

# Derby & District Organists' Association

Registered Charity No. 510567

## Newsletter



### *Doveridge welcomes its restored organ - Adam Slack*

For those of you who have known the organ at Doveridge in recent years, you will probably remember an instrument which played like a sponge, had some interesting faults and sounded like a flushing toilet when you opened or closed the swell box. The old swell engines and perished leather leaked like a sieve. The instrument had got to a point where, whilst still playable, became a constant game of Russian roulette. Was that stop you were about to pull out going to cut off everything you were playing or actually do what it was supposed to? Was it worth the risk? It was fine as long as you didn't want to play anything particularly fast, or loud.

Luckily, in 2013, the organ underwent a complete, seven-month rebuild, by MC Thompson Organ Builders of Burton-on-Trent. Facing hurdles along the way, including finding that the Victorian organ loft could not support the weight of the organ, the team worked to produce a greatly improved instrument.

The history of the organ in St Cuthbert's, Doveridge is interesting and involves several well-known musicians. In the late 1800s, church music was changing and many churches were installing organs. Doveridge was no exception. The first organ is recorded (on the NPOR) to have been installed in 1867, replacing a

### *DDOA Events 2014*

#### **12<sup>th</sup> July (Saturday)**

Educational event at the Cathedral, in association with RSCM (See page 3)

#### **15<sup>th</sup> July (Tuesday)**

Visit to local organs: Hoar Cross and Doveridge. (See pages 1,2 and 8)

#### **8<sup>th</sup> September (Monday)**

Visit to local organs: English Martyrs and restored instrument at Mackworth

#### **8<sup>th</sup> October (Wednesday)**

'The Organ Pilgrimage' – Peter Gould's final visit of his marathon project with opportunity to play the recently restored organ at St Osmund's, Derby

**November:** AGM

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### *Concerts & Recitals*

#### **Wednesdays at 7.45pm**

#### **Derby Cathedral Summer Recitals**

July 2 <sup>nd</sup>	Nigel Ogden
9 <sup>th</sup>	Roy Massey
16 <sup>th</sup>	Robert Quinney
23 <sup>rd</sup>	Simon Hogan
30 <sup>th</sup>	Peter Gould/Tom Corfield Chris Johns/ Sachin Gunga/Ben Bloor

August 6 <sup>th</sup>	John Scott
13 <sup>th</sup>	John Hosking
20 <sup>th</sup>	Tom Corfield
27 <sup>th</sup>	Peter Gould

#### **Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> August, 2.45pm Albert Hall, Nottingham**

Organ recital by Henry Websdale FRCO  
(Student from Oundle School)  
Admission £5.

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### *Your newsletter*

With this month comes another bumper issue of the DDOA *Newsletter*! Our thanks are to all the members who have contributed articles, reports and letters. Please keep them coming.

- Editor

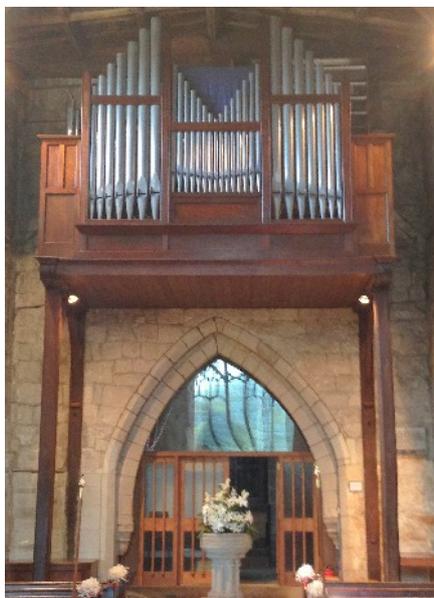
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Photo: Adam Slack plays the organ at Doveridge

musician's gallery and being designed by Sir John Stainer (of Crucifixion fame). However, an article from The Derbyshire Advertiser dating from 1967 tells a different story.

The village was lucky, at the time, to have Lord Hindlip (pictured below) residing in Doveridge Hall. Not only a wealthy man, as head of Samuel Allsopp & Sons brewery in Burton-on-Trent, Hindlip had a passion for the arts, especially music. It was perhaps one of life's happy coincidences that he should also be a good friend with both Sir John Stainer (at the time organist at St Pauls' Cathedral) and Sir Arther Sullivan. The three would often meet in Doveridge Hall and spend their time discussing music as all three were keen to raise standards of choral music in the rural churches throughout the country.

