

Saturday 16th October 2010

Our annual playing day dawned bright and sunny and our invited conductor, Andrew Collis, made the assembled players work very hard. We only played three pieces during the day, but they were very different both in style and period, and we had an opportunity to look at them in depth. This also gave us plenty of chances to practice the tricky bits and improve our technique.

We started the day with a favourite – **Peter Warlock's** *Capriol Suite*. Those who hadn't encountered the piece first hand before were somewhat shocked by the tempo of the fourth movement, but with continued work we felt that we had mastered it. We followed this with a big Band piece, **Greame Layton's** *After you've gone*. Having been encouraged to swing the quavers but not to stand during the solos, again we produced a good rendition. Our final piece was the beautiful *Sonata á 7* by **Schmelzer** in which we were encouraged to play delicately. There was plenty for all sections to work on. The final performance of all three works at the end of the day was a testament to our hard work and showed a marked improvement in our playing.

The day had many other highlights – lovely cakes provided by the committee, a fun raffle which was held to raise money for our contra bass fund, and mostly Andrew's recital in the lunch interval. Andrew began by playing a Chinese folk song which used the pentatonic scale as it's basis, having told us two versions of the story of the heroine. He then went back to Van Eyck playing one of the many variation from *Der Fluiten Lusthof* (after telling us about how this music came about).

Following this was the first of a Bach Violin Partita arranged expertly for recorder, Andrew playing the Gavotte from the E-major partita at this point. Moving to modern technique which captivated the audience Andrew played Fantasy and Scherzi from Hans Martin Linde's repertoire, introducing us to flutter tonguing and 12 tone music. Interesting though this was, it was lovely to hear a beautiful renaissance lament played on a renaissance recorder (with wider holes), and the final item of the concert was another movement from Bach's E major violin partita, this time the gigue.

What a super day we all had, thanks to Andrew who made us both work hard at our playing and our listening.