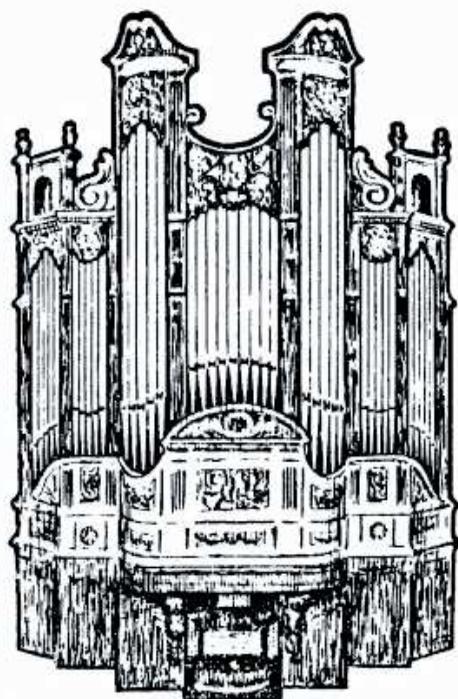


# The Berkshire Organist

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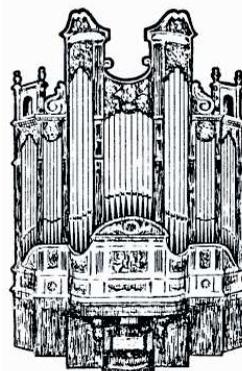
Neither the Editors nor the Association accept any responsibility for opinions expressed in this Journal

# 1. THE BERKSHIRE ORGANISTS' ASSOCIATION

Founded 1921 Registered Charity No. 298088

## CONSTITUTION Amended May 2014

1. The name of the Association shall be "The Berkshire Organists' Association".
2. The Association shall be affiliated to the Incorporated Association of Organists.
3. The objects of the Association shall be to advance the education of the public in the study of church and organ music.
4. The Association may arrange and present:
  - (i) public lectures, discussions and debates;
  - (ii) public demonstrations of instruments, choral and organ music;
  - (iii) open competitions for playing, singing and composition of such music;
  - (iv) meetings to advise churchmen and other members of the public on any matter concerned with the improvement of standards of composition or performance of such music;
  - (v) any other activity which may enhance the attainment of the objects.
5. Membership of the Association shall be open without restriction to any member of the public who is interested in organ or choral music. Every member shall receive a copy of this Constitution and Rules.
6. The income and property of the Association shall be applied solely to the promotion of the objects and no payment or transfer of any part of such income or property shall be made to or for the benefit of any member of the Association. Provided that nothing shall prohibit any payment in good faith by the Association of reasonable and proper remuneration of any member of the Association who is not a member of the Committee for services rendered to the Association, or reimbursement to any member of out-of-pocket expenses.
7. If on the winding-up or dissolution of the Association, there remains, after the satisfaction of all debts and liabilities, any property whatsoever, this shall not be paid to nor distributed among the members of the Association, but shall be given or transferred to some other charitable institution having objects similar to the objects of this Association.
8. This Constitution shall not be altered or added to except by resolution at a General Meeting, and no alteration shall be made which would cause the Association to cease to be a charity at law. No amendment shall be made to this Article, Article 3 or Article 7 without the prior consent in writing of the Charity Commissioners.



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## 2. Editorial



Welcome to the 2015 Berkshire Organist; I hope you enjoy the read. The 150th Anniversary of the Father Willis organ in Reading Town Hall was actively supported by the Berkshire Organists' Association both at events and financially. You can read about some of the events in this journal.

Members are encouraged to write and submit articles and we have over the years, I hope, all enjoyed a wide range of contributions. I am grateful to all those members for their contributions and for the support and assistance from the Journal Subcommittee.

Recently I tried to get access to churches with organs in Izmir in Turkey; yes there are at least three pipe organs there. Unfortunately the churches I tried to see were all inaccessible; locked and barred. However last year I had more success in Singapore and you may find the flashback to 1949 just after WW2 interesting.

For the moment we are retaining the A5 format of the Berkshire Organist Journal, but there is significant pressure to change to A4. Members of the Organ Club have already received their latest Organ Club Journal in the A4 format. It will be interesting to hear their views on the size change.

I became involved in the Berkshire Organists' Association as a guest friend of the late Alan Kent who was a stalwart member of the BOA. Subsequently my wife became Editor in 2010 at Alan's suggestion, but the layout has been done by me for all issues from 2010. I became Editor in 2013 but the 2015 issue will, I'm afraid, be my last. I hope that I have ensured a high standard in the editions under my care and thereby kept in his memory my promise to Alan

Malcolm Rigg

### **3. Annual General Meeting**

- Don Hickson

A drama in three acts

ACT 1 – THE VILLAGE CENTRE. It was a beautiful summer day as I drove through the verdant countryside for the Association’s Annual Meeting. However, once I reached the centre of Midsomer Parva I was struck with a sense of foreboding. Firstly, why had the scenery department given the village a thorough makeover so that it looked very much like Hambleden? Secondly, where were Inspector Barnaby and his steadfast sergeant? Thirdly who were all these people arriving with earnest expressions. Obviously they were aware of the crime wave that permanently sweeps the Midsomers and were mumbling about the fear of attack by Sixteen foot Diapasons and of showers of tremulants raining from on high and infecting everyone with the collywobbles. Despite these misgivings Christine Wells, our hostess for the day, assured us that no bodies had been found under the swell box and that all was clear for us to go into the church.

ACT 2 – IN THE CHURCH. Once settled in the church we were treated to the AGM Recital given this year by Richard King on the organ and Charlotte Reid (violin). Both had graduated from London Academies and Richard is now heavily involved in music education while Charlotte is involved with chamber music as well as playing in several London orchestras. From the first notes of the Handel sonata it was obvious that we were listening to a duo of considerable quality and the rapport between them was excellent despite the limited visual contact between them round the architecture of the church. The music chosen was ideal for a warm summer afternoon and flowed over the listeners in a relaxed manner. There was nothing relaxed about the dedication of the performers who approached each piece with professional thoroughness and sensitivity. The entire programme is reproduced at the foot of this item. This excellent recital over and with the triumphant tones of Walton’s Crown Imperial ringing in our ears it was now time to move on to the next stage..

ACT 3, SCENE 1 – THE VILLAGE HALL. Progress across the village from church to hall was accomplished without any untoward assaults but with the continued absence of Inspector Barnaby a good look-out was maintained in case of an attack from the flank. Once in the hall the traditional BOA Tea was served, admirably prepared by

Christine’s helpers from the village. All was well with this; no hemlock powder had been dusted on the sandwiches and the tea had not been laced with a toxic cocktail of three rank mixtures. But what were all these organists doing ensconced round the tables? Were they planning excursions to sabotage electronic organs? Was there a clique of rebels planning a coup at the AGM with or without the support of a delegation of organists from the SNP? Or were they, like the writer of this article who had travelled from the far flung realms of Hampshire, just catching up with old friends.

ACT 3 SCENE 2 – THE SAME. Musically and digestively refreshed and with a little furniture moving (with still no bodies found) we then proceeded to the AGM itself. A formal report of the proceedings appears elsewhere in this issue but let it be confirmed that no rebels disturbed the actions and that the Association seems to be in good health financially and as far as forthcoming events are concerned. Having handed over the Presidency to Jonathan Holl, Harry Russell completed a successful two years in post and, being a glutton for punishment, is now taking over as Secretary. With the meeting concluding the day, all the necessary thanks were given to those concerned and we all drove off into the sunset thankful that no misfortunes had befallen us. All that remains is for the Hambleton makeover to be removed and Midsummer Parva restored, Barnaby to be recalled from leave and murder most foul to recommence. What of next year? Perhaps we can move up the valley to Turville and get the event exuberantly blessed by the Vicar of Dibley!

### 3.1 BOA AGM Recital 16 May 2015

The BOA AGM Recital was at St Mary the Virgin Church, Hambleton and given by CHARLOTTE REID (Violin) and RICHARD KING (Organ). Their program was:

Violin and Organ	Sonata Op 1 No 1	Handel
Organ	Psalm Prelude Set 2 No 1	Howells
Violin and Organ	Benedictus	W Lloyd Webber

Organ	Villanella The Holy Boy Bryn Calfaria	Ireland Ireland Vaughan Williams
Violin and Organ	Salut d'amour Intermezzo	Elgar Sammons
Organ	Crown Imperial	Walton

### **3.2 President's Report to the AGM**

The President, on behalf of the Association, thanked the recitalists, David King (organ) and Charlotte Reid (violin) who had skilfully entertained members (and local people) in the Church of St Mary the Virgin, Hambleden, with a collection of interesting and enjoyable pieces for organ or violin/organ.

He also thanked the ladies who had served us in the Village Hall with excellent tea, sandwiches and cakes.

During this past year the Association has played a leading role in the 150th Anniversary Celebrations for the Father Willis Organ in Reading Town Hall. We provided a significant financial support for these events from our own funds and also funding which we raised from the Incorporated Association of Organists and Reading Arts. The celebration events included concerts and workshops intended to introduce as wide arrange of people as possible to the organ. There was a particular emphasis on young people. The youth orchestra, Berkshire Maestros, performed works for organ and orchestra, one of which was a special commission, with organist William Whitehead. The organ workshops attracted several hundred people who wanted to hear more about the organ and 'have a go'. Members of the Association were present at every event to talk to participants about the work of the Association and offer free copies of our Town Hall Organ book. I would like to thank all those who helped in this way.

Our 2014 volume of the Berkshire Organist was another bumper issue of nearly a hundred pages featuring the usual reports on local recitals and the activities of this Association as well as over forty pages of articles on general topics written by members. Increasing numbers of

past editions of the journal are now being made available to the public on our website. The Editor, Malcolm Rigg, is stepping down after seeing the 2015 edition through the press. Malcolm has served as editor of the magazine for four editions and before that assisted in compiling the copy for the printers. I would like to thank him for all his hard work on behalf of the association.

The Association continues to play a role in the wider community and continues to attract new members.

### **3.3 Elections**

As a result of the elections at the AGM, the Association's key posts are filled as follows:

President:	Jonathan Holl
President Elect:	vacant.
Secretary:	Harry Russell
Treasurer:	Ron Byer
Committee (for 3 years):	Ian May and Mark Jameson
Committee (for 2 years):	David Butler, David Price and Anthony Hodson
Committee (for 1 year):	Derek Guy and Jill York
Programme subcommittee:	Membership of this committee will continue to be: Christine Wells (chairman), President, Secretary, Treasurer, Derek Guy, Ian May, Jill York.
Publicity Officer:	Harry Russel
Webmaster:	David Pether

Benevolent Fund Steward Ruth Wetherley-Emberson has resigned.  
The duties will be taken over by  
Committee members,

Editors:

The Berkshire Organist: vacant as Malcolm Rigg has resigned.

The Newsletter: David Pether

Independent Examiner: David Duvall

## **5. Celebration of the 150th Anniversary of the - Father Willis Organ at Reading Town Hall.**

### **5.1 Program overview**

- David Pether

Anybody who has read our association's excellent book about the Father Willis Organ in Reading Town Hall, and in particular Peter Marr's article on its history, will know the sorry tale of the inaugural concert on 6th October, 1864. The instrument, then in the old Town Hall (now known as the Victoria Room) was far from complete. When S.S.Wesley attempted to play those parts which had been installed, it was found that the weight of assembled musicians on the stage, pressing down on the action parts beneath, prevented the pipes from sounding.

Despite this inauspicious start, the Father Willis Organ has come to be recognised as of great significance internationally as a rare Victorian survivor, and holds an important place in Reading's cultural heritage. There was therefore no dissent when the BOA committee were approached with proposals for a series of educational events to celebrate the instrument's 150th birthday.

Gradually a varied programme of activities came together, comprising free organ lessons, talks, creative workshops and an Anniversary Celebrity Recital which featured a new commission for organ and strings. As well as showing off the musical potential of the instrument, the aim was to introduce participants from all backgrounds, young and old, to the organ, how it works, and its heritage within the Town Hall.

The BOA was part of a team working together to achieve this, including: Reading Arts; Berkshire Maestros; Reading Museum & Town Hall; Royal College of Organists; Royal Philharmonic Orchestra; and, of course, William McVicker. While supporting the entire project with goodwill in kind and using our regular publicity channels, our association was directly involved in the setting up and funding of specific events which aimed to bring members of the public into contact, often literally, with the Father Willis Organ. These were as follows:

## FREE ORGAN LESSONS

Tuition was made available to the public as small group sessions under two headings: Organ Lessons for Pianists (for those with some ability to read/play music) and Organ Lessons for Beginners (for those with no musical experience). Sessions lasted one hour and were led by tutors from the Royal College of Organists.

Eight sessions were held in total on Sunday 26 October (led by Gabs Damiani) and Sunday 2 November (led by Marilyn Harper). Overall, 98 people attended, of whom 55 took the opportunity to play. Approximately half of those playing were young people and the



remainder adults. Numbers exceeded our expectations and we are very grateful to the tutors who extended the length of their sessions when necessary to ensure that everyone who wanted had the opportunity to have a go.

Additionally, a session was held on the morning of Saturday 4 October, led by Gabs Damiani. This was not open to the public, but instead provided an opportunity for seven young pianists from Berkshire Maestros to try "converting" to the organ.

