



Est. 1932

Soundboard

The newsletter of the Nottingham & District Society of Organists

May 2018

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Ian Watts

Time flies, but memories are timeless! It is amazing how a term as President has flown by in what seems like a breath. At the start of this journey I proposed to not attempt to follow my predecessors but to come from a different angle and do my own thing; In many ways I feel that I have accomplished this goal and I hope that you can concur with me. We have most certainly achieved some new things and probably some things that haven't been achieved for a while so I feel content in myself in having done my very best.

For a glimpse back at the year in a nutshell, we started with a bang with my Presidents Evening at Ironville with the members playing live to a ticketed audience either on solo pieces or on accompanying a large male voice choir. We bravely took risks and this brought us to the attention of some 100-audience members and raised a hearty £600 sum for Children With Charity. Soon after was the Everyday Organist look at modulation and organ vs. worship band which brought us our first Gospel Singer guest and gave a chance for a couple of members to try playing with 'the band', we met Martin Hodge who examined and discussed modern worship music against tradition followed by an engaging and healthy debate from the members. After that we spent some quality time with Paul Provost who was very open with us in sharing his plans for the position of Rector Chori at Southwell Minster, it was a pleasure to be able to interview him in front of an audience and to then witness him conduct choral evensong. We then headed North Nottingham on the journey of "Ho's!" around our county with 3 most surprising organs being tried and a brilliant turn out of members. Annual Lunch came next with a fabulous dinner at the Carrington Restaurant and a wonderful cello performance by the young Mariatu Kanneh-Mason and a compelling address by her mother Kadie, bringing my two boys with me meant that this occasion may possibly be the first time in a while where children have joined us for our annual lunch. We then battled the 'Beast From The East' whilst travelling up to East Yorks to meet Mr John Scott-Whiteley who received us for the day despite his flu, this was certainly a first with the incorporation of members from the Derby Society of Organists who joined us for this excursion. Finally (at time of writing), we went in search of the smaller organs of J.J. Binns, both electrical and water powered, ending with an impromptu recital to a modest audience at Hucknall Methodist. We are about to step into the unknown with my first 'massed choir' event for the Focus on Welsh Hymnody and I have spent an incredible amount of time pushing this charity event in the hope that it will be something really special (by the time this edition hits your letter box we will know if this actually worked). Then with a little date change (details elsewhere in this publication) we then head to Walsall to compare a sampled Hauptwerk organ directly to the real thing, back to back! My year as



NEXT MEETING

Saturday 14th July (note: changed) 10.00 a.m. onwards: **Trip to Birmingham area**

Details overleaf 

President will end with a low key AGM in the tiny but exceptional St James Papplewick on a summers evening where I pass on the medal and brief case to my successor Paul Hale!

I wish Paul well and hope that he enjoys another term as President as much as I have enjoyed my first. He is sure to have a good selection of events up his sleeve and I do hope that we continue to grow the amount of members that attend these events. I would like to make special mention of our Secretary Denis Littleton who has performed so much essential work behind the scenes and to you all for your kindness and support.

Ian Watts

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Put them in your diary now!

Visit by coach to Birmingham area

Saturday 14th July (NOT now 16th June). Coach departs 10.00 from St Mary's, Bulwell. Broadway URC, Walsall, where we visit the four manual amateur organ construction, comprising parts from at least four different redundant organs. Then on to a private residence to inspect a large Hauptwerk digital installation.

Annual General Meeting

Monday 16th July, 7.30 p.m., at St James's Church, Papplewick. There will also be an opportunity to play the church's one-manual Father Willis organ.

President's Evening

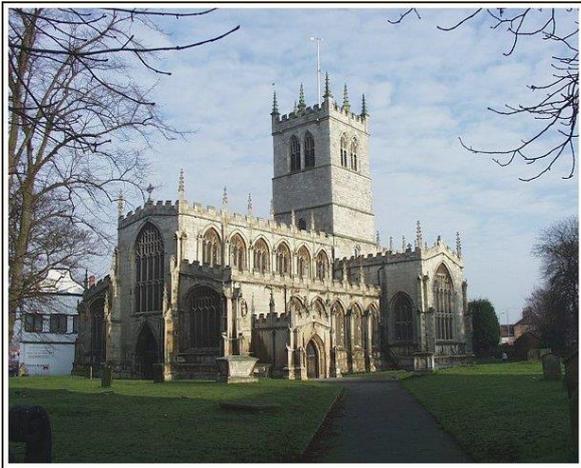
Thursday 27th September, 7.30 p.m., at Halam Court. This will include an illustrated talk about Paul Hale's recent consultancy at Selby Abbey.



Tewkesbury Abbey – one of next year's venues

RECENT EVENTS

Northward Ho! 20th January



St Swithun's Church, Retford

The day began with a visit to St. Mark's at Mansfield, where we were greeted by a very affable vicar, who incidentally, is looking for a new organist.

The organ originally by Brindley & Foster, dates from 1900 and originally had 19 speaking stops. It was rebuilt by Henry Willis in 1955. Additional work was carried out in 1974 by Midland Organ Builders, Anthony Herrod in 1993 and 2005, and was rebuilt by Henry Groves in 2014, when the action was converted from pneumatic to electro-pneumatic. In its current incarnation the organ has 23 stops (Ped 7, Gt 8, Sw 8), including the 16⁷/₈' reed rank added in 2005.

The church itself dates from 1897, and was designed by the unusually named Temple Lushington Moore, who designed a number of churches of which 34 are grade I or II listed. [*He also designed the Choir/Solo organ case - now no longer - for the 1915 Walker in St Mary's chancel - Ed.*] St Mark's also has 2 stained glass windows by Kempe. The design is such that the church is unencumbered by pillars, and the congregation has a good view of what is happening. The organ is situated in the north east corner and raised about 4' above floor level, accessed by a short ladder. It speaks clearly into the building.

Our next port of call was St. Peter & St. Paul at Warsop, which is situated on a hill at the north end of the town, and has been around longer than St. Marks by over 800 years. The organ was installed by Alfred Kirkland in 1892, it is situated on the north side of the chancel and maintained by Anthony Herrod. The action is now electric and it looks as though there are more stops on the 3 manuals than were present when new.

Lunch then beckoned, at the Wetherspoon's in Retford, which rejoices in the name of the Dominic Cross, which apparently marked Retford's southern boundary in medieval times and the base can still be seen near Retford Town Hall.

The organ in St. Swithun's church has 39 stops over 3 manuals (Ped 9, Ch 9, Gt 10, Sw 11), with a detached console on the opposite side of the chancel. The organ sounds good and there are some interesting stops including a 4' Harmonic Flute, a Krumhorn and Viola Célestes and a good selection of reeds. Thanks are due to David & Alice Bird for arranging this part of the day.

Our final destination was St. Anne's in Worksop. This is a comparatively recent church, dating from 1912, built in a rather heavy version of the perpendicular style designed by Austin and Paley of Lancaster. We were welcomed to the church by Edward Bennett, the organist, who is also an organ builder with Goetze and Gwynne. The original organ here was by Brindley and Foster, was replaced in 1999 by a Gray and Davison organ which had started life in 1852 in Clapham, subsequently moved to a United Reform Church in Buckley (Flint), then to its current home in Worksop in 1999.

The organ is a 3 manual instrument with 30 stops (Ped 2, Ch 7, Gt 11, Sw 10), and is situated behind the choir stalls. The organ is a good instrument to play, but it is getting towards the point where it needs some attention.

