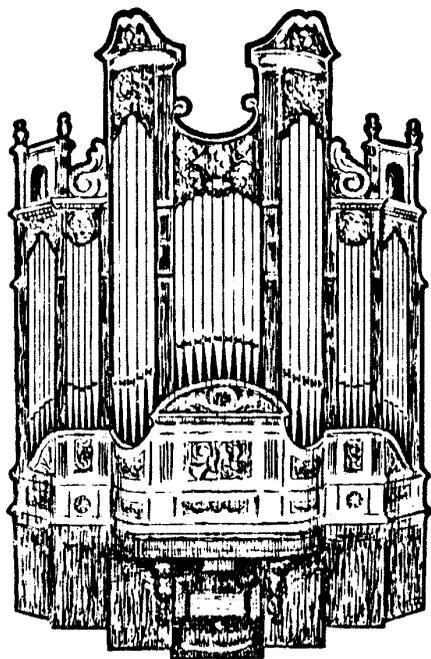


The Berkshire Organist

ISSN 0265-1971



Number
49

1996



President 1995

Graham Ireland BA BMus MMus FRCO
Village Farm Cottage
The Street, Swallowfield,
Reading RG7 1QZ
(0118) 988 2679

Hon Secretary

Donald Hickson
29 Langhams Way
Wargrave
Reading, RG10 8AX
(0118) 940 3209

Hon Treasurer

Mark Jameson
92 The Hawthorns
Park Lane, Charvil,
Reading, RG10 9TS
(0118) 934 4212

Hon Programme Secretary

Derek M. Guy, AFCM
14 Wilmington Close
Reading RG5 4LR
(0118) 969 3587

Benevolent Fund Steward

Mrs Evelyn A. Fisher
7 Beechwood Close
Crays Pond, Goring Heath
Reading RG8 7SG
(01491) 681232

Publicity Officers

Leslie Davis
99 Tilehurst Road
Reading RG3 2NA
(0118) 950 7367

H. Gordon Hands
1 Froxfield Avenue
Reading RG1 6LR
(0118) 959 0025

Other Committee Members

Ian Nicoll
Michael Humphries
Norman Hutt

Miss Edith Hewett
Miss Christine Wells

Editors of *The Berkshire Organist*

Gordon Spriggs
403 Wokingham Road, Earley
Reading RG6 2EH
(0118) 926 4257

Philip Bowcock
4 St Anne's Road, Caversham
Reading RG4 7PA
(0118) 947 5438

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

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: this body became the Incorporated Association of Organists in 1929, 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 try to achieve them in three ways.

(a) Organising events for members.

We hope 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.

Since 1932 there has been an annual half-day conference, and since 1965 we have arranged regular celebrity recitals on the historic Father Willis organ in Reading Town Hall (these have been temporarily suspended while the organ is being restored).

(b) Communication with members.

We issue a newsletter approximately every two months, and each year since 1948 we have published *The Berkshire Organist*, a substantial 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.

CONTENTS

Portrait Of The President	1
The Percy Ravenscroft Scrivener Commemoration	2
Reminiscences Of St Giles-In-Reading	7
Albert Edward Rivers	8
Annual Conference 1994 - Concluded	9
Dr Wylde / Henry Willis	13
The 1995 Dinner	13
Celebrity Organ Recital	14
Another New Hymnbook	15
The Annual Conference	17
Presidential Service And Recital	18
Dr Arnold Bentley	19
The Albert Barkus Memorial Cup	19
Lunchtime Organ Music	20
From The Other Side Of The Music Desk (3)	21
Canal Trip	29
News From The Royal School Of Church Music	30
Dorchester Outing	31
The Benevolent Fund, 1995	32
Reviews	33
New Music From O.U.P. In 1995	36
Word Search	39
Crossword No 5	40
Christmas Carols	41
Solution To Crossword No 5	42
Summer 1995	42
Past Presidents	43
Honorary Fellows	43

PORTRAIT OF THE PRESIDENT



My earliest recollections of making music, apart from listening to my mother's regular sessions on the piano, took place on the Norfolk coast, during the family's annual trek to Thornham for the summer holiday. Gran, as well as possessing a fine brain, was a gifted, energetic pianist, having played regularly for the local hops attended by servicemen stationed in East Anglia. In her front room was the piano which was used for family group work, where rhythm and personal involvement were two major mainstays of her credo. It was a natural transition when at home to join the church choir, as our family lived next door to the Rectory. By the time I became Head Chorister all of the family except father were involved in the choir, and I was beginning to take a real interest in the organ. In common with one of our previous Presidents, the "infamous" 11- plus

held no real fears for me, and I began my academic studies at Marling School, Stroud, a flourishing grammar school. It was here that my musical horizons were considerably widened by an able, interested music master, and a Headmaster, who felt that all of his sixth form pupils should experience, if they so wished, the best of local and national music making. Complementing this, study with Dr. Sumsion at Gloucester Cathedral began, introducing me to the treasure house of English choral music, and an extensive organ repertoire, not forgetting the Three Choirs Festival.

From Marling I left to begin my musical studies at Sheffield University, having been awarded a scholarship there, which included music tuition. At the cathedral I studied with Dr. Tustin Baker, a contemporary of Dr. Sumsion, under whose guidance I gained my LRAM and ARCO Diplomas. After four years in Sheffield it was time to earn an honest crust, and I was appointed Assistant Director of Music at Framlingham College, deep in the heart of Suffolk. The college was involved quite actively in the Aldeburgh Festival, and it was an amazing privilege to be in the presence of such famous musicians as Peter Pears and Benjamin Britten, to name only two. With, dare one say it, a little spare time on my hands, I embarked upon a BMus course at Durham University, gaining the degree some years later.

My next move was to Caterham School in Surrey. This enabled me to establish contact with music in London and Croydon, not only to attend concerts, but also to learn first hand the organisational side of music making. I fitted in study for the FRCO Diploma, before I felt the need to move to a school with more demanding academic standards.

Reading School was looking for a Director of Music. To my amazement, as I had up till then only taught in the independent sector, I was offered the job, which I have held until this day. It is an extremely demanding one, but does allow me a little time to keep an eye on the Berkshire Organists' Association in particular, and to promote in general music making on the organ both by giving and encouraging organ recitals. My friendship here with the same past president led me to study for an MMus in Musicology at Reading University which I gained two years ago.

Here the story ends for the moment. We do face increasing uncertainties over the exercising of our profession of organist, from the constant changes in worship and instrumental provision, to say nothing of the "do gooders", who always seem to be at hand, ready with the easy answer. My earnest wish is that in following the example of former members of the Association, we may continue to exercise our talents to the highest of our endeavours, and be able to say at the end of the day, "Well done thou good and faithful servant."

THE PERCY RAVENSCROFT SCRIVENER COMMEMORATION¹

Choral Evensong at St Giles-in-Reading on 28 January 1995.

Sermon preached by the Revd Dr Peter Marr²



People generally serve the best wine first and keep the cheaper sort till the guests have had plenty to drink; but you have kept the best wine till now. (John 2: 10)

Charles Stuart Calverley (1831-84): *O Beer! O Hodgson, Guinness, Allsopp, Bass! Names that should be on every infant's tongue.*

It was one evening during 1894 or 1895. Evensong had taken its course. The anthem had been sung, the State Prayers said, the sermon began. Frederick Davis³, the then organist of St Giles followed his usual habit, going through the choir vestry, out of the door, and across the church yard to The Bell, the beer house on the corner of Church Street and Letcombe Street. The usual sermon was quite long enough to enjoy a pint of ale. Someone who had been a boy in the choir at that time⁴

¹ Born in Lewisham 1873; died Reading 19 January 1962. Organist of St Giles-in-Reading, 1895-1957.

² Organist at St Giles, 1959-86.

³ Grandfather of Leslie Davis, Vice President of the Berkshire Organists' Association.

⁴ Mr Arthur Goodall, later also Churchwarden at St Giles-in-Reading and a boy in St Giles' Choir for some time during Frederick Davies' organistship.

told me that it was a short sermon that evening. The outcome was predictable. So it was that a vacancy for an organist arose, a hundred years ago.

St Giles' parish was a social mix at that time. There were the newly-built terraces of the Redlands Estate near St Luke's; the prosperous detached houses of Redlands and Kendrick Roads. And the tough, impoverished, communities in Silver Street, the Courts of London Street and the back streets of Katesgrove. Fr. John Farler, vicar in the early 1890s saw to it that the poor were his number-one priority. He introduced Eucharistic vestments too. The richer members of the congregation did not like either and withdrew their financial support from the church. Fr. Farler had to leave⁵. It was William, later Canon, Ducat, his successor in 1894 who returned the church to a more sober and middle-class dominated ethos.

The Tractarian movement had come to the church quite early, but in no dramatic way. The church and organ⁶ had been rebuilt, the pews replaced by benches, the galleried organ moved to the choir-aisle. And in 1873 there was built a large spire, whose pinnacle Percy Scrivener's uncle reached by climbing the scaffolding.

Leslie Harman, in his history of St Giles dating from the 1940s⁷, quotes the words of a parishioner who felt he could die happy now that a High Celebration was restored at St Giles⁸. But the character of St Giles was not that of the great - and extreme - catholic parishes. And although the arrival of John Carter Fitzwilliam Gilmore in 1911⁹ gave the parish firm leadership, there was a quietness, and an Englishness about the worship here that contrasted greatly to the baroque taste of the smaller urban and ritualistic Catholic-tradition churches.

It was within that quietness of taste that the organist of St Giles played for most of his time here, Sunday by Sunday. One special occasion was an ordination service in 1912. Among the priest-ordinands was Ronald Arbuthnott Knox, later to become one of the most influential Roman Catholic priests of his generation.

In his autobiography up to his conversion to Rome, entitled *A Spiritual Aeneid*, Knox describes that at St Giles-in-Reading in this way:

The bishop celebrated in a chasuble, 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

⁵ Information from R.E.Goodall.

⁶ St Giles' first post-Reformation organ was installed in 1819; it was replaced in the early 1820s, but "a large new organ" was installed by James Bishop in 1828-9. This provided the basis of the present instrument when it was enlarged by J.W.Walker in 1867.

⁷ *The Parish of St Giles-in-Reading* (Reading, 1946).

⁸ Ibid, p.91

⁹ Vicar until his death in 1934.

to believe that less than half a century before, all the accessories of the ceremonies would have been condemned as disloyal by almost every bishop on the bench.¹⁰

Yet, within this Anglican diversity, there has been a thread of consistency, a trickle of pure water, which half a century later, Pope Paul VI referred to as the worthy patrimony of the Church of England.

Those of you who have known the spiritual and musical life of this church will have been conscious of this strength which enabled it to survive. It may be that Ronald Knox may offer a clue as to the dangers not so much of the nonconformity which was so strong in this town a century ago, but those of the blind-eye, rose-bespectacled view of another shore. In his later book, *Enthusiasm: a chapter in the history of religion*, Knox writes that Enthusiasm could be seen as:

a series of moods in which the worshipper disposed thereto by all the arts of the revivalist, relished the flavour of spiritual peace. You needed neither a theology nor liturgy, you did not take the strain of intellectual enquiry nor associate yourself whole-heartedly with any historic tradition of worship. You floated, safely enough on the little raft of your own faith, eagerly throwing out a life line to such drowning neighbours as were ready to catch it. Meanwhile, the ship was foundering.

It is this by-passing of an historic tradition in favour of a personal experience that has created the modern religious situation in England.¹¹ He continues: This is what has happened in the Church of England now.

Indeed, the prognosis is not good in 1995. A Church of England which separates itself from the great Tradition of the universal church; which splits itself within the Decade of Evangelisation; a unisex church, rife with enthusiastic revivalism.

