

GMVC Newsletter June 2020

Vol 13 No.6

Chairman's Notes, contributed by Geoff Hampson

Hello and welcome to our June Newsletter.

Didn't Swadlincote Royal British Legion make a superb job of adding a video clip to Mansions of The Lord for the VE Day celebrations? What a shame the Lock Down curtailed so much of the plans the country had, we did have a pleasant day though, as everyone sat in their front gardens around us on a lovely sunny afternoon.

As yet there doesn't seem to be much chance of returning to our concert programme but we are managing to continue with our rehearsals on Zoom for those who have the technology and Karl has been busy getting rehearsal tracks on line and on CD's for those not able to join Zoom sessions so please let us know if you need anything. Of course none of this is a real substitute for our usual rehearsals and as soon as it is safe to return with social distancing we will try to get something up and running but at least we are together, having a sing, looking at some new music which to coin a well known phrase "is a good starter for ten".

It was disappointing to get confirmation that our concerts in Wales were cancelled but the good news is that everything has been carried over to next year so i for one am delighted but obviously there will be more about this further on in the newsletter I feel sure.

I am sure like me you are all looking forward to spending a bit more time with the family even if it's in the garden with social distancing, It's going to be hard not to give the younger grandchildren one of grandad's squeezes though.

Not much for me to add as Dave has been doing a great job with his weekly news update but we are all looking forward to joining you all in concert at the earliest opportunity.

Please keep safe and well and hopefully in our August edition we might have a better idea of how we can move forward.

SPC Report, contributed by Mick Robey

We are still in a very slightly more relaxed lockdown but not relaxed enough for us to hold planning meetings and of course, due to the "social distancing" for which we cannot predict an end, it is impossible to arrange future concerts and events.

However, we have now heard from our friends in Wales that all our tour venues have inevitably been cancelled for this year. Under the circumstances we are all very disappointed, but the news was not unexpected. With the use of social media, the SPC Committee agreed to recommend to the Executive that because all 3 tour venues had been cancelled, we had no option but to cancel the tour in its entirety.

Reading between the lines of our conversations and email communications with our friends in Wales, we could sense that something was afoot for the concert at St. David's Cathedral to be re-instated next year. Sure enough the St. David's concert was re-arranged for Thursday 12 August 2021 and we were cordially invited again by Tenby MVC to join them. This was readily agreed by the members and the Executive. Quick emails to Port Talbot MVC and the National Botanical Gardens resulted in very warm invitations being repeated. Port Talbot were so overjoyed, they immediately invited the whole party to an afterglow and buffet after the concert!

So the details of our 2021 Tour now look like this:-

Wednesday 11 August – Depart for Wales

Thursday 12 August – Evening concert at St. David's Cathedral

Friday 13 August – Daytime performance at the National Botanical Gardens in Carmarthen.

Saturday 14 August – Evening Concert with Port Talbot (Cymric) MVC with afterglow.

Sunday 15 August – Return home.

GRESLEY MALE VOICE CHOIR

FESTIVAL PRIZE WINNERS - RADIO, TELEVISION and INTERNATIONAL CONCERTS



If anyone who did not elect to go on the 2020 Tour but now wishes to join us for the 2021 Tour, please let me know as we would be delighted for you to experience these magical moments with us.

MAVORO Ladies Club, contributed by Maureen Hickman

Hi ladies, Hope you and your families are ok.
This is an update for our meetings:

All meetings cancelled up to September at the moment, but it looks as if it may be for the whole of 2020 but will keep you updated.

Love to all and keep safe.

Friends and family are most welcome to join us for our social occasions.

If you would like any more information about our ladies' evenings or events, please contact any of the numbers below:

Hilda Oates	- 01283 536144	Maureen Hickman	- 01283 703218
Jan Masterman	- 01283 814553	Sue Littlewood.	- 01283 810291
Josie Ivens	- 01283 212914	Pat Hurd	- 01283 542746
Janet Auwkit	- 07902 498391		

MAVORO Programme 2020

June 5 th	Painting Demonstration <i>Jayne Good</i> Cancelled	Aug 7 th	Meal, Cancelled
July 3 rd	Smile Please Say Cheese <i>Ian Rogerson</i> Cancelled	Sept 4 th	Watching With Mother <i>Kath Reynolds</i>
		Oct 2 nd	Charabanc Tour <i>Alan Hiley</i>
		Nov 6 th	Our Counties Food & Drink <i>Paul Newsham</i>
		Dec 4 th	Christmas Party Ken Wears His Christmas Hat <i>Ken Knowles</i>
		Jan 8 th	2021 AGM

A Return to Normality, contributed by Mick Robey

I reported last month that it had just started raining for the first time in 7 weeks, well that didn't last long did it? Today the ground is still deeply cracked and like concrete but at least I have picked my first crop of strawberries for tea, again 2 weeks earlier than I have ever picked due to the constant warm sun, but really poor quality. We haven't had the rain to swell and grow them into nice juicy fruit.

