

# North Queensland Recorder Society Newsletter

August 2012

## Next Play Day – note different venue

The next play day will be on Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> August, 2.00 – 4.30. It will be held at the National Trust historic houses in Castling St, West End. For those not familiar with this site, you can find a map and more information at <http://www.heritagecentre.org.au/>

The leader for this play day is Patricia Reynolds. She says:

“We will be playing a mixture of Australian folksongs and dances as well as more formal dance music from the early 1900s. We may even try some daring rags and tangos which scandalized the “oldies” so much.”

Please bring recorders, music stands, something to share for afternoon tea and a gold coin to assist with the expenses of the day. The National Trust tour of the historic houses is available for the usual price of \$7 per adult.

## Recorder weekend 2012

the NQRS Annual Workshop, 25-27 May 2012

by Ian Montgomery with photos by Valerie Huston (more on the website)



For the second year running, the annual weekend workshop was a non-residential event held in Townsville at St Joseph's School, Mundingburra. This makes it much cheaper and more convenient for Townsville residents.

St Joseph's is an excellent venue for workshops and we again used the new performance space. The smaller music room was not available so we used the spacious library

as a second space. As before, the courtyard provided an open-air venue for morning and afternoon tea and lunches.

The guest tutor was Alana Blackburn from Armidale NSW and her theme for the workshop was Celebrating Diversity - Music for the recorder inspired by different countries and cultures.

Alana came to us with an impressive record both academically and as a performer and trainer. She is a graduate of the Sydney Conservatorium, post-graduate of Sydney University and graduate of the Conservatorium van Amsterdam. In the Netherlands, she was a member of the Royal Wind Music, a double sextet of renaissance recorders and has performed in festivals and recital halls in both Europe and Australia.

The workshop followed the usual pattern 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. Participants could nominate their level of expertise by colour: blue - beginner; yellow - intermediate; and red – expert, and sessions were organised with different combinations of these varying from from one colour only, through green and orange (two groups) to rainbow (everyone). Alana and our local tutors Heather, Malcolm and Valerie, rotated very effectively through these groups, though this year we had only two simultaneous streams rather than three.



## Notes and Queries

by Malcolm Tattersall

### Festival Blues

Q: I've been coming along to the Australian Festival of Chamber Music for years now. They have lots of great music (and I am going to keep on coming) but they *never* have any recorder players.

Why not? You know and I know that recorder can be played at this level! Are the organisers just not aware of what recorders can do, or is there a better reason?

A: Um, can I say, without meaning to be disrespectful to anyone, that *both* your suggestions may be correct? That there are good reasons but that it would still be possible – and nice – to include recorders?

You see, "Chamber Music" is defined as music for small ensembles and most people who use the term mentally add, "from Bach and Vivaldi onwards," and often, "especially for strings and piano."

That, in fact, is pretty much what we got in the AFCM for years: string quartets, piano trios and so on, mostly by the "great composers" of the Classical and Romantic periods – Mozart, Beethoven and Brahms; Schubert, Dvorak and Faure for variety; Bach and Vivaldi because everyone knows they are "important"; Prokofiev and Britten because "we mustn't be stuck in the past".

Programming has broadened, thankfully, in the last few years to include more modern composers. Piazzolla, for instance, who is not really classical; Westlake and Hindson representing the generations of Australian composers younger than Sculthorpe etcetera.

But where would recorders fit in?

If you do the maths, the AFCM draws on almost exactly 300 years of music, from 1710 (Bach's maturity) to 2010. Recorders went out of fashion quite decisively in about 1760 with the deaths of Bach, Telemann and Handel. The next generation of composers didn't write for them so the next generation of professional musicians didn't play them and the next generation of amateurs had no teachers. Utter oblivion.

Then, about 1910, a tiny group of early-music enthusiasts found these unknown instruments in museums. They worked out how to play them and wrote some music for them because they couldn't find any original music for them. (No! I am not kidding! That is how it happened!). Within twenty years we had the first good, serious chamber music for recorders in 150 years, composed by Hindemith, Lennox Berkeley and people like that. Since then, there's been a boom - although we have to admit that it was a couple

more decades before the best recorder players matched the performing standards of, say, flute and clarinet.

The numbers work out very neatly, don't they? 300 years of "Chamber Music", with recorders around for the first 50 and the last 100.

So yes, the AFCM could feature a recorder player or two as legitimately as they feature a harp or a guitar (both of which are somewhat peripheral to the tradition) and more legitimately than they feature a didgeridoo. On the other hand, recorders cannot participate in the core (i.e. nineteenth century) repertoire and are not central to the non-core periods.

It is quite understandable, then, if recorders are not foremost in the minds of the festival planners.

Understandable, but still disappointing.

Maybe we'll be luckier next year.

### **Australian Concerto & Vocal Competition**

It's good to see some successful recorder players in this year's competition (held in July). In the School Ensembles section, Townsville Grammar Recorders came third and Ingrid Miller, who also plays recorder, received one of the Print Music Encouragement Awards for her cello performance.

