



Seaside concert ruled out again

Our Scarborough concert has been cancelled for the second time.

It's no surprise readers will probably agree but it's a big disappointment nonetheless. We have had the date in our diary for August 2021, expecting that our seaside trip would mark our return to performance. It had already been cancelled once before during the height of the pandemic in August of 2020, but we had been clinging to the hope that things would be returning to normal by this summer and that we would be back onstage. But it's not to be.



Our esteemed patron, **Miss Christine Cox** and our equally esteemed Choir secretary, **Jenny Baxter**, have been in regular contact over the last fraught months. And the outcome of their recent discussions has been to come to a reluctant but inevitable decision that, for a second year, the scheduled concert can't happen.

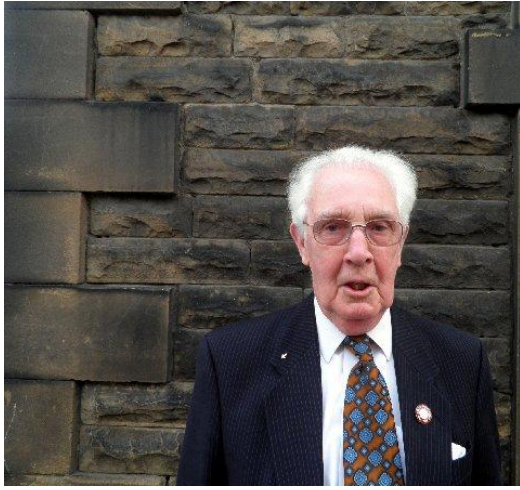
There's very little that's positive about the decision, however necessary it is but we can find a couple of good things. Our kind patron has made a generous donation to our Choir funds - and better yet - has once again commissioned the Choir to perform in August 2022.

We are very grateful for her ongoing support, though very sad to have to scratch the date from this year's diary.

Here we see her at the 2019 concert thanking **Keith Swallow** for his valiant contributions to her Scarborough Music Festival over many years.

We live in hope that we can schedule a performance or two in the autumn before we get stuck into our Christmas repertoire.





Basil gets in touch

Second tenor and long-time Choir member, now retired from singing, **Basil Hirst** has been in touch with secretary, Jenny.

'I keep following the news of the Choir through Voice of the Valley' says Basil, 'And, I realise that these have been tough times, with you being unable to get together to sing or to perform. I have reason to hope that things will improve for you soon.'

It's been six years now since I stood down - I could no longer manage the stairs getting onstage at the Town Hall nor even up the steps to our rehearsal room'.

He's 95 now and maybe not so mobile but Basil has definitely still got his marbles. One of the things he still misses, he told VotV, is being part of Colne Valley Male Voice Choir. *'I put on one of the Choir's CD's', he says 'And sing along - quite often I conduct you in my living room'.*

Basil tells VotV he has been very much aware that the Choir currently has to get along without performance income. So, when last he contacted Jenny, he made a donation to Choir funds. He asked me not to mention an amount but VotV can reveal it was **not insubstantial**.

Thank you, Basil and keep on singing along

Private Eye tells it like it is.

The satirical magazine, Private Eye, has noticed the furore over the government's inconsistent approach to Covid 19 regulations and their ban on choral singing.

"The government has made a serious error and must correct it. Fast"



MUSIC & MUSICIANS

AFTER the relaxations of 17 May, everyone assumed choral singing could get back to business. Alas, no.

With the British public free to meet in large numbers and scream at the top of its collective voice in pubs and sporting events, without warning it emerged that the orderly, Covid-conscious gathering of amateur choirs would remain banned. This is despite the absence of any meaningful data to explain the decision.

Culture secretary Oliver Dowden is now under blistering attack to change his policy. As Deborah Annetts, chief executive of the Incorporated Society of Musicians, complains, it was "clearly a mistake for government to make the guidance on indoor singing more restrictive than before... Public health guidance should be helping the safe return of millions of singers and thousands of choirs across the country, rather than forcing the cancellation of upcoming performances."

In an open letter to Dowden, prominent choral director Andrew Griffiths puts it more bluntly: "The guidance around amateur singing is a disgrace. You briefed through parliament that it would be allowed... There could hardly be a better demonstration of your utter disinterest in our sector."



