

BRANCH REPORTS – WINTER 2012

BATH

The new season started well with nearly 30 people attending. There was a special theme for the afternoon to commemorate Colin Mitchell who helped revive the branch in 1984 and was the Treasurer for many years. He stopped playing in recent years because of poor health and died in July on his 90th birthday. Ann Lyall conducted pieces by Byrd, Bach, Buxtehude, Schmelzer and Poulenc, finishing with Vaughan Williams' arrangement of *Linden Lea* - all favourite pieces of Colin. His wife Eileen attended the session, making it especially memorable.

BEDS & NORTH HERTS

It's not often you hear from us, but that doesn't mean we've disappeared; on the contrary, we are still a very active branch. However, it's not often that we do anything unusual, and whilst very enjoyable for those who attend, endless reports of standard branch meetings would make rather boring reading. We have, of course, had a Pastoral Visit each year, but somehow these haven't lined up with the deadlines for reports. However I can tell you that we will have our first playing day for more years than I care to remember in Bedford, on 23rd March 2013, conducted by Moira Usher. Players from other branches will be very welcome - keep an eye on our website for details.

CORNWALL

Cornwall branch has been going from strength to strength under the leadership of the new Musical Director Sarah Whomersley. She has set up a junior branch which meets for three quarters of an hour before the regular monthly SRP meeting and is thriving - we understand we are the only branch with youth members.

Members from the junior branch, from the SRP and from the school where Sarah teaches all came together to celebrate Cornwall branch's 20th anniversary with a concert at Carnon Downs Village Hall on 23rd June. It was a typical summer evening - howling gales and torrential rain - but a small audience was very appreciative of both the concert and refreshments including birthday cake afterwards!

During the forthcoming year there will be a Pastoral Visit from Andrew Collis; the branch will be playing in Truro Cathedral on Wednesday December 12th during a late night shopping evening and there are plans for a concert in April 2013 following on from the success of the 20th birthday concert.

Visitors to our wonderful area are very welcome to attend our branch meetings - details are on the branch pages of the SRP website.

CUMBRIA

For the past few years our Musical Director, Bob Berry, has been attempting to get us playing from memory. To aid us in this endeavour Bob has compiled a collection of 50 tunes, which he has called *The Cumbrian Remembrancer*. Each member of the branch has been given a copy of this amazing resource. Now all we have to do is memorise them! Well done, Bob!

DEVON

The September meeting of Devon branch was a special Playing Day with Marguerite Dolmetsch and Brian Blood sharing the conducting. The attendance was excellent, despite the unfortunate coincidence of the local recorder orchestra's rehearsal. It was a pleasure to be treated to a long-married couple sharing a task without (quite) falling out!

We were treated to music by Ferrabosco and Trabaci, amongst others. We learned about polyphonic versus harmonic music and played two very different settings of the same text, *Ave Verum Corpus*, by Byrd and Saint-Saëns. In the course of playing a difficult Handel Concerto Grosso we learned much about Baroque ornamentation.

A day that left us uplifted, better-informed and wiser!

DURHAM

The year 2012 marked the twenty-fifth anniversary of Durham branch, which came into existence in 1987 under the musical directorship, then as now, of Mary Tyers who continues to lead the branch from strength to strength. We celebrated at our May meeting with a playing day directed both by Mary and our guest conductor for 2012, Moira Usher. The day was very well attended both by branch members and members from other branches, especially Edinburgh, Leeds, and York, and a happy, varied, and stimulating day was enjoyed by all. There was inevitably some sadness as members reflected on the absence of the late Flora Pitt, founder member and long-term Secretary of the branch, but we were delighted to welcome back old friends, especially another founder member, Joan Pearce, who has for many years now been living near Pontefract.

In its ordinary meetings the branch continues to flourish, welcoming new members and enjoying the company too of longer-established ones, meetings made all the more pleasant by the excellent hospitality of social secretary Andy Phipps and his wife Julie, who alongside baking brilliant cakes for meetings is also the branch's auditor. The Durham University Affiliated Group too has continued to flourish under the leadership of Sara Suess, and it has been excellent to have student members with us, as well as to know that student recorder playing is flourishing on its own account. We begin the 2012-13 session keenly looking forward to the next twenty-five years and anxious to welcome new members.

