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Sequencer

The newsletter of the Nottingham & District Society of Organists

2015-6, Issue 1

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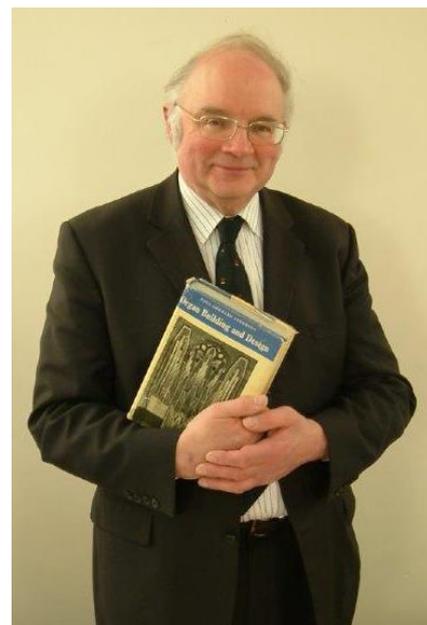
FROM THE PRESIDENT

David Butterworth MA MusB FRCO CHM FRSA

Dear friends,

Welcome to the latest edition of *Sequencer*, the termly journal of the Nottingham & District Society of Organists. I hope you will find something of interest to you in these pages. If you are not already a member of the NDSO - then how about joining us for a year to see how you get on with it? Annual membership is a modest £18 per household, for which you get three "Sequencers", four issues of the full colour "Organists' Review" at a bargain rate, and the opportunity to meet new friends, to share ideas, and to visit places you never knew existed. Just contact me or our Honorary Secretary, Denis Littleton (secretary@nottsorganists.co.uk), and we shall be more than pleased to welcome you to a thriving society of practising organists and non-organists alike.

Our theme this year is "Out and About". Amongst other events, we shall visit beautiful churches and organs hiding in our locality, have days out to Buckingham Palace and Cambridge, and experience two "At Homes" complete with members' pipe organs; for the more adventurous we have a trip to Denmark, and we have even thrown in a visit to a state-of-the-art power station! Do have a look at our programme for the year, and just turn up!



THE AUTUMN PROGRAMME: 'OUT AND ABOUT'

NB. Own transport needed but please try to share/offer seats. October visit will be a coach.

26 September: Westward Ho!

A traditional organ crawl, commencing at 2.00 at Sutton in Ashfield U.R.C. (untouched Keates); thence to Annesley (a Rothwell unique to the area); Ironville (T.C. Lewis); finally to St Giles' Sandiacre at about 6.10 p.m., with its Nigel Church organ on a purpose built west end gallery, complete with a Rückpositiv. Here we shall also be offered tea.

29 October: Homage to William Drake

Coach leaves 8.00 a.m.

William Drake, amongst our very finest builders, died last year tragically early. Some of his finest work is in London, and it seems appropriate to honour his memory by exploring some of it. Visits to St Paul's, Deptford (new 3-manual), hosted by our younger member Jack Stone; (non-organ) visit to Greenwich Royal Naval College to see the Chapel and the Painted Gallery (hosted by our newest and youngest member Matthew Hall); Christ Church, Spitalfields (magnificent restoration of the large Richard Bridge organ, after decades of silence); and the Ballroom in Buckingham Palace. Dinner will be taken at the 'Green Pea' in Greenwich, hosted by the characterful Irishman, Tom.

22 November: Choral Evensong for St Cecilia

Sung by members of the N.D.S.O. in St Peter's Parish Church, Mansfield. Service 6.30, rehearsal beforehand.

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12 December: Eastward Ho!

Festive organ crawl south and east of Nottingham. An unusual morning event. Commence 10.00 at Widmerpool (classic original Hunter); Croxton Kerrial (early John Nicholson rescued with much restoration work first by Martin Renshaw, and more recently by Peter Collins); Branston-by-Belvoir (largely late 18th. century Hugh Russell material, remade into an organ in his style by Martin Renshaw.)

Finally, at 2.00, light lunch prepared according to our wishes at 'The Wheel' next door.

NEWS OF MEMBERS

Members have been saddened by the sudden death of David Cowlshaw. David has played a very big part in the work of organists in the East Midlands and in the NDSO programmes and its committee. The following obituary has been received.

David Francis Cowlshaw **23rd May 1944 - 6th June 2015**

David Francis Cowlshaw was born in Hertfordshire on the 23rd May 1944, the only child of John Hiram and Vera Annie Cowlshaw; the family moved to North Wingfield in Derbyshire when he was two years old. His mother played the piano at home and David took an interest in learning to play at an early age. Later David sang in the village church choir (St Lawrence Church, North Wingfield) and developed a love for organ music, taking lessons from the local organist and then later from Graham Matthews, Organist at Sheffield Cathedral. Even as a young teenager he was playing Sunday Services at Pilsley Church, a neighbouring village, and serving as a relief organist at North Wingfield. David was an Associate of the London College of Music. His certificate, having been signed by William Lloyd Webber (father of Andrew and Julian), was framed and much prized.

