

FOLK SINGING RETREATS

Spring Retreat 2020

Friday 20th – Monday 23rd March | Coverack YHA, Cornwall



Hello!

Thank you for your interest in the Spring Retreat 2020 to Coverack, Cornwall. This magical singing weekend is for open to all ages (over 18) and abilities whether you are a keen harmony singer, a complete beginner, a musician who wants to improve on singing and playing with others or you just want to spend the weekend immersed in music learning new tunes and meeting new people. There is a maximum of 20 places on this retreat.

At the heart of it, the weekend is a holiday for you to sing together, connect with others, socialise and to enjoy the amazing surroundings all supported by our brilliant team of professionals. Accommodation is at the wonderful Coverack YHA which sits on the South West Coast Path and is situated on the incredible Lizard peninsular; spectacular beaches and amazing views from the hostel. We will enjoy some coastal walks and perhaps, if you're brave, even take a dip in the sea!

Price for the weekend includes three nights accommodation, all food and a glass of wine with dinner, all singing workshops and facilitated song shares and a yoga class each day.

Detailed information about the weekend is included within this PDF as well as a link to the sign up form. You will also need to pay a deposit (full details below) which will secure your place. If you have any questions please don't hesitate to get in touch at folksingingretreats@gmail.com.

The team very much look forward to welcoming you on the retreat in March!

Warm wishes,

Two handwritten signatures in black ink. The first signature is 'Heg' and the second is 'Julu'.

Heg Brignall & Julu Irvine

Directors at Folk Singing Retreats

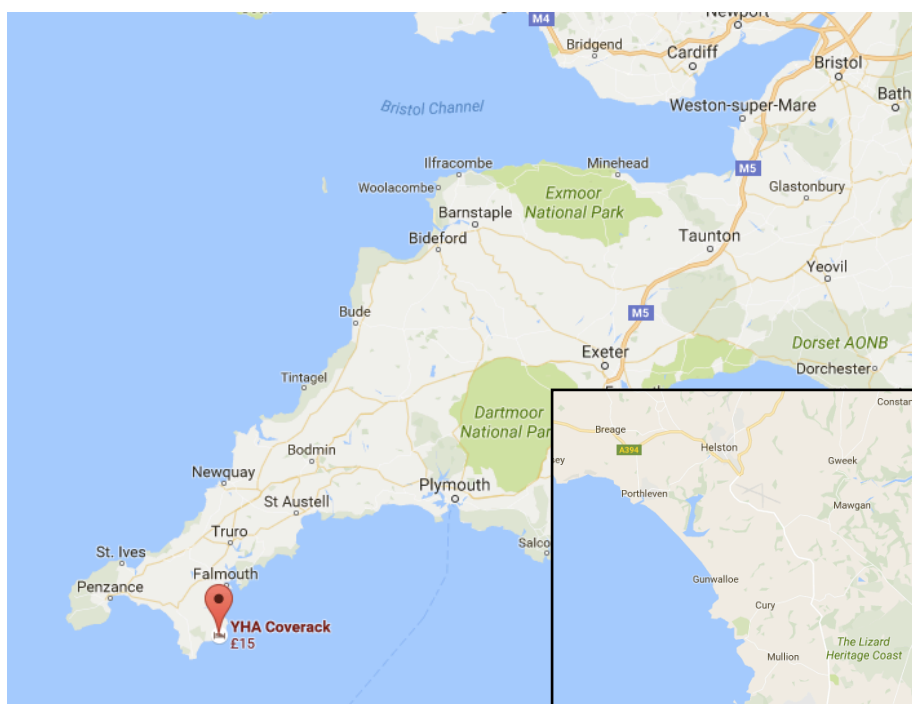
BEEN BEFORE? CHECK OUT WHAT'S NEW!

All of our singing weekends incorporate singing technique into the daily workshops. Each retreat is slightly different. Throughout the weekend we will be giving tips on how to sing well and how to use your voice safely and get the best out of it. On this retreat, our Saturday morning technique workshop will focus on making up your own harmonies; how to pick out harmonies; how to get the chords to ring; matching vowels and creating that tight tuned-in sound. Read more below!

