



The EMFS Newsletter

March 2021 Issue 13

Hallo!

How lovely to see the spring bulbs flowering, and daylight appearing earlier and disappearing later! I hope this brings us all a bit more energy and motivation to keep practising our music, listening to old favourites and new discoveries, and to join in with some of the many online offerings. There is also hope for real life musical events in the not too distant future! Some events are listed below, and as always, please check they will actually run before you try to book.

The MEMF website continues to give a fantastic overview of participatory early music activities online. (<http://memf.org.uk/online-early-music-in-lockdown/>) It's well worth investigating. I also include extracts from their recent emails below, giving details of upcoming online events as well as early music items that are still available.

I am indebted to the news contacts for all the other Early Music Forums. There is a core of very proactive people, and they are very generous with sharing information, which I endeavour to pass on to you without too much repetition!

And of course, I am truly grateful for all the items that have been submitted to this issue of the newsletter. Many thanks, and please do keep the EMFS in mind when you come across anything of early music interest - it could feature in our next issue!

The deadline for the next issue is 15th May. I'll be sending out a request for articles nearer the time. Meanwhile, I hope you enjoy this issue!

Sue

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Page 2	Pages 4-12	Page 13	Pages 14-17
Message from EMFS Chair	Events, Workshops, Diary Dates, Websites of Interest	Gargoyles of Gargunnock	Recorders in Scottish Education
Pages 19-21	Pages 22-24	Page 25	Page 26
Review of Alison Kinder's talk on Michael East's music	Beethoven and Scottish song - Ossian etc	Lockdown laughter	Fine music during lockdown
Pages 27-28	Pages 29-32	Pages 33-34	Page 35
The winter of our discontent	The Zoom ceilidh experience	Book: Palestrina for all	News from the SPC



Message from our EMFS Chair

As we approach the end of a year of living with COVID-19, it does begin to look as though we will be able to make music with others, in the same physical space, at some point in 2021. There are, of course, a lot of “ifs and buts” - and especially so for our organisation, as many of our members are of retirement age and likely to be cautious about social mixing.

The committee met recently using Zoom; this worked really well. It was lovely to see and talk to each other and to catch up on how everyone has been faring. The general feeling was that locally based, small group music-making is likely to be the first thing that many people will feel comfortable with, once the current restrictions are eased. So perhaps EMFS needs to take on more of a role in encouraging and supporting such groups – possibly helping with finding venues, tutors, music or indeed participants. Maybe we should look on this as an opportunity to develop a real network of small early music groups, throughout Scotland, sharing ideas and performances online?

To help the committee decide how to plan for the rest of this year, we would really like to know YOUR thoughts. We will be sending out a short online survey to all members and friends - please do take a few minutes to respond to this. And as ever, we would be delighted to hear from anyone with ideas about future projects and the time and energy to help to make them happen.

Also on Zoom, we held our second early music ceilidh recently (see Sue Owen’s article below), with a wide range of musical contributions. Many thanks to everyone who took part, and especially to Sue Owen for organising and hosting the ceilidh with such calm good humour. A very welcoming and friendly occasion!

We are making good progress with our new website, hosted on the Making Music platform. We will let you know as soon as the site goes live. The website will continue to evolve over time; photos, articles, recordings from members will be most welcome. Our thanks to Susan White for her continuing work on what has proved to be a challenging and occasionally frustrating task!

While we are of course very grateful for the continued support of our members, please do not attempt to renew your membership at present. We are moving the membership process across to the new website for the start of our new membership year in September. All memberships have been extended until then, so no-one will drop off the mailing list. Susan White will contact you when we are ready to renew memberships.

Stay safe, enjoy the longer days and better weather, and let’s look forward to making music together.

Alison

Your EMFS committee



Your EMFS committee at their recent Zoom meeting!

From left to right starting at the top: Alison Tollick (chair); Sue Owen (news editor and EMFS choir administrator); Lynne Hope (recorders coordinator and viols); Philip Redfern (EMFS choir music director); Susan White (EMFS administrator); Vickie Hobson (EMFS viols coordinator); Kate Mors (EMFS treasurer); Patsy Campbell (viols).

Events, workshops and other treats for your diary In real life! (Online events in next section)

MAY 2021

- Fri 9 - Wed 14 Lacock. Ambleside Music Week – Esquivel (Eamonn Dougan)
www.lacock.org
- Mon 10 - Thu 13 Benslow Music
Harpichord Workshop with Claire Williams. Tutor: Claire Williams
https://benslowmusic.org/?PageID=2823
- Fri 14 - Sun 16 Benslow Music
Voices and Viols. Tutors: Alison Crum, Peter Syrus
https://benslowmusic.org/?PageID=2551
- Wed 14 - Fri 16 Bristol Early Music Festival (sponsored by *SWEMF) All Saints, Pembroke
Road, Bristol, BS8 3ED. *http://bristolearlymusicfestival.uk/*
- Wed 14 - Fri 16 Worcester. International Festival of Town Pipers
http://www.townwaits.org.uk/
- Sat 22** **Scottish Plainsong Choir**
Afternoon workshop-rehearsal at a Glasgow venue for the Traquair
performance on Sat 29 May.
Contact *c.mackenzie@strath.ac.uk*
- Mon 24 - Fri 28 Benslow Music
Schütz's Psalms of David with music by Andrea and Giovanni Gabrieli
Tutors: David Ireson, Jeremy West, Rogers Covey-Crump
https://benslowmusic.org/?PageID=2552
- Sat 29** **Scottish Plainsong Choir**
Informal, lunchtime promenade-style performance
Traquair Medieval Fayre.
Contact *c.mackenzie@strath.ac.uk*
- Mon 31 -
Thu 3 June Benslow Music
Baroque Voice: Aria, Cantata and Song. Tutors: Nicholas Clapton, Gavin
Roberts. *https://benslowmusic.org/?PageID=3044*
- Mon 31 -
Thu 3 June Benslow Music
Baroque Orchestra: Purcell, Arne and Boyce. Tutors: Theresa Caudle, Mark
Caudle, Oliver-John Ruthven. *https://benslowmusic.org/?PageID=2565*

JUNE 2021

- Sat 5** **Scottish Chamber Choir**
Byrd Mass for Four Voices, Parry Songs of Farewell at the Rosslyn
Chapel (and 12th June at Limekilns Parish Church)
https://scottishchamberchoir.org.uk/concerts/
- Sat 19 SEMF Workshop for singers (David Allinson)
Smarden Village Hall, Chessenden Ln, Smarden, Ashford TN27 8NF.
www.semf.org.uk

Events, workshops and other treats for your diary In real life! (Online events in next section)

JULY 2021

- Sat 3 - Fri 9 Lacock. Music at Monteconero – early Latinoamericana (Gabriel Crouch)
www.lacock.org
- Mon 5 - Wed 7 Benslow Music
Baroque Trio Sonatas with Da Camera. Tutors: Emma Murphy, Susanna Pell,
Mie Hayashi. <https://benslowmusic.org/?PageID=3078>
- Sun 11 - Fri 16 Lacock. Edinburgh Early Music Summer School – Carver et al. (Rory
McCleery). *www.lacock.org*
- Sun 11 - Fri 16 Benslow Music
The International Viol Summer School. Tutors: Alison Crum, Roy Marks,
Peter Wendland, Alison Kinder. <https://benslowmusic.org/?PageID=2597>
- Fri 16 to
Sun 18** **Scottish Plainsong Choir
Residency Orkney including Vespers-style Evensong St Magnus
Cathedral.
Contact c.mackenzie@strath.ac.uk**
- Sat 25 - Sun 1 Aug Cambridge Baroque Summer School
<https://www.cambridgeearlymusic.org/summer-schools.html>
- Sat 31 - Sat 7 Barnard Castle NORVIS 50 summer school. *www.norvis.org.uk* (dates tbc)

AUGUST 2021

- Sun 1 - Sat 7 Beauchamp Early Music Course for singers and players of Renaissance
instruments, at Rendscomb nr Cirencester. “O quam gloriosum” - large &
small-scale music associated with saints and sainthood (David Hatcher,
David Allinson & Sue Addison). *www.glosacadmusic.org*
- Sun 1 - Mon 8 Cambridge Renaissance Summer School
<https://www.cambridgeearlymusic.org/summer-schools.html>
- Sat 14 - Sat 21 Irish Recorder and Viol Course in Termonfeckin near Drogheda, north of
Dublin. <https://www.irishrecorderandviolcourse.org>
- Sun 15 - Sun 22 Baroque Week summer school at Queen Anne’s School, Caversham. The
Grand Tour: Italy (Theresa Caudle, Ann Allen, Amanda Babington, Clare
Beesley, Zoë Cartlidge, Steven Devine, Satoko Doi-Luck, Jane Francis, David
Miller, and Kate Semmens). *www.baroque-week.org.uk* (dates tbc)
- Mon 16 - Fri 20 HISS (Historically Informed Summer School)
“Where early, folk & traditional music come together”. Bishop Burton
College, near Beverley, East Yorkshire. <http://www.hiss.org.uk/>

Events, workshops and other treats for your diary In real life! (Online events in next section)

SEPTEMBER 2021

- Fri 3 - Sun 5 Jackdaws. Stylish Baroque (Theresa Caudle & Alastair Ross)
www.jackdaws.org.uk
- Sun 5 - Fri 10 Lacock. Trogir Music Week – Jacobean music (Patrick Craig)
www.lacock.org
- Fri 10 - Sun 12 Jackdaws. The City Musick course on late 16th/early 17th C instrumental
music (William Lyons and Richard Thomas)
www.jackdaws.org.uk
- Mon 13 - Thu 16 Benslow Music
Consorting Viols. Tutors: Alison Crum, Roy Marks, Peter Wendland
<https://benslowmusic.org/?PageID=2933>
- Mon 20 - Thu 23 Benslow Music
The Grandeur of St Mark's: Venetian Sacred Music by Cavalli from his
"Musiche Sacre" of 1656. Tutors: Theresa Caudle, William Carslake.
<https://benslowmusic.org/?PageID=2778>
- Fri 17 - Sun 19 Medieval Music in the Dales at Bolton Castle
<https://www.medievalmusicinthedales.co.uk/>
- Sun 19 - Sat 25 Lacock. Lucca Consort Week – Frescobaldi et al. in small groups (Robert
Hollingworth). *www.lacock.org*

Concerts, workshops, vignettes etc from MEMF emails

Concerts – Recorded and on demand

Handel's Messiah from the Barbican, performed by the Academy of Ancient Music directed by Richard Egarr with soloists Rowan Pierce, Iestyn Davies, Ben Johnson and Ashley Riches. Between 9th Feb to 24th March rent this for 48 hours for £12.50 [here](#). (168 mins)

RIAS Chamber Choir of Berlin conducted by Justin Doyle (an EMF Tutor) featured on The Early Music Show on 14th February, singing music by Bach, Binchois, Byrd, Caldara, Gesualdo, Hildegard of Bingen, Lassus, Palestrina and Victoria, along with some organ improvisations played by Martin Baker. Listen on BBC Sounds [here](#) (52 mins).

