

Saturday 17th March 2012

Debbie Nicholas

A really good crowd were gathered in Ruishton for Debbie's first visit of 2012, although it's only a few months since she last came to conduct the group. We began the afternoon with a simple but very playable **Bach** chorale – *Liebster Jesu wir sind hier*. This gave us a chance to use our bigger instruments and to warm up as a group. We then moved forward a few centuries to play *Ayre Conditioned* by **Andrew Charlton** – a very interesting piece, again utilising the 'big boys'. We managed a very good rendition of this quite quickly. Following this we moved back to straightforward 4 foot grouping to play a lovely madrigal by **Michael East** – *Hence starts too dim of light*. This was a very successfully played and sounded superb in our acoustics. Before we could have our tea break Debbie gave us *5 Ukranian Folk Songs* by **Lance Eccles**. These were a delight to play – we began (as you do!) with the second, then broke for an excellent tea provided by Diana and Felicity, which included Diana's excellent Date slices. After the tea break we continues playing numbers 1,3 and 5. All were fun to play with interesting parts for the whole group with the exception of the bass part of the first piece. After this we went back to using the larger instruments, and also Sheila on the sopranino, playing **Brian Bonsor's** *17th Farewell to Alva*, lovely group of Scottish folk songs written for the end of a previous SRP festival. The whole work sounded very good, and we even added a solo tenor part played by Mary. We concluded the afternoon with and arrangement by Alex Ayre of **Boyce's Allegro from Symphony number 5** -for so late in the afternoon there were a lot of semiquavers in all parts. But we coped very well and it was a lovely way to finish the afternoon. Thank you again Debbie, for steering us through such a lovely selection of music. -