As a result Lord Hindlip decided to defray the cost of a new organ in Doveridge church and John Stainer was asked to draw up the specifications for it. He designed the organ and superintended the work until the organ was complete that year. Part of the design includes the platform the organ still sits upon (although very nearly not!) today. The organist originally sat to the left of the loft, on a platform raised above the floor level. If you look carefully on the supporting post of the loft you can still see the outline of the steps the organist would have climbed to make his way to the console.



The elevated organ case at the west end

Sometime after the installation, various friends of Lord Hindlip made visits to the village and, indeed on Sundays, to St Cuthbert's church. Distinguished guests included the Prince of Wales, his personal suite, Sir Arthur Sullivan and Lily Langtry. After the service, it is reported that Sullivan spent twenty minutes "extemporising" at the organ. Later musicians of note include George Frederick Linstead, who featured prominently in the musical life of Sheffield and South Yorkshire. He spent most of his childhood in Doveridge, developing his musical skills as part of the choir and playing the organ at St Cuthbert's.

Fast-forward some time to 1954 and the organ underwent a restoration at a cost of £400. Detailed tuning notes remain from this time until today. Through these we learn about numerous other changes to the instrument, up until 1972 when the organ once again underwent a full rebuild. Undertaken by H. Cantrill, this

rebuild replaced the tracker action with an electro-pneumatic one. The console was detached, moving it to the chancel, where it still sits now. Interestingly, this new console was largely made of pews from Repton and most of this still remains now.

Despite moving the console, the pipes were not turned around to speak down the church and until last year all still spoke towards where the organist originally played. Some even spoke into the tower wall. This has been addressed as part of the 2013 rebuild, along with significant updating of the action. Now digital, the response time of the organ has been considerably improved, along with less mechanical, background noise and our games of Russian roulette are now over. The voicing of the organ has changed to produce more interesting combinations and the reinstallation of composition pistons has made playing considerably easier.

I hope you enjoy your visit to Doveridge in July. Unfortunately I won't have broken up for summer by that date, but I hope you have as much fun playing it as I do! Needless to say in its opening concert, I played something both fast and loud (Louis Vierne Symphony 3 Finale) just to, you know, test it out!

Adam Slack

Please note the date of our visit to Doveridge: **Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> July at 8.15pm**, following our visit to Hoar Cross. Two beautiful churches with fascinating histories and two interesting organs to hear and play. See page 8 for a location map.

**Great**

Lieblich Bourdon	16
Open Diapason	8
Hohl Flute	8
Octave	4
Flute	4
Twelfth	2 <sup>2</sup> / <sub>3</sub>
Fifteenth	2

**Swell**

Gedact	8
Salicional	8
Principal	4
Gemshorn	2
Mixture	II
Trumpet	8

Tremulant

**Pedal**

Bourdon	16
Lieblich Bourdon	16
Bass Flute	8
Lieblich Flute	8
Super Octave	4

Swell to Pedal  
Swell to Great  
Swell Octave to Great  
Swell Octave  
Swell to Pedal

8-channel piston memory  
8 General composition thumb pistons  
5 Swell composition pistons  
5 Great composition thumb and toe pistons  
Great to Pedal piston coupler

## Recent Events

### May meeting - Visit to organs in Sheffield

The outing to Sheffield in May gave a great opportunity to sample two contrasting traditions of organ design. At St Matthew's in the city centre we heard and played a historic reconstruction by Goetze and Gwynn of a two-manual organ built by Bernard Smith in 1673 for the King's Private Chapel in Windsor Castle. Later in the suburbs at St John's, Ranmoor, we were treated to the cathedral sound of the four-manual instrument, originally by Brindley and Foster, but much augmented during its near 150 years history.

The splendid sight of the organ in the western gallery at St Matthew's immediately promised Baroque tones and members lost no time in testing it with Pachelbel, Bach and Buxtehude. The mechanical action of the manual had a very light and responsive touch, the sort that offers great scope for expressive phrasing and ornamentation but which also demands precise fingering. All the registers were unenclosed and, with door-knob style stops having about four inches of drawing action, some of us were required to practise our skills as registration assistants to achieve suitably quick registration changes. For three of the stops, the drawstop had a curious feature, such that when pulled out to its halfway point, the stop was playable on one manual, but when pulled all the way, it was playable on the other manual. This seemed very clever, but



St Matthew's. Purely mechanical console.



