



# Choir News

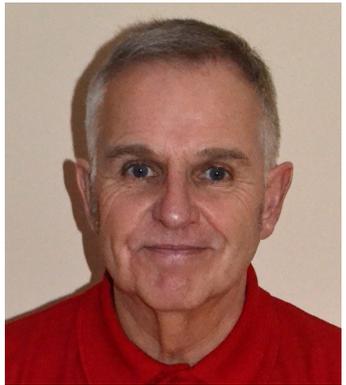


April  
2020

# COVID 19

## “Corona” cancels choir’s commitments

With almost breathless indecency, the current pandemic has put all of our lives on hold and certainly placed all choir activities on the back burner for a while. It seems only a handful of days ago that some of us were convening to organise our annual concert, trip to North Wales and Annual Dinner. All of these events have now been postponed for the foreseeable future and thankfully we seem to have recovered most of the associated costs involved so have not ended up out of pocket. The important thing at the moment is for everyone to keep safe and look after themselves and loved ones. I have managed to speak to many of you by phone in recent days and it appears that at least two members have experienced the virus. It’s amazing how many of you have said that you are already missing our rehearsals and concerts. Please make sure you keep in touch with each other through our facebook page, website or one of the many round-robin emails that appear to be circulating. If all else fails you can always revert to the old fashioned method of picking up the phone. #Stay Safe #Stay At Home



## Ian Ware - From the coal face

I have experienced many changes and challenges in the NHS. In recent days I have seen the NHS I've known for many years morph in every aspect to have one cause of fighting Covid-19.

It's like nothing anyone has experienced before. All parts of the health service and staff, whatever their role, has had to face quick changes and different ways of working.

Everyone I work with in and out of the hospitals are working long hours, feel flat, exhausted, sad, emotional, frightened of the unknown. Frightened of what we could face as well as anxious about whether the PPE is good enough to protect us and the loved ones we go back to, yet they all remain energetic in their efforts and enthusiastic to keep pushing forward. It makes me feel proud of the health service as a whole.

Yes people are dying. We see this in the media and we are still to see the worst of it but many, many more are surviving it. This really is unprecedented and will no doubt change our lives and social habits in one way or another.

I can honestly say the front line is braced and fighting the first battle whilst preparing for the larger one to come which; with strict social distancing will be slower and more manageable. It's this that will allow us to treat all unwell patients whatever their illness far more effectively and improve outcomes.

The small things like the choirs emails to share a piece of music followed by the comments including Tom's musical knowledge as well as Lou's quiz definitely lift my spirits as I'm sure everyone else's spirits who are isolating at home. We will all be back singing happily together once we have beaten this.

Take care of you and yours

Interested in joining the choir?

E-mail : [robkevg59@outlook.com](mailto:robkevg59@outlook.com) or call 01332 928834



## From our Foreign Correspondent



Situated in the depths of darkest Staffordshire it was a delight to receive a communication from baritone and Cornish pasty connoisseur Frank Norris. Like many other choristers Frank and Irene are self isolating to minimise the risk of the corona virus. "It's at times like this that our families rise to the occasion" said Frank. "My daughter Jackie is a rock and insists on doing all the shopping for me. Everything was going fine with spuds, bread and all the everyday essentials but she got a bit upset when I asked her to get me a packet of extra large condoms.

### Christmas baby boom anticipated

Frank explained, "There are fears about the long-term implications of a global condom shortage after the world's largest manufacturer was forced to stop production due to the coronavirus outbreak. Malaysian company, Karex Berhad's has three factories based in South East Staffordshire and all have been shut for 10 days already, meaning there are already 100 million fewer condoms. The company, which produces one in five of the world's condoms, is now appealing to the government for a partial exemption from a nationwide lockdown. Without being able to reopen, Chief Executive, Mr Goh said there would be a "global shortage" of condoms, which could potentially impact "a lot of humanitarian programmes... for months". What's more, he added, demand "is still very strong", which is no bad thing "given that at this point in time people are probably not planning to have children". "It's not the time, with so much uncertainty."

