

Derby & District Organists' Association

Registered Charity No. 510567

Newsletter



An Organ Adventure in America - Tony Westerman

One might reasonably expect the history of a cathedral in the American west to be somewhat different from that of an English cathedral, whether it be old or new foundation. The Cathedral of St John in the Wilderness, Denver, Colorado (a city of some 2.9 million) has a rich and colourful history that reflects its place in the birth of a nation, and yet there is much common ground with English cathedrals, particularly with regard to music. A detailed account of the cathedral's history can be found [here](#). Readers might not be surprised that the first dean of the cathedral was an Englishman, though his hunting of buffalo might set him apart from the average nineteenth century English cleric.

The Interim Director of Music at the Cathedral of St John, Dr Lyn Loewi, was generous with her time and hospitality and allowed me unfettered access to the magnificent 96-rank Kimball organ, her thoughts

on music, the organ and the future supply of church musicians. Lyn is a prize-winning alumnus of Stanford University, California and was fortunate to have spent a post-doctoral period with Marie-Claire Alain, whom Lyn described as a gracious, lovely lady who renewed Lyn's love of music and organ playing after a period of intense academic study. Always refreshing and positive, Mme Alain encouraged the possibility of a number of different interpretations, rather than adopting a narrow, didactic approach to teaching.

The musical establishment at St John's is not dissimilar to that of an English cathedral and is undergoing a period of evolution rather than revolution, and there is clearly a lot happening - a suitable reflection of a modern, cosmopolitan city with a vibrant Arts scene. Lyn has been Assistant Director for five years,

DDOA Events 2018

7th July (Saturday)

Visit Manchester to view organs at the Cathedral and Town Hall. (See page 8)

29th September (Saturday)

Visit Organ World at Shaw, Lancashire.

15th October (Monday)

Celebrating Hubert Parry - Talk by Tom Corfield and Stephen Johns.
St Matthew's, Darley Abbey (See page 4)

19th November (Monday) 7.15 pm

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

Concerts & Recitals

Wednesday Lunchtime Recitals

12.30 - 1.10pm

at St Modwen's, Burton-upon-Trent

4th July Tom Corfield - Derby

11th July Ben Bloor - London oratory

Derby Cathedral Summer Recitals

Wednesdays 7.45pm Admission £9.

18th July Hugh Morris (Derby)

25th July Carleton Etherington
(Tewkesbury)

1st August Andi von Oppenkovski (Essen)

8th August Michael Haynes (Hexham)

15th August Edward Turner (Derby)

22nd August Tom Bell (London)

Saturday 18th August, 7.30 pm

St John the Evangelist, Bridge Street, Derby

190th Anniversary Celebrations

Celebrity Organ Recital by Gordon Stewart
(Concert Organist & Huddersfield Town Hall)
on the 1875 Henry Willis organ.

Followed by Cheese & Wine Reception.

Member's Notices

Vacancy at Ashford-in-the-Water

After the retirement of Dr Ian Pykett, Holy Trinity Church wishes to appoint a Director of Music. There is an enthusiastic adult robed SATB choir with a choral repertoire from Tudor to contemporary. For more details please visit www.ashfordparishchurch.co.uk

Vacancy at St Luke's, Derby

Organist required for sung Mass on some Sundays. Please contact Alan Winfield on 01332 765368 for further information.

and since February this year, Interim Director, now full time; there is also a Choir Director, who is half time, and a Music Administrator.

Choral music is provided by a core group of sixteen musicians who are supplemented by a similar group of volunteers for choral services. The adult group is mixed, though there has always been a boys' choir associated with the church since its earliest days in the 1870s. A glance at the cathedral music list will tell the reader that the English choral tradition is alive and flourishing, though Lyn expressed a keen and worthy interest in expanding the repertoire to include contributions by female composers, both those contemporaneous with Stanford *et al* and more recent contributors to church music such as Elizabeth Poston and Judith Weir.

Lyn and I enjoyed a productive exchange of ideas. The DDOA Children and the Organ project excited Lyn's interest as there is the same problem in America as here - whence the next generation of organists? Views on the content of recital programmes were very much in tune with realists in England, as Lyn had also attended recitals after which she felt comatose, whilst others left her full of admiration for their ingenuity and appeal to a wider audience. The timing and nature of recitals brought forth the idea of evening recitals by candlelight, mainly featuring transcriptions to bring in those who would not normally attend.

