

THE CORONA SPECIAL no.1: A SORT OF NEWSLETTER! May 2020

Dear Essex Branch SRP members,

We miss you: the personal contacts, the monthly get-togethers and the music, but hope that everyone is keeping well in these uncertain times.

No news is not good news in this case, as we still do not know when we will meet again. We are hoping for September, but of course will have to wait to see how things develop.

In view of the lack of musical information, Madeline suggested that the committee members share what they have been up to in all this unscheduled time at home (some still have to carry on working from home and others have found different ways to be active). Madeline has also set you a brain teaser to check your musical knowledge and provided a copy of Bergmann's Golden rules as well as tips for socially distanced recorder players. (See attached documents)

Judith our former committee member has suggested to organise monthly musical zooms until we meet again (as she has done for her flute group) and we would like to hear your reaction. She is willing to organise and explain how it all works and she already come up with ideas of what we could do: e.g.

Play a piece we are particularly fond of

Play something that shows a point that you have been working on

Play something that you can't get right and ask for advice

All work on something e.g. double tonguing, finger exercise, extended technique

Short recital by volunteers

Play something to be played during the Thursday 'clap'.

I am also including a suggestion from William Lyons for those of you who might be interested:

"I'd like to draw your attention to a new project that I have set up with my ensemble The City Musick. We are all missing playing together in consort and being able to share repertoire and our expertise with our students on the various summer schools and courses that we teach on as an ensemble or individually.

In order to provide, albeit a virtual one, an experience for those like us who feel far removed from group activities, I asked the members of the group to remotely record and multi-track consort parts for a wide variety of pieces and styles from the renaissance. Combinations include mixed consorts of shawms, cornetts and sackbuts and dulcians and whole consorts of crumhorns and recorders. On our site there are a number of recorder consort pieces that society members might enjoy, and they can also join in with the other more exotic sounds! Each piece purchased provides score and parts and a series of audio files with the various parts omitted for each one so that players can fill in those missing parts and join in with the consort play along."

<https://www.tcmusick.com/cckabout>

<https://www.tcmusick.com/cck-music-store>

Very best wishes,

William

WILLIAM LYONS

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Now for the committee members activities:

Madeleine:

I have oiled my recorders - all 20 of them! I don't like to do much

playing, living in a mid-terraced house and with neighbours both sides working from home, but I try to do a bit each day, either recorder, spinet or piano. Choir rehearsals take place courtesy of Zoom, which is an interesting experience....

I have been reading and transcribing letters written by my great great great grandfather which appeared in the press in the 1820s and 1830s. Not easy reading but I found them interesting.

I am lucky in having wonderful Valentines Park 5 minutes' walk away. Is it my imagination or do the colours look more vivid this year - thanks to lack of pollution?

Christine:

I've been having a tootle now and then and also doing a bit of yoga. We've also been out quite a bit walking in Thorndon and Warley woods nearby. The garden's looking a good bit tidier - I've been taking some cuttings and I managed to buy a few bedding plants before the lockdown. And now garden centres are open, I've got hold of a pheromone trap too in an effort to combat the box tree moth. Picking off the caterpillars was just getting too much!

Janet:

Have spent lockdown working part time at home although am now retiring end of June!

Not travelling to London for work has given me more home time to complete some projects such as a crochet blanket, crochet bunting for VE Day and have at last recovered and resprayed an old Lloyd loom chair which my mother had bought just before I was born!! (see attached photos).

Also have been practising my concertina - still can't play fast enough for dance music but at least I am not having to keep checking which button plays what note!!

Have been out on lots of walks and cycle rides.

That's my news

Adrienne:

"There are advantages and disadvantages to teaching online - the Mute button is undoubtedly a gift, balanced out by being able to see only what nine children are up to at any one time! The best thing which has happened to me since lockdown is winning the Staff 'Pretentious Baked Beans on Toast' competition, with my arrangements Peppercorn Pentagram and Sideways Soldiers with Rosemary Bayonets'. Meanwhile, to my regret, I have not had the time or energy to pick up a recorder since Christmas (treatment for my latest parathyroid flare-up is of course delayed). I've done lots of knitting and crochet, though ..." (see attached photographs)

Liz:

I've become quite busy over the last three or four weeks - I now have ten sessions a week doing maths tutoring by zoom - I'm a lot more proficient on that than at the beginning.... I try to walk at least 30 minutes a day and do some online structured exercise most days - yoga, Pilates, body pump or body balance.... the boys and I are doing a lot of baking - I'm gradually mastering sourdough - we have a lively WhatsApp group in our street organising such things as feeding some of Southend's homeless, putting up bunting and banners to thank the NHS and key workers, lots of baking and sharing of skills and resources - the latest is a pebble painting competition for the children - judging on bank holiday Monday... I have to say I have not picked up my recorders once - but I do have an OU maths exam in less than three weeks...!

Annelies:

I have not been musically active, apart from listening to a lot of Classic FM and concerts on the internet, but am involved in care giving, about 4 hours a day to a friend with Parkinson's and shopping and moral support to another friend with cancer. Otherwise I am perfecting my baking skills, looking after my garden, knitting and embroidering for a grandniece due in a few weeks and keeping up with friends via phone and email. Being active keeps me from worrying about the things I cannot change and makes me feel I am doing something useful.

Keep well

This has turned out to be our longest newsletter yet, and we hope that you will make contributions and suggestions or give reactions to be included in our next newsletter. Meanwhile keep safe and well,
With best wishes from Annelies on behalf of the Committee.