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## Basil Brush Keeps Everyone Smiling On The Smiling Sessions



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The Smiling Sessions are run by a charity who usually go into care homes or sheltered accomodation for the elderly each week and host sing-a-longs for the residents.



Throughout the pandemic they've had celebrities dropping in to participate virtually allowing them to reach care homes right across the UK.

This project is highlighting the benefits of singing to health and wellbeing and lifting the spirits of the elderly during an incredibly tough time with many of them living in isolation since March, as well as dealing with the deaths of close friends to this horrible virus.

Basil Brush is the latest guest to appear - singing Christmas songs dressed up as Santa! Other celebrities that have taken part so far include Brian McFadden, KT Tunstall, Daniel O'Donnell, Natasha Hamilton, Merrill Osmond, Squeeze's Chris Difford & Christopher Biggins.

I asked Basil about the sessions and his visits to the north.

### **Did you enjoy doing The Smiling Sessions?**

I certainly did! My mission in life is to make people smile, the organisers asked me along and said would I sing some songs and I agreed. They have had Christopher Biggins, one of the Osmonds and lots of others who have stepped up to the pledge. Music is so evocative and brings back memories of the past. The news this year has been so difficult to watch but we can all still sing and smile.

### **You never get to look any older, what is your secret?**

Grow fur all over your face to cover the cracks. If anyone tells you that I have had a face lift than they are taking out of their Botox - Boom! Boom!

### **How did you find the Lockdown?**

I was just about to star in an Easter pantomime then the pandemic came and my entire year disappeared. I have snow blindness the number of times I have had to look at my diary. Last year I did the Glastonbury Festival - I found an excellent vegetarian cafe there too called No Bones Jones, I was due to go back this year to Glastonbury but of course that didn't happen.

### **Have you ever been up to Yorkshire?**

My goodness - I have been there many times, in the summer I was able to get up to Scarborough and I also did some shows at the Haven sites on the Yorkshire coast. I like the friendliness of the audiences up there in Yorkshire and Lancashire. People know how to enjoy themselves in the north whereas in the south the audiences are more reserved.

### **Are you missing performing in the panto this year?**

Hopefully I'm going to be doing panto in January in Windsor, I'm crossing my paws it will still go ahead. I love going to the theatre, for children it is probably the first time they have been to the theatre and they never forget that first experience. I find TV programmes so throwaway but the theatre and panto allows kids to be kids.

### **How are you going to spend your Christmas?**

This year it will be very different as it will for everyone. I am normally recovering from doing panto and laying in a jacuzzi but not this year or putting my paws up in a hotel. I have been very busy sending out personal video messages on Celeb VM to my fans - one was getting married and wanted me to wish her good luck. In fact she said that when she was younger she wanted to marry Mr Brush! I send the messages all over the world, I have just done 2 for Australia. It is so good to cheer people up with this awful pandemic, as I said my mission is to make people smile.

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<https://www.smilingsessions.com/>