## MEET THE ORGAN

This was a series of free illustrated talks presented by William McVicker, introducing the Father Willis Organ, its history within The Town Hall and how it works. All attending the talk were able to see the organ up close and have a go at playing. The presentation was kept entertaining and family-friendly.

Three free sessions were held during the course of Saturday 15 November. In total just over 50 people attended, including a dozen children.

## DIY ORGAN PIPE WORKSHOP & BIG PIPE BUSK

This was a free children's workshop led by Jules Bushell on Saturday 15 November, under the auspices of Reading Museum. The participants used plastic tubing to make and decorate their very own organ pipes. At the end of the afternoon, the children brought their



pipes into the Concert Hall and took part in The Big Pipe Busk, performing en masse with the organ, in a specially composed 10-

minute work, based on famous organ tunes and played by William McVicker.

Eighteen people attended, including seven children. This was the only disappointing attendance of the series of events. It's not clear why numbers were down, as this was the final event in the series, so had been very well trailed for several months. Perhaps the late afternoon slot on a Saturday was not good timing for families.

All of the events so far described fell outside of Reading Arts' usual pattern of organ activities and required special funding. This was raised from a number of sources, not least a £1000 contribution from BOA's reserves for educational projects. By so doing, we were able to apply for and release additional grants from the IAO (£500) and the Reading Cultural Partnership (£2160).

BOA had a presence at all events, so we were able to distribute copies of the book on the organ and membership forms to those attending.

The centrepiece of this mini festival was the Anniversary Recital held on Saturday 4th October, with William Whitehead presiding at the console, alongside young string players from Berkshire Maestros, before an audience numbering 350. A full report on the concert can be found elsewhere in this edition, but it's pleasing to note that the organ performed perfectly for its birthday party and the ghosts of 150 years previously were firmly laid to rest.

## **5.2 William Whitehead on 4th October 2014**

- Jill York

This was a Town Hall concert like no other! It starred William Whitehead, organ, The Berkshire Maestros 'Academy on Sundays' String Ensemble conducted by Benjamin Pope and the World Premiere of 'Zangi-e Rangi' for organ and string orchestra by the British-Iranian composer Soosan Lolavar.

The programme comprised:

Finale from Symphonie No.6 in G	Widor
---------------------------------	-------

Prelude and Fugue in D minor BWV539	J.S.Bach
The Orgelbüchlein project:	
<i>Nun ruhen all Wälder</i>	Van Oortmerssen
<i>Wenn wir in höchsten Nöten sein BWV641</i>	J.S.Bach
<i>Ich dank' dir schon durch deinen Sohn</i>	Bednall
Scherzetto from Organ Sonata	Whitlock
Concerto in G Op.2 No.3	Stanley
Zang-e Rangi – WORLD PREMIERE	Lolavar
Fantasia and Toccata in D Minor Op. 57	Stanford
Air on Holsworthy Church Bells	Wesley
Toccata from Symphony No.5 in F	Widor

William began and ended with sparkling Widor, delivering a superb performance of the famous Toccata. The three Orgelbüchlein project chorale preludes made a fascinating sandwich of contrasts. The Van Oortmerssen was delicate, Bach-like yet modern with a jazzy feel, and then followed the Bach (completed by another) with an elaborate reedy melody supported by a gentle flute. The Bednall was quite a surprise – the first and last sections placing the chorale in the pedal on Tuba with cascades of arpeggios (à la Widor) racing around it. All three pieces, so different but closely related, gave a lesson in what can be achieved in the chorale prelude genre.

The other solo organ pieces were by British composers. The Whitlock Scherzetto fluttered about with neat, delicate registration and in contrast the Stanford (just the Toccata in fact) was played with great authority, energy and volume. The Wesley Air followed in perfect contrast, flowing and melodious and beautifully shaped and registered.

The String Ensemble came on to play the final piece in the first half of the concert and the first piece of the second half. As the Willis organ is

slightly sharper than current pitch, the strings were tuned to high pitch. Stanley is associated with neat voluntaries and concertos for manuals so this concerto was reworked for orchestra and organ with very pleasing effect. The playing was decisive and crisp and the organ and orchestra were well balanced. These young players are from 8 to 15 years old, meet six times a year and work with professionals from the Royal Philharmonic orchestra, several of whom were playing with them today.

Zang-e Rangi, composed by Soosan Lolavar for this Gala concert, was quite extraordinary. In the pre-concert talk, Soosan talked of her wish to engage the young players in contemporary music, how they would play and sing in the piece and how she blends her two cultures and uses microtones. She was intrigued that some stops on the organ are deliberately slightly out of tune and took this 'beating' sensation as the starting point of her composition. The single organ note at the beginning is joined by the strings and the music pulses and rises with percussion joining in later, and with the string players beating with the wood of their bows as well as using their voices. A deep pedal 'pedal' dominated and supported the music and led to an elemental, throbbing ending. I loved this piece – the pulsing, the control, the layers of sound and the organ and orchestra working as one and also as two. It was illuminating to hear how Soosan's piece evolved as she worked with the organ timbres and expanded them into the orchestra. I doubt that anyone playing in that first performance will ever forget it. It was an evening to remember.

### **5.3 Concert by William McVicker on 9th May 2015**

- Jill York

A large and enthusiastic audience turned up to enjoy an outstanding evening of organ-playing by William McVicker, Curator of this organ, Curator of the Royal Festival Hall organ and Professor of Organology at the Royal Academy of Music.

The concert was preceded by an illuminating talk about the composers and the music with time for questions afterwards, so we discovered why the organ has high pitch (for the higher echelons of society - low pitch for pianos played on by servants) and why Willis was called "Father" (at the Restoration, hitherto banned organ-

builders returned to Britain and one of the greatest was "Father" Smith, so Willis had his genius recognised similarly).

The recital began and ended with two well-known pieces: the Karg-Elert thundered majestically and used the full range of sounds on all manuals and the Lefébure-Wely, introduced as "very lowbrow", was an exuberant romp for the end of a service. The aim of the evening was to present a programme that could have been performed 100 years ago on the organ so some of the music was unfamiliar, but we learned fast!

Sigfrid Karg-Elert (1877-1933)	Choral-Improvisation 'Nun danket alle Gott'
Sir Arthur Sullivan (1842-1900)	Overture to 'The Pirates of Penzance'
Alfred Hollins (1865-1942)	In Springtime
William Faulkes (1863-1933)	Fantasia on Old Welsh Airs
Patrick Moore (1923-2012)	March: Halley's Comet
Richard Dawre (c.1850-1900)	Jubilant March
Ferdinand Hérold (1791-1833)	Overture to 'Zampa'
William Lloyd-Webber (1914-1982)	Five Portraits i. Carol (Lyric Piece) ii. Imogen (Fairy Tale) iii. Elizabeth (Valse de ballet) iv, Justine (Romance) v. Mandy and Dula (Burmese Blues-Variant)
Louis James Alfred Lefébure-Wely (1817-1869)	Sortie in E flat



The 'Pirates of Penzance' Overture transferred to the organ superbly and was given a captivating, carefully-registered performance that almost had us singing along. 'In Springtime' by Hollins (blind from birth) was a gentle depiction of birdsong using the quieter stops including flutes, oboes and corno di bassetto. William Faulkes is a composer we know little of. He wrote 500 organ works and between 1900 and 1930 was the 5th most programmed composer of his day. However, fire destroyed both the Liverpool City Library and the church where he played and most of his output was lost. William McVicker tasked us with identifying the five Welsh Airs used in the 'Fantasia' (we managed three) and the piece proved a great choice for the Willis, ending with an exhilarating fugue on The Ash Grove. An unexpected piece was the 'March: Halley's Comet' by Patrick Moore, the astronomer, written for the bestowal of his Doctorate at Portsmouth University and played by William. It had a wonderful fairground feeling to it, flowed beautifully and had lots of oompah-pah rhythms. A real surprise!

William bounced on after the interval (in a blue shirt now, after starting in maroon) to play Dawre's short and rousing 'Jubilant March', a typical church exit piece of the period. The Pirate theme recurred with Hérold's 'Zampa' Overture, a fun romp from a comic-

opera which Sullivan may have known, given the parallels between the two operas. Then came the William Lloyd Webber's 'Five Portraits', most of them describing beloved cats. The first was languid and restful (corno di bassetto), the second warm and chordal, the third full of mood swings, the fourth rich and passionate and the final one jazzy and frisky. Perhaps these inspired his son Andrew to write the musical 'Cats'?

After much applause the delicate encore was William McVicker's own arrangement of 'She moved through the fair', an Irish traditional folk song. This was a superb evening's entertainment, delivered by a master of the instrument, indeed as its Curator the one person who knows the insides and foibles of the instrument better than anyone! It was in all senses a 'fun' evening and for me was the most exuberant recital I have ever heard on the 'Father Willis' Organ. It was indeed a fitting Celebration of Henry Willis' work and a great way to spend a Saturday evening!

## 6. Reading Town Hall Recitals

### 6.1 Victor Matthews on 2nd July 2014

- Edward Stansfield

This lunch time recital on the Willis Organ at the Town Hall, the last until the autumn, was given by Victor Matthews, a music scholar from Eton College.

Born in September 1998 in Australia, Victor began learning the classical guitar and piano when he was 4, and started his organ studies at the age of 10 in Sydney. After winning a scholarship, a number of prizes, and giving solo organ recitals, he passed his Grade 8 organ with A+ when he was 14. He attended the Royal College of Organists' organ scholar's course in Oxford in July 2011, and moved to England in June 2012 as a music scholar at Eton College. As well as playing the classical guitar, and passing his Grade 8 with an A in 2013, he studies the organ under the prominent international organist David Goode, Head of Keyboard at Eton, and has played the organ regularly at local venues.

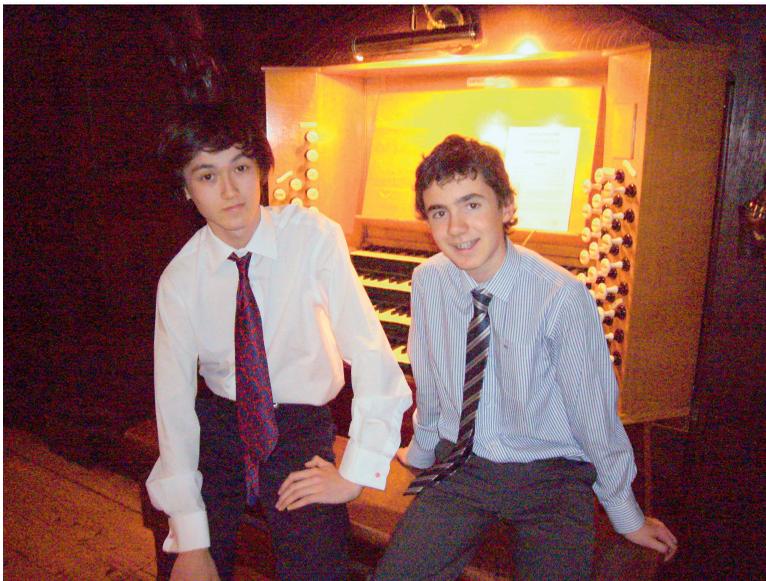
His Reading Town Hall programme on the Willis Organ was:

Allegro Maestoso from Sonata in G	Edward Elgar (1857 - 1934)
Récit from Suite No. 1	Louis-Nicolas Clérambault (1676 - 1749)
Prelude and Fugue in A-minor (BWV 543)	Johann Sebastian Bach (1685 - 1750)
Benedictus (Op.59 No.9)	Max Reger (1873 - 1916)
Choral No.3 in A minor	César Franck (1822 - 1890)

The annual Reading Town Hall recitals by Eton Scholars have demonstrated the high level of training that they receive, and the standard of Victor's playing this year was excellent. The Elgar was very stirring, and by comparison the Clérambault which followed was genteel. The Bach was a sheer delight to listen to, and it had my foot tapping in tune, especially during the lighter Fugue. Compared to the

Bach, Max Reger's Benedictus was slow and contemplative, building to a loud climax before gently fading away. In his introduction, Victor commented that the Franck piece was one of his favourites, and one that he had always wanted to play. His performance did not disappoint - it was certainly fast and furious - and said to be written for the composer's secret lover to demonstrate the struggle between good and evil! This recital showed that organ music is alive and well in our educational system, and long may it continue to be so.

At the end, Victor, who was not yet 16, thanked those who had invited him to play the fine Willis instrument which we in Reading are lucky to have. Marcus Knight, a younger organ student from Eton assisted with page turning and stop changes. He also thanked those who had helped to organise the recital, along with his family and the audience for coming to listen.



Victor with Marcus on the right.

As one who enjoys music but does not play any instrument, I thought this was a most enjoyable lunchtime recital to bring the current season to a close. The numbers in attendance (around 60) were somewhat

down on previous occasions, perhaps due to the fine weather and people taking their summer holidays. None the less, it was certainly enjoyed by all those who came.

## 6.2 Edward Reeve on 17th September 2014

- Jill York

His programme was:

Grand Choeur Dialogué	Eugène Gigout (1844-1925)
Communion in G	Alexandre Guilmant (1837-1911)
Toccatà and Fugue in D minor 'Dorian' BWV 538	J.S. Bach (1685-1750)
Sonata on the 94th Psalm	Julius Reubke (1834-1858)

Edward Reeve's recital got off to a bright start with an energetic performance of the Gigout. He used the solo Tuba stop at the opening to great effect and played the piece fast, only once going too fast and losing the clarity of the fingerwork. However, he demonstrated a dazzling technique and confidence on the Willis. The Guilmant Communion was an unexpected but inspired choice for a second piece and used the various flutes and light diapasons on the organ most effectively. This melodious, legato piece was beautifully played.

