NEWSLETTER – July 2022

Website: https://harpsnorthwest.org.uk/

Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/HarpsNorthWest

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



Convenor's message July 2022

It's time to **renew your membership!** See below for what HNW offers and details of how to renew. Don't forget to send in a newly completed membership form.

Look out for the **Festival 'A la Carte' booking forms**. You may not be able to attend the whole festival but there just could be a workshop that you really do not want to miss.

Don't miss Susan's workshop on 'Playing in a Session', Tuesday 5th July, 8pm on Zoom.

We've had another busy month of harping. Mary Dunsford led an excellent workshop on Zoom on how to get the most out of your smallest harp ... really useful if you are thinking of taking your harp on holiday with you. Am feeling inspired to play mine more ... how about a regular 'Harp Adventure Day' when we take our small harps to somewhere remote and play outdoors? HNW has a few small harps that can be borrowed. We could even Zoom it out to those who could not make it. Weather dependent of course!

Sadly the live workshop with Ailie Robertson was postponed as she came down with Covid. We are delighted she has recovered and that the workshop is rearranged for the 17^{th} July (see below).

Six members of HNW enjoyed playing as part of the Kendal Unitarian Chapel Tercentenary celebrations. It was great to share the delight of the harps with so many people.

Linda and I attended a Dumfries and Galloway workshop with Karen Marshalsay, an old friend of HNW. We enjoyed it a great deal and have invited Karen to run a workshop for us in Cumbria in the autumn. We usually have a quiet month in August. This year we shall be recovering from the excitement of the festival. We look forward to sharing the autumn programme with you in September. Enjoy your summer harping. **Gill**



July Events

This week!

Tuesday 5th July 20:00 – 21:30 Donations welcome. Ref: Susan+your initials



'Playing in a Session' with Susan Lambert

In preparation for the Saturday night party at the HNW Festival, or any other session!

All members will be sent the Zoom link and any materials a few days in advance of the session. A recording of the session will be available.

Zoom

rearranged date and venue

Sunday 17th July 10:30 to 15:30 Tuning from 10:00 Fee: £30

Ref: Ailie+your initials



Ailie Robertson - full day workshop

Develop your skills alongside learning some fun and challenging arrangements by highly renowned Scottish harpist, Ailie Robertson. The session is designed to include harpists of all levels.

Please sign up by contacting Mandy on events@harpsnorthwest.org.uk Bring your own lunch.

If you signed up for the original date of this workshop, please confirm or cancel your place on this new date by contacting Mandy on

events@harpsnorthwest.org.uk

There are still places available so don't delay, contact Mandy to sign up.

Bardsea Malt Kiln Village Hall, Well Lane LA12 8 QT

Inside the Newsletter

This is a very full newsletter (thanks everyone)- as well as all our regular sections, see inside for:

☀HNW Festival update - with update on harp servicing, and 'à la carte' booking	page 2
Harps made in Cumbria	
Harp Building Course	1 0
Harp for sale	
*Membership fees due - how to pay and what HNW offer	

Harps North West Festival 29th - 31st July 2022 - Latest Info



"A la Carte" Festival bookings are now being taken!

The University of Cumbria Campus, Ambleside is a beautiful part of the Lake District and a wonderful place to enjoy a musical weekend in the summer.

The Festival starts with a concert on Friday night, followed on Saturday and Sunday by a range of workshops and specialist classes from our tutors Jean Altshuler, Mary Dunsford, Lauren Scott and Charlotte Petersen. These range from absolute beginners and youth groups, to Cumbrian music, developing fluidity and playing in ensembles to Gaelic and Scottish tunes.

The Festival party and late night session is on Saturday evening.

Harp related exhibitors are Sound Plus, Heritage Harps and Harps made in Cumbria. Alternative activities (Alexander Technique, Tai Chi and harp care) are scheduled throughout.