And so to the Kimball organ, the full specification of which can be found [here](#). The main organ is in the Chancel in a compact chamber on the north wall with the console on the south side of the Chancel, providing the player with a good sense of balance when accompanying. The new (2012) Antiphonal organ is in the West Gallery, some 160 feet away, and is designed to overcome the lack of support for congregational singing at the west end. Kimball's prescience in acknowledging that there would be a problem with the sound of the main organ reaching the west end down the long Nave has paid dividends; he installed 28 blank stop knobs on the main console in preparation for the later addition of the Antiphonal divisions. His original concept is



Kimball's 1938 Chancel console. Beneath the Great stopknobs is the original expression arranger (inset), which permits the four swell boxes to be assigned to any expression pedal

now completed with pipes from an 1898 Kimball organ from Pittsburg.

Whilst Lyn played, I walked down the nave to hear the balance of the two instruments. It is a tribute to the skill of the voicer that the integration of the new pipework is seamless; as one approaches the west end it is only the direction of the sound that changes, not the tonal structure. At the console, one inevitably experiences a delay whilst the sound from the west end reaches the chancel, though it is entirely manageable, certainly a shorter delay than some instruments I have played in England! When played with the main organ the Antiphonal pipework is inaudible, rather like the Nave organ at Lichfield Cathedral.

Swell, Antiphonal Swell, Choir and Solo divisions are enclosed, as are the secondary choruses on the Great; the only enclosed Pedal stops were those derived from manuals. To help control the enclosed divisions, Kimball installed a selector (the white panel at the bottom of the right hand stop jambs) allowing the organist to choose which pedal controlled each division; they can all be put on one master pedal if desired, with the exception of the general crescendo pedal.

A quick count suggested that there were 180 stop knobs and 34 rocking tablets - rather a lot to come to terms with in a short time, though the console was very comfortable and the bench adjustable. I recommend this

[YouTube clip](#) to offer a taste of the organ.

I found it difficult to find a direct sound parallel with an English organ builder as the timbre of the Kimball was quite distinct: the Diapasons were noble with no tailing off in the upper registers; the range of eight foot pitches available on the Great, Choir and Swell allowed for a subtlety of shading over which any accompanist would drool; strings were closer to Hill rather than Lewis, whilst the chorus reeds were more in the style of Binns; the quint mixtures complemented full organ, adding body rather than brilliance; Choir mutations were subtle, again, very much for accompaniment and decorating psalms rather than Baroque performance. Full organ produced a truly visceral experience, enhanced by the cathedral's generous acoustic.

I am most grateful to Lyn for giving so generously of her time and for allowing me to play the splendid organ in St John's, which is, apparently, the largest unspoiled pre-war cathedral organ in the US. It was a bonus to play whilst the cathedral was closed, allowing me to explore the full gravitas and power of the organ. It isn't often that one can play with Tubas at both ends of the nave - an experience that I shall carry with me for some time!

Tony Westerman

John Housley Poyser R.I.P.

Midlands organ building has suffered a considerable loss with the recent passing of Mr John Housley Poyser on Friday 13th April, at the not inconsiderable age of 84 years. John is survived by his wife Pat and three children, Karen, Tony, and Michaela.

John spent most of his working life in the world of organ building. He was the Grandson of John Housley Adkins the well known Derby organ builder for whom he worked for many years. When J H Adkins retired, the business was taken over by Messrs Walker and at that time John transferred to the new company becoming their Midlands manager. In this role he oversaw the building of several important organs in the midlands area, amongst which might be mentioned Saint Alkmunds, Derby, Melton Mowbray Parish Church, Oadby Parish Church, Leics, and the organ of Rugby School Chapel. I well remember as a youngster together with my friend Tony Lister, being taken on a day trip to see and play these fine new rebuilds. John's kindness and enthusiasm was boundless!

In more recent years the firm of J. W. Walker considerably reduced the size of their operation, and John decided to, as it were, 'return to his roots' forming his own business with a rather more local connection, maintaining tuning contracts and carrying out restorations and rebuilds of organs which he might well have worked on as a youngster at J H Adkins.

Over the years John has been an enthusiastic member of our association serving as committee member and Chairman. During his years of office many interesting visits to organs both local and further afield were arranged - John had all the contacts!

All at the Association will want to pass on their deepest sympathy to Pat and her family at this time, and as a final tribute to John, what better than to reproduce again his article recalling a life in organ building which appeared in our August 2010 Newsletter."