Derbyshire was a big mining area in the 1960s and, after leaving Tupton Hall Grammar School, David went to work in the Science Laboratory attached to Clay Cross Colliery. His obvious interest in analytical science prompted one of the Senior Technicians to suggest he leave the Colliery and apply for a position in the Medical Laboratory at Chesterfield Royal Hospital. By now he had been appointed Organist at St Thomas' Church, Brampton in Chesterfield. David joined the hospital as a Junior Technician and studied hard for his accreditation exams externally. He eventually gained his Fellowship in Clinical Chemistry with the Institute of Medical Laboratory Sciences (FIMLS - equivalent to a degree status). Safety regulations were somewhat lax in those days and David, along with two other members of the Biochemistry Lab, contracted tuberculosis which left him with weakened lungs and in later years he developed a chronic cough.

David was a keen member of the Royal School of Church Music and used to enjoy attending various Choir Festivals round the country as well as the annual Summer School at Addington Palace, the headquarters of the RSCM, near Croydon.

In 1970 David met Gillian Mary Caroline Rowden, a chorister but otherwise a non-musician, at one of these Summer Schools and in June 1972 they were married by her father, the Revd Gilbert Martin Rowden, at St. Lawrence Church, Bradfield in Essex. The Organist was Dr. Gerald Knight, then Director of the Royal School of Church Music. Unfortunately, owing to a power cut and thunderstorm overhead, Dr. Knight had to content himself with playing the service on the piano only managing to perform Bach's 'Gigue' Fugue on the organ in the final few minutes. David & Gilly lived first in Chesterfield where David was at that time a very active member of the North East Derbyshire Organ Society. With the NDSO the young couple participated in a number of enjoyable Organ Crawls during their first two years of marriage.

In 1974 David successfully applied for the post of Senior Medical Laboratory Technician in the Biochemistry Department at Leighton Hospital, near Crewe and the couple moved to Winsford in Cheshire. Elizabeth Mary Cowlshaw was born in this same hospital in August 1975. Beside his hospital work, David was Organist and Choirmaster at St John's Church, Over in Winsford. In September 1977 David was appointed Chief Medical Laboratory Technician at Mansfield General Hospital and for some months commuted between his parents' home in North Wingfield and his own in Winsford. Eventually the house sale enabled



the family to move to Mansfield six weeks before Gilbert Francis Cowlshaw was born in February 1978. Owing to hospital on-call commitments, David was unable to take on a regular Organist post but he sang in the choir of St. Mark's Church, Mansfield and served as a relief organist as often as possible. He continued to be an active member of both the RSCM and the Nottingham & District Society of Organists. At this time David also had an allotment, which took up much of his time and gave him great satisfaction putting his own father's expertise to good use.

A number of RSCM activities at Southwell Minster and the quality of the Minster School Music Department were sufficient encouragement for the entire Cowlshaw family, including David's mother, to move to Southwell in September 1986. David commuted to Mansfield daily; Elizabeth joined the first year of the Minster School; and Gilbert joined the Junior Department and became a Chorister at the Minster, initially under Rector Chori Kenneth Beard and then, from April 1989 under Paul Hale. Through Gilbert being a chorister Paul came to know David and Gill well, working with David on the Southwell & Notts RSCM Area Committee from 1989 until David's death twenty-six years later. Paul found in David a passionate commitment to the cause of Anglican Church Music and utter dedication to his role as the Area Treasurer.

David was intensely proud of his children's musical interest and prowess. Elizabeth was immediately drawn to the 'cello, so piano quickly took second place; Gilbert learned violin as well as piano and saxophone. David spent hours practising the accompaniments for their various Associated Board exams in order not to "let them down" and was always thrilled by their many achievements. Between his garden, his own musical interests and supporting the children's activities in the Minster, the RSCM, Newark Music School, Nottingham Youth Orchestra, Trent College Choir and Orchestra, Birmingham Conservatoire and Royal Holloway College London University, David was kept very busy: that was what he most liked. David was an active member of the Nottingham & District Society of Organists, serving as its President from 1996-97. He was well-known around the county for being an always willing stand-in organist, spending in some instances months acting as organist at various churches, notably Epperstone.

David and Gilly separated and were eventually divorced but remained close friends. He met his second wife, Gill, through a mutual admiration for Katherine Jenkins; they were married in 2009 and their happy marriage gave David additional energy and commitment to all his interests – particularly gardening and promoting the work of the RSCM – during their eight years together. When David was diagnosed with prostate cancer it was a great shock to all the family but he approached it and overcame it with typical stoicism and bravery. He never let health issues curtail his activities and musical interests, which he was pursuing with vigour right up to the time of his fatal, and unexpected, heart attacks.

*Gilbert Cowlshaw
edited with additions by Paul Hale*

Phillip Mason

This year has seen the loss of yet another of our great characters from the ranks of the N.D.S.O. Phillip Mason had just returned from Southern Rhodesia when I arrived in Nottingham in 1967. His profession was that of accountant; his disposition was to be freelance, a route which he pursued with success, and which took him into some interesting and unexpected byways. His African period, for example, resulted in his appointment as organist of Bulawayo cathedral for the duration!

Phillip was nothing if not colourful, for he was indeed a curious mix of opposites. His sense of order and efficiency could be quite overwhelming, as witness – for example – the militaresque pre-service instructions pasted on the choir vestry noticeboard during his tenure at St Jude's, pages of them entirely in capital letters. On the other hand, his presidential evening which was held at the hall of St Giles' Church, Sandiacre, nearly got the better of him. Notwithstanding a friendly and outwardly successful evening, poor old Phillip could be seen beforehand frantically running off dozens of sandwiches as he had forgotten about the refreshments; and the 'entertainment' which had been intended to be a film about organ building somehow turned out to be a documentary about the Welsh slate-mining industry.

