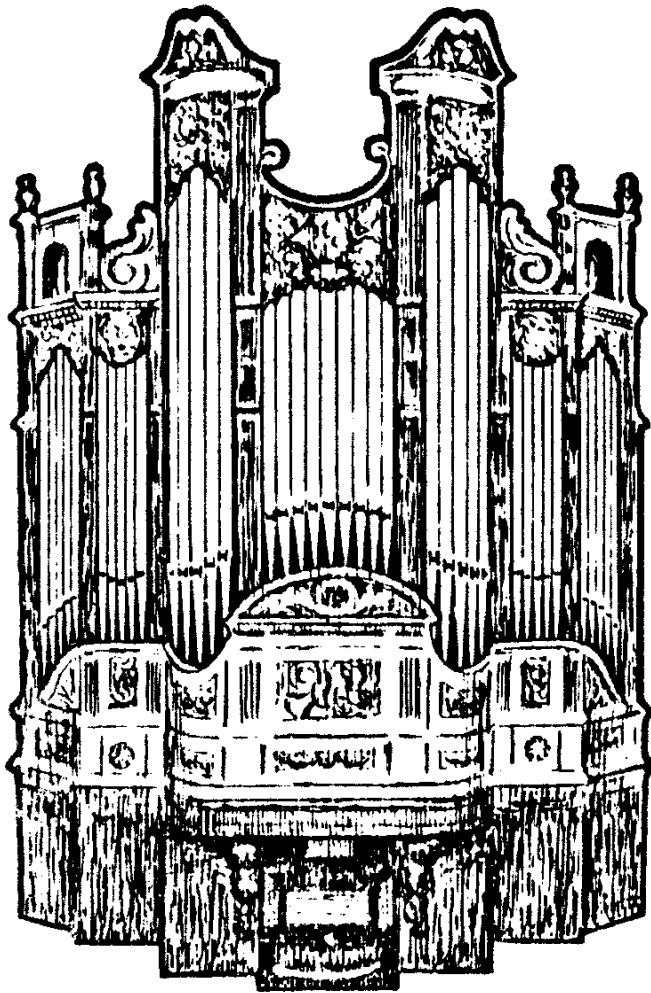


# *The Berkshire Organist*

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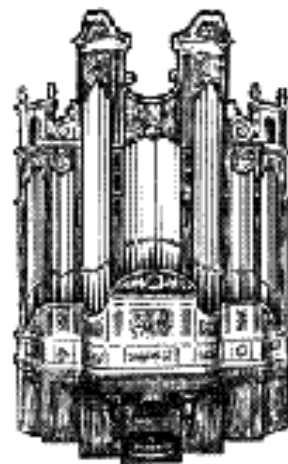
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# THE BERKSHIRE ORGANISTS ASSOCIATION

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 were suspended while the organ was 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.

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# **THE REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT**

## **1999-2000**

Christine Wells

As President I feel perhaps a little like a company director who has to report on profitability to the shareholders. All our members are shareholders (or should it be stakeholders) in the success or otherwise of this Association. I hope I will not be derided later if I say that some “green shoots” of recovery are visible. During the past year there has been an increase in the membership and we have had some notable recitals, meetings and visits.

Our membership now stands at nearly ninety out of which five are student members. We have done our best to give opportunities to young players though it was disappointing that this year there was only one candidate for the Barkus Cup despite our highly efficient Secretary having informed at least ten local schools which possess organs. We should persevere so that this organ competition continues to be put before the schools. I heard recently that a similar competition in Bedfordshire attracted eight entrants. It is also our duty to encourage churches to take the initiative in recruiting young organists. We have agreed that the profits from the booklet about the Reading Town Hall organ which will soon be on sale should go to benefit young players and I for one would like to see our Association offer an annual bursary .

The series of local recitals arranged by Philip Aspden has proved very successful. Not only has it given some people the chance to perform who would otherwise not have done so (and so increased the amount of their practice time!) but it has enabled members to hear and appreciate many different organs. I always think that listening to a recital is a better way of getting to know an organ than having to sit through the “everyone must have a go” sessions on an organ crawl. The recitals are also, in a small way, raising awareness of organ music amongst the general public and benefiting the Association financially. I hope very much that the series will be continued as from September. The lunchtime organ concerts at St. Mary’s are going well thanks to Gordon Hands’ dedicated work and opportunities for players and listeners alike are provided by Ian May at St. Giles. But the highlight of Reading’s organ year was the opening recital on the Father Willis in Reading Town Hall (or Concert Hall as it is now known) given by Olivier Latry. Apart from his fluent and attractive playing of some of the French repertoire most of us were green with envy at his effortless improvisation on “Sumer is icumen in”. The role of this Association in promoting recitals in the Town Hall is not yet clear and must be defined during the coming year.

A weekend in Paris was thoroughly enjoyed by all who went and was the first foray from these shores made by the Association. As well as a discovery of the organs and organists of Paris it was as much a discovery of the bistros of this glamorous city. We hope that the trend will be continued in a visit to Holland (Alkmaar, Haarlem and Amsterdam) later this year.

In March this year we were delighted to meet our Patron, Dame Gillian Weir, and the afternoon at Pincents Manor was spent most pleasantly in her company. After the

formal business of a question and answer session we were all able to meet her informally over a cup of tea.

The 52nd *Berkshire Organist* came out on time and lived up to its usual high standard (apart from a few misprints in last year's Presidential Report!).

So it is with a mixture of regret and relief that I give up the Presidency to a very worthy successor. I am very grateful for the hard work done by all the officers and editors without which this Association could not continue but this year I would like to pay special tribute to Derek Guy for his unstinting work as Programme Secretary over 26 years. His numerous phone calls and letters (many unanswered after many weeks) to organists high and low and countrywide and to hotels, village halls and town halls to make arrangements; his efforts to coax hesitant members into meeting deadlines; all have led to many very successful and enjoyable activities. But Derek did not work in isolation. Jen was there to lend support and the programme meetings at their house were always graced by her bringing in the refreshments. So it gives me great pleasure to end this report by announcing that we would like to make Derek an Honorary Member of this Association.

## **RECITAL AND AGM 2000**

13 May 2000

This was held in Christchurch and was preceded by a recital by Philip Aspden and David Old in the Church and lunch at the Hillingdon Prince Hotel.

### **RECITAL PROGRAMME**

|          |                                      |                              |
|----------|--------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| (David)  | Pastorale op 19                      | Cesar Franck (1822-90)       |
|          | Scherzo in E minor                   | Albert Alain (1911-40)       |
|          | Fantasia and Fugue op 135b           | Max Reger (1873-1916)        |
| (Philip) | Sonata on the 94 <sup>th</sup> Psalm | Julius Reubke (1834- 58)     |
|          |                                      | Grave (vv 1,2)               |
|          |                                      | Allegro con fuoco (vv 3,6,7) |
|          |                                      | Adagio (vv 17,19)            |
|          |                                      | Allegro (vv 22,23)           |

Over recent years members of the committee had been elected on a “block” basis with the result that the number exceeded that set out in the rules. The committee therefore recommended that a fresh start should be made with an election of nine members with the intention that in future three would retire each year.<sup>1</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> The AGM comprised the usual agenda of reports and elections, but it was remarked afterwards by a member that this had been the most enjoyable such event for several years.

The following were elected to serve for the coming year :

|                         |                  |
|-------------------------|------------------|
| President               | Graham Ireland   |
| Hon Secretary           | James Wooldridge |
| Hon Treasurer           | Mark Jameson     |
| Programme Secretary     | Christine Wells  |
| Benevolent Fund Steward | Evelyn Fisher    |
| Publicity Officer       | Donald Hickson   |

The following were elected to serve on the committee :

FOR THREE YEARS :

|               |           |               |
|---------------|-----------|---------------|
| Philip Aspden | Derek Guy | Jonathan Holl |
|---------------|-----------|---------------|

FOR TWO YEARS :

|                |                    |                |
|----------------|--------------------|----------------|
| Philip Bowcock | Christopher Cipkin | Michael Thomas |
|----------------|--------------------|----------------|

FOR ONE YEAR :

|                   |             |              |
|-------------------|-------------|--------------|
| Michael Humphries | Gwen Martin | David Pether |
|-------------------|-------------|--------------|

## THE TOWN HALL ORGAN

Philip Bowcock

Everyone will know that the organ has been restored by Harrison and Harrison as part of the refurbishment of Reading Town Hall. This work started in earnest last year and was completed shortly before Christmas. Most of the pipework and the action



Re-assembly starting

was removed to Durham, leaving only the largest pipes to be cleaned in situ. In June the first van load of parts arrived with the action, and I was able to photograph much of the work in progress from then on, though it was not possible to have access to the main areas above platform level.

By this time the concert hall itself was practically finished and the new floor was covered with hardboard sheets for protection as pipes, packing cases and individual parts were laid out.

At the start the entire case of the organ was an empty shell with only the largest diapason pipes on the front which had not been removed to Durham. Scaffolding was erected to give access to the upper part so that the swell box, sound-boards and structural members could be replaced.

Gradually the hundreds of parts were installed, trackers adjusted, and wind chests connected.

In September the pipes were returned from Durham and placed in position on the soundboards, and at last the organ could make some sounds, though final voicing and tuning took several more weeks. By December it was in a playable condition once more though subsequent experience proved that it will probably need a great deal more “running in” before it is entirely reliable.

In the meantime the Association Town Hall Committee has met with Andrew Ormston, the Director of the Hexagon to discuss the part which the Association might be able to play in arranging recitals. It turned out that Dr Kent had already arranged three celebrity recitals for 2000, and the opening recital was given by Olivier Latry of Notre Dame. The Association will have an opportunity to arrange the traditional lunch-time recitals, but there is a problem here because the Victoria Hall will be in frequent use for conferences etc, and obviously a recital could not take place at that time.

Recitals can therefore only be confirmed four weeks in advance, which raises problems of publicity and liaison with the other recitals in St Mary's. It should be mentioned that in future these will not be “free” as hitherto because modern regulations require that Town Hall staff are present, and maintenance costs of the organ will be considerable. However it is important that members make an effort to attend as this is the only way in which the recitals can be continued (as with country post offices, banks, and other facilities “Use it or lose it”).

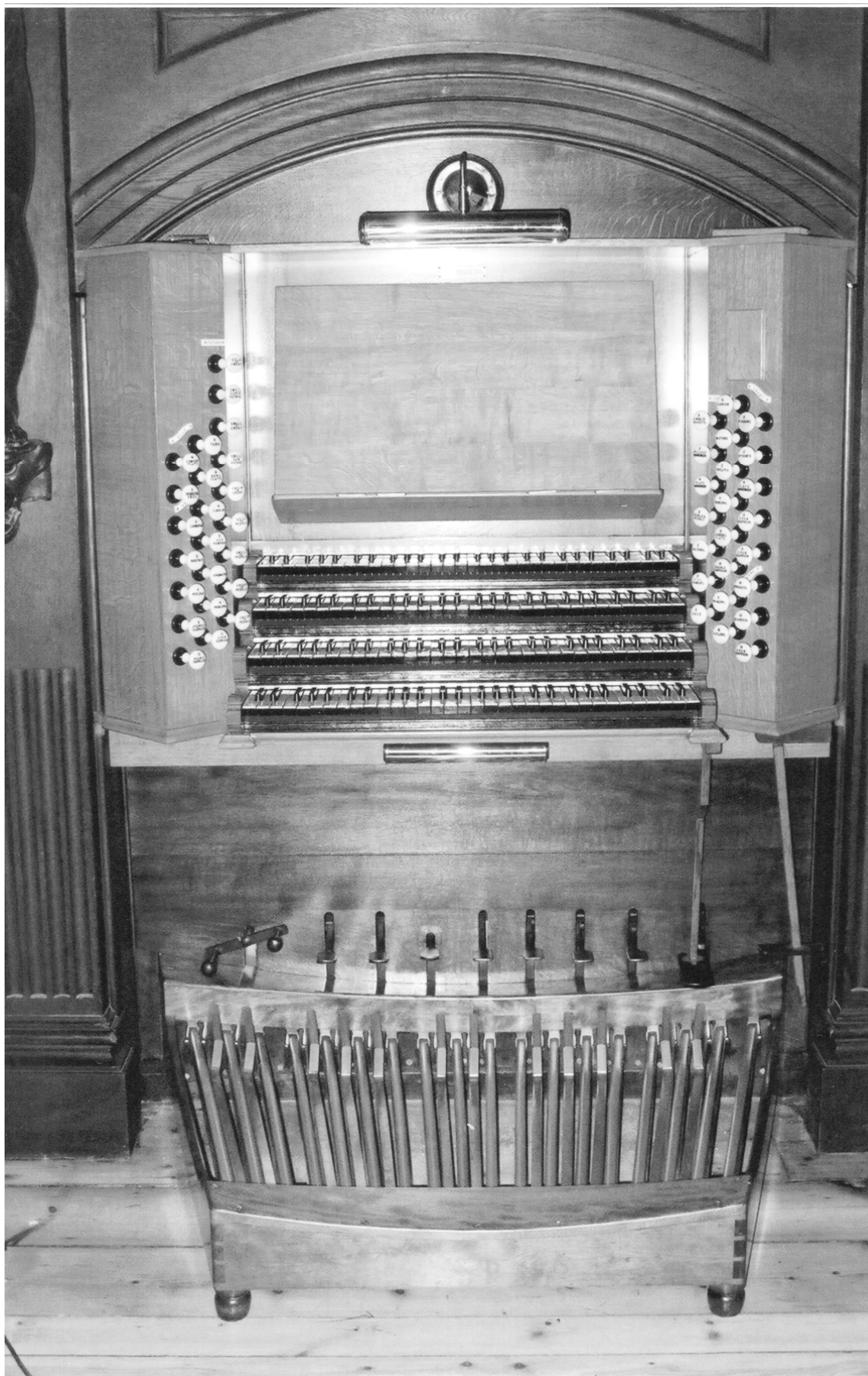


Adjusting the pedal trackers behind the console



The re-installation team

It is anticipated that members will, as before, be permitted to practice on the organ, subject to approval by the Town Hall Committee, and also to activities in the Victoria Hall, but they will be expected to make a contribution to tuning costs. However there will probably be no difficulty in finding time between 7.00 and 9.00 am!



The Console

## THE OPENING RECITAL

It might have been expected that the opening recital by Olivier Latry on 16 March would have some problems, and these expectations were fulfilled when the organ started with a cypher in spite of having been played extensively during the day! However Harrisons had provided a representative and matters were soon corrected and M. Latry was able to give a brilliant recital. It was a little disappointing that the programme was entirely French, but nonetheless a very enjoyable evening.