Denis Littleton

Annual Luncheon: 10th February

A good representation of the Society, with some “other halves” attended this year’s luncheon. The venue was a departure from recent tradition: the Carrington Restaurant at Nottingham’s Westminster Hotel was probably less imposing than the Masonic Hall, though we were served very good food from a thoughtfully assembled menu, provided in advance.

A short recital preceded the meal – a lovely innovation. The soloist was 8-year-old ‘cellist Mariatu Kanneh-Mason, who played music by Percy Grainger and Georg Goltermann (and whom I had the pleasure and privilege of accompanying). Her assured and sensitive playing was a delight – who would have thought it was actually her first performance before a real live audience?



After lunch, Mariatu’s mother, Kadie Kanneh spoke to us. What a remarkable speech – and what a remarkable lady. The Kanneh-Masons (our soloist Mariatu has 6 older siblings; her renowned brother Sheku is No 3) have been described as Britain’s most talented family, but the overriding impression was one of sheer common sense and determination, together with charm and sincerity which undoubtedly have been passed on to all the children, as anyone who has ever met any of them will testify. Her observation, “Sheku won it, but it could have been any of them” seemed to summarise her utterly down to earth outlook on the competitive aspect of music making for highly talented youngsters. Kadie believes passionately in the importance of musical opportunities and experience for **all**; she laments the patchiness of much current provision but champions what *is* offered, especially in the schools where her family’s initial musical experience was grounded and with whom the family still has strong links.

(A passing thought: surely future Nottinghamshire historians will bracket the surname Kanneh-Mason with (*inter alia*) Hood, Lawrence, Boot, Sillitoe, Hogwood, Clarke...)

For all kinds of reasons, this year’s luncheon was a great occasion, and warmest thanks are due to Ian, Denis and others who made it all work so well.

Roger Harrison

Visit to Everingham: 17th March

We gathered shivering at the back of Bulwell Parish Church waiting for the coach which had already picked up members of the Derby society. They were joining us for the visit to three East Yorkshire organs, including the one in John Scott Whiteley’s home. 21 of us set off under skies which were anything but promising.

On the journey north we had alternately drizzle, thick fog and blizzards - but then, north of the Humber, it was suddenly spring! We ventured further and further off the beaten track, eventually pulling into the grounds of Everingham Hall where we were to visit the estate’s 19th Century Catholic Chapel. The idyllic scene was complete with bright sun, blue sky, fluffy clouds, myriads of snowdrops – and a band of geese who eyed us curiously as we stepped from the coach.

John Scott-Whiteley greeted us at the Chapel door. For those of us who only knew him from his BBC ‘21st Century Bach’ series (with titles by Damian Hirst), it was a relief to see that he wasn’t continually surrounded by bees. He was thoroughly down-to-earth and approachable, responding graciously and enthusiastically to the many questions we put to him. The Chapel of Ss Mary and Everilda, (the latter a 7th century saint who founded a convent here), is a sumptuous riot of elaborate plasterwork and statuary – the 12 life-size apostles filling the nave and Everilda herself, along with the Virgin Mary,

adorning the sanctuary.



The organ, with gilded pipes, splendidly sited in a west gallery, sounded wonderful in JSW's hands, playing a voluntary by Samuel Wesley. With two manuals and 16 speaking stops, it was built in 1839 by Charles Allen and remains largely unaltered, with just a conservative restoration by Mander's in 1988. The short compass Swell stops at F below middle C, with the Great going down to GGG, four notes lower than on modern organs. Pedals at that time were, of course, a novelty in this country and there was one pedal stop simply named 'Pedal Pipes 16'. The pedals were fiendish to play, being about half an octave to the left of where we might expect them to be. I was intrigued that there was no key for bottom G sharp. A more scholarly member explained that this was because of mean tone: G sharp and A flat, being two different notes, would have necessitated two separate pipes for each rank, both bulky and expensive. Since G sharp and A flat would be unlikely to be used much, the note was simply left off. Faultless logic!

We went into nearby Market Weighton for lunch. One of our number snuck off for a clandestine try-out of the organ in the parish church. He declared it to be a nice, unaltered, Henry Jones in good condition and well worth a play. The rest of us had piled immediately into the food and drink.

After lunch it was back to Everingham to visit the little parish church, also dedicated to St Everilda. By now it was snowing but the snowdrops and bucolic setting still charmed us. The little organ was an absolute gem. Also by Charles Allen and restored by Forster and Andrews in 1904, it has one manual (8,8,8,8,4,4,2) with pedal pulldowns, and was in excellent condition. It has the most wonderful, liquid tone, especially the soft flutes. JSW charmed us all with one of Haydn's Musical Clock pieces. We were given the opportunity to play, and several said they could easily have stayed all day, so delightful an instrument was it.

Then it was on to JSW's own house to see the organ that he has had built there since retiring from York Minster. The house, in the past variously an inn, then, under the influence of the Temperance Movement, a coffee house, stands in the centre of the village. The organ has its own room with the ideal floor for best acoustics, of polished marble. John hosts regular concerts throughout the summer months. The organ is basically by Hardy of Stockport, and was adapted and installed with various alterations by Paul Derrett of Keyingham. At two manuals and 26 speaking stops, it is a most eclectic instrument, boasting, among other things, a Pedal reed unit at 16, 8, 4, and 2, an adjustable Cymbelstern and a Pedal Glockenspiel. The Swell and the Positive are both played from the upper manual. John entertained us with stories of how they had acquired this rank and that rank, adapted them, modified them, extended them, revoiced them, until he had the instrument he wanted. After a short demonstration, he let us to try it for ourselves.

Tea and biscuits, and the opportunity to purchase some of his recordings and books, rounded off his most generous hospitality and then we re-joined the coach. Bright sun gradually turned to blizzard again as we headed south, and we pulled back into Bulwell to find a thick blanket of snow.

An unforgettable day, convivial and informative. Many thanks to those who made it all possible.

Richard Marsden

In Search of James Jepson Binns: 14th April

The day was spent sampling three organs built in the first third of the twentieth century by the organ builder James J. Binns of Leeds. The swell manual at all three places included the same group of 8'stops: Geigen Principal, Rohr Flute, Viol d'Orchestre, and Vox Angelica. At Averham and Hucknall there were Oboe and Cornopean stops. Averham had a Trumpet on the Great. Sometimes there were mixtures and 2' stops in the original build, or such stops were added later. On his organs Binns used octave and sub-octave couplers, such as Swell Octave to Great, to give the impression of upper work. Essentially all three organs had similar tonal qualities which were recognisable as a "Binns sound". Tubular Pneumatic action had been used for the key action and the draw stops, with integrated consoles, for all three instruments - still the case at Averham and Wellow.

NDSO members made an early start to arrive at Averham for 9 am.

One of the oldest churches in Nottinghamshire, it stands by a fast flowing River Trent. It has a high painted roof with a spacious nave and chancel, especially for a church in a small village. We were welcomed by Martin Cooper who had overseen the restoration of the tower and the organ. Martin gave a short talk about the history of the instrument and its pumping system. He also provided us with a welcome warm drink and biscuits!

The bellows can be pumped using a hydraulic piston. We saw the system working directly and on a screen. Mice had been eating the bellows of the hydraulics so pumping was switched to an electric blower. There are possibly only three remaining water pumped organs in the whole country.

A number of members played, led by our president Ian Watts, and demonstrated some of its possibilities. The sound was well balanced in the building and didn't overwhelm it.

Members moved on to Wellow, where we entered the church yard through the pub car park! This was a much smaller building, and the smallest of the three organs. There were no reeds and only a Bourdon 16' and Flute 8' on the pedals. A feature at both Averham and Wellow was the organ bench. The feet spanned the pedal board, but the seat was shortened to allow for a step at one end to help the organist get onto the seat. Members again demonstrated the various sounds that were possible on this instrument. At Averham and Wellow the organs spoke only across the chancel as there were no openings in the walls into the nave. Wellow, particularly, sounded much quieter "down the nave". Both had foot operated composition pedals.

