



**February 2021**

A newsletter for all choristers in Western Vic. & SE  
of SA

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The Choral Grapevine website: <https://thechoralgrapevine.wordpress.com/>

## CHORAL CALENDAR

Date, Time, Venue	Concert information
13th February - 22nd April 2021  Online at <a href="https://voces8.foundation/livefromlondon-spring">https://voces8.foundation/livefromlondon-spring</a> (Website gives live concert dates and times)	<b>LIVE FROM LONDON FESTIVAL – SPRING</b> , presented by <b>Voces 8</b> , featuring 10 concerts. Artists - <b>Voces8</b> and Jonathan Dove, <b>Stile Antico</b> , <b>Carducci Quartet</b> , Joanna MacGreggor, Emma Kirkby, <b>Jason Max Ferdinand Singers</b> , <b>English Chamber Orchestra</b> , <b>Academy of Ancient Music</b> , <b>I Fagiolini</b> , Tamsin Greig. Major works include <b>Faure Requiem</b> , <b>Bach B Minor Mass</b> .  <u>Individual and season tickets</u> available to watch online from concert date to April 22 <sup>nd</sup> .
16 <sup>th</sup> May, time and venues TBA	<b>AMERICANA – The Gisborne Singers</b> conducted by Luke Severn.
23 <sup>rd</sup> May, time and venue TBA	<b>AMERICANA – The Gisborne Singers</b> conducted by Luke Severn.
Sunday August 8, 3pm, Basilica of St Mary of the Angels, Yarra Street, Geelong	<b>BACH'S GENIUS - THE MOTETS – Australian Chamber Choir</b> directed by Douglas Lawrence.  <a href="https://www.auschoir.org/">https://www.auschoir.org/</a>
Friday 17 September 2021, 7.30pm, Basilica of St Mary of the Angels, Yarra Street, Geelong	<b>THE SEVEN LAST WORDS OF CHRIST</b> – Theodore Dubois performed by <b>Windfire Choir</b> conducted by Joseph Hie with orchestra and soloists Teresa Duddy, Manfred Pohlenz and David Campbell.  <a href="https://musicatthebasilica.org.au/">https://musicatthebasilica.org.au/</a>
Sunday, November 21 <sup>st</sup> , venue and time TBA	<b>BRAHMS REQUIEM – The Gisborne Singers</b> conducted by Luke Severn
Sunday November 21, 3pm, Basilica of St Mary of the Angels, Yarra Street, Geelong	<b>TOP 10 CHORAL CLASSICS – Australian Chamber Choir</b> directed by Douglas Lawrence.  <a href="https://www.auschoir.org/">https://www.auschoir.org/</a>
November 29 <sup>th</sup> , venue and time TBA	<b>BRAHMS REQUIEM - The Gisborne Singers</b> conducted by Luke Severn

For further updates, check the [online calendar](#).

### SINGING THE CLASSICS

**Singing the Classics** is a community singing initiative coordinated by Anne Pilgrim, under the auspices of the **Geelong Chorale**. Singing the Classics gives singers from anywhere the opportunity to participate in an afternoon singing major works from the choral repertoire that may be outside of the scope of some choirs.

This year's program is expected to begin in July when, hopefully, most of us should have been vaccinated and we will have a good idea of how singing rehearsals are going.

Is there a work you've been wanting to sing but is outside the scope of your current group? Anne would welcome your suggestions. Please respond directly to [Anne](#).

[Anne Pilgrim](#)

## EDITORIAL

We're finally in a new year after the ravages of 2020! Happy New Year. Let's hope that this year's C word is 'concert'. With the suspension of singing together for so long, and continuing in so many parts of the world, we're lucky in Australia to seem to be returning to something like normality. Thanks to all of those who have contributed to this bumper edition.

Many of our choirs refused to let 'physical distancing' mean 'social distancing' using Zoom, video calls, newsletters, emails and sharing of links to music to keep in touch. Thanks to June in Portland, founder of the Choral Grapevine, who has shared many links to much wonderful, and sometimes humorous music.