The programme was :

|  |                                   |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| Chorale sur ‘Victimas Paschali<br>laudes                                 | Charles Tournemire (1870 – 1939)  |
| Prelude, fugue et variation  | Cesar Franck (1882 – 1890)        |
| Carillon de Westminster  | Louis Vierne (1870 – 1937)        |
| Symphony No 5 in F minor   | Charles-Marie Widor (1844 – 1937) |
| Improvisation on a theme<br>presented at sight (“Sumer is<br>icumin in”) |                                   |

## CHANTS IN TUNE

Peter Marr

In the 18<sup>th</sup> century it was general in England to find organs tuned to quarter-comma meantone temperament. This has significant implications when we look at the keys used in English organ voluntaries of that century. Its effect is very apparent in the slow introduction to many English voluntaries. To play them on an instrument tuned in meantone temperament is a very different experience from that heard in equal temperament. Likewise, the English Trumpet Voluntary, almost invariably in the key of D or C, has both a vitality and a sweetness not heard in equal temperament, particularly when the Trumpet sections are in thirds or sixths.

It is approaching thirty-five years ago that four stops on the organ at St Giles’ Reading were thus tuned and that I wrote in a church music journal:

[The use of temperaments other than equal temperaments] is a growing image in our perceptions; only by making mistakes and re-conditioning ourselves in the light of historical evidence can we adopt a logical and satisfying answer to the underlying ageless paradox — twelve ‘just’ fifths are not the same as seven octaves.<sup>2</sup>

---

<sup>2</sup> “In pursuit of Euphony” in *Church Music*, volume 2, no. 18 (April 1967), pp 7-8.

Stephen Bicknell very rightly points out<sup>3</sup> the use of mean-tone temperament produces in modulation a shift of tonality rather than a mere transition. Furthermore, the choice of key will be a fundamental issue as regards mode rather than merely a matter of pitch. In addition, the use of what might be termed “unavailable” notes, such as A flat, A sharp, D sharp, and D flat results in a contrast that, to those used only to equal temperament, can be likened to that produced by false relations. A useful table of how different keys are “out of tune” in meantone temperaments may be found in *The Cambridge Companion to the Organ*.<sup>4</sup>

The use therefore of key colour will be a conscious attempt to evoke certain effects and to have specific effects upon the listener. The matter as regards organ music is well set out again by Stephen Bicknell:

The combination of boldly voiced mutations and shifting patterns of consonance and dissonance (always part of a performance on a keyboard instrument tuned to meantone temperaments) highlights the harmonic structure of the composition played, and in particular emphasises modulations away from the home key. That home key will itself have its own colour, depending on how many sharps or flats it has. This tonal world is one that is almost completely unfamiliar to modern ears, despite the early music movement and interest in authentic performance: the insights it provides are well worth pursuing.<sup>5</sup>

With these thoughts in mind, it would seem that the systematic former organist of St Lawrence’s Reading, subsequently of Lichfield Cathedral, must have known what he was doing when compiling his collection of Fifty-Five Chants, *Divine Harmony*, published in 1752.<sup>6</sup> This collection comprised about half the number of chants that he had composed by the early 1770s<sup>7</sup>. The purpose of this paper is to pose questions about temperament and the *Divine Harmony* collection.

---

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.albany.edu:8080/faculty/bec/piporg-l/tmprment.html>.

<sup>4</sup> See Christopher Kent, “Temperament and Pitch”, in *The Cambridge Companion to the Organ* (1998), pp 42-54, especially p 45. See also Dr Kent’s paper, “Tuning and Temperament and the British Organ 1750-1850” in *BIOS Journal*, volume 14 (1990), pp 21-34.

<sup>5</sup> Stephen Bicknell, *The History of the English Organ* (1996), p 206.

<sup>6</sup> *Divine Harmony; or, a Collection of Fifty-Five Double and Single Chants for Four Voices As they are Sung at the Cathedral of Lichfield; Compos'd by John Alcock, Organist, Vicar, and Master of the Children of that Cathedral*. Birmingham 1752. Edited, with an introduction by Peter Marr (Oecumuse, 1980). See also, Ruth M. Wilson, *Anglican Chants and Chanting in England, Scotland and America 1660-1820* (1996), pp 87-88, 90-91, and Peter Marr, “An 18<sup>th</sup>-Century Collection of Anglican Chants” in *Soundings*, 8 (1979-80), pp 71-80.

<sup>7</sup> See Preface to his *Six and Twenty Select Anthems* (1772) in which he notes that he wrote a hundred chants for use at Lichfield Cathedral. Twelve chants are in the 1772 collection. The balance are apparently lost, probably in the sale of Alcock *miscellanea* in 1813.

The keys and the number of chants in each key are arranged as follows:

|        |                                |         |                                |
|--------|--------------------------------|---------|--------------------------------|
| A flat | 1                              | a       | 6                              |
| A      | 3                              | b       | 4                              |
| B flat | 4                              | c       | 3 1 of which is a double chant |
| C      | 4                              | d       | 4 2 of which are double chants |
| D      | 3                              | e       | 3                              |
| E flat | 4 2 of which are double chants | f       | 1                              |
| E      | 2                              | f sharp | 1                              |
| F      | 4                              | g       | 4                              |
| G      | 4                              |         |                                |

The collection consists of fifty single and five double chants together with an additional (unnumbered) chant indicating the (careless) manner in which chants generally were sung. The chants were written between Alcock's arrival in Lichfield (January 1750) and the publication of the volume (1752). They were intended for cathedral and collegiate use and the volume was the first single-composer collection to be published. The chants are numbered consecutively from 1-55 but seem to have some organisation behind them as regards their order. The principal characteristics of the chants are:

- Considerable use of passing notes and ornamentation;
- The choice of keys;
- The frequent use of reciting and final chords whose consonance is questionable in the temperaments likely to have been used at this period;
- The contrasted use of major chords between the sections of the chants;
- Systematic slurring as an indication of pointing<sup>8</sup>.

In the *Divine Harmony* collection the fifty-five chants are arranged as follows:

- Chants 1-18 are single chants with the exception of no. 11 which is a double chant;
- There follows a shortened chant for the Athanasian Creed (not Alcock's composition);
- Chants 20-34 are single chants with the exception of no.25 which is a double chant;
- Chant 35 (double chant), 36, 37 (which appears elsewhere in Lichfield Cathedral MS Mus 63 as a Funeral Chant) and 39 contain harmonies that this paper addresses;
- Chants 40-53 are single chants except nos. 44 and 51;
- To nos. 54 and 55 are subjoined a note that they may be accompanied "with all sorts of Instruments".

---

<sup>8</sup> Discussed in Marr (1979-80) above, and Wilson (1996) above.

On the face of it, there are, in order:

17 chants

Then one for the Athanasian Creed

Another 17

The Funeral Chant

Another 17

And finally two with the note quoted above.

Whether that arrangement has any significance is not clear. Because of the position of the double chants, it seems unlikely that these are grouped as three sets of Venite chants for each day of the week plus ten other chants for the psalms.

To look in more detail at some aspects of the chants in the light of the above:

**a) Accompaniment**

As these chants are consistently figured, albeit with Alcock's idiosyncratic method of figuring, it presupposes that they were intended to be accompanied. The organ at Lichfield in the 1750s was a 25-stop instrument by Thomas Swarbrick.

**b) Reciting notes**

Some chords used as reciting notes are less-accessible chords, e.g. A flat (three instances), f minor (one), F sharp (one); in addition there are reciting notes as diminished chords (four).

**c) Endings**

Some cadential chords at the metrum are also less-accessible: f minor (one), F sharp (two) G sharp, A flat, (three) B.

**d) Ambience**

There is a marked difference between the more lyrical chants (e.g. no. 16 in A major) and certain minor key chants which in meantone are astringent in character (e.g. no.17 in e minor and no.27 in f sharp minor). The f minor chant, later described as a Funeral Chant, no. 37<sup>9</sup>, is very sombre when heard in meantone temperament.

**e) False relations/non-related chords**

There is a frequent use of contrasted juxtaposed chords across the metrum.. These are always both major triads and a third apart, e.g. A followed by F sharp (no.4), G followed by B flat (no. 25) G sharp major (!) followed by E major<sup>10</sup>, and so on.

**f) Other harmonic effects**

Secondary dominants<sup>11</sup>, Neapolitan chords<sup>12</sup> and diminished chords<sup>13</sup> are well in evidence.

---

<sup>9</sup> Example 1.

<sup>10</sup> See no.36, Example 2.

<sup>11</sup> See no. 35, Example 3.

<sup>12</sup> See no.30, Example 4.

### g) Tempi

The harmonic language and the amount of ornamentation demands slow tempi for the performance of these chants, in spite of Alcock's own comments about slow psalm chanting.<sup>14</sup>

### h) Bearing of repetition

The importance of looking at this is because Anglican chants, by their nature, are a musical form constantly repeated. There is no passing transitory hearing of a progression. In addition, the use of less-accessible chords as reciting notes poses the same questions.

Even in equal temperament these chants are full of interest. In meantone temperament the characteristic colours of the different home keys and the harmonic interest outlined above mark them out as a new world, as different creatures indeed from the bland efforts of a century and more later.

Example 1 – No 37



Example 2 – No 36



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<sup>13</sup> See no. 32, Example 5..

<sup>14</sup> John Piper (pseudonym of John Alcock), *The Life of Miss Fanny Brown* (1760), pp 315-316.

Example 3 – No 35

Example 3 – No 35 is a musical score for four staves. The notation includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, and accidentals. Fingerings are indicated by numbers 1 through 5. The score is divided into two systems, each containing four staves. The first system shows a sequence of notes and rests, with fingerings 4, 4, #5, #, 5, #, and #. The second system continues the sequence, with fingerings 6, 6, 6, 4, and 4 1 3.

Example 4 – No 30

Example 4 – No 30 is a musical score for four staves. The notation includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, and accidentals. Fingerings are indicated by numbers 1 through 5. The score is divided into two systems, each containing four staves. The first system shows a sequence of notes and rests, with fingerings 4, 4, #5, #, 5, #, and #. The second system continues the sequence, with fingerings 6, 6, 6, 4, and 4 1 3.

Example 5 – No 32

Example 5 – No 32 is a musical score for four staves. The notation includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, and accidentals. Fingerings are indicated by numbers 1 through 5. The score is divided into two systems, each containing four staves. The first system shows a sequence of notes and rests, with fingerings 4, 4, #5, #, 5, #, and #. The second system continues the sequence, with fingerings 6, 6, 6, 4, and 4 1 3.

## **LOOSE LEAVES FROM A DIARY...**

### **Gillian Weir on the trials and tribulations of the itinerant organist**

After three weeks on tour in Denmark I find the mail has overflowed and is seeping out from under the door of the study. I spend till 1 am. dealing with the most urgent, but Tuesday is another day and a swift trip to London is scheduled before making for Bristol for the annual conference of the Incorporated Association of Organists. I am scheduled to record an, interview for this evening's 'In Tune' on Radio 3 (I recall the inspired headline of a Virgil Thompson review of a less than exciting singer: 'in tune, but not with the Infinite') and am throwing CDs into a briefcase when the phone rings and a voice edged with carefully-controlled dementia asks whether I could after all do it live, please? I demur, with thoughts of the evening's event; is it vital? The voice, cracking slightly, murmurs that the gents' loo above the Radio 3 studio has overflowed and the programme will have to be transferred, but the alternative won't be ready until . . .

I see the point, and dash off meanwhile to the Japanese Embassy to collect my visa. This yearly exercise is fraught with difficulties, as the protocol is strict. A few years ago I was relaxing between concerts in America at the movies, a week before going on to Japan. The film was *The Last Emperor* and the audience rapt until I leapt to my feet crying 'My visa!', the course of the story having triggered the realisation that I'd forgotten it. Frantic calls to my London agents, Japanese agent, the NY Embassy etc. elicited the fact that the magic stamp on the original papers, now in London, was essential, my favourite toy the fax machine no use; the official advice of the Consul was to fly back to London, collect the papers, and return. Deadlock was finally broken after anguished pleas to the right quarters (a stage secret), but I have learned my lesson and am now a model applicant.

Japan is amazing; every year another magnificent new concert-hall has blossomed, and each has a superb organ, made by the world's finest builders. A sophisticated audience for the concert organ has burgeoned – in his centenary year I was asked to play all Franck's works in Tokyo's Suntory Hall in one afternoon and evening (both concerts broadcast) and this year my visit includes being an adjudicator for Tokyo's international organ competition. (This is one of five juries I will be part of this year, in Switzerland, America, Britain etc.– 'Judge not, that ye be not judged' haunts my waking and sleeping hours.)

In a traffic jam en route to Broadcasting House I recall my first experiences with the food, from sushi to live prawns jumping off the teppan-yaki heat; hurrying back to the hotel one day after three weeks of healthy delicacies I passed a McDonald's and, seduced by the sodium, was swept through its portals on a wave of nostalgia. The exquisite girl behind the counter giggled helplessly as I ordered cheeseburger and fries and McNuggets and Coke and then sat looking at them lined up in front of me like a Bosch portrayal of decadence. At this rate I shall be late for the interview briefing - unforgivable in Japan, where on my first visit I had indicated to a stage-door keeper, in what I thought was a triumph of communication, that I would be back in an hour (sweeping circular gestures with watch) after lunch (eating gestures). I was

bewildered to find a search party out for me when I returned after just one hour and five minutes.

The interview, in the happily dry Radio 2 studio, is fun and I manage a mention for the newly-formed PIPEDOWN, the society formed to fight the menace of non-stop musak that threatens to make us all deaf: literally, when horrendously loud, and figuratively, when to preserve our sanity we switch off our sensitivity. After midnight, having been briefly lost in the wilds of outer Bristol, I arrive at my long-suffering hosts'. Time for a few hours' sleep before I give a master-class. I am delighted with the standard - well-prepared and really interesting young players. Classes are always a challenge: I am very much aware of the responsibility to give the players something worth while during their stint, while at the same time one is trying to make the comments as universal as possible in their application, for the sake of the audience.

I greet numerous Congress friends, and then on to St Mary Redcliffe to prepare for my recital there the next day. I am playing Widor's 5th symphony, complete; a thrill. The Toccata means so much more as the blaze of glory at the end of the symphonic structure. A lecture on the last morning, and then I can relax and enjoy the final dinner. I discover that I am seated next to the Bishop who chaired the commission that recommended on occasions the use of rock in church. Knowing that rock acts as a drug (via the noise level and also the incessant beat) to raise blood pressure, quicken the heart-beat and stimulate aggression (amply proved during the 'poll-tax riots' when one young vandal commented approvingly that he and his team had been helped by 'someone drumming in the crowd' to get on with their work of smashing shops and burning cars), I seize the opportunity to ask how this is intended to be made use of in the context of a church service. It is hard for the layman to reconcile 'Be still then, and know that I am God' and 'Whatsoever things are lovely, think on these things' with such apparently different aims. The Bishop is charming and the subject inexhaustible.