WHEN

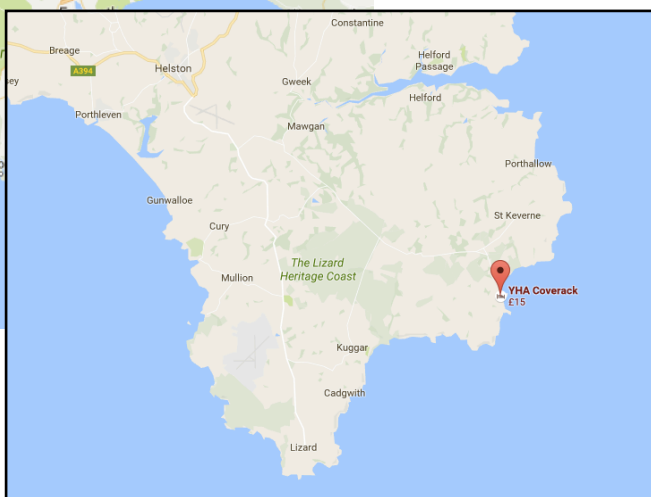
Friday 20th – Monday 23rd March 2020

Check in at the hostel is at 5pm on Friday 20th March where you will be greeted by the team and shown to your rooms. Our first workshop starts at 6pm. We encourage participants to arrive on time so that you can enjoy the introduction workshop here everyone gets to know each other. There is plenty of parking on site and if you are using satnav the post code below takes you to the door. Do allow plenty of time to travel as Fridays often take longer than expected. The 6pm session is a chance for the group to come together for the first time. There will be some introductions, house rules and an easy singing workshop, introducing you to some easy harmony songs.



WHERE

YHA Coverack
Parc Behan
School Hill
Coverack
Helston
Cornwall
TR12 6SA



Coverack is a small coastal village and fishing port situated on the east side of the Lizard peninsula, about nine miles south of Falmouth. The YHA is an amazing Victorian country house which sits right on the South West coast path and is a short walk to the beach. It has spectacular panoramic views out to sea from the room you will be singing in. There is intermittent phone reception there so you can enjoy a phone-free weekend of singing and socialising. There is a pay phone on site for emergencies.



MEET THE TEAM



The retreats are run by co-directors Heg Brignall and Julu Irvine with yoga instructor Richie Dobson. The team facilitate the entire weekend for you; from the meals to the workshops to the walks.

Combining their music and science backgrounds, Julu and Heg will be teaching you songs throughout retreat; from the more formal workshops which incorporate singing technique and more complex harmony singing to the casual evening song shares with easy choruses that you can join in with. They pool together their extensive music backgrounds in singing teaching, composing, choir directing and performing and create a weekend of workshops which will enable you to explore your voice, learn new tips to help you sing with ease and enjoy singing

folk songs in harmony. As touring musicians, Julu and Heg bring their wealth of experience in singing to help you understand your voice, what can restrict your sound and simple tools to help you sing more freely. They have a friendly, inclusive approach to teaching with an energy and enthusiasm that creates a safe, non-judgemental space for you to explore your voice.

Richie is an integral part of the team, teaching yoga sessions each morning and cooking delicious, home-made food for you. Richie has a background in theatre and music and studied yoga in New Zealand where he became a qualified instructor. Richie has a gentle approach to yoga and designs his sessions with singing in mind, preparing the body, releasing tension and opening the breath. Richie is careful to make the yoga classes accessible to all ages and abilities, supporting everyone in the class with guidance on each posture and how to do them safely.

The whole team work hard to create a safe bubble over the weekend with a firm ethos of respect and inclusivity. The weekend is as much about coming together and connecting with each other as it is about learning songs and the team are there to ensure that you have a wonderful time and have everything you need.

ACCOMMODATION



The hostel is spacious, with large, bright communal spaces for you to enjoy. Pictured above is the workshop space which has a nice acoustic for singing, wooden floors and wonderful views of the sea. It's also a lovely room to watch the sunset.

Below is the cosy living room and bright conservatory dining room where we all eat together as a group. Our evening song shares take place in the living room which we decorate with lights to make it extra cosy.