Trouvere Medieval Minstrels play Danse & Estampie Reals (royal) from the 13th century [here](#) (31 mins).

Jeffrey Skidmore's 70th Birthday

Ex Cathedra put on a forty minute concert to celebrate Jeffrey's birthday on Saturday 27th February at 7.30 (and available to view afterwards). It's a virtual voyage that celebrates his varied interests, his research trips, and the many journeys in music he has conducted with Ex Cathedra. There is glorious music from the Latin American and French Baroque, little-known gems from the Italian Renaissance and Jacobean era, and traditional favourites from Sweden and Scotland. Details [here](#). This is a free concert, but please donate if you can [here](#).

Radio 3 Early Music Show recently featured Jeffrey and Ex Cathedra. This includes an interview with Jeffrey and excerpts from our recordings, including a rare chance to hear some extracts from our archive recordings of concerts with the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment from 2008 and 2009: *Messiah 1784* and *Gerontius 1900*. Catch it on the BBC Sounds app afterwards [here](#).

Topical (but not early music)

Robert Hollingworth of I Fagiolini has recorded his sadness in leaving the EU in this quirky parody Brexit train: part deux [here](#). (Part one was recorded in 2018, in similar style.)

Recorders

Mary Tyers is running recorder zoom workshops at Foundation, Lower Intermediate and Upper Intermediate levels in March and April. See the flyer [here](#).

Duets (zoom) with Marion Scott: Four weekly sessions: Easier/Intermediate begin on March 12th, Intermediate/Advanced begin on 15th March. Music supplied in advance. Email her [here](#).

Talk

Emilia Benjamin talks about the lirone, or lira da gamba [here](#) which was a popular instrument in the late 16th and early 17th centuries, often used in Italian operas to accompany singing - "heaven's Hoover" as it has been dubbed by Erin Headley. Includes pictorial and audio illustrations (11mins).

Vignettes

Schütz: Auf dem Gebirge performed by Iestyn Davies and Hugh Cutting with Fretwork at a recording session [here](#). (5 mins) (*Look out for the CD*).

Philippe Jaroussky sings Vivaldi's Cum Dederit with some very mellifluous cornetti playing [here](#) (3 mins 14).

Agnus Dei from Palestrina's Missa Brevis, sung by The Marian Consort [here](#) (3mins 30).

Thomas Tallis: God Grant with Grace, sung by Stile Antico [here](#) (1 min 23).

Marin Marais: Couplets des Folies played by Lucie Horsch (recorder) and Thomas Dunford (theorbo) [here](#) (4 mins 32).

O Virtus Sapientiae by Hildegard von Bingen sung by Romina De la Fuente (soprano) accompanying herself on the Lyre [here](#) (2 mins 42).

Caterina Assandra's Duo Seraphim for 3 men's voices sung by I Gemelli [here](#) (4 mins 24).

Bach's Cantata "Jesu, der du meine Seele" BWV 78 performed by the Netherlands Bach Society with soloists Maria Keohane, Tim Mead, Daniel Johannsen and Matthew Brook, as part of their *All of Bach project*, [here](#) (24 mins). Links to information about the project and other recordings can be found below the video.

More of the *All Bach Project - Bach's Easter Oratorio BWV 249* performed by the Netherlands Bach Society with soloists Maria Keohane, Damien Guillon, Thomas Hobbs and Sebastien Myrus [here](#) (42 mins).

JC Bach's Lamento "Ach, dass ich Wassers gnug hätte" performed by Alex Potter (countertenor) and la Festa Musicale [here](#) (7 mins).

Telemann's Sonata in G for flute, two viol da gambas and harpsichord [here](#) (16 mins).

Michel Corrette: Concerto for harpsichord, flute and strings in D minor performed by Brooklyn Baroque and Friends (2014) [here](#) (9 mins).

A round of Three Country Dances in One by Thomas Ravenscroft, from the Lonely Lockdown Consort (Jude Rees) [here](#) (3 mins 21).

Handel: Sonata in B minor (part) for flute, viol and harpsichord from a live performance by Ensemble Échos [here](#) (5 mins) and several more videos at the same place.

To celebrate Vivaldi's birthday recently, his beautiful aria "Sovvente il sole" has been arranged for baroque oboe and mandolin, and played by Marco Cera [here](#) (4 mins 28).

And finally

Create your own music with Blob Opera [here](#)! (*Ed: This is huge fun!*)

Events, workshops and other treats for your diary Online

2021

MARCH

- Sat 13 Masterclass with Lisete da Silva Bull - an introduction to French baroque repertoire. Zoom
<https://www.lisetedasilvabull.com/>
- Tue 16
7.30 pm Tues 16 BMEMF
David Allinson 'Compare and Contrast' workshop for singers. Settings of Psalm 42 by Cardoso and Taverner.
<http://www.bmemf.org.uk>
- Fri 19 - Sun 21 Medieval Music in the Dales online festival
<https://www.medievalmusicinthedales.co.uk/>
- Sat 20
7pm MEMF/EEMF/TVEMF
Philip Thorby. 16th C Venice 4: Musica Nova
<http://memf.org.uk>
- Sun 21
3 - 4.30pm Benslow Music
Medieval music for Springtime. Tutor: Leah Stuttard
<https://benslowmusic.org/?PageID=3028>
- Thur 25
7.30 MEMF
Alison Kinder - Renaissance Classics for instrumentalists (singers allowed)
<http://memf.org.uk>
- Sat 27 MEMF 11am Robert Hollingworth - SingTheScore Extra
<http://memf.org.uk>
- Sun 28
3 - 4.30pm Benslow Music
Medieval music for Lent. Tutor: Leah Stuttard
<https://benslowmusic.org/?PageID=3028>
- Mon 29
8pm TVEMF
Patrick Craig Stabat Mater
<http://tvemf.org>
- Tue 30
6.30 pm Cambridge HandelOpera
Julian Perkins and Dionysius Kyropoulos. Speaking in tones (recitative)
<https://cambridgehandel.org.uk/events/>

Events, workshops and other treats for your diary Online

2021

APRIL

- Sun 4
3 - 4.30pm
Benslow Music
Medieval music for Easter. Tutor: Leah Stuttard
<https://benslowmusic.org/?PageID=3028>
- Sat 10
10 - 11.30am &
2 - 3.30pm
Scottish Plainsong Choir
Zoom sessions, with vocal warm-ups and Easter chant.
Please click *here for the morning session*, and *here for the afternoon session*
- Tue 13
7.30
SEMF
Talk by Laurie Stras of Musica Secreta: "Dare to declare who you are - Convent music of the Medieval and Renaissance periods". Scores and instrumental parts will be provided. <https://www.semf.org.uk>
- Fri 16
3pm
North East Early Music Forum
Online talk: 'Sources of medieval music from the north-east of England'
Dr Lisa Colton (University of Huddersfield) via Zoom
<https://www.neemf.org.uk/neemf-workshop-diary.html>
- Sat 17
11am
MEMF
Elam Rotem (a SingTheScore Extra guest) talking about Salamone Rossi
<http://memf.org.uk>
- Sun 18
3 - 5pm
Benslow Music
Josquin at 500: A Remarkable Tribute Motet. Tutor: Andrew Griffiths
<https://benslowmusic.org/?PageID=3082>
- Thurs 22
7.30 pm
BMEMF
Rory McCleery 'Compare and Contrast' workshop. Guerrero's 'Ave Virgo Sanctissima', other settings of the motet, and movements from Juan Esquivel's mass of the same name. <http://www.bmemf.org.uk/>
- Mon 26
8pm
TVEMF
Andrew Griffiths. Venetian music for the feast of the Ascension.
<http://tvemf.org>
- Tues 27
6.30pm
Cambridge Handel Opera preparing for Tamerlano
Julian Perkins and Dionysios Kyropoulos. Production dynamics
<https://cambridgehandel.org.uk/events/>

Events, workshops and other treats for your diary Online

2021

MAY

Sat 8
10.30am-12noon
North East Early Music Forum
Playing Josquin – an illustrated talk with singing/playing opportunities
with Jacob Heringman, by Zoom
<https://www.neemf.org.uk/neemf-workshop-diary.html>

Tue 18
TVEMF
Patrick Craig 'Melodramatic Motets' programme exploring the artistic
inspirations behind the vivid music of Giaches de Wert.
<http://tvemf.org>

JUNE

Sat 5
MEMF
All day workshop with Patrick Craig in Loughborough (virtual if necessary)
<http://memf.org.uk>

Regular Events

Wednesdays 1pm: Ensemble Hesperis. Lunchtime baroque concerts www.ensemblehesperi.com.

Wednesdays 7pm: Trouvere Medieval Minstrels on their Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/TrouvereMedievalMinstrels/>.

Fridays 11-11.30am: The Telling in Retreat. Medieval singing workshops <https://www.thetelling.co.uk/in-retreat> (available afterwards). 19/2-26/3 Women in Medieval Music.

Fridays 1pm: David Allinson Lunchtime Live (available afterwards) <http://davidallinson.com/media/>.

Fridays 1pm: Eboracum Baroque spotlight concerts on YouTube and Facebook (available afterwards) <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCYp4g02I56ZBZli2ndmFsYw>.

Fridays 6pm: SingTheScore (available afterwards) <https://www.ifagiolini.com>.

Fridays 29 Jan to 5 March, 7pm: 6 Platinum Consort workshops, also available on demand afterwards. Bach: Jesu meine Freude at A=415. <https://www.platinumconsort.com/jmf.html>.

First Saturday of each month, alternating mornings and afternoons: SWEMF are hosting 'Early music chat' <https://www.swemf.org.uk>.

Organisations offering Early Music events, courses etc Outside Scotland

For details of events in the north of England which may be of interest and within reasonable reach:

North East Early Music Forum <http://www.neemf.org.uk/>;
and <https://www.neemf.org.uk/other-events.html> for a long list of Early Music events in north east England.

North West Early Music Forum <https://nwemf.org/>.

The National Early Music Centre in York presents a wonderful programme of concerts and events.
<http://www.ncem.co.uk/>.

Benslow Music runs several Early Music courses in Hitchin, Hertfordshire:
<https://www.benslowmusic.org/>
Some of their courses are listed below.

The Rondo Viol academy runs courses throughout the year for players of different standards.
For details of all courses please see <http://www.rondoviolaacademy.co.uk/>.

Venues are The Hayes in Swanwick, Derbyshire
<https://www.cct.org.uk/the-hayes/the-hayes-conference-centre>.

