

Derby & District Organists' Association

Registered Charity No. 510567

Newsletter



Victorian Organ Cases: The Legacy of George Bodley - Laurence Rogers

The appearance of many British public buildings and churches owe a considerable debt to the Gothic revival of the 19th century. The great names of the architects of the revival need no introduction; George Gilbert Scott, John Loughborough Pearson, Augustus Pugin, and so on, not to mention many local provincial heroes who fashioned rapidly expanding Victorian cities. In the case of new churches, architects sometimes were commissioned to design an organ case as part of the furnishings. During the Autumn I attended a fascinating seminar on Victorian organ cases at the Church of St Michael and All Angels, Croydon, a fine Pearson church with a Father Willis organ housed in two splendid cases by George Frederick Bodley (1827-1907). Much of the day focused on Bodley's work which was introduced with an engaging illustrated gazetteer by Christopher Moore, a former organist at St Michael's.

Bodley was a pupil of Sir George Gilbert Scott (1811-1878), one of the most prolific architects of the Victorian era who designed two of London's icons, St Pancras Station and the Albert Memorial. (Locally in Derbyshire, Scott designed the workhouses in Belper and was responsible for restoring the Romanesque features of St Michael, Melbourne.) As with several of his contemporaries, Scott's practice was based on thorough scholarly research achieved through extensive travel in Europe. Likewise, Bodley was much travelled and became strongly influenced by Northern European late-medieval designs. Christopher pointed out that this influence could be traced in many of his organ cases. It particularly fascinated me that there was an apparent empathy between Bodley's cases and the Gothic organ case at the Jakobikirche in Lübeck, Northern Germany, where I had the pleasure of playing during August. The notable features were the 'crowns' on the tops of the towers and the ornamental pipe shades just below the crowns. I show here two

Photo: The Bodley cases of the Father Willis organ (1882) at St Michael and All Angels, Croydon.
Photo by courtesy of Oliver Horn.

DDOA Events 2014

10th February (Monday)

'Those were the Days' Recordings of famous organists of the mid 20th Century St John's Heritage Centre, Belper at 7.30pm . (see page 6)

12th March (Wednesday)

'Organ Tourism' with guest speaker Anthony Burns Cox

7th April (Monday)

'Lessons with Dad' – J S Bach as teacher (Peter Williams and Stephen Johns)

24th May (Saturday)

Visit to organs in Sheffield, including St John's, Ranmoor

17th June (Tuesday)

Annual Dinner at the Black Boy at Heage

12th July (Saturday)

Educational event at the Cathedral, in association with RSCM

15th July (Tuesday)

Visit to local organs: Hoar Cross and Doveridge

8th September (Monday)

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

8th 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

Concerts & Recitals

Saturday 15th February, 12 noon

St. Andrew's Church, Swanwick.
Lunchtime organ recital by Martyn Noble (Organ Scholar, Southwark Cathedral)
Tickets are £4 including lunch, available at the door or in advance by calling 01773 605291 or 01773 541458.

Send to a friend

Do you pass on your Newsletter or forward the pdf version to a friend? This would be a useful way of broadening interest in our activities and introducing new members to our Association.



North transept case, St Michael's, Croydon



Gothic organ (1457/1515) St Jakobi, Lübeck

examples of local interest, at Hoar Cross, Staffordshire, and Clumber Park, Nottinghamshire, which serve to illustrate this resemblance.

According to Bodley "Gothic is a complete style...which can give unity to a building". The style

encompasses not only the proportions and structure of the building, but also its furnishings and ornamentation. It is said that Bodley could "close his eyes and imagine every detail" when designing a new building. Such attention to ornamental detail was in evidence in even the most modest village organs. A favourite colour scheme used olive green, terra cotta red and gold as is illustrated here in another local example to be found at Plumtree Parish Church, Nottinghamshire. One of the finest examples of Bodley's complete Gothic creations

is at Hoar Cross which the DDOA plans to visit in July. I hope this short introduction whets the appetite of members for the visit - one not to be missed!

Laurence Rogers

Thanks to Christopher Moore for the photographs below.



