

NORTHAMPTON & DISTRICT ORGANISTS' ASSOCIATION



NEWSLETTER—ISSUE 2/2019



FROM THE EDITOR

I am really grateful to those members who have kindly said that they enjoyed the last issue—my first as editor—and particularly to Roger Skoyes, Barry Wadeson and Helen Murphy who have all most kindly submitted contributions to this edition. I hope you will keep up the good work!

May I also record the Association's sincere thanks to Jonathan Harris, for all his work for NDOA, particularly as Hon. Treasurer. Jonathan has recently stepped down from the role. Do please have a look at what it entails (see p.16) and speak to Alan or Helen if you would like to know more.

In this issue we have articles on three local organs—the Peter Collins instrument in St Michael's, Great Oakley, by Roger Skoyes, and on what we now know to be the Parkinson in St Lawrence, Broughton, near Newport Pagnell by Barry Wadeson. For something different, we have a retrospective on the Compton from the Lyric Cinema, Wellingborough, much travelled and now residing in the West Midlands—originally saved by the former music master at Weavers' School Wellingborough, Mostyn Burman, who will be remembered by many members.

Amongst other highlights we have a perspective on the Medieval organ, in Helen's insights into Martin Renshaw's excellent book, *An ABC of the Medieval Church*; and we have reviews of Philip Bricher's recital at NTCG College Street, of two of Thomas Trotter's Birmingham lunchtime recitals—now numbering more than 780 in 30 years - and the Bloomsbury Organ Day. We also look at an important report on *Inspiring Organists of the Future* by Anna Hallett, a 14-year-old Wiltshire organist, which provides a really thought-provoking look at what is being done to encourage future organists.

There was great sadness to hear of the passing of two of the country's finest organists - Noel Rawsthorne, Organist of Liverpool Cathedral for some 25 years from 1955 to 1980, and Peter Hurford, Master of the Music at St. Albans from 1958 to 1978. Noel's ashes will be interred under the organ at Liverpool during Evensong on 3rd October 2019, prior to the 93rd Anniversary Recital. There will be a memorial service for Peter at St Albans in due course. May they both rest in peace and rise in glory.

Looking forward, in the next issue we will have an exclusive interview with Thomas Trotter, as well as a report of the NDOA visit to Coventry Cathedral. Don't miss it!

Richard Tapp

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The Newsletter is produced four times a year. Contributions are always most welcome and should be submitted to the Editor, please—by 1 June 2019 for the next edition.

NORTHAMPTON AND DISTRICT ORGANISTS ASSOCIATION northamptonorganists.org.uk

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Cover: St Michael's, Great Oakley. Photograph reproduced with kind permission of Roger Skoyes. Roger's appreciation of the organ begins on page 3.

THE ORGAN THAT I PLAY— ST MICHAEL'S, GREAT OAKLEY

ROGER SKOYLES

When I first became involved with the organ in St Michael's Church Great Oakley in 1983 it had the specification shown in the table (*below*). This modest instrument was installed in 1907 by 'Alfred Kirkland Organ Builders, 155A Marlborough Road, London N' and sited on the north side of the Chancel. In 1908 it was insured for the sum of £250.

It was later discovered that the Swell soundboard was from an earlier Harrison instrument and the back of the faceboard was marked Bishop, Ipswich 1890. It is likely that the pipework was also from

earlier organs. In the words of the Diocesan Organ Advisor at the time it was 'one of the most idiosyncratically designed and worst-sited organs in the Diocese'. The organist could not hear the congregation who in turn could barely hear the instrument, making it virtually useless for leading large congregations. Further problems included the extremely heavy action – up to 20 oz. with Swell to Great coupled – a troublesome pedalboard and the fact that the casework obscured about a third of the Communion Rail.

In the year 2000, two further stops were added: a 2ft Fifteenth on the Great and an 8ft Rohr Flute on the Swell. Although this made a significant improvement to the brightness and depth of sound, it was still not entirely satisfactory for large gatherings, particularly with the increasing number of weddings that were taking place in the church. In 2007, the promise of generous donations prompted the search for a new organ and, following discussions with the Organ Advisor, the firm of Peter Collins Ltd. was asked to suggest and quote for possible schemes. One possibility was to move the existing instrument to the west end of the church but with minor tonal changes to enhance the accompanying possibilities.

The second option was to move the organ to the west end, provide direct electric wind chests and a console sited at the north-east corner of the Nave. Some extension could then have been introduced to

enhance the specification without increasing the depth of the instrument. However, in both these cases several pews would have been lost, which was unacceptable.

The final outcome of lengthy deliberations and further fund-raising was that the current instrument was installed in December 2007 and was completed – more or less – at 4am on the morning of the Carol Service!

<u>Great</u>	<u>Swell</u>	<u>Pedal</u>	<u>Couplers</u>
Open Diapason 8	Gamba 8	Bourdon 16	Swell to Great
Dulciana 8	Vox Angelica 8		Great to Pedal
Lieblich Flute 4	Principal 4		Swell to Pedal
			Trigger swell pedal





The old organ was eventually refurbished with a greatly improved specification and installed in Stoke Hammond Church. The new instrument was originally built in 1998 for a private individual who was so pleased with it that it was part-exchanged for a larger 3-manual instrument. Unfortunately, the space available at Great Oakley was not sufficient to accommodate the pedal pipes of 16ft pitch, so it was suggested that digital

technology could be used for some of the pedal stops.

The organ is now ideally situated, both visually and aurally, in the north-east corner of the nave in what was known as the Squire's Pew and has the following specification:

Contained within a case of American Oak, it has keys of bone and ebony with suspended mechanical action, and the touch, whilst not being exceptionally light, is rather sensitive. The Tremulant is quite gentle and affects all the pipework, most of which is new apart from some wooden pipes and the Gamba, which is from the old organ and probably dates from well before the installation date of 1907.