As an organist, Phillip was enthusiastic and he was good. He had extended tenures not only at St Jude's, but also at St Augustine's, Basford and at the Albert Hall. Latterly, in common with many others, he eschewed a regular commitment and focussed on 'filling in', so much so that he became almost full-time in that capacity. He was also something of a health fanatic. Living so near to him, I was well aware of his daily exercise, and frequently encountered him on his runs. On the occasion of a visit by Jane Parker-Smith to speak at our Annual Dinner, he even managed to get her to go out running with him on the following Sunday morning; not an invitation she often had, I imagine! After the running came the cycling. Full of ambition as ever, Phillip actually planned a tour covering the length and breadth of France, entirely by bike. It was abandoned

only at the eleventh hour! After the bike, he downsized to walking – long walks, and very sensible, too. It was on one of these that he bumped into me on the pavement while I was inspecting my roof with binoculars. Upon enquiring as to his upcoming Sunday duties, he confessed with alarming candour that he had had to stop playing; that he had been obliged by the doctor to sell his Mercedes and his beloved Morgan; and that he believed he was losing his mind. It was true – slowly, steadily, unmistakeably. Following on from that, I saw him many times in his nursing home by St Martin’s Church. On the last occasion we were allowed out together without medical supervision, I took him across the car park into St Martin’s. He courageously managed to crawl up those treacherous stairs to the organ, and he had a few notes on it. But he was exhausted by the effort, and I wondered how on earth we would ever get downstairs again. Thanks to Phillip’s personal courage, we made it - backwards.

Phillip could be incredibly generous. One of his notable achievements was the complete restoration of the large Keates organ in his beloved Uppingham School. Indeed, if he had had entirely his own way, he would have gone further and paid for a 32’ reed (stopped by the school’s structural engineer) and provided an additional modern three-manual continental instrument (had there been anywhere to put it.) He also bought a bass tuba for the High School. In his will, too, neither the High School nor the Royal School of Church Music were forgotten. But even more important than this beneficence was the legacy Phillip left behind for his ex-choristers, his ‘boys.’ Of the three Hayler brothers, for example – all Bluecoat lads – two are now priests and the third is a Sunday School teacher. Andrew – who also trained as an organ builder with Manders – wrote after hearing the sad news: “It was largely through you and Phillip that I received the gift of music, and understand my faith – our faith - most profoundly. Thank you!” I can end no better than to copy verbatim this appreciation from Andrew’s brother, Peter, who is now at Great St Mary’s, Cambridge.

“Phillip Mason came to St Judes, Mapperley after the legendary 51years of service by the beloved Stanley Gunn, who was always going to be a hard act to follow. He came as a jaunty Captain, a paymaster in the TA, and his favourite word was 'Splendid!' He would wear his uniform on occasions such as Remembrance Day, and he would conduct even the mellowest of motets, such as Bruckner's *Locus Iste* as if it were a military march. His other favourite choice of attire was his 'Rupert' trousers and bright pullovers - to match the real Rupert, his fun-loving apricot poodle.

“He did much to encourage the boys of the choir, particularly by introducing the residential courses run by the RSCM: Wellingborough after Christmas, Rossall after Easter and Darley Dale in the Summer. I was particularly privileged to win a place on two Cathedral Courses, travelling away from home to fulfil a fortnight of locum duties, at Oxford ('77) and Lichfield ('78). I went on to receive two invitations to be House Captain, and was paired with Ian Tracey in his first outing as a Master of Farrant House. These were such formative times; times I shall never forget; times that prepared me so well for my present post at the heart of the Anglican choral tradition in Cambridge.

“May he rest in peace and rise in glory!”

David S. Butterworth

At the point of going to press, we have also heard the very sad news of the passing of Martin Goetze. A fuller tribute will appear in the next issue of *Sequencer*.

REPORTS OF MEETINGS

Bulwell Parish Church

The meeting on 18 April was described as a Members Recital but in fact it was rather special in that members were invited to play music either by disabled (blind) composers or East Midlands composers. An eclectic mix was inevitable and this was fulfilled in practice. The choice of music was itself of interest and several new items were heard and will lead to some purchases in the near future. Consequently the programme is worth recording for reference:

John Catling	Grand Choeur No. 2	Alfred Hollins
David Rooke	Idyll Melancolique	Louis Vierne
	Pasticcio (organ Book-10 pieces)	Jean Langlais
David Gabe	Prelude on 'David of the white rock'	George Towers
	Festive postlude on 'Westminster Abbey'	George Towers
Shaun Hooper	Suite in D (arr. Henry Coleman)	John Stanley
Derek Wileman	Prologue	Leonard Henniker
	'On Jordan's stormy bank I stand'	Jean Langlais
Philip Smart	Berceuse and Pastorale (24 pieces)	Louis Vierne
Michael Anthony	Meditation on 'Rockingham'	C.Charlton Palmer
	Festal Offertorium	Percy Fletcher

The President should be congratulated on the novel subject for the meeting which was open to the public as a Church event and drew a number of visitors who seemed to enjoy the evening with organists and unfamiliar music.