The Bach 'Dorian' Toccata was delivered with considerable drive and some impressive pedalling, although at one point it speeded up and the clarity was briefly lost. The Fugue sounded confident, indeed, Edward strode masterfully through it with good control and with obvious understanding and enjoyment of the texture. The structure was clear although a loud registration was chosen throughout. Given the range of sound available on this organ, maybe some contrasting registration would have been easier on the listeners' ears?

The Reubke was a brave choice and Edward handled the mysterious opening and the mighty thundering that followed with aplomb. His

cascading pedal work was exhilarating to hear and see. The Fugue was tackled with great enthusiasm with, again, a very loud registration throughout and perhaps a tad more speed than was safe, given the complexity of the music.

This was a recital by a young organist who is clearly 'going places'. Edward has a fine organ technique, wonderful enthusiasm and confidence and we wish him every success with his organ scholarship at Cambridge.

Readers may be interested in his CDs whose details are:

#### THE GREAT ORGAN WORKS – VOLUME I

Johann Sebastian Bach: *Tocatta and Fugue in D minor BWV 565, Allabreve BWV 589, Chorale Prelude on Ich Ruf zu Dir, Herr Jesu Christ BWV 639, Prelude and Fugue in A minor BWV 551*

Dieterich Buxtehude: *Fugue in C major BuxWV 174*

Edward Elgar: *Solemn Prelude arr. Harvey Grace*

Edvard Grieg: *Elegiac Melody arr. Harrison Oxley*

Craig Sellar Lang: *Tuba Tune*

Franz Liszt: *Fantasia and Fugue on B-A-C-H*

Felix Mendelssohn: *Sonata No 1 in F minor, Sonata No 2 in C*

Thomas Tallis: *Prelude in the Phrygian Mode, arr. Noel Rawsthorne*

#### THE GREAT ORGAN WORKS – VOLUME II

Johann Sebastian Bach: *Fantasia and Fugue in C minor BWV 537, Chorale Prelude on O Mensch, bewein dein Sünde groß BWV 622, Canzona BWV 588*

Dieterich Buxtehude: *Ciacona in C minor BuxWV 159*

Alexandre Guilmant: *March on a Theme by Handel*

Felix Mendelssohn: *Sonata No 3 in A, Sonata No 4 in B flat*

Henri Mulet: *Carillon-Sortie*

Noel Rawsthorne: *Chorale Prelude on Abide With Me, Postlude on Jesus Christ is Risen, Aria, Prelude on Be Thou My Vision*

#### THE GREAT ORGAN WORKS – VOLUME III

Johann Sebastian Bach: *Prelude and Fugue in C major BWV 547, Chorale Prelude on Vom Himmel hoch, da komm ich her BWV 606, Pièce d'orgue (Fantasia in G major) BWV 572, Prelude and Fugue in C minor BWV 549*

Dieterich Buxtehude: *Ciacona in E minor BuxWV 170, Passacaglia*

*in D minor BuxWV 161*

Edward Elgar: *Nimrod arr. Noel Rawsthorne*

César Franck: *Pièce Héroïque*

Sigfrid Karg-Elert: *Chorale Prelude on Nun Danket alle Gott*

Noel Rawsthorne: *Two Versets on Brother James' Air, Two Versets on Love Divine, Reverie*

George Thalben-Ball: *Elegy*

Louis Vierne: *Berceuse, Carillon de Westminster*

#### THE GREAT ORGAN WORKS – VOLUME IV

Johann Sebastian Bach: *Passacaglia BWV 582, Chorale Prelude on Nun Komm, der Heiden Heiland BWV 659, Prelude and Fugue in E minor BWV 533, Chorale Prelude on Wachet Auf, ruft uns die Stimme BWV 645*

Léon Boëllmann: *Suite gothique*

Andrew Carter: *Trumpet Tune*

João de Sousa Carvalho: *Allegro*

Walford Davies: *Solemn Melody arr. Rawsthorne*

Paul Hindemith: *Sonata No. 1*

William Mathias: *Fanfare*

Nigel Ogden: *England's Glory*

Johann Pachelbel: *Chorale Prelude on Vom Himmel hoch, da komm ich her*

#### THE GREAT ORGAN WORKS – VOLUME V

Johann Sebastian Bach: *Fantasia and Fugue in G minor BWV 542, Prelude and Fugue in G major BWV 541*

Edward Elgar: *Chanson de Matin arr. Brewer, Chanson de Nuit arr. Brewer*

Johann Jakob Froberger: *Six Canzonas*

Alexandre Guilmant: *Communion*

Felix Mendelssohn: *Sonata No 5 in D major, Sonata No 6 in D minor*

Giuseppe Verdi: *Grand March from Aida arr. Morris*

#### THE GREAT ORGAN WORKS – VOLUME VI

Jehan Alain: *Trois Pièces (Variations sur un thème de Clément Janequin, Le jardin suspendu, Litanies)*

Johann Sebastian Bach: *Tocatta and Fugue in F major BWV 540, Prelude and Fugue in A minor BWV 543, Prelude and Fugue in E flat major BWV 552 ('St Anne')*

Gabriel Fauré: *Pie Jesu from the Requiem arr. Rawsthorne*

César Franck: *Cantabile*  
 Eugène Gigout: *Grand chœur dialogué*  
 George Frideric Handel: *Air from the Water Music arr. Morris*

### 6.3 Tuners - Unsung Heroes

- Mark Jameson



I could hear Tuners preparing the RTH organ for the following day's recital when I called by to buy tickets on November 11th. Unfortunately I cannot remember their names, but they were working their way through a long list of items; the tremulant has been repaired - preparing it for tomorrow's recital.

The tuners are the unsung heroes keeping the beast in good order! So here is a photo of two of them to publicly express our appreciation of their efforts.  
*Editor's note: They are Rosemary and Duncan.*

### 6.4 Anthony Hammond on 12th November 2014

- Jill York

Programme:

March from <i>The Martyrdom of St Polycarp</i>	Sir Frederick A.G. Ouseley (1825-1889) <i>Arr. Hammond</i>
Pièce d'Orgue BWV 572	Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)
Soliloquy from <i>Sonata No. 2 in E Minor Op. 50</i>	James Lyon (1872-1949)

Variations on <i>Adeste Fideles</i> : An Improvisation	Marcel Dupré (1886-1971) <i>Tr. Smith</i>
Andantino from <i>Pièces de Fantasia</i>	Louis Vierne (1870-1937)
Toccata de la Libération	Léonce de Saint-Martin (1886-1954)



After a dramatic start, when changes in the weather led to spectacular ciphers (soon remedied by the organ Curator), Anthony Hammond and the Willis settled into a colourful and unusual programme. The Ouseley March, transcribed from an oratorio, was a crisp, rhythmical movement ideally suited to performance on an orchestral concert organ. The Bach was none other than the famous Fantasia in G, played with distinctive registration to suit this instrument and starting with very fast semiquavers on the choir flutes. The *Grave* section used

pedal and great reeds, reducing to diapasons then building up the colour again and the final section was a whirl of fiery reeds.

Anthony Hammond champions composers who have been unjustly overlooked and he introduced James Lyon, a British composer who wrote three organ sonatas. The Soliloquy began and ended gently, encompassing several moods in its contrasting sections, probably variations, and using the Solo oboe, Choir flute and several reeds to great effect.

With Dupré, we were introduced to musical politics and the fact that he and Saint-Martin both fell out with Vierne! The *Adeste Fideles* Variations were actually improvised in New York, USA, in 1929 and recorded on a 'player pipe-organ'. They include a fugue and finish with a triumphal major ending. The Vierne Andantino is a concert piece, described as 'simple, elegant and it encapsulates his sound world' and it was suitably dreamy and ruminative throughout. The Saint-Martin Toccata fulfilled its brief with racing hands, a strong pedal theme and a splendid finish, although it seemed somewhat over-long on a first hearing.

Overall this was a musical, well-executed recital that showed variety in the choice of pieces, really used the range of the instrument and successfully introduced the audience to several lesser-known composers. Mission accomplished, Anthony Hammond!

## 6.5 Ben Bloor on 21st January 2015

- Jonathan Holl

Programme:

Triumphal March	Alfred Hollins (1865 – 1942)
Sonata No. 5 in D major <i>Chorale – Andante con moto - Allegro maestoso</i>	Felix Mendelssohn (1809 – 1847)
Rondo con imitazione de' Campanelli	Giovanni Morandi (1777 – 1856)

Sonata No 1 in C sharp minor  
*Allegro appassionato – Andante*  
*- Maestoso*

Basil Harwood (1859 – 1949)

Since September 2014, Ben Bloor has been Organ Scholar at Westminster Cathedral. Previously, he spent three years as Organ Scholar at New College Oxford, having already spent a year as Organ Scholar at St George's Chapel, Windsor Castle. With such a background it was not surprising that he gave a highly accomplished recital at the Town Hall, on a cold January day when one might have expected audience numbers to be less than normal. Not so – there were 111 people and not enough programmes had been printed – a good sign to the authorities that the lunchtime recitals are alive and well!



He chose a programme well suited to the organ, beginning with the Triumphant March by the blind organist Alfred Hollins. This has an energetic start with ‘splashes’ on the Tuba, before a quiet fugal passage. The energy and drama return, bringing the piece to a flamboyant finish.

Mendelssohn’s fifth Sonata followed. With three movements, this Sonata was in marked contrast to the first piece and played with most suitable registration, allowing us to hear some of the quieter foundation stops.

Next came the Rondo con imitazione de’ Campanelli by Giovanni Morandi. His compositions include Sonatas, Pastorales, Overtures and Marches. However, this Rondo is his most well-known composition, very tuneful, and was played with sparkling colour and very clear and precise articulation.

Ben Bloor finished his recital with the large scale Sonata in C sharp minor by Basil Harwood. This was composed in 1886 and for quite a time was considered to be the finest organ sonata that had been written. Based on plainchant themes, the first movement though somewhat “dark”, was played passionately as per the title *Allegro Appassionato*. The second movement (*Andante*) is expressive and gentle giving respite to the dramas of the first movement. After a short introduction, the last movement breaks into a fugal passage which never quite reaches that of a strict fugue. Tension gradually increases until the penultimate page when a hymn melody (*Beata nobis gaudia*) is played. The piece ends in triumphal style with a final ‘Amen’.

Ben’s playing was immaculate throughout, displaying a high level of technical ability with excellent organ management. His musicianship and style were exemplary.

## 6.6 Jeremy Lloyd on 18th March 2015

- Jill York

Programme:

Flourish for an Occasion	William Harris (1883-1973)
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Sonata No. 4 in B flat: Allegro con brio; Andante Religioso; Allegretto; Allegro Maestoso	Felix Mendelssohn (1809-1847)
Fantasie in C	César Franck (1822-1890)
Cantique Op. 3 No. 1	Edward Elgar (1857-1934)
Concert Fantasia (Improvisation No. 1)	Edwin Lemare (1865-1934)

Jeremy Lloyd, from Peterborough Cathedral, chose an interesting programme of pieces all from the time of the Reading "Father Willis". The opening Flourish by Harris was very effective, delivering Edwardian swagger and really suiting the instrument. Then followed the well-known Mendelssohn Sonata, with the quieter inner movements showing sensitive registration followed by a spirited performance of the majestic finale. The Franck Fantasie was new to me and after the slow start progressed through a series of contrasting sections, each using the lovely orchestral colour of the organ, my favourites being the oboes and the vox humana with tremulant. The piece felt a little fragmented but I would undoubtedly benefit from a second hearing.

Next came the Elgar Cantique with plenty of diapason sound, a chorale-like mood and rich harmonies. The Lemare Concert Fantasia was something else! Lemare was famous for his improvisation and transcription and he brought these skills to bear in combining four tunes in one piece. I recognised The Sailor's Hornpipe, Auld Lang Syne, The British Grenadiers and Rule Britannia and the piece was an effective vehicle for varied registration.

Jeremy's organ management throughout the recital was outstanding and he achieved his aim of playing varied music from the age of the orchestral concert organ.

## 7. Celebrity Recitals

### 7.1 Paul Hale on 15th May 2014

- Don Hickson

Paul Hale's concert was entitled "A March in May" and the programme was:

War March of the Priests	Felix Mendelssohn <i>arr</i> <i>Frank E Brown</i>
Occasional Overture <i>Grave/Andante</i> <i>Allegro moderato</i> <i>Adagio</i> <i>March</i>	George Frideric Handel <i>arr Henry Coleman</i>
Prelude and Fugue in C BWV545	Johann Sebastian Bach
Southwell Suite <i>Fantasia</i> <i>Larghetto</i> <i>Allegretto scherzando</i> <i>Adagio</i> <i>Toccata</i>	Christopher Rathbone
Festive March in D	Henry Smart
Prelude, Fugue and Variation	César Franck
Maytime Gavotte	Alfred Hollins
March, Crown Imperial	William Walton <i>arr Herbert</i> <i>Murrill</i>

Apart from a long career as Cathedral Organist at Southwell Minster, Paul Hale has built up a healthy reputation as a Concert organist giving regular recitals throughout the country and it was with great pleasure that we welcomed him to Reading.