<u>Great (Manual 1)</u>		<u>Swell (Manual 2)</u>		<u>Pedal</u>	
Open Diapason	8	Gedact	8	*Principal	16
Chimney Flute	8	Gamba	8	*Subbass	16
Principal	4	Open Flute	4	*Principal	8
Fifteenth	2	Nasard	2 ^{2/3}	Bass Flute	8
Mixture	19,22	Flageolet	2	Octave	4
		Tierce	1 ^{3/5}	Flute	4
				Fife	2
				*Bassoon	16
Tremulant				Compass	
Stops marked * are digital and the other Pedal stops are obtained by transmission from the manuals.				Manual CC-a 58 notes	
				Pedal CC-f 30 notes	
				Wind pressure 2.5"	

The instrument contains

about 700 pipes and due to the lack of space some are placed horizontally. The front pipes are 70% tin, some of which have to be removed in order to tune the instrument.

The instrument can present some challenges:

- The Swell Organ doesn't – there is no swell box.
- There are no couplers.
- There are no aids to registration.
- The pedal board is a straight German (BDO) style.

However, many satisfying effects can be obtained and the instrument is quite suited to music of the Baroque period. Although there are no reeds (the 16ft Bassoon is digital) the mutations can provide



several interesting combinations including, of course, a Cornet. The Pedal department is particularly versatile and the Diapason chorus on the Great is strong, although the absence of a 4ft Flute on the Great was initially a shortcoming. A satisfactory compromise has now been achieved by adjusting the 4th Principal such that it can be used with either the Open Diapason or the Chimney Flute, the latter combination being a good

balance against the 8th and 4ft Flutes on Manual 2, which itself has no basic Diapason tone. At present the Mixture on the Great is rather strident, but the intention is to soften it a little in the near future. An advantage of having no reeds is that the instrument stays in tune (with itself) for long periods of time and only small and easy tuning adjustments of the digital stops are required during large fluctuations of ambient temperature. This is fortunate since access for tuning is rather restricted.

In spite of the various shortcomings, the organ has a good tonal and dynamic range and overall it is a splendid instrument for a small village church.

Peter Collins built organs in Melton Mowbray for more than 50 years from 1964 until his passing in 2015. He trained with Bishop & Son and then with the acclaimed Austrian builder Rieger, focusing on tracker instruments in the neo-classical style. Notable instruments included those at St Peter Mancroft, Norwich and St David's Hall, Cardiff. From the 1990s he worked on hybrid pipe and digital instruments, including that at Higham Ferrers, with his final instrument being made for the St Albans International Organ Festival in 2015.

ALLEGRO MUSIC. Many members will be familiar with Allegro Music, run for more than 30 years by Richard and Barbara Priest and which for many years also ran the IAO Organist's Review subscription service and supplied Organmaster shoes. Following Richard's ordination and their move to Dorset, they have decided to close their sheet music business, which has now been transferred to Church Organ World, who can be contacted on 01706 888100 and music@churchorganworld.co.uk. Allegro Music will continue to supply archive reprints on behalf of ABRSM, OUP, Schott & Co and Peters Edition.

A FULFILLING PROFESSION... Anyone privileged to edit a publication, great or small, will know the risks of spell-check technology. Most of the time, it's brilliant but just occasionally it's good to be reminded that human input is better. A local parish newsletter most commendably announces the closing voluntaries to be played by one of our most respected members, but recently the spell-checker decided he would play two new contributions to the French Romantic school - 'Grand Choir in D by A Fulfilment' (instead of Alexandre Guilmant, of course) and the famous *Sortie in E Flat* by 'Lefebvre Went...'

UPDATE ON THE ORGAN OF ST. LAWRENCE, BROUGHTON

BARRY WADESON

Readers may recall that in the June 2014 edition of the Newsletter I included a short piece in 'The organ I play' series on the one-manual organ of St. Lawrence's Church, Broughton near Newport Pagnell. It is the tiny organ that I used to play before arthritis began to stiffen my fingers. In the article I speculated on the providence of the organ which was something of a mystery since, as the church is redundant, the records have been dispersed, lost or otherwise disappeared. Well, help has arrived and we now know who built it and it has a connection to a shop in Northampton where organ pipes can still be seen, if you look in the right place!

A local historian in Milton Keynes who writes for the weekly free newspaper regularly updates the Friends of St. Lawrence if he finds anything relating to the church; usually this concerns its Victorian rectors. A short-lived and difficult to find local newspaper called the *Buckinghamshire Standard* that covered the north of Buckinghamshire has finally yielded up information about the organ. We now know that it was built for the church and was not a handed-down house organ as I had supposed. It was paid for by the Rev. John Irving, a long-serving (over 50 years) rector and former curate, specifically for St. Lawrence's and installed in the church in 1881:

"Then in August [1881] the Reverend [Irving] presented a new organ to the church; 'The tone is of great power and sweetness, and reflects great credit on the builder, Mr. Parkinson, of Northampton.'"

The builder was a James Parkinson of 10 Fish Street, Northampton. A quick look at the NPOR proved fruitless. There are several Parkinsons but only one for Northampton at the Fish Street address referred to in an 1874 trade directory, but no other information. The internet may be a great invention but anybody who relies on it entirely needs a lesson in reality. This is why I have so many books at home and believe in supporting libraries that contain real books. It was whilst I was looking something else up in Canon Hilary Davidson's *Choirs, Bands and Organs: A History of Church Music in Northamptonshire and Rutland* that I came across James Parkinson, and much more than I had hoped for.



On the corner of Fish Street and Abington Street in Northampton you will find today a Costa Coffee shop. But, look up and there are two rows of organ pipes now painted in Costa colours. They used to be grey; when I was a young apprentice at Davies's I frequently passed this shop which was then called Fraser, Son and Mackenzie selling high-quality pianos and assorted musical instruments.

