



Colne Valley men share in accolade



Colne Valley Museum is to receive a prestigious award. The announcement said, 'In recognition of the commitment and enthusiasm of volunteers, past and present, the Queen has conferred the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service.'

The volunteer teams of the Golcar-based Museum, recipients of the highest award a voluntary group can receive in the UK, include **Colne Valley Male Voice Choir** members, **Raymond Ellis** and Second Tenor and one-time Choir Chairman, **Roger Fielding**.



Roger is also Chair of the Trustees of Colne Valley Museum. He said, when the news emerged,



"I am delighted that our volunteers' hard work has been recognised. The Museum is celebrating its 50th birthday this year, which in itself is a monument to the hard work and dedication of previous volunteers and supporters who had the original idea of setting up a local heritage museum in the Colne Valley. This really is the icing on the cake and although we are disappointed we can't celebrate as we had planned, we're looking forward to having a proper 'bit of a do' once it is safe to do so."

Colne Valley Museum, housed in a row of four weavers' cottages, is a small independent community museum in the heart of Pennine Yorkshire and depicts the life of the cottage textile worker.

The museum is run entirely by volunteers - 67 in total - who specialise in preserving heritage skills, providing a 'Life Long Learning' opportunity and an educational service to schools.



The **Queen's Award** aims to recognise outstanding work by volunteer groups to benefit their local communities. It was created in 2002 to celebrate the Queen's Golden Jubilee. Recipients are announced each year on 2nd June, the anniversary of the Queen's Coronation.



Baritone, Raymond Ellis demonstrates hand-loom weaving for the visitors.

Representatives of Colne Valley Museum will receive the award from the **Lord Lieutenant of West Yorkshire** later this summer. Furthermore, two volunteers from the Museum will attend a garden party at **Buckingham Palace** in May 2021, along with other winners of this year's Award.

Raymond and his Museum pals don't just weave for show. They really do make fabric, even if it takes months to make a bolt of cloth. Raymond has been a main mover in making links with Slaithwaite high-fashion garment maker **McNair**. Together they used the traditional hand-loom woven cloth to create bespoke shirts with the special material used in the

decoration of collars, cuff and pockets.

<https://mcnairshirts.com/really-slow-fashion/>



Samba Triste

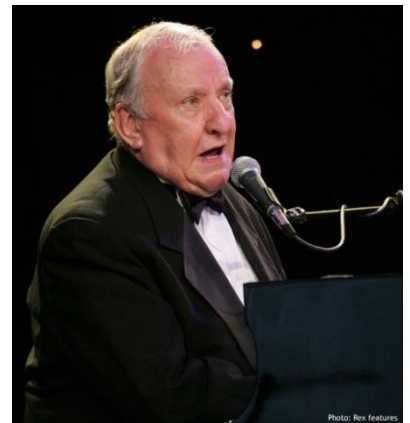
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-a7lnnq2VbU>



Continuing his super work on **& piano**, CVMVC accompanist, **Chris Pulleyn** offers this terrific duet -played with **Grace Turner** - a student at Greenhead College and anticipating Music studies at Birmingham University (virus permitting). They are playing '**Samba Triste**' (Sad Samba) from a suite for two pianos by Richard Rodney Bennett. It's cool, jazzy and deliciously rhythmic.

Sir Richard Rodney Bennett, an Oscar-nominated composer, was born in Kent in 1936. He was a composer of classical and jazz works and regularly performed as a jazz pianist. More famously he wrote film scores.

Bennett's scores for '*Far From the Madding Crowd*' and '*Nicholas and Alexandra*' received Oscar nominations, and his other compositions for film include '*Enchanted April*' and '*Four Weddings and a Funeral*'. TV work included the **Doctor Who** serial, 'The Aztecs'.



His score for Sidney Lumet's '*Murder on the Orient Express*' won a BAFTA in 1974, and was also nominated for an Academy Award.

