



## BULLETIN #30 2020

### **This Week**

Hello everybody!

I hope you're all well and you've enjoyed your summer and managed to do some lovely things even with Covid restrictions still around and very apparent. I know we've all missed live concerts, festivals and events and sadly now we've to delay the start of term for a while as two 40 strong choirs. The committee were very disappointed when the change of plans had to happen.

So we'll get back to Zoom practices, they will start at 7-30 prompt on Thursday 17th September, this later start will enable more people to join in so if you haven't tried it yet please come along, at least we all get to see each other on screen. Would anybody like to do a quarantine next week? I know it's short notice but with so many talented people in the choir, I'm sure one of you will give it a go.

To compensate for the disappointment of not getting together properly as we'd planned, your first two weeks of Zooming will be free. After that normal subs will apply (£13 a month) please let John know if you want your direct debit reinstating or if you will be paying by a bank transfer. Once we do start singing at the Crown over two nights our costs will obviously be higher so inevitably our subs will have to temporarily increase while ever we have to split the choir but, as always, we will still be very competitive compared to other pop/rock choirs and none of them have Craig and Declan.

Welcome back everybody see you on Zoom on Thursday.

Love Julie.

## Members Profiles

We are always looking for new profiles, send Julie a quick email if you would like to contribute to this section.



### **Graham and Pippa Turner**

We live in Ripon and are both now retired. We love singing in the choir, Pippa in the altos and Graham in the tenors or basses. We are two of the choir's founders, together with Pauline who also sings in the altos, and Dave and Lynne who now live in Darlington and sing with a choir there. We started the choir in September 2013 and are delighted that it has grown from strength to strength under the strong management of Julie and John, who took over running the choir when we were finding it too much, and also the committee members who provide valuable support.

### **Graham**

I grew up in a small market town in the midlands in the 1950's and 60's, I am the youngest of three, with two older sisters. Happy days were spent roaming the countryside and climbing trees. As a family we sang quite a lot together, and there were always little performances at family parties at Christmas or New Year. I sang in the school choir and, as a teenager, took up the guitar, forming an amateur folk group with my friend Eddie and three girls. While in the sixth form we performed at youth clubs, and at school and local church events.

I have always been enthralled by all types of music and, in my teens and early twenties, I went to live music events most weekends; back in the day many musicians on tour took in the University circuit so I was fortunate to see many great bands and performers in Sheffield and Leeds.

I studied engineering at Sheffield University and took my first job in Leeds; I have lived in Yorkshire ever since, apart from a number of years spent working abroad in Abu Dhabi and in Hong Kong in the 1970's and 80's. While working abroad I travelled to many interesting countries before settling down with a family. I have three daughters from my first marriage, all now grown up and in their 30's.

I spent some time as a single parent, then I met Pippa in 1993 who was also separated and we married in 2001. Pippa has two sons from her first marriage, so we have five children between us, and also four grandchildren ranging from 9 months to 15 years old.

In my 40's I took up classical guitar lessons, passing my Grade 5 exam and studying up to Grade 6 but then I decided no more exams! Since retirement I have been involved in the U3A guitar group in Ripon and I have performed at the monthly open mike sessions at a pub in Ripon. I still enjoy learning to play new material on the guitar and, during lockdown, I have taken up some on-line piano lessons.

Pippa and I are not keen on the cold, dark, short of daylight winter days in England so, since retirement, we like to go away in January and February and we spend two months in Andalusia, renting an apartment in Mijas Pueblo. We love hiking and joined a walking club so have been able to discover some great walks in the campo and sierras of southern Spain. I am therefore also learning Spanish with a U3A group in Ripon.

In 2018 I had a health scare when I was diagnosed with prostate cancer but fortunately it was in the early stages so, following a course of treatment and radiotherapy in 2019, I was finally given the all clear in December 2019.

I am an active person, not one for sitting around, so I enjoy growing my own vegetables in a greenhouse and in the garden, and I also take part in the 5Km Park Run at Fountains Abbey. During lockdown I have been continuing to try to run 5Km twice a week as well as keeping up walking around the Ripon area.

### **Pippa**

I grew up in the 1950's and 60's in Newport Pagnell, a small market town in the midlands, most well-known for Aston Martin cars and its motorway services! I am the middle child of three with an older sister and a younger brother. My mother and step dad ran a shop in the High Street selling army surplus equipment, tools, camping equipment & a small area for second-hand clothes....my mum being ahead of the times.... before charity shops sprang up!

After Grammar School and my O levels I went to St. Thomas's Hospital, London to train as a nurse. By that time, I had met my first husband and we married and I moved north to begin our new life in York. As this was halfway through my training, I completed my nurses training in York, which

was then 4 separate hospitals spread around the city. The change of hospitals provided interesting and varied experiences... I worked in surgical, medical, orthopaedics and community nursing, all challenging but worthwhile.

I separated from my first husband in my mid 30s and spent 5 years on my own with my 2 sons before meeting Graham in 1993. During that time, I decided to re-train as a Health Visitor for a new challenge and a move away from shift working, proving easier to manage as a single parent. I was a Health Visitor in the Easingwold area and York until I took early retirement at age 55, after which I worked part time on projects with Age UK in Ripon. My career has given me the privilege of working closely with a wide variety of people, in hospital and their own homes, experiences that have been very humbling and made me grateful that I chose the career I did.