High Leigh in Hoddesdon, Hertfordshire
<https://www.cct.org.uk/high-leigh/high-leigh-conference-centre>.

Hothorpe Hall in Theddingworth, Leicestershire
<https://www.hothorpe.co.uk/>.

The Beeches in Bournville, Birmingham
<https://chartridgevenues.com/the-beeches/>.

The Eastern Early Music Forum website contains a 'Lockdown Links' page which lists many online early music performances, learning resources, contacts and other material which can be accessed at all times. The Midlands Early Music forum has something very similar, and so does the North West Early Music Forum.

A visit to one of these pages is strongly recommended.

Eastern Early Music Forum: www.eemf.org.uk/lockdown_links.html

Midlands Early Music Forum: memf.org.uk/online-early-music-in-lockdown/

North West Early Music Forum: <https://nwemf.org/>

The Gargoyles of Gargunnock

Helen Rowell

Well, our main excitement last year was getting dressed up on a cold September day, in our finest period costumes, and driving separately to Bannockburn House for individual photo portraits for a book launch (theirs, not ours!) with Mark Leslie. It was so cold and we had to get into unusual positions and “hold it” until we were told we could move again! How we suffered for art!!

Then I represented us all and took part in a Zoom Ceilidh run by the Early Music Forum for Scotland, reading the lyrics to one of our favourite songs, *The Tale of Sir Patrick Spens*, for my party piece. The last verse can bring me to tears when we sing it because we put so much feeling into it, so I had to be careful not to get emotional on screen!

There's another one due in February so I've volunteered again and will read *The Three Ravens* and then *The Twa Corbies*. They are another 2 of our songs and tell what happens to the body of a knight killed in battle. The Scots version is much more gruesome but more realistic than the English version!

So, this year we've already been booked to perform at the Traquair House Medieval Fayre at the end of May and we've booked our accommodation. It's highly unlikely this will go ahead, but it's nice to dream!

Our only other potential appearance so far, is singing at the book launch at a special Bannockburn House evening in September and there's a vague chance that might actually happen!

Meanwhile, we've learnt how to practise on Zoom! So, every Tuesday morning, we have a coffee and chat 'together' and then one person takes the lead and sings their part of a song and the other two mute themselves and sing along. Our songs are all in 3-part harmony, so it sort of works! But it's fun anyway and keeps us singing!

Our singing and costumes seem to bring pleasure to those who see and hear us perform so we do hope that we can all get back to some kind of normality eventually!

Best wishes from the Gargoyles of Gargunnock – Zoe, Liz and Helen



Singing to King Robert the Bruce at Bannockburn Live 29th June 2014

Recorders in Scottish Education

Louise Guy



At the beginning of the twentieth century, the recorder was an obscure, even an exotic, museum object. By the mid twentieth century, the playing of it was so embedded in education that it was listed as one of the instruments in the Scottish education examination diet and remains so to this day. My research is attempting to work out how this had come about. Central to the use of recorders in Scottish schools is Brian Bonsor (1926 - 2011).

Bonsor grew up and lived his entire life in the borders of Scotland. He was at school during the second world war and, not long after leaving school, he was called up to serve in the navy. Once demobbed in 1948, he went to Moray House Teacher Training College. He was appointed assistant music teacher in 1949 at Hawick High School where he had been a pupil. In 1961, he was appointed assistant music organiser of Roxburghshire but returned to Hawick High School to head the music department there in

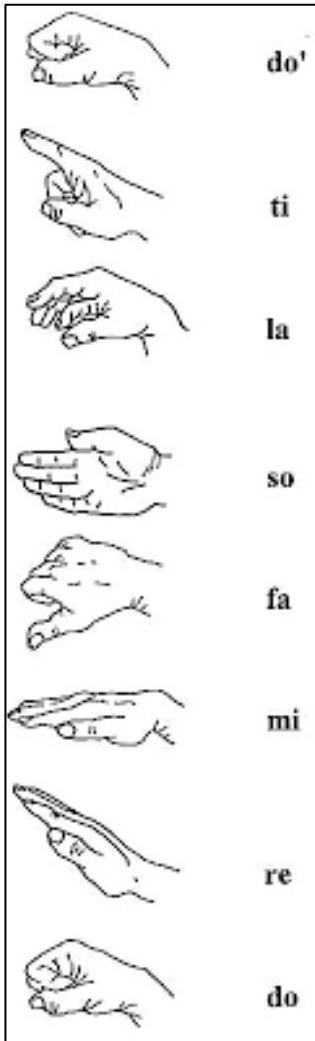
1966. In 1970, he took up the post of music adviser for the border counties of Roxburghshire and Selkirkshire and, after regionalisation of the counties, for Berwickshire and Peebleshire as well. He retired from the Scottish education system in 1983 to start a new phase in his life but this is an area of his life I am only now beginning to research and will not address in any detail here.

As a composer, Bonsor's compositions are wide-ranging and usually very accessible to the school and amateur recorder player, with 147 pieces listed in the British library catalogue. His initial compositions seem to have been choral including a children's opera, "Shades of Night", which was broadcast by the BBC Children's Hour in 1949. His orchestral works include a "Scots Suite" composed in 1964. Of his extensive recorder catalogue, there are 14 recorder compositions listed in the current grade exam syllabuses (Associated Board, Trinity College and MTB) and examples of his piano compositions have until this year featured in these as well. Many additional works are yet to be published.



Hawick High School

His work in the formal education system was in Scotland, a system which is quite distinct from the rest of the UK. After the Reformation in the sixteenth century, the Scottish state church became presbyterian rather than episcopalian as in England. The church was anxious that the masses would be able to read the Bible in the vernacular and, to that end, the aim was to have a school in every parish. These parochial schools and the borough schools in the towns were staffed by university educated masters. The UK state began its involvement in education in 1832 when it provided grants initially for buildings. Over time, the grants were extended to include salaries and equipment. Inspectors were appointed in 1839 and, by 1860, the plethora of conditions attached to the grants was codified into an annual education code. The compulsory curriculum consisted of the 3Rs, reading, writing and arithmetic. While elementary education was free from 1872, secondary education was not until 1918.



The place of music in the curriculum was anomalous. If sight reading of vocal music, usually from solfa, was not taught, the government grant was reduced in England. However, in Scotland the university educated masters were not expected to necessarily have that skill in their repertoire. Consequently, if “music from notes” was taught, the Scottish grant was enhanced. Music was compulsory across all years until 1962 in both elementary and secondary schools.

A second difference in Scotland was the introduction of a national school examination in 1888 following a pilot by an Edinburgh University professor, George Chrystal (1851-1911) the previous year. The Scottish Leaving Certificate was offered at a Higher level, nominally taken by 18 year olds, and a Lower level, at 17 years. Music did not become part of the diet until 1932. Thirty years later, in 1962, the Leaving Certificate was replaced by the Scottish Certificate of Education which renamed the Higher level as Higher grade, taken from age 17, and replaced the Lower level by Ordinary grade taken around age 16. The examinations were no longer under the direct control of the Scottish Education Department, a new body, the Scottish Certificate of Education Examination Board, having been set up the previous year. In 1988, a century after the first national diet, the Ordinary grade was replaced by Standard grade, the result of a major review of teaching in Scottish schools which Bonsor had been party to.

Bonsor’s involvement in the examination system began in 1958 when he was asked to write the syllabus for the recorder part of the Scottish Leaving Certificate, the instrument being then introduced as available for the practical section of the examination. He then wrote the syllabus for the recorder part of the Scottish Certificate in Education in 1962. He served on

the Scottish Education Department’s Central Committee on the Curriculum from 1971 to 1974. However, possibly most important was his appointment to serve on the highly influential working party examining music teaching in Scottish schools in 1973 to 1977.

The report that was produced revolutionised the teaching of music. The Scottish Leaving Certificate and the Scottish Certificate of Examination in music had been described as elite subjects because a student had to have reached a high level of competence in performance of an instrument or voice. This meant, for the candidate to be successful, they had to attend music lessons outside the classroom. The report made it clear that success in school music was expected to now become available for the average pupil through classroom work alone. There was uproar from some quarters but the report resulted in the introduction of the egalitarian Standard grade in music. Bonsor’s final work in formal education was to serve on the working party on “Entrance Qualifications for Teachers in Music” in 1981.

Standard Grade Music had 4 elements:

- Performing on any instrument or voice
- Performing in an ensemble on a contrasting instrument
- Inventing
- Listening.

After retirement in 1983, Bonsor spent the remainder of his life concentrating largely on the recorder. Although a widely popular instrument, especially with amateur gentlemen during the eighteenth century, skills for playing and making recorders had largely been lost during the nineteenth century. The revival of the recorder can be dated to two exhibitions that brought the instrument to the notice of the public and to three lectures given to the Musical Association in London. This revival was consolidated by the work of the instrument maker Arnold Dolmetsch (1858-1940), often performing in costume.



Worshipful Company of Musicians Exhibition 1904

The Brussels Conservatoire had provided recorders for the 1885 International Inventions Exhibition and Francis Galpin (1858-1945) loaned recorders to the Worshipful Company of Musicians Exhibition in 1904. John Finn, a well-known flautist, gave a talk on “The Recorder, Flute and Fife” to the 1904 exhibition. However, in 1901, he had been one of the musicians who performed at a lecture on “The Chester Recorders” given by Joseph Cox Bridge (1853-1929). Serendipity had resulted in Bridge, who was the organist of Chester

Cathedral at the time, being present when a box containing a consort of recorders was discovered in the Cathedral bowels. Only one other consort had been known and that was in the museum in Nuremburg. However, Bridge’s lecture was not the first at the Musical Association. In 1898, Christopher Welch (1832-1915) had lectured on “Literature relating to the Recorder” and subsequently followed this in 1902 with a lecture on “Hamlet and the Recorder”.

Dolmetsch’s work forms the third strand leading to the revival of the recorder. He attended the Brussels Conservatoire to study violin around 1879 and at the Royal College of Music in London in 1882, a year before it was formally opened. He worked as an instrument maker at various times in France and the USA but settled finally in England in 1914. From 1891, he performed on early instruments. The first report of a recorder being played in modern times in Scotland was by Dolmetsch and his wife at a concert in Perth in 1912 when they had just returned from one of his forays into the USA. In 1920, Dolmetsch constructed the first modern British recorder following the loss of the baroque instrument he had been using.