Meanwhile, Jackie's refusal to procure her father's special order left Frank in a quandary until he discovered that bicycle shops were to remain open. My suggestion that she got me some patches to repair my old condoms failed to resolve the dispute. Frank says the swelling has now reduced and he has partial vision out of his right eye.

### Eric's long road to recovery

Having waited in the Derby Royal for close on 6 weeks it was something of a relief for Eric Singleton to be transferred to the Glenfield hospital in Leicester. Nationally recognised as a centre of excellence for heart disease it was here that Eric underwent a 6 hour operation to have two valves replaced in his heart. Reports from Beryl continue to indicate that Eric is making steady progress and he is now recuperating on a general coronary ward. He is experiencing some discomfort as a result of the operation but generally making the expected progress to a full recovery.





## If you can remember the 60's you weren't there



Fun loving duo and children of the sixties Len, (Rainbow traveller) and Jill (Pixiedust starchild) can often be found relaxing to their favourite sounds at their commune in Stawberry (Stenson) Fields. "Chilling out to some funky vibes is one of our favourite pastimes man" says Rainbow as he relaxes on an oversized bean bag and takes another puff from his Moroccan hookah pipe. Pixiedust nods in the affirmative as she combines threading a daisy chain through Rainbow's hair with keeping time to the music on her finger cymbals. "Most dudes around here have too much anger" commented Rainbow, "we just like hugging trees and communing with nature brother". "We dig grass as well as trees" added Pixiedust. (Not sure whether that comment referred to lying on grass or smoking it). And just before the pair entered a chant induced state of trance, Rainbow offered this final piece of advice, "remember, if you're going to San Francisco, wear flowers in your hair."



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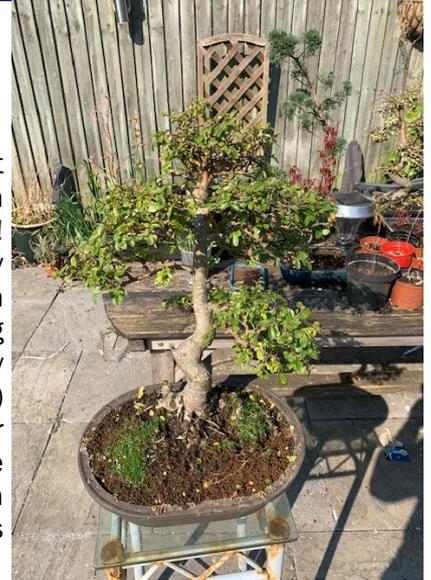




## Oakwood man grows small trees

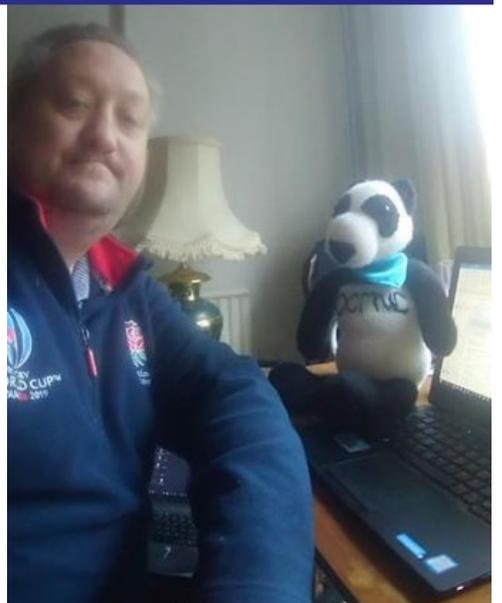


In a suburb of Derby named after the stout native tree of Britain; first tenor Tom Fleming chooses to grow miniature trees! Tom has found recent days at home really enjoyable. He have managed to chill out in the garden in the beautiful spring sunshine and work on his bonsais; mainly Chinese Elm and Japanese Acers (maples) and a Weeping Cotoneaster thrown in for good measure. In a few more days the maples will be a stunning vibrant crimson and Tom will remain a giant amongst his forest of bonsai.



