



# Soundboard

*The newsletter of the Nottingham & District Society of Organists*

Est. 1932

January 2021

## FROM THE PRESIDENT

Roger Harrison MA, ARCO, CHM, LTCL

As I contemplate a grey and wet Derbyshire day, a cancelled family Christmas, new variants of the virus, chaos at the Channel ports and gloom in every direction, it is hard to find reasons for optimism any time soon, though we can at least pin our hopes on a speedy deployment of the vaccine, and for its widespread acceptance. Some aspects of daily life may never return to the *status quo ante*. I will not, to cite a relatively trifling example, miss sitting for ages at the barber waiting my turn, when a post-lockdown exchange of texts will secure a timed slot and a swift no-nonsense haircut. I enjoy well-ventilated and obviously thoroughly cleaned public spaces and a proper awareness of the need to maintain a respectful distance from other shoppers, travellers, sightseers and (dare I say) worshippers.



Our ICT skills have surely improved beyond recognition, as we seek to keep in touch with our family and friends, and – in our sphere – to maintain our individual and social musical life via the now ubiquitous Zoom. Virtual choirs are a part of life; many of them are excellent. When I look back on the bulky recording apparatus of my youth (remember the Ferrograph Series 2?), I realise just what a blessing the iPad (or its equivalent) is, especially when recording a solitary tenor part against a backing track and electronic metronome.

Some know of my enthusiasm for the virtual organ recitals at St Michael's, Cornhill (City of London) each Monday lunchtime (maintaining a very long-standing tradition), preceded and followed by Zoom chat between regular audience members and the recitalist. Thanks largely to Ian Watts, we have now presented two of our very own "composite" recitals, which have been hugely enjoyable, and very well attended.

Amateur music making has not prospered since March, even though some organisations have made enormous efforts to get choral and instrumental rehearsals restarted with appropriate measures in place, and singers in particular have had to accept some unpalatable scientific findings concerning vectors of transmission. Church congregations simply may not sing, indoors at any rate. We organists (having duly sanitised keys, stops and pistons) may have fared better, and churches may at least provide an indoor space where live music may be heard in the course of communal worship.

By the time this reaches you, Christmas will have happened and we'll have had our fill of socially distanced, virtual and outdoor carols. The green shoots I mentioned in May are a long time coming, and the outstanding events planned for last year must remain in abeyance for now. But our Society is in excellent heart, and maybe 12 months from now we will look back on 2021 singing with the Psalmist, "Then was our mouth filled with laughter, and our tongue with joy".

*Roger Harrison*

**Breaking News!**

*See overleaf*



## FORTHCOMING EVENTS

The Society's January event will take place on the afternoon of Friday 29<sup>th</sup> – a 'live' visit to Flentrop Orgelbouw, Zaandam, Netherlands, hosted by the Managing Director Erik Winkel and their chief voicer, Dirk Koomans who is mentioned further on in the Århus article. Start time 2.00pm. Further events are in the pipeline, and will be circulated as soon as possible.

## And a message from our Hon. Treasurer ...

Thank you to all members who have sent in their voluntary subscription for 2020/2021 – about half of the full membership. We now have only four members who still have not paid their sub for 2019/2020 and I have also been able to fill in a few back gaps – very willingly done by the people concerned! Please do pay in the near future so that I can get an accurate picture of the year's finances. The more subs we collect, the more I can ask the charities commission for. We shall have to pay the IAO for all our members and I am keen to keep the gap between these two income/expenditure items as close as possible. Many thanks.

Cheques to: Richard Eaton, The Gables, Burden Lane, Shelford, Notts. NG12 1EF.  
Payable to NDSO.

Electronically:        The Nottingham and District Society of Organists  
Account No: 08442808        Sort Code: 09-01-54

Richard Eaton

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## REPORTS

### 27 September:

#### Talk on The Oxford Movement – its Effect on Choirs and Organs by Elliott Walker

*"Welcome kneelings and bowings, welcome matins and complines, welcome bell, book and candle, so that Mr Slope's dirty surplices and ceremonial Sabbaths be held in due execration!"* (Anthony Trollope: *Barchester Towers* c. 1855)

The Oxford movement, initiated by John Keble's "Assize" sermon of 1833, and the publication over the next few years of 90 "Tracts for the Times" by theologians of the stature of John Henry Newman and Edward Bouverie Pusey had (and still has) an enormous influence on all areas of the Anglican church, and by no means confined to its Tractarian or Anglo-Catholic wings. It is a huge subject of study, not least because of the path that the Church's music subsequently followed. It would be a gross oversimplification to say that, in parish churches, the west gallery tradition - immortalised by Thomas Hardy's beloved rustic instrumentalists in "Under the Greenwood Tree" gave way overnight to surpliced choirs in chancels, organs in brick-built chambers, Anglican Chant, Merbecke *et al*, but by 1900 a regular Anglican churchgoer's



*The Choristers' Schoolroom*

Sunday experience of divine worship would be very different from that of his early 19<sup>th</sup> century forebears. One example of the renewed enthusiasm for a high standard of liturgical music was the foundation of schools purely for the education of boy choristers. I can do no better than to point readers in the direction of the extremely well-researched and illustrated pages on [recordedchurchmusic.org](http://recordedchurchmusic.org) and note, for example, the existence of such a school at Clumber Park, which supplied the music for the Duke of Newcastle's impressive private chapel. I think the last two survivors of the 40 or so Tractarian schools were those of All Saints, Margaret St. W1, whose sad but inevitable closure in 1968 caused such an outcry (because the boys' sound in William Butterfield's incredible "marzipan" building was second to none), then St Michael's, Tenbury in 1985. A further example of the drive for higher musical standards was the foundation by Richard Limpus of the (Royal) College of Organists in 1864, housed initially in St Michael's, Cornhill.

## Falling demand for boy choristers

*From Mr Andrew May*

Sir, — Having recently returned to England after living abroad for some years, I have been deeply saddened to find, everywhere I look, the almost total disappearance from parish churches of the boys' choir; indeed, the virtual demise of the boy chorister as a species. In the space of only some ten or 15 years, countless flourishing and lively boys' choirs have totally vanished, to be replaced by groups of adults.

Populations have not altered enough in such a brief period to account for this fundamental change. The sorry fact appears to be that in the name of feminism, and political correctness (or simply a preference for the easy way), countless young males are now being excluded from an important role in the Church, and as a result are being lost to it for life. Already there is a tragic reduction in the supply of young choirmen, of organists, of male laity, and perhaps also of clergy.

I gained a deep love for the Church and its music as a chorister, and this has remained with me ever since. In

due course I became an organist, and am still sometimes of use in my local church.

Mixed choirs will not serve; young boys in general will not join or thrive in a mixed choir, first, because it is the team ethos peculiar to the young male that gives them much of their motivation (good choral singing is actually a team sport); second, because they need to feel important, not mere appendages to the adults. If girls or women desire to sing in a church choir — which they have every right to do — then they too can have their own choir. But the boy has only his God-given treble voice for a short time, and it is tragic, indeed very wrong, that he has virtually now no place in our churches. The same can equally be said to apply to the young server, also sadly a rarity now.

There are times when it is not only right, but vitally necessary to turn the clock back; and I believe this is one of them.

ANDREW MAY  
17 Gilbert Road  
London  
SW19 1BP

We all, I suspect (and not just those with High Church leanings), are the legatees of those theologians, architects, artists, church furnishers and (primarily!) musicians of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and this came home to me very clearly during Elliott Walker's well-informed, comprehensively illustrated and technically slick Zoom presentation on 27<sup>th</sup> September. Elliott is *inter alia* Organist and Choirmaster of St. Paul's Masborough and therefore a key member of the music team at Rotherham Minster. As an "add-on" to the substance of the evening, we were treated to videos of his own playing on a variety of interesting organs in the Rotherham area. Clearly an accomplished and scholarly musician, Elliott is to be congratulated and thanked for a most interesting evening. As our first

"virtual" meeting, it put down a marker in the history of NDSO and our membership's response was most positive and very heartening.

*Roger Harrison*

## 16 November: Members' composite organ recital

Whilst the health emergency lockdown rules have shattered the 2020 plans for meetings of so many organists' associations nationwide, the NDSO has led the field in adapting to the 'new normal' by embracing the online technology for its meetings. Not only have there been regular events, but audience participation has not seen any decline compared with the 'old normal'. The word 'Zoom' has now taken on a new meaning as more of the population have discovered that online conference technology is closer to their fingertips than many had imagined. Such has been the success of the market leading Zoom software, a 'Zoom meeting' has been appropriated in a similar way to 'Biro' has for the ballpoint pen.