James Parkinson appears to have been one of two very busy local organ builders; the other was William Barker of 61 St. Giles Street, Northampton. Both were in business from around the 1850s. Parkinson, added a bit of lustre to his name in his adverts by adding 'from London'. Canon Davidson reports that only one organ by Parkinson is known to exist which was originally in St. Edmund's Church and was moved to Mixbury when St. Edmund's acquired its Hill organ. He will no doubt be pleased to know that we have now identified the little organ at St. Lawrence's as a Parkinson. The fact that Parkinson did not appear to label his organs lends some credence to this since the St

Lawrence organ has no maker's label. Parkinson seems to have specialised in rebuilding: he added two stops to the organ in the Corn Exchange and probably the Cavaillé-Coll Swell too when it was moved to the Guildhall.

What is known about Parkinson is that he had a business relationship with Charles McKorkell, the organist of All Saints, Northampton. McKorkell was both a fixer for Parkinson and Barker, recommending their services to clergy and gentry, and something of a character himself.

JAMES PARKINSON, ORGAN BUILDER, (from LONDON), 10, FISH-STREET, NORTHAMPTON. Organs, Pianofortes, and Harmoniums Tuned and Repaired on moderate Terms.

The following story about Charles McKorkell is included in Canon Davidson's book but was first told to me by Ron Gates many years ago.

McKorkell had presided over the music at All Saints for several decades; he was well known around the county and had even drawn praise from Mendelssohn for his piano playing on a visit to the composer's home in Leipzig. However, he was in the habit of adjourning to the *George Hotel* across the road for a pint during the sermon. Sydney Gedge, then vicar of All Saints got wind of this and proposed to catch out the lubricated organist by cutting short one of his normally three-quarter hour sermons and substituting a brisk five-minute address. This would allow McKorkell time to depart but not to drink up in time to get back. One of the churchwardens favourably disposed to McKorkell had been alerted to this and hurried across the road to warn the organist. When the vicar ended his brief sermon and before he could announce the next hymn an astonished congregation heard the organist launch into the National Anthem complete with every musical embellishment in his repertoire.

McKorkell ran a music shop in St. Giles Street with his sister Emma (also an organist). Between them they ran dancing classes and music tutorials in Northampton and the surrounding district. In an advertisement in the *Northampton Mercury* on 1st June 1844 the McKorkells had four finger organs for sale ranging from £50 through to £200, plus several barrel organs. Parkinson too advertised his organs, some incorporating the new *anches libres* from eminent makers in Paris. To you and me *anches libres* are simply reed pipes like the Clarinet, Cor Anglais and Euphonium. But this was 1855 and a novelty for English organs.

McKorkell died in 1879 so how the Rev. Irving of Broughton came to engage James Parkinson to build an organ for his church we do not know. It was originally placed on the south side of the Chancel at St. Lawrence's in 1881. However in 1903 it was moved to the north-east side of the Nave with choirstalls built around it. An 1899 inventory tells us that there were 8 cassocks and 8 surplices for the choir, so perhaps the Chancel was getting a bit crowded. Interestingly there were only 18 copies of Hymns Ancient & Modern, 16 Prayer Books and 16 Cathedral Psalters. Of course, in those days people often brought their own prayer and hymn books to church.

In November 1921 we learn that the organ was rebuilt and enlarged with the addition of the Viol di Gamba 8' and Bourdon 16' (actually an additional octave to the 8' Stopped Diapason Bass). It is possible that the 4' Flute was placed on a separate windchest to make way for the Viol di Gamba at this time, and may explain why the 4' Flute is poorly winded. The work was carried out by Messrs. Fraser of Bedford. There was an organ building firm called Fraser & Son of Bedford at this time and although this is speculation it is possible that they are the 'Fraser & Son' part of Fraser, Son and McKenzie of my apprentice days. James Parkinson was still building organs in the 1880s according to trade directories; this is despite having been made bankrupt in 1862 from which he seems to have recovered and later had a factory along Billing Road.

FOR SALE (a great bargain) a good-toned, Finger ORGAN, with five stops, viz., stop diapason bass, claribella treble, dulciana, open diapason, and principal; one and a half octaves of German pedals (concave and radiating); neatly-designed case, with gilt pipes in front, admirably adapted for a small church or chapel.—Apply to J. Parkinson, Organ Builder, 10, Fish-street, Northampton. 765

James Parkinson died on Wednesday 12th October 1887 at around 9.00 pm in the evening, apparently from a heart attack. He had been to Harpole that day on business and on his way home had called at the Green Man in St. James's for a glass of stout, where he died aged 67 years.

Sources: Davidson, H. (2003) *Choirs, Bands and Organs: A History of Church Music in Northamptonshire and Rutland*. Oxford: Positif Press; Buckinghamshire Standard; Northampton Mercury.

THE "LYRIC" COMPTON, WELLINGBOROUGH

RICHARD TAPP

The Lyric Compton. The Lyric Cinema, Wellingborough, opened on 14th December 1936. In pride of place was a two-manual Compton organ of five ranks, which was equipped with a lifting and illuminated console, and one of Compton's Melotone units which provided a varied range of additional sounds and effects. The organ ranks were a tibia clausa, vox humana, tuba, flue and cello.

The Cinema's organist, Neville Turner, came to Wellingborough from the Palace Theatre Ramsgate, having previously held a cinema organ post at the Regal Theatre, Great Yarmouth. A Yorkshireman, he had played at churches in and around Sheffield from the age of 12, and had latterly been organist and choirmaster at St Bartholomew's, Carbook.



MR. NEVILLE TURNER

The Lyric—which became part of the ABC chain—closed in 1969 and became a bingo hall, before being demolished for the site to form part of what is now the Swansgate shopping centre. The final concert was given in June 1967 by Noel Briggs, Harold Nash, and Mostyn Burman.