## Holbrook resident charged with “pandering” to a soft toy

Parish Council officials in the sleepy village of Holbrook are considering taking a local resident to court using a bye law last invoked during the 17th century. Introduced to prevent an increasing level of bear baiting, cock fighting and sheep worrying; an unnamed official claimed that the abuse inflicted upon the soft toy fell into the same category. Lord Mayor of Holbrook and church warden, Chris Lumb commented “ Mr Powell is clearly bonkers, he talks to the Panda, he even told me that it’s learning to play the piano. I laughed and asked if it was playing by ear?” Mr Powell gave me an incredulous look and responded “don’t be stupid it’s using it’s fingers.” The case is due to be heard at the Holbrook Assizes on the first day of April when a jury of twelve stout hearted men will be chosen to hear the panda perform on the pianoforte.



## Ken's boyhood dream takes shape



As a young boy, Ken recalls being given the choice of a Meccano or train set as a gift. "Whilst I thoroughly enjoyed playing with the Meccano I have always had a desire to possess my own model railway" says Ken. So as Ken enjoys his time in the "third age" with both time and space available to him he has set to work on his layout. It's nowhere near complete but I have the basic layout in place including six bridges which I have modelled myself. The wiring is quite an intricate job and takes all of my time and patience.



## Journey's end in sight?

In recent days I have attempted to speak to most choir members by telephone. Whilst we have all received regular updates from Louise regarding John Cumpstone's progress, I was delighted to speak to him in person and hear the optimism in his voice. John continues with his treatment and believes he has about eight weeks to go before it is completed. This is a particularly hazardous time for him at the moment and he is being especially careful to isolate himself from the outside world. We all send John and Pat our continuing best wishes and look forward to a time when they will both be back in circulation - along with the rest of us.



## Applauding our NHS

I'm afraid I'm naturally cynical and self-conscious, but Catherine always surprises me. After she tentatively asked me to join her on the front step of our house to "applaud" the frontline workers of this weird situation, I saw the disappointment in her eyes when I waved it off. I'm not totally heartless so I joined her. There was no one else out there but that didn't stop her, she clapped anyway, in the open street her clapping echoed, I felt a sense of pride for her and shame of my own cowardice, so I joined in. Slowly the neighbours started appearing one by one until our whole street was clapping and cheering and chatting amongst one another. I'm not one for emotional situations - I'm not designed for that - but this really opened my eyes to the power of a single, well-meant action. If we all did one single, well-meant action a day, how nice could this world be?"





## Dave and Barbara Carver

On Saturday 28th March, choir secretary Dave Carver and his wife celebrate their Golden Wedding Anniversary. Unfortunately current circumstances mean they will be unable to celebrate with friends and family and intend to spend the day together at their home in Kilburn. "We'll have a right old knees up when this is all over" said Dave, "but don't think I'm going to invite any of that old riff raff from the choir". Dave met Barbara Cowdell at a club in Nottingham in the late 1960's. "I used to go to Nottingham most weekends" he reminisced, "there were always plenty of good bands on; and you could see the likes of Eric Clapton, have a few beers and a fish supper all for less than a shilling". (That's about 10p Ellis) Dave himself was a member of several bands who used to tour the pub and club scene in the Nottingham and Derby areas. "I started off with a group called the Black Cats who changed their name several times to The Bent Society and then Clockwork Orange. We ended up as the LA Trio because one member left because of "musical differences" I used to sing and play rhythm guitar so I was a bit of a babe magnet. On a Saturday night you had to beat them off with a stick, Barbara was lucky to get me" reminisced Dave with his usual modesty and a sparkle in his eye.