Good and bad news to report now about the birds. The pigeons are back trying to build their nest again but, I still have my pigeon poker from last year which I use 3 or 4 times a day and so far I am winning. They are in the Acer tree on the front but on the back where there is a blank wall, I have trained some Ivy. It starts 12 feet off the ground and I let it cover a further 4 feet on a north facing wall. Year after year we had sparrows nesting in it but not for the last two years.

Imagine our delight a few weeks ago when we spotted from our kitchen window a pair of blackbirds surveying the scene. They returned a few days later and proceeded nest building in exactly the same spot as the sparrows before them. They even used the same entrance by flying in at the bottom and climbing up 3 foot to the nest site with their twigs and moss from my lawn. Exiting is by a different route, a 3 foot horizontal climb and exit through a hole in the leaves, just like the sparrows did. My wife reckons its social distancing because now that they are feeding, as soon as one goes "Up" with food, the other comes out 3 foot away, it's a one-way system!

With an end to social distancing not even on the horizon, the in phrase at the moment is "When we return to normal". We hear it from our neighbours, from our friends and relations and from most reports on the T.V. Sorry to disillusion everyone but there can never be a return to normal! The word normal cannot be used on its own without some qualification. With nearly 40,000 deaths in the UK alone, over 100,000 in the USA and millions worldwide from Covid 19, how can we return to normality. Car plants all over the world are reducing their employees in great numbers, companies and small shop businesses are closing down in quantity and poverty will be widespread, especially after furloughing finishes and employers sack their employees because they won't be able to afford to keep them all. Have we come too far too quickly in our development? The majority have achieved a certain standard of living in recent times but I am afraid they will not want to "cut their cloth accordingly" as we of an older generation had to in order to survive. Automatic washing machines, dish washers, cars, yes even computers and mobile phones are a necessity nowadays yet one can manage without them. Granted they add efficiency, comfort and speed to our way of life to give us more leisure time but have we become so accustomed to them that they are now a necessity? One particular scene that always makes me cringe are the television interviews of people "down on their luck" and complaining about the system with a fag in one hand and a pint in the other

Covid 19 has been an eye opener in every home on the planet, even those who doubted its effects in the first instance. It will be talked about and remembered for many years to come and into history so lessons must be learned. Certainly the medical profession will never forget it and develop vaccines as they have done with most other contagious diseases. But it will hopefully, also serve as a reminder to the majority of the population to appreciate what they have now and how quickly it can all be lost. Our appreciation of life pre-Covid has been frequently spoken about due to our post-war experiences. Let us hope today's survivors reach the same conclusion post-Covid and they will enjoy it all the more and complain less about their lot. The "Norm" will change whether we like it or not, we just hope the issues closest to us will be least affected in time, our families, our friends and our GMVC. We are all in this TOGETHER!

Origin of Phrases, Historical Roots, contributed by Eric Coxon

Have a read of this, very interesting.

They used to use urine to tan animal skins, so families used to all pee in a pot & then once a day it was taken & sold to the tannery.....if you had to do this to survive you were "~~P###~~ Poor"

But worse than that were the really poor folk who couldn't even afford to buy a pot.....they "*didn't have a pot to pee in*" & were the lowest of the low

The next time you are washing your hands and complain because the water temperature isn't just how you like it, think about how things used to be. Here are some facts about the 1500s:

Most people got married in June because they took their yearly bath in May, and they still smelled pretty good by June.. However, since they were starting to smell Brides carried a bouquet of flowers to hide the body odour. Hence the custom today of carrying a bouquet when getting Married.

Baths consisted of a big tub filled with hot water. The man of the house had the privilege of the nice clean water, then all the other sons and men, then the women and finally the children. Last of all the babies. By then the water was so dirty you could actually lose someone in it.. Hence the saying, "*Don't throw the baby out with the Bath water!*"

Houses had thatched roofs-thick straw-piled high, with no wood underneath. It was the only place for animals to get warm, so all the cats and other small animals (mice, bugs) lived in the roof. When it rained it became slippery and sometimes the animals would slip and fall off the roof... Hence the saying "*It's raining cats and dogs.*"

There was nothing to stop things from falling into the house. This posed a real problem in the bedroom where bugs and other droppings could mess up your nice clean bed. Hence, a bed with big posts and a sheet hung over the top afforded some protection. That's how canopy beds came into existence.

