

SRP Meeting August 2015

Not as big a gathering as we sometimes achieve but during the holiday period that is understandable; however for those of us who were there it was an enjoyable and mostly not too taxing programme conducted in two parts by Gwyneth and Sue Farrant.

The first session was Gwyneth's and she gave us an interesting mix of pieces both contemporary and some much older pieces.

The first was 'Three Dances from Jolly Roger' by Walter Leigh(1905-42) taken from his comic opera of that name. These were nice short warm-up pieces but fun to play.

Secondly came 'Three May Madrigals' Now is the Month of Maying - Thomas Morley, Now Each Flow'ry Bank - Orlando Gibbons and I Pride of May - Thomas Weelkes taking us back in time. The first was very familiar and all were enjoyable to play and within our capabilities so no excuse for less than perfect performance - perhaps not quite.

Thirdly came 'Rodrigo - Overture' by G F Handel, which was his first opera; written in 1707, originally for 2 violins or oboes, viola and bass. This setting for recorders was by Harold Newman in 1962 and posed a bit more of a challenge to some of us (demi semiquavers?) but we did our best and it did sound good.

Finally a bit of swing 'Bach Goes to Town - Fugue' by Alec Templeton and arranged for recorders by Brian Davey. Some Mock Baroque with inégale(swung) quavers was a fun piece which brought us to a welcome tea break.

Rikki supplied us with a wonderful choice of cakes but her tea making partner Pat was unwell so willing volunteers were ready to lend a hand, particularly with the washing up; thanks to them.

Sue brought us to order after tea with a series of 'familiar tunes'.

* Rondeau from Abdelazar Suite Henry Purcell Purcell: The Abdelazar suite consists of nine pieces scored for strings, written as the incidental music for the play of the same name - the alternative name being The Moor's Revenge! The rondeau is the movement that Benjamin Britten used as the theme on which he based his famous Variations and Fugue on a Theme of Purcell. Originally a medieval dance, the rondeau form of a recurring main theme interspersed with contrasting sections was commonly used for instrumental pieces in the 17th and 18th centuries.

* Scarborough Fair Traditional A very familiar folk song based on the two-way conversation between lovers made popular by Simon & Garfunkel an American folk rock duo of the 1960's

* Song of Vilja Franz Lehar Lehar: The Song of Vilja comes from the popular operetta The Merry Widow and is sung by the title character during a nobleman's birthday celebrations. In Slavic mythology the Vilja were believed to be the spirits of women who had been frivolous in their lifetimes (rather like the Merry Widow herself) and now floated between here and the afterlife. The Vilja were thought to inhabit high places and have power over wind and storms, appearing as ghost-like figures with long, billowing cloaks.

* Beckett Blues John Pitts More swing to finish the afternoon; an easy, familiar piece with the swing kindly written in as a dotted quaver semi quaver notes so as our concentration was wavering it was easy to stay with the mood of the piece.

Thanks from us all, Gwynneth and Sue, for taking through a very pleasant afternoons playing.

Sue Walker