



# The Berkshire Guitar Society

www.berkshireguitar.freemove.co.uk



Newsletter No 147

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## CONTENTS

BGS Meeting 12th February

BGS News

Web site of the month

\*\*\*\* Next meeting: \*\*\*\*

March 12th - Members Evening (Latin American)

### BGS meeting 12th February

It was very encouraging to see a high proportion of our membership at the Society's AGM on Sunday 12th February, and also good to see George Macdonald mobile again.

After the formalities with last year's minutes were over, the meeting proper got under way with George's report as Chairman of the Society, which I reproduce here for those who were not present at the AGM:

"This was a relatively quiet year for the society. The one concert with Virginia Pearson that had been organised for January had to be cancelled due to her having injured her hand. Whilst it was not a society sponsored concert, one highlight for me was the concert by Stephen Christmas and Debbie Haeck with Ray Burley in Reading. As a guitar duo Stephen and Debbie seemed to have progressed tremendously and it is always a pleasure to hear them play at the society evenings.

At the start of my tenure as chairman I set 3 broad aims: 1) to encourage members to play together, 2) to increase the number of friends of the society and 3) maintain the ethos of the society. I would like to believe that the third of these has been achieved, but on the first two clearly little or no progress has been made, apart from the creation of the music database, which is now freely available and could provide the material to encourage members to play together.

Throughout the year there has been the usual mix of events. Worthy of particular note are the Spanish Circle evening which as always was great fun; the summer barbecue kindly hosted by Graham Cooper and his wife Sue (we wish them all the best with their relocation); the Early Music evening organised, again, by Graham Cooper; and the Grande Finale for 2005 (not discount-

ing the Christmas Meeting) which was the excellent, and stunningly well attended Student Concert in November.

I have to admit that I have not been able to give the society my full attention in 2005, and I am now keen to hand over the reigns to a new Chairman, and I wish him or her the very best, and promise I will give my fullest support in 2006."

We then turned to Richard Butter's excellently presented accounts. The main issue here was whether it was necessary to increase the subscription by £5 to £40 (full member) in view of sharply increasing room hire charges from South Hill Park. After some discussion it was decided that even with the increase the subscription still represented good value for money and the proposal to raise the subscription was agreed.

Steve Tucker brought us up to date with the web site in the last year. This continues to receive a satisfactory rate of traffic and is developing into a valuable resource for members. Steve will look into the suggestion that the Society should register it's own domain name, which will make management of the web site easier and might also make it easier for folks "out there" to find us on the Web.

We then moved on to the election of the Committee for 2006. The only change was that George wished to stand down as Chairman, although he is willing to remain on the Committee. The existing Committee was re-elected. As I had previously indicated a willingness to take on the Chairmanship and there were no other candidates, it wasn't too much of a surprise for me to be elected Chairman.

The discussion that ensued came up with some useful ideas for the Committee to discuss in coming weeks,

and after thanks to George for his efforts as Chairman in the last year, we took a break before resuming with some solo offerings.

First off was George, with a rollicking "fingerpicker" by Doc Watson called "Old Aunt Dinah", to be followed by Steve Tucker with Fernando Sor's "Les Adieux". Steve had gone back to a fascimile obtained from the web as his source for this performance, and made an excellent effort with a score which required Steve to do without much of the assistance provided by modern editors that we all rely on.

I then returned to a favourite source of material, a collection of the works of Hector Ayala (edited by Richard Stover) with the Prelude and Guarania from the Suite Americana. Allan du Feu then played us a Carulli Waltz and a Largo by Sor, before the evening was brought to a close by Stephen Christmas with an admirable Prelude, Sarabande and Gigue from J S Bach's Lute Suite BWV 997.

## BGS News

### NEXT MEETING

Our next meeting will be on Sunday March 12th. This is a member's evening with Latin America as the theme, so plenty of scope there folks, look out something to play and come along to South Hill Park at 7.30 pm.

If you haven't paid that subscription yet, don't forget the chequebook!!

### JAMES AND JUNE WANKLING

We have recently heard from James that he and June will be unable to continue as full members of the Society - in addition to James' difficulties, June has problems

with arthritis in her hands. As a Society we would wish them all the best and as it is their intention to keep in touch with what we are up to, we may see them at concerts or on some other occasion.

### NEWSLETTER

The newsletter editor having been elected chairman, we are now inevitably looking for someone to take on the running of this august publication - while I can keep the newsletter going for a short time I cannot do so indefinitely.

I think we would all agree that it is important that the Society has a newsletter, which serves as a record of the Society's activities, and also as a vehicle for communicating what is coming up better than can be done for example by "ad hoc" emails. Subject to these broad objectives however, the way in which it is done is up to the editor - there is no obligation to follow the current style. I should explain that because circulation is almost entirely by email, the main task is actually putting the newsletter together which leaves plenty of scope for being creative, as opposed to printing and filling envelopes and other such mundane tasks.

So if you are thinking you could take this on, don't hold back - let me know by email or at the next meeting.

### Diary 2006

The schedule for 2006 is being circulated with this newsletter, and promises the usual varied programme.

Unfortunately the Woodley Festival has fallen by the wayside but we do now have a date for one of our highlights of the year, the visit to the Reading Spanish Circle on Friday May 26th.

We will be continuing to work through the year on Ivan Andrews' Berkshire Themes composition, and I gather from Gary Jordan that some more of this is now available. Hopefully we can get this into sufficient shape to make it worthwhile for Ivan to come and hear what we have been able to do with his music, and to pass on his own thoughts as composer.

We do have a vacant slot with the September meeting, so if anyone has any ideas or thinks something is missing from the programme, please say so.

The committee will also be having another look at getting some concerts organised, hopefully there will some news on this front before too long.

### Web site of the month

Last month we featured an old video of Segovia on YouTube - the collection of classical guitar videos on this site is growing apace. Quality is variable inevitably but some are quite watchable and I enjoyed this video of Roland Dyens playing his Tango en Skai:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BZJwZYjh4bY>

In my experience this composition attracts much comment as to how it should be played - so it's good to see how Dyens himself approaches it.

To view the whole list of available videos, go to the main page for the classical guitar group on YouTube:

<http://www.youtube.com/group/ClassicalGuitar>

Scroll down to the "view all videos" link and take it from there.