

NEWSLETTER

May 2023



Website: <https://harpsnorthwest.org.uk/>
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/HarpsNorthWest>

Editor: Frances Quinn, events@harpsnorthwest.org.uk

Convenor's message

Just woken up with the ethereal sound of Chloe Matharu's beautiful voice and harp in my head. Her concert at the Farmers' Arms, Lowick Green, was a delight. Good to see so many HNW members there. We are hoping to bring Chloe back to Cumbria to lead a workshop on singing and playing with the harp - watch this space. I heard that quite a number of members managed to get to the Edinburgh Harp Festival - we would love to hear more about it so do send in your musings to Frances, newsletter editor.

Congratulations to two of our young harpists. Emily Bruce won the Bective Cup for the Strings Solo class, Year 9 and under, for playing Savourna Stevensen's 'The Downie Dens of Yarrow'. Well done Emily! Clara Hepworth not only won an award at the South Cumbria Music Festival but has gained a place at the Junior Royal Northern College of Music. Well done Clara!

So many bank holidays in May made it difficult to fit in a HNW live event. However, Mary Dunsford will help us to hone our harp skills via Zoom sessions in May and in June. We hoped that Wendy Stewart would visit us in June but sadly that is not to be. So the next live session will be a Playing Session led by members at the start of June. We'll practise the pieces for the summer celebration. Also, do bring harp pieces that have a connection to kings, queens or that are just your favourites!

On Saturday 1st July HNW members are playing at the Leighton Moss Bird Reserve as part of a Making Music event. We'll play and introduce the harp to the reserve's visitors. Do come and join us to play and/or talk to the visitors about harps.

Hoping you'll make it to the HNW Summer Celebration on Sunday 2nd July in Barrow-in-Furness. See inside for details. If your Playing Group would like to play a piece or two, on similar lines to the HNW Xmas Party, please let Mary know on events@harpsnorthwest.org.uk

The new HNW Performance Group is being kept very busy practising for gigs coming up in May, June and possibly July. Do come and listen. Details inside. Happy harping.
 Gill



May Events

Monday 15th May 19:30 to 21:00 No fee but donations are always welcome.	<p style="text-align: center;">*New* Develop your harp skills with Mary Dunsford</p> Working at a Steady Pace - suitable for all harpists but particularly post beginner, elementary to intermediate harpists - 'The steady players' A recording will be available. No need to sign up. All members will be sent the Zoom meeting link.	Zoom
Saturday 20th May 13:30 - 15:30	<p style="text-align: center;">HNW Performance Group Gig - Gatesbielld Garden Party</p> Harps North West harpists play at the Gatesbielld Garden Party, Windermere, Open to the public. Contact Gill on events@harpsnorthwest.org.uk if you are interested in joining the group	Gatesbielld Housing Association LA23 2LA

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HNW Dates for the Diary

Times are GMT. Road/travel information - <https://www.facebook.com/Cumbriaroadwatch/>