Hucknall Methodist Church, 16th May 2015

Following an early season of somewhat esoteric meetings for Members, the meeting in May was the second event (after the Bulwell evening in April) where we took the Society out into the wider community to demonstrate our versatility to the world.

While the Bulwell concert centred around our more normally perceived "serious" face, the meeting at Hucknall Methodist Church was an opportunity to show our lighter side, and even a sense of humour.

It was an extension of the Saturday afternoon music and tea events which the Church has given for several years now, and a few Members have already played at these earlier events. The concerts have been organised in conjunction with the Eric Coates Society, who always support them, and on this occasion there were thirty people present to hear the offerings from our six players.

There was a warm fellowship at the concert with excellent refreshments, and interest was shown in the Society's events calendar. The event was hosted by Stuart Walters from the Church, and the President continued with music and player introductions.

John Catling	Coates	Knightsbridge March
	Anderson	Forgotten Dreams
	Rodgers	Selection from 'The Sound of Music'
David Rooke	Stoneham	Michael's Theme (Parkinson)
	Stoneham	Fly me to the moon
	Rawsthorne	'Danny Boy'
Philip Smart	Lang	Tuba Tune
	Mathias	Processional
Denis Littleton	Bovet	Fuga sopra un sogetto
	Boely	Pastorale from 'Messe de Noel'
Derek Wileman (piano)	Coates	By the sleepy lagoon
		The green hills of Somerset
		Bird songs at Eventide
Michael Anthony	Walton	Three pieces from 'Richard III'
	Coates	March: Youth of Britain (Princess Elizabeth)

Shelford Parish Church, 20th June 2015

Continuing the Presidents plans to move NDSO meetings out into the community we visited Shelford at the invitation of Richard Eaton who had invited The Bridge Singers, conducted by Lynn Holland, to join him in an organ and choir concert. The attendance from members and the Shelford community was excellent with wine and nibbles to lubricate the occasion. The main items of the concert were as follows:

<i>Choir</i>	Weelkes	To shorten winter sadness
	Attwood	Teach me O Lord
	Howells	Like as a hart
<i>Organ</i>	Bach	1 st trio sonata
	Messiaen	Nativité(one movement)
	Dubois	Toccata
<i>Choir</i>	Rutter	Monday's child; The owl and the pussy cat; Matthew, Mark, Luke and John
	Karl Jenkins	Adiemus
<i>Choir</i>	Karl Jenkins	Deep peace
	C.V. Stanford	The bluebird
	Rodgers and Hart	Blue moon
<i>Organ</i>	Whitlock	selection
<i>Choir</i>	Everytime I feel the spirit; Spread a little happiness	
	Rutter: The heavenly aeroplane	

Richard Eaton told us something of the history of the organ, originally by Augustus Gern in 1770 and placed in Tocklington Manor near Bristol. Its Cavallé-Coll pipework from ~1870 is characteristic and it was moved to its present west end ground-floor position by Groves in a 2005 rebuild retaining the original casework. The entertainment and socialising made a very happy occasion.

Annual General Meeting

The AGM was held at Bulwell Baptist Church on Monday 20 July with an attendance of 34 members. The business followed the usual pattern with the President, Michael Anthony, giving a full review of the year's activities mentioning in particular how he was affected by Christine's final illness but her desire for him to carry on. This was further referred to by Joan Orton in her final secretarial report which also mentioned the launch of the bursary scheme for young organists which so far has had a disappointing number of applicants. Members expressed appreciation to Joan for her work as secretary having taken it on as a 'rescue operation' and had her own personal difficulties with the death of David.

The Treasurer, David Towers, noted that the year showed a loss of operating costs but which included a donation of £500 to the Binns Organ Trust to assist their loss of sponsorships for the recital programme. David had announced last year the need to rationalise the annual subscription rates and an increase to £18 was proposed and accepted.

Before elections were considered members stood to remember fellow members who had died during the year – Christine Anthony, David Cowlshaw, Phillip Mason and Francis Phoenix. The new Bishop of Southwell and Nottingham had accepted an invitation to be a Patron but the new Roman Catholic Bishop of Nottingham had not yet replied to his invitation.

Two Life Memberships were conferred – Geoffrey Bond and Neville Crown - members since 1941 and 1944 respectively; they were both present and congratulated by the President.

The new secretary is Denis Littleton and David Towers continues as Treasurer. New ordinary committee members elected were Ian Watts, David Hanford and Michael Worth.

The President-Elect was duly proposed and seconded: Professor John Morehen accepted with appropriate humour.

David Butterworth was inducted as the new President and expressed delight at being asked to serve again in this post and referred to Joan Orton as an efficient and supportive secretary in recent years. He then outlined his programme for the year with the theme of ‘Out and About’ which includes an extended visit to Denmark. The meeting concluded with an informal members recital compéred by Ian Wells.

David Gabe

NEWS

The Averham Organ

from the Newark Advertiser, 6 May 2015

Volunteers have helped to dismantle the Grade II listed organ at St Michael and All Angels’ in Averham, ahead of the repairs. An anonymous donation has met two-thirds of the £70,000 cost. The organ, built in 1901, in memory of Queen Victoria, has more than 1,000 pipes and was built by J.J. Binns, a significant organ builder of that era. It is unique in the East Midlands because it can be powered by water, a hand pump or an electric blower. It hasn’t been played in 25 years because of water damage. Churchwarden Mr George Binks, of Averham, said: “It gives us a great opportunity to get people to play the organ, both regularly and for one-off concerts.”

