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Soundboard

The newsletter of the Nottingham & District Society of Organists

September 2022



H.M. Queen Elizabeth II

1926 – 2022

In Memoriam

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Richard Marsden MA (Cantab.)

A warm welcome to you all as we go into the 2022-23 season. It has been good to meet in person in 2021-22 and we will continue to do so in the coming season. Our Zoom meetings, though, have been particularly well received, so we are planning to continue with some of these as well. Further details in due course.

Meeting some of you at the Midlands Organ Day on 3 September was a great pleasure. The exquisite chamber organ recently commissioned by the Derby and District Organists' Association. the wealth of experience shared by Andrew Scott, head voicer and now MD at Harrison and Harrison; the little-known works for organ and violin performed by the Apollon Duo; and Jonathan Scott's dazzling displays of virtuosity – all combined to make for a day that exceeded all expectations.



Jonathan has an extensive web site which includes lots of recitals as well as the scores for his own transcriptions. Speaking of web sites, Google now knows that I regularly refer to organ-related stuff on the internet. Consequently it presents me with all manner of organ paraphernalia whenever I use it. Leaving aside the wackier sites featuring hooded monks playing organs in railway stations or toddlers performing BWV565, here are a few of the more interesting sites I have discovered recently. If you haven't already done so, you might like to view them for yourself.

During lockdown the Royal College of Organists produced their 'ABC of the Organ'. There's one section of every letter of the alphabet – including X, Y and Z! The speakers are all experts in their field and the topics wide-ranging. Try Anna Lapwood on Bach for example:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iBXZFyFJKgw>

Other slightly quirky but very enjoyable diversions come from Fraser Gartmore. In a peculiar mix of German and Scottish accents, he explores a wide variety of organs across Europe. Try this, for example:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ywxFfTHLFs>

The Society of Women Organists is open to anyone, male or female, who is keen to see the organ grow in popularity among women. Their web site is well worth keeping an eye on

<https://www.societyofwomenorganists.co.uk>

More about them in a future edition.

Meanwhile I hope to see many of you at our meetings in the coming months. Do join us at 'Church Organ World' on 8 October. They are providing a free lunch but do bring your wallet - they have the UK's largest stock of organ music for sale!

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Saturday 8 October – Visit to Church Organ World, Shaw nr Oldham

A large display of electronic organs by Makin, Copeman Hart, Johannus and Rodgers. The venue also now houses what is claimed to be the largest stock of sheet organ music under one roof in the UK, having recently subsumed the entire resources of Allegro Music. (But don't forget we have a superb music shop in Nottingham, being Windblowers, just a little way up Derby Road from St Barnabas.) To coin a Post Office saying: "Use it or lose it"!

Saturday 12 November – Improvisation Workshop at Halam Court, 3.00pm

This workshop will be led by David Machell, a lively character full of ideas and, nay, surprises.

Saturday 3 December – "The Vicar Returns" – 11.00am

A welcome return of the thought-provoking Revd Dr Professor Stanley Monkhouse, recently retired as Vicar of Burton-upon-Trent; one of the most controversial, yet engaging and at times charming, clerics of our time. A rare privilege indeed. This event will be followed by lunch at the Waggon, Halam, in which members are welcome to participate on a "Dutch" basis.

Monday 23 January 2023 – My Life with the Organ – 7.30pm

A Zoom meeting with John Kitchen, Edinburgh City Organist.

Saturday 25 February – Annual Luncheon at the Corinthian Restaurant, Goldsmith Street, 12.30 for 1.00pm

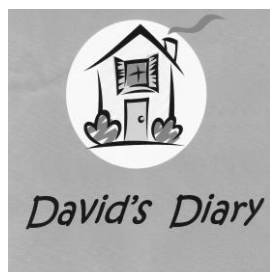
The guest speaker this year will be Dr David Baker. Formerly Assistant Organist of St Mary's, and founder of the Halifax Organ Academy (It was David whom we heard accompanying the choir on our recent Zoom meeting *The Lost Tapes of St Mary's*).

FORTHCOMING RECITALS

Sunday 30 October	2.45pm	Thomas Trotter	Albert Hall, Nottingham £10 <i>(Please note: Lunches are no longer provided)</i>
Thursday 6 October	12.15pm	Bayley Halpin	Chesterfield Parish Church <i>Collection</i>
Wednesday 12 October	7.30pm	Peter Stevens	Southwell Minster £8
Thursday 20 October	1.00pm	Justyna Posluszna	St Swithun's, Retford <i>Collection</i>
Thursday 27 October	12.15pm	David Butterworth	Chesterfield Parish Church <i>Collection</i>

Also, of possible interest to lovers of chamber music:

Saturday	2 October	3.00pm	Jayne Walker Trio	Halam Court <i>Collection</i>
Duos for violin and cello, plus Mozart's Piano Trio in B flat, K. 502				



Now is probably as good a time as any to look back on the past three years, and review the trials and tribulations of Covid-19, and specifically its

longer term effects on the worlds of organ and church music. Gone – almost – are the cultures of mask-wearing and daily self-testing with NHS free kits; albeit a degree of self-isolation from positive testing is still disrupting the daily routine of many. It's easy enough to look back and duly rue all the worst effects of the pandemic, on education, on businesses, on community activities, on the enforced loneliness in death of so many – especially the elderly. But, like so many conflicts of life, the positive must be allowed to shine through and fortify us for our future endeavours.

In the first place, I believe we owe a huge debt of gratitude to Dame Catherine Bingham DBE, and to those responsible for appointing her as Chairman of the UK Vaccine Taskforce. She was given a specific job to do, shackle-free from committees, over-accountability and the micro-management of others, and told to get on with it. So she did; we could hardly have been in better hands. The NHS, too, have been absolutely wonderful across the board. And all that's just for starters; from top to bottom, we have seen myriads of folk, excelling themselves not just for themselves, but selflessly giving of their time and energies for the benefit of others.

