

SRP Report 21st June 2014

Despite the temptation of blazing sunshine, a goodly number of us turned up to play our recorders and eat cake. Our conductor was Joyce Rudall, standing in for Dick Little.

We began with Four folk songs for Recorder Consort (satb) arranged by Alex Ayre. The Ash Grove (Welsh) was straightforward, but basses were advised to go gently on the quaver runs in order not to drown the descant melody. No 2, My Love's an Arbutus (Irish) is interesting because although it is in G major it modulates to A minor and pauses for you to think about it. It has a pentatonic feel. The melody ends on the 5th, not the tonic, and the bass part is the only one with a definite G major ending. No 3 O Waly, Waly (Somerset) is in 3/2. It is a beautiful lament, and the tune is sometimes played by tenors and basses. Upper parts were requested (politely) to pipe down. We practised the poco animato (Latin for 'do not go mad') and the rallentando, ending with a lovely gentle lento as her love "fades away like morning dew" No 4, The Lark in the Clear Air. A treble solo floats over the top of the 4 part harmony, but for some reason which escapes me it didn't, so we gave up and moved on.....to a totally different style.

Groovy Kind of Love arranged by Garth, one of our group. This is a simple but effective arrangement of a modern love song. The melody, first played by a solo descant, has a steady rhythm of 4 quavers and 2 crotchets. Below this the lower parts play dotted minim+crotchet or a rumba rhythm. There are 4bar solos followed by tutti, and the tune is passed around. Varying the number of players means that the dynamics can be easily controlled, although our leader was still convinced we could play more softly (and she was right) The ending was beautifully peaceful. Thank you Garth.

Canzon La Padovana by Ludovico Grossi da Viadana was our next piece. Grossi is usually known by the name of his birthplace, Viadana near Mantua. He served in the cathedral at Mantua, where he met Monteverdi. In 1596 he became a Franciscan monk.

The piece is set for two satb choirs of recorders and begins in 4/4 time. Choir 1 plays the 1st subject, and is echoed by choir 2. The 2nd subject begins on the off beat, and is treated in similar fashion, each choir leading or echoing. The time signature switches to 3/4, with a feel of 6/8 in alternate bars. Stressed notes and staccato add to a dance-like rhythm. The canzon ends with a dramatic pause on the penultimate chord, adding a major 3rd to finish.

We broke for tea, with several different kinds of cake made by Gill Rummings and Sue Walker. Delicious, and we needed it, for we were about to play a modern piece in 7/8 time. Prelude, by Russell Pascoe, from a suite for recorders, and published as the centre spread in the Recorder Magazine. After a quick committee meeting about the best way to conduct

this we settled for 12, 12, 123 and later 123,12,12. It was VERY IMPORTANT to make notes and rests precise in length, as quite often two or more parts were playing the same rhythm and the effect would be ruined if just ONE person failed to concentrate. (To hear this again, click here) Actually, once we were in the groove, and feeling the rhythm, it was good fun.

Next we played an Allegro from the first suite of the Water Music G F Handel arr Anthony Baines.(satb with div sop and treble parts) This is in 3/4 and after a single bass note the other parts enter on the 2nd of 6 quavers.....more concentration.... The parts work in tandem,

descants with basses,, trebles with tenors, and then merge, but all the time there is a constant 6 quaver rhythm moving from one part to another. In the middle section the basses play arpeggios and the sound builds up as the quaver patterns come closer together and finally play in unison. The opening section is revisited , all parts play more complicated patterns with semiquaver runs then a typical Handelian ending – 2bar Rit... trill p a u s e.

Our final piece was the well-known Prelude on the Hymn Tune Rhosymedre Vaughn Williams arr Paul Clarke. (satb) This needs to be smooth and light, with gentle lower parts. The original tune in minims is first played by the tenors, then passed to the descants, with odd phrases appearing in the bass part. This is accompanied by a flowing pattern of crotchets and slurred quavers, with few rests. The rests in the bass, at the beginning and end of the piece, lend a pleasing variety to the sound. Dynamics can be decided by the players, if the conductor is in a good mood. Gwynneth