

Derby & District Organists'

Registered Charity no: 510567

Association



The Chairman, PJ Williams, with the Rev. Julian Hollywell, guest speaker at the annual Derby & District Organists' Association dinner. The dinner was held at the Grange Banqueting suite, Derby. More photographs can be found on the Association website (details on page 2).

Forthcoming Events

Wednesday 18th February 7.30pm

Europe's Oldest Organs – A Sequel, St John's Heritage Centre, Belper.

Members will be familiar with the talks which Rodney Tomkins has given in the past and also with the depth of research which inform his presentations (see article on page three).

Saturday 21st March 10.00am

Organ Study Day with Roger Fisher, St Oswald, Ashbourne (see article on page 2).

Saturday 16th May 8.00am

Annual Outing - Liverpool
Visits to St George's Hall and the Metropolitan and Anglican Cathedrals. Members will have the opportunity to play the organs in St George's Hall and in the Metropolitan cathedral. Bookings will be made later in the year. Guests from other associations will be invited.

Saturday 13th June 7.30pm

Members' Recital, St James, Riddings

Monday 20th July 7.30pm

Evening Visit to Tibshelf and Somercotes

Saturday 12th September 2.30pm

Chairman's Event – Repton

Saturday 10th October 7.30pm

Mendelssohn Event – St Mary, Ilkeston

Tuesday 17th November 7.30pm

Annual General Meeting – St Werburgh, Spondon

Two dozen members and guests gathered at the Grange Banqueting Suite for the Association's Annual Dinner. The surroundings were spacious and comfortable – and we had a bar to ourselves, which several members felt was a great bonus.

The guest speaker, Fr. Julian Hollywell, proved to be an engaging dinner companion as well as an entertaining speaker who managed to leaven the more academic parts of his speech with humorous anecdotes about organists – none of whom were local. He described himself as an organist of the Les Dawson School, though there is a competence there which his modest humour sought to hide.

The central theme of his speech was the lack of dignitas and gravitas in modern liturgy; he supported his thoughts by references to the Tudor period, one of the most turbulent in English church history. Before taking holy orders, Fr. Julian studied law in the Middle Temple and it was this background which informed his thoughts on rapid changes in liturgy through a detailed consideration of the many

Acts that affected the liturgy of the Tudor period. His carefully drawn parallel with the last 50 years was thought provoking and challenged the removal of dignitas and gravitas from Church of England services.

'When was the last time you felt a sense of awe in a church service? When was the last time you were moved by the liturgy itself, rather than the music?' These questions challenge all of us to think about the liturgy in our worship and what it is that encourages a sense of spirituality amongst people in our very materialistic world.

His ideas on recreating a sense of awe and mystery in modern worship certainly found support amongst some members though I did not have the opportunity to hear comments from members of other denominations.

After the dinner, members were able to visit the Masonic Temple and play the recently installed Allen organ. David Shooter has placed some photographs on the website.



The **Organ Study Day** on Saturday 21st March is a new venture for the Association, one which we hope will be well attended.

Drawing upon Roger Fisher's extensive experience as a teacher and performer, the focus of the day will be the development of playing and interpretive skills, with particular attention paid to the way in which we learn pieces and overcome difficulties.

Those attending the day, both as players and observers, will be given a bound copy of the prepared and unseen pieces which they may keep.

Roger, pictured above and right, is a recitalist of international repute as well as a teacher of both piano and organ. If you would like to take part, please complete an application form which can be obtained from the Secretary, Siann Hurt, by calling 01773 606900 or via e-mail on hurt@one-name.org More information can be found on the Association website at www.derbyorganists.co.uk

The following information may encourage candidates to apply for a place as either a player or observer. The specification of the St Oswald organ appears on page 3.

Roger Fisher was Organist and Master of the Choristers of Chester Cathedral for 29 years and left there in 1996 to concentrate on his career as a recitalist, teacher and adviser on organ construction. From 1997 to 2004 he was Features Editor of Organists' Review.

Born in Woodford, Essex, he was educated at Bancroft's School and studied at the Royal College of Music with Dr Harold Darke and Prof. Herbert Howells, gaining his ARCM, FRCO and CHM diplomas and winning the Geoffrey Tankard Prize for Organ playing. In 1959 he became Organ Scholar at Christ Church, Oxford and studied with Dr Sydney Watson, Dr Bernard Rose and Dr H. Kennedy Andrews.