The restoration will take up to six months and the church is planning to hold a fundraising event in the summer to support the work. The volunteers plan to tackle a leaking roof in the church tower next. More than £65,000 has already been raised towards the £90,000 needed for roof repairs. The total spend on the renovation work is expected to be more than £250,000.

Submitted by the late David Cowlshaw

Chamber Music for Devotees

Those making the journey on Sunday afternoon 17 May to Halam Court, David B.’s country seat near Southwell, could not possibly have imagined the exceptional treat in store. Daniel Harrison (cello) and David himself (piano) performed a programme of sonatas and shorter pieces in a concert of spell-binding quality – quality, that is, in terms both of the music played and of the performances themselves. Three cello sonatas were given: Beethoven’s Fourth Sonata in C major, Debussy’s Sonata, and Kodaly’s formidable Sonata for Solo Cello. Interspersed with these, David gave Chopin’s *Nocturne* op. 15 no. 1 – what a joy to hear him on his own Steinway - and the duo gave Fauré’s *Elégie* and Saint-Saëns’s *Allegro appassionato*. The programme opened with the Beethoven, or to give it its published title: Sonata for Piano and Cello, op. 102 no. 1 – It doesn’t matter that the composer was following custom in naming the piano first: the instruments throughout engage in a vivid dialogue, the cello leading the opening slow section, the piano and cello coming together in the subsequent forcefully dramatic allegro in A minor. The second movement is also in the two sections slow-fast, the fast toying with the opening of the Sonata in inversion and playing with the rapport between the instruments, as the cello does catch-up echoes of the piano. Beethoven called this Sonata “free” and it is of a piece with his late-style formal innovations. The Debussy also is built through and through on the true dialogic nature of chamber music, here with a possible programmatic element: ‘Pierrot raging against the Moon’ was at one time under consideration as the title of the work, so friends of the composer reported. In the give and take between the chamber-music partners at Halam Court, we were privy to two exceptional musicians sharing and coordinating their views of these two great sonatas.

David has been a close friend of the family right back to the days when all three of Daniel’s uncles were choristers at St Mary’s. The oldest, Roger, was in fact David’s page turner on Sunday, and is himself a qualified organist and bassoonist. Now, via the Purcell School, King’s Cambridge and the RNCM, Daniel is a

free-lance performer and teacher in London. He is also a star. His playing is technically immaculate, emotionally mature, and he draws a rapturously beautiful tone from his 1790 London cello. Like many players of the latest generation he uses vibrato selectively and judiciously, recapturing the old idea that it was essentially ornamental. All in all this was playing of international excellence from an artist very much to watch. The Kodály was composed as a virtuoso show-piece, with vertiginously altitudinous writing and bowed melodies accompanied by left-hand pizzicato. Daniel gave a totally compelling account, such that his duet partner told the audience afterwards “I am just recovering from one of the supreme musical experiences of my life” – I am sure he spoke for many of us.

About 30 of us sat round in David’s music room. This gave us the very best of salon ambiances, with music for and in the chamber, the performers communicating directly with a select and attentive audience. What a privilege! And there was generous hospitality too, drinks before and after, all attended to by Joan Orton and June Whitesides - for the proceeds are to go the Albert Hall Binns Maintenance Fund. The fact that this full-length recital was given without interval added to the intensity and joy of the whole experience.

Robert Pascall

I’ve often wondered what those long ago gatherings in musicians’ houses or aristocratic mansions would have been like ... friends gathered for a glass of wine, a bite to eat, and to listen to fine music. Now I have some idea because I was at Halam Court on Saturday evening together with twenty five or so others.

David Butterworth, in whose magnificent organ room the event (to raise funds for the Binns Organ Trust) was held, played a full and varied programme. I have played several Grant Degens and Bradbeer organs including the one at York University but was impressed even more here by the richness, variety and colour of the sound. Most interesting for me were the characterful flutes and a marvellous tierce en taille - really “three dimensional” and vibrant. A well adjusted tracker action makes possible (in the hands of a good player) lively and musical phrasing and a far greater impact from variety of pipe speech. David demonstrated this in a balanced programme of music from three centuries.

Vivaldi/Bach (the A minor concerto) preceded most engaging Couperin (four pieces from the Messe pour les Couvents) and Georg Böhm (Prelude and fugue in G minor). 19thC music was represented by Rheinberger with all the clarity brought by prompt speech and bright but full sounds. On such an instrument and in such an acoustic one really can hear it all! Two Swiss pieces followed, one being a long, exciting, and, I suspect, distinctly tricky rumba. The evening closed with more Bach – the Passacaglia and Fugue in C minor S 582. A most enjoyable evening with organ, player and surroundings all impressive.

