

Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> March 2010

Debbie Nicholas

We began the afternoon (after lots of announcements!) with a piece called **Echo Song** by *Lasso*. This was very cleverly written as a simple canon – firstly we all played through the 1<sup>st</sup> choir part, then 4 of us were sent into the corner to become choir 2. The effect was very satisfying. We followed this with a well known and well loved suite by *Paul Clark*, his **Irish Suite**, played in honour of the recently passed St. Patrick's day and in respect of all of the Irish jockeys that had come over to take part in Cheltenham festival this last week. After a discussion about frogspawn and a general consensus that Spring had now arrived, we played **Spring Dance** by *Andrew Challinger*. There was a certain amount of dissent by the altos, but generally it was well played. We then enjoyed a lovely tea and cakes prepared by Pat and ably assisted by Riki. After tea we went back to the baroque period – 2 **Allegros** by *Handel* from orchestral fugues. They were fun and somewhat challenging to play. We also attempted to play the 2nd one as a concerto grosso with 2 soloists. After the Handel it was time to play a modern arrangement of Playford – *James Carey's Step Stately*. This provoked discussion on maggots – strictly in the musical sense and as applicable to dances. Kathleen told us some interesting information about the dances themselves, and we enjoyed playing all 4 from the suite. We concluded the afternoon with a few swung quavers – the oldest swingers in town? They were part of the score of **Joshua** by *Paul Richards* – as were the Hall of the Mountain King (Grieg) and some references to Bonnie Prince Charlie – a great piece to end the afternoon on as we all went out singing! Thanks again Debbie, and I hope we'll see you again soon