

EFDSS Saturday Music Workshops



Autumn Term 2009

Enrolment and Information Pack

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EFDSS Saturday Music Workshops

1.0

What are the Workshops?

Launched in April 2008 the Saturday Music Workshops aim to promote the musical traditions of the British Isles through song and traditional instruments - including the Banjo, Accordion and Jew's Harp - and to inform those new to folk music, and long time appreciators alike, of the breadth, depth and wealth of folk culture that occurs within this country.

The Course Aims:

- To increase knowledge of and enthusiasm for English folk songs, tunes and playing techniques
- To increase musical confidence in vocal ability and instrumental ability
- To increase understanding of the folk arena

Objectives:

- To encourage solo and group singing, finding one's voice and harmony singing
- To develop repertoire of songs, knowledge of singing styles, techniques and good practice
- To encourage solo playing and group sessions
- To develop musical literacy, ability, repertoire, confidence and communication with other instruments

The EFDSS Saturday Music Workshops have been created in order to provide high quality teaching, from professional folk musicians, to Londoners, who, until now, have had few opportunities to enjoy affordable folk music tuition in this city.

The classes offer an informal yet structured opportunity for people of all backgrounds, musical tastes and levels to gain expert knowledge and skills in Banjo, Accordion, Singing and Jew's Harp whilst learning as a group.

1.1

Who Are The Workshops For?

Everyone over 16 years of age is welcome to join the Saturday Music Workshops. No prior experience of folk music is necessary - just a willingness to learn something new and enjoy making music in a celebratory, examination-free and sociable environment!

Young people of 12 – 15 years can also apply, with places offered at the course leaders' discretion.

See below for more information on the specific pre-entry requirements for the different courses.

EFDSS is committed to equality of opportunity. If you have specific learning or access needs please tell us and we will endeavour to meet your needs. Please note that Cecil Sharp House is accessible to wheelchair users on the foyer floor only providing access to Kennedy Hall, the Library, and adapted toilet facilities.

1.2

Instrument Descriptions

Accordion: an instrument whose popularity transcends the folk world and is commonly found playing in many different musical disciplines from Jazz to Classical, although its popularity within the folk culture is probably unrivalled. Of European descent, its current design was created around the 1860's and has spread world-wide adopting local musical styles due to its flexibility. This course aims to show the range of techniques through tunes and musical arrangements with the emphasis on the English tradition.

Banjo: an instrument of American lineage fashioned in response to the string gourd instruments brought over by African American Slaves. It evolved in its construction and playing style as it became the instrument of choice in the melting pot of American culture influenced by African and Native American Rhythms, British Ballads and melodies, French and Scandinavian tunes and many other musical traditions. In the late 1900s it became a popular big band and classical instrument in the UK and has long time connections with community and folk music here. This course aims to show a mixture of traditional styles and accompaniments for the Banjo both British and American in their nature. It is a fantastic and accessible folk instrument!

Jew's Harp: (Jaw Harp, Mouth Harp, Trump, Geg-gaw) the oldest instrument in the world and known in the UK as the Jew's Harp for over 600 years. This instrument has existed independently in nearly every continent in its brass, iron, bamboo or wooden form. Many parts of the world have had archaeological remains discovered dating the Harp back over a 1000 years. This is an ancient instrument with a very modern sound. Using predominantly British tunes, this course aims to introduce all aspects of playing and plucking technique and how the instrument can be used as both a solo instrument and as an accompaniment.

Singing: Britain contains a large and highly evolved repertoire of traditional song covering a variety of genres – from ballads and comic songs to work songs and ceremonial songs - as well as a wealth of singing styles. This class aims to introduce these extraordinary traditions through a practical workshop, through the learning and exploration of these songs and listening in to the voices of our cultural ancestors.

1.3

New to your Instrument? Introduction Class for New Players

If you have never played an accordion or banjo before you will need to attend an additional Introduction Class before the beginning of term to introduce you to the rudiments of playing. Students are offered instructions on handling and instrument positions, correct posture, tuning (banjo) and the elemental skills of playing. This will enable 'first timers' to join in more easily and comfortably to the beginners' classes, as not all the other students will be new to their instrument.

After the Introduction class if you feel your instrument is not for you, you have the option of either a change of instrument (space depending) or a full refund of the course fee. To do the introduction you must be enrolled for the whole term.

Beginners' courses are structured progressively so it is important that students attend as many classes as possible to facilitate their learning.

1.4

Class Levels & Pre-entry level Requirements

Accordion

Students will work both from music and by ear: copies music and MP3 audio files will be available.