Programme and booking form at https://harpsnorthwest.org.uk/harps-north-west-festival.html

You may not be able to attend the whole festival but there just could be a workshop that you really do not want to miss, or you may only be able to come along for one day. More information at on the HNW website - you can also request an 'à la carte' booking form by contacting the festival team on festival@harpsnorthwest.org.uk

Looking forward to seeing some of you at the festival - why not come along to browse the exhibition. On behalf of the Festival Planning Team - Susan, Ann, Carol, Mandy, Cathrine, Frances, Gill

Update on Harp Servicing at the 2022 HNW Festival and Teifi Harps

To all festival delegates, tutors and HNW members.

Mark Sharp, harp technician, formerly of Teifi harps, will be attending the Harps North West Festival from Friday 29th July to Sunday 31st July.

If you wish to have your harp serviced, worked on or looked over, please arrange this by contacting Mark Sharp directly on sharpy61@live.com 07984 246510.

Don't delay - slots usually book up quickly. ***UPDATE** Mark is staying on after the festival (Monday 1st Aug) to continue to service harps. He will be based at Lowick Community Hall, LA12 8EE, South Cumbria, from 9am until 5pm. As Teifi Harps are sadly no longer functioning as a business, Mark has agreed to work with us in a freelance capacity. Mark is also offering to tune pianos. Thank you Mark.

Saturday Evening Festival Party:

After a busy day at the harp, let's party!, If any playing groups or individuals would like to perform a party piece, please let us know in advance via festival@harpsnorthwest.org.uk, or talk to Susan who will be coordinating the party during the festival.



ABSOLUTE BEGINNERS' COURSE:

Saturday 30th July Workshop from 09.00 until 11:45, The University of Cumbria Campus, Ambleside Tutor: Alice Pell, FEE £25

Do you know someone who wants to learn to play the harp? Please encourage your friends and family to have a go.

No previous music knowledge is needed as our experienced tutor will guide you through the delights of playing the harp. Harps and music stands are provided. Light refreshments will be available part way through the session.

To sign up, either make an enquiry via festival@harpsnorthwest.org.uk or complete the booking form available on the Harps North West website https://harpsnorthwest.org.uk/onewebmedia/Timetable%20&%20Form%202022.pdf
Make the payment as instructed and submit the booking form to festival@harpsnorthwest.org.uk

There will be the opportunity to either hire a harp at the end of the session or go on a waiting list. harp hire is £80 per quarter in addition to a £50 deposit and membership of HNW (Adults - £20. Under 18 - £10)

YOUTH SESSION:



HNW Dates for the Diary Times are BST/UTC+1 to end of October. Road/travel information - https://www.facebook.com/Cumbriaroadwatch/				
Date and cost (if any)	Event details and how to book	Venue		
Tuesday 5th July	'Playing in a Session' with Susan Lambert	Zoom		
20:00 - 21:30	In preparation for the Saturday night party at the HNW Festival, or any other			
Donations welcome.	session!			
Ref: Susan+your initials	All members will be sent the Zoom link and any materials a few days in advance of			
	the session. A recording of the session will be available.			
Sunday 17 th July	Ailie Robertson - full day workshop rearranged date and venue	Bardsea Malt Kiln		
10:30 to 15:30	Develop your skills alongside learning some fun and challenging arrangements by	Village Hall,		
Tuning from 10:00	highly renowned Scottish harpist, Ailie Robertson. The session is designed to	Well Lane		
Fee: £30	include harpists of all levels.	LA12 8 QT		
Ref: Ailie+your initials	Please sign up by contacting Mandy on <u>events@harpsnorthwest.org.uk</u>			
	Bring your own lunch. If you signed up for the original date of this workshop, please confirm or cancel			
	your place on this new date by contacting Mandy on			
	events@harpsnorthwest.org.uk			
	Still places available so, don't delay, contact Mandy to sign up.			
Friday 29th to Sunday 31st	Harps North West Summer Festival			
July	*nearly full! check the HNW web page			
july	Thearry run: check the nivw web page			
Saturday 24th September	*NEW * Play Mediaeval Music - Tutor: Wendy Stewart	Zoom		
10:00 - 12:00 BST	4 1 61 11 911			
Fee £10	A recording of the workshop will be available.			
Ref:: Wendy+your initials	To sign up please contact Mandy on events@harpsnorthwest.org.uk			
Sunday 2nd October	*NEW* Tutor: Lily Neil - workshop title to be confirmed	Zoom		
15:00 - 17:00 BST				
Fee £10	A recording of the workshop will be available.			
Ref: Lily+your initials	To sign up please contact Mandy on events@harpsnorthwest.org.uk			
Weekend of 15th-16th	*NEW * Full day live workshop - Tutor: Karen Marshalsay	Venue in the north		
October	Date and title to be confirmed.	to be confirmed.		
Friday 11 th to Sunday 13 th	Higham Hall - A Weekend with the Harp - Residential	Higham Hall		
November 2022	Tutors: Shelley Fairplay and Rachel Newton	CA13 9SH		
1.0.0111001 2022	Contact Higham Hall directly. http://highamhall.com/	0.110 7011		