His programme began with the Mendelssohn and although there was, at first, a little inconsistency in timing this opening piece soon set a

vibrant style which was continued throughout the evening. The changes in registration through the various moods of this march were very well controlled and brought to light its various moods. The Handel Overture was well controlled rhythmically and the contrast in the four movements handled well, although I thought that the registration in the final March did tend to obscure the melodic line.



In the Bach one always looks for something individual and this was registered fairly conventionally but the Prelude was played at a good pace. The Southwell Suite was based on two hymn tunes particularly

associated with the Minster and each movement had its own distinctive character. A "modernish" Fantasia was followed by a very Baroque-like Larghetto and the whole piece ended with a ripping Toccata interspersed with some lovely quiet interludes.

After the interval we were treated to Henry Smart's Festive March. This joyful piece, excellently played, would have brought back many memories to the ghosts from concerts past because it was just the type of piece that would have delighted the audiences and was staple diet for the regular Organ Concerts in Town Halls in the Victorian and Edwardian eras. The César Franck is a pretty standard item in most organist's repertoire but new light was shown on this. In introducing the piece Paul Hale told us that it was originally conceived as a duet for piano and harmonium before being revised to its familiar organ solo. He then gave a performance replicating the original sounds, using the two flute oboes (coupled) for the melody accompanied by the flute, introducing piano arpeggios in the Chorale link and at one stage just using the vox humana and tremulant. This produced a sound that I had not heard before on this organ and could easily have been a harmonium. What a genius Henry Willis was in designing this instrument.

With two blind organ composers in one recital the Hollins Gavotte was a very light, enjoyable piece ideally suited to the organ and bringing a breath of spring time into the evening. We finished in fine March style with the Walton bringing the programme to a triumphant close. This started off at a cracking pace and I am not sure how long I could have marched at 120 paces a minute but then I was not in the Light Infantry!

To send us home with spring in our minds, Paul Hale sent us home with a delightful encore - Chant du Mai by Jongen. All in all this was a very enjoyable evening and once again reinforced the view that such concerts must be continued, putting this marvellous instrument in the hands of accomplished performers.

## 8. Other Local Recitals

### 8.1 Jonathan Holl on 28th June 2014

- Jill York

The event was an Organ recital celebrating the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Royal College of Organists – given by Jonathan Holl on Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> June 2014 at St. Peter's Church Cranbourne, Berkshire.

Programme:

La cannonade	C. Balbastre (1727-1799)
a) Tierce en Taille b) Duo (en cours de chasse sur la Trompète)	J.F. Dandrieu (1682-1738)
Passacaglia in C minor (BWV 582)	J.S. Bach (1685-1750)
Pastorale	T. Todero (1930-2011)
Sonata No 3 in A: Con moto maestoso – Andante tranquillo	F. Mendelssohn (1805-1847)
Meditation on 'Brother James's Air'	H. Darke (1888-1976)
Capriccio 'Cucu'	J.K. Kerll (1627-1698)
Final (Symphonie No 1)	L. Vierne (1870-1937)

This recital on the colourful Peter Collins organ at Cranbourne entertained us with a wide variety of music from the 17<sup>th</sup> to the 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. Jonathan Holl started with a lively blast of gunfire and cannon from Balbastre, following this with the bright, spikey 'cornet' sound of the Dandrieu Tierce en Taille and the hunting call of the Duo.

The famous Bach Passacaglia consists of twenty variations on an 8 bar theme followed by a fugue. This was a commanding performance which used the wide range of colour on this organ to great effect in the variations - in terms of organ management, the demands of this piece

take some beating! In complete contrast, the modern Italian Pastorale by Todero that followed also contained variations (about eight), featuring a pulsating pedal line and clear, quiet registration. The well-known Mendelssohn Sonata was given an energetic, crisp performance. Darke's Meditation had a relaxed, drifting quality and was another skilful journey through varied registrations, particularly featuring the Voix Celeste. Next, the Kerll 'Cucu' featured the lovely manual flutes, with fluttering scales and figurations beneath the bird calls, and the Vierne Final brought the recital to a triumphant end.

This was a well-planned and beautifully-executed recital, showing the organ at its best. A fitting celebration of the RCO's 150<sup>th</sup> birthday.

## **8.2 Jill York on 27th September 2014**

- Mark Jameson

This recital took place at St James the Less, Pangbourne on Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> September 2014.

On a really lovely early Autumn evening, still with summer temperatures, it was a pleasure to attend one of Jill's concerts. I know I shall be hearing works from less well known, and often, female composers [Jill's specialist subject]. Others must have felt the same, because the event was well attended.

Jill's programme consisted of eight works – featuring three ladies. Starting with a little known work by Fanny Mendelssohn [sister of Felix] *Prelude in F*, followed by Thomas Arne's *Introduction & Fugue from Concerto 1*. François Couperin's *Tierce en Taille* was next before the complex Bach *Fantasia and Fugue BWV542*. Then Elizabeth Stirling's *Movement in A flat*. Jill has written about this Victorian composer in our annual handbook and there is also a very expensive book available about her. A total change of tempo was *Fiesta* written by Emma Lou Diemer – a very energetic 86 year old American composer and organist. The programme completed with two French works, *Berceuse* by Vierne and lastly, *Final* from Sonata 1 by Guilmant – a great favourite of mine.

It is always good to hear the Pangbourne organ - it dates from 1882 built by Wedlake of Regents Park London and totally rebuilt in 1983

by George Sixsmith, a builder rare in this part of the UK, with further work more recently. With 2 manuals & 30 stops there is a great variety of tonal colour which Jill used to great effect. Jonathan Holl was the page turner. Well done Jill.

### **8.3 David Pether on 11th November 2014**

- Edward Stansfield

This recital by David Pether took place in Reading University Great Hall on 11th November 2014.



Sir David Bell  
and  
David Pether

The organ in the Great Hall of Reading University was constructed by the Leeds firm of J.J.Binns and formally opened on 21st October 1911. This was not long before the start of the First World War, and the recital was one of many Reading University events to commemorate the centenary. David Pether carefully chose his music to be appropriate for the occasion, and it was fitting that the recital was held on Armistice Day itself. David is familiar with the Binns organ, as he often plays it for Reading University graduation ceremonies.

The programme opened with the stirring march *Allegro Marziale* by Frank Bridge (1879-1941), and was followed by David's own delightfully tuneful arrangement of *English Idyll No.1* by George Butterworth (1885-1916). No concert programme commemorating the First World War would be complete without '*Nimrod*' from the *Enigma Variations* by Elgar (1857-1934), and for this David chose a version arranged by W H Harris. The fourth piece was the theme music for the 1941 film *49th Parallel*, Ralph Vaughan Williams's (1872-1958) *Prelude 'The New Commonwealth'*. Next came the rather sombre *Prelude and Variations* by Ernest Farrar (1885-1918), which is based on just five notes. David informed us that the composer enlisted in 1916 at the age of 21, and was killed 2 years later on the Western Front. Next we heard Hubert Parry's (1848-1918) *Prelude on 'Eventide'* which uses the hymn *Abide with Me* as the subject. Finally, David finished his programme with the rousing *Rhapsody No.3 in C# minor* by Hubert Howells (1892-1983).

This was a most enjoyable and well executed recital attended by some 90 persons, including Sir David Bell, the Vice Chancellor.

## 8.4 Christine Wells on 22November2014

This recital on 22nd November 2014 by Christine Wells at St Peter Earley had the following programme.

Fanfare	Lemmens
Prelude and Fugue in G major	J.S. Bach
Adagio	C.P.E. Bach
Sonata no. 4 in Bb	Mendelssohn
Pensee d'Automne	Jongen
Sarabande and Rhythmic Trumpet	Seth Bingham
Grand Choeur	William Faulkes

## 9. Heritage Day

- Mark Jameson

“I arrived first at the hall and only two staff were on duty, Roger Bartlett joined me and we manned the stand together. The hall had not been cleaned or cleared from a previous users event, so Roger set to with rubbish bags and broom to clean the hall, and then we placed 24 chairs nearer the organ.

It was also necessary to update the publicity board, and more importantly, the Museum had not provided any publicity for Heritage Open Day.

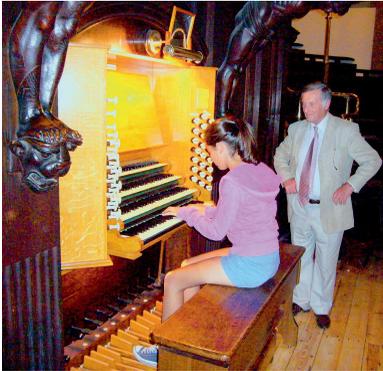
David Pether played the first demonstration at 1pm – one elderly man and a lady with a noisy baby, – we especially welcomed Rosemary Evans from Newbury who had been with us earlier in the year at Oxford – she played after but found it very heavy. The elderly man also played.

Jonathan covered the 2nd and 3rd sessions – at 2pm four visitors came including two connected with Reading School, the gentleman videoed Jonathan Holl during the demo.



In the interval, another person came in and tried the organ, then stayed for the 3pm demo

For the 3pm demonstration - we had 13 including two young children from Wimbledon with parents and grand parents, the children played as did “grandma”.



Jessica Hoyes playing the Father Willis

All were given the leaflet David provided about the organ, the 150th Anniversary Town Hall concerts brochure, and the parent’s of the children who played was given a copy of the TH book, several annual handbooks were given out. We also sold 2 town hall books and one CD.



Samuel Hoyes playing the Father Willis

I have to say it was really disappointing that not one other BOA member came to the Town Hall today.”

## 10. Events

### 10.1 Liverpool: a Trio of Tubas on 5th May 2014

- Derek Guy

As last year, this year's famous Liverpool Organ Day involved both the Cathedrals and St. George's Hall. Starting at 11.15am at the Anglican Cathedral we were given a brilliant recital by the young associate organist, Daniel Bishop. We were treated to pieces by Antonio Soler and Joseph Jongen. Daniel then played his own Trumpet Tune in D using the Tuba to great effect. This was followed by pieces by Herbert Howells, Bach's 'Great Prelude and Fugue in C Minor' and 2 short pieces by Percy Whitlock.

Daniel then played 2 of his own arrangements to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the beginning of the 'Great War'. Both of these were played with the Cathedral lights turned off and first was John Williams 'Hymn to the Fallen' from the film Saving Private Ryan. This started with and included music played by the Corps of Drums, which Daniel trains. It was a most moving tribute. The second piece of this commemoration was an arrangement of 'Sunset' by Captain Green MBE, known to many as The Last Post. The recital finished with the Finale of Louis Vierne's 1st Symphonie.



At 3.00pm we assembled at the Metropolitan Cathedral where Richard Lea, the Cathedral Organist, played a varied programme of music by John Bull, the Toccata in F by J.S. Bach, and an interesting piece by the Swedish composer Oskar Lindberg based on a folk tune. This was followed by the Prelude & Fugue in B major by Marcel Dupré and the Adagio & Toccata by René Vierne, the younger brother of Louis, who was tragically killed in the war.

Then followed the first movement of Elgar's Organ Sonata, a quiet piece by E. Ronald Mason, who had trained with Dr. Harry Goss-Custard at the Anglican Cathedral. The final piece was The Queen of Sheba from a grand opera by Charles Gounod and opened with fanfares making good use of the Tuba.



The culmination of the day was a recital by Professor Ian Tracey on the magnificent organ in St. George's Hall. This recital was given 'In memory of Carlo Curley' and as the programme stated "Planned in the best Carlo tradition" .

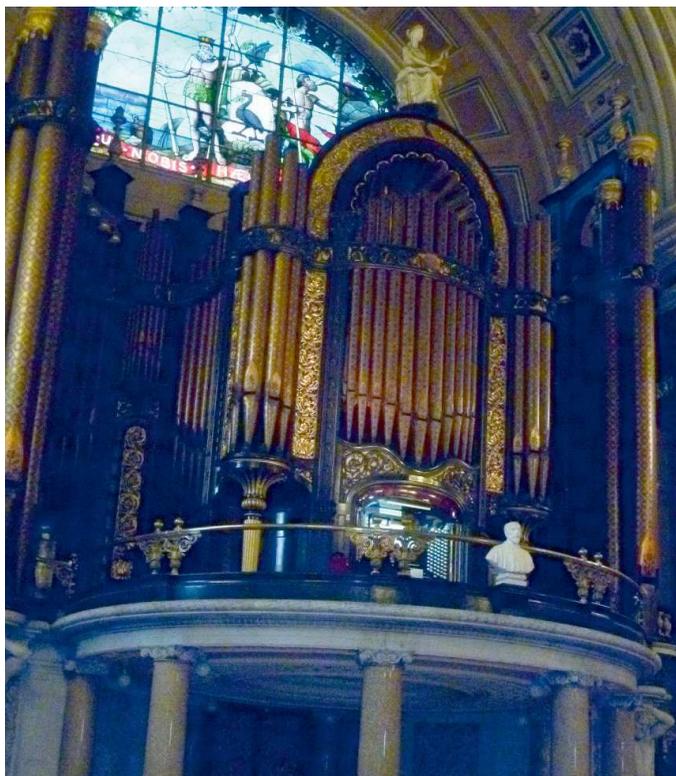
The programme started with pieces composed or arranged by 3 of Carlo's teachers. Simple Gifts by Virgil Fox, Christos Patterskis by Roy Perry and Sir George Thalben Ball's arrangement of Festing's Largo, Allegro, Aria and Variations. Then in true Carlo style a larger work, this being Mozart's Fantasia in F minor. This part of the

programme concluded with Meditation from Thais by Jules Massenet and Trois Pièces by Gabriel Pierné.

