

Derby & District Organists' Registered Charity No. 510567 Association



The 'Children and the Organ' Experience

It saddens many of us that, in England these days, it seems to be a fact of organ life that so few young people attend organ recitals. However, the contrast could not be greater if you were to eavesdrop on a Children and the Organ (CATO) workshop organised by a team of DDOA volunteers. Typically the average age of the audience is in single figures and the atmosphere is always one of engagement and fun. The *Children and the Organ Project*, masterminded by Stephen Johns, James Muckle and Ed Stow, has been running for over two years now and has succeeded in introducing over a hundred primary age children to the fascination of pipe organs and the music they make.

Primary schools have been offered a 90 minute workshop programme for a class of about 30 pupils. It is most convenient when a church with a good pipe organ is available within walking distance of the school. A key component of success is the motivation of the head teacher who ideally has an enlightened view of the curricular

opportunities on offer. With a crowded curriculum in state schools, facilitating extra-curricular activity is a demanding undertaking and staff need to be convinced of the bonus to the children's education. Clearly, plenty of musical experience is implicit in our workshop, but we have also sought to highlight the involvement of maths, science, art, design and history through activities which explain the components of an organ and the skills employed in its construction.



DDOA Events 2011

- 18th May** Lecture recital by Simon Lindley.
- 14th June** Annual dinner.
- 18th July** Visit to local organs.
- 24th September** Outing to Oakham churches and Peterborough Cathedral.
- 24th October** Composers' workshop with Paul Fisher
- November** Chairman's Event and AGM

Concerts & Recitals

Saturday 7th May, 7.30 pm Lenton Methodist Church

Nigel Ogden
'The Organist Entertains'
Phone 0115 928 5287 for tickets £8.
The church is opposite the Savoy Cinema, Derby Road, Nottingham NG7 1PD

Saturday 7th May, 7.30 pm St. John the Evangelist, Derby Andrew Storer

Chesterfield Parish Church Lunchtime Recitals Thursdays in May 12.15-1.00 pm

5th Andrew Wyatt (Organ Scholar, Birmingham Cathedral)
12th Geoff Gratton
19th Andy Booth (Chesterfield)
26th Mark Rothman (Asst. Organist)

Saturday 4th June, 7.30 pm St. John the Evangelist, Derby Tom Corfield

Saturday 25th June, 7.30 pm
St. Andrew's Church Swanwick.
"Last Night of the Proms"
Brass Band and Organ Concert with David Redfern at the organ and the Blidworth Welfare Band.
Tickets £6 available at the door, or phone 01773 605291 or 01773 541458.

Derby Cathedral Summer Organ Recitals 2011: Wednesdays at 7.45
Recitalists in July include Hans Heischler, Timothy Byram-Wigfield, Anthony Hammond and David Briggs.



A workshop begins with listening and watching, and it usually amazes children how much there is to see as well as to hear. Pupils take turns to gather round the console and watch the multi-tasking player using two manuals, the pedals and stops as well as turning pages and keeping balance. On a mechanical organ they love to watch the 'ghostly' playing of the keys when the couplers are engaged. Then Ed Stow opens up his box of sample pipes, illustrating the different sizes, materials and shapes of pipes. This is usually followed by a game in which ranks of 16, 8, 4 and 2 foot tone are combined to produce new sounds. We remind pupils that the idea of the organ as a sound synthesiser was around long before the advent of electronics. Of course in a medieval church you are surrounded by history and this alone may be a novel experience for some children. The initial presentation concludes with another organ piece demonstrating how a variety of registration adds interest to the music.

Having set the scene, we then split pupils into small groups of



about six for a series of hands-on (and feet!) activities which are organised in rotation. Each activity, lasting 10 or 15 minutes, is supervised by one of our volunteers and we spread the groups out as widely as possible within the building to minimise noise interference between groups. The logistics can be tricky; arrangements are made easier when church rooms, a vestry, vestibule or tower space are available. The keeping of time for each activity is also crucial for maintaining an efficient rotation.

Pedal power: Children sit on a reduced height stool over a dummy pedalboard coupled to a sound synthesizer. They take turns to play simple tunes with their feet.

How it works: Children can see inside a mini-organ specially built by Ed Stow. With a one octave keyboard and three draw stops, this demonstrates how air is controlled to reach individual pipes.

Playing the organ: This has to be the high point of the organ experience; feeling the touch of the keys, changing stops, using couplers, swell pedal and so on. Children listen to the pipes at close range and sometimes feel the vibration of the case. This is a very tactile activity, but lots of calculations can also be done working out pipe lengths. Unfortunately most children are completely unfamiliar with the *foot* as a unit of measurement, so an old fashioned ruler is a useful visual aid. Usually children have so many questions, this activity always runs out of time.