Date and cost (if any)	Event details and how to book	Venue
Monday 15th May 19:30 to 21:00 No fee but donations are always welcome.	*New* Develop your harp skills with Mary Dunsford Working at a Steady Pace - suitable for all harpists but particularly post beginner, elementary to intermediate harpists - 'The steady players' A recording will be available. No need to sign up. All members will be sent the Zoom meeting link.	Zoom
Saturday 20th May 13:30 - 15:30	HNW Performance Group Gig - Gatesfield Garden Party Harps North West harpists play at the Gatesfield Garden Party, Windermere, Open to the public.	Gatesfield Housing Association LA23 2LA
Saturday 3rd June Tuning from 10am. Playing 10:30 until 11:30 and 12:00 noon til 13:00	* New * Playing Session. Penrith area Delicious cake to be enjoyed at the break time. A chance to practise the pieces for the Summer Celebration or bring a piece to share relating to Kings and Queens or just bring along a favourite piece to share. Free to members but donations are always welcome. Let us know you are coming by contacting Mandy on events@harpnorthwest.org.uk	Skelton Toppin Memorial Hall CA11 8TE
Friday 9th June 18:30 to 19:30	HNW Performance Group Gig The Harps North West Performance Group perform as part of the Friday Evening Concert Series at St Michael and All Angels Church Cockerham, Free entry Contact Gill on events@harpnorthwest.org.uk if you are interested in joining the group	St Michaels & All Saints Church Cockerham LA2 0EQ
Monday 12th June 19:30 to 21:00 No fee but donations are always welcome.	Develop your harp skills with Mary Dunsford Working at a Faster Pace - suitable for intermediate and advanced harpists. A recording will be available. No need to sign up. All members will be sent the Zoom meeting link.	Zoom
Saturday 1st July 11:00 arrive 11:30 to 14:30 All welcome	Make Music Day An informal playing session where we encourage the public to listen to our playing and have a go at playing the harp. All members are welcome to join us. If you'd like to come along to play or talk to people about harps, contact Ann Woolley on events@harpnorthwest.org.uk	The Holt Room Leighton Moss RSPB Centre Silverdale LA5 0SW
Sunday 2nd July - 10:00 - 17:00 Concert tickets for Friends and Family (NWMA policy) £5	* Details inside * Harps North West Summer Celebration or A Harp Extravaganza! North West Music Academy (NWMA), Ramsden Square, Full Day end of year Summer Celebration A chance to meet and play with a group of blossoming cardboard harpists who have been working with Mary in the NWMA. Includes: - World Premiere of Lauren Scott's piece for sax and harp ensemble - Premiere of HNW Pachelbel Canon video (the live edit!) To Sign up: Contact events@harpnorthwest.org.uk if you would like to join in.	Live NWMA Centre Ramsden Square Barrow-in-Furness LA14 1XA
Saturday 19th to Monday 21st August 2023	Higham Hall - A Summer Break with the Harp Tutors: Lucy Nolan and Tamsin Dearnley Contact Higham Hall directly. http://highamhall.com/	Higham Hall CA13 9SH
Friday 10th to Sunday 12th November	Higham Hall - A Weekend with the Harp - Residential Tutors: Eira Lynn Jones and Luke Webb Contact Higham Hall directly. http://highamhall.com/	Higham Hall CA13 9SH

Payments for HNW events

Harps North West (HNW) is committed to providing opportunities to play and appreciate the harp. We offer many events to members free of charge, though we do ask members to consider making a voluntary donation to help cover costs (suggested minimum of £5). We ask for a specific fee for some tutor-led workshops Non-members are asked for a higher fee or they may join HNW and pay the same as members. Payments can be made by bank transfer or, from outside the UK, by Paypal - **details at the end of the newsletter.**

Other Dates/Activities for a Harpist's Diary 2023

13th May 19:00	Rhythms from Latin America - Ricardo Curbelo at Gaskell Memorial Hall Innovative musician, composer and poet, takes his audiences on a rich, colourful journey on Harp, Cuatro and Vocals, combining traditional pieces from a variety of Latin American countries, together with many of his own spellbinding compositions - tickets https://www.wegotickets.com/event/577889
27th May 2023 10:00 - 17:00	Lake District Summer Music - String Workshop In a special day to launch our 2023 festival programme, we welcome young and amateur string players to take part in a workshop in celebration of Vienna and its profound influence on music over the centuries. The workshop will be directed by Stephen Threlfall plus guest performers the AESTUS STRING QUARTET. NB: Open to all string players Grade V or above (ABRSM or equivalent). Tickets https://tickets.ldsm.org.uk/sales/events/28-july---6-august-2023/string-workshop

Sunday 4th June 13:00	Lucy Wakeford Harp Recital , Holy trinity Church Bardsea, LA12 9QT Escape from the hustle and bustle of modern life by listening to the heavenly harp playing of Lucy Wakeford in the calm, intimate setting of Bardsea Church. https://ulverstonmusicfestival.co.uk/event/lunchtime-harp-recital-lucy-wakeford/
Sunday 25th to Friday 30th June	International Festival for Irish Harp - An Chuirt Chruitireachta Artist in Residence: Rachel Hair Co Louth, Republic of Ireland. Full details coming soon at https://www.cairdenacruite.com/festival
Saturday 1st and Sunday 2nd July	Harp Haven in Appleby-in-Westmorland An hour of scintillating music for the soul performed on lever harp by Lauren Scott 1st July, 19:30 Appleby-in-Westmoreland 2nd July 15;30 Kendal 2nd July 19:30 Orton Tickets https://www.eventbrite.com/cc/harp-haven-in-cumbria-1975809
Wednesday 23rd to Saturday 26th August	Glasbury Harp Summer School https://www.glasburyarts.co.uk/component/rseventspro/event/126-11th-anniversary-harp-summer-school-2023?Itemid=101

HNW Upcoming Event

Harps North West Summer Celebration or A Harp Extravaganza! Sunday 2nd July

At the North West Music Academy (NWMA), Ramsden Square, LA14 1XA

A full-day event celebrating so much that has happened within HNW this year. A chance to meet and play with a group of blossoming cardboard harpists who have been working with Mary in the NWMA. Includes:

- World Premiere of Lauren Scott's piece for sax and harp ensemble
- Premiere of HNW Pachelbel Canon video (the live edit!)

