

GMVC Newsletter December 2020

Vol 13 No.12

Chairman's Notes, contributed by Geoff Hampson

Hello and welcome to our December Newsletter.

"Christmas is coming, the geese are getting fat, please put a penny in the old man's hat. If you haven't got a penny a ha'penny will do if you haven't got a ha'penny God bless you".

There is an old one I am sure you will all remember especially if you used to go out carol singing.

I usually find myself really busy singing at this time of year and have fond memories of Christmas music as a chorister in the Church choir practising and singing in the traditional carol service of "Nine Lessons and Carols". It is Kings College Cambridge that gets the accolade for the first performance in 1918 but interestingly it was first performed in Truro Cathedrals' temporary wooden building while waiting for the new Cathedral to be completed in 1880.

It was the idea of their Bishop Edward White Benson with the aim of keeping his flock out of the local hostelrys all night. As well as carols, three of the Messiah's choruses were included which were dropped over the following few years as the service quickly gained popularity as the Victorians loved carols.

I like this story because most people might think of the carol service we see on the TV as a little elitist, although top notch musically. However I find it quite amusing that the original idea was to keep the working classes out of the pub!!, just as perhaps the Methodist Minister who encouraged the beginning of our choir did in 1904.

Well, it has been a strange old year, almost unimaginable really and unfortunately this episode has still a little time to run so we certainly won't be singing this Christmas and meeting our friends and supporters over a mince pie and a cup of tea, which is usually a highlight for us which I feel sure will make that a little bit more special next year.

I am sure **Horace Hines** won't mind me mentioning his big birthday as Dave has already spilt the beans. Horace joined the choir in 1971, serving on various committees and is still a member of the music committee. In January he will have clocked up a very impressive 50 years of service where he will join **John Wilton** with 50 and **Peter Baker** an amazing 61. Peter along with his late father Reg and brother Julian have clocked up 112 years of service to our choir. Reg Baker, is up to now the longest serving Musical Director with an impressive 29 years of his 32 years membership and Julian was the assistant Conductor for 9 of his 18 years he was a member of the choir.

We did manage to make a presentation to John earlier in the year before having to cancel all of our activities, denying us the opportunity to recognise Peter's long service. **Michael L'Oste Brown** and **Bernard Arnold** have also clocked up an impressive 35 years service this year and again we have been denied the opportunity of showing our appreciation by presenting their awards. This is again disappointing as we are very proud of our members long and continued commitment to our choir and is a big part of who we are. This is something we aim to put right as soon as we are allowed but for now we can only thank them along with all our members, musicians and MD Karl for their continued commitment at this very difficult time.

Obviously with little news other than what is covered by Dave's excellent weekly catch ups all that remains now is for me on behalf of GMVC and myself to wish all of our readers a Happy Christmas and thank you all for your continued support.

SPC Report, submitted by Mick Robey

Would you believe it is now 6 months since you last heard from us regarding the news from the Special Purposes Committee. Obviously, we have not held any planning meetings and although it was suggested we could do it by "Zoom", what was the point because until we can start meeting together again and performing concerts, there is no purpose in making immediate new plans. However, now that it appears vaccines are on the way and the future is a little brighter, there is one plan still in our minds we are very much hoping will now come to fruition. We are of course referring to our re-scheduled tour to South Wales in August and regarding this, there is a little bit of good news we have been saving for the last 6 months until an appropriate time to release it. With Christmas fast approaching, in whatever form it may take this year, we are delighted to inform you that we have managed to negotiate the same prices for the 2021 Tour as we did for the 2020 intended tour. To refresh your memory, these are £330 per person in a shared room (Double or Twin) and £400 per person in a Single room.

The next piece of information is quoted directly from the June Newsletter to remind you of the existing arrangements so you can start to put something more positive in your 2021 diary.

“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 – Morning departure for Wales

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

Friday 13 August – A 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”.

If anyone who did not elect to go on the 2020 Tour but now wishes to join us for the 2021 Tour, please contact me for a Registration Form as we would be delighted for as many as possible to experience these magical moments with us.

The past year has been a very difficult one for all of us and one we don’t wish to repeat. Our final comment is to say on behalf of the Special Purposes Committee, to all choristers, wives, families and friends of GMVC, we send our very best wishes to each and every one of you for a safe, happy, peaceful and blessed Christmas, however you manage the celebration

MAVORO Ladies Club, contributed by Maureen Hickman

Hi ladies, Hope you and your families are ok.

**This is to let you know that all MAVORO meetings have now been cancelled for 2020.
Let’s hope that 2021 will be a better year for all and we can meet up again.**

Love to all and stay 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		

Happy Christmas?, submitted by Mick Robey

Let me start with some good news for a change, well it is for me as once again I have practised what I preached. My edition last February was to tell you that I was going through the change and what I had done was to change Banks, Car Insurance company and energy supplier. I stated that in the “old days” we were always loyal to a few well known suppliers but after years of experience, I had found there is no reward for loyalty which has now gone out of the window! With modern technology and research it is easy to get a multitude of quotes for the same thing and save yourself quite a few shillings. So in September my home and contents insurance came up for renewal. The current supplier sent me their quotation and informed me they would automatically renew on the credit card information they held, something I totally disagree with, but I had something up my sleeve! I immediately checked comparable web sites and found similar cover elsewhere £20 cheaper so, knowing me and how much I like a hagggle, I phoned the original supplier to see if they would match it. Due to “lockdown” all the agents were working from home and when they re-directed my call, I kept getting cut off. After several attempts I thought forget this, they are using up my valuable time, they will contact me. I was certain of

this because during the year I had changed banks and the card information they had was no longer valid (1 – 0 to Mick). In due course they sent a reminder to pay as time was running out – I ignored it in the knowledge I had a cheaper quote. A further reminder to supply card details came and eventually in November the letter I had been waiting for, “Your renewal quotation has expired and you are no longer insured”. With this I went on the comparable website and recalled the £20 cheaper quote. Just as I was about to press the “Buy Now” button I thought, I wonder what my original company is quoting? I went on to that website and, wonder of wonders in black and white, same policy with same cover but £41 cheaper than they originally quoted, so I signed up with my new credit card (2 – 0 to Mick). Just proves the point I made back in February and now it’s even easier to change. Comparable websites for insurances, energy and banks, just one click on the mouse and it’s all done for you.