Beginners: Using easy tunes, simple yet tasteful accompaniments will be taught. The layout of the left hand buttons, correct use of the bellows and fingering will be fully explained throughout the course. Learning is done by ear; music will be available, however the ability to read music is not essential. Understanding of the piano keyboard is required.

Intermediate: This course is for players with knowledge of the layout of the left hand buttons who also have good co-ordination skills between their right and left hands. More adventurous harmonies using counter basses and playing across the rows will be encouraged along with adding basic harmonies in the right hand.

Advanced: This is for players who have had regular experience, are confident to be learning and playing fast and developing new technique. However this isn't for students who just

want to play more advanced tunes - in some cases quite the opposite as the aim is to study each tune with the intention of wringing out every possible nuance. Therefore harmonies, dynamics and variations will be explored in more depth.

Singing

This is open to all: songs are learnt by ear with the use of field recordings for source material. Music notation is not always available though all songs are hosted on the internet for reference. The level of ability in the class is of a reasonable standard, all singers having had prior (though not necessarily trained) experience and understand the rudiments of pitch and volume and song craft. No prior knowledge of folk song is required though all songs learned are traditional.

Banjo

Learning will mostly be done by ear, with music (tablature) also provided at each session.

Beginners: *Picking the Banjo* - the beginners' Banjo course aims to offer an introduction to playing 5-string banjo. Over the duration of the course basic right hand technique for the frailing or clawhammer style of banjo will be learned. The three basic chords that offer the fundamental ingredients to almost any song will also be taught.

The Beginners' Banjo course operates in a two-term cycle; each term building on the material learnt in the previous term. The autumn term 2009 will be the first term of this cycle. Although attendance of term one is not strictly required for entry to term two, new students starting in term two should be aware they may need to practise a bit harder and put in some independent study to keep up with the group. Depending on students' abilities and previous musical experience they may find it desirable to attend both beginners' terms once, twice or more times before progressing to Intermediate classes (*More Banjo*).

Intermediate: *More Banjo* - this course is directed at players who have more experience of playing 5-string banjo (probably having played for at least a year and/or having attended at least two terms of the beginners' course). Each week students will learn a new tune by ear; faster than the beginners' course and relying on more difficult left and right hand techniques. Students will explore different tunings as well as more advanced right hand techniques (dropped thumbed frailing, galax lick etc.). There will also be more discussion of music theory, transposing, capos etc. Over the course students will be expanding their repertoire as well as their understanding of the instrument.

Jew's Harp

Absolutely no experience is necessary; students will be introduced to every part of the instrument, its playing styles, history and mysteries. The course will focus on learning the following elements of playing: plucking and breathing, rhythm playing, tonguing and tripling, harmonising and bass, changing key and creating a group sound. Instruments will be available and are for sale 'at cost' for £15.

1.5

Dates, Timings and Costs

Class	Time	Cost
Singing	11.00 - 1.00pm	£65
Banjo Intermediate	11.00 - 12.30pm	£65
Banjo Beginners	1.30 - 3.00pm	£60
Accordion Beginners	1.15 - 2.45pm	£60
Accordion Intermediate	11.00 - 12.30pm	£65
Accordion Advanced	3.00 - 4.00pm	£70
Jew's Harp	1.30 - 3.00pm	£65

Introduction day

12.09.09 - for absolute beginners: Accordion (11 – 1pm, £12) and Banjo (1pm – 3pm, £12)

Workshops- Autumn Term 2009

19.09.09

03.10.09

10.10.09 – (Traditional Song Forum Day)* see 2.4 for more information.

31.10.09

14.11.09

05.12.09

12.12.09 – Final Class

1.6

Tutors

Accordion: Paul Hutchinson is a member of Belshazzar's Feast and the innovative and progressive folk trio, Hoover the Dog. Paul is also a seasoned accordion tutor for Folkworks, Hands On Music and for the British Council in the Czech Republic and Belgium.

Singing: Sam Lee is a singer, teacher, researcher, song collector and all round folk amateur. With a large and varied repertoire of songs gleaned from the depths of the folk catalogue he is a regular performer on the folk circuit. Sam is apprenticed to the legendary Scottish Traveller singer and storyteller Stanley Robertson, who is passing onto Sam his vast and unique repertoire of ballads and songs. He is also a guest tutor on the Newcastle Traditional Music Degree

Banjo: Ed Hicks is the Banjo tutor. Despite his relative youth (by banjo player standards) Ed has many years of professional experience teaching and playing the banjo. He has played with Cut a Shine, Ramshacklicious Theatre Company, The Honk Project, The Cockney Awkestra as well as touring solo as Sleepy Ed Hicks. Ed is a passionate advocate of people playing the banjo and folk music in general.