During his student years he was Organist of St Mark's, Regent's Park in London. He became Assistant Organist of Hereford Cathedral in 1962, and Assistant Lecturer in Music at Hereford College of Education in 1963. During this period he studied the piano with Professor Claud Biggs and acted as an assistant chorus master, organ soloist, and accompanist for The Three Choirs Festival.

Upon completion of the rebuilt organ in 1970 at Chester, he embarked on the first of many BBC broadcasts and numerous recordings (including several for EMI, Decca and RCA) which have had world-wide sales. Recently, many of his CDs have appeared on the AMPHION label, but he has recorded for a number of other companies, not only in the United Kingdom, but also in the USA, South Africa and Germany. As a pianist, he has collaborated with Gordon Pullin in an 8 CD set of *The English Tenor Repertoire*.

He has frequently been asked to act as organ adviser to churches, chapels and cathedrals and has also advised on organ projects in colleges and concert halls.

He tours frequently and extensively as a recitalist in Europe, Scandinavia and North America, visiting Australia also in autumn 2004 and South Africa in 2002, 2005 and 2007. He has a wide repertoire and specialises in the music of Bach and of the Romantic Era. He is a keen pianist and gives piano recitals and concerto performances when time permits. His new book "Master Class with Roger Fisher", giving practical advice to pianists and organists, has just been published by *animus*.

Web-site:

www.rogerfisher.org.uk



Both of the photographs, courtesy of Roger Fisher, show Roger seated at the organ in the music room of his home, The Old Chapel, Trelogan. Information about the organ can be found on Roger's website.

Visitors who observe the proceedings without copies of the music will be charged £7.

Specification of the Hill, Norman & Beard organ in St. Oswald, Ashbourne.

Pedal Organ

Harmonic Sub Bass	32
Open Wood	16
Violone	16
Contra Viola	16
Bourdon	16
Octave Diapason	8
Bass Flute	8
Trombone	16
Fagotto (from Sw.)	16

Choir Organ

Open Diapason	8
Stopped Diapason	8
Viole d'Orchestre	8
Dulciana	8
Wald Flute	8
Larigot	1 1/3
Krumhorn	16
Tromba	8
Tremulant	

Great Organ

Contra Viola	16
Open Diapason I	8
Open Diapason II	8
Gemshorn	8
Hohl Flute	8
Octave	4
Principal	4
Nason Flute	4
Twelfth	2 2/3
Fifteenth	2
Mixture	III
Tromba	8

Swell Organ

Bourdon	16
Open Diapason	8
Rohr Gedeckt	8
Salicional	8
Vox Angelica	8
Octave	4
Twelfth	2 2/3
Fifteenth	2
Mixture	IV
Contra Fagotto	16
Trumpet	8
Horn	8
Oboe	8
Clarion	4
Tremulant	

Couplers

Great to Pedal
Swell to Pedal
Choir to Pedal
Swell to Great
Swell to Choir
Swell Unison Off
Swell Octave

Swell Sub Octave
Choir to Great
Choir Sub to Great
Choir Unison Off
Choir Octave
Choir Sub Octave
Great and Pedal pistons combined
Adjustable pistons to each dept:
Great 6
Swell 6
Choir 4
Pedal 6
Reversible pistons for:
Swell to Great
Great to Pedal
Choir to Pedal
Swell to Pedal

Europe's Oldest Organs – A Sequel,

Wednesday 18th February 7.30pm

St John's Heritage Centre, Belper.

A year ago I delivered a session, largely pictorial, in which we looked at representations of organs in late Mediaeval art and on to photographic examples of surviving instruments and casework up to early C17th. This year we shall home in, with more in-depth listening, on six organs dating from the early C15th to early C16th.

It is during this period - a century of transition from late Gothic to early Renaissance – that the gallery organ (i.e. a substantial fixture, as opposed to moveable portatives and positives) reached its first great flowering before the disintegrative influences of the reformation were to set in – influences that were to transform the organ from a purely solo instrument to one which, in addition, was expected to accompany congregations and choirs. These multi-functions still, today, affect the location (and in many cases the effectiveness) of the organs we play.

RT

Historic Organs in Derbyshire Rodney Tomkins

In the ten years since Rodney's epic tome was published there have been numerous changes to the

county's stock of historic organs, and a few more have been discovered.

Sadly, a number have been lost in a variety of circumstances and a few rebuilt so radically that they no longer qualify for inclusion.

