

# NEWSLETTER

JULY 2007

## LOOKING AHEAD

### Tuesday 17 July : Evening visit to Abbott organs at Long Lane and Longford

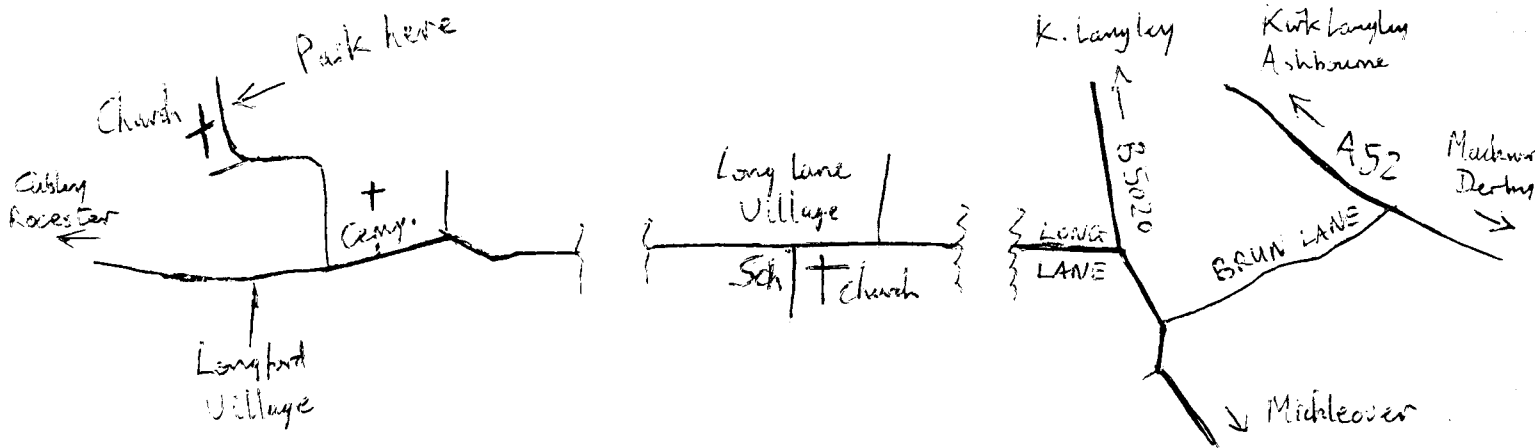
**7.30 Christ Church, Long Lane.** It would be fascinating to be able to discover more about the origin of this seemingly unique instrument - the county's largest one-manual, though with distinct "Great" and "Swell" divisions which in many ways represent a scaled-down version of the Longford organ (as built). Records suggest that it was already in the church before being moved and re-opened in 1874, making it an early product of Abbott (established in Leeds in 1869). An additional curiosity, which often seems to go unnoticed, is that the Lieblich Bourdon, as well as forming a full-compass Pedal stop, also provides a manual "Bourdon Bass", in effect completing the compass of the Tenor C Double Diapason.

"Great"		"Swell"		Pedal	
Double Diapason	16	Gedact	8	Bourdon	16
Open Diapason	8	Gamba	8	Lieblich Bourdon	16
Stop Diapason	8	Dulciana	8		
Salcional	8	Lieblich Flute	4	"Pedals to Keys" coupler	
Principal	4				
Harmonic Flute	4				
Mixture II	(12-15)				

**8.30 St Chad, Longford.** Our member David Vincett, Organist of both churches, has researched the circumstances in which the Longford organ came about; members will be able to purchase copies of his booklet which relates the story in great detail as well as being commemorative of the scheme executed in 2006. Essentially the organ was presented in 1875 in memory of Emily ("Milly") Anson, daughter of the then Rector, who had drowned in a swimming accident in the Hebrides the previous year. It remained unaltered apart from the loss of one Mixture rank and, in 1991, the electrification of the pedal action, until 2006, when a major restoration was carried out by Edmund Stow, along with two tonal substitutions on the Swell and the addition of a Pedal reed. The "new" pipework all came from the former Brindley & Foster/Adkins/Reeves organ in St Anne, Derby.

Great		Swell			
		1875		2006	
Bourdon	16				
Open Diapason	8	Gedact	8	Gedact	8
Stop Diapason	8	Gamba	8	Gamba	8
Salcional	8	Dulciana	8	Lieblich Flute	4
Dolce	8	Lieblich Flute	4	Super Octave	2
Principal	4	Oboe	8	Horn	8
Harmonic Flute	4				
Twelfth	3	<b>Pedal</b>		3 unison couplers	
Fifteenth	2	Open Diapason	16		
Mixture III (15-19-22)		Bourdon	16		
		Trombone	16	2006	

Transport for the evening is by members' own cars, and as always we urge anyone who needs assistance to contact the Secretary (☎ 01773 606900) or any Officer. Cars may be parked on the road at Long Lane; Longford church is reached via a lengthy private drive, at the end of which cars may be parked parallel to the church wall, but **not in the adjacent farmyard or in such a way as to obstruct farm traffic**. NB There are no *facilities* in either church.