Those who attended Helen Hughson's workshops in Geelong last year may have received her link to the Voces8 Live from London choral festivals, held in June and December. These featured some amazing groups from the UK, Ireland, Europe and the USA. During the Christmas festival, another series for 2021 was announced. Several of the choirs featured have visited Australia – for example Voces8, Swingles and Gabrieli Consort presented concerts at the Melbourne Recital Centre in 2019. It's unlikely they'll be back in Australia any time soon. (At the time of writing, Helen H is still in London, and, we hear, keeping well, and managing some singing, in lockdown.)

**Ballarat Choral Society** has commissioned some research into the use of technology for singing safely in outdoor and indoor venues. This work should benefit singers all around the world. I urge you to read Merle Hathaway's report on behalf of the Choral Society about interim findings from this research. (p.2–below)

Also, Helen Seymour has sent an article from the DHHS about singing together safely. (p.9)

As we dust off our vocal cords to share a note of two in 2021, enjoy your singing. Helen Lyth

## Reports from our choirs

### BALLARAT CHORAL SOCIETY

Our *Singing Together Again* project still has some work to do, but here's what we've come up with to date for sharing with other choirs –

Last year **Ballarat Choral Society** received a Regional Arts Fund grant to form a small team of experts in various fields to investigate the particular risks of singing in choirs and to test and develop ways to sing together. It is a world-first project and from the start we have committed to widely share information gleaned from this research.

The team consists of Professor Catherine Bennett, Chair of Epidemiology at Deakin University, civil engineer Michael Knowles, sound recording expert Rex Hardware, and from the Choir - electronics engineer Brian Sala, Musical Director Helen Duggan, and President Merle Hathaway as project manager.

The STA Team is working on several different fronts, investigating outdoor and well-ventilated indoor venues, and a high-tech solution involving headphones, transmitters and mixer to feed back the particular choir sections to allow us to sing distanced from each other. This will be tested when we have sufficient equipment, but in theory it will allow new ways of singing in unusual spaces and may even help less confident singers to learn their parts.

For actual singing together, research recommends that singing be limited to 20 minutes of solid singing (without breaks), with masks to be worn when not singing, and that singers be spaced at least 2 metres apart, with 3 metres between rows.

In February the Ballarat Choral Society will try out a new well-ventilated indoor venue where, after singing for only 20 - 30 minutes, singers will go outside for BYO drinks while fans will be used to further air the space, before returning for another short time. Chairs or coloured sports field markers will ensure singers maintain the safe distance. After general health checks, vocal warm-ups will occur outside, and hand sanitising before admission.

Of course, the safety of this plan is dependent on COVID-19 developments in Victoria. Currently, with no community transmission, this is estimated to be of minimal risk. Obviously, we must all be extremely vigilant, and be prepared to change if these arrangements become risky.

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As Professor Bennett says, “the plan allows the choir to respond to any changes in community transmission risk by stepping up precautions including mask wearing etc.”

Merle Hathaway

President, Ballarat Choral Society

## ACABELLAS

**Acabellas** finished on March 13, 2020. I ran online sessions for nine weeks using pre-recorded videos which included introducing songs, teaching them and then incorporating 4 track videos with all parts sung. I did this four days a week and each session took about 7 hours to prepare and I stopped exhausted. For the last 10 weeks of 2020 I ran three weekly zoom classes which had light attendance. Formerly 180 plus people attended Acabellas sessions per week and approximately twenty singers per week engaged in zoom. When the restrictions eased, I established summer sessions with maximum numbers of 22 to be run socially distanced indoors for one hour. These booked quickly and I had 200 bookings within a couple of weeks. On 30 Dec masks became compulsory indoors so I cancelled all sessions. Outdoor singing and masked indoor singing are not options I am willing to pursue given the multiple health considerations of the singing cohort. I am very eager to hear about other groups.

Update, 26<sup>th</sup> January. Acabellas are back singing with two groups on Thursday at Ocean Grove and a Friday morning group in Geelong. All welcome. \$15 per session. No bookings necessary. See [acabellas](#) website for details.

