

Derby & District Organists' Association

Registered Charity No. 510567

Newsletter



The Simons Collection Revealed

The March meeting of the Association attracted excellent support of members who crowded into the house of Nicholas and Eileen Simons for a tour of their amazing collection of mechanical musical instruments. Starting off with an exquisite musical box and culminating with an organ for accompanying ballroom dancing, Nicholas demonstrated for us over a dozen beautifully restored and maintained instruments.

Being both a professional mechanical engineer and an amateur musician, one can begin to understand how Nicholas has possessed the skills and passion to realise this unique collection

occupying the lounge, the hall and a converted barn. Many of the instruments have been restored by Nicholas himself, and his achievements as a restorer are highly regarded and widely recognised in the world of period mechanical instruments.

Some of the instruments employed a rotating barrel mechanism to store the music, in which case the duration and number of playable tunes was fairly limited. The portable street organ, requiring the constant turning of a crank handle was the classic example, which famously gave rise to the term 'organ grinder' for street musicians with this device in the late 19th and early 20th century.



DDOJA Events 2017

16th May (Tuesday) 7.00 for 7.30pm
Annual Dinner, Horsley Lodge, Coxbench, Derby (See page 6)

10th June (Saturday)
Visit to organs in Doncaster Minster and Selby Abbey. (See page 6)

23rd September (Saturday afternoon)
Visit to organs in Newark and Halam (near Southwell)

19th October (Thursday) 7.30pm
Manuals only seminar. Melbourne PC

20th November (Monday) 7.15 pm
AGM

Concerts & Recitals

Saturday 13th May 3-5.30pm
'BLAST OFF!' - organ for young people
Daniel Moulst at Nottingham Cathedral
(See page 5)

Saturday 24th June 7.00pm
Hinckley URC, The Borough, Hinckley Leicestershire LE10 1 NL
"Gala organ Concert" to celebrate 150 years of the historic Holdich Organ given by Paul Hale. Adults: £7.50, Under 18s free. (See page 3)

Saturday 24th June 7 for 7.30pm
St. Andrew's Church, Swanwick
"Last Night of the Proms" organ and band concert with Keith Hearnshaw and the Blidworth Welfare Band.
Tickets including refreshments £7.00 at the door or in advance 01773 605291.

Derby Cathedral Summer Recitals **Wednesdays 7.45pm**

19 th July	Hugh Morris (Derby)
26 th July	Rupert Jeffcoat (Chelsea)
2 nd August	Jennifer Bate
9 th August	David Davies (Exeter)
16 th August	Michael Overbury (Newark)
23 rd August	Gordon Stewart

Photos:

Main: Arbuo Belgian dance organ (c.1930)
Containing a variety of instruments, the sound easily fills a small hall.

Left: An early 20th century portable reed barrel organ by A Varetto & Sons



'Pianolin', coin operated piano from New York c.1920 contains a 44 note piano mechanism together with 44 'violin' and flute pipes. Behind the front doors is revealed a paper roll mechanism in the form of a continuous loop.

Philipps 'Pianella' - German Roll Operated Piano with xylophone c.1920

In the main, perforated rolls of paper provided the mechanism for storing all the instructions for playing tunes; we saw this method applied to pianos, American organs and a whole variety of hybrid instruments containing piano mechanisms, organ pipes, glockenspiels, cymbals, drums and so on. The technology gathered pace in the 19th century, especially in North America, and the Low Countries and Germany in Europe, and contemporary catalogues of available instruments make fascinating reading; the ingenuity in combining mechanical, electrical and pneumatic technologies possibly matches the flood of digital innovations we are so accustomed to today. The array of holes in a roll not only define the notes to be played but also the orchestration of the different sounds within the instrument; for example, normal piano sound might be modified by intermittently inserting a layer of felt on which are mounted a row of metal discs; a rank of pipes offers a

flutey sound; glockenspiels, xylophones, drum, cymbals and triangles may all contribute variety. The process of orchestration is reminiscent of what organists do when choosing stops.

Since each manufacturer invented their own proprietary system, the music rolls were generally not transferable from one system to another, so Nicholas not only possesses a fine collection of musical instruments, but for each, an accompanying library of music rolls. The selection he played provided an interesting glimpse of the popular music of the day, going into the 20th century; a generally lively dance-style idiom. This was one aspect of domestic music-making before the days of radio and the popularisation of the gramophone. As the new media became more widely affordable, the mechanical musical instrument industry went into rapid decline.