So far Dowden's sole response in parliament has been a feeble statement about following public-health guidelines. But that won't do. Choral singing isn't an obscure minority interest that can be kicked aside: it's central to the lives of millions and of critical importance to their overall wellbeing. If it's safe to shout in pubs, it's safe to sing in choirs. The government has made a serious error and must correct it. Fast.

Masons make generous award



It happened like this. Retired second tenor and ongoing Vice-President of the Choir, **Norman Brown**, retains many contacts from his old business life and his activities with **Junior Chambers of Commerce**. He tells VotV he was aware that the Choir was under some financial strain due to Covid 19 and so, when he was last in touch with an old business friend, **Neil Kaiper-Holmes** he enquired, knowing of their many charitable activities, whether there might be any support available via Neil's Masonic charities. *"I didn't push it", says Norman, "But I was pleased to hear that contacts with the Choir were followed up and I'm very pleased to learn that a grant has been made."*

The grant came from West Riding Masonic Charities Limited with the support of Neil's luventutis Lodge No.9338.

Many of the founders and original members of this lodge were former members of the Junior Chamber of Commerce - hence the Norman Brown connection - based in West or South Yorkshire and Derbyshire. This lodge, consecrated in 1989 under charter from **The United Grand Lodge of England**, meets at **Pontefract Masonic Hall**.



Norman's old friend, **Worshipful Brother Neil Kaiper-Holmes**, is seen here on behalf of luventutis Lodge, officially opening the new storage unit for the "Friends of Haw Hill Park" in Normanton.

This is just one of very many worthy charitable activities that the Lodge supports.

The award to the Choir came from the **Provincial Grand Masters Fund**.

Their charity Steward, **Worshipful Brother, Stephen Gill** administered the award.

We see him here presenting a cheque the Friends of Castleford Library, This grant - like ours - was sponsored by luventutis 9338 - another example of Freemasonry working in the community.



Once contacted, Chairman **Joe Stones** put together an application. The grant will be used by the Choir to buy a new portable piano and conductor's rostrum. These needs were identified in the Choir's planning for our centenary year. We anticipate that these items will greatly assist the Choir in community performances where facilities are limited.



Many thanks to the Brethren of luventutis 9338 and well done, Norman and Joe.



West Riding Masonic Charities Limited
20 Castle Grove Drive, Leeds, LS6 4BR

Telephone:- 0113 278 2451
Registered Charity No. 212073
Registered Company No. 399211
Provincial Grand Master's Fund - Freemasonry in the Community Initiative



Mr J Stones
Colne Valley Male Voice Choir

Dear Mr Stones

30th May 2021

Colne Valley Male Voice Choir – Inventutis Lodge No. 9338

I am delighted to inform you that the Freemasons of Yorkshire West Riding through West Riding Masonic Charities Ltd. have awarded a grant of £1,737 from their Funds and arrangements have been made to electronically transfer the amount to your organisations bank account.

This award is granted solely for the purpose of financing the work contained in the application submitted by the proposing lodge, namely towards the specific cost of purchasing a portable stage piano, storage case and keyboard stand plus a conductors chair and music stand.

Your assistance in gaining maximum publicity for this grant would be appreciated and representatives from the lodge will be pleased to liaise with you on this matter.

Finally, please accept our sincere appreciation for the excellent work that you do. The Freemasons of Yorkshire West Riding are pleased to be associated with you and hope that your success continues.

Yours sincerely and fraternally,

Chris

Chris J. Allen
PGM Fund Administrator



Chairman, Joe Stones, sends our thanks...

Thank you very much, Stephen, for your email and the good news of this very positive support. This will make a huge difference for rehearsals and concerts when we are on the move and will also help the Colne Valley Boys (Youth Choir) who we founded eleven years ago. So the Masons' kind help will help not just one choir but two!

We also very much appreciate your own personal support that you have provided to us and we would be delighted if as suggested you will be able to come and present the equipment to us once we have purchased it.