Bennett received a knighthood in 1998. He died peacefully at the age of 76 on Christmas Eve in his adopted home city of New York in 2012

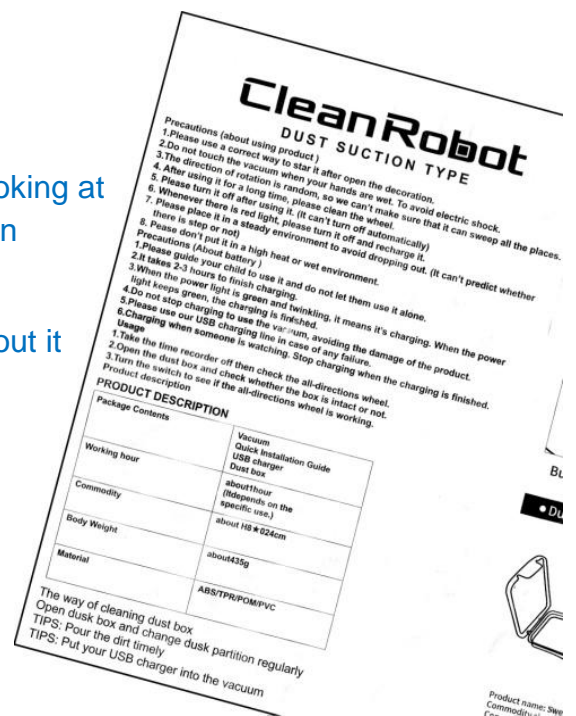
https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=43&v=c6CiHydKQOg&feature=emb_logo

Robot cleaner

Like so many others, your editor has been wasting time looking at stupid stuff in online shopping outlets - worse still he's been buying some of it!

This was delivered the other day. By far the best thing about it was the instructions....

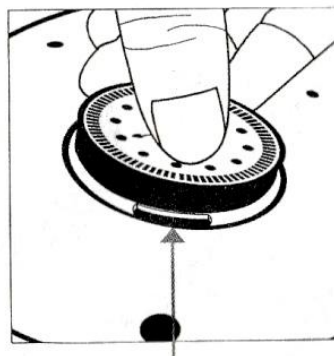
He knew he was onto a winner when he read...



Precautions (about using product)

1. Please use a correct way to star it after open the decoration.

Then things turned just a bit mystifying...

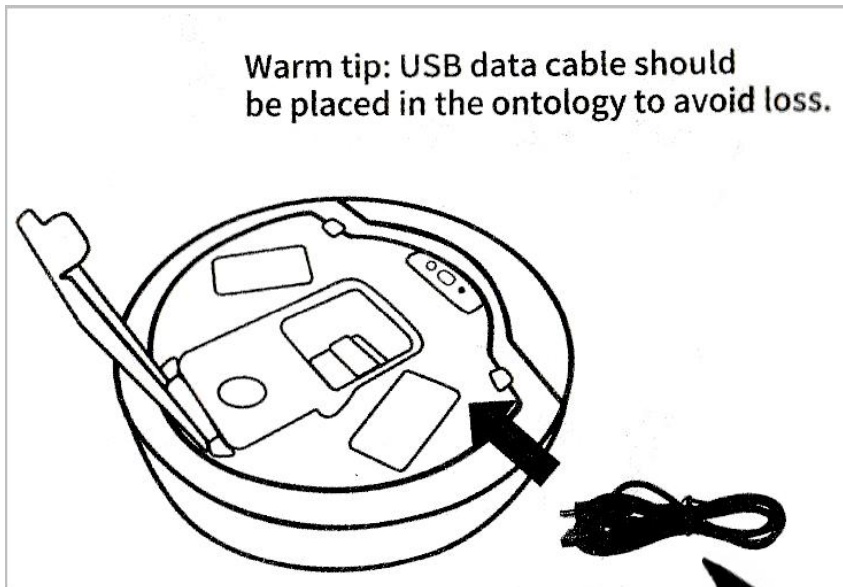


Buckle the bump

A slightly surreal element began to creep in.... what is this dusk partition? Is that the vacuum of space?

Open dusk box and change dusk partition regularly
TIPS: Pour the dirt timely
TIPS: Put your USB charger into the vacuum

Best if all was there was metaphysical dimension to contemplate....



