

May
2020

Choir News



Derbyshire Community Male Voice Choir

COVID 19



Ian Ware - From the coal face

Since our last newsletter the covid-19 situation has continued to dominate our lives. There have been many more services set up to help GP practices and Emergency Departments. Suspected or positive covid-19 patients are seen by dedicated teams in dedicated Red areas. Other patients are seen in Green areas and it's important that anyone who needs emergency intervention or investigation still attends ED without fear of contracting covid-19. We now all work effectively in PPE and are very familiar with all the processes in place to keep patients and staff safe.

It remains a very changing time in the NHS. It is with great sadness that a young nurse from our DHU team died recently having contracted the virus. We have other medical colleagues on ITU fighting for their lives. This news hits all of us hard and our thoughts are with their families. Whilst all of us are working long hours and days off everyone is working so well as a team and each person helps the other when one of us hits a low.

Whilst I am working clinically more at this time, my day job as Head of Urgent Care has recently involved setting up large scale swab sites across Derbyshire with the capacity to swab 1000 people a day at each site. We currently don't have the demand until the government widen the swab criteria. What we are able to do is swab the University Hospital of Derby & Burton staff and other trusts. If their result is negative it allows them to return to work earlier than the isolation period and helps maintain the care levels within the hospitals. This was a positive experience for me to see how quick these large sites can be set up so quickly whilst I worked alongside the Army liaison officer assigned to the county. The NHS and British Army have worked very well together, demonstrated in the Nightingale Hospitals that have been set up recently.

The lockdown has certainly controlled the level of cases and pushes back the peak period further. Well done for everyone coping with lockdown and the challenges this throws at all of us. Stay safe and I look forward to singing together as soon as we can.

Chris Hare - A view from the Royal

The hospital is a very quiet place without all the visitors, volunteers and clinics running. I can't describe the generosity of local businesses donating all sorts of things; 13,000 chocolates from Cadbury and a constant stream of Pizza and Curry deliveries, all free I might add. I hope that when this is over, Weight Watchers and Slimming World are equally as generous. My employer, ISS, provides essential services to the NHS and all the staff have been really up against it, especially our cleaning team. They have been absolute stars and I'm proud to work with them. A large number of staff in the hospital have been self isolating which has required the rapid recruitment of agency staff to plug the gaps. This has increased my workload quite a bit in delivering initial induction training. All of the hospital services have been affected by the distancing rules and I'm sure you're all conforming and doing your bit. I'm aware that a couple of our members have been quite poorly with Covid 19 and other illnesses and I hope they all make a full and speedy recovery. I myself am washing my hands religiously and following all the good practices that are highlighted regularly on television and social media streams. Take care, stay safe and I look forward to us all being back together soon.



STAY AT HOME 

PROTECT THE NHS

 **save lives**

Looking to the future

Since the last newsletter we should have enjoyed a local concert in Alvaston but more importantly spent a couple of nights away together singing with choirs in Denbigh and Flint. Hopefully when life returns to some form of normality we will be able to contact the organisers of all of these cancelled events and agree some new dates for performances. During the last few weeks I have been contacted by some people who are planning ahead. We've been asked to perform in a concert in Chester Green and also had an enquiry about performing at a wedding in December 2021.



On a personal note, I was disappointed that my eldest son and his girlfriend have had to postpone their wedding planned for June this year until August 2021. Better to be safe than sorry I'm sure.

Thank you to all of those who have contributed to the last two editions of the newsletter and apologies if I have tweaked your offering in an attempt to introduce a bit of humour. In the next edition I have contributions promised by Tim, Michael, Clive and Ellis but would welcome further contributions from all of you - whether you are a regular contributor or newsletter virgin.

