

NEWSLETTER

JUNE 2008

LOOKING AHEAD

Saturday 21 June : Visit to organs in Leek

We are indebted to Denis Littleton who has arranged this self-propelled event focussed on the products of Jardine & Co. (Manchester), who appear to have cornered the market in the Staffordshire Moorlands district in their day. We seem to have chosen a date when the churches in Leek are rather busy: consequently our schedule has had to be rehased more than once. It now stands at:

10.30-12.00 St Edward's (the large Parish Church at the top of the Market Place)

3-manual Jardine, restored 2007 by Principal Pipe Organs (York):

Gt: 16, 8, 8, 8, 4, 4, 2²/₃, 2, IV, 8. Sw: 16, 8, 8, 8, 8, 4, 4, 2, IV, 8, 8, 8, 4.
Ch: 8, 8, 8, 4, 4, 2, 8. Ped: 32, 16, 16, 16, 8, 8, 16.

12.00-13.30 Break for members to take lunch and look around (market and antiques emporium)

13.30-14.45 St Luke's (Fountain Street)

2-manual Jardine, restored 1984:

Gt: 8, 8, 8, 4, 4, 2, 8, 8. Sw: 16, 8, 8, 8, 8, 4, 2, II, 8, 8. Ped: 16, 16, 8.

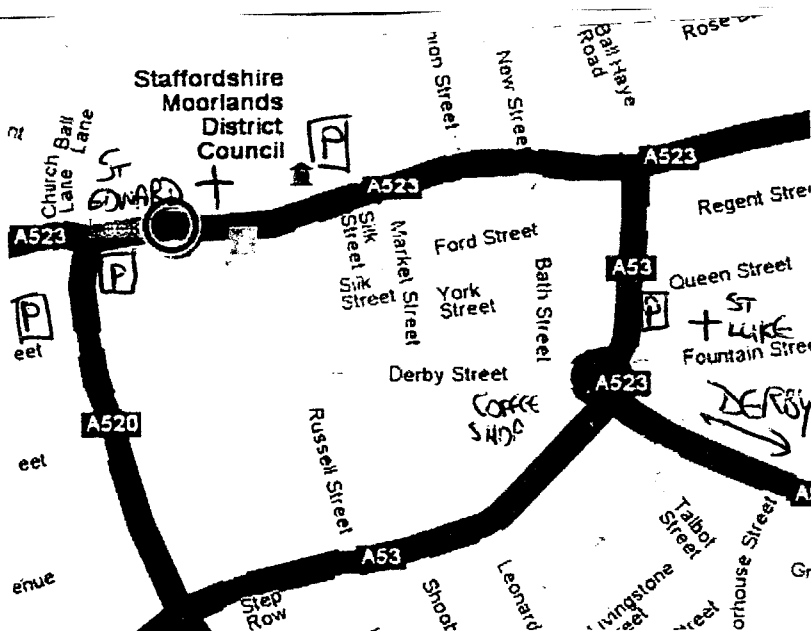
15.15-16.15 Waterfall Parish Church

No details given, other than that the organ is a 1-manual Jardine. Laurence Elvin records, however, that in 1867 Forster & Andrews rebuilt a former barrel organ in this church (at a cost of £46!); it will be interesting to see whether the present instrument is a further reincarnation of that.

From Derby, Leek is reached by taking the A52 westbound, then the A523 beyond Swinscoe. The two churches and various car parks are all within walking distance of each other (see map below).

On the return journey, take the first left at Waterhouses into Waterfall Lane. In Waterfall, follow the road round to the right, then turn left; park in the church car park.

As we always emphasise, no-one who does not have a car, or does not fancy driving the distance, should feel excluded; in any case it makes sense for members to take as few cars as possible. Please contact the Secretary,



LOOKING AHEAD (cont.)

Monday 28 July : Organs in Cromford (please note revised date)

Both instruments to be inspected have been subject to recent major work by your Editor - cornering the market in Cromford, perhaps (for what that may be worth). At the Methodist Church (7.30) an undistinguished anonymous pneumatic-action organ has been supplanted by a very solidly-made and nicely-voiced small Nicholson & Lord of 1906, rescued from a closed chapel at Sedgley, W Midlands. At St Mary's (8.30) the Hill/Lloyd organ has been fully restored after years of anticipation, thanks to a generous donation in memory of Ron and Celia Styles; the Hill Great chorus has been completed and the Lloyd Swell brightened up by the rearrangement of existing ranks. More details in our next issue.

