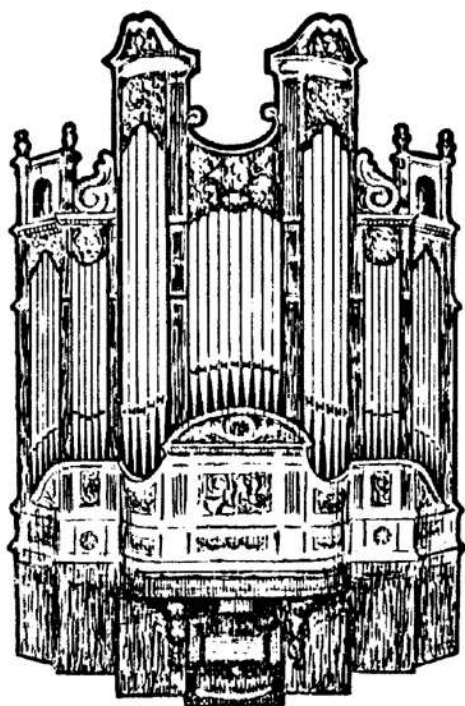


The Berkshire Organist

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Neither the Editors nor the Association accept any responsibility for opinions expressed in this Journal

2. THE BERKSHIRE ORGANISTS' ASSOCIATION

Registered Charity No.298088

The Berkshire Organists' Association was founded at a meeting held on 19 April 1921, arranged by Mr. Percy Scrivener (Founder President) and Mr. Archibald Lusty, who subsequently served as Secretary for 46 years. The Association was affiliated to the National Union of Organists' Associations, which became the Incorporated Association of Organists in 1929, and to which we are still affiliated. In 1988 we became a registered charity.

Our aims as an Association are:

- to promote the art of playing the organ
- to encourage the public to appreciate organ music
- to provide help and advice to church musicians
- to enable organists to meet each other.

These aims are of equal importance, and we aim to achieve them in three ways.

(a) Organising events for members.

We endeavour to cater for as many tastes as possible by promoting organ recitals and concerts, master classes, talks on organs, discussions on church music, publishers evenings, choir workshops, social evenings and visits to interesting organs.

Starting in 1965 we arranged regular celebrity recitals on the historic Father Willis organ in the Reading Concert Hall until these were suspended when the Hall was closed prior to restoration. They have been resumed under the auspices of the Borough Council since the restoration of the Concert Hall in 2000.

(b) Communication with members.

We issue a newsletter approximately every two months, and each year since 1948 we have published this magazine which has few equals amongst other organists' associations.

(c) Exercising an influence in the outside world.

We consider it important to be, and be seen to be, a source of help and advice to all organists and church musicians. We are striving to raise our profile in Berkshire, along with the Newbury and Windsor Associations, in order to involve as many people as possible in achieving the four aims listed above.



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4. Editorial

Although I have done a fair amount of editing over the years, I have never before edited a magazine on a topic about which I know almost nothing! However I have realised that my ignorance may have some positive aspects in that I have been able to look at the range of fascinating articles sent in to me with the detachment of the outsider. I have also learned a surprising amount about organs and organ music and of those who play organs! There have, of course, been some difficulties, since I was totally unfamiliar with the Organization and the way it worked, and the fact that there was no technical expert to help us prepare material for printing was a problem. However we struggled through, and here I need to pay tribute to Alan Kent who worked tirelessly to extract promised articles from various contributors and to my husband Malcolm Rigg, who was inveigled into helping with the layout difficulties and whose computer skills meant that we could finally deliver a completed pdf file to the printer. Thanks are also due to Jim Wooldridge, Michael Pickett and Michael Humphries who took on the onerous task of proof reading the finished journal.

On a practical matter, it would be helpful in the future if submissions to the magazine could be sent electronically in Word format. Images can be sent separately, but again it would be helpful if preferred location in the text is specified.

I do hope that you all enjoy reading the magazine.

Patricia Rigg

5. Introduction from the President

It is with enormous pleasure that I commend the 2010 issue of *The Berkshire Organist* to all members of the Association and to others who may read or use it.

This year we have a different editorial team in place, headed by Patricia Rigg, our new editor, who comes to us from outside the Association and so has approached the task from an independent viewpoint. We welcome Pat most warmly and hope that this will be the start of a long and fruitful partnership. An editorial team has assisted as and when required, in particular Alan Kent and Roger Bartlett, together with Don Hickson and Michael Humphries.

I think we would all want to extend a big vote of thanks to Graham Ireland, who has stood down as editor after several years. We owe Graham a tremendous debt of gratitude for the work he has put into *The Berkshire Organist*. It is not always realized what a considerable amount of hard work goes into such a job which entails hours, days and months of graft. Thank you, Graham, very much indeed.

David Pether, who has provided technical support for the printing of the journal, also stood down after some years, mainly owing to his many and various commitments, to say nothing of his own daytime work. Again, this post demands considerable time and effort. This year Malcolm Rigg has provided this support.

Please read and enjoy the B. O. and let members of the committee know what you think. It is your publication and, indirectly, it is you, the members, who are paying for it. We obviously need to maintain the high standards achieved by our predecessors and I believe we have done this with the 2010 issue.

Have a good and enjoyable read.

Ian May

6. President's Report on the AGM May 8th 2010

At the outset of this report I should like to say a big 'thank-you' to a number of people; to Malcolm Harding and Don Hickson for arranging this venue at Waltham St Lawrence, to the church authorities, the vicar and to Malcolm Harding for giving the A.G.M. recital, helped by his organ scholar.

I would like to begin by reviewing the past year and highlighting what, to me, have been some of the main events:

1. The Berkshire Maestros' Day (July 11th). Most of the planning of this event took place last year and my predecessor put in a large amount of work to ensure its success. This was certainly a feature of the year, as a result of which we gained some new young members.
2. Heritage Day and Presidential Service (Sept 11th). David Pether gave several demonstrations of the Father Willis in the Concert Hall and later that day there was a revival of the Presidential Service at St Giles' Church, Reading, taking the form of Choral Evensong, tea and 'cello recital. It was most worthwhile, although disappointing from the point of attendance, but certainly worth persisting with.
3. Study Tour to Chichester, Portsmouth and I.O.W. (Oct 7th - 10th). For me the annual study tour is always one of the highlights of the B. O. A. year and this year was especially memorable for the organs, the people we met and the camaraderie. It is distinctly possible that the I. O. W. association might visit us sometime in the next year.
4. Annual Dinner (Nov 7th). Once again this was at Beenham with guest speaker, Timothy Byram-Wigfield (Director of Music, St George's Chapel, Windsor). A very pleasant, convivial evening.
5. The President's afternoon (Jan 9th). This had to be cancelled because of the weather and eventually took place on April 24th at Emmanuel Church. This consisted of a short concert, a quiz and tea. A successful afternoon, but we had picked a busy Saturday so

the attendance was down.

6. The Association has been responsible for a number of visits over the course of the last year, including a trip to Oxford and to the Foundling Hospital, London. Sincere thanks are due to the Programme Committee led by Christine Wells.

7. We also encourage visits from other organist associations and we welcomed members of the Surrey O. A. on February 13th this year. They enjoyed a busy day visiting the Concert Hall, St Giles' Church and St James' R. C. Church.

8. There has been a lot of activity on the recital front; two celebrity concerts and several lunchtime recitals at the Concert Hall, a local recital series and the Friday lunch-time recitals at the Minster.

9. There have been changes regarding The Berkshire Organist journal. Graham Ireland resigned as editor after many years of very hard work.

As President I wrote to him officially to thank and commend him for all his hard work and time. David Pether has also stood down, but has been available when needed for advice and comment.

We have been exceedingly fortunate in appointing Patricia Rigg as editor and she has worked enthusiastically on producing the 2010 issue. An impressive number of articles have been submitted and the journal, for this year, is well in hand.

An 'ad hoc' editorial committee has been set up to assist as and when required. I must report at this juncture that Alan and Roger have given invaluable help with B. O. and deserve our grateful thanks.

I must at this point thank the officers of the B. O. A., all the members of the committee and sub-committees for all their hard work, enthusiasm and interest. It makes so much difference when the work of any association or society is carried with positive attitudes, friendliness and a willingness to do the best for the well-being of the membership. It is a privilege for me to work with such a group of people.

An A. G. M., of necessity, looks back over the previous year but I would just like to give you a couple of future events to whet your appetites;

- the study tour to Durham and the North East at the start of October
- a talk by Malcolm Riley on Percy Whitlock in January
- Concert Hall Celebrity recitals by Carlo Curley and Dame Gillian Weir

Please continue to support the Association as much as you are able.

All good wishes, Ian

6.1 Elections and AGM Recital

This year the Association held its Annual General Meeting in the ancient and beautiful Parish Church in Waltham St Lawrence. This was an idyllic setting, where the church is one of the focal points in the centre of this picturesque village, the other being the equally attractive and historic Bell public house.

Twenty or so members assembled for the formal part of the day, which consisted of the AGM itself. In their reports the President (Ian May) and Secretary (Christopher Cipkin) both referred to the successful year just past and looked forward to equal success to come. Particular reference was made to the Pipes Aloud event in the Town Hall, which was extremely well received and was one of the largest events ever promoted by the Association. The amount of work involved in this event by many members was duly recognised. The Treasurer also reported a reasonably comfortable year, but warned that with the effects of inflation increasing, there was a need for prudence in expenditure and it may be that an increase in subscription rates could be recommended at next year's AGM.

When the Agenda reached the Election/Confirmation of Appointments items, all existing Officers including the Committee were re-elected with the necessary proposers and seconders. As we are now entering Ian May's second year as President, Jill York was unanimously appointed as President Elect. The only other change is that David Duvall was appointed as Examiner of Accounts. The names of all Officers and Committee members appear elsewhere in this Journal.

With the business of the day over, the members adjourned for a few refreshments, before the day concluded with an organ recital by Malcolm Harding, Director of Music at Waltham St Lawrence. This gave us the opportunity to hear the church's historic Father Willis, dating from the 1860s and, for all practical purposes, still unaltered in character. Because of the slight signs of aging and the necessity for other major work in the church itself, the organ had had a major refurbishment a few years ago by BOA Member Tony Foster-Waite and was in pretty good shape. Unusually, there is, in the church, a brand new single manual 4 rank Tickell chamber organ, which is the personal property of Malcolm Harding. The recital began with a duet using both organs, with the Tickell being played by Sam Whiteside, the organ scholar there. This was a delightful performance and the balance between the two organs was so delicately matched that one could easily believe they were designed that way. For the rest of the programme Malcolm Harding demonstrated the many varied colours that can be obtained on the Willis, by playing three varied short Chorale Preludes, before ending with Mendelssohn's second Sonata, which gave us an insight into how strong the full organ was.

This concluded the day and after due recording of thanks to all involved, we all went home, hopefully anticipating another successful year in the Association's history.

Don Hickson

6.2 Annual Dinner 2009

The Annual Association Dinner was held on 7th November at 'The Six Bells' at Beenham. Once again we were treated to an excellent 3 course dinner with an extra Sorbet, 'à la française'. With lots of choice for all, we submitted our intended requests in advance and Derek Guy (who organised the event) had the presence of mind to print out everyone's requests in case of forgetfulness! Although the date was 7th November, there were no interruptions whatsoever from nearby firework displays, as happened at another location a few years ago.

We were pleased to welcome Tim Byram-Wigfield, Director of Music at St George's Chapel, Windsor Castle as our guest. He gave us a short but very amusing talk, recounting briefly his duties, musical and non-musical, at the Chapel. The latter extends to the 'Duty of Care' towards his choristers. He mentioned that for those services attended by Her Majesty the Queen, it was necessary to submit at least two suggestions for the service music. Her Majesty, having been presented with the music copies then hummed through the tunes and made the choice. In response to a question as to whether Her Majesty could actually read music, Tim pointed out that a predecessor of his, Sir William Harris, used to teach the piano to both her, as Princess Elizabeth, and her sister Princess Margaret. Tim went on to mention an amusing anecdote about Francis Jackson at York Minster, before finishing by commending to us the essays written by the great pianist Alfred Brendel.

On behalf of us all, the President warmly thanked Tim for being with us, after which conversation continued to flow freely indicating a thoroughly enjoyable and convivial evening.

Jonathan Holl

7. Obituary

7.1 Leslie Davis R. I. P.

Leslie Davis was, over very many years, a pillar of the Berkshire Organists' Association and his contribution and influence on the work of the Association was very considerable. Leslie passed away last year and his funeral was at St Michael's Church, Tilehurst, on July 9th. I was privileged to be asked to give one of the tributes. The following is a synopsis of that tribute:

To do justice to someone a week short of his ninety-ninth birthday is difficult, and to do justice to someone who has packed so much into his life is totally impossible. All I can do is to give a few snapshots of his musical career.

Leslie was born in 1910 into a musical family who both sang and played the piano. The family owned two music shops at one stage and musical evenings on a Sunday were a feature of his formative years. Leslie started piano lessons at four years old, being taught by family members and George Pettingell, organist of Holy Trinity, Reading. Organ lessons followed when he was twelve. During these early years he was a choirboy at All Saints, Reading and Holy Trinity. From the age of seventeen he attended Reading University for three years, studying music. We next hear of Leslie in 1931 at Bristol where he had a job at the Regent Cinema as organist, accompanying the silent films. He had a great love of cinema organs and he felt it a great shame when sound films appeared and the cinema organist went out of business. Many years later, as part of his eightieth birthday celebrations, Leslie went to Blackpool Tower to play the mighty Wurlitzer.

After his work with the silent films, Leslie returned to Reading and took up work as a cost accountant and then did war service when WW II broke out. Before and after the war he was organist at Finchampstead before moving to Sonning church in 1947. At Sonning he built up a good choir, using the boys of Bluecoat School and he revived various local choir festivals..

In 1953 he became organist and choirmaster at Christchurch Reading, a position he occupied for the next forty-one years. At Christchurch Leslie built up an excellent choir which included cathedral visits in its itinerary

and during these years he literally taught hundreds of choir pupils. Whilst at Christchurch he put on and took part in many concerts, often involving professional musicians.

Leslie had become a member of the B. O. A. and, indeed, was its President from 1969-1971 and then editor of *The Berkshire Organist*. Over the years he did much valuable work for the Association. He became honorary borough organist in 1981 and presided over the Father Willis in the Town Hall for mayor-making ceremonies and many other functions.

Sometime during the 1970s he became an organist at Reading Crematorium: Monday was his day and he would prepare a voluntary for each service, taking his responsibilities most seriously. Over recent years he became unhappy with the increasing use of cassettes and then CDs. On January 8th 1995 at the age of eighty-four, he retired from Christchurch; his final service was a special Evensong attended by the Mayor. However, he soon got itchy feet and was organist at St Michael's, Tilehurst, from 1995 to 2001. After this he played at various churches, in particular at Englefield on the first Sunday of the month. Leslie's last service at Englefield was on June 1st 2008 and his last Monday at Reading Crematorium was on June 2nd, the day before his unfortunate accident in Friar Street. He never really recovered from this and passed away about a year later. He was buried in St Michael's churchyard with his beloved wife.

We shall probably never see the like of Leslie again: a wonderfully talented musician, prepared to pass on his knowledge to others and a generous person as well. His musical abilities and achievements rubbed off on many people and inspired them. Countless numbers were the better for knowing him.

May he rest in peace and rise in glory.

Ian May

8. Reading Town Hall Lunchtime Organ Recitals

8.1 Nick Lee of Eton College

The lunchtime Organ Recital was given by Nick Lee of Eton College on July 8th 2009. The Programme was:

Fantasia and Fugue in C Minor
BWV 537

J S Bach

Trio on 'Herr Jesu Christ dich
Zu uns Wend' BWV 655

J S Bach

Rhapsody No 3 in C sharp minor
Op.17 No. 3

Herbert Howells

Rhosymedre (from Three Preludes
Founded on Welsh Hymn tunes)

Ralph Vaughan Williams

Prelude and Fugue on B.A.C.H.

Franz Liszt

Our 16 year old recitalist continued the recitals in this series given by music scholars of Eton College. Each year one wonders if the College will be able to produce another one of equal ability – and, yes, they can! The striking thing about them is the maturity of their performances. Of course they do have the advantage of good facilities, but also of having David Goode as their instrumental tutor and it shows. In writing these notes one really does feel it unnecessary to qualify comments with the prefix 'young player'.

Nick Lee commenced by playing two Bach works without fireworks and with a restrained registration. I know some would say this is not the correct approach for this instrument, but for me it most certainly is and provided an excellent opening to this recital. At this point a mention must be made of Nick's page turner. The Howells requires many stop changes, something not easy to achieve with the Willis. The page turner provided considerable registration aid for this work, and also in the Liszt, the two working well together. It says much for their abilities that both works came over magnificently; many page turners would have blenched at coping with the stops on this scale and page turning.

The Vaughan Williams provided a complete contrast. I would have liked a little more legato and rubato in the interpretation, but that's only my opinion. The Liszt was delivered with much bravura but not too much. Many players really go to town with Liszt but I believe it is not necessary. Nick has all the technique required to manage this rather difficult work and gave us a performance of note. This was indeed another recital that shows that hearing works 'live' provides an experience difficult to achieve with a CD.

At the end of the recital Nick acknowledged both his page turner, who was given well earned applause for his noble efforts, and the instrument. And indeed what a superb instrument this is, with its ability to bring out the best in players.

For some reason the audience numbers were down slightly at 84, but it was still an attendance many organizers would envy. However it is a pity that more did not come, both for the performance itself, but also because our younger players in particular need our encouragement and support.

