

## SRP NATIONAL FESTIVAL 2014

This year's Festival was held at Truro School perched above the city with splendid views of the cathedral. We were blessed with glorious sunshine for the whole of the weekend – though there was little time to be outside to explore the Cornish surroundings or even get a glimpse of the sea!

Those of us who arrived on Friday evening were treated to a Cornish pasty (what else!) supper and a selection of wine and local brews. Later there was a demonstration of Cornish traditional dances in costume accompanied by a live band – followed by a chance for the participants to show off our elegant footwork and brilliant co-ordination and timing.

The first massed playing session was conducted by Steve Marshall in a re-working of *Pasticcio della Cornovaglia*, a piece by Paul Clark originally written for the first Cornish festival. The other two massed playing sessions offered pieces by local composer Russell Pascoe - *Keskan II* (conducted by Moira Usher) and *Suite for Recorders*, and presented interesting technical challenges with its minimalist style. Unfortunately, the first massed playing session was very cramped due to a larger than expected turn-out but a solution was found for the later sessions by changing the seating arrangements.

The Saturday programme offered the usual diet of music of different styles and suited to differing playing standards. Music ranged from Byrd's *Fantasia à 5*, Reinecke's *Tone Pictures*, John Hawkes' *Silver Suite* and *Suite Pastiche* (both sessions taken by the composer), Rosemary Robinson's *Arden Dances*, Marg Hall's *Klezmer Collection* and Banchieri's *Battaglia a Doppio Coro*. The Sunday programme was slightly expanded to take account of the increase in the number of expected participants, due to the cancellation of the Northern Recorder Course. The Conference and Committee meeting were as usual held in the morning, followed by the presentation of the report after lunch to the body of the Festival.

Alongside the playing sessions there were some workshops, including one on the Baroque Sonata (Handel) and The Basics of Jazz Recorder. Junior players were well catered for with two workshops coached respectively by *Consort Audite Nova* and Delyth Holland. In addition to the advertised group playing sessions there was a double slot allocated to a Recorder Orchestra conducted by Caroline Jones. Music tackled included Farquahar's *Sami Soumi Suite*, Leenhouts' *Mega-RONY* and Davis' arrangement of *The Italian Girl in Algiers* by Rossini.

One of the great advantages of the venue was that everything was under one roof, the Burrell Theatre – all the workshops and playing sessions. A constant supply of drinks was a really welcome feature!

There was a lunchtime recital given by *Consort Audite Nova* (a group of four young graduates) at Saturday lunchtime. Fortunately for those who missed this, there was a chance to hear this very engaging consort that same evening in the concert in the school chapel, in a mixed programme of music including talented local youngsters attending the Richard Lander School, and an informal recital was given by *The Dolce Consort*, a Cornish Recorder Consort consisting of students Grade 5 and above.

The shops (Early Music Shop, Recorder MusicMail, Willobie Press, Hawthorns Music) were located in a section of the dining room. Perhaps not ideal, but it meant that at least participants knew where they were. This year two instrument makers/repairers were present – Stephen Robinson (spinnet maker) - and Anthony Barrett (recorder repairs) in the foyer of the Burrell Theatre.

The Festival concluded with the third massed playing session conducted by Sarah Whomersley, MD of the Cornwall branch. A number of participants had taken advantage of this year's location to stay

on for a few extra days in the vicinity and enjoy the unseasonal high temperatures and prolonged sunshine.

Many thanks to the Cornwall branch for organising this year's Festival and Conference and setting the standard for those of us at South Staffordshire who will have the pleasure of hosting the Festival in 2015 at Wolverhampton Grammar School on April 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup>.

*Trudie Davies-Findell & David Roberts*

## **THE SCOTTISH RECORDER FESTIVAL**

Flanders, Fun and Fine weather, what a glorious day we had in Glasgow. The Flanders Recorder Quartet musicians were not only inspirational as tutors but also charming and exciting people to have as our conductors. The Quartet has evolved into one of the world's top ensembles. They have performed more than 1,800 concerts and have attained a prominent position in the world of Early Music.

There was everything to choose from in the way of music, including getting into real jazz mode with Cole Porter's *Night and Day* and by contrast J.S. Bach's Fugue in A and Contrapunctus 4 & 9. For those willing to try something ultramodern there was a difficult but interesting piece by F. Yoshimine: *Small Festival*. The final massed playing held a surprise. After a calm start we were into a very sexy dance mode with *Lachrimae Tango* by Dowland, arranged by A. Melville.

There were players from Ireland, Cornwall, Isle of Man and all over Scotland who seemed to enjoy themselves hugely.

Both the Early Music Shop and Recorder Music Mail provided temptation with a wide selection of instruments and music. Most of us were willing to be tempted!

The day not only provided good tutoring sessions but a superb concert by Ton, Joris, Bart and Paul. We were treated to a selection of pieces from 1360 with Ashton's *Maske*, through Boismortier Concerto Op. 15, VI in G, Purcell *Chacony* to the 18th century with J. S. Bach Fugue in G. It was an inspiring performance. Thank you FRQ for visiting Glasgow.