We shall be playing:

- The World Premier of Lauren Scott's, 'There were Always Going to be Owls' with Susan Lambert on harp and Mike Smith - guest saxophonist, with HNW accompaniment. (HNW members commissioned this pieces a wedding gift to Susan and Mike.)
- Stargazing - Gill Lowden
- Pachelbel's Kite - Gill Lowden
- Pachelbel's Canon - Sylvia Wood. You will need to purchase your own copy unless you work from the gentle approach by Mary Dunsford, an elementary alternative.

Playing Groups are invited to play a piece or two.

Please let Mary D. know what you'd like to play via events@harpnorthwest.org.uk

Free to members: Members wishing to join the event please sign up by contacting Mandy on events@harpnorthwest.org.uk

Friends and family wishing come to the performance (£5 entrance payable on the day) and/or the HNW shared lunch please contact Mandy on events@harpnorthwest.org.

The performance at the end will be very relaxed, as per other HNW events. NWMA will charge £5 a ticket for this, (their policy for all performances held at NWMA) but audience size will be small due to space limitations.

The Full Timetable:

Time	Who	Where
10.00	HNW members arrive via back access	Hall (with Kitchen use)
10.30-12.30	Mary lead HNW rehearsal with saxophonist for premiere.	Hall
12.30-1.30	HNW bring and share lunch break	Kitchen/Hall
1.30-3.15/30	HNW afternoon rehearsal/playing session	Hall
1.00-3.00	Absolute beginners on Cardboard Harps	Tutti Room
3-3.30	6-pack players rehearsal	Tutti Room
3.30-4	Sort hall space	Hall
4.00	Open doors to public	Hall
4.15 – 5.15	Performance of beginners, 6-pack players and HNW	Hall

★NEW★ Post Beginner's Personal Best series ★NEW★

We are delighted to be launching our brand new HNW Post Beginner's Personal Best series, aimed at supporting new players on the harp, and a great follow up for those who have taken part in one of our Absolute Beginner's Workshops.

We commissioned Mary Dunsford to create a set of **16 videos**, covering **four modules of learning**, building up finger skills and musical playing along the way, with dedicated exercises and brand new pieces to really bring the best out of your playing and to support confidence in joining our playing groups too!

To celebrate the launch, we are offering this lifetime-access package at a special introductory price to any interested existing members until the end of May of just £30! ★ending soon!★

This is also the price that brand new HNW beginners will be able to access it at after a workshop. It will be available to the general public (and to existing members beyond May) at £45 - still great value for the content provided!

To purchase the package, contact events@harpsnorthwest.org.uk



International 'Make Music' day

Make Music Day UK is an annual celebration of music-making that takes place in communities across the world on the 21st of June. Make Music Day builds on a concept started in France in 1982 – that a day each year should be dedicated to music, with no barriers to people playing and enjoying live performance – and has now spread to more than 125 countries.

HNW has booked the Holt room at **Leighton Moss** for **Saturday 1st July** for us to play and meet the public to celebrate international 'Make Music' day (which is actually Wednesday June 21st - but near enough!). This is an informal playing session where we encourage the public to listen to our playing and have a go at playing the harp.

All members are welcome to join us. If you'd like to come along to play or talk to people about harps, contact Ann Woolley on events@harpsnorthwest.org.uk

General information at <https://makemusicday.co.uk/>

HNW Bursaries for Young Harpists.

Harp North West are offering annual bursaries to young harpists who are under the age of 18 on 1 September in the year of the award. Applications should be submitted by 1 July to the convenor of Harps North West.

The awards will commence from 1 September.

Applications must include a testimonial from the young person's harp teacher.

Please ask your harp teacher for more information.

NEWS of Recent HNW Events

Welsh Tunes with Harriet Earis - 30th April

Harriet's workshop on some more unusual old Welsh tunes was well received, the comments speak for themselves -

'Thanks for the great workshop. Harriet made the flying fingers of Welsh music easy to handle. Her advice for improvisation was very helpful and opened up many possibilities. Also, thanks for making the recording available, very helpful for refreshing memories for timing etc. A lovely morning all round.' Eileen Bentley

'What a stimulating workshop! We started off with a 'warm up which is very good for my stiff fingers! The two pieces Harriet worked on were such lovely melodies, and she took us through them so carefully, although my memory failed me by the last line of the first piece and I had to resort to the manuscript! I would welcome another workshop with her at some time.' Judy Taylor

'Thank you so much really enjoyed it' Gill

'Thanks very much for a lovely workshop. Love the tunes. Thanks Gill for organising too - much appreciated.' Jane

'Brilliant workshop, thanks Harriet!' Cathryn:

'Thank you very enjoyable' Diane

'Many thanks, lovely tunes and loved the 'relaxed hand' tips' Sue

Harriet also sent some further suggestions for harpists wishing to explore more Welsh music.