The Members' Recital on 16<sup>th</sup> November was the third Zoom meeting of the Autumn season, and what a pleasure it was in these socially deprived times to see a screen-full of friendly faces. In view of my Derby affiliation I was able to spot a good number of very familiar faces, but also many Nottingham

friends from previous joint meetings. A pleasure, yes, but we have to be on best behaviour in front of the webcam; no yawning please! Our host and Master of Ceremonies Ian Watts maintained a wonderfully buoyant continuity as he introduced and commented on the performances. One must acknowledge that this role was the tip of the iceberg of Ian's commitment to the evening. Despite the amazing sound and video quality afforded by modern mobile phones, there is still a lot of work involved in collating the results, and in particular cleaning the sound track from noise and general unwanted background ambience. So, full marks to Ian for a very smooth operation of the videos during the recital. Sound quality in the context of the Zoom system is necessarily limited by the bandwidth of the internet communication and crucially by the quality of the sound device attached to your computer at home. Headphones are very reliable for quality, but the tiny speakers on computers are generally inadequate. I found that the 'mid-fi' speaker system, which includes a bass box, attached to my computer gave very acceptable organ sound, but when I later played back the YouTube videos, the sound was excellent. Again, thank you Ian for all that cleaning.

Unlike a normal live recital, it was very interesting to hear the pieces performed on different instruments. I should say *very* different instruments. We heard recordings of real organs at St Oswald's, Ashbourne, St Michael's, Bramcote, St Michael's, Linby, Michael Overbury's intimate four-stop house organ by Bower, and the crowning glory of the brand new Marcussen in Holy Trinity, Esbjerg, Denmark. In the electronic digital genre we heard a bright and sparkling Ahlborn-Galanti instrument. Several impressive Hauptwerk renderings transported us virtually to locations such as Armley for the mighty Schulze, and Waltershausen, Germany for the historic Trost organ that Bach knew. In complete contrast there was Paul Stringfellow's 1937 Hammond organ offering a definitely different musical genre described by Ian as "slightly off the wall". As we moved through the programme I enjoyed the added interest of hearing about the different instruments in players' introductory comments. Sometimes Ian's comments pre-empted those of the players.

### The Programme

Tuba Tune	R Porter Brown	Michael Anthony
Prelude in G, S.541	J S Bach	David Hanford
Ecce iam noctis	Healy Willan	Derek Wileman
Praeludium	Johann Pachelbel	Denis Littleton
That's the way God planned it	Billy Preston	Paul Stringfellow
Folk Tune	Percy Whitlock	Roger Harrison
Nun komm der Heiden Heiland	Diderik Buxtehude	Ian Watts
Lamento di Tristan & La Rotta	Anon.	Michael Overbury
Allegro (Trio Sonata no. 1, S.525)	J.S. Bach	Michael Overbury
Prelude & F sur le nom d'Alain	Maurice Duruflé	David Butterworth
Fantasia & Fugue in G	C. Hubert H. Parry	David Butterworth
Interval Talk: Ian Wells	Charles Tournemire	d.1939

The nicely balanced programme treated us to a variety of works, composers and styles stretching from early music to contemporary. It was evident that each player's choice had carefully considered the strengths of their instrument. Michael Anthony, on his recently installed Ahlborn digital organ, featured the Tuba Mirabilis and Trumpet stops which, played in a fanfare style, made one sit up and listen; it successfully established a confident tone for the recital. The standard of playing throughout was high. In the case of Paul Stringfellow's 'one-man-band' contribution, one should say that the



standard of playing *and* singing was most impressive; we heard Paul on the Hammond organ, piano, bass guitar, as well as the vocals which went to three parts. (Of course these were all brought together in the video with software magic.) As a complete contrast to the rest of the programme, I thought this performance was wonderfully refreshing. I had not heard of the rock musician Billy Preston before, but now feel better educated. The final two pieces of the programme played by David Butterworth were a worthy grand finale. Both works demanded virtuoso performance and David's skills were well matched to the task. The Fantasia and Fugue is a spectacular work, and we learned that its composition was spread over 34 years, such was Parry's pursuit of perfection.

Half way through the programme the music took a pause whilst we heard a talk by Ian Wells giving an account of the life and work of Charles Tournemire (1870-1939). We heard a fascinating story of this enigmatic pupil of César Franck and Widor who spent five years on a remote island in Brittany composing his magnum opus in a windmill overlooking the Atlantic ocean. This was *L'Orgue Mystique* which consisted of 51 sets of 5 pieces for the Mass based on Gregorian chants, one set for each Sunday of the year. Some of the music was played in the background to Ian's talk, but for me these 'noises off' sounded cacophonous and didn't work at all.

After David Butterworth's triumphant finale, Roger Harrison, NDSO President, offered a vote of thanks for all the performances and the technical smoothness of the event, despite its apparent complexity. He recalled a personal experience of the Duruflé piece; as a student at St John's College, Cambridge, when he was detailed to turn the pages of the work for Stephen Cleobury. Duty also involved darting from side to side as registrant, but at one moment he was required to kneel on the floor to press the Swell 6 toe piston that was out of reach of Cleobury's otherwise busy foot!

Overall, a splendid evening, and thank you for extending the invitation to neighbours and friends.

Laurence Rogers

## 18<sup>th</sup> December: Members' Zoom Recital – Advent to Candlemas

With Ian Watts as compère and producer once again, the second NDSO Zoom event, arising from the Coronavirus situation, took place on 18 December 2020, consisting of a recital of organ pieces for Advent, Christmastide and Candlemas, along with a live recording from St. Mary's, Nottingham on Christmas Eve, 1982. Some members of Ian's choir from Aston also added a festive touch with traditional Christmas hymns. Thanks to the technological and artistic expertise of Ian, this can be viewed as a high-quality presentation on You Tube, complete with Christmas decorations surrounding some of the performers!

You Tube access:

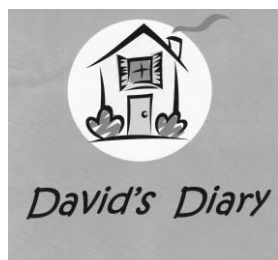
Part 1 <https://youtu.be/BCz7vmp0Dvc>

Part 2 <https://youtu.be/d9e1JU4CAH4>

The videos can also be accessed by entering **NDSO Advent** in the search box on the You Tube website.

On the You Tube videos, eight of our Society members are playing a cornucopia of organ music ranging from Baroque Noël's and Bach chorale preludes, through Romantic and twentieth-century pieces, to recently-composed carol variations; we also hear *Once in Royal David's City* from the 1982 Service of Nine Lessons and Carols in St. Mary's, Nottingham. Most players use their electronic house organs, of varying sophistication, but some play on their church instruments, and several provide informative introductions about composers, the music, registrations, and so on. The tune chosen most often here for preluding and for playing variations is *In Dulci Jubilo*, showing that the old, as so often, is of lasting value. The producer has tastefully provided festive borders for many screen shots, with additional pictures and captions, so that the experience of watching and listening to this You Tube presentation is most entertaining, instructive and a feast for the ears.

Peter Horne



I would like to have been able to sit down, pen dutifully poised – and avoid any mention of the inevitable. It only took me about three seconds to realize that wasn't

going to happen! It seems the best thing we can do for now, for ourselves and our families and friends, is to imbue everything we say and do with that same degree of positivism and resolution that has seen this nation through thick and thin for a very long time. The examples are obvious. In other words, it's a case of the glass half-full. The usual bumper crop of Christmas cards and letters was replete with all sorts of encouraging little messages, such as "the garden has never looked so good" and "I've been meaning to get round to that for years" et al. Mind you, this is by no means to belittle the plight of so many thousands who have lost family, lost friends and lost their jobs and their callings in life – and we know that includes many musicians.

On a practical level, I have enjoyed the opportunity to do something "I have been meaning to do for years"... A search for a particular tranch of rather scattered information through the columns of that veteran organ magazine "The Organ" from no. 1 (1922) to the present became much more than just that. It's always good when you can bring "added value" to bear on a job. It must be about forty years ago now that I purchased an unbroken run of "The Organ" from nos. 67 to 238 (1981) from our last surviving founder member, the much respected Arthur Smedley. The copies were beautifully wrapped into five brown packets of equal size with a carefully typed label affixed to each, so typical of that meticulous character. No sooner had I taken this stash on board, however, when a friend from Sussex gave me an almost complete run from no. 1 right up to 260 (1987). Such is life! Then, on top of that, I had my own substantial run dating from when I got bitten by the organ bug, around 1960, plus various second-hand copies of earlier issues which I would eagerly snap up on my periodic visits to a wonderful old bookshop called Holleyman & Treacher, on Duke Street, Brighton. This was a heavenly three-story grotto (for want of a better word)

which, it seemed, must have stocked something for every imaginable taste including undoubtedly a good few rarities. It was certainly held to stock the largest collection of antiquarian books in the south-east. Apart from the magazines, the music section coughed up a few books actually on the organ (snapped up of course), along with Novello editions of JSB (the yellow ones plus the odd earlier browns or greens) which I still sometimes use to this day when I am confident that our friendly Prof is at a safe distance. Not finished yet ... "The Organ" collection no. 4 came my way just recently, when I was given the library of veteran 'The Organ' author Bryan Hughes (see below), having been rescued from the skip in the nick of time.