St Matthew's Carver Street. West gallery.

frequently confused us in trying to remember which manual was currently active for those stops. The tone generally was very bright, fulfilling its Baroque promise, but would need skilled handling for later repertoire.

At St John's we were greeted by George Parsons, a local organist standing in for the Director of Music who had another engagement. He demonstrated the instrument with the A major Prelude and Fugue by Bach followed by a Psalm Prelude by Howells. The Bach showed the grandeur of the full choruses whilst the Howells demonstrated the enormous range of tonal resources and its capability for registering seamless crescendos and diminuendos, a hallmark for a cathedral organ. To achieve these, George used the whole range of eight combination pistons on each manual, at one point pressing a different thumb piston in a dozen successive bars. With the main divisions on the north side of the chancel, the detached console was on the south side, so the player could have a good sense of balance in the overall sound. The organ spoke well into the church of cathedral proportions and we all agreed that it was a very comfortable and rewarding instrument to play.

It was a shame that the number in our party did not reach double figures on this occasion, for, apart from the persistent rain on the day, our visit to Sheffield was most enjoyable. Our thanks go to Denis Littleton for making the arrangements.

*Laurence Rogers*



St John's, Ranmoor. North chancel cases.



Gillian Chatto plays Bach's B minor Prelude

### Forthcoming Event



On **12<sup>th</sup> July**, we shall collaborate with Derby Cathedral and the Derbyshire RSCM to present an all-day event for young musicians. The intended audience is from age 11 to 22. **Please use your contacts to bring this to the attention of young people and parents.**

Publicity for this event is crucial, so the help of members in recruiting participants is really important.

Children who play the piano or a keyboard are especially welcome - if they bring a piece they will be invited to play it. We shall offer our usual hands-on activities with the mini organ, solo pedalboard, organ design kit and the cathedral organs.

## Recent Events

### June meeting - Annual Dinner

The Black Boy, Heage, provided the venue for this year's annual social event. A very friendly atmosphere prevailed at this traditional Derbyshire pub which served an excellent meal in its spacious upper room.

Guest of Honour on this occasion was Professor Robert Pascall who, in his after-dinner speech, charmed us with reminiscences from his life as a professional musician and academic. Recalling his interview for the organ scholarship at Keble College, Oxford, a mischievous don asked him "How do you make Stilton cheese?". Despite a tenuous relationship with the expected skills of an organ scholar, Robert improvised a description which apparently impressed his questioner, as he was duly offered the scholarship!

During his time as a student he visited as many organ lofts as possible at Oxbridge colleges and



Professor Robert Pascall

cathedrals to observe and study the technique of spell-binding role models such as David Willcocks, Gordon Slater, Clifford Hewis and John Birch, to mention just a few. He spoke in reverent tones of the enormous musical talents that he witnessed during his formative years, particularly those of Sir Jack Westrup, Head of the Music department at Oxford, citing his immaculate playing of Bach's trio

sonatas. Ultimately, Robert chose an academic career and for many years was Professor of Music at Nottingham University. He begged the question "What makes an organist become an academic?" He confessed that his dislike of organ practice dissuaded him from a career as a professional organist, so he resolved to devote himself to "thinking and writing". As such he has enjoyed a distinguished reputation as analyst, editor and author. Defending scholarship, he declared "The notes are not enough" for performance, and cited the example of how the writings of C.P.E. Bach have provided insights on expressive performance, insights which he must have learned from his father, J.S. Bach.

Robert entertained us with many anecdotes and after an enthusiastic vote of thanks from Chairman, Denis Littleton, he continued chatting with members informally. A splendid and friendly evening indeed! Special thanks to Stephen Johns for his superb organisation.

*Laurence Rogers*

### CATO Workshop at Darley Abbey

'I really enjoyed knowing how the organ works'. This is one of the many remarks from twenty one Old Vicarage School children aged 9 to 11. Mrs Adshead brought them to St Matthew's in May for a lively and interactive workshop about the church organ.

The organ can teach children a lot about music, science, technology, art & design and physical coordination, and the DDOA has carefully developed the Children and the Organ (CATO) project to tie into the National Curriculum. The small team of organists who deliver the two-hour session comprises some enthusiastic retired teachers, a scientist, an engineer, an organ builder and a university professor.

The children began by listening and watching carefully. They were encouraged both to ask and to answer questions – and they did! What do the different stops sound like, why are there so many shapes and lengths of pipes, how do they produce sound, and when can you combine different sounds together?