Belinda Densley Director, Acabellas

## TIDES OF WELCOME

I've been doing a little bit of digging myself - particularly with contacts from DHHS and they have responded with the following which looks very promising. I guess it still comes down to whether people wish to be involved especially if they are working. If there was a close contact outbreak it would mean a fourteen day isolation. Limiting the time and opening up ventilation without indoor fans is a good option. The link explains much of that.

<https://www.coronavirus.vic.gov.au/entertainment-and-culture#can-i-go-to-a-rehearsal-or-lessons-for-singing-or-music>

### Can I go to a rehearsal or lessons for singing or music?

Yes. If the rehearsal is held indoors, the indoor venue should be well ventilated. This can be achieved by making sure that windows are opened.

If you are participating in a music or singing rehearsal it is recommended that you keep at least two metres from other people in the rehearsal. You must wear a fitted face mask when you are in a public indoor setting

No group limits apply.

The facility can apply the two square metre rule if using electronic record keeping. This means the limit on the number of people who can attend is determined by the size of the venue. The two square metre rule is the only limit on the number of people who can attend.

Activities can be held indoors or outdoors. The facility must apply the two square metre rule to ensure people have enough room to maintain 1.5 metres distance between them.

Paul Jones, Mob 0487391451

## U3A CHOIR GEELONG

The U3A Geelong Choir met for the last time in 2020 on March 11<sup>th</sup>.

In October a decision about the return to classes for the Choir in 2021 had to be made to facilitate timetabling and venue hiring and at that time, considering our member numbers, age and health concerns, and venue,

we took the advice of all the researchers that it would not be safe for us to resume early this year.

We all kept in touch throughout the year via phone calls, daily e-mails with videos and suggestions for listening to music and participating in various choir rehearsals streaming on-line.

The Geelong Chorale very kindly let us have access to their weekly newsletter which was always very informative and interesting.

However, the good news is that in term 3 the Choir can be accommodated in our usual space, Cobbin Farm Chapel. It will be a long wait and we wonder what our voices will be like after such a long time

but by then hopefully we will have been vaccinated, will not need masks, and will feel comfortable to return to singing together once more in 4-part harmony.

Life will certainly be better with live music!.

Margaret Hughes OAM, Choir Director, U3A Geelong Choir

## GISBORNE SINGERS

The Gisborne Singers are greatly looking forward to resuming rehearsals in February. We have a new Conductor, Luke Severn, and a new Accompanist, Anna Clarke, leading us. Meg Heymann

## VOX ANGELICA GEELONG CHAMBER

Vox Angelica Geelong Chamber Choir had two concerts cancelled in 2020. Luckily, before Covid, we were able to give our Summer Sounds concert in the Geelong Gallery, which we repeated at Queenscliff Anglican Church. With the current dangers of singing we are not yet making any definite plans for rehearsing or performing in 2021. We have the scores for a 'swoon music' concert ready to go and we are hoping that the concert planned for late 2020 in the Geelong Gallery, with its stunning acoustics, can be scheduled for some time in 2021. The programme will include music by Monteverdi, Alonso Lobo, Faure (*Cantique de Jean Racine*), Elgar (*Lux Aeterna*, aka *Nimrod*), Ēriks Ešņvalds, Healey Willan, and possibly the 24 part canon, *Qui Habitat*, by Josquin Desprez.

Tom Healey, Director

## ST PAUL'S ANGLICAN CHURCH CHOIR

The Choir of St Paul's, Geelong, has been back singing from the beginning of December, 2020, but, because of strict limits to singing indoors, we have just had masked quintets (SSATB). Although we cancelled the Carol Service, we had different quintets singing on Christmas Eve and twice on Christmas Morning. The quintets will be back from the end of January until restrictions are further eased.

With two of our fine basses moving away from Geelong, we are on the lookout for a couple of basses. We also have generous choral scholarships available.

Enquiries to Tom Healey, 0451 960 768

Tom Healey, Director of Music

## MILLICENT CHORAL SOCIETY

Like everywhere else 2020 was a topsy turvy year.

We tried Zoom for several weeks. This new experience enhanced social contact as well as providing opportunities to remain familiar with our music.