Lunch at the aforementioned pub allowed members to build up their stamina for the drive to Hucknall. Here there was an audience of members and friends of the church, along with refreshments, including cakes!

Trinity Methodist Church (now called Central Methodist) was originally a typical Victorian non-conformist building – quite high and with a gallery right round the church. The organ was built in 1930 in a chamber off the gallery. It had two Open Diapasons on the great and an acoustic 32' on the pedal. About 1988 this church was demolished and a new church was built on the same site. This is lower in height without a gallery. An alcove was built at ground level for the organ, which was rebuilt by M.C. Thompson. The 32' and No 1 diapason were removed; some upper work was added; and the number of couplers reduced. A moveable console replaced the integrated one. This was developed from an old cinema organ console. Stop tabs replaced draw stops. The keys are slightly narrower than standard, and the action was converted to electric, which is extremely light to the touch. Everyone who played commented on these last two features, as they raised a number of problems for players. The largest organ of the three instruments, it has been toned down. As members played, and listened to each other, it was clear that at full-organ it was still probably too loud for the building. However, members enjoyed



Averham's hydraulic piston

playing pieces suited to the greater choice of stops, with thumb and foot piston aids.

Our thanks go to Ian Watts and Denis Littleton for organising the day. Also to Martin Cooper (Averham), Jean Crofts (Wellow) & Stuart Walters (Hucknall).

Derek Wileman

A little more about St Giles', Sandiacre

As explained in the January issue in conjunction with Robert Pascall's report of the anniversary recital on 4th. November last, Laurence Rogers, our friend from the DDOA, had added some further comments, focussing particularly on the design of the Nigel Church organ...

“Celebrating a ‘Great Little Organ’”

The building of a brand new organ in Derbyshire is such a rare event, it certainly demands celebratory attention. Such was the case in 1977 when the Nigel Church organ was inaugurated in St Giles Church, Sandiacre. (To be fair, the town of Sandiacre, with a Nottingham post and telephone code, and sandwiched between the M1 motorway and the county border along the River Erewash, is really part of Derbyshire.) Last November the 40th Anniversary of the organ was celebrated with a special recital. It was fitting that the recitalist was David Butterworth, who, as consultant for the original project, designed the specification. It was a lovely recital, full of joy and fascinating variety.

In his programme David offered something for everyone; he began in joyous mood with *La Réjouissance* by Handel and finished with the brilliant *Toccata in F* by Widor. The Baroque credentials of the organ were beautifully articulated in the *Concerto in D minor* arranged by J S Bach from Vivaldi, constantly bubbling with energy. The ‘meat course’ came late in the programme with J S Bach's *Prelude and Fugue in B minor*. It was revealed that David had chosen to play this mighty piece from a facsimile of the original score – a very brave choice indeed, considering all those swirling hand-written semiquavers, but his crisp and incisive performance was full of integrity. A personal favourite of mine was the *Sonata in D* by Bach's son, Carl Philip Emmanuel. This piece of chamber music was full of invention with charming interplay between the Rückpositiv and Great with softer stops. Balancing the classical items were contemporary pieces by Petr Eben, Julien Bret and Guy Bovet, more demanding on the listener but demonstrating the amazing versatility of this two-manuals and pedals, ten-stop organ. Yes, only ten stops! How can such sparse resources sustain the variety of sparkling Vivaldi, the thundering Widor pedal line, or the full-bodied Bach prelude?

The answer lies in a happy combination of several factors; clear acoustic, gallery location, pipe voicing, but crucially, the specification. Browsing the stop list you might be surprised to see only three 8-foot flue stops, as many as three independent pedal stops and two substantial reeds. No doubt the use of wooden resonators for the 16-foot Fagot allows it to provide gravitas without domination. And then a masterstroke is to place the whole Great in a Swell box! Being immediately behind the facade pipes, the shutters are extremely effective in modifying the brightness of the pipes as well as the overall volume, and, as such, contribute greater tonal variety. The ingenious specification, no doubt, was borne out of David's painstaking research behind his designs for the Marcussen instruments at Clifton and St Mary's, Nottingham, just a few years earlier. He knew exactly how to get a lot out of a little.

This unusually bold organ project needed strength in several aspects to come to fruition. The church was clearly fortunate in finding a winning combination of expert consultant, clergy advocate, quality builder and generous donors. The choice of Nigel Church as the builder came at a time when, as a young company, he was rapidly earning a reputation for exciting instruments of excellent quality. In the previous year, to high acclaim, he completed a larger instrument designed by David Butterworth for Hucknall Parish Church. Although Nigel Church dissolved his business in 2000, his legacy lives on as was witnessed by the Sandiacre celebration. In our area, it is not alone, there being instruments in English Martyrs Church (Alvaston), Christ Church (Chilwell) and Trent College (Long Eaton). Nationally the company certainly earned its place in UK organ history, being credited with a significant contribution (The National Pipe Organ Register cites 109 instruments) to the spread of the so-called *Organ Reform Movement* in this country, promoting mechanical instruments voiced in the neo-Baroque

style and often featuring modernist architectural design and casework. The stunning design at Sandiacre with a Rückpositiv perched on the balcony edge is a fine example of a ‘great little organ’ which certainly deserves to be wished “Happy Anniversary”!

Laurence Rogers

The Rector of St Giles, Fr. Olaf Trelenberg, is a keen and knowledgeable musician, and will be delighted to admit anyone to the organ by arrangement. Telephone number from the Editor.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

It does not surprise me that Stanley Monkhouse’s letter to the Church Times was not published (please refer to Stanley’s letter on page 12 in the January issue of Soundboard). He evidently wrote this letter in response to an article urging churches to use worship bands as a way to entice young people to come to church. The key sentence in Stanley’s letter is: “a well-run choir is the best recruitment tool for getting young people to church”. This is based on Stanley’s many years’ experience in the church. I agree with Stanley that there can be many benefits from choir membership, i.e. discipline, companionship, self-esteem. Nowadays, though, young people do not think it is ‘cool’ to sing in a choir be it secular or sacred.

We are all aware that church attendance in the UK has been in serious decline for many years. This is of great concern to all denominations. By listening to advice from top digital experts at the Vatican, Roman Catholics hope to learn new ideas of how to retrieve the millennials who have been leaving their church in droves. What are churches in the UK doing to attract people, especially the young, to come to church? Messy Church has gained wide acceptance in many churches and some cathedrals. It basically is a substitute for Sunday School (which has vanished in many churches). Some churches are offering a rock mass to worshippers. A church in Ipswich, where I live, offers free breakfasts to people when they walk through the door on a Sunday morning!



Courtesy of Church Times

Many churches have a worship band leading services. Clergy and congregations sincerely feel that the worship band adds to the worship experience; they also feel that young people are attracted to a church which has a worship band. Worship bands are found in all kinds of churches – evangelical, charismatic, middle of the road, etc. Why have worship bands become so popular? What is their appeal?

If one listens carefully to the selection of music that worship bands usually play, the style is very similar to the music people hear when they go shopping, eat out or go to the dentist’s surgery. Because of this churches argue that people feel at home when they enter a church where worship songs are sung/played. Informality is the norm in society these days and the fact that the worship band is casually dressed makes newcomers feel at ease because they too are casually dressed. Clergy have felt under pressure to liven up their services and make them more ‘relevant’. In the Church of England bishops have their own ways of putting pressure on vicars to become more modern in communicating the gospel.

