



Come Singing newsletter, June 2024

Dear Come Singing friends,

It's Sunday, the sun is shining and suddenly the world is smiling. What a difference a couple of days can make! My jungly garden is full of roses, Canterbury bells, cranesbills of various colours, foxgloves and all sorts of delights, and with luck there may soon be a few strawberries, blackcurrants, redcurrants and even a golden raspberry or two. I'll need to wait a while yet, but the cherry and fig trees are loaded (to be shared with the birds!) and the apples look promising. Fingers crossed that the July drop isn't too heavy...

But it *is* very lush and straggly after all the rain. My clothes are covered in seeds from all the spent forget-me-nots and I suspect my hair permanently has twigs in it!



This time of year makes one think of 'English Country Gardens' - almost impossible to sing with its huge list of flowers, insects and birds, but with the irresistible punchline to each verse: 'in an English country garden'! With luck this version will come with some evocative images:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R5zny7ZlbME>

There are so many songs about flowers - and not just roses. Their beauty, colour and fragility are perfect imagery for verse, and even their names are romantic and magical - lady's mantle, cosmos, Solomon's seal, morning glory, love-in-a-mist - the list is endless...

Here are a few favourites

1. A Robert Burns classic: - My Love is like a That's newly sprung in June; o my Love is like the melody that's sweetly played in tune.
2. What flower would go well with a white sports coat?
3. You wouldn't look out of place here with flowers in your hair.
4. One for the kitchen garden: what greenery should you take with you to Scarborough Fair?
5. The end of the affair: 'You don't sing me love songs, you hardly talk to me any more when I come through the door at the end of the day'. but worst of all...
6. 'I see trees of green, red roses too; I see them bloom for me and you and I think to myself...'
7. Poor self image here! A Barbra Streisand classic: 'I'm wearing second hand hats, second hand clothes. That's why they call me



8. Not a song at all but a waltz from Tchaikovsky's Nutcracker Suite.



9. One of the most poignant and beautiful songs, describing the end of summer: '... .. ' left blooming all alone, all her lovely companions are faded and gone...
10. And to finish, a protest song as relevant now as when Pete Seeger wrote it in 1955 - 'When will they ever learn?'

It's good to be able to get out and about when the weather allows. At the moment there's a wonderful installation by Antony Gormley at Houghton Hall of one hundred life-size cast-iron figures standing or buried to some degree in the ground. It rained non-stop when I visited but we still loved it and were fascinated see how many of the human forms we could find!

<https://www.houghtonhall.com/whats-on/antony-gormleys-time-horizon>



What made an even greater impression was the parkland on the approach to the Hall: much less formal and so calming and welcoming.



Very reminiscent of the music of Vaughan Williams – perhaps his Fantasia on a theme by Thomas Tallis?

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ihx5LCF1yJY>

Later a not-quite- poem popped into my head, describing how it felt...

Houghton Parkland

There's something about expanse of green -
Majestic trees in full fresh leaf,
spacious ease...

The eyes breathe in,
Mind finds its note
in the green harmony.

A larger music begins...

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-mHgucSz1hs>

We all thought we could dispense with the recipe this month and simply enjoy the season of salads, strawberries and ice cream instead! That makes this a shorter newsletter than usual, but it comes with best wishes and much love from all at Come Singing.

Hope to see some of you soon at the Millennium or Earlham library!



Answers to flowers songs

1. My love is like a red red rose <https://youtu.be/X6Z8f42fF8M>
2. A white sports coat <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zD8MnvyAi6I>
3. If you go to San Francisco <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=710vkKy504U>
4. Parsley, sage, rosemary and thyme <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-Jj4s9I-53g>
5. You don't bring me flowers any more <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Zm4XAwNoR-A>
6. What a wonderful world <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A3yCcXgbKrE>
7. Secondhand Rose <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lCtrcAp3TEY>
8. Waltz of the flowers <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VUF9g9V-Ang>
9. The last rose of summer <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HHH6DYCoYVk>
10. Where have all the flowers gone <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PSE03QVnXg0>