Today, we need to have consciousness of the tradition rather than mere personal experience. That coolness of temperament is what the Church of England lacks at the moment. That is part of the payment of the debt by which our wills become more subject to the will of God. It is the debt which Angels and men owe to God; And everyone who does not pay it, does sin.

Cardinal Newman, in his *Idea of a University*, notes: the true gentleman carefully avoids whatever may cause a jar or a jolt in the minds of those with whom he is cast. Such was the temperament of the man we commemorate today. Perhaps we need to set those words within our own consciences, and hope they can be set in the collective conscience too.

¹⁰ R . A . Knox, *A Spiritual Aeneid* (London, 1918), p.108.

¹¹ R.A.Knox, *Enthusiasm, a Chapter in the history religion with special reference to the XVII and XVIII centuries* (Oxford 1950), p.589.

It is a long time to be organist for 63 years at the same town church. Previously to his arriving here, Percy Scrivener had been organist at St John's Caversham and assistant at Christchurch, as well as playing at a small church in Bengal where his father worked as a railway engineer. His mother had been Miss Ravenscroft, a descendant of the Tudor musician.

Until the thirties, the choir of 40 or so, was augmented by a ladies choir, the Cecilia Choir. With his conductorship of the Reading Philharmonic, his teaching at the University College, at Kendrick School, Portway College, Wallingford and Newbury Grammar Schools, and his individual pupils, his influence upon the musical life of the town was great. He was in 1921 the Founder and first President of the Berkshire Organists' Association. Not that he was alone, for Dr Read at Christ Church, Mr Strickland and Dr Daughtry at St Mary's, Dr Embling at St Laurence's all added to the town's vigorously competitive church music life in the first quarter of the century. It was an age of large choirs and full churches - one had to be in church here half an hour before evensong to get a seat.

He kept careful records, bound up in volumes, of choir attendances and of all service music.¹² Yet beneath someone who might be obdurate was a man interested in people and what they did, not least of course his family. And as a good father to all, he saw to it that, unlike his predecessor, he was seen listening to sermons.

It had only been a generation since hymns A&M had ousted collections such as Binfield's Reading Psalmody. He inherited the Westminster Chant book (and retained it in use until he retired), changing from the somewhat old-fashioned Elvey's Psalter to the then in vogue Cathedral Psalter.¹³ His copy is marked carefully so as to make clear what would-be purists call the Anglican thump, and others know to be an essential part of understanding the development of Anglican Chant.

When Percy Scrivener came to be organist here, the organ had just been overhauled. He saw to it that electric blowing was installed in the 1920s, together with the pedal Trombone stop, prepared for in 1888. There was a plan to have the organ rebuilt with a detached console but mercifully this was prevented by the outbreak of war in 1939.

By the standards of these days, and even of his more well-known contemporaries, the organ repertoire was not his strong point. They were, of course, the days of arrangements, and many a musical education was enriched by duets of piano concertos with organ and piano. But many were moved by his understanding of the large-scale hymn tunes of Elvey and Monk, even of Dykes and Stainer. And in line with the

¹² Now deposited in the Berkshire Record Office, Shinfield with the parish records DP/96.

¹³ See also Table following p.120 of P.H.Ditchfield, *An Ecclesiastical History of Reading* (Reading, 1883).

character of the St Giles worship, plainsong found little part in the liturgy until the 1950s¹⁴.

It was in his accompaniment of services that our memories are particularly rich. The tasteful extemporisation beforehand, the smooth undramatic style of playing enriched with well-wrought inclusions of chords of the Augmented or Neapolitan Sixth, or the ethereal sound of his beloved Vox Angelica stop, brought our emotions towards God. The oboe with tremulant, or the hymn tune worked into the accompaniment of the creed, were means by which our hearts and our minds could be taken up, part of a craftsmanship possessed in quietness. His compositions find little place in any choir's repertoire today, but they were written with his choir in mind, with individuals in it whose voices he had in many cases nurtured from the time of their being boy trebles.

We can recall the story of the empty pots, the water and the wine. The worst possible thing had happened at the wedding. The wine had run out. It may be that metaphorically the wine has run out in the Church of England in these days. But the order was given directly by Our Lady: Whatsoever he tells you to do, do it. And Jesus said, Fill up the water pots with water. They were told to do what was simply within their tradition. There was not a dazzlingly enthusiastic display. It was an honest preparation for the ordinary ritual. There was no hint of a Toronto Blessing.

As we meet on an occasion that is seemingly symbolic and about the past, we need to recall the relevance today of those words, of St John's gospel - the spiritual potential of the ordinary task - of Ronald Knox - the quiet and communal nature of our encounter with God - and those of His Holiness Pope Paul VI, that there is a worthy patrimony of the Church of England.

An ordinary and faithful observance of rituals - indeed over a whole lifetime - can conform us to the worthy patrimony. It is within that context that transformation - and indeed our transformation - takes place.

We offer sincere apologies to Dr Marr for the unfortunate error in the last issue as a result of which the concluding paragraphs of his article on "Chant" appeared, unidentified, on page 22 instead of following on from page 4.

¹⁴ The form of liturgy and consequent musical demands changed considerably after the arrival of the Revd P.D.B. Miller in 1947.

REMINISCENCES OF ST GILES-IN-READING

Ralph Whitehouse

After the Choral Evensong to mark the centenary of the appointment of Percy Scrivener as Organist of St Giles-in-Reading I was introduced to your President. On hearing that I had been choirboy, choirman and assistant organist in Mr Scrivener's time he asked me to write of my reminiscences for your magazine.

I joined the choir in 1934 at the age of eight. I cannot remember the precise date but I do know that I was in the choir when the Rev Bonsey was inducted as Vicar. By "in the choir" I mean that I was one of the 23 boys singing at the service. In those days new recruits attended the two mid-week practices as probationers, sometimes for several weeks, before a vacancy arose. Yes, there were three practices a week, Tuesdays and Wednesdays for the boys in the vestry and a full practice on Fridays in the chancel.

Not surprisingly I have many memories of those boys' practices. I will mention but two, apart from what a cold and draughty place that vestry was in winter. I can remember quite early on learning to sing "For unto us a child is bor- - - n" all in one breath. Also I recall that if any of the boys from one of the poorer families had a cough Mr Scrivener would send them round to Brunsdens, the chemists, in Crown Street to get some cough mixture,, adding "and tell them I sent you".

Inevitably came the time when my voice showed signs of breaking. My transition from choirboy to choirman might be said to be instantaneous, for on the same Sunday I sang treble for the Sung Eucharist in the morning and alto at Evensong. I continued to sing alto until I was called up in 1944 but by the time I was able to get home on week-end leave I had become a bass.

A couple of images of Mr Scrivener that remain are his continued wearing of a wing collar and spats long after anyone else that I recall, and his sitting in a chair at the end of the choir stalls during the sermons. It may have been more comfortable than on the organ stool but we were convinced that its sole purpose was to keep an eye on the choir.

At the outbreak of the second world war a large number of children were evacuated from London to Reading and several of the boys joined the choir. However many returned to London and it was then that the ladies, who for some years had sung sitting in the Lady Chapel, were brought into the choir stalls and robed for the first time.

I commenced organ lessons with Mr Scrivener when I was 15 years of age. It could not have been so long after that I became a member of the Berkshire Organists' Association and I remained so until moving to Lancashire in 1961. My organ lessons were interrupted when I joined the R.A.F. and on my return four years later I asked Mr Scrivener if I could recommence. Much to my disappointment he said that he did not have any vacancies; I did not seek tuition elsewhere which was just as well because some weeks later he said to me "How about starting your organ lessons again?" I was

delighted and from then on it seemed a natural progression that I should become his assistant.

So in due course I played for the full practices. Two reminiscences of being thrown in at the deep end. Mr Scrivener disliked hymn tunes in C (something to do with there being a break in boys' voices at that pitch) and so after a couple of chords in G there would be a cry from the chancel. "Organ, we'll have it in A flat". Also he would rehearse anthems without warning - it improved my sight reading no end! Mr Scrivener was very particular about the singing of the psalms. I remember his saying "Anyone can sing anthems, but can they sing the psalms?". I think it was his love of the psalms which on foggy winter days brought him in from Purley on the bus for Evensong. Before the service he would ask me to "finish off" which meant that he would be going home after the first set of prayers.

My wife was also a member of the choir and there was one particular occasion on which neither of us occupied the choir stalls, that of our marriage - a Nuptial High Mass. We were living at Arborfield three years later when our first child was born. Out of courtesy I called on the local Rector to tell him that our son was being christened at St Giles'. When he heard that I played the organ he said, "We need an organist here". It was with some misgiving that I decided to become involved in the local church and so, in 1955, ended my participation in the worship at St. Giles'.

ALBERT EDWARD RIVERS

A Founder Member in 1921 of the Berkshire Organists' Association, Bert Rivers, who died on 1st January 1996 at the age of 93, was its most senior member, with almost 75 years to his credit. He was President in 1949/50, and was elected an Honorary Member in 1963 in recognition of his long service to the Association

Deeply interested in liturgical and musical matters, he lectured on such subjects as "The Oxford Movement And Its Influence on Church Music (1933), and Samuel Sebastian Wesley" (1937), also, while the Church of England was still in its right mind, on the 1662 Book of Common Prayer.

His literary abilities made him the obvious choice in 1948 as the first Editor of this magazine, producing for 26 years an annual publication widely respected in the Organists' world, and now in its 49th year

Modest in his approach as a player, he was in his earlier years Organist at Swallowfield Parish Church, moving on in 1949 to St. Mary's, Whitchurch (Oxon) for 12 years, later to Rotherfield Greys, finally being appointed to St. Laurence, Reading, in 1974, and retiring in 1976. His researches resulted in a privately published history of this historic church.

His wife Elsie pre-deceased him many years ago, and some of us remember them both with great affection.

Gordon Spriggs

ANNUAL CONFERENCE 1994 - CONCLUDED

Part II

When you have mastered the basic techniques of improvisation you may have the unenviable task of having to suddenly switch into “improvisation gear” and produce something for your congregation. This can be a most terrifying moment but fret not - you are not alone in this world. I still feel very uneasy in such circumstances. You may be the only organist, and you have perhaps learnt something at home; you are a bit late because the telephone rang just before you left; and all the traffic lights were against you. You’ve got to the church in just enough time- someone then fainted in the choir and you had to deal with all that. And then - Oh, Mrs so-and-so was bringing the music you prepared at choir practice and she’s not here yet.

You go to the organ and feel cool, calm and collected. You sit there and so far it is the most peaceful part of the day. And then you find that whoever was giving you the hymns has not produced them, or you’ve forgotten to put the hymns out in the choir stall. It’s a panic scenario, its absolutely frantic and how you get through it?. And then of course there comes the time when we need to extend the hymn. What can I do when something is happening and I’m lost? These are the most difficult moments anyone has to play. Sometimes I would honestly say Forget it and give them a bit of silence, it will do them good.

But people are totally frightened of silence. And so we have a balancing act, juggling between what a piece of music is intended to do in a service, and playing because people have not finished what they were doing, and they look to you to carry on. Occasionally it is a very good thing to give a little bit of music, but the question then is What do I give them? What can I do?

I do not suggest that you should just jump in and do something. You must, before the Sunday do a little preparation and go through the particular moments where you might have to play. For example, an offertory hymn with only a few verses is an obvious spot where there may be a difficult moment. Be prepared, and work one or two things out during the week on your piano at home. You are still improvising, because you will do something different each time you play. It is like preparing a speech. You practice it, you decide where to give the greatest weight to get all your points put over. The same goes when playing this piece in the church. You give yourself time to see how best to do something with the tune.