Bedrooms are dorms all furnished to a high standard, with various combinations of beds; **all with bunks**. If you would prefer a lower bunk then please let us know when you book so that we can allocate you your preferred bed. All bedrooms have sinks in the room itself separate to the bathroom, some are en suite and some have shared bathrooms next to the rooms. You will be able to request a specific room type on your booking form. We offer a combination of mixed single-sex* dorms; double occupancy rooms (based on two people sharing) are available on a first come first served basis and are charged at a higher rate. All rates are listed at the end of this PDF. Please get in touch so we can allocate a room that suits you. We want you to be as comfortable as possible so please let us know if you have any concerns about sleeping arrangements. All bed linen is provided but you will need to bring your own towels.

**single-sex refers to any individual who identifies as that gender.*



WORKSHOPS AND ITINARY

The entire weekend will be coordinated by the team who will oversee everything and make sure you are looked after. All food will be served for you and there is a tea and coffee station where you can help yourselves at any time throughout the weekend. As the weekend is a communal retreat, washing up after meals and tea breaks is a group effort.

Singing Workshops

The material on our retreats focus mostly around folk music from the British Isles, all taught in a cappella harmony, with occasional deviations to folk songs from around the world. Participants are welcome to use the scores and lyrics provided or can learn by ear (you do not need to read music to take part since we teach every part by ear as well as providing scores and lyrics). The workshops are relaxed and fun yet informative, allowing you to explore your voice, how you use it and what might be holding you back. The weekend starts with easy, quickly learnt rounds and loops and then on to learning snippets of songs which we return to each day and build upon. By the end of the weekend you will have learnt lots of short, easy tunes as well as several more complex arrangements. At the end of the weekend, we record what we've learnt so that you can listen back after the weekend.

Each session builds from a full body warm up incorporating breathing and singing technique helping you to learn how to use your voice safely and to it's full potential. Together we look at resonance, pitching, constriction, tension, nerves, how to use your breath with singing, how to improve your harmony singing and much more.

From the foundation of good technique, we create multiple harmonies as a group, turning single melody folk tunes into rich, textured pieces.



Heg and Julu work hard to bring the group together in song, quickly diminishing any nerves with harmony songs that are easily achievable for complete beginners. You'll be singing in harmony before you even know it!

The weekend is weighted so that Friday evening is a short session which is easy and relaxed, Saturday is the most challenging day with lots of technique and learning of new songs. We recommend getting an early night on Friday night to ensure you have energy and stamina for the workshops as the Saturday is challenging and demanding of energy. Sunday is less intensive with a choice of activities including free time, a chance to work with one of our teachers one on one and a technique Q&A for you to ask any questions about the techniques we cover over the weekend.

Evenings are a chance to unwind, share songs and play music together. This is the more informal element to the weekend where you are encouraged to bring your own contributions to the group; whether it's a song you've written, learnt from memory or a book, a round, call and response, solo, a cappella, instrumental or accompanied, anything goes and it doesn't have to be a folk song. You are also welcome to just listen. The team facilitates this session to get the group started; often with call and response sea shanties and other folk songs.

Yoga



Our morning yoga sessions are designed for all abilities and have been planned with singing in mind. The sessions centre on breathing and opening the body up ready for singing. The class aims to bring calm and focus to the day ahead. Classes are aimed at complete beginners and allow more experienced practitioners the chance to focus their yoga towards breathing and singing under the guide of our experienced teacher. The sessions are of course optional and participants are encouraged to experience the class within their own comfort zone.

Richie is experienced at tailoring sessions based on the needs of the group. If you have any injuries or health concerns which may affect your ability to take part, please let us know on the booking form

and we will be in touch about how we can accommodate you in the classes.

Please also let us know if you are pregnant.

Walking



Walking is a lovely part of the weekend giving you the chance to relax in the great outdoors. Using well laid out coastal path routes and designated trails, we explore the surrounding scenery on foot. Although we follow coastal paths and trails, some of the walking is challenging. We advise that participants with health complaints or those who are worried about their fitness level should seek doctor's advice before booking. Please do not hesitate to ask any questions you may have.

All walks are led by a member of the team but are not professional guided walks and are undertaken at the participants own risk. Please make sure you have read our [terms and conditions](#).