So now I have a big problem, what do I spend my extra £41 on this Christmas. This is a big problem for me because a) £41 does not buy much these days; b) I don’t want to go and mingle with the masses of unmasked and not socially distanced people and c) I don’t particularly like shopping online for presents as I prefer to see what I am buying. One cannot choose jewellery or clothing from a computer page! So Christmas is going to be very different for us all this year. Not in my 50+ years have we experienced anything like it before. At least the government are trying to soften the blow a little by relaxing the rules for 5 days and awarding us a bubble for 3 families, which is OK for small families. For larger families it causes greater problems as those in the bubble cannot swap over. This means for us and many others, on Christmas and Boxing Day we can let two of our children and their families in the house to share the festivities, but when the third one shows up, we have to close the door on them! In a 3 children family, how do we choose which two to let in and who to leave out. Which grandchildren will get their presents at Christmas and which will have to wait, possibly until Easter, until we can see them again. For us it is not going to be a family Christmas. My family are already talking about a weekend next year when we can all get together to celebrate Christmas but it won’t be the same. Singing “Silent Night” or “In the bleak mid winter” at Easter does not appeal to me but I would not object to eating turkey with roast potatoes washed down with mulled wine at any time of the year. The lead up to Christmas is something I really look forward to, my usual 16 choir and band December concerts of Christmas music and carols really sets the stage, which I shall sorely miss this year. However, challenges are being submitted to government to allow us to sing carols and I am still hopeful of playing them in Melbourne Market Place on Christmas Eve, all socially distanced of course. This all sounds so negative but far from it. It’s a very small price to pay for our survival to be able to continue on to next year when, although things will never return to normal as we knew them, we shall at least hopefully return to normal with our practices, concerts, social activities and the Christmas celebrations we have always enjoyed and loved. In whatever shape and format Christmas comes this year, I wish you and yours a very sincere, an especially safe and above all, a happy and enjoyable Christmas celebration.

A Virtual Walk Together, contributed by Eric Coxon

If you are feeling down and would like to have a talk
Why not join my wife and I on our next virtual walk
We will take a stroll together down to our virtual wood
And know that after doing so we’ll all be feeling good

The recent gales have blown leaves down which now lie on the ground
And left a colourful carpet where we can walk without a sound
Trees are standing tall and bare and looking rather bold
The leaves they shed are glistening in red and autumn gold

Now just around the corner is a very large oak tree
And on this tree I carved a heart when I was twenty three
I carved it then to spread some love to all who passed that way
A message that was relevant then and is as relevant today

So let us sit beneath this tree and drink something from a flask
Breathe in the fresh autumnal air without an awful mask
Just cuddle up and take a look because all of this is free
And if we sit here quietly, might see a deer or three

Just over in that clearing rabbits are coming out to play

For this is nature at its best, oh what a lovely day!
A robin stops to say 'hello' and look, a tiny wren
Flitting here and there and off he goes again

So let us all embrace this life as we sit here side by side
And share our love with other folk who may be suffering worldwide
We'll let them know that we have love that we would like to share
And tell them to keep smiling because there are those that care

Thank you for joining my wife and I on this our virtual walk
And if you are feeling a little down it always pays to talk
God bless you all wherever you may be
Just remember how good it felt sitting under that oak tree

KEEP SAFE AND WELL By Dennis Davison

Secretary's Update – contributed by David Wright

GRESLEY MALE VOICE CHOIR - CONCERT/EVENTS 2020/2021

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
Cancelled	Choir Annual Meal Appleby Inn Hotel, Atherstone Road. Appleby Parva 7 pm Tickets £22 + £1 prize Draw	DE12 7BE	Informal
Cancelled	Holy Trinity Church Ashby de la Zouch 7.30 pm Tickets TBA	LE65 2FR	TBA
Cancelled	St Peter & St Paul's Church 70 Newhall Road Swadlincote 7.30 pm Tickets £7	DE11 0BD	TBA
Cancelled	Newlands House Netherseal 2pm	DE12 8DA	Blue + Blue/Gold Tie

Unfortunately, due to the current restrictions it looks like all of this year's arranged programme has had to be cancelled or postponed.

We will of course be actively looking to re-arrange these events next year as soon as we are allowed and we will keep you all informed of any changes.

GRESLEY MALE VOICE CHOIR

FESTIVAL PRIZE WINNERS - RADIO, TELEVISION and INTERNATIONAL CONCERTS



David Wright

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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You can remove yourself from the mailing list anytime via the link to unsubscribe at the bottom of every newsletter by emailing gmv.choir@gmail.com and requesting your email address be removed from the list.

If you wish, you can also request all data we hold on you to be deleted. If you receive your Newsletter as a printed copy and wish to cease receiving it each month, then please ring Mr D Wright, 07545 472774

Eric Coxon 30th November 2020