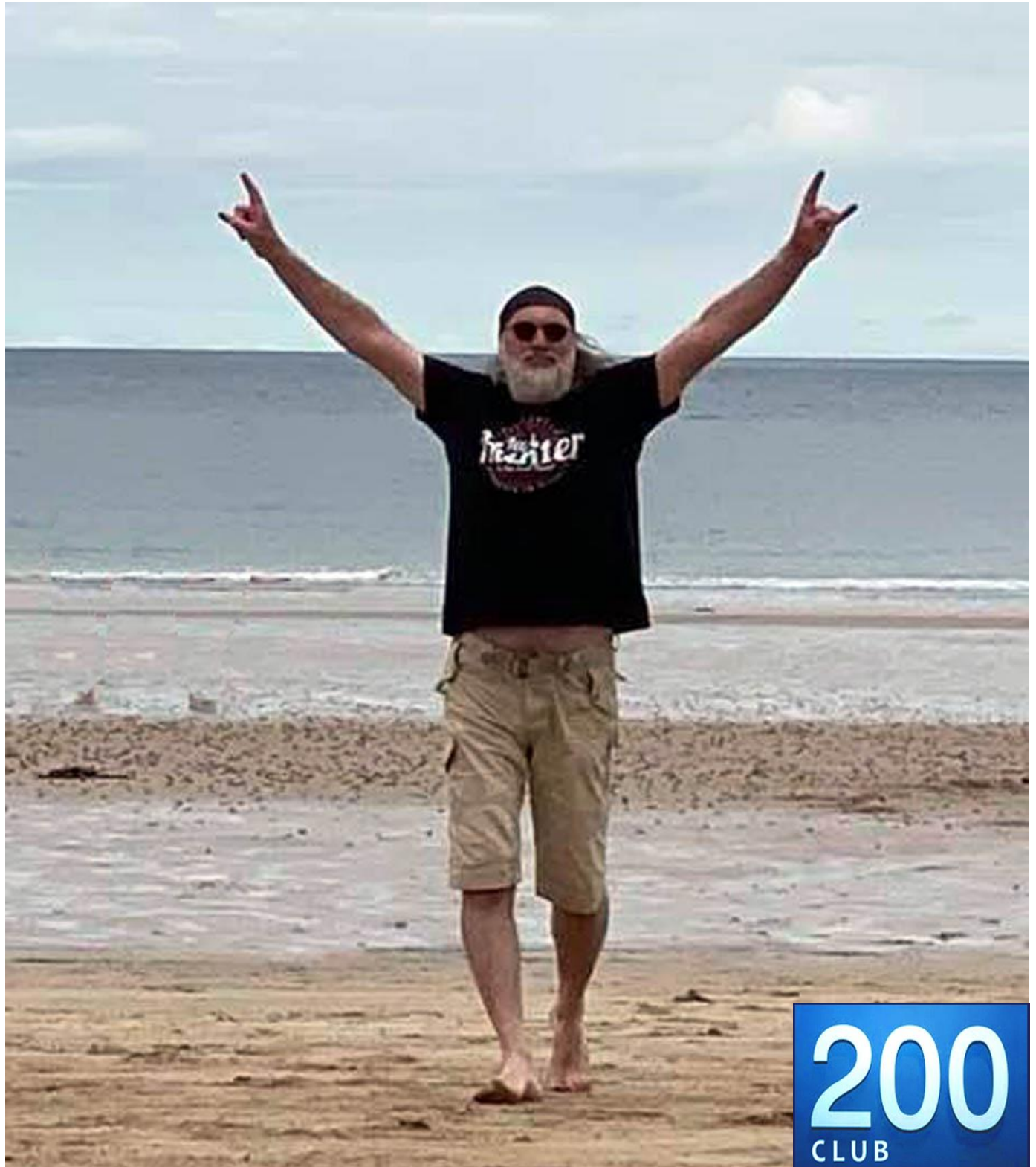
Joe

Simon might look jubilant ... but...

But this week it's **not** him winning a prize in the 200 Club again.