The Weavers Relocation. Mostyn Burman taught at Weavers School—then Wellingborough Technical Grammar School—and with the support of parents, staff and pupils of the school, the organ was acquired. It was re-built in the school hall, with organ lofts constructed to either side of the stage for the Compton ranks, and for the Melotone unit, percussion and effects. An additional rank of Walker diapason pipes was also installed.

The illuminated console surround did not go to the school—it was purchased by Roly Walker,

himself an organist, and placed in the showroom of his motor dealership in Wellingborough where it had pride of place amongst his dealership stock. The organ itself was extensively used at the school for a number of years—the author remembers the excitement of playing it in the 1970s (as a friend's father taught at Weavers). A recording was made in the *Cinema Organ Encores* series, with Mostyn Burman playing a very broad selection of music



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The proprietors of the Lyric Cinema have made ample provision for the musical side of their entertainments by the installation of a Compton Theatre Organ. The instrument is equipped with the 1936 Compton Electrone Unit which provides the most sensational and appealing Tonal Effects ever heard in a cinema. Another feature of the Organ is the wonderful Illuminated Console, or key desk, which gives a remarkable range of ever-changing colours.

COMPTON ORGANS ARE ALSO INSTALLED AT

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Washwood Heath	Beaufort	Derby	Haymarket	Oxford	Ritz
Handsworth	Regal	Cambridge	Rendezvous	Nottingham	Elite
New Street	Forum			Great Yarmouth	Regal

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which showcased the organ's abilities. The programme began with Sousa's *Manhattan Beach March*, continued with a medley of tunes from the opera, *Diamonds are a Girl's Best Friend* and a wartime selection, including the *Dad's Army* theme, *A Nightingale Sang in Berkley Square* and *The Army, The Navy and the Air Force*. It can be heard on YouTube—see Sources, below.

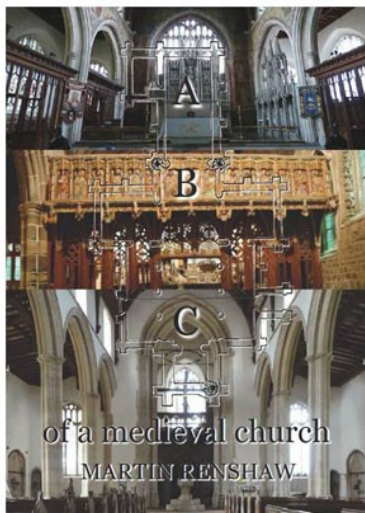
Mostyn Burman. Born in Northampton, Mostyn Burman was educated at Wellingborough Grammar School. Coming to teaching as a career change after a serious road accident, he played at Park Avenue Methodist Church in Northampton for some

20 years before his passing in 2004. The *Chronicle and Echo* paid glowing tribute to his service, noting that he had played church organs since the age of 10, and also that he was resident pianist at Althorp and played for Princess Diana and Prince Charles, as well as playing at the wedding of Earl and Countess Spencer in 2001. The *Chronicle and Echo* noted that 'he was a remarkable and rare musician', whilst amongst other tributes he was described as 'a fine organist and pianist, an all-round-musician and a lovely man'.

Moving again—Bilston Town Hall. In 2007, following work by Cannock Chase Organ Club, the organ was purchased and installed in Bilston Town Hall. A new and very attractive housing for the console was made (right). The Melotone unit was not installed and has since been exported to the USA. In Bilston, the Compton is now used weekly for tea dances— more than 400 having been held — and the Cannock Club recently celebrated the 10th anniversary of its installation at Bilston. Long may the outstanding 'quality of resonance' and 'wonderful impression of tone' heralded in the Lyric's opening programme continue to be enjoyed.



Sources. The Compton Organ summary and advertisement, and the photograph of Neville Turner, come from the Lyric's opening programme which can be found at CinemaTreasures.org, posted courtesy of Mr Alan Ashton and included here with thanks by virtue of Cinema Treasures Creative Commons (Attribution) License. The Cinema Organ Encores LP comes from the author's own collection. It can also be heard at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IMcDeBj-u7M>. The photograph of the console of the organ in Bilston Town Hall is included with thanks to the Cannock Chase Organ Club. A video of Paul Kerner playing the organ as installed at Weavers' School may be found at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A74LGIGuV2k>. Details of the Compton Melotone system can be found at electrokinetica.org, and further information on the Wellingborough installation in the Organ Builder section at Stories-of-London.org. Northampton *Chronicle and Echo*.



WHATEVER HAPPENED TO THE ORGAN? HELEN MURPHY

For anyone (like me) who is a keen church visitor and a fan of the Middle Ages, *The ABC of a Medieval Church* by Martin Renshaw (*At the Sign of the Pipe*, £8) is a fascinating book, full of esoteric minutiae. I attended a lecture (in St Augustine's, Ramsgate, as part of the Pugin Week activities in 2018) given by the author specifically on one small part of the medieval church experience – the organ. As well as an early start as a singer (a chorister at St Paul's, lay clerk at Canterbury Cathedral and a chorus member at Kent Opera) Martin Renshaw has worked on organ restoration (and making) in England and on the continent for many years – and for some time has been involved in organ research into 'later medieval musical infrastructure' with his colleague Dr Victoria Harding, a collaborator in this book, which is a

distillation of over ten years' investigation. Having read some of his writings gleaned from his web site soundsmedieval.org (such as 'Investigating the Archaeology of the Late Medieval Organ' and 'The Removal of Organs from Churches 1540s to the 1640s'), I can feel a fuller article coming on – you have been warned! Co-incidentally, Christopher Howse (who has a regular column 'Sacred Mysteries' in the *Saturday Daily Telegraph*) had written a piece headed 'Observer's Guide to the Wind-Trunk Hole', which I had cut out of the paper, in which he makes reference to Martin's book and draws attention to a particular church in Norfolk where this is still visible to the keen-eyed observer.