After a short interval, again in true Carlo style, we heard a major work— Choral no 3 in A minor by Cesar Franck, played with effortless ease by Ian Tracey. This was followed by the Largo from the ‘Symphony from the New World’ by Antonin Dvorak, Bach’s Sinfonia to Cantata 29, and Pavane from the Rhythmic Suite by Robert Elmore.

To conclude we heard a couple of pieces often played by Carlo - Gordon Nevin’s Will o’ the Wisp and The Pines of Rome by Ottorino Respighi.

As in the previous recitals, the Tuba was in evidence. This recital closed an interesting and most enjoyable day.



## 10.2 Visit to West Berkshire on 14th June 2014

- Jonathan Holl

This encompassed 3 organs and an excellent lunch, interspersed with some delightful moments driving through the beautiful countryside of West Berkshire.

We started in the morning at Yattendon Parish Church where we were warmly greeted by the organist and churchwardens. The present organ was installed in 1985 by Tony Foster-Waite, who, with his wife Eileen, was with us for the day. Eileen gave us a short talk on the chain of events leading up to the present organ. There are 4 stops each on the two manuals and pedals. The Swell has the make-up of a Cornet, while the Great is topped by a nicely blended and very effective Mixture II. All the stops are beautifully voiced and one does not miss a reed stop.

We made our way towards Lambourn, our next port of call, but stopped for lunch just a few miles short, at Eastbury. With a table reserved for us all at 'The Plough', we enjoyed a delicious lunch, but with all the food freshly cooked, time was a little short for us to partake of a dessert, -- never mind!

At Lambourn Parish Church, the organist Stephen Holmes greeted us, spoke about the 3 manual Willis and gave a short demonstration. The organ was installed in 1858 and though various small stop changes have been made, the instrument remains much as it was originally. George Martin, organist of St Paul's Cathedral from 1888-1916 was organist here for many years before his appointment to St Paul's. The organ was exciting to play, but with very few aids to registration one experienced the normal difficulties of playing an organ of this age! The specification is Great 12, Swell 8, Choir 5, Pedal 4 and a Tremulant effective on the whole organ.

We made our way to Boxford in a southeasterly direction towards Newbury for 4pm. The church had been unable to accommodate us earlier due to a wedding. We were greeted by Andrew Lyle, the deputy churchwarden, who kindly offered us cups of tea. Here was a beautifully kept church with an organ by Norman & Beard installed in 1909. It was looked after for many years by Tony and Eileen Foster-Waite. There are 3 stops each on the Great and Swell (884) and a Pedal Bourdon. A Cor Oboe on the Swell has never been fitted. The

excellent voicing and blend produced a bright and beautiful sound and was such that the lack of any stop above 4 ft was not noticeable.

So ended a very full and interesting day. Many thanks to Jill York who made all the arrangements.

### **10.3 Visit to Oxford Colleges on 12th July 2014**

- Jill York

The Berkshire Organists' Association visit to Merton and Keble Colleges, Oxford was on Saturday 12th July 2014.

This visit to two stunning organs must be a highlight of the BOA year! The group of members and friends met at Merton College where we were greeted by Ben Nicholas, the Organist and Director of Music at the College, and given an introduction to the instrument. It was pleasing to find we were the first organ Association to visit the organ, which was installed a year ago.

The organ is a three manual Dobson, from America, designed to fill in



the 'gaps' in the types of organs in the Oxford colleges as a whole. Overall, it isn't a 'one style' instrument and it is intended to be versatile, serving 3-4 chapel services a week and student examinations and recitals. The organ dominates the Ante-Chapel as you enter, and the sound is bold there, but the organ is voiced to sound right from the choir and it was fascinating to discover this for ourselves. As you walked away from the organ into the chapel there was a point two thirds of the way from

the organ to the end of the chapel where the sound coalesced, a remarkable sensation. Ben played the popular Bach Toccata and Fugue in D minor BWV 565 by way of demonstration, using the exquisite flutes for the fugue echoes. Members and friends then played, offering a wide range of contrasting composers: Liszt, Buxtehude, C.P.E. Bach, Mendelssohn, Howells, Guilmant, Archer and J.S. Bach.

Jonathan Holl playing the Merton Dobson organ with Jill York as page-turner.



After lunch we assembled in the Victorian splendour of Keble College Chapel, said to boast perhaps the finest acoustic in Oxford. Here, the organ is placed high up in the wide, shallow and tall transept. Indeed getting up to it proved quite a challenge to some of us on the day. This new organ is by Kenneth Tickell, whose aim was to build 'a coherent instrument, informed by its underlying ethos - the spirit of the late nineteenth century - but capable of broad use'. It is unusual in that it has four manuals but is in essence 'a fully-specified two manual, with the Choir-Solo and Bombarde divisions adding versatility and colour'.



Keble Chapel organ, and below: Rosemary Evans playing.



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old front pipes and casework have been retained but slightly

repositioned to harmonise better with the chapel decoration.

Once again the BOA party tried out a wide variety of music, including Pachelbel, more of the Liszt, Dandrieu, Purcell, Andrée, Handel, J.S. Bach, Roguski, Seth Bingham and Alain. The sounds and reverberation in the chapel were indeed amazing.

This was a wonderful BOA visit, giving members privileged access to two superb new instruments, both in beautiful historic settings. Our thanks go to Christine Wells for organising such a coup and leaving us with such memories of a great day out.

## **10.4 7th September 2014 Visit to Newbury Methodist - Mark Jameson**

The Methodist Church in Newbury has recently completed a full renovation and the final part was the restoration of the organ. This recital was sponsored by the organbuilders - B C Shepherd & Sons, of Edgware.



It was  
a very

great pleasure to listen to David Aprahamian Liddle who is the organist at St Barnabas Pimlico, London. David has been blind since birth and was the youngest English pupil of André Marchal. He also studied with H A Bate, David Sanger Marie-Madeleine Duruflé and Daniel Roth.

Well known internationally, it was well worth a drive to the opposite end of Berkshire to hear him. Others must have thought the same as the church was filled 5 minutes before the start time of 4pm. Many of those who attended had come considerable distances, and quite a few other organ builders were in the audience too.

David's programme was:

Nun danket alle Gott, Op.65	Karg-Elert
Prelude and Fugue in G Minor, BWV 535	J S Bach
Chorale Prelude on Wir glauben all an einen Gott, vater	Krebs [mis-attributed to Bach]
A Trumpet Minuet	Hollins
A Song of Sunshine	Hollins
Elegy	Edward Bairstow
Prelude in C	Edward Bairstow
Syke Boat Song, Op.10	David Liddle
Laetus, from Mnemonic Suite, Op.21	David Liddle
From Symphony No. 8 – Allegro & Moderato Cantabile	Widor
From Symphony No. 5 – Toccata	Widor
As an Encore - The Answer	William Wolstenholme

The organ was new in 1898 and by Alfred Hunter & Son, London – it included a few pipes from the previous organ by T Hughes & Co, London of 1861. In 1963 Gray & Davison rebuilt it and enlarged it from 2 to 3 manuals. John & Eric Shepherd took over tuning in 1986 including minor changes in 1987 & 1993. Whilst church rebuilding work was carried out in 2013/2014, the organ was dismantled. The instrument now has 1854 pipes, Gt 11, Sw 10, Ch 7 & Pedal 8 stops. A superb afternoon, for just £5!

## **10.5 Tour of Midlands September 2014**

- Jonathan Holl

This took place from Monday 29th September to Thursday 2nd October. A good start was made, arriving at Coventry Cathedral in time to hear a lunchtime recital by the Organist and Director of Music, Kerry Beaumont. This was one of the regular Monday recitals, which was well attended. He played works by Saint-Saens, Frescobaldi, Martini, Paradis and Lanquetuit. Also included was an improvisation on ‘Thine be the Glory’. An encore followed which was another improvisation on ‘Food, glorious food’, where we heard extracts from Bach’s Toccata and Fugue, Vierne’s Symphonie No 1, Sheep may safely graze (??!) etc. etc. It was not long into the recital that we realised we were listening to a very skilful and highly accomplished organist. After the recital, he gave us a warm welcome, spoke briefly about the instrument and allowed us free reign to play while he retired to the pub with his wife! The organ was built by Harrison’s and has 73 stops over 4 manuals and pedals. There is everything one needs except, surprisingly, a Vox Humana. The organ layout is sensational with the various departments positioned vertically, one above another on both sides of the chancel, giving a very direct sound into the vast Nave. The height of the organ from floor level to the top is approximately 70 feet, and for the tuners there is a vertical ladder inside the organ on both sides from top to bottom. On a personal note, the organ was a delight to play and everything sounded ‘just right’. The cathedral has lovely acoustics and the Swell reeds are as fiery as I have heard in the UK. My last visit here was just after the opening in 1963!

We proceeded to Lichfield, where we were booked to stay for 3 nights. Our hotel, The George, was comfortable, friendly and with

good food. Lichfield turned out to be a very attractive small town with many good shops (and restaurants) and of course a lovely and historic cathedral. The station was a 5 minutes walk which was convenient for those wishing to travel to Birmingham, about 35 minutes away. Personally, I was very pleased to visit Lichfield; it was where my father started his organ career in 1926 as an Articled Pupil, then Assistant Organist to Ambrose Porter, the Cathedral Organist.

The next day, we were in Birmingham to visit the two cathedrals. The morning visit was to St Philip's Anglican Cathedral where we were hosted by the Assistant Organist, David Hardie. Before he arrived we were looked after by their newly appointed Heritage Manager, Jane McArdle, who explained much about the history of the cathedral and what plans they had to more fully engage the public. The church was built in 1715 and an organ by Schwarbrick was installed in a west end gallery. Over the years work was done involving well-known organ builders such as Snetzler, George Pike England and William Hill, who moved the organ to its present position in the North East corner. Since 1894, the organ has been in the care of Nicholsons and in 1993 major work was carried out. The organ has 4 manuals with 61 stops. It was comfortable to play and with a very good sound, but the disposition of the pipes required the player to be aware of the balance in the nave, between the different sections of the organ.

After a splendid lunch at a well recommended Italian restaurant (Fumo), we proceeded not very far to St. Chad's Roman Catholic Cathedral. This has a very striking interior, beautifully decorated with much gold leaf. The organ was installed in the early 1990s in the West end gallery, specially built. We were greeted by David Saint, the Organist and Director of Music and Acting Principal of the Birmingham Conservatoire. He gave us a short history of the organ which was by Walkers. After playing to us (from memory) various extracts from the repertoire, he disappeared to his office in the depths under the cathedral. We were free to play! The organ has 3 manuals and 40 stops. The voicing is bright and there is an array of mutations in the style of the times. The sound was impressive and very loud at the console.

We returned to Lichfield where we attended a recital in the Cathedral given by Colin Walsh of Lincoln Cathedral. He played works by Langlais, Bach (Fantasia and Fugue in G minor), Franck, Harwood, Bairstow, Tournemire and Vierne. A real 'Tour de Force'.

The next morning, it was 'our turn' with a visit to the cathedral organ. We were made very welcome by the Assistant Organist, Martyn Rawles, whom we had met the previous evening at the recital. He spoke about the cathedral and its organs. The cathedral is one of the oldest places of worship in the country. The organ was built by Holdich in 1861, when it boasted the first full pedal specification, along contrapuntal lines, in England. A rebuild by William Hill & Sons took place in 1884 and the organ was moved to its present position over the North Quire Aisle in 1907. The instrument was rebuilt in 2000 and a substantial Nave section was added, playable from the main console. The organ and console are very high; the organ loft is the smallest I have ever experienced in a cathedral with room for just one other person! The tuning is to Old Philharmonic pitch, which means that the organ is almost a semitone sharper than Concert pitch. For concerts with other musical instruments, a large 3 manual digital organ is used. We learned that this instrument once caught fire during a concert! The main organ was comfortable to play (when finally seated) and the sound was magnificent in the vast space of this high and lengthy cathedral.

In the afternoon we visited the Great Hall of Birmingham University. Our member, Christopher Cipkin, now the music librarian of the university, was able to host us. The Hall itself is an impressive building under a large dome. The organ by Norman & Beard is situated at one end on a gallery, the pipes being divided each side; there are 4 manuals with 52 stops. A rebuild took place in 1967 with some tonal additions appropriate to the epoch. There was ample time to play and the organ sounded ideal for the accompaniment of ceremonial occasions. Christopher also showed us the new Elgar Concert Hall, just completed, not far down a corridor. We saw the new organ by the Swiss firm Garnier, looking very beautiful in a decorated case. Unfortunately we were not able to play – work was still in progress on the hall and organ. The day concluded with dinner at our hotel in Lichfield where we were joined by Christopher.

The last day arrived and we went to Leicester Cathedral, where we were warmly greeted by the Organist and Director of Music, Christopher Johns. There was considerable work taking place in the cathedral, preparing for the re interment of King Richard III in a few months. The cathedral is effectively a large parish church with the organ situated on the west gallery. We had the pleasure of playing the large 4 manual Harrison organ.

