

North Queensland Recorder Society Newsletter

August 2011

Next Play Day

Note that the date of the August play day has been changed from the one advertised at the beginning of the year. This is to avoid a clash with rehearsals for the Beethoven concert by the Barrier Reef Orchestra.

The next play day will be August 28th at St Joseph's School, Mundingburra, 2.00 – 4.30. The leader for the day will be Malcolm Tattersall and his theme is *Music for Dancing, 1500-1900*. Malcolm plans to range through Playford, Mozart minuets and Irish/Australian country dances.

Please bring recorders, music stands, something to share for afternoon tea and a gold coin to assist with the expenses of the day.

Weekend Workshop

Ian Montgomery

This year for the first time the annual weekend workshop was a non-residential event held in Townsville at St Joseph's School, Mundingburra. The aim was to encourage more Townsville residents to attend by making it cheaper and more convenient than previous workshops held in Paluma or Ingham.

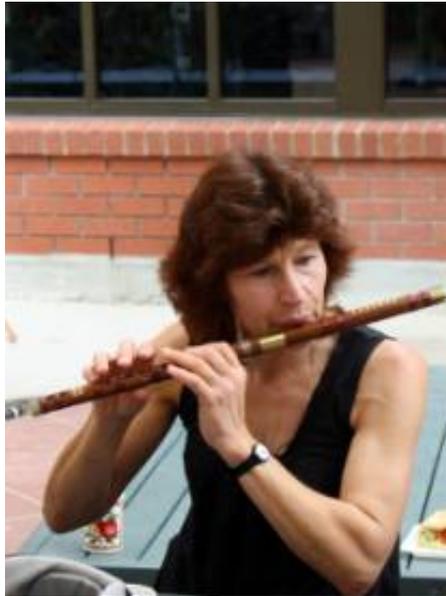
St Joseph's is a regular venue for the Society play-days, but this time the music room was augmented, or perhaps eclipsed, by the expansive, brand new performance space. We had the privilege of being its first users and the finishing touches were still being applied when we arrived on Friday evening.

The guest tutor was Barbara Jerjen, a professional Swiss musician who lives in the ACT and is musical director of the Canberra Recorder and Early Music Society. Anyone who has been fortunate enough to have been in any of Barbara's classes at the Orpheus Music Recorder Course in Armidale, NSW, would have been as delighted as I was at the choice of tutor, both for her skill as a recorder player and wonderful teaching style. The theme promised an engaging weekend: 'Something Serious, Something Light - music both solemn and bright'.

The workshop consisted of an introductory session on the Friday night, a full programme on Saturday and a morning session on Sunday with a 'Show and Tell' concert after lunch. As usual, participants could nominate their level of expertise by colour: blue - beginner; yellow - intermediate; and red - expert and session were organised with different combinations of these from one colour only, through green and orange to rainbow. Barbara and our local tutors Heather, Malcolm and Valerie, rotated very effectively through these groups.

Lunches were flexible with participants being free to bring their own or share Subway platters. On the Saturday evening, many of us partook of the banquet at the nearby Malaysian Satay Mas.

By any measure, the weekend was a huge success. It proved very popular and I counted up to thirty participants at the sessions involving everyone. Barbara was as brilliant as ever, our local tutors did a splendid job and - as the theme promised - we tackled a fascinating and inspiring selection of music from baroque to modern. I missed slightly the total immersion that comes with a residential weekend, but I appreciate the benefits of the new format.



ABC Classic Radio Recorder Romp

Valerie Huston

To celebrate and advertise the Concert tour of *Concerto Copenhagen and Genevieve Lacey* this year, ABC Classic FM organized a recorder competition. This was open to any group, starting from just two members, children to adults from around Australia. Heather Coleman and I decided to *do it!*

Entry was by a three minute video clip (which was at some time extended) downloaded onto **You Tube** accompanied by 50 words *Why playing the recorder is FUN*. I don't know about Heather but for me having it videoed and uploaded was a new learning experience. We did it. Heather entered Grammar Primary and Secondary, and the adult Wednesday night group. I entered Holy Spirit, St Joseph's Mundingburra and St Joseph's the Strand.

The prize was a workshop with Genevieve Lacey now that would be nice. There was a people's choice prize of \$300 of *percussion??!* From around Australia there were 90 entries. 22 finalists were selected by the judges. 3 were from Qld and they were all from TOWNSVILLE!! They were Grammar Secondary, Holy Spirit and St Joseph's Mundingburra.

The winners were the Perth Recorder Orchestra. Public voting was out of the 22 finalists. A school from Marryatville in South Australia won this. They were really having a lot of fun.

