

Saturday 16th January 2016.

Frances Webb

We welcomed in the new Year by inviting Frances to conduct the branch again, and she began the proceedings gently with a well-known work by **Mozart**, the *March of the Priests*. This worked surprisingly well for recorders, and Frances encouraged us not to rush the quavers. We then moved on to the centrespread piece from the magazine, *Moto Strinsky*. Sadly not everyone had received their magazines in time, but we had sufficient copies to be able to get a glance at the music. Frances told us about the way **Moira Usher** had come to compose the music, and as we played it we began to think of Stravinsky's famous Rite of Spring (a piece which I have personal horrors of....) The whole piece worked really well in our group, and Frances helped us to overcome any difficulties in articulation. Moira Usher is our playing Day conductor in October this year, so this many have given us a small sample of the day.

Next a complete change of mood and era – *Robin*, by John **Munday**. This is also a well-known tune, but in this arrangement (originally for keyboards- probably virginals), there were some very interesting corners – particularly for the bass department. Frances – I don't think we took it up to speed – could that have had anything to do with all those bass semiquavers??? Fun and interesting to play. Before the tea break we split into 2 choirs of SATB, (plus the bigger instruments to add some depth) and had a brief look at **Viadana's** *Canzon Padova*. Some of us had played this before, so, although on different parts, we weren't too shocked by the syncopated section.

We broke for a lovely tea with cakes (many!) provided by Mary (F) and Miriam.

After tea we resumed playing the Viadana, quite successfully, although there were perhaps too many descants and not enough tenors, but we all enjoyed the music.

As it is **Erik Satie's** 150 anniversary (since his birth in 1866) this year, Frances then gave us a very interesting arrangement of **Gnossiemme** number 3. This is a very beautiful and haunting piece, with most parts playing a series of semi-breves, and a delicate quaver melody occasionally appearing on the top. It certainly tested the breathing of those playing the larger recorders.

We concluded the afternoon with 2 other well-known pieces, this time by **Handel**, and taken from his Water Music Suite. The *Alla Hornpipe* was taken at a fast pace, and the *Coro* was a fun way to round off a lovely afternoon of varied music.

Many thanks, Frances, and I hope that you will come again in 2017!