So ended another Association Tour where we played six prestigious organs and were made very welcome at all the venues. Grateful thanks are due once again to Christine Wells who made all the considerable arrangements.

## **10.6 Annual Dinner on 15th November 2014**

The Annual Dinner was held at The Crown, Play Hatch on the outskirts of Reading. We were privileged to have as our Guest Speaker, Malcolm Hawke, General Secretary of the IAO, who came to us from Sussex. Members and guests enjoyed an excellent three course meal.

Malcolm, who attended with his wife, spoke enthusiastically about all aspects of the IAO. He explained how he became an organist almost accidentally and had learnt the need to adapt to various kinds of congregation. He stressed the importance of supporting those churches with minimal or difficult musical resources. His talk was delivered in a cheery and engaging manner with a scattering of amusing anecdotes.

As always, this was an evening enjoyed by all.

Grateful thanks to Ian May who made all the necessary arrangements.

## **10.7 Samuel Coleridge-Taylor by Harry Russell**

- John Jebb

On Saturday, 10th January, 2015 we gathered in St. Andrews URC, Reading. Berkshire Organists Association President Harry Russell held his audience in attentive concentration as he took us on a journey through the life of Samuel Coleridge-Taylor.

For those who knew very little of this enigmatic character we learned he was in part, of African descent and that his talent was recognised at the early age of 5 when he began the violin. By 7 he was singing in St George's Church choir, Croydon. At the age of 15 he attended the RCM where he was introduced to the organ.

He was raised by his mother and her father, as Samuel's biological father left England without ever knowing of his son's birth having

come to this country from Africa to study medicine. What an introduction! Harry turned to the little organ behind him.

Firstly, he played 'Arietta', of SC-T's "Three Short Pieces" - which included 'Elegy' and 'Melody', the first two marked 'introductory voluntary' indicating church use, demonstrating Samuel's ability to write a good tune and in such a way that the playing neatly happens for the hands as well as pedal and swell box etc.

Returning to the narrative of Taylor's life - help from Col. Herbert Walters enabled his violin studies and composition with Charles Villiers Stanford. He may have experienced racial issues, although his abilities afforded him continued success in musically influential circles. Already published by August Jaeger at Novello, Samuel left the RCM in 1897. He was a contemporary of Holst and Vaughan Williams, and invited by Elgar to produce a piece for the Three Choirs Festival in 1898, a decade before Vaughan Williams. Quite a Star!

At the age of 23 he shot to fame with his composition Hiawatha based on Longfellow's epic poem about Native American Indians. Here we listened to a CD - the WNO revival of 1990 with Bryn Terfel.

The original performance was at the RCM, conducted by Stanford and attended by Elgar and Sullivan. Startlingly, although the work was played over 200 times in the UK and USA, SC-T only received fifteen guineas and no royalties ever from Novello. This treatment led to the formation of the Performing Rights Society.

With success and fame Samuel married Jessie Walmisley, a singer he met at the RCM. There was family resistance to the mixed race marriage, however the couple had a boy Hiawatha and girl Gwendolyn known as Avril, the latter achieved success in her own right.

Harry, finding his correct spectacles for playing, sat down at the organ and we heard 'Melody', a beautiful rendition.

We learned of a busy life, teaching, composing, conducting and adjudicating including the National Eisteddfod Wales in 1900. He composed songs, orchestral and instrumental music and an opera. Currently, Daniel Hope has a recording of the Violin Concerto,

Hiawatha was considered a 'breath of fresh air' in the choral writing of the time

Here Harry played another CD of Hiawatha's - 'Dance and Chorus'

Followed by one of his best pieces - 'Hiawatha's Vision'

Samuel learnt more about his paternal lineage with history of enslavement, and likened the intention of his 'Twenty-four Negro Melodies' for addressing African melodies in the manner of other composers for their respective folk traditions.

Samuel Coleridge-Taylor collapsed at Croydon Station in 1912 awaiting a train. Three days later he died of pneumonia age 37. Thousands attended his funeral and donations for his family including a pension of £100 per year from King George V were made.

Returning to the organ Harry played SC-T's 'Elegy'

In conclusion, Hiawatha retained popularity in the thirties under the guidance of Malcolm Sargeant at the Royal Albert Hall with 600 singers, 200 dancers - mostly amateurs with homemade costumes.

President Russell played a CD of 'And they said "Farewell for ever"'

There was great applause for a thorough and intriguing presentation. We wandered downstairs to do the quiz and enjoy tea whilst conversing about what we had just heard.

## 11. General Articles

### 11.1 Tensions at Wokingham

- Peter Marr

In the 17th century, provincial ("Country") parish congregations, such as at Wokingham, were led in their psalmody by the Parish Clerk, appointed frequently out of charity rather than musical ability. The singing, in the "Old way", which was led by the Parish Clerk, line by line and often with ornamentation, was unaccompanied and in unison. Towards the end of the century and in the first years of the eighteenth century, groups of singers were encouraged to assist the congregation in the psalmody - the metrical psalms - and sometimes there was also a wish to sing short anthems before or after a service, emulating music in the cathedral style. These groups often included young women as well as the men.

The "New Version" of the Psalms (Tate and Brady) was supplanting the "Old Version" of Sternhold and Hopkins. Innovations, including "fuging" tunes were excluding congregations from their well-loved melodies. Many such groups of singers existed not to lead but just to be heard.

This situation came to be discouraged and disagreements were inevitable. We see this occurring in 1739 at All Saints' Parish Church at Wokingham.

The story is told in a statement prepared, so it would seem, by one of the Churchwardens, Dennington Bradley (1688-1749).<sup>[1]</sup>

The Case of the Churchwardens of the Parish of Wokingham

*Wokingham is a large Town parish within the Counties of Berks and Wilts and within the Peculiar of the Dean of Salisbury (who Visits) and has a large and Comodious parish Church well pewed and seated with handsome large Galleryes and very populous, and for time out of Memory God[']s divine service hath always been officiated & performed therein in a most quiet decent manner 'till of late years a set of Young fellows and Girls have in a Contemptuous manner associated themselves under pretence of Singing Sal: fa:- and separated themselves from the Congregation in the time of divine service into a body together in a particular part of the Church and then have taken upon themselves to name and set and Sing what*

*Psalm they pleased without suffering or permitting the Clerk of the parish to name or read the same, and not only sing the psalms-according to their new and unintelligible way to the general part of the Congregation, whereby they cannot Join in singing as they were usually wont, but take upon them likewise to sing Anthems and Songs no ways ordered set down or specified in the book of psalms to the disquietude of the Church in general.*

*And it being insisted on by the Minister & Churchwardens that they shou'd not take upon them to name or set the psalms for the future of themselves; but that the same shou'd be done by the parish Clerk, who (being antient & infirm) the Minister and Churchwarden did consent might have his son (who could sing well) to sing with him and assist him in Setting the psalms and so ordered him to begin & proceed as from the Sunday after Easter day last [margin note: 29th Apr 1739; underlining in original]; But on this order those young fellows & Girls on the Clerk[']s naming the psalm, they had prevailed upon on the Clerk[']s son, not to assist his father in setting the psalms, and so no psalm was sung, but as soon as Church was done, they all set up and begun one of their Customary Anthems or Songs composed by themselves in Contempt and scorn to the Minister & Churchwarden's aforesaid order.*

*Whereupon the Churchwarden imediately went up to them and removed them out of their Seats and dispersed them, forbidding them to assemble and sing any more in the like manner which according to their custom they had done not only in the Church after service but even in the Evenings of the weekdays and then and their [i.e. there] used to make and appoint their private meetings & Caballs as is conceived to the great prejudice & distraction of many of them. That when they had been so dispersed for the two following Sundays, the Clerk named & read the psalms and the same were set and sung by the Congregation in general as antiently Customary in the old way in a very quiet and decent manner.*

*But those young Creatures being initated [?] in an irreligious Audacious & Malicious manner on Sunday the 20th day of May 1739 assembled themselves & got together again into the Chancel of the said Church without the consent or leave and greatly to the disapprobation & dislike of the Impropiator [2] to whom it is conceived the Chancel properly belongs, and then & there (irreverently turning their backs to the Altar & spreading & laying*

*their hats on the Communion Table) when the Clerk had named the psalm, began in a very loud & Jargonlike manner singing in their new way and in an undecent [sic] manner and greatly to the disquietude of the whole Church and notwithstanding the before Injunction to them by the Churchwardens, as soon as service was done begun singing there, (without going out or departing quietly with the rest of the Congregation,) as they had presumed before to do in the Church.*

As an addition to the Churchwardens' *Presentment* of non-payment of Rates,<sup>[3]</sup> signed by both Churchwardens, Dennington Bradley alone summarised the situation and named some of those involved on one or both occasions: James Notherclift, Robert Duke, John Spratley, Richard Towse, Henry Cotterel<sup>[1]</sup> and Edward Chaplin. As far as I can make out from the Baptism Register, these were local men, in their twenties or early thirties.

So what prompted this outburst? We read that the singers had been active for some time before, as the former pattern of psalmody had been interrupted before - "till of late years" is mentioned. Berkshire was at this time in the Diocese of Salisbury and All Saints' Church and part of the parish was in Wiltshire (detached). The association with Salisbury may explain how this was brought to a head.

We have seen that the person leading the objections to the singers was the Churchwarden, Dennington Bradley.<sup>[4]</sup> Bradley was baptised in the City of London <sup>[5]</sup> but came from a Wokingham family.<sup>[6]</sup> His grandfather had been a local brewer; his father was Town Recorder and a member of the Inner Temple. Dennington Bradley became Town Clerk and Clerk of the Peace in 1719 and in 1727 a Master Extraordinary of His Majesty's High Court of Chancery. One must presume that Bradley would have known Bishop Thomas Sherlock (1677-1761, Bishop of Salisbury from 1734 until 1748) who had succeeded his own father as Master of the Temple. Sherlock campaigned against anthem singing in parish churches, encouraging others in his diocese to do the same. The Dean of Salisbury, John Clarke <sup>[7]</sup> (Dean from 1728 until 1757) was apparently of the same mind otherwise he would not have been quoted in "the Case". Clarke's son, also John and a Prebend of Salisbury, was Vicar of nearby Sonning-on-Thames from 1737 until his death in 1741.

Bearing in mind that this unwanted singers group had being going on for some time (all seems to have been well " 'till of late Years"), it

seems possible that Bradley had been prompted by Dean Clarke, maybe during a visit, to put a stop to the singers, spelling out details to make his point.

The Parish Clerk, described above as "ancient and infirm", was Cyprian Cotterell. He died in 1741. As each eldest son of that family down the generations was named Cyprian, it is not easy to be certain of which generation. As Dennington Bradley was born in 1688 (so aged about 51 in 1739) it seems unlikely (unless out of spite) that he would describe the Clerk as "ancient" if he was a "Cyprian" born about ten years before him. So perhaps Henry Cotterell (if he was the "son" who joined the group of singers), who was born in 1714, was his grandson.

The singers occupied the chancel, not the West Gallery. Whilst it is unclear what the singers sang, it is probable that they had been taught by an itinerant teacher, although whether actually by sol-fa, with each part being taught separately, is also unknown. The irregular harmonies found in some published collections of psalmody at the time [8] might well have justified the use of the word "jargon". In any case, the speed of the music would have been much faster than the way that the Old style psalm tunes were sung. [9]

So there was tension between the generations, the introduction of a complete change of style and a considerable pastoral problem. What the eventual outcome was has not yet come to light.

[1] Chippenham, Wiltshire History Centre and Record Office, MS D5/17/1/3. Original spelling retained.

[2] The shorter version of this (see below) deletes this word and inserts Ordinary, i.e. the Minister.

[3] Chippenham, above, D5/28/107.

[4] His co-Churchwarden was Thomas Segary, "yeoman", a farmer (1675-1768). It is clear from the *Presentment* that Segary disassociated himself from the complaint.

[5] On 9th April 1688 at St Stephen Coleman church.

[6] R. Bradley, "The Bradleys of Wokingham, *Berkshire Family Historian* 33 (September 2008), pp 8-10; see also *Daily Post* 3rd July 1727.

[7] A prominent mathematician and Dean of Salisbury from 1728 until 1757, although he lived with his family at Cambridge.

[8] Examples of psalmody during this period may be found in *Musica Britannica* vol. 85, "Eighteenth-century Psalmody", (2007).

[9] It was in 1710, nearly thirty years before, that John Bishop's *A Set of New Psalm Tunes*, "taught by Thomas Batten", was published for St Laurence's Reading, suggesting that there was an organised choir there.

## 11.2 Yet more Tuning Tales

- Ken Gaines



Ken Gaines at the Birmingham Symphony Hall organ.

During a time of heightened alert concerning mainland IRA activity I was assigned to an Irish tuner. This inoffensive, knowledgeable young man was working for our firm as a sort of "intern" to broaden his experience. We were to tune the organ at a lovely old church where, coincidentally, my first wife and I were married in 1958. Invariably I would find a few

moments there to stand at the relevant spot and quietly give thanks for our happy marriage - which was to last for 51 years. Naturally that church was special to me but not so the organ. It had been rebuilt and crammed into an inadequate case on the west wall. Access for tuning was precariously by ladder (and guess who had to hold it!). Once the tuner had squeezed into the organ I would return to the remote console

and listen for his instructions (indistinct because of his brogue and the intervening pillars).