Being arguably something of a technophobe myself, I can but marvel at how musicians of all sorts, so indulgently managed to adopt to both live-streaming and Zoom – be it in the church, in concert, in every imaginable context; at how thereby they have managed

to keep everything going, and on how this has impacted so significantly on our gradual return to a near-normality. I have particularly marvelled at the combined choral performances of such august bodies as the Rudolphus Choir (run by the amazing Ralph Allwood). Live-streaming, too, has taken on a new impetus, with concerts, services and solo recitals available at the touch of a button.

Nor has our dear NDSO fallen short. At the thick of it all, our two Immediate Past Presidents, Roger Harrison and David Hanford, managed, by mutual consent, to elasticate two years into three (18 months each). Sad moments there were when two of Roger's star arrangements – trips to Cambridge and Malvern – had to be postponed, but latterly both of these were gloriously re-instated; and they were indeed superb. Above all, the thread (or should I say parachute cord = slightly flexible and immensely strong) of continuity that has really pulled us through has been our management who, apart from their individual dogged determination, have readily taken on Zoom. Mind you, Zoom has had its lighter moments, such as the occasion on which one of Roger's cats appeared and unashamedly displayed its rear end to the camera lens. Notwithstanding, Zoom – most especially in the gifted hands of our resident whizz-kid Ian Watts – has been an absolute life-saver. True, at times we have come near to having to work on a month-to-month basis, but it has worked, and indeed membership has not only increased significantly but – thereby – our average age has dropped. Couldn't be better!

Slava Ukraini!

Slava NDSO!

David

REPORTS

Visit to Cambridge, 11th June

On a rather overcast St Barnabas' Day, 16 members of the NDSO set off for Cambridge in anticipation of visiting both St John's College and Sidney Sussex College.

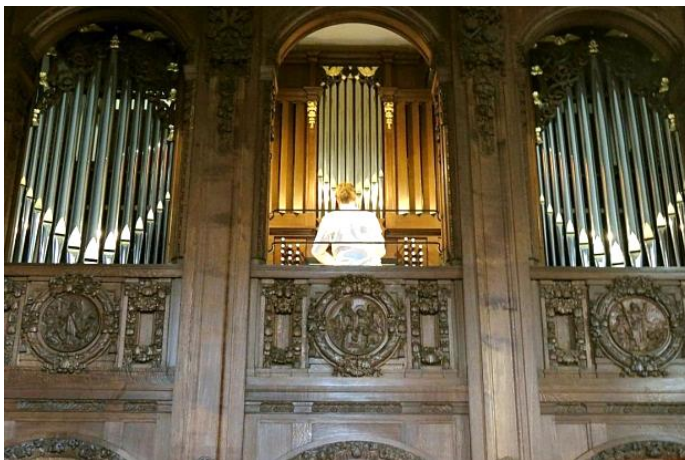
We were to have access to the organs in both college chapels and, to round off the day, we were to return to St John's for Choral Evensong, a service in celebration of St Barnabas.

As always, Denis ensured that the logistics were flawless. The transport delivered us to St John's safely and in sufficient time to enable us first to get a leisurely lunch, prior to re-assembling in the chapel to view and play the organ.

This instrument is a 4 manual Mander¹, built in 1994. To my inexpert ear, it has a very fine sound and a rich palette of tonal colour. Several of the Society were able to demonstrate this very effectively with pieces of varying styles (and volume!) which showed off not only the more delicate tonal qualities of the instrument but also the fiery *Trompeta Real en chamade*. It is my understanding that this instrument is due for replacement in 2024, probably by the Willis organ formerly in St Peter's Church, Brighton². An internet search suggests that the heavily-used Mander is not always as reliable as it might be, and it is also felt by some that it struggles to do justice to the qualities of the St John's choir³. I enjoyed playing it anyway!



Then on to Sidney Sussex. The chapel here is smaller than Sir George Gilbert Scott's masterpiece at St John's, but it does boast a recently installed (2016) Flentrop instrument. There is also a small and interesting chamber organ of 2014 by Taylor and Boody of Staunton, Virginia, USA. We were met by College Junior Organ Scholar Luca Myers who, by way of introduction to the Flentrop, played the final movement of Widor's 6th Organ Symphony for us. Luca then (perhaps quite wisely!) withdrew and left us to it.



The Flentrop Organ

The Flentrop has (again to my inexpert ear) a very clean and clear tone, so much so that it sounds somewhat sterile in my view. Maybe it's a Dutch thing - I don't know. The 2M console is attached and the Swell shutters are either side of the console right next to the player, one set of shutters for each ear. As such, "box closed" is quite loud to the player, whereas "box open" is literally "in your face". This leads to difficulties even for expert players like Luca, as the configuration makes it very difficult for the organist to accurately appreciate how the instrument is sounding in

the body of the chapel, or indeed how the Great is balanced to the Swell. An attempt has been made to compensate for this challenge by a system of microphones suspended from the chapel

ceiling and a set of noise cancelling headphones for the organist - it was quite odd seeing Luca select his registrations and then don a pair of Bose over-the-ear headphones so he could properly hear what he was playing!

I suppose there must have been insurmountable difficulties that made a detached mobile console impractical for this installation, but it seemed very odd to me. Nevertheless, the stalwarts of the NDSO remained undaunted and tackled the supersensitive combination pistons and the *enormous* straight flat pedalboard (Size 11s a distinct advantage) with gusto and with aplomb. I myself (size 8.5 Clarkes⁶) literally stumbled through a short piece by Charles Wood only to realise that Luca had returned and was patiently and tolerantly waiting to play for us again. He showed us what the instrument could *really* do by playing the first movement of the Elgar Sonata in G - after donning the Boses again, of course.

We had also had the opportunity to play the little one-manual chamber organ, and one of the highlights of this was a performance of Pescetti's "Allegro" by one of our young guests on the day, Christine Jiang.

We returned to St John's just before 4pm and took our seats in the chapel for the rehearsal for Choral Evensong. St John's Director of Music, Andrew Nethsingha, had kindly given us permission to observe his rehearsal, which lasted about an hour. It focussed largely on the anthem for that day, Benjamin Britten's "Rejoice in the Lamb" Op. 30, and it was fascinating to see how the interpretation of the anthem was crafted by Dr Nethsingha, who clearly had some very fine singers at his disposal. It was also gratifying to see that even expert singers make mistakes - hands were flying in the air throughout the rehearsal!