Harp arrangements:

Hwyl Gyda'r Delyn - Mair Roberts

Tant: 101 o alawon telyn traddodiadol - Sian James & Sioned Webb

The Welsh Harper - John Parry (18th and 19th century facsimile with a lot of old tunes - available reprinted by Clive Morley)

Welsh Tune Collections:

Clera - Welsh traditional music and dance society <http://www.alawoncymru.com/>

Alawon John Thomas: A Fiddler's Tune Book from 18th century Wales, ed. Cass Meurig (Note: this is not the harpist John Thomas, but an earlier fiddler called John Thomas who collected tunes and just includes Welsh tunes from the 18th century fiddle tradition and scholarly notes, but no chord symbols or accompaniment)

Robin Huw Bowen - has published a lot of Welsh gypsy music and a lot of Welsh hornpipes with arrangements for triple harp that can be adapted for Celtic harp.

Welsh Song Collections:

Can di Bennill - D. Geraint Lewis & Delyth Hopkins Evans (words, simple harp accompaniments, sol-fa and guitar chords)

Caneuon Traddodiadol y Cymry/Traditional Songs of the Welsh (1961 edition recently reprinted by Cwmni Cyhoeddi Gwynn) (song melodies with words and sol-fa but without accompaniment or chord symbols)

100 o Ganeuon Gwerin, ed. Meinir Wyn Edwards (melodies, guitar chords, words and sol-fa)

Blodau'r Grug - book of the Welsh Folk Dance Society (Welsh dance tunes with guitar chord symbols)

Meinir Heulyn - Welsh tunes arranged for harp

'Best wishes and thanks again so much for having me.' - Harriet

Thank you Harriet for all this information - from Harps North West

News from members

Edinburgh International Harp Festival - Opening concert



A feast of gorgeous harp music was in store when we attended the big opening night concert of the 2023 Edinburgh International Harp Festival or EIHF to the regulars! It was in the surroundings of the George Watson college in Edinburgh for the second time, a little further down the road from the previous venue of many years at Merchiston School. The beautiful big hall had some ground level seating as well as tiered seating in the hall used for concerts which made good viewing for all.

Isobel Mieras officially opened the harp festival with a well spoken introduction and welcomed Scottish Harpist Ailie Robertson who was performing in the first half. Ailie looked lovely in a beautiful blue velvet trouser outfit. Ailie actually attended the school where the festival now resides. She started her harp lessons at 10yrs old with tuition from Festival founder - Isobel Mieras, who told us that her first piece that she taught Ailie was 'Singing Strings'.

Ailie took us on a journey with some Scottish music - 'waiting a thousand days and nights' - a nod to the Scottish whisky making process and her own arrangement of a Latin American flamenco dance after being inspired by her trip to South America and Buenos Aires 6 months before lockdown.

She used techniques such as playing with the back of her nails on the harp which was impressive. She played 'pres-de-la-table' to create the Spanish guitar effect too.

She even performed her old favourite "Singing Strings" that she learnt with her teacher Isobel Mieras.

Final piece - 'Haar' - atmospheric piece describing the mist over the sea. She used clever pedal looping effects during this piece which made a beautiful musical atmosphere.

She also played a lullaby which was her motherly touch in respect of her new baby daughter born at the end of last year. Her performance was well received by the audience and thoroughly enjoyed.

In the second half we were introduced to the American Harpist Kim Robertson. She is no stranger to the EIHf and last attended the concert 12yrs ago. I enjoyed her easy going nature as she connected with the audience between her pieces.

She performed 'Shenandoah' - as a solo piece and some American folk pieces too.

She played a duet - with her long term dueting friend Sunita Staneslow who now lives in the Shetlands but had previously lived in America and knew Kim then.

She performed a beautiful arrangement of 'Jupiter - I vow to thee my country' as a duet with Sunita again. I really want to get my hands on that piece for the harp!