Yet again Eton has provided us with a marvellous conclusion to our Lunchtime Series. This year I was able to attend all the recitals, plus the evening ones and a splendid year it has been at the Concert Hall. Our thanks are more than due to William McVicker and David Pether for the hard work in arranging these recitals and ensuring the players are welcomed and supported. Thanks are due also to the Concert Hall staff for their support and help. It has been noticeable that over the years they have become more cheerful and supportive, which I think is a result of the increase in audience numbers, helping them to feel there is a future in the old Willis after all!

Alan Kent

8.2 Ricardo Bonci of St Barnabus Church, Dulwich

The lunchtime organ recital was given by Riccardo Bonci on Sept 9th 2009 . The programme was:

Carillon de Westminster

Louis Vierne

Two Songs without Words

Felix Mendelssohn

(Lieder ohne Worte)
No. 6 Venetianisches Gondellied
No. 14 in C Minor

(arr. Calkin)

Humoreske, Op. 101 No. 7

Anton Dvorak
(arr. Lemare)

Suite Gothique
Introduction-Chorale
Menuet Gothique
Priere a Notre Dame
Toccata

Léon Boëllmann

Elevazione
Sonata per Organo

Gherardeschi
Bellini

Our sincere thanks are due to Riccardo Bonci for agreeing at very short notice to give this enjoyable recital, because of the indisposition of the named recitalist. He did not attempt the planned programme and it is a pity that there wasn't sufficient time to publicise this, because the audience numbers could well have increased. The advertised programme was subject to some less than enthusiastic comment and at least two of our regulars did not come because of this. As it was, 50 came, which seems to follow the pattern of previous years, where numbers tend to pick up for the remainder of the season. So some missed a very enjoyable, well played, but also somewhat different recital. It was mixture of well known pieces with some interesting arrangements, plus two works and similar encore completely unknown to me and, I think, to members present.

The two French works were interpreted with beautifully judged fluidity which showed both in a new and welcome light, particularly the Boëllmann. The Suite Gothique often becomes rather a warhorse, but certainly not here. I have both works on CD but what a difference to hear the real edge of a live performance. The Mendelssohn items proved of considerable interest and the registration was well chosen. In complete contrast, the Humoresque, as arranged by that famed master Lemare, was most enjoyable.

The final works were by 19th century Italians. We associate Bellini with opera, of course, but organ? Together with the much deserved and appreciated encore, these works demonstrated a very different approach to church and the organ. The Gherardeschi alternated quiet passages with

loud reed-dominated ones, not the usual British approach for this part of the service. But all three were very tuneful, almost operatic – and reminded me of the Petite Mass Solonnelle by Puccini that I once took part in. Apparently all of these works were adapted for performance on British organs by W T Best – is there much Best didn't try out? This must have had the approval of the recitalist as giving some idea as to how they would sound on an Italian instrument. (Mind you an Association member thought they made Lefebre – Wely sound like a serious composer!)

So ended another very interesting, well played recital which also introduced us, or at least me, to a new repertoire. Our thanks are due to Riccardo Bonci, not merely for stepping in at short notice, but for drawing up and performing such an interesting programme. Perhaps he could be persuaded back to give us more Italian works?

Alan Kent

8.3 Travis Baker

The Lunchtime Organ Recital on Nov 18th 2009 was given by Travis Baker, whose programme was:

Imperial March	E. Elgar
Temple Suite; Prelude, Trumpet Tune, Siciliana, Allegro	J Stanley
Piece Heroique	C Franck
Tonstucke no. 1	N Gade
Toccata	G. Mushel

Travis Baker is a native of Melbourne, Australia who now lives and works in the UK in a variety of posts, St John being but one. His programme was an eclectic one as by now expected at lunchtime concerts. It commenced with Elgar, an arrangement of an orchestral work. Well played though it was, there were perhaps too many registrational changes for me which tended to render it somewhat episodic. With Stanley, we come back to the general neglect of English composers of the period. There is the

difficulty of playing such works, as in general some arrangement is required because of reduced modern keyboard range, but remember Handel thought it worth going to hear him play! In the Suite the contrasting movements were properly differentiated and came over well. Perhaps another recitalist will programme some Stanley. The Franck is of course known to many and suits the instrument. Does it require perhaps the additional reverberation that a large French church possesses to gain the full effect?

The two final items were new to me as were the composers. Neils Gade is a 19th century Danish composer and the Tonstucke is well worth hearing when played as it was here. My reference books make no mention of Mushel. The Toccata was not as I expected, as it did not require full organ from the word go. Yes, it was free ranging but tended to the contemplative and provided an unusual conclusion to an interesting and enjoyable recital.

The concert concluded with a deserved tribute to Ann Brown, who has presided over the Concert Hall for all of the lunchtime and Celebrity recitals since the reopening and is now retiring. William McVicker, in his tributes to her, said she has supported these recitals wholeheartedly. Without her, the organ programme could well have collapsed. Even though numbers at lunchtime have not been as good thus far for this series, nevertheless the 75 present for this recital is a figure many locations would die for. Ann has ensured that all has been in place, that a welcoming atmosphere is always apparent and her efforts have helped to ensure that the recitals are so highly appreciated. David Pether then presented her with a substantial houseplant as a token of the regard in which she is held by all. She takes with her in her retirement the best wishes from the Association for all her efforts.

Alan Kent

8.4 Pipes Aloud

Among the aims of the Association is one to aid the appreciation of the organ and organ music. Pipes Aloud was an activity aimed at the younger generation with two morning sessions of one hour each, run by the Association and an evening concert organised by the Berkshire Maestros, the Young Musicians Trust. So it was that on Saturday July 11th, the

BOA and the Berkshire Maestros sponsored an organ and choral event at Reading Concert Hall using the Father Willis organ.

Our major involvement was to organise organ related activities for younger people. These were split into two sessions, one for the age ranges 6-11, the other for 10-18's. Riccardo Bonci (Assistant Organist, St. Barnabus, Dulwich and Choir Director at Alleyns Junior School) delivered these workshops. They contained appropriate activities for the various age groups, including demonstrations, exercises and competitions. Alan Kent and I manned the BOA stand during the morning sessions and noted that 23 young people and their parents responded positively to the event. As a result four attendees are now student members of the BOA.

In the evening a choral and organ concert was presented, featuring the Berkshire Youth Choir, Senior Girls Choir, Berkshire Chamber Choir and Berkshire Young Voices. The organ was played by two Eton College Organ Scholars. The organ accompanist was Ben San-Lau and two organ solos by Nick Lee (who had given the July Lunchtime Recital on the 8th). I was unable to attend but understand that the concert was well delivered and received.

Our thanks go to Chris Cipkin for all his work on this event, particularly for the morning presentations, the liaison and organisation with Berkshire Maestros, plus the display and publicity material. Thanks are also due to those members who helped by distributing this and helping to publicise the event.

Roger Bartlett

8.5 Paul Derrett

The lunchtime Organ Recital on 17th March 2010 was given by Paul Derrett. This recital, in spite of the January cancellation, drew the best attendance to date at 118 – reasons could include good weather, the recitalist, the programme, pent-up wish to hear the organ again, who knows? As expected, it was a recital of note with a well varied and played programme, a recital which once again showed Reading's good fortune in having the Willis.

The programme was:

Allegro, Symphony No.6 in G Minor

Charles-Marie Widor

Concerto in G
Allegro
Grave
Presto

Johann Ernst of
Saxe-Weimar
Arr J S Bach, BWV592

Four Sketches
Non vivache e molto marcato
Non vivache e molto marcato
Vivache
Andante con moto

Robert Schumann

Scherzetto, Sonata in C minor

Percy Whitlock

Etude Symphonique

Enrico Bossi

The Widor opened the recital in style, displaying the full capabilities of organ and recitalist. Without doubt this Willis provides Cavaille-Coll with a very formidable competitor and French romantic works undoubtedly suit the instrument. The next item was very different. (It was shown as Vivaldi in the programme, but although most of the Bach concerto arrangements are indeed by Vivaldi, this one is not, and very much none the worse for that.) Paul Derrett's performance was superb, his registration and tempi giving a real concerto feel. As the recitalist reminded us, the Schumann sketches are not strictly organ works as they were written for pedal piano but work well on the organ, a view admittedly not shared by all. The tempi variations were very well judged and the registrations brought the works to life. It is a pity they do not appear more often in recital programmes. The Whitlock Sonata is another work that is seldom heard in recitals. The Scherzetto gives welcome variation to the extended other movements, but is more than able to stand alone. Whitlock was famed for his knowledge of the instrument and the registration possibilities available and these were very ably shown today. Whitlock wrote with a balanced swell pedal in mind but today it seemed as though the balanced pedal had been restored. The Bossi is of course a real tour de force. Listening to Paul Derrett almost literally bringing the house down, one could understand why not many include it in recitals! It would have been a wonderful way to have ended the recital, but Paul offered an encore. It was the Ronde Française by Leon Boëllmann. This is the second occasion recently that a recitalist has included a work by

Boëllmann that is not the Gothic Suite. I for one would welcome another opportunity to hear it again.

Paul Derrett is famed for both his ability to bring the best from an instrument and his interpretive abilities. Today he demonstrated why. Could we have him back please?

Alan Kent

8.6 Postponed Recital from January 2010

A brief note to remind members of the January snow. In spite of the snow and cold all seemed set for a recital in January until further snow overnight marooned William McVicker at his home, hence the unfortunate late cancellation. The good news is that this recital will almost certainly appear in the 2010-2011 series.

8.7 Association Local Recitals

As in previous years the Association, in conjunction with local churches, has arranged a programme of recitals. The recitals are free, but there is a collection with the proceeds shared between the Church and the Association. In the 2009 season the following recitals were given.

May 23rd	St Giles Reading,	David Pether
June 27th	All Saints, Downshire Square, Reading	Graham Ireland
Sept 26th	Englefield Parish Church	Michael Thomas
October 31st	St Paul's Wokingham	Edward McCall

Sincere and grateful thanks are due as usual to the performers, the officials and clergy at the various churches and those who have dealt with the publicity and production of programmes etc.
Ian May

8.8 Lunchtime recitals at St Mary Minster

We have had a total of 17 Lunchtime recitals from the beginning of February 2009 until the end of February of this year, and I am very grateful to all those who have given their services to keep these concerts going. The Willis organ continues to deteriorate, and we have had to resort to the Makin organ on no fewer than 7 occasions.

We enjoyed a wide range of music from before Bach to Nigel Ogden, mostly on the organ, but we were also able to hear some fine piano playing from Margaret Isaacson, and our usual Christmas treat from the pupils of Bluecoat School under their leader, Jonathan Bowler.

Our average attendance was about 30, but we would very much like to see more at these half-hour recitals. A retiring collection is always a feature, and during this period we raised over £700 which is solely for the organ fund. A new deputy organist has been appointed at St Mary's, and he is making every effort to get major funding for the rebuild which the Willis desperately needs.

I would like to thank the following who have played for us this year :- Pupils from the Bluecoat School, Sylvia Collins, David Corbett, Derek Guy, Don Hickson, Chris Hood, Graham Ireland, Raymond Isaacson (with James Moorcroft on Bassoon), Edward McCall, Ian May, David Price, Richard Smith, Malcolm Stowell (twice), Michael Thomas, and Christine Wells. And yes, I played for one too!,

Jim Wooldridge

9. Celebrity Organ Recitals

9.1 Roy Massey

The ‘Classical Music Alive at the Concert Hall’ recital on 4th November 2009 was given by Roy Massey entitled ‘Music for the Royal Fireworks’, and included the following programme:

Grand Choeur	T Salomé
Four Sixteenth Century Dances	Anon(arr Massey)
Prelude and Fugue in D Major	J S Bach
Variations for pedals only on Henry Smart’s Regent Square	John Bertalot
Music for the Royal Fireworks	G F Handel (arr E Power Biggs)
Sonata No 5 in C Minor	Alexandre Guilmant

At these celebrity recitals the pre-concert discussion is always of great interest and this recital was no exception. Dr. Roy Massey, during his long distinguished career, has played this organ on at least two previous occasions. During his opening remarks he commented that it was somewhat decrepit – but it had a ‘proper’ swell pedal, no comment! He is the second of our recent recitalists who come from the Midlands and he paid tribute to Sir David Willcocks for his help and interest during the early phases of his musical life. It was interesting to hear his memories of David Willcocks who, he said, had an acute ear for tuning and intonation, something apparent in his various choral recordings. (Willcocks also appears to have the gift of discerning early musical ability in organists, with his interest in both Roy Massey and Thomas Trotter.)

Roy Massey’s early musical education was in Birmingham, continuing at the University there, where he also had various organ appointments. He was advised to see David Willcocks, then at Worcester, for advice whilst still at school. This took on a practical aspect with Willcocks giving him

free organ coaching for a number of years. After some years as an organist and choir director in the Birmingham area, he moved to Croydon Parish Church, Croydon Bach Choir and the RSCM at Addington. He then returned to Birmingham to the Cathedral and finally to Hereford Cathedral where he was organist from 1974 until 2001, thus continuing the tradition of long service of organists at this Cathedral. He reminded us that the post at Hereford Cathedral included the responsibility for the oldest music festival in the country, the Three Choirs, which requires an ability to conduct a wide variety of works with both the Festival Choir and Cathedral Choirs and with leading professional orchestras. He paid tribute to British orchestras for their sight reading abilities and readiness to take on a new repertoire with often only three days available to master it. It had been, he admitted, a daunting prospect to face a leading London orchestra for the first time after his appointment at the Festival. But he said that provided one could give them a clear indication of what was wanted, had a clear beat and let them get on with it, all was fine. He said it had been important to admit when one had got it wrong, as he had to do once with the Birmingham players. But as he said professional musicians know only too well what can happen. Providing one looks competent they will respect you. He was nine times conductor in chief for the Festival. He was asked about the problems of coping with three very different cathedrals because Gloucester is very reverberant, Worcester rather dead and Hereford he thought probably about right. It is one of the aspects of the Three Choirs that has to be accepted and allowed for.

Finally the question of fashion and repertoire was raised. This has been commented on previously but it was interesting to hear him confirm that Guilmant is now more popular. In emphasizing that fashion and taste vary with time, Dr Massey mentioned that when he was young Mendelssohn was thought to be in rather poor taste, (Additional comment: Dr Massey is an MBE, but among his predecessors are two knights. Times change!)

Before continuing to the recital proper, it must be reported that the Willis was not on its best form, unfortunate after the recitalist's comments on its unrestored state. For some reason, just before the Bach, the organ ciphred but cleared, to return briefly during the Bertalot. Fortunately Harrisons were quickly on hand during the interval but were unable to solve the problem which did not recur for the Guilmant. There had been a change in the weather and it could well be that the organ has not settled down yet. The slight tuning problem on occasion during the Guilmant was due to stops not being pulled fully out – something that old hands are aware of and page turners instructed accordingly!

The recital was of much interest with a good mix of the known and lesser known. Salomé was Choir Organist when Guilmant was Titulaire at Sainte-Trinité, Franck's church, and provided a good opener to the recital. The Sixteenth Century Dances were unknown to me, but the recitalist's arrangement was beautifully realised in performance. The Bach was good to hear, although it was not the best performance of the evening, but allowances must be made for the organ problems. The Bertalot again was something completely new. John Bertalot is known to many as a famed choir trainer and director but wrote this work during his time at Blackburn Cathedral. It proved to be a veritable and highly enjoyable tour de force. The Fireworks arrangement by Power Biggs (a name well known to those of an older generation) was another enjoyable and very appropriate work for the time of year. As in the Bertalot it certainly used to the full the resources of the instrument. Guilmant is becoming much more popular in the Concert Hall at both the lunchtime and these Celebrity recitals. The Sonatas require a largish organ which maintains clarity at all levels, plus preferably reeds with some fire. The instrument returned to its normal self and satisfied the requirements very well. This sonata commences with another Grand Choeur moves through three movements of varying nature to conclude with the Choral et Fugue, one of my favourite Guilmant movements. This nominally concluded in real style a most enjoyable recital. But a rightly enthusiastic audience demanded a delightful encore, which had the cognoscenti searching their memories. It was by G P Marie, the same era as Widor and Guilmant, La Cinquantaine, and provided a delightful finish using the Willis's delicate registers.

202 people attended the concert including a number of very distinguished visitors. It is a pity that the evening numbers are not larger. Is it that audiences are unwilling through the week to come to the Concert Hall because of the number of pubs and their noisy clientele in the vicinity? Or are we suffering because of the work ethic problem noted by William McVicker in the recent Organists' Review? Perhaps we should investigate the audience numbers for other classical weekday concerts – and in view of our Heritage Day experiences somehow do more to make sure this glorious Willis is more widely known.

Alan Kent

9.2 Margaret Phillips

The 'Classical Music Alive at the Concert Hall' recital on 22nd April 2010 was given by Margaret Phillips. The programme entitled 'French Fancies' was:

Sinfonia from Cantata 29
Pièce d'Orgue (Fantasia in G) BWV572
Fantaisie in C Op.57
The Swan (Carnival of the Animals)

Marche Héroïque

Andante 'Chœur de Voix Humaines'
Sortie in Bb
Sonata No. 1 in D Minor
Introduction et Allegro-Pastorale-Final

J S Bach (arr Guilmant)
J S Bach
C Saint-Saëns
C Saint-Saëns (arr
Guilmant)
C Saint-Saëns (arr
Guilmant)
Louis J A Lefébure-Wély
Louis J A Lefébure-Wély
Alexandre Guilmant



Firstly, why “French Fancies” when Bach introduces the recital? Because, we were informed, one was arranged by, and the second is thought to be influenced by, a Frenchman. The remainder of the programme was very decidedly 19th century French, with just the Fantaisie from 1919, but very much remaining in the earlier style.

As usual there was a pre-recital discussion.

Margaret Phillips commenced playing the organ at 10, progressing from being a chorister to the console by age 13. She went to the Royal College of Music under the legendary Ralph Downes. She was asked about him and she said she always found him rather reserved, one who took a keen interest in his students, but not necessarily very friendly. The discussion moved to today’s young organists and their experience by comparison. There are problems now in the present climate of dealing with children and the style of services favoured do not always help. Also there is the problem of a career structure for organists in the UK, because the organ is seen very much in a religious context. Japan does not have this problem as the organ culture there is completely secular.