Hoar Cross



Clumber Park



Plumtree

Members' News

Derby Diocesan Organ Pilgrimage

Back in the summer of 2012 I had the idea of touring the diocese and playing all of the organs that were operable. I don't think that this scheme has ever been attempted before, certainly not within the Derby Diocese and I suspect not in any other diocese either. Knowing that this would be quite a time-consuming plan I decided to give up teaching after 38 years. I had recently been

teaching A-level music at Derby High School, part time. The position at Derby Cathedral as Master of the Music continues, now in its 31st year. My ambition was to play in every Anglican church with a serviceable organ over a period of two years. In 2013 I would concentrate on the seven rural deaneries in the Northern Archdeaconry then tackle the remaining churches in the South in 2014. I have just finished the churches in the north, clocking up the 128th in Glossop on November 6th 2013.

It has been a most enjoyable exercise and I am now looking forward to arranging the final nine rural deaneries and 148 organs in the South. I see this as a piece of outreach work for the cathedral and diocese and have had so many words of welcome and support from the parishes, my photo is probably on several church websites by now! I have the approval and support of the Bishop and Dean of Derby and indeed the Bishop has given me a grant towards my travelling expenses. Part of my self-imposed brief was to arrive at the first church of the day and leave for



home from the last by public transport. Those who know me well know that the train is my preferred mode of travel and every deanery has involved the rail network on several occasions. The journey between churches during the day has been by car, kindly driven by someone in the locality, often the rural dean, an organist or a church warden. By using a wayfarer ticket for each day I have been able to travel around the county quite cheaply and so far have only spent £249 on buses and trains on this pilgrimage.

Upon arrival at each church I aim to play a short programme of three works, a short prelude and fugue by Bach, followed by two pieces from the English romantic repertoire, often Stanford, Whitlock and Vaughan Williams to show off the colours and sounds that each organ can produce. The great joy is that every organ is unique just as the buildings are too, and for me it is the first time that I have visited some of these beautiful buildings and made them come alive. (Some I have known from the past when I have taken the cathedral choir there to sing at services or concerts over the years.) I do encourage the areas to publicise the event and some are more successful than others in this area. I have played to



Peter Gould at Glossop

anything between 0 and 79 people! The average head-count is about 6 – 10 but some places have produced school parties if the church has been close and I have been happy to talk to the children about how the organ works as a prelude to the short concert. I have had a nursery class, years 5 & 6, a music A-level class and in one case, the whole school! I have even had four dogs (separately) in my audience and one cat too! I have played on one manual organs without pedals (difficult to find much repertoire here so tend to improvise!), organs in a sorry state of repair, a range of electronic instruments including a Hammond in a worship centre (so included 'I do like to be beside the seaside' as an encore!) though I much prefer the traditional pipe organs and have found many gems in my travels. In a few places I have managed to fit in a longer recital into a lunch-time regular slot like Swanwick and Chesterfield and have also given an evening concert at Glossop where attendance rose above normal levels. I have also played before a service, at the end of a service, included a hymn and have been able to accommodate various requests.

At the end of each concert I ask for a collection to support two charities in equal measure, one is the restoration of the cathedral organ which is becoming increasingly unreliable and also a local charity, the choice of the local rural dean. So far I have collected over £2,000 and most of this has been gift aided.

The only sad thing that I am picking up from my travels is that the organ has much less use than was originally intended. Pedal boards sometime look very dusty and I am often told that the organ is only played infrequently by a visiting organist for weddings and funerals. I hope that through my playing I can help to awaken the possibilities, showing how versatile the instrument still is and what it is capable of in the service of Almighty God.

Canon Peter Gould

DDOA - Your Association

Annual General Meeting 2013

The minutes of the meeting are available as an attachment, but here are some highlights from the meeting.

The Chairman, Denis Littleton thanked the officers and committee for their support throughout the year. He reflected upon a varied and successful programme of the year's events, highlighting the entertaining contribution made to the Annual Dinner by our guest speaker Alan Thurlow, the trip to Oxford, Peter Williams's session at Repton on Service Accompaniment, and the work of the Children and the Organ Project (CATO) which showcased its activities at the July concert at Belper with children and parents from Pottery School.

