

Branch Secretary's Report for 1995-6 season

The Branch returned to the newly refurbished premises at Augustine United Church.

The Branch had 47 members, one fewer than the previous season (7 new members, 8 non-renewals). We met on 35 Monday evenings from September to June for combined playing. One-to-a-part groups met on alternate evenings.

On 30 October we were delighted to welcome Margaret Hall as guest conductor at one of our regular Monday evening meetings.

The Branch's Special Playing Day was on 4 November when the visiting conductor was Alyson Lewin, Musical Director of the South Staffordshire Branch. The event was held for the first time in the church itself which is now possible since the refurbishment. We welcomed many visitors from the other Scottish branches. The money collected during the buffet tea was sent to the Walter Bergmann Memorial Fund.

We were deeply saddened by the death, on 1 December, of Joyce O'Riordan, the President of the Branch and a founder member. She had attended her last meeting the week before her death and will be sorely missed. Some of her recorders were donated to the Branch by Denis O'Riordan.

Our Christmas Evening was on 11 December when we played to an audience of family and friends in Augustine Church. We were joined by South Morningside Primary 7 Recorders conducted by Margaret Hall. A collection was made in aid of Edinburgh Direct Aid, a favourite charity of Joyce O'Riordan's.

On 13 December a group of about a dozen members played Christmas carols at Cameron Toll shopping centre as part of Oxfam's Christmas Carol Collections.

On 20 January a memorial service for Joyce O'Riordan was held at St. Mark's Unitarian Church at which the Branch played two movements from Jim Carey's *Playford Suite*.

On the 10 March a group of eight players from the Branch played during the evening service at St. George's West Church.

The National Recorder Festival took place on 27 April at Heaton Manor School, Newcastle. Jim Carey was among the conductors and conducted his *Rondo on Northumbrian Themes*, which he composed for the occasion, and *At the Fair*. On 28 April, Eileen Finlayson and Andrew Short attended the Society's Annual Conference at the Civic Centre, Newcastle, as delegate and observer. The Conference agreed to an increase of £1.00 in the national subscription in the 1996-7 season. Visitors to branches were to be classed as Temporary Members. Elections resulted in Andrew Short being voted Chairman of the Society, replacing Michael Sharman, and in two new committee members, Angela Dumbreck (Cornwall) and Marion Panzetta (Essex), Alyson Lewin replaced Paul Clark as Musical Adviser on the

Committee. A new branch at Peterborough was ratified. The demise of the West Suffolk Branch was also reported. There are now 49 branches. The 1997 National Festival will be at St. Albans on 24 May.

This year members attended Special Playing Days in Glasgow (11 May) and Hawick (25 May).

The Scottish National Recorder Festival was at Alva on 8 June and was organised by the Glasgow Branch. The conductors included Jim Carey (with a new composition *Raise Your Hats*) and Sandy Howie who conducted *Consorts with a Swing*. The principal guest conductor was Herbert Hersom.

Jim Carey was visiting conductor at the Cleveland and Suffolk Branches.

Our Summer Evening was on 17 June. This was Sandy Howie's last Summer Evening as Joint Musical Director of the Branch and a presentation was made to him as an expression of the Branch's gratitude for the inspiration he has given us over the past ten years. The collection was divided between Shelter and Edinburgh University Settlement.

As always we must thank our Musical Directors James Carey and Sandy Howie for making our weekly meetings so enjoyable and successful.

Eileen Finlayson
12 September 1996