I bid goodbye to Bristol and leave my car at Heathrow, embarking for Paisley, another organ competition. At Glasgow I am greeted by a journalist with whom I embark on an interview as soon as we reach the hotel. Here, rock is playing in the foyer at a level happily just below that of pain, but above that at which speech is possible; I soon have a new convert to PIPEDOWN. The rest of the jury arrives and we confer regarding marking procedure; bliss: we are in total agreement. A good omen for the week.

Off to beautiful Paisley Abbey for a rehearsal for my Wednesday recital; the Festival's driver cannot believe I am happy to be locked up alone in the dark church till after midnight. During the week he will learn a lot about the strange practice habits of organists - especially when the organ is working overtime to cope with 18 contestants. The organ, with several Cavaille-Coll stops, is an old friend and sounding fine; I will look forward to playing Widor's 6th symphony, this week. My fellow jurors are Lionel Rogg, Joachim Grubich from Poland, Naji Hakim and the Scots composer Martin Dalby, old friends all.

We prove to be in complete accord throughout the week - by no means as common as might be thought. We learn a good deal from the reactions of Martin Dalby, who has written the excellent (but difficult) test piece but who is unfamiliar with the more

annoying idiosyncrasies of the organ world. 'What on earth is that *marimba*?' comes an explosive question from his chair. 'Ah well,' we reply, 'the gedackt has been given rather too much chuff, I'm afraid...' A throttled scream, 'Why on earth is this player transposing the piece up a fifth?' 'Yes, well - he's using the nazard - yes, it is too narrow scaled and does indeed simply sound a fifth above, rather than integrate with the fundamental as it should...' Why indeed? If only the usage and abuse of mutations were better understood.

We sit and listen and run for a sandwich and sit and listen, and I make a mental note never again to play certain of the test pieces; Durufle's wonderful toccata left my repertoire years ago after I'd listened to some 30 performances of it as a juror in Chartres... The week ends with a performance of the Poulenc Concerto by Chris Nickol, 1990's joint winner. It is first-rate, and I sit enjoying it and thinking nostalgically of my own first performance of this eternally youthful work, on the opening night of the Proms when I was still an RCM student. It was televised, and I experienced the curious concerns of some of the public for the first time when, among the flood of letters, was one criticising my nail polish.

We relax at the winding-up party and fantasise briefly about hiring ourselves out as an instant Rent-a-Jury. Then it's to bed for a few hours before heading bleary-eyed for home for a night before driving to Exeter. I had forgotten how full of atmosphere the Cathedral is; it is joy to play there, although I am momentarily disconcerted to find the acoustic vanish when the audience fills it up. I tear myself away afterwards and am home by 2 am. ready to fly early next morning to Belfast; I am playing the Rheinberger G minor Concerto next day in the BBC's immensely popular Invitation Concert series. A bomb just a few days before has relieved the Ulster Hall of every one of its windows, and the pipes of the organ jumped out of their sockets but have settled down again. The performance is joyous and, as always, it is immensely satisfying to make music with other musicians.

A day in London and I am again at Heathrow en route to Germany. I am to play in the Festival at Schwabisch Gmund; a car collects me at Stuttgart and I become progressively more enraptured as we drive through the incomparably beautiful countryside in the soft evening light. Schwabisch Gmund appears - a baroque fantasy, an entire town of rococo splendour, with a market-place that could be the set of a Mozart opera. The Munster's magnificence is challenged only by the dazzling Johanniskirche. I check into my hotel and set off eagerly to choose a restaurant for dinner. But everywhere, from every door, comes the incessant thud and ker-chih, ker-chih, ker-chih of heavy metal. I am disappointed, then incredulous. The fairy-tale beauty before the eyes is so much at variance with the ugliness assaulting the ears that it is eerie - as though one had stepped on to another planet. The end of the film *2001* surfaces in my memory, when the astronaut encounters rooms filled with French antique furniture - the feeling of strangeness and disorientation is the same. Clearly much love and a great deal of money has been lavished on this wonderful place, but the qualities engendered in the buildings could not be more at odds with the numbing, dead thump of the noise. No tune is identifiable or, for the most part, audible; just the hypnotic, synthesised beat. I retire, defeated, and sit in my room until at 1 am. the

various machines are finally turned off and I can sleep - until the cleaners come at 6 am...

The organ in the Munster, a 3-manual Klais some eight or nine years old, is superb, and the acoustics warm and resonant. My programme, centred on the big, impressive Passacaglia and Fugue of Healey Willan but taking in Bach and several French composers, is leavened with two of Guy Bovet's tongue-in-cheek Hamburger Preludes, the audience loves them and has fun searching for the quotations he has hidden in them. Over dinner I learn more about the fine work done by the city's cultural department (and fall in love with the local speciality *spatzle*), and then a night among the trees (having changed hotels! ) before flying home.

Twenty four hours to sort out urgent paperwork, collect the dry cleaning, reserve October and November foreign flights, make yet more excuses for the now horrific lateness of the 6,000 words promised as my contribution to a new book, pack for three and a half weeks in Japan... The *Organbuilder* has arrived, with the second instalment of my interview with the Editor on various aspects of organ building and repertoire. He calls me 'controversial' in his introduction; am I controversial? Enthusiastic certainly, and passionately concerned for the education of our students and above all for the survival and nurturing of our wonderful body of music... Perhaps all enthusiasts are labelled controversial; better that than to have remained silent when so much is at risk in our beloved world of music and the arts.

There is also a batch of ISM matters to attend to - as President of the Incorporated Society of Musicians for this year I am responsible for the Conference at the end of the term of office, next April, and my flood of ideas are patiently being brought down to earth and turned into reality by the Chief Executive, Neil Hoyle. A spanner was temporarily cast in the works when the speaker I had hoped would provide the keynote for the conference declines to answer faxes or phone calls; but there are many other possibilities and I am brought up to date with progress in all of these. I am having to give more speeches during the year, or rather the local ISM Centres are having to endure them, than I had ever contemplated, used as I am to saying what I have to say through the fingers more easily than verbally; with each one I learn something else not to do.

A few years ago I was given a prize in my native New Zealand, and in the course of a concert tour there was presented with it at a splendid dinner hosted by the Prime Minister. I was in an agony of nervousness, and only at the last minute managed to pull myself together sufficiently to appear at all. With a supreme effort of will I made my acceptance speech, managing to raise some laughs and completely to conceal my fear. At the end, a man who had known me when I was a child came up to the top table and stood looking at me, silently shaking his head. Then he spoke: 'And you were such a nice, quiet little girl...' He walked silently away. You can't win!

Telling stories can be dangerous. In New York recently I was asked to wait after the first piece during a recital as someone in the back row was taken ill. The paramedics had been called and the victim was being attended to, but it was felt we should wait until he had been removed. Most of the audience did not realise anything was wrong, so I went out to say that there was a slight problem but it would give me a chance to chat to them about the programme. With some Vierne coming up, but with

only half my mind on what I was saying, I found to my horror that I was well into the story of Vierre's unhappy life, which would culminate in his dramatic death at the console of Notre-Dame. Mesmerised as though by the headlights of an oncoming car I could not steer clear of the looming punch-line, but struggled to give it an upbeat flavour. 'And so he gave out the theme for the improvisation and ... and fell dead at the console! What a lovely way to go!' I retreated, moaning gently, to my own.

Ticket, passport, MUSIC, SHOES, luggage - the taxi is here.

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## AN AFTERNOON WITH DAME GILLIAN WEIR

4 March 2000

Dame Gillian is one of our top international recitalists and spends much of her time abroad in her work. She has also frequently appeared on television and radio, including last year's *Last Night of the Proms*.



Dame Gillian with the  
President

It was therefore a great privilege when she accepted the Association's invitation to become our Patron, and equally to spend an afternoon with her at Pincent's Manor Hotel, when she talked about her work. This was not a prepared talk – she simply spoke in answer to questions, but her answers revealed a great deal about her past and her love of her work.

She was born in New Zealand, though her parents were English and her early ambition was to be a ballet dancer. Eventually, after learning the piano she played the organ for her local church, and decided to learn the instrument. She had no interest in sport at school, and on this account was thought very peculiar! She eventually decided that she would be an organist two weeks after winning the St Albans Organ Festival Competition.

On the question of concert hall organs, she was firmly of the opinion that they should be capable of dealing with all repertoires. The public often don't hear organ music properly, and frequently only hear the "soothing wallpaper music" so often played. The public has little understanding of the organist, and on one occasion she was introduced as "one of the greatest organisms"!

Piano concertos were popular, possibly because of such works as the Warsaw Concerto which had become very well known. Perhaps organists should aim to

promote organ music by jazzing up everything except the music itself by advertising, and appointing a City Organist.

She was very much against “Church Muzak” which did nothing for understanding the instrument and generally not in favour of transcriptions as there was already so much in the organ repertoire. It was unfortunate that many orchestral conductors were unsympathetic towards the organ.

Altogether, a very pleasant afternoon in a delightful venue, and in the company of our Patron, one of today’s most distinguished musicians.

## **MUSIC AND THE OPEN UNIVERSITY**

Sheila Gambrell

The idea of the Open University was launched by Harold Wilson in 1963 and it offers people the opportunity to study without having to give up work or personal commitments.

I decided to study music with the OU because in spite of having achieved Grade VIII in both the theory and practical (piano) examinations of Trinity College, London, I was not able to realise my ambition of studying for the ATCL. My parents felt that a career in music was far too precarious, and a career in the Civil Service was regarded as the epitome of a secure job for life. I was therefore despatched to London at the age of 17 to work as a Clerical Officer in the Historical Buildings and Ancient Monument Section of the Ministry of Works at Lambeth Bridge House. Although my accommodation in a hostel in South Kensington was not very salubrious, it was within a short walking distance of the Royal Albert Hall and therefore I became a regular attendee at the Proms. Also thanks to the very obliging vicar of the Church of the Holy Trinity, Brompton Square, who allowed me the use of the piano in the vestry each morning between 6am and 7am, I was able to keep up a limited amount of piano practice.

Why did I choose Open University? As my elder son graduated with a BA in 1987, I already had first-hand knowledge of the OU system and was also aware of the interesting music courses that were being offered, but since we were supporting our two younger children through University our resources were limited. However in 1989 the Reading Jobcentre, where I was working, decided on a policy of Human Resource Development (HRD) and staff who were interested could be sponsored on courses of their choice, provided that they were beneficial to their career. Staff mainly opted for O/A level or typing/computer courses but I decided on an OU degree course which would incorporate as many music blocks as possible.

To my surprise, in view of the cost involved, due to the length of study (a minimum of 6 years) and the additional cost of a week at Summer School, my application was accepted and I began my OU studies in February 1990. Since most of my courses involved musical analysis I spent a considerable amount of time, when applying for each new music course, in attempting to convince my Manager of the benefits of such a course to the Jobcentre. This usually involved a long detailed

account of the mathematical element in music, which if applied correctly could transpose the unemployment figures at a stroke!

At that time two Foundation Courses (Level 1) were necessary and after having completed both a Social Science and an Arts Foundation Course I was able to embark upon a 2nd level course entitled Elements of Music which covered all aspects of music theory up to approximately Grade VII. Apart from brushing up my rather rusty knowledge of the subject, the best thing about the course was the requirement to learn the recorder. Having purchased a treble recorder I soon became reasonably proficient at playing some of the Bach Chorales and other pieces by George Boehm, Louis Spohr etc.

All other music courses apart from Elements of Music were set at third level and my next venture 'Baroque to Romantic : Studies in Tonal Music' was a vast course which covered all areas of music from approximately 1600 - 1930 in Italy, France, England and Germany.

The initial units covered the development of tonality and the modal system. An examination of the treatment of dissonance during the Renaissance and Baroque periods involved a comparison between Palestrina's (c. 1525-94) motet *Veni Sponsa Christi* with a recitative from the opera *Euridice* by Jacopo Peri (1561-1633). Other areas of study included the opera in Italy, the suite in France and the recitative in England.

Since much of the best German music from between 1650 and 1700 was connected with the Lutheran church, a whole section was devoted to continuo songs, forerunners of the cantata and organ music. I particularly liked *O Gottes Stadt* a 16 verse poem by Johann Rist, set to music by Johann Schop and which appears in *Rist's Himmlische Lieder* (1642) a collection of simple melodies for ordinary people to sing to a continuo accompaniment. The construction is strophic and within each verse, every syllable receives only one note, no words are repeated and the continuo also follows the words - a certain winner with most congregations!

Other case studies included one of Johann Pachelbel's short *Magnificat* fugues, from a collection of 94, written while he was organist of Nürnberg's Sebalduskirche and which were used in the service to replace the even-numbered verses of the sung *Magnificat*. Also the charming prelude, on the Christmas melody *Vom Himmel hoch da komm, ich her* by Georg Bohm illustrated how, apart from adding ornamentation to his chosen cantus firmus, Bohm leaves gaps between each line of the chorale during which the accompaniment continues. During the gaps he uses material from the line of the chorale which yet has to be heard - a technique known as fore-imitation and widespread among Bach's predecessors, although not so characteristic of Bach himself.

An insight into the background of Handelian Oratorio also proved interesting reading. While working as a kind of composer-in-residence for John Brydges (later Earl of Caernarfon and first Duke of Chandos) at his princely court at Canons, Stanmore<sup>15</sup>. Handel wrote two English masques *Acis and Galatea* and *Esther* and

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<sup>15</sup> This building is now North London Collegiate School – Ed.

three private staged performances of *Esther* took place in the Crown and Anchor Tavern in the Strand. These performances were highly successful and led to an unauthorised, staged public performance. This caught the attention of the Bishop of London, who forbade any further staged performances of *Esther*. (Bishop Gibson also considered opera houses to be immoral places). Handel therefore revised and expanded *Esther* and it was performed with no action on the stage - the birth of a new genre - the Handelian oratorio.

A study of Handel's Organ Concerto Op.4, No 4 in F major suggested that the form was invented by Handel in the 1830s for use with his oratorios. By comparison with Italian opera, Handel's oratorios with their increasing use of a chorus lacked the virtuosic element of the individual performer and it is likely that Handel saw the organ concerto as a means of overcoming this deficiency, with himself as soloist to attract the audiences. The frequent use of *ad libitum* indications also testify to improvisatory passages which were intended to astonish and delight the audience when played between the acts of the oratorio.