Towards the end of the year we met face to face for a "sing" - an enjoyable time. We had a Christmas breakup meal at which six members were presented with a trophy for long service commitment.

This year we are planning to hold a Christian Music Concert in April. This was originally planned for last year. Depending on this

outcome we hope to be involved in other community events during the year.

Practice resumes Feb 1.

Jennifer Golding

## THE GEELONG CHORALE

Our headline concert for 2020 – Brahms *Requiem* – was cancelled due to Covid-19. Unfortunately, the choir was unable to resume at all, but is looking forward to a full year of singing, depending on the situation, in 2021.

The Chorale will return to rehearsals on Monday February 15. Another cancelled concert - *Around the World in 80 Days* - has been rescheduled for the first half of 2021. The date and details are not yet set. We also thought it would be beneficial to the Chorale community to return to singing as soon as possible - in a safe manner, of course. The Brahms's *Requiem* concert is now planned for later in 2021, depending on the Covid-19 situation.

The Chorale Committee is aware that some singers are not yet comfortable to return to group singing, so initial numbers will be limited. We want our members to come along whenever they feel comfortable to do so. Hence singers can defer face-to-face rehearsals to later in the term, and will be supported by links to music and parts as available. We wish to remain as flexible as possible.

Rehearsals will continue to be in the hall at St Luke's, where there are multiple doors for natural ventilation. The hall can hold 41 people with spacing of 4 square metres, which is the required spacing for singing. Rehearsals will be for a maximum of 90 minutes with no break.

QR code signing in will be required.

Masks are still recommended indoors for singing, although masks will not be worn in performance. Hand sanitiser will be available and is also recommended. Singers need to bring any drinks etc. as there will be no access to kitchen or other areas except toilets.

Angela West (Secretary).

## THE GEELONG WELSH LADIES CHOIR

The Geelong Welsh Ladies Choir is so excited to be getting together for rehearsals in 2021, with rehearsals resuming at St Luke's hall, Highton at 7pm on February 3<sup>rd</sup>.

We have a COVID rehearsal plan as well as COVID requirements from St Luke's to adhere to so we are very sure that the rehearsals will be held safely and comfortably for everyone.

Our repertoire will be a mixture of music including a compilation of Lennon and McCartney, music from Oklahoma, *The Streets of London*, *Benedictus*, *Guardian Angel* and *The Rose*. Despite our name, we do not sing everything in Welsh so please don't be put off coming to sing with us or introducing friends to our choir. There is plenty of help and believe it or not there are only two natural Welsh speakers in the choir. If all goes well we hope to be able to sing in concert with the *International Harvester Male Choir* and have been invited to join in concert with the *Mornington Peninsula Welsh Ladies Choir*.

Anyone who is interested in joining us can contact the President Bronwen (0423 712 182) or myself (0413 406 433) or contact me on the choir email. <mailto:geelongwelshlc@gmail.com>

Freda Wright Secretary

## THE HAMILTON SINGERS

The Hamilton Singers committee have finally met and made some decisions regarding our choir's life this year.

Rehearsals will begin February 8<sup>th</sup>. The planned rehearsal space will be large enough accommodate all singers with adequate spacing. We shall attempt to rehearse two hours with a break in the middle but if we find that we are too rusty we

shall shorten that rehearsal length. At this stage we have no plans for a concert during the year - we want to just meet and start singing together and see how things go. Maybe we shall work on producing a CD of some of our favourite choral pieces to give ourselves a bit of a goal for the year.

Beth Tonissen

## INTERNATIONAL HARVESTER MEN'S CHORUS, GEELONG

The international Harvester Male Chorus will have its first practice on the first of February 2021. We are going to have a recruiting campaign so if you know of any men who like singing in the bath or shower we would love to hear from. There are no auditions as we will help them along and reading of music is not obligatory.

We are looking forward to getting back to singing as it has been almost a year since we sang as choir.

All the best to everyone for the New Year.

