



## **BULLETIN #22 2020**

### **This Week**

Dear friends,

I hope you're all keeping well and enjoying the glorious weather? Well whatever your political affiliations are it's definitely been a very funny week on the political front, however, we do seem to be moving on in terms of who we're allowed to see, it's been fantastic to be able to see people at a distance, sadly we'll have to wait a while longer for the hugs and embraces though. Things are starting to open up a bit now and some of our freedoms are returning, I think we've all got to be exceedingly careful still though.

I'd like to send a big hello message to those of you who've not been able to attend our zoom sessions. I know there are members who find the technology a pain, others who are working hard and some of you are busy looking after elderly parents or family member. We'll look forward to seeing you all soon and hope you're getting on just fine, we miss you.

On Wednesday one of our bass members, Jeremy, became a grandad for the first time to a little girl Minerva, congratulations Jeremy and family.

This week our Zoom session was very lively, I noticed many of you having a bit of a dance. I think everybody is realising that you have to put your heart into the session to feel the benefit of it.

Our warmup song this week was Si Si Si la dolla dar, which is a nice lively song from the African Congo, it's very joyful and cheery and gets us all moving and in the mood, we didn't need warming up physically as it was a hot evening. We looked at Sing by Gary Barlow, Craig picked out parts that we'd definitely benefit from looking at again. Keep having a sing of Sing we're going to work on it with Craig again next week.

Our Cover 19 song this week was “Blame it on the Boogie”, what a laugh we had doing the dancing actions in our living rooms and offices. Sunshine, moonlight, good time, boogie do you remember?

Our Quarantune was kindly performed by Sue Creeley this week, who did brilliantly singing Waterloo, there’s nothing quite like an ABBA number for getting everybody going. I do need performers for our quarantune every week, do get in touch if you’d give it a go you’ll get loads of encouragement and praise from your fellow choir members.

Have a good week.

Julie.

### **Tuition**

I told you last week that Craig has decided to keep offering his 1:1 lessons over the summer they will be available at the cost of just £35 per hour. Those of you who’ve chosen to have lessons are really feeling the benefit. Craig will conduct his sessions on Zoom and payments should be made via Paypal and BACS.

Make your bookings by emailing [craig@livingvocally.com](mailto:craig@livingvocally.com)

Declan is also be offering 1:1 lessons in piano/composition I hope you’ll have a think about having a lesson . They can be taken Monday-Sunday 9-00 am-8-00pm.

Declan’s lessons are just £30 .

To book please email [Declandaviesmusic@gmail.com](mailto:Declandaviesmusic@gmail.com)

## **Poets Corner**

I suppose it took a global pandemic for me to realise  
Just how much I have always loved the smell of wisteria.  
Watching clouds drift from windows,  
Rooftop bus rides to nowhere and sipping rosé in beer gardens,  
Playing at sophistication and world-weariness.  
I suppose it took a global pandemic for me to notice  
Just how much I have always hated the sound of early morning alarms.  
Chaotic nights out with people I hardly know, fuelled by FOMO and fear.  
Sitting frustrated in smoky traffic jams,  
Long train rides home without a buffet cart.  
It seems it only took the whole world to stop whirring  
For me to feel the wild warmth of  
Spending time with people who make you feel safe.  
Even if it is on Zoom.

Anonymous

## **Note To Self by Colleen Keating**

Laughter of friends on Zoom  
is no more than a polished reflection of its cosy aura in real life  
top priorities when this isolation is over  
warm greetings, hugs, family,  
to touch, to touch again,  
stay closer than 2 metres,  
smell the vibrance of youth,  
the milky scent of a grandchild  
to crowd in as many concerts  
art galleries, picnics in parks  
to sing  
have walks by the sea  
note to self;  
never take your freedoms for granted  
ever again

## Profiles



### **Gary Blandford**

After working for 40 years in General Insurance, my wife Elaine and I moved from St Albans, Hertfordshire to Knaresborough in January 2017 to be 'closer' to our Daughter, Son-in-law and 2 Grandchildren, then aged 4 and 1.

We love our Grandchildren to bits, but we knew that we would have to build a new life for ourselves and therefore, the original intention was to be close to them, but not 'too' close that we became the easy option for babysitting etc. However, at a time when we were not that familiar with the layout of Knaresborough, we, unexpectedly, found a house that ticked all the boxes, made an offer, which was accepted and then discovered that the house was a mere five minutes' walk from where the family lived!

We need not have worried though, as, up until the present crisis, we had found the perfect balance between performing and enjoying the Grandparent role, reaping the benefits of being near to our family and building our new life and finding new friends.

Of course, with the current restrictions, we consider ourselves so fortunate that, being so close, we are in a position to be able to see and talk to our family, albeit from a distance, although being unable to have a 'Dougie Hug' (only viewers of 'Hey Dougie' will know what this is) remains both frustrating and sometimes upsetting.

As for Knaresborough, although we had already chosen the town as our preferred location to move to, Elaine and I cannot believe how lucky we are to have chosen to live in such a beautiful and friendly location. My early recollections as a small child growing up in Putney, South West London, was of friendly neighbours, a real community spirit, with front doors open and children and adults socialising outside of the terraced houses where we lived. I have always yearned to find that same atmosphere again and I am so pleased that, in Aspin Oval, we have found it and we are both now keen to become active in the Knaresborough community, one of the reasons for me joining KAC.