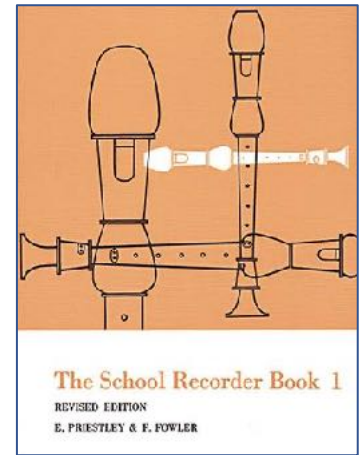
In 1925, Dolmetsch started an early music festival in Haslemere, Surrey. One of the audience at the 1930 Hazlemere Festival was a newly qualified flautist, Edgar Hunt (1909-2006) who had just matriculated from Trinity College, London. At the Festival, Hunt bought a recorder and used the 1730 tutor “The Modern Music Master” by Peter Prelleur (1705-41) to teach himself how to play it. Hunt completed the Trinity College course in teaching music, and in 1935, he returned to Trinity College to teach recorder. In 1936, he was invited to give a week’s recorder course to a group of Bradford teachers. One of the attendees was Fred Fowler who was to publish possibly the most popular school recorder tutor in 1962. Fowler’s co-author was Edmund Priestley who had been appointed the first school organiser of music for the West Riding of Yorkshire and who introduced both percussion and recorder playing into class teaching.



Arnold Dolmetsch



Edgar Hunt



1962 Recorder Tutor

Hunt had been importing inexpensive recorders for school use since 1934. These and the work of Priestley meant that recorder playing in the classroom became widely accepted in England. Hunt was also integral to the formation of the Society of Recorder Players in 1937 along with Carl Dolmetsch (1911-1997), the younger son of Arnold. Thus, the recorder was poised to be established as an accessible instrument to both adults and children before the second world war.

Bonsor's involvement with the recorder began in 1952. Although a pianist, three years into his teaching career, he taught himself the recorder. In 1954, he attended the "Recorder in Education Summer School" in London. This summer school was a satellite of, but distinct from, the Society of Recorder Players. Bonsor passed the Society of Recorder Players teachers' test which took place at the summer school in 1955 and began to tutor at the school himself from 1959. He became the summer school's director from 1966 until 1998. Over time, the summer school morphed into the ongoing "Recorder Summer School". In 1961, he founded the "National Recorder School of Scotland" and directed it until 1994. This has also morphed, but into the ongoing "Scottish Recorder Course". In 1967 to 1968, Bonsor was the recorder tutor on the British Orff Society Summer School. His involvement with the Society of Recorder Players was extensive. He was added to their visiting conductors list in 1965 and became a musical director in 1967. In 1989, the organisation made him vice-president. He not only led workshops throughout the UK but also in Australia (the First Australian National Recorder Festival in 1984), New Zealand (New Zealand National Recorder Festival in 1989), the USA (Long Island Recorder Festival) and on the Irish recorder course.

In summary, Bonsor was a key figure in Scotland with seminal work on music teaching and by producing an extensive catalogue of original and arranged music for use by school children and amateur adults. There is still much research to do, principally around the influence of Bonsor after he left working in formal education, much of which is expected to centre around his involvement with the Society of Recorder Players in addition to his composing for the increasing availability of the larger recorders.

I include a little *video* (please click) which shows Tom Beets and Joris van Goethem of the now defunct Flanders Recorder Quartet setting up for a concert to give some indication of the variety of recorders now being produced.

A bit of fun from the past

sent by Lynne Hope

MILES KINGTON

ANDRE PREVIN once ingeniously defended Muzak on the grounds that it was the only medium where you could hear otherwise neglected composers. This is no longer true. The function has been taken over by Radio 3.

One of my pleasures in life is riffling through the new *Radio Times* to see what obscure composers they have been able to dig up for this week's offerings; yesterday alone produced pieces by the following composers unknown to me: Jindrich Feld, Hilding Rosenberg, Vagn Holmboe, Peter Nelson, Georges Hue, Drdla, Pieter Hellendaal and Maurice Ohana. Excellent names, all of them, and as resonant as the best names in tennis, which I normally think are the best in the world, just as I think names in football are the least imaginative.

One way in which Radio 3 trawls new composers is by sending its fishing boats out into relatively uncharted seas such as the Mannheim school, the Bohemian tradition, contemporaries of Beethoven and pupils of Liszt. This can also be done in a contemporary way by inventing programmes based on modern Estonian composers or new Swiss organs. Both of these, actually, were featured last week, and introduced names such as Ester Maegi, Veljo Tormis, Evald Aav, Isaac, Eduard Tubin and Boyvin.

At what point, I wonder, does the idea steal across your mind that at least some of these names must be made up? There is a certain feel of left-over Scrabble letters to some of them, is there not? And an air of failed anagrams to others, the implications of which lie dormant in your imagination for years and one day suddenly

New parlour games from Radio 3

sprout into full-grown suspicion.

For me, this happened last week when I spotted a programme of baroque music including works by Salamone Rossi and Biagio Marini. Neither of them anything like household names. Yet somehow familiar. One can imagine the Radio 3 planning session . . .

"Isn't it about time for some Italian baroque music?"

"If you like. But I thought we were avoiding it because we'd run out of Italian names."

"We have. But I suddenly thought we might try having a couple of pieces by — wait for it — Martini and Rossi!"

"You're joking! The listeners will smell a rat a mile off. They'll know for sure we've been making up names, then."

"God, you're such a coward. Well, disguise it a little, then. Make it . . . Marini and Rossi. Give them fancy first names, like Salamone and Biagio. I bet nobody will ever notice."

And I bet nobody has. Emboldened by their daring, the two planners plunged recklessly on.

"I thought I'd try an anagram this week."

"Let's hear the worst."

"Edison Denisov."

"No."

"Why not?"

"I keep telling you — people will guess! At least change one letter."

"Settle for Edison Denisov?"

"Oh . . . I suppose so. Then will you accept my vowelless

wonder for the week: Drdla?"

"How do you pronounce it?"

"You don't. You just listen to his music."

"All right. Here's one I quite like. Doppler."

"Seems pretty humdrum by your standards. Just means twin, doesn't it?"

"Yes. But I'm proposing a pair of composers called Dopppler! C and F Dopppler!"

"Too much!"

"Incidentally, isn't it your turn to produce the over-the-top Christian name if the week?"

"Yes. Got it somewhere. Here we are. Dionisio Aguado."

"Dionysus Aguado? Very nice. What kind of music does he write?"

"Guitar music, of course. When in doubt with a Latin name, he's a guitar composer."

"Oh. By the way, weren't you going to come up with another famous composer's name linked to an unfamiliar first name? They're always fun."

"How does Vladimir Mendelssohn grab you?"

"It's ludicrous. We'll use it."

And all these names duly appeared as composers last week on Radio 3, along with Kaija Saariaho, de Fossa, Ariel Ramirez, Storace, Wolf-Ferrari, Stenhammar and full supporting cast.

It's no use writing to me pointing out that one or two of these composers were genuine people. I'm sure you're right. I expect that. These Radio 3 people are no fools — of course they're going to stick in or two real names to get us to swallow the others. But, really — C and F Doppler, Drdla, Edison Denisov, Marini and Rossi, Evald Aav, Vladimir Mendelssohn . . . well, I ask you.

A breath of fresh air!

Alison Kinder's presentation on the Music of Michael East

by Zoom on Saturday 9th January 2021

Sue Owen

If you didn't link in, you missed a real treat! A couple of weeks into the post-Christmas high level of lockdown, I was ready to be cheered and uplifted. So I bought a virtual ticket for this Zoom event run by the North East Early Music Forum (NEEMF) to find that more than seventy others seemed to feel the same way.

A brief introduction from Joanna Rowling (although, as she pointed out, not many people would not have some previous experience of Ali Kinder) and the talk started. Ali could speak about a speck of mud and make it exciting and enthralling. With genuinely interesting material, Ali's vivacious personality and enthusiasm soon had us carried on a wave of fascinating insights into Michael East and his music.

She first described how little known Michael East (1580 - 1648) is, and that she couldn't find a picture of him anywhere. She went on to tell us how he fitted in with his contemporaries, and the sort of music generally associated with his contemporaries. For example, we know Byrd (1543 - 1623) for his glorious sacred masses and his association with the Chapel Royal, John Bull (1562 - 1628) for his keyboard music, John Wilbye (1574 - 1638) for madrigals including the famous "Draw on Sweet Night", Thomas Tomkins (1572 - 1656) for vocal works and verse anthems. Michael East now fits in chronologically, known for his madrigals, 3-part fantasies and 5-part consort music. Following Michael East by year of birth, we have Orlando Gibbons (1583 - 1625) known for his verse anthems, for example the famous "Silver Swan", John Ward (1590 - 1638) for his madrigals and consort music, John Jenkins (1592 - 1678) for his instrumental consort and lute music, and William Lawes (1602 - 1645) for his consort music, theatrical music and dialogues.

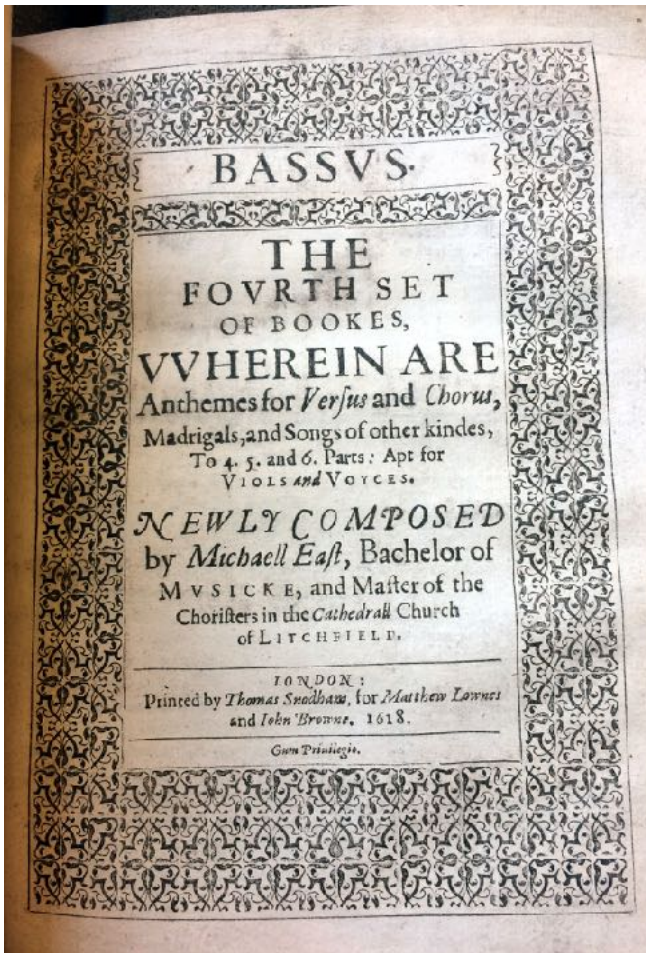
Ali made the point that while all the others in this list of contemporaries are played, recorded and listened to frequently, the music of Michael East is much less well-known, less frequently played and hardly ever heard. Ali's consort (the Chelys consort) has recently teamed up with the vocal Fieri consort to produce a CD devoted entirely to Michael East's music. She and Ibi Aziz (a well known fellow viol player and a fellow member of the Chelys consort) spent many hours in Christ Church library researching the original music, in Michael East's own hand to ensure their interpretation was as authentic as possible. Ali acknowledged her gratitude to Christ Church library for allowing this privileged access. As far as she knows, there is only one other complete recording of East's music. This is remarkable considering the number of recordings of many of the other composers in the list. Yet in his time, Michael East was a prolific musician, with seven books of music published - the most published composer of his time! So what happened? Ali mused. Could it be, dare we ask, that his music really wasn't up to the standard of his contemporaries. Even Ali's consort were a bit dubious at the thought of recording a whole CD of Michael East's music.



