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Issue 64



*Helping people to live happier, healthier lives
through musical participation.*

'Every day may not be good, but there is something good in every day' (Alice Morse Earle)



In the current circumstances, we're hoping that this month's newsletter will serve as a little reminder of the fantastic things that are still happening and the small moments of happiness that we can take from each day. Whether it be laughing with our wonderful beneficiaries over the phone, joining our merry bunch of 'singstreamers' during weekly Facebook Live sessions, or our community sing-alongs via Zoom, there is always a reason to keep smiling!

'Light from the Darkness'

Song-writing is keeping everyone busy at the moment; a favourite quote, a memorable anecdote and a hope for the future - these were the three essential ingredients needed for our latest song-writing project in collaboration with the University of York. Contributions made over the phone by the Rolling Tones were cleverly collated into a beautiful song reflecting the importance of nature, the simple things in life, positivity, having hope and faith in God.

But in this time of isolation
Our spirits are drawing nearer
And the people in our lives
Are becoming ever dearer
Strangers become brothers,
in the harder times
Goodwill parcels on the doorstep,
give joy to anxious minds



Stan and Jean, our media King and Queen!

We recently collaborated with Minster FM on a wonderful project called Make York Smile, which encouraged people to send in clips of themselves singing and dancing to George Ezra's 'Shotgun'. Taking the challenge in his stride, our very own Stan Perks donned his best hat and recorded a brilliant version of the song which has since been streamed over 7,400 times and landed him not one, but two radio interviews! Jean Wall, one of our newest members, also experienced the dizzy



heights of fame as she spoke to a 'That's York TV' presenter about having to accept that the Rolling Tones' rehearsals are suspended for the foreseeable future, but she is nonetheless enjoying accessing our online activities: '*we manage to chat and see each other - as time goes by, you get more isolated and so it's very important to keep in contact*'. Despite having joined the choir a mere 6 weeks before the lockdown, Jean has already taken to the stage of the Joseph Rowntree Theatre, joined our wonderful Zoom sing-alongs and completed a television interview... what a glowing résumé!

Roll Up, for the Round-Up!

Online singing sessions, regular phone calls, postcards and photos, music videos galore... there isn't much that we haven't tried over the last month to keep in touch with our group members and to help them keep singing! Our music groups are so important to our beneficiaries, and maintaining that connection is a huge priority for us when so many of our members aren't able to get out to spend time with others. Tune in to our wonderful *weekly Facebook Live sessions at 11am on a Wednesday morning* or, for the more tech-savvy amongst you, join our *fortnightly Zoom sing-alongs at 1pm on a Friday afternoon*... guaranteed laughter and a fantastic feel-good way to finish the week! Email enquiries@musicalconnections.org.uk, and we will send you a link ☺.

Stay Inside, You Know the Drill... It's Time to Learn a Brand-New Skill!

Weekdays without any of our wonderful music groups, weekends without anywhere to go and a sudden abundance of spare time on our hands... we've binged our favourite televisions shows, made it to the bottom of our reading lists and now, we're all practising hard for The 2.6 Challenge. This fantastic initiative is designed to embody the spirit of the London Marathon and inspire people, families, and communities to fundraise in an effort to help save charities threatened by the Coronavirus pandemic. The money raised will make such a difference to our ability to sustain our groups when normal life resumes and we've donned tutus, thrown ridiculous alphabet shapes and suffered leg injuries all for the cause... what a brilliant incentive to get those donations in! You can view our efforts on Facebook, and donate via our Virgin Money giving page: <https://bit.ly/2Kj3tax>.

Fiona

“...so, apart from practising my ballet moves for The 2.6 Challenge, I have been enjoying walking the dog in the sunshine!”



Emma

“On a normal week I'm so busy working and performing that I never have time to read... so, during lockdown my new hobby is to read all the books that have been sat on my shelf for years.”

Abby

"I've been keeping busy... so far I've planted 16 seeds, that have all subsequently died!

I've been learning French (oui!) and of course, been in serious training for The 2.6 Challenge. I can't wait until we can restart the groups and I can see everybody again!"



Charlotte

"If I'm not bending my legs all over the place for The 2.6 Challenge, you can probably find me trying an adventurous recipe in the kitchen, immersed in some gardening or curled up with a good book!"

Emma

"I'm getting used to incorporating my dog into daily life as we're now stuck with each other 24/7. Doga is a popular activity when we're not arguing over who has the best spot on the sofa!"



Thank you for reading – keep singing and keep smiling!