On the Saturday we do a longer walk of up to 3 hours and Sunday we take it easy with a shorter walk of up to 1.5 hours. We go out come rain or shine so make sure you bring your warm, wet weather gear!

Example Schedule

Detailed below is a rough guide to what the weekend will entail. We have taken care to include some free time so that you can relax and explore some of the wonderful nearby sights. We encourage all participants to join in with as much as feels comfortable.

Friday

- **5pm** Arrival at hostel
- Shown to your rooms, cup of tea, get settled.
- **6pm** Gather in workshop room for introductions.
- Singing workshop. Learning part songs and rounds.
- **7pm Dinner**
- **8pm – 9pm** Song share/instrument session.

Saturday

- **8am** Yoga for singing and breathing technique.
- **9am Breakfast**
- **10am** Singing workshop. Technique and new songs.
- **11am** Tea Break

Continue workshop

- **1pm Lunch**
- **2pm** Walk along coast.
- Free time
- **5pm** Singing workshop
- **7pm Dinner**
- **8pm – 9pm** Song share/instrument session.
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Sunday

- **8am** Yoga for singing and breathing technique.
- **9am Breakfast**
- **10 – 12pm** Choice of activities. Free time/Small group singing.
- **12pm** Yoga or meditation
- **12.30pm** One-to-one sessions/technique Q&A
- **1pm Lunch**
- **2pm** Walk/singing on the beach
- Free time
- **5pm** Singing workshop. Building on technique. Perfecting songs learnt. Recording the songs learnt over the weekend.
- Free time
- **7pm Dinner**
- **8:30pm Cabaret** – Participants are invited to try out performing a song in front of the group. This is totally optional and is a lovely way to celebrate the end of the weekend even if you don't feel comfortable taking part. Previously it has been a very special addition to the weekend. We encourage participants to dress up in celebration of the weekend! You may interpret that as you like!
After the cabaret we have our final song share in the living room.

Monday

- **8.30am Breakfast**
- **10am** Final sing
- Check out by 10.30am

MENU

All food is vegetarian (vegans also catered for) with gluten and dairy allergy options available. If you have any other dietary requirements, please get in touch with us first before booking. Your food will be prepared and served by one of our team. Below is a sample menu from a previous retreat; final menu to be sent out once we know all catering requirements. A glass wine is provided with dinner; **do bring along your own choice of alcoholic drinks for the evenings as they will not be provided.**

FRIDAY

Dinner

Jacket potatoes with ratatouille and cheese
With a selection of salads

SATURDAY

Breakfast

Scrambled eggs, toast, fresh fruit, yoghurt, granola
Tea, coffee & juices

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Lunch

Carrot and coriander soup with a hot baked crusty roll

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Dinner

Spaghetti bolognese and cheese
With garlic bread and salad

SUNDAY

Breakfast

Scrambled eggs, cereal, toast, fresh fruit
Tea, coffee & juices

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Lunch

Pea and leak soup and hot baked crusty roll

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Dinner

Vegetable curry and dahl with basmati rice
Naan breads & yoghurt

MONDAY

Breakfast

Croissants, toast, fresh fruit, yoghurt, granola
Tea, coffee & juices

ETHOS AND RULES

- **General ethos** Each retreat is built on foundation of mutual respect, acceptance and collectively creating a space which is supportive and encouraging. For some people, sharing songs is a nerve-wracking experience and singing solo in front of people can be a big barrier to overcome. It's essential that everyone keeps this in mind throughout the weekend; especially during the evening song shares. We encourage everyone support each other and allow people the space to come forward by *listening*.
- **Taking Part** You are encouraged to take part in all elements of the weekend, without pressure. If at any point you need some time out that's fine too; it's your weekend to enjoy! The weekend is as much about bonding and getting to know one another as it is about learning songs so try to stay engaged with the activities and with the group as much as you

can.