Choral Evensong in the chapel was well attended and the anthem went very well indeed, accompanied skilfully by Joseph Wicks. We all had a bit of a sing to the final hymn "The Son of Consolation" (Aurelia) for St Barnabas' Day and then Joseph played the retiring voluntary *Intrada* written specially for him in 2015 by Neil Cox.

We had an uneventful trip back to Nottingham. In addition to Denis's behind-the-scenes organisation, thanks are also due to Roger Harrison for liaising with St John's (where he was a Choral Scholar) and to David Butterworth for liaising with Sidney Sussex.

Notes

1. <https://www.npor.org.uk/NPORView.html?RI=D01634>
2. <https://www.npor.org.uk/NPORView.html?RI=N00951>
3. <https://johnian.joh.cam.ac.uk/articles/love-music/>
4. <https://www.npor.org.uk/NPORView.html?RI=K01359>
5. <https://www.npor.org.uk/NPORView.html?RI=K01237>
6. Other shoe brands are available.



Christine plays the Taylor & Boody

Stephen Cox

Editor's Note: Thank you, Stephen, for your 'maiden' contribution to *Soundboard*. The question of balance is ever-present in the organ world – more so than in any other form of music-making – be it within the instrument itself, or between organ and choir. One soon becomes accustomed to a particular situation after a little trial and error. So it's O.K. for a resident organist, but visitors beware! And this doesn't just apply to classically-orientated instruments such as the Nottingham Marcussens and my GDB, where the Brustwerk position of the second manual is rather obviously 'in your face'. At the opposite end of the tonal spectrum, King's, Westminster Abbey, St Paul's, etc., etc. all demand careful judgement and experience. More locally, I recall giving a recital on the 'old' St Peter's Nottingham organ, which happened to involve quite a lot of interplay between Great and Swell. It was only afterwards that I was (kindly) informed that the Great organ - speaking down the North Aisle – had all but obliterated my efforts on the Swell and Choir! Btw, Steve, the Flentrop pedalboard is of standard straight & concave type, so maybe you do indeed have very small feet! Sidney Sussex did present something of a dilemma, in being confronted by two absolutely superb instruments, yet markedly so contrasting. On top of the Flentrop, I could have spent hours on the little Taylor & Boody, which was exquisite – and of course unique in the UK. The visit to St John's was equally memorable. The norm is that a group visit to a rehearsal in relatively intimate surroundings is a nuisance. The man in charge will pick up every little nuance of sound from their guests – be it the poisonous hiss of an 's' in a muted whisper, the rustle of a Tesco shopping bag, or whatever. During the whole hour of the John's rehearsal, there wasn't a sound from us. It was wonderful, and I felt proud to be among such sensitive and considerate colleagues. The rehearsal itself was something of a revelation, almost the opposite to what we would have expected. The choir's actual singing amounted to about 5% of the time. All the rest was talk; just what we've always been told not to do! But the results spoke for themselves. And it was, after all, a private affair in which we were truly privileged to share. - Ed

Annual General Meeting – St Michael's Church, Bramcote, 18 July

This year's AGM will perhaps be remembered for two things: being combined with the President's Evening and for being held on the eve of the hottest day ever in Nottingham. Was it my imagination or were the roads unusually quiet for a late Monday afternoon on the A52? If they were, the heat did us a favour. The church was cool (relatively) and a pleasant place for a meeting.

The meeting started promptly and proceeded at a good pace. David Hanford reviewed the events of the past year which included David Butterworth on the *Orgelbüchlein* of Bach; the visit to Manchester; the visit to Worksop Priory, Worksop College and Goetze and Gwynne, organ builders; the visit to the Catholic cathedral and Castle Gate Church; Denis Littleton on the music of Franck; the Annual Luncheon which at one point was heading for its third speaker; and the trips to Malvern and Cambridge.

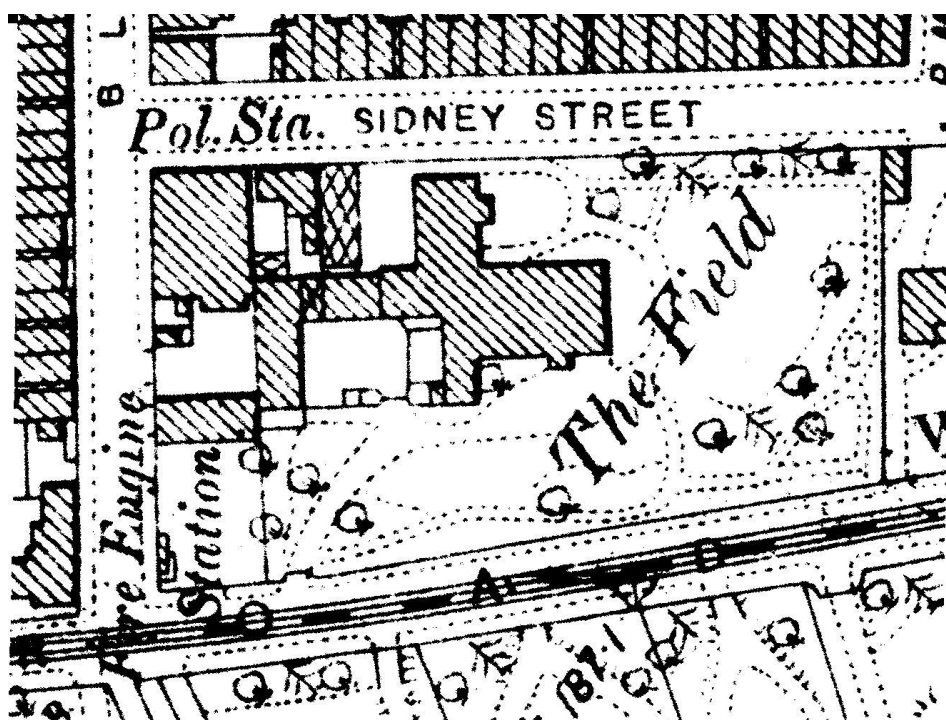
Moving swiftly on, the elections of officers took place. Richard Marsden was installed as President; Reg Aitken becomes President-Elect; Roger Harrison, Ian Watts, David Butterworth and Peter Horne were re-elected to the Committee. Michael Anthony stood down as a Committee member and was thanked by David Hanford for his service over many years. After the meeting, members were invited by the (then) Past President to take tea in the large and interestingly designed modern church hall and take the opportunity to play the organ. This happy juxtaposition of events was brought about by David's recent accident whilst walking in the Lake District some weeks before, which had caused him to postpone his President's Day. Almost everyone could stay afterwards and discuss organ matters and music in general. It all made for a happy occasion helped by a very good tea! Our thanks to all who helped and to David, Karen and the church ladies for organizing it all.

