



Mary is 79 and has been a resident at Grange Care Home in Kilmarnock for two years. She takes part in all of the activities organised by Derek, the Lifestyle Coordinator, but she has a particular fondness for music.

Mary: "I've always loved music. My mother loved music too, she played the accordion. Then I got one and had lessons, then my sister... we were like a three-piece band, it was marvellous."

Derek: "The residents love to hear different music. We were doing exercise to ABBA this morning. Last week I had to control them all because I had Status Quo on and I didn't think that would go down well, but they were all up!"

We spoke to Derek and Mary about their recent live music session with Music in Hospitals & Care musician Neil Sturgeon over Zoom.

Mary: "It was fabulous, he came on with the guitar and oh it was wonderful. Singing and dancing, brilliant... [Afterwards] I felt happy, because it just made you feel a wee bit more alive at the end. We all went to bed happy. Even Sheila and Margaret were singing, and they're about 90 odd! It was marvellous, I couldn't say enough about it."

Mary and the other residents haven't seen friends and family or been able to leave the care home for a number of months during the pandemic.

Mary: "You miss them, but we keep saying to each other you know, it's going to lift and our families can come back in... I miss my shopping. I'm a shopaholic! That's [been] very hard."



"We haven't had live music for months. Everything we have been doing is just on the TV or videos, that type of thing. So to have someone who was actually interacting directly, asking them what songs they would like to hear, I think it was almost like a wee touch to the outside world again. And that just made you feel a bit more hopeful afterwards."

Derek Lennox, Grange Care Home, Kilmarnock

Watch our interview with Mary and Derek on our website at mihc.org.uk/our-stories.

Step into Christmas

with an active Advent



This Christmas looks likely to be a challenging time for all of us. While we don't know yet how we will celebrate, we do know that it is going to be quite different to what we are used to.

Now more than ever it is important for us to share live music with people in healthcare settings who are particularly isolated and vulnerable at this time.

You can help us do this by taking part in our fun fundraising challenge this December, and asking your family and friends to sponsor you as you 'Step into Christmas' for Music in Hospitals & Care.

With lockdowns across the country impacting how we can exercise and winter nights drawing in, keeping active and healthy is a challenge for many of us.

Exercise is great for physical and mental wellbeing, and so we created a fundraising challenge to help you stay motivated to keep active this December.

The Step into Christmas challenge allows you to set your own daily step challenge. Whatever your fitness level and available time, you can set a daily step target that works for you.

Find out more and register for your place today at mihc.org.uk/step-into-christmas.

Musician Moments: String Sisters

This Musician Moment is from Angharad Thomas of the duo String Sisters, who have been working with us in Wales since 2018.

"There are so many highlights we could mention, such as playing Lullaby Hour sessions at Morriston Hospital. It's humbling to see how many complex machines and medicines are set up in the wards and the care and patience that the parents and staff give to the little ones. To think that we could bring a little bit of music and smiles to both the babies and grown-ups is absolutely amazing. We left the hospital so calm and happy – it was relaxing for us too!

Another true highlight was at a care home where we played Can't Help Falling In Love by Elvis. One of the ladies was singing along in her chair, then got up to dance with me. It was so moving that I put my violin down and danced with her as my

sister, Lowri, played the melody. She was a much better dancer than me, and eventually saw me as a lost cause and just hugged me close until the song was finished. It was a really special visit."



Our supporters take on the challenge



We are lucky to have supporters who do amazing things to raise money and make people's lives better through live music.

We were thrilled when we learned that mother and daughter team Katie and Amy Alcock from Leamington Spa were taking on the Helvellyn Triathlon. The challenge consists of a one mile swim, a 38 mile cycle (including 'The Struggle', an infamous route up the 1489ft Kirkstone Pass), and a nine mile fell run up and down Helvellyn, the third highest mountain in England with an elevation of 3118ft – no mean feat!

We also had four runners taking part in the virtual London Marathon 40th Race in October. David, Kirsty and Keith Dinsmore battled the elements to run the marathon around central London, and Henrietta Stock completed a route around Guildford and Woking whilst playing the recorder.



"It was tough staying motivated over the summer after the original marathon was postponed, but then one of my work colleagues messaged me to say that he had experienced the work of Music in Hospitals & Care first hand when his baby was born prematurely a few years ago and they came to do a Lullaby Hour session on the premature baby ward. This really helped me to get back out running."

Henrietta Stock

Congratulations to all of our challenge fundraisers for their fantastic achievements and the vital money they have raised.

If you think you are up to the challenge and want to do something similar, drop us an email at hello@mihc.org.uk and we will give you everything you need to get started.

December is normally our busiest time. As we can't share live music in person this year, we are creating something special for the festive season. Musicians from across the UK will come together to reimagine some festive favourites.

Please join us on our social media channels at **11am on Christmas Day** and **4pm on New Year's Eve**.



We will continue to be #HereForCulture

We are overjoyed to have been awarded £248,570 from the Government's Culture Recovery Fund through Arts Council England, £48,657 from the Welsh Government's Cultural Recovery Fund delivered by the Arts Council of Wales, and £110,997 from the Culture Organisations and Venues Recovery Fund via Creative Scotland.

The grants are a lifeline and will help us look forward to our safe return to live music with our incredible freelance musicians, reaching and connecting people through the healing power of live music.