How it looks: Children are given a set of wooden model pipes and invited to experiment with different geometrical arrangements to create designs for organ cases. Sometimes we give them a

colouring task to make decorative designs for pipes as in Victorian organs.

Organist in control: This is a PowerPoint presentation illustrating the many tasks performed by an organist when seated at the console.

Finally all the children are gathered together for a summing up and question and answer session. The conclusion is another demonstration of organ playing but with audience participation with children chanting antiphonally, imitating Swell and Great chorus effects.



For the presenting team, there is a considerable amount of spade-work before the event, but this is always rewarded by the responses of the children. We have also received lovely letters from pupils with comments such as:

'As well as enjoying myself I learned a lot. I would love you to come again.'

'I really thought that when we designed our own organs it was fantastic.'

'I loved watching all the knobs on the organ go in and out and also thought the 'mini organ' was astonishing.'

Laurence Rogers

Photographs published by kind permission of the Headteacher, Middleton Community Primary School.

Recent Events

Talk by Peter Collins - Organ Builder

Before attending the February meeting of DDOA I should have reflected that a successful and world-famous organ builder would have had a fascinating life. This had not occurred to me. Yet it is obvious, really: he must be a music-lover, a perfectionist, a technologist, a consummate craftsman, a hard-headed businessman, a scholar, and an entrepreneur. Our speaker, Peter Collins, is all of these things, and at the same time he adds to the list his skills as a lively raconteur and communicator. In his talk, which he modestly claimed he had not planned or prepared, he illustrated all these qualities. And who the hell needs preparation, when he has so much to tell, and such fluency and wit in the telling of it? His fascinating life was that preparation, and we, the listeners, were the happy recipients of a tiny part of his knowledge and experience.

We heard of Mr Collins's early years, the growing fascination which the organ came to hold for him, his work for an English firm, then his decision to go to Austria to work for an inspirational builder; his later decision to go it alone, his financial recklessness, which always seemed to come out right, his friendships with famous organists for whom he built organs, or who helped him by putting in a good word with clergy and bishops, and in one case the British aristocracy. We were told about the changing face of organ



construction in Britain and the Continent over fifty years. An impression of international camaraderie between organ builders emerged - tempered by healthy rivalry, it must be said. Questioners sought information about materials used: sheep, cow and goatskin was passed around the room, we learned about temperaments, and of the methods of preparing metal for pipes, and we heard about the disasters which happened when organs collapsed when modern glue proved not as reliable as earlier materials.

The firm of Collins has built and exported organs all over the world, from China to North America, via Germany, where the local builders are not always too pleased when an English firm gets the contract. It was a pleasure to learn of the history and life-story of the man behind it all, and we wish the firm well in the future.

James Muckle



Photos: Peter Collins demonstrates traditional materials used in organ construction.

DDOA - Your Association

Get well soon

At the time of going to press, our Hon. Secretary, Stephen Johns, is recovering from a major operation in hospital. Members will wish to join the committee in sending Stephen best wishes for a speedy recovery. In characteristic form, prior to the operation, Stephen made strenuous efforts to ensure that plans for DDOA events were well ahead of schedule to minimise disruption to our programme. We are extremely grateful for Stephen's generosity of spirit at all times and look forward to him returning to normal health soon.

Children and the Organ

We are delighted to receive confirmation of the award of a grant of £150 from the IAO for promoting our work with young people. Earlier this year, our Chairman submitted a request for funding the production of educational materials to support our workshops and it is very encouraging that the IAO has recognised our efforts in this practical way. The response of the IAO was especially welcome in view of our previous application to the Brereton Memorial Fund being unsuccessful.

Our plans for a workshop at Ilkeston for older pupils in February were thwarted by very low recruitment, so we have postponed this venture until the Autumn.

For the attention of all DDOA members

Your committee has discussed a recently received report from the IAO Advisory Committee which asks us to consider a range of issues affecting organists' associations (OAs) nationally. In order to involve the whole DDOA membership we reprint the report in full on page 4. Please take time to read this carefully and communicate your reaction to the committee. The report generally makes rather gloomy reading, but with your help we would like to identify opportunities for action which might preserve the life of OAs and improve the health of organ interest locally and nationally.

Please send your comments to mail@derbyorganists.co.uk.

Strategic Questions for the IAO and OAs

Please read the introductory note on page 3.