Denis Littleton and Richard Eaton

The Franklin Story – Part 6

Last time, we left off at the point at which George Franklin had settled in his new home at “The Field” in 1895, and his new organ completed (once again) by JJ Binns, being opened on 24 June 1899.

The first thing to do is to set out a most welcome correction regarding The Field and its immediate environs, to which end reference to the picture on page 12 of the May issue would be helpful. For this update, I am most grateful for Denis’s input. By the time George had moved into The Field, the grounds were far from being as extensive as I had understood, according to this extract from an OS map dated 1900.



In fact, as we can see from this extract, a) they went back only as far as Sidney Street (which remains and therefore acts as a useful pointer on the ground to George’s rear boundary); b) to the left, the property stops short of abutting Bloomfield Street, the intervening area being accounted for by public services, namely the ‘Fire Engine Station’ and the ‘Pol. Sta.’ This in turn now means we have an answer to the corner ‘mystery’, the entrance and little window being neither George’s ‘Porter’s Lodge’ nor a public toilet, but the pedestrian entrance to the fire station.

As to this ground plan of ‘The Field’ itself, dated 1900 in the middle of George’s tenure, it is difficult to determine just exactly what comprises George’s property, and what may be parts of the other two stations. If a straight line goes directly down from Osmaston Road, then the answer is simple enough. Indeed, there is an 1883 OS map, (see back page) drawn rather more finely, on which it does look as if this straight line prevails, making ‘The Field’ really well equipped with outhouses, etc. If not, then it remains to be seen whether any clarification can be gained from older records. What does stand out is the one difference between the two: the large ‘wing’ on the (figurative) top side of the main building, seen here. In 1883, it simply isn’t there, and the horseshoe-shaped pathway seen to the right continues right up to – and returns on – the cross-hatched area, completing an oval. I believe this addition to be an organ chamber, added by George, as he had done previously at No. 132.

Notwithstanding the big move in 1895 and the completion of the amazing four-manual Binns

in 1899, the rest of George's life continued apace, with its inevitable ups and downs. We have already noted the premature deaths in 1895 not only of Richard Bernard (4 months) but also of the 18-yr. old George Harold on 10th August in Malta (from TB.) There was a further infant death in 1896 – of an Albert Edward Franklin, whose mother's name, however, is stated as 'Wright', with an address at 53, Williamson Street, Derby (no longer extant.) It is at this point that the waters may or may not be becoming a little murky – if you see what I mean.

A rather happier event in 1898 saw the "Marriage of Miss Gertrude E. Franklin" on 23rd May. The Derbyshire Advertiser & Journal of 27th May reports: "A very pretty wedding took place at King-Street Wesleyan Chapel on Monday, the contracting parties being Miss Gertrude E. Franklin eldest daughter of Councillor G.E. Franklin & Mr Walter Henry Randall son of Mr Randall formerly a draper. It has to be mentioned that for some years the father of the bride has been organist of King Street Chapel. ... Horace Franklin the brides' [sic] brother played Mendelssohn's "Wedding march". After the signing ceremony, a wedding breakfast was provided at "the Field" with a wedding cake. Mr & Mrs Franklin, Miss Dot [nickname for Mabel – age about 10] Franklin the bride's little sister, amused the guests by humorously responding to the toast of "The Bridesmaids".

"Many [guests] attended, including Mr Horace Franklin, Herbert Franklin [William Herbert b. 1882], Miss Eunice Franklin, Claude Franklin [Claude Edward b. 1893], Mr & Mrs W.H. Franklin and Mr & Mrs S [Samuel] Franklin "along with all of the fellow founders and directors of the company and many friends from both sides, including Mr & Mrs JJ Binns of Bramley." Then on 14 June 1899, we have the opening of George's grand organ. It is not clear whether by this point his kleptomaniacal instincts had spread to organs – as it surely had in terms of furniture, ornaments, etc. But at some stage, he had also acquired two more instruments.



James Davis chamber organ

The first of these is a little one-manual in a nice Sheraton-style case apparently built by James Davis c. 1810. Unwittingly, and frustratingly, I have come across this much-travelled organ in no less than three different venues without taking too much interest in it at the time. It now (finally?) resides in Melbourne Parish Church, and is cared for by our member Chris Gray. The other instrument to have come George's way is a (probably deafening) mechanical organ by the

famous firm of Imhof & Muckle. I suspect I know where this lies now, albeit in parts. Further investigation beckons! If you want to know what this might have sounded like in the house, tap into: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jf47KODkrA0> and turn up the volume to maximum! It is questionable whether Mrs Franklin would have been amused.

In 1900, George's political ambitions came under some scrutiny:

Derby Daily Telegraph, 26th November 1900

"THE ARBORETUM WARD ELECTION. As previously stated these columns, Mr B.H. Cox will have to take proceeding by petition in order to secure the seat to which he was elected in the Arboretum Ward, but which he has so far been deprived of through an unfortunate clerical error. The necessary notices have been duly published, and in his petition Mr Cox claims that "he had the majority of lawful votes" over Mr Franklin, and he prays that a recount may be had of the result recorded in favour of your petition and of the said George Edward Franklin respectively, and that it may be determined that the said George Edward Franklin was not duly elected and that your petitioner was duly elected and ought to have been returned." ... "The whole of the voting papers will therefore have to be counted before a Judge in Chambers, and it will be for the Judge to decide, on the votes recorded, the result of the election."