The units on the Classical period included sections on the sonata principle, instrumentation, concerto and symphony and German Lieder and concentrated mainly on the composers Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven and Schubert. We studied the development of Haydn's style across a period of some thirty-five years through the medium of his innovative string quartet writing, concentrating mainly on Op.1 No 1, nicknamed *La Chasse* (The Hunt) and Op. 76 No, 4, nicknamed The Sunrise. The section on Mozart was principally concerned with two of his mature works, the piano Concerto No 22 in E $\flat$  K482 and the Symphony No 40 in G minor K550.

An analysis of Beethoven's Symphony No 3 *Eroica* revealed a long, complicated work which made great physical demands on the players. Beethoven's orchestration was always a subject for discussion by his contemporaries, who felt that he was a notorious abuser of the orchestra. The following extract from a witty fantasy written by the composer Carl Maria von Weber in 1809 bears this point in mind:

... in my dream I found myself suddenly transported to a concert hall where all the instruments had come to life and were holding a great assembly under the chairmanship of the emotional and naively impertinent oboe. On my right was a group consisting of a viola d'amore, a basset horn, a viola de gamba and a recorder, who were lamenting the good old days in plaintive tones; on my left, Dame oboe was conversing with a circle of young and old clarinets and flutes with and without the countless modern keys; in the middle sat the gallant pianoforte surrounded by a few sweet violins who had cultivated the style of Pleyel and Gyrowetz<sup>16</sup>. Trumpets and horns caroused in one corner, while the piccolos and flageolets pierced the hall with their naive childish cries ...

Everyone was enjoying himself when all of a sudden the morose double bass burst in at the door in the company of a couple of cellos, his cousins. He flung himself on to the conductor's stool so violently that the pianoforte

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<sup>16</sup> Ignaz Pleyel (1757-1831) Piano manufacturer and composer, Adalbert Gyrowetz (1763-1850) composer.

and all the stringed instruments let out an involuntary discordant gasp. 'No!' exclaimed the contrabass, 'The devil take anyone who makes us listen to compositions like that every day! I have just come from the rehearsal of a symphony by one of our newest composers, and though, as you know, I have a very strong and resilient constitution, I could stand it no longer, for within another five minutes my sound post would have fallen over and my life strings would have snapped. Rather than be forced to jump about like a rabid wild goat, rather than be turned into a violin to execute the non-ideas of the worthy composer, I will become a danceband fiddle!'. . . All of a sudden the property man entered the hall, and all the instruments separated in fear, for they knew the rough hand that packed them up and took them to rehearsals. 'Wait!' he shouted 'Are you rebelling again? Just wait! Pretty soon they are going to set out the *Eroica* Symphony by Beethoven and after that I'd like to see which one of you can move a limb or key!. 'Oh no! Not that!' begged all the instruments. (Schindler p.481)

The section on Schubert's songs or Lieder discussed the new cultivation of lyric poetry in the German-speaking countries from the 1770s, which acted as a great stimulus to Schubert's song composition and examined his setting of *Erlk nig*. The poem *Erlk nig* comes from Goethe's Singspiel text *Die Fischerin* (The Fisherwoman) and is a free adaptation of a traditional Danish ballad published a few years earlier by the German folklorist Herder and concerns the ancient Danish folk-belief that there are storm and cloud-spirits who steal mortal children in order to increase their own numbers. The spirit who tries to entice the child into his own realm in Goethe's version is called the 'Erl-king' because Herder mistranslated the Danish original, which meant Elf-woman. Schubert's *Erlk nig* is important in the history of the Lied because the accompaniment was once and for all elevated to a status of equal importance with the voice part. The melodic expression characterises the changing emotions of the father, the child and the erl-king while the galloping horse and the howling gale are outlined by the most appropriate figures of accompaniment which not only serve as a foil to the voice-part but also as musical painting, outlining the atmosphere.

The units on the Romantic period were very wide ranging and were organised around theme and genre rather than by composer and included Italian, French and German operas, virtuoso piano music, the development of the piano, the French and German song traditions, the symphonic poem, Russian nationalism and Tonality dissolving.

The section on nineteenth century Russian music illustrated the emergence of a nationalistic style due to a sense of inferiority at having no inherited national tradition in music other than folksong. A study of Glinka's last important orchestral work *Kamarinskaya* (Fantasy on two Russian folk-songs) showed his musical inventiveness in surmounting the apparent restrictions of folk-songs by the addition of counter-melodies to them, and in carrying repetition to its utmost limits.

The last part of the course dealt with the question of tonality and one of the examples given was the first harmonic progression of the Prelude to Wagner's *Tristan und Isolde* (1859), generally considered to have led eventually to the dissolution of tonality through the increased use of chromaticism. Although this would need careful qualification other examples including Mussorgsky: *With nanny* and Liszt: *La lugubre*

gondola No 1 certainly showed that major-minor tonality was under threat and that as a result the tonal system was changing in various striking ways.

The half credit course on Beethoven's life and works mainly involved the analysis of some sections or movements of his major works. These included Septet Op20, string quartets and piano music, Symphony No 6, The Pastoral, Symphony No 9, Choral Fantasia Op 80 and his opera *Fidelio*.

My final music course 'From Composition to Performance' was another vast course which again covered the period from the sixteenth to the twentieth century but with a different emphasis. The first chapter provided a cross-cultural perspective on the place of the musician in society and introduced a range of musical cases drawn from a variety of societies in Peru, Brazil, Nepal, West Africa, India and Indonesia. I was sufficiently interested in the Sundanese Gamelan music, which derives from the western third of the island of Java, to attend a late night Prom which featured this type of music. It was incredible to see how the members of the group managed to perform highly complex music mainly without the aid of notation and keep together, since the music involves the co-ordination of many parts, which interlock and overlap in a variety of ways. The instruments used included xylophones, gong sets, drums and a two-stringed fiddle.

We examined the ways in which the forms of music and the activities of church music in the sixteenth century were determined by the political, religious and social climate of the time, and included in the examples studied were John Browne: *O Maria salvatoris Mater*, Thomas Tallis: *If ye love me*, Gaude *gloriosa Dei Mater*, In jejunio et fletu and a mass by John Taverner *Gloria tibi Trinitas*.

A section on modernism in music examined the music produced in Vienna between 1890-1920 when Viennese audiences were presented with works so different that the term The New Music was coined to describe them. The term Expressionism characterises music that concentrates on extreme emotional and psychological states and displays these by use of chromaticism, a fragmented texture, word painting and harmony that avoids the sense of being 'in a key'. This was well illustrated by Schoenberg's one-act opera for a single female singer *Erwartung*.

The gulf in taste between 'advanced composers' and the mainstream listening public increased as the progressive wing of the serious music establishment produced high-tech electronic music. The attitude of one such composer Milton Babbitt, who was one of the most powerful individuals within serious music in America, to his public is summarised in the following extract;

(But) why should the layman be other than bored and puzzled by what he is unable to understand . . . . (The) composer would do himself and his music an immediate and eventual service by total, resolute and voluntary withdrawal from this public world to one of private performance and electronic media, with the very real possibility of complete elimination of the public and social aspects of musical composition.

A study of compositional processes in written music included Luciano Berio's transformations of his own music and examined his *Sequenza for flute*. This was written for performers who possess both an exceptional talent and an intellectual interest in new ideas which is just as well since the piece has no clef, no time signature and no bar lines!

The section on Blues, Rock, Funk, Rave, Jazz and Ragtime involved me in long telephone discussions with my younger son, who lives in London and knows far more about this type of music than I do. His advice was of great assistance to me when preparing my tutor-marked assignment (TMA) - the bane of all OU students.

A whole Block was devoted to tracing the development of musical notation from its beginnings in the ninth century eg. plainsong and neumatic notations to the beginning of the seventeenth century, by which time most of the modern notation system was in place, and also discussed the principles of transcribing music from its original notation into a modern equivalent. Practical work included working from facsimiles of Handel's autograph and conducting scores to produce an edition of the opening bars of the chorus *And with his stripes* from *Messiah* according to modern convention, together with a detailed commentary.

An interesting chapter on the technical development of keyboard instruments stated that the first organs which were described in sources around 2000 years ago did not have keyboards that could be played with the fingers, but had instead much more unwieldy mechanics that were operated by the whole hand or fist - a rather daunting prospect! Other chapters traced the development of brass, string and woodwind instruments, the solo voice, choirs and orchestra and performance history

The final Block focused on 'reception history' and included discussions on the selling of so-called world music on the Western market together with a brief survey of West African popular music and also the changing attitudes to Beethoven's Ninth Symphony. We also considered some of the reactions to Schoenberg's atonal music and looked in more detail at his serial method, which consists of using a single sequence of pitches, called a tone-row, to organise the whole piece. We also examined the differences in technique between Schoenberg's *Pierrot lunaire*, a setting of 21 poems for female voice and chamber ensemble which included the use of his most controversial invention Sprechstimme, (half-speaking, half-singing) and Boulez's *le marteau sans maitre* for contralto and chamber orchestra. By this time Boulez had extended the principles of serialism not only to the pitches but also to the durations, dynamics and modes of attack.

Although this is only a brief outline of the music courses, hopefully it will give some idea of the wide-ranging aspects of the musical content and the underlying circumstances.

My degree course also included three non-music subjects: Science and Technology, Religion in Victorian England, and Motive, a second level German course.

## MUSIC AT ST GILES

Ian May

A number of recitals have been held at St Giles during 1999. Undoubtedly, the highlight was the visit of our patron, Dame Gillian Weir, in March. A programme, including music by Vivaldi/Bach, Jongen, Durufle, and Dupre, delighted a most appreciative audience.

We were also pleased to welcome Gerald Wheeler, Boston, U.S.A., who came to St Giles' while on a recital tour of the country.

The following gave recitals in 1999:

|                                 |   |
|---------------------------------|---|
| Saturday February 6th           | Annual Scrivener Memorial Recital Shelagh Trist, soprano, Ian May, organ, and Ivanka Shana, violin. |
| Saturday March 13th             | Dame Gillian Weir   |
| Saturday June 19th              | The Cameo Singers in Concert: Ian May, conductor, David Sidwell, organ.                             |
| Wednesday July 14 <sup>th</sup> | Gerald Wheeler, Boston, U.S.A.  |
| Saturday October 2nd            | Malcolm Stowell, Slough Parish Church   |
| Saturday November 6th           | Christopher Cipkin, St James-the-Less, Pangbourne   |

## ST GILES ORGAN SCHOLAR

Ian May

### Organ Scholarship at St Giles

This year has seen the appointment of an organ scholar at St Giles. This is actually the reinstatement of a practice which began back in 1986. On that occasion an organ scholar was appointed by Reading University to help at St Giles. He was paid £75 per year by the university and £25 by the parish. This first student, Neil Roberts, came from Swindon and, by all accounts, proved to be a very good organ scholar.

The appointment was made at the end of Dr Marr's long reign as organist and director of music, just as he went as a candidate for ordination.

The resurrection of this scheme has been made possible by the financial legacy that Doris Griffin left to St Giles and we were able to advertise the scholarship for £750 per annum paid by St Giles, via the legacy, and appointed by St Giles jointly with the university. The first holder of this post is Jason Childs from Tredegar in South Wales, who is doing a post-graduate year at the university. He has proved a most useful addition to the musical personnel at St Giles and we trust that the year will have been useful to him and that the experience will help further his career.

All B.O.A. members will be aware of the shortage of church organists at this time and the organ scholarship at St Giles is an attempt, albeit a small one, to help in this situation.

Doris Griffin attended St Giles for many, many years and is still sorely missed. Her legacy was partly intended for the encouragement of music and young people and it seems entirely appropriate that this organ scholarship was established from her most generous gift to St Giles. We hope that the appointments will continue and develop and be a lasting witness to her memory and her enthusiasm for church music.

## A QUESTION OF IMAGE

Christopher Cipkin

When it was suggested that I write an article for these pages on how people see organists, the word “image” came to mind, especially in relation to encouraging young organists to join our profession. I asked myself the question: do organists have an image problem? What indeed is the image we present to non-organists? Is an image problem the reason why younger members are difficult to attract into our Association?

The Library profession in which I work is obsessed with its image. For too long it has had to counter the stereotype that its professionals are cardigan wearing spinsters with their hair tied in neat buns, who stamp books all day and say sssshhh! I asked a few friends and colleagues what images they had in their minds of organists. The results, though anecdotal, are telling. The organist is typically engaged in playing for church services, middle-aged or elderly, an aloof character (“up there with the clergy”) and usually male.

You probably do not recognise yourself as matching this stereotypical organist, but these images persist and we need to challenge them. If we do not, we will allow ourselves, quite rightly, to be caricatured – not least of all by the concert going public and congregations we serve. How do we convince the next generation that they will not suffer the same image problem if they join our profession?

The first challenge, and perhaps the most difficult one, is to communicate that being an organist should not mean a lifelong commitment to being tied to a church organ bench every Sunday. If a youngster wants to have a credible image (and the world of teenage fashion is entirely about superficiality), then having a taste in Classical music may well reduce his or her street ‘cred’. Playing an instrument which everybody associates with the church makes a youngster even more prone to jibes from peers: I know from my own teenage years at a tough northern comprehensive!

For most young organists, the opportunity to play for services is a welcome one, especially if well remunerated. For some, however, it may be the case that the expectation that they will play in church is off-putting; this pressure and expectation should be avoided. There are parallels in the choral world where youngsters who will gladly sing church music in a concert hate singing it in the setting of a divine service. We need to promote the fact that the young organist does not have just one avenue to explore: we are not, after all, members of the Berkshire *Church Organists’ Association*!

The organ also has a rich domestic and concert history which runs parallel to that of its role within the church. I personally would wish to encourage *all* young organists in the hope that one day they will play an active role within the church. We should however also promote the diverse ways in which an organist can use his or her talents: as a choral society accompanist, as a recitalist, as a continuo player and, above all, for private enjoyment. It's these opportunities which have enriched my life as much as any church appointment.

My second challenge is to assert that those who work as church organists in fact do far more than play the organ. The image of the aloof organist who just turns up and plays on Sunday is false because it ignores the wide variety of tasks we undertake. It's rather like saying librarians just stamp books all day. This misconception can lead to an under-valuing of skills ("a pianist can play the organ just as well"), justification for minimal remuneration and the establishment of alternative music making which leaves out the organ altogether (the dreaded "music and worship group"). Those of us working within the church need to escape the image of being just organists because this title fails to cover the tasks we usually undertake: music group pianist, choir director, music group leader, concert administrator, copyright advisor, liturgical consultant, music teacher . . . .