The support and flexibility from so many trusts and foundations, such as Postcode Care Trust, has been amazing. Thank you so much for your continued support. It really is absolutely vital to keep the music playing.



Music Every Day at Derian House

Claire Van Opstal, Play Specialist at Derian House Children's Hospice in Chorley, tells us how the #MusicEveryDay live stream music sessions have helped the hospice to adapt their activities during the pandemic.

"Lockdown has been a very challenging time for us and our families here at Derian House; many of our families have been at home shielding. Some children have been able to access respite and stay and play sessions at the hospice, but with all the COVID-19 guidelines in place we have had to think hard about how we deliver our services and support to the families that need it most.



We really missed live music and were stuck listening to the radio and the same playlists. When I received an email from Music in Hospitals & Care to say we could access live stream music sessions, we jumped at the chance for the children and young people staying with us, and we were able to advertise the links on our Facebook page for families to join in at home too.

The children love it when they hear their name mentioned and then the musician plays their favourite song. The sessions are so therapeutic, making us all happy and lifting the atmosphere, reducing anxiety, stress, helping us communicate with our children and also distracting them from any discomfort, pain or worries they have.

Whenever I tell staff that we have a live music session that day, they get excited and look forward to it just as much as the child they are caring for. The atmosphere is always lifted after these sessions, which is just what we really need during this challenging time."



Musician Spotlight: Margaret Ferguson



Manchester based soprano Margaret Ferguson is approaching her 1,500th live music session and has been working with us for 22 years. She is a firm favourite particularly amongst older audiences for her interactive renditions of classic songs from across the decades.

How did you first get involved with Music in Hospitals & Care?

"I joined in 1998 after an audition in Cardiff. My husband saw an article in the local Manchester free paper about a concert by Music in Hospitals & Care in the area and I decided to see if I would 'fit the bill'. Thankfully I was accepted.

How have things changed during your time at Music in Hospitals & Care?

"Well, not only has the name changed, but the diversity of concerts has too, with more musicians of many different styles. Back when I started there

was just one person in North England organising concerts. However, that has now changed to having more staff.

In terms of audience, the age group has changed; there is a younger generation now living with dementia. This, of course, has meant a change in repertoire, with them having grown up in a different culture."

What have been some of your highlights?

"The first special moment I experienced was a stroke patient who hadn't spoken for seven years. I sang 'Let me call you sweetheart'; it turned out to be the song his mother sang to him when he was young and he sang along with me. His wife, family members and the staff were in tears.

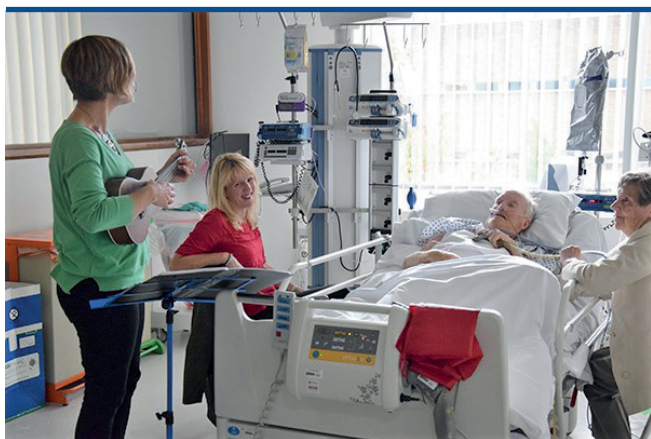
I also very much enjoy the Musician Days, which provide an opportunity to meet with other musicians and share skills."



Brigadier Ellery's legacy of live music

After our last newsletter, one of our supporters, Brigadier James Ellery, got in touch to let us to know he has left a gift in his Will to Music in Hospitals & Care.

We spoke to him to find out what had inspired him to make this gift.



"I am always heartened by the pictures you have of musicians in hospitals and can see the joy that music is bringing to those they are playing for."

Brigadier Ellery

He said that he found immense pleasure from music and knew that he was not alone. He is fortunate to have not spent a great deal of time in hospital himself, but went on to say that if he did he would welcome the sound of familiar tunes to improve his spirits and as a way to soften the surroundings.

He had visited a friend in hospital recently and they had heard someone playing the piano. The sound had resonated around the hospital and he and his friend had both found it very uplifting.

By choosing to leave a gift in his Will to Music in Hospitals & Care, Brigadier Ellery will leave a wonderful legacy of live music.

Music in Hospitals & Care works in partnership with **McClure Solicitors** to offer legal services such as free Will writing, a free Will review and a special price Power of Attorney service.

On using the service you will be asked to consider leaving a donation for Music in Hospitals & Care, but you are under no obligation to do so. To find out more please visit:

mcclure-solicitors.co.uk/mihc-partnership.

If you would like to talk to us in confidence about this, please contact Isla by emailing isla@mihc.org.uk or calling 07494 986878.



Become a Friend 🎵

The support of our Friends plays a critical part in sharing the healing power of live music. If you have not already joined us, find out more about becoming a Friend at mihc.org.uk/Friend.

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If you would prefer not to receive our newsletter please get in touch with us at the above address to let us know. We value your support and would like to keep you informed of how you help to share Joy Through Live Music.

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