Instead of allowing the congregation to sing all the verses and then doing your bit, I suggest that it is better to train them to expect something between the penultimate verse and the last one. I know that people are still standing and that is quite a good thing. Once they have finished singing their minds are much more likely to wander and your music will not really be of great importance. If you pause they will say ‘Ha Ha Ha, he’s forgotten the last verse’. Begin your piece from the last chord of the penultimate verse. Don’t finish the chord and then start your piece, because they will start singing again. Begin your piece using the last chord of that verse as the first part of your next phrase. If you carry on they will not start singing they will stand there a little uneasily

but nevertheless they will wait, then sing that last verse with great gusto and great strength.

The hymn starts with an introduction, and this should not be a perfunctory little thing. Try to make it a little grander. Take the introduction to be the last chord of the whole hymn and that is a musical experience. Do not give out the whole hymn with a bit of a playover, then just go through the verses. Think of the whole work you are going to perform and then you will be satisfied, like a meal.. You start it, you know exactly what you are having, and when it is finished. Put it together in one entity and then it is fantastic. And then you can think about what you will play between the verses. It can be quite short, or you can just play the tune in a slightly different way,

For example, with *Love Divine, all loves excelling* you can take the tune and instead of playing the melody on the top play it into the alto You pick out the tune with your right hand - you know what the chords are because they are already written. Play the tune with your thumb or your second finger, and above it a third or fifth just like a faux-bourdon, a little descant, and eventually you will find that it works so easily

Playing a note above the chord adds a little interest . Everyone knows the tune and so it is possible just to hide the tune and to vary it a little. Don't change the harmony underneath, just fill out the harmony a little with the odd note or two. You can do it while everyone is singing, to give more excitement to the playing of the hymn. When you have a hymn with six verses, nothing really is more boring than hearing the same tune six times with the same harmony. You're running out of registrations and you think "Oh, what can I do". Just add another part.

Use the harmony which is in front of you and enjoy accompanying the congregation and the choir. You don't have to be adventurous and invent extra chords Wedges of chords can detract from the good music of the other verses. Create a faux-bourdon as organists did in previous centuries. A counter melody is much better for sharpening the singing of the choir or congregation. The added sound of an improvised part just as it was in Baroque times, when an organist or a harpsichordist would play only from the bass line and create music above the bass line harmony note.

Today in this country we have hymnbooks with four-part harmony. This has been I'm sorry to say, the organists' undoing. These dreadful books are for choirs to sing from in four-part harmony, not for the organist to play from. The organist so often laboriously plays the four-part harmony which the choir is singing instead of expanding it and creating the old traditions of the organist as Bach did. If it was OK for him, it's OK for us to try, because we still use many of the chorales that he wrote. There are some rather strange harmonies in some cadences because the organ was providing another bass line at that particular point, while the basses in his chorales sometimes sing above the tenor line. It works out when you have a 16-foot on the pedals so that the bass line is still below the tenors.

Then of course the choir becomes the most important instrument in the church instead of the organ. In some of the reformed churches on the continent, Sweden for instance, the church is enormously important. The Lutheran church in Sweden is the

state church. Every hymn book has the melody in it. There are no books except on the black market for the organist to play from. It is up to the organist to play his own accompaniment to these hymns. He must provide the prelude beforehand. He then also accompanies the hymn throughout. The choir is not usually four-part, except in a few churches. It is much more organ-orientated than choir because the whole reason for the Reformation was that the people should join in and therefore sing in unison. Here, from the fourth row in the pews the choir is totally inaudible as four-part harmony because of the huge wedge of congregation, and the organist is subservient to people who are absolutely inaudible to the congregation. It is lopsided here but there the organ is all-dominant and so you play to provide the congregation with uplift with your harmonic invention.

From the very early stages of playing on the continent giving someone a hymn tune melody only is as natural as ordering a cappuccino in Italy. It is so simple. In Dresden in Germany I asked my worst student, to harmonise some chorales for me. She did a very very good harmonisation and then I said to her “now do a variation”. She said she could not do it, but in fact of course she could. It was just a matter of unlocking her natural flow of ideas. If she could harmonise very beautifully from one line a chorale that she didn’t even know, then of course she could improvise very well.

But alas, over here we have this hymnbook which is the ruination of inspiration, keeping it bottled in when you need to open out. There’s music in front of you and this makes the difficulty because in the early days of learning we have been taught to play with written music in front of us, and never to experiment. (One of my first organ teachers said “Oh stop messing around”.) You get conditioned to doing this sort of thing. It is easier to improvise if you have choir books with melody only. Take some, have a look at them, and see how you would cope having to play constantly from the single-line.

Gradually you will come to the conclusion that you would actually quite enjoy it when you think about how to actually make a different accompaniment. I keep stressing this word “accompaniment”, not “leading”, because once everybody gets under way you are all making music together. You are making music around the cantus firmus in the old traditions. The congregation sings in unison, and what you are playing surrounds this unison vocal line.

In this country pedal boards are not generally independent, usually just a 16-foot bourdon, an open wood, and perhaps a 16-foot trombone. In many countries on the continent, particularly Germany, and the Netherlands, instruments dating from the middle of the 1600s often had very good pedal departments with reeds and mixtures, so there was no great necessity to always couple through. But historically both in the Netherlands and in France as well as to a large degree in Germany, the pedals were not intended just to provide a bass line. They were frequently used to punch out the tune with an 8-foot trumpet plus a soft trumpet sometimes. In France a 16-foot was the last stop ever to be put on the pedal. They always started with an 8-foot trumpet, and 8-foot flute, then later on the 16-feet. The bass was always considered to belong to

the fingers, not to the pedals. Using the pedals in a different way allowed a greater freedom to the improviser.

Use the harmonies, the very easy chords that we found before, and just enjoy doing something like that Any old tune, just roughly around the middle of the pedal board, just enjoy the different sonorities that you can make, and think that that note is in fact in the middle of the music that you are playing. The bass line can be one note in the left hand. If you have a 16-foot manual bourdon, you actually have the sensation of a 16-foot with a big sound, and in the middle of this you have a trombone singing in the tenor register. And then visualise how it would be written on the printed page.

The early classical French composer, De Grigny, was for a time organist at Rheims Cathedral. We know very little of this man's music, but there was just one set of pieces published in his lifetime. When he wrote down his organ pieces he wrote the pedal line between the manuals, so you have the treble clef at the top, the bass clef for your left hand at the bottom, and in the middle, in the tenor clef line for the pedal, So when you look at it in the original you think Oh help What on earth. But of course he was writing it as it would sound There were not many rules about writing and most composers had their own ideas of how to do it, so they improvised the writing down of their music. Now you can sit down and take a chord and make a slow moving accompaniment that goes with that.

A Scandinavian organist who has a very good trumpet on the pedal will play a prelude preceding the verse like that Something with the right hand and then the theme coming in two or three bars later. Or the end of the first phrase could perhaps be even eight bars long. Then the theme comes and people are just sitting there. They are listening to it - it is part of the liturgy and they know when it is coming to the end and they get up and sing. In this country we are not really used to it but occasionally it is very good to have such a prelude. It trains people to understand that music is part of the ministry of the church. It is setting the scene for the next hymn If it is a particularly beautiful or reflective hymn there is nothing more beautiful than having just a short prelude to set the scene. And many hymns are so well known that they really demand no playing over at all, so you can improvise a prelude to them

Well, have a bit of imagination and set the scene!

Nigel Allcoat demonstrated many of the above points on the organ of Caversham Heights Methodist Church where he gave the lecture. It is clearly not possible to reproduce these in print, but it is hoped that the above will indicate the possibilities that exist for improvisation and enhancement of services.

Nigel finished his lecture with an extended improvisation on a hymn tune taken at random from the hymnbook.

He has also published *A British Treatise on Organ Improvisation* in which he sets out his thoughts on the skill, and in 1985 he recorded *The Art of the Improviser* in Lichfield Cathedral.

DR WYLDE / HENRY WILLIS

Philip Bowcock

The Association was privileged to have a double event on 18 February when Dr David Wylde and Henry Willis IV addressed us at Greyfriars.

Dr Wylde's principal topic was the organ of the Alexandra Palace which, as many will know, has been described as "the best concert organ in Europe though it has had a very chequered history - vandal damage, water, fire, and general disregard of its importance by people who should have known better. He instanced one architect who had made a mistake in some measurements with the result that the platform on which the console now stands is far deeper than necessary so that the organist can hardly be seen, and the added cost of structural modifications would have paid for the restoration of the entire organ!

Dr Wylde also spoke about the problems of making recordings of organ music and referred in particular to his recording of Andrew Lucas in St Paul's Cathedral. A resonant building such as St Paul's creates many problems, particularly in relation to standing waves, and in that case it was said that there are only two points at which standing waves do not occur. He had found one of them, and placed his single microphone at that point, close to the floor, so that the bass notes would be heard fully.

Dr Wylde also spoke about the problems of recording on compact discs. One factor which many people do not appreciate is that the material, plastic, can be distorted by the effect of gravity if left standing vertically in one position for a long time. Compact discs should therefore always be stored flat, otherwise it is possible for the microscopic dots in the header track to be so distorted that it is impossible for the laser to read them and the music on the disc therefore cannot be read.

Henry Willis spoke about the problems of making pipes and demonstrated his talk with various pipes which he had made. One wood pipe on show had been made by him recently and had taken about seven hours to make. He has a considerable number of pipes from the organ and his dedication to its rebuilding was unmistakable.

THE 1995 DINNER

The 1995 Association Dinner was held at the Ucross Hotel, Berkeley Avenue, Reading, when, apart from slightly limited accommodation, a most enjoyable meal was had by all.

The Speaker on this occasion was Jonathan Rees-Williams, Organist of St George's Windsor, who gave a fascinating account of life in Windsor. The Chapel has a professional choir who have a wide and very difficult repertoire of 800 pieces, and this is continually increasing. They have also done many broadcasts and made several recordings, and had also been on a recent tour to Holland.

The members of the choir live within the Castle, which is the spiritual home of the Knights of the Garter. There are state occasions from time to time, and also visits from members of the royal family.

CELEBRITY ORGAN RECITAL

GERARD GILLEN

Graham Ireland

At the time of writing this article it hardly seems possible that an exact year has passed since Gerard Gillen gave his memorable organ recital in Reading School Chapel, on Saturday February 25th. Gerard Gillen is widely regarded as one of Ireland's leading church and concert organists, who also enjoys an international reputation as an organ recitalist. He is Professor and Head of the Music Department at St Patrick's College, Maynooth, where he directs the University Choral Society. As a Director of the National Concert Hall in Dublin, he was its advisor on the installation of the organ which he co-inaugurated in gala concerts with the National Symphony Orchestra in September 1991.

It was therefore with no small measure of excitement that we awaited Gerard's recital in the School Chapel that evening. His programme not only gave us an excellent example of each individual composer's output, (in one case his only composition), but enabled the appreciative audience to hear some of the many varied tonal contrasts and combinations from the restored Hill, which was now accustoming itself to its new position up in the gallery.

The first two works by Muffat and Buxtehude showed the performer's clear insight into the practices of the day, with the realisation of clarity of texture and line uppermost in his intentions. These were followed by an exciting "Italianate" performance of Bach's *Concerto in A minor* drawing our attention not only the master's skill in adapting the work for the organ, but also by the capturing of the very essence of Italian music making of the day. We then moved on to the period at nineteenth century French music. Would an English Hill be able to cope with the subtleties of this unique style? Within its limitations the answer was a resounding affirmation for the versatility of the organ. Unusual stop combinations were heard in the Franck for the long spacious melody, and the eight-bar sections were clearly and effectively contrasted in the Gigout *Scherzo*.

