

Derby & District Organists' Association

Registered Charity No. 510567

Newsletter



Celebrating a 'Great Little Organ'

The building of a brand new organ in Derbyshire is such a rare event, it certainly demands celebratory attention. Such was the case in 1977 when the Nigel Church organ was inaugurated in St Giles Church, Sandiacre. (To be fair, outsiders might be confused that the town of Sandiacre, with a Nottingham post and telephone code, and sandwiched between the M1 motorway and the county border along the River Erewash, is really part of Derbyshire.) Last November the 40th Anniversary of the organ was celebrated with a special recital. It was fitting that the recitalist was David Butterworth, who, as consultant for the original project, designed the specification. It was a lovely recital, full of joy and fascinating variety.

In his programme David offered something for everyone; he began

in joyous mood with *La Réjouissance* by Handel and finished with the brilliant *Toccata in F* by Widor. The Baroque credentials of the organ were beautifully articulated in the *Concerto in D minor* arranged by J S Bach from Vivaldi, constantly bubbling with energy. The 'meat course' came late in the programme with J S Bach's *Prelude and Fugue in B minor*. It was revealed that David had chosen to play this mighty piece from a facsimile of the original score – a very brave choice indeed, considering all those swirling hand-written semiquavers, but his crisp and incisive performance was full of integrity. A personal favourite of mine was the *Sonata in D* by Bach's son, Carl Philip Emmanuel. This piece of chamber music on softer stops was full of invention with charming interplay between the

DDOA Events 2018

6th February (Tuesday) 7.30 pm

'The Music of Denis Bédard'. Talk by Andrew Storer at St John's, Derby.
(See page 6)

17th March (Saturday)

Visit to the house organ of John Scott Whitely in Everingham, East Yorkshire.
Joint meeting with Nottingham Association

16th April (Monday)

Evening visit to the Nigel Church organ at Christ Church, Chilwell.

May

Annual Dinner at Horsley Lodge

June

'Children and the Organ' Talk by Stephen Johns and Laurence Rogers.

July

Visit Manchester to view organs at the Cathedral and Town Hall.

29th September (Saturday)

Visit Organ World at Shaw, Lancashire.

October

Celebrating Hubert Parry - Talk by Tom Corfield and Stephen Johns.

November (Monday) 7.15 pm

AGM followed at 8.00 pm by members' recollections of influential organists.

Concerts & Recitals

Friday 2nd February, 7.30 pm

Derby Cathedral
Vivaldi's Gloria performed by The Sixteen.

Saturday 10th February, 12.30 pm

St. Andrew's Church, Swanwick DE55 1AN.
Lunchtime recital by Martyn Noble, HM Chapels Royal, St. James's Palace
Light buffet from 12, Tickets £5 including buffet, available at the door

Wednesday Lunchtime Recitals

at St Modwen's, Burton-upon-Trent
7th March Tom Corfield
14th March Stanley Monkhouse
21st March Tony Westerman

Photo: The Nigel Church organ, St Giles Church, Sandiacre. Casework in Cedar of Lebanon designed by Roger Pulham.

St Giles Church, Sandiacre

Great

Chimney Flute	8
Principal	4
Mixture	III
Trumpet	8
<i>Tremulant</i>	
<i>Positiv to Great</i>	

Rückpositiv

Stopped Diapason	8
Chimney Flute	4
Principal	2

Pedal

Subbass	16
Principal	8
Fagot	16
<i>Great to Pedal</i>	
<i>Positiv to Pedal</i>	

Built 1977 by Nigel Church & Company, Stamfordham, Northumberland to a design by David Butterworth.

Flue pipework scaled by David Butterworth and made by Stinkens of Zeist, Holland.

Reed pipes made and voiced by Giesecke of Göttingen, Germany

Case design in Cedar of Lebanon by Roger Pulham.

Rückpositiv and Great. Balancing the classical items were contemporary pieces by Petr Eben, Julien Bret and Guy Bovet, more demanding on the listener but demonstrating the amazing versatility of this two-manuals and pedals, ten-stop organ. Yes, only

ten stops! How can such sparse resources sustain the variety of sparkling Vivaldi, the thundering Widor pedal line, or the full-bodied Bach prelude?