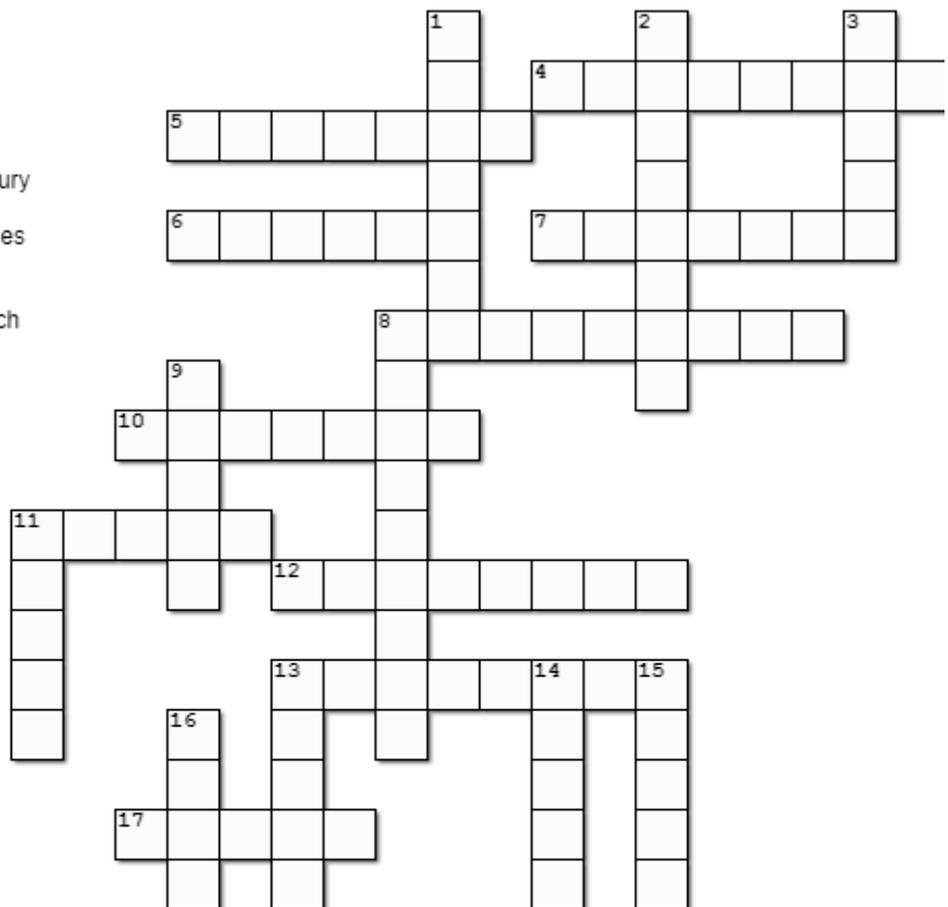
I intend to continue my round robin phone calls every 10 days or so to keep in touch and I'm grateful to Louise for organising the quiz rounds. The answers to round 1 and 2 are contained within this newsletter. Just to keep you on your toes, below is a musically themed crossword - good luck!

Across

- 4. indicating volume of music
- 5. five musicians
- 6. slow and stately dance
- 7. musical period 16th to 17th century
- 8. lowest female singing voice
- 10. combination of two or three tones
- 11. dark, melancholic tonal mode
- 12. words of an opera
- 13. male voice reaching female pitch
- 17. dance written in triple time

Down

- 1. a great conductor
- 2. distance between two notes
- 3. successive notes of a key
- 8. easy flowing style
- 9. celebrating christmas
- 11. military procession
- 13. to play loudly
- 14. first tone of a scale
- 15. drama where words are sung
- 16. a diminished note



Necessity the mother of all invention

As many of you will know, Len Briddon is a regular volunteer at the Derby Royal Hospital. Most weeks he can be seen ferrying patients around on one of the motorised buggies. Since the outbreak of Covid 19 however all volunteers have been asked to stand down and Len has had some extra time on his hands. "I've managed to keep fairly busy", said Len, "mainly in the garden where I have applied some stain to the fences and tidied up all of the borders and lawn. I've always been a practical type of bloke and it was while I was cleaning the patio that I came up with my latest brainwave". Len realised that there are going to be some shortages in the shops in the near future and he had noticed lots of reports on TV of people panic buying. "I managed to scrounge some PPE from the hospital stores, a few pairs of surgical gloves and a couple of aprons" said Len, "I already had some safety goggles and a pair of wellies so the initial outlay has been fairly small" The masterstroke was persuading a close neighbour who runs a dog grooming business to allow him the use of his trailer. "Tarquin isn't able to operate his business at the moment so his trailer was standing idle. He's let me have it for a month's trial and I've given it a quick paint job - I think it looks quite smart" added Len, "I don't think I'll have any problems with the local authorities because in a few weeks I will be offering an essential service. In fact I may need to expand my operation fairly quickly and wondered whether any other members of the choir would like to get involved. I'll certainly be offering them a discount if they want to use my services."