Changing a job title (I prefer Director of Music) is only the start. Communicating forcibly at Church Councils all that we do is also essential, but behind all this must be the professionalism to support our claims. Never cease acquiring new skills, be it through a qualification, an RSCM course or even getting yourself connected by email to help your administration abilities (being IT literate can earn you far more respect with some clergy than any RCO diploma!). If you are happy to be a sluggish amateur, providing wallpaper music and nothing else, then others will perceive you as such and the image of our profession will be damaged. Our professionalism, therefore, is very closely connected to the whole question of image.

My third challenge is to dispel the notion that organists are all old retired males. I do not mean to berate those of you who do fall into this category through no fault of your own: there will be retired male organists as much as there are retired male violinists or piccolo players! The notion that we *predominantly* fall into this mould must be changed though. I have lost count of the number of times wedding couples have expressed surprise that I'm under 60 and it started to grate with me after a while. Within our Association and more generally, role models who dispel the stereotypes need to be given maximum publicity through recital opportunities, committee activities, social events and publications. This may mean older members having to do a lot of persuading of younger members to take leading roles, or, conversely, older members will have to take the risk of letting go of the nest egg they have nurtured for half a century. It is a risk worth taking – trust the future! I for one am willing to take an active role in the committee, but I have never been approached.

In the light of all I have said above, our patron, Gillian Weir is such an excellent role model because she challenges all the accepted images of the organist. It is time now to take a look at ourselves and the Association we belong to. Is the Association primarily for *church* organists, or should we be paying more attention to other spheres in which we work? Does it aim to support activities assigned to organists but which

do not involve playing the organ? Is it doing enough to promote role models who counter the established image of us as dull, aloof and old? The existing aims of the Association state that it exists to “promote the art of playing the organ” – presumably in all spheres of musical activity, not just within the church.

Not forgetting the importance of the church, the Association also aims to “provide help and advice to church musicians”, but I’m not clear how far this extends. Future seminars for Directors of Music on developing skills beyond simply playing the organ could be considered, perhaps in conjunction with the RSCM as in previous years. Most importantly, we exist to enable organists to meet each other, allowing young and old, inexperienced and experienced alike to interact. It is my belief that mutual understanding, encouragement of diversity and a commitment to upholding professional standards and values are what will improve the image of all of us who profess to call ourselves organists. By improving the image of ourselves, we further the Association’s other aim of encouraging the public to appreciate the organ music we play.

## **THE VISIT TO WHITCHURCH**

Graham Ireland

On Saturday April 17th 1999, thanks to the efficient arrangements of Norman Hutt, a respectable number of members set off to try the two organs under his charge at Whitchurch Hill, and in Whitchurch village itself. For the writer the visit to both churches was a first, the one on the hill having remained unnoticed behind a hedge, and the other in the village always unreachable because of the constant stream of traffic urging you up or down the hill past its entrance.

It was a fine afternoon with the sunshine giving an extra dimension to our idea of a real country church set in such an idyllic spot. We were welcomed by Norman, who, having told us a little of the history of the church and its organ, invited members to try it for themselves. Nestling in the transept was a small two manual turn of the century Walker, almost invisible from the west end of the chancel. We could make out the casework, and on further inspection found an exquisite example of Walker’s carpentry, housing we hoped some pipework of similar quality. There were no problems of registration to overcome by the performers very hesitant at first about playing in front of their colleagues, but we were rewarded by the enjoyment of the sound of the different ranks of pipes speaking so clearly and characterfully into the church. Members were urged by those who had just broken the ice, to try the instrument, and so young and old entertained us until it was time to drive down the hill to St Mary’s Church.

Here a larger two manual Walker organ also built at the turn of the century was at our disposal. It was given a good going over by the assembled company obviously inspired by the greater variety of stops, for we were treated to a wide ranging selection

of pieces drawn from many styles. Many members took the opportunity to inspect this ancient church noted for its historical connections and artefacts. The call for tea in the rectory by Norman and Mary brought the playing to a halt. In the elegant dining room the Rector, Mr R Hughes and his wife Anne, had laid out a delicious tea. This was taken by all punctuated by gentle conversation, rounding off the visit in a most pleasant way. Thanks were offered to our hosts for such a delightful tea, and members made their way home.

It had been a successful afternoon in every respect. Perhaps there were one or two members who did not play in either church, but this apart, it was most rewarding to be able to match another face to a name in the back of *The Berkshire Organist* for the first time.

Thank you Mary and Norman for organising the visit.

## THE PRESIDENTIAL SERVICE

Hambleden, 25th September, 1999

Keith Atkinson

Gordon Spriggs reported on the 1998 Presidential Service (*The Berkshire Organist*, No 52: 4 - 6) when he provided some historical details of the annual service, as well as interesting notes on Hambleden and its fine parish church, dedicated to St Mary the Virgin.

In the second year of her term of office as President of the Berkshire Organists Association, Christine Wells, BMus., FRCO, LRAM, conducted the choir during Evensong on the eve of Harvest Festival. The church was beautifully decorated to complement the music from the chancel. The evening canticles were sung to Tertius Noble's setting in B minor, the Responses to John Sanders' set based on the Dresden Amen, and the anthem was Charles Wood's *O thou the central Orb*.

Psalm 61 (*Hear my crying O God*), *All creatures of my God and King* (Lasst uns erfreuen), Dave Evans's *Be still for the presence of the Lord and Forth in thy name, O Lord, I go* (Song 34) completed the sung parts of the service, all expertly accompanied by Graham Ireland. The Revd. Canon Mark Fitzwilliams, Rector of the Hambleden Valley Group, read the service and gave a thoughtful and sympathetic address. The organ voluntaries were played by Christine Wells to an appreciative congregation. Before the service, she played Herbert Howells's *Master Tallis's Testament* and afterwards a *Postlude* by William Matthias.

Refreshments followed, much appreciated by choir members and congregation, before Christine Wells continued her busy evening undaunted. A string quartet, comprising Rhiannon Fentimen and Susan Thompson (violins), David Thompson (viola) and Christine Wells ('cello), enchanted the listeners with Haydn's Quartet in C,

opus 76, no. 3 (The Emperor) followed by the second movement (Polka) from a string quartet by Smetana.

One could not fail to be reminded of the God-given and God-inspired gift of music, of the great fortune heaped upon those who can make and appreciate music and, in this instance, of the long service and committed dedication shown by Christine Wells to music in Hambleden.

## ETON CHORAL COURSE 1999

Huw Jones

Last July I attended an Eton Choral Course as an organist. The summer courses, which started twenty years ago, were conceived to prepare prospective Oxbridge choral and organ scholars. Now they are simply aimed at students between 16 and 20 who want to improve their singing.

Every summer, there are four choral courses, each a week in duration, one of which is intended for organists as well as choristers. Ralph Allwood, Precentor of Music at Eton College, directed the one I attended. In addition, I received organ tuition from David Goode, Neil Taylor and Stephen Farr, and singing tuition from David Lowe.

The daily timetable was worked around the choir practices, which were directed by Ralph Allwood. The choir was sixty strong, but despite this Ralph kept us entertained with his sense of humour. I was inexperienced in Alexander technique prior to the course, but I participated in the masterclass and received a personal lesson. This relaxation technique is particularly valuable to performers.

I was also inexperienced in conducting prior to the course, but I participated in the masterclass and conducted a session with one half of the choir! One day, the organists made a visit to Douai Abbey, to play the organ there. On the final day, the whole course made a visit to Trinity College Cambridge to sing evensong.

Most of the choral music that we learned was in preparation for the Choral Evensong, broadcast live on BBC Radio 3. The pièce de résistance was *The Twelve* by William Walton. We balanced this with William Byrd's responses and a *Magnificat* by Andrea Gabrieli and a *Nunc Dimittis* by Tomás Luis de Victoria. We also made a recording of a prepublication work, *Sing!* By David Willcocks, which is a choral setting of Widor's Toccata!

One interesting aspect of the course is the insight you gain into the Eton life. This way of life is privileged, but I find I cannot quite put my finger on one aspect that leads me to this conclusion. Beyond doubt, Eton is more than a college; it is a community committed to the education of the affluent. I stayed in Common Lane boarding house, which was comfortable. This was the boys' house; the girls' house

was at the other end of Eton! All meals are eaten in the college hall, and you are very well catered for!

Overall, I enjoyed the experience of living for a week, in a town with so much history attached to it.

The course is demanding, but each day finishes with an obligatory hour of tap. This is not a dance session but is the traditional name for the school bar. The social aspect of the course is important, and there is time in the evening to do what you want. Few people know each other at the beginning of the course, so everyone makes a big effort to make friends.

My course, as usual, concluded with a barbecue at Queen's Eyot, an upstream island on the River Thames.

Overall, the course was a valuable experience that improved all aspects of my music. If you attend as an organist, you can participate in the activities organised for the choir as well as the organ activities. On the course I attended there were five organists, so we had plenty of time to practise on both the Hill organ in the school chapel and the Flentrop organ in the school hall. This culminated in a recital on the chapel organ, which was an amazing experience! To summarise, the course was an enjoyable, concentrated week of singing to a high standard.

If you are interested, you should contact Lydia Smallwood, the course administrator, on 01223 845685. This year, the four choral courses are from 6 July to 14 August, each at cost of £339.

## **VISIT TO THEALE & PANGBOURNE**

10 July 1999

Mark Jameson

Our visit to Theale Parish Church was on one of those rare summer days - sunny and very hot!<sup>17</sup>

Our member, Michael Thomas, welcomed us to his Church which stands in open surroundings and dates from 1820. Michael talked about the history of the Church which bears many similarities with Salisbury Cathedral. The building style could be described as a free interpretation of early English. The free-standing tower was added some twenty years later. Michael then opened the playing by taking the organ through its paces before other members had the opportunity to try their skills.

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<sup>17</sup> Initially the way into the church was not obvious and several members of the group walked around several times before finding the open door – following the example of Joshua outside the gates of Jericho! At least the building did not fall down. Ed

The organ is by G H Foskett and dates back to 1933, including earlier pipework. It has recently been restored.

The second Church of the day was St James the Less, Pangbourne. What looks like a medieval church was actually built in 1866, although the brick tower dates from 1718. However, inside there are artifacts from earlier buildings.

The organ here dates from 1882 and is by H Wedlake of Regents Park, London and cost £185.00. It includes parts from earlier organs and is a rarely heard make nowadays. In 1983 it was totally rebuilt by George Sixsmith of Mossley, Lancs for £26,600. The current specification appears above:

There was very good attendance for this visit and members were able to play both organs.

| Specification of the Organ in Theale Parish Church |   |                                  |    |
|--|---|----------------------------------|----|
| GREAT  |   | SWELL                            |    |
| Principal  | 4 | Tremulant                        |    |
| Clarabella   | 8 | Super Octave                     |    |
| Dulciana   | 8 | Piccolo                          | 2  |
| Open Diapason                                      | 8 | Geigen Principal                 | 4  |
|  |   | Gedact                           | 8  |
| Couplers   |   | Viol D'Orchestre                 | 8  |
| Swell to Great                                     |   |                                  |    |
| Swell to Pedal                                     |   |                                  |    |
| Great to Pedal                                     |   |                                  |    |
|  |   | PEDAL                            |    |
|  |   | Sub Bass                         | 16 |
| 2 comp pedals to Swell                             |   | The action is tubular pneumatic. |    |
| 2 comp pedals to Great                             |   |                                  |    |

## LUNCH TIME RECITALS IN ST MARY'S

The lunch time recitals in St Mary's, Reading, are now entering their tenth year. They have become quite an established feature of the Reading musical scene, and the audiences continue to grow.

For the record, 168 recitals have been given up until the end of 1999, and the success story continues. The church authorities are very grateful to all those who have taken part, and have helped to keep this beautiful Father Willis organ in fairly good repair until the huge amount required for its rebuilding can be found.

With the restoration of the Town Hall organ, Reading now has two four-manual Father Willis instruments again, and it is interesting to compare the differences between the voicing of a Willis concert organ and one of his larger church organs. St Mary's organ was built in 1862 and the Town Hall organ in 1864.

During 1999 the following organists have played at St Mary's and we thank them for their interest and help most sincerely.

|                        |                 |
|------------------------|-----------------|
| Francis Brooks         | Michael Brough  |
| Wilbur Wright          | Cynthia Hall    |
| Malcolm Stowell        | David Sidwell   |
| Graham Ireland (twice) | Christine Wells |
| Christopher Cipkin     | Renata Bauer    |
| Jonathan Holl          | David Butler    |
| Philip Aspden          | Richard Line    |
| Michael Howell         | Daniel Sandham  |
| Evelyn Fisher          | Wendy Watson    |
| Ian May (twice)        | Huw Jones       |
| Elizabeth Cooke        | Gordon Hands    |

## **RECITAL BY YOUNG MEMBERS**

These events when our younger members have an opportunity to demonstrate their abilities in a formal recital are infrequent but demonstrate that there is a body of talent around who will be well able to take over the responsibilities of church music in the future.

On this occasion the recital was on the organ of Reading School where we have held numerous events in the past. Our thanks are again due to Reading School for their kind permission to use the Chapel for recitals.

The programmes were as follows :

DANIEL SANDHAM :

|   |              |
|---|--------------|
| Tuba Tune                                 | C S Lang     |
| Fugue and Finale from Sonata in D minor   | Mendelssohn  |
| Prelude from Prelude, Fugue and Variation | Cesar Franck |
| Le Banquet Céleste                        | Messiaen     |
| Processional                              | Mathias      |

JAMES WILLIAMS

|                         |                |
|-------------------------|----------------|
| Suite Gothique Opus 25  | Léon Boëllmann |
| I Introduction          |                |
| II Menuet Gothique      |                |
| III Prière à Notre-Dame |                |
| IV Toccata              |                |
| Scherzo                 | Alan Ridout    |
| Toccata In Seven        | John Rutter    |

HUW JONES

Toccata in C  
Andante Tranquillo  
Herr Jesus hat ein Gartchen Op 39 No 10

Bach  
Whitlock  
Peeters

## WHAT ARE YOU PLAYING?

Peter Marr

When the Editor invited me to do a piece for this year's *Berkshire Organist*, I first thought that something on "why it was possible to hear a hymn tune played over and be completely baffled as to what tune it might be". It does happen. I've experienced it on many occasions (though not with my present organist, I hasten to add). The tune is simply not revealed to the listener, mere mortals that we are.