Terry Bennett

Derby Organ Builders in the 19th Century

John Poyser

Joseph Gratian	1784-1863
Alfred Noble	1849-1905
James Mitchell Grunwell	1835-1888
William Joseph Hall	1851-1886
Henry Adams Weston	1826-1907
William Walker	c.1891
John Stacey	c.1861
John Housley Adkins	1869-1947

Although there were a number of nationally well known firms that worked on organs in and around Derby, the first recorded locally based organ builder of the period was **Joseph Gratian** (b. 1784 d. 1863). It is thought that he was involved in work on several organs, including some at Belper and at the old St. Alkmunds Church in Derby.

Already a widower, he married Sarah Warin when he was 66 and they produced a daughter, Rosa two years later, and then a son, Henry, two years after that. He is listed in 1835 as living at Chapel Street, Belper, and then in 1840 and 1853 at Upper Brook Street, Derby.

A gap then appears from 1853 - the last trade reference to Gratian until 1870, when **Alfred Noble** (b 1849 d 1905) was listed as working from 63, Melbourne Street, Derby. Noble was one of a large family of organ builders originating in Norwich. He came to Derby via Birmingham and had four daughters and six sons, of whom his eldest, Ernest (b 1875) was apprenticed to him.

Noble built or worked on a number of local organs, including Christ Church, Derby; Dale Road Methodist Church, Derby; Barrow on Trent Methodist Church; Middleton Wesleyan and St. Michael's Church, Shirley, where he added the swell manual. His last local directory entry was 1905, the year of his death.

Just four years after Noble started in business, **James Mitchell Grunwell** (b 1835 d 1888) started trading - his Derby directory advertisement in 1874 reading

"James Mitchell Grunwell, Victoria Street (congregational chapel), pedals fitted to piano fortes and harmoniums - res Beckett Well Lane".

In that year he built the small three manual organ for T.B. Mellor, organist of St. Peter's Church, Belper and shortly afterwards installed the two manual organ in St. Paul's Church, Quarndon, although the great organ of that instrument is quite a bit older. Other work included the organs at Wirksworth Congregational Church, Nether Heage Methodist Church in its former home, Fritchley Congregational Church, and the original one for Kedleston Street Methodist Church, Derby.

By 1881 Grunwell was established at 59, Traffic Street and interestingly, also advertising in that year at 44 Traffic Street were the *"Midland Electric Blowing Co., prop J. & A. Page"*. The firm, from which in 1932 **Arthur Fryer** came and started the British Organ Blowing Co. (B.O.B. Co.), were still trading after the Second World War.

In 1884, my grandfather, John Housley Adkins was indentured to Grunwell but in June 1887 he left to work for White (later White & Sentence) of Grantham. Grunwell died in 1888 so it is possible that he decided to retire for some reason and arranged for Adkins to continue his indentures with White.

In 1876 there is an entry in Kelly's Derbyshire directory showing **William Joseph Hall**, organ builder, with the address at 7, Wardwick and Bells Mill, Cheapside. Unfortunately I could find little more about him, although there was a William Joseph Hall (b 1851 d 1886) with a Frank Hall in business at Birkenhead in 1882 to 1886. Was this the same man or alternatively an ex-employee of Noble or Grunwell?

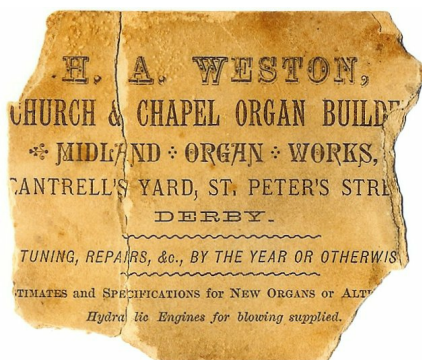
Recently I came across the business card of **Henry Adams Weston** (b 1826 d 1907) who in 1881 first advertised in the Derbyshire directory as "*Henry A. Weston, organ builder, 10a Jury Street, Derby*". In 1884 and now resident at 125, Ashbourne Road, he advertised his business address as "*organ builder & joiner, 6½ St. Peters Street, Derby*" however this odd address is clarified in 1885 when his address was given as Oakes Yard, St. Peters Street, Derby. Actually it is shown on his business card as Cantrell's Yard but that may refer to one of the twelve businesses that were trading there. Oakes Yard was where the Yorkshire Bank and Co-op Travel are now situated in St. Peters Street and was opposite Nags Head Yard which eventually was bought by Marks & Spencer before being demolished in 1959.