Terry Ayrton. President

## VOX BOX COMMUNITY CHOIR

**VOX BOX CHOIR** will resume rehearsals at 7.30, Monday Feb 8th.

We have changed venues from the South Barwon Community Centre to the Highton Senior Citizens, Barrabool Road Highton so that we can have more space in order to be compliant with Covid safe- singing requirements.

New members are welcomed; as we are a community choir, the only requirements are ability to sing in tune and blend with fellow choristers (the second I can help singers with). The cost is \$10 per session.

Please contact Choir Director for further information on: 0413 480 182.

Lisa Breen

## SURFSIDE SINGERS

**The Surfside Singers** Torquay formed just over 4 years ago with the support of our local Community House. Starting off with an enthusiastic consort of 12 we now have 33 active and dedicated members. Surfside Singers is a non-auditioned group who love coming together to learn new things such as basic singing technique, part singing, and ensemble and performance skills. Apart from singing, we also enjoy spending time together and having a good (often, very rowdy!) chat. We are an extremely supportive and welcoming group. The choir has many social get-togethers as well as concerts and special performances for local groups and events. There is a wide range of repertoire – musical theatre, jazz, folk, pop, blues, African and spirituals.

We began rehearsals three weeks ago in a larger venue that allows us to socially distance. The room has lots of windows and doors which also allows us to keep the space well ventilated, and we wear masks. Although this has proved challenging, it's better than not being able to sing together!

Our first performance for 2021 will be at an Open Day for our Multi Arts Centre here in Torquay. We are looking forward to using the Black Box Theatre space for the Cabaret Show mid-year that we had previously locked into a date in May 2020. At this show the audience will not only be treated to performances from the choir, but also from soloists and small ensembles from within the group. Who knows what talents will be unearthed?

Let's hope that this year doesn't throw us any more curveballs. Wishing all the ensembles all the best for the year ahead.

Erika Turner – Director

## WINDFIRE CHOIR

Happy New Year!

If you are anything like me, you're probably hanging out to start singing in a choir again...

With ongoing good management of the situation and the roll out of the COVID vaccine we hope that we can all safely return to singing this year.

At this stage we are hoping to "reboot" the *Dubois Seven Last Words of Christ* in September. We are planning to perform this concert on Friday 17 September 2021, 7.30pm. The conductor will be Joseph Hie. Rehearsals will resume for this on August 4<sup>th</sup> and run weekly till the performance.

If you know of any other singers (especially tenors) who would like to join us for this concert, please let me know.

We also plan to perform Benjamin Britten's *St. Nicholas* for Christmas.

Jane Bashiruddin

## WONDROUS MERRY

Wondrous Merry members are straining at the leash to be 'allowed' to sing again!

We had one 'flash singing' get-together towards the end of 2020, with a set list of a few songs which we know from memory and (in normal times) sing happily and fairly often. Before that list was exhausted other favourites were suggested or started, and the singing took off, seemingly with a life of its own. We were truly Wondrous Merry again!

Such joyous enthusiasm is difficult to curtail, so we've decided to try rehearsing weekly (not that we have any gigs on the calendar!) in a large, well-aired room where we can be in a circle and suitably spaced, but unfortunately with less-than-ideal acoustics for the subtlety required in part-singing.

Let's hope the whole world can enjoy making music again very soon!

Marie Goldsworthy '*Let the Music Keep Your Spirits High*' (Jackson Browne)

## GEELONG HARMONY

**What Geelong Harmony has been up to in 2020 – and where we are going in 2021!**

Well, there were a number of disappointments with the onset of Covid, especially the cancellation of our regional *Sweet Adelines* convention both for 2020 and 2021. However, we had a virtual convention instead. This fitted in well with our rapidly acquired expertise at navigating Zoom rehearsals. We have held these meetings online for 3 out of 4 weeks throughout the year, with a variety of activities, including singing and guest educators. A virtual concert was presented instead of our usual contribution to the Seniors Festival held in Geelong; this entailed a great deal of work and expense, but was another great achievement enjoyed by all those who tuned in to watch. We also took part in a number of Sweet Adelines Australia educational events and performances. A highlight was the contribution to the *I am Woman* video shown at the memorial service for Helen Reddy.