Margaret Phillips’ own career has been wide ranging, both as recitalist and teacher. Indeed she is now the holder of Ralph Downes’ post of Professor of Organ at the Royal College. She is, of course, noted with her husband for the number of organs they possess at Milborne Port in their residence, home of The English Organ School. Their collection includes two new build Peter Collins, two three manuals, chamber organs, harmoniums and harpsichords. Her records are many and she is now well into her complete Bach series, using both historic and new instruments, but her repertoire is wide. Asked about ‘our’ Willis she thought it had retained that rare property in the organ world of integrity because it has remained unaltered. But she did not consider it easy to play – now where has that been heard before?

The recital commenced with the Bach Guilman arrangement and was rightly played as Guilman rather than Bach. The Fantasia was given a performance to match the title, with every part clear as it should be. The Saint-Saëns items varied from early to late in his lifetime and were beautifully interpreted and played. The March, we were informed, is dedicated to a friend who died in the Paris uprising; it is salutary to remember how much of the French organ music of the period was written in turbulent times. Which leads on to Lefèvre-Wely who is subject to much critical comment. Yet he was very popular in his time – was this in part because of the political unrest? The two works in the programme are

very different, with the Andante gentle, the Vox Humana being used to good effect. The Sortie is vigorous and was played with the full blooded approach it requires. On an organ such as the Willis and a player in sympathy, which we had, one can see why it was popular and it was certainly well appreciated. The second half of the recital comprised Sonata No. 1 by Guilmant. This is a major work by one of the leading organists of the time and it should be heard more often. The first movement is extensive, requiring full use of the organ. Contrast is provided by the Pastorale which introduces passages requiring use of, and interplay between the oboe, clarinet and flute stops, fine examples of which exist on the Willis. This was beautifully attained by the recitalist, allowing the full organ introduction to the final movement to achieve the desired maximum effect. It is not an easy movement for the player, but in this performance was made to appear so. The recitalist was rewarded by enthusiastic applause from a very appreciative audience. The encore in response was a delicate piece by Dubois, Marcietta. Reading has been very fortunate in its recitalists who manage to combine technique with musicianship and this recital was another excellent example.

Although the audience was highly enthusiastic it was unfortunately not as large as had been hoped and indeed as it deserved. It did clash with the second of the TV election debates - I had no doubt as to my priority, perhaps others did. It must be mentioned that David Pether provided an excellent set of very informative programme notes. The Association, Reading and the Willis have much to be grateful for in the work of David. And mention must also be made of William McVicker, who keeps a very close eye on the Willis and rarely misses any recital, in spite of being far from a local. Our thanks are due to both of them.

10. Heritage Days

10.1 Concert Hall Open Day

This year the Concert Hall opening again coincided with the Library's Crime Writers' Conference – except that this year the latter lasted two days and involved the Concert Hall. Hence our lecturer/ recitalist/ demonstrator David Pether very nobly agreed to do duty on both Saturday and Sunday mornings - September 12/13th 2009.

We were determined this year that if notices did not seem to be apparent we would have something available. Don Hickson got cracking and provided two laminated A3 notices. We noted at the preceding lunchtime recital that notices were placed on the glass screen entrance doors – we followed suit. At this recital we also placed one at the top of the stairs on a book rest and it served its purpose well. There was one notice already in place in the Foyer, but it wasn't very obvious until you were about to go up the stairs.

So on the open days we made sure we were in well on time, stuck the screen notice up and bagged the top of the stairs spot! The Writers' event did not get underway as early this year and this helped us because the early arrivals had time to see the notices and hence some were able to pop in between talks. Mind you it was a little galling to be asked why the two events were planned for the same weekend, but we were very polite in our explanations.



Over the two days we had about 70 visitors, split roughly equally over both days. It is difficult to be precise because some just popped in initially, returning later, whereas not all were able to. The authorities had drawn up a Heritage Day tour leaflet and at least two visitors came because of this. Some had seen a press release and yet others were attracted by the sound of the organ. It was a shame that we were unaware that the Museum was giving short lecture tours of the replica Bayeux

Tapestry – and the Museum staff who spoke to us were not fully aware of the Hall activity. Next year we should talk to the Museum to ensure that we are all aware of activities through the day.

The visitors seemed very enthusiastic; a couple of families came in and the children had a go. A few residents of non-European background came along – two ladies were particularly enthusiastic and really put David through it in their thirst for knowledge; they say they'll come to a lunchtime recital and we hope they do. David did his usual excellent job. It is not easy to introduce the organ as an instrument, play a short recital and then demonstrate at the console, at the same time coping with many questions. He also had to give his presentation against a background of chatter. It is preferable to have the Association display stand et cetera outside the Hall, but it was not possible – we didn't think it would be tactful to tell enquirers to shut up! All who attended came away having enjoyed the visit. Some must have indeed, as three organ books were sold.



David again had to stand for most of the time, so he had a tiring couple of hours. We managed to sneak a quick sit down every now and then - but visitors kept disturbing us! It was disappointing that this year only one member visited, because it was a missed opportunity to play the Willis.

This Heritage activity is something the Association must continue to support. Yet again some came along who had never seen the Hall, yet alone the Willis. Others knew the Hall, had been to concerts, but the organ was completely unknown to them. Also we should with hindsight have had

prominently displayed information on the other organ and church based activities being offered for the weekend. Next year it will be different!

Somehow we really ought to see if some liaison with the Library and Museum about publicity is possible. It would be pleasant if we could find some one we could ask why the very worthy and well attended Library event is on Heritage Day.

Roger Bartlett Alan Kent

10.2 Celebration at St Giles' Church

Although we were in the middle of what I believe John Betjeman described as “Those interminable Sundays after Trinity” the event at St Giles' Church in Reading on Saturday 12 September seemed to have a definite three-fold structure. Firstly, it commemorated three things; Heritage Weekend, The Presidential Service of Rededication for the Association and as a memorial to Father Michael Melrose of St Giles and Leslie Davis a distinguished long serving member of the BOA. Secondly the event comprised three distinct parts; a Service of Chorale Evensong, a tea and a Cello Recital. Thirdly, three instruments were involved in the recital – cello, piano and chamber organ. Finally, most of the music focussed on this year's three anniversary composers – Handel, Purcell and Mendelssohn but here we must also add the inclusion of Haydn in the recital.

The service was sung by the Church Choir and accompanied by the Association President, Ian May who produced a good and controlled wealth of sound from the choir and the organ all in the West Gallery. Mendelssohn framed the service with his “Above all praise and majesty sung” as the introit and the First movement of his Third Sonata bringing the service to a conclusion. Purcell's contributions were his setting of the Evening Canticles in G minor and “Rejoice in the Lord Always” as the anthem.

After this uplifting beginning a brief interlude of relaxation was provided by the light refreshments and the opportunity to talk to each other. Having replenished ourselves spiritually and digestively we then settled for the recital given by Christine Wells and Ian May. Beginning with an adagio from a Haydn concerto this was followed by a Handel Sonata

arranged from an oboe sonata, during both of which the balance and timing of the two players was to be commended. Before concluding the evening with a little known, but delightful “Lied ohne Worte” for cello and piano by Mendelssohn, Ian May used the small chamber organ in the church to play four of Haydn’s Pieces for mechanical clocks which were joyfully performed on the 4 foot registers producing a wonderful spikey sound which perfectly suited the original design of the pieces.

The only disappointment in the evening was that there was only a small congregation present to enjoy it, particularly as there were very few members of the Association for what had been programmed as a Presidential Service of Re-dedication; an event which the writer of this review has long campaigned to be re-instated to our regular calendar. Despite this low attendance our thanks must go to Ian, Christine and the Choir for all the work in preparing such an enjoyable evening.

DH September 2009

11. Visits

11.1 Marlborough College 13th June 2009

Marlborough College (morning visit)

The new organ at Marlborough College was built by Rudolf von Beckerath and completed in December 2006. This instrument replaces an organ by Forster & Andrews as modified by Hill, Norman & Beard, that had first stood in the west gallery of an earlier and much smaller school chapel. The present school chapel is a long narrow building with a chamber for the organ in the north wall, behind the choir stalls. After the old organ was moved to this position, it went through several phases of modification and enlargement that were aimed at producing an instrument of an appropriate scale to support the singing of a congregation of up to 900. Unsurprisingly, a satisfactory result was never achieved. When the time came to consider a major overhaul of the organ, surveys showed that considerable work was required on the wind chests, that the pipe work was in poor condition, having been lengthened and shortened over the years and that the layout of the instrument was very disorganised as successive additions had been tacked in around the existing structures. A replacement organ began to be considered.

The Beckerath organ is housed in the chamber in the north wall behind the original case. The console and almost all the pipe work is new; the majority of the retained pipes are in the pedal. The action is mechanical with coupling being electrical. The organ comprises Great, Swell (enclosed), Positiv, Solo (enclosed) and Pedal Departments with a total of 62 speaking stops. There are a comprehensive range of couplers and extensive registration aids. The Great has a full diapason chorus that is characterised by an attractive rather fluty tone and is complemented by a full reed chorus at 16', 8' and 4' pitches. The Swell has a wide range of string and flute stops including some unusual ones such as a Sifflet 1' and a Harmonia Aetherea III (12,15,19). The Positiv ranges from a Prestant 8' and Holzdedaecht 8' to Terz 1 3/5', Larigot 1 1/3' and Scharf IV with a Cromorne 8'. The Solo includes a Tuba 8' and a Vox Humana 8' among other imitative flutes and reed stops. The Pedal has, beside flute and diapason choruses, a full reed chorus at 32', 16', 8' and 4'.

The College Organist, Ian Crabbe, demonstrated the organ to us with J.S. Bach's *Dorian Toccata* and Reger's *Benedictus* showing the instrument's wide dynamic range and some of its colours. Members of the Association amply demonstrated its ability to fill the chapel with sound leaving, no doubt that it would effectively lead a large congregation through the singing of hymns. In the time available the many quiet and solo stops were not so widely sampled.

It has been hoped by the College that the new organ would attract pupils. Sadly I was told that at the time of our visit that there were only three learning.

Harry Russell

Town and Area (afternoon visit)

The afternoon was planned to include two churches, one in the town and the other just outside. There was also a visit to a third church. Our President had thoughtfully provided ample time to find a lunch place, very necessary because Marlborough was as busy as usual. The second visit was to St Mary's church, which is situated at the eastern end of the main street, just behind the Town Hall. It proved to be an unusual church with a superb Norman doorway under the tower. On entering the church the nave is virtually square in shape and with a flat, shallowly coffered ceiling. The original building suffered fire damage around Civil War time and so was rebuilt as a 'preaching' church. Subsequent additions provided a chancel and, yes, an organ chamber, fortunately rather more spacious than many. The organ was installed in 1879 and built by Bryceson Brothers and Ellis. It was restored in 1968 by Rushworth and Dreaper and the church leaflet states with no tonal alterations. Our President wonders if this is correct because of the presence of a mixture on the Great and a Cymbel on the Swell. It is a 19 stop, two manual, with a rather heavy tracker action, but coped and sounded well over a wide range of music. The sound travels well throughout the church and the organ should give good congregational support with considerable life and sparkle, which not all instruments of this size and era do.

It was a pity that the College had to be visited first, because almost any instrument would have considerable competition after the Beckerath and it says much that this much smaller church and organ made such a pleasant impression.

So off to the third church for the afternoon, that at West Overton, about four miles to the west of Marlborough. Lovely surroundings, pleasant church with reputedly an 1860-70 un-rebuilt Vowles – well, we saw the organ, complete with doors closing off the console. Unfortunately that had to be all, because no key was apparent and no-one came to greet us. This was a disappointment to say the least, because had we known, the stay at St Mary's could have been longer.

Our thanks are due to Ian for another very enjoyable day, one which took considerable effort to arrange. Perhaps we could have another attempt to get to West Overton if and when a future visit is arranged to that area. (Calne has a four manual and isn't that much further to drive!)

Alan Kent

11.2 Oxford 13th February 2010

A visit to Somerville and Trinity Colleges, Oxford.

The weather on Saturday was cold, but dry, and certainly much better than some of the days we have had this winter. I have to confess that a lot of the work in arranging these visits was done by Ian Wooldridge, my nephew, who is in the Accounts department at Somerville, and who is very familiar with many of the Oxford Colleges.

About 16 of us met at Somerville at 11.00 am and were welcomed by him, and were led to a Senior Common Room for coffee and biscuits (a first for us) before going into the chapel, which was next door. This had a small gallery at the back which contained the 2 manual Harrison and Harrison organ. Our treasurer, Mark Jameson kindly provided us with full details of both organs, which proved very helpful to us. All 9 organists amongst us had the chance to play this delightful organ, while the rest were able to listen from the ground floor of the chapel, which was nice and warm!

Afterwards, pausing only to pop into the Oratory Catholic church next door to admire this beautiful building, Ian led us to an adjacent street where there was a choice of restaurants for lunch.

We had intended to go to Mansfield College in the afternoon, but their organ had broken down a few days before, and, so, at very short notice, we were invited to Trinity College instead. This wasn't too far away, so we walked there and were in good time for our 2.30 pm appointment. The chapel is a beautiful building, with a particularly lovely ceiling, and the organ, another Harrison and Harrison, was again in the gallery. This was considerably bigger than the Somerville one, and could only be reached by a frighteningly narrow spiral staircase and only those playing were permitted to ascend it. Nevertheless nearly all of us "had a go" and it certainly gave a good account of itself, particularly in pieces from the classical repertoire.

All together it was a most successful day, and our thanks are due to both Somerville and Trinity for allowing access to their buildings and organs, and especially to Ian, without whose help it would have been a far more difficult outing to arrange.

Jim Wooldridge

11.3 Foundling Hospital

In March 2009 members of the Association visited the London Foundling Museum, which celebrates the multifaceted collections of Britain's first home for abandoned children. We were pleased to be joined by three members of the Windsor and Maidenhead Association, making a group of seventeen in total. The Museum is housed in a restored and refurbished 1937 building adjacent to the original site of the Hospital, which was demolished in 1928. Katherine Hogg, Music Librarian of the Museum, gave an amusing and illuminating guided tour which covered the origins and history of the Hospital, the notable art collection, and an introduction to the Gerald Coke Handel Collection.

The history of the Hospital goes back to 1739, when philanthropic sea captain, Thomas Coram, established a home for the "education and maintenance of exposed and deserted young children." Most of these were infants born out of wedlock and particularly moving are the distinguishing tokens given by mothers to their children in case they ever wished to reclaim them. Part of the exhibition focuses on the new hospital built in Redhill in 1935. Oral histories recounted by the last foundlings to live in the relocated hospital before it closed in the 1950s can also be heard. After the final closure of the Hospital, the Thomas Coram Foundation for Children was established to continue the founder's original philanthropic aims. It is now one of London's largest children's charities operating from a building adjacent to the Museum.

The Collections of the Museum give a fascinating insight into social welfare in the eighteenth century. Middle- and upper-class men and women, including William Hogarth and Georg Frederic Handel, gave their time, money and skills to raise money in support of the Hospital. Indeed, it is estimated Handel generated income of £10,000 (over £1 million today), particularly through the annual charity performances of *Messiah*, which he personally directed until his eyesight failed later in life. The childless William Hogarth was a founding governor and it was he who decided to set up a permanent fund-raising exhibition in the Hospital, with pieces by leading artists and sculptors of the day, including Sir Joshua Reynolds, Thomas Gainsborough, Richard Wilson, Francis Hayman, Louis-François Roubiliac and Emma Brownlow. Many of these works are exhibited in the fine Court Room, which, complete with its ornate ceiling and large fireplace, was reconstructed in the present building after the original London Hospital site was demolished. The focus of our visit was, naturally, a musical one, and Katherine Hogg

specially tailored her tour to focus on the Collection's many musical items. These included an original performing score of Handel's Foundling Hospital Anthem of 1749, 'Blessed are they that considereth the poor' (HWV 268) and a pipe described as being from the first Hospital organ, which Handel donated in 1750. This instrument, built by Dr Morse of Barnet, had to be replaced only a few years later by a new organ built by Thomas Parker in 1769. The earliest painting of the Chapel interior dates from 1773 and shows this later instrument. Musicologists now believe that the three manual console and possibly also the remaining pipes on display in the Museum, actually come from the later Parker organ rather than the one Handel originally gave to the Hospital. Readers interested in a full history of the organs of the Foundling Hospital are encouraged to read an informative article by Donald Burrows.[1]

Gerald Coke (pronounced 'Cook') was an obsessive collector of all things Handelian. His collection is described by the Museum as "the largest privately held collection of Handel material and a major international research collection." Because of Handel's close links with the Foundling Hospital, it was permanently allocated to the Foundling Museum by the British Government in December 2008. Several important items in addition to the Parker organ console are contained in an exhibition on the top floor of the Museum. These include a fair copy performing score of Messiah, bequeathed by Handel together with instrumental parts; large illustrated tickets for the first performance of Messiah at the Hospital; and a range of memorabilia celebrating the life and work of the honorary English composer over the years. There are also a series of comfortable listening chairs where you can escape the din of London and listen for hours to Handel's music. The most important item on display is the composer's will, which, together with its many codicils, clearly identifies the musical, domestic and medical individuals he came to rely on. The deteriorating state of his signatures in the codicils also testifies to his worsening eye sight as he aged.