The Secretary, Stephen Johns, reported that, sadly, the Derbyshire Organs CD Project has been abandoned due to many frustrations in the recording process (unheated churches, untuned organs, unheralded arrivals and interruptions from noisy power plant and industrious flower ladies). The need for innumerable re-takes got quite out of hand. The player, Peter Williams, and recording team were thanked for their persistent but ultimately daunted efforts on the project.

The Officers and Committee for 2014 were elected as follows:

Chairman: D Littleton
 Vice Chairman: J Maxwell-Jones
 Secretary: S Johns
 Treasurer: C Darrall
 Gift Aid Secretary: Mrs G Chatto
 Newsletter Editor: L Rogers.
 Committee: T Bennett, P Gould,
 M Eades, J Muckle, D Shooter

Subscriptions for 2014

The treasurer's proposal to hold the DDOA subscription rates for 2014 was adopted at the AGM. However, the Organists' Review subscription will increase to £25. The rates are as follows:

Standard rate: £15
 Family rate: £20
 (two members in one household)
 Student rate: Free
 Organists' Review: £25.00

Subscriptions are due now, and notification letters from the treasurer are attached. Members are requested to pay their dues as soon as possible.

Gift Aid

This is a reminder that, if you are a taxpayer, you can help boost the finances of the DDOA by completing a *Gift Aid* declaration form. This allows the Association to reclaim tax on any donations (including subscriptions) which you make to the DDOA. A declaration need only be made once and will be ongoing thereafter, as long as you remain a taxpayer. (Should you cease to pay tax at any time, then you should inform the DDOA Gift Aid secretary that this is the case.) The form is available from the Gift Aid Secretary, Gillian Chatto, 22 Guide Post, Nether Heage, Derbyshire, DE56 2AQ, email: dandgchatto@tiscali.co.uk.

Books & CDs Exchange

A sizeable quantity of second-hand piano music is available at no cost to anyone wishing to give it a new home. It could be very useful to a piano teacher for giving away to pupils. Please let the Editor know if you are interested or can think of anyone who might be interested.

Children and the Organ

In the new year the CATO team has two bookings for workshops for young people: First on 15th February at St Peter's Church, Nottingham, at the invitation of Dr Peter Siepmann, President of the Nottingham Organists' Association; Secondly, negotiations are progressing to hold a workshop at St Matthew's, Darley Abbey in the Spring. We are grateful to our member Geoff Howell for promoting our work with contacts in local schools. This is a useful reminder to members to use their local knowledge and contacts to help us broaden awareness of our service to education. If you know of or can recommend primary schools who might be interested in participating in a CATO workshop, please contact the Secretary.

Archives of DDOA.

Report to AGM, November 2013 by James Muckle, Vice Chairman

The Association was formed in 1904, but until recently the only records we had were from 1917 onwards, mainly committee and 'general' meetings. These comprise a complete run, as far as we can see. Other documents and correspondence are represented

patchily. We have no constitution before 1980, and the earliest list of members relates to 1966.

It is possible to compile from these relics a straightforward, but relatively unilluminating account of the activities of our predecessors. The records lack 'flesh', while confining themselves to bare facts. A few press cuttings do, however, enliven the story, and it is possible sometimes to read between the lines and construct a more interesting picture.

Until recently the greatest gap was the early years: 1904-16. However, a digital archive of local newspapers recently became available, and we have to thank our former Secretary, Mrs Siann Hurt, for exploring the *Derby Daily Telegraph* archive on our behalf. In fact, those early years now appear more vividly than almost any other in our more distant history as a result of her discoveries in the columns of that newspaper. One account of our 1905 dinner has been recently reprinted in a recent issue of our newsletter. Journalists have brought our history to life in a way that our own minutes do not!

There are still many gaps, however, but Siann may well discover further interesting material. It is perhaps rather unlikely that anyone present has access to material that we ought to preserve in our records, but if you have, please let us know. For example, we lack events cards for 1958, 1967, 1980-84, 1986-88, 1999-2004, 2006, 2007 onwards. Someone must surely have these, at least.

I should like to propose that Siann Hurt is officially thanked for her work on these early records.

