



# The Cuddy Wren Newsletter



[www.cuddywrenfolkclub.com](http://www.cuddywrenfolkclub.com)

Hi, all!

It has been a *long* time since our last Newsletter, and a very strange time, too. Alison suggested it might be a good time to have an electronic one at least until we start up, so here goes!

First, the Club is still here! Thanks to some enterprising Club members we've kept together better than we might have thought. Some have kept in touch by via various social media like WhatsApp. We do also remember those who don't do computers and clever phones as they don't suit everyone, so Club members have been phoning each other as well.

Most entertainingly we've used that wonderful if weird modern video conferencing technology called "Zoom" with a weekly Tuesday "SingaZoomarounds".



They will continue for the present, with a monthly Hot Spot as well. These will be on first Tuesdays with the first one being with our very own Ian Tyzack on April 6<sup>th</sup> exactly a year later than planned!



Our next Zoom Joint Concert will be on Friday April 16<sup>th</sup>, with Yorkshire folk rock duo Plumhall, Judy Cook from the US, who tends more to the traditional US and British repertoire and who has looked in at our Zooms in the past, and Saltburn harpist Sarah Patterson.

Most of you will get the information anyway, but if you'd like to try the Zooms or concerts, and haven't, just email our Nigel Carden on

[nigelcarden@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:nigelcarden@yahoo.co.uk).

He'll soon sort things for you.



Don't forget our own Bob and Marjorie Fortune's folk show on Zetland F.M every Wednesday. They keep going strong, and it's always well worth tuning into.



We must mention Club regular Tony Morris, under whose feet no grass ever grew, and who very quickly last year set up the Covideo Folk Club on Facebook so folkies could share their performances. He very soon had thousands of people worldwide!

Looking ahead, the government hopes to remove all restrictions by June 21<sup>st</sup>, and I'm guessing all our Club regulars will have had their second jab by then, so we *may* be back to normal. We'll have to see what the Bowls Club decides as well, of course.

Alison kindly offered her reflections on her experience of the new form of folk club, and here she is:

### The perils of being a ZOOM MC .....



When the Cutty Wren decided to join the 'in crowd' and start using Zoom for our club nights – some people were sceptical. Bearing in mind that the majority of our members are of a 'certain age', some wondered how many people would participate, but we decided to dip our collective toes in the water and have a go. After all, if it was a disaster – we didn't have to continue.

Nearly 40 weeks later – we have voted it a distinct success. Numbers are so high that we regularly have to ration the number of people who get to perform twice in each session.

'You are still on mute!' will forever be associated with Zoom and with this particular period of history – it has migrated into our everyday speech, and despite Marjorie and I being MCs since the start – we still forget and go rambling on, not realising that no one can hear us until 'You are on mute!' rings out across the (virtual) room.

Connections drop (sometimes mid warble), we get feedback – echoes and the click of fingers on keyboards of those who have forgotten to mute (Although Nigel and John are always on their toes to jump in and mute the forgetful).

My cat (Rupert) will regularly appear – a huge ginger and white head pops up on the monitor then he will casually stroll across the keyboard leaving a cryptic message for everyone '23232hukksihj3ojjwgavah'. He once, whilst 'marking up' my laptop succeeded in cancelling my mouse and another time knocked it shut – cutting me off in mid flow.

I love our SingaZoomarounds, they are such fun. OK, it's not as good as real life – no choruses for a start (lots of faces with moving mouths though), sound can be a bit iffy at times (but better than when we started thanks to Nigel and John) and other technical difficulties (see above), but they connect us. We can talk to our friends (and make some new ones), play, sing, laugh, joke and swap interesting facts in the chat.

Who knows how long it will continue – but I am so glad we decided to 'give it a try'. Thank you to everyone involved in the organisation of Zoom, especially Nigel and John. But thank you to everyone who comes and is helping to keep our Cutty Wren family together during these challenging times.

Thanks, Alison, for that, and yours and Marjorie's noble service as M.C.'s. My own memories of the Zooms have been the variety of material as well as the high quality despite the vagaries of the system.

We've also been lucky to have people like Steve and Sue Lane, Dick and Sylviane and others who would be out dancing on a Tuesday in normal times. John Dunleavy has been a real asset with his knowledge of the system as well as giving us some unusual material. And it's been good to have other visitors from Stockton and Saltburn Clubs. Judy Cook and Dave Mason have even joined us from the U.S.A.!

There have been too many good songs to mention since last July, but I can't resist recalling Vince quickly coming up with the topical

"Bog Roll Millionaire"!



### Saltburn and Cutty Wren Joint Concerts

We've also had some great evenings, with our Nigel organising the clever stuff (with John's help) and Tony Warren from Saltburn Club sorting the on-line money.



We kicked off with two ladies, Edwina Hayes and Carrie Martin on December 18<sup>th</sup>. Both were great, Carrie being the lively one, and Edwina as always warm and relaxing performer.



We were very pleased with the turn-out on Jan 29<sup>th</sup>, for our second Zoom concert (80 tickets sold!)

There was some excellent material from Wendy Arrowsmith, incredible blues from Roger Sutcliffe, and – well, I can't say anything more about Jez Lowe, except that he was as great as ever.

Roger recommended the show to his contacts, and that we had audience members from the USA and Germany as well as all corners of the UK says it all!

And on March 5<sup>th</sup> we had some great powerful songs from Lizzy Hardingham, followed by some deep and reflective ones from the Brothers Gillespie.



We have to record some losses, sadly. We remember Heather Taylor's father and our Vince Parker's wife Joan.

Ian Stewart's brother Barry, who was a regular in our Skelton days, has now passed on, as has Trevor Bond's brother, John. Stewart MacFarlane, whom most of us will have known as the ebullient front man of The Fettleers and local radio presenter has also gone.

Adrian Spendlow, poet and performer whom some will remember from Redcar Festival, has slipped his moorings, as has that great performer Kieran Halpin.

Perhaps, when some folk people are still suffering from the virus, Kieran's words still ring true, believer or not: "If there's a God that you can turn too, don't turn the other way", his song, of course, being a plea for supporting each other in doubtful times, which is what we try to do.



**Memories of American Independence Day  
2019 - Special Club Night**

Lets hope it is not too long before we can be together again – who knows - American Independence day 2021 in the Cutty Wren??

So thanks to all who've kept us going – keep it up.

*See you soon  
– on screen or in the flesh!*

*George F*



**Hot off the press!  
News just come in!**

**Zoom Concert Friday 21st May:  
Cutty Wren and Saltburn Folk Clubs**



Sunjay – young guitar wizard with a great voice, drifting naturally between folk and blues

Dick Miles – top concertina player, writer of songs based on the traditions of Suffolk and Ireland



Pauline Vallance – her clarsach is a beautiful traditional instrument, her songs are contemporary

7:30 start £5 contribution per audience member

For details email [info@cuttywrenfolkclub.com](mailto:info@cuttywrenfolkclub.com)