Katherine Hogg's finale was an opportunity for us to see behind the scenes of the Gerald Coke Collection, where she exhibited a small display of eighteenth century scores relating to Handel's organ music. These included six different editions of the Organ Concertos, originally printed by Handel's publisher, John Walsh (1709-1766). The earliest was without parts and states on its title page that these were due to be published soon. We also saw an early edition of *Alexander's Feast* with the organ concerto movements interspersed as proof of the original style of performance. From this small display, one could clearly see the contemporary corrections, manuscript annotations and cadenzas,

fingering and figured bass marks which, as Katherine explained, make the collection such a valuable resource for both performers and musicologists.

After a good and welcome lunch in the Museum café, members made their way to Ely place via St Andrew's Holborn, where the London Oriana Choir were rehearsing the Frank Martin double-choir Mass in readiness for a concert that evening. This detour was highly fitting, as carvings on the organ case in St Andrews are believed to come from the Foundling



Hospital's 1750 Morse Organ. At Ely Place we entered St Ethedreda's Roman Catholic Chapel to hear and play the new Späth organ which supports the work of the Chapel's professional choir. We were the second organists' association to visit since it was inaugurated by Gillian Weir in May 2009. The medieval building, all that remains of the Bishop of Ely's London palace, is a fascinating place, with some imposing stained glass

windows and eerie statues of Reformation martyrs staring down from on high. At the church, we were greeted by the resident organist, Simon Lloyd, who demonstrated the organ with pieces by Byrd and Buxtehude. Perched high on a gallery in two small cases against the south and north walls, the organ speaks well into the building, although at the console, the Swell division, which is immediately behind the player, sounds louder and the Great consequently quieter than it does in the body of the church. Members adapted quickly to the flat pedal board and continental-style console and showed off the versatility of the instrument with works by Louis Vierne, Judith Bingham and J. S. Bach among others. Simon Lloyd expressed his delight at the instrument, though he noted that some minor work still remains to be completed, including adjusting the sharp/flat key shaving and modulating the responsiveness of the tracker action on the Great. We are grateful to Simon for giving up his time to host the visit. Members interested in finding out more about this interesting instrument are encouraged to read the recent article by Paul Hale.[2]

Christopher Cipkin

References

[1]: Donald Burrows Organs and Organists at the Foundling Hospital. 1750-1800. Available at: www.music.ed.ac.uk/russell/conference/Burrowsonorganists.html (accessed 14 March 2010)

[2]: Paul Hale, 'London's Best Kept Secret' Organists' Review August 2009, pp.39-43.

11.4 Association Tour to the Isle of Wight

The Association Tour in October 2009 was to the Isle of Wight, Chichester and Portsmouth Cathedrals

This year the tour opened and concluded with a visit to a Cathedral, one of many years standing, the other dating from the 1920's which made an interesting contrast. The major part of the tour was to the Isle of Wight and for some of us it was a first long visit. We are fortunate that our member Ruth Wetherley-Emberson is now resident on the Island and she and Christine Wells organised a very interesting and enjoyable visit. Ruth is also a member of the I of W Association and we were very grateful for the energy she put in to ensuring that their members were aware of our visit. This meant we were able to meet some of them and must thank in particular Mrs Isabel Thorpe and Mr and Mrs Jon Rose, who guided and led us to most of the churches. Without their help the party might still be circling Newport's roadworks, which seemed designed to ensure no stranger could negotiate them.

The timetable was such that before the afternoon ferry to the Island a lengthy visit to Chichester Cathedral could be made. Similarly the return ferry time gave us time at Portsmouth Cathedral. Our thoughts on the Cathedrals are given after the I of W visits. Following a calm crossing, the weather closed in with torrential rain and mist making our driving difficult, as it was almost impossible to read street names. Fortunately we found our hotel on the outskirts of Ryde and, even more importantly, found St Cecilia's Abbey where we were due to attend Vespers and hear a short organ recital. This was a very moving experience and hence we have written a separate contribution to the journal. St Cecilia's is a closed convent, yet they courteously provided us with tea in the main hall. This visit came about through Christine's investigations on the web so 'closed' does not preclude use of technical developments, a lesson to us all.

On our first Island evening we were joined by Ruth and Bernie for dinner at our hotel, which got us off to an excellent start for our visits on the next day. The weather had changed and the sun shone from a blue sky. The church visits provided much variety in both architecture and organs. Our first church, All Saints at Freshwater, took rather longer to reach than we thought originally, Island roads are not especially suited for rapid progress. When we reached the lovely parish church, we were greeted by Peter Smith, Churchwarden and some other I of W friends. The church itself is an old foundation, dating from at least Norman, possibly Saxon

times with later additions, and has Tennyson links. The organ is a substantial three manual with a detached stop key console, the pipes being placed in the chancel. The console was thought to be comfortable for playing. Originally by Speechly of 1905 it was substantially rebuilt by Rushworth and Dreaper in 1959 and in 1986 by Michael Farley of Devon, who we met on our Devon - Cornwall visit. The church acoustic does not help an organ and to us it appeared not too well balanced tonally. It was certainly bright and should be able to support a full church.

Our second location was Christ Church, Totland Bay, not very far from Freshwater. This is not an ancient foundation and has been subject to some rebuilding and repair, which has apparently improved the acoustics.



We were met and welcomed by the organist Joan Gregson. Here again we found a substantial three manual instrument, but based this time on a 1911 two manual Norman and Beard. Michael Farley has been at work here as well, mainly from 1991 to 1994 and has made additions to the existing two manuals and pedal.

The third manual is a Positive in a separate case which is mobile, normally placed as we found it, tucked into and under the main case. It is used as a separate accompaniment instrument, placed out in the choir for small choral groups. The original N and B stops are designated by an N on the stop knob on the now detached console, so that it is possible to obtain the original sound. All agreed that this is a fine instrument of considerable versatility, well balanced with clear tone. It does have the advantage of the N and B original pipes, a company which in some ways appears nowadays underappreciated. There are claims that this is the Island's finest organ and one can see why. It is in popular use as a recital instrument and a summer series is organised each year with recitalists almost queuing up to give one. Audiences are good as well, which is encouraging to know. Our members certainly put it through its paces with Mendelssohn, Simon Preston and Widor's Symphony No 6, 1st Movement, all of which came over very well. Is the main difference

between this morning's two instruments due to the superiority of the original N and B build versus Speechly?

Then came a slight diversion for some of us, as our I of W friends not merely found us an excellent place for lunch but took us to their own church, St. Michael's, just opposite at Shalfleet. This is a lovely old church well worth seeing for itself, and has an original two manual Father Willis from a country house in Scotland. It was rebuilt and restored by local builder Andrew Cooper, who is also providing additional casework, as it now stands in the open rather than in a chamber. (Andrew, an ex Willis employee, is also an organist, who presides appropriately at a large three manual Willis in Ryde, which unfortunately we couldn't visit.) Mrs P E Rose is the organist here and is rightly delighted with her new organ, which on our brief visit sounded well with a bright clear sound.

It was then on to St. Mary's, Carisbrooke - church not Castle - which is interesting because it has monastic origins. It lacks a Chancel and is unusual in that it comprises a nave and a very wide south aisle. We were welcomed here by the organist, George Downer, who showed us the large two manual organ placed on a gallery under the West end tower. According to the church notes we were allowed to borrow, the instrument originally was a two manual Bevington, rebuilt by Bishops and now considerably enlarged by the local builders Griffiths and Cooper (Andrew) in 1999, with a variety of pipes, using the original Bevington supplemented by Willis and Walker pipes. This could have resulted in a somewhat unbalanced instrument, but the builders have blended them well. It speaks well into the church with a lively but not over bright tone. Again our players took full advantage to play a wide variety of music.

Our final visit of the day was to St. John's in Newport where we were welcomed by the I of W Association President and Organist, John Matthews. The church itself is an 1840's Gothick box shaped building decorated in the typical late Georgian colours and style. The church has links to Edwin Lemare and we were able to see a number of his scores. The organ now installed is by Bryceson and dates from the 1890s, with various later additions. It was then rebuilt by Osmonds of Taunton 26 years ago. John expressed great satisfaction at the standard of workmanship as over the succeeding years they have had no problems. The organ proved capable of supporting a large congregation, with an effective trumpet stop, but was perhaps not as versatile as some of the other instruments heard during the day.

Our second day commenced at St. Saviours on the Cliff, Shanklin. This

church was built in phases from 1869 in an Early English style by Thomas Hellyer of Ryde. Most of the church is built of local sandstone, which has not worn well on its exposed side. Throughout its history St. Saviours has been faced with fabric problems which has caused expense. At the church we were welcomed by the Organist, Ian Hookey, who related a brief history of the church and organ. In 1874 J W Walker and Son provided a two manual organ and it remains substantially as supplied, with a number of the mellow stops typical of the maker at that time. The main addition has been of three digital stops, a 32' Sub Bourdon and a 32' and 16' Trombone to the Pedal. The blending of these stops is a matter for debate. The Organist seemed to be happy with the result and the general view was that it worked adequately. The organ speaks clearly and well throughout the church.

At the end of our time there we were joined by Ruth - how did she manage this? - who then led us to her home where she had prepared an enormous and magnificent lunch for us and various I of W Association Members. (Not forgetting re-acquainting ourselves with a much older looking Millie, Ruth and Bernie's Labrador.) *Regrettably we have learned that Millie has since died; our condolences to Ruth.* We did our best at the feast, but fear that it will only be by the time these notes are written, that the Wetherley-Emberson's will have about finished the remains. Ruth then led us off to her own church - how she managed this we do not know, as we all felt we would have collapsed in a heap after preparing the lunch. This is the church of St. Lawrence Undercliffe, where was discovered a two manual Gray and Davidson, installed originally when the church was built in 1878. Interestingly G and D refurbished it in 1949, with a number of additions, which match the original well but, of course, they could have undertaken a moderate revoicing of the whole instrument at that time. Wesley's Air and Gavotte came over well and a young I of W member gave us some very welcome Whitlock. Ruth must be pleased with the instrument, which filled the church with a bright, lively sound. Also of interest in the Church is a small carillon from 1935 to celebrate George the Fifth's Jubilee, restored in 1977 for the Queen's Silver Jubilee and refurbished in 2002 for her Golden jubilee. We were then taken quickly to the church's fascinating predecessor, a very small building placed on a narrow ledge. It remains in use, even for funerals, but undertakers must be faced with considerable difficulties. One could see why it was not rebuilt on the site, there just isn't room.

So to our final Island church, St. Boniface, Bonchurch, built in 1848, which is another Victorian replacement for an older predecessor. How we could have found this church without assistance is difficult to know. It is



a large church situated in a worked out chalk quarry, so not easily visible from the road. This is another church with poet links, this time Swinburne, whose family lived in the parish. The organist here is George Westcott, the young organist met at Ruth's. He presides over a Forster and Andrews two manual which remains virtually as they left it in 1872. It has that typical forthright but clear sound so typical of their work, a sound perhaps somewhat conservative for the time of building but preferable to a number of other contemporaries. So here again we found an instrument with a sound of some weight but also clarity in spite of being

hidden in the choir, with the action showing some signs of age. George gave us an interesting introduction to the church and the organ, which he then demonstrated to us. Unfortunately our playing numbers were now reduced to two but nevertheless all enjoyed both church and organ, a visit which concluded the Island part of our tour this year

The two Cathedrals provided an interesting contrast, beside just the ages of the Dioceses. Chichester has of course the famous Hill and its case, as enlarged by Hill and latterly Mander 1984-85. The egress of sound to the Nave is somewhat restricted by the location of the main instrument and very wisely a new nave organ has been provided, but we were not able to try this addition during our visit. We were welcomed by the Organ Scholar, John Dilworth, who took us up to the console and introduced the instrument to us. Curiously this instrument divided the party because the non-players were impressed, whilst the players felt it did not have sufficient gravitas and weight in certain respects. The players were unable, whilst playing to gain a full impression of the organ, as the

console is situated under the main instrument with the choir case very close to their back. Hill's reeds do not have the fire perhaps of the best of Willis's but is this necessarily a bad thing? In spite of reservations, a wide repertoire was played from French classical to modern, all of which your reporters thought sounded very well - it is a pity Chichester is rather a long way from Reading, because we would certainly go to recitals there. The Cathedral was far from full and it may well be that the main instrument would require something extra for a recital under those circumstances. But for congregational support there is the Nave organ, which has presumably been voiced well up. We very much enjoyed our visit and are grateful to the cathedral for providing us with the opportunity to visit and to have ample time to play the organ.

Portsmouth provided a complete contrast. Here the group was united in its view that here the organ was a very versatile instrument that sounded well throughout the building, which is a difficult one, as it does not provide a unified space as do most Cathedrals. David Price, the Cathedral Organist met us and gave us an introduction to both the building and the organ. Portsmouth, including the Cathedral, suffered much damage during WW II. Ironically, the organ had been removed for safety, but was severely damaged in its supposed place of refuge. A three manual instrument was constructed from the remains of this and another damaged Portsmouth organ and served for a number of years. It was not entirely satisfactory and a search for a replacement was undertaken. A John Nicholson three manual of 1861, originally designed for Manchester Cathedral, but moved to Holy Trinity, Bolton became available in 1992. John Nicholson's present day successors were chosen to provide the new instrument using all the 1861 pipes with judicious matching additions to increase the versatility of an already well provided for instrument. At the same time the existing Jordan case was completely restored, leading to some in the congregation thinking it was completely new! But as the planned Cathedral enlargements were built, additions to the instrument were obviously required. The main instrument faces East and is situated on a gallery on what was the original West wall of the Cathedral. Two passage ways were provided at both ground and organ level. This certainly allowed the organ to be heard in the new Nave space but it was not fully adequate, a similar story to Chichester, and so a West facing Nave Great was commissioned, provided by Nicholson and completed in 2001. They were asked to produce a Great division which would match tonally the existing Great, but with more power. David Price gave us an excellent demonstration of the organ and then Ian and Christine were allowed ample time to explore the instrument's capabilities. It is uncanny to walk round the Cathedral hearing the East and West parts blending

imperceptibly. There is no lack of weight here, but also none of the woofy sounds common to a number of Cathedral instruments. We were fortunate in that our original allocation of 30 minutes extended to an hour and a quarter, a splendid conclusion to our tour.

There is really no need to mention that all went well - after all this happens time after time because of Christine's efforts. So the Association has had another very successful, varied and educational tour, with many happy memories. It is pity that many members were unable to come - did we all perhaps wonder if the I of W would be able to provide sufficient interest for organ enthusiasts? If so, we were wrong. It was good to meet so many members of another Association, particularly one where there are considerable difficulties in arranging to do so. (The ferries are very efficient, but it is an expensive and time consuming journey.) No, we did not find large four manuals but did find an interesting variety of buildings and instruments by a number of different builders. London firms could be expected but a Hull firm? Today Michael Farley comes over from Devon and has undertaken large rebuilds. If any member is thinking of visiting the I of W do make contact with the I of W Association. We are sure you will have a warm welcome. Our hotel in Ryde proved comfortable and convenient, once some of us had found it. The Cathedral visits provided an interesting comparison. Perhaps the two outstanding events of this tour, very different, were the Vespers in St. Cecilia's Abbey and the lunch at Ruth's. An unusual occurrence for our President at the Abbey was the provision of a chair specially for him so that he could hear the recital in comfort, yet with a view of the organ. (If you want to learn more, read our report of the Abbey visit.) Once again our thanks are due to Christine for arranging this tour, particularly for the Abbey visit, and to Ruth for all her help and making it possible to meet members of her other Association.

Alan Kent Roger Bartlett

11.5 St Cecilia's Abbey, Ryde, Isle of Wight

St Cecilia's Abbey is a closed Convent with a strong choral tradition where a two manual Kenneth Tickell organ was installed in 2003. Its predecessor was a Binns with a somewhat heavy sound, which they decided was not really suited to accompany the choral services. The Abbey is linked musically to Quarr Abbey on the island and to the ancient foundation of Solesmes Abbey in France. Christine Wells, when researching the I of W tour, knew of their new Tickell instrument and found contact details for the Abbey on the Web. She contacted Sister Laetitia to see if a visit would be possible. We were consequently invited to attend Vespers. As this is a closed Convent, we would be unable to play, but the nuns kindly arranged a short recital to be included with Vespers so that we could gain an impression of the instrument.

For most of the party Vespers was a completely new experience. The service was sung by the Sisters from the main body of the Church behind an open screen. We and the congregation sat in an extended transept at right angles to the screen. The service was, of course, in Latin to plainsong from the Library in Solesmes Abbey. Vespers was uplifting, being entirely and beautifully sung by a solo voice, sometimes the divided choir and then by the full choir. The accompaniment was provided very sparingly, with simple, slow moving chords using a single stop on the organ. The service was introduced and concluded by a short organ item. On these tours it is usual to include attendance at a choral Evensong, very often a Cathedral, with music from various eras. Here the service was one that has been unchanged for centuries.

At the end of the service we were able to move to an open space so that we could see the new organ and its fine case. Our President remained so that he could view and hear the instrument, but the rest of us returned to the pews – we could hear but not view. We were given a generous 30 minute recital, for which a programme and organ specification was provided. This was played by two of the Sisters with works from the 16th Century to “Nimrod” by Elgar. This is not a very large instrument but it coped admirably with this variety, and we are all very grateful to the Sisters for permitting us to share the sounds of this new instrument with them.

After the recital we were invited to tea in the main visiting Hall, which was kindly prepared by the Sister who had welcomed us to the Abbey. We were pleased that we could give our thanks to Sister Laetitia, who was able to join us from behind the openwork metal grill dividing the

room. She was able to give us some details of the Convent and the reasoning behind the decision to obtain a new organ. The Abbey has a very strong musical tradition and applicants for admission have to be able to sing, with the excellent results that we heard.

The organ is a beautiful instrument, perfectly suited to the requirements of the Abbey and the specification is worth studying.