The answer lies in a happy combination of several factors; clear acoustic, gallery location, pipe voicing, but crucially, the specification. Browsing the stop list you might be surprised to see only three 8-foot flue stops, as many as three independent pedal stops and two substantial reeds. No doubt the use of wooden resonators for the 16-foot Fagot allows it to provide gravitas without domination. And then a masterstroke is to place the whole Great in a swell box! Being immediately behind the façade pipes, the shutters are extremely effective in modifying the brightness of the pipes as well as the overall volume, and, as such, contribute greater tonal variety. The ingenious specification, no doubt, was borne out of David's painstaking research behind his designs for the Marcussen instruments at Clifton and St Mary's, Nottingham, just a few years earlier. He knew exactly how to get a lot out of a little.

This unusually bold organ project needed strength in several aspects to come to fruition. The church was clearly fortunate in finding a winning combination of

expert consultant, clergy advocate, quality builder and generous donors. The choice of Nigel Church as the builder came at a time when, as a young company, he was rapidly earning a reputation for exciting instruments of excellent quality. In the previous year, to high acclaim, he completed a larger instrument designed by David Butterworth for Hucknall Parish Church. Although Nigel Church dissolved his business in 2000, his legacy lives on as was witnessed by the Sandiacre celebration. In our area, it is not alone, there being instruments in English Martyrs Church (Alvaston), Christ Church (Chilwell) and Trent College (Long Eaton). Nationally the company certainly earned its place in UK organ history, being credited with a significant contribution (The National Pipe Organ Register cites 109 instruments) to the spread of the so-called *Organ Reform Movement* in this country, promoting mechanical instruments voiced in the neo-Baroque style and often featuring modernist architectural design and casework. The stunning design at Sandiacre with a Rückpositiv perched on the balcony edge is a fine example of a 'great little organ' which certainly deserves to be wished "Happy Anniversary"!

Laurence Rogers

DDOA - Your Association

New Chairman and Committee

The AGM for 2017 was one of the best attended in recent years, held in November at a new venue at St John's Methodist Church, Allestree. The meeting elected its new Chairman, Margaret Eades and Vice Chairman Hugh Morris. The full line-up of officers and committee for 2018 is as follows:

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

Subscriptions for 2018 - Good News!

The Treasurer has reported that Association finances being stable, there will be no increase in subscription rates for 2018. Subscriptions are due on 1st January. Please do your best to pay on time.



New and retiring Chairmen, Margaret Eades and John Maxwell-Jones

A Message from Margaret Eades

I was pleased and honoured to be elected to succeed John Maxwell Jones in becoming chairman of the Association following the recent AGM, and hope to continue to develop and progress with the good work John has done in the past three years of his office.

The committee have met and have put together a new and varied programme of meetings which I hope will attract members to attend and I hope that people will enjoy meeting other members and sharing common interests and experiences. Being an organist can be a lonely life at times, and I think talking and sharing experiences with others similar to ourselves can be very valuable and stimulating, so please come along and join in the activities!

I left my native Newcastle upon Tyne to become a Music student at Nottingham University under Professor Ivor Keys straight from school, and at the same time had organ lessons at St Mary's Nottingham with Russell Missen. I gained a B. Mus. Honours degree & eventually ARCO, and after spending two years teaching at Ashington, near Newcastle, I came to Derby, married Martin and taught Music at Parkfields Cedars Girls' Grammar in Derby.

After having had two sons, I continued class teaching for a while, then went into instrumental teaching at Derby High School and eventually joined the Derbyshire Peripatetic Instrumental Teaching Service as a peripatetic violin teacher. When this was discontinued, I worked at Ockbrook School doing the same work and privately at home.

I have held various organ playing jobs at a number of churches in Derby, notably Duffield Parish Church and currently, (and, since becoming a Catholic fifteen years ago) I play at English Martyrs Catholic Church at Alvaston, Derby. I also occasionally fill in where needed at other churches when requested, something I particularly enjoy doing. I also play viola in the Derby Sinfonietta String Orchestra, sing in the Nottingham Diocesan Choir and occasionally sing with St Matthew's Choir, Darley Abbey. Hobbies are Sailing, (now on the river and canal) gardening and travelling to historic places.

Margaret Eades

Recent Events

The English Church Anthem through the Ages

This was the title of the talk immediately following the 2017 AGM. Presented by our new Vice Chairman, Hugh Morris, Director of Music at Derby Cathedral and the Assistant Organist, Ed Turner. We were grateful to Ed for standing in at short notice for the Reverend Chris Moorsom who was unfortunately taken ill on the day. The talk was illustrated with audio extracts. It would have been lovely to have heard these many beautiful performances at full length, and at the outset Hugh apologised for this, but his brief to cover more than eight centuries of music in fifty minutes clearly made this impossible! The story of English church music is one that has been told many times, but, like a child's favourite story, it was great to hear it again through fresh voices and vision. Our speakers exuded commitment and enthusiasm for the subject and the audience savoured every moment of their offering. The present account attempts to summarize the journey they described, from plainsong to jazz.