Further details of Len's new business launch are reported on page 7 of the newsletter.



The crazy world of Jim Brown

It's funny how certain traits run in the family. Back in 1968, Jim's uncle Arthur (pictured right) had a hit with a song entitled Fire. This fascination has certainly been inherited by Jim who put it to full use when assisting a neighbour with their gardening recently. "I only asked for a bit of sympathetic pruning" exclaimed the neighbour who wished to remain anonymous, "the next thing I know is that my garden is a raging inferno." Jim explained "I have always adopted a slash and burn approach to gardening; can't see the sense in messing about myself when you can let the cleansing power of fire do all the work". Just step away from that petrol can and matches Jim.



Charitable status application granted

Following the decision at the last AGM to consider charity status for the choir, the committee spoke with Ellis (who in his "day job" is a solicitor advising on charity law matters including new registrations). Ellis advised the committee to apply to register the choir as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation ("CIO"). The advantages to the choir of registering as a CIO include the following:-



- Increased public recognition and trust which will assist with general fundraising.
- The ability to claim gift aid on donations;
- Potential tax reliefs on VAT and trading
- The ability to apply for additional sources of grant funding;
- Protection for the trustees from personal liability;
- Protection of choir assets to ensure they are only used for the public benefit and for no other reason;
- the ability of the CIO to own property and enter into contracts in its own name;

Registering as a CIO would not prevent the choir from continuing to act in much the same way as it has for the past 60+ years. It would also be able to continue making donations to its charity of the year (in fact this would be enshrined in its stated charitable objects).

As part of the registration of a CIO, the choir will adopt a completely new and bespoke constitution. As part of this, the general subscription-paying choir membership will be able to continue attending AGM's and other members meetings of the choir and vote on matters concerning them and the choir. The committee will become the CIO's charity trustees, being ultimately responsible for the compliance of the CIO with charity law and other obligations. Of these, the chairman, treasurer and secretary would be ex-officio roles, whilst the remaining trustees would be elected by the membership for a term of 4 years.

The application to register the CIO was submitted on 15th April and approval was received a few days later. It is intended to request the confirmation of members at the next AGM allowing the choir to begin operating under the CIO structure soon afterwards.

Any questions concerning the proposed charity status of the choir can be directed to Ellis or Kevin.

You're how old ???



During the month of April three of our colleagues have celebrated their birthdays. (There may be other choir members with birthdays in April but they are unknown to me). These three fine gentlemen have a collective age of 193 years. The difference between the youngest age and the median age is 21 years whilst the difference between the oldest age and the median age is only 1 year. Can you work out how old Len, Ian and Dave are this year?



Through the keyhole



So who might live in a house like this? The soft toys on the window sill indicate a love of children and a willingness to support community activities - a family man perhaps? The books suggest a love of reading and the ornaments a love of wildlife. The resident of our mystery house tells us that music is still playing a massive part in his life with friends posting/sharing all sorts of amazing videos and recommendations of what to listen to. He also says he's missing the choir but looks forward to getting back together in the near distant future when we shall raise the roof and hopefully a glass or two. So who lives here? Answers on a postcard.....



ELP Choral Injury Lawyers "Accident at choir" compensation claims

Have you had an accident at choir? If so, it's possible that your accompanist, conductor or another chorister has been negligent, and you may be able to claim against their Public Liability Insurance. ELP offer a No Win No Fee service in 98% of choral injury cases.