There being several engineers among attending members, a

constant trickle of technical questions prevailed, but with his encyclopedic knowledge of the intimate workings of every single instrument, Nicholas was never stuck for an answer. This was one of those meetings that never seemed to come to end; as the tour progressed Nicholas demonstrated ever more sophisticated instruments. However, when tea-time arrived, Eileen put on the kettle and invited us all to tuck into cakes and biscuits. This turned out to be just an intermission, as Nicholas, spurred on by more questions, soon embarked on an extended tour, this time to his workshop and garage.

It was wonderful to experience such generous hospitality and enthusiastic sharing of knowledge. We are greatly indebted to Nicholas and Eileen for providing us with such an interesting and friendly afternoon.

Laurence Rogers



Left: Seeburg Style E Piano Nickelodeon from Chicago c.1910. Plays automatically when a nickel coin is inserted in the slot on the right hand side. There are loud and soft controls and the piano sound can be modified to give a 'mandolin' effect. There are also 25 flute pipes.

Right: Aeolian 'Orchestrelle' American reed organ from the USA c.1890. There are seven treble stops and nine bass stops which may be controlled by the user as the roll plays.



DDOA - Your Association

2017 Committee and Chairman

Chairman: John Maxwell-Jones
Vice-Chairman: Margaret Eades
Secretary: Andrew Storer
Treasurer: Chris Darrall
Gift Aid Secretary: Gillian Chatto
Newsletter Editor: Laurence Rogers
Committee: Terry Bennett,
Geoff Howell,
Hugh Morris
David Shooter
Past Chairman: Denis Littleton

Children and the Organ (CATO)

Workshops are planned in May for children at Holbrook Junior School and All Saints Junior School, Matlock.

If any members have contacts at primary schools that might be interested in taking advantage of our free educational workshops on the organ for Year 4 or 5 classes, please let us know via the Editor.

Members' News

Margaret Tomkins R.I.P.

With sadness we report the death of our member Margaret Tomkins at the age of 79. Her funeral at St Luke's, Heage, on 5th April was a moving occasion, infused throughout with the music of Bach, her great love. As a personal tribute, her husband, Rodney, played Bach's *Adagio in C*, a gesture admired by the large congregation. Dr Tom Corfield accompanied the service, prefacing it with a mini Bach recital.

It was as a student reading French at Durham University that Margaret met Rodney reading Music. After marriage in 1959 they became teachers in their respective subjects in Colchester, Essex. In 1972 their move to Derbyshire was one from which they never looked back, especially as it fulfilled their mutual love of walking and travel. Margaret was also active as a violinist and as a singer in various choirs including the Derby Cathedral Voluntary Choir. Although not an organist herself, she loved organ music and was a regular attender of DDOA meetings until her health began to fail in recent years. She had a strong sense of social justice and compassion for disadvantaged people, qualities that inspired her work for Amnesty International, for which she was a local branch secretary. We send our sincere condolences to Rodney.

Ed Stow - Letter from Stroud

Ed wishes to thank all those members who have recently written to express their good wishes for the success of his present treatment for cancer. He is now nearly half way through the treatment and his consultant surgeon is very pleased with progress so far.

Future Event

Planning a Seminar on 'Manuals only' music (October meeting)

The idea for this forthcoming event stems from James Muckle's article last September on Telemann's *Three Dozen Keyboard Fantasias*. As James argued, these pieces, although chiefly intended for harpsichord, are eminently suitable for organ, especially a chamber organ. This set me thinking about other repertoire for manuals-only keyboard instruments which might transfer nicely to the organ. Volumes of pieces for harpsichord, clavichord, spinet and so on are an obvious source of material. Music generally from the renaissance and baroque periods is perhaps another fertile source, since pieces were frequently unspecific about instrumentation or were adapted or re-scored for different instruments. I wonder what music our members might have borrowed from non-organ repertoire? If you have a favourite example of such borrowing which succeeds well on the organ, please send me your suggestions. Better still, please volunteer to come and play it at our October meeting in Melbourne. There, as well as the main organ, we have a charming chamber organ available, and hopefully, for the occasion, a harpsichord also. This would provide an opportunity to compare timbres and discuss the qualities in music that are revealed or enhanced by alternative instruments. I propose a seminar format for the meeting where we can all have a say and share what we enjoy in the pieces.