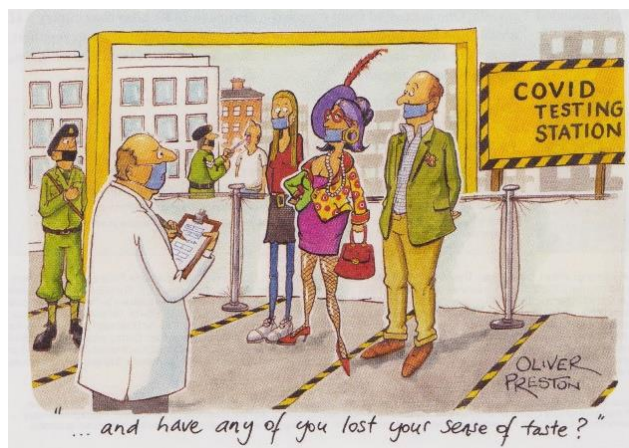
Anyway, I digress .... The problem with sorting stuff is that you get waylaid, so that the job in hand, complete with the 'added value', ends up taking absolutely ages – and it has done! A number of prolific writers formed the backbone of the contents right up until the end of the magazine's 'blue period'. Following that, some of you will be aware that it hit harder times, in terms of both quality and quantity, and the format duly changed - I suspect not only on the grounds of trying to create a more 'modern' image, but also for reasons of economy. Number 220 (July 1977) introduced us to a revised design, mainly white with a broad blue band along the top – list of contents easier to read but aesthetically barren. By 1981, the design remained while the format went half-size. Then in 1988, the front upgraded to a colourful photograph (but still in half-size book format.) Finally, at no. 291 (January 1995), full-size format was re-established, which is where we are to this day with just periodic minor changes to the typescript. Some of the earlier writers were 'big guns' in the organ world, and numbered amongst others the erudite and camera-wielding Revd. Andrew Freeman; Dr Leslie Sumner of Nottingham; Gilbert Benham; L.S. Barnard; A. Eaglefield Hull, Mus. D.; D. Batigan Verne; The Revd Noel Bonavia-Hunt; the Revd Gordon Paget, Cecil (Sam) Clutton, Bryan Hughes; and Marston Manthorpe who took us on excursions to that far-away little place called Denmark. I expect some of you may remember them. Noel Bonavia-Hunt was, I think, as eccentric as he was knowledgeable and reckoned voicing among his talents. He had

more than a penchant for Schulze Diapasons, and introduced them, voiced by himself, whenever he got the chance. Noel's father, the Revd Dr Henry George Bonavia-Hunt, founded the Trinity College of Music. And it so happens that his final clerical position was as vicar of my boyhood church, St John's, Burgess Hill, until his death in 1917. Thus it was that Noel was given free rein to 'experiment' with the 1889 Binns, op.75 (please cross-reference this later with the Franklin Story pt. ii, which will appear in May). He paid particular attention to the 6-stop Swell, which had been, synoptically, a perfectly workable 8' 8' 8' 4' III 8' (Cornocean). Noel replaced all three 8' flues with an Orchestral Flute 8 (actually the Binns Open moved up an octave, holes punctured in the middle and lips cut up and arched); and a pair of Violes d'Orchestre, which I thought particularly unpleasant. And to cap it all he replaced the III-rank Mixture with an Oboe. True to form, he also added a 'Schulze' Diapason on its own pneumatic chest, situated behind the Nave case – the only stop on the organ which didn't speak into the chancel. I made contact with Noel in my teens, and my father and I ended up being invited to afternoon tea in the garden of his house in Tenterden on a beautiful summer afternoon – one of those memories that sticks with you for good. When I arrived in Nottingham, I soon met Dr Leslie Sumner, who lived in a bungalow in Central Avenue, Chilwell. He was a large, amiable figure, rather imposing actually. Again, I felt honoured to be meeting in person a man whose definitive book, 'The Organ, its Evolution, etc' (1<sup>st</sup>. Edition) I had read from cover to cover under the bedclothes I don't know how many times while I was still at school. Aside from his work at the university, he was the Diocesan Organ Adviser. He gave great support to the proposals for the new Marcussen organ in the transept position in St Mary's, being very understanding of the predicament we were in at the time and the need to sort out as many issues as possible in one fell swoop on a shoestring budget. Of Clifton, he was not unsupportive but he was distinctly cynical; "Wilf Wilkinson" [the Rector] "is living in cloud-cuckoo land if he thinks he is going get a Marcussen down there." Little did Leslie know that the indefatigable "Wilf" never let clouds,

cuckoos or anything else stand in the way of something he wanted.

Of those other 'vintage' writers I have mentioned, the only one I knew – just a little – was Cecil (Sam) Clutton. He was a great friend of Noel Mander's, and I referred to him in our last issue. "The Organ" journal is coming up for its century, and it is quite absorbing to flip through the decades and observe the changes in taste, the advertisers that came and went, and the writing styles, especially in the Letters to the Editor. Earlier advertising was dominated by Hunter (N.B. Wymsewold) and Walker in the front, and Hele & Co., Spurdun Rutt and Discus Blowers at the back, as well as a selection of other builders such as Forster & Andrews, Sweetland and Abbott & Smith who are now all part of history. Later on, Mander and Willis seem to have vied for the back page, though I am confident there was no gentleman's agreement involved there! Manders tended to be quite outspoken about what they could offer their clients. Spread out over a whole page, we have: "GOOD ORGANS are expensive / BAD ORGANS are not worth building / Whatever your resources, you will get good value from / N.P. Mander, Ltd." Willis latterly entertained (admonished?) readers with cynical and even hurt copy with one, for example, comprising three lines of tiny script over a whole page, starting at the top: "*The following works have been completed within the preceding twelve months*" / blank / then in the middle: "*The following works are presently in hand in our factories*" / another blank / and at the bottom "*The above information has been requested by well-wishers **and others***" Themes sometimes emerged and rumbled on for a while, the Editor then being less inclined to truncate them with "This correspondence is now closed - Ed". Lady Susi Jeans and Noel Mander had a right old ding-dong over the relative merits of tuning-slides and cone-tuning. Another lasting memory is of one A. Gordon Miller who, at every opportunity - for he wrote frequently - would trump up the need for a 32ft. pedal stop on every but the smallest instrument. The annoyance he generated was considerable and made for splendid reading, only eventually to be quelled by Noel Mander himself in relatively irenic mode, writing in October, 1959: "Can anyone tell me whether Mr. A Gordon Miller

has ever written a letter to any musical paper without regretting the absence or applauding the presence of a 32ft. Open on the organ he is describing? My own feeling is that, except in the very largest buildings where money is plentiful, there is no better way of wasting money than to indulge in 32 ft. Open Diapasons.”



Well, that’s just one little story – or is it more a series of branch lines? What of our honourable Society and of all those carefully prepared events, now postponed till whenever? Here we have been so fortunate in having the unstinting talent of Ian Watts who has spent much

professional time engineering our two composite recitals. They have drawn good e-audiences both of members and of friends and have been rated an unqualified success. High praise, too, to the participants, some of whom have no experience of being recorded live; rather daunting even if you are used to it! I know one member who had 42 goes at recording his party piece –and got there in the end! The teamwork has been great. One of several lovely reactions came in the form of a message from the parents of one of the boys singing in the 1982 ‘Once in royal’ that we heard. He wrote: “Dear David, M. and I really enjoyed this evening’s recital, thank you for inviting us.” That, I can tell you, was praise from Caesar!

The way ahead? Practicalities aside, there are other, less tangible issues in all this. The pandemic has left many folk in an enforced situation of loneliness and even despair. These things do not necessarily show up easily. My New Year’s resolution (already implemented ahead of time) is to make a habit of daily lifting up the ‘phone and calling someone with whom I feel out of touch. The list is long (it’s a busy world.) We all know someone who needs it. Let’s just do it!

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*CHAMADE: Ranks of organ pipes, usually of the trumpet kind, maybe mounted en chamade. They stick out straight and frighten passers-by. Village choirs often have a tenor who sounds as if he is en chamade, though unlikely to be mounted.*

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## NOTES AND NEWS

We rush to congratulate our senior Society member, Ron Cutts, on the discovery that he reached the grand age of 90 this last 27<sup>th</sup> April. Keep it up, Ron, the telegram’s waiting for you.

We are sorry to note the deaths recently of Arthur Wills, long-time Organist and Master of the Choristers of Ely Cathedral and a prolific composer; and of Catherine Ennis, a mighty power for good on the British organ scene and, of course, the third great lady to have passed away in 2020 after Jennifer Bate and Jane Parker-Smith. May they rest in peace.

Members are reminded that the Society remains eager to offer funding to assist in the *bona fide* organ tuition of youngsters, through the generosity of bequests left to us by, respectively, Phillip Mason and David Chapman.