They then split into five groups and spent around 15 minutes on each of five activities – the pictures



Stephen Johns explains how to design an organ case.



Pupils explore the console

are reproduced by kind permission of the Old Vicarage School. One group went to the Walter Evans Room to investigate a specially designed mini-organ, with three stops and an octave of notes, where you can see the mechanism – the children took it in turns to operate the hand-pump and play the keys. Meanwhile another group in the link-corridor experimented with a pedal-board, with a lower bench for short legs. A third group was treated to a slide show in the chancel about organs, while a fourth in the cross-aisle had a go at designing the layout of pipes in an organ case and decorating the pipes. Finally, they could try the actual church organ itself, under careful supervision!

Back together again, there was a chance to hear the King of instruments, as Mozart called it, in a special concerto for organ and 'boomwhacker' orchestra. Many pipes of different colour and length were handed out, and everyone had to concentrate hard to play at the right moment to fit in with the organ – great fun.

Some more comments from the children: 'I enjoyed making my own pipe decoration'; 'I never knew there were 16ft, 8ft, 4ft and 2ft pipes on an organ'; 'I liked the foot keys'; 'I loved everything – could not pick my favourite activity!'

So they all enjoyed the afternoon and learnt a lot at the same time.

*Geoff Howell*

## *Letters to the Editor*

*From Edmund Stow:*

It was very kind of you to feature my retirement as you did in the *May/June Newsletter*, and also to print in full my lengthy piece re St Osmund's. The latter elicited a serious enquiry which looks likely to result in the relocation of the "Clatworthy" organ on a more permanent basis not very far away - more details when reportable.

I must, however, in all modesty correct an error in your account of my previous career (and incidentally I was a fourth-generation railwayman - three of my great-grandfathers worked on the railways for at least part of their working lives). As the numerous railway buffs among our membership will have realised, I could not possibly have been the inventor of the BR AWS (Automatic Warning System), which was developed in the very early days of BR, and installed with perhaps rather more urgency than might otherwise have been the case following the catastrophic Harrow & Wealdstone accident of 1952. The original trainborne equipment, designed for steam locomotive cabs, continued to be fitted on diesel and electric stock with only minor modifications until it became imperative that something more in keeping with the relatively quiet and sometimes very small cabs of modern stock be substituted. I had the job of developing a compact unit to replace the old bell, horn and indicator, with a simple circuit producing both sounds, which came into general use from about 1980 onwards.

Anyone who has travelled just behind the driver in one of the modern multiple-unit trains and been irritated by the AWS 'ping' will now realise who is to blame.

*My apologies for misinterpreting Ed's fame as a railway engineer. However, I am sure that we should not underestimate the sophistication of acoustic knowledge that contributed to Ed's invention of the 'ping' in the driver's cab. I have it on the authority of one of his former colleagues that the special wave shape of the 'ping' is indeed a skilful product that we could only expect of a master organ builder. - Editor*

*The May/June Newsletter published a letter from Arthur Tipper, lamenting the use of CDs at weddings and funerals. This provoked a flurry of responding letters which I am delighted to publish here. Please keep them coming, on any topic about which you find interesting or concerning. - Editor.*

*From Margaret Eades:*

I agree with what Arthur Tipper says about the use of CDs at weddings and funerals not doing much to bring the organ to any sort of prominence.

I play for a steady number of funerals and a few weddings annually and am lucky to work with a priest now who does not permit the use of CDs at weddings and funerals. However, I have played at churches where this is not the case, and CDs have sometimes dominated the proceedings, and are often the deceased's favourite pop song! In a few extreme cases my services have been dispensed with altogether, as the people concerned didn't know any hymns and appeared to be completely "unchurched" The vicar/incumbent appears to see them as a pastoral opportunity to get the people to church, by sometimes compromising the nature of the church service.

Happily, these cases are as yet rare, and in most cases in my experience, I feel it is a real privilege for me to be able to contribute to the celebration of a family wedding or pay tribute to the memory of a deceased person by playing at their funeral.

I also think it is very important, and a big responsibility to play as well as possible - to do justice not only to the people concerned but to the organ itself. I have unfortunately heard some organs "played" so badly, that I wished at the time that a recording had been used instead! This is why I feel that what the DDOA is doing in the field of organ education is so essential, to bring the attention of a wider public to what the "king of instruments" has to offer potential performers and listeners alike.