Manual 1		Manual 2	
Open Diapason	8	Stopped Diapason	8
Clarabella	8	Salicional	8
Principal	4	Chimney Flute	4
Nazard	2 2/3	Flageolet	2
Fifteenth	2	Oboe	8
Tierce	1 3/5		
Couplers: M-M, M-P		Pedal: Subbass	16

Alan Kent Roger Bartlett

12. General Articles

12.1 Richard Clack - an organist from Berkshire

As an organist, Richard Clack first appears on the musical scene as a fifteen or sixteen-year old when he was considered for the appointment as organist of St Laurence's Church, Reading. In the event, John Alcock, then at St Andrew's Plymouth, became organist. This is explained in a letter from the Vicar of St Laurence's Reading, the Revd William Boudry, to James Harris of Salisbury, and is dated 1 August 1741.

I am exceedingly pleas'd to find that you remember an old lover of musick, & I should have been glad to have served the person you recommended. But first of all the judges declared a young lad named Clack to be the best player, & then it was my sincere opinion that though Thompson might be the best player yett he was by no means a good organist – And as a good organ can afford no pleasure without a good organist, I prevailed with the parish to choose one Mr Alcock of Plymouth[.] – I hope therefore you will not take amiss my behaviour in this affair, & if you do not take it amiss I beseech you to shew it by taking a ride to play on the prettiest organ in England of the same price. [1]

Of course we do not know who the judges were or whom, to be sure, Harris had recommended. The letter above had been prompted by a new organ at the church, built by Byfield.

At the end of July 1741, “Mr Clack Organist” was paid three guineas for playing.[2] In addition, and it appears quite separately, “Mr Tomson, organist, and expenses for coach, & for the Windsor Boys” was paid £8/15/- on 27 July for the visit and, as we have seen, he also was an unsuccessful contender for the Reading post. It was later in the year that John Stanley came to play at Reading and his recital was sympathetically reported in the *London Magazine; and Monthly Chronologer*.

Where Richard Clack had received his musical education is not clear. We learn from music subscription lists that, soon after Alcock was appointed to St Laurence's Reading, the young Richard Clack went to Plymouth. He is described as “Organist” in four publications to which he subscribed

between 1743 and 1750, and at Plymouth from 1747. That he subscribed to Alcock's *Twelve English Songs* is no surprise, but the other three suggest that he was involved in wider activities: *Twelve sonatas for two violins* by Boyce (1747), *Six Cantatas* by William Hayes (1748), of which he bought four copies, and Alcock's *Six Concertos* (1750). The Musical Society at Plymouth also subscribed to the Concertos.

In a manuscript that he compiled in the early 1740s he is referred to as "Music Master" at Plymouth.[3] This is a collection of keyboard music put together for one of the Davies Gilbert family, Philippa Davies. As well as basic instruction material, it has just under fifty harpsichord pieces including short works by Corelli, Handel, Samuel Howard, Boyce, Stanley, Hasse, Festing, Avison, Joseph Kelway, Geminiani and Chilcot. With the three latter composers in the vanguard of sympathy towards the music of Domenico Scarlatti it is therefore not surprising that towards the end of the manuscript there is a non-attributed and flamboyant hand-over-hand keyboard sonata. It also contains a piece entitled *Waring's Maggot*. [4] This may have been composed by the Revd Richard Waring, vicar choral and *custos* (senior vicar choral) at Hereford Cathedral.[5]

The fact that Clack was described as an organist at Plymouth does not necessarily mean that he had held a post as such. Indeed in 1743 a Mr Smith was also described as an organist at Plymouth, subscribing to Boyce's serenata Solomon. No other relevant Plymouth documentation has survived.

Clack's subsequent movements are not known until his appointment on 6 July 1754 as organist at Hereford Cathedral.[6] This was only a fortnight after the previous organist, Henry Swarbrick, had died. Swarbrick had known of Alcock (or though more likely visa-versa) as he had subscribed to his *Twelve English Songs* and to his six harpsichord suites published in the early 1740s. This points to the possibility—and it is no more than that—that Hereford may have recruited its organists from people already known to the Chapter. This happened, it would seem, in the case of Clack who had studied with Swarbrick.[7] Looking ahead for a moment, Clack's successor at Hereford in 1779, William Perry, was appointed at the same Chapter Meeting as Clack resigned.

On his appointment as organist at a salary of £50, Clack was also paid to maintain and tune the cathedral organ as had his predecessor, Henry Swarbrick, uncle of William Swarbrick, the organ builder, who had neglected to do it, apparently leaving it to his nephew. In the year

following his appointment Clack became a member of the Hereford Musical Society whose meetings were by then held at the Coffee House in St John Street.[8] This was run by the Revd William Felton, vicar choral and later *custos*, organist, harpsichordist, violinist and composer. Clack's involvement here was also to tune the harpsichord each evening, but at only half the fee that his predecessor was paid. Swarbrick had been organist for some thirty-four years and it appears that, as with many other places, standards had slipped. In April 1758, nearly four years after Clack's appointment, the Dean wrote:

I am fully persuaded, upon enquiry, that there is no Cathedral Quire in England so much neglected in this respect as that of Hereford, and when the number of Vicars provided for that Service in our Church is consider'd such neglect must appear so much the more excusable, as well as more indecent.....[together with] the indecency of seeing the Psalms and Hymns [i.e. presumably Canticles] so often left to be chanted by the Boys only.
[9]

In November 1764 he was reprimanded for not giving proper attention to instructing the choristers although "this entry in the Chapter Act Book was dispensed with at the adjournment, 11 Dec.1764". [10] Nevertheless, in March 1766 he received an admonition to attend personally (i.e. not send a deputy) each day except Wednesdays and Fridays, and to teach the choristers at least three times a week.. The former was an arrangement allowing him to teach privately locally, a point noted in the pseudonymous semi-autobiographical novel by John Alcock, *The Life of Miss Fanny Brown*:

they always *chaunt* the Service without the *Organ*, every *Wednesday* and *Friday*, which gives the Organists an Opportunity of attending their scholars out of Town. [11]

Whatever grounds the Dean had for his sharp criticism of musical standards at the Cathedral, it appears that Clack had made his mark as a conductor. He conducted the Three Choirs Festival at Hereford in September 1759 and was the first organist from one of the three cathedrals to do so. But there was another feather in his cap. Handel had died the previous April. However popular his oratorio *Messiah* may have been, it

was, like all oratorios, not then considered suitable for performance in a Cathedral: oratorios were deemed too secular. The Guildhall at Hereford was in a parlous state and unusable for the performance; the hall in the vicars choral college was too small. It was necessary to maintain the status and income of the Festival and so, although that oratorio had been performed at the Three Choirs meetings in 1757 and 1758 as evening concerts in secular buildings, in 1759 Clack had been able to conduct the oratorio on 14 September in a morning performance in Hereford Cathedral. This was later in the same year as Handel's death. It was the first Cathedral performance at the Festival and indeed the first in an English cathedral.[12] This performance extended the Festival to a third day and *Messiah*, in whole or in part, subsequently appeared in the Festival programme. Meanwhile, Clack conducted in 1765 and subscribed to the Meeting in 1768.

As organist he was not automatically a member of the College of the vicars choral but on 14 July 1769 he was elected,[13] taking the place in the College of the Revd Richard Waring, formerly *custos*, vicar choral for sixty years who reputedly had had "an increased moroseness of disposition". William Cooke, quoted above, puts it thus:

No doubt Mr Clack was a very respectable Man in his sphere of life, but this is scarcely sufficient to explain the motive which could have induced the Bishop to ordain, or the Dean & Chapter to elect him into the office of Vicar Choral. while the College was teeming with young Members & while his own vocal Services were of no Value to the Choir, as long as he retained the situation of Organist.

Felton surely must have agreed to his appointment. The latter died suddenly in December 1769, the year he was appointed *custos*.

Few of Clack's predecessors as organist were members. John Alcock notes the situation at Hereford regarding the vicars choral: that they are all in Orders and dine communally. This meant that Clack had to be ordained before he could be admitted.[14] He was ordained Deacon on 23 July 1769, nine days after he was admitted to the College, as a Probationer. He paid 13/4d for linen. A month or so later, on 25 September 1769, he was Instituted into the vicarage of Diddlebury, in Ludlow Deanery.[15] Twelve months later, after his probationary year, on 26 July 1770, his

appointment was confirmed, i.e. he was “perpetuated”, and he paid twenty shillings “in full satisfaction” for eight bushels of wheat and fourteen bushels of barley, yearly rent.

Whilst organist at Hereford Clack subscribed to Richard Langdon’s *Ten Songs and a Cantata*, Jeremiah Clarke’s, *Eight Songs with the instrumental parts set to musick*, (1760), Richard Lovett’s *Philosophical essays on the nature and property of the electrical fluid* (1766) and his later *The Electrical Philosopher* (1774), Charles Burney’s *General History of Music* (1776), the 1771 reprint of Thomas Morley’s *A Plain and Easy Introduction to Practical Music* [16] and, presumably entering his subscription among that of many others and before his death, Chapple’s *A Review of Part of Risdon’s Survey of Devon* published in 1785. He was presumably the “Mr Richard Clack” of Hereford who subscribed in 1774 to the 2nd edition of William Enfield’s *An essay towards a history of Liverpool* [sic].

During Clack’s tenure as organist, his younger brother Thomas, born in 1745, became a chorister,[17] subsequently went to Brasenose College, Oxford, and then was ordained Deacon at Hereford on 25 September 1768, having spent a time in Ireland.[18] His title parish was Canon Pyon, near Leominster.

Clack resigned as organist on 11 November 1779 [19], having seen John Byfield II rebuild the Cathedral organ, with a new soundboard,[20] in 1772-73. He died aged 54 later that year.[21] His wife Martha later referred to the “long painful hours” of his illness.[22]

Further details of Clack’s musical activity are sparse. We have noted the manuscript written for the instruction of Phillippa Davies and Cooke[23] says that he wrote several similar ones for his spinet pupils at Hereford. These contained “country dances, popular Ballads, Airs, Minuets & Gavottas, agreeably to the taste of the day”.

Three manuscripts in the British Library contain material in his hand.[24] The substantial Add. 315592 (128 ff) contains 34 Italian (Neapolitan) secular cantatas in his hand.[25] The other two manuscripts contain what appear to be his own compositions. Add. 31723, ff 15-29 is a secular

cantata, possibly an early work, *When a tender virtuous passion*, for SATB soli and strings plus movements with flute, trumpets and timpani respectively. Add. 31702 ff 10-21 is a long Kyrie for five-part choir and strings.

So what of his earlier background? Richard Clack came from Wallingford, then in Berkshire. His father, Thomas Clack, a member of an old Crowmarsh Gifford family, was from at least 1720 Innkeeper of The Lamb, an important coaching inn, in the High Street at Wallingford, a market town across the Thames from Crowmarsh.[26] He was probably Postmaster but certainly Deputy from 1760.[27] He was also Churchwarden at St Peter's Church Wallingford from 1742-44 and 1752-54.[28] By his two wives, Ann and Elizabeth, he had, according to the baptism records of St Peter's Wallingford, three sons and seven daughters. With the repetition of Christian names, two must have died young and were buried at Crowmarsh Gifford. A Richard Clack was baptised on 26 July 1720. But this does not tie up with his age stated by Cooke[29], neither does it agree with his being described as a "lad" in 1741. There is a gap in the list of baptised children, which allows another birth in 1724-26. Ann Clack, Thomas' first wife died in January 1726 n.s. (? in childbirth). If so this gives a possible pointer to Richard Clack's date of birth. [30]

William Cooke, in his account of the vicars choral, and the entry in the Chapter Acts listing Clack's appointment at Hereford, are silent regarding his background, education and previous appointments. The date of his arrival at Hereford is not known and his name does not appear in the Chapter Acts as an arriving or departing chorister. However, a note in Cooke's handwriting on the verso of the front cover of an organ manuscript[31] says that Henry Swarbrick, his predecessor as organist there, was his Master. This was presumably immediately before his appointment as organist. However the inclusion of *Waring's Maggot*, the dance tune, in the Truro manuscript already mentioned, might suggest a Hereford connection prior to 1747. Swarbrick is described elsewhere as "a very good Master, but a good & natur'd Man"[32] and Clack's being under Swarbrick must surely explain why he was appointed so soon after the latter's death.

At some stage—and it may well have been after 1768—Richard Clack married. In his will, dated 3 September 1776, he left everything to his

wife, Martha.[33] In November 1768 he had been granted arms (“to Richard Clack of the City of Hereford”): *Gules an eagle displayed ermine within a bordure engrailed erminois*; with the Crest: *A demi eagle or, winged ermine*. [34] The “limitation” was extended to include the other descendants of his father, “Thomas Clack, late of Wallingford co Berks, deceased”. It is differenced from the arms of the Wayney family by the *bordure*. Was there a connection? Was this another hint that he had no children? The arms are on the family memorial in Crowmarsh Gifford church.

Meanwhile, Richard Clack’s sister, Frances (born in 1739 after Thomas, senr. had remarried, and one of three attractive daughters of Thomas and Elizabeth[35]) hurriedly married in Edinburgh the under-age, William, second Viscount Courtenay. There was another (respectable!) service at Powderham Church late the following year. Frances (Fanny) and William had thirteen daughters and a son. Through William’s generosity, and connections with Hereford Cathedral and Brasenose College, Oxford,[36] the youngest son of Thomas Clack, Thomas, junr., (born 1745) had left for Brasenose by July 1763.[37] As we have seen, he was subsequently ordained at Hereford (Deacon in 1768, Priest the following year) and, from 1774, started the long period of Clack incumbencies at Moretonhampstead, Devon, where initially Frances Clack’s husband, his brother-in-law, was Patron. These lasted until 1901.

What established the connection of Richard Clack with Hereford or specifically with Henry Swarbrick is not known. It may have been through the Maxey family of Wallingford, or the connections with Brasenose College which had scholarships from Hereford Cathedral School. But it can be assumed he had agreed that Thomas, his younger brother, could become a chorister, perhaps with the view to his later being given a scholarship to Brasenose. It seems that Richard Clack composed little but certainly had ability as a conductor—even if he was apparently not so conscientious with his training of the boy choristers.

So it is clear that Richard Clack was a systematic and, to a degree, a talented musician. The source of his initial musical education is not known but it does appear that there *may* have been a Hereford connection from an early age but he appears not to have been a chorister there.

Although he was later under Swarbrick, there seems a possibility that he had been with—or was he related to—Richard Waring, *custos* of the vicars choral at Hereford. Further details of his Plymouth connection have not come to light or indeed those of his Wallingford background. However, it is clear from the grant of arms and the Crowmarsh Gifford memorial that his father was Thomas Clack of The Lamb at Wallingford.

Acknowledgements

My thanks are due to the staff of the Berkshire Record Office, the British Library, Birmingham Archives and Heritage, Cornwall Record Office, Herefordshire Record Office, and Reading Central Library Local Collection; also to Professor Donald Burrows, Rosalind Caird (Archivist Hereford Cathedral), Felicity Harper (Archivist Powderham Castle), Mr William Hunt, (Windsor Herald), Hugh Drake Brockman, David Pedgley, Jason Smart, Rachel Walker and Nicolas Walker for help, each according to their kind.

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Notes

[1]: See Donald Burrows, and Rosemary Dunhill, *Music and theatre in Handel's world: the family papers of James Harris 1732-1780* (2002), pp 117-118.

[2]: Reading: Berkshire Record Office D/P 97/5/3. It has been misread as Clark on occasion.

[3]: Truro: Cornwall Record Office DG/190. Almost entirely in the same hand, which I think is Clack's, although there are three others.

[4]: f 12v

[5]: In *A Choice Collection of 200 Favourite Country Dances...Vol II* (1742) there is a dance entitled Waring's Delight but I have as yet been unable to ascertain whether it is the same piece.

[6]: Chapter Acts 6 July 1754, Hereford Cathedral Archives 7031/4 p 282. The most recent general history of the Cathedral is Hereford

Cathedral: A History (ed. G.Aylmer and J.Tiller, 2000). See also Watkins Shaw and Roy Massey, *The Organists and Organs of Hereford Cathedral* (Hereford, 2005).

[7]: See note 31 below.

[8]: See Revd William Cooke, [MS] *Biographical Memoire of the Custos and Vicars admitted into the College at Hereford from 1660-1823*, n.d. [19th century] (Hereford Cathedral).

[9]: Hereford Cathedral vicar choral Acts 7003/1/4 p 154.

[10]: See Hereford Cathedral MS 5661 verso.

[11]: John Piper, *The Life of Miss Fanny Brown (A Clergyman's Daughter:)* (1760), p. 219. See also P.Marr, "John Alcock and Fanny Brown" in *Musical Times* (Feb.1977), pp 118-120.

[12]: Daniel Lysons, *History of the origin and progress of the Meeting of the Three Choirs* (1812), p.189 notes some of the singers and instrumentalists together with the ticket arrangements that included entrance to the Ball in the evening.

[13]: Chapter Acts 14 July 1769; see also Cooke, op.cit.

[14]: A note about this is in Chapter Acts 7031/5 p 31 and repeated in Herefordshire Record Office HD6/12, requiring him to show his Letters of Orders to the Chapter and then the Bishop of the diocese had to be told of his election. The second of those dated 23 July 1771 is with the 1771 ordinations. Ann Clack, sister of Richard, had married Thomas Locke (Westminster School, BA Christ Church Oxford, 1752, d.1787) who became Rector of Newcastle West in co.Limerick. Did the Clacks have an Irish connection and, if so, does the question of Richard Clack's musical education have its answer in Ireland?

[15]: Hereford vicar choral Acts 7003/1/4 p 198 when he succeeded the Revd Lewis Maxey, who had also been born in Wallingford. The (Prebendal) Vicarage of Diddlesbury was the usual one in which new vicars choral were installed.

[16]: John Alcock did not subscribe as it would seem probable, from references in *The Life of Miss Fanny Brown*, that he had a copy of the original 1597 edition.