Booking and Paying for an event. Harps North West (HNW) is committed to providing opportunities to play and appreciate the harp. To cover costs we ask members for a voluntary donation for many events (suggested minimum of £5) or we ask for a specific fee for workshops. Non-members are asked to join HNW. (See the HNW website for details on how to become a member.) Payments can be made by bank transfer or, from outside the UK, by Paypal - details at the end of the newsletter. *See changes to bank details at the end of the newsletter*

COVID-19 Guidance Changes

Latest COVID-19 guidance from the Government:

https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/self-isolation-and-treatment/when-to-self-isolate-and-what-to-do/

The government has removed domestic restrictions in England and free tests are now only available to vulnerable groups. There are still steps you can take to reduce the risk of catching and spreading COVID-19: Get vaccinated, let fresh air in if meeting indoors, or meet outside, consider wearing a face covering in crowded, enclosed spaces. If you have symptoms of COVID-19, try to stay at home and avoid contact with other people.

contact with other people.				
Other Dates/Activities for a Harpist's Diary 2022				
Several courses in July/Aug,	Ardival Harps Makers of Historical Harps - Harp Holiday Courses details at https://www.ardival.com/			
October				
22 nd to 28 th July	14th World Harp Congress in Wales https://www.whc2022.wales/			
4 th to 6 th August	Harp in the Hebrides course - details at http://www.harp2ewe.net/courses.html			
8 th to 10 th August	Bohemian Harp Building Course - see the News from Members section			
24 th to 27 th August	Glasbury Harp Summer School - online			
	https://www.glasburyarts.co.uk/component/rseventspro/event/87-virtual-online-harp-summer-			
	<u>school-2021?Itemid=101</u>			
30th Sep. to 2nd Oct.	Harps at Blackruthven - a weekend course with Charlotte Petersen, more information from Felicity			
	Merchant			
	felicitymerchant@gmail.com 01488 608672			
28th Oct. to 1st Nov.	Harp on Wight festival, details https://www.harponwight.co.uk/			

NEWS of Recent HNW Events

Two great workshops led by HNW tutor Mary Dunsford



Flexible fingers for Frolicking Fun!

The first, a finger agility workshop, gave us techniques and exercises to loosen up hands and brains. We started with physical warm ups, stretching necks, fingers and shoulders. Very useful, I tend to jump right into practice forgetting the importance of loosening up muscles in the upper body, which also wakes up the brain and helps to free up stiffness in hands and arms. Must relax and get loose. Then onto the first exercise.

Step 1, was scales with both hands. We continued up and down, up and down, until we could look around the room, anywhere apart from the harp and still keep hands in relationship with each other. Then on to steps 2 and 3 - both hands doing their thing up and down scales, independently, but together! We carried on with lots more variations of scales exercises. Right up to Step 16......! Trickier and trickier. I now appreciated the importance of regular shaking/shoulder loosening.

(An aside from me - If your brain feels a bit stressed grasp a couple of handfuls of hair, from opposite sides of your head, close to the scalp and pull in a perpendicular direction away from the scalp. Hold for 10-20 secs. Repeat over your whole head. Please excuse the interruption, but this does zap tension.)