*From James Muckle:*

Arthur Tipper's letter raises an important, but complex issue for the role of organists at funerals. Modern technology allows churches to play

recordings of music of all sorts, while the organ is often wanted too, as it evokes memories of times in church. A quick answer to Mr Tipper's question is, yes: we should accept what fee is offered for playing perhaps no more than a couple of hymns, and without protest. The family must have what they want within reason on such an occasion. Funerals are not the time for demonstrations, however tactful, of disapproval. We organists can always decline the invitation to play at the ceremony.

A year or two ago, I played for the funeral of a friend, a pillar of the church, who was also prominent in goodness knows how many local charities. The church was consequently packed to the doors, they were propping up the walls all round the sanctuary: I have never seen so many crammed into our building. I needed near-full organ for all the hymns, though I kept the trumpet until 'Changed from glory into glory!' And they sang magnificently, Methodists and the rest. I shan't forget it. The son of the deceased had asked for a recording of Vaughan Williams's 'The Lark Ascending' to be played as the mourners assembled. (No opening organ voluntary.) It was not used as 'mood music': we had the whole thing, which lasts over 13 minutes, so it finished two minutes before the family arrived with the coffin. The congregation was (mainly) silent, and remained so when it finished. I was in a quandary: should I leap onto the organ stool and improvise? No! It would have spoilt the effect of VW, and we have little enough silence these days in Christian worship.

It was an object lesson in the proper use of recorded music, and I was able to play a voluntary at the end which the deceased friend had said he enjoyed only a few weeks before. I was present at a later funeral when 'The Lark...' was used in the middle of the service, but the vicar choked it off because it was going on too long. This is the trouble - it's too easy to stop and start recorded music and it is often seen as mere background. I organized the funeral of an aunt of mine some years ago; she had been a loyal choral singer. At the crem., where live music was not available, I asked them to play 'Thanks be to God' from *Messiah* at the end of the short ceremony. It only lasts a minute or two, but the

undertaker was badgering me to get a move on and clear the family out. Obviously to her, a CD was 'mood music' and dispensable. That is the danger.

If the mourners want 'We'll meet again' (Vera Lynn), who are we to object? It's the last thing I'd want at my funeral, but then I have one friend who asserts that the deceased has no rights, and that it is the bereaved who should decide how he is to be to 'sent off'; I cannot say I agree.

As for 'The Lark Ascending' (which I was familiar with – I once played the triangle in it!), it came to me afresh as a lovely work, so the very next day I combed the local charity shops for a CD – and found I had a choice of two: for 99p I bought Adrian Boult's 1952 version with Jean Pougnet (a name I had almost forgotten). What value for money! A pity it would not 'go' on the organ; at least, I could never bring it off. So sometimes CDs can be very effective at a funeral; if they are not, we must just grin and bear it.

*From John Forster:*

Like Arthur Tipper, and no doubt many other organists, I have experienced the influx of CD usage during weddings, funerals and other services. However I would make two points before commenting further on their use.

Firstly, the minister/vicar taking the service should be aware, or made aware, of the inclusion of music from CDs and be agreeable to that inclusion (Quite often he/she is the instigator – having seen the bereaved, bride and bridegroom and listened to their requirements).

Secondly, if the above criterion is met, then you the organist are responsible for the performance and quality of the music, including CDs, at that service.

I think we organists must recognize that in the 21<sup>st</sup> century the music tastes of the public who attend funerals and weddings are more diverse than ever, and unless you exist in the heady enclaves of a cathedral loft you can expect to be requested to use CDs more and more.

Now whilst accepting the inclusion of CD music, I do **not** accept it's the organist's job to "switch it on". Most churches



nowadays have built in sound systems operated by suitably trained operators, and it makes sense therefore for the organist to liaise with the operator to ensure right tracks are selected and the timing etc. sorted, so each knows what the order of the music is. And as with any service the organist should be prepared and able to "fill in" as required.

In many instances there is no need to use CDs if the music score required can be obtained (downloaded for free, borrowed from the library, bought or adapted) to be played on the organ.

I have happily played "Daisy Daisy" as the coffin of a dear old lady was brought in (her granddaughter was named Daisy and she was forever singing the song!) and also "I love to go a wandering" for an avid fell walker, and quite a few others, including the funeral of an opera loving family playing opera favourites before and on outgoing which required a bit of research for music from the library but was preferable to CDs.

