



COLNE VALLEY MALE VOICE CHOIR NEWSLETTER MID MAY 2020 EDITION

Thom's busy day

Our illustrious Musical Director, Thom Meredith, has not found the shutdown easy. There are no Choir rehearsals or concerts to entertain him, of course. Nor can he do that much for 'Musica Kirklees', of which he's the Head, as music classes are curtailed too. Celebrated baritone soloist though he is, Thom can't enjoy performing either, as all events remain suspended.

So, like most of us he's making the best of his enforced free-time, getting round to jobs at home.

Unlike most of us, he's found a way of combining domestic chores with his musical talents. Enjoy Thom 'whistling while he works' in this skilfully put-together video. Thom assures VotV it's all his own work and he didn't need kids to show him how to work the technology.

You'll be impressed and entertained by his 'Czardas'.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GZOgGOB3-sl&t=30s>





So, what were my jobs for today?

Thom's
Busy
Day

hedge-trimming, cooking ...



Cut and glue that
wood for the
door...



and grouting, too



The whistling Caruso

Maybe not as good a whistling performance as Thom's but the Muppets are always good fun.



https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SjY9TBkqNU&fbclid=IwAR0ZImOOYlvq_sUVsQ5llxpvm3YiG_p3CsAMZ6EDHGntLGSXOby8a3ALN2A



Ian Rex's Dyson Joke

Ian Rex, first tenor, is to blame for this terrible joke he couldn't resist sending to VotV.

It made your Editor smile so he couldn't resist putting it in either.

So the story goes, somebody told Ian his mate had got Coronavirus and was in hospital.

"He's on one of those new Dyson ventilators."

"I'm sorry to hear that. How's he doing?"

"Oh, he's picking up nicely!"



Unnecessary Picture of a canal boat at Slaithwaite - isn't spring wonderful!



Germany: regulations ban singing in church

Guardian: Berlin 30/4/20 - updated May 11th

Germany has set out guidelines for religious services during the Coronavirus pandemic with a list of restrictions, including a ban on singing.

Religious services have been banned since the start of the country's lockdown in mid-March. (Germany is often held up as a model of good practice on anti-virus policies.) None the less, some worshippers have expressed fury at the government's slowness in plotting a route to reopening churches. One Catholic community in Berlin, which insisted on continuing to celebrating mass, took the government to court over its ban.

The German chancellor, **Angela Merkel**, a pastor's daughter, and regular churchgoer, met leaders of the country's 16 states early in May to coordinate a nationwide set of rules. Those leaders had, in advance meetings, agreed, a set of rules on strict physical distancing and the prohibition of anything involving bodily fluids, such as kissing religious objects. Muslim leaders have agreed a temporary halt to Friday prayers.



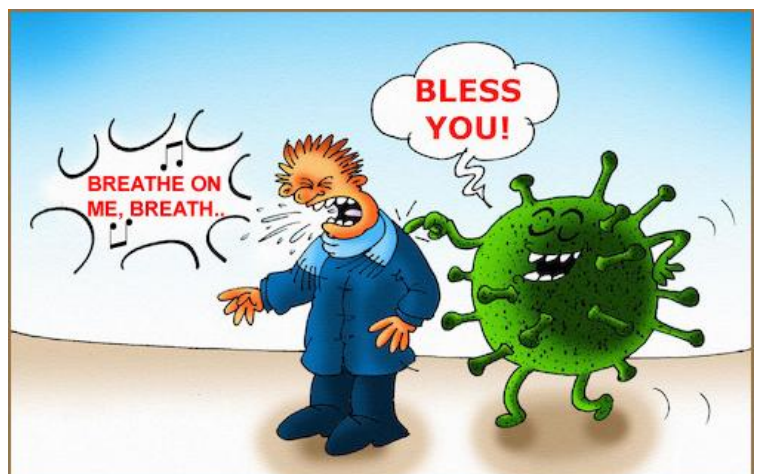
Communal singing had reportedly proved a sticking point in the discussions, despite repeated warnings by doctors that **singing is as dangerous as coughing for spreading the virus**.

Reports, including one from Berlin - where 59 out of 78 singers from the choir of the city's Protestant cathedral went down with Covid 19 - offer anecdotal evidence that choral singing has contributed to the spread of the virus. Lothar Wieler, head of the German government's disease control agency, specifically warned on Tuesday that singing was ill advised. "**Evidence shows that during singing, the virus drops appear to fly particularly far,**" he said.

The guidelines ban communal singing at services because of the "**amplified precipitation of potentially infectious drops**". While the new rules had been backed in principle by Protestant leaders, they nevertheless wished to draw a distinction between roomy cathedrals and small village churches and senior Catholics remain opposed.

The new rules were passed.

59 singers, out of 78 in the Berliner Dom, the protestant cathedral in Germany's capital city, got Covid 19.



Victory in Europe

Who better to help celebrate VE Day than the **Victory Sisters**, reprising the Andrews Sisters hit, 'The **Pennsylvania Polka**'?

Their 'lockdown' version was recorded in their various homes - hence the slightly anachronistic earpieces giving them the backing track on their i-phones.