Ontology - I had to look it up.

So reassuring that it was a 'warm tip'.

It could have felt quite distressing otherwise; with that aching prospect of 'loss'.

Ontology is part of the major branch of philosophy known as metaphysics. It deals with questions about what things exist or can be said to exist, and how such entities can be grouped according to similarities and differences.



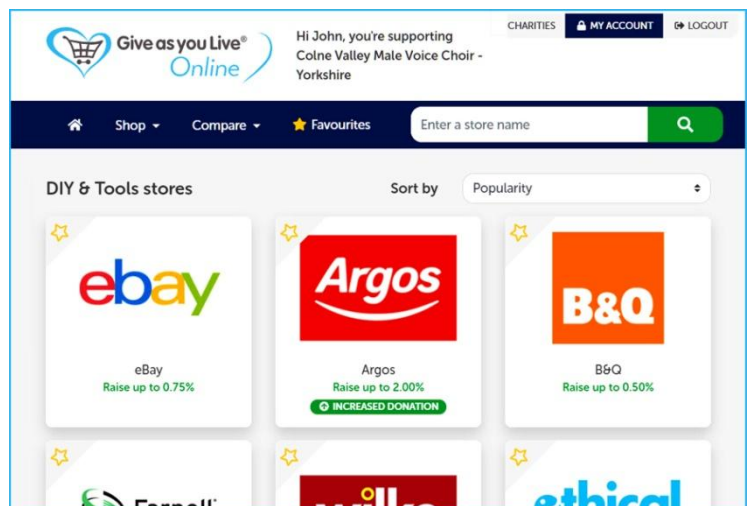
I should add that their English in that factory in **Guangdong Province** is a lot better than my written Cantonese.

Piece of **** though - straight to the charity shop!

But if you do want to spend money online....

... then, sign up to 'Give as you Live', You can buy stuff online **and** support Colne Valley Male Voice Choir in the process. It's just a couple of percent that goes to your nominated charity - but every little helps.

One subscriber - a secretary to a voluntary organisation in a musical field - told VotV, 'It's still very worthwhile. 'I've made my purchases as usual and some £64.00 has gone to my chosen charity - a famous choir.'
<https://www.giveasyoulive.com/how-it-works>





Will no one in government stand up for British choirs?

THE ARTS COLUMN

Excerpts from **Richard Morrison**'s column in The Times - the views expressed are his own

Thursday June 04 2020

Until 12 weeks ago Britain was a choral powerhouse. Two million people sang in 70,000 choirs. Some were highly professional and world-famous. Think of **The Sixteen** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2QfFtjmdZxE> and the **Monteverdi Choir**, or the magnificent opera choruses of London and Leeds, or the incredible ensembles sustaining West End musicals. That's thousands of highly trained singers now facing financial ruin. Then think of the millions who sang for fun. True, those people haven't lost their livelihoods, but for many the weekly choir rehearsal was what kept them ticking along - culturally, spiritually, physically and socially.

Few singers dispute that choirs needed to stop temporarily because of coronavirus. What is starting to irritate, however, is the lack of official guidance as to when and how they might safely resume. Instead of scientific research, anecdotal horror stories swirl around, instilling a fear that choral singing is so dangerous it might be permanently banned.



Let's deal first with those horror stories. In early March, before social distancing was a thing, people became infected with the virus after singing with a handful of choirs across the world. Sensational headlines created the illusion that all choirs were death traps. In fact, thousands of choirs were still rehearsing without any precautions in March. Only five reported illnesses afterwards. The affected choirs rehearsed in tightly packed rooms. They greeted each other with hugs. They shared refreshments. Yes, the singing might have transmitted coronavirus, but equally the socialising might have done. We need proper research before jumping to conclusions.