Introduction

These notes are a brief summary of the discussion on strategic matters at the IAO Advisory Committee meeting held on 23rd October 2010. This was in the nature of a brain-storming session, and the object of the questions below was to provoke some forward thinking in discussion groups. The bullet points under each question are a brief summary of the feedback from those groups. The background to the session was that IAO Council has been observing, over the last few years, a steady but slow decline in total membership of affiliated OAs and in sales of *Organists' Review* to members. Whilst this is not a matter for urgent concern, if neglected it would become so, because economics of scale will come into play at some point, rendering *Organists' Review* and eventually IAO as an umbrella organisation unviable. The recent demise of a couple of local OAs gives an early warning.

1. How does the environment in which OAs operate now differ from when they were founded? What trends in society and in churches affect membership numbers? Why and how?

- *There are fewer churches, and a reduction in the numbers of organists, and of organ teachers and pupils.*
- *The population is becoming unchurched. A diminishing proportion of those churches that are active need organists.*
- *The format of church services is changing, and with it a change in the nature of church music.*
- *The population is aging. Those older people who expect and respect traditional church music are diminishing in number.*
- *The RCO syllabus is irrelevant to the needs of the majority of churches.*
- *There are fewer church choirs, and more use of recorded music.*

2. Is there a growing polarisation between 'professional' and 'amateur' in organ playing? How is this evident? Is it inevitable? How might the IAO position itself in relation to this?

- *There is a tendency for the organ to be regarded more as a musical instrument in its own right, and less as a church music facility.*
- *On balance, church organists are becoming less 'professional'.*
- *The boundaries between 'professional' and 'amateur' are becoming more blurred in some respects and sharper in others.*
- *Perhaps these trends should be reflected in greater adaptability of OAs, to accommodate differing skill levels and interests?*

3. What, in strategic terms, are the differences between IAO, RCO, GCM, RSCM, ISM, etc? Do they each fulfil a unique role? How could IAO strengthen its position among them?

- *There is negligible collaboration among them, and very little in the way of joint ventures.*
- *Each organisation has its own niche, but greater collaboration can be envisaged as a response to the demographic changes that are affecting all.*
- *Perhaps the IAO could take a lead in building bridges?*

4. Is IAO sufficiently un-denominational (including non-church use of organs)?

- *The answer depends on the area. In Scotland, for example, OA membership and activities are more multi-denominational than in England.*
- *Perhaps the IAO should remove the word 'liturgical' from its terms of reference?*
- *There are excellent instruments in secular locations that could be used for OA meetings and for recruitment initiatives on 'neutral territory'.*

5. Will organists need broader skills in future? Could/should IAO help, and if so how?

- *The role of church organist is moving towards 'Music Leader' [in the USA, Minister of Music]. Even in some cathedrals this trend is evident.*
- *He/she needs to be able to collaborate with other instrumentalists, including singing groups that may not be traditional choirs.*
- *It need not be a case of either organ or music group. Often organ can be used with other instruments, giving more opportunities for the organ to be heard.*
- *[The meeting on balance expressed the view that] this issue needs to be addressed in relation to the future of OAs; it cannot be ignored.*

6. Should OAs locally, and the IAO nationally, have established a dialogue with church authorities?

- *Such a dialogue already exists in Scotland, where the SFO and the Church of Scotland have an ongoing collaboration in the form of an Agreement and recommended salary scales, and the SFO offers an advisory service.*
- *There seems to be little dialogue in the rest of the UK, although this could be beneficial to both sides under the prevailing conditions.*

7. Do the ways that OAs and the IAO interact need to be changed to confront future challenges?

- *The Advisory Committee could play a bigger role in helping to formulate policy.*
- *Communications need to be more bidirectional, with more debate and fewer formal 'reports'.*
- *Organists' Review should be developed as the primary communications link between the IAO and individual members, and could be more informative of 'what is going on'.*
- *Personal contacts are important and effective. The Regional Forums are valuable in this respect, but need to be maintained on an ongoing basis rather than being one-offs.*