After much searching I have found how to get into the site now which has the winners and runners up and you can view all the performances, abc.net.au/classic/breakfast/recorder

Notes and Queries

Malcolm Tattersall

The Key to the Staff

Have you noticed the curly thing at the start of each line of your music?

Yes.

Good. Did you know it is a key?

Huh? I thought it was a clef.

It is, but a 'clef' is literally a 'key'. If you ask for the 'clef' in your Paris hotel, you will be given your door key! In music, the clef is your key to the letter names of the notes on the staff. For instance, if the clef is a 'G', it will curl around the line that G lives on.

Huh? I've never seen a 'G' at the start of the line - only this curly squiggle.

Okay, but that curly squiggle began life as a 'G'. That's more understandable when you look at how it was written a really long time (maybe 600 years) ago:



Oh! What about Bass clef then? That's not a G.

No, it's an F – actually the F below middle C. The two dots, one either side of the line that F lives on, were originally the cross-bars of an F.

Are there any others?

Yes, although recorder players don't normally use them. There is a 'C' clef, and it is centred on the line that represents middle C. Here are all three kinds of clef, and middle C in relation to them.



Viola players use the C clef all the time, trombone and cello players use it sometimes, but most instrumentalists never use it. There is an extra complication with the C clef, too: it can centre on the second line of the staff, in which case it is a 'Tenor' clef, or on the third line (as above), in which case it is an 'Alto' clef.

That's a bit tricky! Do any of the other clefs move around like that?

Not usually, although back in the olden days they moved about more often. The last people I know of who regularly moved the treble clef were musicians in France in the eighteenth century. They liked to put it on the bottom line of the staff, and a treble clef in that position is now known as 'French violin clef'.

When you think about it for a moment you will realise that G on the bottom line of the staff is the same, letter-wise, as Bass clef, so it's not too hard for us to read today.

Yes - so long as you can read Bass clef in the first place! I have been playing recorder for six years and never had to read Bass.

You have obviously never played Bass recorder, then, have you? Perhaps you should try sometime. When you do, you will probably notice that the Bass clef has a little decoration on top – an '8'. Have you ever seen that on your Treble clef?

Yes. What does it mean?

It means that the music will sound eight notes (that is, an octave) higher than it looks. The lowest note of a Soprano (Descant) recorder is actually an octave above middle C, but writing it in that range would mean we were up on ledger lines all the time. That's hard to read, so we write it lower and - sometimes! - put an '8' above the clef to confirm that that's what is going on.

I get it. That's why music for Tenor and Soprano recorders looks the same but sounds an octave apart – Tenor sounds the same as it looks, but Soprano doesn't.

Right. And Bass recorder is written an octave lower than it sounds, too, again to avoid lots of ledger lines. But learning the new clef – Bass or Alto or any other – is just a matter of learning to associate fingerings with lines and spaces, so the octave difference doesn't make it any harder.

One last thing: at the start of some modern editions of very old music you will get a really intimidating cluster of signs. You might get a clef you don't usually use, an odd-looking time signature and a note, then a clef you do usually use, a sensible time signature, and the real beginning of the music.

That's scary!

Yes, but it is just the editor's way of showing you what the beginning of the music looked like originally.

Okay, it's not really a problem then, is it?

No – and if you don't understand it, you can still play the music perfectly well. Shall we begin?

For those who want to explore further:

<http://www.dolmetsch.com/musictheory14.htm#summary> will show you twenty possibilities for the three modern clefs.

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Clef> presents more of the history and usage (and it is the source of the old G clefs illustration above).

Newsletters from other Recorder Societies

As editor of this newsletter I receive copies of newsletters from other Australian societies. I wonder if there is anyone in the NQRS who would like to receive these instead. I have always thought that one day

I would set up a habit of reading them all and extracting interesting bits for the newsletter but it hasn't happened yet. Anyone interested in saving me from my conscience?

Thanks, Jean Dartnall

Recorder Workshop Weekend at Maleny 1-2 October

The recorder players of Maleny will host this event. One of the tutors is Daniel Murphy from Sydney who has much experience with recorder orchestras. The other major change this year is that we will include a choral option to be run by Naomi Craddock.

Due to catering and accommodation limitations, it is likely we can only manage somewhere between 25-30 participants. It will be case of first definite confirmations!

Present estimates are that cost will be \$90.00 per person having three meals (lunch, dinner, lunch).

Students attending classes but having no meals: \$40.00.

Please contact michaeltowsey@gmail.com

Membership & Society Contacts

Please visit our [Home](#) page for information.

Newsletter compiled by Jean Dartnall

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