

Special Recess Bulletin #1 - 19 March 2020

Dear Leaders and Members

The proverb says 'when the going gets tough, the tough get going'. You - Leaders and Members and Musicians are all amazing and a great testimony to that saying.

The speed in which you have all acted and responded to us has been exemplary to say the least. It makes us feel very proud of the strength of our network and organisation. To have all groups respond positively within a week to our directive to go into recess has been inspiring.

Thank you also for your kind words, support and understanding. It's not an easy time for any of us that is for sure. I have tried to offer my thanks to all Leaders personally. I still have a few to go

However, taking the action we have has definitely, as they say, 'flattened the curve' somewhat when you consider the breadth of our organisation.

Our next step must be about staying in touch with each other. I know each of the groups have made sure they have the email addresses and or postal addresses of all members. I am aware of various measures each group are taking to stay in touch and they all sound great. **TIP:** If you want to have a sing which is a good idea - Youtube up your favourite singer and sing your heart out - great suggestion from Yvonne Butler of Wollongong. However, if at any time there is anyone out there who feels isolated at any stage they may be in touch with us: info@singaustralia.com.au or our office 03 - 88388995 or my mobile 0417 628082.

In offering this support we need to reinforce that Head Office will continue to operate as normally as possible from Monday to Friday. There are still many things we need to keep doing to ensure that the organisation can bounce back when this crisis is over. We will still manage membership renewals. We will still assist people in signing onto Direct Debit. We will still take the opportunity to undertake some preliminary enquiries for our future National Gathering and for further tours and events. We will still handle merchandise as much as we can and that will include making available the recording of the songs of Songbook 1. We have had difficulties in getting that onto CDs and there has been considerable slowness in getting the copyright through. I will be sending out a weekly bulletin with updates and other information. **This will also be posted on the website.** www.singaustralia.com.au **Go to Home Page and click on News Updates.** It would be great if you could please pass these bulletins on to the members then everyone will be kept consistently informed. It is important therefore please that we have the continuity of membership fees to maintain our office

Just to confirm:

- 1. The National Gathering and the Post Gathering Tour have been cancelled. Please make sure all your members know about this.**
- 2. All groups must go into recess for an indefinite period as from Monday 23 March.**
- 3. All gigs must be cancelled for at least the next 6 months or until advised**

I will post a Special Recess Bulletin on the website each week. For those not on the internet could you please ensure they get this.

I know that some people will have the urge to want to get together for a social sing and catch up. Could I ask that you resist that as tempting as it may be. Please do not go there. This virus is non judgemental – it is a real leveller. No one is exempt. **No one knows who has the virus until it has been diagnosed or the symptoms become obvious. That can be in a period of 2 to 14 days or even more.** Once again the uncertainties every which way are to be respected. **TIP:** The best way we can all stay safe now is to exercise social distancing - do not gather, do not get caught in a crowd and don't forget the use of soap and water – wash your hands regularly.

On our early morning walk this morning we came across someone we haven't seen for a while. He waltzed straight up and was about to shake hands and I said 'woah – you can't do that now'. We insisted that he keep his distance. His reply to us, which I fear is more prevalent than we realise, was – 'Oh what a load of bullshit'. I spent the next 5 minutes trying to convince him otherwise but that is the problem we face in our society right now – on the one hand there is panic that we might run out of everything and on the other hand there is the denial of the seriousness of the pandemic itself. I did get his attention when I mentioned the impact of the Spanish Flu. He knew nothing of it. **TIP:** Keep your distance from everyone. **On a lighter note:** Our grandson was told that when he washes his hands with soap and water he must do it for as long as singing the Happy Birthday song twice. He now fully believes that if he sings Happy Birthday twice he will be OK. Very cute. **TIP:** Sing Happy Birthday while you are washing your hands – why not.

All the best everyone. Stay safe.

Colin Slater
National Director