

Recording of the week: Dongo lamellophone and fireside chatting

This week's selection comes from Isobel Clouter, Curator of World & Traditional Music.

Here is an intimate [recording](#) made by one of our long time field recordists John Brearley. Travelling with his own violin to encourage a two-way flow of ideas, as suggested by anthropologist Alan Barnard, John Brearley sought out players of musical instruments and people who could perform healing dances and songs throughout Botswana, with positive results. John amassed a large and varied collection of music and interviews which illustrate the relationships he formed with the musicians that he recorded. The sound of the dongo (lamellophone) is but one part of a beautiful recording of the musician G/ashe G/ishe and his family chatting by the fireside.

[Dongo \(lamellophone\) and fireside chatting \(BL reference C65/60\)](#)



Dongo (lamellophone) of G/ashe G/ishe

John Brearley continues to record in Botswana. His collection is an ongoing work that began with his first trip to Botswana in July 1982 to investigate and record traditional music, and to observe to what extent the influence of radio and recorded music had interrupted the use of traditional instruments. In particular he wanted to hear the music of the Basarwa. (The countries in southern Africa use different names to refer to Bushmen populations. In Botswana the term employed most often is Basarwa). Over 1000 recordings from John Brearley's collection can be explored on [British Library Sounds](#).

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There is more intergenerational co-operation than battles

I have long disagreed with my old friend David Willetts and those who think the baby boomer generation have done too well at the expense of the generations that follow. I am not pessimistic like them about the upcoming generations, who may well go on to harness new ideas and new technologies to make themselves considerably more comfortable and richer than the baby boomers. Meanwhile, let me explore some of the errors of the present belief that the older generation are having it too good.

There is nothing new about most of the wealth of a country residing in the hands of people over 40 rather than under 40 years old. By definition babies come into the world with no wealth of their own, and no capacity to earn until they have grown up. We do not agree with child labour, so we support our children from our income instead.

In contrast many of the older generations have spent years struggling with a mortgage until they reach the day when they own a home outright. Given usually rising house prices they get gradually richer even with a mortgage. Most save for their retirements, so over their lifetimes their savings in financial assets build up to secure them that pension at 65 or beyond. 20-40 year olds have not normally managed to save much for their retirement, and are still struggling with home buying. So did the baby boomers in their younger days when house prices were a lot cheaper but mortgages were a lot dearer. Current affordability as judged by mortgage payments as a proportion of income are not overextended in the way the house price to income ratio is.

In practice the baby boomer generation is sharing their wealth and income with the younger generations in conventional ways. The Bank of Mum and Dad is flourishing where parents have a surplus. It is paying educational fees and providing deposits for homes. The Bank of Grandma and Granddad is also often working overtime for similar purposes. Many of the younger generation will stand to inherit decent sums, though we hope they will have to wait a good long time for that.

The more active retired who have some wealth are keen to spend on exotic holidays, meals out, leisure breaks, sporting and cultural events and much else which creates income for those setting up businesses to service these markets, and creates jobs for many younger people. The frail and disabled better off spend much of their money on care homes, which again generate work and income for many people. The better off tend to be generous with charities.

The present imbalance in wealth between older and younger people is nothing new. It is inevitable given the way we work, earn and save. The money is recirculated, as it would be unhelpful if the elderly just sat on their wealth and did nothing with it. Many of them make conscious decisions to move it on by buying things and by giving it away to those who have more need of it. To those who do not, they leave it in a bank or savings scheme, so their money gets reused anyway by younger people who borrow it for their own purposes. I do not think there is a great intergenerational war. Most people see the elderly have money which they need to spend, and the younger people have energy to work, to earn that money. In their turn they will expect the same in their old age.

[The Tories have let down rural Scotland](#)

Following last year's General Election, Scottish Tories were quick to proclaim that they would "champion the Scottish national interest" at Westminster. The reality has been very different.

[Go to Source](#)

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[Community Spirit Action Group meeting #dundeewestend](#)

Details of the next meeting of Community Spirit Action Group – the community group for the "north" part of West End Ward, covering Pentland, Tullideph, Ancrum, Forest Park and the Cleghorn area – all very welcome :

Community Spirit Action Group

Come along to the next meeting of the Community Spirit Action Group



When: Wednesday 7th February 2018 at
6:30pm

Where: Tullideph Sheltered Housing Lounge

Speaker: Dundee Pensioners Forum and guests

Do come along, all welcome
Refreshments provided

Any local issues – West End Councillors normally
attend

Community Spirit Action Group

The last stage of the EU negotiations

The PM's critics say she does not know what she wants from the EU. Those who say this should read what she has written and spoken.

The following things are crystal clear in her statements:

The UK is leaving the EU on 29 March 2019

The UK is leaving the single market and the customs union – and this has been confirmed by two important votes in the Commons. She put Conservatives on a three line whip to vote down proposals to stay in the single market and customs union. It was also the clear statement of both campaigns in the referendum, and the position of the EU that you cannot stay in them without accepting all the other obligations of EU membership

The UK would like a comprehensive free trade agreement and trade partnership and is proposing no new barriers to our trade after we have left

She has also made clear – as she needs to do if we are to have a bargaining position – that no deal is better than a bad deal, and the UK will be ready to leave without a deal if necessary, though she strongly wants a deal.

I do not see how we can decide on a so called Transition period without knowing if there is something to transit to that both sides want. The March Council needs to be told we only accept transition if there is an Agreement and if it needs extra time to implement. The government should say to the EU we are offering no new barriers to trade – what barriers do they wish to impose on their trade with us? Were they to agree to no new barriers we could speedily translate that into a Free Trade Agreement and register it at the WTO.

I think the EU also needs to be told that the provisional generous agreement on money and other matters only comes into play if there is a comprehensive free trade deal which the UK likes. As someone who does not want to pay the EU anything extra, I would need persuading that any Agreement was value for money for what is an ex gratia payment.