I have always loved music but have never had any formal musical training. Meeting Graham allowed me to explore this area at last, owing to his great love of music of all types. He introduced me to "live" music and concerts for the first time and what a joy it's been! After being inspired by the early Gareth Malone programmes on TV bringing people together to sing in choirs... off we went to try out Rock Choir in Knaresborough. We joined in 2011 and enjoyed it for two years before the Knaresborough choir closed. There was, however, a core of us who had enjoyed singing together and didn't want it to end and so Graham and I, together with Pauline, Lynne and Dave, got together and decided to set up our own community choir. The rest is history as they say.

Not long after we started the choir our little grandson Zac, aged 15 months, developed a serious heart condition and was rushed into the LGI Children's Heart Surgery Unit and we nearly lost him twice. A dreadful time but the Unit provided wonderful care and he survived and is now a well and healthy 7 year old. As a result of our troubles the choir raised funds for the charity 'The Children Heart Surgery Fund' that year through some of our performances and was able to make a substantial donation.

Yoga has been a long-term hobby of mine and over the years I have developed interests such as meditation and mindfulness. Although not a practising Buddhist, I welcome their calm, kind approach to life in my efforts to achieve a Zen like state of mind; not often achieved but I continue to try!

I love reading and we both enjoy cryptic crossword puzzles, another hobby Graham introduced me to! I enjoy spending time with our fairly large family, including 4 grandchildren, and our friends, as well as going out walking and hiking with Graham. North Yorkshire is such a beautiful place to live.

We both love our time together in Spain in the winter months; the weather is so much better and the days longer, but we do miss the choir when we are away. Both the singing and the friendships we have made are so important to us. We take the various parts with us on our laptop and practice singing them so that we are reasonably up to speed when we get home, but we miss Craig's directions on how to interpret the song and improve the performance. We look forward to being able to sing together again in some form as soon as possible.



### **Heather Ireland**

One Sunday morning, when I was twelve years old, I was picked up and taken to Bradford Musicians Union Rehearsal Orchestra by my friends dad David, principal cornet player for the Black Dyke Mill Band.

David's words were as I sat down nervously on the back desk of second violins

*"this will help you with your sight reading!"*

I was only halfway down the first page of music when I realised everyone else was on the next piece! Over the next few years not only did I learn to sight read but also to keep my bow going the same way as everyone else, one eye on the music and the other on the conductor, listen and blend with everyone else and also miming by tilting the bow onto the wood.

I owe this fabulous experience and learning curve from players that I call 'the old school', I was fascinated by people smoking during these rehearsals and how much smoke would come out of the holes in the woodwind instruments when they played especially Eddie on the bassoon. There was 'scratchy Stan' who was going deaf and said he was past his sell by date

but nevertheless knew his job as a violinist. You could always tell when it was twelve o'clock as the bar opened and one-by-one the brass players disappeared and returned with full pints not only smoking but drinking in their bars rest too! In later years I learnt the art of rolling and lighting up a cigarette during ten bars rest, pre-ordering drinks for the intervals of shows and how to dance round the instruments at after show parties without falling over.

At the age of sixteen I attended Huddersfield School of Music but as time went on, I realised a career in music was not for me so I took time out and worked as a private nanny in North Yorkshire. Later I trained to be a Nursery Nurse, keeping music as a hobby along with my other passion 'horse riding.'

I have played in some fabulous orchestras and gained lots of experience through the years playing in various orchestras. I was leader and founder member of the Bradford Phoenix Orchestra. The Yorkshire Youth Orchestra was the first full symphony orchestra I ever played in, the thrill of playing my first Tchaikovsky Symphony was spine tingling. As well as a full time job along with helping my husband with his three retail outlets I have also played over the years with Airedale Symphony, Leeds Symphony, Harrogate Symphony and for many years pit orchestras for amateur dramatics all over Yorkshire including the Alhambra, where I once sang on stage with the Brazilian Opera Company while they were touring the country with the production of Carmen (that's another chapter in my life !)

I have played under some wonderful conductors and also some scary ones and some inexperienced. I remember one conductor who conducted wearing white gloves and more than once brought the orchestra in too soon and then tried to rub us out - okay for strings, bad for brass and certainly off putting for the soloist on stage! The Musicians Union saying is "*Keep music live*" Very apt! I taught violin at Guiseley Music Centre and conducted the Junior String Orchestra for a while. I had a spell in an Irish band for a few years which was a totally different kind of playing and experience.

In 1999 we were successful at auction in buying a rundown smallholding near Harrogate - my life changed completely, at the age of 44 I finally owned my own horse! What with house renovations and the more animals we acquired the less time I had for hobbies. I gave up my full time job, orchestra playing and choir singing, I put my violin in the loft and sadly sold my piano

which was being left to rot in the barn , good for the hens to roost on though! To fit in with my new life I took on various part time jobs, working at the International Conference Centre, the Royal Hall and best of all my dream job working with horses. Life was completely different and a whole new learning curve lambing, hay making, horses, geese, ducks and hens. An old farmer who at the time was giving me advice on how to spot and deal with maggots in my sheep said, "*when you've got stock - you've got trouble*" He was right! Lots of good times were had but also lots of heartache and worry too!

Fast forward to 2016, we sold our smallholding and settled to a more relaxing life in Knaresborough with gas central heating and instant hot water instead of relying on the wood burner, chumping, splitting logs and old pallets hoping we had enough to get through the winter! I dusted down my violin, joined Otley Little Theatre Orchestra and bought a keyboard. I saw KAC advertised and thought I would give something different - go singing acapella. I was made most welcome, loved the singing experience and soon made lovely friends.

I have been married to my long suffering husband for 42 years who has been my rock, roadie, groom, fence mender, builder, plumber, electrician, nursemaid and many animal related tasks. My life is very much in the slow lane, I often reflect on how I managed to cope with such a busy life.....  
*'those were the days my friend.....!'*

### **Make Contact**

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