However at one or two weddings the groom requested music of their favourite pop groups to be played before the service while they waited for their brides to arrive. The only answer was CDs. I have even had a request for the bride to enter to Shania Twain's "From this moment on" – the words being apt to the situation – again a CD rendition.

Outside funerals and weddings I have found an increasing use of CD music during ordinary services. These are of two kinds; to accompany modern so called worship songs and secondly to act

as backing to *PowerPoint* presentations shown on the screen which is now de rigeur in most churches.

Taking the second kind first – there are times when it is more sensible to use a CD, and others where organ music would have done equally well if not better – though I accept that if putting a *PowerPoint* presentation together it is more coherent if the music is embedded with the slides.

On the use of CDs for worship song singing, I had my church buy a boxed set of CDs covering a wide range of worship songs. They are now rarely, if ever used. Why? Because the arrangements with a pop group does not clearly indicate the start point of the verse and often had no further indication of subsequent verses – a competent rehearsed choir still being required to lead the congregation. Further, the tempi are so strict that it is difficult to fit the words in properly. There are exceptions but on the whole not a success.

In summary I would say that CDs are another tool at our disposal in providing relevant music for services, and if used sensibly and with discretion can enhance the veneration of a service.

*From Edmund Stow :*

There is no Divine Right of Organists (or Choirs) - at least not any more. We have to justify ourselves by showing that as live musicians we can provide that extra something in terms of appropriateness and sensitivity to the occasion.

The purpose of music in acts of worship (which church weddings and funerals are still supposed to be) seems generally not to be understood by those who are not regular church-goers, and even by some who are. So often discussion seems to centre on what the individuals concerned like, or liked, in a general context, not on what is suitable for the particular occasion.

While appreciating the obvious difficulties, particularly with funerals, I do often feel that the clergy could do more at the outset to get people thinking on the right lines - they certainly shouldn't expect organists to act as censors.

Most of us who are organists will sometimes employ a page turner and we all know what a wonderful job page turners do. In fact it is not a 'job' in the singular, but rather a host of different jobs of which turning pages (hard enough in itself, of course) is just one. Even though in this country we have no tradition of registrants (and many organists pride themselves on being able to manage the registration unaided), the turner will often be called upon to help with stops, either in a planned capacity or in an emergency. Many a turner has rescued a performance from disaster by quick thinking and rapid action, often involving a coupler or a tuba stop. In addition, turners may be required to play unreachable notes, to relay the beat, or even to defend the console area from intruders, and if that last claim seems melodramatic, it is certainly true that turners act as intermediaries between the organist and the outside world. Many organists have someone they call upon regularly and with whom they develop a close rapport. It is a musical partnership, like that of singer and accompanist and just as sophisticated in its mutual dependency and its subtle codes of communication.

With all that in mind, it is good to be able to report an initiative which promises dramatically to improve the lot of page-turners (and there are a lot of page-turners). The Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music is planning to introduce a syllabus in organ page-turning. The proposals have not yet been announced formally but the new syllabuses have certainly been drafted and the Board has given permission for them to be aired in public so that turners and organists alike have an opportunity to comment in general and in detail on what is being proposed.

There are four grades (2, 4, 6 and 8) and broadly the syllabuses divide each exam into two parts. Part 1 tests the classic prepared requirements of good page-turning, namely an assured turning technique and the correct demeanour of friendly, unfussy helpfulness. Organists want to be able to be able to concentrate on playing the music, confident that the turning and other ancillary

tasks will simply happen. They want someone who will follow the score without appearing to read every note (which can be intimidating, particularly if the performance is not going well). Accordingly at each of the four proposed levels, there are set pieces for which the candidate will prepare, in an ascending level of difficulty. Meanwhile, Part 2 tests the ability to manage a previously unseen score and to cope with the unexpected. Here again candidates will be tested in increasingly difficult situations.

The following shows the Part 2 tests, extracted from the draft syllabus. Readers wishing to see the whole syllabus are invited to obtain a copy from the *Newsletter* Editor who commends it all.

**GRADE 2:** Candidates will be required to place a piece of previously unseen music on the music desk. There will be no turns, but during the performance the second examiner, impersonating an interested member of the public, will approach the console and attempt to engage the candidate in conversation, with an opening gambit such as: 'What do the foot pedals do?' or 'Does he take requests?'. Candidates must turn the intruder away and will be marked on the firmness and tact with which this is accomplished.

