

Songbirds Newsletter - April/May 2020

Hi everyone

Here's hoping this second 'lockdown' newsletter finds that you and your loved ones are all keeping well at this time. It's been a strange few weeks for most of us and we've all had to adapt to new ways of being, and new ways of keeping in touch with friends and family. And, as was mentioned last time, those of you with gardens have probably worked very hard on them during the lovely warm, sunny days that we've been having. In fact you may well be reaching the stage of looking for things to do like polishing individual leaves! Thankfully, the (hopefully temporary) change of weather has finally saved us from watering duties and probably turned our attention towards some of the jobs we thought we might catch up with, inside.

Your committee recently held a Zoom meeting (how very 21st century!) just to catch up with each other and discuss any ideas we might for keeping in touch with all our Songbirds, so, in this month's issue there are recipes, jokes, a nature quiz and much much more !!!

First of all there's cause for celebration because our very own Frankie and her team won the Final of the TV Quiz, 'Only Connect' recently. Wow (that's the show where I am lucky if I manage to answer just one of the questions) - they won the whole series!! Well done team Frankie, I'm sure baby Jemima had something to do with it too!

You may remember that many of us were going to sponsor Ali in the 'Race for Life' event, raising money for Cancer Research. The JustGiving page is still live so more donations can be made but obviously the date for the race has had to be changed. It will now take place on November 1st and Ali is continuing to keep fit with regular runs around the area. She usually runs in a pink top and a Race for Life hat (although not JUST those two items) so do give her a wave if you see her passing by your window!

Anyway, I mentioned jokes earlier and we have Martine to thank for the choir-related jokes distributed around this newsletter - here's the first:

*How many Seconds does it take to change a light bulb?
One to do it and four to say, "It's too high for her!"*

.....pause for laughter.....and the next one.....

*How many Altos does it take to change a light bulb?
None. They can't get up that high!*

Right, that's enough hilarity for now!! How is everyone getting on making bunting? It would be nice to think we'll have made enough to create a real splash of colour in the hall at the end of all this. Maybe next month we'll do a count up around the whole choir so do get involved if you can. The last Newsletter provided a knitting pattern for bunting but there is absolutely no reason why people can't crochet them or make them out of fabric as long as we all stick to the same approximate size of 19 x 19 x 19 cm triangles - the more variety the better!

Joke alert -

*How many Top Sopranos does it take to change a light bulb?
Just one- she holds the bulb and the whole world revolves around her!*

There seems little prospect of us all coming together as a choir again in the foreseeable future and our Summer 2020 Concert is an unfortunate casualty of circumstance - we can only wait and see what happens as the weeks roll on. However, the work we had done up to the point of Covid-19's rude interruption will not be wasted and when we eventually do return to rehearsals for our next concert (whenever that might be), we will have a good head start! In the meantime, the committee would like to suggest that members choose a song (or songs) that we can practise for ourselves while we are all at home and which we can

then sing together the next time we meet as a choir - perhaps we could call it our 'lockdown song' and make it part of our next concert?

Kay has delved into the request box and has come up with a number of titles for us all to think about:

- Time after Time - for SSA arranged by Kirby Shaw
- Hallelujah - 2 part harmony arranged by Roger Emerson
- True Colours (like a Rainbow?) - SSA arranged by Tim Brent
- A Million Dreams - SSA arranged by Roger Emerson

You can find these all on YouTube with choirs singing them in 2 or 3 parts so do have a listen to them and see what you think. Having them on YouTube, are arranged for 2 or 3 parts means we might be able to practise and learn them at home.

There are also songs we have sung before and whose words and meaning resonate with us at the moment. We could revisit one or two of these while we're at home - either with YouTube or with Jane's wonderful recordings! Here's a couple to get you started:

- Bridge Over Troubled Waters
- Irish Blessing

We would really love to hear your thoughts and suggestions about the above. Do please email, text or WhatsApp your choices to committee members and we'll announce the 'winners'. If we choose just a few songs to work on and learn at home as best we can then they could feature in our next concert, whenever that is, along with the songs we were already practising.

Complete change of subject now - here's a recipe for us to try. It's been supplied by Wendy (she's been very busy during lockdown! More later).

Banana Cake

A 'fruitful' way of passing some lockdown time!

8 oz S.R Flour

4 oz Sultanas

6 oz soft brown sugar

2 beaten eggs

4 or 5 ripe bananas sliced

1. Put all ingredients in bowl , mix together (I use a small electric hand mixer).

2. Place in loaf tin and bake for 1hour 15 mins at 180.

A fat free recipe BUT a slice of it spread with butter is delicious!!

*How many Besses does it take to change a light bulb?
None- they're so macho they prefer to walk about in the dark and bang their shins!*

Wendy has been extremely busy with the knitting needles and the crochet hook over the last weeks. She's been knitting bunting and has also crocheted a number of blankets, one of which will be the prize in the annual non-raffle which raises funds for our charity. There is a picture of it which I feel sure Wendy will send to anyone who wants to see it but, after the problems we had with photographs in the last one, this Newsletter is a bit lower tech! It's a lovely blanket, be assured!

It's been so positive that choir members are keeping in contact with each other during this time - there are WhatsApp groups, telephone calls and Zoom meetings - all really good ways of not losing touch and checking that we're all ok. There are some really funny pictures, video clips and jokes being shared around and the Zoom meetings have proved really successful - it's so nice to actually see people and catch up with what people are doing with their time - jigsaws, crafts, books and, naturally, gardening! Let's keep it up and if, for some reason, you are not involved with other Songbirds through one or other of the ways listed then just give one of the committee members a 'shout' and we'll make sure you are linked in.

*How long does it take a conductor to change a light bulb?
Nobody knows because nobody was watching!*

Here's a poem found by Julia - written during this pandemic - let's hope the final sentiments turn out to be accurate!

And people stayed home

and read books and listened
and rested and exercised
and made art and played
and learned new ways of being
and stopped
and listened deeper
someone meditated
someone prayed
someone danced
someone met their shadow
and people began to think differently
and people healed
and in the absence of people who lived in
ignorant ways, dangerous, meaningless and heartless,
even the earth began to heal
and when the danger ended
and people found each other
grieved for the dead people
and they made new choices
and dreamed of new visions
and created new ways of life
and healed the earth completely
just as they were healed themselves.

Kitty O'Meara

Wildflower Quiz

Here is a compilation of pictures of wildflowers that Phil (unofficial photographer to Songbirds) put together after we had been for a really lovely, peaceful walk in Stoke Wood last week.

Your mission, should you choose to accept it, is to name all the flowers.
Answers next time!



I'm going to finish with a couple of recommendations from the Committee for some YouTube entertainment which we hope you enjoy.

The first should give you a bit of a laugh - if you liked Victoria Wood you'll love this!

<https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=Nc1ZuQmwbLo&t=4s>

Next, a song, just listen to the words! 'Times Like These'

<https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=7GEIP4YdrBE>

Finally, here is an alternative way to look at some pieces of artwork!

<https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=8zP2b1PzzU0>