

## SRP FESTIVAL – Dublin, 11th and 12th May 2013

Hi my name is Sue Eades and I represented Cornwall branch in Ireland for the 2013 Festival and Conference along with two other members, Jill Hoskin and Vanessa Harper.

We arrived late Friday evening at Dublin Airport and were exceptionally pleased with the public transport which took us right to the door of our hotel, and as we had chosen a hotel close to All Hallows College we were able to walk to the venue both days.

Upon our arrival on Saturday morning we received a very warm welcome from the members and volunteers who were all very obvious during the course of the weekend wearing beautiful Irish Green tops which was most useful.

We joined friends and colleagues for coffee before making our way to the first massed playing with the lovely, very amusing Pamela Flanagan, to play Bach's Concerto from the *Easter Oratorio*, a brilliant start to what was an excellent weekend of playing, shopping and chatting with like-minded people.

After the massed playing Jill went off in one direction whilst Vanessa and I chose to play Paul Clark's *Sweet Albion* with Sandra Foxall.

We met for early lunch which was well organised and very agreeable. We had the pleasure of sitting with Pamela Flanagan and her mother and I don't think we stopped laughing the whole time.

With the aid of the programme booklet map and the signage in the hallways we able to find our way between the music rooms and shops fairly easily. After a wander round the shops we joined Dermot Brophy to enjoy Six Dances from Gilbert and Sullivan operas, after which we again went in different directions. Vanessa and I had two enjoyable sessions - one with Sheila Richards playing Garfield's *Bobby Shaftoe's all at sea*, a brilliant mix of sea shanties, followed by Alyson Lewin's *Off to the Fair*, before returning to the Woodcock Hall to play the première of Festival commission piece by Rhona Clarke, conducted by the inimitable Pamela Flanagan. Unfortunately I had become quite cold by this time and having only just got over a major op Vanessa and I decided to miss this session and I went to get a drink to warm up. We could hear the music and it sounded amazing, and when we caught up with everyone they were all very enthusiastic about it and we were sorry we had missed it.

On Saturday evening we enjoyed a very unusual and interesting session with Simon O'Dwyer on Ancient Irish Horns, held in the beautiful chapel, followed by a Ceilidh. Although I was unable to stay for this, everyone I spoke to on Sunday said it was an amazing evening highlighting a wealth of talented people.

Sunday found us all going in different directions. Whilst I went off Conference and committee meetings Jill and Vanessa went to enjoy further sessions, then we all met back in the Woodcock Hall for Conference report followed by the final massed playing of Paul Clark's *Irish Suite*, very apt, with Pamela in full swing determined we would do the piece justice. A perfect finish to a brilliant weekend.

After everyone had packed up ready to leave several of us met in the local pub to chat over the weekend and I enjoyed my first pint of Guinness, a perfect finish to a brilliant weekend.

Thank you Ireland for a memorable Festival. We look forward to seeing you all in Cornwall in 2014.