Jew's Harp: Michael Wright is the leading performer, historian and enthusiast of the Jew's Harp in the United Kingdom today. His expertise with playing this melodic, uncommon, yet historically important musical instrument is stretching the Harp to its limits, both as a folk accompaniment and as a classical centrepiece. Michael's research into the social history of the instrument is ensuring that the full scope of the Jew's Harp's contribution to trade and entertainment is recorded. His workshops have been described as "fantastic!", and he was called the "King of the Jew's harpers" by John Campbell, while his playing on the 'Des 'n' Mel Today' TV programme was described as "amazing" by Des O' Connor himself!

1.7

Cover Tutors

As all our tutors are professional musicians, from time to time, due to other gigs and commitments, they will not be able to teach classes. In these cases another tutor will cover their absence. As much notice as possible will be given when changes are made.

Tutors used to cover classes include: Accordion: Becky Price; Banjo: Barry Southern; Singing: Sally Davies, Maya Waldman.

1.8

Online Resources

Many of the workshops will host songs, tunes and resource material on the internet for online viewing, listening and practising. Full details will be given to students after enrolment.

1.9

What to Bring With You

Singers are advised to bring a bottle of water, soft shoes and layers of clothing. Please bring your own Banjo, Accordion or Jew's Harp if you have one, however instruments are available to loan (see 2.5 below). Students are also recommended to bring their own lunch as the Café is not guaranteed to be open every Saturday.

2.0

Performance Opportunities

We aim to allow students the chance to showcase their work whenever possible and appropriate. Involvement will be at each person's discretion. We encourage group members to support each other and to take their newly acquired skills one step further and onto new platforms.

2.1

Refund policy

It is not EFDSS's policy to refund participants for missed classes.

Refunds are only given:

- If your course is cancelled or closed early.
- In exceptional circumstances (for example serious illness) supported by relevant documentation. This will be at EFDSS's discretion.

If you enrol on a course but decide after the first session that it is not right for you then you can *either*:

- transfer your booking from one instrument to another (depending on availability). If the course of your choice is full then we can reserve a place for you on the following term.
- *or* have the course fees refunded to you minus an administration charge of £10 (as long as you contact us before the second class of term).

2.2

VWML Library

The Vaughan Williams Memorial Library is the largest public traditional music archive in the UK and is housed at Cecil Sharp House. It is open Tuesday to Friday and the 1st and 3rd Saturday of the Month. Students are encouraged to explore and take advantage of this archive and on days when the classes coincide with the Library opening times students will be granted free access to use the facilities. (Normally £3.50 a day or free to EFDSS members)

2.3

Traditional Song Forum

Saturday Music Workshop students are invited to attend an informal seminar on the printed sources of traditional and popular song in Britain from the 18th to 20th century. Featuring broadsides, chapbooks, garlands, songsters, sheet music, and other printed materials from bygone ages. Presented by Steve Roud, Roy Palmer and Steve Gardham, with plenty of original examples on display. Jointly organised by the *Traditional Song Forum* and the *English Folk Dance & Song Society*

Date: Saturday 10th October 2009; 1.30 – 5.00 pm **Venue:** Trefusis Hall, Cecil Sharp House

Further details contact Steve Roud on sroud@btinternet.com.

2.4

Instrument Loans

We have a limited amount of banjos and accordions available for hire to Saturday Music Workshop students. If you wish to loan an instrument please contact Verity Flecknell on verity@efdss.org, 0207 485 2206 (extension 25).

Banjoes: 5-string, Ozark banjos

Accordions: 48 Bass, Chanson accordions

Conditions of Instrument Loan

To loan an instrument for EFDSS Saturday Music Workshops you must:

- A.** Complete and sign the "Instrument Loan Form" and return it to us with your deposit of:
£100.00 for Accordion
£50.00 for Banjo

Please pay deposit by **CHEQUE** and make out to EFDSS

B. The deposit is refundable upon the return of the instrument at the end of the loan period, less any cost involved in restoring the instrument to the original condition.

C. You may only loan the instrument while you are still enrolled with the EFDSS Saturday Music Workshop programme. If you decide not to attend the workshops you will need to return the instrument as soon as possible.

D. If the instrument needs any repair work during, this must only be carried out by an approved repairer, and must first be authorised by EFDSS, who will need to accept the estimate from the repairer.

E. When the instrument is returned it should be returned in the exact condition which it was loaned.

F. It is the borrower's responsibility to keep the instrument in good order.

Information correct at time of going to print. EFDSS reserves the right to alter any aspect of this programme.