

SCOTTISH RECORDER ORCHESTRA

The Spring 2013 issue of *The Recorder Magazine* (pp. 37–38) gave an account of the concert given in Edinburgh in October 2012 to celebrate the 10th Anniversary of the Scottish Recorder Orchestra. This was a joint concert with members of the Dortmund Recorder Consort and their conductor Dietrich Schnabel who joined the SRO players for a weekend of rehearsal before the concert.

In May this year 18 members of the SRO, with our conductor and founder Eileen Silcocks, had the pleasure of a return visit to Germany and a joint concert with The Dortmund Consort.

The Scottish contingent converged on Haus Nordhelle near Valbert, in the Sauerland mountains south of Dortmund. We had two days of concentrated bilingual rehearsals in beautiful surroundings before giving the concert in St John's Church in the nearby town of Plettenberg.

The concert programme in Germany was substantially the same as in Edinburgh, this time with German soloists on the single top parts. In addition we played Dietrich Schnabel's arrangement for lower instruments of Lodovico Grossi da Viadana's *La Genouese* from *Sinfonia musicali* (1618). Viadana was an Italian composer, important in the development of the early baroque technique of basso continuo and figured bass. He composed mostly sacred music; the *Sinfonias*, though, are secular and each individual composition bears the name of a different town in Italy. In this case Genoa.

The experience of the two orchestras meeting and very quickly combining their two quite different sounds and styles into a new unified group was fascinating, particularly since many members were far from bilingual. Simultaneous translation is exhausting. However our two conductors, keen that no nuance of language or music should escape anyone, provided instant translation throughout, testament to their linguistic skills and love of communication.

The main difference between the performance in a traditional concert hall in Edinburgh, and that in the church in Plettenberg was the acoustic, which was much livelier in the church. It was also evident that both orchestras had become comfortable with the programme over the previous year and this resulted in an assured and very well-received concert

Spending this time with the Dortmund Consort was a rich experience both musically and socially for the Scottish players. Long may the link between our two composer/conductors and orchestras continue.