With Rodney's approval, Ed Stow is now producing an update in the form of a supplement which it is hoped will be made available to members and the wider public in the near future.

If anyone has any relevant information which there is even the slightest chance that Ed or Rodney may not be aware of, please pass it to Ed as soon as possible.

Ed can be contacted via the Secretary, Siann Hunt, or via the list of members.

Ed would also appreciate feedback on his Christmas crossword – does anyone actually complete it?

Membership List

If you have you changed your address or telephone number during the last two years since the current list was compiled, please will you contact the secretary, Siann Hurt and let her know your new details?

Similarly, if you are now an internet user, please let Siann have your e-mail address. The Association *never* releases members' personal information.

Siann can be contacted on: 01773 606900 or via e-mail at hurt@one-name.org

Are You a Cartoonist?

I wonder, do we have any members who can draw cartoons? A little humour brightens everyone's day and the world of organs and organists is potentially a rich source of harmless entertainment and wit.

Please contact me at: twes@fsmail.net if you have any thoughts on this.

TW



Adam Slack

Having been a member of the Derby and District Organists' Association for some years now, I thought I would offer a contribution in the series of articles about musicians at the beginning of their careers.

I first started playing the organ about thirteen years ago. We moved from Derby to Doveridge when I was six and started attending St. Cuthbert's, the village church. I was fascinated by the organ; I'd never seen anything like it and from that moment on I was hooked - the rest, as they say, is history.

Before going to University, I played for quite a few churches in the Doveridge area, most often at St Mary's, Uttoxeter. The 45 stop Reeves & Merner organ, with its many faults, is still very powerful. I understand there are some plans in the pipeline for a complete rebuild. I also played occasionally at St. Cuthbert's, regularly at St. Andrew's in Cubley, and wherever I was required. I still play for special services, weddings and funerals at Uttoxeter.

I went to school at Thomas Alleyne's in Uttoxeter and still play the organ for their carol services, amongst other things. I accompanied the Alleyne's choir on two music tours to Italy; we stayed in the Bay of Naples, in Sorrento.

If you like travelling and have never been to the Bay of Naples, I recommend it; I hope very much to go back this summer. I was lucky enough to play in various churches in the area, including Amalfi Cathedral. Some of the old pipe organs there are a little neglected, and generally have been replaced by Viscount digital organs; a great pity as the original instruments would have once been really impressive. Unfortunately, as with many places in the UK, lack of money has meant that rebuilding the pipe organs was just not an option.

I started as a fresher in Mathematical Science at Birmingham University in 2006 and within two weeks had joined the University Choir which has a membership of approximately 250. The University choir is renowned throughout the Birmingham area and performs in both Birmingham Town Hall and Symphony Hall. The choir has recently sung: *These things shall be*, John Ireland; *B Minor Mass*, Bach; *Te Deum*, Berlioz; *Alexander's Feast*, Handel. This coming term we shall sing Fauré's *Requiem* and Bernstein's *Chichester Psalms*.

In my second year I became the manager of the University Choir and was re-elected in November last year. Running a choir of 250 is perhaps not most people's idea of fun, but I love it! As I am in my final

year most people think I'm slightly insane to keep going with it although I wouldn't have it any other way.

The choir not only comprises university students, but anybody in Birmingham who wishes to join, so there are many older members who have retired and enjoy coming for a chat with friends once a week. It's nice to be part of helping that happen for them and we enjoy having 'cake' rehearsals!

I also ran for conductor of the University Chamber Choir having sung solo with them in the previous term. I say Chamber Choir though a choir of about fifty people is not so much a chamber choir as a smaller choir. I had forgotten how much hard work it could be, preparing rehearsals, music and parts. However, it was great fun and we gave a fine concert at the end of November 2008 with works ranging from Gibbons to my own arrangement of Cole Porter's *Anything Goes*.

I haven't played the organ a great deal in Birmingham though I am able to use the Great Hall Organ to practise. Birmingham has some of the best organs in the country, so I am lucky to have been able to play both the Town Hall and Symphony Hall organs. Various churches have me on their 'list' including St Martin's, and St Paul's in the Jewellery quarter, though my main church is St Bartholomew's, Edgbaston which is a very nice church; I sing in the robed choir there and play when required.

My time at Birmingham has been busy and exciting, so much so that two of my plans for next year involve staying here for another year.

Adam Slack

Adam is currently teaching maths on a part time basis at Handsworth Boys Grammar School until he completes his degree.

TW