

## **Review of HISS 2014**

**Alex Wherry**

As a new member of the student HISS helper team in 2014 I was thoroughly impressed by the warm welcome and shared musical enthusiasm shown throughout the week by participants and tutors alike.

Being a recorder player I attended the progressive Hotteterre sessions with Mary, during which we worked on the styling and ornamentation associated with French baroque. Mary's patient and inspiring teaching approach made these very technical sessions highly enjoyable and informative, and left us all feeling much less daunted by the idea of French baroque.

The inclusive nature of this course was also highly evident; with musicians welcome at all sessions regardless of instruments played or experience in the particular genre of early or folk. As a wind player it also gave me the opportunity to try my hand at the treble viol - something which was completely alien to me. Thankfully due to Susanna's brilliant introduction, coupled with her own Alexander technique infused teaching, I was able to cobble a few notes together!

The highlight of the week for me was the musical banquet which was a real chance for everyone to let their hair down and enjoy a great shared enthusiasm for both music and food! The variety of music and performance was brilliant, and similarly to the ceilidh earlier in the week brought everyone together.

I would like to give a big thank you to Graham, Chris and all the tutors for their continued hard work and commitment to early music and to HISS. It was a fantastic week!