## VISIT TO ORGANS IN NOTTINGHAMSHIRE

Members initially congregated at Holy Cross, Epperstone, where the organ, originally by Lloyd of Nottingham and later pneumaticised by Wragg, was rebuilt in 1999 on the extension principle, generating 22 stops from 8 ranks of pipes. The instrument is located and played on the north side of the chancel, and in the building, under an arched plaster ceiling, sounds quite bold with a satisfactory blend of upperwork and warm foundation stops. The electric action is prompt, although the writer found the touch a little on the deep side. It was pleasing to note that the winding was stable, with no trace of the "wobbles" that can sometimes affect this kind of instrument.

Following a mini "Le Mans" start, members continued to St Helen's, Burton Joyce, where the organ by Principal Pipe Organs of York was completed in 2004. The all-new pipework of this instrument is located in an oak case designed by David Graebe, on a platform in the tower arch at the west end, operated by electro-magnetic action. The console sits in an alcove off the chancel (where the old organ was located), a scheme reminiscent of several 1950's, 60's and 70's organs locally, most of which have come to unhappy ends! In fairness, the Burton Joyce organ has been beautifully executed by the builders, with a comfortable console furnished with high-quality fittings. There is no extension, and the 18 stops fill the church with an exciting level of sound. The only snag is that this cannot be truly appreciated at the console because of its difficult location behind the chancel arch. Perhaps it could be repositioned in the future.

Owing to traffic controls on the Gunthorpe bridge, members following Denis indulged in a brief Motor Rally through the outskirts of Nottingham, over Lady Bay bridge and via Radcliffe-on-Trent to Shelford. The church of SS Peter & Paul is a large building for the size of the village, and contains a real gem, the 1870 August Gern organ originally built for Tockington Manor, near Bristol, in an 18th century case attributed to Richard Seede (of Bristol). When Tockington became a school in 1947 the organ was put up for sale and was purchased by St Catharine's, Nottingham, who had apparently lost their previous instrument in a fire. The installation was carried out by Roger Yates, who made some additions and alterations but, we are told, no changes to the voicing of the original pipework. On the closure of St Catharine's the organ was given to Shelford PC and a thorough restoration and installation carried out by Jonathan Wallace of Henry Groves & Son.

As rebuilt by Yates the organ contained 20 stops, and the specification remains the same at Shelford. There is the unmistakable warm French romantic sound, with really snappy reeds - not surprising since Gern had been foreman to Cavaillé-Coll.

Our thanks are due to the Organists of the three churches,, David Cowlshaw, James Williams and Richard Eaton respectively, who welcomed us and demonstrated the organs, and not least to Denis Littleton for kindly arranging the "afternoon delights" on our behalf.

TWB

## OTHER CHURCH/ORGAN-RELATED EVENTS TO NOTE

- Wed 4 July Ashley Grote : Cathedral, 7.45
- Fri 6 July David Birchenough : Holy Trinity, Ilkeston, 7.30
- Sun 8 July Matthew Halls (harpsichord) : Bach *Goldberg Variations* :  
Southwell Minster (Great Hall), 8.00
- Wed 11 July Malcolm Archer : Cathedral, 7.45
- Sun 15 July Jeffrey Makinson : Albert Hall, Nottingham, 2.45
- Wed 18 July The Swingle Singers + Peter Gould : Cathedral, 7.45

Wed 18 July Roy Massey : Southwell Minster, 7.30  
 Wed 25 July Tom Corfield : Cathedral, 7.45  
 Wed 1 Aug Johan Hermans : Cathedral, 7.45  
 Wed 8 Aug Charles Harrison : Cathedral, 7.45  
 Sun 12 Aug David Butterworth : Albert Hall, Nottingham, 2.45  
 Wed 15 Aug Peter Gould : Cathedral, 7.45  
 Wed 15 Aug James Taylor : Southwell Minster, 7.30  
 Wed 22 Aug Kerry Beaumont : Cathedral, 7.45  
 Mon 27 Aug John Coulton (trumpet) + David Dunnett (organ) : Southwell Minster, 3.30  
 Sat 1 Sept Come and Sing *Elijah* (Mendelssohn) Pt. 1 (dir: Peter Williams) :  
 Melbourne Leisure Centre, workshop 2.00, perf. 7.30 ☎ 07765 819428 to book  
 Sun 2 Sept Nigel Ogden : Albert Hall, Nottingham, 2.45  
 Sat 8 Sept Jennifer Bate : Victoria Hall, Hanley, 12.00 & 2.45 (Hanley Mendelssohn Organ  
 Festival)

## BACH - PARTITAS (Clavierübung Part 1)

I returned from holiday to find the last *Newsletter* with our Editor's plea for contributions. Having just chosen the Angela Hewitt recording of the Bach Partitas for a birthday present and listened to it on holiday, I thought I would share my joy in this wonderful collection.