No, in Monday's draw the winning number belongs to retired bass, **John Morrison**, who supplements his pension this week with a £45.00 prize. Well done John

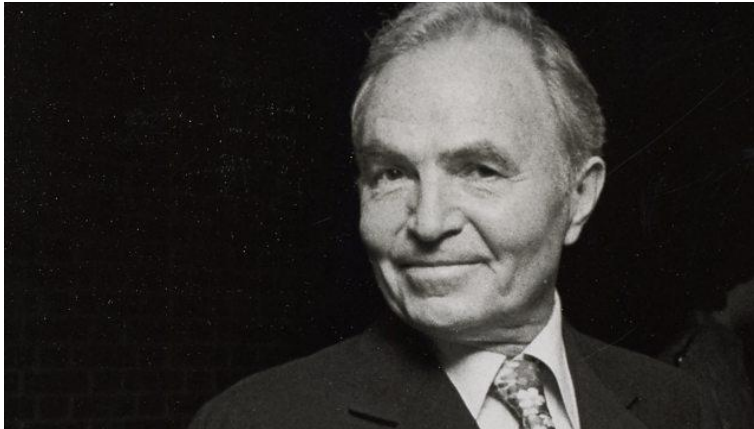
And don't get down, Simon. With your luck you'll probably win a bigger prize again next week.



'Hello, Mr Editor and VotV readers,' writes bass **Brian Hibbert**

Home James

'Something else for you to think about, do you know about a programme made for Yorkshire Television about 1972, called, 'Home James with James Mason'?'



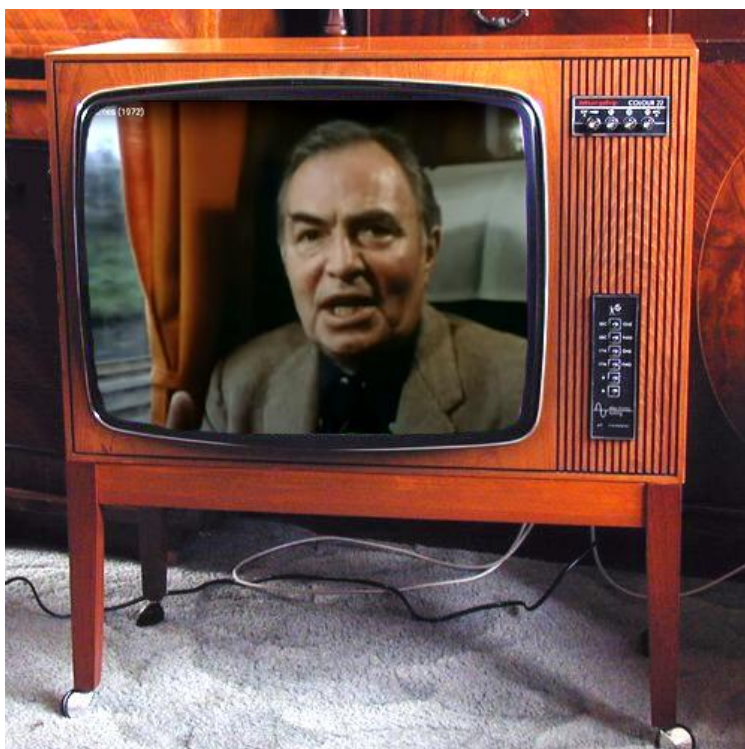
The movie-star, long-dead of course, takes a tour of his home town, Huddersfield, taking in the Colne Valley and all its different aspects with mills, engineering, etc.

I find it a fascinating watch remembering a vibrant and prosperous town both to natives and comers-in.

*It mentions the **Choral Society** and **CVMVC**. The film crew must have attended a CV rehearsal to record us singing. I recognised Harold Clough.*

Enjoy 45 minutes of nostalgia. The film is almost 50 years old, now. It doesn't matter if you are a native of the town, or not: it's a good watch either way'.

Brian.



Click on the link to view

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l4LsSIWzITA>

Spare a thought for Felling

Those fine men of **Spelling Male Voice Choir** in the North East were to be celebrating 100 years of singing together but sadly, their Centenary Year, which officially started in October 2019 proved to be a bit of a washout for them as Covid 19 put paid to all their performances in 2020.