As told by Hugh and Ed, the starting point and prevailing thread of the story is that the Christian Church has been singing praises to God since time immemorial. It's there in St Paul's letters to the Ephesians and Colossians. Plainchant is an ancient method of bringing alive scripture and the psalms. Its expressive and timeless quality have been source of inspiration to composers throughout history and in modern times has even been used by pop groups.

Salve regina

Plainsong contained Ferial forms for daily worship and more elaborate Festal forms for the great feast days of the church's calendar. As time progressed "glorification escalates with each generation" such that settings formerly for special occasions become the norm. So by the Renaissance, polyphony was established.

Libera nos (Shepherd)

Thus far in history, singing was in Latin, but with the Reformation came the demand for greater intelligibility and the use of vernacular language. On the



Hugh Morris

continent, under Luther the chorale emerged as a prolific form for all to sing and it became a ubiquitous source of cantus firmus for extended settings and organ preludes. Schütz was one of the early composers to write music with words in his own tongue. His Magnificat demonstrates how the chorale is given a contrapuntal life, but the German text has an "unyielding presence".

Magnificat (Schütz)

In England the settings of Gibbons, Byrd and Tallis shared a quality of the text, in English, pushing forward. An example by Thomas Tomkins demonstrates how the native text can lend so much beauty to the music without being completely homophonic.

When David heard (Tomkins)

One of the disastrous effects of the English Civil War was to take a chunk out of the development of English church music. We might speculate that an "English Bach" could have emerged in the mid 17th Century but for this disjunction. When the monarchy was eventually restored with Charles II, William Cook was appointed as choir leader at the Chapel Royal. He was able to revive traditions that had not been completely forgotten, but which were "on hold" during the Commonwealth. Significantly, three of his choristers, John Blow, Pelham Humphrey and Henry Purcell, went on to rebuild the choral tradition. A key outcome was the verse anthem with a sectional structure, not unlike the cantata model prevalent at the time on the Continent.

Rejoice in the Lord away (Purcell)

It is interesting to consider the monuments of choral music that were soon to be produced in great quantities by Bach. The motet for double choir demonstrates the pinnacle of his art.

Singet dem Herrn (Bach)

If each generation contributes to an 'inflation' in the art of choral music, then perhaps Bach represents this to a maximum extent; "What more can you do with polyphony and counterpoint than what Bach achieved?" As a reaction to such sophistication, the 'Enlightenment' of the 18th Century ushered in greater lucidity of thought and clarity. The Viennese style of Haydn and Mozart, with beautiful melodies, flowing phrases, the drama of an exciting climax and a sense of joy remains very popular for its clarity. With Mozart, however, the writing is not necessarily sympathetic to text – the tune is everything!

The heavens are telling (Haydn)

Benedictus from Mass in F (Mozart)

These Germanic traditions developed into the Romantic period in which the tools of counterpoint and harmony were essentially the same, but extreme contrasts of expression and chromatic writing became more common. The fervour and intensity of expression are shown in the example of this Bruckner motet:

Christus factus est (Bruckner)

Back in England, after Purcell there was a great dearth in first-rate English church music. Composers like Thomas Attwood could write nice tunes but lacked the imagination to develop them into more substantial structures. We had to wait until the mid-19th Century for a revival in church music begun by Ouseley and



Ed Turner

secured by Stanford. Stanford, gifted with great musical imagination, was accomplished in many forms, operas, symphonies and concertos, so when he turned to choral service settings, anthems and motets, his facility for developing ideas with tunes achieved great music. "English choirs still love singing Stanford; it sings well and sounds good. His music has gravitas."

For lo, I raise up (Stanford)

'Trundling forward' into the 20th Century there appeared a growing disconnect between church music and the 'high art' atonality developed by composers like Schoenberg. Church music seemed more conservative, but in reality it was required to be practical, fulfilling a liturgical function. Composers sought inspiration in folk tunes, spirituals and ancient

modes. An essential ingredient was structure and functionality, as in the next example of which is clearly not diatonic but has rhythmic integrity propelling it forward.

Let all the world (Leighton)

By the late 20th Century a plurality of styles evolved represented here by 'atmospheric' pieces by Jonathan Dove and Avo Pärt

Secrets of the seven stars (Jonathan Dove)

Tintern Abbey (Pärt)

Finally, two examples of the use of jazz at Evensong. Faced with a shortage of deputy organists last summer, Hugh realised that he could easily muster a jazz trio with drums, bass guitar and piano and so set about arranging a spiritual and composing a Magnificat.