Well, there's never been any doubt that, if one dabbles in politics, one has to take the rough with the smooth. It has ever been thus. But, politics aside, his business continued to flourish, and it is recorded that in the same year its turnover was £400,000.

Murky waters were mentioned above, and the way that the remainder of George's life was to unravel after the turn of the century is shrouded in a degree of uncertainty, from which one can only do one's best to discern that grey area between coincidence and 'proof.' First, let us take a look at the Derby census for 1901 (taken 31 March.)

237 Osmaston Road, Derby

George E. Franklin	Head	51	Director, Public Benefit Boot Co. Employer Elton
Annie Bate	Cook	24	Cook-Domestic
Mary Holt	House Maid	23	Housemaid-Domestic

Censuses for Gillingham show William Herbert in the army; and, for Nantwich, Horace articulated to an auctioneer. Of Mrs Franklin and the rest of the family there is no sign. It could be argued that they were all away, for example visiting the sick William Herbert in Davos, but the balance of probabilities is that they had already upped sticks.

Enter one Eugenie Gertrude Brown, formerly Walker, whom Dave Bean (biographer) suggests may (or may not) at one time have been one of George's domestic staff. She was married to a travelling salesman by the name of George Thomas Brown, and at least for a while they lived in Coventry. The (I didn't say their) first child was born there on 12 June, 1902 and, interestingly, was christened George Edward – coincidence? Their second child was a girl – Eugenie Gertrude – obviously named after the mother, and born on 19 August, 1903. We have found a record of (possibly the same) GTB's marriage to Alice Walker in 1897, who then died prematurely in 1899. It is conjectured that these two Walker girls were in fact sisters, GT Brown effectively defaulting from one to the other.

At around the same time – 1902 – there is evidence that our George's relationships were less than smooth, fuelling speculation that his wife, Elizabeth, may indeed already have left the family home. Either that, or the under-mentioned may have been the 'last straw.'

The Derby Daily Telegraph of 24 February, 1902 published joint notices by George on the one hand and on the other a Mr J.W.C. Perkins of 186 London Road (just at the bottom of Bloomfield Street):

“REWARD. WHEREAS certain false and slanderous statements have recently been circulated in Derby concerning me, the undersigned, GEORGE FRANKLIN, of “The Field”, Osmaston-road, Derby, which are absolutely untrue, and I have been unable to discover the author of the same, I hereby offer the above reward to any person who will give to me or my Solicitors, Messrs. Moody & Woolley, 20. Corn-market, Derby, sufficient information to enable me to successfully prosecute an action against the author of such slanders, or any person or persons repeating the same. G.E. FRANKLIN. 22nd. February, 1902”

“£10 REWARD. WHEREAS certain false and slanderous statements have recently been circulated in Derby concerning my wife, myself, and another person, which are absolutely untrue, and I have as yet been unable to discover the Author of the same, I HEREBY OFFER the above reward to any person who will give to me or to my Solicitors, Messrs. Moody & Woolley, of 20, Corn-market, Derby, sufficient information to enable me and my wife to successfully prosecute an action against the author of such slanders or any person or persons repeating the same. JWC Perkins. 186 London Road, 24th Feb.”

Practically everything seems to have happened in 1902, what with also the premature death of another of the children, William Herbert, on 27 November in the health resort of Davos (Switzerland), of TB. Fortunately we can conclude this edition on a somewhat happier note, with the wedding on 7th June, 1904, of Horace (the organist child) to Rosetta Burdett Turner, at the Parish Church of St Mary Magdalene, Newark.



Horace's wedding

Main row left to right: - Hettie Turner; Gertrude Franklin; George Edward and Elizabeth Franklin (parents); Thomas and Henrietta Turner (parents); Flora Turner; Thomas Turner;

Mabel (Dot) Franklin; Eunice Franklin; Arthur Turner. Note the (sad) body language of the Franklin parents.

Front: - Rosetta Burdett Turner (bride); Horace Franklin. The little flower girl is not recognized.[One wonders if she is one of the missing Franklin children, who didn't make it to the 1911 census? She seems to be very much 'with' Horace in the photo.]

Thomas Turner was an art dealer, so it seems quite probable that George had had dealings with him, and of course Horace himself was now in that line - hence the connection!

It's a nice picture, albeit short on smiles. Wife Elizabeth is either still around or, more likely, has come back specially. But just look at the parental couple's body language. If looks could kill... Better to end this episode with the delightful account in the following day's Newark Newspaper:

“MARRIAGE OF MISS ROSETTA BURDETT TURNER —

A very pretty wedding took place at the Parish Church yesterday morning, when Miss Rosetta Burdett Turner, the well-known vocalist, daughter of Mr Thos. Turner of Baldertongate, Newark, was married to Mr Horace Franklin, son of Mr G E Franklin, The Field, Derby, who is familiar to Newarkeers as an exhibitor of trotting ponies at the local Agricultural Show, amongst them being those magnificent animals Champion Queen Gobang, Champion Lord Gobang, Champion Lady Gobang and Grand Duchess Gobang, all frequent prize winners. Much interest was manifested in the event, and a large crowd assembled to witness the arrival of the bridal party. The bride was driven to Church in an open landau, drawn by four matched greys, ridden by postilions in livery, the equipage having been purchased from the Duke of Portland. She was attired in an empire gown of pale pink *crepe de chine* over silk, ornamented with silk lace, the dress being a lovely creation direct from Paris, which was secured by Messrs Peter Robinson Ltd, London. Instead of carrying the usual bouquet, she had a parasol en site [sic], a large bunch of roses being attached to the handle. The bridesmaids were Miss Phyllis Randall, who was dressed in a long white satin empire gown with pale-blue *crepe de chine* empire bonnet, and Miss Eunice Franklin, Miss Dot Franklin (sisters of the bridegroom), Miss Henrietta Turner, and Miss Gertrude Turner (sisters of the bride), who were all robed alike in Swiss costumes in crimson and white, with crimson picture hats, which were also supplied by Messrs Peter Robinson Ltd. Mr J C Turner officiated as best man, and the bride was given away by her father. The ceremony was performed by the Vicar of Newark, at the conclusion of which a wedding march was played by W T Wright ARCO. As the happy pair left the church the bells rang out a merry peal, and flowers were strewn in the bride's path by a number of her music pupils, with whom she is very popular. On arrival at her father's house she was greeted with 'The Welcome to the Bride' from the Children's Opera, 'The Hawthorn Glen', and a short time after Mr and Mrs Franklin entrained at the Great Northern Station en route for Scotland, where the honeymoon will be spent. The bride's travelling dress was a pale grey *crepe de chine*, with long fawn coat with antique silk collar, and large picture hat to match. The presents were a pleasing and costly selection and included a pair of silver flower vases from her pupils at Miss Wallis's school ... [there follows an elaborate and long list of gifts and their donors].