Secondly, will members please consider whether we should deposit these records in the City or County archives in due course? The City librarian/archivist has expressed interest. I suspect, however, that there may be difficulties over photocopied/offprinted texts (for reasons of the long-term preservation of such material), and over material stored in digital format on disk (because technology changes so rapidly that such material may not in a few years' time be retrievable.) The expertise of anyone here or in the Association will be gratefully listened to.

James Muckle

Members' News

We are happy to welcome Matthew Gibson to our membership and hope he will enjoy our events and meeting other members. Matthew is Organ Scholar at Derby Cathedral.

Recent Events

Johann Ludwig Krebs

Immediately following the AGM, our Chairman, Denis Littleton, gave an illustrated talk on the organ works of this German composer and pupil of J.S.Bach. The music we heard was impressive for its vitality.

Visit to organs at Osmaston and Ashbourne

A dank October afternoon found a small group of us at Osmaston and Ashbourne.

In 2000 Ed Stow moved the Brindley & Foster organ from Ashbourne URC to Osmaston, to replace their original one-manual instrument. I remember playing the instrument in its original location not long before it was moved and being impressed by it then. The organ is situated at the west end of the church, set a little higher than the pews, is a 2-manual instrument with 14 stops and speaks clearly into the building. Playing the organ is an enjoyable experience, the congregation at Osmaston is fortunate to have such an instrument.

Having enjoyed the hors d'oeuvre, we moved on to the main course, the recent restored and renovated organ at Ashbourne. We arrived just as a wedding party was coming out, having taken their photos inside due to the miserable weather.

We were welcomed with tea and cake, by Michael Halls, who told us something of the history of the organs at Ashbourne. The first documented instrument dated from 1710. This was replaced in 1858 when William Hill built a 3-manual instrument which formed the basis of the present organ. It was moved in the 1880s to its present position on the south side of the choir. Its next rebuild was

.... Continued on page 6.

"This man is a phenomenon" - Alexandre Guilmant in Derby

Delving into the archives of the *Derby Evening Telegraph*, Siann Hurt has recently uncovered reports of three recitals given in Derby by the great French organist and composer, Alexandre Guilmant. Reprinted here is a transcript of the report on his recital of 1883, published shortly afterwards in December of that year. It is a wonderful piece, giving fascinating insights into the sensibilities of the time, not least to those of the author, about whom Siann writes:

"John Henry Gower, who reviewed the Guilmant recital in 1883, was a teacher at Trent College, Long Eaton at the time of the 1881 census. He was born in Rugby, Warwickshire in 1855 and emigrated to Denver, Colorado, in 1886, so was not one of the founding members of the DDOA. At the time of the 1920 US Census, Dr Gower is still in Denver, teaching music privately from home."

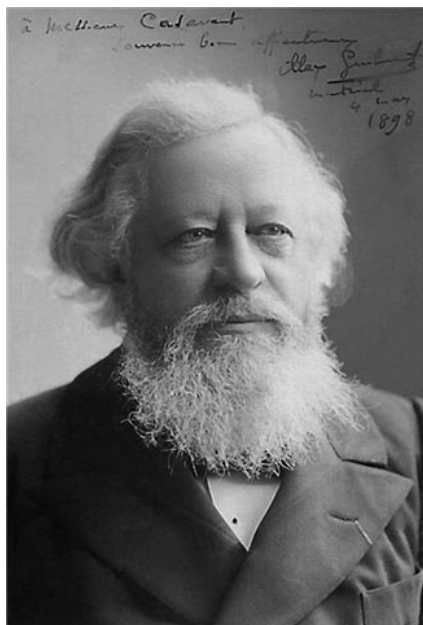
In each case, the recitals were given at the Drill Hall, a substantial building originally built in Becket Street, Derby, in 1869, but now demolished. The only reminder of the former grand premises is the 'Drill Vaults' pub on the nearby corner with Newland Street.

