



Chairperson's message for 2021

If the Queen can have an 'Annus horribilis' so can Dare to Sing. Yes, it's been a year of difficulty for everyone and our choir has been no exception. All performances and practices have had to be cancelled and to cap it all just as things were getting better we lost Davina, one of our treasured choristers.

However, it hasn't been all doom and gloom as our wonderful, proactive music team of Llinos and Rebecca have kept things moving with their weekly Zoom practices. Indeed it's been so good that we have even learned a number of new songs.

Covid has certainly put a damper on our progress although it hasn't dampened our chorister's enthusiasm as now we are back practicing with a full complement although a few of the more vulnerable are still using Zoom. Additionally, given the present situation we are still reluctant to take on any concerts, however perhaps the new year will bring some joy in that department.

We have also now changed our practice venue, after a choir vote, from Cwmdare Club to Saint Elvans Church, which after a few teething issues such as the heating; things appear to be settling down. Certainly, our new venue is large and airy which allows us to space our seating arrangements to satisfy Covid requirements. Cwmdare Club has been good to us over the years and I would like to send our thanks to them for all their help and support we've had. Be assured, we will still use it for our future social gatherings.

Finally, what of the future? It looks as if the virus is going to be with us for some time, so do we learn to live with it and take on bookings? My feelings are that in order to survive we have to perform so let's take all the safety precautions we can and move on. Indeed we have already accepted a concert in Ross on Wye in March and plans are afoot to have a Saint David's concert at the beginning of the month if all is well and safe. Let's make 2022 a year to remember for the good things and let's put 2021 behind us.

Best wishes for Christmas

Denise Manning

2022 Events!

We are feeling positive about a return to performing in 2022, including a postponed visit to Hereford Police Choir, and fingers crossed for a St Davids Day concert - watch this space!

New Website Launch!

In 2022 we will be launching a new website, complete with more performance videos, and special content for choristers. Keep an eye out for the launch on our social media pages. Follow us on Twitter, Facebook, YouTube and our website!

<https://daretosing.co.uk>

<https://twitter.com/DareToSingChoir>

<https://www.facebook.com/daretosing/>



ZOOM!

The first part of the year we carried on with our Zoom rehearsals and socials. Since we are back rehearsing in person we have found that it is still a great way for people who can't attend, for one reason or another, to join in.



Local Community Links

We were thrilled when restrictions were lifted to receive two grants from Interlink, one of which enabled us to treat our ladies with a fabulous afternoon tea at Cwmdare Club. A lovely afternoon was had by all who attended.

Again this Christmas the choir have chosen to support the local Salvation Army and the much needed work they do at their food bank in Aberdare. Denise Manning presented them with a cheque at a recent rehearsal in St Elvans



Thank you to... as always, Llinos and Rebecca, we couldn't do any of it without you both. As always a huge thank you also goes to our patrons, friends, family and supporters, especially over the past two years.

Dare to Sing's Annual Bursary Award 2021

This year we were thrilled that our chosen school, Aberdare Community School, on being asked to choose a promising student, chose the very talented Morgan Southern. We were delighted that we had returned to practice and were able to present his award in person. Here is a bit about Morgan's music career from his mum.

Morgan began an interest in playing music during primary school where he began by learning the guitar. Once he moved to Aberdare Community School, he carried on with guitar lessons for a short while, but he was more interested in playing the saxophone. He quickly progressed to be being entered straight to Grade 2 and shortly after passing his Grade 3 exam, he was invited to join No.1 Welsh Wing Band for the Air Cadets, as a cadet attending 254 Aberdare ATC Squadron. His debut performance for the Wing Band was in the summer of 2016 where they took part in the Armed Forces Day parade through Caerphilly and put on a display for the public. Through his involvement with the Wing Band, he committed to travel to Cardiff for weekly practice, took part in various events such as Wing presentation evenings, regional competitions, and played at RAF Cosford Air Show.

Alongside this, he has been a member of the orchestra and jazz band in school throughout his time in ACS, taking part in annual music shows for the public and Christmas Carols concerts.

As a member of the Jazz band, he traveled to Belgium, Germany and Holland where he played in public performances in various venues abroad as part of their school trip. Morgan achieved his Grade 5 after completing his GCSE's and is currently working towards his Grade 8 exam, delayed and disrupted by the pandemic. Morgan is particularly interested in performance and just has received the (provisional) grades at A level needed to secure himself a place at the University of Plymouth later this year to studying BA(Hons) Music: Performance. His plan for the bursary money given kindly by the choir is to buy a new mouthpiece, and accessories for his saxophone, ready for uni in September.



Merry Christmas! Here's to a happy, healthy and prosperous 2022 for all choristers, patrons, families and friends.