OTHER CHURCH/ORGAN-RELATED EVENTS TO NOTE

- Sat 7 June Laurence Rogers *Bach for all Seasons* : Hugglescote PC (Coalville), 7.30
Sun 15 June 4 Organists (inc. David Redfern) : Burton Town Hall, 2.30
Fri 20 June Lorna Anderson + King's Consort (cond. Matthew Halls) : St Oswald, Ashbourne, 7.30
Sat 21 June Ian Tracey : Victoria Hall, Hanley, 12.00
Sat 21 June Derby Cathedral Choir : All Saints, Matlock, 7.00
Sat 21 June Derby Bach Choir *Midsummer Music* : St Wystan, Repton, 7.30
Sat 21 June Nottingham Bach Choir *Lux Aeterna* (Lauridsen), *Mass for 2 Organs* (Widor) :
St Mary Nottingham, 7.30
Sun 22 June Matthew Halls (harpsichord) : St Oswald, Ashbourne, 1.45
Wed 2 July Naji Hakim : Cathedral, 7.45
Sat 5 July Martin Setchell : Kingswood Methodist, Wollaton, 7.30
Wed 9 July Jonathan Scott : Cathedral, 7.45
Sun 13 July Ahreum Han : Albert Hall, Nottingham, 2.45
Wed 16 July 5 Organists : Cathedral, 7.45
Wed 23 July Cathy Lamb : Cathedral, 7.45
Wed 30 July Martin Neary : Cathedral, 7.45

We are distributing details of this year's series of DERBY CATHEDRAL ORGAN RECITALS with this issue.

It is pleasing to note the appearance of several past and present student members of our Association in the above list of events - **Matthew Halls** in the two concerts at Ashbourne on 20/22 June and **Ben Bloor**,

Steven Grahl and **Christopher Johns** amongst the 5 performers at the Cathedral on 16 July.

ADVANCE NOTICE

This year's IAO Midlands Organ Day is to take place in Lichfield on Saturday 11 October. Presenters include Paul Spicer, David Saint, Philip Scriven and Mark Venning (MD of Harrison & Harrison). Our Secretary can provide booking forms (contact details above).

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

John Hobbs (☎ 0115 939 4695) is trying to arrange people to deputise for him at All Saints, Risley, on June 8, 29, August 31, September 21 - 10.30 service, hymns and voluntaries only. Can you help?

He also mentions that members may be interested in the following internet pages:

the viva organ section of <http://forums.abrsm.org>

<http://www.mander-organs.com/discussion/index.php>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RZIWfObgPmM>

VACANCY

The **Christian Science Church**, Friary Street, Derby, seeks an organist for its Sunday morning service, once a month

BRIDLINGTON AND SCARBOROUGH

A good time was had by all on our seaside trip on 17 May; everything ran more-or-less to schedule (thanks to our familiar driving and navigational team, Willis and Mark Garratt and Derek Fisher), we were enthusiastically entertained at both churches, and even the rather unpromising weather forecast proved unduly pessimistic (just a few spots as we arrived at Scarborough).

Bridlington Priory, though consisting of only the nave of the pre-dissolution edifice, is a very large building and accordingly needs an organ with an output of cathedral proportions. One imagines that some of the peculiarities of the 1889 Anneesens original, and the serial enlargements that followed at roughly 20-year intervals up to 1968, were all aimed at achieving this objective. The present 75-stop instrument is in reality a new Nicholson organ re-using much of the previous pipework and the case, and reflects very little of the ethos of any of the earlier contributors. Even the notorious monster pedal reed has been tamed out of recognition. Everything has been done to an excellent standard, of course, and the voicing and tonal finish could not be faulted; but this perhaps slightly jaundiced reviewer could not help wondering whether such instruments somehow, in the attempt to be able to do everything, lose any really distinctive character of their own.