By 1888 Weston, now listed as just "*organ builder*", had moved his residence to 35, Wilson Street but by 1891 there appears to be no further reference. I have no knowledge of his work on any particular organ but over the ten years or so that he was in business there may well be records in some of our churches' old minutes books.

In the 1891 directory there appears a trade reference to "**William Walker**, (reed) organ builder, Oxford Street, Ripley". It may not now be appreciated, but many churches and chapels as well as private residences owned reed organs and there was a healthy trade in them up until the cheaper electronic instruments became available in the 1950s.

In the 1895 Belper Trade directory we find **John Stacey** advertising as an organ builder of 24, Bedford Street, Derby, and again in the Town & Country Derbyshire directory of 1905.

There was a John Stacey who was in business in Sheffield from 1861 to 1869, having worked for Brindley & Foster. It is of course possible for this to have been the same person as, allowing him the age of 30 when he started his business in 1861, he would have been 65 when presumably he retired. It does seem strange that there is a gap of 26 years between the two businesses and there is also a suggestion that the Staceys were father and son, but then the son, who would have then been a



relatively young man, would only have been in business for about ten years – and there is no trace of him afterwards. I personally prefer the former explanation; in any case there are only four organs which can be traced as having been worked on by him – St. Michael & All Angels, West Felton, Shropshire, Holy Trinity, Tansley (swell added), the unusual two manual (great 3, swell 2, ped 1 coup 3) at Junction Street Baptist Church, and in 1887 the three manual organ in Greenlane Primitive Methodist Church, although I always felt that the latter was an unusually ambitious instrument to be accredited to him – it did have his nameplate on it however!

The last organ builder to start up in business in the 19th century was **John Housley Adkins** who, having moved from White to work for Denning of Stamford in 1893/94 started up on his own in 1898. His first home was at 69, Nottingham Road but he soon moved to 37, Queen Street, having his works at the 1765 Wesleyan chapel in St. Michael's Lane. At one time it was suggested that Adkins bought out Grunwell's business but, as seen earlier, that ended in 1888 so it was unlikely that there would have been anything left to buy ten years later. It should be remembered that in 1898 Noble was still trading and Stacey had established himself in 1885. Adkins's son, Lewis, sadly died in 1897, so it would appear that he came back to Derby to start a new phase of his life, starting from scratch.

With the progress of the industrial revolution still in full swing, much wealth was generated and a side effect was that a considerable amount was directed to building and furnishing not only Anglican and Roman Catholic churches but also an array of chapels – Congregational, Baptist, Presbyterian, and Wesleyan and Primitive Methodist churches with sundry names such as Bethel, Ebenezer, and Mount Zion etc. Not only did the sponsors compete with each other in the splendour of their buildings but in their pipe organs as

well and in the last half of the 19th century many were installed in this area. It is therefore rather surprising that during that period, of the eight builders mentioned here, only a very few instruments were produced by them, and a considerable proportion were either enlargements or rebuilds of older organs.

John Poyser

DDOA - Your Association

Children and the Organ (CATO)

The bumper season of workshops has continued with three events at Mickleover and more at Holbrook and Duffield parish churches. We were honoured at Holbrook by a visit from Paul Hale, Emeritus Organist of Southwell Minster. Having heard about our work previously, Paul requested to come and see for himself. Although he planned to be a 'fly on the wall', we persuaded him to play a piece for the children, *Nun danket* by Karg-Elert. Entering into the spirit of the occasion, he first demonstrated the opening section several times, each with a different registration, perfectly illustrating the variety of voices in the organ.

October 2018 Meeting - Please volunteer to sing!

On the evening of Monday October 15th at St Matthew's Darley Abbey the Association is celebrating the 100th Anniversary of CHH Parry's death: his funeral was actually on October 16th in St Paul's. We shall, of course, enjoy some of his organ music, but also choral pieces and listen to some of his symphonic output. He was a truly great man and UK musicians owe him a lot. Tom Corfield and I are hosting the event and would greatly appreciate your support in the following ways:

1. Please come!
2. We need singers – could you help? There will be one rehearsal on the evening of the event at about 6.15.
3. Tell your WI friends about it – they adore 'Jerusalem' after all.

Please contact me if you can join the ad hoc choir. I'd appreciate a response well in advance of the event please. 01332 764792 or email the Editor.

Stephen Johns

Recent Events

Martyn Noble at St Andrew's Church Swanwick

I made my, now annual, visit to St Andrew's for this year's recital by Martyn Noble (HM Chapels Royal, St James's Palace, London), now his 7th annual visit to Swanwick. Despite less than favourable weather conditions there were about 80 people in church and, as always, we were treated to a buffet lunch before a generous amount of music.