The floor was dirt. Only the wealthy had something other than dirt. Hence the saying, "*Dirt poor.*" The wealthy had slate floors that would get slippery in the winter when wet, so they spread thresh (straw) on floor to help keep their footing. As the winter wore on, they added more thresh until, when you opened the door, it would all start slipping outside. A piece of wood was placed in the entrance-way. Hence: *a thresh hold.*

In those old days, they cooked in the kitchen with a big kettle that always hung over the fire. Every day they lit the fire and added things to the pot. They ate mostly vegetables and did not get much meat. They would eat the stew for dinner, leaving leftovers in the pot to get cold overnight and then start over the next day. Sometimes stew had food in it that had been there for quite a while. Hence the rhyme: "*Peas porridge hot, peas porridge cold, peas porridge in the pot nine days old.*"

Sometimes they could obtain pork, which made them feel quite special. When visitors came over, they would hang up their bacon to show off. It was a sign of wealth that a man could, "*bring home the bacon.*" They would cut off a little to share with guests and would all sit around and "*chew the fat*".

Those with money had plates made of pewter. Food with high acid content caused some of the lead to leach onto the food, causing lead poisoning death. This happened most often with tomatoes, so for the next 400 years or so, *tomatoes were considered poisonous.*

Bread was divided according to status. Workers got the burnt bottom of the loaf, the family got the middle, and guests got the top, or the *upper crust.*

Lead cups were used to drink ale or whisky. The combination would sometimes knock the imbibers out for a couple of days. Someone walking along the road would take them for dead and prepare them for burial.. They were laid out on the kitchen table for a couple of days and the family would gather around and eat and drink and wait and see if they would wake up. Hence the custom of *holding a wake.*

England is old and small and the local folks started running out of places to bury people. So they would dig up coffins and would take the bones to a bone-house, and reuse the grave. When reopening these coffins, 1 out of 25 coffins were found to have scratch marks on the inside and they realized they had been burying people alive... So they would tie a string on the wrist of the corpse, lead it through the coffin and up through the ground and tie it to a bell. Someone would have to sit out in the graveyard all night (*the graveyard shift.*) to listen for the bell; thus, someone could be, saved by the bell or was considered *a dead ringer.*

And that's the truth....Now, whoever said History was boring?

Secretary's Update – contributed by David Wright

GRESLEY MALE VOICE CHOIR - CONCERT/EVENTS 2020

All Concerts are being reviewed on a month by month basis

Please bear in mind there could be further amendments to the list below, extra concerts,
Uniform colour and start times all subject to change.

Tickets available from 07399 417995

Or online via "We Got Tickets" <http://www.wegotickets.com/gmvc>

DATE	VENUE	Post Code	Uniform
Postponed	Kegworth Methodist Church Primary School, High Street, Kegworth 7.15 pm Tickets £7	DE74 2DA	Blue + Blue/Gold TIE
Postponed	Joint Concert with Desford Colliery Band St John the Baptist, Hugglescote 7.15 pm Tickets £10	LE67 2BQ	Black + Red Bow Tie

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To be reviewed	Joint Concert with The Boundary Singers Venue to be advised		TBC
Postponed Till 2021	Choir Tour Weekend (Wed. 12.08.20 – Sun. 16.08.20)		
Under review	Choir Charity Concert Teams 4 U St Mary's Church Church Road, Stretton 7.30 pm Tickets £8	DE13 0HD	Blue + Blue/Gold Bow Tie
Sat 5 Sep	The Gt. Meeting Unitarian Chapel, Hinckley, Leicestershire. 7:30 pm Tickets TBA	LE10 1PP	Blue + Blue/Gold TIE
Fri 18 Sep	Derby Catenian Circle 100 year celebration St Mary's Church Derby 7.15 pm Tickets TBA	DE1 3AX	Black + Red Bow Tie
Sat 26 Sep	Joint Concert with Gresley Band Ibstock Palace. 7.30 Tickets £10	LE67 6LH	Black + Red Bow Tie
Sat 21 Nov	Choir Annual Meal Appleby Inn Hotel, Atherstone Road. Appleby Parva 7 pm Tickets £22 + £1 prize Draw	DE12 7BE	Informal
Sat 28 Nov	Holy Trinity Church Ashby de la Zouch 7.30 pm Tickets TBA	LE65 2FR	TBA
Sat 19 Dec	St Peter & St Pauls Church 70 Newhall Road Swadlincote 7.30 pm Tickets £7	DE11 0BD	TBA
Sun 10 Jan 2021	Newlands House Netherseal 2pm	DE12 8DA	Blue + Blue/Gold Tie

GMVC Website and Facebook

GMVC has now a new more modern Website with a new address www.gresleychoir.com
GMVC would like to acknowledge the generous support of the family of the late Mr. Roy Atkins and his son Andy, through his company WebCertain, in securing the availability of our new web address "gresleychoir.com" for a further 5 years.
If you need to know **anything**, about Gresley Male Voice Choir, visit our Website www.gresleychoir.com. It's full of pictures, videos and information about the Choir. If you need to email the Website or any of the Officers or Committee, email gmv.choir@gmail.com. Also, if you wish to keep in touch with events, other members and supporters of the Choir, look at our **Facebook** page, web address: <https://www.facebook.com/GMVC1904>

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Eric Coxon 30th May 2020