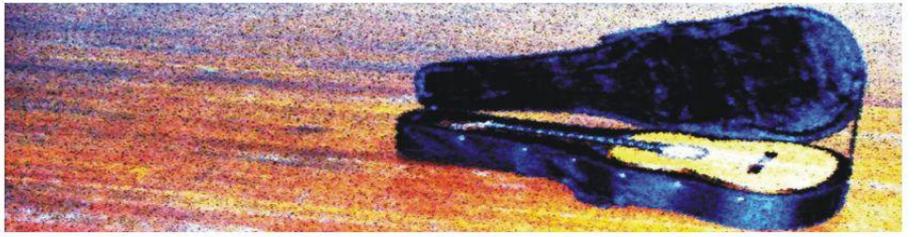


# Christchurch Guitar Society



## SOUNDBOARD

February 2011

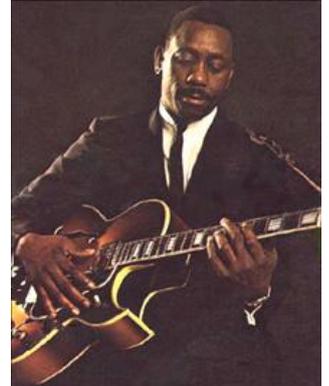
The Newsletter of the Christchurch Guitar Society

President – Alan Dixon

Secretary – Kenny Daly

Treasurer – David Smith

Committee Members – Julie Scales, Gillian Calvert,  
Kathryn Treeby, Roger Welsh, Paul Zdrenka



### Mission of the Society –

**To promote playing, education and friendship for players of all styles of guitar in and around Christchurch and to expand interest in the guitar in the general community.**

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### President's Notes

Dear members

As you all know, we have a concert coming up on the evening of the 3rd of March at the Ho Hepa auditorium in Barrington Street. This is planned as a gold coin entry function with profits going to a good cause, likely to be Ho Hepa itself. Firstly I would like to ask for 2 volunteers who are not performing in the concert, who could take charge of arranging the podium so that the minimum of time is wasted and the players can step up, sit down and play. Secondly, I am looking for volunteers who would be willing to look after refreshments. If you are interested in performing either of these tasks, then please drop me an email and let me know. Lastly, please encourage friends and family to come and support, not just you, but also the society.

Also congratulations to Michael Riddell on passing the ATCL exam.

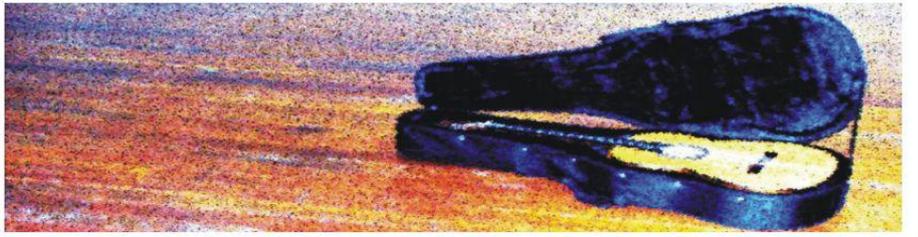
Thanks

Alan

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### Prelude for Thought

The capo is a very useful device and although irrationally frowned upon in some quarters it can be put to very effective use. Essential for the flamenco style it also brings vitality and freshness to lute and vihuela music. Generally it is accepted that much 19<sup>th</sup> century music is easier on the romantic guitar because of the shorter scale length of those guitars. A survey of scale lengths of romantic guitars reveals a range from 60cm to 65cm. So favoured the guitars of the Frenchman Rene Lacote with scale lengths around the 63cm mark. Modern guitars average out around 65cm with some going up to 66cm. Some of the larger stretches are certainly easier on the earlier guitars. If you are



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playing pieces where the stretches are causing problems then try playing with the capo at the first fret. It will make a big difference.

David Smith

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### TARANAKI GUITAR SUMMER SCHOOL 2012

Report by Paul Zdrenka

This being the first 'summer school' for 20 years, guitarists from young to old were waiting with anticipation for this event take place from January 15 to 21 this year in New Plymouth. The schedule was fully packed every day starting with ensemble practice, a workshop, a lunchtime concert, a masterclass, another workshop, followed by a 'full' guitar orchestra practice (encompassing over 60 guitarists from Australia and NZ). Then there was a dinner break and finally the main evening concert. As you can see a lot of the participants were duly exhausted just after the 1st day!! Of course it was optional to choose what you wanted to attend, but most people tried to take advantage of as much as possible.