What is the purpose of Christian worship? I feel it is to bring us into God’s presence: to sense His transcendence and immanence. This is achieved as we pray, listen to scripture, hear a sermon and engage with music. Most of us enter a church with much on our minds; we are overstimulated. An interesting statistic recently caught my attention. The average person touches, swipes or taps his/her

phone 2617 times/day. We need to unwind! An atmosphere of calm inside a church can greatly assist us in getting into the right frame of mind for worship. My experience of worship bands is that the music chosen lacks melodic interest and is very repetitive. Because we are made in the image of God, our hearts hunger for beauty in music.

Going back to Stanley Monkhouse's point about encouraging the young to sing in a choir, the question needs to be asked: what can be done to reinvigorate an interest in choral singing in UK churches? I feel that we must look to the Royal School of Church Music for leadership. A musical high point for me in recent years was attending the RSCM Summer School in Canterbury in 2008. Bob Chilcott, the composer, played an active role. We sang a number of his compositions. What I liked about Bob was his warmth and his solid musicianship. It was fun and highly motivating to sing when Bob was conducting. His particular blend of personal qualities are what young people would positively respond to in a church choir. I wish Bob could be cloned!

The RSCM has a network of local committees which organise events that bring choristers together for different events, e.g. singing evensong, participating in a choral workshop, etc. With the enormous challenges that churches are facing these days, I feel it is an urgent priority for the executive committee at the national level of the RSCM to allocate more resources to strengthening existing local committees and setting up new ones. [*Something along these lines is in progress at this time – Ed.*] From my reading of the Church Music Quarterly, the RSCM's finances are in better shape than they were a few years ago. Is there someone in NDSO with energy, creative flair and credibility as a church musician who would be prepared to stand for election to RSCM's Executive Committee? Fresh thinking is long overdue for reinvigorating choirs.

Juliette Adams

FOR YOUR LIBRARY

Our member Dr John Whittle has for sale two excellent organ books as follows:

Bicknell – *The History of the English Organ*. Cambridge University Press, 1996.

Hardback, no dust wrapper. Mint condition, never opened. £30

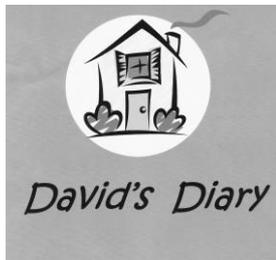
Elvin – *Pipes and Actions, Some Organs in the Midlands and Beyond*, 1995

Hardback including dust wrapper. Mint condition, never opened. £30

These prices compare very favourably with alternatives seen on Amazon.

John's telephone number, for enquiries regarding these books only, is 0115 9228433.





It's amazing how easily one can let opportunities slip under one's nose. I am a prime culprit, I know, whilst others around me (not least members of the N.D.S.O.) think nothing of jaunting off to London for Sunday Mass, or up to the Settle-Carlisle railway for a return trip through glorious scenery to nowhere, or just enjoying one of a myriad of excellent local performances available year-round in our own city centre. Indeed, contributions to this very issue of Soundboard indicate a healthy outlook (literally) in some quarters. DSB please note. Anyway, as I write this in early May, I feel I might have gone a little way towards redressing the balance; at any rate the promises are in place, and I certainly feel this should not be the end of it!

On 27 April, 20 members of B.I.O.S. (N.D.S.O. members Peter Horne, Chris Gray and self included), attended a highly informative and enjoyable seminar at the workshops of Messrs. Goetze & Gwynn at Welbeck. The topic of the day was the restoration-in-progress of an anonymous eighteenth-century chamber organ which had recently been purchased by the Horniman Museum from the (sadly) broken up Finchcocks Collection. Dominic Gwynn first offered the practical organ-builder's perspective with a typically digestible balance of near certainties and informed suppositions. After a sumptuous lunch – incidentally provided for us by the Heritage Lottery Fund – Mimi Waitzman told us all about the Horniman Museum, the musical instruments department of which she is the Deputy Keeper. I think I had heard of it, but I had certainly not visited. Have you been? Have you even heard of it? Well, it's certainly on my 'to-do' list now. Situated in Forest Hill (SE23), Horniman Museum and Gardens offer amongst other things, a special 'Sunken Garden', a Café, a Farmers' Market and a Butterfly House. The Museum itself was founded as long ago as 1901, and majors on displays of all Frederick John Horniman's pet interests, including anthropology, natural history, taxidermy (if you like that sort of thing), musical instruments and a torture chair, the total amounting to more than 350,000 exhibits. Notwithstanding the erection of an additional building in 1911, a

further extension was added in 2002, so they must be ticking a lot of the right boxes. The music gallery is on the Lower Ground Floor, and houses the largest display of its kind in the British Isles. Admission is free!

Now let's come a little nearer home – and here I make no apologies for 'banging on' about this – Southwell Minster. This week, I had the pleasure of attending Choral Evensong on two consecutive nights, at Southwell and Lincoln. The Southwell Choir routinely operates on a minimal basis of 12 boys and 6 lay clerks (like Chichester and one or two others), and that was precisely the number on this occasion. By now, Paul P. will know his way around Southwell in the dark, but anyone who has done it will tell you that taking over someone else's choir is no mean challenge, never easy, and fraught with the unexpected. From what I heard on Thursday, it is clear that things are moving very much in the right direction. The Radcliffe Responses, Psalm 18 and Daniel Purcell in E minor were climaxed by a wonderfully spirited performance of Peter Phillips's tricky '*Surgens Jesus.*' This motet just oozes 'Phillips' (cf. *Cantantibus organis* and *Ascendit Deus*), and its full ingenuity and glory were superbly painted by the Minster choir. Then on to Lincoln on the Friday. The scenario here is substantially different. The girls' and boys' choirs share duties on a more or less 50:50 basis, and on this occasion it was boys and men. Numbering respectively 18 and 12, one is looking at an altogether bigger resource in a bigger building. Lincoln – like Liverpool Anglican – is noted for its very wide choir (architecturally speaking) which is potentially unhelpful to the singers, and could present real problems for a small group. No issues here, however, where co-ordination was always spot-on, and the climaxes spine-tingling. The fare for the day was the Clucas setting of the Responses, Psalms 46 and 47, and Purcell in G minor. But the motet capped it all – *Ave Maria* by Robert Parsons. Having been informed by the Sub-Dean in his announcement that Parsons died after having swallowed half the River Trent at Newark, we entered a world apart – of sublime harmony, gently weaving counterpoint and a continuous, seamless, experience of sheer beauty. Southwell and Lincoln both massively deserve our full support. They are easily accessible!