Choristers at St Paul's Cathedral, London

That's the problem. Little research has been done, and none in Britain. However, two fluid-mechanics scientists at **Bundeswehr University** Munich conducted experiments to see how far singers project emissions. Their findings are encouraging. Although the World Health Organisation's guidelines (echoed by Public Health England) say that Covid-19 is primarily transmitted through respiratory droplets and contact routes rather than aerosols (airborne transmission, which carries farther), the Munich scientists tested for both. They found that "at a distance of around 0.5m [from the singer], almost no air movement can be detected, regardless of how loud the sound was and what pitch was sung".

Therefore, they concluded that it is "unlikely that the virus could spread beyond this limit via the air flow created during singing". Add an extra metre to minimise risk even more, and it seems that — if the Munich findings are accurate — choirs might operate reasonably safely with singers placed 1.5m apart and configured in one big semi-circle.

That's good and bad news. It's good for smallish groups who stay in one place while they sing. Cathedral choirs clearly won't be able to use their traditional double-ranked, inward-facing choirstalls, but given their buildings' size, they could easily spread out in a semi-circle (as German choirs are doing). For big choral societies, that formation isn't practical. They

may have to break into smaller units. The real challenge, however, would be getting the choruses for operas and musicals safely back in business in productions where they need to move around the stage.

Other factors hinder progress. One is the ultra-cautious approach of the Church of England. That hugely endangers a cathedral tradition that relies on boy and girl choristers maintaining extraordinary musical skills through daily training and performance. An enforced break of a year, coinciding with cash-strapped cathedrals closing their choir schools (as York Minster is doing), would be the biggest catastrophe for church music since Oliver Cromwell.

How to overturn the negativity? Britain's singers need clear British guidelines, but the government's response is (surprise, surprise) lamentable. **Oliver Dowden**, the culture secretary, has set up a task force to "help reopen cultural life", but it seems to have no musicians or scientists sitting on it. The same is true of a separate task force set up by the Ministry of Housing to get churches reopened.

Singing in a choir will never be entirely risk-free, but neither will shopping. In Germany and Scandinavia guidelines have been agreed and choirs are confidently reopening. Here, it's just muddle. Our choirs deserve better. Is there not a single minister in Boris Johnson's cabinet who cares enough about Britain's glorious choral tradition to fight for its survival?

Britain's brass bands, like our choirs, have been silenced by the pandemic. I grew up playing second trombone in a band conducted by my dad, and know how much pride and joy brass bands bring to communities going through grim times.

Let's hope it's only a few months before the fabulous musicians of such legendary bands as Black Dyke, Cory, Grimethorpe Colliery, and **Brighouse and Rastrick** can shake the rafters in the same room again.



...and join with CVMVC in Christmas concerts? we can but hope

Tales of my late father in law

Hi Mr Editor, writes bass, **Brian Faircough:**

*I have many wonderful tales from my late father in law, **John Alker.***

He was gruff, rarely shaven, shabbily dressed, in wellies and slop, with a broad Northern (Wigan) accent. His language was often colourful and he gave the impression (when it suited) that he was a bit on the dim side. But he was no fool and had a fabulous teasing sense of humour.

He is no more, but I penned some time ago a few of the tales I enjoyed with him at his farm between Wigan and St. Helens

Let me try one on you....



The Pork Sausages

It was approaching Christmas, a busy time at the farm. The Mother in Law bred, and fed, and slaughtered around 100 plus turkeys annually. It started as just a few and because they were basically hand-reared, they were really good turkeys, and my mother in law became a victim of her own success, as the demand and reputation of them grew.

The turkeys were despatched, as late as possible, very often on Christmas Eve. It meant that the farm was upside down and there had been little preparation of the wonderfully filling Christmas Dinner, that was so big that it was a "wall slapper" and a post dinner snooze was inevitable.

As soon as the turkeys had gone, my mother in law's attention would turn to the dinner on Christmas Day which included the biggest turkey she had bred! The turkey was to be festooned in the oven with strips of bacon and pork sausages to increase the flavour and add the traditional touch.

The father in law was still in his tatty and mucky work clothes, covered in all things such as cow muck, oil, soil, and all sorts. Parts of his overalls shone! He was unshaven and had a multi-coloured heavy beard, and wore, as always, his gravity defying flat cap on top. His mucky wellies completed the picture. He was en route to the bank to draw out some money, without anaesthetic.