However, although one can probably tease out how a tune is immediately recognised, I gave up the task, quite coincidentally coming across the following. It is a verse from the hymn *Stand up, and bless the Lord* (James Montgomery, 1771-1854), a hymn well known to all those who use traditional hymn books. The verse is omitted in modern books and as far as I can see not mentioned in Julian's Dictionary, but it is quoted in *Historical Companion to Hymns Ancient & Modern* (1962). It first appeared in the original version of the hymn written for Sheffield Red Hill Wesleyan Sunday School Anniversary on 15th March 1824.

It serves, *inter alia*, as a memorial to those whose playing does not permit that recognition, or revealing of the hymn tune, referred to above:

**There with benign regard  
Our hymns He deigns to hear;  
Though unrevealed to mortal sense,  
The spirit feels them near.**

As a postscript, I recall that in the mid-1950s I attended an Induction in a village church just south of Reading. The previous Vicar had been there for well over thirty years and, not being very popular, left the parish in a very run-down state. During the interregnum a very quiet, and indeed, holy man was appointed. I know he was apprehensive about going because I knew him, having been organist at his former church.

As usual, the church was full for the Induction. And as usual the organist, a lady getting on in years, presided at the organ and played before the service. It was a long time before I could work out what she was playing, indeed initially I had no idea. But eventually I could make out what it was: Handel's, "Art thou troubled?". He probably was, but whether he recognised the tune I have no idea.

# PISHILL CHURCH AND ITS ORGAN

Michael J.Humphries

One is tempted to ask why an article about an Oxfordshire parish church and its organ is appearing in *The Berkshire Organist*: the answer is simply that the organist is based in Berkshire!

Pishill is a small village situated north of Stonor on the Henley to Watlington road. The church is situated on the edge of a small wood some two hundred yards from the road, and if you blink as you enter Pishill from the south it would be quite easy to miss the turning.

The church itself is of Norman origin and unknown dedication. Largely reconstructed in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, it now comprises a chancel, north transept (also known as The Stonor Aisle), a small vestry and a south porch. It has seating for around 150 people. An open turret contains one bell, erected in 1911, and still regularly rung before services.

The windows are mostly plain lancets. There is, however, one perpendicular style window east of the porch which has stained glass. The east and south-east chancel windows have good examples of Victorian stained glass. A recent window, made by John Piper in 1967 represents the Sword and the Gospel. It is at the south-west end of the chancel and is most striking both when the sun is on it from outside, but also in darkness when the building is lit within. There is also a memorial window in the north transept.

A fine reredos depicting the Paschal Lamb adorns the sanctuary behind the altar. There are several memorial inscriptions on the floor of the north transept, mainly to members of the Stonor family and other Roman Catholics. A War Memorial in the form of a brass tablet is on the north wall opposite the porch, and two other wall tablets commemorate vicars who had done much for the church in their lifetime.

It appears that over the centuries there have been difficulties in finding a priest.<sup>18</sup> In 1356 the lord of one of Pishill manors together with the parishioners were trying to force Dorchester Abbey to supply a resident priest. Again, in the post-Reformation period complaints were made about a lack of services. One curate admitted that he said prayers on alternate Sundays at Pishill and Nettlebed only to be told that if he could not serve both cures properly he must resign one of them! In 1626 it was reported that Pishill was adequately served, but a turbulent history was to follow. Stability returned in 1854 when Pishill was separated from Nettlebed and linked to Assendon (later to become known as Stonor). With two Sunday services and Communion once a month, the regular congregation soon grew, being recorded at around 100 in 1866.

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<sup>18</sup> Historical notes about the church from a compilation presented to Pishill Church by L. & B. Wilton, 1983, mainly extracted from *The Victorian County History of Oxfordshire*, Vol. 8

By 1954 a reduced population had led to a decline and Pishill was amalgamated with the living of Bix. In 1978 Pishill once more found itself without a clergyman. On the 18 February 1981, Her Majesty the Queen by Order in Council approved the formation of The Benefice of Nettlebed with Bix and Highmore, comprising the benefices of Nettlebed, Bix with Pishill, and St.Paul, Highmore. So, once again Pishill was linked to Nettlebed. Today, the Rector has to perform something of a balancing act to serve the four parishes so that, typically, Pishill has three services a month; one a Communion, one a family service, and one an evening prayer.

And so, to the organ! Built by Thomas R.Willis<sup>19</sup> in the 19th century, its precise date of construction is unknown. However, we do know a little about Thomas Willis himself: T.R.Willis appears to have started business in 1827 at 29 Minories, London E., known as the “Tower” Organ Works.

Instruments included St.Peter-ad-Vincula (recently replaced with a Canadian-built instrument), Leytonstone St.Andrews, Oxted Congregational (This was his largest), Pishill, Winterbourne Monkton, and a barrel organ.

The premises were burnt down in 1890, with the loss of 4 organs, a large stock of pipes, and some “Father Smith” soundboards. There is no record of him carrying on in business after that event.

The Pishill organ was restored in March 1919 under the aegis of Philip J.Hall MA, ex-lieutenant Hampshire Regiment, as a thank offering for preservation during the Great War.

The organ is positioned at the west end of the church. The casework is of pipe-rack type with integral console and pedalboard. The front pipes are all painted dummies. The straight pedalboard is split in two:C-e, with d-c<sup>1</sup> apparently being added later. With the exception of a 16ft. Bourdon, the organ is totally enclosed. Tracker key action is used for the single manual, and the drawstop action is mechanical.

| THE SPECIFICATION <sup>1</sup> |        |   |
|--------------------------------|--------|---|
|                                | MANUAL | Pedals permanently coupled to manual        |
| Open Diapason (tc)             | 8      |   |
| Stopped Diapason Bass (C - B)  | 8      | Two combination pedals                      |
| Stopped Diapason Treble (tc)   | 8      | Hitch-down pedal to swell                   |
| Dulciana (tc)                  | 8      |   |
| Principal                      | 4      | Manual Compass: C - f <sup>3</sup> 54 Notes |
|                                | PEDAL  | Pedal Compass: C - c <sup>1</sup> 25 Notes  |
| Bourdon                        | 16     | Pedalboard: Flat, straight                  |

<sup>19</sup> Notes mainly extracted from *Musical Times*, June 1885 by MDJ.

# THE MILLENNIUM SERVICE IN ST PAUL'S CATHEDRAL

Philip Bowcock

Being present and appreciating the atmosphere at an event is something which cannot be conveyed by television, whether a football match or a concert.

Many members will have seen at least a part of this memorable service on 2 January, and I accompanied Sheila when she was invited to attend because of the fostering work which we have done in the past. We entered through one of the west doors watched by a considerable crowd who presumably had come to see The Queen. We were indeed fortunate not only to be present but to be seated under the centre of the dome, seven rows behind the royal party, the Prime Minister, and other members of the royal family and government, where we had a superb view of everything.

The music before the service was designed to include a representative selection of English organ music, though most of this was played before the broadcast started :

|  |                    |
|--|--------------------|
| Sonata in G Op 28,                                     | Edward Elgar       |
| <i>Veni Redemptor Gentium</i>                          | Thomas Tallis      |
| Prelude and Fugue in E minor                           | Thomas Attwood     |
| Stephen at Peace from "Little Carols<br>of the Saints" | Malcolm Williamson |
| <i>Adagio</i> from Three Pieces for Organ              | Frank Bridge       |

Particularly memorable were the contributions of the children's choir from various schools in London, and the three individual children from Wakefield Cathedral School who took part. It is to be hoped that at least some of these will continue their interest in singing and in church music.

The two fanfares were in a modern idiom but what may not have been apparent in the broadcast was that the soloists were at the four corners of the Cathedral – in the west end gallery, the transepts and the pulpit – "surround sound".

The television broadcast was slightly curtailed as the event had overrun, but we left to David Willcocks' Fanfare on *Gopsal*, a Trumpet Voluntary by Patrick Gowers and Jeremiah Clarke's *Prince of Denmark's March*.

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On 23 February we attended the Reading Millennium Service in St Mary's Minster Church on the invitation of the Bishop and the Lord Lieutenant. The church was packed for a very fine service but it must be noted that the Order of Service mentioned all who had taken leading parts – except the organist!!

## A WEEKEND IN PARIS – THREE EXPERIENCES

### 1 – Madeline Holl.

The last weekend in October saw six members of the Association (and one wife!) gather at the Eurostar terminal at Waterloo Station. The journey to Paris was comfortable, smooth and fast - the experience a first for several of us.

It had been arranged that we would attend evening Mass at 1800 hours at the American Cathedral, which meant an expeditious (but somewhat troublesome) journey on the Metro to our hotel on the Boulevard de Grenelle, just south of the Eiffel Tower. There was only time for a quick wash and brush-up before returning to the Metro for the journey to Avenue George V. The Cathedral is an excellent example of 19<sup>th</sup> century Gothic Revival architecture. The form of the service was all very familiar but as on every Saturday evening it was in French. Afterwards, the Assistant Organist, Edward Hughes, demonstrated the large four-manual organ (originally (Cavaillé-Coll) with some Bach and Franck. The organ and console is situated on the South side of



Some of the party outside St Sulpice

the Choir as in many English parish churches. To assist in the accompaniment of large congregations, a two manual “classical” style organ has been installed on the west end wall and this is also playable from the main console. The marrying of two completely different styles of organ building under one control is unusual and considered by some to be questionable. We were given a warm welcome at the Cathedral but unfortunately there was no chance for members to play. The evening ended with the first of several memorable meals!

Sunday morning began with a 40 minute walk to St. Sulpice, where we again attended Mass. The “Choir Organ” was used extensively during the service – the Choir itself not sounding particularly nice! Officiating at the “Grande Orgue” was Sophie-Véronique Choplin, the Assistant Titulaire (Daniel Roth was away). During the Offertory she played *Lucis creator optime* (Tombeau de Titelouze) – Dupre, and during the Communion a *Tierce en taille* by Marchand. At the end of the service we heard extracts from *Symphonie I* by Vierne followed by a typically dramatic improvisation. The music over, we and other visitors were delighted to be welcomed personally by Madame Choplin at the entrance to the organ loft before being allowed to inspect the spectacular five-manual Cavaillé-Coll console, including the organist’s red-carpeted “boudoir”, containing historic photographs of Dupré, Schweitzer, etc.

Lunch then followed in a small, delightful Italian restaurant nearby, before spending the afternoon freely. Some visited Notre-Dame Cathedral and La Madeleine whilst the writer and her husband visited the Musée d'Orsay. The building was originally La Gare d'Orsay but now houses collections of art covering the years 1848 to World War I. After a walk passing the Tuileries Gardens and a visit to the Church of St Roch which contains three organs, we all met up at St. Eustache for a recital by the Titulaire, Jean Guillou. This was an “aural spectacular”! The organ is a 101-stop, five-manual Van den Heuvel, built about ten years ago. Guillou played his transcription of Liszt's *Orpheus* and then his own “Jeux d'Orgue”, a suite of six pieces. His wonderful control of this vast instrument was quite remarkable, the sound reaching high levels of intensity in the very resonant Gothic/Renaissance building. His musicianship shone through at all times – his style very “avant-garde” both in composition and improvisation. His playing of Bach was considered very individualistic! By chance, we were able to meet him after the Mass and he spent a short time chatting to us in a most charming manner.

Dinner time was approaching! The right restaurant only appeared after a long walk, ending up at Montparnasse. We had a splendid “last supper” and for 150 francs we each had an aperitif, three-course meal, half a bottle of wine and coffee, served to us by a very attentive waitress!

Monday morning was free and was spent shopping locally or, for some, experiencing further trouble on the notoriously crime-ridden Metro.

So ended an action-packed weekend in convivial company.

## **2 – Ian May**

We met at Waterloo, one Saturday morning in October; seven of us off for a weekend in Paris. I should mention at this point that we were all members of the Berkshire Organists' Association and were in Paris to visit some of the famous churches and cathedrals, their organs and organists.

We arrived early on Saturday evening, dropped our bags at the hotel and made our way to the American Cathedral in Paris, where Edward Hughes was waiting to greet us. We attended a service, were entertained to a glass of wine, heard a talk and demonstration of the organ, after which, we took ourselves off with the organist to dinner in a very smart restaurant.

Sunday morning was spent in the vast spaces of St Surplice at the main Sung Mass with the famous Cavaille-Coll organ played, with supreme skill, by Mme Sophie-Veronique Cauchefer-Choplin, a rising star in the French organ world. It was quite an experience listening to this wonderful instrument with its history of famous organists, including Widor, who was organist for many years. After Mass and a short organ recital we were taken on a tour of the gallery and the organ console and met the organist. St Surplice seemed to be a meeting place for English organists. While we were there we saw one half of the Shepherd brothers, organ builders, and also the organist of Southwark Cathedral. And so to lunch.

The group split up for the afternoon, some of us visiting Notre Dame, S. Madeleine and other churches. We met up again at S. Eustache, where we heard the Organist

Titulaire, Jean Gillou, give an absolutely stunning thirty-minute recital. This was followed by Mass, which was said, but with organ interludes and voluntaries interspersed. Again, a wonderful experience.

The Magnificent Seven then set off to find a suitable restaurant for dinner. After a lot of walking, we found the ideal spot and settled down for the rest of the evening.

Monday morning was free. A few of us went off in search of French music publishers, but all too soon it was time to make our way to Gare du Nord and Eurostar. We hit the real world when we arrived at Waterloo, as it was the middle of rush hour and, what with trains being cancelled, we had a nightmare journey back to Reading.

Quite a week-end. And not without incident. We did a lot of walking and saw a lot of Paris; saw some wonderful churches and heard their organs. It was a pity that two of us, during the course of the visit, were relieved of our French money by pick-pockets on the Paris Metro, but it was still very worthwhile.

### 3 – Graham Ireland

#### Une flânerie par les orgues

I have often passed through Paris, but never stopped there long enough to stray further than a few meters from the coach transporting a school party either on its way to Avignon, or returning to Calais. The time of stopping was always around midnight. Sleepy heads were cross at being woken up just to see a floodlit Eiffel Tower, (fancy waking me up to see that thing!), and vigilant staff wanted to wander off to look for a cup of coffee. Impressive it was even that unearthly hour. At last an opportunity presented itself to see a little of Paris, on foot, face to face on our organ crawl.

A septet of travellers left Waterloo on Eurostar and having passed the non-functional London Eye, the train made its way to the coast, at a gentle speed reminding us of a clean version of the *Dirty British Coaster*, soon to be transformed into an exceedingly fast *Quinquireme of Ninevah* [Masefield] as it emerged from the tunnel into the French sunlight.