Raymond Deane's *Idols* followed. Deane is one of Ireland's leading contemporary composers, having studied under Stockhausen and Kagel. His piece provoked, as was to be expected, much comment from the audience after it had been played. Written in a most strikingly original manner, using the simplest of tonal means alongside the most extravagant of contemporary musical gestures, it began with a minimalistic opening, broke the opening melodic fragment in minute pieces, and developed it to culminate in an intense toccata-like conclusion. The organ at times filled the chapel with the most interesting and arresting sounds, many of which to the untutored ear were quite indescribable, but extremely exciting. To complete his recital Gerard Gillen played the *Toccatto Fugue and Hymn* by Flor Peeters. Here the central chorale theme was subjected to various treatments involving some colourful, sparkling registrations. It was a fitting end to a programme which not only brought scholarship

and artistic integrity to the fore, but also appealed to the catholic tastes of a very varied audience

We are indebted to Gerard Gillen for coming over to Reading from Ireland to play in the Celebrity Organ Recital Series, and to his hosts, Tony and Brenda Hollingsworth for working so tirelessly behind the scenes to ensure the lasting success of the evening

PROGRAMME

Toccata Septima (Apparatus Musico Erganicus 1690)	Georg Muffat 1658-1704
Three Chorale Preludes	Dietrich Buxtehude
In Dulci Jubilo BuxWV 197	1637-1707
Komm, Heiliger Geist, Herre Gott, BuxWV 199	
Nun Komm, Der Heiden Heiland, BuxWV 211	
Concerto in A Minor	Johann Sebastian Bach
	1685-1750
Prelude, Fugue and Variation	Cesar Franck 1882-1890
Scherzo In E	Eugene Gigout
	1844-1925
Idols (1971)	Raymond Deane b1952
Toccata, Fugue and Hymn on Ave Maris Stella	Flor Peeters 1903-1986

ANOTHER NEW HYMNBOOK

Gordon Spriggs

To those of us who take worship seriously hymns mean a great deal. Apart from anything else, they can build a healing bridge across the differing denominations, or they can be a source of petty squabbling over pet favourites.

Whatever hymn book we use, we can always find fault with it, and we have to remember that no book can ever be perfect. When faced with the prospect of changing to a new (or revised) book, it is necessary to analyse it thoroughly to find out in advance what is missing in both words and tunes, what has been altered, re-harmonised or re-worded, what good new material is offered, and whether any previously missing treasures have been brought back into circulation.

At the worst, it will have left out too many important tunes and hymns, altered the wording here and there, or omitted whole verses that really matter. The tunes will be set to the wrong hymns, the harmonies will have been tampered with - often because of lowered pitch, with consequent loss of the freshness of the tune as the composer wrote it, and of some fine phrases in the tenor, bass or alto - just to pander to some male voices whose owners may well have given up coming to church anyway!

Some books fail to group the hymns according to the seasons of the Christian year, making it difficult to observe this most wholesome discipline whereby no aspect of the Faith is either neglected or overdone. After all, it took centuries to work it all out and get it right (like the good old Prayer Book), and it keeps the whole set-up balanced.

Where a lot of dead wood has been thrown out, it will probably have been replaced with specially written efforts by the compilers and their contemporaries which will rarely, if ever, catch on, and in turn become more dead wood. But, just occasionally, something new and really good turns up.

Some of us will find the American habit of putting the words of several verses in between the music staves very irritating and confusing. Printed separately on the page makes it far easier to take in the structure of the hymn as a whole, and accompany it intelligently. As for those dreadful editions that clutter the music with guitar chords - or tonic sol-fa signs - or have choruses which go back to a repeat in the middle, and end up near the beginning - NO Thank You!

Disregarding the rash of cheap Throw-away-Ditties flooding the guitar-strumming go-ahead churches, there have been serious new books like "A&M New Standard" (much too bulky) and "New English Hymnal," not to mention "Hymns For Today's Church," which latter is beautifully produced and quite comprehensive - PROVIDED one avoids like the plague its colossal impertinence in mangling the great classics because of a childish obsession for banishing "Thee" and "Thou" from utterance in church. (Just look what it has done, for example, to poor old Wesley's deeply moving "O Thou Who camest from above").

And now there is another one called "Christian Hymns," first published 1977, current edition 1985. It has considerable merit, and my church has started to use it. As organist, and privileged to select most of the Sunday psalms, hymns and canticles, I have studied it in depth, and feel that others might be interested in an assessment of its value. Hitherto we used an evangelical book, *Hymns Of Faith*, supplementing it with items drawn from *Anglican Hymn Book* (very good, as far as it goes) *English Hymnal*, *Ancient and Modern Revised*, and *Church Hymnal For The Christian Year*, in an attempt to provide the best from all sources.

Containing 901 hymns and 704 different tunes, this new book is quite comprehensive, and commands considerable respect for both its literary and its musical merit. It is heavily weighted by 101 hymns of Charles Wesley (reputed to have written over 6,500!), 71 by Isaac Watts, 26 by James Montgomery, 23 by William Doddridge, 14 by Thomas Kelly, 11 by Frances Ridley Havergal, and 10 by William Cowper; there are six of Mrs Cecil Alexander's best, and a fair sprinkling of the great mediaeval (and earlier) hymns, with a good dose of German Lutheranism. Slight variations, and extra verses, are probably more authentic than the better known versions, and an unusual feature is the inclusion and classification of 76 Metrical Psalms and hymns directly based on the Psalms, a commendable recognition of the Psalter's supreme importance in Christian worship; though, if you are lucky enough to

sing the standard Coverdale translation to our heritage of beautiful Anglican chants, you hardly need these as well.

The hymns are not grouped to follow the Christian Year, and the tone of the book is somewhat old-fashioned. More of the worthier products of the great surge of post-war hymn writing could have been included to let in some fresh air. "Tell out, my soul" is there, but some of Fred Pratt Green's fine hymns, more of Timothy Dudley-Smith's, and some of Christopher Idle and Michael Sayward could have been included instead of much excellent but little known works which will be unfamiliar and remain so to most Anglicans.

Emanating from evangelical Welsh sources, this book contains a wealth of grand Welsh tunes with excellent harmonies, most of them unknown to most of us, and some set to hymns already possessing good well-known tunes. The musical editors (not familiar names at all) are obviously sound musicians, but far too many hymns have got mixed up with completely wrong tunes! For example, *Lord, enthroned in heavenly splendour* is unpardonably divorced from Sir George Martin's splendid *St. Helen*. This can be put right in practice, but it is a headache for organist and singers. Amongst some 60 hymns that ought to have been included, but have to be supplied on photocopied leaflets as required, are *On Jordan's bank* (Advent), *In the bleak midwinter* (Christmas), *Forty days and forty nights* (Lent), *Ye choirs of new Jerusalem* (Easter), *Come, Holy Ghost, Veni Creator* (Whitsun), *Three in One and One in Three* (Trinity), *Alleluia! Sing to Jesus, New every morning is the love, Hail Gladdening Light, Holy Father, cheer our way, God is working His purpose out, Thy kingdom come O God, O what their toy and their glory must be, Dear Lord and Father of mankind, King of glory, King of peace, Praise to the Holiest, and Thy hand, O God, has guided*. It is more for Non-Conformists than for High Church, generally speaking, but one can get a lot of good sense out of it with a bit of care.

The words-only edition is either rather small print for elderly eyesight or lovely and clear in a bulkier format. The music edition is printed on see-through paper; if better quality paper had been used, and slightly larger type, the only way to avoid an utterly unwieldy volume would have been to leave out a hundred or so items that will hardly ever be wanted. Among about 50 tunes missing are *Ar Hyd Y Nos, Beulah, Chorus Angelorum, Day of Praise, Everton, Harewood, Heathlands, Kensington New, Ladywell, Little Cornard, Northampton, Michael, Old 104th, Old 124th, O Quanta Qualia, Repton, St. Drostane, Sebaste, Song 13, Vesper, and Wolvercote*. All of which is sad, but it is easy to complain, and time will prove its true value - better still, a revised edition!

THE ANNUAL CONFERENCE

The 1995 Conference was held in Reading School and was addressed by Richard Bower of R.A.J, Bower & Co, Organ Builders, who was responsible for the removal and installation of the Hill organ in Reading School. Details of this have appeared in this journal previously, and he has also restored the Holdich organ in St Frideswide, Frilsham..

Richard gave a very detailed account of the process of removal, from the inspection at St Philip's, Battersea to the completion of the installation. Members of St Philip's were greatly disappointed to lose their instrument, but it was inevitable given that funds required for repair of the building and the organ were just not available.

The Holdich organ was built between 1850 and 1858, and had not been altered. The organ is unaltered except that a fifteenth was originally prepared for, and this was installed following the style of Holdich. A particular feature is that the original unequal tuning has never been altered, and this has been maintained. The pipework is now cone tuned, and this maintains its tuning more effectively than slide tuning.

After the conference Richard Bower gave the following recital on the Reading School Chapel organ.

PROGRAMME

Six variations on <i>Mein Junges Leben Hat Ein End</i>	J.P. Sweelinck (1562 - 1621)
Prelude and Fugue in D major	Buxtehude (1637 - 1707)
Fantasia in F minor and major	Mozart (1756 - 1791)
Voluntary No 1 in C major <i>Adagio - Spirituoso - Gratoso - Allegro Moderato</i>	William Russell
Sonata No 7 in F minor (First movement)	Josef Rheinberger
<i>The Pilgrims Song of Hope</i> (Andante in G)	E. Batiste (1820 - 1876)
Toccata	Theodore Dubois (1837 - 1924)

[The process of installation of the Hill organ was witnessed and photographed by Philip Bowcock, and a set of the photographs has been given to the School.]

PRESIDENTIAL SERVICE AND RECITAL

The Presidential Service was held on 1 July in the Chapel of Reading School when Choral Evensong was sung by the School choir as part of their Speech Day celebration. The setting was Walmisley in D minor, and the anthem was *Rejoice in the Lord alway* (Purcell). The choir was conducted by Graham Ireland and the organist was Malcolm Stowell.

Following the service there was a recital of music for oboe, cello and harpsichord.

DR ARNOLD BENTLEY

Congratulations to our member Dr Arnold Bentley, who was awarded the honorary degree of Doctor of Letters by the University of Reading on 16 December 1995.

Arnold Bentley arrived at the University in 1931 as an undergraduate from Lancashire, and almost immediately began to make his presence felt in the musical world, including founding the University Singers.

Following graduation he became a teacher in a Reading secondary school but this was interrupted by wartime service as an Education Officer. Following that he became a Music lecturer in Weymouth, but was recalled to Reading to develop the first course in the country for graduate secondary school music teachers.

His reputation grew and graduate students and others from all parts of the world visited. By the 1950's he was being drawn to questions regarding the musical performance of children, particular in singing, which led to his Doctorate for research into their singing abilities. This was published in Music Ability in Children and its Measurement in 1966. As a result the University became the centre for research in this field, leading to the internationally known Society for Research in Music and Music Education of which he later became President.

Apart from his University work, Arnold Bentley was appointed Organist of the former Trinity Congregational Church, since demolished, which, at the time had one of the finest organs in Reading. In recent years he has played regularly at the Crematorium for funerals, and his abilities have certainly been appreciated by those mourning a loss.

We wish him continued happiness in his retirement.

THE ALBERT BARKUS MEMORIAL CUP

Christine Wells

A legacy from the late Albert Barkus has enabled our Association to sponsor a new class in the instrumental section of the Woodley Festival of Music and Arts. A splendid engraved cup is now the trophy for the candidate obtaining the most marks in either the 18 years and under or the open organ class. In April 1995 this cup was presented to 16-year-old Paul Gibbons of Reading Blue Coat School. The adjudicators were out for half an hour as the standard of playing of all three young candidates was very high and there was little to choose between them.

This year it is hoped that more will enter. All local schools with organs have been informed. It is a way of encouraging young organists and also of ensuring that Albert Barkus's distinguished contribution to the musical life of Reading is not forgotten.

