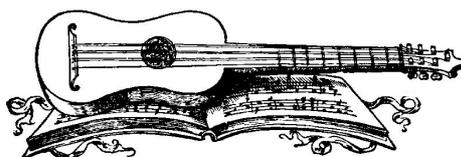


Dorset Guitar Society

Newsletter



April 2007

Eden - Stell Concert and Workshop ***26/27 May***

So far bookings for the Eden-Stell workshop have been disappointing. I know that some members can't make it because of holidays and other commitments but please don't leave it to the very last minute to book. This makes life difficult trying to allocate the parts when I don't know which members are taking part.

Please book on Sunday if you intend coming. If you can't make it on Sunday then please email me with your intentions.

This is a brilliant opportunity to work with two of the most renowned duos in the world, so please do take advantage of it.

I will be bringing some more posters and flyers for those who were not there last month.



Inside this issue:

March Meeting	2
Int Guitar Series	2
Guitar Workshop at Coda	2
Intellitouch Tuner	3
Committee Members	4
Future Meetings	4
Diary	4

Quote of the month

"It's extraordinary how much gipsy music is like modern counterpoint; everyone plays what he likes, but it all comes out together and it all sounds all right."

Antonin Dvořák (1841-1904)
Quoted in Robertson, Dvořák 1964

Next Meeting

The next meeting will take place on *Sunday 15 April at 5.45 p.m. until 9.30 p.m.* in Rooms 1 and 2.

We will be working on '*Zarabanda Lejana*' by Rodrigo and also another new piece.

AGM

The AGM has been postponed until the May meeting. Please have a think about nominees for the committee. There will be a notice on the notice board at this Sunday's meeting for you to nominate somebody for the positions of Chairman, Treasurer, Secretary, Newsletter Editor, Concert Organiser and Publicity Officer. Obviously the nominees will be asked whether they willing to stand before the AGM.

Terry Robinson and Bill Eggleston are willing to stand for another year. As mentioned last month, I will be standing down as secretary and newsletter editor. I am willing to stand for concert organiser and publicity.

New Member

A warm welcome to

Jeremy Kelsey

from

Wimborne

March Meeting

As our March meeting fell on Mother's day, unfortunately quite a few people couldn't make it and we were a bit thin on the ground on some of the parts. However in true DGS style we carried on regardless.

We worked on 'Reverie' by Debussy with all the new string positions and nail angles that we looked at the previous month. I did get the opportunity to stand out at the front and have a listen and it really did make quite a dramatic difference. We also worked a little bit on the first movement of the Mozart piece.

Solos this month were from:

Gavin played '*Graina*' (from Flamenco)

Andy played '*Opus 35, no. 17*' by Fernando Sor and '*Alfonsina y el Mar*' by Ariel Ramirez

Sarah played '*Opus 35, no 18*' by Fernando Sor

Margaret played '*Les Adieux*' by Fernando Sor

International Guitar Series in Dorchester

I will be running an International Guitar Series this year at St. Mary's Church, Dorchester, which will begin with a concert by the Amadeus Guitar Duo. Thomas Kirchoff from Germany & Dale Kavanagh from Canada will be playing on **May 5th at 7.30pm.**

All members of the Guitar Society can get tickets at the concessionary rate of £6 by calling me and reserving their ticket on the following number; 01305 265237. (Please mention that you are a member of the Society when calling)

I hope to make use of my contacts in the field of classical guitar in order to bring exciting artists to Dorchester. This concert will be fantastic and I hope some of you can make it.

Christopher Stell

Classical Guitar Workshops - 29th April and 10th June

Two day-long, related and progressive workshops from 10am to 4pm.

with Stephen Kenyon BA LRSM

Coda Music Centre, Chewton Farm Road, Christchurch, Dorset, BH23 5QL

www.coda.org.uk (The Coda website includes directions and a map)

Solo Guitar Performance

Advanced techniques for intermediate players

(Grade 4 to post Grade 8)

An opportunity to explore a range of aspects of performance including many techniques associated with conservatoire training or professional playing, all presented in an approachable and manageable way. For those wanting to improve their exam or public playing and for those interested in an insight into higher levels of performance practice, these two workshops bring together practical fingerboard matters and approaches to stagecraft and mental preparation.

The first day lays the foundations for the higher level discussion on the second day. Both will include opportunities to play for others, to ask questions and to discuss in a relaxed atmosphere. Bring a packed lunch—refreshments provided.

A simple 2 octave C major scale and E major arpeggio is the only 'set material' for the course, but extensive course notes will be provided. Attendees should prepare a piece at least 2 or 3 grades *below* their current standard with which to explore these performance matters.

