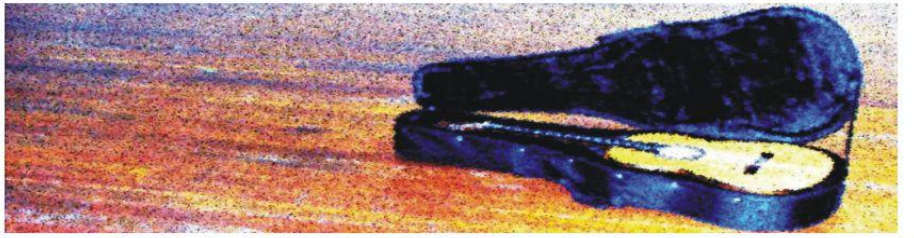


# Christchurch Guitar Society



## SOUNDBOARD

August 2011

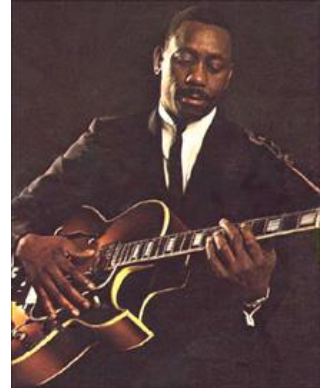
The Newsletter of the Christchurch Guitar Society

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

Have you ever asked yourself 'what kind of person am I'? Of course you have, we all have at sometime or other. Ah! But were you serious about the question? And were you equally serious about the answer and what to do with it?

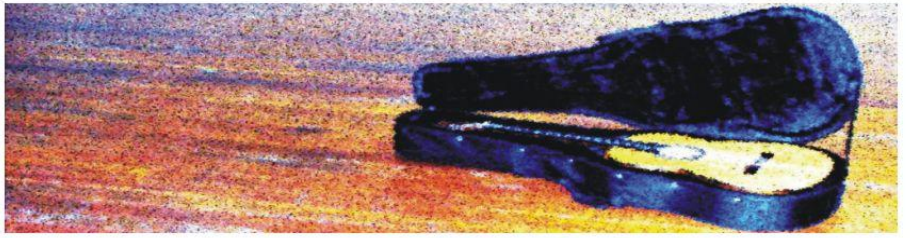
What's this got to do with guitar playing? I hear you ask, and I can hear you saying Oh God! Not more moral philosophising! Well, no, it's not, but the issue of what kind of person we are, and how we practice our instrument is quite closely connected.

Ours can be a very insular existence. Classical and contemporary guitarists spend vast, yes vast amounts of time alone with their instruments, practicing. More time, I suspect than, other instrumentalists. And this is where 'the self' exerts its influence. It can persuade us that a particular fingering will suffice, at any speed we wish, and that we have the dexterity to pull it off. Also that we have mastered a particular section of fingering. Self can lull us into believing that a particular tempo is right, even when we suspect that it may be a little fast, and that the next group of notes are semiquavers, just like the last lot, and that you must get to the end of the piece, and so on.

And how can this come about? It is precisely because we spend so much time practicing, and have very little in the way of checks and balances to keep us on the 'straight and narrow' whilst we do it. This is where our personality comes in. As human beings we have the unique ability to self assess, and we can all recognize in ourselves measures of impatience, laziness and arrogance.

It's these elements of self that we must strive to dominate if we are to succeed in practice and performance.

We don't play in orchestras and have both general and divisional rehearsals. We rarely play with



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anybody else! And how many times have we thought, read, and heard our teachers say :-

## **PRACTICE SLOWLY UNTIL YOU CAN GET IT RIGHT!**

Alan

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### **Monthly Session**

Can't find my playlist from August meeting, anyway I think I can recall at least who was present -

Attendees: Sue (& friend), Alan, Lindsay, Geoff, Jeni, Kenny, Kathryn, Gillian, David, Mark, Julie, Roger.

Apologies: Evan

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### **Prelude for Thought**

Playing music at sight is a valuable, albeit essential skill of the classical guitarist. This goes beyond the mere location of notes but requires the interpretation of notation into music. Certain skills are required; fingerboard knowledge, effective technique, knowledge of keys, harmony, recognition of rhythmic groups, a feel for phrasing and mental hearing to name a few.

The brain, eyes, fingers and ears all play their part. The term "multi-time frame" is a useful description. This involves planning ahead, action and listening to and evaluating the outcome. The eye observes, the brain computes, the fingers carry out the instructions and the ear confirms or disapproves of the outcome. For this last evaluation there needs to be an expectation of what the outcome will be i.e. the initial mental hearing.

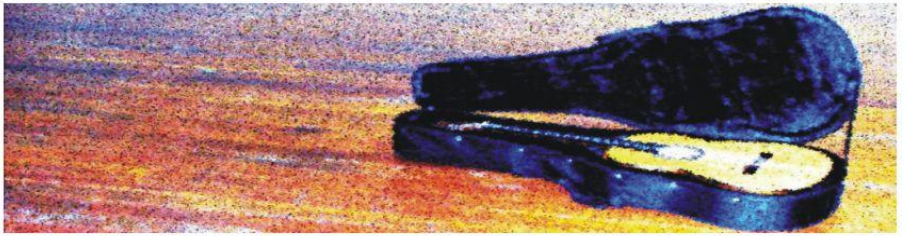
Try a simple experiment. Select a piece of music, maybe just a melody to start with, and begin playing it at sight (observe as much as possible before you start - only in a bad dream would you find yourself performing from a score that you had never even looked at before with an orchestra behind you and a thousand plus pairs of ears in front. That's John William's territory!). Begin playing and then at a random point spontaneously close your eyes and continue playing. You may only get one further note correctly played but that is enough. If you achieved that then you have been planning ahead.

Sight reading on the guitar is not easy and should be practiced. As we play there are many distraction thrown at us - an awkward chord, a position shift, a tricky rhythm and so on.

Reading skills should be a primary factor in preparing a piece of music. Generally speaking I don't try to commit a piece to memory until I can read it reasonably fluently. By then most of the hard work has been done.

David Smith

# Christchurch Guitar Society



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## YouTube Inspiration

At the last meeting there was some interest in Kathryn's guitar rest, here is a link to a site that sells them and gives you some more info (no left-handers though!);

<http://sologuitarist.net/dynarette.html>

Following on from that Geoff spotted this innovative guitar strap that allows you to play standing up;

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KGDLOkjZQOk>

I had a laugh at this, it's a spoof of a Segovia masterclass;

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xaCUTx0CJqs&feature=feedrec\\_grec\\_index](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xaCUTx0CJqs&feature=feedrec_grec_index)

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## Coming Up

Next Session – Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> September, 7.30pm at Avon Loop Community Centre, 28 Hurley Street

Note the themes for the rest of the year are October (Pre 1800), December (Other guitar). Of course members can play absolutely anything they want.

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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.