### **CREMS & SSRS Bundanoon Workshop, 5-6 May 2012**

by Ian Montgomery [ian@birdway.com.au](mailto:ian@birdway.com.au)

Twice a year, the Canberra Recorder and Early Music Society and the Sydney Society of Recorder Players take turns to organise a joint workshop in Bundanoon, a picturesque little town near Moss Vale in the Southern Highlands of NSW about halfway between Sydney and Canberra. In May this year it was the turn of CREMS to organise it and I decided to attend, partly as a 65th birthday present to myself (5 May) and partly to see how they run their workshops.

The workshop is held in the local public school using the auditorium for the introductory combined session and the final concert and the library and two classrooms for the three simultaneous group sessions. Participants arranged their own accommodation, with the local Bundanoon Hotel near the railway station being the preferred of several suggested choices and the venue for the Saturday dinner. Morning and afternoon teas were provided, but participants were encouraged to bring their own lunches or walk to the local cafe.

The application form included a questionnaire on skill level and the approximately 50 applicants were allocated to the beginner, intermediate or advanced groups by the organisers. Apart from the first combined session, participants remained in the allocated group for the entire course, but the six group sessions rotated among the three tutors who were permanently allocated to the three classrooms. There were three excellent tutors: Barbara Jerjen, Robyn Mellor and Hans Dieter Michatz. All three teach regularly at the Orpheus Music Recorder Course in Armidale and both Barbara and Robyn have led NQRS workshops in recent years. Many of the participants were regulars at Armidale so I found that I knew many of them including several very well, so I immediately felt at home.

The theme was Music from the Hispanic World. This proved to be a fascinating and varied choice ranging from Spanish Renaissance and baroque music to Latin dances and South American folk tunes. The early Spanish music was less familiar to me than the mainstream Italian and French schools, so it was a wonderful introduction to an amazing repertoire.

The tutors that we were initially assigned to were responsible for choosing the pieces that we played in the final Sunday Concert. This meant that they taught us in the first and final group sessions. I thought that worked very well as it gave a sense of completeness to the cycle. I also liked remaining in the same group for the whole weekend, rather than playing in different combinations as we do in Townsville. This provided the opportunity to get to know the players well and for the group dynamics to develop and improve.

I enjoyed the weekend hugely and I was happy with my birthday present. I plan to go to the next Bundanoon workshop on 29-30 September. The theme will be Dances Ancient and Modern. There are regular train services from Sydney to Bundanoon and cheap flights from Townsville to Sydney, so I would recommend it highly.

**Links:**

CREMS: <http://www.rkmedia.net/crems/#sub>

SSRP: <http://www.sydneyrecorders.com.au>

**Orpheus Music Recorder Course 2013**

Enrolments have been coming in which is great to see. We have a nice spread of enrolments in Stage 1, 2 and 3. There are still places in all courses at this point. For those that have already enrolled your confirmation is in the post detailing your course selection so you can start preparing the music which as we all know is the best way to get the most from a course like this.

Download PDFBrochure

<<http://orpheusmusic.com.au/pdfdownloads/omrc13brochure.pdf>>

Download PDFEnrolment Form

<[orpheusmusic.com.au/pdfdownloads/omrc13enrolmentform.pdf](http://orpheusmusic.com.au/pdfdownloads/omrc13enrolmentform.pdf)>

Download PDFMusic Order Form

<<http://orpheusmusic.com.au/pdfdownloads/omrc13musicorderform.pdf>>

### **News of Past Members**

Some of you may know about the 'Mulkadee', the Catholic Schools' interschool arts festival (<http://www.facebook.com/Mulkadee>).

It involves 1000 kids from Mt Isa to Proserpine to Ingham in one week of rehearsals and workshops with mostly out-of-town tutors, leading to a truly spectacular variety concert at the Entertainment Centre. There is no recorder involvement as such, but lots of ex-recorder players played in the Concert Band or participated in Choral, Dance or Drama sections, and our two local gurus Valerie Huston and Malcolm Tattersall were among the tutors. NQRS people may also remember two of the visiting teachers, David Lawrence and Louise King, from their participation in workshops with us a few years ago.

Down in Brisbane, Margaret Caley's two daughters performed in 'Creative Generation', a similar-but-bigger Education Queensland festival, and Alec Steedman (who came to NQRS workshops in Paluma in 2007 & 2008) was featured as a soloist.

### **Membership of North Queensland Recorder Society**

Are you a financial member? The membership year runs from the first of January and renewals of new memberships can be paid at the first play day.

Benefits of membership include

- Reduction in fees for workshops and other Society activities
- Access to the Society's library. (Members can receive a copy of the library catalogue as a CD or as an email attachment on request).
- Guaranteed receipt of newsletters.
- Opportunities to be involved in organising and deciding on Society activities

Membership fees: \$15 (Single), \$25 (Family), \$10 (student).

## **Contacts for the Society**

Web site <http://members.iinet.net.au/~mtattersall/NQRS/NQRS.html>

President [ian@birdway.com.au](mailto:ian@birdway.com.au)

Secretary/Treasurer [john@batterham.id.au](mailto:john@batterham.id.au)

Newsletter editor [jeandartnall@gmail.com](mailto:jeandartnall@gmail.com)