Space is limited and the maximum course numbers is 12

£35 per workshop or £60 for both booked together.

On 10th June course attendees are welcome to stay on for the Coda Acoustic Night in the evening – to put everything into practice!

To book phone the Coda Music Centre on 01425 276161, to find out more phone Stephen Kenyon on 01305 257099 or, preferably, email: sbk@jacaranda-music.com

Visit Stephen's website at www.jacaranda-music.com

Using the Intellitouch Tuner

I have always been an advocate of using the ear to tune the guitar and in my brief career as a teacher I made sure my students could tune using a tuning fork or other reference pitch and relative tuning.

However, I now play in several ensembles including the Cambridge Guitar Orchestra and tuning in an environment where 20 other guitars are being tuned and warmed up made using this method unsatisfactory and ordinary acoustic tuners also suffered from extraneous noise. As a result I broke a promise and bought myself an Intellitouch tuner some three years ago.

They do, however, seem to be temperamental and can be quite frustrating. For instance, it can be difficult to get the tuner to display the 6th string E. Quite often it will show this to be B. This is because the tuner is more sensitive to higher pitches and it is hearing the overtones of the harmonic series of the string. Many people try to overcome this by using the 12th fret harmonic. However, this is really not necessary if the tuner is used properly.

The tuner can even pick up the sympathetic vibrations of undamped adjacent strings. I was at a concert at the Dillington Guitar Festival where a performer explained on stage what these devices were being used for and that they are excellent for telling you what the next string along was doing not the string you wanted!

These unwanted harmonics are eliminated by damping the other five strings and by using only flesh to sound the strings. Using nails is more likely to set up harmonics in the upper registers and on other strings. This problem is worse with better quality guitars where overtones are partly responsible for the finer sounds.

These tuners are very accurate – each arrow on the display represents just one hertz ie 1/440th of the pitch. It is not impossible for the setting to be inadvertently changed so that it is not referencing to 440. I have a colleague to whom this happened. Her guitar was always sharp when checked during collective tuning up and couldn't understand why. Her reference had somehow been changed to A=442!

Also at Dillington, I saw the Aquarelle Quartet who also use this tuner. However, in their case the tuner was laid on the upper bout adjacent to the heel of the neck rather than clipped to the headstock. Afterwards I asked them why they did this and was told that it was partly because they had broken the clips and partly because they worked much better there! Another benefit of this is that you look down at the tuner and can tune discreetly between pieces during performance. It is quite off-putting if you are sitting next to a player with a tuner clipped to the headstock as the player appears to be staring at you whilst tuning!

Incidentally, all professional players I have seen remove the tuner from the guitar before playing. This is partly because they can unbalance the guitar a little but also they are unsightly, even when folded back against the headstock. They are distracting to audiences and they do spoil the aesthetic appearance of what is a beautiful instrument. I always remove my tuner and clip it to the post of my music stand.

A couple of years ago my tuner “locked up”. It got stuck on a particular display and wouldn't reset itself. I checked the batteries with a meter and they seemed to be OK. In frustration I looked up Intellitouch on the Internet. They are located in Texas. I emailed them with my problem and they kindly phoned me back!

I was asked to go through the process of tuning the guitar whilst being talked through it with the phone tucked under my chin! The first thing he noticed, from 5,000 miles away, was that I was sounding the strings too loudly, also that I was using nails. The recommended method is to play softly and use flesh only as mentioned above.

After quite some time, the conclusion was that the batteries were flat. It turns out that once the batteries get below a certain voltage

the tuner will retain the last display that it was showing when the voltage dropped below this level. When switched on again it would still show this display. New batteries solved the problem. I was told that, for the black tuner with the backlight, a reasonable battery life would be about a year. Incidentally Halfords appear to sell these batteries more cheaply than jewellers in my experience. Intellitouch recommend that you keep a spare set of batteries in your case (although, in my opinion, it is unwise to keep anything hard in your case as these can escape from the compartment during transit and damage the guitar). The shelf life of batteries is at least three years.

One spin-off benefit of this tuner (as opposed to other tuners of this type which do not display the pitch of the note being played) is that it can be used to find what note is being played by natural harmonics at various fret positions. It is also very useful for checking intonation and can indicate when stretched strings need replacing and even whether new strings are faulty. Try checking an open string and then checking that string at the 12th fret. There is usually a very slight difference due to the nature of the guitar construction but a difference of one or two hertz (two arrows) is easily noticeable.

I have been asked several times to share my experience on how best to use these tuners, so here goes.