M. GUILMANT'S RECITAL

M.Alex. Guilmant, the celebrated French organist, is well known in this country. For many years he has paid us periodic visits and given us every facility for hearing him. At first he was somewhat handicapped by inexperience in English organs, but now he may be said to fairly represent himself on instruments of either home or foreign make. As a sound and conscientious musician, as a marvellous executant, M.Guilmant takes first rank. His compositions, too are popular, and deservedly so. Indeed there is every reason why they should be. They almost invariably form part of his own programme, and the name is familiar in the right-hand columns of the "bills of fare" of scores of organ recitals. They are tuneful, graceful and well written, though perhaps lacking in originality and power.

The programme of his recital at the Drill Hall on Thursday was interesting and instructive, both historically and musically. The performance of it was well in keeping with his reputation. A short criticism of the rendering of each number of the programme is here appended.

No.1.*Toccata and Fugue in D minor, J.S.Bach. The Toccata was splendidly played, and, considering the heavy touch of the Drill Hall organ, the semiquaver and demisemiquaver work was clear and distinct. The fugue was taken a little too fast, and, in



consequence, the execution of the ascending sequence of 5ths was somewhat uneven. The subject and answer in the exposition was given on a combination of stops unsuited (to my mind) to the dignity of the Fugue. At the moment M.Guilmant was working the movement to a grand climax, a pedal note ciphered most persistently, and not until the coda was it induced to stop. No.1, all things considered, was a masterly performance.

No.2. Offertoire on two Christmas Themes (Alex. Guilmant). This composition did not strike me as being in any particular *form*, and indeed I was rather surprised to find the piece had finished. The opening, however, afforded the opportunity of judging the "Diapasons" of the organ; they are undoubtedly of round, even and powerful tone. The *clarinet* stop, however, is rather thin. No.2, a little disappointing.

No.3. (a) Prelude, Clerambault, (b) Pastorale, Lemmens. The latter work was *encored*, chiefly owing to the magnificent playing of M.Guilmant. The Prelude is quaint and pretty. The Pastoral is irregular as to form and construction. No.3 beautifully played – well received.

No.4. (a) Scherzo Symphonique, (b) Elevation – both by Alex. Guilmant. The first named of these two compositions is undoubtedly the better, and is one of the most successful of M. Guilmant's works, while the "Elevation" is tuneful and graceful. Both were admirably played, as might be imagined. In No.4 Mons. Guilmant scored a great success.

No.5. Passacaglia, Frescobaldi (1591-1654): tonic, sub-dominant, and dominant harmonies, with variations, grace notes, appoggiaturas, from page 1 to finish. Probably appreciated 200 years ago more than now.

Part 1 concluded with a verdict in favour of M. Guilmant.

Part 2 opened with Mendelssohn's Sonata in D minor (No.6). I had looked forward to this number, but on the whole met with disappointment. The rendering was unsympathetic, and in some parts even rough – the first variation, marked pp by the composer, especially so; the beautiful contrapuntal accompaniment to the theme was too loud, and the melody was played on a coarse reed. In this work, one of the very few objectionable features in M. Guilmant's playing was also noticeable, *i.e.* sustaining the final tonic triad too long. The enormously heavy touch of the great organ coupled to the swell, interfered with the manipulation in the rapid semiquaver variations of M. Guilmant's fingers, as I believe it would be in any fingers in the world. No.6 has been judged from the highest standpoint, as of course M. Guilmant would wish it.

No.7. Caprice in B flat (Alexander Guilmant): an admirable and effective composition admirably and effectively played.

No.8. (a) March, with hymn of priests; fugue in C (Buxtehude). Of the March little can be said but it proved acceptable in the hands of the *virtuoso*. The fugue is excellent and was magnificently played, and roused the audience with enthusiasm. – No.8 admitted of no appeal from the verdict pronounced in favour of M. Guilmant.

Mr. Crowther here came forward and informed the audience that No.9 would be an improvisation on two themes, selected without the knowledge of M. Guilmant. The great organist then displayed one of his most remarkable gifts, and fairly astounded everyone. No.9, an extraordinary feat.

The recital concluded with No.10, Grand Chorus by Salome. M. Guilmant then left the platform.