Please send suggestions of pieces that we put in the programme and please volunteer to play if you feel able. Contact DDOAnews@gmail.com, or drop a line to my address at the foot of page 6. I look forward to hearing from you.

Laurence Rogers

Correspondence

Robert Gower commends the RCO sponsored event at Nottingham on 13th May (see page 5):

"This concert by recitalist Daniel Moul is the first event to take place in the East Midlands as part of an initiative by the Royal College of Organists to stimulate and encourage regional activity. The music includes George Thalben-Ball's Variations on a theme of Paganini for pedals only, 'Penguins Playtime' by Nigel Ogden, Widor's Toccata, excerpts from 'The Carnival of the Animals' and what promises to be an electrifying performance of Iain Farrington's virtuosic 'Live Wire'.

The afternoon will consist of an hour's concert, followed by an opportunity - particularly aimed at school pupils - for hands-on experience at the console (no previous experience necessary!) when Daniel will also be able to answer questions and provide demonstration as appropriate."

Peter Collins House Organ For Sale

Manual II: 8' 4' 22/3' 1' 8'
Manual I: 8' 8' 4' 2'
Pedal: 8' 8' 4' 2' 8' (by transmission from manual stops)
Tremulant; inter-manual coupler; mechanical action. Height 235cm
Width 175cm, depth 132cm (200cm with pedalboard),
Built in 2001. The instrument fits within standard UK ceiling heights, and would be equally suited to use in a house, school, college, or church. Oak case, panels veneered to match. Offers invited. Please contact William Fox at petrus1901@gmail.com or [07974 757027](tel:07974757027)



'A Remarkable Survivor': Holdich at Hinckley - David Crick

On 24th June Paul Hale will give a recital at Hinckley United Reformed Church to celebrate 150 years of the historic Holdich Organ. David Crick, the church's Organist, describes the history of this notable organ.

The Hinckley URC organ was built by the London organ builder, George Maydwell Holdich, to the design of the influential Dr Henry J Gauntlett, in 1867. It was originally built for the Union Chapel, Islington. When a new church was being designed to accommodate a growing congregation (1874-1877), the intention was to install the organ in the new building. However, Holdich is said to have objected to the proposed location of the organ and so it was removed and placed in storage.

The Borough Congregational Church, Hinckley (as the church was then known) purchased the instrument in 1878 for £600. It was installed in Hinckley by Holdich himself and originally located in the rear gallery. In 1903, at a further cost of £400, Nicholson & Lord of Walsall moved the organ to the front of the church. Some minor tonal modifications were made at this time. The organ underwent a clean in 1934 and in 1961 the organ was refurbished by J W Walker & Son, then of Ruislip, Middlesex, which also included electrifying the pedal action. A further clean was carried out in 1971. In 1998 the organ was awarded an Historic Organ Certificate by the British Institute of Organ Studies.

The organ has been described as a "remarkable survivor". Most of the original Holdich pipework survives, as does most of the original mechanism along with the conservative work of Nicholson & Lord



from 1903. It is thought to be the largest surviving example of Holdich's work in the country. The organ bears many hallmarks of Gauntlett's design: fully developed diapason choruses on both swell and great divisions (including tierce mixtures in both departments), a full swell reed chorus and four independent 16-foot ranks on the pedal organ including a fine Trombone. The choir organ contains some delicate flute stops. The organ is one of only two large Gauntlett-inspired instruments still in existence and was considered to be very forward-looking for its time with such a full specification, although, interestingly the beautiful voicing means that tonally the organ could belong to an earlier age.

The organ was fully restored in 2006-07 by J W Walker & Sons of Brandon, Suffolk at a cost of £113,000 and the inaugural recital on the restored instrument was given by Dame Gillian Weir on 9th June 2007. Now the organ approaches its 150th anniversary; it is still in fine voice and we look forward to hearing Paul Hale demonstrate its capabilities.

