

From the Archives - Winter 2012

The branch has taken under its wing a beginner group of Commonwealth teachers, all attending a year's course at Exeter University. Several members of this group have made their first acquaintance with western notation, and the major scale in particular, through the recorder, and the results are proving to be most interesting.

Devon, 1966

We sent a tape of simple graded pieces to a young blind teacher in Tanzania who had started to give recorder lessons to her class of blind African children. She has now asked for instruction also, so we are planning a tape of graded lessons. We heard the children singing on tape and they are obviously very musical, so we look forward to hearing the results in due course.

Aberdeen, 1967

We hear from Mrs. Helena Baker in Johannesburg that two of her pupils played the Telemann A minor Concerto which includes two trebles at the Young Artists Concerto Festival. In a review headed 'Recorder Revival' the music critic writes "For Mrs. Helena Baker this will be the culmination of years of campaigning for recognition of the recorder as a solo instrument".

Country and Overseas, 1971

In October branch members took part in what can best be described as a "variety show". This fund-raising event was organised by St. George's Church in Brentwood, whose hall we use for our meetings. The programme included solos on violin and clarinet by the young people of St. George's, heavy(ish) rock and Old Time Music Hall! Our contributions included Almans by Holborne, a Sinfonia by J.C. Bach and dances by Seiber.

Essex, 1994

Chipping Norton is a recorder player's oasis midway between Oxford and Cheltenham on the edge of the Cotswolds in a scenic, rural setting where it is sometimes possible to play *Sheep May Safely Graze* while actually watching them do so.

North Cotswold, 1993

When you are new to an instrument you need to learn the jargon as well as the technique. As beginners at the Leeds Summer School we were intrigued by this 'SRP' we kept hearing. It was not Scottish Rugby Players, we learned, but groups of enthusiastic recorder players meeting regularly. Could we cope alongside the 'experts'? Joining the SRP was rather like a learner driver feels going on to a motorway for the first time. To do this one needs the support of the more experienced. If the music is difficult and you take a wrong turning, or your engine stalls, it's not too long before you're back on the road again.

South London, 1993

If you heard a strange subterranean rumbling on Saturday afternoons recently it was probably Beethoven turning in his grave. We were playing an arrangement of part of his 8th Symphony.

Essex, 1993

March was rounded off by an erudite workshop taken by Paul Clark and entitled "Sampling our Hexachord Heritage".

Somerset, 1993

In March we had a day workshop conducted by Paul Clark entitled 'A Load of Old Bull'.

Somerset, 1994

[I can find no record of what Paul inflicted on Somerset in 1995 – Ed.]

All our musical tastes have been well catered for in the programme selected by our Musical Director Tom Tucker. He has indulged our natural predilections for Byrd and Gabrieli with fantasias and canzonas; led us a merry dance with Gershwin, Hilling and Challinger; and strained our sight reading to its limits with Staeps' *Berliner Sonata*.

Warwick 1993

In February, thanks to the spellcheck function on our Secretary's word processor, we were introduced to such delights as Handy's Divertimento, Phillips' Paeon and Mallard, Schist's Set-CE Mars and 8 Consort Pieces arranged by Doom G. Murky.

West Riding, 1994

We have just prepared our programme for the next six months. Fortunately we have a committee member with a word processor and the expertise to go with it, although the Secretary is wondering if she is too old to learn such new tricks.

Norfolk, 1995

Dr. Dolmetsch recounted for us his successful campaign to get the BBC to revise the sound of the 'pips' from B flat to B natural, and all the subsequent media attention that followed from his initial letter to the Daily Telegraph. Next target Big Ben!

London, 1994

Remember the winter of 1981/2?

Despite the snow we were able to go ahead with our Christmas meeting on 12th December; a large number of people came and were able to forget about the weather for a few hours.

Oxford

On 12th December with the nation practically at a standstill because of weather conditions most of our members turned up to make it a memorable session.

Warwick

In spite of the terrible weather twenty members braved the elements to come to our Christmas meeting on 12th December, which was a rewarding and enjoyable session.

Mid-Herts

Our AGM scheduled for early January had to be postponed for lack of a quorum – only two members managed to get through the snowdrifts.

Beds & North Herts

Heavy snow obliterated our January meeting though one member skidded round town delightfully on his front-wheel drive.

Birmingham

Owing to the terrible weather we had to cancel our January meeting at St. Nathanael's Church Hall, but instead a meeting was held at the secretary's house in case anyone wanted an afternoon's playing. So we were agreeably surprised to welcome 13 members who had braved the snow.

Bristol