Ibi Aziz and Ali Kinder in Christchurch college library, researching for their new CD “Amavi - music for viols and voices by Michael East; Fieri consort and Chelys”

Ali then gave us a brilliant demonstration of the calibre of East’s music. She took as an example anthems using the text “When David heard that Absolem was slain”. (This is a text from the Old Testament of the Bible, where David, having fallen out with his son, went into battle against him with his army. He instructed his army not to hurt Absolem but apart from that, to do what they needed to secure victory. Unfortunately, it didn’t work out, Absolem was killed, and David’s words of lament have been used by many composers). Before playing East’s interpretation, Ali played us the anthem by Thomas Tomkin, first pointing out some key features of the score. How it started with a solo voice, how the beginnings and ends of the different sections were treated, how key phrases and words were interpreted musically. We all listened in rapture to Tomkin’s glorious score. Ali then brought up East’s score, and showed us how the structure was very similar in terms of solos, beginnings and ends of phrases etc. and we then listened to East’s score. Again, it was stunningly beautiful, but I couldn’t help thinking “how much of this did East copy from Tomkin? Then came the punchline. East’s score (1618) was published four years before Tomkin’s (1622)! If any copying had been done, it was Tomkin copying East’s ideas! Yet now, it is very easy to find Tomkin’s version, and very difficult to find East’s.

This brought us to the tea break, but just before we put all our kettles on, Ali gave us a delicious anecdote on one of Michael East’s human failings. While Ali and Ibi Aziz were researching and looking at East’s original music books (located in the library of Christchurch college, Oxford) for their Michael East CD, they came across “The Triumphs of Oriana” collated by Thomas Morley in 1601. The manuscript was published by Michael East’s uncle Thomas East. All compositions except East’s were allocated a number in the manuscript. Michael East had contributed one composition to this collection, and it is listed at the beginning of the contents separate from the other contributions, with no number allocated. Why was this? A footnote explained this mystery. Michael had missed the deadline, and had sent in his manuscript after everyone else’s had been catalogued and edited. His uncle must have accepted it after the deadline as a favour, and listed it as a last-minute entry without a number.



Frontispiece of one of Michael East's original music books.

After the tea break, Ali talked about Michael East's 5-part fantasias. Unlike other composers' suites of fantasias which are usually merely numbered, Michael East gave names to each of his fantasias: Desperavi (I despaired); Peccavi (I sinned); Vidi (I saw); Penitet (It displeases me); Credidi (I believed); Vixi (I lived); Triumphavi (I triumphed) and Amavi (I loved). Ali explained that the fantasias are related in that they are in similar keys, and the titles form a sort of series. She played us snippets of each to illustrate their character. It was clear that although they are related in the ways mentioned, they are not really related in terms of musical material.

The first one, Desperavi, is like a lacrimae. The first long note falls away to a minor third and is very descriptive. In contrast, Vixi is a lot more lively, beginning with a dance-like rhythm and each part coming in quickly one after the other. At the end of Vixi, there is a rising pattern of melody with a "ludicrously indulgent tenor cadence" (one of Ali's delicious descriptions!)

The Triumphavi sounds exactly that - a triumphant joyful piece. As Ali said, it's also a triumph if all the parts manage their very difficult entrances correctly!

Ali decided to play the last fantasia, Amavi, in its entirety. She described it as a serious, grown-up portrayal of love, with some obviously happy sections, and also sections depicting more difficult challenging times. Somehow, all the previous fantasias are summed up in a "contented" way, with elements of hope for happy years ahead.

This brought us to the end of Ali's talk. She mentioned Michael East's Verse anthems briefly, saying that they are not really noticed much at all these days, but are well worth investigating.

If you'd like to buy Ali's CD (Amavi - music for viols and voices by Michael East; Fieri consort and Chelys), here are details of four sources on the internet (thanks Joanna Rowling of NEEMF)

<https://bis.se/orchestras-ensembles/chelys/amavi-music-for-viols-and-voices-by-michael-east>

<https://naxosdirect.co.uk/search/amavi>

<https://www.prestomusic.com/classical/products/8861917--michael-east-amavi>

<https://www.amazon.co.uk/Amavi-Fieri-Consort-Chelys-Viols/dp/B08NF33G96>

Beethoven and Scottish Song: Ossian and all that

Dr John D. Halliday



Ludwig van Beethoven



George Thomson (1757–1851) by Henry Raeburn

Ludwig van Beethoven was baptised in Bonn, Germany, on 17 December 1770, just over 250 years ago. Thus began a turbulent life's journey that changed music for ever.

Much less well known is Beethoven's connection with Scotland. Scotland? Yes! In fact, of his compositional output, by far the biggest component was the nearly 200 Scottish, Irish and Welsh folk-song arrangements commissioned by an Edinburgh public servant and enthusiastic music lover, George Thomson, between 1809 and 1820. It is a remarkable story.

Born in 1757, in Limekilns, Fife, Thomson moved to Edinburgh, becoming Clerk of the Board for the Encouragement of Art and Manufactures, a position he held until he retired in 1839. A capable amateur musician, Thomson revered the best classical composers of the day. But he also loved Scottish "airs". Convinced this wonderful music needed more sophisticated arrangements by the very best, he devoted over 50 years at considerable personal expense to an astonishing project producing eleven volumes of arrangements of Scottish, then Irish and Welsh songs, published from 1793 to 1841. Recognising Vienna as the musical epicentre in Europe, he initially approached the now almost unknown Pleyel and Kozeluch, then Haydn and, most spectacularly, Beethoven. Their 50 or so letters represent a sustained, respectful collaboration.

Moreover, for the song lyrics, Thomson collaborated closely with Robert Burns, including such poems as Auld Lang Syne, Sir Johnie Cope, Duncan Gray, Lovely Lass of Inverness, and Bonnie Wee Thing. But he also commissioned new, albeit often twee, lyrics for older tunes by a range of famous poets, including Walter Scott, Byron, James Hogg, Joanna Baillie and Cambridge don William Smyth. Love songs predominate but Lowland style ballads such as The Banner o' Buccleuch and the odd Jacobite nostalgia number such as Charlie is my darling also feature.

Beethoven's arrangements arrived in Edinburgh via courier through war-torn Europe. These highly inventive compositions included introductions and codas accompanied by the piano, enhanced with violin and cello. They are perhaps closer in style to beautifully worked classical 'art songs', or Lieder, than the 'trad' ceilidh song, more at home in the concert hall than the pub. But each one is a small masterpiece - a gem.

So why should the composer of those breathtaking symphonies, concerti, Fidelio, Missa Solemnis, piano sonatas and wonderful chamber music have devoted so much creative energy to simple Scottish folksongs? Was it money? Absolutely not. Today, one of Scotland's favourite tunes, "Highland Cathedral", is in fact German, written by Ulrich Roever and Michael Korb for a 1982 Highland games in Germany - a striking reminder of the fascination that Scottish culture has exerted on German culture for nearly 300 years. Literary and musical life in late 18th century German was completely in thrall to the culture of the Celts, and Scotland in particular, to the extent that it would have been astonishing if Beethoven had NOT wholeheartedly embraced Thomson's commissions.

What sparked this was the 1760 publication of *Fragments of Ancient Poetry*, by Scot James Macpherson, which absolutely electrified European cultural life. It is difficult today to grasp the extraordinary impact that these purported translations of the blind 3rd century Caledonian bard, Ossian, and his epic tales of Fingal and Temora, had across mainland Europe - and on the German-speaking world in particular.

Early Romantics, led by German philosopher Herder and the poet Goethe, rebelled against the neo-classical status quo, fomenting a thirst for a deeper connection with the people - the 'folk' or *Volk* - and the land. Rejecting the sophistication of 'civilised' society, they embraced the cult of the simple, the natural, the wild and primitive, seeking meaning in the culture of the people and its past. Macpherson's Ossian fitted the bill perfectly. Herder felt the ancient Celts were "more alive, more free, closer to the senses, more lyrically dynamic". He even first coined the word 'Volkslied' or 'folksong', in this context. Scotland was the "crucible in which emerging ideas of folk music were tested." (Gelbart)

Translations and Ossian-inspired odes abounded, and Goethe, in his revolutionary 1774 novella, *The Sorrows of Young Werther*, included long extracts from his own translation of Ossian at a key point in the story.

Inevitably, Beethoven was also immersed in this 'Ossianomania' from an early age by his first music teacher in Bonn. Infatuated, Beethoven wrote to his publisher in 1809, stating that his favourite writer, along with Goethe, Schiller and Homer, was ...Ossian!

He knew Goethe's *Werther* mostly by heart, including the Ossian quotations. More poignantly, battling his growing deafness, and considering whether, like Werther, to take his own life, Beethoven wrote his *Heiligenstadt Testament* of 1802 in a passionate style redolent of Werther's Ossian. Fortunately, he opted to devote himself to his art.