Richard Eaton

The Music at Halam Court series finished on a balmy August afternoon, when Margaret Scott, an alumna of both the Royal College of Music and the Budapest Conservatoire, introduced and performed an enjoyable selection of works from the Seventeenth to the Twentieth Century. The two lengthiest works were Mozart’s classical Sonata in D K576 and Ravel’s neo-classical Sonatine from about 120 years later. Together, they gave a substantial heft to the programme, with their three-movement structures, and the Ravel’s diminutive title clearly belies the structural and technical challenges of the work. Margaret Scott was too modest to point out that Ravel himself thought the work’s technical challenges were too great, or that the composer frequently omitted the third toccata movement in concert performances. No such fears or omissions were allowed at Halam, and both the Mozart and the Ravel pieces were accomplished with fine articulation and panache.

From the Romantic repertoire were two Impromptus from Schubert’s op.90 set and Chopin’s Ballade No. 1 in G minor. The spirit of each was caught, but Ms Scott did not exploit the pianissimo potential of the Halam auditorium so the effect was percussively monochrome. However, the recital’s opening works were two Preludes and Fugues from Book II of JS Bach’s Well-Tempered Clavier: No. 9 in E and No.15 in G. I could listen to these all day, and I would love Margaret Scott to have succumbed to our enthusiasm at the concert’s end by giving us an encore of a further taste of her Bach playing.

Steven Halls

The Viscount has landed

As you may be aware, the Hill organ at Selby Abbey is currently undergoing a major renovation by Principal Organs of York. So, for the time being they have installed a Viscount Regent 356 in the Abbey for services and the series of Tuesday lunchtime recitals (12.30 p.m.) during the summer months from July 7th to September 1st. Details are on both the Viscount and Selby websites. (This is the same model which is now in St. Mary's, Nottingham, and which was wonderfully demonstrated by John and Andrew on July 19th, on behalf of the Binns Trust.)

July 7	Dr Roger Tebbet (Selby Abbey)	Aug 4	Paul Hale (Southwell Minster)
July 14	Joshua Stephens (Manchester)	Aug 11	Jan van Mol (Antwerp)
July 21	Dr Franz Hauk (Ingolstadt Minster)	Aug 18	Michael Overbury (Newark)
July 28	Paul Parsons (Pontigny Abbey)	Aug 25	D'Arcy Trinkwon (Worth Abbey)
		Sep 1	John Scott Whiteley (York)

See more at <http://viscountorgans.net/selby-abbey-organ-recitals-in-association-with-viscount/#sthash.Oq7VPdrU.dpuf>

Hot off the press (July 21st) is the Viscount DVD of D'Arcy Trinkwon playing the Selby instrument in a dazzling programme of varied music, some readily playable and other pieces simply virtuoso. The final Cochereau Toccata will test every sound system – be warned! Don't miss the sartorial variations as well.

The DVD is available directly from Viscount (telephone no. 01869 247333) @ £15 with p&p £1.56, giving a total of £16.56. There is also a second DVD by John Scott Whitely in the offing – keep an eye on the Viscount website, viscountorgans.net. Further to this, Selby Abbey has produced a re-processed CD of the historic Fernando Germani recordings – see their website for details www.selbyabbey.org.uk.

Here's to happy listening.

Michael Anthony (Past it!)

VACANCIES

The music department of
St Peter's & All Saints' Nottingham
wishes to appoint an

Assistant Organist (All Saints')

to play the fine 3-manual Hill, Norman & Beard organ for the
10.30am Sunday Eucharist at All Saints' Church, Raleigh Street.

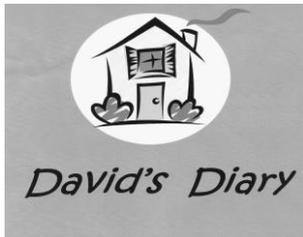
Working as part of a team of organists, there is the opportunity for flexibility when it comes to the size of commitment (which could be between two and four Sundays a month). For suitable candidates, the role could also include accompanying the Choir of St Peter's on their monthly visits to All Saints'.

Enquiries and expressions of interest should be sent to the
Organist & Director of Music, St Peter's & All Saints'

Dr Peter Siepmann

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I am sitting here on a huge granite boulder, on the shoreline of Sveneka at the far side of Bornholm, looking out to Poland. I listen to children screaming with

happiness as they prance from one jagged, lopsided, boulder to another, barefoot and with all the assured agility of mountain goats. And I love the sound of the water as it laps against the rocks, now and then eliciting renewed screams of excitement as it catches out the cheekier ones who dare the waves to chase them and sometimes get it wrong. So, here I am enjoying that rare commodity - time on one's hands, musing once again on those immortal words of my illustrious predecessor - "What's it all about?"

Most of us by now will have said goodbye to holidays, though hopefully not to all of the summer. We are back to the proverbial grindstone, doing our best to make the world around us just that little bit better. For my part, coming across to Denmark always seems to recharge my batteries, or at the very least my aspirations; to wake me up and to remind me that I can indeed do better. O.K., that may be partly because they do some things better here, but make no mistake, it's a two-way affair. We may admire the Danes for many things - for their easy-going camaraderie, their communal cleanliness, their intense love of culture, their ubiquitous and utterly sensible cycle tracks, and the order they bring to such diverse yet important things as crossing the road and looking after churchyards. But the Danes also love Britain and the 'Brits.' They adore our countryside, our cathedrals and our market towns. They love London for everything from St Paul's to Camden Market and, let's face it, we have been 'just good friends' for a very long time, and we definitely get a lot of things right.