**GRADE 4:** 1. The examiner will play three verses of a hymn, conducted by the second examiner who will be out of the player's sight. The candidate will be required to relay the beat throughout.

2. The examiner will begin one of the great fugues of Bach. After a few bars the second examiner, impersonating a verger, will approach the console and explain that the minister needs to give out some notices. The candidate needs to convey the bad news tactfully to the player and look sympathetic once the music has been brought to a premature close.

**GRADE 6:** 1. The examiner will play a work that the candidate is unlikely to know.

At exactly the moment the candidate is preparing for a turn, the second examiner will appear behind the candidate with a message such as: 'Tell the organist that in the second hymn we will omit verse 3'. This message must be accurately relayed to the player once the piece has finished.

2. The examiner will play a work of *scherzo* character from a manuscript copy which is only just legible.

**GRADE 8:** 1. The examiner will play a work of toccata-like character from manuscript sheets placed on top of each other. The candidate is required to arrange the sheets and remove them in a way that is as helpful as possible to the player. The sheets will be numbered but two of them will have been interchanged. The mistake must be spotted and rectified in time.

2. This simulates the experience of turning for a foreign organist whose plane has been delayed and who arrives with only half an hour to prepare for a recital on a kind of instrument with which he or she is totally unfamiliar. Two pieces will be played and the

organist will require frequent help with the registration, giving instructions in either French, German, Italian or Spanish. Candidates will be marked on their unflappability and their capacity to respond appropriately to such instructions as 'anches', 'flûte seule', 'Mixturen auf dem Hauptwerk' or anguished exclamations like 'weicher, weicher!'. The candidate will be informed of the language to be used just before the performance commences and instructions will be taken from a glossary which will be available to candidates on application to the Board (and published on the website).

3. This is an aural and memory test similar to that in the previous grade but more involved. At an inconvenient moment, while the candidate is turning a page, a message will be passed on by the second examiner in a loud voice. The candidate must attempt to quieten the speaker and then relay the substance of the message once the performance is over. Here is a specimen message:

'Please tell the organist that the third hymn will not now be AMR 573 but instead NEH 477 to the tune Hyfrydol and omitting the third, fifth and seventh verses.

Psalm chants in F sharp and B please, verses 5 and 6 unaccompanied and with the second part at verse 8 instead of as marked. *Diminuendo* in the Gloria. We will do the Attwood up a semitone'.

Assuming that these proposals are put into effect, the examinations will bring a whole range of benefits. Quite apart from providing useful qualifications at various levels of attainment, the new syllabuses will help to define tasks and set standards. They will enable turners to study systematically, progressively and comprehensively and will give their art, for too long one of the most neglected of musical accomplishments, something of the status it deserves. Examiners will need not only musical ability but also the acting skills to impersonate convincingly stray members of the public, clergy and others. For that reason and others, entry fees are likely to be high. However, it is to be hoped that churches and other organisations, recognising the value of the examinations, will be willing to subsidise promising candidates.

*Tom Corfield, 1 April 2014*

Note: The author has long experience of page-turning at the organ console. He dedicates this little article, however, to the two people whom he rates the best turners in the world, Rosemary Corfield and Wendy Bateman. Mention should also be made of Matthew Gibson, whose own pages the author will one day count it an honour to be allowed to turn.

## *Is this a First? - An Oversubscribed Organ Recital - John Bland*

I attended an organ recital on Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> March where the start had to be delayed for 20 minutes to allow the long queue of people to get into the hall. An extra Box-Office had to be opened to cope with the crowds! Ian Tracey the recitalist commented that it was certainly a first for him.

The occasion was at the Parr Hall Warrington, home to the only "tonally un-touched" Cavallé-Coll organ in the country. Previous recitals have struggled to realize much above double figures by way of an audience, but the audience on Wednesday was just a little under 300, which though not filling the hall, certainly looked good and appropriate. As is usual Ian Tracey had the help of an assistant, who turned pages and whilst Ian announced the subsequent parts of the programme, set the stops, and curiously, in the eyes I guess of those who don't know the lay-out of Aristide Cavallé-Coll consoles, literally crawled around the floor setting the vents.

It was, as one would expect, a French programme and Ian took us on a tour of some of the Parisian Churches and their organs and organist/composers. We began with St Gervaise and the Passacaglia in b, by Couperin, then after a tour of six more Churches we ended at Notre Dame with Dupré, Vierne and Cochereau.