On to 'The Ants Nest' - lots of whizzy scales. Oh fun! (I do have problems telling my right from left.) Don't think. Do! This was hectic. Eyeball bouncing - eyes ahead of fingers on the sheet. I now appreciated steps 1, 2 -> 16, above and exercises for finger independence. Hand oscillating exercises for speed between hands/fingers.

Tricky. Very tangling, but freeing if you can get the rhythm going.

Breathe, if you can!! Don't look at strings, eyes out, ears in. Take your brain away! Oooh, my neck/head/shoulders/etc.

On to building up speed - Mary recommended not building up by perfecting placement, technique, etc, but get the rhythm/melody into your head. Don't look at your strings. Think Debussy, who said 'Music is the spaces in between'. Sing it, then rattle away at speed. (Ah! Permission to have fun). Build up technique and correct notes, later. Concentrate firstly on left hand, bass patterns, then bring in right hand melody. Interesting! Hope I've got that right. Be more Yehudi. He's often not note perfect, but he plays with total feeling. On to finger independence by placing all four fingers, but playing only the notes on the page. This needed concentration. Playing 2 + 3, 3 + 4, 1 + 4 with both hands was tangling enough. Then we tried different patterns with each hand working the patterns independently at

Am I getting that right?? Confusing?? But when I thought about it, that's music.

I came away from this workshop with more appreciation of whole involvement in the music. So - breathe - develop relaxed familiarity - internalise patterns. Don't think - Do. And, keep practising with joy.

For further reading, Mary recommended Deborah Friou's book, 'Harp Exercises for Agility and Speed'

There was so much more, information and Qs and As. Too much for here. It would be very useful to repeat this workshop. 222

On to Mary's second workshop-'Optimising your Smaller Harp'

.(Lap harps, 18 strings up to 26 strings). Which, as Mary said, 'Need a different approach from the larger 32 - 36+ string harp.' (Possibly the 32 string harp could also be considered in the smaller bracket. It would depend on the bass range) Here we were given lots of useful chords/bass lines/rhythms - Alberti bass and more, and how to use them. These were accompanied by plenty of diagrammatic handouts and left hand shapes to try.

On to the music - Kumbaya - the Afro-American spiritual 'Come by Here'. With 5 bass versions for left hand and some fuller versions for right. Everything was geared towards exploring the range of the small harp.

Glen Miller's swinging 'In the Mood' and 'Moonlight Serenade' completed the day's music. The bass patterns here, although staying above 4th 'C', (ish) filled out the music nicely.

Then, as requested, Mary closed with her recording of a sea shanty.

Ooops! I can't remember it's name, but I'm sure you know the one I mean.

A very informative workshop indeed. What did I take away from these workshops? Internalise my left hand chord patterns, then play the spaces with relaxed familiarity.

Thanks to Eil Bentley for both the writeups

Many great responses for the 'Optimising your Smaller Harp' workshop:

'Many thanks, Mary, really interesting', Kaye

'Thanks that's been really helpful not just for the small harp! Another lovely evening of harp playing and learning', Jane

'Thank you so much, Mary. That was so helpful and your sea shanty was fab!', Linda

'Thanks so much, Mary. It was a fabulous session. I learned such a lot. It's opened my mind to all sorts of LH possibilities', Felicity 'Many thanks, I've at last got round to watching/playing the first half hour of the session today, it's going to be so useful for getting to grips with my beautiful new Starfish lap harp.' Nicola

News from Members



Harps North West play for the Kendal Unitarian Chapel's Tercentenary celebrations. Saturday 11th June

Six members, Ann, Carol, Gill, Gill, Linda and Val, played in support of the Kendal Unitarian Chapel's Tercentenary Celebrations on Saturday 11th June. In preparation, we held three practice sessions at a venue midway between the most distant harpists, around 36-40 miles in both directions! We were made very welcome and it was a joyful day. It was good to share our music with so many appreciative people. What a beautiful chapel and peaceful gardens, all very well hidden in the middle of the town. As Harps North West approaches its own 20th anniversary (2024), it was interesting to hear that

one of the very first HNW gigs had been at the very same chapel. Thank you to the Chapel for their generous donation to Harps North West. Gill Salter-Smith

This is a lovely comment from one of the organisers.

