



MID MAY '21 NEWSLETTER

Dear Come Singing Friends,

When do you think we can legitimately cast off our vests and other winter garments? Please, can anybody throw any light as to the definite meaning of “Don’t Cast a Clout until May is Out”? Does it mean when the hawthorn blossom is out in all it’s glory or the actual month of May? You’ll find a quiz all about May that Pat has drawn up, overleaf.



HAWTHORN BLOSSOM

Among the many buds proclaiming May
Decking the fields in holiday array,
Striving who shall surpass in braverie,
Marke the faire flowering of the hawthorne tree
Who finely clothed in a robe of white,
Fills full the wanton eye with May’s delight.
Geoffrey Chaucer

My Father-in-Law called hawthorn ‘bread and cheese’ because when he was a lad, he, and other boys, would eat the young leaves from the plant in springtime, as they were supposed to taste like bread and cheese! I can’t say I’ve ever tried them, but I do remember as a child being in a friend’s garden and eating raw rhubarb sticks and green, unripe gooseberries straight from the bush.

Another plant with cheese in its name, is the Swiss Cheese plant, so called because of the holes in the leaves - did anyone own one back in the 70's? They were quite the thing then and I believe they're making a comeback. Although I had one for several years it never flowered and when it got quite out of control the plant somehow found its way of the house – I can't remember how. I think I was told to bathe the leaves with cottonwool and milk when they got dusty but I can't say that I ever did.



A SWISS CHEESE PLANT (Monstera Deliciosa) – Did yours ever flower?

Pat has sent in a quiz all about the word “May” – have a go at finding the missing letters or words, answers on the back page:

May Quiz

- 1 May _ _ _ _ this was decorated with flowers and ribbons and used to dance around.
- 2 May _ _ _ a cockchafer.
- 3 May _ _ _ a distress signal.
- 4 May _ _ _ _ _ _ grows on hawthorns
- 5 May _ _ _ _ an important area in London.
- 6 May _ _ perhaps?
- 7 May _ _ _ _ chosen on May Day.
- 8 May _ _ _ collected for its medicinal and cosmetic properties.
- 9 May _ _ _ utter chaos!
- 10 May _ _ _ _ they are found for a short time over rivers and streams.

"The world's favourite season is the spring.
All things seem possible in May."
- Edwin Way Teale

"Be like the flower, turn your face to the sun." – Kahlil Gibran

Carrying on with the theme of well-loved cars from the last newsletter:-

THE STORY OF LAURIE'S SPORTS CAR: The Mazda MX-5 was designed to fill the gap in the market for a compact sports car in the late 1980's. This segment, once popular with manufacturers, had declined with very few new models introduced at the time. Does anyone remember cars of the 60's and 70's such as the Lotus Elan and Elan, the Triumph Spitfire and GT6 or the MG Midget and MGB? Since starting production in 1989, the MX-5 is the world's best-selling sports car and is now in its 4th generation. The Mark 1 had pop-up headlights which were very similar to the Lotus Elan of the 60's.

My car is a Mark 2. It was first registered in June 1999. In December 2002 it was damaged in an accident and was declared a Category C write-off. It was bought and repaired to a high standard by a bodywork repair specialist in Wakefield and it was sold locally there in 2005. I bought the car in January 2009 with about 42,000 miles on the clock to replace a kit car that I built which resembled a Morgan two-seater, but of course that is another story.

Its current mileage is 83,000 miles and it has been totally reliable during the whole of my ownership. It has suffered from minor rusting around its rear wheel arches like most other early MX-5 cars, but this has been properly dealt with by a local bodywork repairer. It only needs an annual service and its brake system once required overhauling. I have generally done the servicing and other jobs myself as it is quite straightforward to do. I have also undersealed the underneath of the car a few years ago to help prevent any rusting there.

It is a very enjoyable car to drive, especially on B-roads with sweeping bends. It has exceptional road-holding capabilities, rather than outright speed. You point the wheels into a bend regardless of the speed and it goes round it safely without any fuss.

The car is a delight to be in when the weather is dry and I use it from Spring through to Autumn each year. My late wife and I have used it for a holiday in Germany and we have also enjoyed several holidays driving down to southern France. What is definitely on my list of things to do is to have a driving holiday in the Scottish Highlands as well as going through the alpine passes of France, Switzerland and Italy to experience the dramatic scenery of the region. Maybe next year should the coronavirus pandemic recede enough.

It might be a 22-year-old car, but with occasional attention to its mechanics and rust prevention of its bodywork, it could be a source of enjoyment for quite a few more years.