The encore perhaps inevitably was the Widor Toccata from the 5<sup>th</sup> Symphonie. Ian had previously played the Adagio whilst "at St

Sulpice". We heard every colour of the organ from the shimmering célestes, mellow flutes, to the wonderful vibrant reeds.

The supporters of the organ whose fate still seems insecure – though it depends upon whom one speaks with about it – are naturally delighted and it is hoped that the strong support for the recital will give impetus for their efforts the better to promote the gem at Warrington's heart.

*John Bland*

### The Great Parisian Tradition by Ian Tracey

St Gervais	Passacaglia in b	François Couperin
St Eustache	Lamento & Elves	Joseph Bonnet
St Trinité	Le Banquet Céleste	Olivier Messiaen
	Pastorale (Symphony 1)	Alexandre Guilmant
St Augustin	Grand Choeur Dialogué	Eugène Gigout
La Madeleine	Prelude in B major (Op 99)	Camille Saint-Saëns
	Toccata in G (Douze Pièces)	Théodore Dubois
St Sulpice	Basse et Dessus de Trompette	Louis Nicolas Clérambault
	Adagio (Symphonie V)	Charles Marie Widor
Ste. Clotilde	Pastorale (Six Pièces)	César Franck
	Improvisation sur le 'Te Deum'	Charles Tournemire/Durufié
	Modal en La	Jean Langlais
Notre Dame	Te Lucis Anteterminum	Marcel Dupré
	Allegro Vivace (Symphonie 1)	Louis Vierne
	Scherzo Symphonique	Pierre Cochereau

## *Forthcoming DDOA Meeting*

### **Evening Visit to Organs at Hoar Cross and Doveridge, Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> July**

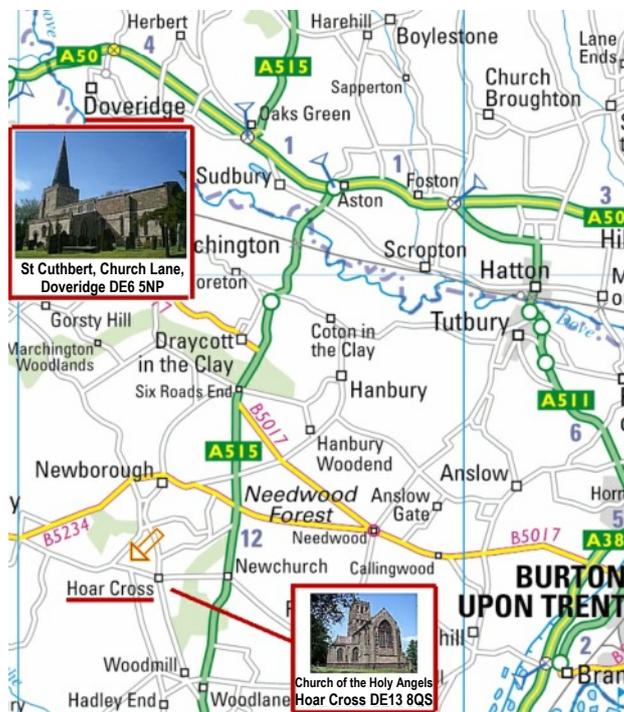
#### **6.45 pm The Church of the Holy Angels, Hoar Cross**

John Betjeman described the church as "the masterpiece of its late Victorian architect G.F. Bodley" and "great architecture; original, well massed, well sited, well detailed; very English".

The organ was originally built by Samuel Green in 1779 for Bangor Cathedral. It was installed in Hoar Cross by Bishop and Son in 1876 and enlarged to three manuals by Conacher in 1935. With pneumatic action, it fell into disrepair in the 1970s and was silent for many years until its recent restoration. With its magnificent organ case designed by Bodley and Canon Frederick Sutton, it makes a splendid sight in this mini cathedral of a church.

#### **8.15 pm St Cuthbert's Church, Doveridge**

See the lead article by Adam Slack on pages 1 and 2. Light refreshments will be provided.



Items of news or articles for the September/October edition of the *Newsletter* should reach the Editor by **Monday 18<sup>th</sup> August**, either via e-mail: [DDOAnews@gmail.com](mailto: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](mailto:mail@derbyorganists.co.uk) Please visit the DDOA Website [www.derbyorganists.co.uk](http://www.derbyorganists.co.uk) for information about Association activities, past editions of the newsletter, photo gallery and many special features of local interest.