We got married in the parish church in Gottham where Barbara's family lived. We spent all our money on buying a house for ourselves in Alvaston so couldn't really afford a honeymoon at the time. In contrast to the warm weather we have enjoyed this week, Dave recalls it snowing on the night before their wedding. I thought at the time it was an omen from God, but I couldn't have been more wrong, we've had a wonderful life together. Everyone associated with the choir wishes Dave and Barbara every congratulation and a continued happy, healthy and prosperous life together.





## I promise I'll do it when I've got the time!

Along with thousands of other men, I am guilty of promising to do many of those laborious DIY tasks when I have the time. Well suddenly, circumstances dictate that sufficient time has been made available. So out come the paint brushes and rollers and a period of decoration begins in the Griffiths' household. Woodwork sanded down, tiles re-grouted, walls painted a whiter shade of pale and new door handles fitted. Enough decorating to last until the next global pandemic!!!



## During the corona

It's good to report that Ian Lilley is in good spirits despite the self inflicted isolation he is experiencing. In a recent telephone call he said that he had stopped shaving and was playing the strategic long game. "When this is all over I'm aiming to have a beard like Uncle Albert" commented Ian. "it could well be close to Christmas and I might pick up some work as a Father Christmas. Failing that I'll work on my range of shaggy dog stories about the time we were all isolated due to the corona virus". Stay safe Ian



## If it's good enough for Boris...

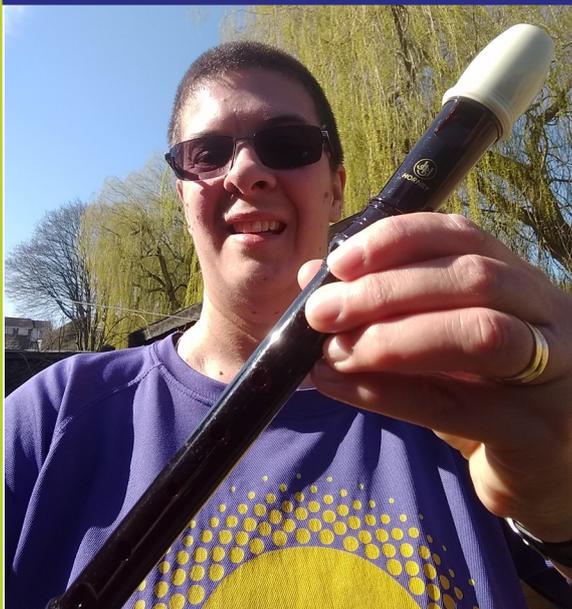
Mark Kohrs has been following the government guidance and working from home for the last few days. During this time however he has been bed ridden with a debilitating illness and may hold the record of being the first choir member to have experienced the dreaded Corona. " Due to a lack of testing I don't know what it was" said Mark "but it certainly laid me low and I wouldn't wish it upon anyone". At the time of talking to Mark by phone he was beginning to feel better and felt he was on his way to a full recovery. #StaySafe





## Meanwhile ..... in the woodshed

Many of you will be familiar with Malcolm's talent for producing beautiful items from pieces of wood - many of which are offcuts and have been discarded. It came as no surprise to me therefore to find that this logically minded IT professional was spending some of his enforced isolation in sorting out his wood. And here's the photos to prove it - long pieces, square pieces, short pieces.... Wood, wood, wood, wood, wood.



## Surprises await our return

Louise has been active doing all sorts of crazy things around the Belper area including a running race carrying a recorder as a baton! Cycling, baking with the child; and playing piano have also filled her days. However, for the past three days Lou believes she has experienced a bout of coronavirus. "I've been in bed with a few shivers and sweats, a banging headache and chest pain, and complete exhaustion. Over the worst now hopefully, still tired but feeling more human" says Lou.

When we return from our period of exile we are in for a treat as Lou has also taken time to arrange a number of new songs especially for the choir. Arrangements of popular and contemporary music will help to set us apart from other male choirs and we are fortunate to have someone like Lou with the skills and motivation to create these new arrangements.

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