John Berry: My Life and Interest in Music



I was fortunate to have been born into a musical family. My grandfather was a violinist and professional piano tuner and gun dealer (quite a combination!), and my father Cecil Victor Berry was an HonRAM FRCO LRAM and ran our family music business in Worksop, Nottinghamshire, besides having many private pupils for piano, violin and viola. He played the viola in the local North Notts Symphony Orchestra and conducted it at times. He served as a church organist at Worksop Priory and then for many years (70) at St Mary's RC, Worksop. He was awarded the Papal *Bene Merenti* Gold medal for services to the Church. He was a tremendous influence on me. I

admired him enormously and with good reason. He retired to Eastwood in his 90s, to stay with me and keep an eye on me at the Presbytery, he used to count the church collection, still teach me the organ, (his ability to spot mistakes was remarkable: in an excruciating piece by Messiaen we were working through, he once reminded me that the second tenor part in a cluster of some 10 notes should be G double sharp and not just G sharp...). We often played piano and violin duets together (Beethoven, Mozart, Elgar and Grieg). Only two weeks before he died at the age of 93, he played the organ here for a parishioner's funeral. We remember his stories – how he, as a corporal, was reduced to the ranks for letting a prominent Irish political prisoner escape from Spike Island, Co. Cork and was sent on a draft to Egypt but was rescued at the last moment by the Bandmaster was asked him what he played – 'Piano, violin and organ', said my dad. 'No use to us...Can you play the fife?' asked the Bandmaster. 'Never played one in my life' said my dad, 'Here's one...pretend to play!' said the bandmaster. And for the next four years, according to my dad, he won the First World War practising the fife in the regimental band for the victory march. And then his quick wittedness for getting out of trouble – once he let slip that those were 'the happiest days of his life'...to which my mother said 'What's that!'. 'Oh', he said, 'before I met you, my dear!' And as we, my mother, father, grandmother and sister and brother all 'lived over the shop', we were immersed in music of all sorts from the start. I loved to try all kinds of different instruments. (My mother, who was Belgian, used to say 'Never marry a musician!', when things got somewhat stressful).

Education

My father never forced any of us to learn an instrument, but I remember him starting me off on the piano and violin at the age of 5, though I must admit I only really 'caught the bug' in my late teens. It was hearing him play Bach's *Tocatta and Fugue in D minor* that inspired me to want to learn to play the organ and to play that piece. I must have been keen because when I went in 1948 to Oscott College, Birmingham, to train for the priesthood, they elected me organ student for the next six years. There we had a wonderful three manual and pedal pipe organ that originated from the days of Cardinal Newman. It was from same college chapel that Newman preached his famous 'Second Spring' sermon to the assembled Hierarchy of England and Wales. The place itself was an inspiration as were the lecturers, among them Dr H Francis Davis (a Newman authority) and Fr Joseph Connelly, a brilliant and gifted musician, who gave me organ lessons. It was thanks to the recommendation of these two scholars that my bishop sent me to Cambridge after my ordination as a priest in 1954 to read Music. However at the very last moment he asked me to add French and Latin to the list! He needed another schoolmaster at his diocesan college at Tollerton Hall, Nottingham and the lot fell on me. I suppose the Bishop was right: Music on its own was a bit of a luxury, he felt, and French and Latin with Music made me more versatile as a teacher, and helped pay the rent.

To regress, there is a story going round that I was never properly ordained. The Archbishop of Birmingham was ordaining my classmates at the Oscott college chapel; there was no one else to play the organ except myself, so, rumour has it, the Archbishop waved his hand towards the organ loft at the crucial moment and so ordained me from the East end as I was seated at the organ in the West end gallery. And some days later the Bishop of Nottingham had to make good the deficiency and ordain me properly again in Nottingham Cathedral.

Training

Cambridge was a marvellous experience. I was recommended to approach Dr George Guest of St John's College to take me on as an organ pupil: he wasn't able to at the time so he suggested I contacted Dr Boris Ord at King's College who agreed to accept me. He was kindness itself. Apparently I was the first Catholic priest he had had as an organ pupil. I owe him a great deal. He also tried to get me to pack up French and Latin and read Music full time instead. A pity I didn't take his advice – I was obedient to my Bishop in those days and after all he was paying for me to be there. However it was thanks to Dr Ord and to my father that I did manage to pass the ARCO and CHM diplomas. The President of the RCO commented when I received my diplomas that it was good to know that, and I quote, 'even the clergy can do these things...!' And some time later, thanks to a correspondence course with James Stevens, I did manage to pass the FRCO paperwork at the first attempt. I'm still dreaming about the rest...Prior to that I was awarded the Church Music Association (CMA) Certificates in Organ Playing and Choir Training and remember the examiner well. He was Henry Washington and the venue, The Brompton Little Oratory. I also attended the Society of St Gregory summer schools and passed their SSG Diploma in Plainsong, the examiners being Dom Aldelm Dean of Quarr Abbey and Mother Margaret. I also did a course at the RSCM at Addington Palace with the late Dr Gerald Knight and it was thanks to him and to Dr George Guest (the visiting professor) and his staff that I managed, along with fellow candidates David Butterworth (then a young brilliant FRCO organ scholar) and Harold Bebbington (past President of the NDSO) to obtain the RCO's CHM Choirmaster's diploma. Dr Knight wrote me a lovely letter afterwards about how well 'I fitted in with his society....' I remember also meeting there a young brilliant pupil, Gillian Weir (later Dame Gillian Weir).

I also rowed for Downing College six days a week, mainly because if you got into the first two boats, they trained you on fillet steak and Flowers bitter! I remember giving an organ recital in Downing chapel with hands sore and calloused from all that rowing!

I think the examiners must have been very charitable to grant me my BA(Hons) and later my MA degree, which in those enlightened days, cost me a fiver, and a dinner with the dons at Downing College.

Teaching

Teaching Music, French and Latin was a wonderful experience. We managed to get a school orchestra started with the help of a number of staff members who joined in as double bass, cello and trombone players. Also a choir of men and boys, and we even managed to perform Britten's *Missa Brevis in D* for boys' voices shortly after its publication in 1959. Britten wrote it for George Malcolm's boys at Westminster Cathedral. It was one of the most popular pieces with the boys we ever did. They even asked for copies and recordings of it. We also, thanks to Peter Smedley, Cathedral organist and former President of NDSO, a lifelong friend, sang Carols and performed at other times in the Cathedral and for various Diocesan events.

Parishes

After years at Tollerton, in 1966 I was let loose on the parish. First at Leicester for one year as second curate, where I met some wonderful people (Nuala, my colleague and her husband George among them) and where I learnt that there was more in life than French irregular verbs. Then as parish priest at St Mary's Brigg (where I composed a Mass on *Brigg Fair* – (shades of Delius!) and installed a Walker organ (and got Dr Francis Jackson of York Minster, and my father to give the two opening recitals). I remember also playing the organ part in Albinoni-Giazotto's *Adagio for organ and strings* at a concert in the church and also for Radio Humberside the organ part in Mozart's *Coronation Mass*, which we performed with the Brigg Girls' Grammar School chorus and orchestra from some public hall in

Scunthorpe. There was an interval in between and a generous bar staff – I have only vague recollections of the second half of the concert: the conductor (who was also my organist) took it a breakneck speed, a miracle we all kept up with him and kept together! Quite an exhilarating experience.

Afterwards the Bishop appointed me to the large parish of the Good Shepherd, Woodthorpe, Nottingham in 1974. There we managed to enlarge the Walker organ and to get Dr Francis Jackson again to give the opening recital in the presence of the Bishop. We were fortunate to have a newly formed choir in that splendid modern church (a Grade II* listed building) and a regular congregation of some 2,000.

In 1980 I came here to Our Lady of Good Counsel, Eastwood and again, thanks to Peter Smedley who discovered the Peter Conacher organ for me in Groves workshop, had it installed here and later upgraded by Jonathan Wallace in 1994. A truly heroic instrument, with trumpets at 16, 8 and 4 on Great and Pedals, a 16' Contra Oboe on the Swell (which we got from the HN&B organ in St Mary's Derby), not to mention the 'Berry' Mixture of three ranks which Jonathan designed and installed as a surprise and much appreciated gift.

