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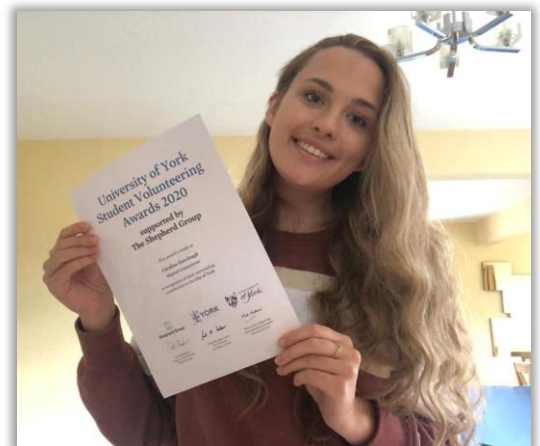
*Helping people to live happier, healthier lives
through musical participation.*

Let's Give Three Cheers for our Volunteers!



The beginning of June marked Volunteers' Week, an annual celebration of people's wonderful contributions to the community, and particularly poignant given the circumstances this year. We are incredibly lucky to have a fantastic team of volunteers who provide transport, support and friendship to members of our weekly groups. Whilst the ongoing coronavirus pandemic has made this slightly more difficult, they have responded wholeheartedly, taking on new roles and demonstrating just how crucial their involvement is to our charity by making weekly phone calls, sending cards and making deliveries to some of our most vulnerable members.

We were delighted to hear that Tower Court's loyal and much-loved volunteer, Caroline, recently received an award from the University of York for her continued commitment and dedication. Whether it's through phone conversations, beautiful postcards or donning 26 items of clothing for The 2.6 Challenge, she knows exactly how to put a HUGE smile on everyone's faces! If you are interested in joining our volunteer team, do give us a call on **01904 373011** or email enquiries@musicalconnections.org.uk.



“Forget the news and sing your socks off... and the world will hear your song!”



Our members have thoroughly enjoyed singing their socks off in our fortnightly Zoom sessions and we now have a merry bunch of regular Zoom-ers tuning in on a Friday afternoon! We recently challenged them to rewrite the lyrics to John Lennon’s ‘Imagine’ and thanks to some wonderful contributions from Helen, Sara and Jean, we now have a beautiful Musical Connections version. The new lyrics touch on the sadness of being unable to sing together, the joy of nature and the excitement of a celebratory reunion... something which

we are very much looking forward to! In the meantime, we’re collating video recordings of our brilliant members singing the new version and hope it will be a lovely celebration of the strength (and song-writing skills) of our Musical Connections family.

Try Not to be Blue, There’s Still Plenty to Do!

Since the lockdown began, the importance of the humble phone call has become increasingly evident and at the moment, it’s the safest - and best - way of connecting with our most isolated members. We’re enjoying calling a large majority of them on a weekly basis and all the chatting, laughing and putting the world to rights has given us the chance to find out lots of interesting details about each other’s lives and share the different ways we’re keeping ourselves entertained whilst at home! The flower beds are pristine, the kitchen cupboards are ordered, the DIY tasks are completed, so now what are we all doing?! You’ll be pleased to hear that our lovely members aren’t short of ideas; here’s a little insight into how they’ve been keeping themselves busy recently!

Pat, one of our lovely Tower Court group members, has turned to knitting and gardening to fill the Musical Connections shaped hole in her life. She’s also taken up calligraphy and oil pastel drawing and has recently produced these two beautiful pictures! Another of our creative members, **Pam**, uses the fur of her angora rabbits for quilting. They’ve recently had a new litter; very cute, fluffy and only weeks old!



Anne, one of our brilliant volunteers and also a member of our Acomb Road group, has been learning to play Morris tunes on the concertina, as it's lighter than her accordion. Her neighbours have been enjoying her lockdown performances and we can't wait to hear her in action very soon!



When she's not singing along to our weekly music videos, **Jade**, another regular at our Acomb Singers group, has been taking advantage of the abundance of cycle paths (and sunshine?!) on her gleaming new wheels... looking very pretty in pink!

Our longest-serving volunteer, **Brian**, has found inspiration in the current pandemic and has turned his hand to a bit of poetry-writing! Here's a little snippet of one of his fantastic poems. You can listen to a Musical Connections-themed one in our Aviva funding campaign video: <https://www.avivacommunityfund.co.uk/keeping-connected>

*'The public now queue to be able to shop
Has life as we knew it now come to a stop?
"No", cries the Blackbird as he carols his song
And the scent of the Lilac shows life will go on.
The swallows are back from their Africa flight
The hoot of the owls as they call through the night
The cuckoo's call is heard once again.
We will go on is Nature's Refrain.'*



Gardening has taken the world by storm recently and our green-fingered members have been busy; **June, John, Linda** and **Tina** have all been enjoying the sunshine and getting their daily dose of nature in the comfort of their own back gardens, whilst **Alison**, keen to add another musical string to her bow, has been learning how to play the flute!

Thank you for reading – keep singing and smiling!