Most of us are aware of the great destruction of organs that took place during the Commonwealth period under Oliver Cromwell (a rabid organ-hater) – but what was the status quo ante? Martin Renshaw is of the opinion that organs were far more numerous than previously thought and is assiduous in his search for the evidence, which to the observant is still visible. He maintains that medieval sanctuaries often included an organ located on a gallery or loft generally on the north side – with a bellows room on the outside wall to accommodate not only the bellows themselves, together with their ropes and levers, but also the person (or persons) operating them (the larger the organ the more sets of bellows needed) and with a wind trunk running through the wall. He has found examples in a number of places, both large and small, and evidence of bricked-up holes in a blank north wall or of a former building there would seem to support this. He surmises that the first organists were singers, who would have played alternately with the sung plainsong of the Mass and the Office, but as music developed, becoming more complex (and, necessarily, written down), the dedicated organ player would emerge.

Because of the wholesale destruction of Latin manuscripts during the reign of Edward VI, it is impossible to know just what was sung or played or by whom. The surviving Eton Choir Book (c1490) and the few other sources extant suggest that the contemporary choral record often sounds like organ music with its 'layering of sounds' and contrasts – with a likely cross-over between the two. And what of pedals? Conventional wisdom has it that English organs had none – however, the National Historical Museum in Stockholm has an organ with a pedal board from the late 14th century, and there is reference to pedal-playing in Florence in 1379 – so pedal boards were around in both northern and southern Europe. But with no evidence here, it is impossible to know whether England had them too. But what we do know and have evidence of is the size and complexity of English organs in the early 16th century. The author has carried out a great deal of research to produce this book (illustrated with many photographs and references), and the next time I visit a medieval church I shall look especially for any tell-tale signs (both inside and outside) of former organ galleries/lofts and bellows chambers.

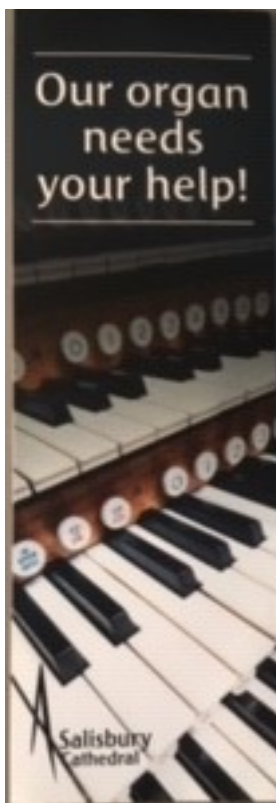
The ABC of a Medieval Church by Martin Renshaw is available, priced at £8, plus £1.50 post and packing, directly from Martin Renshaw's excellent website soundsmedieval.org.



In his last recital of 2018 at the New Testament Church of God in Northampton (ex-College Street Baptist Church to those of us of an older generation), NDOA member Philip Bricher again delighted his small (but increasing!) audience with his usual wide variety of imaginative and out-of-the-ordinary-run-of-the-mill selection of pieces – under the general heading of Christmas – not one of which I had heard before, though I was familiar with some of the names (Betty Roe, Malcolm Riley, David Willcocks, Howard Blake, Norman Warren, David Schelat, Russell Schultz-Widmar, Jean Langlais and David Blackwell – you see what I mean!).

This time he was ably aided and abetted by NDOA President, Alan Cufaude, who contributed a *Prelude on Veni Emmanuel* by John Bertalot (former DoM at St Matthew's, Northampton, in the early Sixties and NDOA President 1962-3) and two chorale preludes on *In Dulci Jubilo* by JSB (BWV 608 and 729). Philip is working hard to keep this worthy organ in the public memory, as it would seem – judging by the keyboards, microphones, guitars and music stands (with a sound desk at the back) that it is not used by the present occupiers of the building, which is a great shame. More power to Philip's elbow (and his hands and feet) for his continuing efforts – and thanks to both him and Alan for their inspiring offering – it was a busy day but well worth the effort. **Helen Murphy**

NTCG was founded in the United States in 1886, and was established in the UK in 1953. College Street is one of 130 ministries of the New Testament Church of God in the UK. NTCG's UK National Office is based in Cheyne Walk, Northampton. Further details of its work can be found at ntcg.org.



SALISBURY CATHEDRAL ORGAN RESTORATION APPEAL LAUNCHED. Salisbury Cathedral has launched a £700,000 appeal for the repair, restoration and rebuilding of the 1877 Father Willis. Noting that an intensive programme of restoration is now essential to ensure the organ survives for future generations, the Cathedral authorities are inviting donations to salisburycathedral.org.uk.

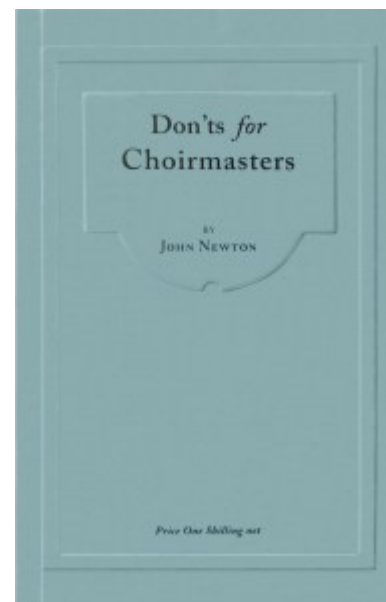
DON'TS FOR CHOIRMASTERS is an entertaining reprint of a little book originally published in the 1920s by John Newton, then organist and choirmaster at Christchurch Priory, and now with a foreword by Paul Phoenix of The King's Singers and PurpleVocals fame.

Some of the recommendations include:

'No. 22. DON'T let a lust for noise rob the evening office of Magnificat or Nunc Dimittis.'

'No. 41. DON'T forget the power of silence. The other day a priest preached a 40-minute sermon on the great value of silence!'