On the singing front, I am afraid that my resume` is limited:

- Sang Descant in primary school choir and starred as Chief Weasel in the same school's production of 'Toad of Toad Hall', when I had to sing a rendition of 'Poor old Toad' solo;
- Whilst on holiday, infrequent questionable appearances at Karaoke Bars, usually quite late in the evening. Although, it should be noted that on the occasions when the opposition were either absent or in a worst state than me, I can boast that my performances have been successful, winning me free breakfasts' and Boat Hire!
- A founding member of the HOOT Boys - a one performance trio who performed a number of 1950's Rock and Roll classics at a Christmas fund-raising event (HOOT being an acronym for 'Horribly Out Of Tune'!)

Although I am a 'I wish I could play an instrument' person who lacks the discipline required to learn to play, listening to music is my main hobby. I like listening to quite an eclectic selection of music, with Blues, Blues Rock, Jazz, 50's Rhythm and Blues being my preferred genres, followed closely by Soul, Gospel and Folk. However, when it comes to live performances, I especially enjoy staged musicals, opera and choirs, as these can generate those 'feel the hairs on the back of your neck' moments. This was another motivator for me seeking to join a community choir.

I also have to admit to being a closet DJ and event-organiser, having, over the years, created numerous playlists for various parties, social functions and organised fund-raising events.

The final push for me to look to join a choir came when I saw my, then, 6 year old Granddaughter perform 'The sun will come out tomorrow' solo, on the stage of the Royal Hall, Harrogate. As any Grandpa would do, in the weeks building up to the day of her performance, I had been encouraging her and giving her the benefit of my vast musical experience. After seeing her performance and recovering from being reduced to a blubbering mound of jelly, I said to myself, if a 6 year old can do it on her own, a 66 year old can definitely do it hidden in a crowd! I consequently, made a promise to myself to look for a choir to join. By chance (or was it Fate?), the following day, I saw a poster recruiting singers for KAC and immediately contacted Julie. I joined at the end of September last year and thanks to Julie, Craig, Declan and the rest of KAC have enjoyed every minute of it since.

All I have to do now is learn how to sing properly and remember the lyrics!



## **Sarah Blood**

I was born in Cambridge but spent my childhood prior to going to University in the wonderful county of Shropshire where my Father was a schoolmaster. My school years were filled with music and I played the recorder, hand bells, violin and piano as well as singing in school choirs and local

choral societies. I was fortunate enough to play the violin in the Shropshire Youth Orchestra and travelled to Canada on tour on two occasions. I was thrilled to gain Grade 8 distinction on the violin and was invited to audition for the Royal Academy of music. I had however a burning ambition to be a musical Doctor and not a Doctor of Music and went on to Birmingham University medical school where I qualified as a Doctor in 1984. GP training followed, which I completed in Shrewsbury and Birmingham. I married David in my final year of GP training and as my married surname was to be Blood I canvassed my patients asking them if they would be happy to see a Dr Blood!! Many said no and I decided to keep my maiden name of Minty for work! Several of you know me as Dr Minty!

We moved to Knaresborough in 1988 as my Husband David (an RAF pilot) was posted to RAF Linton-on-Ouse and we have been very fortunate to have lived here now for 32 years- the last 26 in the lovely village of Old Scriven. I was a GP partner at Eastgate surgery for 11 years and also worked for 9 years as medical officer at St Michaels Hospice. I have also worked as a locum GP in many local practices in particular Beech House in Knaresborough. (I am now secretary of the Patient Participation group at Beech House which keeps me in touch with what is happening!!)

We have two wonderful children, James and Hannah, both with lovely partners. Hannah is an employment lawyer in Leeds and James lives in Warwick working for Jaguar Land Rover

I took early retirement in 2017 and David retired last year after flying both in the RAF and later for TUI for a total of 40 years. We had planned to have lots of holiday having developed a liking for cruising but this is obviously on hold for the moment. I am still very busy with volunteering for the fabulous cancer support charity Maggie`s Yorkshire at St James Hospital in Leeds and

prior to the lockdown was doing therapy visits with my wonderful Newfoundland dog Bella.

I have continued my passion for music but after a short spell with the Harrogate Symphony Orchestra have not played my violin for many years now. I have sung with the Knaresborough choral society, The Fishers singers and more recently over the past 6 or 7 years with a wonderful small group of ladies in Harrogate called The Straybirds. This is where I met Craig who helps out with taking sessions when the musical director Neil Balfour ( a great friend of Craig's) is unable to be there. Last year I made the very difficult decision to leave The Straybirds as our travel plans meant it was difficult to commit to such a small group of singers ( just 13).I am still an "honorary" Straybird as the group are all such good friends and support each other through good times and not so good times! I also sing choral music with a choir called The Masterworks Chorale in Leeds.

When I heard Craig had taken over as MD of KAC I knew that this was where I wanted to be!! I joined the choir just before Christmas and was thrilled to be part of the Christmas performances. I absolutely love singing with the choir and want to thank Julie and all the choir members for making me feel so welcome.

We are keeping as busy as we can in lockdown and I do regular zoom Pilates classes which I love. We have adopted a 3 year old collie cross called Sasha and we are enjoying lots of walks around our beautiful countryside. I am also a fanatical knitter and I have knitted a lot of hearts for the hospital during the Covid pandemic. My other passion is baking and I have recently done some fundraising for Maggie's which involved a lot of cake baking. I have also joined a small baking group in Knaresborough who have been baking for the hospital and the ambulance service.

I do hope it won't be too long before we are all singing together but in the meantime a massive thanks to Craig and Declan for the great zoom sessions and to Julie and John and the committee for all your hard work.

### **Make Contact**

Please feel free to contact me, my email is [jbradburysharp@gmail.com](mailto:jbradburysharp@gmail.com) or ring me on 07926027676.