LUNCHTIME ORGAN MUSIC

Gordon Hands

There were 21 performances in 1995, these interludes now being in their fourth year, given by :

13 January	Philip Aspden	21 July	Graham Ireland
27 January	Michael Howell	25 August	Christopher Kent
24 February	Graham Ireland	8 September	Michael Howell
3 March	Elizabeth Cooke	22 September	Leslie Davis
7 April	Evelyn Fisher	6 October	John Stott (Piano)
21 April	Derek Guy, with Jennifer Guy (Violin)	27 October	Evelyn Fisher
5 May	Malcolm Stowell	3 November	Malcolm Stowell
19 May	Richard Line	17 November	Don Hickson
9 June	Gordon Hands	1 December	Frank Brooks, with Maria Murray-Brown (soprano)
30 June	Frank Brooks, with Maria Murray-Brown (soprano)	15 December	Malcolm Stowell
7 July	Christine Wells		

The organ is holding up very well, and although we cannot hope to raise sufficient funds in this way for a complete rebuild, we were able to pay for a new humidifier which was fitted in June. This has made a considerable improvement, many leaks and runs having virtually disappeared as the old leather and woodwork does not dry out so much in conditions of low humidity. I dread to think what might have happened without it during the hot summer of 1995. We are also arranging for more tuning and maintenance visits than heretofore.

The Church Authorities would like to express their great appreciation to all those who have taken part in this venture. More support would of course be encouraging to the players, but we would record that Mrs Marr, at the age of 92, has scarcely missed a single one!

FROM THE OTHER SIDE OF THE MUSIC DESK (3)

Earnest Davey

“Could you please tune the organ to the piano as we wish to use them together?” Many times during my tuning career have I been confronted with that request. This strikes right at the heart of the subject of pitch and the desire to use organs in conjunction with other instruments. During the past hundred years, or even further back still, there has been a diversity of pitches, some authentic, and some, by the lesser fry, ‘near enough’. Apart from concert halls and similar institutions, the organ has stood alone, needing no other instrument to support it. Due to the age of most of our organs, and the expense involved in changing the pitch, little has been done generally. This is unfortunate because there is a tendency to make the organ ‘take a back seat’, despite the desire in this modern age to “Let everything that hath breath praise the Lord”.

Pitch, of necessity, due to shrinking frontiers, has had to become standardised; in the same way that weights and measures are standard. It needs to be national and international if we are to enjoy the rich offerings of musicians and musical instrument makers world wide. The present day pitch is a standard of The British Standards Institution and of The International Standards Institution.

The note A (second space treble clef) is the keystone, and its frequency or number of vibrations per second has been agreed on as A440. Organ Builders generally prefer to base their tuning on the C above this A, and the vibrations per second for the C works out at 523.3. As mentioned above, pitch has varied considerably over the years and one has the feeling that perhaps psychological reasons played an important role in the decisions that were made. The following list of the main pitches used during the past hundred years may be of interest:

A430 - C512	Philosophic pitch
A435 - C517	French Diapason Normal.
A439 - C522	New Philharmonic pitch 1896
A440 - C523.3	British Standard Pitch 1939
A444 - C552.8	Medium pitch.
A452 - C555	Old Army Band Pitch (Knellar Hall Pitch).
A454 - C540	Old Philharmonic Pitch.

The difference between Philosophic and Old Philharmonic Pitch is almost a semitone.

A most important point with regard to pitch is the temperature of the building in which the organ is used. With instruments of the orchestra the players are able to adjust their instruments; provided that they have been manufactured to the correct pitch in the first place. The organ, however, presents us with an entirely different problem. Its pitch is set at the time of manufacture and the ambient temperature of the building in which it will be used must be taken into consideration. The organ builder

has some guide lines, examples of which are shown below, but each building must be assessed individually. There are exceptions to every rule!

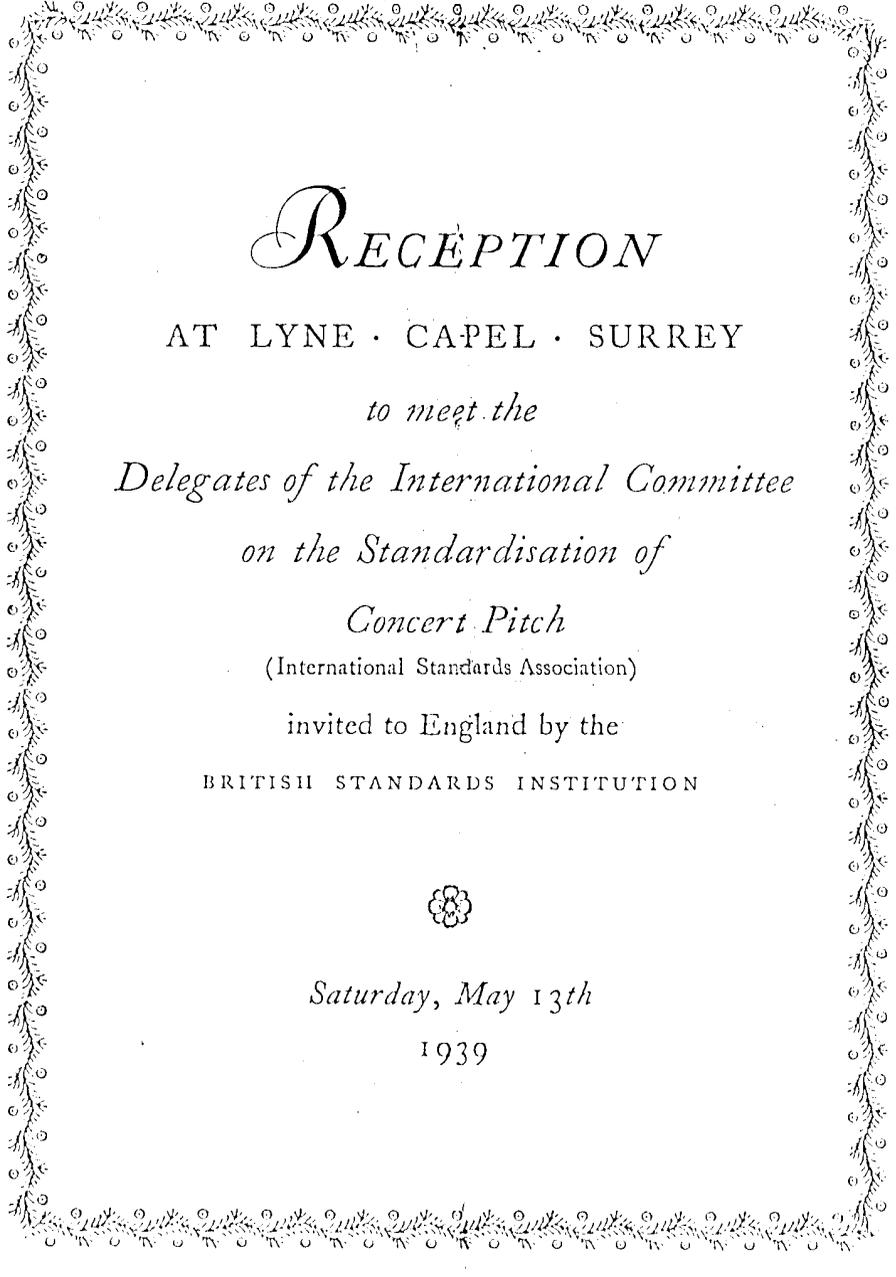
- (a) Country Churches and Chapels with modest and simple heating. C523.3 at 59 deg F
- (b) Large town Parish Churches with modern good general heating. C523.3 at 63 deg.F.
- (c) Modern small Churches and Chapels with efficient and rapid heating. C523.3 at 65 deg.F.
- (d) Concert Halls C523.3 at 68-70 deg.F

The pitch of one foot C (usually middle C of four foot principal, gemshorn or octave) will sharpen one beat or vibration per second for every two degrees Fahrenheit rise in temperature; and will flatten by the same amount for a two degrees fall. Reed stops are not affected so drastically, for their main vibrator, the reed tongue, tends to pull the natural frequency of its resonator tube in step with it. Where there are two vibrators of the same frequency, the stronger of the two will control the other. This explains why reeds tuned in the winter sound flat in the summer. What has taken place is that the whole body of the flue work of the organ has sharpened due to temperature rise. Quite a number of organists are under the impression that pipes flatten with the summer heat due to expansion of the metal. Metal does expand with heat, as we all know, but the controlling factor in an organ pipe is the column of air which it contains. The warmer and less dense the air, the quicker it vibrates and the sharper the note will become. Colder air causes the reverse to happen.

Referring back to the list of the various pitches that have been used, and bearing in mind the effect of temperature on pitch, an organ tuned to C523.3 (British Standard Pitch) at 50 deg F. will become C528 (Medium Pitch) at 60 deg.F. The following examples will give some idea of the problems experienced.

Many years ago I spent several days at Tilsworth Parish Church, near Dunstable lowering the pitch of the organ. It was a very small organ which, when it was constructed, had its pitch set to C528 (Medium Pitch). This pitch had to be changed to C523.3 (British Standard C). One of the problems was the small scale of the pipework; such pipes do not take kindly to length variations, and in this case the speech of the pipes had to be modified to suit the extra length needed for the new pitch. The other problem was that the temperature in the church was 50 deg.F. I set the pitch to C517 (French Diapason Normal) so that it would become British Standard at 62 deg.F. I re-visited the church in the summer to give the normal tuning and found the pitch was 'spot on' with the British Standard tuning fork.

At Beaconsfield Parish Church the Victorian organ stands in the west end arch Inscribed in pencil on the stonework of the arch above the organ is the following: "The organ has this day been tuned to concert pitch (probably New Philharmonic C522) at 50 deg.F"; this was in 1920. At 62 deg.F. the instrument's pitch would be changed to medium pitch (C528) by the temperature rise; this would have been the pitch set by William Hill when the organ was built.

A decorative border of small flowers and leaves surrounds the text.

RECEPTION

AT LYNE · CAPEL · SURREY

to meet the

Delegates of the International Committee

on the Standardisation of

Concert Pitch

(International Standards Association)

invited to England by the

BRITISH STANDARDS INSTITUTION



Saturday, May 13th

1939

The following countries are represented on the Committee:

BELGIUM	GREAT BRITAIN	NORWAY
FRANCE	HOLLAND	POLAND
GERMANY	ITALY	SWITZERLAND
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA		

THE TUDOR SINGERS

Conductor: CUTHBERT BATES

Sopranos

Dorothy Langmaid
Peggy Chenevix-Trench
Elizabeth Simkins
Molly Lake

Contraltos

Kathleen Whittome
Grace Bodley

Tenors

Cecil Wigley
Frederick Freeman
Kenneth Cooper

Basses

George Wall
Arthur Andrews
Dudley Chalk

*A gong will be sounded immediately before each group is to be sung.
If weather conditions make it advisable to remain indoors, the
Tudor Singers will sing in the front hall.*



PROGRAMME

⊗ 3.30 THE FRONT HALL

Reception

CAPT. EVELYN H. T. BROADWOOD, M.C., M.I.M.I.T.