When we arrived on this occasion the church was locked and I directed the tuner to the Vicarage for the key. For some reason the vicar had not been notified of our visit and not having met that tuner before was alarmed by the deep Irish accent. He told the tuner to return to the church and he would follow. Instead of checking with our office, he notified the police of his concern. Their arrival at the church co-incided with the vicar's. Seeing and recognising me the red-faced cleric apologised to all concerned. I'm sure the most ardent terrorist would not have blown up that church. However, after the usual difficult and frustrating tuning, I wonder if this mild Irishman might just have been tempted to put paid to that organ.

Another organ that gave us no great pleasure was the Baptist church in a rural market town. The former galleries had been bridged to form an upper floor to serve as the main worship area. The lower floor divided into useful rooms - an ingenious use of space. The organ had been reduced and rebuilt on both sides of the south facing large window at the rear of the former galleries. This was against the organ builder's advice but at the insistence of the architect. It was just as if the organ had been placed in a greenhouse and suffered badly from extremes of temperature. On one visit we suggested that Venetian blinds be fitted to the window behind the organ to help alleviate the effect of the sun. On our next visit the steward proudly announced that a Venetian blind had been put up behind the organ as suggested. We could see no trace of it from outside but once inside realised that a Venetian blind had indeed been fitted, but behind the remote console situated by the east facing window.

It was at this same church that another amusing and memorable incident took place. There was the usual list of faults, mostly attributed to the heat and humidity problems. Just as we were about to start tuning we were introduced to a man we had never met before. This man who could "talk the talk" in a limited way seemed intent on telling us how to do our job. This did not go down at all well with the tuner who was a director of the firm and one of the country's leading voicers. After receiving a severe riposte the man confessed that he used to work for an organ builder, Mr ---. "Mr Gaines", said the tuner, "Take this man out and shoot him." Trying to calm the situation I said "What is Mr --- doing now?" "He's gone back to market gardening,"

was the reply. "It's a pity he ever left it," my mate retorted. As far as we know Mr -- had never built anything new over a period of almost 20 years. However, he certainly left a crop of "restored", "renovated", or "rebuilt" organs, very few of which were anywhere near satisfactory. Our firm reaped a crop of new or renewed tuning contracts and even some for further improvement work where organ funds had not been exhausted.

Not all "one man bands" or small firms are bad. There are many small organ building firms and individuals doing excellent work within their capabilities.

We were often amused and sometimes alarmed at amateur attempts at repairs, renovations and even removals. Pipe mouths often suffered badly during re-painting of speaking show pipes. Attempts to save expense are understandable but the savings are often illusory when set against the cost of consequent remedial work. Often a quote for cleaning was enough to stir some well meaning but unthinking volunteers into action. Vacuum cleaners and feather dusters would be deployed and front pipes dented or broken. Small pipes could be bent over or even snapped off. There is no reason why a competent handyman with a rudimentary knowledge should not attempt a temporary repair to a broken component. However, a more remote or unseen fault could have caused the visible component to fail in the first place. If it is possible to live with a missing note, stop or accessory it may be better to wait until a proper repair can be made. A church that had a faculty but not the finance to move their organ some 12 or 15 feet decided to move it themselves. The smallish 2 manual Thos Hill organ was slid inch by inch along the floor accompanied by the blower which they hadn't the wit to disconnect. Inevitably the vibration of the move loosened the dowels and glued joints of the casework and was the "last straw for the old tapes holding the reed pipes. Some of the large pipes were removed to reduce top weight and subsequently replaced in the wrong holes! The case had become precariously unstable - nothing that a few balls of string would not fix!. What a pathetic shambles.

Another pathetic attempt to renovate an old organ (possibly built by Waughs of Monmouth) included covering the case with plywood panels. An old pedal board had been added and attached as pull downs to the lower manual by string which of course had become slack and ineffective.

The great variety of stop knobs and keyboard cheeks has always fascinated me. Stop knobs on organs range from tiny unmarked specimens with paper labels on the jamb to turned ivory or turned wood with ivory facings. A Jones organ in Birmingham had large oval heads and a Brindly and Foster huge ceramic heads. When the specification was altered the ceramics department of a local Polytechnic came to the rescue with replacement heads. The variety of names given to stops is fascinating, on some old organs there is a stop marked Blower. This is not, as might be supposed, a switch for the electric blower (although at least one has been adapted for that purpose). Rather it allowed a block of wood to strike the case in the vicinity of the man or boy operating the blowing handle or the valve of an hydraulic motor. It was to warn the blower to put down his newspaper and get blowing! On the organ Edward Elgar played as organist at St George's RC church in Worcester, there are some stops marked with an "E". When this Nicholson organ was enlarged and rebuilt it was specified that all the original ranks should be retained and identified with the letter "E" so that it could still be played using the same stops and compass that Elgar would have known. © K J Gaines

### 11.3 Singapore revisited

- Malcolm Rigg

My neighbour John Mortimer served in the RAF in Singapore in 1949 at the Changi airbase.



While there he took a considerable number of photos of the city as it then was. We have visited my younger son who lives in Singapore close to Changi (now) International Airport, and I was curious to see how the locations had changed. I was also curious to see what churches had organs and hear about the state of Singapore after WW2 and also whether any church material (eg pipes) had been lost or removed by the occupying forces.

My first stop was St Andrews Cathedral. Both pictures were taken from approximately the same spot. [photo of 2013 and 1949]



Inside the Cathedral the organ console is in the choir for an electronic Rodgers organ.

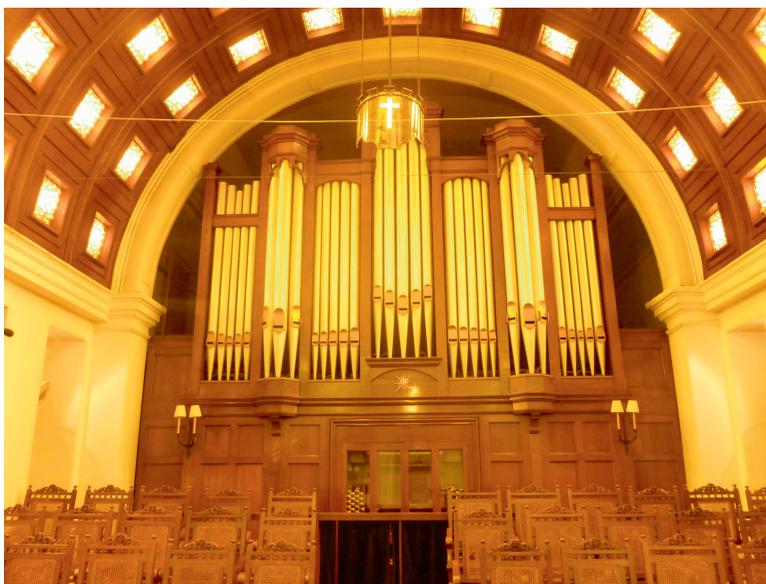
However it still can control some original pipes which are situated over the west end of the church. The cathedral is fortunate in having many organists including the

charming young lady who described the organ layout to me. The main problem with a pipe organ in Singapore is ensuring playability within a wide range of humidity.



Pipes over west end of St Andrew's Cathedral.

Some Highland regiments (specifically The Gordon Highlanders and The Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders) preferred to use a non C. of E. church and in the Presbyterian church in Orchard Street which they used, their flag-holders for setting regimental colours are still there. This church has a main pipe organ behind the choir rebuilt by J.W. Walker & Sons in 1962. It has three manuals with 43 speaking stops and is believed to be the largest church organ in S.E. Asia. There is another smaller pipe organ in the vestry which I was unable to see.



Orchard Road Presbyterian Organ and below: the Church exterior.

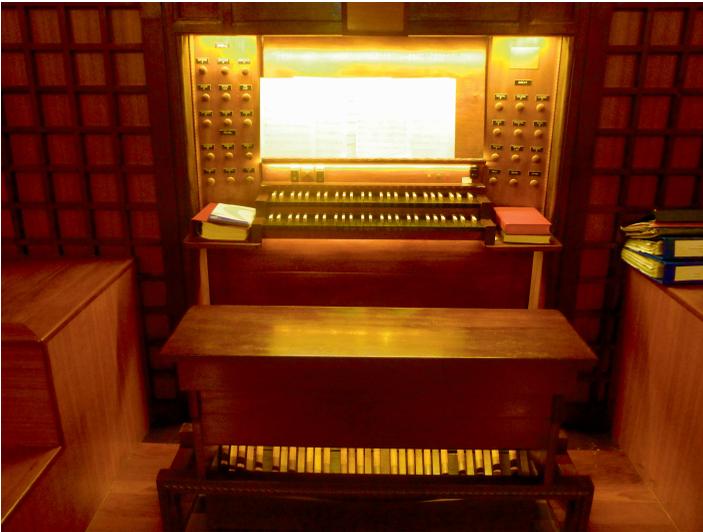


The Methodist church was very fortunate to have been spared being looted during the Japanese Occupation during which time worship services continued. A plaque on the organ is inscribed “Walker & Taylor Lincoln England (1936) Rebuilt by Robert Navaratman, Singapore 1989”. The 2005 specification of the 1103 pipes is:

<b>Great CC-g3</b>		<b>Pedal CC-fl</b>	
Principal	8	Bourdon	16
Dulciana	8	Subbass	16
Clarabel	8	Gedackt	8
Principal	4	Flute	8
Flute	4	Flute	8
Piccolo	2	Trumpet	8
Mixture III	1 1/3	Trumpet	4
Trumpet	8		
Glockenspiel	8		
<b>Swell CC-g3 unenclosed</b>		<b>Couplers</b>	
Diapason	8	Swell/Great	
Gedackt Flute	8	Swell/Pedal	
Octave	4	Great/Pedal	
Harmonic Flute	4		
Nazard	2 2/3		
Fifteenth	2		
Terz	1 3/5		
Trumpet	8		



Kampong Kapor Methodist Church organ and console.



The Victoria Memorial Hall has two organs but when I last visited Singapore the building was being refurbished and entry wasn't possible. However the building hasn't changed much in 60 years, but the road traffic has increased and the trees have grown.  
[Photo of 1949 and 2014]





Sir Stamford Raffles - statue in front of the Victoria Memorial Hall

The Plaque



When John was there in 1949 the Fullerton building was alongside the Padang [photo below] and operated as the Post Office. The present building on the site is the Fullerton Hotel [photo on left] which has in one basement area many interesting pictures of the former use of the building showing the workers sorting mail. In the intervening years much of the Padang has been reclaimed from the sea.



Fullerton Hotel (2014)

Post Office across the Padang

Many thanks are due to the staff of the Changi Museum who helped to identify some of the 1949 pictures. The Museum covers the period from Colonial Times, through WW2 to Independence from Britain and is well worth visiting. I must also thank contacts at St Andrews Cathedral, the Presbyterian Orchard Street Church and the Kampong Kapor Methodist Church for welcoming me into their midst and providing information about their organs and church history. Hopefully on my next visit to Singapore I'll be able to see and hear the organs in the Victoria Memorial Hall.

## 11.4 A Tuner's model organs

- Ken Gaines

In a pretty little Cotswold church there is a small Victorian organ by Albert Pease of London. In a corner of the church I spotted a model of an organ with a label "A Pease" over its tiny music desk. However, the model was of a 2 manual organ whereas its 'big brother' had only one manual, a pedal board and just five stops. The origin and purpose of the model may never be known. It may have been a representation of how an enlargement would look. It was rather naïve and not the best example of the model maker's craft. Some large front "pipes" were disproportionate and the keyboards were of card marked out with black ink. The scale was about 1/10 or 1/12.

Conceitedly, I thought I could have done a better job even with my limited skills. Some time later I determined to make a model and

drew plans of one in 1/12 scale. This size was decided for me by the availability of a kit for an American organ. A long standing family friend (now my wife) was into building and equipping dolls' houses. Materials and accessories from suppliers were to prove useful and I later found the keyboards and drawstops were available as a separate package.

Having decided on the scale it was necessary to settle on what to model. Eventually I decided to make a freelance model of a typical two manual Nicholson organ as produced in the mid to late 19th century but as renovated and modernised in mid to late 20th century. Apart from the keys and drawstops everything was scratch built including the pedal board. After unsuccessfully attempting to form front "pipes" in very thin metal I asked an engineer friend to turn them in brass rod of varying diameters. I then cut the mouths and formed "bay leaves" by filing. Dowelling and fine alloy tubing formed inside pipes along with lengths of square section wood. Even the swell box has a representative selection of pipes.



The finished article has been appreciated by many for the details included, such as replica builder's labels, Nicholson pattern key cheeks, blower switch, a "tell tail" and even an A & M Hymnal on the

organ bench. The blowing handle has been retained along with the usual organ blower's graffiti on the organ case. At the rear an assortment of choir notices are displayed along with the dire warnings of the Ecclesiastical Insurance Co. The dimensions are 14" high, 9" wide and 10 ¼" deep from the front of the pedal board.



Having nowhere to keep the model it is on loan to Nicholsons who kindly made a showcase for it. It can be viewed (by appointment) at the factory in Malvern.

If anyone proposes to embark on a similar project I would be pleased to discuss and advise.

Since my first foray I have built a less ambitious model of a Rest Cartwright one manual that I have known all my life and a freelance chamber organ and also a square piano for one of Beryl's dolls houses.