"While you're in the village." said my mother in law, "Nip into the Co-op and get a tin of treacle and a pound of pork sausages". His mission to the bank completed, my father in law made his way to the Co-op where he collected a wire basket and toddled up and down the aisles till he found the treacle. Then onward to the meat counter where, being Christmas there was a queue. He was the only man in the queue, and his grubby appearance brought non-admiring glances from the ladies in the queue, many of them, no doubt, prominent members of the community.

Eventually he made his way to the front with a can of treacle in his basket and asked the young lady for "a pound of pork sausages". She turned to gather them but within a few seconds was back facing this huge unkempt and unshaven man, to inform him. "I am sorry but we have no pork sausages left!"

My father in law looked crestfallen and eyed the tin of treacle as the only other thing he was purchasing. The helpful assistant encouraged him by saying, "We do have beef sausages, would you like a pound of those instead?"

"Well" he said in a glum voice, "I suppose it will have to. You see, we cawn't afford a turkey!"

The young assistant felt so sad that this man was so poor. All he had for Christmas was a tin of treacle and some sausages she mused in silent pity.

That 'pity' translated itself to the biggest 'one pound' of sausages that the Co-op has ever sold. There must have been more than two pounds of them. It tickled the Father in Law who, in later times, whenever the question of money came up would raise a twinkle in his eye and say, "Tha knows, we cawn't afford a turkey"

The rascal!



Ian's new joke

A mother drove to B & Q with her young daughter. Just after lockdown, the gardening and DIY store had just reopened and customers were only allowed in at socially-distanced intervals

On arriving, she asked her to check on the queue.

'Well it's orange and about the same size as the B', came the reply.



Three little Victory Sisters

This ensemble with Colne Valley connections – Marsden, **Liz Chadwick**, is the daughter of one of our second tenors, Howard, lately removed to Scotland - usually recreates WW2 music, so this might be their most 'modern' song.

It's taken from the musical **'Hot Mikado'** from 1986. But for them it still counts as 'vintage' as it is a swing version of the **Gilbert and Sullivan** operetta, **The Mikado**, from 1885.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cvjLKXPbMNc&feature=youtu.be&fbclid=IwAR0Enw195HRkfu7dZi6aw4z3e003iyQLV_0qsCnWr6sp_76zZcGmwT5QnIY

200 Club winners

'Hi everyone,

All is well at Baxter Towers and I hope it's the same with you." writes secretary, **Jenny**. She adds, "The winner of the 200 Club draw this week (£45) is **Margaret Parkin**, wife of Ken Parkin who sings with the First Tenor Section and also looks after publicity for CVMVC. Margaret works hard for the Choir selling CDs for us at concerts.

Last week, (June 8th) it was £45, too and the winner was **Richard Neville** from the Baritones. No more news today but I can get you a 200 club number if you contact me.

Stay safe.
Kind regards'
Jenny

	Just one pound a week buys you one of the 200 Club numbers.
	There's a good chance of winning: £45 in prize money weekly, £185 in the monthly draw and two whopping £1,000 draws each year.
	Even if you don't win, you win - because half of the fund supports Choir concerts and performances.
	Contact Choir Secretary, Jenny, on 01484 645192



Nina sang it better than anybody nearly 50 years ago

This brilliant live performance - just Nina at her piano - took place at the Montreux Jazz Festival way back in 1976. It's full of the pain, the frustration, the anger and the hope that is still driving protest in 2020.

*I wish I knew how it feels to be free,
I wish I could break all the chains that still bind me,
I wish I could say all the things I can say when I'm relaxed..... I wish ...*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-sEP0-8VAow>



New vicar of **Saint Bartholomew's**

Colne Valley Male Voice Choir has joined the **Marsden Silver Prize Band** in a fabulous community Christmas concert at the Marsden's parish church every year for ages. So it's of interest when the village gets a new vicar. When the new vicar also covers **Saint James Church** in Slaithwaite - our home village - it's even more pertinent. Colne Valley men and the **Colne Valley Boys** regularly perform there. Indeed they had been due to sing there in the annual '**Lions**' **Charity Concert** on Monday this week - sadly yet another casualty of the virus.