Next time: The disposal of the grand Binns organ and much more...

Some Wicked Words

“Becoming a grandfather is like getting a telegram from the mortuary”

Martin Amis

“Friends are God's apology for relations”

Hugh Kingsmill

“Too many pieces of music finish too long after the end”

Igor Stravinsky

Subscriptions

Members will recall that subscriptions are due for 2022/3. At the AGM it was agreed that subscriptions should be raised from £20 to £25. This is the first increase in several years. Please pay your sub soon (now). It would be very good to have them all in by the end of October.

A few members have already paid by direct bank transfer – unfortunately at the old rate! Perhaps those few of you who have done this could send another £5! But thanks for being so prompt!

Please pay, ideally by cheque payable to: “Nottingham and District Society of Organists” and send to me at The Gables, Burden Lane, Shelford, Notts. NG12 1EF

or alternately by bank transfer to: Nottingham and District Society of Organists
Sort Code 09-01-54 Account number 08442808

Many thanks.

Richard Eaton (Hon Treasurer NDSO)

Archive of Recorded Church Music – Pt. iii (Conclusion)

The last acoustic recording to be made without a microphone was a set of four records of Choral Mattins from St George’s Chapel, Windsor, directed by Edmund H Fellowes. Recorded at the Gramophone Company studio in Hayes, Middlesex in 1924, it’s a misnomer to say ‘the choir’, as they couldn’t all fit round the horn! The choir only consisted of six senior choristers, one alto, one tenor and one bass.

Two years later, on 20 March 1926, the HMV mobile recording van rolled up to the Chapel Royal and the first electrical recording of an entire choir using microphones was produced. As well as the dramatic improvement in sound quality, two other major differences were apparent. Firstly, the reverberation and acoustics of the building added to the overall effect, and secondly, the organ was being used, not a wheezy studio harmonium.

The floodgates were opened and choirs clamoured to record. A year after the Chapel Royal recording there came one of the most famous records of all time: the 15-year-old Ernest Lough and the Temple Church Choir, directed by George Thalben-Ball, recorded Mendelssohn’s *Hear my Prayer* on 5 April 1927. During the first eight months a staggering half million records were sold, and six presses worked 24 hours a day at the HMV factory to keep up with demand.

To the great consternation of HMV, the metal stampers which pressed the records began to wear out, so it was decided that a new recording would have to be made, and this was done in great secrecy on 30 March 1928. Ernest Lough was then 16 years old.

There are significant differences between the recordings, but no one seemed to notice ... it was just Ernest Lough singing *Hear my Prayer*. Ernest himself preferred the first version, describing his voice as ‘crisper’.

One could say that Ernest Lough was the first boy ‘super-star’ and the cult of solo treble recording was born. Record companies frantically tried to find the



A classic collector's item

next great ‘boy-soprano’ voice and the competition was intense. However, it wasn’t just the solo voice that appealed to the public – they wanted to hear more of our great choirs, and so during the 1930s many of these choirs made their debut in front of the microphone. Cathedrals, churches, collegiate chapel and Royal Peculiar choirs, together with prep and public school chapel choirs all wanted to record.

St Nicolas College, Chislehurst, directed by Sir Sydney Nicholson, issued 13 records in 1939 but later that year war was declared, which meant an abrupt end to this first golden age of recording. No gramophone records from robed choirs were issued during the war years, but not even the Luftwaffe could silence the weekly broadcasts of BBC *Choral Evensong*, which mostly came from King’s College Cambridge and New College Oxford.

When the war ended, the record companies and choirs once again turned their attention to recording, and in 1949 Columbia Records embarked on an ambitious project, their famous *Anthology of English Church Music*, featuring some of the most famous choirs of the day. Between 1949 and 1954 a total of 48 records was issued with accompanying booklets. This was to be the flagship of Columbia Records.

Unfortunately, the timing could not have been worse, as Columbia, greatly lacking in foresight, chose to record the series on 78rpm. By the time the series was complete, the 78rpm record had almost been superseded by the LP – all the more ironic as Columbia Records invented the LP! To add to their woes, the singing from most of the choirs was savaged by the critics. Today, however, these records are considered an extraordinary achievement and a great historical legacy.

This brings us neatly to the end of the first part of our story, when for 50 years or so, the 78rpm gramophone record reigned supreme, leaving a legacy of choir recordings which is only now being fully appreciated. The LP explosion was to follow.

Visit the Archive’s website, www.recordedchurchmusic.org, to find out about the work of the Archive and to listen to historic recordings. You will also find there a link to the YouTube music channel onto which is uploaded rare and interesting recordings from the Archive each week.

Colin Brownlee

Beat that, St Pancras!

There’s nothing quite like a communal musical instrument in a London train station!.. At St Pancras International, you can usually find a lone commuter dusting off their old ‘Chopsticks’ chords on the station’s battered piano, or a couple spontaneously playing a duet of ‘Heart and Soul’ in a horrible Richard Curtis-style meet-cute moment.

Well, St Pancras’s notorious joanna has got a new contender for London’s commuter-carolling crown. A 250-pipe organ has been installed at London Bridge station to serenade travellers with its majestically sonorous notes as they speedwalk to the Jubilee line. The organ officially opened to the public on Saturday, July 30. It was installed on July 17, and was soon discovered by one of the UK’s most celebrated young organists, Anna Lapwood, 27, who played for five minutes and wooed the crowd.



All change, please

Martin Renshaw, organ restorer and founder of the charity [Pipe Up for Pipe Organs](#), said: ‘She rocked up and I thought: “Oh, not another one.” I hadn’t recognised her but it soon became apparent who she was. She played absolutely brilliantly, it was lovely.’