## My journey to the organ

*We've all become organ enthusiasts by one route or another. Here, Richard Marsden shares a few personal reflections.*

I enjoyed David Butterworth's most informative article about Noel Mander in the September 2020 edition of 'Soundboard'. In particular, my memory was stirred by his mention of the recording which Noel, and Cecil Clutton, made of the organ in Cecil Clutton's home. As a young teenager just discovering a passion for the organ, I absolutely *devoured* that recording. It was the first time I ever heard BWV 565. It also introduced me to Couperin and Brahms's preludes. But let me backtrack a little...

"Richard started piano lessons at the age of four, and, at the age of 10, gained Distinction in Grade 8. He moved on to organ lessons and gained the ARCO at 15, and FRCO a year later, winning the Turpin, Durant and Limpus prizes. He spent time in Italy studying with Fernando Germani, and in Paris where Sophie-Véronique Cauchefer-Choplin was his mentor. He is also an accomplished viola and cor anglais player and composes operas in his spare time....." Thus would be my dream CV. The reality is somewhat different ...

My family was not in the least musical and my music lessons started from not very worthy motives. A boy in my class brought his piano accordion to school to play to us. I was jealous! Surely I could do that! At the time, the local accordion teacher (actually a ballet and tap teacher who taught accordion on the side) was offering six introductory lessons for the price of five, including the free use of a practice instrument. My Dad agreed that I could have six lessons and then gave me an 'audition' to see if it would be worth his while for me to carry on. I passed and took accordion lessons for three years. My teacher was not the lady herself, but one of her older pupils – a girl in her late teens who taught in the 'annexe' (a.k.a. garden shed). From her I gained, among other things, the incorrect pronunciation (and in some cases the incorrect meaning) of many Italian terms. She was cheaper than the main teacher though!

The focus was not on authentic accordion music but on playing arrangements of orchestral classics. Thus it was that I was introduced to the *Habañera* from *Carmen*, the *Sleeping Beauty Waltz*, Tchaikovsky's *Piano Concerto in B flat*, etc - all arranged for the accordion! I won a prize in the Grade 5 exam – a Grieg album transcribed for the accordion. Only years later did I hear the *Mountain King* and *Anitra's Dance* as they were originally meant to be heard! But with its 120 buttons for the left hand - sounding root notes and chords - the accordion did provide an excellent grounding in basic harmony, and I am grateful for that.

I first encountered the organ as a toddler. Like many in the 1950's, I was sent to Sunday School, more to give my parents an hour of peace and quiet than from any loftier motives. Occasionally we children were taken to the village chapel where I gazed adoringly at the 21 huge, brightly painted, tubes arrayed at the front. I counted them repeatedly! I daydreamed about which one I would take home if we should be allowed to choose one. How pleased my mother would have been if I had come home with one of these! Never for one moment did I associate them with the lovely music which came from the front of the chapel.

At my all-boys' grammar school in the industrial north, there wasn't much of a music department, and extra-curricular activities were rugby or rugby. However, at the age of 11, I joined the Boys' Brigade where Sunday attendance was compulsory. For a special service, we boys were displayed in our uniforms in a gallery at the front of the church, behind the huge pulpit. Sitting just in front of the organ console, for the first time, I witnessed this mysterious machine at close quarters! What a thrill! Why three keyboards? What did all those knobs and levers do? Was the player pumping the wind with his right foot on that pedal thingy? And all these strange words! *Swell Organ*, *Large Open Diapason*, *Swell to Great Sub-Octave*...and was there really a *violoncello*, a *clarionet* and a *double trumpet* (what???) behind those mysterious pipes? I lost count of the number of times I was told off for turning round and staring – but how could anyone resist when there was so much to look at?

I plucked up the courage to approach the organist, who happened to have been a teacher at my primary school - one of whom we children were terrified - and he agreed to let me 'have a go'. In fact he generously left me alone and told me to drop the latch to the back door of the church when I had finished. Utter heaven! I tried every stop, then worked out a few combinations, played a few chord sequences, a few pieces that I knew by heart, including a couple of Beatles songs – and from that moment I was

captivated. I needed to take piano lessons ‘to get my left hand working’ and went to the formidable Miss Chatburne who immediately set me onto Mozart Sonatas and Czerny.

But where to practise? My older sister had been denied a pony, so a piano for me was out of the question. Fortunately the Wilkinsons at number 72 had an old piano in their front room which they didn’t use, and I was welcome to come and play it whenever I wanted, as long as I didn’t mind being cold – the room was never heated. I jumped at the chance and practised hard. After a few months, a local organist who was not actually a teacher, agreed to take me on for organ lessons.

The old III/30 Abbott and Smith workhorse at Salem Chapel, Halifax, on which I cut my teeth, sat in this huge 19<sup>th</sup> century ‘preaching house.’ It had been conceived to accompany the lusty hymn singing of a thousand Methodists and had a fine array of 16’ and 8’ stops but no mixtures. I had read about mixtures and mutations – they sounded most exotic – but I had never heard one ‘for real’. Then, on a day trip to Liverpool, we visited the newly built Metropolitan Cathedral. Someone was demonstrating the Walker organ to someone else, and I, of course, pressed up against the railings and strained to see and hear. Flute and diapason choruses were sounded – and then the mixtures were added! So that’s what they do! How they transformed the sound! Moments later, for the very first time, I heard the beautiful combination of 8ft and 1<sup>3</sup>/<sub>5</sub>. I’ve loved mixtures and mutations ever since!

Opportunities to hear either live or recorded organ music were thin on the ground in those days. I first heard Widor’s *Toccata* on ‘Two Way Family Favourites’, a Sunday lunchtime request programme on the BBC which relayed messages to and from individuals serving overseas in the Forces. It always ended with a popular classic and when ‘Widor’ came on I was transfixed! The fingers obviously moved so quickly that the tune was barely discernible, so that must be the pedals striding out the melody. Amazing! Alas, before I caught the name or the composer of the piece, I was loudly summoned back into the kitchen and reprimanded for deserting my washing-up duty. It was a long time before I heard the piece again and discovered more about it.

At first I funded my lessons by taking on a paper round. At 16, though, I became the organist at Salem Chapel, which more than covered the cost of my lessons. Taking time out of school to play for funerals was a very welcome perk! The old ‘preaching house’ had by now been demolished and rebuilt to make way for a new road. It now housed a very pleasant Laycock and Bannister instrument – complete with mixtures and mutations! It was newly built and was far too big and loud for the much smaller replacement building – but what does that matter when you’re 16! I was now having lessons with Cyril Baker at Halifax Parish Church (now Halifax Minster). The four manual Harrison and Harrison was thrilling beyond words, and he allowed me to deputise for him from time to time. I also served as page turner for the weekly recitals which allowed me to observe notable players at close quarters.

To my amazement, I discovered that Halifax library held the complete organ works of Bach (Why? Who on earth ever looked at them?) I took the volumes out one by one and devoured them. I read and re-read ‘Teach Yourself the Organ’ by Francis Routh and I can still, even now, recite large swathes of it off by heart.

Gaining my driving licence at 17 allowed me and a fellow organ enthusiast from my school to visit some of Yorkshire’s finest organs. But at 18, taking a place at Cambridge (to read languages, not music) expanded my organ horizons beyond measure. The wonderful David Baker was Senior Organ Scholar at my college. His Bach playing set my spine tingling. I was privileged for a few brief years, to hear some of the world’s finest players and play some of the country’s finest instruments.

Over the years I have played many instruments in the UK, Europe and America and I remain as much an organ fanatic as ever ... but, even so, I have never yet been allowed to take a pipe home with me as a gift for my mother!

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*TENORS: Most choirs have either a) none or b) too many. When wholly absent, they leave an aching void. When too numerous they fill the void, without removing the ache. Tenors rarely sing words and often produce regional sensations rather than actual notes. During the mating season, they draw attention to themselves by a practice called rubato.*

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## Århus Domkirke. Restoration of the Grand Organ

In March, 2016, 34 members and friends of the Nottingham and District Society of Organists descended on Denmark, to savour – over a period of eight days – the many delights readily and welcomingly available to the lover of all things good, not least its organscape. Add to that its architecture, food, hospitality and its unique *hygge*, and you have the recipe for a perfect holiday – busman’s or otherwise. Even the weather, end-to-end, was perfect and that, it must be admitted, is by no means a given; actually, what we have here we then send to them, across what they charmingly call the ‘Vest See’, the only difference being that, by the time it gets there, it is usually a degree or two cooler.