They both played on Camac harps that had been kindly loaned to them both for the concert. One red harp and one green harp, both harps had been modified for amplification for the concert. Played with back of nails and did some string bending too!

All in all, a fabulous concert and it was so nice to return to the festival after not being able to attend it in person for the last three years. Interestingly following the Covid Pandemic, the festival was still offering zoom workshops to a limited number of pupils per session. So even if you were unable to attend the festival in person you are still able to get involved online.

It was lovely to see harp friends whom I had met up with before in previous festivals and bump into HNw member Susan Lambert too who had also made the trek to Edinburgh, so along with my family we all sat together to enjoy the gorgeous harp concert.

Alice Pell.

Simply Scottish - new harp book by Ailie Robertson

A beautiful selection of elementary Scottish tunes arranged for harps with 22+ strings.

<https://www.ailierobertson.com/harp-music-shop?category=Scottish>

Harps and Crowns

It was great to see a harpist featuring at the coronation of King Charles as the guests took their places. The King, when Prince of Wales, reinstated the role of Royal Harpist in 2000, and there have been six people in the role since, with Alis Huws the current harpist. They get to play a truly unique £150,000 harp, made especially for the Royal Harpist by the Italian company Salvi - who describe it as 'an unrepeatable instrument'. It is covered in gold leaf and decorated with Welsh symbols. You can see the harp here

<https://www.salviharps.com/salvi-harps-special-editions/prince-of-wales-harp/>.

Alis with the Coronation Orchestra played Tros y Garreg (Crossing the Stone) arranged by Karl Jenkins and can be heard here

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bBL1q5A-Ubw>. It builds slowly, with the harp building more towards the end.

Sources: Wikipedia, Salvi,

Harps North West Information

HNW Playing Groups

Participating in a playing group adds to the fun of playing. The following are contacts for the HNW open playing groups:

Harps Out West is based on the west coast, near Gosforth, usually meeting on the Thursday morning once and sometimes twice each month. Contact Helen on helenbrian@sky.com Tutor: Susan Lambert.

Harps South Lakes are based in Ulverston and usually meet in the morning of the 2nd and 4th Wednesday of each month. Contact Hazel on hazyhead49@gmail.com. Tutor: Mary Dunsford.

Harps Up North are based in Watermillock, usually meeting the first Thursday morning of the month. Contact Frances on francesmquinn@btinternet.com.

Red Rose Harps are based at Slyne Village Hall, North Lancashire. They meet on Tuesday afternoons twice per month. Contact Carol on coldwellcarol@gmail.com

***New HNW Performance Group:** open to all members. A commitment to practising around once per month with the ensemble will be necessary in order to ensure the balance of parts is optimised. It is not expected that everyone will play in every performance. Parts will be available for all levels. Venues will vary. If you decide you would like to be part of this group or to know more, please get in touch with Gill Salter-Smith on events@harpsnorthwest.org.uk

The Management Team from 11thSept 2022 – Sept 2023

Gill Salter-Smith	Convenor Membership Secretary - overview Higham Hall Link	convenor@harpsnorthwest.org.uk events@harpsnorthwest.org.uk higham@harpsnorthwest.org.uk
Mandy Bartlett	Vice Convenor Harp Hire Secretary - overview Events: members' bookings	harphire@harpsnorthwest.org.uk events@harpsnorthwest.org.uk
Ann Woolley	Secretary	
Susan Lambert	Website & Facebook	online@harpsnorthwest.org.uk
Carol Coldwell		
Cathrine Livesey		
Chris Pollington	Venue bookings	
Frances Quinn	Newsletter editor	events@harpsnorthwest.org.uk
Linda Taylor		
Alison Stobbs	HNW Administrator from Jan 2020 Treasurer Harp Hire - admin & support Membership - admin & support	administrator@harpsnorthwest.org.uk treasurer@harpsnorthwest.org.uk membership@harpsnorthwest.org.uk



WANTED! Your Harp Society Still Needs You!

If you are a keen harpist committed to enjoying playing with others, we would be delighted to have you join the committee. We're a friendly bunch who just love playing the harp.

Payment - Bank details for use when paying donations for HNW workshops.

★ HNW Bank details ★

Bank: HSBC, Name of Account: Harps North West

Sort Code: 40-16-22

Account Number: 81806521

For those paying HNW from outside the UK please use PayPal <http://paypal.me/HarpsNorthWest>. When paying by PayPal please change the 'paying an invoice or business' option to the 'paying family or friends'.

Cheques and cash transactions are also now charged so we appreciate your payments being made by direct bank transfer. Thank you.