I must now find fault with the audience – who, by the way, had been very appreciative throughout the evening, for the scanty applause finally bestowed upon him – for if there is any sense of justice or good feeling in *recalls*, M. Guilmant should certainly have been recalled again and again to receive a ringing cheer, three time renewed. I remarked to a well known Derby organist as we left the hall, "This man is a phenomenon!" His reply was, "Yes, indeed, he is splendid." Much praise and many thanks to M. Guilmant, who is a great man, and gave us a great musical treat.

JOHN H. GOWER, Mus.Doc., Oxon.

*A Toccata is a prelude or overture.



The console at Ashbourne

in 1951, which involved replacing the tracker action with electro-pneumatic, and the console detached; apparently this was a condition of the appointment of Daley Atkinson as organist. He must have liked it, as his tenure lasted for 48 years. A further restoration was carried out in 1982 by Hill Norman & Beard in which the console was made movable.

Michael explained the problems the organ had prior to the recent work. Due to its location and the building itself, the sound of the organ was not at its best in the nave, and not really adequate for supporting the singing of large congregations.

As a result Henry Groves of Ilkeston was commissioned to carry out work on the organ in 2011. This comprised addition of a sound canopy to reflect sound into the building, rather than lose it in the roof space; some ranks were turned round to speak into the nave; the choir stops were changed; a nave division of 8', 4' 2' and Mixture IV was added (this is not in the nave but within the case and speaks down the nave); new blowers were installed and shutters were added to the west side of the swell box to direct sound towards the nave.

After all of this, which cost in the region of £80,000, the church as a 3-manual 47 stop instrument which should serve them well into the future. It is a comfortable

organ to play and I think we all enjoyed the experience.

Thanks to Stephen Johns for the arrangements, to Michael Halls for allowing the visit and his account of the organ and its history, and to the church warden at Osmaston.

Denis Littleton



St Martin's, Osmaston

Forthcoming DDOA Meeting

New Season 2014

Monday 10th February, 7.30pm

St John's Heritage Centre, Belper

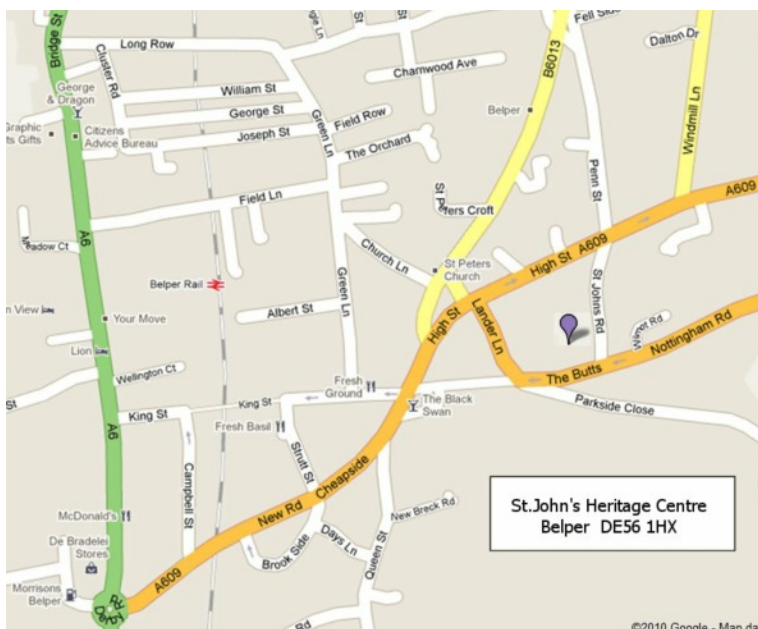
'THOSE WERE THE DAYS'

Recordings of Organists from early - mid 20th century presented by John Maxwell-Jones and Stephen Johns:

***Schweitzer ~ Dupré ~ Sumsion
GD Cunningham ~ Reginald Goss-Custard
Conrad Eden ~ Thalben Ball ~ et al***

Stephen and John welcome members' offers of recordings of these organists or any of their contemporaries. The evening should provide a fascinating comparison of styles of playing as fashions changed during the 20th Century.

Access to the close-by car park is from St John's Road which is one-way from High Street.



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Items of news or articles for the March/April edition of the *Newsletter* should reach the Editor by **Monday 17th February**, either via e-mail: 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. 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.