Our ‘home’ town was Esbjerg, and the first day of the tour was to be a longish journey up to Aalborg, to see, hear, play and thoroughly inspect inside and out, Marcussen’s magnificent new concert organ in the Musikkens hus. Of course, any building of that nature is inevitably busy, and we were fortunate to secure a 3-hour slot in the mid-afternoon to ourselves, in between orchestral rehearsals. The appointed hour meant that we had plenty of time beforehand to ‘linger’. However, one does not travel all the way to Denmark just to linger! We had already factored in a slight detour *en route* to Mariager (with its new Aubertin organ) if there was to be time. Better than that in the event, we were able to stop earlier on for a goodly lunchbreak at Århus, Denmark’s second city and a really delightful place, too. Having wended our way through a pretty tortuous series of temporary roadworks and diversions (I’ll never understand how our bus-driver managed some of the twists and turns!), we parked fortuitously right by the cathedral. A bonus indeed! Inevitably, nearly everyone made a beeline into this unexpected prize. What a wonderful building – huge yet beautiful, and adorned throughout with the most wonderful wall paintings dating right back to the fifteenth century. In fact, the cathedral is full of superlatives ... The frescoes cover a total of 220 sq. metres; the paintings of St Christopher and St Clement are the tallest in the country; the one and only stained glass window dating from 1926 is the tallest in the country; and the church’s model ship (you will find one or more in almost every Danish church) is the largest in the country. The altarpiece, completed by the famous Lübeck sculptor and painter Bernt Notke and dedicated on Easter Day, 1479, is regarded as one of Denmark’s great treasures. It is unique in that it incorporates movable sections which can be shunted around to depict the various stages of the liturgical year. The baptismal font, the golden gates, the bells and the tombs and memorials are no less worthy of this cultural paradise. And the organ? Well, of course, it’s the largest in Denmark. Mind you, for a little while it had to be re-categorized as the largest *church* organ in Denmark when the Van den Heuvel arrived at the new Danish State Radio complex; but recent additions have once again tipped the balance. Amusing parallels here, methinks, with the R.A.H. / Liverpool story!

Although we were able to look up in envy at the magnificent Baroque case of the west-end organ, we knew we should have to rest content on that occasion in our capacity as just casual visitors. Little did we then know that there were already well-advanced rumblings afoot to have this beautiful giant fully restored / updated / call it what you will. So it was that, as far back as 2012, a comprehensive internal inspection had revealed an unexpectedly poor state of affairs. This was to be followed by a strongly motivated agenda to determine the way forward, to which end a high-profile committee of experts was formed under the inspired impetus of the recently appointed organist, Kristian Krogsøe and with extensive financial backing from five Danish charitable foundations which generously covered most of the cost. The specific ‘job sheet’ would be headed up by the Swedish organ consultant, Anders Johnsson, who is university lecturer in the organ and organography at the Conservatory of Music, Malmö.

The first question one always asks of any restoration is: “What does it mean? Where do you start and how far do you go?” ... questions which have been debated time after time in this very journal and elsewhere. Even more controversially: What does ‘updating’ mean? Clearly, the restoration needs to have a specific focus, which doesn’t necessarily mean going back to the beginning. The answer adopted here is, I think, true to our time, that is to say that whilst I am convinced we still owe a great deal to the efforts of the so-called *Orgelbewegung*, there has developed over the last few decades a far deeper and more insightful respect for, and understanding of, the former Romantic schools of organ building, be they English, French, German or whatever. But to obtain a proper perspective of the Århus question, we need to look a little more closely at its history. Basically, the organ was built in 1730 by one of Arp Schnitger’s

most successful pupils, Lambert Daniel Kastens (c.1690-1744). It comprised three manuals and pedals and 43 speaking stops, and included the wonderful case we see today with its elaborate gilded decorations. At this time, however, some of the case pipes, although voiced for speech, were left disconnected. Various markings on the internal framework indicate that the original layout was such that the conduits from the *Positiv* soundboards to the relevant pipes would have been so long as to have been unworkable, so equivalent pipes were placed directly on the soundboards to do the job. In 1747, Kastens' pupil Benjamin Wulff, was back with a couple of his own men, doing some work at the top of the south (CC) side of the organ during a thunderstorm, when they were struck by a bolt of lightning, tragically killing two of them. It seems that the lightning entered a side window and 'spattered' into the organ, disturbing many of the smaller pipes as well as the clock, and burning some of the large case pipes in the areas around their iron fixing nails. No-one would subsequently go up there to complete the work (until now), and indeed to this day some scorch marks can still be seen on the larger pipes.

In 1799, the controversial Abbé Vogler gave a concert on the organ, arising from which he proposed a radical rebuild on what he called his 'simplification system', involving amongst other things scrapping half of the Kastens pipework. Fortunately, nothing came of this, so the organ soldiered on for another 50 years, by which time it was considered hopelessly out-of-date with short bass octaves, limited compass and at a high, so-called kortøne pitch. Thus in 1848, the Danish organ builder Peter Ulrik Frederik Demant (1802-1868) visited the instrument and put forward a proposal for a new organ to be built behind the existing façade, incorporating nine of the Kastens registers. Nothing much happened for a long while, however, apart from odd repairs and miscellaneous tonal alterations. Eventually, it was Demant's son, Johan Andreas (1830-1878) who was contracted to build this virtually new organ, again of three manuals and 43 speaking stops, including the nine Kastens registers as proposed by his father. The console of this organ remains – in beautiful condition – within the main case of the organ. The Demant pipework is of the highest quality, and has featured significantly in the present restoration.



Some of the 'blitzed' case pipes

From around 1915, at the instigation of the new organist Jørgen Nielsen, all sorts of proposals were put forward, including such radical steps as the replacement of the slider soundboards with cone-chests and the addition of a fourth manual, all on electric action, and general tonal augmentation in what might best be described as a late Romantic style. Over the next few years, a modest number of these proposals was carried out, though precise documentation is curiously lacking. But it was in November 1922 that the seeds were first sown for a thoroughgoing rebuild and great enlargement of the Demant organ, in the form of a treatise by none other than Dr. Albert Schweitzer: his *"Gutachten für die Restauration der grossen Orgel des St. Clemensdomes zu Aarhus"*. This contained 15 broad points, well detailed over 5 closely-written pages, in which amongst other things he declared the Århus organ to be one of the best in the world, reminiscent in the breadth of its tone to that of Notre-Dame, Paris.. A major rebuild should incorporate, amongst all else, slider soundboards, and tracker action assisted as necessary by Barker lever machines; electric action should not be used; old pipework and slider chests were not to be discarded, but incorporated into the new organ, and the wind pressures were not to be raised. Only the Swell organ would receive significant attention, much influenced by the French Romantic school as exemplified by the work of Cavaillé-Coll, who had already built a two-manual instrument in the Jesus Church at Valby. In short, the new instrument should not be a 'factory organ.' There would however be a new console standing forward and detached from the existing case, with a full complement of playing aids on the 'English system.' Schweitzer concluded his proposals by re-iterating that what was already there was a 'jewel', and that the best starting point was the careful conservation of its inherent beauty. This document was pretty remarkable for its time, though one must remind oneself that its author had been expounding the virtues of the earlier famous builders, in particular Silbermann,



as far back as 1897, in a personal reaction to some of the more recent German ‘factory organs’ deploying high pressures, pneumatic actions and excessive layers of console accessories. This led to some valuable collaboration with Oscar Walcker, as exemplified by that builder’s early ‘Alsatian reform’ organs in, for example, both St Reinoldi Dortmund (1909) and St Michaelis Hamburg (1912), to name but two.