David Crick



United Reformed Church Organ Hinckley, Leicestershire

Great

Double Diapason Bass	16
Double Diapason Treble	16
Large Open Diapason	8 *
Small Open Diapason	8
Large Open Diapason	8
Clarabella (Stop'd bass)	8
Gamba	8
Principal	4
Wald Flute (Tenor C)	4
Twelfth	3 sic
Fifteenth	2
Flute	2
Sesquialtera	III (17.19.22)
Trumpet	8

Choir to Great

Swell to Great *= added 1903

Swell

Double Diapason Bass	16
Double Diapason Treble	16
Open Diapason	8
Stop Diapason	8
Viol d'Amour	8 *
Viox Celestes (TC)	8 *
Principal	4
Twelfth	2 2/3 †
Fifteenth	2
Mixture	III (17,19,22)
Contra Fagotto	16
Cornopean	8
Oboe	8
Clarion	4
<i>Super Octave</i>	†= added 1961

Choir

Dulciana Bass	8
Dulciana Treble	8
Stop Diapason	8
Viola	8
Principal	4
Flute Tenor (C)	4
Piccolo	2
Clarinet	8

Swell to Choir

Pedal

Large Open Diapason	16
Small Open Diapason	16
Bourdon	16
Violincello	8
Flute	8
Trombone	16

Choir to Pedal

Great to Pedal

Swell to Pedal

Manual compass 56 notes C to g³
 Pedal compass 30 notes C to f¹
 3 Great combination pedals
 3 Swell combination pedals
 Gt to Ped coupler pedal
 Balanced swell pedal
 Wind pressure: 2¾ inches
 Tuning: A = 440 Hz

Built 1867 by GM Holdich
 Installed in Hinckley 1878 by Holdich
 Moved 1903 by Nicholson & Lord
 Refurbished 1961 by JW Walker & Sons
 Restored 2007 by JW Walker & Sons

'In' Voluntaries and the 'Chattering classes' - John Forster

The article by Malcolm Hawke under 'Rank & File' in the March issue of the *Organists' Review* struck a chord with me. In this, he relates the irritations and frustrations of many organists, who, playing music before a service must put up with the noise of the "chattering classes" as he calls them. This phenomenon is probably the result of now living in an age where many in the population consider music a mere backdrop to their conversations, whatever location they find themselves in, so "when greeted in church with what some might consider religious muzak, there is a tendency to chatter away as per normal". So, as Hawke goes on to say, "the organist must simply 'grin and bear it' or not play at all". In a future article he promises to look at potential quietening tactics.

Having also recently read Stephen Johns' report on Mike Sole's talk at Darley Abbey in which he referred to Harvey Grace's "The Complete Organist" (written 1920), I was prompted to look at my own copy, and in particular at the two chapters on "Voluntaries", to see whether he had any observations on the problem. At the beginning of the chapter he defines voluntaries and talks about the kind of music which can be used for them. However, he goes on to assert that common practice is less than ideal:

"The voluntary of today may be anything or nothing – a Mendelssohn or Rheinberger sonata or a Bach work at one end of the scale, or a few meandering chords at the other. Between these two extremes of highly organized music and entirely unorganized platitudes, what infinite variety do we not meet! Here we find a choice of nothing but the best, played often enough to deaf ears; elsewhere we may find

the very worst of shallow offerings. Complaints in the ecclesiastical and musical Press are surprisingly rare, but it is a significant comment on the taste of organists that they are invariably directed at flippancy and vulgarity."

What a dim opinion of some organists is reflected here! Pulling no punches, he goes on to deprecate the attitude that the in-voluntary is "regarded merely as a useful noise for covering up the footsteps of choir and clergy". If this be so, he suggests that "the famous prelude of S.S.Wesley, who once showed his disapproval of something or somebody by putting down the lowest pedal note, and slowly building up and sustaining a chord of C, answers the purpose as well as anything else."