'People are still talking about the harp playing, even mentioning how all you could see on the day were smiles. Thank you to you and your fellow harpists, you were making a huge contribution to that.'

And from John

'with compliments and many thanks for your wonderful contribution to our celebrations on Saturday. It was truly a joy to be surrounded by such beautiful music, with very best wishes'

Style 85Harp Duo

St Andrew's Church, Sedburgh, Tuesday 21st June 1pm

Our own AnnaKate Pearson, based in Windermere, and her duo partner, Gwen Sinclair, gave a very engaging lunchtime recital at St Andrew's Church in Sedburgh on Midsummer's Day as part of the town's Music Festival. The weather was beautiful, enhancing the setting for this concert; and it was a real pleasure to hear two concert harps played together so sensitively in this ancient building with the sunshine streaming through the windows.

The programme was varied, featuring a wide range of composers from Joplin to Debussy. The pieces certainly showcased these amazing instruments, (I was in awe of the pedal work in Joplin's 'Suite for Two Harps').

AnnaKate and Gwen had a friendly rapport with their audience who were very appreciative. Several people commented that it was good to hear them playing again at this venue, as they had been sadly missed during the Covid years.

I was delighted that this talented duo also played one of my own pieces, 'Stargazing'. It was wonderful to actually hear the piece away from my own harp, and so delicately and beautifully played too. Thank you, AnnaKate and Gwen for such a memorable experience. I will remember it for a long time to come! **Gill Lowden**

From AnnaKate:

'We played one of Gill's pieces for harp duo called 'Stargazing'. It was lovely - Gill introduced her piece too within the concert'



Harps made in Cumbria

For the past 3 years a 19 string small harp has been made in a workshop which is situated in an Old Coach House in the northern Lake District. The 'Zoe' harp (the Greek word for 'life') is made by 'joywoodharps.com' - a single craftsman operated business run by Frank Bakewell in a collaboration with Clare Bakewell , his wife , a well known harpist and teacher from Cumbria . The motivation for making this harp was to help more people be able to take up this beautiful instrument by making it both light and affordable but not compromising on good sound and build quality.



Some of the wood used is local and was cut down and dried by Frank personally and the tuning pins used are recycled from old pianos.

Specifications:

- 19 strings ranging from G below Middle C, through to a top d'.
- There are 5 sharpening levers Middle C, f, c, f' and c'
- The strings are nylon, giving a nice bright tone.
- The soundboard is made from aircraft grade Spruce.

The harps are supplied with a tuning key, supporting pole and padded carrying bag. The frame is glued under tension to reduce string breakage and to help keep it in tune. The back of the harp has traditionally been made from a solid piece as it is a major part of the strength. But through an innovative design this has been changed so that the harp now has a removable rear section which makes it lighter and also string changing becomes much easier.

Harps are available to rent as part of a three monthly package which includes weekly or fortnightly live online lessons fully supported by videos and paper resources as well as regular in-person sessions

☀Come and see these harps - Clare and Frank will be exhibiting at the HNW Festival on saturday morning, 30th July.☀



Build your own Bohemian Harp in Moniaive, Dumfriesshire - 8th to 10th August 3 day course

Lots of HNW members have. They all love their Bohemian harps or "Boho" harps, 33 strings and 26 strings.







'Hi All! I'm very excited to share with you that I've signed up for a **Bohemian harp building course** led by Christoph of Klangwerkstatt and Wendy Stewart, in Moniaive, Dumfriesshire. It's from 8th August and will run for 3 or 4 days - final details still to be confirmed. They have run it every year since 2013, so very well established.

There are possibly 3 spaces left on the course - several interested - so if it's for you, I would get in there quick! The organiser has given me permission to share his email address if you would like to contact him to express an interest. It's Alan James, <u>alan@snademill.co.uk</u>. I saw some of these harps at a retreat in Gardenstown earlier this year. They are beautiful, lightweight and have a surprisingly big sound! Each one was different, reflecting the individuality of the owner. It would be great to see some of you there!' Anne Philbow, on Facebook



Harps in Strange Places!

