

**To Leaders and Members.**

**Special Recess Bulletin No 12. (12 June 2020)**

**Greetings to all members of Sing Australia.** We want to thank you all for your patience and understanding during our recess period. It has been undoubtedly quite a challenging time for many people. However, in our isolation we have also had the time to reflect on many things about our priorities and ourselves. It hasn't all been bad. In lots of ways it has brought us closer together. We may not have been able to see each other, although that bit has eased considerably, we have thought about each other more than normal and we have connected with each other.

**Great programs in each group.**

We are thrilled to see all the terrific programs that you have been running in your group. There has been a lot of communication through Zoom programs, through videos of songs, to promoting the singing of certain songs at a particular time, there has been the sharing of poetry, jokes, art, travel stories and so on. There have been lots of phone calls and letters. A huge thanks to the Leaders of the groups for managing all this - I know it has taken quite a bit of work. Your efforts, I know, will be greatly appreciated by your members and they will show their appreciation in all sorts of ways.

**Special Members only Facebook Page**

Our special Facebook page has had a magnificent following. Gian's Tuesday night sessions in particular and her Spotlight on Sing Australia program have been hugely popular. It has created a kind of phenomenon where the exchange of comments and greetings has almost been as exciting and lovely as the singing. Members have been able to go back and play those evening sing-alongs over and over. I have been overwhelmed to see the responses to my various tributes to the various people who make up the membership and leadership of Sing Australia and to the Life Members and to those, our dear friends who have passed away. I was also pleased to know that my singing lessons were of assistance and that the songs I posted were uplifting and helpful. We will continue to offer various things on that Facebook page that can bring joy and comfort.

**New idea for our Facebook group**

One of our new ideas following on from my wife, Margaret, singing with me on Facebook, is our invitation to other couples to send us a video of them singing a song from one of our songbooks. Just to be clear that is one couple singing in their home. Not more than one couple meeting up to sing. We must stay on song with our message on this. But it would be so nice to be able to post up a video of a couple enjoying the singing of a song together. Don't worry about any high production on this. Just do it as I do - with your camera. Send it to [info@singaustralia.com.au](mailto:info@singaustralia.com.au)

**Lots of friendships and greater self reliance**

As I have said we have come to know each other more and more through all our activities and so I say there has been a very positive side to the Covid lockdown - an opportunity indeed that may never have presented itself so poignantly and timely under normal circumstances. It has provided an opportunity to reset a few things. I know we have a whole new perspective on personal hygiene now.

We have a whole new respect on giving people space. We have a different view on what is important in terms of our friendships and we have hopefully come to know more about our singing voices. To know how wonderful it is that we can sing and that we can express our emotions in such a beneficial way not to please others but to have that self-reliance in knowing how to make ourselves happy and content. It is pretty empowering.

### **Ongoing recess**

We can envisage that the recess may continue for a while yet. Until we have the all clear and a certainty of safety we must stay in recess. We cannot break off into small groups to sing in our homes, we cannot sing in any size public venue and we cannot sing outside as yet even though it is safer. It is not entirely safe. I must say because of our demographic I am going for 100% safety with our precautions.

### **Preparations for our virtual National Gathering.**

We are proposing that we have this on the evenings of 10, 11 and 12 July. They will all commence at 7.30pm Melbourne time but log on 5 minutes earlier to be ready. Broadly the program will look like this:-

***Friday 10 July - Christmas in July*** - songs from both our Christmas songbooks plus a few surprises.

***Saturday 11 July*** - An evening of song supported by multiple instruments. Both Chris Hale and Nathan Slater will join Gian. Should be a great sound. The songs will be selected by Gian. We will have other special guests as well. The theme will be determined by Poll.

***Sunday 12 July*** - Theme to be determined by poll. Once we have the theme we can put out a poll for the songs.

On all nights we will invite you to send in photos of your dress ups and maybe your special dinner and table decorations during the evening. We will post these during the night. Perhaps you could do a couple of practice runs to see how you go with selfies.

That's about it folks. Stay safe and well. Lots of love to you all from all of us at Head Office

Colin Slater, National Director