MRS. GERARD BRAY

MRS. C. W. P. HODSOLL

⊗ 4.15 THE STONE WALK; SOUTH LAWN

The Tudor Singers

- | | |
|--|-----------------------|
| (a) MADRIGAL in six parts | <i>William Byrd</i> |
| <i>This sweet and merry month of May</i> | 1543-1623 |
| (b) MADRIGAL for five voices | <i>John Wilbye</i> |
| <i>Sweet honey-sucking bees</i> | 1574-1638 |
| (c) BALLET for five voices | <i>Thomas Tomkins</i> |
| <i>See, see, the Shepherd's Queen</i> | 1573-1656 |

4.30 TEA will be served

❁ 5.0 UNDER THE ABELE TREE; SOUTH LAWN

The Tudor Singers

FOLK SONGS

- (a) *Brigg Fair (Lincolnshire)* arr. Percy Grainger
TENOR SOLO: Cecil Wigley
- (b) *Wassail* arr. R. Vaughan-Williams
- (c) *The Turtle Dove* arr. R. Vaughan-Williams
BARITONE SOLO: George Wall

❁ 5.15 THE STONE WALK; SOUTH LAWN

The Tudor Singers

- (a) MADRIGAL for five voices *Anon*
Cuckow c. 1610
- (b) VILLANELLA for four voices *Orlandus Lassus*
Thou knowest fairest maiden c. 1530-1594
- (c) CHANSON for four voices *Orlandus Lassus*
Un jour vis un foulon

❁ 6.0 SINGING FROM THE TOWER

(Audience assemble in the fore-court)

- What is our life?* *Orlando Gibbons*
1583-1625

❁ 6.15 IN THE FRONT HALL

- (a) *Ca' the Yowes* arr. R. Vaughan-Williams
- (b) *Peggy Ramsay* arr. Gerard Williams
- (c) PART SONG, six parts *Frederick Delius*
On Craig Dhu (An impression of nature) 1862-1934
- (d) *Green Grass* arr. Gustav Holst

6.30 SHERRY

Further to my article in The Berkshire Organist No.48, reproduced here is a reduced size copy of one of the original small posters advertising the Handel Festival Concert at The Alexandra Palace on June 3rd. 1939, two months to the day before the second world war started. The heading of the poster is worth noting: Re-Opening of The Organ at Low Pitch.

ALEXANDRA PALACE

RE-OPENING OF THE ORGAN AT LOW PITCH

The Committee of the Organ Appeal Fund announce

RECORD ADVANCE BOOKING FOR THE

HANDEL FESTIVAL CONCERT

SATURDAY, JUNE 3rd., 1939 AT 7 P.M.

SOLOISTS

ISOBEL BAILLIE
FRANK TITTERTON

MARGARET BALFOUR
HAROLD WILLIAMS

ORGANIST: G. D. CUNNINGHAM

CHORUS

THE ALEXANDRA PALACE FESTIVAL CHOIR OF 1000 VOICES

Chorus Master: Charles Proctor. Deputy Chorus Masters: Allan Brown and Myers Foggin.
District Conductors: Herbert G. Crellin, L. Glanville Newison, Frank Odell, George Swidenbank, Harold F. Thiele

ORCHESTRA OF 200

THE STUDENTS OF THE ROYAL ACADEMY OF MUSIC
(by kind permission of Professor Stanley Marchant, C.V.O.)

THE STUDENTS OF THE ROYAL COLLEGE OF MUSIC
(by kind permission of Dr. George Dyson)

CONDUCTOR

Sir HENRY J. WOOD

All the above, following the generous lead of Sir Henry Wood, are giving their services in this Festival Concert.

An illustrated souvenir programme is being prepared containing the selections to be given from "Judas Maccabaeus," "Israel in Egypt" and "The Messiah." Mr. Cunningham will play the Concerto No. 10 in D Minor for Organ and Orchestra. Copies of the music of the choruses (2/-) are now available.

SEATS RESERVED: STALLS 5/- & 3/6 . AREA & COLONNADE 2/6 . Unreserved 1/6
Box Office: Phone TUDOR 5000 . or write ALEXANDRA PALACE, LONDON, N 22

HANDEL FESTIVAL CONCERT, JUNE 3rd, 1939

To the Box Office, Alexandra Palace, N.22

Please send 5/- tickets
..... 2/6 ..
..... 2/6 ..
..... 1/6 ..

numbered and reserved
unreserved

I enclose remittance £ : s: d.

Name

Address

Copies of Music at 2/-

Cheques should be made payable to "The Alexandra Palace Organ Emergency Appeal (1937)" and crossed "National Provincial Bank, Ltd., Huswell Hill."

Towards the completion of my apprenticeship with Henry Willis I was sent to St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church in Froggnal, London. The three manual organ there had been completely rebuilt and the pipes had been returned to The Rotunda Works in Brixton for re-voicing and lowering of the pitch. My task was to tune the organ in readiness for the final tonal finishing; for which I was given three days. I went there armed with a new C522 tuning fork and an assistant. It was a terrible task. Everything I tuned had to be sharpened and all the pipes below 4ft. C would have needed to have been cut; fortunately I did not cut them. "On the third day" Henry Willis arrived to see what progress I had made. On hearing of my problems he asked how I had begun the tuning. I showed him my tuning fork. He explained (not necessarily in mild terms) that as the temperature was only 49 deg.F. it was no good whatsoever tuning to a tuning fork. He instructed me to reset the middle C of the four foot principal (the pitch pipe) by adjusting the tuning slide to the indicator mark on the pipe put there by the voicer at the factory. I spent a further three days there re-tuning the organ. This time it worked out well - a never to be forgotten lesson was learned.

It can be now be deduced from the foregoing that the out-of-tuneness at service times can be attributed to rapid modern heating; particularly if that heating is fan assisted. Usually it is the unenclosed sections of the organ that are first affected; they will become noticeably sharp. The swell organ and other enclosed sections will remain flat. Another disadvantage is that the longer pipes are more affected than the shorter ones, due of course to the varying temperature levels as the warmed air rises. Should there be an evening service and should the heating remain on all day then it will be found that the instrument will be much more in tune. At Westminster Central Hall the heating was changed to a rapid heating system, whereby the heat was blown from the dome. The effect on the tuning was disastrous, for even the thirty two foot pipes and other long pipes were the first ones to go out of tune, followed by the unenclosed great organ. The enclosed departments were out of tune with one another due their being sited at different heights. It takes two days of heating to create an equal temperature throughout such a large instrument. Nowadays we are faced with either keeping constant heating for the sake of the organ or, in these days of tight budgets, using rapid and economical heating to warm the congregation; that too is not always successful.

Many Victorian builders voiced and tuned their organs to medium pitch (C528). At the turn of the century there was a revulsion to this high pitch and many builders adopted French Diapason Normal (C517) or even Philosophic (C512). Grand rolling music indeed! Then began the struggle to a more logical 'in between' pitch which was New Philharmonic (C522). Unfortunately many of our organs have retained the pitch they were born with. A great pity, for there is a growing call to use organs in concert with other instruments. There are for and againsts to this. If ensemble music brings in congregations, then so be it. As my article on the Alexandra Palace Organ (The Berkshire Organist No. 48) made clear, it is a very costly undertaking to lower the pitch of an organ. Some stops do not take kindly to this treatment. Reeds and string toned stops in particular - their length is part of the voicing procedure. More drastic measures have to be employed when altering the length of the pipes of these stops.

In 1939 an international committee was set up to standardise pitch at A440. Captain Evelyn Broadwood was very much to the forefront in this project. Broadwoods had played an outstanding role in the development of the pianoforte from its early beginnings, when it was known as a forte piano. Henry Willis and other leading instrument makers were members of the British Team, together with musicians and scientists. This pitch became the international standard. Instruments manufactured anywhere in the world could be used in concert with one another. I was fortunate enough to be invited to the reception at Captain Broadwood's country house near Dorking on May 13th. 1939; not in my capacity as an apprentice organ builder, but because at that time I was an honorary member of the Oxford and Cambridge Musical Club. I retained a copy of the programme of that great occasion and it is reproduced here. It is sad to think that Germany, who was well represented on the committee and who played a very important part in the standardisation, was at war with us within four months of this memorable event.

Some of you may remember the Third Programme transmitted by the B.B.C. The tuning-in signal was A440. At the time it was a most useful and exact reference.

I wonder what George Frederick Handel would have thought about the various pitch changes over the years. His A tuning fork produced a note roughly equivalent to our G sharp. Our pitch changes are very modest compared with some of the German and Central European pitches of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

CANAL TRIP

On a grey showery Saturday in June a few of us met at the Wharf at Newbury for a trip on the canal. We were the only party on the boat so there was plenty of room for us to walk about and talk to each other. We set sail towards Hungerford with a commentary on places we were passing, given by the boat crew. Newbury certainly looks different from the canal as one gets a different perspective of places from the water. After about an hour we turned round and headed back towards Newbury and Greenham lock. Tea was served on this part of the journey and was enjoyed by all.

We had to wait for the locks to fill or empty on a couple of occasions so there was ample time to browse or buy souvenirs that were on board, and we arrived back at Newbury feeling relaxed, having had a quiet and comfortable few hours with nothing to do but enjoy the scenery and each other's company, and eat our tea.

It was a pity that only a few of our members were able to go on this outing, as it was something different and very enjoyable.

NEWS FROM THE ROYAL SCHOOL OF CHURCH MUSIC

David Duvall

1996 marks a milestone in the history of the RSCM, as after 42 years at Addington Palace we move to Cleveland Lodge, near Dorking. The lease of Addington from Croydon Borough Council is up, and there is a need to move to smaller, more economical premises. An appeal is in progress for £1.5 million to refurbish and adapt Cleveland Lodge: so far we are approaching £500,000, and we have a long way to go.

Cleveland Lodge was the home of Susi, Lady Jeans, who gave a memorable talk to the Association some years ago. When she died she most generously bequeathed it to the RSCM. It is in a very pretty part of East Surrey, a mile from Dorking and at the foot of Box Hill: it is easy to reach both from the M25 and by train, being just across the road from a station gloriously named “Boxhill and Westhumble” - which conjures up a vision of a very old-established firm of Uriah Heap-like solicitors.

The effect of the smaller premises is that much of the RSCM’s training activity is now being devolved to the regions. For my sins, I have been appointed Education and Training Officer for the RSCM in Berkshire, and my priority is (just as it was when I was your President) to ensure that the RSCM and the BOA work together as much as possible for the benefit of church music and musicians.

We have formed a small Education and Training group to steer things along in this area, and I am delighted that Don Hickson is a member of it. My role, with the help of the group, is

- to ensure that the RSCM provides existing affiliates (churches and personal members) with the events and training that they need and will enjoy
- to raise the profile of the RSCM with non-affiliated churches, of all denominations, and find out how we can help.

We have already sent out a questionnaire to all affiliates in Berkshire, and at the time of writing we are analysing the results: I hope that we will be able to circulate these to you.

If you have an interest in church music, we need your help. If you or your church are affiliated, I hope that we have received your completed questionnaire and that we will be able to respond to it either with individual advice or through future events.

If you aren’t, and are involved with church music, I would very much like to know if you have any particular problems with your music. We may be able to help more than you might think. Please get in touch with me (39 Hudson Road, Woodley, Reading RG5 4EN: Reading 696308).

DORCHESTER OUTING

3 June 1995

Don Hickson

What was originally planned as an “organ crawl” for various reasons turned out to be a “one stop” visit to the Abbey Church of St Peter and St Paul at Dorchester on 3 June. In retrospect this turned out to be a good thing because the various attractions of Dorchester were more than ample to occupy the whole afternoon.

A good sprinkling of members made the trip on a beautiful summer afternoon and we were welcomed by the Resident Organist John Simpson, a former member of our Association, who gave us a brief description of the organ before letting us loose on it. The present organ, built by Walkers, was installed in the Abbey in the 1870s but was smaller than originally intended, space being left for additional pipework as funds became available. Regrettably, little expansion took place and by the 1970s the organ had deteriorated to an almost unplayable state. Following extensive discussion the decision was taken to ask Bishop and Son of Ipswich to undertake a complete overhaul under the direction of John Budgen retaining as much as possible of the original Walker concept. At the same time it was decided to re-site the instrument on a gallery one bay west of its original position which improved its efficiency for Service accompaniment and also allowed effective use for recitals and concert work. The present specification appears at the end of this article.