By contrast, the Scarborough Willis retains all its builder's quirks, faithfully preserved or even reinstated under the terms of a Heritage Lottery Fund grant a few years ago. While the rigidity of this approach may be questioned, it does at least mean that there can be no concession to the must-have mentality which has so often afflicted the treatment of old organs and therein cost them their historicity and individuality, as well as storing up problems for the future.

ERS

The down-side to all this was that, despite extra publicity and the obvious attractions of the day, only 20 members and friends came (plus two joining us at the venues, for good reason), resulting in a substantial financial loss once again. This year's subscription increase means that we are well able to cover the deficit, of course, but supporting poorly attended coach trips attended mainly by the "faithful few" is really not what our funds are intended for. Is this number all we can hope to raise out of a constituency of 100 members plus their families and friends? Should we continue to arrange an annual coach outing at all, and if so what is necessary to achieve a better turnout?

Your Committee is meeting on 16 June to consider next year's programme, and needs answers by then to these questions, particularly from members who consciously decided not to come this time. What was it that put you off - the early start, the late finish, the overall duration or travelling time, the venues, the organs, the cost? Answers, please, to the Secretary (contact details above).

SING TO THE LORD *or* AN ANTIDOTE TO THE (NEW) ENGLISH HYMNAL

Having been unable to attend the meeting at Ticknall, I read with interest the review by Laurence Rogers, and it set me thinking about the wider issues of hymnody in all of our churches.

I was brought up in the Baptist Church in Arnold, Nottinghamshire, and, with my father being chapel organist for 36 years, it was almost inevitable that I should follow him "onto the bench". My first introduction to choral music was at the old Sunday School Anniversaries when over 100 children would "sit up" on the platforms flanking a large choir, and share in the singing of choral anthems based on the Parables (e.g. "Peace be still" and "The ten virgins") and other standards, many from the pen of Ernest Nichol. The delight was that we had a good J. H. Adkins 2-manual organ for accompaniment. Sadly, it was subjected to an unfortunate installation in the brand-new church building when relocation happened in 1968, where the organ (and player!) were to be heard but not seen, and the marvellous Great Open Diapason display pipes ended up behind the swell box at the rear of a minute chamber.

Having finished college, I began 35 years of appointments around the Nonconformist chapels of Nottingham, including singing in Terry Bennett's 1969 choir at Castlegate Congregational Church in the city and having access to the (then) wonderful 4-manual Binns organ - now a sorry shadow in a largely unplayable state. I also spent 16 years in the Male Voice Choir world, both as Accompanist and later as Musical Director, visiting many churches for our concerts.

All these positions brought me into contact with a wide variety of denominational hymnbooks of several eras of issue. When I started at Heanor Methodist in 1985 *Hymns and Psalms* had just been introduced. This was trumpeted as an ecumenical hymnbook, the Committee having had representation from every denomination under the sun, but, within a few years, Anglicans had revised their hymnody and come up with *Common Praise*, the Baptists had produced *Baptist Praise and Worship* and the URC gave us *Rejoice and Sing*. Then there were the non-attached books such as the *Mission Praise* series, the wide variety from the Mayhew stable and other more evangelical productions.

So what?, you may be thinking, but look closely at the mainstream denominational books and you will see that for generation after generation three parts of them have always been the same shared hymnody, maybe with some different tune associations, but no fundamental differences. I do not believe that individual denominations can continue to foist their own latest reincarnations onto hard-pressed congregations, with all the attendant expenditure that entails. The time is surely right for a truly universal, non-denominational book of "standard" hymns to be adopted, and then for each church to add its own preferred supplementary collection, especially in the age of computers and copyright licences opening up huge easily updated resources for those who wish to choose that route.

Returning to Ticknall, I note Dr Rogers' slightly disparaging aside for "the other tune" to "At the name of Jesus". I assume he refers to the 20th Century tune *Camberwell*, leading to the displacing of tunes such as *King's Weston*. However good it may have seemed on the night, I do not believe the latter to be a suitable tune at all. Study Caroline Noel's excellent words and you will find they have an indisputable 4-beat pulse to them. Why negate this natural momentum with a 3-beat tune? I will always play *Camberwell*, or occasionally the older *Evelyns*, depending on the congregation and nature of the worship, both 4-beat tunes complementing the inherent rhythm of the words. Tunes must always complement the words in both style and rhythm.