[17]: He became a chorister on 4 August 1756 and had departed for Oxford by 27 July 1763. See Chapter Acts 7031/4 for those dates. Richard Clack had signed for a quarterly payment to him in 1757; see Hereford Cathedral Archives 5715/127.

[18]: According to his pre-ordination reference, signed by three Church of Ireland clergy and countersigned by the Bishop of Limerick. See Herefordshire Record Office HD6/11.

[19]: Chapter Acts 7031/5 p 176.

[20]: Chapter Acts 7031/5, p 89, 12 November 1772.

[21]: Cooke says that he was buried in the Cathedral on the east side of the south transept but the tombstone is now not visible. For the date see Francis T.Havergal, *Monumental Inscriptions in the Cathedral Church of Hereford* (1881), p 24.

[22]: Letter, 1788, to the Rector of Bromsberrow, Glos., Birmingham Archives MS 3192/Acc1941-031/857/1.

[23]: William Cooke, op.cit.

[24]: In the British Library catalogue these are wrongly attributed to “Richard Clark”. Répertoire International des Sources Musicales (RISM) attributes them to Clack and they are in the same hand as the Truro MS mentioned above.

[25]: By J.A.Hasse (18), Doni (5), Vinci (6), Leo (2) and one each by Martini, Tartoretti, Pergolesi, Vivaldi, Porpora and Orlandini.

[26]: The Lamb has an interesting history. See “Some notes on the domestic architecture of Wallingford, Berkshire” in *Berkshire Archaeological Journal*, vol. 50 (1947), p 32.

[27]: And succeeded by his widow. See G.H.R. Homer-Wooff, *The Postal History of Wallingford* (Wallingford, 1987), p 4.

[28]: Berkshire Record Office D/P 139 5/1. Thomas Clack died on 3 April 1761 and is buried at Crowmarsh Gifford along with other members of the family. He was still in business in 1759 when the Churchwardens paid him 8/- for “Licker at the Seshons for the Pshish” [sic]. His second

wife, Elizabeth, also buried there, died in 1764.

[29]: Op.cit.

[30]: See the memorial in Crowmarsh Gifford Church. There is no record of the baptism of the organist Richard Clack in the Wallingford registers.

[31]: MS 30.B.18. It also notes that Clack compiled the Index (recte table of contents) which is in Swarbrick's hand.

[32]: The true Anti-Pamela or, Memoirs of Mr. James Parry...written by himself (1742), p 33.

[33]: PCC Prob 11/1060.

[34]: London: the College of Arms, Grants 11.322 dated 30 November 1768. Burke, General Armory, gives 13 November. The similarity of the blazon to that of the Wayney family (more common in Ireland than England) and the Limerick link with Ann Locke (née Clack) is of interest.

[35]: "The personal attractions of the innkeepers' three daughters were such, that the story of their beauty, their graceful figures, and alliances is current at the present day" see J.K.Hedges, The History of Wallingford, vol. 2, (1881), pp 409-410. Also William Beckford is said to have written: "...a publican at Wallingford whose sign at least displayed the symbol of innocence, for it was the sign of the Lamb.....Honest Tom was...of a kind disposition [and] well known to indulge his customers, especially the young members of the neighbouring university with whatever they liked best that his home afforded." See Society Scandals, ed. Bridgeman and Drury (1977), p 39.

[36]: There were Dean Langford and Philpott's scholarships to the College.

[37]: Chapter Acts, supra.

12.2 Organ Art - the pipe painting

by

Michael J. Humphries

This article is about how an amateur went about painting the pipes for his doorbell project [see The Berkshire Organist No:62 pp63 - 67 OrganArt - A Novel Door 'Bell']. I'm sure that the professional pipe decorators will cringe at how this was accomplished here.

In the previous article I gave an insight into how we went about it, and I've included that description again in case you haven't got the original article to hand.



The pipes could have been left in their rather grey, plain state, but this was to be where the “art” bit of OrganArt would apply. The pipes were treated to a background coat of silver Hammerite, and then the search was on for a suitable pattern, ending up with a design loosely based on that of the Walker organ in St.Bartholomew's Church, Arborfield, Berks. Digital photography and computer graphics were used to edit the pattern to the right scale. Then carbon-paper was used to transfer the pattern outline onto the pipes, emboldened afterwards in freehand! Fig. 1 shows typical outlines which had to be painted

So, how was it done? Hammerite Metal Paint in red and gold 'smooth' were used to colour in the outlines, shown in the detail of Fig.2, but a very steady hand would have been needed to produce an acceptable finish without the benefit of a stencil. Casting my mind back to the production of artwork for electronic printed wiring boards of the 1970/80s



I remembered that we used self-adhesive crepe paper tape, called graphic tape, made by Chartpak. The tape comes in a variety of thicknesses and so, choosing one of 0.046" (approximately 1.2mm) width and using a scalpel for cutting I outlined the finished paintwork on each pipe... a long drawn out affair as it took me nearly 10 hours for each pipe. Fig.3 shows a detail of one of the finished pipes. The final job was to 'fix' the tape and several different coatings were tried on a test sheet before choosing Halfords Clear Lacquer. Fig.4 shows the finished pipework in its case.

Acknowledgements: Marjie Harris for her paintwork and for mopping my brow as I toiled over the tape!



12.3 A week in the Dordogne

What does one associate with the Dordogne region of France? Not organs, I think! What a surprise therefore when my wife and I were invited to join a tour with ten others to visit and play organs in this region. We were certainly not disappointed. The tour was organised and led by Anthony Burns-Cox, a former organist of Romsey Abbey, but now at Pear Tree Church, Southampton, the oldest Anglican church in the world. He kindly hosted our Association visit to his church a few years ago. Mr Burns-Cox has been arranging annual organ visits to various parts of France for some years.

We assembled at St Pancras to catch the Eurostar to Paris, then on to Libourne, a small town to the east of Bordeaux. The journey was exhilarating with speeds of well over 100 mph. Some further excitement was generated when Mr Burns-Cox and another of our party failed to disembark at Libourne. They were taking their time in helping a lady with her luggage when the train doors shut and the train departed! There was nothing anyone could do. Fortunately, the next stop was Bordeaux only 15 miles away. Our hotel in Libourne was situated at the confluence of the Rivers Dordogne and Isle, an attractive situation, enabling us to see some spectacular water activity when the tide was coming in.

We began the first day by visiting two organs in Bordeaux. The first was the gem of the tour, the world famous 5 manual Dom Bedos organ in Eglise Sainte-Croix, where we remained for the whole morning. Dom Bedos was a Benedictine Monk, an organ builder and a writer. He is best known for his “L’art du facteur d’orgues” – writings about all aspects of organ building, a work which is still much referred to today. This organ was



Composition actuelle de l'instrument

1^{er} clavier (51 notes) Positif de dos		2nd clavier (51 notes) Grand orgue		3^{ème} clavier (50 notes) Bombarde	
Montre	8'	Bourdon	32'	Bombarde	16'
Bourdon	8'	Montre	16'	Gros cromorne .	8'
Prestant	4'	Bourdon	16'		
Flûte	4'	Montre	8'		
Nazard	2 2/3'	Bourdon	8'	4^{ème} clavier (32 notes)	
Doublette	2'	Flûte	8'	Récit	
Tierce	1 3/5'	Gros nazard	5 1/3'	Cornet	V rangs
Larigot	1 1/3'	Prestant	4'	Trompette	8'
Plein jeu	IX rgs	Grosse tierce	3 1/5'		
Cornet	V rgs	Nazard	2 2/3'	5^{ème} clavier (39 notes)	
Trompette	8'	Doublette	2'	Écho	
Clairon	4'	Tierce	1 3/5'	Cornet	V rangs
Cromorne	8'	Grosse fourniture	II rgs		
Voix humaine	8'	Plein jeu	XIII rgs		
		Grand cornet	V rgs	Pédale (36 notes)	
		1 ^{ère} trompette	8'	Flûte	16'
		2 ^{ème} trompette	8'	1 ^{ère} flûte	8'
		Clairon	4'	2 ^{ème} flûte	8'
				Flûte	4'
				Bombarde	16'
				1 ^{ère} trompette	8'
				2 ^{ème} trompette	8'
				Clairon	4'
Accouplements à tiroir Pos/GO et Bombarde/GO Tremblant fort – Tremblant doux Sonnette souffleur					

La Renaissance de l'Orgue à Bordeaux
26 rue du Maréchal Gallieni, 33150 CENON
Tel/fax/répondeur : 05-56-86-58-29
Courriel : orguebordeaux@neuf.fr



built in 1748 but has had a chequered history, being later installed (unsatisfactorily) in Bordeaux Cathedral. It was not until 1985 that the organ was fully restored and re-installed in Sainte-Croix. There are 45 stops over 5 manuals, but as is normal on French classical instruments, the upper manuals are no more than Solo manuals. The fifth manual (Echo) has just one stop, a soft Cornet. The pedalboard (small blocks of wood) goes down to F; consequently the position of the notes laterally is not quite where one would expect. The rich and colourful sounds are something we will always remember. Our afternoon visit was to Eglise St Augustin

where we played a 3 manual North German style instrument by Pesce, an excellent builder based in the South of France.

The second day, we headed North Eastwards along the River Isle to Montpon Ménéstérol. We played another North German style organ, this one by Grenzing, with a highly decorated case. We were then welcomed at the home and auditorium of Francis Chapelet. Monsieur Chapelet, now retired, was organist at St Severin in Paris, and is known worldwide for his knowledge of historic French and Spanish organs. In an annexe behind his house, which could be taken for a large workshop and storage for garden machinery, there is a large tall, air-conditioned room housing three early historic organs. Two were Spanish and one Italian. After he had kindly demonstrated, we were free to play them all (but not at the same time!). Those who wished to play a “Battaglia” on the real thing were not disappointed. On the way back to Libourne, we had an important assignation! We were welcomed at the Château Guillotin at St Emilion for a “dégustation”. The lady of the Chateau, being English, offered us all a cup of tea on arrival before getting down to the serious business! The vineyards here were established in 1730. We were shown

the workings of wine production and it was explained to us just how critical is the weather in determining success or failure.

The next day, we headed in the same direction, but further on, to visit St Astier. Here we played a newly-installed 2 manual organ by Pesce (in the North German style). The tonal qualities of this organ were memorable, nothing harsh, reminding one of the qualities of a Silbermann, the 18th century South German builder. I later learned that this organ had in fact been constructed along the lines of a Silbermann. After lunching in Perigueux, we played the 4 manual 1733 Carouge in L'Eglise Sainte-Etienne-de-la-cité. It was a pity that this church was very dark and gloomy with a forbidding atmosphere – not a place to find oneself locked in at night! We proceeded to the Cathédrale Saint Front, a large expansive building with a number of domes, characteristic of the Byzantine style. Here the organ was a 2 manual Merklin, one of the few romantic style organs we came across. Merklin was a German by birth but set up organ building in France. He was a prolific builder and was a rival to Cavaillé-Coll. We left Perigueux and made our way to Beynac, a small village on the River Dordogne, where we stayed for two nights.

Journeying further east the next day, we arrived at Souillac. Again, the church had Byzantine features. A wonderful atmosphere prevailed here with the circular chancel and altar adorned with lit candles. The organ here was small and had 2 manuals and pedals but no pedal stops. The pedals were coupled to 'the Great' permanently but, with a 16 foot Bourdon on 'the Great', which was in no way thick and heavy; it was surprising how one never noticed the lack of pedal stops. Our next church at Gourdon had an organ with the same characteristics. It must be said that everywhere we visited, however big or small we found that "extra stop" – excellent acoustics! We finished the day at Sarlat. Here the Cathedral had a lovely 4 manual organ built in 1752 by Lepine. There was a recital that evening given by a young lady who was a prize winner at the International Toulouse Competition. She graciously took an hour's break in her afternoon rehearsal so allowing us to play. We were not able to stay for the recital but some of us stayed and listened for a while when she resumed her practice.

For the last day we headed westwards and came to St Cyprien-en-Perigord. This small town has a 3 manual Grenzing in its church. North German in style, it has been used by André Isoir to record the works of

Bach. For the whole of this tour we were transported in three good-sized cars each taking four people. There was therefore some individual flexibility and on our way to Bergerac we decided to make a slight detour and visit Château Monbazillac to taste their dessert wine. This chateau is situated just to the south of Bergerac on the top of a hill with wonderful views of the valley. In Bergerac we visited L'église St Jacques and the main church, Notre Dame. There were Cavaillé-Coll organs in both churches. A slight detour on our way back to Libourne took us to St Emilion where we played the only authentic organ by Cavaillé-Coll's son Gabriel.

So ended a most interesting and convivial week with memories of lovely scenery, not a drop of rain, blue skies, good company and delicious food, not to mention an amazing diversity of organs. My wife, being the only lady with us, came through it very well!

Jonathan Holl

12.4 The Ruscombe Organ

Re-Dedication of the Organ in the Church of St. James the Great, Ruscombe.

A congregation of sixty-nine gathered at the 6pm Service in the Church of St. James the Great, Ruscombe on the evening of Sunday 22nd November 2009 for a very special Service.

A full re-furbishment of the fine two-manual organ was completed in July, with a new Fifteenth Stop installed by organ builders F H Browne & Son to commemorate many years of devoted commitment by Alan Garraway, in his role as Verger.



Members of the Garraway family and Ruscombe Parish Councillors joined many members from the local churches of Ruscombe & Twyford to hear the fresh, clean sound that is now further brightened with its additional feature, as Organist Sylvia Collins accompanied the hymns and played 'La Rejouissance' by Handel to follow the Prayer of Dedication led by Revd. Simon Howard.

A strong choral group of ten singers led the hymns and sang the Anthem 'Lead me Lord'.



After the service, refreshments were provided by Church Warden Carolyn Cowland, who led the Fund-raising Committee that successfully met the full cost of the re-furbishment in only five months, thanks to generous contributions from a wide-ranging number of supporters of this project. As a result, the organ will, for many years to come, continue to lift the singing of those who gather in the church for worship.

For all those present, this was a remarkable event that brought this Church Year to its end, with the anticipation of all the future opportunities to hear this superb instrument.

Sylvia Collins

12.5 Student Organ Recital at Reading School

I hoped when I retired I would be able to listen to local lunch time recitals, so when David Pether's excellent e-mail system notified me of a recital on Friday 12th March 2010 with less than 24 hours notice, I totally rescheduled my day.

The announcement of a students' concert at Reading School was, as far as I am concerned, important, as BOA strives to support the activities of young players.

Philip Aspden, the School's Director of music, had arranged the concert – and at the last moment – had advised David. The students who played and their pieces were in sequence:

Richard Parkinson [11E]

Bach – BWV534 – Prelude in F Minor

James Oakley [11E]

Karel Jirak – Prelude No.3

Ben Morris [13LM]

Bach – BWV525 – Trio No 1 in E flat – 1st Movement

Tim Perry [13AMH]

Lang - Tuba Tune

Ben Morris

Vierne – Finale from Symphony No.1

It was very obvious that all the students had done a lot of hard work towards their performances. However the organ I think is in need of some attention as action noise and a ciphering pedal note did not help the players. Both Tim and James are pupils of Graham Ireland. Ben has been appointed Organ Scholar at Gloucester Cathedral from the autumn; his skill is obvious. The work by Jirak is new to me and needed research to find out more about this composer. The piece comes from 5 Little Preludes & Fugues Op.77 and is in a publication edited by Anne Marsden Thomas and published by Cramer. Well done lads; we need to hear more from your students, Philip. It was a very enjoyable half hour.

Mark Jameson

12.6 Crossword

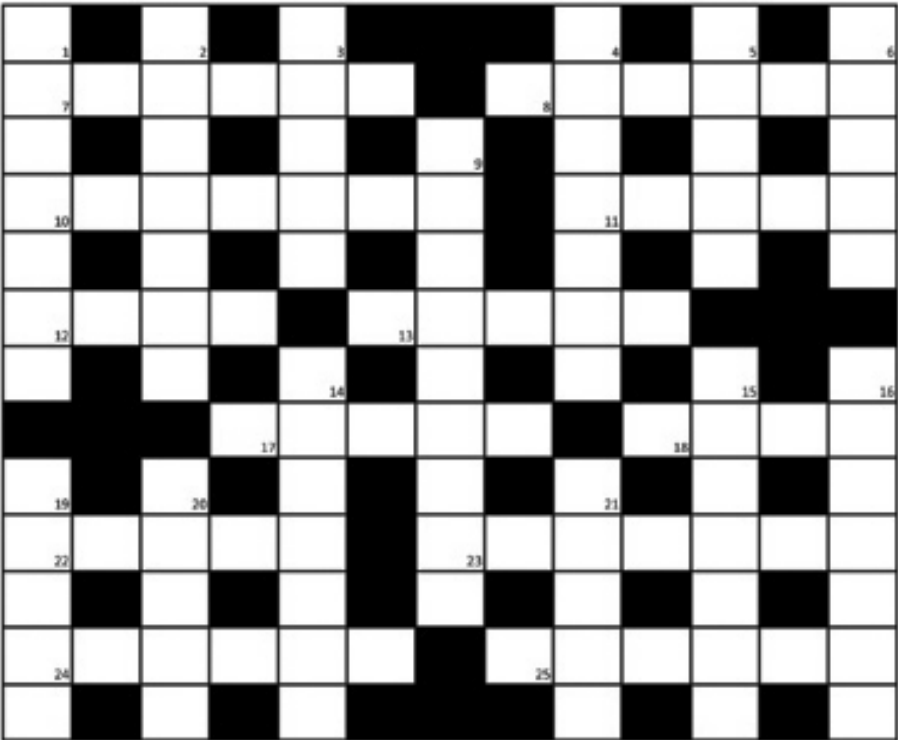
Crossword Puzzle Clues

ACROSS

7. Composer of the opera “Mignon” (6)
8. Composer of a famous Berceuse. (6)
10. A member of Les Six (7)
11. The second best setter of the poem Erlkonig to music. (5)
12. An ornament. (4)
13. A “riotous dance of German origin”. (5)
17. Long live the King of Italy. (5)
18. Not edible but borne with suffering. (4)
22. This composer accepted an Oxford D. Mus. in 1928. (5)
23. A papal composer. (7)
24. Composer of Bluebeard’s Castle. (6)
25. An English composer, who was an authority on Liszt. (6)

DOWN

1. A composer associated with the clarinet. (7)
2. Part of a piano manufacturer. (7)
3. A song of Triumph. (5)
4. The second half of the name for the second most important note in the Tonic Sol-fa. (7)
5. Composer of the music for Milton’s Comus. (5)
6. A virtuoso on the twelve hole harmonica. (5)
9. A musical period. (9)
14. A composer of a Te Deum. (7)
15. Not Benjamin but the other one. (7)
16. Composer of Lakmé. (7)
19. Bach’s show pupil. (5)
20. Are they still made of this? (5)
21. A Professor of Music at Reading University. (5)



12.7 Ebenezer Scrivener

Percy Scrivener (1872-1962), founder-member of the Berkshire Organists' Association and its first President, was proud of his middle name, Ravenscroft. It is understood that he was a direct descendent of Thomas Ravenscroft (1591/2-c.1630) whose Psalm Tunes are known to all who accompany church services. But Percy Scrivener had another Christian name. At his birth and at his marriage he is named as Percy Ebenezer Ravenscroft Scrivener. Understandably, he declined to use Ebenezer, for the popularity of the name faded as Dickens' novel, *A Christmas Carol*, featuring the scrooge Ebenezer, became widely known. But why Ebenezer?