Has your auxiliary chord diminished, have you developed an itchy crotchet, does the conductor's glare leave you all a quaver? Experiencing too many accidentals? Slipped whilst descending your Lasso?

If you've been injured during a choir related activity through no fault of your own, you may be entitled to claim compensation. Is the thought of ending up with a big legal bill off-putting? The vast majority of ELP client's claim injury compensation on a No Win No Fee basis.

ELP secured £120,000 compensation for a chorister who was forced to repeatedly sing "When the Saints" which lead to severe stress and anxiety problems leading to family breakdown.

ELP aided a first tenor who was awarded £1 million when poor maintenance and inadequate safety procedures lead to severe head injuries caused by a defective music stand. The chorister has been left brain dead although nobody seems to have noticed. "He's like a vegetable" said Ellis, "but at least he's a rich vegetable".



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Ken's green fingers hit a new "high"

Ken Barnes, who lives in Allestree - quite close to the University - is enjoying a number of pastimes to keep himself occupied during this enforced isolation. He is particularly enjoying the opportunity to get outside in the garden now that the weather has begun to warm up. "It's nice to feel the heat of the sun on your back" said Ken, "and it's certainly good for the plants. I've got a small greenhouse, some raised vegetable boxes and a couple of cloches. It's lovely to have a bit of home grown produce on your plate and I feel quite proud of my horticultural success. I usually stick to the same old tried and tested vegetables but this year my greatest success has been in growing a new wonder herb". Sitting down on his garden bench Ken stretched out in the sun and began to explain how he started to grow the new herb.

"It happened by accident really" commented Ken, "living close to the university you see quite a few students walking about and one day I got into conversation with a couple of young lads who are studying horticulture. We got talking about various things and they asked me if I liked gardening"



Apparently the students were undertaking a research project as part of their final year and were looking for somewhere safe to cultivate various strains of a new plant they were researching. The students claimed the plants had a range of medical uses and were keen to see if they could be grown in a typical British climate.

"I mentioned that I had a bit of space in my garden and we went from there" said Ken. "They brought along three different varieties of the herb and they have all grown really well as you can see in the photo" added Ken proudly.

"Every Thursday the lads come along and harvest a bit of the crop and Carmen and I have been adding a little bit to our cooking. It certainly seems to add something and we always feel more relaxed after eating it. Carmen has been adding it to home made soup but I prefer it when she adds it to her muffins. It's certainly helped us get through this period of isolation" commented Ken. Because the university has shut down the students have asked Ken if he will continue harvesting the plant on their behalf until they return. They have left Ken a stock of clear polythene bags and a self adhesive label (pictured right) to stick on each bag. Ken's building up quite a stock.





Len launches new business

Local entrepreneur Len Briddon is excited to announce the launch of his new business venture "LAW". "I'm pretty confident that I've identified a gap in the personal hygiene market and I can't wait to get going," commented Len as he gave me a personal tour of his prototype trailer. "The trailer is a cross between a mobile dog grooming parlour and those vans you see driving around cleaning wheelie bins" said Len wearing an excited look on his face. On closer inspection Len explained that the trailer contained a water tank,

drainage system and a domestic power washer. "Oh and of course" exclaimed Len enthusiastically "there's a grab rail for customers to hold onto when the power washer is switched on" Len went on to explain that in a few weeks time he felt there would be an international shortage of toilet tissue and that his service would be in great demand. Len explained that early pilot trials involving family members had been reasonably successful and that his technique with the power washer was improving all the time. "The secret is all in the wrist action" said Len " I've really mastered the method now but I would like a few more volunteers just to perfect it a little more. I was wondering whether a few choir members would like to volunteer? I'd give them a really good discount and they'd leave as clean as a whistle".

It's official! Divine status bestowed on Chris

In preparation for Easter, the holiest period in the Christian calendar, a Baptist Church in York was embarrassed to find that a local printer had misspelled four new banners. Thankfully the error was spotted in plenty of time for replacement banners to be produced but can you imagine the commotion if Chris had been elevated to the status of demi God? Would our devotion and adoration be directed at both or one of our Chris's? How would we decide which Chris to worship? Would we be required to genuflect each time Chris entered the rehearsal room? Would there be a need for human sacrifice each time a note was sung out of tune? - that would rapidly reduce the numbers in the baritone section!! Would miracles be used to prevent the second tenors from singing the top tenor line? Would top tenors be blessed with perfect pitch?