What of the Psalms? We are happy to chant about praising God on many "instruments of joy", but when someone comes along and actually wants to implement this exhortation we condemn it or even run away. This smacks of selective double standards.

Metrical Psalms have been with us for many a year, and Responsorial Psalms are included in various books (but how many churches use them?). Consider newer arrangements such as Richard Bewes' paraphrase of Ps 46 "God is our strength and refuge" to the *Dambusters* tune - it works! Also there are Norman Warren's setting of Ps 47 "Clap your hands" - much less demanding than RVW - and Christopher Tambling's setting of the *Jubilate* (in $\frac{7}{8}$ time), to name but three.

Music is not the ultimate end of our worship, and participation is the prerogative of the whole congregation, not just a choir. We have to ensure that we worship the right God, with music being one of the contributory vehicles or channels towards that goal.

There is one new church in Nottingham which meets in a converted industrial unit on the outskirts of the city and gets congregations of over 1500, several times a week. They have submitted a planning application to expand into an adjacent unit, but this has been refused as the local road infrastructure cannot cope with the increased level of parking or mass exodus. Their worship patterns may not be to all of our tastes, nor ours to theirs, but their worship is growing - what about ours? Look around your congregation - when did you last meet your Diocesan Quota or District Assessment? No, it's not all about money, but I believe the time is fast approaching when we must all enter the "refiner's fire" and come out leaner and fitter for our varied mission. Remember the mid-1990's and the Anglican-Methodist Covenant? Pity the poor Methodists who now do not know with which schism of the Anglican Church they are covenanted!

Maybe the blunt, unbending Baptists were right all along. Despite now doing most of my locum/rota playing in Anglican churches, I am proud to be true to my roots and remain a maverick Nonconformist.

Camberwell 5 King's Weston 0

Michael Anthony

* * * * *

In his covering note to the Editor, Michael suggests "this is one where you may not agree with all the content". Too true! (would he condemn all triple-time tunes for hymns in Iambic and Trochaic metres?) - but we print it in its entirety in a due spirit of editorial even-handedness.

Further contributions (on this subject or any other related to our activities) are still invited, as long as the argument is constructive and doesn't just degenerate into a sterile ding-dong between contributors occupying predictably entrenched positions.

The featured composer this year is **Olivier Messiaen** (1908-1992) and to mark the centenary of his birth several of the recitals will include a piece by him.



DERBY
CATHEDRAL
2008
WEDNESDAYS
IN JULY AND
AUGUST
7.45 p.m.

ORGAN
RECITALS

- 2nd July Naji Hakim (pre-concert talk by Nigel Simeone at 6.15 p.m.): *Messe de la Pentecôte* and works by Tournemire, Widor, Hakim; also an improvisation
- 9th July Jonathan Scott: works by Glinka, Bach, Mulet, Debussy, Dupré, Massenet and Duruflé
- 16th July Peter Gould, Tom Corfield, Ben Bloor and Christopher Johns: *Dieu parmi nous* and works by Hakim, Whitlock, Dupré, Karg-Elert, Cundick, Fish and Ogden
- 23rd July Cathy Lamb: 'Les Mages' and 'Jésus accepte la souffrance' from *La Nativité* and works by Gigout, Bach, Stanley, Mendelssohn, Peeters, Hollins and Vierne
- 30th July Martin Neary: *L'Ascension* and works by Bach, Couperin, Franck, Vaughan Williams and Liszt
- 6th August Timothy Noon: *Combat de la mort et de la vie* and works by Dubois, Böhm, Bach and Widor
- 13th August The Midas Touch Organ Duo (Roger Sayer and Charles Andrews): works by Mozart, Leighton, Langlais, Vierne, Widor, Franck, Dupré; music from the films
- 20th August Gareth Green: *Joie et clarté des corps glorieux* and works by Elgar, Howells, Mendelssohn, Yon, Vaughan Williams, Leighton and Vierne

Admission £5 at the door (2nd July £10)
Season tickets (available in advance) £35
Programmes with full details will be on sale from June