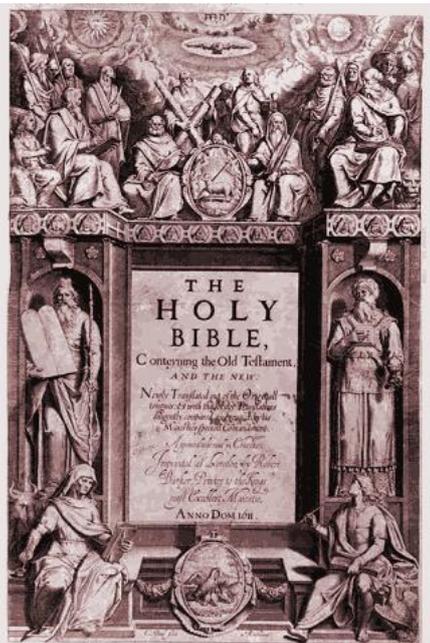
Conclusion

It is clear to the IAO Council that the demographic changes touched on in this initial debate will greatly alter the landscape for upcoming generations of organists. Basically, the IAO, the affiliated OAs, and their individual members, can be non-responsive to these changes, or can be reactive to the challenges, or can be proactive to the opportunities. Council considers that the only viable option is the latter. The debate between Council and the Advisory Committee will continue, to determine appropriate courses of action, and it is hoped that this will be mirrored at local level.

Don Roworth, updated 1.11.10

Members' Notes

The King James Version at 400 Celebrations at Derby Cathedral in June



2011 marks the 400th anniversary of what we call the 'Authorised Version' of the Bible, commissioned by King James I and published in 1611. In the Cathedral we have chosen to mark the anniversary in June with four events:

- **Exhibition** of old Bibles and historic information
- **Celebration Concert** given by the Cathedral Voluntary Choir, Friday 17th June at 7.30 pm.
- **Public Readings** of the Authorised Version during the week beginning 20th June.
- **Commemorative Evensong** on Sunday 27th June with the Bishop of Derby preaching.

Celebration Concert: 'The King James Version: a Celebration in Words and Music'.

The event sets out to tell the story of the Authorised Version and to illustrate something of the wide range of musical settings which it has inspired over the centuries. We will be joined by the actor Alan Smith (well known in Derby for his appearances in Shakespeare) and there will be refreshments at the end. Admission: £8 (£5 concessions, under 16s free if with an adult) Tickets are available from Foulds, the Cathedral Coffee House and the Cathedral Vergers.

Public readings: We hope that the event, as well as being

worthwhile in itself as a demonstration of the enduring power of the scriptures in this wonderful translation, can be used to raise money. Proceeds are to be divided equally between the Cathedral Choir Fund, the Organ Restoration Fund and Christian Aid. If you would like to take part as a reader or steward, or you would like to sponsor the event, please contact Tom Corfield (01332 762251; tandrncorfield@tiscali.co.uk)

Tom Corfield

Cavaillé-Coll DVD Project

Fugue State Films have recently launched an appeal for subscribers to fund a DVD celebrating the work of the great French organ builder. Having been so impressed with previous productions by the company, for example the Daniel Moutl DVD presented at our January meeting, I would commend this as a very worthy project for investment.

Details: www.fuguestatefilms.co.uk/cavaille-coll

Editor

The 'All-Bach Website' for Bach lovers

A brief browse on the Internet will reveal in excess of 60 million results for "Bach", but buried amongst them is a recent newcomer which deserves the particular attention of organists. The *All-Bach Website* contains an eclectic mix of articles, photos, videos, recordings and links, most of which have interesting associations with the great master. The author, David Rogers, a retired but much travelled music teacher and organist, has been a lifetime student of Bach's music and observer of performances and performers, both historical and contemporary. The medium of a website has given him an opportunity to share what one suspects is but a small sample of his collected Bach memorabilia, commentaries and scores.

You will find slide shows of quality photographs of organs, churches, performers and conductors, but most fascinating is the collection of links to YouTube videos. Each video has a feature of unique interest; for example a rare film of Louis Vierne playing at Notre Dame, or the dextrous pedalling of Jean Guillou at St Eustache, or the legendary 64 foot reed at Sydney Town Hall.

Members' News

New members

We have pleasure in welcoming two new members to the DDOA:

Mrs Margaret Wall of Etwell

Mr Alan Goulding of Foston, Lincs.

Ben Bloor Success

Members will be delighted to hear of the recent success of young Derby organist, Ben Bloor, currently Organ Scholar at St. George's Chapel, Windsor Castle, in the Quimby Competition for Young Organists organised by the American Guild of Organists. We offer our congratulations to Ben as winner of the European Region Competition. In July he travels to New Jersey, USA to compete in the finals of the National Competition and we wish him every success there.

BBC Music Magazine

The May issue includes a free CD of Bach works on the Silbermann organ at Freiburg Cathedral.

There are several enlightening articles and short essays exploring historical insights into famous works and performers. Example topics are the Bach interpreter Glenn Gould and the transcriptions for organ of the Chaconne from a violin partita. The author is a devotee of the art of transcription and offers numerous examples which demonstrate the sheer versatility of Bach's music. A dozen or so of the author's own transcriptions are available as free downloads in PDF format.