Percy Scrivener, the eldest of seven children, was born in Lewisham, as was one of his sisters. The family moved around, for others were born in Ipswich and—it would seem—in West Bengal. It was there that Percy Scrivener went as a child, for his father, Edgar Thomas Scrivener, worked at Asansol on the construction of the railway, probably the Asansol to Chakradharpur line of the Bengal Nagpur Railway, which was opened about 1890. Edgar Thomas Scrivener was initially, like his father, an agricultural machinist, but by 1896 is described as an engineer, and those skills must have taken him to India.

Edgar Thomas Scrivener had been born at Ipswich in 1849, and was one of a large family. Later, then living at Bermondsey, he married Annie Maria Ravenscroft, later to be the mother of Percy Scrivener, in November 1871 at Trinity Independent Chapel, Reading, subsequently Trinity Congregational Church, sadly now no more. She had studied the organ under Miss Binfield at St Lawrence's Church. Annie Maria Ravenscroft's father had been a local tea dealer but was later a fishing tackle maker and tobacconist. But we might ask, why at Trinity Independent Chapel? The likely answer soon comes to light.

Edgar Thomas Scrivener's father was Ebenezer Scrivener (1819-1895), a carpenter by trade. He came from Ipswich in Suffolk. His father, William Scrivener (born about 1780) was a thatcher. Ebenezer was baptised at the Ebenezer Wesleyan Church in Ipswich (demolished, I think, soon after 1900), and perhaps named after that—with presumably some family connection—which may explain why his son, Edgar Thomas, was not married in a Church of England Church. Ebenezer and his family had moved to Reading by the mid-1850s.

To return to Percy Scrivener, we have seen that he went to West Bengal as a child. There, in his early teens, he was organist of a small church, I think St Paul's Asansol, so preparing him for the post of assistant organist at Christchurch, Reading, and then as organist at the recently-built St John's Church, Lower Caversham. But, before then, and apparently whilst he was in India, he gained his ATCL (in the theory of music, not organ) and in 1890 LTCL, the latter at the age of seventeen. He was then described as "of Asansol, Bengal, India", but he seems to have been back in England well by then. It may be that he took these paperwork examinations in India and was awarded them on his return to England. In England he studied under Arthur Moss who lived in London Road.

In 1896 at St Giles', soon after his appointment as organist there in the previous year, Percy Scrivener married Jesse Dunn, the daughter of a local bookbinder and stationer. The organist post was handy for him as he lived in the parish. His appointment had been facilitated by the dismissal of the organist, Frederick Davis, who had gone—during the sermon—for a drink at the Bell Inn, then on the edge of the churchyard.

So this has explained "Ebenezer". But I suppose what is also interesting is that there was what we might term "chapel blood" on his father's side of the family. And, bearing that in mind, it is no surprise to recall that Percy Scrivener was never a plainsong man.

Peter Marr

12.8 On Turning the Page

Modern organ consoles often seem to have more buttons and display screens than the flight deck of Concorde. This is purported to allow the performer to produce kaleidoscopic registrational changes fit for a virtuoso. However, despite the ever-increasing complexity, I have yet to see a gadget which can easily replace the need for a page turner. It is true that wonders can be achieved with imaginative use of a photocopier, and some players may be blessed with the ability (and sufficient spare time) to memorize entire works, but that would perhaps be overlooking some of the less obvious functions of an assistant at the console.

A good page turner is invaluable, and I have been very glad to have had the support of a few extraordinarily reliable and enthusiastic people in this vital function over the years. As well as handling the score, they have been able to help with assessing problems of balance in rehearsal, giving an honest opinion with diplomacy. They are also a calming influence in those tense final moments prior to a performance, either through the distraction of idle banter, or by providing the comfort of knowing that a safe pair of hands is ready to assist should the unexpected happen. Instead of facing a solo challenge, a recital becomes something to be tackled as a team, and an event as apparently minor as a missed registration change ceases to be a threat which could bring a piece to a shuddering halt.

There is something of the “spirit of the confessional” about the relationship at the console. Players have been known to utter some choice vocabulary when a performance is not going swimmingly, and a page turner would be expected never to repeat such intimations, nor to reveal exactly which passages in the recital the performer knew to be “absolutely impossible” to play as written. I have to confess that I have, on at least one occasion, lost my place in the music due to a lack of concentration and, with my fingers wildly marking time, had to ask my page turner where I should be looking. It is at moments such as these that it is essential to be able to depend on the assistant to remain calm... and discreet.

However, it is not always the case that a page turner is a blessing. I try to forget the time when a copy of *Vierne I* landed in my lap just as the Archbishop was processing towards the West Door. An assistant had “been volunteered” from the choir at the church in question who unfortunately couldn’t quite reach the music desk; when his attention drifted and he then tried too rapidly to make up time, disaster struck. Fortunately, this was one incident where I found that I knew more of the score from memory than I suspected.

I can think of situations where I have been listening to a recital and found that the antics of the registrant have been a distraction for the audience and, worse, the organist. Although they are of course there as part of the show, they can dominate proceedings unduly by fidgeting, chewing, or generally moving around the console in an attention-seeking manner. An extreme sartorial mismatch may be entertaining, but in general the assistant should be clothed so as to neither upstage nor shame the performer. I also wonder whether it should be considered a hanging offence if the registrant obscures the console and player from the view of the paying public unnecessarily; it’s really not that difficult to work out the relevant sightlines.

More recently, I have found myself on the other side of this divide, particularly at the Reading Town Hall lunchtime recitals, and have been surprised to find that I am sometimes more nervous in this role than when I am playing. I think this must be because there is often barely time to run through more than one or two awkward passages with the soloist before the doors open, so the rest of the programme has to be done on the fly. The lack of preparation and awareness of the dire consequences of an error on my part certainly help to keep the adrenalin pumping.

The job of registrant can, of course, be made easier by clear instructions written on the score. Colour-coded Post-it notes are my favourite, as they stand out and help to distinguish the relevant detail from the multiple pencilled accretions which music can accumulate over years of use. Judging the exact moment when to turn each page can be a nightmare as every recitalist reads ahead to a different degree, so an unambiguous “yes”, nod, “thank you”, or primeval grunt is beneficial for both sides. One popular player I’ve assisted is very wary of two pages being turned at once (apparently a case of “once bitten, twice shy”), so is in the habit of folding down the corners of alternate sheets in every score to make this accident virtually impossible. The technique seems to work well but has not caught on; my own insurance policy is to check the number of the page I’m about to reveal, thus avoiding the embarrassment of the shouted “turn back!”.

It can be very helpful for a page turner to know his or her way around the organ and console. For instance, at Reading Town Hall there is a small sound delay at the console, so it is important to anticipate the beat when making registration changes, although on occasion it surprises me that some players do not expect a stop to be drawn exactly on a given beat or phrase opening. The combination action on the Father Willis can also be temperamental at times, with stops not coming fully on and making it sound as though one or two pipes have dropped out of tune; here, experience in recognizing the problem and knowing which drawstops are most likely to need an extra tug can save important seconds of auditory discomfort.

Fulfilling the duties of a console assistant does have its less obvious disadvantages and even dangers. The elevated console at the University Great Hall in Reading, for example, requires the skills of a mountain goat to be able to reach the music desk without actually joining the player on the bench. I have seen a registrant trip up stairs whilst following an international star off stage, so no step should be considered to be safe

when in the public eye. Often the console is the worst place in a building to hear an organ; this is certainly the case at Reading Town Hall, where the cantilevered overhang of the case renders the sound very distant. Not least, there is absolutely no opportunity to relax on duty. It is inadvisable to get engrossed in thinking about how the music being heard is put together or, indeed, to enjoy the performance too much, otherwise a page turn or key registration is certain to be missed.

However, I would set against these negatives the benefit of being up close to a competent player. It can often be like having a lesson, where new ideas in registration, phrasing and interpretation can be gleaned purely by observation, even if eventually one comes to the conclusion that this is not the way to play!

I'll close with one final piece of advice to anyone considering taking up the challenge of page turning. Without doubt, nobody ever made a living out of doing it.

David Pether

12.9 Forster & Andrews and the IOW

In the notes on the Isle of Wight tour, a comment was made concerning the Forster and Andrews organ at Bonchurch, as to how a Hull builder came to supply an instrument so far from home. It seems, however, that James Forster, son of the founder, retired to the Island after World War One. This poses the question, was his move because he had visited Bonchurch with regard to the organ sometime after it was built, and hence was attracted to the Island, or had the family earlier links with the I of Wight? If the latter did they perhaps stay in the region of St Boniface and Bonchurch when the church was seeking an organ? James Forster apparently had little interest in the practical side of organ building, so it is unlikely that he took a working interest in the Bonchurch instrument, unlike Father Willis who would no doubt, even if on a holiday visit, have had a go if something did not please. So was there an early link or was it that a parishioner had heard an F and A on the mainland, liked it and persuaded the Parish to order one.? Perhaps our Isle of Wight friends may have an idea.

Alan Kent

12.10 A Weekend with Organ Builders

Neither of us are organ builders but we are subscribers to the Institute of British Organ Builders. As such we receive four Newsletters and the annual journal 'The Organ Builder'. The Institute was founded to encourage the art and craft of British organ building. As such, it encourages and develops training schemes for trainees that are recognised formally and nationally. In addition short training courses are run on specialised topics in order to encourage continuing education throughout the industry. As subscribers, we can support such activities to ensure that we continue to have an organ building tradition in this country. However the Institute also holds a number of meetings, some semi-social, to visit and to learn about recently built/restored instruments of note and the processes involved. We, as subscribers, are able to apply to attend a number of these. Thus we have had the privilege of learning of the problems and solutions involved in achieving mechanical and audible excellence in a number of instruments.

A very interesting day was based in Milton Port, at Margaret Phillips' English Organ School, and at Sherborne Abbey, to see and hear the rebuilt and extended Tickell organ. But our most recent visit was a weekend based in Worcester, commencing on a Friday with a talk on the restoration of the historic instrument in the city church of St. Swithin's. This was followed by an enjoyable evening trip by boat on the Severn. The weekend also included a visit to Witley Court and its recently restored fountain, 'fired' especially for the occasion. Obviously whilst there, a visit was made to the famed Rococo church to hear about and to listen to, the organ with its Handel case. (How much of Handel's instrument remains, other than the case is a matter of conjecture!) The weekend concluded with a visit to the Elgar Birthplace Museum with a brief talk and DVD on the Elgar Sonata No 1.

The main visit of the weekend was to Worcester Cathedral to hear about and also to listen to, the new Tickell Choir organ. Those who came to the Roy Massey pre-recital talk will recall he was not enthusiastic about the Cathedral acoustic but did not mention the organ. John Norman, consultant to the project, gave a brief history of previous instruments, general opinions of which were distinctly lacking in enthusiasm. The existing instrument was considered life-expired and a complete rethink about the Cathedral's requirements was undertaken. The result was that a new Choir instrument would be specified together with a new Nave organ, to be provided by Nicholson, we believe. The existing Hill Pedal

pipes placed in a transept would eventually be playable with both instruments. Kenneth Tickell was awarded the Choir organ contract.

To us it was of note that unlike any Tickell predecessor, this would have an all-electric action of novel design, although in some ways being a variant on the HNB action provided at Gloucester. During the presentations by both John Norman and Kenneth Tickell it became obvious why a tracker solution was just not possible. The Worcester Choir is built over the beautiful crypt, the vaulting strength of which is apparently just about adequate for the choir structure. A floor mounted instrument could not be contemplated. The Triforium/Clerestory area in Worcester unfortunately is very cramped, and so a N and S split location for the pipes above the Choir arches was agreed as the most sensible arrangement. Kenneth Tickell went through the design development process, showing how the pipes were placed, some in the galleries, some in the cases which stand proud of the structure. The console is placed in a slightly elevated position on the South side. In view of the general concern about the acoustic, we wondered how it would sound. We had visited Worcester previously and by luck heard this new instrument, so we knew it was worth hearing, but the demonstration by Adrian Lucas and his Assistant to conclude the presentation absolutely bowled us over. It is not a very large instrument, 60 odd stops over four manuals, but it is very versatile. Any acoustic problems have been overcome marvellously. In a private chat later with John Norman, he gave it as his opinion that having had one of the worst Cathedral organs in England, Worcester now has one the finest – we agree wholeheartedly. We also attended an excellent Evensong where the organ, played by Adrian Lucas, gave ample and varied support to the Girls Choir. For his superbly played voluntary, Adrian chose Liszt's "Ad Nos" applauded by the large congregation. (He has recorded this on a CD, available from the Cathedral Bookshop and well worth having.) The day concluded with a formal dinner with Relf Clark as the Guest Speaker on the subject of Worcester's musical heritage.

So that was our weekend with the organ builders. We were made most welcome and learnt much, as well as hearing some glorious music. This year we gather the meeting will be in Bristol to visit, amongst other organs, the restored St Mary Redcliffe. We hope to be there. We do strongly urge you to consider becoming a Subscriber. It is worth it for its own sake and helps support 'our' industry. It could even be that you could assist in some way – apparently some subscriber members were able to provide support and information to the IBO over the proposed EU lead regulations and the problems posed. To find out more about the IBO,

their website is www.ibo.co.uk but if you visit the BOA stand at the Concert Hall during recitals, samples of IBO publications are usually on view.

CD/DVD Details

- DVD/CD Elgar Sonata for organ, opus 28, James Lancelot, Durham Cathedral (Plus discussions on Elgar with James Lancelot, H and H etc.)
Available from the Elgar Birthplace Museum
- CD Reubke, Sonata on the 94th Psalm: Vierne, Symphonie No. 1
Adrian Lucas, Master of Choristers, Worcester Cathedral
Worcester Cathedral Enterprises, LUC402
Available Worcester Cathedral Shop

Alan Kent Roger Bartlett

12.11 Ronald Knox & Maurice Frost

For some years, my mother, Alexandra Louise Marr (1902-2001), regularly attended The Berkshire Organists' Association lunchtime recitals at St Mary's, Reading. She had been born in the depths of the slums of Coley (in the parish of St Mary, Reading) but subsequently spent virtually the whole of her life in the parish of St Giles. As a child, on 22nd September 1912, she attended in St Giles', Reading the priestly ordination of Ronald Knox, later to become a Roman Catholic (subsequently Monsignor Knox), at which – so she related to me – she vividly recalled the fur on the hoods of visiting clergy. Of the occasion Knox wrote later (R.A. Knox, *A Spiritual Aeneid*, 1918, p 108):

The Bishop celebrated in a chasuble, the preacher was the Rev. V.S.S. Coles, whom I had known so well at Pusey House; the church itself was one where the Divine mysteries held their proper place in worship, and ceremonial was used of a kind that in a northern diocese would have been considered very advanced, it seemed impossible to believe that less than half a century before all the accessories of the ceremony would have been condemned as disloyal by almost every bishop of the bench.

Vincent Stuckey Stratton Coles had contributed much to The English Hymnal (1906).

Among the five deacons and nine priests ordained was, as I have said, Ronald Knox, but also, as a priest too, was Maurice Frost. The latter subsequently became the editor of *The Historical Companion to Hymns Ancient & Modern* (1962), a useful reference work for the *Revised A & M* (1950). Frost died on Christmas Day 1961, the year before it was published. His other publications include *English and Scottish Psalm and Hymn Tunes* (1953).

The hymns at the service mentioned above – and readers can look them up – were from (the Standard Edition of) *Hymns A & M*: 355 (Montgomery's splendid hymn telling us all about parochial ministry), 157, 321 (written by the Revd V. Stuckey S. Coles), 322 and 551. The service was sung to the cheerful *Woodward in D*. Percy Scrivener, organist from 1895-1957, was at the organ (pumped by two men until the '20s) and the Voluntaries on that day, although these may have been evening ones as well, were *Andante in C* by Silas and *Allegretto in B minor* by Guilmant. In the evening – the church was full according to a contemporary report, so that would have meant eleven hundred people or so – the anthem was *I was glad* by Elvey and the last hymn was *Onward Christian Soldiers*. The music details are from the extensive St Giles' choir records in the Berkshire Record Office.

