

MARCH 2021



- 1. What's New**
- 2. Mirthy Talks**
- 3. Scams**
- 4. Challenge of Lockdown**
- 5. Bit of Fun**

Editor: Hilary Robb

DEAR ALL

Spring has sprung officially and there are brighter days on the horizon both in terms of daylight and, hopefully, some sunshine and the prospect of being able to meet up with friends and family.

In John Rostill's recent letter to Branch Officers he outlined the planned dates for meetings to re-commence in England and sends his apologies that he did not refer to Scotland and Wales. At this stage, the "release" date of end of June applies to England only. Scotland and Wales may well set a different path out of lockdown depending on case numbers and vaccine rollout. Whatever happens, I will keep you informed once plans for Scotland are announced.

On a lighter note, Norma Garthwaite sent me the following link to a new online exhibition which she thought might interest members who want to take a walk down memory lane. With all that is happening to our high streets it seems appropriate to have a look back at how things used to be. One of my early memories is of my mother taking me to Jenners in Edinburgh to see the Christmas Tree. She would not think of going into the shop without her best hat and

white gloves on! How times have changed, some people now do their shopping in their pyjamas. The exhibition has been put together by Historic Environment Scotland and is called 'Historic Shops'. You can view it by clicking on this link:

<https://www.historicenvironment.scot/archives-and-research/online-exhibitions/scotlands-historic-shops/>

Congratulations must also go to Norma for her success in the recent NHSRF Photography competition. She won a Highly Commended and an Honourable Mention for the two photographs below, titled Knitting for the NHS and Working from Home. Well done Norma!



MIRTHY TALKS

As you all know, The Mirthy Talks are a member benefit and are very entertaining. It is a way to connect with other members across the UK too. I have listed the next four talks below and I will certainly be keen to watch the talk on the World War 1 battlefields as I have a great uncle buried in Serre II Cemetery and nobody from the family has ever been to his grave. I had planned to go there in 2020 but we all know how that worked out! Maybe in 2022. I am sure many of you will have family members who did not make it home from the battlegrounds and this might spark some interesting research to keep you occupied in lockdown.

Registration is pretty easy - please just visit www.mirthy.co.uk/NHSRF and you will just need to enter your name and your email address for the talk you wish to register for and then you will receive an email from Alex with a link to click at the start of the talk. Live chat starts just after 10.45am with the talk starting at 11am. This together with the Q&A session makes an enjoyable experience. Remember replays are available on demand. Assuming a member registers for a talk they will receive a confirmation email with a link to join the talk live. This same link can be used for 7 days to watch a replay of the talk on demand.

The next 4 talks planned are:

Wandering in Flanders Fields

Tuesday 9 March at 11am

Melanie Gibson-Barton brings to life the well known and certainly the less well known First World War sites in a themed way that will appeal to all elements of the audience. Talk length - 41 minutes.



The Accidental Author

Tuesday 23 March at 11am

In this talk we find out how Sue Medcalf became an accidental author! Her series of books came from a conversation with her sister, who had badgers digging up her back garden and she asked if she knew how to discourage them from digging!! After a lot of research on badgers Sue became hooked on them and the Itchybald Scratchet character was born! Talk length - 33 minutes.



Thirty Years of Travel in China

Tuesday 6 April at 11am

Former long-time Hong Kong resident Chris Forse has travelled widely in China since 1978 when only one city was open to foreigners. His travels have taken him beyond the standard tourist itineraries, to the country's remote regions of Yunnan, Xinjiang and Tibet and across distant borders, accumulating a bank of memories and impressions and spectacular photographs. In the process he witnessed the astonishing transformation of China from an insular peasant society to global economic super-power in just one generation. Talk length - 55 minutes.



Santa Evita

Tuesday 20 April at 11am

Eva Peron was not just a character in a musical. This talk explores the true story of Argentina's charismatic and legendary First Lady. Was she a saint or a sinner? Hazel's research has taken several years and has included two visits to Buenos Aires. Talk length - 50 minutes.



Preventing Fraud and Online Crime

I had to go to my bank recently to close down an account and the very young teller, seeing my white hair, started talking to me about current scams and how to protect myself from fraudsters. As he said, he wasn't trying to frighten me, just give me some weapons to use! Seriously though, fraud is rife just now and the scammers are becoming more and more inventive. Here are some of the points from the Bank's leaflet:

Scam Emails and Texts

What to look out for

They want financial or personal information. Your bank or other genuine company will NEVER message you asking for banking or personal details.

Unexpected Sender – If you don't know who has sent a message, it could be a scam.

You need to act now! A genuine message will be written in a reasonable and calm way. Scams may use warning messages, threats of fraud or problems with your account.

How a message greets you. A bank email will always greet you by title and surname. They always include part of your main account number. They will include part of your postcode.

Spelling Mistakes. Scam emails often look odd. They may have a messy layout and spelling mistakes.

The email address. Bank email addresses always end in the name of the bank followed by .co.uk. (e.g. bankofscotland.co.uk) There should NEVER be another word in between the bank name and the .co.uk.

You're asked to move money. A bank will NEVER ask you to make a test payment online or move money to a new sort code and account number. They will NEVER ask you to move money to a secure, safe or holding account.