The square piano with lid open is 4" tall x 4 ¼" wide and 2" deep, the Rest Cartwright is 5" wide, 10 ½" tall and 3 ½" deep. The freelance chamber organ is approx 8" tall.



Editor's note: Ken Gaines provided me with some photos on a CD and Nicholsons kindly responded to my request for photos by sending me a bigger selection of photos, some of which I have used, which I gratefully acknowledge.

## 11.5 Stamps of interest

- Mark Jameson

### Europa stamps for 2014, two specials, three medals and a bank note

Postal authorities across the countries that form the EU work together and once a year stamps are issued on a chosen theme that include the word "Europa" within the design. Europa issues started in 1956 and since 1993 PostEurop [note no "e"] has been responsible for their issue. The theme for 2015 is old toys, 2016 will be Ecology, 2017 Castles. Music has now featured twice, in 1985, and last year in 2014. The UK Europa issue featured the bandstand at Eastbourne.



If you look very closely at the bottom right of the stamp – the word "europa" can be seen. In 1985 quite a few nations featured the organ on their stamps, but there were only two this time, The Vatican and The Netherlands.

The majority of stamps issued by the Vatican City feature The Pope or religious activity, but several have featured local organs. Their Europa issue on 20th May 2014 featured two Rome instruments:



The 85c stamp [left] features the organ in *Basilica patriarcale di San Pietro* built in 1892 by Nicola Morettini and includes pipework dating from 1722 by Filippo Testa, it was restored in 2012 by Giani casa d'Organi. It currently has 2 manuals and 18 stops. The 70c stamp [right] features a much older instrument in *Basilica patriarcale di San Giovanni in Laterano* that was new in 1598 and built by Luca Blagi as one manual and pedal. In 1747 it was enlarged by Traeri e Aleris Testa with a second manual, in 1934 Francesco Morinetti carried out a partial restoration but full restoration to 1747 state was carried out by Bartolomeo Formentelli in 1985. Manual 1 has 16 stops and Manual 2 12 stops, the pedals are pull-downs. I have the full stop lists if requested! In all the published material, even the Vatican publicity, these two stamps are shown with the values reversed. However, all the stamps are the same – I suspect somebody did not check proofs correctly!

The other Europa 2014 issue featuring the organ was the Netherlands where street organs are common. The 2014 issue however shows the inside workings of a mechanically playing instrument – I am not aware of any other issue showing this detail:

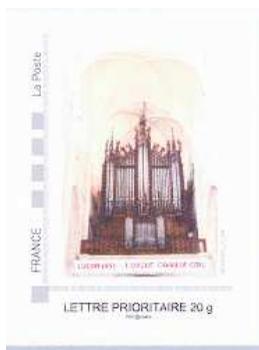


There are two stamps above - left has the inside workings while that on the right shows the exterior decoration - the two were issued joined as one. This scan from the full sheet I have also shows the Netherlands catalogue number, and other detail. There was also a booklet - see cover below:



An anniversary, celebrated elsewhere in this BOA Journal, is the 150th birthday of our Reading Town Hall organ. The UK postal authorities appear only to allow children's activity on bespoke postage stamps - and simply a white flag attached by perforation to a

totally unsuitable small square standard stamp. A Dutch collector interested in organs who had celebrated her own church's organ, produced for me an international use Dutch stamp, face value one Euro, featuring our Town Hall organ. The stamp has been produced in sheets of 10, one complete sheet is with a German friend, three are in Holland and I have a complete sheet in my collection. They can be used as a standard postage stamp if you send a letter from the Netherlands; here it is a collectors item. I also had three sheets produced to sell at Town Hall recitals, they have been selling slowly. The aim was to produce something special to mark the anniversary. Once the costs are covered all profit pass back to BOA - but I have to sell all my stock to make a profit! Each stamp costs £4. This is the stamp: [not easy to scan]



Also celebrating work done, is the Cathedral of Luçon, in the French Department of Vendée. The grand organ here was built in 1857 by Cavaillé-Coll 4/54 and a choir organ added in 1882 by Louis Debierre 2/12. The Cathedral team issued a restricted bespoke issue and I was lucky to get a set. The issue has four stamps, the others are the cathedral exterior, cloisters and a statue.

These three "finds" came to light in 2014. In Germany, Austria and the Netherlands medals or tokens to celebrate music or organ festivals are not common, and reasonably expensive. To find three for the UK was a total surprise:



These three medals are sterling silver and through hallmarks, and speaking with the Company that produced them, I have the dates. The Bristol one [left] is 1942, originally awarded to a Mr Carey, and as it was produced during WW2 is exceptionally rare, I have another example without engraving that dates from c1926. The St Austell one dates from 1925 and the festival organisers did not know about this medal - they no longer include the organ in their festivals due to lack of interest. The right one was issued as a prize in a Plymouth Musical Competition and Festival in 1925, and on the obverse has the Plymouth coat of arms. The dealer who sold the Plymouth item said it had come from a lady who had recently passed away. The image of St. Cecilia at an organ is a common theme.

Finally, £50 notes can be expensive, especially when they feature an organ. A few years ago the UK withdrew the previous £20 note that featured Edward Elgar, but no organ. By chance, I came across an Eire £50 bank note. The first issue of this design was dated 1st November 1982 with the final issued version dated 5th November 1991. The front of the note has the Irish harp and a background of musical staves and lots of notes whilst the obverse [shown below] has the highly decorated panel from the lower front of the case [dating from 1724] of the organ in St Michan's Dublin. The organ was built by John Baptiste Cuvillie between 1723-1725, costing about £470 for the case, three bellows, 2 manuals and 11 stops. The carved panel dates from 1724 and is by Henry Houghton. My example of this banknote is well used and cost more than its original face value, notes of this type in uncirculated condition can be found on Ebay for between £300 and £600 each -



I did not pay anything like that!

## 11.6 The Beast at Hexham Abbey

- Anthony Hodson

This is the term that the Hexham people use for their magnificent organ, and, from what I heard on Tuesday 24th February, it is quite appropriate!

That evening, I was present, with a group of fellow-Mercers, at the installation of the new Rector of Hexham Abbey. It was a wonderful, happy occasion: the new Rector, Rev'd Canon Dr Dagmar Winter had already been part of the ministry team (although her previous parish had been elsewhere); she was clearly respected and loved by those who had worked with her in past years, and she was evidently delighted to be back at the Abbey.

The service was made particularly moving by the inclusion of the ceremony of so many groups from the general Hexham community, from two children representing schools, to the civic dignitaries, and they were all there to celebrate a their place in strong integration of the Abbey and its buildings into the life of the town.

The relatively short service had music at its centre, with a choir of adults and children – boys and girls on this occasion – under the direction of Marcus Wibberley. The choir started the main

proceedings with a very atmospheric a capella rendering of Weelkes' 'Alleluia, I heard a voice'. Later, they sang John Rutter's tuneful 'Look at the world' before the Installation itself; and after The Welcome and the Peace came Stanford's familiar 'Magnificat in C', which always takes me back to my days as a boy alto.

And then, of course, there was the Beast. Our party entered the church in the middle of the Largamente of Bach's Pièce d'Orgue (BWV 572), and what a noble sound that was! We were soon treated to that inexorable 2-octave rising scale on strong pedals, reeds and all, and on to the joyful concluding bars over dominant pedal. The interrupted cadence at the end always surprises (even if keenly anticipated). The final section was a complete contrast, with whispering flutes over the long pedal fall that gently unwound the climactic pedal rise in the Largamente, and, at the end, the piece just disappeared into the ether. This gave a good introduction to the main organ prelude to the service: Buxtehude's Prelude in A Minor: complex and virtuosic, part answering part, with no less than two fugal sections and ending almost with a fanfare – a suitable note before the service started with the Choir's introit.

The service concluded with the Bach's Fugue in G minor (BWV 578) – its theme heightened for me at each entry by the boyhood words: 'Mister Bach wrote sev'ral tunes that sound like this ...'. A real treat afterwards, although not mentioned on the service sheet, was Bach's huge Passacaglia and Fugue in C minor (BWV 582).

The organ is set, very strikingly, over the entrance to the chancel, and it is a handsome and impressive sight. The organ loft is at the centre, facing the nave, but the organist is curtained from view, so that all communications with the choir director and clergy are dependent on video screens. To my regret, I did not have the opportunity to see the organ's console close to on this occasion, but I do hope to have an opportunity next time I am in Hexham.

The organ was built in 1974 by Lawrence Phelps and Associates of Erie, Pennsylvania, U.S.A., with two manuals and pedal organ, and 34 stops. According to the Lawrence Phelps website:

The Phelps Organ at Hexham Abbey was the first modern mechanical-action instrument built in the United States exported to Europe, reversing centuries-old cultural flow. It was part of the

1300th anniversary of the Abbey, an event in which Queen Elizabeth participated in during the September 1974 celebration.

Extensive details and a very interesting article about the organ are to be found on the Phelps web page:

<http://www.lawrencephelps.com/Documents/Instruments/hexham.shtml>

and a quick study of the stop-list gives a sense of the power, variety of registration and the sensitivity of the instrument – and underlines what can be done with a modern two-manual organ.

Not to be forgotten is that the late Lawrence Phelps was the husband of our Patron, Dame Gillian Weir DBE, and she has given a number of recitals on this organ, including its inaugural recital in the presence of Her Majesty the Queen, and a recital celebrating the organ's 30th birthday.

## 11.7 CD Review

- Mark Jameson

Three CDs released in May 2015 would I believe interest BOA members.

At Dr McVicker's Town Hall recital on 9th May, he played a piece by **William Faulkes**[1863-1933] called "**Fantasia on Old Welsh Airs**" - which I much enjoyed. He explained that much of Faulkes' music had been lost in 1961 in a fire at St Margaret's Church, Anfield, Liverpool where he was organist from 1886 to his death.

A new recording by DELPHIAN [DCD34148] has recently been released featuring this composer's works, played at St. Mary's Episcopal Cathedral in Edinburgh by Director of Music Duncan Ferguson. The organ is an 1879 Willis that Harrison & Harrison rebuilt in 1931, and there have been a number of subsequent alterations. Currently the instrument has 4 manuals and 58 stops. The CD lasts 75 minutes, and according to the booklet only the first piece has been previously recorded.

Faulkes' works are detailed below with timing in minutes:

1	Festival Prelude on Ein Feste Burg	6.47
2	Fantasia	11.34
3	Scherzo Symphonique Concertant	8
4	Varied Theme in E Flat	5.09
5	Barcarolle in B Flat	8.17
6	Concert Overture in E Flat	13.22
7	Melodie in F by Anton Rubinstein, arranged by Faulkes	3.49
8	Fantasia on Old Welsh Airs	8.21
9	Legende and Finale	10

Compare these pieces with Vierne, Widor, etc. - they make for an interesting listen!

On 16th September – **David Newsholme** of Canterbury Cathedral is scheduled to play the lunchtime concert at Reading Town Hall. David has just released a recording made in 2013 on the rarely recorded **Metzler** organ in **Trinity College Cambridge**. David's release is a double CD featuring the **Bach Trio Sonatas** – BWV529, 527 & 528 are on the first disc, while BWV526, 525 and 530 are on the second disc. I never tire of hearing these works. The disc is Opus Arte OACD9037D.

At the start of May BOA Committee was notified of a new release by **The Choir of King's College Cambridge [KGS0010]**. The organ here is world famous and with the Choir is considered a single entity in the same way as our Town Hall organ is part of Reading Museum. This purely organ recording has been produced “in-house” and played by **Stephen Cleobury** who has been Director of Music for over 30 years. There are three works:

Fantasy and Fugue on “Ad nos, ad salutarem undam”, S259, by Liszt  
 Sonata No. 6 in D Minor by Mendelssohn  
 Sonata on the 94th Psalm by Julius Reubke

All three works are well known, the last is particularly difficult. Stephen's playing is extremely accurate, and shows off many of the resources of this instrument. It has been recorded in surround sound, however, I do not have that equipment, but somehow, the “wow” experienced with the Priory recording on the same organ with the same player, or with the same pieces on other organs, is missing. This may be because the organ is in need of restoration – the reason for the release of this disc. The College is seeking to raise £1.25 million to repair and endow the organ, and from this sum. £900,000 will directly pay for repair and restoration of the organ, £250,000 to provide an endowment to the organ and £100,000 for repairing, cleaning and upgrading the organ loft. A substantial amount of this has already been funded by a generous donor – Harrisons are due to start in 2016. Each CD costs £9.99 – going to need to sell many! Currently the instrument is becoming unreliable, and the work is aimed to restore the organs brightness. No significant tonal alterations are planned.



I found the interesting 22 page booklet that goes with the disc hard to read, particularly with regard to the description of the music. The point size of the text is tiny – about fontsize 8 at most and there are large blocks of text giving lots of detail about each work, in English, French and German. The text is arranged in two columns on each page – 7 columns over nearly 4 pages for each language. If the text had been in a greater point size, or split into more paragraphs, it would be far easier to read. Four pages are given over to the history and specification of the organ, despite the tiny text size because it is more split up, it is easier to read. Finally there are biographical notes by

Stephen in three languages, still the tiny print, but in smaller blocks of text it is easier to read.

If you wish to support the project, purchase the disc. It should be available widely, and is easy to find on the internet. If you wish to fund/contribute to the restoration – the contact is [development@kings.cam.ac.uk](mailto:development@kings.cam.ac.uk) or 01223 331313.

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