

Saturday 16th November 2013

As the gloom settled over the Somerset Levels we welcomed a new face as our conductor for the afternoon - Jack Brothwell, who, along with Jackie, his wife, had travelled down from a village near Gloucester - a great place for composers as he lives near to both Vaughan Williams' and Holst's' birthplaces. He not only brought his wife, a good selection of music, and his recorders, but also came armed with various percussion instruments and an electric guitar. He had actually acquired one on his route to Ruishton!

So we began the afternoon with one of Jack's arrangements (actually, everything we played was either composed by or arranged by Jack, and nice and easy to read on his type setting) - **Let it Snow**, originally by *Julie Styne*. A great piece for the forecast weather, and a good piece to start the afternoon off.

Following this we went back a few centuries and added the bigger instruments for a lovely arrangement of *Holborne's Honiesuckle* - which also included solos and the newly acquired tuneable Bodhran. Very suitable! We then moved to a folk song that Jack had lovingly arranged and given to his wife, Jackie, and it worked very well on recorders - the folk song being **Hares on a Mountain**. Jack told us the story behind the words first, which were interesting! Before tea we looked at *Glenn Miller's Moonlight Serenade*, sorting out the tricky triplet rhythms before enjoying the beautiful cakes made by Mary and Vivien. After tea we performed the Miller with the addition of an electric guitar and a square drum called a khahong, which will double as a complete drum seat - or a seat!

Then we moved to another of Jack's compositions - a tune which has been set by one of the eminent composers already mentioned, Vaughan Williams. It was entitled **Riverside Suite**, and we played part one - I would like to have played the rest of the suite - but perhaps another time!

Then, as we have no Christmas meeting this year, we voted to play *Corelli's Christmas Pastoral*. Although originally written for strings, Jack reminded us to use big phrasing, and it sounds quite beautiful on recorders. We finished the afternoon by splitting into 2 choirs - a small group of 'soloists' and a larger group, with Jack doubling on Soprano due to both Soprano players being in the soloist group. *Handel's And the Glory of the Lord* was the chosen piece, and it was a lovely cheerful arrangement of a well-known piece of music, and a good way to end the afternoon.

Thank you both Jack and Jackie for coming to Somerset and making our dreary November day special!