Choir Quiz - Round 1 Answers



Sailed up the Suez Canal when it was snowing, aged 12



Lived in Saudi Arabia for 2 years



Was once a lifeguard in the USA



Always wanted to play a cello



Smoked cigarettes with Engelbert Humperdinck as they drove to Grantham from Northampton



Has only won one competition in his life, and that was a Beano t-shirt



Has the name of a tiny Welsh village tattooed on her back



Terrified of heights but did a bungee jump at Kawara Bridge in New Zealand



Has appeared on TV in 3 different continents



County Inter-School long jump champion for 4 years in secondary school



Acted with Sir Alan Bates in a school play



Captained his university department water polo team to 11 consecutive championship wins





Choir Quiz - Round 1 Answers



Always wanted to pilot an aeroplane (has done small aircraft and a commercial jet simulator)



Judged two Youth Enterprise competitions, one with Ruth Badger as a co-judge, the other with Steph McGovern



Was nursed by an Indian Ayah and their second language was Tamil



Owned a sailing boat called "Breeze of Boston"



Was an extra in the D.H. Lawrence film "Women in Love"



On leaving school became an apprentice joiner making coffins from scratch by hand, using rough ash timber



Used to be a magazine columnist



Was briefly signed to an American record label



Got stuck on the Wurzen Pass for 3 weeks with 181 Bosnian refugees during the Bosnian War



Called to Blondie's bedroom not once, but many times



Played midwife to over a thousand cows



His future in-laws and his parents got married on exactly the same day - October 4th 1947



David's dream to regain the yellow jersey



Not that long ago David Bott was showing a clean pair of heels to all comers as he notched up a series of victories in local races such as the Giro D'Olbrook, Vuelta a Kilburn and the Tour de Belper. Not only a keen cyclist David has also completed the Robin Hood Marathon and a series of long distance walks including the Pennine Way, the Likewake Walk (Osmotherley to Ravenscar), and the Coast to Coast walk.

"I have accepted the fact that I'll never complete one of these major feats again," says David, "but I am now following a challenging training programme from the comfort of my own garage."



My new goal is to be able to walk from the car to the bar at The Kings Head, Duffield when the Covid 19 restrictions are finally lifted".

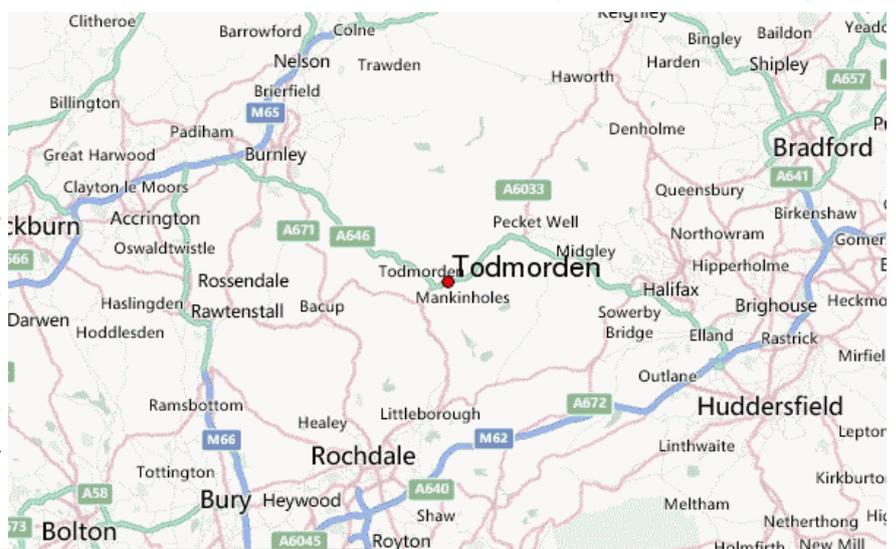
David would also like it to be known that Dave Carver is not the only rock star in the choir. David's claim to musical fame was as rhythm guitarist with a band called Shades of Grey in Derby in the 1970's. I was only supposed to be the driver but got co-opted at the last minute. We played amongst other songs the Hendrix classic "All along the Watchtower" Quite scary! At the moment I'm receiving all my musical entertainment via Skype from many talented musicians within the family.