A picture of Mandy, and the MX-5, somewhere in Provence

Jennie has sent in a quiz about Theatre Musicals, see how many you can guess:-

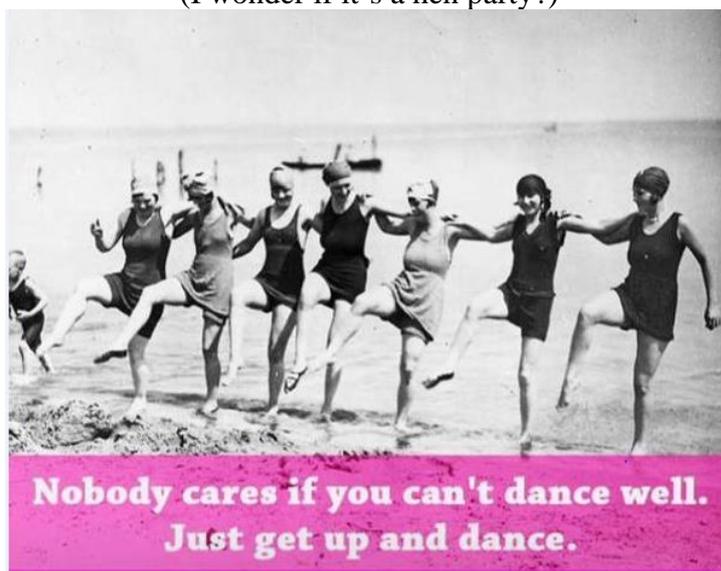
LET'S VISIT THE THEATRE (remotely!)

1. A large number of musical instruments get us off to a rousing start.
2. From the musical 'Hair', astrology (star sign) is the clue.
3. The title of this song is perfect for Heather and 'Come Singing'; saying a big thank you. A Greek Island provides the ideal setting.
4. A romantic song, all about love as you would expect from the musical 'Aspects of Love'.
5. These "rocks" are supposed to be perfect for ladies as Marilyn Monroe declared.
6. A pretty little white mountain flower.
7. A big clue to this song is to be found in last month's newsletter; not exactly like Brian's car but very special too.
8. An invitation to "come out tonight and dance the night away". An alcoholic drink is also the lady's name.
9. Would you climb a hill, go to Timbuktu? Yes, for your smile anything.
10. Just a few requests..... an enormous chair, lots of chocolates to eat, warm hands, warm feet.



It will be fantastic when we can go to the theatre with absolute confidence again: the anticipation of waiting for the show to begin and looking at your watch because it's 5 minutes late in starting! And then the lights go down, suddenly a hush in the auditorium, and the show starts. Then the dilemma in the interval – have I time to go to the loo and get an ice cream as well? The remainder of the show always seems to fly by and before you know it, it's all over, the cast are taking their bows - and if you're lucky they'll do an encore!

Heather has sent in this picture of some ladies have fun dancing on the beach.
(I wonder if it's a hen party?)



I don't think they're going to make the stage – but they're enjoying themselves anyway.
Their swimming costumes don't look very comfortable!

* * * * *

RECIPE SLOT: Rhubarb is in season at the moment - is there anything that tastes better? Here's an easy recipe for an oaty crumble:

CINNAMON RHUBARB CRUMBLE:

Preheat oven to 180c/350f/gas 4

This recipe also works well with porridge oats and bran. You can cut down on the amount of sugar if desired. Instead of using cinnamon, you can add lemon zest or ginger – or just have it plain.

INGREDIENTS –

- 450 (1lb) rhubarb cut into bite size pieces
- 50g (2oz) caster sugar
- 1tsp ground cinnamon

For the crumble topping:

- 110g (4oz) porridge oats
- 110 (4oz) plain flour
- 110g (4oz) butter, cubed
- 1 tsp cinnamon
- 50g (2oz) soft brown sugar

METHOD –

Place the rhubarb in a shallow overproof dish and sprinkle with the sugar and cinnamon. To make the crumble topping, rub the butter into the oats and flour until the mixture

resembles coarse breadcrumbs, then stir in the sugar and cinnamon and mix together well. Spoon over the rhubarb and bake for 40 minutes in the centre of the oven. Check after 30mins.

Delicious served hot with custard, cream, or ice cream.



And Heather has sent a video of a handy Russian trick for anyone who can't get enough chocolate. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z7tRr49qZfo>

Many thanks for your articles, please keep sending them in to Heather at heatheredwards.music@gmail.com it's always good to have a variety of articles and pictures. Don't forget you can join in singing with Heather any time you want by clicking on the library link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LIUZd5QJA-k&list=PLmw2CBV4UBFHfj1dpVxv5V2-EX5fE5F1Z&index=7&t=7s>

Stay safe and well, with lots of love and best wishes from all at Come Singing.

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ANSWERS:

May Quiz Answers

- 1 Pole
- 2 Bug
- 3 Day
- 4 Blossom
- 5 Fair
- 6 Be
- 7 Queen
- 8 Dew
- 9 Hem
- 10 flies

Music Quiz Answers

1. 76 trombones. The Music Man. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lp64p6wMzss>
2. Age of Aquarius. Hair. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PXARzGdhx_Q
3. Thank you for the music. Mamma Mia. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0dcbw4IEY5w>
4. Love changes everything. Aspects of Love. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WnOQ1VV3CqU>
5. Diamonds are a girl's best friend. Gentleman Prefer Blondes. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hEyWqVfY4vo>
6. Edelweiss. The Sound of Music. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8bL2BCiFkTk>
7. Chitty, chitty, bang, bang. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1t4euqZLsY>
8. Sherry. Jersey Boys. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=newBi8VH3n4>
9. I'd do anything. Oliver. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0OWe6M5335s>
10. Wouldn't it be lovely? My Fair Lady. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q5fW7sERw7I>