Deep river (arr. Hugh Morris)

Magnificat (Hugh Morris)

Hugh concluded: "Is picking up different styles symptomatic of the future? Who knows? Maybe we have to acknowledge that we either have to keep invigorating and reinventing things or we are stagnating and allowing the world to pass us by. Perhaps we need to be prepared to move quite a bit from where we are and meet other art?"

After the journey through history with audio pauses, the audience burst into rapturous applause, repeated again after the vote of thanks from Madam Chairman, Margaret Eades.

Laurence Rogers

New Year Puzzle

Around April 1910 a talented 18 year old organ student, son of a plumber, painter and decorator, asked his teacher "whether there was to be any new work at September's meeting of the Three Choirs Festival". "The teacher seemed puzzled", he writes, and "was slow to answer, but did admit he'd heard of a 'strange composer' who was bringing a strange work".

The so-called 'strange work' was indeed performed that year at Gloucester. After the performance the conductor left the rostrum, took an empty seat next to the organ student and invited the young man to share his copy of the *Dream of Gerontius* whilst Elgar conducted.

Questions:

1. Who was the student?
2. Who was the teacher?
3. Who was the 'strange composer'?
4. What was the 'strange work'?
5. Who was the first conductor?

The art of review

A CD review by Gordon Reynolds published in *Organist Review* 1990:

"If you can survive the Bach D minor thrust *en chamade*, but with the unthrill bits rather impressionistic, you may come to enjoy a neat performance of the Boulnois *Choral*. But then you will have to endure some more *en chamade* in the Liszt, which will make it hard to hear the subsequent quiet passages. Much

the same goes for the remainder of the programme: the Giroud and the Vierne are sensible and enjoyable, but I do not think we should stomach all this other terrible noise, really terrible noise, without protest. If it happened next door I would call the police."

The Editor is grateful to David Rogers for sending these nuggets.

Members' News

New member

We are happy to Welcome Richard Brice who has recently moved to Belper from Cumbria. The November issue of the Newsletter carried an interesting article by Richard on 'Unwanted organs'. Hopefully, the first of many! Welcome, Richard!

James Muckle in Conversation with Laurence Rogers

Regular readers of our *Newsletter* will know that James has been a prolific contributor of articles and comment on organ culture in many forms; its music, composers, instruments, places, players and so on. Recently James achieved his eightieth birthday, and, on discovering this, I settled on the idea of offering an article in his honour as a birthday present. I duly invited him to reflect upon his formative years.

James was our Chairman from 2011 to 2012 and in his inaugural message he emphasised that "We are all not just organists, but musicians: choir members and leaders, 'gifted listeners',players of other instruments..... We treasure the organ in particular, while promoting the whole world of first-rate music." In truth, these are all the qualities that James has expressed through his own contributions to Association activities, not least during his chairmanship; we have witnessed his passion for music in many forms. Children have also benefited from his insights in regular presentations in CATO workshops. One of his most striking metaphors is a photo of the cockpit of a jet aircraft which he shows to children, likening the multi-tasking skills of an aircraft pilot to those of an organist at a console!

At the outset, it should be said that James, in spite of his passion and knowledge of music, is not a professional musician. He has led a distinguished academic career as a Russian language specialist, initially as a school master and later as a university professor. A cursory search on *Google Scholar* reveals numerous citations of his journal publications and books. However, as we shall see, organ playing has never been far away from his daily activity.

As the son of a Methodist minister he enjoyed a rich grounding in the Wesleyan tradition of singing and church music. Like many of us, having taken piano lessons at an early age, later in his teens he craved to test his skill on the mighty organ. This was rather against his father's wishes who maintained that "The trouble with organists is that they are always



looking for a bigger and better organ." Nevertheless, at James's insistence, a lifelong hobby commenced. The culmination of his school career was to secure a place at Peterhouse in Cambridge University to read French and German. His was the generation whose university career was deferred until after serving two years' National Service. James volunteered for the RAF and was initially destined to be a radar fitter. However, at an early stage he encountered a visiting squadron leader seeking volunteers to learn Russian with a view to becoming a signals intelligence operative tasked to listen in to Russian pilots. Such a role would have been secret and he now muses that at the time he could have been arrested for revealing that he was training to be a spy! Now in the fullness of time he is perfectly safe in talking about it. Throughout the RAF training he lost no opportunity to practise the organ in his spare time, wherever he may be stationed.

