



The Berkshire Guitar Society

www.berkshireguitar.freemove.co.uk



Newsletter No 132

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Sunday October 10th:

Ensemble

September meeting

After the summer break it was good to point the car in the direction of Bracknell on the 2nd Sunday of the month as the new "season" of BGS meetings commenced.

When we arrived at the SHP it was also good to find an excellent turnout for our "Early Music" session, including Cheryl and Sue who first come along to the July workshop and have now taken the plunge and joined the Society.

Richard Butters volunteered to commence proceedings with 3 pieces by Anthony Holborne (1540 - 1602). Tim Parke followed this with John Dowland's Melancholy Galliard and Lady Hunsdon's Puffe. Dowland died in 1626, so we were firmly established within the time bracket set by our theme for the evening.

This continued with myself and Graham Cooper providing a duet version of Dowland's My Lord Willoughby's Return Home. There's an interesting tale behind this one - Lord Willoughby was the 2nd in command in the Earl of Leicester's ill fated campaign to assist the Dutch against the Spaniards in the Netherlands in the mid 1580's. Folks must have been glad to see him come back - there's a similarly named piece by William Byrd (died 1623) in the catalogues.

Michelle Cole then provided us with part of Guardame las Vacas (which translates as "Guard the cows!") by the Spaniard Luys de Narvaez (died 1555). This was originally written for the vihuela, an early form of the guitar.

We were then treated to James playing a short piece entitled "What if a day" on his self made Lute. This work of art is made in spruce and mahogany and although James very modestly owned up to a couple of errors in its creation it certainly looked and sounded good and was much admired as it passed its way round the group.

Steve Tucker was next up with Mrs Taylor's Galliard by Philip Rosseter, a contemporary of John Dowland's.

We were then brought back to the present day as Paul Miron gave a "test run" (Paul's words) to some Latin American pieces that he will be using in coming concerts. These were Dilermando Reis' s Xodo de Baina, Luis Bonfa's Luiza, Villoldo's El Choclo (one of the 2 pieces that started off the Argentinian Tango, according to Paul), Alfonso Montes' Preludio de Adios and finally Felicidade (Jobim / Moraes). As always on these occasions it was a pleasure to hear with Paul's playing - let's hope that the "test run" serves it's purpose and helped iron out any remaining wrinkles (not that I could hear many).

After a short interval we wound back the years again and George played us Gaspar de Sanz's Pavanne in D Minor followed by an anonymous piece from the Italian renaissance.

Debbie Haeck then gave us a different arrangement of Narvaez's Guardame Las Vacas from that we had already heard from Michelle, and was then joined by Steve Christmas in Lord Willoughby's Return Home.

As the evening drew to it's close Gary played a dance by our old friend "Anon" - possible 16th century Italian, followed by a different combination of Narvaez' "Guardame Las Vacas" variations to those already heard, and finally the Fantasia by the Spaniard Alonso Mudarra (died 1580).

Our entertainment was brought to an end by Cheryl Slater playing a short piece entitled "A Toy" from a selection of music from Shakesperian times.

I found this to be a very successful meeting with contributions of music from a wide variety of sources - I

had never heard of some of the composers whose music was being played.

It is probably inevitable that on these occasions there will be some duplication as members decide what music to bring along and play. This seems difficult to avoid unless we do something like "registering" what we propose to play in advance to avoid this happening, or people prepare with multiple pieces "in case" - both of which seem unrealistic. In any case, is it that much of a problem? If anyone is bothered about the possibility that someone else might play "their" piece first, then the situation can probably be avoided by careful selection of what to play. Views, anyone?

BGS news

NEXT MEETING

For our meeting on October 10th, we return to working together as we have an ensemble meeting scheduled. If anyone doesn't know the format, we break into groups to work on a piece from the Society library, each group coming back later to play their music to the rest of the meeting. So for another opportunity to play with others rather than work away on your own, come along to the South Hill Park Centre on October 10th at 7.30 pm.

FUTURE MEETINGS

We are getting close to organising another recital to take place in the new year, details to follow hopefully next month when all being well it will be possible to update the diary into early 2005. In the meantime, as we have a busy few weeks ahead of us here's a summary of what's happening to the end of November.

Nov 7th - Concert with Paul Miron and the Rosewood Trio.

Paul's ability to entertain is familiar to us and on this occasion he will be joined by the Rosewood Trio featuring our own Gary Jordan and Tim Parke, plus Mike Hinchliffe. The Trio will be playing music by Vivaldi (Concerto in G major) and Bernstein (West Side Story suite arranged by Ray Burley).

Tickets are available from the SHP Box Office on 01344 484123 and are a snip at £5 for the general public and £3 for BGS members with no charge for under 16's (please note that the prices quoted in the SHP programme are incorrect). As there won't be another newsletter before this concert takes place, please get this one into the diary now and don't forget to book those tickets!

November 14th - Amateur guitar making.

This is our monthly meeting, which takes on a different complexion as Steve Spearing takes us through his experiences building his own guitar. Steve also hopes to be joined by Peter Wheatley on harmonica to play some blues. As usual, we meet at 7.30 pm at South Hill Park.

November 21st - Students concert - 3.00 pm at the SHP

More details on this one next month.

ARRANGEMENT / COMPOSITION COMPETITION

Entries to this need to be in by the end of October.

Firstly, remember this is intended to be a bit of fun. There are no rules as such, other than that any compositions or arrangements submitted should be substantially original. As a small incentive there is a prize of £15 for each of the following:

- Best composition for one or more guitars on the theme of the humble potato;
- Best arrangement for two or more guitars.

Any BGS member can enter and entries should be sent to George Macdonald who is acting as organiser by **31st October 2004**.

Entries will be judged by members (to be designated or volunteered) who have not entered the competition and results will be announced at the December meeting.

OTHER NEWS

Paul Miron concert

Paul plays at the Royal Berkshire Hospital's Chapel on Saturday 16th October at 7.30 pm to raise funds for the Hospital's Intensive Care Unit. Tickets @ £6 available from The Appeal Office 0118 987 7962.

Calling all lefties!!

The Federation of Guitar Societies is asking for feedback from left handed guitarists (or frustrated left handers!). If anyone has any knowledge of left handers being encouraged to play "with the writing hand" or alternatively being made to play right handed then please email Martin Shaw on martin.shaw1@connectfree.co.uk.

Flute and Guitar weekend

Fiona Harrison is arranging another guitar and flute weekend to be held at Bloxham School near Banbury on April 8th - 10th 2005. Further details available available nearer the time.

"Web site of the month" and "And Finally .. "

will make their re-appearance in future issues.