There followed extended correspondence and consultation with a number of authorities. Proposals for a 70-stop Cavaillé-Coll were at a pretty advanced stage when the Domkantor of Roskilde Cathedral, Emilius Bangert wrote, on 1<sup>st</sup>. December, 1923, that he felt Frobenius should also be considered for the project as they had been associated with the place for so many years. The correspondence that followed this is well preserved, and has been a mine of information for the current restoration. Particular focus at the time devolved on the Kuhn organ at Winterthur in Switzerland, such that by the end of 1924, that builder was also now being considered for the eventual contract. Other builders and suppliers, too, were investigated, but eventually it was decided that Frobenius would build the organ, with input of many of the new ranks, mainly reeds, initially from the French supplier Frederic Härpfer who would come to Århus to finish them (but in the event from Leau), as well as some from Laukhuff. After seemingly interminable discussions (so what’s new?) the contract was signed in the autumn of 1926. The Laukhuff involvement in all this may seem somewhat foreign to the concept of a Frobenius organ. It was however a perfectly pragmatic and natural course, considering not only the immensity of this contract, but also in view of the fact that the firm was building two other very large organs all at the same time. Furthermore, Theodor Frobenius had actually worked for Laukhuff for a while in his earliest, formative, days, and he knew them well. In the event, the Laukhuff pipework was of the highest quality, zinc – for example – being entirely eschewed apart from the bass octave of the 16 ft. Pedal Salicional. All of this, along with the sliderchests which they also made for Frobenius in the style of Cavaillé-Coll, were of first-class quality and have been entirely preserved in the current work. Admittedly, the ultimate agenda politely laid aside several of Schweitzer’s proposals, but in contemporary terms the 1928 organ left nothing to be desired. This enormous instrument of 89 speaking stops was a ‘model’ of its time, big, successful, superbly voiced by Theodor Frobenius himself (who had even been on a reed-voicing course to Paris just to make sure he got it right). It was as nearly a Romantic organ as the Danes ever managed. There were 4 x 8 ft. flues on the Hovedværk, two sets of undulating strings, full reed choruses (nearly all French) respectively on Hovedværk, ‘Récit’ and Pedal; and an enormous Pedal department complete with a wooden 32 ft. Bombarde from Laukhuff. Much of the voicing was of its time of course, with many open ranks slotted and with wind pressures starting at 80 mm, and so on. But that was 1928. The *Orgelbewegung* was already gathering pace, and not only in Germany. It was a mere two to three years later that Frobenius’s principal colleagues on Sønderjylland, Marcussen og Søn, under the inspired leadership of the famed Sybrand Zachariassen, were to build their first (one might say prototype) ‘classical’ instruments – in Esbjerg Vor Frelsers kirke (still with pneumatic cone-chests) in 1930, and København Sct. Nicolaj (with ground-breaking tracker action and slider soundboards, 1931.) And so it was that, as organ building began to ‘reform’ itself year by year, with concomitant changes in taste, so did dissatisfaction with the Århus instrument – not with the Frobenius firm, that is, just with the 1928 concept. Even before the Second World War, both Frobenius and Marcussen were keeping well in line with the North German concept of the ideal Baroque organ. Thus it came to pass that, as early as 1940, the Århus organ was rebuilt and ‘modernized’. Amongst other things, there was a new ‘Kronpositiv’ division of six ‘Baroque’ stops (oddly in a little Swell box of its own); and the proposal back in 1928 to replace two fundamental Pedal stops with a Mixture was carried through. Following the Second World War, Danish organ building really entered a golden era, in the opinion of many even excelling over albeit excellent German and Dutch firms. It is indeed remarkable to think that the restoration of such notable historic Dutch instruments as Goes, Amsterdam Nieuwe kerk and Haarlem St Bavokerk should all have been entrusted to Marcussen, not to mention the same firm’s new instruments for Radio Hilversum and St Nicholas Utrecht (1956 – at the specific instigation of the church’s organist with the enthusiastic backing of Dutch organ consultant Cor Edskes); along with the three organs (1959 to 1973) in St Laurenskerk, Rotterdam. In the light of all this, the Århus instrument was considered to be getting seriously left behind and, by 1959, notwithstanding various intermediate tinkering, it was considered once more to be hopelessly out-of-date! This is the year when another comprehensive rebuild was undertaken, yet again by Frobenius, in accordance with the

requirements of the recently appointed organist, Georg Fjerald. In a wide-ranging agenda of tonal 'modernisation', the pipework was comprehensively re-worked, much of it shortened with all the slots filled in and with many ranks shunted around to different parts of the instrument. Most of the string stops were cut down to be re-made into higher pitched ranks. But, still, those *Positiv* façade pipes didn't speak.

Well, that was 1959. You've guessed! No sooner had all this work been completed, than the current perception of 'balance' began to kick in – a growing appreciation of the Romantic, yet within a respectful framework of all that was best in the *Orgelbewegung*. Thus it was that the last major intervention took place in yet another comprehensive operation in 1983. Once more, Frobenius were employed to undertake a programme of rationalization with an ostensibly retrospective eye to 1928. Notwithstanding, the various transposed ranks remained where they were; no attempt seems to have been made to recapture Theodor Frobenius's voicing of 1928; and altogether the 1959 *Orgelbewegung* aesthetic remained paramount.

For example, the newly introduced reed stops had employed mahogany blocks, and new bass pipes were made of copper. Many ranks were rescaled in the treble with an increase in power, involving interspersing odd new pipes here and there to cover the gaps thereby created. In the *Hovedværk*, the 1730 pipes of both the 4 ft. Oktav and 2 ft. Oktav were entirely replaced by new; the *Hovedværk* Mixture was also new; the Fladfløjte was replaced by a Ters, and the Rauschquint II was replaced by a Clarion 4 ft. In Manual II (effectively the *Positiv*), the 5 1/3 Quint was remade into a 16 ft., with new bass pipes of copper, and the Gemshorn 4 ft. was replaced by an 8 ft. Trompet. Mechanically, the decision was taken to replace the tubular-pneumatic element of the key action with electrics, the tracker and Barker lever parts remaining intact. Yet further tonal alterations were made in another intervention in the year 2000 and, finally, a completely new combination system was installed in 2003. So, if nothing else, at least the instrument

could be claimed by now to have 'evolved'! But, at that size and complexity, it had lost its way; a true, single, ethos no longer existed. Aesthetically, it didn't hang together any more; nor, in the opinion of one of Denmark's leading authorities, Svend Prip, did it even fill the building comfortably. It was time for a radical review, a daunting – some would say impossible – task, of bringing everything back together again into a cohesive, thoroughly convincing and musical, whole. After four major rebuilds and innumerable intermediate interventions along the way, how on earth could this be achieved?



*They tell their own tale*

It is probably fair to say that it was the appointment of the youthful Kristian Krogsøe as organist in 2007, that brought the necessary fresh impetus to bear on the situation. Here was a grand old organ in beautiful clothes, an organ which could tell many stories; which was made up of multiple layers of craftsmanship, musical perceptions and alterations, generally done well and with complete sincerity – but which, as a consequence, had lost its identity. The major internal survey and re-appraisal carried out in 2012 gave rise to a unanimous verdict that the time was ripe for a complete, thorough-going, restoration of the organ's major identity, that of 1928. This organ was a sleeping masterpiece. Much respect had usually (not always) been shown towards the historic pipework during the course of its various incarnations; but, apart from anything else, after 90 years of use it was mechanically worn out and hence in need of complete technical rejuvenation. At the same time, many of the intervening modifications – so it turned out – displayed



different aesthetics, involving the use of aluminium, plastic, flexible conduits and plywood. So, in co-operation with the team of expert advisors headed up by Johnsson, a comprehensive agenda was created. Obviously, cleaning and technical restoration in every detail would be total; recognition of the 1928 organ as a masterpiece in its own right would be the primary motivating focus; the majority of the 6,000 + pipes would have to be re-lengthened and their speech reset accordingly; wherever necessary and ideally, second-hand pipes would be purchased from several different sources to recreate authentic 1928 voices; remaining replacement pipework would be new. In addition, all those pipes rejected in the 1983 rebuild had been preserved in the cathedral, and these would also be sourced as appropriate. Finally, the 1928 console would be refurbished and brought completely up-to-date in line with contemporary registrational requirements. Along with this, special respect would be paid to the surviving pipework of Kastens (1730) and Demant (1876) and, for the first time ever, nearly all the façade pipes would be brought onto speech and become an integral part of the ensemble.



As is proper, the cathedral's Organist and advisors knew exactly what they wanted before a short-list of six firms of international standing was approached for further comments and for quotations. In the event, the comprehensively researched proposals from Marcussen won the day, not so much on price (which I understand was midway) but for their in-depth understanding of exactly what was wanted



*Daniel Christensen and Stefan Paulsen*

by the cathedral's organist and advisors. The way ahead was to be a massive essay in fine organization and perfect collaboration between all the parties involved. It is impossible to do justice to the work which has gone into this project in the space of one article. But in briefest terms, overall management both as to costing and personal logistics, were in the hands of Marcussen's MD, Claudia Zachariassen, and the works manager Hans-Ulrick Hansen; Bernd Lorenzen was responsible for the technical side of the project, and Jens Christensen with his three fellow voicers Daniel Christensen, Stefan Paulsen and Daniel Zink Loft undertook the enormous task of dealing with literally every one of over 6,000 pipes. In the earlier stages back at the organ works in Åbenrå, much of the pre-voicing work on the remade pipes was done by Olav Ousorren, the immensely gifted organ builder who had been responsible back in the 1970s for the scaling and voicing of the two Nottingham Marcussens. Tragically, Jens – who was utterly devoted to the project – died halfway through the work, creating a potential crisis point; for three people were not sufficient for the task in hand. After some discussion, Flentrop were invited to make up the shortfall in the form of their own chief voicer, Dirk Koomans. This turned out to be a singularly warm and happy partnership, so much so that they feel that it is reflected in the overall result. Apart from the enormous job on hand with the existing pipework, it was found that seven of the 1928 stops were completely missing, whilst some others were altered beyond redemption. A comprehensive search for suitable *genbrugt* (once used) pipes yielded some fantastic results, not only from the stash of erstwhile discarded pipes found on the gallery in the east transept, but also from certain redundant organs over a wide geographical area – Laukhuff pipes from the discarded Johansson organ (1931) in Frøslunda; pipes from the stored organ in Haderslev Seminarium (including some by Furtwängler & Hammer); an 1876 Marcussen Fugara 8 ft. stored at Marcussen's; more pipes from a Jørgensen organ of 1927 in Sofienberg (Oslo); and a Mixture from Ullern. Of course, it could

arguably have been easier to make new pipes, but in this ever-so-faithful restoration, that was only to be a last resort. Everything was handled meticulously, and particular attention was paid to the reeds which had all been revoiced more 'lightly' over time. Useful organs of reference were the two Frobeniuses in Jerusalemskirken in København and in Tønsberg cathedral. Such was the interest in getting a Clarinet stop just right, that Jens was sent on a 'Clarinet tour' to København and Skåne (the southern part of Sweden) to determine exactly what would be the best model for Århus! One or two outright additions seem to have worked well, most notably a Roosevelt Doppelfløjte from around 1880 which is very beautiful.