On completion of his training in 1956 he was posted to the RAF station at Gatow on the western outskirts of Berlin. Working in shifts, his spare time was irregular but he did succeed in taking organ lessons with Herr Paul Hoffmann, the distinguished organist of the Kaiser Wilhelm Memorial Church in Berlin. Before the Second World War this was one of Berlin's most prestigious churches founded in the last decade of the 19th Century. In later years, after the war, the ruined stump of the tower standing alongside a slender concrete and glass belfry and a modernist hexagonal church building became an icon of the resurgent West Berlin. 1956 predated this construction and services were conducted in a nearby

church hall type of building complete with galleried organ upon which James had lessons. For practice, Herr Hoffmann recommended a 'wonderful' brand new 2-manual Schuke organ in the Parish Church of Gatow, next to the RAF station. (Schuke organs are ubiquitous in Berlin. In 1962 Karl Schuke built the new organ for the rebuilt Kaiser Wilhelm Memorial Church.) At Gatow James met a fellow practising organ student, Dietrich von Amsberg, who was preparing for entrance exams to the Berlin Conservatoire. James described Dietrich as a marvellous player who could perform many of Bach's works at no notice. In so doing, he helped introduce James to many great works of the master. He also demonstrated the much-admired skill of improvisation by opening the Lutheran hymnbook (there is no such thing as a words only edition, every book is printed with the melody line) at random and proceeding to improvise a chorale prelude, an essential feature of a Lutheran service. Dietrich was destined for greatness, later becoming the Cantor at the historic Johanniskirche in Lüneburg (Georg Böhm's church).

After National Service James took up his place at Cambridge, but soon discovered that reading French and German could not fulfil him and very shortly he switched to studies in Russian. Organs were not far away and James seized all the opportunities to make music and practise at Peterhouse. By now his father was Tutor in Old Testament studies at Hartley Victoria College, Manchester and during vacations a chapel organ was at his disposal. Academically, Russian language and literature soon consumed his interest and upon graduation he enrolled on a course in Russia which enabled him not only to visit the great museums in Moscow and Leningrad but also meet many interesting real live Russians.

His career teaching Russian began at Chichester High School for Boys and again his parallel organ activities flourished, a high point of which was to play the cathedral organ at the school's end-of-term services. His next appointment took him to Leeds Grammar School where there was also a good organ, but, not content



The 1962 Schuke organ in Kaiser-Wilhelm Gedächtniskirche, Berlin.

with that, he was Organist at Horsforth Methodist Church. At this time he began organising student trips to Russia. Then as Associate Professor at Nottingham University he made regular trips to Russia, making many academic friends in the field of education and not neglecting his interest in church music. Members will recall his fascinating talk on Russian Orthodox Church singing at his Chairman's event in 2011.

During his Nottingham career he has been organist at Lenton and Kingswood Methodist Churches. Latterly at Kingswood he collaborated with John Forster and was closely associated with the renovation of the organ by Ed Stow in 2004. As a pianist and harpsichordist he enjoys chamber music, regularly playing in ensembles with local instrumentalist friends. He is presently keeper of the DDOA archive, a valuable repository of artefacts and stories of Association activities and personalities for much of the 20th Century. Never to be lost for a cause to follow or research, he currently has a project harping back to his RAF days, exploring the contributions to national life of former colleagues.

Thinking of contributions, thank you James for all the ideas and energy you have poured into our Association! Long may they flow.

Laurence Rogers

Forthcoming DDOA Meeting

**6th February 7.30 pm at St John's Church,
Bridge Street, Derby**

'The Music of Denis Bédard'

An illustrated talk by **Andrew Storer**, Organist of St John's, Derby

Denis Bédard is a Canadian organist whose works are currently published in Britain by the RSCM. Andrew has embellished his repertoire with works by Bédard and aims in his talk to commend a selection which illustrates the composer's distinctive style.

Denis Bédard, who was born in Quebec City in 1950, first studied music at the Conservatoire de musique de Québec, graduating with first class honours in organ, harpsichord, chamber music, counterpoint and fugue. He continued his studies in Paris and Montreal, as well as in Amsterdam with Gustav Leonhardt. He was a professor at the Conservatoire de Musique de Québec from 1981 until 1989 and organ professor at the University of British Columbia in Vancouver from 2001 until 2004. Since 2001 he has been organist and music director at Holy Rosary Cathedral in Vancouver. He is a very active concert artist and has given recitals across Canada, in the United States, in France and in Brazil. His music, essentially tonal and melodic, aims to communicate with as large a public as possible.



Items of news or articles for the March/April edition of the *Newsletter* should reach the Editor by **Monday 19th 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, 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.