The big black bird of Todmorden



In 1960 I was based at Todmorden. It was one moonlit night when I set off at 10pm on my cycle to check the property on my beat. One such building was Eastwood Mill where I examined the ground floor doors of the offices and boiler room. I climbed onto the flat roof and walked up the wooden steps to check a small door. Whilst standing on the steps I saw the figure of a man walking across the mill yard towards the main office door. I got back onto the small roof and I was immediately above him. I thought, "I

will jump down behind him, grab his shoulders and pull him to the ground". I jumped but the cape I was wearing billowed out and covered him. We both ended up on the ground and he was trying to get out and I was trying to hold him. When he did get out he kept saying "Thank you sir ". He was a roadster. I arrested him,



took him to the nearby police pillar and asked for transport. At Todmorden police station I charged him with attempted office breaking and placed him in a cell. He kept saying "Thank you sir". I typed out my report, arranged an occasional court at 11am. and went home. Later he appeared at court, pleaded guilty and when asked by the magistrate if he had anything to say he said, "Yes sir. I want to thank the officer for saving my life". The

magistrate looked at me. I shrugged my shoulders and he asked him to explain. He said, "Well you see sir, this big black bird flew down and grabbed me with its claws and lifted me off the ground but this young officer grabbed my legs and pulled me down. It was terrifying ". The magistrate, who also had a coal office on my beat, gave him a conditional discharge on the understanding that he told all his friends and fellow travellers about this big bird which now looked after all the properties in the area. It did the trick. No more break-ins by travellers in the area.



21st century Arts and Crafts Movement flourishes in Mickleover

The spark for the Arts & Crafts movement was the Great Exhibition of 1851, the first world's fair, held in London. Many of the people who became involved in the Movement were influenced by the work of the designer William Morris, who by the 1880s had become an internationally renowned and commercially successful designer and manufacturer. Morris believed passionately in the importance of creating beautiful, well-made objects that were produced in a way that allowed their makers to remain connected both with their product and with other people. Morris argued for the return to a system of manufacture based on small-scale workshops.

We within the choir are privileged to have access to our own Arts and Crafts movement in the shape of Malcolm and Liza Richardson. Both possess a creative eye and the practical skills to produce



beautiful objects out of discarded and unwanted materials. In preparation for our trip to North Wales, Liza has invested a huge amount of time and effort in designing and creating pennants for our host choirs to commemorate the two joint concerts. It is this point of difference which sets us apart from most other choirs and helps us to extend the hand of friendship to others. The two concerts which should have been held on the 17th and 18th of April would have been one of the highlights of this concert season and we are deeply indebted to Liza for all her time and hard work. As yet we have not rewarded her efforts appropriately.

Partner in crime Malcolm is also a gifted crafter as many of us are aware having already taken advantage of many of the wonderful items he has created in wood. One of Malcolm's latest creations is shown below and is a candidate for use on the cover of our latest CD. This is somewhat dependant upon the quality of the finished tracks and whether our recording of



"We rise again" is of sufficient quality to be included on the album of songs. Whilst the quality of our performances should always be our ultimate measure, the skills, talents, energy and enthusiasm of people like Malcom and Liza make our choir so much more than a choir. Many thanks to you both from all your colleagues. The background to the left is a classical arts and craft design called The Angel with the Trumpet, designed as a furnishing fabric by Herbert Percy Horne around 1884.



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Choir Quiz - Round 2 Answers



Len



Dave



John



Ian



Kevin



Geoff



unknown



David



Ken



Tom



Choir Quiz - Round 2 Answers



Graham



Malcolm



Sean



unknown



Louise



Chris



Ellis



Clive



Jim