'No. 48. DON'T hide the boys on the occasion of a visit from the bishop, which is all too rare. A word from the bishop does the boys a power of good, aye, and the choirmaster too.' Available from www.gottahavebooks.co.uk £7.95



SUNSHINE IN PARADISE...

Few organ concerts attract several hundred eager customers in the dark days of January. Even fewer do so on a regular basis every two weeks or so, and it is probably fair to say that only one series in recent memory has succeeded in doing so with the same virtuoso organist more than 780 times in 35 years.

Step forward Thomas Trotter—Birmingham’s immensely popular City Organist since 1983, successor to Sir George Thalben-Ball, and closing in on Sir George’s total of some 900 recitals. Adding to his spectacular CV, Thomas has recently been awarded the Medal of the Royal College of Organists.



Thomas’s Birmingham recitals are now split between the city’s Town Hall, with its Romantic four-manual Hill originating from the 1834, and Symphony Hall’s contrasting Klais organ of 2001, both venues on either side of the city’s Paradise Square development.

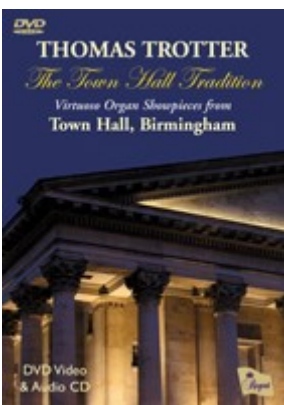
January 2019’s recitals—numbers 780 and 781—took in both venues. The first saw a delightful and varied programme of material showcasing the colours of the Hill, from Bach’s *Fantasia BWV 572* to Thomas’s own arrangement of Holst’s *Jupiter* from the *Planets Suite*. On the way, in memory of Piet Kee, he took in Kee’s *Fantasia on Wacht Auf* and a meditation on the *Passion Chorale*, two movements from Percy Whitlock’s *Sonata in C minor*, Franz Lehar’s *Gold and Silver Waltz*, and Alfred Hollins’ ever-popular *Song of Sunshine*, giving Thomas ample reason to use the Hill’s handbells, installed by Mander during their work following the lengthy refurbishment of the Town Hall in recent years.

Fast-forward two weeks, and Thomas presided over the Symphony Hall Klais in a very different programme, perfectly suited to the contrasting nature of the instrument. Building his programme around the letters B A C H, he began with Liszt’s *Prelude and Fugue on B A C H*, following with Schumann’s *Three Studies*, before Bach’s own *Chorale-partita Sei gegrüßet BWV 768*. He concluded with Judith Wier’s “musical watercolour” *Ettrick Banks*, and Mulet’s spectacular *Carillon-Sortie*.

Richard Tapp

The Birmingham lunchtime recital series takes place on a regular basis, typically on alternate Mondays at 1pm. Tickets cost £6 and more details can be found at THSH.co.uk.

Thomas has recorded both organs, and the video *The Town Hall Tradition* (Regent Records, regent-records.co.uk REGDVD 001, £20) is particularly recommended. An exclusive interview with Thomas for NDOA will appear in the next edition of this Newsletter. Thomas will play the 2019 Castle Ashby recital on Saturday 6th July at 7.30pm—tickets £15 from the Editor at editor.ndoa@gmail.com.



According to the Introduction in the Programme for this year's event on 26th January, the original Bloomsbury Organ Day in 2011 was planned as a one-off event to celebrate the formation of Organists Online in November 2000, but here they are still at it and planning ahead. And with the exception of the evening Festival Recital it's all free – you just come and go as you please.

To kick off, Simon Williams introduced us to the RCO Certificate of Accredited Membership (CAM) and explained how it worked with four 'students' to illustrate the different levels: an 11-year-old at Level 1, a teenager at Level 2 and a man and a woman, both of a 'certain age', at Level 3. With the organ (B C Shepherd & Sons 2008) up on a gallery, with the console on the left-hand – 'north' - side and the pipes in two matching cases at the back, we were able to watch the action on several screens. Michael Stephens-Jones gave the first recital – Buxtehude's *Magnificat Primi Toni*, Dupré's *Cortège et Litanie* (one of my favourites and on possibly the first organ LP I ever bought), concluding with Franck's *Cantabile* (very smoochy) and *Pièce héroïque*.

At this point, I have to own up to going AWOL to dash across to the British Library for the première of an amazing new film about George Butterworth, *All My Life's Buried Here*, by Stuart Hajdukiewicz. The film began with footage of the commemorations held annually in the little village of Posièrès, very close to where he was killed. We saw the Mayor and various villagers who described how they had taken George to their hearts and we saw them wandering among the stalls – just like a typical English village summer fête – and dancing (more of which later). We also saw Hugh Butterworth, George's cousin, who recalled talking as a boy to his 'Uncle Alec' (George's father) and I wondered if he was still alive. Imagine my joy when at the conclusion of the film, a small French contingent came forward and gave short speeches of appreciation. Not only that, but there on the front row sat Hugh, chatting happily to anyone (like me) who approached him. Bearing in mind that George was killed in 1916 at the age of 32 (surely some time before Hugh was born!), one can only suppose his father was George's father's youngest brother.

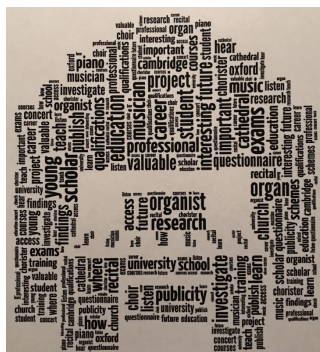
George was very much into the folk movement of the early twentieth century (along with Cecil Sharp, Ralph Vaughan Williams and others) and there he was on film leaping about energetically in a Morris dance – nothing sedate in the true Morris! They were all avidly collecting, recording and transcribing songs and dances before they were lost for ever (and we had a few original recordings, both visual and aural, too of singers). Returning to the present, Roderick Williams was filmed singing some of Butterworth's settings of poems from Housman's *A Shropshire Lad*. One can only imagine what might have been Butterworth's output had he not been cut off in his prime.