Maybe few on that occasion, nearly a hundred years ago, realised that those two newly-ordained priests would subsequently do what they did - not least bearing in mind that Maurice Frost had, a year previously, obtained only a Third Class degree in Theology at Cambridge.

Peter Marr

12.12 St Albans International Organ Festival

The St. Albans International Organ Festival on the final day of the 25th Competition in 2009

The St. Albans International Organ Festival's prestigious competition hardly needs an introduction. Previous winners, since it began in 1963, include well-known names in the British organ world, such as Gillian Weir, David Sanger, Thomas Trotter, Kevin Bowyer and David Goode in

the interpretation section and David Briggs and Martin Baker in the improvisation section. The Festival is biennial and lasts for a period of just over a week during which the quarter-finals, semi-finals and finals of the competitions take place. Alongside these run a series of concerts of chamber, choral, orchestral and instrumental (the organ and other instruments) music. A particular feature of the Festival is that each of the competition jurors gives a recital.

Perhaps surprisingly, this festival is very much a local musical event. When I bought my tickets, they were surprised at the box office that I had come from so far away as Reading. Apparently most festival visitors live within a ten-mile radius of St Albans. Furthermore, although I chatted to lots of people during the day, none were organists; they were people who simply came because they loved the music. Many attended all the competition rounds and eagerly followed the fortunes of the competitors, as well as attending most of the concerts and recitals.

Three organs are used in the Festival. The newly restored and somewhat extended Harrison organ at the Cathedral is used for the competition finals and various sections of the earlier rounds. The Festival's own organ at St. Saviour's Church, by Peter Collins in the style of the Strasburg Silbermanns, is used for competition performances of Bach and earlier repertoire as well as some recitals. The new (2005) Mander organ in St Peter's Church is also used for competition rounds and recitals.

The day of the final rounds of the competition was packed with delights. The Improvisation Final in the Cathedral at 9.00 a.m. drew a large crowd to hear the three finalists improvise three movements in symphonic style on given themes for up to twenty minutes. Each improvisation showed astonishing variety in the treatment of the given themes in texture, as well as form, and great boldness in exploiting the colours available on the Harrison organ. The announcement of the winner as Jean-Baptiste Dupont had been widely expected by those who had heard the earlier rounds.

At lunchtime there was a short concert by Anne Page and students from the Royal Academy of Music featuring the harmonium and including a suite of pieces from César Franck's *L'Organiste*. This was a wonderful opportunity to hear a good harmonium in proper working order, played well in music written for the instrument. Quite clearly this was a novelty for many of the audience and they were obviously very taken with it.

In the afternoon, one of the competition judges, James David Christie,

gave a recital at St Saviour's Church of music from France and Germany of the seventeenth century. There was much unfamiliar music here by lesser known composers, expertly played by a specialist on an appropriate organ.

The Interpretation Final was played to a packed Cathedral audience in the evening. The competitors were required to play one of two set pieces by Bach, *Pièce d'Orgue BWV 572* or *Prelude and Fugue in A minor BWV 543* (in fact, all chose the latter), a work composed between 1850 and 1970 and a work composed after 1970. Each programme was not to exceed 35 minutes. There were four finalists from Hungary, Australia, Czech Republic and Russia. The competitors' own selection of pieces included works by Reger (twice), Jean-Louis Florentz (twice), Petr Eben and Vierne. Screens set up in the nave of the Cathedral allowed the audience to see the players as they performed at the console high up above the choir. As may be expected, the competitors' own choice of works tended towards the virtuosic and there was a lot of staggeringly good playing. All four chose the same Bach piece, which offered the opportunity of comparing performers on a level playing field. Four performances of the same prelude and fugue were not too much as the interpretations differed quite widely. It was interesting also to compare each player's performance of Bach with their performance of other repertoire. At the end I felt that the demands on the players of the Bach prelude and fugue were as great as those of any other pieces that they had chosen, no matter how much more virtuosic they seemed. The winner was Konstantin Volostnov of Russia. Again, this had been widely expected by those who had followed earlier rounds of the competition, but other finalists had strong support also.

The next St Albans Festival will be in 2011 and details will probably appear on its website quite soon after this magazine is published. St Albans is only an hour's drive away and the Festival is well worth a visit to hear organ playing at the very highest standards on excellent instruments.

Harry Russell

12.13 Illustrated Stamps

THE ORGAN IN MINIATURE WORKS OF ART

The Postage Stamp – Part 2

Following on from the article in last year's Handbook I have put together a small selection of some of the stamps collected – now numbering around 200 that feature the organ. The detailed attention required when collecting stamps broadens knowledge in many ways, for example art and music, geography and language & currencies. It need not be expensive to pursue.



In 1938 an international philatelic exhibition was held in Lichtenstein and marked by the first mini-sheet [of 4 stamps] which jointly celebrated the 100th anniversary of the birth of local composer Rheinberger. The design was also the first in the world to feature organ pipes. Exhibitions are often where technical advances first appear. Up to that point designs had been less adventurous. In 1939 the design was released as a single stamp for normal postal use.



After World War 2, many stamps in Europe featured building restoration. In 1946 Austria featured St Stephen's Cathedral, Vienna, bombed in 1945, showing the case of the destroyed organ as one of 10 views of the damaged Cathedral. The stamps had a postal rate plus restoration surcharge. However, it was not until 1960 that the organ was replaced, and it has been rebuilt again since.



In 1950, the new German DDR issued a special set of 4, celebrating 200 years from the death of J S Bach. These 4 stamps are now hard to obtain and there are two versions of the Angel holding a positive organ – one of which is very expensive – that has no dark line between the right side of the keys and the edge of the instrument. This was the first modern issue to feature Bach and the first of many angels with hand held positive

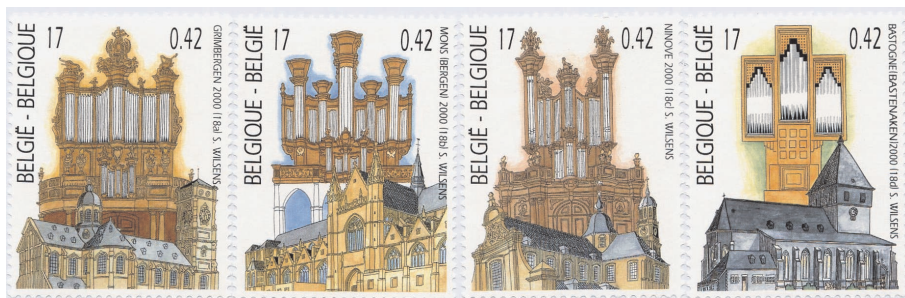
organs. These also had an extra taxation charge.



So far, there has only been one definitive [that is to say, everyday stamp, not covering a special event] issue with an organ, and that was issued by Russia in 1997 at 5000roubles. In 1998 the currency was re-valued and the 5 rouble version appeared and was still in use in 2009. The organ behind the grand piano is a Cavaille Coll in the Moscow Conservatory – I understand it is

barely playable, having suffered from excessive heating.

A number of countries have linked organs to tourism and this excellent set issued in 2000 by Belgium is no exception. Left to right they feature the organ at the Norbertine Abbey in Grimbergen. Next is La Collegiale Sainte-Waudru. This is followed by the Church of the Ascension in Ninove and its organ. And finally the parish church at Bastogne and the organ. The postal value of each is 17fr, the 0.42fr is a surcharge.



There are a number of locations in the world, where either the plants or rock formation is described as being like natural organ pipes. Mexico has an organ cactus but more common are basalt piles described as organ pipe rocks. In 2002 Finland issued this stamp showing the monument to Sibelius which has been crafted to look like organ pipes.

When seeking out stamps with organs it is often luck that leads to identification – none of the next 4 mention organs in their descriptions:

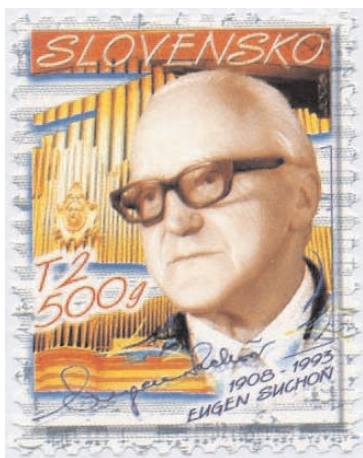


The only Norwegian issue found so far with an organ was issued in 2002 celebrating the 200th anniversary of Kongsberg – including part of town church organ case.



Ansfelden in Austria celebrated 1200 years in 1988 – the town’s coat of arms features organ pipes. Other cities also have done this.

A “Congratulations” stamp was issued in 2001 by the Czech Republic - featuring a cat with built in organ pipes! This one could interest cat lovers - there is another very similar issue as well.



This stamp was issued late in 2008 by Slovakia and came in with office post. It was quite hard finding out who Eugen Suchoň was but eventually I found his history as both an organist and composer who had died in 1993. It turns out he was a prolific Slovak composer of the 20th century.

The Bamboo organ in the Philippines is world famous and a festival using this organ takes place each February. The pipes are made mainly from bamboo. Work was started by the local priest in 1816 who had arrived from Spain, using this local material and completed in 1824. The pipes also appear on the seal of Manila. Having survived earthquake, insects



and world wars, the church and organ were restored in the 1970s with Klais using local materials, only the Trumpet being of metal. To maintain its quality local organ builder Diego Cera carried out an overhaul in 2004. It has 747 bamboo & 122 metal trumpet pipes. This stamp issued in 1970 also shows an overprint for change of value – a feature rarely found on UK stamps.

Only a very few stamps show a player at a console. This Christmas 1994 issue for Nevis [to the south and east of Haiti] shows the organist of St John's Figtree. One of 14 parishes, the church dates from 1680. The other stamps in the set show more local instruments. I have not established who built the organ.



Our British postal system started a “design your own” Smiler service in 2008 – you can add your own photo to one of 10 designs of 1st & 2nd class stamps, strictly controlled, mainly family photos, not for advertising; so I



had this done in February 2010 at Stampex by the Royal Mail . This is a legal postage stamp, with space provided to the left of the Union Flag for personalisation.

I hope you have enjoyed this small selection – just another aspect of enjoying the organ. A further selection will follow next year.

Mark Jameson

© Mark Jameson

12.14 Crossword Solution

S		C		P				P		L		A
T	H	O	M	A	S		G	O	D	A	R	D
A		L		E		E		L		W		L
M	I	L	H	A	U	D		L	O	E	W	E
I		A		N		W		U		S		R
T	U	R	N		W	A	L	T	Z			
Z		D		B		R		I		R		D
			V	E	R	D	I		Y	O	K	E
K		I		R		I		A		D		L
R	A	V	E	L		A	L	L	E	G	R	I
E		O		I		N		L		E		B
B	A	R	T	O	K		S	E	A	R	L	E
S		Y		Z				N		S		S

12.15 CD Review

I start this year's review with an unusual item. One does not normally expect to purchase organ CD's from your Post Office, but this is exactly what the residents of Luxemburg can do. Over the past four years their Office des Timbres has issued in sets of 4, stamps showing modern organs of Luxemburg. This is one from the latest set issued on 1st December 2009:



The organ, built by Karl Schuke Berliner in 2005, is in the Luxemburg Philharmonic Hall. The stamps have now been backed up by two lavishly illustrated books with full descriptions of each organ including specification, and four CDs featuring local artists with a very wide range of music, bringing out the very best each organ can offer. As an example, music played on this organ includes:

Wagner	Prelude WWV90 to Tristan and Isolde
Ligeti	Etude No.1 for organ – Harmonies [1967]
Ligeti	Etude No.2 for organ – Coulée [1969]
Reger	Op135b, Fantasia and Fugue in D minor

All the text is in French. The cost – 99.50 Euro [£90 in early March 2010], expensive yes, but well worth the expenditure. To purchase, you need to fax or e-mail with a credit card – I do not normally suggest using a credit card in an e-mail. I spoke first to my credit card provider and told them to expect a charge from P&T Luxemburg of around 100E, so they knew it



was a single payment. Have a look at <http://www.pt.lu/portal/> and follow the site.

If you write –the address is: Office des Timbres; L-2992 Luxembourg. The office is open Monday to Friday: 08:00-12:00 and 14:00-17:00 . Tel.: +00 352 40 88 8840 Email mengpost@pt.lu
Very highly recommended!

In the last Handbook, I wrote up details of my holiday in Seattle [USA] at the 2008 OHS Convention. All the music played at the convention sites is recorded – including hymns, and usually several years later a 4-CD box set appears. Most unusually, this has already been issued for that convention. If you would like to hear the very high standard of music, then “HISTORIC ORGANS OF SEATTLE” is available now directly from the OHS at <http://www.ohscatalog.org/> for \$37.95 [about £25]. You have to add post to that, seamount is cheaper than airmail. If you order from the USA, do so in small bites, anything over £20 can attract a customs charge, and then the UK post office slaps on their fee for handling a customs item. However, most of the time the customs takes no notice of low value items! Included with the discs is a 36 page illustrated booklet with all the specifications. The discs are a very good reflection of the convention as I remember it.

The Organ Historical Trust of Australia may be less well known to BOA members but at least 2 BOA members belong to OHTA. In 2009 they issued their first CD – at A\$32 [£19.42] including post and packing to the UK and you can use VISA/ MasterCard. Five expert Australian organists selected appropriate music to show the instruments off, ranging from c18 to modern. The organs are in New South Wales at:

Newcastle – St Andrews Presbyterian	Hill & Son 1892
Stanmore – Seventh-day Adventist	Unknown c19 organ
Bonnyrigg Heights – St John Baptist RC	Bevington 1879
Burwood – St Paul’s Anglican	Davidson 1891
Parramatta – St Patrick	Norman & Beard 1898

Dr Kelvin Hastie OAM has produced the 16 page booklet to go with the CD with full descriptions of the music, organs, and not least, the players. Highly recommended. Please look at <http://www.ohta.org.au/projects/> for more information and an order form. If you do not have internet - the address is OHTA Recording, GPO Box 676, Sydney NSW2001 Australia.

Still out of England, but closer to home are CDs from Scotland. Newly issued are two discs on the Pro-Organo label [USA] but obtainable via Priory. The first is a numbered SACD7199 and called Sir Edward meets Father Willis. The organ is the 1879 Willis at St Mary's Episcopal Cathedral in Edinburgh and is played by Simon Mieminski. From the title, it can be guessed correctly that all the works are transcriptions of Elgar's work – some by the player, and some by Herbert Brewer and others. It is an unusual programme containing:

Polonia [Op.76], Chanson de Matin [Op15/2], Prelude and Angel's Farewell from the Dream of Gerontius [Op 38], Variations [Op.36], Chanson de Nuit [Op15/2] and Minuet from Beau Brummel [1928]. This is a fine disc with enjoyable playing. The organ has seen work by Hope Jones in 1897, Norman and Beard in 1901, a major rebuild by Harrison in 1929 and regular work by them since. However, the Willis basic plan is still evident in the stop list. Simon's playing is excellent – he studied at the RAM with Nicholas Danby, and is organist at this Cathedral.

The second disc was recently recorded on the 2006 Mathew Copley organ in the RC Cathedral of St Mary in Edinburgh [Pro-Organo CD7222] – that programme also is excellent – a mixture of transcriptions and original organ music with works by Grison, Massenet, Debussy, Thomas Roß, Fréteur, Lefebvre, Widemann, Brewer and ending with a 20 minute long Sonata by Alphonse Maily.

Both these discs are excellent and are highly recommended – particularly as the music content is most unusual. The cost of each is around the \$20/£15 mark.

The Edinburgh Society of Organists is preparing jointly with Delphian an A4 size book about Organs in Edinburgh complete with 4 CDs. This is expected in July and will cost £37.99 – I expect it to sell very quickly.

Regent Records maintained a steady output during 2009 and have released two CDs of London instruments both of which I have heard. Disc REGCD313 is called *Let the pealing organ blow* and played by Jonathan Bunney on the organ in **St Giles-in-the-Fields**, London. This church is in the shadow of Centrepont and escaped serious damage during WW2. The organ was first built in 1678-9 by George Dallam, worked on by Christian Smith in 1698, Gerald Smith in 1734, George Pike England in 1792; the Lincolns looked after it from 1807 to 1856 – J W Walker worked there in 1849. The first full rebuild was by Gray & Davison in 1856, with further work in 1880, Henry Jones attended in

1900, Bevington was involved in 1929, with Gray & Davison returning in 1960 – those involved read as a directory of British Organ Building! In 2005 William Drake dismantled the organ for restoration, keeping all remaining work from 1678/9, 1698, 1734 together with the 1856 modernisation. New upperwork was provided for the Great, but to the original ideas. The restoration cost in excess of £400,000. Jonathan's programme for this disc starts with Handel's Organ Concerto Op4/6, being followed by works by Bull and Stanley. After this early music he follows with Rheinberger's Pastoral-Sonata Op88. He then turns to more modern music by Klais Bolt & Mathias. S S Wesley's Choral Song & Fugue follows; a lighter moment with Nigel Ogdon's Scherzo for the White Rabbit and concludes with two very short trumpet tunes, with Sarah Field on Trumpet. A really excellent disc! The cost is £12.50 including P&P direct from Regent or any good local dealer.



The second new Regent London CD is a total contrast – REGCD302 – recorded on the 2008 Mander east end organ at St Giles Cripplegate. I saw this organ in build at Mander's and heard it for the first time during a visit to the church in December 2009. The church is the home of the St Giles Organ School skilfully run by Anne Marsden Thomas.

There are only 13 stops - the organ is equipped for disabled players with facilities to help blind organists - to hear it gives the impression of a far larger instrument. The main west end organ is not included in this recording. This disc has been recorded by Thomas Trotter with 26 tracks covering music by Handel, Anon c16 music, Stanley, Bach, Rogg, Vaughan-Williams, Holloway and Litaize. As always his playing is excellent. I strongly recommend this disc – cost as before – at £12.50.

Mark Jameson

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