

13th December 2008.

Rosemary Berry, Gwynneth Flitters and Sheila Clement.

Travelling conditions across the country were treacherous (due to excessive rain), so congratulations to all 14 members who made the Christmas meeting.

The lunch, of various meats, salads, vegetables, Julia's crisp roast potatoes, Felicity's delicious nut roast and the annual treat of fruit mousse made by Dennis, was organised most efficiently by Mary.

The playing began with Rosemary with the baton, who had chosen three varied arrangements of the **Bach Chorale** which concludes the *Christmas Oratorio*. The arrangement by **Pachelbel** required the bass players to transpose the tenor line, thus giving greater depth to the melody. The final piece in this group was the well known tune, *O little one sweet*, where the basses had a beautiful harmonic line.

There followed four seasonal fun pieces for recorders and various percussion from Rosemary's collection. They included *Winter Wonderland*, *The Christmas Song*, *White Christmas* and *Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer*.

Rosemary concluded her session with a simple, serene arrangement in five parts by **Alyson Lewin** of *In Dulci Jubilo* by **Bach**. The harmony parts had some tricky bars of triplets followed by even quavers but we mastered them before enjoying a tea break of tea and seasonal mince pies.

Gwynneth now led the group with **Mozart's Musical Sleigh Ride**. Followed by two dances and airs for *His Majesty's Sackbuts* and *Cornettes* by **Mathew Locke**. There was a small problem with fitting the last semiquaver in exactly together.

Sheila concluded the after noon with a real challenge, *Romanian Christmas Carols* by **Bartok**. The difficulty was the many time changes within the piece. Sometimes there were three, two or even seven, but by the fifth carol we were beginning to get the hang of it. Sheila was very enthusiastic about the carols and bought an enjoyable afternoon of playing to a close.

ANN HANKIN