One Challenge of Lockdown – Ellen MacLeod, Secretary, Ayrshire & Arran Branch

“If music be the food of love – play on” Twelfth Night: William Shakespeare

A message in the play of unrequited love of Orisino – Duke of Illyria.

However, in these very unusual times created by the pandemic, many of us have been denied the pleasure of singing as members of choirs and choral societies.

Music of all kinds is so much a part of our lives and during lockdown Music Education has seen on the one hand, a huge interest from adults learning or returning to music, and on the other, young people's music has been disrupted due to school closures.

I think we all need to recognise the pre-requirements for this activity eg.

- Space which is local and affordable to rehearse
- Recognition of local cultural activity at all levels of policy making to help it thrive

On a personal note – I have been a singer all of my life from Primary School through to adulthood. Membership of junior choirs, church choirs, and choral society. Having been in lockdown for a year now and not being allowed to sing even in church, things have been very very different. The Music Director of the Choral has been having virtual rehearsals on a Monday night but it is so different to be sitting at home on your own singing. We are rehearsing Mozart's Requiem and the church choir – those of us who have access to or can be bothered to rehearse on a fortnightly basis for the service to go out on a Sunday morning.

Virtual rehearsals sound straight forward but they are not. Once everyone has submitted their voice recording, this has all got to be pulled together by the technical team and not all organisations have people with the 'know how' to do that.

At the beginning of lockdown the recommendation of Making Music UK was to carry out a survey on COVID19 and this I did; only to discover that it was an opportunity for people to re-assess themselves and two large groups of women decided that this was the time to resign due to getting older, travelling in the winter time and illness.

In 2019 Kilmarnock and District Choral Union (of which I am a member) celebrated its 70th Anniversary and in 2020 we were forbidden to sing and couldn't even have a concert which we depend on as they are our main source of income.

Once we are allowed to meet again the problem will probably be where to rehearse. For many years we have met in the Assembly Hall of a local secondary school but one of the things highlighted in the survey was that some people wouldn't feel comfortable going into school – is its air-conditioning adequate? The other alternative is a church hall but how safe would it be? In terms of cost, the school is half the price of the church hall!! The third choice is to sing outdoors – NOT practical - TOO COLD etc.

Concerts require to be planned and even more so at this time when there is a requirement for risk assessments and to ensure social distancing.

All of this is a long way from being able to join each other for a very happy evening singing and enjoying the company of each other.

At present we are in a world of backing tracks, recording ourselves singing at home and sending it to the choir master and team to ensure the right balance and everyone's mouth is mouthing the same words at the same time!!

As I have said at the beginning – ***“If music be the food of love – play on”***

I think we are all suffering from unrequited love being denied being able to meet and sing together and hopefully things will gradually change as we go through this year 2021

BIT OF FUN

Quiz

1. Venetian blinds originated in which country?
2. A poult is the young of which creature?
3. Which group recorded the original of “Light My Fire”?
4. In an English trial, how many people sit on the jury?
5. Marcel Desailly was a World Cup winner playing for which country?
6. Which great soprano earned the name of “La Divina”?
7. What measure of paper is 8 by 10 inches?
8. On a standard European roulette wheel which number appears on the green?
9. What number is “dos” in Spanish?
10. In which game do you draw part of a gallows for every wrong answer?
11. Brights' disease affects which organs of the body?
12. What name is given to a garden with geometrically arranged beds and small hedges?
13. Who sang with the Dakotas?
14. In Which century was 1658?

15. Which Actress said "I want to be alone"?
16. How many kings of England have been called Philip?
17. How many stomachs does a cow have?
18. With which swimming stroke do races begin in the water?
19. How is the Roman city of Verulamium known today?
20. Which city in the world has the largest population?

Answers shown below

Thanks to my colleague, Paul Pople Development Officer for South West England, who sent me this cartoon during the recent cold spell.



An interesting contribution from Susan Gunning, The Royal Marsden Branch

NEOLOGISMS - a newly coined word or expression Wikipedia Washington Post has published the winning submissions to its yearly neologism contest, in which readers are asked to supply alternative meanings for common words.

Coffee (n.), the person upon whom one coughs.

Flabbergasted (adj.), appalled over how much weight you have gained.

Abdicate (v.), to give up all hope of ever having a flat stomach.

Esplanade (v.), to attempt an explanation while drunk.

Negligent (adj.), describes a condition in which you absentmindedly answer the door in your nightgown.

Lymph (v.), to walk with a lisp.

Gargoyle (n.), olive-flavoured mouthwash.

Flatulence (n.), emergency vehicle that picks you up after you are run over by a steamroller.

Balderdash (n.), a rapidly receding hairline.

[Quiz Answers](#)

1. Persia
2. Turkey
3. The Doors
4. 12
5. France
6. Maria Callas
7. Quarto
8. Zero
9. Two
10. Hangman
11. Kidneys
12. Knot garden
13. Billy J. Kramer
14. 17th
15. Greta Garbo
16. None
17. Four
18. Backstroke
19. St. Albans
20. Shanghai

Finally, just to say hope you enjoyed our Newsletter – comments would be appreciated, and I welcome any contributions for our next issue. Please note if you do have a contribution but haven't got anything typed up just give me a ring and I can type this up with you over the telephone, call 07985 670156 or email scotland@nhsrf.org.uk - Hilary Development Officer