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BGS meeting 11th June

This was, as they say, a "meeting with a difference".

After a short reminder about chords I, IV, V and 12 bar structures Debbie Haeck gave us some 12 bar blues patterns and variations to play as a group to get us into these "swing" of the evening. A reminder about blues and pentatonic scales as a basis for improvisation led into a session in which the the opportunity to solo passed about the room at will while the rest of the group kept those blues rythmns going. Not surprisingly, it soon became apparent that whilst some of us were showing the

benefit of a mis-spent youth (or whatever) and were adept at improvised soloing others (no names mentioned!) found it much more of a challenge. A pity that time ran out before we could get to grips with those mixolydian modes

After an interval we had solo offerings from John Parr with Summertime, (John coping admirably with the lack of a thumbnail for the evening), Allan du Feu with Scott Joplins Easy Winners, George Macdonald with 2 short pieces from Debbie's shelves (Bluesette and West Coast Blues), and myself with a "modern French" (!) blues from Roland Dyens called Lettre Noire. Gary Jordan played us "Robert's Rag" and Steve Tucker brought things to a close with Hesitation Blues.

Many thanks to Debbie Haeck for a lot of hard work in pulling together an evening which succeeded in taking us "out of the box". Thanks also to fellow bluesmen for the evening for entering into the spirit of it so well - Michelle Cole and Cheryl Slater. in addition to those mentioned above.

BGS News

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting is the Society's summer barbecue on July 9th. Despite last year's experience, this is being hosted again by Graham Cooper.

The format is similar to past events, *with the key difference that we have an earlier start at 12.00 ish* to accomodate those of us who wish to get home and watch the World Cup final at 7.30 pm (although we know by now that England won't be featuring!)

- The time - 12.00 pm till about 5.00
- Food & drink - please bring along your own meat or equivalent, something to drink, and something (e.g. rolls, desert or salad) that can be shared with others.
- Partners & other members of the family are welcome.
- A couple of folding garden chairs would be a good idea.
- Dont forget your guitar - they do get used on these occasions!!

Here's hoping for some decent weather!

CONCERTS

Good news on the concerts front - all being well, we will be staging three concerts in autumn / winter 2006/07.

On Sunday October 29th at 3.00 pm, Rebecca Baulch will be giving a recital. Rebecca is a member of the Appassionata Trio along with Amanda Cooke and Hayley Savage - and many of you will recall Amanda's past successful recitals for the BGS. This is closely followed on Sunday November 5th (also 3.00 pm) by our Student's Concert, when hopefully we can repeat the success of last year's event. Lastly, on Saturday March 3rd at 7.30 pm we have a duo performing in the shape of John Mills and his wife Cobie Smit - definitely something to look forward to.

All three events take place in the Recital Room at SHP. Further details to come nearer the time.

Background Music

Thanks to Debbie for the following contribution.

How important is it to understand the meaning and background of the music we play? If we have one picture in our minds, which differs entirely from the composer's vision, does that make the performance a disaster? Perhaps it all hinges on whether or not he is sitting in the front row of the audience! It seems to be universally agreed that we should understand the context of a piece, the specific purpose for which it was written could be extremely relevant.

A recent entertaining teaching moment for me was delivered by a fourteen year old, who has been receiving classical guitar lessons for over five years. Having looked into appropriate Baroque repertoire to fit in with the Grade Five syllabus, the lesson turned to discussing the style of his chosen piece.

"So, do you know what a Bouree actually is?" I ask him. He looks at the music for a moment and then turns to me, in all earnest, and replies "Yes, it's a sort of hat".

So often, when students are asked to go away and find out about the piece of music they are playing, they return with a list of bullet points including the dates that the composer lived and the place of his death. Of course, when and where the music originated was relevant, but does it really tell us much about where the phrasing should lie or exactly what was being expressed? I'd be more interested in hearing about what musical training the composer had received,

who his heroes were, how lucky in love he was, what tunes he sang in the bath! None of this is quite so easy to find in your standard encyclopaedia. It takes some detective work, listening to other pieces from the period, understanding the cultural setting and most importantly of all, using our own imagination.

DebbieHaeck

And Finally ...

The world expert on European wasps and the sounds that they make is taking a stroll down his local high street. As he passes by the record shop, a sign catches his eye. "Just released - New - Wasps of the World and the sounds that they make. Available now!!!"

Unable to resist the temptation, the man goes into the shop. "I am the world expert on European wasps and the sounds that they make. I'd very much like to listen to the new disc you have advertised in the window."

"Certainly, Sir," says the young man behind the counter. "If you'd like to step into the booth and put on the headphones, I'll put the disc on for you."

The expert goes into the booth and puts on the earphones. Ten minutes later, he comes out of the booth and announces, "I am the world expert on European wasps and the sounds that they make and yet I recognised none of those."

"I'm sorry Sir", says the young assistant. "If you'd care to step into the booth, I can let you have another 10 minutes." The world expert on European wasps and the sounds that they make steps back into the booth and replaces the headphones. Ten minutes later, he comes out of the booth shaking his head. "I don't understand it", he says, "I am the world expert on European wasps and the sounds that they make, and yet I still can't recognise any of those!"

"I really am terribly sorry", says the young assistant, "I've just realised I was playing you the bee side."