Still we look to better days. We are still hopeful that the Marsden Christmas Do might go ahead.

In any case we welcome the new man to the valley and wish him well in his ministry.

Click on the link to see **Graeme Holdsworth** introduce himself:



https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=43&v=YZkGAs9MTVk&feature=emb_logo

John Garner's little mindbender

John Garner keeps meticulous records of the Choir's attendance for all rehearsals and concerts, putting together regular reports that let us spot changes and examine trends. He sends VotV this 'little mindbender' he's put together.

Is your covid-softened brain up to it?

'Upper Grumblewick Male Voice Choir has 47 singing members. There are two more first tenors than second tenors, three more baritones than bass and one more bass than second tenors.

The average age of the first tenors is 57.0 years, of the second tenors is 63.1 years, of the baritones is 58.0 years and of the bass is 72.1 years.

How many of each part are there in the choir and what is the average age of the whole choir?

Steam train lovers get an added bonus

Friendly old archivist and bass singer, **David Clarke**, has with his girlfriend, Chris, really got stuck into exploring the old railway branch line to Meltham. He sends this old video he's come across showing parts of the old railway - with a steam train going down the line. <https://youtu.be/EjQPvs7FmzY>



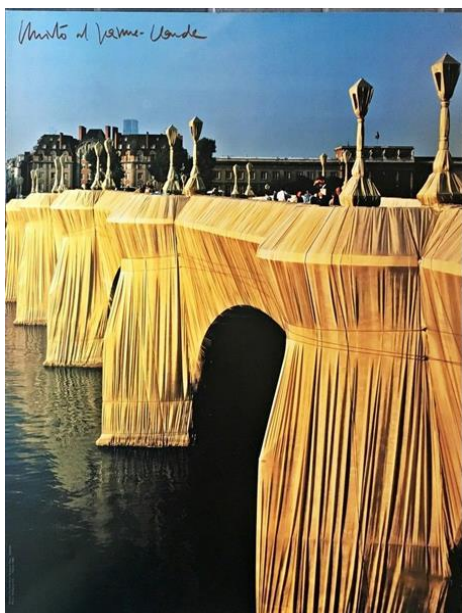
So farewell then Christo

The artist Christo, known for wrapping buildings including Berlin's Reichstag and also swathing areas of coast and entire islands in fabric, has died aged 84. He died of natural causes at his home in New York.

Born Christo Vladimirov Javacheff in Bulgaria, Christo studied in Sofia and then defected to the west in 1957, stowing away on a train from Prague to Vienna. Two years later he met Frenchwoman Jeanne-Claude Denat de Guillebon, who would become his artistic partner and wife until her death in 2009.



Christo unveiling his first UK outdoor work, a 20 metres high installation on the Serpentine in 2018.



John looks forward to 'real' tomatoes



Hi Mr Editor,

You want to know what we get up to now we can't get to sing with the Choir.

Well, whilst shielding, I got to thinking about tomatoes.

It feels a bit dodgy going to supermarkets to buy them and even if get them brought in by family members or delivered to your home by van, the ones you end up with do not taste like my Dad's home-grown ones; in fact some have no taste at all.

So I thought what better time to have a go myself.

First you need a greenhouse! So here is my DIY version.

Almost 24 hrs since I planted them - and they are still alive!

In gardening terms I'm not a patch on my Dad but I'm sure VotV readers have many experts, who I hope will pass on their knowledge via your pages.