Lapwood, Director of Music at Pembroke College, Cambridge said: “I had been told about it and just went to see if I could find it and saw it behind a barrier and they let me have a play.”

As parish churches close across the country, many historic organs are left abandoned and in need of a new home. Pipe Up for Pipe Organs works to rescue threatened pipe organs by restoring them in situ or rehoming them. This lucky example was saved from the United Reformed Church in Whetstone, north London. It was made around 1880 and has a swell box and a full range of pedal pipes (technical organ-type chat), powered by its 30-note pedal keyboard.

As the organ continues its life in the slightly less sacred home of London Bridge station, it will be kept company by the soft waft of commuter sweat as squiffy Londoners make their way home from Thursday drinkies with the girlies.

Ellie Muir

News and Notes

First, a warm welcome to further new NDSO members. They are Martin Rhodes; Stuart Cowell; Sophie Mattern (who attends the Birmingham Junior Conservatoire) as a Junior member; Christine Jiang (sister of Ascend) as a Junior Member, and Isabelle Lawes as a Student member, who is about to take up a place at Glasgow University to read Music and Theology. Christine already has Grade VI Piano under her belt. Isabelle has achieved Grade VIII on piano (merit) and Grade VIII Singing (distinction), as well as various grades on most other instruments, having clocked up a total number of 33 ABRSM examinations to date.

I’m delighted to report that our ex-President, Neil Page, has been making a remarkable recovery from his illness touched on in the last issue of *Soundboard*; so much so that he is back at home, driving, and – most importantly – back in the saddle at St Barnabas Cathedral. Unfortunately, the Cathedral will shortly be closed for several months for a major restoration, but I am sure that such restrictions will do nothing to cramp Neil’s positive style, and that the restoration itself will ultimately be to the benefit of all.

Our Chaplain, Fr Stephen Dye has been unwell off and on, and is undergoing a course of pills and injections and other things sent to try us; the long-term prognosis seems pretty good, and Fr Stephen is taking all the attention in his stride. We wish you all the best, Stephen, in the coming months.

Turning our attention to appointments, movements, et al, one in particular must inevitably stand out in our minds, given not only extensive recent coverage in these pages, but also bearing in mind our wonderful trip to St John’s Cambridge in June ... Andrew Nethsingha is leaving his coveted position there - to become Master of the Music at Westminster Abbey. James O’Donnell is seeking a new life at Yale University, as Professor of the School of Music and of the Yale Institute of Sacred Music. In a sense, both of these ‘shuffles’ could be considered a real disappointment, because each in his own individual way has brought his choir – and his individual respective charges – to the dizzyest of heights. One almost feels one doesn’t want to let go! But of course it is entirely understandable that such a creative person as, for example, James, should seek to tread pastures new after twenty-three years in the same place. As to the future at St John’s, it will be fascinating to know of the appointed successor, bearing in mind

the unbroken string of brilliance which will have preceded them, in the persons of Dr George Guest, Sir Christopher Robinson and David Hill. Of course, this isn't the only question. Nethsingha leaves the post with a legacy of change, part complete, part in the offing. Likely prediction is that the introduction of girls to the choir's famous top-line will be sustained – the College will probably insist on that. The projected replacement of the Mander with the Father Willis from St Peter's Brighton is perhaps slightly less secure. Watch that space indeed!

Following Covid-related delays, the much-awaited new Fratelli Ruffati organ for Pershore Abbey is expected to be installed in the period January – March, 2023. Meantime, associated work is being completed to the triforium and blower room, and the two slightly projecting platforms (in two adjacent bays) are already *in situ*.

Ernest Hart, the brilliant mastermind behind the famous Copeman Hart name, died in January of this year, aged 87. A leader in his electronic field, Ernest was a gentleman of the first order, hard-working and devoted to the cause, but equally and vocally appreciative of good pipe organs. The best known example of his work in the East Midlands is probably his installation in the Royal Concert Hall, Nottingham.

The irrepressible Will Fraser is bringing his latest gargantuan project to a triumphant conclusion: *Bach and Expression*. The first of three volumes is expected in September, with the remaining two to follow soon after, these being respectively *Orgelbüchlein Plus* and *The Great Toccata*. All can currently be purchased at nicely discounted pre-publication prices. Well worth a look on their website.

Members will recall Andrew Reid, guest of honour at a recent Annual Luncheon, as Director of Harrison & Harrison, and formerly Director of the Royal School of Church Music. Andrew is now retiring in order to return to what has been described as 'practical music-making', whilst his chair is taken by H&H's head voicer, Andrew Scott. Scott has risen through the ranks with remarkable alacrity; at the time of our Albert Hall restoration, his name was barely known outside the firm. In fact, amongst other things, he is an excellent organist, having for a while held the prestigious post of Director of Music of Croydon Parish Church. Of course, Mark Venning continues as an active member of the board.

Dr David Frostick, a key figure in modern British organ building, has passed away at the age of 73. He started his career at N.P. Mander, Ltd, which is where your Editor first met him as a junior voicer, freshly elevated from apprentice status; one recalls him telling the story of what a total mess he made of his first pipe! Fluework led to reed work, in which he quickly became an acknowledged master. Eventually, he left Manders to set up on his own, in which capacity he remained in great demand. Having been responsible for the St Paul's West End battery of reeds (by which Her (late) Majesty is reported to have been not amused), he went on to do much work for William Drake, David Wells, Ken Tickell, Robin Jennings (newly of Derby Cathedral fame) and many others. Nor was he backward in sharing his expertise with others; his brief survey of reeds and their problems in an early issue of the BIOS Newsletter is a model of its kind.



The shallot must be perfectly flat

We are also sorry to note the deaths of a further two very eminent figures in the world of church and organ music. Richard Seal passed away on 19th July. He was for many years Organist and Master of the Choristers of Salisbury Cathedral, and is particularly noted for introducing the first girls' choir into a UK cathedral. It is uncertain, however, whether it was he who was

responsible for introducing those green cassocks. Then, to some people, Martin How was the RSCM, that august institution with whom he had been continuously involved since right back in 1955. He died a few days after Richard, on 25 July. He is noted for, amongst other things, creating the famous *Choristers' Training Scheme* (more recently re-titled *Voice for Life*.) A lot of people owe an enormous debt of gratitude to these two gentlemen.