- **Meal Times** The weekend is a communal weekend and we invite all participants to eat together at the times specified. All your food will be cooked for you by the team and we ask that participants wash up their own plates and cups after meals and tea breaks.
- **Phones** All spaces at the hostel (except for in your own rooms) will be phone, laptop and tablet free. It's really important to the bubble we create to be present during the weekend and have a break from screens and technology. Please respect the rule of no phones outside of your rooms and enjoy a break from technology!
- **Noise** The entire upstairs of the building is a quiet zone at all times. Please respect each other with regards to noise. Some people may wish to go to bed earlier than others and may require quiet time during the day too. If you would like to stay up late, please do so in the living area and keep noise down after 11.30pm, ensuring that you come to bed quietly.
- **Alcohol** it's really important that the first bullet point in this list is still respected at all times but especially during the evenings when people are drinking alcohol. Aggressive, overtly intoxicated or disrespectful behaviour is inappropriate to the nature of the weekend and will not be tolerated. No exceptions. Please respect each other and know your limits.
- **Visitors** The retreat is strictly for paying participants only. Visitors are not allowed to join for any part of the weekend.

Please also make sure you have read our [terms and conditions](#).



COST

A non-refundable deposit of **£100.00** will secure your place on the weekend, followed by the remaining balance.

Total cost of the weekend based on different room rates:

£265 – per person based on two people booking a double occupancy room together.

£245 – per person based on one person sharing a mixed dorm of up to 6 people.

For further room enquiries please contact Heg or Julu at folksingingretreats@gmail.com

Final balance payment is due by no later than **Friday 14th February 2020**.

Price of the weekend includes;

- All food and drink (including a glass of wine with dinner)
- Accommodation for three nights – bed linen provided
- Singing workshops and evening song shares
- Scores/lyrics for songs which you can keep
- Yoga & meditation classes

Price of the weekend does not include;

- Travel
- Alcohol for the evenings
- Towel

HOW TO SECURE YOUR PLACE

In order to book your place, please fill out the following form <https://www.folksingingretreats.co.uk/book-autumn-19-singing-retreat> and send a deposit of **£100.00 via BACS** using the details below. We will send an invoice for the full amount and an acknowledgment upon receiving your deposit. Please ensure that you write your name as a reference so that we can identify your payment.

Helen Brignall

Account Number: **72141697**

Sort Code: **60-02-38**

Reference: **[SPRING20 Your name]**



FAQs

I am a solo traveller, can I book a double occupancy room?

We can't guarantee a double occupancy room to a solo participant unless another person also requests a double room enabling us to pair you up. Our double room rates are based on two people sharing and booking together. Please contact us if you are travelling alone and would prefer to have a double occupancy room.

Will the weekend be documented?

Yes. The team will be filming, recording and photographing parts of the weekend and please do bring your own cameras and recording devices – the more the merrier! We can share on dropbox afterwards. If you do not wish to have your picture taken for whatever reason, please let us know and we will ensure that you are not included.

Do we help with cooking?

No. You will not need to help with cooking. Food preparation is taken care of by the team whilst we are in workshops. As this is a communal holiday, guests are expected to take responsibility for washing up their own crockery after meal times and tea breaks.

Is there phone reception at the hostel?

The phone signal can be intermittent at the hostel but there is a landline for emergencies.

I've never done yoga, can I still take part?

The yoga sessions will be at beginners level so that everyone can take part. The sessions are especially put together to prepare your body for singing and you will be strongly encouraged to only stretch your body within it's means. You will be in very safe hands with our experienced teacher who will make sure you know how to do all the poses safely.

I have an injury, will I be able to take part in the yoga?

Please make sure you let Heg, Julu or Richie know about any injuries or health conditions *before the weekend*. Richie can advise you about alternative versions of poses and ways to still take part without damaging yourself. It's really important that you don't push yourself beyond your means so communicate with us about how you are feeling.

I don't like the food offered, will there be an alternative?

We will try to cater for everyone as much as possible, however, this is a communal retreat and we can only realistically cook one meal for everyone (taking into account veganism, intolerances and allergies). If there is something you absolutely can't bear to eat, let us know and we will do our best to accommodate you.

Can I use the kitchen to cook my own food?

Unfortunately not. The kitchen is not available to participants and has restricted access except for meal times to keep it clear for the team whilst cooking. A tea and coffee station will be available throughout the day with access to hot drinks, drinking water, fresh fruit and biscuits.