Harps pop up in the strangest of places - this one was found on a stroll around the Edinburgh Botanic Gardens. Made by Mark Norris from a Wych Elm which unfortunately had to be felled due to Dutch Elm disease in 2003. A beautiful addition to the gardens although I have to say it didn't look in playable condition! Ann Woolley







Harp for Sale: Pilgrim Progress (Paul), location Cumbria

'Paul' is a lever harp, has 41 strings and a beautiful sound. He is about 15 kg heavy and will come with his original padded jacket.

Serviced by Pilgrim harps in 2017. £3688 (open to offers).

my details: Jae-Llane Ditchburn, Workington, Cumbria, khoojlyn@yahoo.com, 07594493688



Harps North West Information

*Harps North West Annual Membership Fees are due on 1st July 2021.

Membership fees: Adult £20; Family £25; Youth £10. See the website for membership forms.

Please make the payment, as set out on the membership form, and send an updated membership form to our administrator, Alison, on membership@harpsnorthwest.org.uk

The Harps North West offer to members:

- The JaNEWary Challenge free of charge (FOC)
- Live Playing Sessions and Skills workshops FOC
- HNW Christmas Party preparation session in September, a practice in November and the rehearsal and party in December FOC
- Guest and HNW tutor-led workshops arranged throughout the year
- Between six and ten Zoom sessions per year
- The Summer Festival every two years with at least four professional tutors
- Support for the 'Weekend with the Harp' course at Higham Hall, at least once, sometimes twice, per year
- The opportunity to join a local Playing Group
- The opportunity to play with others at public events
- Access to Harp Hire and the organisation of Beginners Courses.

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.

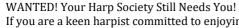
Harps South Lakes are based in Ulverston and usually meet in the morning of the 2nd and 4th Wednesday of each month. Contact Hazel on hazeyhead49@gmail.com. Tutor: Mary Dunsford.

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

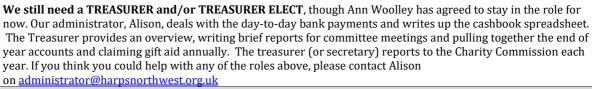
Red Rose Harps are based at Slyne Village Hall, North Lancashire. They meet on Tuesday afternoons twice per month. Contact Carol on coldwellcarol@gmail.com

The Management Team from 11th Sept 2021 - Sept 2022				
Gill Salter-Smith	Convenor	convenor@harpsnorthwest.org.uk		
	Membership Secretary - overview	events@harpsnorthwest.org.uk		
	Higham Hall Link	higham@harpsnorthwest.org.uk		
Mandy Bartlett	Vice Convenor	harphire@harpsnorthwest.org.uk		
	Harp Hire Secretary - overview	events@harpsnorthwest.org.uk		
	Events: members' bookings			
Ann Woolley	Secretary			
	Treasurer - overview			
Susan Lambert	Website & Facebook	online@harpsnorthwest.org.uk		
Carol Coldwell				
Cathrine Livesey				
Chris Pollington				
Frances Quinn	Newsletter editor	events@harpsnorthwest.org.uk		
Linda Taylor				
Alison Stobbs – Not a committee member	HNW Administrator from Jan 2020	administrator@harpsnorthwest.org.uk		
	Treasurer - admin & support	treasurer@harpsnorthwest.org.uk		
	Harp Hire - admin & support	membership@harpsnorthwest.org.uk		
	Membership - admin & support			





If you are a keen harpist committed to enjoying playing with others, we would be delighted to have 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.

★IMPORTANT BANKING NEWS - changes to accounts

Please note that the only account now open has the following details so if you have the Festival account details saved somewhere (I know there are a few of you out there as we need to do the occasional transfer!) this should now be deleted. Cheques and cash transactions are also now charged so we appreciate your payments being made by direct bank transfer. Thank you.

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 choose the pay 'friends and family' option where possible to avoid charges.