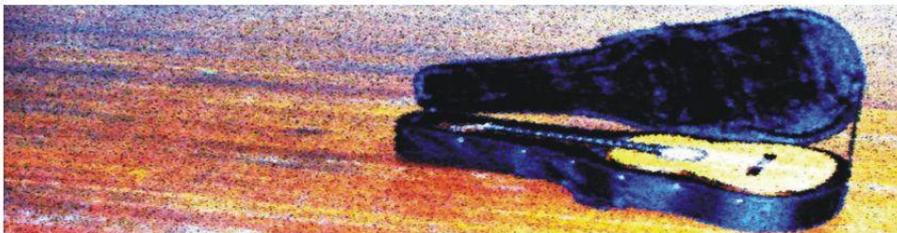
A highlight for many people might have been the opportunity to take part in playing in large ensemble settings. The morning would start with smaller ensemble groups of around 15-20 guitarists with around the same ability level. This took a while to sort out in the first few days as some people had to swap around. The 3 ensembles were led by Jane Curry, Owen Moriarty and John Couch. Later on in the afternoon, these ensembles would combine to play certain items together as we had a slot to perform in 'The Festival of Lights' evening concert in the park. The concert went well with good reviews from a local journalist, and a large crowd gathered during a warm summer evening. The programme consisted of Classical and South American favourites and also a playful Western theme from the movie 'The Good the Bad and the Ugly'.

The workshops held during the week were very informative and interesting, covering topics from beginners to advanced players and teachers. Topics included playing 'healthy', the left hand, flamenco techniques, nerves, luthier, guitar teaching, NZ guitar compositions, and musical expression.

The lunchtime concerts were excellent and featured well known NZ guitar names such as Jane Curry, Due Tone (Owen Moriarty & Chris Hill), Cheryl-Grice Watterson and up-and-coming young talent such as Jake Church and Nick Price. The evening concerts featured the 'heavy weight' contenders such as the NZ Guitar Quartet who blended well together and provided an entertaining programme. Also Duo Jackson, where it was interesting to see a duet featuring the violin and the guitar with a varied programme from flamenco, to gypsy to jazz and classical. Matthew Marshall also played outstanding as usual, interestingly using an 'ipad' with some of his music scores loaded in and occasionally swiping across the screen to turn the page. Also featuring the classic Matthew 'eyebrow twinkle' in more humorous pieces. The highlight for me and probably for many was John Couch's recital. His tone and expression palette had a huge range from soft, warm tone colours, to loud powerful playing which was no problem for his Greg Smallman guitar. His interpretation and playing of a 'Sonata' by Leo Brouwer was fantastic with very virtuosic techniques and skill.

A change to the programme (unfortunately due to Chris Hill suffering a hopefully minor injury to his

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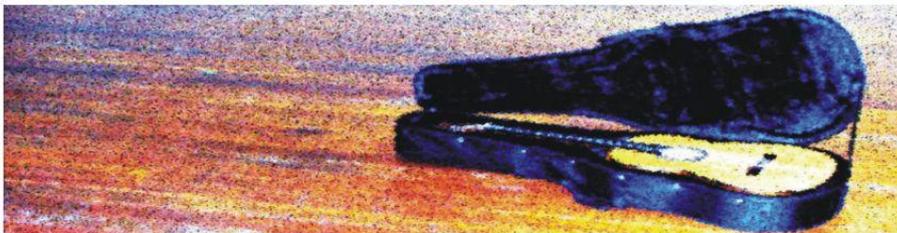
arm) resulted in a combined student/teacher concert for a lunchtime concert on the last day. This gave many people an opportunity to perform in front of each other and the variety in the programme was entertaining. A personal favourite of mine was a new friend I met, Kotaro Nishishita a Japanese guitarist studying in Waikato and finishing his postgraduate degree in guitar performance. Interestingly since the university did not currently have a guitar teacher, he was under the guidance of the cello lecturer there! However his technique is more than good enough to mostly have needed only musical guidance. Kotaro performed one of his original compositions which used a lot of harmonics and encapsulated a dreamy and mysterious atmosphere. It is great to see the level of playing coming up in the ranks with the younger students and coming through the university's. I think NZ guitar is in good hands!

A highlight for me was to mingle with a lot of like-minded guitarists/musicians. It was great to see young students from 10 all the way up to the senior players, one being John at 83 who was there during the last summer school in Hamilton. You could talk to anyone and get useful help and ideas from professional teachers and performers. All the top teachers and players were helpful and willing to have one-on-one lessons if approached. It was great to see my first guitar teacher there, Jeanette McGrath, who's still teaching the masses of kids in Palmerston North. Of course I also caught up with Matthew who was my teacher during university. And it was nice to meet Ross Townsend, who was one of the first 'full-time' guitar teachers in NZ who is still going strong, is a lovely guy and even lent me his microphones which I used to record most of the concerts.

The organization for the 6-day event was outstanding, and thanks must be made to the many organisations which sponsored the event. The price for the package for the week also included lunch and dinner, making this well worth the money. A special thanks to Domenique Blatti of the New Plymouth Guitar society, Wendi Dimond and of course John Couch who was always on the scene whether it was organising ensemble music, workshops, and masterclasses and also had time to give people private lessons.

The organisers are hoping to make this a bi-annual event, and I hope this will be an on-going festival! It was inspiring, motivating and I made some new friends. Even though like most I was often sleep deprived, I thoroughly enjoyed the event and recommend it to any Classical Guitar enthusiast! I will see you in 2 years!

