

# Stories for Lipreading

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## **A LITTLE JAUNT IN THE COUNTRYSIDE by Gill Rogers.**

[This text is read aloud at the beginning of this video:]

Welcome to Stories for Lipreading. If you haven't used our website before, we suggest you look at our 'How to Use' page before you begin. We hope you enjoy this autobiographical story, which is called 'A Little Jaunt in the Countryside' by Gill Rogers.

### **A Little Jaunt in the Countryside by Gill Rogers.**

What do you do on a day out in the countryside? Visit a stately home? Walk the dog through a leafy forest? Have a peaceful picnic? I love to do all these things, but once upon a time, I had a day in the countryside that was an experience like no other.

I learnt to play a brass instrument at the age of eleven, joining two of my older brothers and sisters in the same pastime. I've played in a brass band for 48 years now, and it's my life. I know – I'm sad!

So, imagine me (at the age of 57 and after over 45 years of a musically blinkered existence) being asked, along with my sister, to help out a local brass band who had been booked to play on the Pyramid Stage (yes, THE Pyramid Stage!) at Glastonbury 2015! We both thought about it for a nanosecond before accepting the offer. Normally you'd have to bribe me even to consider attending a music festival unless it was indoors with comfy seating, excellent catering facilities and a car park close by.

Before we knew it, the Big Day was upon us! We set off in the coach at silly o'clock on the Sunday morning, armed with our instruments, music, uniforms, folding chairs, sandwiches, and a few spliffs (OK, maybe not the spliffs, but I'm trying to get into the spirit of the thing here!

On arrival at Worthy Farm, our coach parked next to The Who's tour bus! We were given performers' wristbands. (I still have mine!)

On TV, all you usually see (apart from the actual acts) are thousands of mud-splattered music lovers and the smelly loos. Backstage was an altogether different experience! It was a huge marquee decked out like someone's wedding reception with swathes of cream-coloured silky fabric, fairy lights and floral arrangements. There were named dressing rooms for the headline acts and squishy sofas all over the place. We actually sat outside Paul Weller's room. There were no smelly loos here - oh no! There were proper bathrooms with showers and flushing WC's.

We were treated like royalty, but everything was timed to the minute with military precision. Muster at 10.14. Walk to the stage. Set up at 10.17. Be seated at 10.28. Whilst waiting to go on, I

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had a quick glance around at all the gear stored there for the acts on that day. Loitering with calm anticipation was The Who's massive drum kit. The Pyramid Stage was huge, too, and I think we all, 26 of us, felt very humbled once we sat down ready to play.

So, the moment had finally arrived and we played our set. For the life of me I can't remember what pieces we played. I don't think we were expecting thousands of screaming fans, so we weren't disappointed with the couple of hundred or so that managed to crawl out of their tents to see what the heck we were about. They were enthusiastic, whooping and singing along to music they recognised. When we finished, Michael Eavis, Glastonbury's founder, joined us on stage to thank us for coming!

Backstage we changed out of our uniforms and had a final wee in the pristine loos. We had 5 hours to fend for ourselves before the bus headed home. Off we went (my sister and I) with our fold-up chairs and handwipes, to explore.

Glastonbury is not only famous for the world class music, it is also famous for something entirely different. Yes, mud. It had been raining and there was mud, more mud and then a bit more mud – in fact there were acres of mud. So we squelched off, trying to ignore the arthritic knees, to drink in the atmosphere, and, oh my goodness, what an atmosphere it was!

There were thousands of people of all ages – every one of them relishing just being there. It was a joy to see so many happy people! People with green hair, purple hair, tattoos, outrageous clothing (or very little clothing at all!) People singing and some people staggering around with dilated pupils! It was certainly an eye-opener for a person like me who has led a fairly sheltered life!

We managed to find a relatively quiet corner to unfold our camping chairs and eat our lunch whilst people-watching.

Then we stood to listen to some of the huge variety of music being belted out on the 60 or so stages. The buzz around the place was fantastic. We bought flower rings made of paper to wear on our heads (well, we had to look a little bit like we fitted in!)

A few hours later we joined our muddied, exhausted brass-playing colleagues on the coach and bid a fond farewell to Worthy Farm.

Going to Glastonbury was never something I had on my bucket list, but I'm glad I went and the experience was unforgettable. We all took away some amazing memories, and relished being able to tell our grandchildren that 'I played on the Pyramid Stage at Glastonbury!' It totally rocked, but – I have no pressing desire to go again.

Been there, done that and got the wristband.