Back at Bloomsbury, during the time I'd been away, there were more recitals (including NDOA's own Callum Alger, who played the Mendelssohn *Sonata 3 Op 63 No 3* and Reger's *Fantasia: Hallelujah! Gott zu Loben Op 52 No 3*) and a masterclass by Gillian Weir on César Franck's *Choral No 2* and *Choral No 3*. But the concluding celebrity recital by Isabelle Demers was the highlight: *Concerto in D Minor after Vivaldi* (Jean Guillou); *Romance* from *Symphonie pour Orgue No 4 Op 32* (Vierne); *Intermezzo* and *Finale* from *Symphonie pour Orgue Op 5*; *Un bal* from *Symphonie Fantastique* (Berlioz transcribed Demers); *Deuxième Choral* (Franck) and *Variations on a Theme of Paganini* (Sir George Thalben-Ball) – I've never seen/heard anything like this! I hadn't realised that it was virtually pedals only throughout, and so seeing/hearing four-part harmony played with the feet just blew my head away. I tried it when I got back to my own church on my flat parallel pedal board and I just don't know how she does it (mind you, even if I had the luxury of concave radiating pedals, I don't think I would have done any better!).

Of course, there was a lot of meeting, greeting and networking going on, as ever with these sorts of events; there was even a stall of early organ music (edited by David Patrick of Fitzjohn Music Publications) which looked rather more suited to my modest capabilities, and I bought a small volume of pieces by William Jones of Nayland (1727-1800), a priest and composer. On reading the Editorial Notes, I was very pleased to see that he had been born in Lowick in Northamptonshire, not far from me; Nayland in Suffolk (Constable country) was merely his last post. So, a local boy, then.

INSPIRING ORGANISTS OF THE FUTURE: DOES MORE NEED TO BE DONE?

Anna Hallett (right) is a 14-year-old organist and chorister at St John's Church, Devizes, in Wiltshire. Anna is currently studying for her grade 7 organ exam, and is an RSCM Pipeline organ scholar. She is passionate about the organ, and has carried out an extensive research project questioning more than 250 organists of all ages across the UK, looking at where future organists are coming from, and whether more needs to be done to encourage them.



Her new research report *Inspiring organists of the future: does more need to be done* has now been published on Anna's blog pipeskeysandchords.com. It looks at how people experience the organ, how they too might fall in love with it, and why it is important to nurture and invest in new organ talent.

Anna looks at a range of issues, influences and blockers around how and why people take up the organ—from who organists are, why they start playing, to the education, training schemes, funding and courses available, and membership of various organ-related organisations. She considers the difficulty of access to practice instruments, as well as the exams and qualifications available, the impact of church attendance and the links between playing the organ and a career in music.

The report also looks at the relationship of organist and church, interest in the organ, and publicity around the organ world. In a thoughtful, reasoned and well-argued rationale, Anna concludes:

- Career organists—Directors of Music, their assistants and professional recitalists—will continue to flourish in future as individuals look to combine the organ with music as a career path.
- Organists of smaller parish churches, however, are threatened as a result of demographic changes, a lack of support from congregations in some cases, the difficulty of allocating practice times and the challenge of very regular attendance.
- PCCs should be encouraged to review their music offering to ensure planning is made for the inevitable retirement of the organist in due course.
- There should be 'jump on and have a go' schemes so that those expressing an interest can learn more and learn to play.
- A focus on encouraging younger organists should use structured schemes, encouraging people from a range of backgrounds—including less affluent ones and not just those who can learn in the public schools—to learn, with church youth groups and Diocesan outreach playing an important part.
- Much needs to be done to raise the profile of the organ within the organ world, and both the organ and organists outside; and organ music and media on the organ should be more readily available.
- Young organists should be encouraged to join their local organists' association.

Anna draws these themes together by suggesting that there needs to be a central on-line resource where all key organ-related material, organisations, funding, magazines and groups are detailed. She has the vision of setting up a website to called *The Organ Manual* to do this, has secured the domain name, and wants posters and leaflets in every place of worship, town hall and school. The report is a very thorough and thought-provoking resource in itself, and NDOA wishes Anna every success with her plans for the website, and with her future career in music.

ASSOCIATION NOTES AND NEWS

NDOA CD Afternoon: 2nd February 2019

Candlemas, 2nd February, the 'old' end of the Christmas season, is a lovely feast – remembering the presentation of the baby Jesus in the Temple when the ancient Simeon recognised what he had been waiting for all his life and gave voice to those well-known words: 'Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace according to thy word, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation...'



Our current President, Alan Cufau, acted as host for the CD afternoon this year. He lives in St Crispin's, a development on the site of the former psychiatric hospital, where, in spite of much demolition, some of the old original buildings are still standing – parts of the farm buildings and outhouses now form a small shopping area opposite to where Alan lives. He had warned us that his postcode seemed to put a hex on satnav systems (as Frank Large Walk is only accessible on foot – hence the need to park by the shops) and advised checking on the map. As an avid map-reader, that suited me fine. It's the sort of place you need to suss out in the daylight – which at 2pm in early February is OK – although it was dark by the time we left.

A dozen or so NDOA members and friends gathered to listen to a selection of music and video – Alan has top-notch equipment with all mod cons which can also cope with vinyl, which was just as well as I kicked off with an old LP of Dupré playing his *Cortège et Litanies* on the gallery organ at St Sulpice. This had bowled me over decades ago when I first heard it and it is still one of my tip-top favourites! Don Kennedy brought the Stokowski transcription of JSB's *Toccata and Fugue in D minor* played by the Philadelphia Orchestra under Wolfgang Sawallisch. In contrast to a transcription of organ for orchestra, John Wilson presented a transcription for organ of the overture to Wagner's *Tannhäuser*, with John Keyes playing the Binns organ in Nottingham's Albert Hall.