We are now planning how we will be able to return to face-to-face rehearsals. Much research has been done on how this can be done safely, with opportunities still available for online participation for those who feel unable to attend in person. Hopefully we will soon be running a program of two weeks rehearsal, two weeks on-line and one week break over a 5 week cycle. Our Musical Director, Alex Morris, together with his Assistant Directors, are developing a program of new songs to learn and the reinforcement of singing skills to ensure a productive and enjoyable year ahead.

Finally, anyone interested in female voice acapella singing in barbershop style is most welcome get in touch via [contact@geelongharmony.com.au](mailto:contact@geelongharmony.com.au) as we are keen to welcome new members!

Jenny Rafter (Secretary)

## THE COLAC CHORALE

The Colac Chorale held their AGM on Jan 28th followed by a Dinner. It was lovely to be able to see so many of our group socially and enjoy time together.

As with so many other groups our aim is to be back singing together in the not-too-distant future. However we are seeking further information re vaccinations and other issues before starting up. When we do resume we will follow the latest advice.

The difficulty around singing with a mask on is another factor that was discussed and definitely poses some challenges.

We wish all other groups well as we move into a hopefully brighter 2021.

Pamela Radcliffe

## CORYULE CHORUS

*Coryule Chorus* on the Bellarine will return to in person rehearsals in early February. We are really looking forward to singing together again after so many months of seeing each other on their weekly Zoom rehearsals.

Musial Director Joy Porter and Choir Chairperson Annette Playsted have developed COVID safe procedures to allow for the safest possible return to rehearsals. The choir has been divided into 2 groups of about 18 singers who will rehearse for an hour each, with 30 minutes for cleaning between each rehearsal and again at the end of the day.

Choir members have all purchased special singers' masks, mostly made by the seamstress members of the choir, using a pattern found online. These masks allow for easier breathing than our normal face masks. Singers will be separated by 2 metres as per the DHHS recommendations, and won't share scores or enjoy an afternoon cuppa together at this stage.

Joy says it will be both strange and exhilarating to be the same room singing again: Voices may well be tired from lack of practice over 2020, but she is certain choir members will love being together again to sing in 4-part harmony.

No performances are planned at this stage however the choir remain hopeful that later in 2021 they may be able to welcome an audience back.

2020 marked the 10<sup>th</sup> birthday of the *Coryule Chorus* and they had big plans for a 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Concert. Maybe an 11<sup>th</sup> birthday concert will be just as significant!

Joy Porter

### **Choirs in The Choral Grapevine network in 2021:**

**Apollo Bay:** Apollo Bay Community Choir **Ballarat:** Ballarat Choral Society, U3A Choristers Ballarat, Vox **Berr:** Riverland Choral Group, **Bordertown:** Bordertown A Cappella Singers, **Camperdown:** Camperdown Uniting Church Choir, **Casterton:** Sacred Heart Church Choir, **Cobden:** Cobden Community Choir, **Colac:** Colac Chorale, **Deans Marsh:** Deans Marsh Singers, **Drysdale:** Coryule Chorus, The Bellarine Community Choir **Geelong:** acabellas, Bella Mama, The Geelong Chorale, Geelong Harmony Chorus, GSO Chorus, Geelong Trades Hall Choir, Geelong Welsh Ladies Choir, Geelong Youth Choir, The Gesualdo Consort, International Harvester Male Chorus, Sing Geelong, St Luke's Uniting Church Choir, St Mary's Basilica Choir, Geelong, St Paul's Church Choir, U3A Geelong Choir, Windfire Chamber Choir, With One Voice Geelong, Windfire Chamber Choir, Wondrous Merry, Vox Angelica Chamber Choir, Vox Box Community Choir **Gisborne:** The Gisborne Singers **Hamilton:** Footprints the Choir, Good Shepherd Choir, Hamilton Singers, Tabor Male Choir, **Lavers Hill:** Lavers Hill Choir, **Millicent:** Millicent Choral Society, **Mt Gambier:** Mayfair Youth Jazz, Mount Gambier Choral Society, Mt Gambier Christ Church Anglican Choir, **Naracoorte:** Naracoorte Singers, **Penola:** Southern Heritage Singers, **Port Fairy:** Port Fairy St Johns Anglican Church Choir, **Portland:** Portland Choral Group, **Queenscliff:** Tides of Welcome, **Torquay** Surfside Singers **Warrnambool:** Cantori, Red Tent Singers, Warrnambool Christ Church Choir, Merri Singers, Warrnambool St Johns Presbyterian Choir, Warrnambool Theatre Company Chorale



Thanks to Helen Seymour for this advice from the DHHS web site about safe group singing .