One area where there is no comparison at all, however, is in the lot of the church organist. A place the size of, say, Beeston, West Bridgford, Gedling - you name it - will employ a full-time organist on a pretty handsome civil servant's wage, and may well have provision for a full-time or half-time assistant, too. A couple of days ago, I popped into Sr Mark's Church in Koebenhavn on the off chance (as you do). Preparations were in hand for a funeral about 20 minutes hence. I bumped straight into a dragon of the two-legged variety who informed me that I couldn't look around, and that I could only stay for one minute, sticking up

one finger to make the point. With a wealth of experience of such phenomena under my belt, I am bound to say I was completely unfazed. Ten minutes later, I was asked "Who are you?" I responded that I was a visitor sitting quietly at the back, looking forward to hearing the organ played, as I was an organist. An organist? Oh! That changed it all. In the twinkling of an eye, I was "most welcome." "Please feel free to stay for the whole service if you can." A like situation nearer to home, I cannot help thinking, might well have drawn that glazed look that says "So what?" It all seems to me to be down to leadership. There are pockets of glorious common sense and mutual respect, but too often we hear of inadequate clergy as untrained in personnel management as they are in music; control church wardens who cling on to their positions for far too long; and PCCs some of whose members' sole qualification seems to be the ability to dish out 'song books' (God help us) on a Sunday morning.

Will things ever change for the better? Most of us seem to think not, and many (now largely childless) churches continue to face a bleak future with an ongoing threat of closure. What can WE do about it? Perhaps not all that much, but we can try. How about making September the time for a New (academic) Year's resolution? And how about these for starters? Insist on having the hymns a week ahead to show that you care - then practise them. Cleanse your hymn-playing of faults - so many organists cannot count up to three without snipping off bits - and *please* spare us at least now and then from the megalomania of incongruous last-verse harmonisations. Turn up smartly dressed (if you don't already), notwithstanding the jolly sidesman who goes up to read the Gospel in psychedelic tee-shirt and trainers. Clean the organ keys - and make sure someone sees you doing it. Clean under the pedals - but first ask a churchwarden to buy a special nozzle for the vacuum cleaner. Practise a really nice weekly postlude by a composer people have actually heard of, get it published in the weekly news sheet, and then arrange for a trouble maker on the PCC to turn pages - it doesn't matter if they can't read music, and they will be amazed at everything you have to do to achieve what is all too readily just taken for granted. All these things can count, and will not only earn the respect of others but enhance your own self-respect, too. They won't earn you any extra pennies, but will help in precious, albeit less quantifiable, ways to add value to the cause. Best of luck for the "New Year"!

ARTICLES

Sir Herbert Brewer (1865-1928)

This year marks the 150th anniversary of the birth of Sir Herbert Brewer. To commemorate this important anniversary Professor John Morehen, a member of the NDSO, has prepared a new edition of Brewer's memoirs. John Morehen, who was himself a pupil of Brewer's successor at Gloucester Cathedral – Dr Herbert Sumsion – writes:

After holding church and school appointments in Bristol, Oxford, Coventry and Tonbridge, Herbert Brewer was appointed Organist of Gloucester Cathedral in 1896, a post he was to occupy for over thirty years until his death in 1928.

Brewer was one of the most versatile church musicians of his generation, and was arguably the most gifted of those whose professional life was spent exclusively in the provinces. Speaking at the launch of EMI's recorded *Treasury of English Church Music* exactly 50 years ago, Brewer's pupil Herbert Howells described him as "the greatest organist I have ever known", adding that Brewer's organ pupil Sir John Dykes Bower, who also was present at the launch, agreed with him. In addition to being an outstanding organist Brewer was also renowned as a composer (he was, after all, a pupil of Charles Villiers Stanford), and as a choir-trainer, adjudicator, examiner and teacher.

As Organist of Gloucester Cathedral Brewer was intimately involved for over three decades with the Three Choirs Festival, held annually in rotation in the cathedral cities of Gloucester, Worcester, and Hereford. His informal autobiography, entitled *Memories of Choirs and Cloisters*, was first published in 1931. In recounting his



experiences Brewer offers a fascinating insight into the planning and execution of the Festivals, particularly those held in Gloucester, where he enthusiastically championed the cause of contemporary composers. Brewer provides an absorbing account of his relationship with Sir Edward Elgar (who scored sections of Brewer's oratorio *Gethsemane* at a time when the composer was under considerable pressure) and Brewer's fellow Gloucesterian, Sir Hubert Parry. He also gives an eye-witness account of Samuel Sebastian Wesley's amusing eccentricities and irritating personal characteristics. So far as continental musicians are concerned Brewer offers first-hand testimony of the remarkable piano playing of Camille Saint-Saëns, and he quotes *verbatim* from his correspondence with several eminent continental composers, including Glazunov, Ravel, and Sibelius, whose tone poem *Luonnotar* he premiered. Outside the world of music Brewer describes his encounters with literary figures such as the Poet Laureate Robert Bridges, the novelist Sir Rider Haggard and the writer and critic Sir Arthur Quiller-

Couch. In the civic and political arena Brewer's accomplishments included service as City High Sheriff for Gloucester, and to him is due the credit for persuading the Government to exempt the Three Choirs Festival from the crippling effects of the Entertainments Tax.

