

# Songbirds Newsletter - July 2020

---

Well, here we are, fully into Summer 2020, and let's hope this edition of the Newsletter finds you all well and enjoying some of the opportunities that are coming along as the Lockdown begins to ease.

This month you will find a recipe, an interesting YouTube link and a bit of a 'foray' into the future, as well as the usual, pictures, jokes and more wonderful examples of the continuing creativity of our choir members.

---

## The 'Foray'

Songbirds Committee 'met' on July 13th to take stock of the latest developments in the easing of lockdown restrictions in England. There are an increasing number of things we can now begin to do which, until recently had been 'off limits'! Some of us, for example, have been lucky enough to get our hair cut in the last couple of weeks and see more of our families (notice the prioritisation there!!).

Currently, however, we're still not singing and the little research that has so far been done into Covid-19 and the re-opening of choirs suggests Songbirds members are not likely to be singing together in the near future! The Committee has, looked at research papers from America and Australia as well as information from the NAC and it is evident from these studies that droplets and aerosol spray from the mouth potentially carrying particles of the Covid-19 virus are propelled further through singing than speaking, making singing a potentially more risky activity. The aerosol spray (and therefore the virus) can travel quite a long distance when we sing - making 2 metres distancing insufficient for safety - the same applies to woodwind and brass instrument players as to singers, hence there has been no easing so far, of restrictions on orchestras and choirs. We can only watch and wait for changes to this position, there is little doubt that eventually the conditions for choirs and orchestras will improve but none of us has any idea when that will happen!

There was a point earlier in this whole lockdown experience when, as a choir, we had to accept there would be no Summer 2020 Songbirds Concert and now, the Committee feels, we have reached another point where it has become clear that there won't be a Winter 2020 Concert either. Rehearsals will not be restarting in August or September and until more detailed research can help to produce safe guidelines we are unable to identify a date when choir will be able re-open.

This is the current position for Songbirds (and for other choirs too of course!) and so the Committee would like to ask your thoughts on setting up some Zoom singing opportunities for members to begin in September. When using Zoom for choir singing, members can see each other but not hear each other (as internet speeds vary so much we are unable to sing together whilst listening to each other). It is possible only to hear the music being played/sung by the leader and yourself singing along. Given that that is the situation, it can still be a positive experience when you **see** other people singing on the screen at the same time as yourself despite not being able to hear them! Zoom can also provide some welcome socialising time too - something we are already doing in sections but not as a whole choir.

So, here comes the question:

**Would you be happy to get involved using Zoom as an opportunity to do some singing while we can't meet as a choir?** Please believe us when we say it is not difficult to use!!!!

**Please text or email (or telephone of course) a basic 'yes' or 'no' to any member of the committee by July 31st.** If we have enough members keen to give it a go then we'll be in touch soon after that.

If you are interested but not confident of your technical skills then the Committee will offer every support it can to get you 'Zooming' - on your smart phone, tablet, laptop or PC!

## Caption Needed

Kay came across this picture recently which caught the committee's attention. We decided to reproduce it here for you (could be any little group of Songbirds do you think?) and ask you to provide a suitable caption or title - the funnier the better as we are all in need of laughs these days. Do text or email your suggestions to any committee member and we'll put them in the next Newsletter.



## Coronavirus Guidelines

As a committee we realise we find some of the "what we can or can't do" guidance confusing and it changes quite a lot - so, for everyone's information here is a link to the currently up-to-date guidelines from the BBC website.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-51506729>

## Singing and Voice Projection

How do singers project their voices over 40 metres and a full orchestra and still manage to be heard by an audience without amplification?

Here is a link to a really interesting explanation of what happens when we sing - it's called 'The Physics of Opera', on YouTube and it's certainly worth 5 minutes of anyone's time. Thanks to Rosemary for sharing it.

<https://youtu.be/PKengo7y28U>

## A Welcome Bit of Publicity!

A lot has happened since we presented our final cheque to VASL Young Carers Group early this year, but they haven't forgotten us and we get a mention in their Harborough Mail News Report last month. (Column 3, final paragraph). Thanks VASL.

HARBOROUGH MAIL  
www.harboroughmail.co.uk Thursday, June 1, 2021

### NEWS

COMMUNITY

# Virtual 'meet-up' sessions to help young carers missing respite breaks

**By Kaye Hawkins**  
VASL Young Carers Manager

What a rollercoaster of a few months it has been! Unfortunately, for our young carers, not the Alton Towers type of rollercoaster they were looking forward to. Like young people across the world, young carers have had to put large parts of their lives on hold during the ongoing pandemic, and for many of them, the months of isolation and time away from their friends and social routines is really starting to take its toll.

Here at VASL Young Carers Project, we would normally be busy planning the summer trips which offer vital respite breaks to the young people. Time away from caring responsibilities at home is a key role of the Young Carers Project, and during the summer months we would normally take the young carers on several amazing adventures.

Instead, we've adapted the way we support the young people and have had fun coming up with some creative ideas. During Mental Health Awareness Week (18-24 May) we got on board with this year's theme of kindness and distributed 'Bags of Happiness' to all our young carers, in lieu of the two trips we would otherwise have taken them on.

The bags contained goodies aimed at boosting their mental, physical and emotional wellbeing. Skipping ropes, colouring books, games, quizzes, baking kits, gardening packs and cookbooks, were all well-received and have provided the young carers with some fun alternative activities.