So far, so good. However, Kristian Krogsøe's agenda didn't quite stop there. On top of everything else, he wanted two powerful additions, a Tuba rank in English style and a solo Trompette rank from France. What, one may ask, has that got to do with the beautiful old lady of Århus? Not a lot, one might think.. The question was: Could they be added rather than incorporated, such that they did nevertheless fit in to the musical whole in certain circumstances? Logistically, it was feasible. They have both been placed at the top of the organ, just behind the clock mechanism, on their own electric chests; the idea being that the next generation can always take them out again if they must! Apparently, the argument goes that such an expedient was seriously proposed by Mutin, and much chewed-over, right back in 1923; and that anyway the whole history of the organ had been one of evolution. Maybe. In the event, Marcussen's pipemakers were far too busy making and re-making all the other pipes in the organ, so the French rank was to come from Nicolas Toussaint of Nantes and the Tuba from Terry Shires of Leeds. I have not heard the French rank. The Tuba, however, arrived pre-voiced on 10", at which level it turned out to be too strong for the organ. So the whole lot was revoiced on 7" and then everyone was happy. I must say that I am surprised how well it fits. It's no light pressure Danish Trompet, but it does have its place and, I am told, it certainly did in the opening recital on 4<sup>th</sup>. October, when Thomas Trotter concluded his inaugural recital with the *Ride of the Valkyries*!

As to the outcome, I was fortunate enough to be able to play it in its near-completed state in August, and was most impressed; and a good clamber around its innards brought home the immensity of the work involved. Unfortunately, I was prevented from being able to return for Thomas Trotter's opening recital in October, thanks to severe transport restrictions, but I can report that it has been hailed as 'outstanding' in every respect. Huge credit goes to the firm and its various personalia in pulling together the well-nigh-impossible – to the fundamental job of administering the whole thing, down to the utter dedication of each individual involved. The all-in cost to the cathedral was in the region of D.Kr.18 million (just over £2m), which included the comprehensive restoration and regilding of the case, fees and V.A.T.

The best way to enhance one's appreciation of this amazing project will probably be to source a splendid series of 23 little videos created by Per Rasmussen on behalf of the cathedral authorities. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RtyO99U65C4> is the first of these, and the rest should follow on. Alternatively, tap in *Aarhus domkirke orgel renovering*, then: *Følg orgelrestaureringen*. Unfortunately, it is nearly all in Danish and there are no subtitles; but still well worth watching. There is also a recording by Kristian Krogsøe of Duruflé's *Le monde dans l'attente du Sauveur*: <https://youtu.be/GCmpF2OQzDg>

The whole enterprise has been exhaustive and meticulous. One can only hope that this really is the definitive answer; that it is an organ for all seasons, not just for the rest of this decade. Kristian Krogsøe should be satisfied. Oh, not quite ....! It seems he now has tabs on a redundant Ernest M. Skinner organ, op. 867 from 1931; the plan being to install it in the north transept, and to make it also playable from the main console. There is strong documentary evidence that this was to be a part of the 1928 plan, the *raison* lying in the need for accompanimental provision in that particular part of this very long building. (There is already an excellent Christensen choir organ which can pack quite a punch.) The least that can be said is that the Århus organ(s) will assuredly retain its status as the largest in Denmark! More to the point, however, the unique combination of Kristian Krogsøe (organist). Anders Johnsson (consultant) and the artistic team at Marcussen & Søn have succeeded in bestowing on the music-loving world an instrument of the rarest beauty and majesty.



## Manual I Hovedværk 88mm. w.g.

Principal	16	CC/CC# 1876, pine, DD-BB façade, 1730. Rem. 1876. Lengthened and re-slotted
Bordun	16	CC-f <sup>'''</sup> 1876. CC-B pine, lengthened. f <sup>'''</sup> - c <sup>'''</sup> 1928
Principal	8	CC-d <sup>'''</sup> stored 1876 pipes, renovated and re-instated. LD RSLD e <sup>'''</sup> - c <sup>'''</sup> new
Praestant	8	1730. DD-c <sup>''</sup> façade, sounding once more in the side flats. Pneumatic assistance. e <sup>'''</sup> - c <sup>'''</sup> new
Viola di Gamba	8	CC-BB 1928, spotted metal. Remainder 1855. C-a <sup>''</sup> new beards. LD RSLD
Principalfløjte	8	Reconstruction. CC-b <sup>'</sup> pipes from Fröslunda (Laukhuff 1931) CC-BB open pine; C-b <sup>'</sup> from 4' flute, metal with 1/5 <sup>th</sup> . mouth. c <sup>''</sup> - g <sup>'''</sup> Haderslev (Furtwängler) scaled up. g <sup>'''</sup> - c <sup>'''</sup> new
Bordun	8	1928. CC-BB pine
Quint	5 1/3	1730. Canistered. f <sup>''</sup> - c <sup>'''</sup> reconstructed
Oktav	4	CC-B 1876. LD RSLD. c <sup>'</sup> -f <sup>'''</sup> also 1876. f <sup>'''</sup> - c <sup>'''</sup> new
Spidsfløjte	4	1876. Severely conical. g <sup>'''</sup> - c <sup>'''</sup> 1928. LD RSLD
Quint	2 2/3	CC-BB and a <sup>''</sup> - c <sup>'''</sup> 1876. Rem. 1730 LD RSLD
Superoktav	2	CC-F# 1928 with some old pipes. Rem. new
Cornet 5f		1928 re-introduced 2020. LD RSLD. 4' starts at C; 8' (chimney flute) at F
Mixtur 4f.	2	Ullern Mixture (Jørgensen), lengthened to achieve the correct scale
Cymbel 4f	1	1928/2020. Approx. half the original pipes were found, remainder reconstructed
Bombarde	16	1928 Leau. LD RSLD
Trompet	8	1928 Leau. LD RSLD
Tuba Magna	16	New, in Willis-style. 175 mm. w.g.
Tuba mirabilis	8	From 16'
Grde. Trompette	8	New chamade after the Cavaillé-Coll Sacre-Coeur style. Unit chest at top of organ. Hooded. 150 mm. w.g.
Cor harmonique	4	From above

## Manual II Positiv 80 mm. w.g.

Rørfløjte	16	1928. CC-BB Fröslunda (Laukhuff 1931). C-B 1876, wood. Remainder 1928 rescaled accordingly
Principal	8	CC-CC# 1928 zinc. DD-GG# 1730 in façade below centre tower.. AA-f <sup>'''</sup> 1876. f <sup>'''</sup> - c <sup>'''</sup> 1928. LD RSLD
Fugara	8	1869. CC-BB 1928 spotted metal. e <sup>'''</sup> - c <sup>'''</sup> new. LD RSLD
Salicional	8	EE-e <sup>''</sup> back from Pedal & LD. g <sup>'</sup> -f <sup>'''</sup> Haderslev Gamba with roller-beards. Rem. new
Spidsfløjte	8	1876. Oak. CC-f <sup>'</sup> LD. Rem LD RSLD
Rørfløjte	8	1876 Bass pine. f <sup>'''</sup> - c <sup>'''</sup> 1928 conical

Oktav	4	1876. f <sup>'''</sup> - c <sup>'''</sup> 1928. LD RSLD
Gedaktfløjte	4	1928
Spidsquint	2 2/3	1730 Conical a <sup>''</sup> -c <sup>'''</sup> 1928
Fløjte	2	1730. d <sup>'''</sup> - c <sup>'''</sup> new
Terts	1 3/5	1928 conical LD RSLD
Larigot	1 1/3	1928 cylindrical LD RSLD
Sivfløjte	1	1928 cylindrical LD RSLD
Dulcian	16	1928 Giesecke cylindrical, 1/2-length copper. CC-BB LD
Corno	8	USA 1800s. CC-BB capped. On new unit chest
Krumhorn	8	1928 Giesecke. Cylindrical. LD RSLD
Skalmei	4	Leau 1928 with teardrop shallots LD RSLD
Tuba Magna	16	from Man. I
Tuba Mirabilis	8	from Man. I
Tuba Clairon	4	from Man. I
Tromba Magna	16	from Man. I
Grande Trompette	8	from Man. I
Cor harmonique	4	from Man. I
Tremulant		New 2020