Brewer's *Memories of Choirs and Cloisters* is neither a conventional autobiography nor a diary, but a retrospective collection of reminiscences compiled largely towards the end of his life, probably in the early 1920s. From Brewer's reflections emerges a scrupulous and warm-hearted musician, revered by his choristers, and a person whose political and economical astuteness was suffused with an innate sense of integrity and social justice (evident, for instance, in his ensuring the proper remuneration of organ blowers, and in his introduction of free concerts for local school-children and impecunious adults). Despite his fine sense of judgement Brewer was a keen practical joker, and his text is enlivened by countless anecdotes which reveal him as one whose natural seriousness is frequently relieved by mischievous touches of humour.

The new edition of Brewer's *Memories of Choirs and Cloisters* will be published by Stainer & Bell Ltd to coincide with the opening of the 300th Three Choirs Festival, which will be held in Hereford from 25 July – 1 August. Copies can be purchased through the Stainer & Bell (www.stainer.co.uk) after 25 July 2015. In case of difficulty you can contact John Morehen direct on john@morehen.fsworld.co.uk.

An organist on holiday

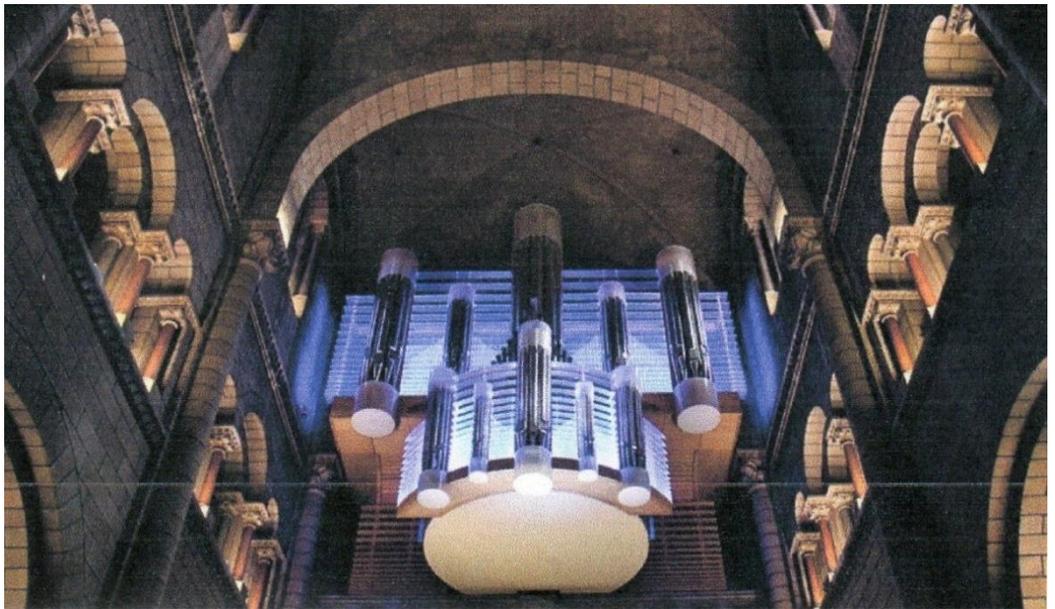
When an organist goes on holiday he either chills out or visits places where an organ may be found. And surprises may follow!

Where is the smallest cathedral organ in Europe? The answer may be Kotor. In case you are unsure where Kotor is, it is in fact in the new country of Montenegro formerly Serbia and even more formerly in Yugoslavia and its cathedral of St. Tryphon is Catholic and not normally given to congregational singing or even singing at all. Its foundation was in 1221 based on a site from 809 and its first organ was allegedly in 1488. Its new organ has few ranks in what might be called a positive organ. Otherwise the cathedral is small but old and in a remarkable state of restoration with stained glass windows and an altar reredos bedecked with silver images and a five foot Easter egg in Fabergé style. However, remind me not to take a Welsh male voice choir there because the organ, placed on the side wall adjacent to the chancel, has 6 ranks and 11 stops and looks immaculate, but small and not for congregational singing.



To be followed by possibly the most controversial new organ was quite a large step. Now in the realm of wealthy Roman Catholicism it is a west end organ with the console placed on a semi-circular platform cantilevered over the narthex below the organ case which is permanently lit by blue, red and white LED lights. If you think you are under the influence of Hollywood you are not entirely mistaken because this is Monaco Cathedral where Princess Grace and Prince Rainier are buried. It is now a 'marmite organ' – you love it or hate it if you are a Monegasque resident.

Its first organ was built in 1887 and was replaced or rebuilt in 1922 and 1968 by a larger organ by Emile Bourdon. Then in 1975 it was rebuilt by Boisson of Poitiers in the French style with 4 manuals and 4840 pipes and inaugurated by Pierre Cochereau. In 1987 it was overhauled by Tamburini of Crema in Italy and inaugurated in 1987 by Cochereau's successor at Notre Dame (Paris)



Philip Lefebvre. In 2011 it was further rebuilt by Thomas of Spa, Belgium as IV/79 and 7000 pipes and brought out from the wall to project the sound better.

But leaving appearance aside the sound is excellent despite judgement being based on an organ student practising a Bach prelude and fugue (from the eight small ones) which he had not quite got to grips with. The cost of the organ is not publicised (Monte Carlo has plenty) but the date of the next rebuild cannot be far ahead by past practice.

David Gabe