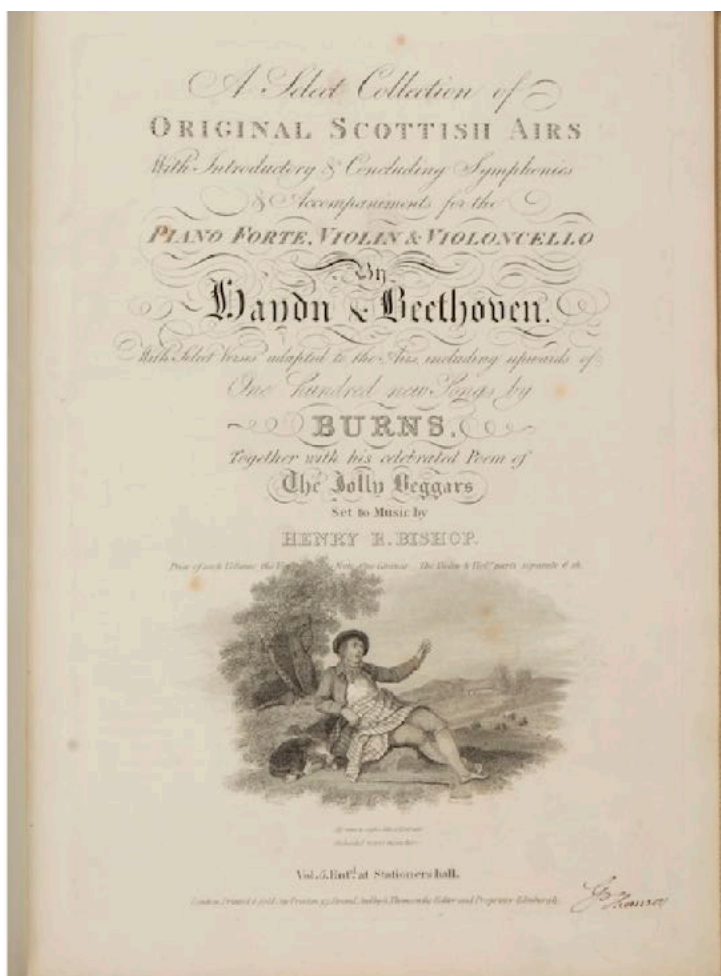
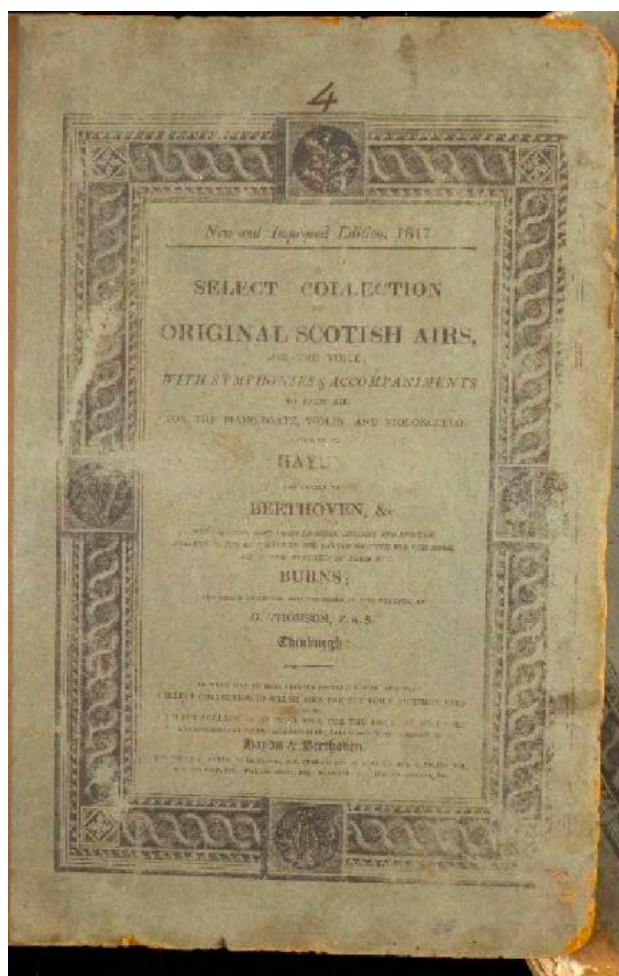
However, the influence of Ossian remained a constant throughout Beethoven's life. Some even felt that Beethoven's life and music, even his often wild physical appearance - was somehow 'Ossianic'! "All his music sounds Ossianic," composer Friedrich Silcher commented to Schumann in 1837.

Scottish 'airs' were so popular in Germany, Beethoven wrote, because "by reason of their simplicity have more profound feeling than the usual songs of this type", later stressing to Thomson his "certain very particular regard and affection [...] for Scottish melody."

No surprise then that he responded so spectacularly to Thomson in producing such a remarkable legacy. He simply could not resist this wonderful mine of musical gold.

In their correspondence Beethoven repeatedly expressed the wish to visit Thomson in Edinburgh - a wonderful thought, alas unrealised. However, his music came, and Thomson, as one of the directors of the first Edinburgh Musical Festival of 1815, ensured that Beethoven was included in the programme.

Thomson has had his critics. However, his is a remarkable achievement. One of the very first in Britain, and certainly in Scotland, to recognise Beethoven's genius, he wrote to him first as early as 1803, in the midst of a devastating European war. As we celebrate Beethoven's 250th birthday, let us therefore also hear it for James Macpherson's Ossian and especially - George Thomson.



Lockdown Laughter

Peter Galinsky

In August 2019 I had the opportunity to buy an alto crumhorn and a tenor cornamuse. I had often thought about getting a crumhorn but I soon became very fond of the cornamuse. The problem with these instruments is that it is not always easy to find people or groups to play them with. I did know that at the time, having long ago bought a chalumeau. For some months I mostly just played them by myself, practising. I found them much harder to play in tune than a recorder.

Quite how this project started I don't remember, but in the summer after the first lockdown, April Parkins and I started to write a trio for flute (her husband Guy Johnson is a flautist), recorder and cornamuse. It was a shared composition: we took turns at writing an unspecified number of bars and sending the music back and forth until it found its closing chord. The three of us played in their back garden, fortnightly, right into December, sustained first by tea and cake and later by mulled wine. The hot wine was not a luxury but a real necessity given some wintry temperatures. The piece, entitled *Undefined Spaces*, went into 4 movements, written, rehearsed and premiered to the garden birds (who sometimes joined in) between July and December. Playing it was hilarious, at times we could not stop laughing & giggling and I remember nearly falling off my chair. I suspect that some of the foghorn-like noises from my cornamuse were the main cause of laughter, but the music itself was also very avant-garde, erratic and at times comical. Guy made comparisons with the Second Viennese School which I was secretly very pleased with. If only we had had an audience! We did also play some early (recorder) music in which the cornamuse, I imagine, felt more at home. We are now working on a new trio, for flute, alto crumhorn and bass recorder, but since the recent lockdown we haven't been able to meet. And there are some duets (written in the more traditional way of composing) which still remain unplayed; it seems the less we play the more we compose. So lockdown brought out the ancient reeds and a lot of modern laughter.

(Of course if you play in a trio with similar instrumentation you would be most welcome to have copies of *Undefined Spaces*, maybe in exchange for a jug of mulled wine?)

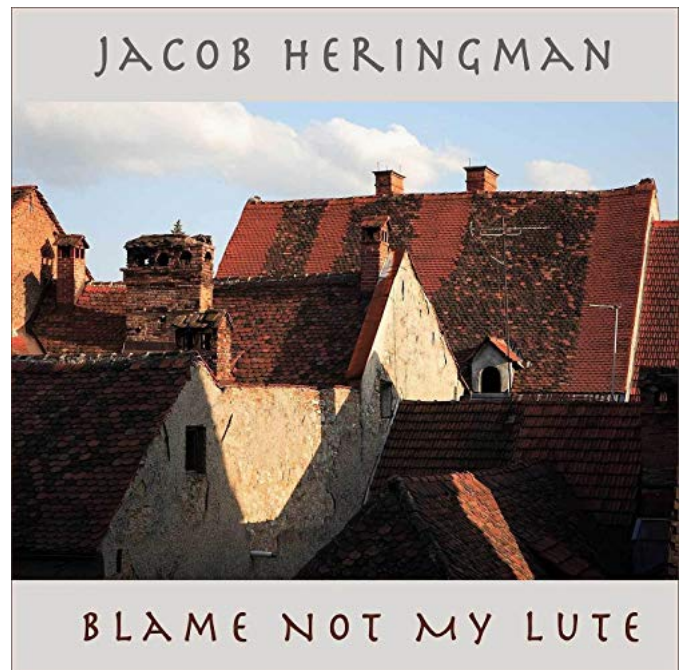


Fine Music during Lockdown

Helen Cais

Access to music during these cold, dark months is a lifeline. I am full of admiration for the initiative people have taken and the work done to make our beloved sounds available in distanced ways, when we are so severely restricted in our live music-making.

Through Susanna Pell I learned of a lovely new CD recorded by her husband, the renowned lutenist, Jacob Heringman. He has released a number of CDs, the most recent of which is 'Inviolata'. This recording comprises a number of intabulations based on the Marian Motets of Josquin des Pres. Some of the works are by composers contemporary with Josquin, and in addition to these, Jacob has included a number of his own compositions, bringing new interest to 500-year-old music with his own explorations and insights. Jacob's skill as both composer and player comes to the fore. This is highly 'solace-providing' music. His superb playing makes its complexity seem simple, bringing out deeply satisfying harmonic structure with wonderful clarity. Every note is thoughtfully placed. 'Inviolata' has been 10 years in the making, and grows out of years of study devoted to Josquin des Pres. I can highly recommend it. You can read more about this process on Jacob's website, where you can also buy 'Inviolata' and his other releases. I can recommend them too. *Jacob Heringman – Lutenist.*



The Winter of our Discontent

Ruth Whittaker

My bass viol is by the late Wing Commander Frank Metcalfe of St Albans. You must look him up online - a most interesting character. At the moment, my viol hangs on its wall rather like that legendary Harp That Once Through Tara's Halls, though I'm certain that I'll coax a tune out of it, sometime. What isn't obvious, is the exquisite repair done to the lower left bouts, damaged during a dreary winter, 12 years ago.

My late mother in law (hereafter referred to as M.I.L.) was a redoubtable force, with a barbed wire tongue.

"Ee, luv - 'av you always been heavy?" is a classic example.

It was my shortcoming to have been her second daughter-in-law, only attributable in her eyes, to me as the Whore of Babylon incarnate.

"Ee, luv - you've 'ad your moments!" she often informed me.

Sometimes, it amused me to imagine myself the Scarlet Woman my M.I.L. considered me to have been, before being redeemed by her son. In absolute fairness, her son completely grasped the power of his mother's invective, and was at fruitless pains to try to rein her in. Notwithstanding, I've failed to envisage myself in the mould say, of legendary *grande horizontale* Caroline Otero. She, you must know, inspired the architect of Nice's Carlton Hotel to cap its roof with twin water towers modelled upon her you know perfectly well what. This heroic lady lived to the ripe old age of 97, finally passing away in 1965. Wouldn't it have been rather splendid to have lived to see a landmark tribute to oneself at every visit to La Promenade des Anglais, on every picture postcard? To be preserved for posterity as inspired iconic plumbing? Gazing occasionally in my looking-glass at lockdown locks, wrinkles and gradual decrepitude, I should tell you that I still derive some comfortably reflected glory from the insinuation of having at least once been considered a *femme fatale*.

