

The SRP Session on Saturday 20th August 2016 in Ruishton Village Hall was conducted solely by Sara Tambling since poor Sue Farrant has broken her leg, so was unable to be there!

There were 18 players, including a new member Julia. So we had 4 Descants, 4 Trebles, 4 Tenors and 6 Basses so a nice balance. Everyone was very supportive of Sara who had only expected to be doing a short spell as conductor and do some playing herself.

We formed a cosy semi-circle of players so Sarah could also sit and possibly join in some playing; in fact she didn't play at all but conducted us brilliantly. A very enjoyable, if a bit more informal than usual with a lovely selection of music; Sarah had her own choices plus some from Sue too, all of which were in four parts.

- Tallis' canon for 4 voices (composed in about 1560)
- Ricercare by Johann Jacob Froberger (1616-1667) - a straightforward start then became much trickier rhythmically but the group responded very well and counted well too!
- O sacrum Convivium by Richard Farrant (1530-1580). Composed for the most sacred part of the Mass so was an exercise in sustaining a very soft sound.

After a well deserved sumptuous tea kindly provided by Julia with help from Felicity we continued with:

- Three pieces by John Jenkins (1592-1678) : Ayre; Corant; Saraband. Much more light hearted than the Farrant and much trickier for the Basses!
- Dios Itlazu Nantzine by Hernanado Franco (1532-1585). Born in Spain but moved to South America to help Christianise the Aztecs. Master of Chapel Music in Guatemala and then in Mexico. The title translates as 'O Precious Mother of God'. It was a pity we didn't have a drum to add a percussive effect!
- We finished with an old favourite: The Teddy Bears' Picnic by John Bratton and arranged by Robin Benton.

One of the descant players played the sopranino part which added another joyful dimension to the already playful character of the piece. This was challenging for all parts because, although we could hear the tune in our heads, the rhythm was often dotted and/or syncopated.

Altogether an excellent and enjoyable afternoon with a surprisingly good attendance considering the time of year.

Thanks again to Sara for stepping into the breach at the last minute and making it a real success.
Sue Walker