Most of the members present climbed the stairs from the vestry to the gallery to try the organ out and those who did not suffer from vertigo found it delightful to play, if a little “heavy” with manuals coupled and able to cope with everything from Bach, via Stanford and Howells to the light hearted delights of Lefebure-Wely!

While not playing many of us took the opportunity to discover the many delights of the Abbey itself. Founded in the seventh century the church had Cathedral status for a time before the see was moved to Winchester in flight from the advancing Mercian army. This status was restored again when the Danish invasion abolished the see of Leicester and it remained the diocesan centre until the Norman conquest when it was once again removed, this time to Lincoln. Subsequent development has taken place through the passing centuries as in all our large ecclesiastical buildings, but here at Dorchester there is a superficial appearance of randomness and imbalance in the resulting totality. Nevertheless the Abbey is full of interest from the 13th Century chapel of St Birinus with the oldest glass roundel in the building to the modern memorial to Gerald Allen first modern Bishop Suffragen of Dorchester in the Lady Chapel.

When all had finished in the Abbey, we adjourned to the nearby Abbey Tea Rooms for an experience too rarely encountered in this modern age. Real “afternoon tea” seated round large tables in a cottage surrounding, with home made cakes all made and presented by lady “Friends” of the Abbey. Prices for tea (reducing with succeeding cups) and cakes were displayed on the tables - no bills were presented you were just trusted to pay for what you had! It was a very civilised way to end what had

been an excellent afternoon out and more than compensated for only having one organ to visit on our “crawl”.

SPECIFICATION OF THE ORGAN IN DORCHESTER ABBEY.

GREAT		SWELL	
Open Diapason	8	Double Diapason Treble	16
Salicional	8	Double Diapason Bass	16
Wald Flute and stopped bassç	8	Echo Dulciana	8
Fluteç	4	Stopped Bass and Clarinet Trebleç	8
Principal	4	Vox Angelica*	8
Twelfth*	2 ¹ / ₃	Principal	4
Fifteenth	2	Harmonic Flageolet	2
Mixture III*		Mixture IV	
Trumpet*	8	Oboe	8
		Horn	8
CHOIR		PEDAL	
Harmonic Fluteç	8	Open Diapason	16
Lieblich fluteç	4	Bourdon	16
Clarionet	8	Principal*	8
Piccolo	2	Trombone*	16
Choir to Pedal		COMPOSITION PEDALS	
Great to Pedal		(installed 1981)	
Swell to Pedal		Swell – 3	
Swell to Great		Great – 3	
Choir to Great			
Swell Super Octave			
Pedal compass CCC to f (but sounding e only)			
Manual compass CC to g3 (4 ¹ / ₂ octaves)			
Tracker action throughout to all manuals			
Electric action for pedals			
* New stops added in 1981			
ç Stops are labelled 8ft or tone			

THE BENEVOLENT FUND, 1995

Evelyn Fisher

The amount donated during the year was £31, of which £11 was collected at the talk on the Alexandra Palace, and £20 at the Half-Day Conference. This is considerably less than the previous year, mainly because no collection was made at the Presidential Service.

I am most grateful to all those who have supported the fund, and I hope you will continue to give generously when you have the opportunity to do so.

REVIEWS

Mark Jameson

Since writing reviews for the 1995 Berkshire Organist" my spending on compact discs has continued, limited by finance and by my wife saying " but you need to do.. ... instead" - however quite a number were still bought in the year! In 1995 the record shop at 84 Charing Cross Road closed, which made less choice in London. Another source, at less cost, is Grammex, located near The Cut, at Waterloo - this is a dealer in second hand CD's, LPs and some tapes. The owner, Roger, is a keen opera buff, and he deals in classical organ, choral, jazz and opera. I am aware that if a second hand disc/CD etc. is faulty, he will give a refund.

As Christmas is now past, I would like to bring to your attention two CD's, aimed at this market –

Carols from Fountains Abbey (Isis CD018): This is a National Trust recording which I bought at Basildon House just before Christmas and features the Harrogate Choral Society singing Christmas music accompanied by Robin Coulthard with four Bach Choral Preludes played by Martin Souter. The recording was done on the 1875 Lewis organ of Studley Royal, St. Mary, which is in the grounds of Fountains Abbey. My wife and I have both enjoyed this disc very much, and part of the profits go to the National Trust.

Christmas music of a different flavour comes in *Celestial Christmas 5* (Celestial Harmonies LC7869) featuring Franz Lehrndorfer playing seasonal music on the new organ in Munich Dom, some exciting improvisations are included. The leaflet text is in German, the CD is American, and I found it in Tower Records at £13.99.

From the house of Kevin Mayhew, I bought in July three discs which are as follows:

Organ Favourites - KMCD1002 - Malcolm Archer at Hereford Cathedral

Organ Masterworks - KMC1020 - James Thomas at Chichester Cathedral

Fanfare for Organ - KMCD1018 - David Poulter at Coventry Cathedral

The discs recorded at Chichester and Hereford both contain well known pieces, but neither cathedral organs are that common on disc. Both I consider to be "pops", but good to hear again. However, I really enjoyed the Fanfare CD as thirty two modern pieces are crammed onto this disc - I have tried to find some of the pieces in the sheet music lists circulated from this house, as this CD is like a breath of fresh air and gives one ideas on what these new pieces should sound like!

Early in 1995 my wife, two friends and I went bus searching via Le Shuttle into Belgium, visiting the Jonckheere factory at the same time. Our return was via Lille, and I made an essential visit to Domaine Musiques, of Région Nord-Pas de Calais to try to get the regions Department organ books. However, neither are in print, but I did get from them other material including two very good CD's. Neither are cheap, but they are sold as *Orgues D'Artois Volumes 1 & 2*. The first features Michael Chapuis

playing the organs of Eglise St. Martin, Auxi Le Chateau (1745 d'Adrien Carpentier) and the Cathedral of Notre Dame, Saint Omer, with music covering 1563 to 1911. The second features players Bernard Hédin, Michel Alabau and Francois Lombard on respectively Lens Eglise Saint-Leger, Carvin Eglise Saint Martin and Boulogne-sur-mer Cathedral Notre-Dame. The last named was rebuilt in 1992 and now has a third manual. This is the first recording I have seen where the enlarged organ has featured. The programme featured is also good. Full organ specifications, as expected, are included in these discs. With the ease of Channel travel, Lille is easily reached but beware, Domaine Musiques does not accept plastic!

Still on imported CD's, from the OHS Catalogue, both at \$29.95 I have bought the 4-CD set of *Historic Organs of Baltimore* CHE-91 - this features 32 organs, 30 players, 60 pieces of music and 9 hymns. The recording comes from their annual convention, and some organs are in obviously poor condition. Members also get a comprehensive handbook covering the convention. Why don't we do this here? Obviously, as the recording is done with an audience, there are background noises, but it adds to the flavour. Their new set covering Maine has just been issued and I hope to add it soon to my collection!. The second purchase from the OHS of USA comes from even further afield - *Historic Organs of Sydney* (Australia) (3WAL8023) - a three-CD set covering 29 imported and indigenous organs played by Michael Dudman. Some of the recording dates back to the 1970's but how often can you find an 1884 Maley Young and Oldknow, or an 1871 Hill or 1897 Hunter to listen to? An excellent set, and well worth trying to get.

Still in the realms of history, the Dutch firm of Festivo have released a historic recording of Piet van Egmond as *The Magic Touch* (FEC140) playing popular music between 1957 and 1961 on the BBC Theatre Organ in the Jubilee Chapel. The organ used replaced the Compton bombed in 1940, and was formerly Reginald Foort's American Moller touring organ of 25 ranks. The organ was sold by the BBC in 1963 and installed in a church in Hilversum. In 1970 it was again sold to a cafe in Pacific Beach, California, and is now located at the Pasadena Civic Centre where it is still used for concerts. Piet van Egnond's recordings were in part found after his death in his Collection. This interesting recording is available from Priory or its agents. The organ builder Holler has recently given its entire archive to the OHS and work has commenced in sorting the 35-tons of paperwork!

Turning now to home recordings, Mirabilis; I have bought two of their productions :

MRCD908 - Royal Hospital School, Holbrook - Peter Crompton

MMBCD 2 - Budleigh Salterton - Roger Fisher

The Holbrook recording is the second recording that I have of this organ and I still think that the original LP recording by Michael Woodward is better. However this is CD and easier to play. The mix is good, and we have a contrast to listen to. Michael had a distinct advantage - he was a local and produced a very good product. The

Budleigh Salterton recording was made following its rebuild; originally Hele and now including the 2-manual Harrison Nave organ from Worcester Cathedral, the recent rebuild is by Michael Farley with help from many others. Roger Fisher was the consultant and plays here a popular programme on an organ not known to me. I like it!

Much closer to home is a new disc by a firm not known to me, Cardinal, whose CSCD101 is *Paul Stubbings plays the organ of St.Martin in the Fields*. The disc of 65 minutes features the new 1990 Walker three-manual organ. Bach features three times in the nine selections. Bought by me as I heard the organ new during an Organ Club visit, only one piece was new to me, and I regard it in the same category as the Chichester/Hereford organs above.

To look at Priory's releases, - they issue so many - one has to pick and choose, and Priory would feature for an article all of their own. Therefore, is very hard to be selective because they are all good, even if printers/proof reading errors appear in the leaflets. I wish Neil Collier would revert to organs on the cover picture, paintings are nice but organs are the subject. He has celebrated his anniversary with some re-issues onto CD of earlier LPs long out of circulation. One of these is Organ Music of S.S. Wesley (PRCD004) featuring Exeter Cathedral and Killerton House (£6.99), a hit to me as an LP and even better as a CD. The player is Paul Morgan. The Celebration series also includes Choral works.

New issues in the Great Organ Series:

37: St.John, Smith Square, London - played by Jane Watts

45: The Hallgrimsirkja, Reykjavik - played by Roger Sayer

Both recordings feature new organs by Klais. The London organ has music by Simon Preston, Daniel Jones (a name new to me) and Jean Langlais. The Icelandic disc has Bach, Dupre, Barry Ferguson, Langlais and Bonnal. Both are well played. This is my first organ from Iceland, and one hopes that the building is warm! My buying of Priory discs is limited to organs – one day I may get round to the Psalms of David and other Choral works, but it costs money!

Finally, I have just had a recording by Margaret Phillips of Wesley, Music for organ played on the older stops of the 1793 James Davis instrument in Wymondham Abbey, Norfolk. This is by York Abbisonic (CD111). I have played it only once so far, and it seems quite good. However the producers, while including the specification, do not show a single photograph of the organ, console or building. If one knows the building organ, OK, but if you do not, these items help to get a better idea of what one is listening to. I expect this detail in a "normal cost" CD and this was not a "cheap" disc.

NEW MUSIC FROM O.U.P. IN 1995

Christine Wells

ORGAN MUSIC

THE OXFORD BOOK OF CHRISTMAS ORGAN MUSIC (£14.95)

IMPROVISING How to master the Art by Gerre Hancock (£19.95)

At last, here is the album of Christmas music expertly compiled by Robert Gower for which we have been waiting for many years. Now we no longer have to delve into at least a dozen different books to find enough music to play at Christmas services. This comprehensive anthology contains 37 of the best seasonal pieces ranging from long established chorale preludes by the likes of Bach and Brahms, new arrangements of pieces such as the Hallelujah Chorus and the Corelli Christmas Concerto, Daquin Noels, Guilman Noels to new commissions by Andrew Carter, Gerre Hancock and David Willcocks. Here also are John Ireland's 'The Holy Boy', Herbert Sumsion's 'The Holly and the Ivy' and John Rutter's brilliant 'God rest you merry, gentlemen' and last but not necessarily least Howard Blake's 'Walking in the air'. It is a pity that the pages are rather thin and tend to tear after repeated turn-overs and the covers flimsy but it is nevertheless a bargain buy for a feast of glorious organ music.