Paul Zdrenka



Report from Taranaki Daily News

## Variety delights in mass guitar concert

The Hatchery Lawn in New Plymouth's Pukekura Park was the perfect setting for a summer evening concert: lights in the greenery, wood pigeons frolicking in the trees above and an audience in a relaxed mood soaking up the mellow sound of massed classical guitars.

The evening was the culmination of six days of intensive study, solo and ensemble playing, classes and concerts. More than 80 participants took the opportunity, the first in around 20 years, to live and breathe guitar music with world class experts and fellow aficionados at the Taranaki Classical Guitar Summer School.

The concert began with more than 60 guitarists on stage, ranging in age from 10 to 83. Aably conducted by the school's director, John Couch, they gave a great mixed bracket from a Clint Eastwood composition to a well-known tango.

Variety was a keynote of the evening. As you would expect with guitar, there was plenty of Spanish music, but also English and Irish folk tunes, arrangements of classics and many modern pieces. Particularly poignant was *Ask Me Tomorrow* by John Couch (which he performed with Matthew Marshall), which gave a very personal view of his mother's battle with cancer.

Young local musician Jake Church gave an assured performance as the first soloist, and as the evening wore on concertgoers were treated to all sorts of lovely pieces by newcomers and experts.

### REVIEW

**What:** Taranaki Classical Guitar Summer School concert

**Where:** Hatchery Lawn, Pukekura Park

**When:** Saturday, January 21

**Reviewed by:** Anne Bovett

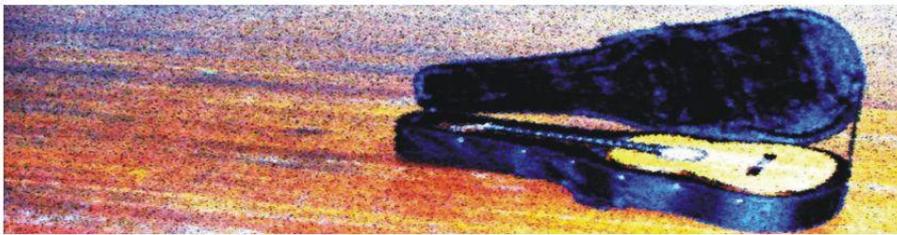
A great example of the multicultural appeal of the guitar was when a Japanese student from Auckland played a Spanish tango by a French composer.

Other standouts were Cheryl Grice-Watterson's *Asturias* by Albeniz and the syncopated rhythms and spiky dissonances of *Zita*, performed by Christopher Hill and Owen Moriarty. The concert concluded with brackets by large ensemble groups of beginner, intermediate and advanced players.

Setting microphones for a soft solo instrument in an outdoor venue with many changes of performer and ensemble size will always be a difficult task, and the sound technicians did their best in challenging circumstances. The nuances of the soft accompanying passages and the fullness of the larger ensembles was sometimes lost. However, what was lost in acoustic quality was made up for in atmosphere.

Without the strictures of a concert hall, those in the audience were able to be transported by the music from the beauty of the park to limitless imaginative landscapes.

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## YouTube Inspiration

From Mark here are a few clips of Raphael Rabello:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fs0zdz-UIOU&feature=related>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-wD2os30vno&feature=related>

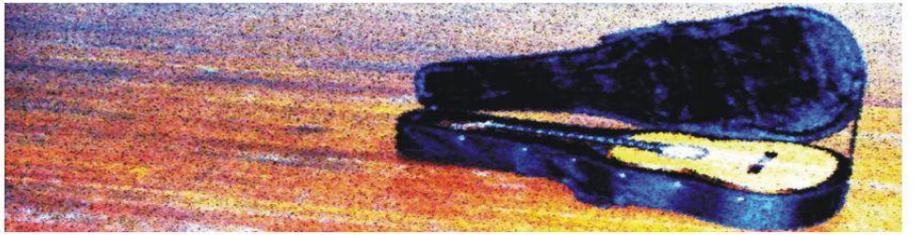
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AOnr5NpPj8U&feature=related>

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From Geoff;

The *Twang Dynasty* is a comprehensive history of the guitar and related instruments in Australasia from 1836 to the present. Over 450 pages in length, this one-of-a-kind book charts a 150 year history through the lives of the most influential jazz, classical and associated performers, composers and makers. This book will prove beneficial to anyone who needs a ready reference. It includes a comprehensive dictionary listing every notable player, composer and maker in Australia and New

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Zealand. Filled with fabulous historical photos, priceless memorabilia this huge volume is essential reading for all admirers of the guitar.

[www.twangdynasty.com.au](http://www.twangdynasty.com.au)

Price \$49.00 including postage and handling, released March 2012.

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## **Coming Up**

Next Session – Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> February, 7.30pm at Avon Loop Community Centre, 28 Hurley Street

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Articles from members are more than welcome, if you have something you wish to share including articles, personal reflections or YouTube links please contact Kenny.