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Issue 72



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

“The life I love is making music with my friends”

- Willie Nelson



After a long and challenging period relying only on phone calls, postcards and online sessions, Willie Nelson’s lyrics are the perfect description for the feelings of our Musical Connections family as we resumed our ‘in person’ sessions in September after 18 months apart. The transition has been relatively seamless and whilst things are still a little different - spaced seating, no biscuits to share (!!!) and hand sanitiser at every turn - it’s been wonderful to see everyone catching up over their favourite songs and

finally making music together once again - a true testament to the strength of the MC spirit! Whilst our online work won’t stop completely (and stay tuned for our Christmas specials), for now, we’re so delighted to be returning to the life we love - several sessions a week, lots of laughter, and a few (Covid-safe, of course) MC Christmas events to look forward to during December!



“It’s goodbye to some things. And hello to others!”

- David Levithan

As many of you will know, the end of June brought with it the sad departure of Emma - a cherished member of the MC family for many years and a wonderful musician - who would we find to step into the role?! Well - with the seal of approval from members who attended our summer sessions, we’re delighted to introduce Amy - local singer, teacher, and arts administrator extraordinaire! A graduate of the University of York, with an MA in Performance Practice, Amy now sings with a number of choirs across the city, whilst also tutoring online and teaching at St George’s School in York. Not surprisingly, our musical family have welcomed her with open arms, and she is clearly delighted to be here:



“Hello everyone! I’m so happy to have been welcomed into the MC family with such kindness and enthusiasm. I’m really excited to eventually meet all of the other groups and to continue making such fabulous music with Acomb, Honeysuckle and Barstow!”

We’d also like to extend a warm welcome to all of our new members - we’re so glad that you’ve decided to join us and really hope that you enjoy being part of our very special Musical Connections family. If you have any friends or family that might like to join us too, then do get in touch or alternatively, visit the website for more information about the groups: <https://www.musicalconnections.org.uk/joining-in/venues/>

Fundraising With Glee Now We’ve Found IMC!

Over the last few years, we’ve used Virgin Money Giving for all things ‘fundraising’ related: campaigns; online song raffles; and most importantly, for receiving money from our steadfast, regular donors. Given Virgin’s recent decision to close their platform, we’ve been trying to find a replacement that offers a similar service. Fortunately, Invest My Community have come to our rescue - a platform dedicated to local community organisations just like us! We’ve recently set up a Regular Giving campaign page with them, and so if you would like to take the opportunity to sign up to donate to MC regularly (and are reading this online), then please use the following link:

<https://app.investmycommunity.com/musical-connections-2670>

The Monkgate Wellness Choir

Over the last few years, it's become increasingly widely recognised that prescription drugs don't always hold the key to better health and wellbeing - sometimes, all a person needs is support from their community and a chance to connect with others - that's where we come in! Building on the success of our two singing groups developed in partnership with York Medical Group, we're thrilled to announce the launch of a new group in collaboration with YMG's Monkgate Surgery. Led by Abby, we're hoping it will give patients, York St John students and York residents from the wider community the opportunity to share and make music together whilst, most importantly, having fun! If you or anyone you know would like to join the group, it will be starting weekly on **Wednesday 3rd November between 3.15-4.30pm at Theatre@41.**



Raise a Cheer – Our Ambassadors Are Here!

As a small charity, we're incredibly fortunate to have supporters who wholeheartedly support the MC ethos - it's so important in raising both awareness and funding. Recently, we asked a couple of them if they'd consider being ambassadors for the charity - and we're delighted to report that they agreed! So, a big welcome to...



Karen Burland-Clark

Karen is a Professor of Applied Music Psychology at the University of Leeds, and co-Director of the Music for

Healthy Lives Research and Practice Network. She is currently researching the effect of musical engagement on wellbeing, and wholly endorses our creative approaches to building and supporting our MC family.

“MC's work is so important for bringing people together - the support they provide, particularly during the pandemic too, is inspirational”



Laura Castle

Originally from Bradford, Laura graduated with a degree in BA Theatre and MA Applied Theatre, and is now a radio presenter on the York Mix breakfast show. She's been hugely supportive of MC over the last year, and was key in helping us to connect with some of our most isolated members via the radio during the pandemic.

“What the team do at MC is amazing - I feel privileged to have witnessed first hand the joy that the sessions bring to people's lives”

Thank you for reading – we'll be in touch again soon!