There's a Colne Valley Male Voice Choir angle, of course. Far right with the foaming tankard is Marsden girl, Elisabeth Chadwick, daughter of one-time second tenor, **Howard Chadwick**, now happily enjoying retirement in Scotland.

The Victory Sisters had planned a bumper season with gigs all over the country - but for them as for us Choir members - things haven't turned out as expected. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f0LQpEQKaNc>



"WE MAY ALLOW OURSELVES A BRIEF PERIOD OF REJOICING." Churchill

The war is over

1945 is a year, even the old men of the Choir cannot remember - maybe the handful in their eighties can. It was the year in which Adolf Hitler's Nazi regime was finally defeated. For most of the British at least, the War was over.

But not for all

This is your Editor's mother and father on their Wedding Day in 1941.



Henry had been 'called up' - conscripted - into the armed forces and on a very brief leave before he was 'posted', they got married.



A week later they sent him to the Far East.

She stayed in Hull, coping when the family home was destroyed in a bombing raid.

She didn't see her new husband again until 1946.

VE Day must have been a somewhat subdued celebration for her.

We think we are in tough times with the virus!

A quiz to help you
pass the time in
lockdown.

It's about opera.
Enjoy the music!

QUIZZYMCQUIZFACE

Government mandated leisure quiz #005

YOU'VE GOT NOTHING BETTER TO DO

It was devised by 'Voice of the Valley' readers, Harriet and Jonny.

Excerpts from 9 well-known operas with various clues.

All you need to do is enjoy the music and remember the opera titles.

Can you get all 9?

Don't stop the video unless you want to avoid the answers that come up towards the end.

<https://youtu.be/gR206pcncAg>



From 100 years ago.... well just 5 years actually

Voice of the *Valley*

Colne Valley Male Voice Choir, May 2015

'Flying High'



The men of the Colne Valley, with their wives and sweethearts, headed down to the West Country this weekend to take part in the **2015 Cornwall International Male Voice Choral Festival**. They billed this festival as 70 choirs and 60 events at 50 locations across Cornwall. For us, it was 4 concerts in 6 events at 6 locations and 1 competition.

The competition was held in early May in Truro. Singers, wives, sweethearts agreed we'd sung about as well as we could.

Then came a tense wait in the Hall for Cornwall as the judges came to their verdicts.

41 Voices and over category - £1,000, Best UK Choir in its class and First Prize - Colne Valley Male Voice Choir

.... and then a few minutes later.....

Overall Best UK Choir and the Peter Gould Trophy - Colne Valley Male Voice Choir

A small Swiss ensemble, Männerstimmen von Basel pipped us to the overall Festival trophy and we congratulate them.

But for us, retaining our title as overall Best UK Choir was the wonderful result we had striven for and our great thanks go to Thom Meredith, whose insight, guidance, musicality and unfailing patience led us to a performance, in which we can rightly take pride.



It also meant we could revel in the next three concerts we were part of, singing with freedom and confidence (and no little skill and quality in the added percussion).

We were also able to enjoy the other performances - in particular - the stunning 8 man Czech ensemble, 'The Gentlemen Singers' and a youth choir, 'Dagilelis' from Lithuania.

(Photos: courtesy of Dr Wendy Allard)

It was a great festival and our hotel base by the seaside in Newquay was just excellent. The organisation was flawless, thanks mainly to our Choir Secretary, Jenny, so all we had to worry about was the singing.

“Still mighty after all these years”

These were the words on the adjudication sheet from one judge, Alan Simmons.

(This week, at least, I think he's right!)

The news sinks in - Cate Clark captures the jubilation on the bus back to Newquay





Jack battles a soft ice-cream in the Lands End wind - and loses!

Piano dancing

This interesting clip seems to combine musical talent with keep-fit. I don't think they are 2 meters apart, though.



Thanks to VotV reader, **Tish Barker** for sending this.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3BDUVh0j-y4>

Missing your Town Hall Organ Concerts?

Well this is poor substitute for **Gordon Stewart** live at the **Father Willis** but it's quite enjoyable.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mTerjuFuH00>

It's from **Mussorgsky's 'Pictures at an Exhibition'**. I'm told - and it seems quite plausible - that this is the **Emerson, Lake & Palmer** version of 'Pictures' that they performed way back in 1970.

Well it made me smile...



With thanks to Private Eye

Know your corvids

This is Corvid 19.

I don't want to **crow** but
this is my own joke.

I was **choughed** about it
actually,

Though you probably think
I'm **raven** mad.

When I showed my wife
she told me to go away.

Her exact words, I seem to
remember, could have
been, 'Sling yer 'ook'



Send me a picture, tell me a story

At this time of social isolation, VotV readers, whether singers or audience-members, can no longer meet each other.

But we can keep in touch.



Let the VotV Editor know if something happens to you, that might be of interest and has some - connection - however tenuous – to the Choir. Doesn't matter if you are not very confident writing, I'll help you put into publishable shape.

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to join us or join our Readers' List or for other queries

And see our website to get the full story



colnevalleymvc.org.uk