Funding for the bags came from the fantastic fundraising efforts of the Market Harbourough-based Songbirds Ladies Choir, and Leicester-based insurance firm, Erskine Murray. Instead of our fortnightly activity group, which gives young carers the chance to socialise with other young people in similar circumstances, we are running regular online 'meet-ups'.

These virtual sessions involve lively discussions and fun games (think Bingo, Scattergories and Pictionary), and are crucial for maintaining connections with our young carers who might otherwise be feeling isolated.

Like most youth groups, we don't yet know when the Young Carers Group will resume 'in real life' but what we do know is that we will continue to be there, via Zoom, text or phone calls, to support our young carers through these difficult times.

This month, Martine has been able to give us a glimpse into:

## The Hairdresser's Songbook - very topical since they have recently re-opened!

- Oh Yes, I'm The Great Split-ENDER
- Dandruff Keeps Falling Off My Head
- Shorn in the USA
- Wake Me Up Before You Wash and GoGo
- I Can Feel It Combing In The Air Tonight
- What's The Story Crowning Glory
- The Blue Rinse Mountains Of Virginia
- Condition Yourself At Home
- Comb Into The Garden Maud
- I Dyed It My Way

## Non-Alcoholic Pimm's (Ali's Recipe)



Here's a guilt-free (wot, no alcohol?!) and refreshing drink for summer days in the garden.

1. 1 x 2 litre bottle of lemonade (any make) poured into a jug (or double the quantity if you're particularly thirsty!)
2. Add a capful of balsamic vinegar per 2 litres of lemonade and stir.
3. Add chopped fruits of your choice and lots of ice.

Ali says it's very refreshing and really tastes like Pimm's! Let us know what you think.

If you use diet lemonade then it's even better for the calories

## Body Shop

Many of you will know that Faye runs a Body Shop franchise in her 'spare' time (Yes - What spare time would that be? You ask!). Anyway, the Committee thought you would like to have a link to the latest catalogue in case you might want some items for holidays (really?) or to put away as Christmas presents (you can never start too soon!).

Here is the link:

[https://issuu.com/tbsah/docs/tbsah\\_summer\\_catalogue\\_2020?fr=sNjFkNjEwNzUwODg](https://issuu.com/tbsah/docs/tbsah_summer_catalogue_2020?fr=sNjFkNjEwNzUwODg)

If you want to place an order, Faye can be contacted by phone call or text on 07905 533341

## Songbirds Bunting

We're not sure whether we have heard from all of the 'bunting-makers' out there but there must be more than 50 pieces that we are aware of so let's keep going folks!

Here is a picture from Ann Leyland - she has managed 20 pieces so far and that's the most we know of from one individual!!



## What musicals/operettas are these? Judith's Quiz (second instalment plus answers to the first)

1. A Magician from Down Under
2. Buccaneers from Cornwall
3. Merry-go-round at the Fair
4. A Legal Judgement
5. Six men who form a striptease act
6. A Tale in a New York District
7. A Lubricant
8. A Travelling Floating Theatre
9. A View of this Affection
10. Evil, foul etc
11. Destiny or Fate
12. Italian Boatmen
13. King Arthur's Court
14. A beach in Rio
15. Free for All
16. Exotic Shoes
17. An Evening Occurrence on a Wide Street
18. A Romany
19. A Dressing for your Locks

Here are the **answers** to the quiz in May/June Newsletter: (1) The Merry Widow, (2) Fiddler On The Roof, (3) Yeoman Of The Guard, (4) Pal Joey, (5) Hello Dolly, (6) Spend, Spend, Spend, (7) Jesus Christ Superstar, (8) 42nd Street, (9) Student Prince, (10) Me and My Girl, (11) Top Hat, (12) Miss Saigon, (13) Salad Days, (14) South Pacific, (15) Half A Sixpence, (16) Chicago, (17) Evita, (18) Paint Your Wagon (19) Cabaret, (20) Oklahoma

## Marion's Paintings

In last month's Newsletter we featured two of Marion's paintings and in this issue we have two more for you. Quite different from each other in subject matter and both very intriguing.



**BBC Proms 2020** Charlotta has found this link and is sharing it through our Newsletter. You can follow the link and sign up for information on all the performances. We may not be able to go and see them live but this must be the next best thing! Dates are 17th July to 12th September 2020. Eight weeks of broadcasts on television, radio and on-line.

<https://www.royalalberthall.com/about-the-hall/news/2020/may/not-the-proms-as-we-know-them-the-proms-as-we-need-them/>

**Songways On-Line Choir Performance** Julia has sent this link for a concert coming up soon.

<https://mailchi.mp/169e2cefa1d8/online-choir-show-sunday-26-july-730pm?e=6cf2f61b7b>

## Joy's Rose

Most of you know Joy (Mandy's friend from Lancaster) - for the last few years she has timed her visits to Mandy to coincide with Songbird Concerts for two reasons - she loves to hear us sing and she enjoys making a contribution by managing the refreshments at our concerts! Last year, as a 'Thank You', she was presented with a small token of our appreciation. She bought herself a rose bush for her patio so that she thinks of us every time she goes out there. This year she reports that it has flowered beautifully and has sent us a picture of it. She says she misses us all and hopes it won't be too long before we can perform again!



**Finally...** Heather found this highly appropriate 'warning' on FaceBook recently - so until the next Newsletter - look after yourselves everyone!!



## In the Newsletter next time...

- Judith's sent in some dingbats for us to work out,
- Julia's got a lovely recipe to share,
- Rosemary has provided a whole podcast on breathing
- ... and much, much more.

Have you got anything you'd like to share? If so, send it to any committee member.