

16th January 2010

The snow had finally cleared and the sun came out ready for our first meeting of the new decade. Robin had (fortunately, as I'd forgotten all the usual stuff I bring) typed out an order for the day – and very appetising it looked, too. With a high number of players present today, **Byrd's *Fantasy Sextet*** seemed a good starting place, it having 2 bass parts. We worked hard at the opening movement, and then tackled the pavan and the more tricky Galliarde, with a degree of success. Following the Byrd, we stayed in the same era, playing **Ravencroft's *Fantasia no 4***. Robin told us that Ravenscroft was almost a contemporary of Byrd, and had written a number of these fantasias, some of which I think we may have come across before. It was very playable and we made a good job of producing a musical performance, finishing just in time for tea. After tea we, appropriately played one of Robin's own compositions – *Snowfall*. It was very much enjoyed by the group and evocative of the recent weather. Staying with modern music we then looked at all of the *Suite* by **John Hawkes**. This is an interesting and in places, challenging, piece to play, and we enjoyed Robin's leadership throughout. We ended the afternoon with a couple of 'fun pieces', arrangements for recorder of **Sousa's *Old Comrades*** and *liberty Bell*. I feel that they are probably better in the original, as Sousa intended, but they are fun to play, nevertheless, and went down well at the end of today's session after all of the hard work earlier. Thank you Robin, for a very enjoyable afternoon of varied music.