<https://www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/faq-covid-19-transmission-air-and-wind-moving-devices-doc>

### Can choirs resume safely?

Group singing may transmit coronavirus (COVID-19). Singing inside in a poorly ventilated area with singers not physically distanced for several hours has been associated with the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19) (Hamner L, 2020). Humming and singing softly is of lower risk. A study has shown that normal singing produces more aerosol particles than normal talking, and loud singing generates more particles than normal singing (Alsved M, 2020). Wearing a face mask reduces the level of aerosol particles produced to about that of normal talking. Interestingly, some consonants, for example 'p', 'b', 'r' and 't', generated a high number of small to large droplets (Alsved M, 2020).

It is important that anyone attending group singing does not have any symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) to ensure the safety of others. People at high-risk of severe illness should not participate in group singing while there is active community transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19).

Group singing is safest when the following measures are applied:

- singing outside or in a well-ventilated room (with windows open)
- physical distancing of at least 2 metres between each person while singing
- short performances (of less than an hour)
- singing softly.

Outdoor lessons, class or practice is permitted with the number of singers based on current restrictions. Singing lessons need to ensure enough space to allow for physical distancing – allowing for people to keep at least 1.5 metres apart.

Attending indoor lessons, classes and practice is permitted based on current restrictions.

If you are running an outdoor class, you may need a permit from your local council.

If a singing assessment is required, the assessor must wear an P2/N95 respirator mask when there is active community transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19). Consideration should be given to introducing glass partitioned rooms, videoing in another room, or recording video from home when there is active community transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19) (Community Music Victoria, 2020).



Finally—a chance to sing with a group, even if you're still singing from home. ..

### #SingTheScore – I Fagiolini

For keen singers #SingTheScore is our new YouTube series. One mini-masterwork a week: historical intros from Robert Hollingworth, a few poor quality jokes, then sing along with *I Fagiolini*.

[www.ifagiolini.com/SingTheScore](http://www.ifagiolini.com/SingTheScore)

## MUSIC AT THE BASILICA

Music at the Basilica intends to present a short concert for Easter featuring a small group of instrumentalists and a vocalist. This will be a modest program, to test the waters in regard to willingness of audiences to return to live performances, and it will give us an opportunity to put our COVID safety plan into practice. We will be able to test the plan and make any adjustments required. The Basilica has been open for services since late last year, and so far the measures in place for booking and monitoring congregations and measures for physical distancing have worked well.

In regard to the Easter concert, the exact details and date have not been determined yet - We will let you know when we have confirmed the performers and the program.

We are planning a return of choral singing in the second half of this year – hopefully the vaccine rollout will be well underway and singers and audiences will be more confident about singing/ attending concerts. **Windfire Choir** will start rehearsals in August. Naturally we will comply with any restrictions that will be in place at that time. This may mean a change in rehearsal venue to allow for physical distancing, ventilation and sanitisation. If all goes well, we will be able to present our first concert for 2021 in September.

**Windfire Choir, Geelong Children's Choir** and orchestra will present a performance of **Saint Nicholas** by Benjamin Britten later in the year.

We are planning to hold the Windfire Annual Music Festival in October 2021, but have not confirmed the date yet. The concerts and artists will be the same as those planned for 2020.

We welcome back the Australian Chamber Choir for two concerts from their 2021 season, on August 8<sup>th</sup> and November 21<sup>st</sup>.

Here's hoping that we will all be able to return safely and confidently to live performances in 2021.

Jane Bashiruddin



Before Covid



Now