I'm pretty sure I first met one or two of the Sarabandes as Grade 2 or 3 set pieces. One could say they were wasted on me at that age, or maybe a seed was planted; i'm sure one should never give new players anything less than the best they can manage. As a teenager I met the opening Bb partita, and at college I became hooked on the C minor, then the D major and finally after college the great E minor. They have never been far from my piano since. The G major and A minor had never quite grabbed me, and Angela Hewitt does describe the the A minor as "unjustifiably rarely played".

Angela Hewitt's playing is certainly to my taste - clarity of part playing, dance-like rhythmic vitality, interesting phrasing and awareness of structure. I found myself noticing points of interest in both the known and the unknown movements.

One example is the Gigue that closes the A minor. It starts with this theme:



and one notices the rising sequence on beats 1 & 3 of the bars - a-b-c-d. Then the second half of the movement opens with:

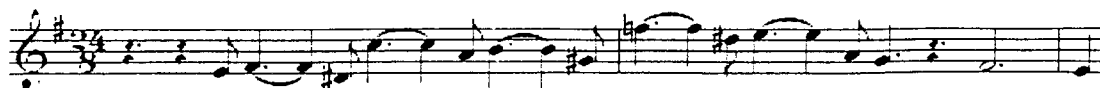


The rising a-b-c-d has become a falling e-d-c. As with the closing movements of Partitas 2 and 6, the theme has been inverted.

Moving on to the closing Gigue of the E minor. This is written:



(I have been unable to reproduce the true time signature, which apparently is a circle with a vertical line through it). Until now I have only ever heard it played in compound time:



Note how much more economical the first notation is. It is an angular theme and certain sections of the movement I could never get to sound "right" when played in simple time as written. Angela Hewitt plays it as written and makes it convincing (of course). Her explanation is that to play it thus emphasises its angularity and provides greater contrast with the preceding Gavotte. Having heard it, I concur, though it may be better to ask what Bach intended rather than rely on subjective perceptions.

One of the sections which used to puzzle me in simple time is:

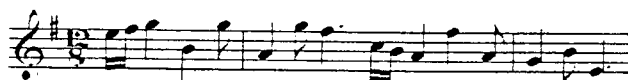


Note that the alto and bass parts are not just accompanying the top line, but are derived from the initial theme in a kind of stretto. This and a parallel passage in the second half of the movement where the idea in the top part becomes the bass are also the trickiest moments in the piece.

To illustrate her point about the the preceding Gavotte - the score starts off with:



but triplets soon appear in the texture accompanying this motif, surely implying that it should be played to fit with the triplets. Angela Hewitt plays:



which in her words gives it "more bounce", particularly when the crotchets are almost quaver plus quaver rest.

If I had more time and space (*space can be provided - Ed.*), I could write more - perhaps on the beauty of the Sarabandes or the switching between  $\frac{6}{8}$  and  $\frac{3}{4}$  in the G major Tempo di Minuetta, or on the the historical circumstances of their composition and publication.

It was spooky to read in the notes that Angela Hewitt's greatest affection lies with the D major Allemande. This is always a joy to play and, though I hesitate to name a favourite, it could be mine too. I also saw a TV documentary of Joanna MacGregor recording her album "Play", and she clearly loves it too.

I know I haven't mentioned the word *organ* here - there's an assumption that anyone interested in the organ must have a love or at least tolerance for Bach. Neither have I addressed the piano versus harpsichord debate. These partitas are simply a Desert Island score for me, and I hope to have triggered shared feelings of delight or inspired you to get to know them.

Further reading: the baffling binary gigue at [www.scena.org](http://www.scena.org)  
time\_signatures at [en.wikiperia.org](http://en.wikiperia.org)

John Hobbs

*Editor's note: Our thanks to John for his thoughtful article. Would anyone like to follow it up with something on similar lines relating to some part of the organ works? As for the thought that any organist's attitude to Bach might be limited to mere tolerance - surely not! But there again, if anyone does admit to it, let's have an article explaining why. It would strain this Editor's impartiality to the limit to print it, but presumably even the most heinous heretic is entitled to a defence!*

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**NEXT NEWSLETTER will be published mid August : deadline 4 August**

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