

Welcome to the July 2020 edition of your newsletter - keeping you up to date with society news. We hope you've all been keeping well through these strange times. Who would have thought, as we finished our February concert, that it would be our last chance for a while?! Despite time at home, a number of COS and CO2 members joined our virtual choir, and we recently held our first AGM via zoom! Looking forward to when we can sing and perform together again!

**“Dare to be Different” – lots of happy memories for cast and audiences!**

Although our last concert seems a while ago, it's been a great experience to look back on. Director, Katie Cutmore, and Musical Director, Richard Harrison provided us with some great opportunities to show off solo, small group and company numbers drawn from shows ranging from We Will Rock You to Mary Poppins. And Katie set us through our paces in terms of movement, so it was a great sense of achievement when it all came together!



**'Dare to be Different'**

Colchester Operatic Society presents their 2020 concert

**Dare to be DIFFERENT**

*Don't conform...perform!*

12th - 15th February 2020  
 7.45pm (Saturday Matinee 2.30pm)  
 Headgate Theatre, Colchester  
 £12.50  
 Tickets: 01206 366000 | www.headgatestheatre.co.uk  
 www.colchesteroperaticsociety.co.uk

Extra Date:  
**Saturday 22 February**  
 7.45pm (Raising funds for Leprosy)  
 Lion Walk Church, Colchester  
 £12.50  
 Tickets: www.lepro.org.uk

## COS & CO<sub>2</sub> Virtual Choir

Huge thanks to Neil Somerville for running our Virtual Choir. For over 10 weeks from early April, our weekly rehearsals have been a ray of sunshine in our quiet lives. Although not the same as getting together for a normal rehearsal, our zoom sessions were a great way to keep up with friends, and have a chance to sing. With a repertoire chosen from COS and CO<sub>2</sub> shows running from Calamity Jane and Footloose through to Oliver, the choir brought together a mix of COS and CO<sub>2</sub> members. Whilst we don't envy Neil the task of pulling many many recordings together, we're excited to hear the result!



## Our first AGM via Zoom!

It was great to see so many COS members at our recent virtual AGM. As well as allowing us to run through all the standard AGM content, the meeting also included Open Forum for members to raise and explore issues. A topic of much debate was the Society's response to the 'Black Lives Matter' movement. We're currently reviewing our practices and policies and developing new ones with a view to improving the diversity of the Society and its approach to inclusion and equality, building on work the Society has already done – look out for more on this soon.

At the AGM, we were also delighted to award the first of our new awards. These new awards recognise an outstanding contribution to the Society for active performing members (Dani Fincham award), and an outstanding contribution to the Society behind the scenes (technical / backstage-Jim Bowman award). Our worthy winners were our fabulous president, John Enfield, and backstage champion, Terry Lyon.





### The latest on 'Fame' and 'Shrek' and beyond

We're looking forward to getting started again with our next productions, although this is unlikely to be before 2021. In the meantime, another virtual choir is a possibility, as are potential online workshops. We'll keep you posted!

### Member news

Congratulations to Claudia Haswell on graduating her degree in Sociology this summer.

### Get Involved!

#### Wanted – Inclusion, Equality & Diversity Lead

The Executive Committee is looking for a COS member to join the committee as our Inclusion, Equality & Diversity Lead. This person needs to have a passion for Inclusion, Diversity and Equality and the drive for positive change in this area. They will take responsibility for our new Inclusion, Equality & Diversity strategy, driving positive change in all areas of the Society and ensuring the Society upholds its new Inclusion, Equality & Diversity policy. This role will develop over time and will also include appointing & mentoring Inclusion champions within all areas of the Society's work. This role also includes being a full member of the Exec committee. **If you think this could be you** then please email Amanda ([secretary@colchesteroperaticsociety.co.uk](mailto:secretary@colchesteroperaticsociety.co.uk)) with a brief note about why you would like to take on this role **by 31<sup>st</sup> August**. The committee will then consider all applications and appoint accordingly.

### Other opportunities

We are always keen to hear from anyone who would like to get involved in the Society, in whatever capacity. This could range from director and musical director, through to other aspects of production and backstage help. If you're interested in any of these roles, please get in touch at any time, with details of your area of interest and any credentials. It's not always possible to advertise roles, and previous speculative contacts have gone on the Choreograph shows for the Society. You can contact us via our secretary, Amanda.

### Contact update: website and emails

We have a brand new policies page on our website: <https://www.colchesteroperaticsociety.co.uk/about/policies/>. Here you can find all COS / CO2 rules, policies and agreements. Our Privacy policies have recently been updated and can be found on the policies page also. Katie has emailed all members with tips for signing in to the members area of the website as we hope to make more use of this area moving forwards.

Following the recent email hack and other technical issues, our membership secretary now has a new Society email – [membership@colchesteroperaticsociety.co.uk](mailto:membership@colchesteroperaticsociety.co.uk). There will be a transition period and emails sent to the old address will still reach him, but please use the new email address if contacting him in the future.

**Keeping in touch**

[www.colchesteroperaticsociety.co.uk](http://www.colchesteroperaticsociety.co.uk)

Follow Colchester operatic society on [facebook](#), Twitter

[@ColchesterOpSoc](#) and Instagram:

<https://www.instagram.com/colchesteroperatic/>

Executive committee contacts

Chair: [chair@colchesteroperaticsociety.co.uk](mailto:chair@colchesteroperaticsociety.co.uk)



Katie Cutmore

Vice-chair and Chair of CO<sub>2</sub>



Ann Taylor

Secretary



Amanda Powell

[secretary@colchesteroperaticsociety.co.uk](mailto:secretary@colchesteroperaticsociety.co.uk)



Laura Hicks

Business Manager



Sarah White

Membership secretary



Paul Kusel-Baum

[membership@colchesteroperaticsociety.co.uk](mailto:membership@colchesteroperaticsociety.co.uk)

Treasurer & Music liaison / orchestra fixer



Neil Somerville

Marketing and Events Chair



Sally Cutchie

[marketing@colchesteroperaticsociety.co.uk](mailto:marketing@colchesteroperaticsociety.co.uk)

Minutes and Newsletter



Celia Greaves

Social media



Becky Clemens

Marketing & Events

Barbara Pears

Please feel free to contact the Executive Committee (via our secretary) with any ideas / issues you may have so we can be more informed on an ongoing basis.

**CO2 can be contacted at [coztheatre@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:coztheatre@hotmail.co.uk)**

Marketing and events committee contacts

[colchesteroperaticsociety@gmail.com](mailto:colchesteroperaticsociety@gmail.com) or  
[marketing@colchesteroperaticsociety.co.uk](mailto:marketing@colchesteroperaticsociety.co.uk)

Chair, Social Account Treasurer & Mercury Contact



Sally Cutchie

External Events co-ordinator



Sarah White

Secretary, Social media (Facebook & Instagram) & Advertising (COS)



Becky Clemens

CO2 liaison, programme (CO2) and Internal events co-ordinator



Charlotte Butcher

Personal Liaison & Promotional Material Distribution Coordinator

Barbara Pears

Strategy

Joseph Rawlings

Social media  
Claudia Haswell

Social media (Twitter)  
Sarah Miles