1. Place the tuner adjacent to the heel on the upper bout. If you prefer to use it on the headstock, experiment with the most sensitive position. Headstock sensitivity is likely to be different for each string.
2. Switch the tuner on and make sure that the correct “440” boot up display shows.
3. Sound the string with flesh only and keep sounding the note continually say once or twice per second. Do not use nail.
4. Whilst doing this, damp the other strings. If you are used to tuning in 4ths the tuner will object to two strings being sounded at once.
5. Do not pluck the string loudly. In fact, in a room with other guitarists tuning you should hardly be able to hear your own strings sounding.
6. Pluck the string nearer to the bridge than the soundhole.
7. Although not mandatory for this tuner, you should follow the good practice of de-tuning the string slightly flat and tuning up to the correct pitch.
8. Wait for the display to go blank before moving to the next string.
9. Remove the tuner from the guitar and clip it to the music stand not the floor where it can be trodden on!
10. Discreetly recheck tuning as the opportunity arises during a session.
11. Change batteries annually and have a spare set of batteries available but not in the guitar case.
12. Change strings regularly, particularly the bass strings. Old worn out strings may not produce accurate pitch and are often impossible to tune accurately.

Tony Ainsworth

Cambridge Guitar Orchestra

February 2007

tony.ainsworth1@btopenworld.co.uk

(Sent in by Valerie Evans)

Committee Members

Terry Robinson - Chairman	01305 834 774	terrydgs@fsmail.net
Stephen Kenyon - Musical Director	01305 257 099	stephen@jacaranda-music.com
Margaret Tredwell - Secretary	01425 613 739	secretary@dorsetguitarsociety.org.uk
Bill Eggleston - Treasurer	01202 824 066	
Chris Gillson and Valerie Evans		

Member of **The Federation of Guitar Societies** www.federationofguitarsocieties.org.uk & **CADArts** www.cadarts.com

Future Meetings 2007

20th May	5.45 p.m. - 9.30 p.m.	16th September	5.45 p.m. - 9.30 p.m.
17th June	5.45 p.m. - 9.30 p.m.	21st October	2.00 p.m. - 5.30 p.m.
15th July	5.45 p.m. - 9.30 p.m.	18th November	2.00 p.m. - 5.30 p.m.
19th August	5.45 p.m. - 9.30 p.m.	16th December	2.00 p.m. - 5.30 p.m.

Diary 2007

**Starting on 16 April—from 2 to 3.30 p.m.
five Monday afternoons—bank holidays excluded**

DORSET RURAL MUSIC SCHOOL

Presents "...but I know what I like"

CANFORD ROOM OF THE ALLENDALE CENTRE, WIMBORNE

Grant Bocking

Some suggestions for broadening your musical horizons beyond Classic FM.

Tel: 01258 452511

email: office@drumsmusic.demon.co.uk

£20 for the course

Sat 5 May— Concert 7.30 p.m.

INTERNATIONAL GUITAR SERIES

ST. MARY'S CHURCH, DORCHESTER

Amadeus Guitar Duo

Tel: 01305 265237

Sat 5 May— Concert 8 p.m.

Sun 6 May - Workshop 9.30 a.m. until 3.30 p.m

SOUTHAMPTON CLASSICAL GUITAR SOCIETY

Carlos Bonell

CONCERT - THE POINT, EASTLEIGH

£12 (Concessions £9)

Tel: Box Office 023 80652333

WORKSHOP - THE SCOUT HUT, RAMALLEY, HURSLEY ROAD,

CHANDLER'S FORD

For players of all standards

£30 (to include a buffet lunch)

Tel: David Tripp 023 80266867

www.scgs-guitar.org.uk

Sat 26 May - Concert 8 pm.

Sun 27 May - Workshop 10 a.m until 3 p.m

DORSET GUITAR SOCIETY

KINSON COMMUNITY CENTRE

Eden - Stell Guitar Duo

Tel: 01425 613739

Sat 9 June - Guitarnight 8 p.m.

(doors/bar open 7.30 p.m)

DORCHESTER ARTS CENTRE

Mike Dowling

His reputation as one of the finest exponents of both acoustic and electric guitar is well-established. Mike's repertoire includes folk, jazz, bluegrass, country, flamenco, slide, and blues.

Tel: 01305 266926 www.mikedowling.com

£9.50 (under 18's £4.75) in advance or £10.50/£5.25 door

Sat 22 September - Concert 7.30 pm.

DORSET GUITAR SOCIETY

KINSON COMMUNITY CENTRE

Dorset Guitar Orchestra

Tel: 01425 613739

WEEKEND COURSES

Fri 13 - Sun 15 April 2007

URCHFONT MANOR

URCHFONT, DEVIZES, WILTSHIRE

Tutors: Raymond Burley & Max Croasdale

Tel: 01380 840495 email: urchfontmanor@wiltshie.gov.uk

www.urchfontmanor.co.uk