Diocesan work

For virtually all of my 64 years as a priest, I have been involved in music both at parish and at diocesan level. At the invitation of Canon Colin Mitchell LRAM, I became a member of the Nottingham Diocesan Liturgical Commission and for some 30 years succeeded him as Convenor of the Music department. I was fortunate in securing the services of some excellent professional and experienced musicians and we were able to run Choir workshops both locally and in other parishes. From these developed our annual Choir Festivals and I am very grateful to NDSO members, Paul Hale, Kendrick Partington, David Butterworth, Peter Smedley, and others who came to adjudicate and help us with their expertise. These gave birth in turn to the Diocesan Choir, but almost by accident. As a diocesan music adviser along with Peter Smedley, and as a member of the SSG Organ Advisory Group with Dr John Rowntree, and for some years as a RSCM representative, I have advised on the installation of some 75 organs in Catholic and other churches. I am grateful to these priests and people who have generously given Music the priority it deserves in our worship.

When the Cathedral was closed in the 80s for major refurbishment, we had to celebrate the big annual Chrism Mass when the whole Diocese, Bishop, Clergy and People come together, in Clifton instead of the Cathedral, and I was asked to provide a scratch 'clergy choir' for the occasion. Miracles I can usually perform at one day's notice, the impossible may take a little longer! So it proved with this would-be clergy choir. We did secure a few brave clerics but to strengthen them I brought in our Eastwood choir and as we were batting on another's wicket, invited the Clifton choir to join us. It was a successful combination and this occasion gave birth to the Diocesan Choir which was used for many years for major events in the Cathedral. It also helped indirectly with music at parish level, and still survives, thanks to Alex Patterson's talented and inspirational support at the Cathedral.

Organist

As a priest, only rarely have I been able to play the organ for services. But some of the occasions have been memorable. When I was at Brigg, with no organist and only a harmonium at first in what was a splendid new building, I used to play the entry hymn and then the final one. It meant a quick dash up to the organ loft in full vestments. The local press got hold of this... "PRIEST LEADS HECTIC LIFE".... read the headlines in one issue.

And then there was the Diocesan Pilgrimage to the Holy Land in 1974. We were to have a Bishop's Mass at 4.00pm in St Catherine's Church in Bethlehem; at about 3.45 we were still hurtling across the Judean desert in an Arab charabanc. Dashing up to the organ gallery with about a minute to go, I asked the Franciscan brother about the organ. He switched it on and over the gallery (which was at the front of the church) in neon lights blazed the words *Gloria in excelsis Deo*. With no chance to try the organ – the Bishop's procession was about to start, - I asked him whether the combination pistons worked (it was an Italian job). 'My father', he said in broken English 'do not touch my combinations – they are all of a twist...'

And of course, there was the memorable occasion when I used to spend August, while still an undergraduate at Cambridge, supplying for a parish priest in Poissy on the outskirts of Paris. There they had in this marvellous basilica a wonderful Cavaille-Coll organ on which I used to practice. On one occasion, I was asked to conduct a wedding. The bride and groom were both from the Paris Opera, she a French soprano and he an Italian tenor from the chorus line and with the celebrant an Englishman, it was a good example of *entente cordiale*. They had some of their friends from the Opera orchestra to play for them, along with the old, retired organist of the Madeleine. The wedding went well until at the end when we were in the sacristy signing the register, the Swiss verger said to me: 'Monsieur l'abbé, we have a big problem...the old organist has had to leave, he's got water works problems...could you play the wedding march?.' Now in France the wedding march is Widor's *Toccata*. All brides want that, you see. So, they kindly gave me time to climb up the 100 feet to the organ loft, and I launched into the *Toccata*. Fortunately the orchestral players had stayed behind and turned the pages for me and at the end gave me a 'Bravo, Monsieur l'abbé!' and invited me to join them in the local hostelry where we found the old Madeleine organist happily installed. It was only about five hours later, having drunk numerous toasts to the happy couple, to the Queen of England and to all and sundry that we staggered out. It convinced me that it was a good thing to be both a priest and an organist! Especially when later the couple sent me a thank-you card with 6 free tickets to the Opera and a bottle of champagne. Later along with five local curates we all had a great evening watching Wagner's *Lohengrin* at the Paris Opera and in a box all to ourselves. Some years later, the BBC on Radio 4 did a programme on *Soul Music* featuring Widor's *Toccata*, for which they asked me to go to Birmingham to record this incident for them. Another memorable occasion, for which I came away better to the tune of £50.00.

Postscript

Finally, I always love to attend organ recitals and concerts whenever my work as a priest allows me. I've heard some remarkable recitals from NDSO members and others and I always feel uplifted and go away feeling I need to do at least some 10 hours' practice, if not more! And when I do practise, often late at night on our splendid organ here, I was often accompanied by Wilma, my late cat. She would sit on the organ stool next to me until she decided that what I was playing was more than any woman could stand, and she had ways of telling me it was time to pack up, go home, feed her and let her out. If she could not attract my attention, she would stand on her hind legs and push in the drawstops. If that failed, she would leap onto the top manual and just lay there! And her musical tastes were suspect – she definitely preferred Mendelssohn to Bach.

It has also been a great honour and joy to me to have been elected as your erstwhile chaplain and that has been an added bonus to my life and interest in Music.

JEJ Berry

The London Organ Day



This year's London Organ Day took place at the Catholic church of Notre Dame de France on March 3rd.

The church is unusual in being circular, its original purpose was not religious, it traded as Burford's Panorama and was a tourist attraction built in the early 1800s. The panorama was among the most popular of visual spectacles from the early 1790s through most of the next century. A panorama was a large painting hung on the inside of a specially built circular building. Viewers paid an entrance fee to see it, entering by way of a tunnel and staircase into the centre of the circle, where they could see the painting that surrounded them on all sides, around 360 degrees. The panorama could depict landscapes, city views and even battles, the panorama made the viewer feel as though they were actually there.

In 1861, Cardinal Wiseman, Archbishop of Westminster, asked the Marist Fathers to establish a

mission to support the large French community in the area, and placed Father Charles Faure in charge of the project. In March 1865, Father Faure purchased the former Burford's Panorama, a circular building off Leicester Square. The French architect Louis-Auguste Boileau, an early promoter of cast iron architecture, was employed to convert the building into a church. He retained the rotunda, hence the circular shape of the present building.

The organ was installed in 1868 by August Gern, it was his first organ after leaving the employment of Cavallé-Coll. It was a two manual instrument with 24 speaking stops. In 1938 it was rebuilt and enlarged to three manuals by J. W. Walker & Sons. During World War Two the building was bombed and the organ was removed and stored by Walker's, who in 1955 built an organ incorporating only a few of the Gern ranks. In 1986-7 the organ was overhauled, tonally reconstructed and enlarged by B. C. Shepherd & Son of Edgware. The original Gern stops were identified and other second-hand French stops were added, including some by Cavallé-Coll. Other stops were replaced by better secondhand ranks, and tonal additions were made to all departments including 32ft flue and reed stops, and an en chamade reed. In 2010 the console was refurbished and rewired, new solid state switching was fitted for the coupling action. Several extended mutations were added to the Positif and Pedale and extra couplers and pistons were added.

The organ now has 67 speaking stops (Grand-orgue 15, Positif expressif 14, Récit expressif 14, Bombarde 4 (floating division), Pedale 20. Wind pressures vary between 3½" on the Positif to 5³/₈" on Bombarde and Pedale.

The day started with an introduction to the organ by Duncan Middleton, the titulaire, who demonstrated the various families of stops. This was followed by a recital given by William Whitehead. He started by playing 4 of the 24 Pieces by André Fleury, I've never come across these before and seem quite accessible, I must get hold of a copy. The recital also included the Franck Chorale in B minor, a chorale prelude from the Orgelbüchlein project (of which more later) and the final from Widor's 6th symphony.

A masterclass on improvisation led by Gerard Brooks followed, with 2 students from the Birmingham Conservatoire.