This is them in June 2019, at probably one of their last summer performances, before the Pandemic 'rained on their parade'.



But are they down-hearted?

Well, maybe a bit - but they are looking forward to getting back onstage. One of their singers, **Kevin Lillie**, has been in contact with CVMVC and wonders whether some sort of joint performance might be possible as we look to our 2022 Centennial. VotV can't say whether it might be 'a goer' but we are grateful for the proposal. Like 'Felling's so many of our plans have bitten the dust, too and while we look forward to a rosier future, it remains unclear when we might 'get back to normal'.



The men of Felling are doing their best and this month did their first '**Live Rehearsal**' in what looks like somebody's farmyard - well done, you chaps. Keep your peckers up!

This issue all about donations!

Well, maybe there are a few donations stories. But, says VotV you don't have to feel 'left out'.

If you, too, want to make a donation to the Choir, here's the guidance as to how to do it.... or just do it on your phone.

<http://colnevalleymvc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Making-a-Donation-to-Colne-Valley-Male-Voice-Choir.pdf>



Want to donate?

It's easy...

Text 5CVMVC to 70085
to donate £5.00

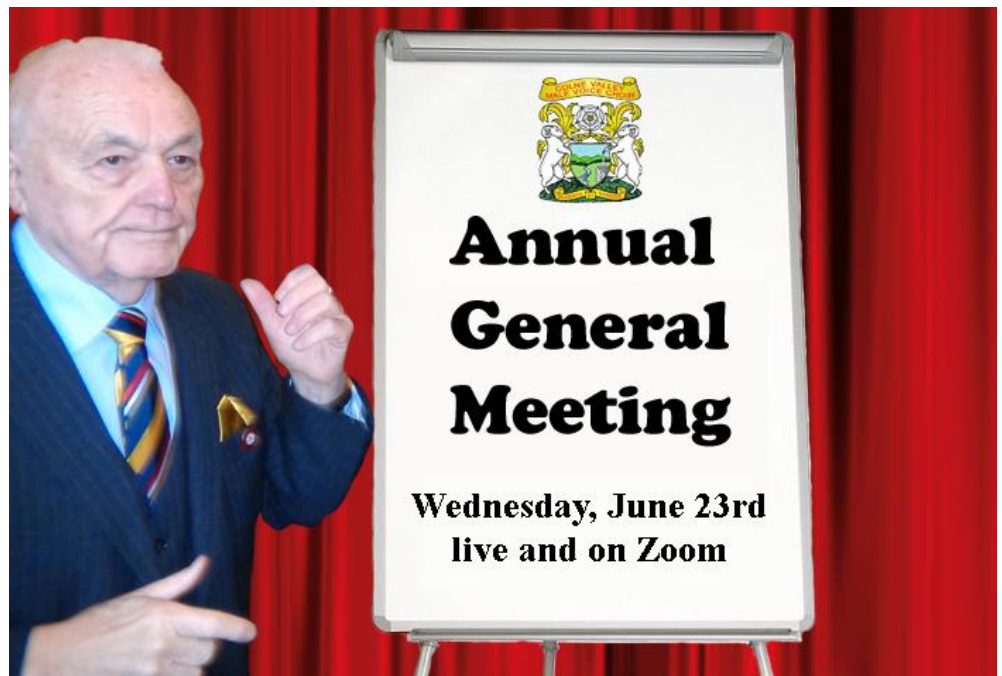
Text 10CVMVC to 70085
to donate £10.00

AGM invitation

Choir members are invited to have their say, '**in real life**' or '**online via Zoom**' at the Choir's **Annual General Meeting** on the 23rd of June 2021.

'Questions for the meeting should be e-mailed in advance, please,' says Secretary, Jenny Baxter.

Choir Members who plan to attend in person should bring a mask and be conscious of the need to maintain social-distancing.





Well, someone didn't think much of the recent G7 meeting in Cornwall....

.... but it made me smile..

..and so did this



Send me a picture, tell me your news....



The times of social isolation continue and VotV readers, whether singers or audience-members, still can't meet each other except in restricted circumstances

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 - even if tangential - to the Choir.

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 colnevalleymvc.org.uk to get the full story