For those of us who went to music college but were not taught or encouraged to improvise it is probably too late to rely on anything other than inspiration and this sometimes fails. Improvising is 10% inspiration and 90% skill developed from many hours of practice. Gerre Hancock, organist of St. Thomas's Fifth Avenue New York, has produced a thorough book for the serious student. He himself studied the art with Nadia Boulanger. The book contains copious examples and excellent advice on planning practice, taking the student from simple progressions based on scales, through phrases and interludes to hymn and song preludes and finally to toccatas trios and fugues. The book is spiral bound and the printing is large and clear.

OXFORD EASY ANTHEMS

JUST AS I AM Bob Chilcott SATB & keyboard (£1.60)

LITANY TO THE HOLY SPIRIT Peter Hurford SATB & keyboard (£1.60)

Bob Chilcott is able to write music that progresses happily over a held bass. The first two verses are written on a pedal 'C' and only at the words 'poor wretched blind' does the accompanying bass move a little. Pedal notes return for the other verses but above there is much interesting counterpoint in 2 and 3 parts. Some of the cross rhythms are perhaps a little too busy but a pianissimo repetition of the main motif in 4 parts on the last 'I come' is a lovely effect. Peter Hurford has written a 4 part version of his original composition for unison upper voices, music which featured as background to Alan Bennett's programme on Westminster Abbey. The simplicity of the original is retained with only one verse of Robert Herrick's poem in full harmony

throughout. The writing makes good use of suspensions and there are some delightful scale passages in the accompaniment against slower moving vocal parts.

OXFORD ANTHEMS

LOVE ONE ANOTHER Andrew Carter SATB & organ (£3.95)

PIE JESU John Rutter SATB & organ (£1.60)

KING OF GLORY William H. Harris SSA & organ (£1.60)

‘Love one another’ by Andrew Carter is a ten minute work setting words from the Epistle of St. Peter and from ‘The Prophet’ by Kahlil Gibran ending with the hymn ‘Come down O Love divine’. The ‘Love one another’ excerpts from St. Peter are sandwiched between large sections of the Lebanese writer’s poem in praise of love. Maybe it is a pity that there is no place for words from the Song of Solomon to make this the perfect wedding anthem. It is still however a thoroughly good anthem providing great scope for a competent choir. The final hymn tune called ‘Worthington’ could easily replace ‘Down Ampney’ in popularity when used separately.

Taken from the Requiem, John Rutter’s ‘Pie Jesu’ is a welcome addition to an ever growing list in the Fauré mould. It is a simple soprano (not treble) solo with SA and TB unison interjections. There are a few colourful modulations from the F major in which the souls must find their eternal peace. It could effectively performed in church services with the right soloist.

First printed in 1925 ‘King of Glory was written for New College choristers. This lovely setting of George Herbert’s words is in bright D major and has strong flowing phrases which a children’s choir would attack with relish. There is plenty of unison, some 2 part imitation and easy 3 part harmony with occasional solo bars to add contrast. The organ part is beautifully crafted.

OXFORD CAROLS

MIRABILE MISTERIUM Andrew Carter SATB unaccompanied (£1.60)

LULLO BY LULLO Anthony Powers “ “ (£1.95)

QUITTEZ, PASTEURS John Rutter “ “ (£1.95)

‘Mirabile misterium’ is a setting of English words c.1500 ‘modernised’ which is just as well as there is no medieval feeling about the music which was written for Gwyn Arch in celebration of his 30th Christmas concert as conductor of the South Chiltern Choral Society in 1994. It is laid out on a large canvas with 4 parts becoming 2, 6, 7 or 8 (in short score) at various points. Some of the chords are quite Wagnerian in their inflation and rather spoil the word ‘mirabile’. Solos for two sopranos above the chorus are effective and there is plenty of dynamic range and rhythmic momentum which make this an exciting piece for a large choir.

By contrast the medieval words in ‘Lullo by Lullo’ are sensitively set by Anthony Powers in a gentle piece largely centred around the note ‘G’. This could be performed by any 4 part church choir that can sing semitones in tune.

‘Quittez, Pasteurs’ arranged by John Rutter is a straightforward arrangement of the French traditional carol with no writing between the beats but with the good idea of a ‘musette’ bass throughout much of it. Both T and B divide in places and it ends with fortissimo downward scales in the tenor beneath the melody. The words are French or English.

OXFORD UPPER VOICE CAROLS

MISTLETOE CAROL Andrew Carter (£1.60)

HEY NOW/FAREWELL ADVENT Bob Chilcott (£2.60)

The ‘Mistletoe Carol’ for SSA unaccompanied is a real ‘fun’ piece which school choirs will love. Andrew Carter also wrote the words. Everything connected with a British Christmas is mentioned including ‘hot mince pies with too much pastry, carol singers out of tune – don’t you dare to drink and drive – kiss me under the mistletoe, Christmas pud and brandy butter and wash up the pots and watch ‘The Queen’.’ The music is rollicking except at the words ‘out of tune’ (marked to be sung feebly), very descriptive and not too difficult.

‘Hey now’ and ‘Farewell! Advent’ are two of a trilogy – the third being ‘Mid-Winter’ (reviewed last year) and now available for SATB. The three were written for the Toronto Children’s Chorus. ‘Mid-Winter’ has already become popular here. ‘Hey now’ is more difficult and probably out of reach for small church choirs. ‘Farewell! Advent’, though the sentiments expressed in the 15th century poem are novel to us, requires even more vocal panache and expertise.

OXFORD CHURCH SERVICES

NASHDOM MASS Anthony Greening (£1.95)

MISSA BREVIS Andrew Carter (£3.95)

The Nashdom Mass (ASB Rite and ICEL texts) is an ultra simple but very effective unison setting which has been reprinted, due to demand we hope. It must be one of the best of its kind. The short but easy to follow organ introductions are perfect. Congregational parts are available. Going from the simple to the sublime, Andrew Carter’s beautiful little Latin Mass for SSA and organ is consciously or unconsciously modelled on Britten’s but the harmonies are more French than English. The sweeping Kyries are to be sung ‘as the rising of incense’ and the Gloria ‘with a tremendous bounce’. Good use is made of parallel fifths and fourths and surging upward figures together with contrasting solo and tutti passages. The appealing Benedictus and Agnus Dei are both worked out over an ostinato bass. This inspired work should enter the repertoire of cathedral and large parish church choirs.

WORD SEARCH

Philip Bowcock

The following WordSearch contains the names of all the speaking stops in the specification of one of the organs mentioned in an issue of the Berkshire Organist within the last ten years.

You are invited to list all the stops you can find and then identify the organ concerned. Note that words may horizontal, vertical or diagonal, and forwards or backwards.

The names of all members correctly identifying the church, the number of stops and the date when the specification appeared will appear in the next newsletter, and in the next Berkshire Organist.

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

CROSSWORD NO 5

Graham Ireland

1		2		3		4		5		6		7
8								9				
10						11						
												12
13				14			15			16		
						17						
	18	19						20				
21												
22						23						
24								25				

CLUES ACROSS

- 1 "I'm looking for a - - - - -" (especially in the summer). (5)
- 4 Plus before not played in this game! (7)
- 8 Literary section of Lottery Game (7)
- 9 Give and inch (5)
- 10 Now a non-Bachian touch? (5)
- 11 Add royal insignia take us from behaviour, a comparative state (6)

- 13 Removes compass point - no charabang! (6)
- 15 Always comes after a stir (60)
- 18 Reading development not - - - -
- 20 . . . in this street (5)
- 22 Conical building enclosing a kiln (5)
- 23 Recipient of willed goods (7)
- 24 Not necessary on Reading's 19 down (7)
- 25 Shall I wrest there from north of the border? (5)

DOWN

- 1 Building opened for public entertainment in 1772 (8)
- 2 Not used when driving even in golf! (3,4)
- 3 Do limited - - - allow time for 2 (3) to heal? (5)
- 4 Take upon oneself (6)
- 5 A successful angler (7)
- 6 A helpful aid to 9 across (5)
- 7 When did they lie around Him? (4)
- 12 No gun for off here in diner (8)
- 14 Composer 1810 - 1849 (7)
- 16 Mozart wrote one of these (KV 144) (7)
- 17 Often made his way to Reading not on a bike (6)
- 19 See 24 across
- 20 Finished is the battle when this is o'er (5)
- 21 This freshwater fish is bred in a river, not a pond.

CHRISTMAS CAROLS

The Order of Service for the Festival of Lesson's and Carols at St John's, Caversham, in December stated :-

At the end of the service please do stay for refreshments. Mulled wine or soft drinks and mice pies will be served in Church.

The Church cat had obviously had a very busy Advent!

SOLUTION TO CROSSWORD NO 5

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

SUMMER 1995

Philip Bowcock

Everyone will no doubt remember the hot weather of the year when rivers dried up, and hosepipes and sprinklers were banned.

The organ of St, John's Caversham, has a long history of problems in hot weather, and this year was no exception. By August several of the Great keys were giving trouble, and for a few weeks the organ was almost unplayable. I became convinced that the problem lay in the pins under the keys and a little manipulation with a pair of long-nosed pliers improved matters somewhat.

Unfortunately, while correcting one problem, another was created. Some of the stickers fell out of position with the result that when the pedal couplers were drawn the organ played itself. As these could not be reached from the front or side access the only solution was to enter from the back. This involved removing the back panel, squirming over the main bellows and under the swell soundboard, when it was relatively easy to put matters right.

However it gave an entirely new meaning to the term "organ crawl"!

PAST PRESIDENTS

1921 - 23	<i>Percy R Scrivener, FRCO FTCL</i>
1924 - 26	<i>A C P Embling, MusD FRCO</i>
1927	<i>Percy R Scrivener, FRCO FTCL</i>
1928 - 30	<i>F G Goodenough, FRCO</i>
1931 - 34	<i>B Probert-Jones, MusB FRCO</i>
1935 - 37	<i>Albert Barkus, FRCO</i>
1938 - 42	<i>A Yould, FRCO ARCM LRAM</i>
1943 - 45	<i>Archibald H Lusty, ARCO HonFTCL</i>
1946	<i>Percy R Scrivener, FRCO FTCL</i>
1947 - 48	<i>W Hugh Rowe, ARCO</i>
1949 - 50	<i>Albert E Rivers</i>
1951 - 52	<i>A Warren, FRCO</i>
1953 - 55	<i>Prof H C Barnard, MA DLitt</i>
1956 - 57	<i>F Gordon Spriggs</i>
1958 - 60	<i>Leslie Pratt, FTCL</i>
1961 - 63	<i>Roy N Nash</i>
1964 - 65	<i>Miss E G Goodship, ATCL</i>
1966 - 68	<i>H D Anthony, MA BSc PhD FRAS</i>
1969 - 71	<i>Leslie F B Davis</i>
1972 - 74	<i>R P J Pepworth</i>
1975 - 76	<i>J C Lawes</i>
1977 - 78	<i>Donovan L Jones</i>
1979 - 80	<i>Mrs Evelyn A Fisher</i>
1981 - 82	<i>Harold H Hartley, MA BSc FRAS MBCS</i>
1983 - 84	<i>Peter B Marr, PhD GTCL FRSA ARCO</i>
1985 - 86	<i>Derek M Guy, AFCM</i>
1987 - 88	<i>Christopher Hood, BA</i>
1989	<i>Christopher J Kent MusB MMus PhD FRCO ARMCM</i>
1990 - 91	<i>David Duvall, MA FCA</i>
1992 - 93	<i>Philip Bowcock, BSc ARICS IRRV</i>

HONORARY FELLOWS

Dr Francis Jackson
Martyn Reason Esq