After lunch Tom Bell and Jonathan Allsopp delivered a lecture recital "Sonic colourscape – investigating Olivier Messiaen's organ". This was interesting in that the theory behind the typically Messiaen sounds was explained, but I'm afraid I think Messiaen is a marmite composer.

Alan Thurlow gave a talk on the ON organ fund. This fund was founded by an anonymous donor in 1984 and has given £325,000 in grants to 830 churches. The Fund exists specifically to give financial support towards the installation, renewal, rebuilding, improvement, maintenance, preservation and restoration of pipe organs, including the making of contributions to any fund or collection established for the purposes of acquiring or purchasing a pipe organ.

The Trust Deed gives the Trustees the power to make grants to any church situated in the British Isles. The Fund is fully ecumenical and the Trustees accept applications from churches (which includes cathedrals and chapels) of any denomination. There is no heritage or other requirement in relation to the instrument except that it must be a pipe organ in a church in the British Isles. The Trustees do not make grants towards electronic or hybrid (part pipe and part electronic) instruments.

If you know of a church looking to raise funds for work on a pipe organ have a look at www.onorganfund.org.uk.

Tom Daggett the Organ Outreach Fellow of St. Paul's Cathedral gave a short talk on an initiative aimed at introducing the organ to state school pupils.

The day ended with a recital by Thomas Ospital, the titulaire of St. Eustache in Paris. The recital included works by Messiaen, Fauré, Debussy, Alain and Ospital (from the Orgelbüchlein project), ending with an improvisation, which was loud, and no doubt, technically brilliant, but ...

You will have noticed a couple of references to the Orgelbüchlein project (www.orgelbuechlein.co.uk). The Orgelbüchlein Project is a major international composition project to complete J S Bach's Orgelbüchlein (Little Organ Book). It is curated by William Whitehead.

The manuscript of Orgelbüchlein has 118 missing pieces, ghostly gaps with only the title penned by Bach. Each of these gaps will be filled by a new composition based on Bach's intended melody. The new pieces, written by the most interesting composers at work today, will survey a range of modern styles. Whilst this seems quite a laudable idea, without exception, all of the new chorales seem to have forgotten to include the tune, which is no doubt a philistine observation, but ...

Despite my reservations it was an interesting day and well worth going to.

Denis Littleton

A New York Minute (Well ... Hour)



Retirement from Imperial Tobacco has released time for me to enjoy my music, however music itself has now become a full time job in juggling various choirs, church music, my tribute band The Kinx, NDSO duties, music lessons, various school music and of course all the work that goes behind all of it as many of you know only too well. My dear wife Celine has to put up with far too much however she does a great job and in an attempt to repay only a fraction of what she puts up with I decided to take her on a nice February trip shopping and relaxing away from the children to New York; four nights in a hotel in the centre of Manhattan doing just what SHE wants to do for a change. It was therefore just a bit tough when I suggested I follow up a tip from a fellow NDSO member and visit St Thomas Church of Fifth Avenue at Fifty-Third Street to review Festal Evensong on the Thursday evening! "Working again? "It's just for an hour darling!" Nevertheless she agreed and so we took a walk the few blocks up Fifth Avenue from our hotel to find the church.

The French Gothic Revival style building of St Thomas looked absolutely stunning nestled in the dwindling evening light among all of those modern skyscrapers; it would have once been the tallest of buildings in the area but is now simply dwarfed by its neighbours; perhaps in height but certainly not in beauty. Entering the building was no less impressive, once past the lobby the building opened up to be vast with a stunning focal point of impressive and intricate stonework at the High Altar. It wasn't too long before my eyes were drawn to the two wooden case fronts of the chancel organ with pipes looking brand new and very shiny! The service (Evensong on the Eve of Candlemas) started with a procession of choir, clergy lead by Englishman The Reverend Canon Carl F. Turner (ex Exeter Cathedral) and of course their new (as of September 2016) Director of Music, (ex Magdalen College, Oxford) Daniel Hyde; the processional prelude was the sullen but gorgeous 'I Am Black But Comely'

from the *Vêpres du Commun des Fêtes de la Sainte-Vierge*, (opus 18) of Marcel Dupré being played by Assistant Organist and fellow UK born Julliard Graduate Ben Sheen. Something seemed suspect with the organ sound but I couldn't quite tell yet. The choir led the Introit (John Amner) and Responses (Philip Radcliffe) to settings I was unfamiliar with but immediately the quality of the 15 boys and 14 men was on show with absolute perfect intonation and a wonderful clarity. Two Psalms (114 and 122) were then sung in Anglican Chant by Eden, Atkins, followed by the first of two congregational hymns both of which were perfect for the church calendar but I have to admit were totally unfamiliar to me, but a bit of sight-reading got me through! The first hymn was *Virgin Born, We Bow Before Thee* (Reginal Heber) to the tune Psalm 86 (Claude Goudimel), the second was *O Zion, Open Wide* (John Baptiste de Sanueüil) to the tune Edmonton from *Harmonica Sacra*. Following the *Mag and Nunc* (Thomas Weelkes) came the Anthem which was an Antiphon to the Magnificat First Vespers, Purification of the Blessed Virgin Mary by Tomàs Luis de Victoria sang in Latin of course which was both outstanding and moving in it's delivery. The second hymn lead us to the recession and outgoing Voluntary *How Fair and Pleasant art Thou* also from the *Vêpres du Commun des Fêtes de la Sainte-Vierge*, (opus 18) of Marcel Dupré and serving to bookend the service in a lovely way.

It had become apparent during the service that the organ sound was not coming from the new looking instrument each side of the chancel but something digital, I had noticed two speaker stacks camouflaged behind sandstone coloured cloth either side of the high altar. A walk around the church following communion quickly solved the mystery with the sight of a 3 manual Hauptwerk console built by the Ortloff Organ Company of Brookline, Massachusetts flanked with its two touch screens and tucked in behind a new looking 4 manual console obviously belonging to the chancel organ. Interesting to learn from their website that it was loaded with the Salisbury Cathedral Willis sample set; a long way to travel to hear this UK sound! It seems that this is a very exciting time for music and liturgy at St Thomas as further investigation led me to discover that not only do they have a relatively new Rector and Director of Music but also, after many years of preparation and fund raising the church has had a brand new Dobson of Iowa organ built in the original case work of the previous instrument on the vision of Daniel's predecessor John Scott LVO (1956-2015).

This new instrument is called the 'Miller-Scott organ' is complete but is currently being voiced with its 7052 pipes ready to be tuned and adjusted. According to the detail in the church it will soon become one of the finest, most significant organs in the United States. The scaffolding which was being apologised for in the information panels had gone showing the beauty of the instrument visually but unfortunately I could not hear it as it must be on the very pinnacle of being ready! Maybe another NY trip is required soon to experience the instrument properly. Above the doorway into the church in a gallery resides the St Thomas' second beautiful looking organ in the form of a 3 manual Taylor and Boody of Staunton Virginia; named the 'Loening-Hancock organ' built in the Dutch style with its white oak, navy blue velvet lined case doors splayed open like the wings of a very large USA angel. I was unfortunately unable to meet with Daniel Hyde afterwards but if I had I would have congratulated him on the very fine choir and high quality of music used in their liturgical life and experienced wonderfully that evening. Well-done Daniel on what certainly sounds like a successful first year and a half in your new post. My wife Celine's review: "very beautiful... but it all sounds the same to me!" Now to make it up to her...some New York cocktails and a bit more shoe shopping perhaps?!?