M.I.L. resolutely affected total denial of my worth, background or even foreground as a musician. Billed initially in the smaller guest bedroom for her visits, she utterly refused to use the wardrobe, preferring to hang her clothes from the machine heads of my double bass. Fundamentally a pacifist, I let this pass, as the machine heads were robust enough to withstand this near-iconoclasm.

Eventually, dementia encroached to enhance her astringency, and we had to move her up to stay with us. She wasn't at all grateful, and I didn't suppose that she would have been, but as she was having regular TIAs, and growing enthusiasm for boiling water for tea in the toaster, we reckoned we had to intervene before she incinerated not only herself, but her neighbours. Nest empty of children by now, we moved her into the larger guest bedroom, with much more wardrobe and cupboard space. I contemplated moving my double bass into the room, for auld lang syne, but decided against, maximising space for M.I.L.

"Ee luv - 'av you shrunk your big fiddle?" she demanded, throwing a disparaging glance at the pendant viol.

My M.I.L. had a perfectly good knowledge of the instruments of the orchestra, but preferred the how-d'you-get-it-under-your-chin music hall approach to my instrumental activity.

An uneasy week passed then, about to sit down to our evening meal, there was a resonant crash from M.I.L.'s room. My heart sank, when I opened the door to see my precious viol lying on the floor. It could have been worse, in that the neck hadn't been knocked out, nor was the table damaged. Turning it over however, I saw the splintered lower bouts. Bass players know better than most about causes/effects of impact damage, and I correctly assessed that I was looking at a table-off job, enabling the splinters to be painstakingly pulled back into place, then strapped inside with linen. If you haven't encountered a table-off situation, please do avoid it, unless you're of a particularly hardy disposition. A sickening sight. Once the table's been removed, the ribs yaw around unsupported, in a helpless wooden jelly-action.

Thwarted, clearly, in an attempt to hang something from the viol, M.I.L. had managed to dislodge it from its hook. My husband gave her a well-deserved lecture, but the damage was done.

Every cloud has a silver lining. Irritating cliché, nevertheless that is how things turned out in time. The first length of fabric was provided by my good friend Robert Lay, who put me in touch with lutier Anthony Edge of Penicuik. This miracle-worker not only undertook the incredibly soul-destroying task of repairing the viol beautifully, but also pared away huge amounts of excess internal wood while he was at it, thus amazingly brightening the tone of the instrument. The other was that M.I.L. inevitably passed away, taken from us at 93. She didn't last as long as Caroline Otero, but in fairness, was not such a *femme fatale*.



"Miracle-worker" Anthony Edge in his Penicuik workshop

The zoom ceilidh experience

Sue Owen

By “ceilidh”, I mean the old traditional Scottish gathering of sharing party pieces and chatting. The dancing sort of ceilidh doesn’t really work on Zoom, but there might be people out there who can prove me wrong!

I’ve run a Zoom ceilidh a couple of times now for the Early Music Forum of Scotland. The first was just before Christmas with about twenty attendees, fourteen offering party pieces. I also included a “tutti” at the end where we all muted and played or sang along to a YouTube rendition of the Boars Head Carol. I had sent the simple music out to everyone in advance. It was probably far too simple, but I love this carol! Thomas Green ran a private event of a similar sort on New Year’s day, and his tutti was much better. He ran it at the start of the session to break the ice, and it was a set of tunes which were quite easy but certainly more challenging than the Boar’s Head! He too sent the music out in advance, and asked a friend to be the leader of the playing, being the only one unmuted while everyone else played along with their microphone muted.

The second EMFS ceilidh was in late February. I ran this along similar lines, with a warm-up piece to start with, “Pastime with good company”, which I thought was very appropriate. This time, there were seventeen attenders, with fourteen people offering entertainment.

For both EMFS ceilidhs, I had to remind myself that a “professional” Zoom licence was needed to accommodate the number of attendees for the time we needed. I was able to purchase a Zoom licence for one month each time, which was ideal given that we don’t know whether or not EMFS is going to offer many more Zoom events in the future.

How long would an ceilidh with this number of participants last? This was hard to judge. As a rather random estimate, I had asked people not to exceed five minutes with their party piece, and several had emailed me to say they thought theirs would last only 2 or 3 minutes. So I thought the first event would last at the most about an hour and a half or so. In fact it lasted 2 hours, which is about the limit for how long people in general can put up with Zoom. (Well, it’s my personal limit, anyway). I think the “five minutes” guideline worked well - some exceed it a bit, and some offerings are shorter. This time, it evened out nicely. Strangely, the second ceilidh with fewer performances also lasted two hours. But it did feel a little more relaxed, with time for each performer to talk a bit about the music or poems they offered. Because “duration of event” was a total unknown, a couple of people kindly offered to have extra pieces up their sleeves should the whole thing finish in half an hour. This was reassuring, even though it wasn’t needed this time.

It’s very important that all participants, except the performer, remain muted during each turn. I’ve been to Zoom meetings and Zoom church services where all sorts of embarrassing things were going on in full earshot of the assembled gathering, including a full-blown argument. People also tend to indulge in conversations in their homes with the dog or the spouse at any random time - and this again, is very offputting for anyone speaking, singing or playing. So the Zoom ceilidh host has to be strict about this! In fact, it’s useful to send out a set of general instructions for optimising sound for Zoom music events, as well as advice about not having lighting coming directly behind each participant (this creates silhouettes which is slightly spooky).

One person said he was unable to perform live in the Christmas ceilidh due to a medical condition, but would send a recording to play. I wondered about this because a Ceilidh is really live music, but when I played the sound file he sent, I thought it was too beautiful not to share, and decided to play it after the short midway break. Of course, I had to practise opening and sharing this sound file without getting into a Zoom pickle.

Another contributor (our very own Vickie Hobson!) asked if it would be OK to try a distanced duet with her neighbour - one on the top floor of their tenement, the other a floor below, with her husband operating the laptop. This seemed like a great idea and I decided to put them in the programme straight after the break to give them time to get themselves set up.

It was clear that there was a lot of nervousness abroad, even from experienced performers. I had to cajole and do some gentle arm-twisting to encourage people to participate. I also encouraged people to read something if they didn't feel up to solo music-making.

Because I was aware of the nerves, I decided to scatter a few silly Christmas cracker jokes throughout the proceedings. I had no idea how this would be received, but later feedback told me it was the right thing to have done. In fact, I enjoyed the jokes so much, I scattered a few silly ones throughout the second ceilidh too. People appeared to be very kind in putting up with them!

I was also fairly terrified about doing the hosting. I'm not known for my leadership skills or musical expertise, and feel more comfortable in a "support" role. But I was also sure that there would be others in EMFS like myself, who would appreciate a bit of contact, and a reason to practice something, so I blundered on with it.

The day of the first ceilidh dawned.

Early in the morning I received a message from Vickie to say that they couldn't use video for the duet she was performing with her neighbour - it simply wouldn't work. I said of course it was fine to turn off the video, and just let us receive the sound while I shared a screen with their photographs on it. So she emailed me a couple of photographs, and I pasted them into a single document for easy screen-sharing when the time came. They also performed in the second ceilidh, and this time had found a way round the video issue - we had a wonderful view from above of them performing very distanced on the doorway and landing below.

I spent time during the morning double checking that I knew what I was doing on Zoom, and that I had the YouTube, sound and photo files that I needed, ready to share. I made sure that my laptop was positioned the best way so that both Dave (my husband) and I could be seen, and then I practised changing the laptop position so that we could both be seen when I changed my seat to play bass viol for our duet. Dave and I nervously went through our very simple duets a few times, making the most terrible mistakes and telling ourselves it would be kind to make mistakes in the ceilidh because it would make the other very nervous ones realise it was OK to do likewise.

It was due to start at 2:30pm. At 2:20pm I opened the Zoom meeting and people started to arrive. This was a relief! I had set up a Zoom "waiting room" which was useful simply because it helped me tick people's names off my "register" as I let them in. If there was no waiting room, I would probably have missed people appearing on the screen.

As soon as we started, I felt great. Our cat Lola helped to relax everyone by coming up to us and miaowing. She hates music, and it's actually quite funny to hear her complain, but it can be utterly distracting. Fortunately, her complaints were constrained to a small protest before the music really got underway.

Thus started a very enjoyable afternoon. The programme was extremely varied, and the inter-floor tenement duet went well (albeit with echos from the highly resonant stairwell!).

There was some lovely encouraging feedback, and so I decided to run a second Spring ceilidh.

What were the lessons learned?

1. It was a good idea to give advance notice of five or six weeks or so, then a reminder, and then a third nudge to encourage participation.
2. A little bit of nervousness is needed to keep alert and to function, but there is no need to become terrified!
3. Fourteen party pieces was the absolute limit for this EMFS event. There wasn't really time for lots of chat between participants.
4. It's a good idea to have offerings in "reserve" because duration of performances is not guaranteed. It could go either way - too short, or too long.
5. I needed thorough preparation, a definite programme, a "register" of attendees and plenty of practice with the waiting room and the different screen-sharing and sound-sharing options.
6. It's a good idea to allow time at the start for any unforeseen technical problems. The similar subsequent event run by Thomas threw up a problem with echoes experienced by all attendees. His microphone gain was set very high. When he turned it down, the echo problem was resolved. Subsequent problems with echoes with recent releases of the Zoom software are often due to selecting "Professional Sound" options in the settings/preferences. This really is not a good idea unless you have amazing professional sound equipment.
7. Sharing Screens - Before trying to share anything, you need to make sure that the window you want to share is open and ready. If you want to share something from the internet, then before clicking "share screen" you will need to toggle to your web browser and make sure that the screen you want to share is the active tab or window. Once that is sorted, all you need to do is press the green "Share Screen" button and select the window you want to share, then click "share". This is also easier if you have as few softwares and windows open as possible. Normally when I'm working on the computer, I tend to have word processing, spreadsheets, "Onenote", pdf readers, web-browsers, photo software etc all open at the same time. If I'm Zooming, I make a conscious efforts to close down anything that I don't need during the Zoom session. I've attended Zoom church where the person operating the screen-sharing inadvertently blitzed personal photographs and his bank account statement to to whole congregation.
8. Sharing YouTube music. My experience of church services on Zoom where YouTube hymns have been shared is mixed. Sometimes it runs smoothly and it's lovely to watch to video footage as the music plays. But more often than not, the video is a bit much for the operators bandwidth and the result is video and sound tracks that stutter and stop and start. This can be very distracting. Therefore, I find that if the video part of a YouTube clip is not essential, it's best to share the sound only for a smoother listening experience. How to do this?
 - Click the green "share screen" button
 - Click the "Basic" button at the top (it might already be highlighted), and then click the Window you wish to share.
 - Then click the "Advanced" button at the top
 - Then Click "Music or computer sound only" to highlight it.
 - Once you've clicked that, click the blue "share" button.
 - And there you are!