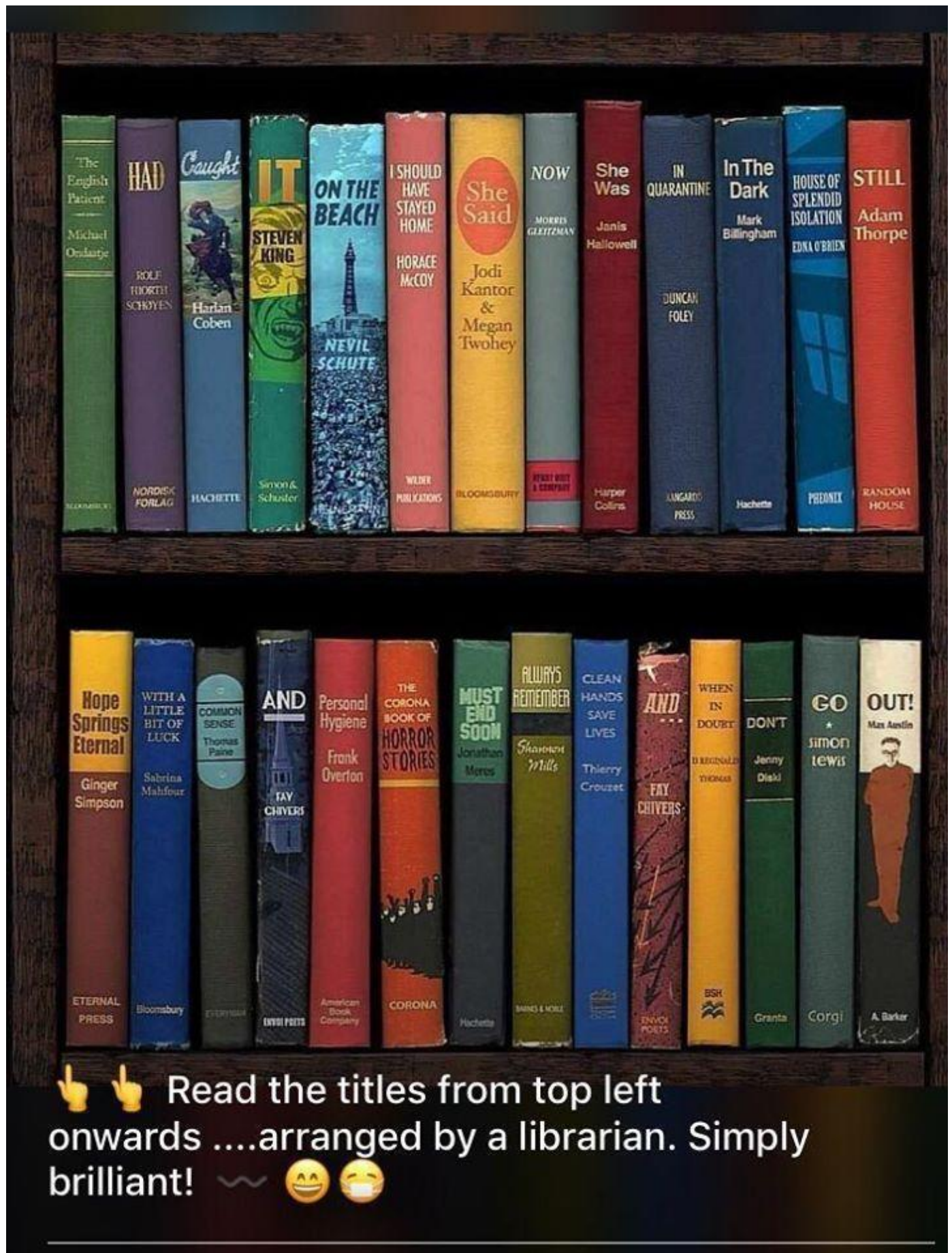


Update: Growing like mad...

... only been in the greenhouse a fortnight, I am getting concerned that the first truss might be at roof height of this mini house !!!!

Can you help first tenor, John, get a bumper tasty crop?

Well, it made me smile



.... and smile once more



The answer to John Garner's Mindbender is 12 first tenors, 10 second tenors, 14 baritones and 11 basses and the overall average age is 62.1 years

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.

Voice of the Valley Editor: John C Clark

Ring Choir Secretary, Jenny, on 01484 645192 to join us or join our Readers' List or for other queries



And see our website to get the full story

colnevalleymvc.org.uk