If you love Bach, then <http://sebastianbach.webs.com/> is for you.

Laurence Rogers



Web author David Rogers at the Rudolf Garrels organ at Purmerend, Holland

Forthcoming DDOA Meetings - Recital by Dr Simon Lindley and Annual Dinner

"Entertainment and Enlightenment"

**A lecture recital reflecting the work of a City Organist by
Dr Simon Lindley**

**Wednesday 18th May 7.45pm
at St Mary and All Saints Church, Chesterfield
Admission £5 at the door.**

Simon Lindley is well known as the Leeds City Organist, a frequent recitalist and a prolific recording artist. He is also Organist at the famous Leeds Parish Church, an appointment he has held since 1975. A fine player, Simon is also an entertaining and informative speaker and raconteur. We look forward to sampling both aspects of his work on this occasion, one not to be missed.

Please note the starting time for this event.



Annual Dinner 14th June

*Alison House, Intake Lane, Cromford
7.00 for 7.30pm*

The Guest of Honour will be **Professor David Shuker**, Editor of the British Institute of Organ Studies *Reporter*. David was formerly a research chemist but in recent years has turned to organ building. He specialises in portable and positive organs made from traditional materials. He currently also holds a research fellowship at the Department of Music at the University of Birmingham. He has published articles in several recent issues of *Organists' Review*.

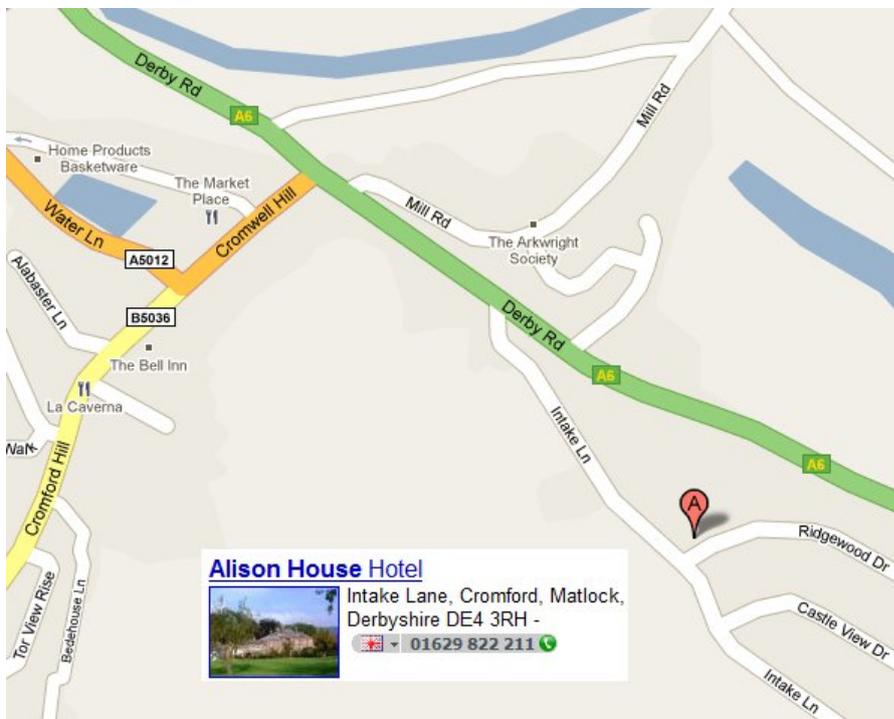
Read more about David Shuker's activities at:

<http://www.signofthepipe.com>

Booking your place:

A two or three course meal is available with the option of tea or coffee afterwards. Details of the menu and prices are shown on the booking slip accompanying this newsletter. Please indicate your choices on the booking slip and return it with a cheque (payable to the Derby and District Organists' Association) to the Secretary, Mr Stephen Johns, 24 Oaklands Avenue, Littleover, Derby DE23 7QG (01332 764792)

**AS SOON AS POSSIBLE
BUT NO LATER THAN 7TH JUNE**



Items of news or articles for the July/August edition of the *Newsletter* should reach the Editor by **Monday 20th June**, either via e-mail: DDOAnews@gmail.com or by post: Dr.Laurence Rogers, 24 St.David's Crescent, Coalville, Leicestershire LE67 4SS. The Secretary, Stephen Johns, may be reached via mail@derbyorganists.co.uk Please visit the DDOA Website www.derbyorganists.co.uk for information about Association activities, past editions of the newsletter, photo gallery and many special features of local interest.