A postscript to Sue's Zoom Ceilidh

As a member of EMFS I received and instantly accepted Sue Owen's invitation to the ceilidh she describes. My wife Jo (viol) and I (modern flute) played a couple of pieces; we weren't sure how much the emphasis would be on Early Music, so we chose a fifteenth century chanson by Dufay and a Susato dance tune. Finding that we enjoyed doing that and that the afternoon as a whole went very well, we organised a similar event among our friends and learnt a few more lessons to add to Sue's account.

Set-up: Sue had sent all contributors notes on how to set up PCs and Macs. We shamelessly re-used her notes, but we added a short bit explaining how to set up tablets, which aren't quite the same. Everything worked fine except that our external microphone caused whistling and echoing until I turned it down. We need to find out more about how to use an external mic.

Screen sharing: Our event included two contributions by photographer friends, who of course needed to share screens. Zoom only allows screens to be shared by host or co-host, so we had to learn how to make a participant a co-host and how to explain to the new co-host how to share the screen (which only requires finding the right button).

Beginning and end: As Sue has said, we started ours with an ice-breaker, which worked well. Sue's event ended very cleanly, with the Boar's Head, but ours ended more gradually as people chatted.

Mic control: essential for the host to know how to mute other people from the Zoom controls.

What worked: musical partnerships worked well for us – flute and viol, viol and guitar, guitar and melodeon. Much more difficult for a solo instrument to fill the space, although we had two fiddle solos from two very strong players which also worked well, and a very effective piano piece. Songs, poems, and photo presentations also worked well.

Thomas and Jo Green

Palestrina for all: unwrapping, singing, celebrating

A book by Jonathan Boswell

This book, which has been widely praised, owes much to the author's experience as an amateur singer within early music choral groups. He is an academic general historian, now retired, and a member of the Thames Valley Early Music Forum (TVEMF).

From Jonathan's website:

Jonathan Boswell is a general historian whose scholarly work in diverse fields has repeatedly defied what he calls "narrow specialisation". His book, *Palestrina For All: Unwrapping, Singing, Celebrating*, reflects long phases of concern, study & involvement.

Born in 1932, he spent his National Service in the R.A.F. & read politics, philosophy and economics at Oxford. He worked in chemical factories and for many years in industrial relations before becoming an academic. He lives in north London with his wife Jill. They have three daughters and six grandchildren.

Jonathan worked at the City University Business School, St Antony's College Oxford, and for ten years at the Von Hügel Institute, St Edmund's College, Cambridge. He has published books & articles on business history & social ideas.

In his mid-30s he converted to Catholicism, but has spent most of his life, "stimulatingly" he says, with agnostics and secularists.

He was brought up on J.S. Bach. Church music, art and liturgy have been lifetime interests. Although long attracted to Palestrina, it was the experience of singing his music in a small early music workshop that proved "*decisively and finally bonding.. I was deeply affected by its emotional & spiritual power... It would increasingly draw me into a different trajectory*".

He pursued studies in the history and aesthetics of music and its effects, worked through large numbers of Palestrina's works, did lots of singing & listening, and engaged with singers & conductors.

The book follows Palestrina's music from love poetry, through changing events in the Church Year, to the composer's record-breaking 104 Mass settings. It's compact in size. At each stage descriptive sketches uncover some neglected treasures.

The treatment of style & structures is accessible & largely non-technical. There's a focus on relationships with text, belief & ceremony; on varied approaches to hearing & listening; on the individual melodic lines; and on the richly interweaving voice parts (cantus, alto, tenor, bass).

The book also engages with Palestrina's life & environment, & briefly with the eventful reception history, & the front line of singers and conductors.

Jonathan discusses diverse ways of responding to the music, emotional, spiritual and imaginative. Palestrina's counterpoint, he suggests, can be interpreted as subtly symbolising core beliefs about the eternal God.

He examines the key features of voice part differentiation, equality, consonance & cordial mutuality. These, he argues, combine to symbolise good social relationships or ideal community. This is music which avoids tight metricality, mighty forces, tumult or disjunction. Its leading values are those of clarity, balance, affectionate concord & graceful flowingness.

Comments and reviews

“Historian Jonathan Boswell has brought to bear a lifetime's fascination with the life and music of Palestrina” (Early Music Today).

“So refreshing, so personal, so illuminating ... I loved this book” (Harry Christophers).

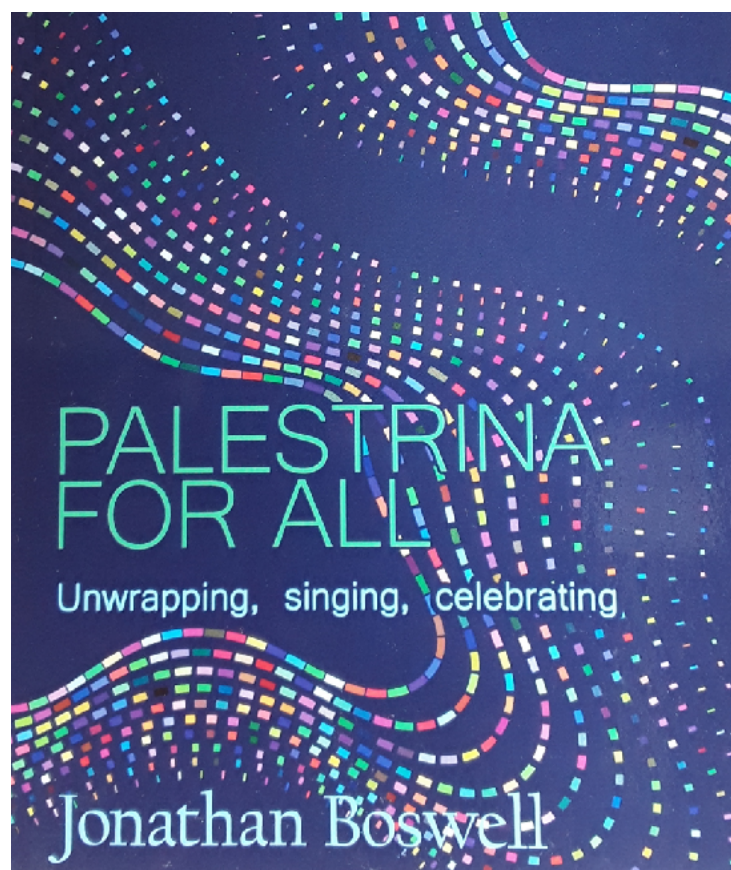
“Anyone interested in exploring Palestrina should start with this book” (Peter Phillips).

“A much needed book ... it's first class” (Andrew Carwood).

“Apposite choices of examples and delicate evaluations ... Self-published to a very high standard ... If you're new to the pinnacle of Renaissance polyphony which Palestrina represents; have already come to love his music and want to know more; or indeed if you want what is now the best introductory volume ... and a comprehensive survey of Palestrina's life and works ... this excellent contribution will suit the general reader and the inquiring specialist very well indeed” (Musicweb International, Mark Sealey).

“Wonderful, welcome, long overdue ... not only a powerful distillation of Boswell's own and others' research, but also an invaluable guide to programming Palestrina's musica grand demystification of both man and music ... It should be on the shelves of music students, choir directors, church musicians, academics, singers both amateur & professional, and listeners” (Choir and Organ, Rebecca Tavener).

For details see www.jonathanboswell.co.uk



“Palestrina for all” can be purchased from Amazon or Barnes & Noble. 165 pp. Paperback £6.32, € 7.16, \$7.49. Kindle edition £3.

News from the Scottish Plainsong Choir

Alan Tavener

It is good to keep in touch with many of you through Zoom online meetings. The next one is a self-contained sessions of one and a half hours, with the reduced registration fee of £5 per session. This can be paid by Paypal by clicking on the relevant time link:-

Saturday 10 April 2021, 10 -11:30am & 2 -3:30pm.

The session will provide another opportunity for participants to reconnect and to sample some aspects of the music of our 'live' meetings, including chant for Easter. Opening informally at 9.45am, the Session will start promptly at 10.00am, and will conclude at 11.30am, followed by a further informal opportunity to socialise. You can participate using (in order of preference) a pc or a laptop with built in camera/microphone, a tablet, or a smart phone. As usual, we shall revise good vocal practice and apply this to the chants for the day.

Alternatively, you can send a cheque for £5.00 per session to "Cappella Nova", addressed to 35 Crosbie Street, GLASGOW G20 0BQ, but *please advise me that you are doing so*, otherwise you might be too late, since I shall strictly limit participant numbers to 20, which will be allocated on a "first come, first served" basis. Accordingly, the each Paypal Link will be disabled when this number is reached.

Those who have registered will be sent an Invitation a few days beforehand to join the Zoom Meeting on the Saturday.

Meanwhile, we continue to look forward with optimism, and you may wish to note the following possible dates for live meetings of SPC in your diaries:

Saturday 22 May 2021 afternoon workshop-rehearsal at a Glasgow venue, and Saturday 29 May 2021 for an informal, lunchtime promenade-style performance Traquair Medieval Fayre;

Friday 16 to Sunday 18 July 2021, residency Orkney including Vespers-style Evensong St Magnus Cathedral.

Announcing Dunedin Consort's Spring plans! Putting the Happy back into Happy New Year from Dunedin Consort emails

Let's face it, this hasn't quite been the Happy New Year we had all hoped for. And after the last-minute cancellation of our *Messiah* performances in December, even we can admit to feeling a little downtrodden in the run-up to Christmas.

But uncertain as the road ahead may look just now, we are very happy to be able to share some exciting plans for the months ahead, including *voice and instrumental clinics* and a new, six-part video series exploring the *history of opera*. There are plenty of ways to get involved. Whether you are twiddling your thumbs and missing live music-making, or frantically home-schooling, we have you covered. You can find more details and the videos by clicking this link: <https://www.dunedin-consort.org.uk/opera/>.

The videos are, in preferred order of viewing: "What is it?: *The Background*"; "What's it all about?: *The Story*"; "What can you hear?: *The Music*"; "What can you see?: *The Stage*"; "What does it feel like?: *Movement & Gesture*"; "What can't you see?: *Behind the Scenes*"

And if you are wondering about the latest news on our upcoming performances, we recommend *keeping an eye on our website* for more information. We'll soon be announcing new details about *A Lover's Discourse*, which will now take place online a little later than originally planned.

Thanks for your patience as we navigate these tricky times. We can't wait to welcome you back to the concert hall soon.

'bye for now!

Thank you once more to everybody who contributed articles. It's been a pleasure to read through them all and assemble them for this newsletter. Once again, I'm also indebted to Thomas Green for proof-reading. Any remaining errors are mine. Let's keep dreaming of making music together in person again, before too long. Keep well.

Sue Owen
sue@emfscotland.org.uk