## Manual III Récit 90 – 120 mm. w.g.

Bordun	16	1928 CC-B pine
Principal	8	1928 Plain metal throughout
Violoncello	8	1928
Vox Celeste	8	1928 T.C.
Vox retusa	8	1928 Slightly conical. LD RSLD. CC-E re-constructed
Nathorn	8	1928 CC-BB pine, then metal, chimneys. g <sup>'''</sup> - c <sup>'''</sup> open conical
Fløjte harmonique	8	1928 CC-BB open, pine. Harmonic from f <sup>'''</sup>
Oktav	4	1928
Fløjte travièrse	4	1928. Harmonic from c <sup>'</sup>
Nazard	2 2/3	1928. From Sesquialtera, re-scaled
Oktavin	2	1928. Harmonic only from C to e <sup>'''</sup>
Terts	1 3/5	1928. From Sesquialtera, re-scaled
Plein Jeu 5 f.	1 1/3	1928
Fagot	16	Leau 1928. Teardrop shallots. LD RSLD
Trompet harm.	8	Leau 1928. LD RSLD
Fagot-Oboe	8	Leau 1928. LD RSLD
Clairon harm.	4	Leau 1928. g <sup>'''</sup> - c <sup>'''</sup> flues LD
Vox Humana	8	1910. New unit chest, top of Récit
Tremulant		New 2020

## Manual IV Ekkoværk 83 mm. w.g.

Violonprincipal	8	1876. LD RSLD. CC-GG mitred zinc from USA. GG#-BB remade
Violin	8	2 <sup>nd</sup> . hand Viole d'Orchestre from USA. CC-BB zinc
Harmonika	8	CC-EE from Fröslunda 1931 in zinc. CC-DD mitred. FF-BB 1928 LD. C-e''' Fugara from the Siseby Marcussen 1876. f'''- c''' new
Doppeltfløjte	8	CC-BB Roosevelt c.1880. Wood. In Kronpositiv. Powerful solo voice
Flauto amabile	8	1928 with 15 new pipes . In-pitch former U.Maris rank, conical. Bass from Tectus
Unda Maris	8	1928. T.C. Conical. Constructed and tuned flat as an undulating flute in the style of the Old Masters (Schiess)
Tectus	8	1876 Plain metal throughout. f#'''- c''' open conical
Quintatøn	8	Bearded. In Kronpositiv. 1880 CC-f'', 1928 f#''- c'''. f#'''- c''' conical
Fugara	4	1901. LD RSLD
Fløjte	4	CC-CC# new. DD-BB 1928 LD RSLD. C-a#'' from Haderslev 1904. b''- c''' new. Harmonic from c'
Genshornquint	2 <sup>2/3</sup>	1928. LD RSLD
Waldfløjte	2	CC-c'' Haderslev 1904. Rem. new
Terts	1 <sup>3/5</sup>	In Kronpositiv.1940, new languids. CC-F canistered with inv. chimneys
Septim	1 <sup>1/7</sup>	Conical. In Kronpositiv. Old Magnusson pipes
Piccolo	1	Harmonic. In Kronpositiv. CC-E ex Fröslunda . Rem. 1940 Sivfløjte. LD RSLD
Mixtur 4f.	1 <sup>1/3</sup>	1928. LD RSLD
Cor Anglais	16	Leau 1928. Teardrop shallots. Resonators LD. c'''- c''' doublelength
Clarinette	8	Beating. Used Giesecke shallots. Copied from Oslo Sofienberg 1927
Vox Humana	8	from Man. III
Tuba Magna	16	from Man. I
Tuba Mirabilis	8	from Man. I
Grande Trompette	8	from Man. I
Cor Harmonique	4	from Man. I

LD = Lengthened RSLD = Re-slotted

## Pedal 80 – 120 mm. w.g.

Subbas	32	1928 pine. Speech restored
P:incipal	16	1876 pine. New roller-beards. LD RSLD
Praestant	16	1730. In façade
Violone	16	1876. CCC-BBB pine. New roller-beards. LD RSLD CC-G metal, reconstructed 2020
Salicetbass	16	Sofienberg (Jørgensen 1927) LD. CCC-AAA was previously hasckelled. CCC-BBB zinc
Subbas	16	1928 pine
Gedaktbas	16	1881 pine, partly LD
Rørquint	10 <sup>2/3</sup>	1730, plain metal
Principal	8	1876. Plain metal. LD RSLD
Praestant	8	1730, borrowed from Man. I
Fløjte	8	CC-BB pine, ex Fröslunda Principalbas, rem. Haderslev (Furtwängler) 1904
Violoncello	8	1870 LD RSLD
Dulciana	8	1928. CC and AA-g' LD. Rem. reconstructed 2020
Bordun	8	1876. Pine
Quint	5 <sup>1/3</sup>	1730. Canistered. Plain metal d#'' – g' 1928
Oktav	4	1876. LD RSLD
Fløjte	4	1876. Oak
Terts	3 <sup>1/5</sup>	1730 d#''- g' 1928
Fløjte	2	1876 c' – g' new
Contrabombarde	32	1928. Giesecke. Pine, full-length
Bombarde	16	Borrowed from 32'. G#-g' from Corno (Man. II)
Basun	16	Leau 1928. LD RSLD
Fagot	16	Leau 1928. LD RSLD
Trompet	8	Leau 1928 LD RSLD
Bassetthorn	8	Leau 1928. Teardrop shallots. LD RSLD
Corno	4	Leau 1928. LD RSLD
Tuba Magna	16	from Man.I
Tuba Mirabilis	8	from Man.I
Grande Trompette	8	from Man.I
Vox Humana	8	from Man.III
Cor Harmonique	4	from Man.I
Cornet	2	from Man.I (Grande Trompette)

Full complement of couplers and accessories

## A verbatim postscript from Dirk Koomans of Flentrop Orgelbouw:

“It was a wonderful collaboration with the guys from Marcussen. Please mention the great atmosphere in which the job was carried out. I had the greatest time in Århus! Right from the start we got along wonderfully. And Daniel and Stephan are not only great professionals, but also very kind and above all, very humorous. We laughed a lot! And inside this very good atmosphere the job ended better than we could ever imagine.



“Some special memories: Working on the big 32’ Subbas and Bombarde was something else! The reeds in the Bombarde needed a bit more curve. But to get to the reed, you need to take away the huge full-length resonators. Not easy. But with help of the Marcussen crew we managed to get those things lifted. This was one of those jobs where you have the feeling that it needs to be done, no matter what. Within all of us it was really “do it NOW or do it never”.

“The Subbas sounded as a quint. It needed more fundamental. After raising the cut-ups, that fundamental came alive. A very special and also funny moment was, when bottom C was voiced. When played, the whole organ-gallery started to vibrate. Also when sitting on the organ-bench, you could feel it in your bottoms.

“That’s why we ‘baptised’ it to “the massage pipe” There were many more occasions where we felt that the whole organ was coming alive. Too many to mention.

D.S.B.: *What do you think about the idea of adding a second-hand organ in the transept next year? Is that going to spoil the grand old lady, who already has two foreign high-pressure reeds on her back??*

“It’s nice to have something in the transept. It’s not going to spoil it so much, since it is independent. But it needs a wise approach and use. Kristian [organist] is very well capable of doing just that.

D.S.B.: *I think you rather liked the Doppelflöte, but I suppose there may have been some other highlights?*

“Besides the stops already mentioned, I indeed liked the Doppelflöte very much. Also work on the Tuba was something special. It had to be eased down a bit because the first version was too strong. And the new Clarinet. Also very special. This stop was voiced by Daniel. I ‘just’ assisted.

“Of the Great Manual plenum, Mixture and Cymbel, the voicing was optimized. It now sounds more lively than before, without being harsh. That needed to be done very, very carefully. Before you know it, it’s over the top.

“Throughout the whole voicing process we took great care in staying within the boundaries of the overall character of the organ. Our goal was to make it into a better version of itself, not change it into something what maybe we thought was ‘better’, but was perhaps too different from the original organ.

“If people would not recognise the instrument, we would have done something wrong. Luckily, that didn’t happen. Especially people who knew the organ well before, told us that it’s still ‘the same’, but has come alive more.”

*Dirk Koomans*

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*MEN: These are what choirboys are intended to grow into. Their traditional privileges include arriving later than the boys on rehearsal nights, counting rests audibly, visibly or wrongly (or any combination of all three) and improvising. They also take snuff, mints or umbrage according to taste. There are three main varieties – altos (whose origin is shrouded in mystery), tenors (glamorous, fickle and rare) and basses (solid, dependable, tenacious of note, opinion and often, unfortunately, of life). In mixed choirs, the men do not arrive late, and they leave with the women.*

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*Århus Cathedral – Main Organ. Restored Marcussen 2020*

For pictures in this issue, thanks to Roger Harrison, Country Life and Per Rasmussen  
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