ESSEX

30th June marked the end of an era. Marion Panzetta who co-founded the branch in 1978 retired as Joint Musical Director. She had been Chairman and one of our principal conductors, with co-founder Lorna Burroughs, from 1978 until 1993. At that point the committee played musical chairs and Marion found herself Joint MD with former Secretary Madeline Seviour.

The committee had planned to make the afternoon of Marion's retirement special – a hand-made card had been commissioned for everyone to sign, speeches prepared, the cake ordered and the gift – a rose named Panzetta's Pride – bought. Chairman Janet Holt had learned how to use the self-timer on her camera so that we could have a group photo.

At 9.40 am Madeline received a voicemail message from Marion "Am in A & E with suspected broken wrist". The committee spent a frantic morning re-arranging matters until at 1 o'clock we received the welcome news that Marion was home and her wrist not broken. She wasn't able to conduct, but she came to the meeting and the celebration went ahead more or less as planned. We were pleased that several former members, including Lorna Burroughs, were able to come – in fact there were eight founder members present. We are delighted that Marion will continue to conduct. This year's session is now well under way with Purcell our theme for the year. We look forward to a Pastoral Visit from Sheila Richards on 2nd February.



NEWCASTLE

Many SRP members will be familiar with the name of Layton Ring both for his association with the Dolmetsch family and for his many recorder arrangements. From the perspective of the Newcastle SRP he will be remembered also for his musical directorship of the branch which lasted some 20 years until his retirement in 2001. This year, 2012, marks his 90th birthday and also the 80th birthday of his wife, Christine. To celebrate the occasion the Newcastle branch invited them both to their meeting on July 21st.

During the half time break a presentation was made to them both of flowers and a small gift on behalf of the branch. After the break Layton conducted his arrangement of the Delius piece *To be Sung on a Summer Night on the Water*, Delius being one of his favourite composers.



NUNEATON

Unfortunately the July charity day at Stoke Golding was cancelled because of the wet weather, so we were not able to play there again this year. However it was a great pleasure to welcome Alan Perkins back to conduct the September branch meeting, with his usual interesting selection of music. This included two works by Anthony Holborne, *Pavan* and *The Honie Suckle*, Henry Purcell's verse anthem Magnificat from the Evening Service in G minor (transposed to A minor), and *Sicilienne*, written by Maria Theresa von Paradis. The afternoon ended with Moderato from Dvorak's Serenade for Wind, Op.44, and the Allegro Molto movement from Concerto in D major for strings by Vivaldi.

OXFORD

The branch website has detailed information on the music that we have played at our monthly meetings. There are also details of our new venue less than 10 minutes' walk from Oxford station. At our playing day in March Ann Lyall conducted music from St Mark's, Venice.

The Queen's Jubilee was celebrated in the village of Ashampstead on June 5th with an open-air performance of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Four members of the branch contributed a small amount of incidental music, mainly from Purcell's *Fairie Queen*.

As well as the monthly meetings, there is one-to-a-part playing in Oxford and in Upper Basildon. A number of members also play in other local groups.

PETERBOROUGH

We kicked off our usual programme of meetings in September, and it was good to see everybody back in action. Looking back to the summer, we were able to get another use from the repertoire worked up earlier in the year, playing at a charity event in nearby Ringstead. We focussed on mostly early stuff, Dowland, de Lully, Greaves, Holborne and Boyce.

We experimented with video recording the performance, and the result can be seen on our SRP Facebook and Peterborough Music Making pages, and may also be stumbled on by browsers of Youtube. Well they say there is no such thing as bad publicity!

SOUTH COTSWOLD

We have had a very interesting 2012, playing and enjoying the varied musical choices of a plethora of eminent conductors, including Steve Marshall, Dick Little, Judith Schmidt, Jack Brothwell, Philip Evry and Ann Marshall.

Our spring and summer period was strongly flavoured with traditional folk music. Jack Brothwell directed our April and June sessions - he is one of our regular members who devotes a lot of energy into arranging music for the recorder. The 'package' that Jack presented was entitled "Jack's Jig", in honour of *Kemp's Jig* and also the Jubilee! It was also linked with a playing day at Hullavington SRP.

We played a number of Jack's arrangements including some English madrigals, morris dance tunes, *Sumer is Icumen in*, *Riverside Suite* and *Lovesong Suite* as well as pieces by Sullivan, Handel and Stanley Taylor.

One of the objectives was to have a 'pool' of music that could be explored over more than one session and it was designed to appeal to those who appreciate being able to take music away to practise and then have another chance to play it.