We soon found our way to a comfortable hotel and dumped our belongings to hurry off to the American Cathedral for our first hands-on experience of French organ music within a liturgical context. Alas, one member was whisked off to uncharted territory on the Metro, so only six arrived at the American cathedral to find mass in full swing. Edward Hughes, our contact, was at the console of a Cavallé-Coll, positioned in the choir, instead of the west end, to accompany the hymns and provide some music during the distribution of the elements. After the service nibbles and drinks were provided for us and then Edward proceeded to demonstrate the organ with an informative recital to follow. How thrilled we were to hear real French reeds within the context of *Sortie* by Lefebure-Wely, and Franck's Choral No 3. Disappointment at not being allowed to play the organ turned into delight as we tasted our first gastronomic meal in a friendly upmarket restaurant. Edward was the perfect host on this occasion and was sincerely thanked by the appreciative group for giving up his Saturday evening to make us feel at home in Paris.

Having rejoined our lost member, plans were made for Sunday before retiring to bed. We walked next morning to St Sulpice to attend mass, enacted casually at the east

end. There was a light on in the Grande Orgue, indicating that there was somebody at home inside, and the organ burst in to life at the end of the service with an amazing improvisation by Mme. Sophie Véronique-Choplin followed by a short recital. This recital was to commemorate the centenary of the death of Cavaillé-Coll [1811-1899]. We were invited to view the console and the small boudoir where Widor ran his affairs, and engage anybody in conversation (in French of course) about the music if we were moved so to do. Lunch was taken in an adjacent restaurant specialising in Italian fare. A speedy delivery of tasty food served with well-rehearsed English phrases found us ready to visit Notre Dame and La Madeleine. Neither of these offered any music during the afternoon, and Notre Dame as expected was crammed full of visitors whose visiting areas were disappointingly restricted to the nave and transepts. Our next rendezvous was the architecturally astonishing church of St Eustache. The church was fairly full for mass by worshippers and those waiting to hear the organ music during and after the service, played by the titular organist M. Jean Guillou, now a venerable sage, but still a brilliant performer. Describing the music we heard was quite impossible except for the Bach Fantasia and Fugue in C minor, which was performed in an oxymoronic melange of Romantic and Baroque styles. By now one or two of us who had become bold enough to speak more than school-boy French offered our thanks to M. Guillou in his native tongue. This was much appreciated by him. By now it was getting near time for dinner. Eventually we found a restaurant open in Montparnasse, which offered us a fine selection of menus and good quality house wine. The food was excellent, the wine a perfect compliment to it, and the incidents not recorded here, added a memorable extra to a very busy day.

Monday was given over to last minute purchases for presents. A final cup of coffee, a browse in a book shop before we left for Eurostar, took us up to lunch time. By mid afternoon our time we were back at Waterloo, only to find ourselves plunged into the chaos of trains having no drivers, trains being in the wrong station, no trains at all, and thousands of commuters trying to get home. What an invasion of little black mobile phones! The Reading train arrived ninety minutes late, and bursting at the seams, hurtled its cargo though the evening back to Reading.

It was a splendid break, perhaps not in terms of hands-on experiences, but it was certainly a memorable time and gave us much to think about when considering future trips abroad. For me the overwhelming build up of organ sound in St Eustache, and the first hearing of genuine French reeds linger most in my mind. So does the problem of substituting English reeds for the French ones, but that is another matter.

# NEWS FROM THE ROYAL SCHOOL OF CHURCH MUSIC

David Duvall

(Education and Training Officer, RSCM Thames & Chilterns area)

When we plan our RSCM area events, we try to minister to as many sorts and conditions of church musician as possible. There are seven main categories which I like to call the 'seven steps to heaven' - well, they will be if we manage to achieve them all.

## 1 ORGANISTS, PIANISTS AND KEYBOARD PLAYERS

Over the years the RSCM and BOA have supported each other's workshops for organists and accompanists. The RSCM now has an Organists' Training Scheme which aims to put pupils and potential pupils (of all ages) in touch with tutors and to set out a programme for them to follow.

In 2000 we are jointly planning a big organ event at Reading College on Saturday 9 September - watch your newsletters and put this date in your diaries.

## 2 CHOIR DIRECTORS

We have just run a Saturday workshop 'Out in Front' which gave valuable advice to people, both new and experienced, who train choirs, or are being asked to train choirs, or even wish they didn't. These events happen regularly and we all have something to learn.

## 3 MUSIC GROUPS

We join forces from time to time with the Music and Worship Foundation for 'MAWTINS' (Music and Worship Together In Service) day conferences where there is a particular emphasis on covering all styles of music. Martin Cox of MWF and I do a double act of 'ideas' evenings (e.g. Ideas for Easter, Ideas for singing psalms) which we can take to any group of people who would like it.

## 4 CHILDREN

We have just launched a new training scheme for young singers, called 'A Voice for Life', which will be adopted by choirs with children. Every year we run a two-day choristers' workshop at Sonning in the October half-term: this year we have Simon Lole (Organist of Salisbury Cathedral) coming to direct it on 27 and 28 October.

## 5 ADULT SINGERS

Some of our most successful events are when people meet and have a good sing - such as our ideas evenings mentioned above, composers' evenings which we run annually, and coming up on 15 May this year 'Making Hymns Work' with John Barnard, composer of *Guiding Power* and many other hymn tunes and arrangements. Our colleagues in RSCM Oxfordshire run the very successful annual choirs festival at Dorchester Abbey, which many Berkshire singers attend.

## 6 CLERGY AND WORSHIP LEADERS

We find that this group are often too busy or not interested enough to come to musical events: the MAWTINS days are advertised 'for clergy and musicians' and attract lots of musicians but few clergy. The Bishop of Reading is doing a Saturday for us on the new Anglican 'Common Worship' and we will see if that makes any

difference! We plan to arrange deanery events which will reach out, we hope to more clergy and church members.

## 7 CONGREGATIONS

We hope that congregations benefit indirectly from the help that we give musicians to improve the quality of services. It's quite a humbling thought for all of us who provide music in worship that for some people in the pews, if they haven't liked the music they haven't liked the service as a whole. Exploring this at deanery level in the Church of England will, I hope, be interesting and illuminating: we must find ways of reaching out to other

churches as well, as both the RSCM and BOA are ecumenical organisations.

If you would like any more details, do please get in touch (0118 969 6308).

## WEB NEWS

Those members who do not enjoy the doubtful benefits of modern technology systems may not have seen this e-mail which was widely circulated recently (source unknown).

The classically minded among us may have noted a TV ad for Microsoft's Internet Explorer e-mail program which uses the musical theme of the *Confutatis Maledictis* from Mozart's Requiem.

"Where do you want to go today?" is the cheery line on the screen, while the chorus sings *Confutatis maledictis, flammis acribus addictis*,

This translates to 'The damned and accursed are convicted to the flames of hell.'

Good to know that Microsoft has done its research.

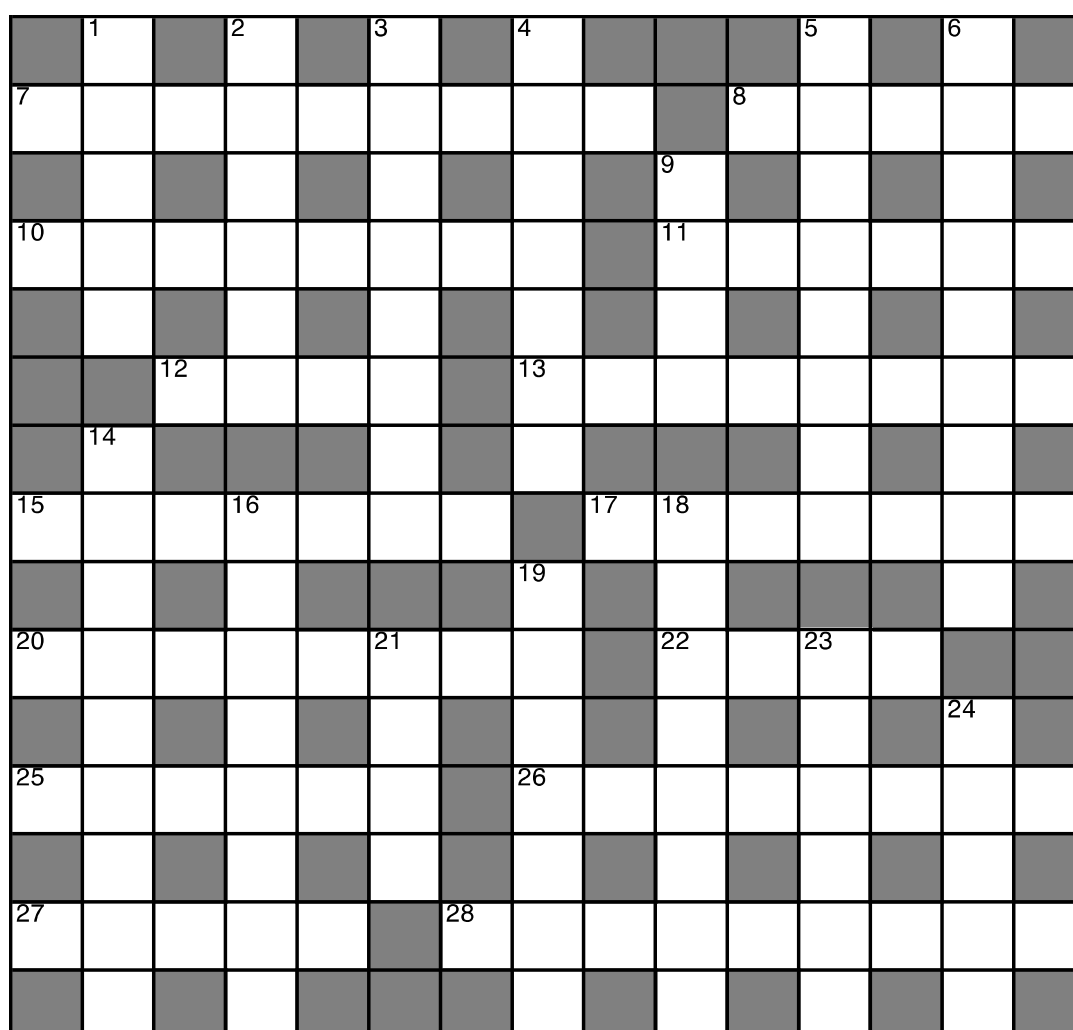
(The advert disappeared from television screens very suddenly after this was circulated!)

## THE BENEVOLENT FUND

Evelyn Fisher

The amount sent to the Benevolent Fund in 1999 was £71.10 of which £17 was collected at the A G M. and £54.10 at the Presidential Service. All support for the Fund is much appreciated and I am very grateful to everyone who has contributed.

## CROSSWORD 2000



### ACROSS

7. Bach's second forename [9]
8. Christian name of Bach's first wife [5]
10. Main Leipzig church where Bach worked from 1723-1750 [2,6]
11. First part of the hyphenated town where Bach worked from 1717-1723 [6]
12. Responsibility [4]
13. A Baroque feature? [8]
15. The other Leipzig Church where Bach worked [7]
17. Often the simplest [7]
20. Outdoor music [8]
22. Ps 16 v 12, "Thou shalt show me the . . . of life" [4]
25. Bach's first name [6]
26. Member of the brass family [8]
27. A . . . . of wool [5]
28. To set alight? [9]

## DOWN

1. One of the slowest Baroque speeds [5]
- 2.” . . . . “ the prophet anointed Solomon king [6]
3. First two Latin words for “Go the Mass is ended” [3,5]
4. Member of the woodwind family [7]
5. Got to the bottom of? [8]
6. String player [9]
9. The Spanish . . . . . [4]
14. Handel wrote this music [9]
16. Not an opera but of it [8]
18. Improper singulum [8]
19. Opera by Spontini [7]
21. First name of Bach’s second wife [4]
23. Simple drums [6]
24. . . . . and fork [5]

## NEW MEMBERS

David Pether

The past year has been a successful one for the Association in terms of attracting new recruits, with some sixteen or so people joining up, many of whom have been introduced by existing members.

Some brave souls have agreed to have details of their personal lives splashed across these pages:

Both DAVID BARNARD and TOM VENNOR are students at Reading University and so do not hold permanent playing positions at present, although they sing and assist with playing at Christchurch, Reading, respectively. David studied the organ with Michael Nicholas and Neil Taylor at Norwich Cathedral, and will return on completion of his agricultural economics course to run a farming business in Norfolk. Tom mixes his organ playing with a keen interest in singing (he founded a university singing quartet), sailing and swinging a golf club, although he doesn’t admit whether the latter forms part of his land management studies.

MARINA MOJES (Newbold College Church, Binfield) is both a teacher and student; she leads a local youth choir, teaches piano/keyboard privately and for the Berkshire Young Musicians’ Trust, and is studying part-time for the MA in organ historiography at Reading University.

RAYMOND ISSACSON (Organist, Bradenham Parish Church) is one of our more distant members geographically, living in High Wycombe, and lists his musical interests as accompanying, listening, concert-going and teaching. His hobby of visiting Spain sounds most enjoyable of all, though.

DAVID GILLMAN is one of our many members who do not play the organ but enjoy an association with the instrument and with choral music. He is involved with the mixed choir at the Reading Retirement Centre known as “FIRTREE” (Friends in Retirement, Taking Relaxation, Exercise and Education).

PETER CHESTER of Old Windsor does not currently hold a regular post, but has been making music on the organ for over thirty years, having been tutored by Allan Wicks at Canterbury. In addition to singing, he has catholic listening tastes which range from soul to opera.

We welcome all our new members, hoping that the Association’s activities prove to be of value and interest. If they aren’t, then please make suggestions – it’s your Association!

## **INTROIT: TOGETHER WE GO PLACES RESPONSE: USUALLY IN TWO’S AND THREE’S**

Mark Jameson

The Chairman of National Bus Company coined the above expression in the early 1970s about providing England’s bus services - the sub-title was the nation’s response of how buses seem to run - in towns at least! However, it’s not often this can be said about organ concerts, and rarely in locations outside of London.

On March 14<sup>th</sup> the Reading Town Hall organ had its first official performance since restoration. The regular St. Mary Minster lunchtime concert followed on the 17<sup>th</sup> with an evening event on the 18<sup>th</sup> at St. James the less, Pangbourne. A gap in concerts, then three together!

The Hall’s long awaited re-opening concert was organised by our Member Dr Kent who was able to bring the highly talented Olivier Latry to start the series on our internationally known Father Willis organ.

As there were no informative programmes, some background to our recitalist may be of interest. Olivier Latry was born in 1962 in Boulogne-sur-Mer, studied under Michele Pauchet, Michel Brebion, and later Gaston Litaize at the Conservatoire de Saint-Maur des Fosses. He went on to be professor at l’Institut Catholique de Paris and at the Conservatoire in Reims. He is currently organist at Notre Dame in Paris.