Roger Skoyles gave us Roger Fisher playing the Peter Collins organ in Ystym Colwyn Hall: Bach's *Fantasia in G minor* (BWV 542) followed by the *Trio in D minor* (BWV 583). This organ (with a few added extras by Peter Collins) eventually made its way to Gt Oakley where he plays—see Roger's article on p.3. Robert Tucker presented us with two selections: Richard Popplewell's *Elegy* played by Jane Watts on the Mander organ in Rochester cathedral and a movement from the Scottish composer Sir John McEwan's setting of Milton's *Hymn on the Morning of Christ's Nativity* performed by the London Philharmonic Orchestra and the Brighton Festival Chorus.

Moving on to the most modern technology (that is until the next one) and mindful of the death of Noel Rawsthorne earlier in the week, Philip Bricher produced a Blu-ray disc (with six channels of sound) of Richard Lea playing Rawsthorne's *Prelude on the Londonderry Air* at Liverpool Metropolitan Cathedral, followed by *Theme One* by George Martin arranged for organ duet (Richard with Charlotte Rowan).

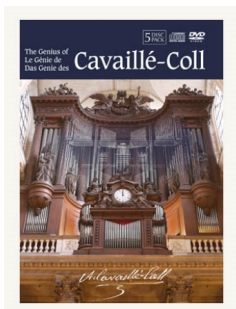
Still in ultra-modern mode, it was on to another Blu-ray disc, this time from Alan, of Kerry Beaumont (at Coventry Cathedral) playing Virgil Fox's arrangement of JSB's *Komm, süßer Tod* (another favourite) just as OTT and effective as the Stokowski heard earlier: these are acts of homage that Bach can easily cope with.

As a Bach aficionado I was delighted when John and Susanne Garside chose 'Schlummert Ein' from *Ich Habe Genug* sung by Janet Baker with the Bath Festival Orchestra, the Academy of St. Martin-in-the-Fields and the English Chamber Orchestra. John told us that, although this was originally scored for baritone, it appears in the Anna Magdalena Book transcribed for Mezzo Soprano, presumably by Anna Magdalena herself.

Rather nearer to home, Mark Gibson had brought the St Matthew's LP made in Michael Nicholas's time with the choir singing *Hosanna to the Son of David* by Weelkes. And rather nearer in time, he produced the CD made recently by the Northampton Bach Choir of a selection of carols, recorded in St Mary's Wellingborough, with Robert Walker's *Joy in the Morning* (words by Kenneth Grahame); Ian Clarke was playing the organ – but a hired Copeman Hart, not St. Mary's own instrument. Finally, Stanley Crane, who as a boy had sung in the Primrose Hill Congregational Church (with organist Leonora Harris), gave us the wonderful *Now Thank We All Our God* by Siegfried Karg-Elert played by Peter Hurford on the organ at Ratzburg Cathedral; Stanley had particular love for this piece as it had been played at his wedding.

During all this, we had managed to devour some splendid food (thanks to Gabriela's efforts) and even do an organ-related quiz (Robert Tucker won with 19/24). At the end of a most enjoyable afternoon, Mark Gibson thanked Alan and Gabriela for their splendid hospitality, and we made our various ways home, thankful that there was no more snow. **Helen Murphy**

Could you be our Treasurer? The Association is looking for a person to take over Jonathan Harris's role as Hon. Treasurer. Although the role is described as Hon. Treasurer the tasks involve mainly the collection of subscriptions, bookkeeping, and reclaiming tax, previous experience of which is not necessary, and for which initial guidance will be given. The person does not have to be a member of NDOA, but might for instance be the spouse of a member. John Wilson and his wife Phylis have kindly offered to assist with these tasks until the next AGM when he becomes President, so the volunteering person would not necessarily have to take on the role straight away. If you think there might be a way in which you can assist, then please contact Alan Cufaude or Helen Murphy—contact details on p.2.



Forthcoming Events. The next Association event will be the edited screening of the outstanding Fugue State Films documentary on the life of Cavallé-Coll, to take place on Saturday 11th May at 3pm at 2, Frank Large Walk, St Crispin's, the home of our President, Alan Cufaude. Members and friends are also most welcome to join us at the Members' Recital at 7.30pm on Saturday 20th July at Castle Hill United Reformed Church, Doddridge St., Northampton. Further details from Alan Cufaude—contact details on p.2.

Funeral Fees. The Association has published amended recommendations for fees payable to organists playing for Funerals. It is, of course, for organists to agree fees themselves, but the Association suggests that the minimum fee for a simple service with no choir or previous rehearsal should be £75. A higher fee may be appropriate to reflect particular circumstances, including but not limited to the qualifications and experience of the organist; the particular requirements of the funeral; the preparation time required, including the preparation of specially-requested music; whether a choir is to be accompanied; whether a rehearsal is required; whether such fees are the organist's principal source of income; the cost of travel to the venue; and whether the organist provides equipment such as a digital keyboard and amplifier. The full recommendations are available on northamptonorganists.org.uk.

In the next issue. Don't miss issue 3/2019, which is planned to include:

- **An exclusive interview for NDOA with Thomas Trotter, right,** Birmingham City Organist. Thomas talks about his career, his passion for the organs of Birmingham Town Hall and Symphony Hall, and his favourite music ahead of his concert at Castle Ashby at 7.30pm on Saturday 6 July—£15 from editor.ndoa@gmail.com or on the door.
- A report of the Association's visit to **Coventry Cathedral**
- A review of Horatio Clare's book of his sound-walk **Something of his Art—Walking to Lubeck with J.S.Bach.**
- A report of Jeremiah Stephenson's virtuoso performance at the **Roger Smith Memorial Concert** at St. Mary the Virgin, Wellingborough.