The remainder of Grace's chapter emphasises that, if the in-voluntary is to be regarded as an introduction to the service, it should be chosen and prepared as carefully as the choir music. However, he cannot resist presenting a parody of the exact opposite of this:

"Instead, what happens in fifty per cent of our churches? The

organist is in the vestry until the last minute or two before the service is due to begin, keeping – or not keeping – order. He then rushes to the console, generally in a state of irritation, adjusting his surplice or hood *en route*, throws his legs over the bench, draws out a few stops (not forgetting the Swell to Great coupler), starts arranging his service music with his left hand, puts his right foot on the Swell pedal, while with the remaining limbs he begins in this style:" (See below)

So much for Grace's critical comment on sometimes sloppy standards in organists' voluntaries, however, nowhere in the chapter is any reference made to noise from the "chattering classes". So are we to conclude that in his day, i.e. the 1920s, congregations were well behaved and silent before service? If so, times have certainly changed. If Grace were writing 'The Complete Organist' today, I wonder what he might advise in a chapter devoted to quietening tactics for noisy congregations! What tactics do you use? Please send your thoughts to the Editor for the next newsletter.

John Forster



Forthcoming Event

BLAST OFF! - An organ activity day for young people led by Daniel Mould

Saturday 13th May 3 - 5.30 pm at Nottingham Cathedral NG1 5AE

Aimed at anyone who has thought of studying the organ, plus teachers, parents, siblings etc.

Places are free for young people aged 15 and under - email robertgower10@gmail.com to reserve a place. Ask about a chance to 'have a go' at playing.

The charge for those 16 and above is £5. Book online at www.nottinghamcathedralmusic.com, or turn up and pay at the door.

Organised by the RCO.



Forthcoming DDOA Meetings

Annual Dinner 16th May 2016 Horsley Lodge, Smalley Mill Rd, DE 21 5BL 7.00 for 7.30pm

Horsley Lodge is a well appointed Hotel and Restaurant in lovely Derbyshire countryside.

Our Guest is **The Revd Peter Barham**, Vicar of St Matthew's, Darley Abbey and St Edmund's, Allestree. He was brought up in Cambridgeshire and educated at Cambridge University, where he met his wife, Julie. He then worked as a librarian in a legal practice before taking holy orders, and has since worked in several parishes in Suffolk, as Canon Pastor at St Edmundsbury Cathedral, and as Vicar of Ponteland in Northumberland, before coming to Derbyshire in 2016. Peter is a keen tenor, with interests in church music and church buildings, among many other things, and he has a blog at www.northernvicar.co.uk. He hosts regular railway film shows at St Matthew's and has almost travelled the entire UK railway network twice, so we should expect some stories about steam engines as well as organists!

Booking: A booking form accompanies this newsletter. As time is very short, if you wish to attend, please contact John Maxwell-Jones immediately (01332 764792).

Horsley Lodge may be reached from the Coxbench and Kilburn exit of the A38 north of Derby.



DDOA visit to Selby and Doncaster Saturday 10th June

The annual outing this year provides a great opportunity to visit and play two nationally significant organs which have been restored recently:

2.30pm Selby Abbey YO8 4PU

5.00pm Doncaster Minster DN1 1RD

Members are asked to make their own travel arrangements. Please contact the Chairman, John Maxwell-Jones (01332 679632 or johnmaxj@yahoo.com) if you have questions.

If you wish to have lunch before the visit in Selby, Terry Bennett recommends Mr C's Award winning Fish and Chip shop at 61-63 Micklegate, Selby YO8 4EA.

Both churches are located within easy reach of main railway stations.

In Doncaster, a council car park is conveniently located to the east of the church.

Selby Abbey

The organ of Selby Abbey is one of the finest romantic instruments in Britain. It was built in 1909 by William Hill and Son and has four manuals, 69 speaking stops and 3,980 pipes. LP recordings made by Fernando Germani in the early 1960s made the organ famous. Since then many recordings have been made by a long list of international star organists. The organ case is the work of William Hill's grandson, Dr Arthur Hill and is one of his finest.

Doncaster Minster

The organ in St. George's Doncaster is the work of Edmund Schulze of Paulinzelle in Saxony, and dates from 1862, four years after the completion of the present church building. It has five manuals and 92 speaking stops. The medieval church had possessed a fine organ by Harris and Byfield from 1739-40 but it perished in the fire of 1853. The firm of Schulze had exhibited an organ in the Exhibition of 1851 and this marked the beginning of a wide influence in this country. The Doncaster instrument is their largest organ, to be compared with that of St. Mary's, Lübeck in scale.

Items of news or articles for the July/August edition of the *Newsletter* should reach the Editor by **Monday 19th 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, Andy Storer, 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.