On arrival in the hall, it was noticeable how warm it was. Lighting scaffolding had been erected since I saw it in January, and this now prevents a clear view of the case. The recital started promptly - and instantly we had ten minutes of cyphers! However, Harrisons were quickly onto the case! Dr.Kent apologised for the problem as the ambience of the hall was affecting the settling down of the organ. Olivier Latry later commented was that the organ was like a naughty child and after a similar rebuild in Paris it had taken 5 years to resolve! However, after this rather unfortunate start, the organ appeared to behave.

The programme commenced with Charles Tournemire's *Choral -Improvisation sur le "Victimae Paschali"* which was originally recorded by the composer in 1930 as part of a series of 78rpm discs at St. Clotilde. These now very rare recordings were transcribed in 1958 by the composer's pupil Maurice Durufle, and subsequently published. Following this introductory piece we heard Cesar Franck's well-known *Prelude Fugue and Variation*. This enabled the quieter stops on the organ to be appreciated. The Parisian flavour continued with *Carillon de Westminster* by Vierne. Olivier Latry said that the composer died at the console during a concert in 1937 - he was not taking after him! Was this a reflection on the enormous effort needed to play it?

The major work of the evening was Widor's complete *5th Symphony*. It was not rushed as is so often the case, and I believe it was the best performance I have heard for many years. The concert concluded with Dr.Kent handing over a theme for an improvisation - "*Sumer is icumen in*" the English 13th Century composition attributed to John of Fomsete, a monk of Reading Abbey. In this the artist showed his talents in dexterity using all the colours and resources the organ could offer. Dr.Kent ably assisted with stop changes and page turning through the main part of the programme.

I very much enjoyed the evening, however the facilities management have a lot to learn. At £10.50 per ticket there should have been a proper programme and a microphone for announcements, refreshments available - even a water fountain would have been welcome, and an interval.

Finally the lack of advertising must be addressed; the number of people at the concert said much for the quality of the recital "grapevine". These concerts must be given the same quality of publicity as other events if they are to succeed, and the concert organisers need to decide whether seat allocation is desirable and enforceable.

On Friday 17th March we had the latest in the regular lunchtime recital series at St. Mary's Minster Church in Reading given by our member, David Pether of St. Paul's, Wokingham. This was a programme of contrasts and the much-needed rebuild of this instrument was evident several times during the performance. David started with a piece unknown to me, *New Era* by John Ogden, written for a Mancunian event. It reminded me of Smart in its textures, interesting! After something new, an old favourite - Bach Choral Prelude "Ich ruf" zu dir, Herr Jesus Christ". Two works by Hollins followed, *Communion* and *Pastorale* and then a transcription by Alan Ridout of Erik Satie's *Gymnopedie* number 1. David finished with the Finale from Vieme's *Symphony* No.1. A very good performance, with an audience of around 50. Well done, David.

Unfortunately I did not make it to Philip Aspden's recital at Pangbourne but I am sure it must have been good. Over to someone else for that review!

## ORGAN MUSIC ON COMPACT DISCS

Mark D. Jameson

I begin with two discs featuring the skill of transcription. The first is an organ version of an orchestral work and the second is a mixture of compositions, all in orchestral format with organ. It gives me great pleasure to include in this review Priory's (PRCD649) recording of David Briggs on **Gloucester Cathedral** organ playing his transcription of Mahler's Symphony No.5 in C Sharp minor. I understand it was all done in one "hit". David's playing is brilliant as some of us experienced when the BOA visited Gloucester in June 1998. Do you think David could do this at Reading one day? The orchestral CD was advertised in the BBC Music Magazine called "Music for a Millennium". It featured the organ so I visited HMV where I found it with the many Millennium discs. True, it is all popular music, such as the Dam Busters March, 633 Squadron, but it does include Thalben-Ball's Elegy and works by Elgar. The backing is Harlequin Brass and the organist is Neil Taylor. For me, it was a chance to hear another Willis - that in the **Sheffield City Hall**. I have not previously heard this organ nor am I aware of any recording. Built by Willis in 1932 it was restored by Hill Norman and Beard in 1987. One has to go back to 1933 to find a specification for this organ (Musical Opinion February 1933, p438). The supplier is new to me - NPC Records, disc number NPC001.

My second group of CDs selected from last years purchases feature three recordings in English churches. First, is another disc from our friends in Oxford - OxRecs who kindly sent me their new recording of **Southwell Minster** (OXCD80) after I complained about the lack of organ data on an earlier disc. Paul Hale and Philip Rushforth play the recently restored Nicholson organ with a wide variety of music, from Dandrieu and Bach, to Vierne and Giles Swayne. The last named has a piece called "Riff-Raff" written in 1983 - a real foot tapping piece, total contrast from Bach! It was free to me, but it is good - and I bet you can't tell the electronic pedal stops! **Cirencester Parish Church** has a Father Willis, altered by John Coulson in 1970 and 1982. Dinmore has recorded it played by David Ponsford, (see "OR" August 1999). I played this organ in November 1999. It is interesting to hear the Royal Trumpets that are located around the corner from the console; I believe most of their "power" is lost to the player. I think we should visit this organ - it is not too far away. Finally, in this group - a Father Willis of 1899, the **St. Bees Priory** organ, played by Roger Fisher. An organ par excellence, a well thought out programme starting with Hollins, two pieces each by Debussy and Bonnal, a Vaughan Williams Prelude and Fugue and ending with Willan's Introduction, Passacaglia and Fugue. (CSCD121D, from David Lane, 3 Dunstone Drive, Plymstock PL9 8SH). Very highly recommended.

I intended to start this year's review with an excellent recording by Dabringhaus and Grimm (MDG320-0866-2) of works by August Ritter (1811-1885) featuring trio Sonatas 11,19,23, and 31 played by Ursula Philippi on the **Rumanian** organ at Hermannstadt (Sibiu), but I opened my "Organist Review" for February 2000 and there it was so there is no point in duplicating! I like this label very much for its clarity; the booklets are always well illustrated and full of information. "Organ Landscape Transylvania" issued first as LPs in 1988 is now available as a 2-CD set

(MDG 319 0414-2) also played by Ursula with Eckart Schlandt (one track). Nine organs are featured with a wide range of organ styles and music periods. MDG's agent in the UK is Chandos- highly recommended!

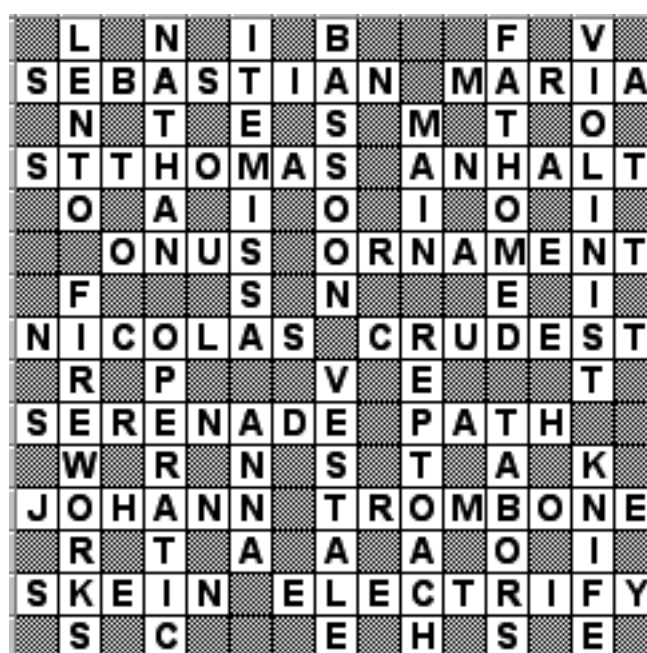
I was asked last year if I knew anything about a new disc by Ian Tracey playing the **Liverpool Cathedral** organ. Upon investigation I found a new Chandos (CHAN9716) recording called "Bombarde" featuring the new Corona Organ Trompette Militaire. The music is French Organ Classics, but why such common pieces with the wealth of repertoire available? As always, playing is good, and yes, the new stop is there, but I wish to hear something different on this organ! Priory has released PRCD695, which is Volume six in their popular organ music series. Yet another Willis - that of **Truro Cathedral** played by the organist Andrew Nethsingha. Another good disc.

My final pair of organ discs feature three organs in **two Douai churches**, one in France and the one down the road at Woolhampton. Both CDs are great and highly recommended. First, starting at the French collegiate church of St. Pierre at Douai-Priory PRCD637 was released in January 2000 and is played by Gerard Brooks of All Souls Langham Place and St. James, Clerkenwell. Gerard is a brilliant player and on this disc there are six pieces by Boely, Guilmant's Morceau de Concert, Debussy's First Arabesque, and three pieces totally unknown to me – Henru Nibelle 1188-1966) Carillon Orleanais, and Achille Philip (1878-1959) Lied and Adagio & Fugue. This church was completed in 1750 and acquired its first organ in 1792, which underwent many changes until pillaging by German forces in 1918. In 1920 the church bought from Mutin-Cavaillé-Coll an organ that had been built in 1914 and intended for the St. Petersburg Conservatory, but because of war and revolution remained stored in Paris. This organ was installed in the original 1792 casework. Louis Vierne inaugurated it in November 1922. Restored after war damage in 1954-1957, it suffered damage during church repairs between 1964 and 1971, by fire in 1975, and vandals in 1977. After 1977 the city authorities started a yearly programme of restoration, the result of which can be heard on this disc. Buy it!

Secondly, our local Douai Abbey has been recorded by a new Reading Company, Deux-Elles whose Executive Producer is Patrick Naylor. I first saw the recording advertised in a magazine and was attracted by the location having seen both instruments in 1996 as part of an Organ Club visit, and because it is a Berkshire location. Deux-Elles current catalogue has five recordings - 3 choral, 1 organ, and 1 of children's music. The organ CD. DXL883 features both Tamburini and Tickell organs as duets played by Gareth Price and Graham Howell. The programme is "Six Concertos for Two Organs" by Antonio Soler, who lived from 1729 to 1783 and was also known as Francisco Javier Jose Ramos. The playing is most enjoyable. I only have one other recording of these works, a 1966 E Power Biggs and Daniel Pinkham LP by CBS on an organ at Harvard University. The CD leaflet is nicely produced, my only criticism is that the point size of the print ought to be a little larger or the typeface used for the credits should be used for the text. The organ specifications are included, which they always should be! Local members should definitely get this one.

Postscript! Deux-Elles have sent me a complimentary copy of one of their choral CDs (DXL 827) called “Let us now praise famous men” recorded in June 1998 in **St.Alban the Martyr, Holborn** (another organ rarely recorded), directed by Edward Barieri who leads the Consortium singers, Gareth Price plays the organ. Nine choral works by Bairstow, SS Wesley and Finzi are featured. It sounds good and very clear, I enjoyed it but I do not claim expertise in choral works! Deux-Elles CDs retail at £12.99

## SOLUTION TO CROSSWORD 2000



## THE ORGAN IN THE TITANIC MEMORIAL CHAPEL

Sub Lt. Dodd G. Eisberg.

Ivor Coughine’s splendid memoir of the Grand Mortuary Chapel Organ in Volume 52 of *The Berkshire Organist* (1999), prompted me to search out the specification of another instrument by Messrs. Mortimer & Cie. which I noted some years back.

Standing on a remote headland at the edge of Glace Bay, Nova Scotia, the Titanic Memorial Chapel contains an organ whose case is in the form of an iceberg. It rises to a tip some 80 feet above the west end of the nave, just grazing the vault (itself in the form of an inverted hull of a ship).

| PEDAL                |                               | SWELL              |                               |
|----------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------|-------------------------------|
| Full Fathom Five     | 32                            | Quintam Tenens     | 16                            |
| Tibia Profunda       | 32                            | Melonphone         | 8                             |
| Importunal           | 16                            | Salicional         | 8                             |
| Donner               | 16                            | Clear Flute        | 8                             |
| Submarine            | 16                            | Murky Flute        | 7                             |
| Marine               | 8                             | Saline             | 4                             |
| Spit Flute           | 8                             | Poop Gedeckt       | 4                             |
| Tears                | 6 <sup>2</sup> / <sub>5</sub> | Quarte a Decque    | 2                             |
| Sepulchre            | 4 <sup>4</sup> / <sub>7</sub> | Apricot            | 1 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>3</sub> |
| Coral Bass           | 4                             | Lifebuoy           | 16                            |
| Schifflothe          | 2                             | Hautbuoy           | 8                             |
| Barracuta            | II                            | Apfel Regal        | 4                             |
| Pandemonium          | 64                            | Pi Regal           | 3 1/7 (approx.)               |
| Contra Trombosis     | 32                            |                    |                               |
| Serpent (Unda Maris) | 16                            | Choir              |                               |
| Rohr Schalmei        | 8                             | Ephemeron          | 8                             |
| Rohr Prawn           | 4                             | Chimney Flute      | 8                             |
| Sink                 | 2                             | Funnel Flute       | 3                             |
|                      |                               | Nazard             | 2 <sup>2</sup> / <sub>3</sub> |
|                      |                               | Quart              | 2                             |
|                      |                               | Pint               | 1                             |
|                      |                               | Oberon             | II (Quint & Bottom)           |
|                      |                               | All                | XI                            |
|                      |                               | None               | <sup>8</sup> / <sub>9</sub>   |
|                      |                               | Basin              | 16                            |
|                      |                               | Nachthorn          | 8                             |
|                      |                               | Foghorn            | 2000m                         |
|                      |                               |                    |                               |
|                      |                               | SOLO               |                               |
|                      |                               | Subaltern          | 32                            |
|                      |                               | Major Bass         | 16                            |
|                      |                               | Viol Sordide       | 16                            |
|                      |                               | Salacional         | 8                             |
|                      |                               | Flauto Transvesto  | 4                             |
|                      |                               | Harmonic Strumpet  | \$50                          |
|                      |                               | (phonon)           |                               |
|                      |                               | Cornet             | V                             |
|                      |                               | Fishnet            | 40 denier                     |
|                      |                               | Tremulant          | (optional)                    |
|                      |                               | Trumpet en Charade | 8                             |
|                      |                               | Troops on Parade   | III ranks                     |

## 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>              |
| 1994 - 95 | <i>Graham Ireland BA BMus MMus FRCO</i>            |
| 1996 - 97 | <i>Donald Hickson</i>                              |
| 1998 - 99 | <i>Christine Wells BMus FRCO LRAM</i>              |

## HONORARY FELLOW

Dr Francis Jackson