St Anne's Church, Derby (Whitecross St., Derby, DE1 3NB)

Saturday 24th September 2022, 2.00 – 4.00pm

Playing Bach

A seminar for organists with

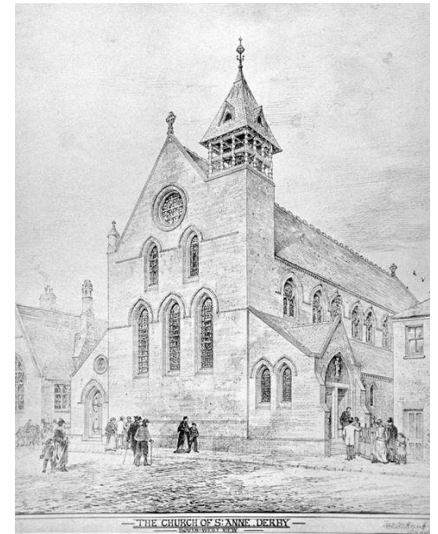
Alexander Binns

(Director of Music at Derby Cathedral)

Older organists will remember being taught to play Bach's music basically legato, to pedal it with toe and heel, and to make frequent changes of registration. But then a new historical awareness challenged those ideas. A non-legato touch was required; we were to use our toes only; and changes of registration in the middle of a piece were forbidden. More recently, that rather dogmatic view has given way to something more tolerant, which recognises the impossibility of achieving 'authenticity.'

All of this though can leave us feeling rather unsure. How can we play Bach so as to make this incomparable music, so brilliant and so expressive, live anew and inspire people today? Alex, a prize-winning alumnus of the Royal Academy of Music, has been described as 'one of our finest young players'. Who better to help us answer our questions? Besides speaking and demonstrating at the console, he will be leading an informal discussion, which will doubtless continue over afternoon tea.

Admission is £7.50 and this includes tea. For catering purposes, please let us know you are coming by contacting T. Corfield on 01332 367736 (there is an answer-phone) or via email: tandrcorfield@btinternet.com.



Five things you may or may not have known about opera

- The term 'opera' originates from the Latin word *opus*, meaning work, and also from the full Italian phrase *opera in musica*.
- At the end of an opera, you should shout 'bravo' for a man and 'brava' for a woman. For a group of singers, the plural 'bravi' is expected.
- Many of the first opera houses were synonymous with unruly behaviour and debauchery. The combination of candles, perfume, heavy perspiration and a severe lack of ventilation made it rather a ripe experience.
- The expression "it ain't over till the fat lady sings" refers to the conclusion of Wagner's four-part *Der Ring des Nibelungen*. In it, the 'fat lady' sings for twenty minutes as an epic finale to the 16-hour saga.
- Loud opera singers match the shape of their throats to the shape of the ear canal, in order to create a sound that fits the human ear perfectly. This technique is known as the singer's formant.

The Halberstadt Code



Organist Julian Lembke adds a pipe to the organ of the John Cage Organ Project during a chord change at the St Burchardi church in Halberstadt, Germany on Saturday. Photograph: Markus Schreiber/ AP

Hundreds of fans recently attended a special kind of musical happening at a church in Germany: a chord change in an organ piece that is supposed to last for an entirety of 639 years.



Visitors queuing in front of the Burchardi church to experience the change of sound of the John Cage Organ Foundation on Saturday. Photograph: Matthias Bein/ AP

The performance of the Organ/ASLSP (As Slow As Possible) composition began in September 2001 at the St Burchardi church in the eastern town of Halberstadt and is supposed to end in 2640 — if all goes well.

The music piece by the American composer **John Cage** is played on a special organ inside the medieval church. The last sound has been the same one for the last six years and 11 months,

and therefore the chord change was a big event among fans of the John Cage Organ Project. A chord change means that the sound of the organ pipes changes either because new sounds are added or existing sounds end. On Saturday, two new organ pipes were added.

Organisers say the performance is “one of the slowest realisations of a piece of organ music”. A compressor in the basement is used to blow air into the organ to create a continuous sound. When a chord change happens, it’s done manually. On Saturday, soprano singer Johanna Vargas and organist Julian Lembke changed the chord.

The new sound reminded some listeners of the metallic buzz inside a big ship’s engine room. The most recent chord change was scheduled for 5 February 2022, the German news agency DPA reported.

When the piece officially started on 5 September 2001, it began without any sound. It was only on 5 February 2003, the day of the first chord change, that the first organ pipe chords could actually be heard inside the church.

Cage was born in Los Angeles in 1912 and died in New York in 1992. He is known not only as a composer, but also as a music theorist, artist and philosopher.

The St Burchardi church has a long, checkered, history. It was built around 1050 and was used for more than 600 years as a Cistercian monastery. It was partially destroyed during the Thirty Years’ War, later rebuilt, at some point secularised and over the centuries also served as a barn, a distillery and a pig sty, the John Cage Organ Project said on its website.

Chord changes usually draw several thousand visitors to Halberstadt but, because of the coronavirus pandemic, the number of guests allowed in the church was limited this year.

... and some more definitions from the Uxbridge English Dictionary ...

Specimen	<i>Italian astronauts</i>
Typhoon	<i>Tea that gives you wind</i>
Arson	<i>To sit on</i>
Emotions	<i>Virtual dumps</i>
Iconoclast	<i>A rubber band for securing religious paintings</i>
Optical	<i>To giggle during surgery</i>
Stifle	<i>No room in the pig-sty</i>
Otter	<i>Nice weather in Yorkshire</i>
Pulpit	<i>What to do with a Geoffrey Archer novel</i>
Balderdash	<i>Fast receding hairline</i>

Grateful thanks to Denis Littleton, Richard Marsden and Mei Jiang
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Pre-Franklin (1883) view of The Field without organ chamber.

A finer drawing of George's house at 237 Osmaston Road (see page 8 for later comparison)