Ian Watts



COUPLER... TWO VACANCIES FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION

All Saints Aston seeks an organist/choir director

All Saints Aston is a beautiful medieval church with a strong musical tradition and a vibrant ministry to our parish. Our RSCM affiliated, SATB choir sings for Sunday services, 3 mornings and 1 evening per month. Our organ (installed 2002) is in good order. We have good relationships with our church school, and scope to develop links with them musically.

We are looking for someone to play for Sunday morning services . We offer a supportive context for a flexible musician who will enjoy playing for All Age Worship as well as Common Worship Holy Communion services and monthly Choral Evensong. Around 25 funerals/ 25 weddings per year offer the opportunity for fee income. We are open to the possibility of splitting the organist/choir director aspects of the role - we'd like to hear from people who might lead the choir, but aren't organists.

Our church is situated just off the A57, 2 minutes from J.31 of M1 / J.3 of M18. Remuneration of £5500 - £6000 comprising honorarium of £2500 plus £3000 - £3500 fees.

For an informal conversation, ring the Rector, Revd. Frances Eccleston, 0114 287 3780 or email f.m.eccleston@gmail.com.

[The above position comes complete with an Eminent DCS organ with an adjustable Sesquialtera. Full specification available from the Editor]

Parish of Clifton, Nottingham. Organist. Job description

The role of organist provides an opportunity to help build the musical life of the church so that it becomes a more beautiful and varied expression of worship. This will be through working with the choir at St. Mary's (which sings once a month), playing the organ and/or the piano at St. Mary's and occasionally at Holy Trinity with St. Francis. The right individual will recognise that there is an opportunity to promote high quality modern and traditional music.

The organist will have the opportunity to help with continuing to develop the annual music festival at St. Mary's and other regular concerts in church

Hours

All Sundays: to play the organ (or arrange it to be played) at St. Mary's. Currently service time is 10.45am. To play the organ or piano at major festivals eg Carol services, Christmas midnight mass, Christmas morning, Ash Wednesday, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, Easter eve liturgies and the quarterly 'hope and remembrance services'.

Time off: 4 Sundays a year at your expense, excluding major festivals.

The salary offered is negotiable in line with RSCM rates. Fees for funerals and weddings are paid in addition to the salary. Enhanced DBS will be required.

[A Person Specification and other additional details available from the Editor]



BRIEF NOTES AND NEWS

Congratulations to Simon Hogan and Hilary Punnett on their engagement. Useful to have an in-house page-turner (either way around.)

Congratulations, too, to our member Jack Stone, who has been awarded the combined Organ Scholarship to Tewkesbury Abbey and Dean Close School, Cheltenham. Jack will have at his disposal the two famous organs in the Abbey – the Grove Organ and the Milton Organ, along with the much acclaimed new Nicholson in the school chapel. Tewkesbury Abbey's choir school closed a few years ago, but through the munificence of a well-wisher, the Abbey's weekday programme of Choral Evensongs on Mondays, Tuesday, Thursdays and Fridays, has been fully maintained, with the boys (and possibly some of the men?) being bussed across from the school. In charge of this excellent arrangement is Simon Bell, formerly of Southwell Minster. On Sundays, too, there is an entirely separate choir under the baton of Carlton Etherington, the Abbey's Organist. A visit here is on the N.D.S.O.'s 2018 – 2019 programme.

Apologies to Ian Carter of Cousans Organs for a slip in January's 'Brief News' ... Cousans have rebuilt the organ in Market Bosworth Parish Church, not Market Harborough!

The young but already universally admired Southwell Festival is back again this year, running from 22nd to 27th August. Along with many other delights, this will be the first time that the Minster's choir organ has been featured. At 4.00 on Wednesday 22nd this will be in the form of a Bach recital, given by Paul Provost. Having only heard Paul once so far on the choir organ, playing Buxtehude, I can guarantee this is an absolute 'must'.

Our January issue updated the progress at Treenighedskirken, Esbjerg. The new Marcussen organ was officially dedicated in its not quite complete state on Palm Sunday, 25th March, complete with packed congregation and the full choir (50+) in attendance. It already sounded magnificent, albeit with much fine voicing and tuning still to be carried out during April and May. The first organ recital on the finished instrument will be by one David Butterworth on 10th June.

While (almost) on the subject, Denmark Tour members will recall stopping for an extended breather outside Århus Dom on our way to the concert hall at Ålborg. This was an unscheduled stop, so no chance to play the organs here. The main west end organ with its magnificent case was built by Daniel Carstens in 1730. The present instrument dates chiefly from 1928, with various baroque-y tinkering right up until 2001, by Frobenius. After – we are informed by the cathedral - stiff competition across four 'international' organ builders, the contract to restore the instrument, along with tonal modifications returning it to its 1928 style, has been awarded to Marcussen. The pendulum swingeth yet again, methinks. The work will cost £2 million.



Århus Cathedral Organ

The next recital at Nottingham's Albert Hall will be a return visit by Martin Setchell on 22nd July. He resides at the exciting Rieger in Christchurch Town Hall, and regularly tours.

Lunchtime organ recitals at the Masonic Hall, Nottingham this summer will be held on Thursdays at 12.15, on 14 and 28 June, and 12 and 26 July. That on the 28th June will be given by our young member Jack Stone, the remainder by David Butterworth. David will be

pleased to make a feature of request items, especially in his recital on 12 July, as specifically suggested by member Reg. Aitken. May David please have any such suggestions/requests as soon as possible? That apart, Bach will feature again, along with the music of C.H.H. Parry, this year being the anniversary of the composer's death.

Thursday lunchtime recitals, also at 12.15, continue to feature at Chesterfield Parish Church, on 24th May by Eric Singleton (Unstone) and 31st May by Nigel Gotteri (Dronfield Woodhouse.)

A vast array of Wednesday lunchtime recitals is under way at St Modwen's, Burton-on-Trent, the next being at 12.30 on 6th June, by the vicar, the Revd Prof. Stanley Monkhouse.

At 7.00 p.m. on Thursday 24th May, Tom Corfield will give a 'Cheese and Wine Recital' at St Michael's Church, Holbrook. The organ is by Adkins, but undoubtedly Tom will more than make up for that...

A series of four fortnightly Sunday afternoon concerts is being organized at Halam, entitled 'Cherish Our Churches', the aim – over and above the enjoyment of music – will be to assist in raising much needed funds for four churches with specific financial needs. Admission will be free, and there will be a retiring collection at each. Provisional dates are 2, 16, 30 September, and 14 October.

It doesn't matter what you want, however off-track it might be, someone, somewhere, will be able to oblige you – be it a new wing for an Austin 7, a wooden hay rake, or indeed a mole trap. But have you ever tried to find a stonemason? You may have a problem there at the moment ... Canterbury Cathedral is employing 26 of them full-time!

One is very sorry to learn of the closure of Tickell's Organ Company. In a short space of time, Ken Tickell developed into one of the country's finest, with an unusually healthy number of new organ contracts as well as many charming 'box' organs to be found up and down the country. Major works include Worcester Cathedral - his first (reluctant!) electric action - and of course Manchester Cathedral, which is still being finished off by ex-employees. Ken's early death was a tragedy, but he has certainly left behind a fantastic legacy of which he can be justly proud.

It is quite well known in the 'trade' that some farmers like to play their cows classical music when they are being milked. Mind you, I'm not sure what the result might be if they had to listen to too much Stockhausen. Well, anyway, the idea seems to be catching on in the animal kingdom. Madrid police now play their police dogs Mozart after an 'op', as they believe it calms them down.

Thanks for help with the pictures from Ian Watts, Kadie Kanneh, Derek Wileman, Canon John Berry, Denis Littleton and The Church Times

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