Martyn's choice of programme anticipated an audience closer to Classic *fm* than Radio 3. His programme notes also gave us a little history of the Chapels Royal, mentioning that Queen Victoria and Prince Albert were married there on 10th February 1840, so his recital coincided with the anniversary of this date.

The first half comprised the Bach arrangement of Vivaldi's *A Minor Concerto*, Grieg's *Morning* from *Peer Gynt No. 1*, and one of Mendelssohn's *Preludes and Fugues*, the *D Minor*, not as often heard in recitals as they might be. Martyn reminded his audience of the composer's connections with the Royal couple and the fact that he certainly played to them on the organ in Buckingham Palace. This was followed by Bach's *Sheep may safely graze*, 4 movements from *Messiah* (Handel) and concluded with a rousing and lively performance of *Pomp and Circumstance No.1* by Elgar.

After a short comfort break the second half started with the celebrated *Maestoso* from the Sains-Saëns *Organ Symphony* and concluded with the Widor *Toccata*, both pieces being fixed and firm favourites at Swanwick. The 'filling' provided a complete contrast, *Somewhere* (from *West Side Story*) - Bernstein, *Summer Nights* (from *Grease*) - Casey and Jacobs, *In Your Own Sweet Way* - Brubeck, three pop songs *Can't Help Falling In Love* - Elvis Presley, *Tears* - Ken Dodd and *Stairway To Heaven* - Led Zeppelin. Had the recital been a few weeks later the second of things might have been a tribute to the late comedian and singer. Walton's *Orb and Sceptre* concluded the royal connections before the, as ever, rousing performance of the Widor. Martyn

always performs very well, and his regular visits mean that he draws more out of the organ each year. As always, tribute must be paid to our member Professor Alan Dronsfield, whose trust generously sponsors these recitals.

John Maxwell-Jones

Annual Dinner 2018

Horsley Lodge was once again the venue for the annual social event of the Association. Surrounded by gently undulating pastures and rolling hills, the restaurant was the perfect setting for a May evening. By general consent we enjoyed a splendid meal which was served by a young staff with great efficiency. For the after-dinner speech our special guest this year was Nigel Allcoat, of international fame as a performer, teacher, composer and improviser. It was a privilege to secure Nigel's presence in the midst of his action-packed schedule, sandwiched between a performance in Glasgow on the previous evening and one in Keble College, Oxford on the following evening. Once on his feet, Nigel entertained us with numerous anecdotes which flowed seamlessly. To give a taste of his grand improvisation I recount here two stories from the evening.

An inveterate traveller, Nigel had many a tale set in foreign parts, the most extraordinary of which was an encounter in Russia back in the communist era before 'perestroika'. He was due to perform at the Philharmonic Hall in St Petersburg, but his visa for travel was severely delayed and issued only on the day before the concert. Arriving in the city on the actual day of the concert he turned up at the hall to discover that an orchestra was rehearsing. Eventually settling in to do some pre-concert preparation, he was then interrupted by a piano tuner who held sway for a further period. Despite all such delays, he succeeded to give his recital that evening. If the manner of his arrival in the city was less than straight forward, that of his departure was an adventure indeed: On presenting himself for check-in at the airport, he was confronted with "Niet" from a formidable official. Allegedly, the ticket wasn't valid for that flight. He had to leave the building and seek out the British Airways office to clarify the situation. There he was assured that the ticket was perfectly valid, however, on returning to check-in the "Niet" response was



Guest speaker, Nigel Allcoat

repeated. After yet another shuttle between check-in and the BA office, he was arrested by the airport security police on suspicion, of all things - money laundering! This was a bizarre interpretation of his to-ing and fro-ing in and out of the airport buildings. Upon interrogation he showed the police his organ music and the concert programme which fortunately contained his photograph. Eventually his version of events was accepted, the charge was dropped and he did get his flight home.

Teaching has always been a special love for Nigel. Over the years his International Organ School in France has grown and grown. Here in the village of Saint-Antoine l'Abbaye (Isère), his second home, the great Abbaye has a wonderful four-manual organ reconstructed by Bernard Aubertin in the 17th century Baroque style. He has held visiting professorships at numerous universities and conservatoires. He recounted an occasion at the St Petersburg Conservatoire when student performances were consistently inaccurate. He soon discovered that their scores were several generation photocopies of photocopies; in those days it was impossible for students to obtain scores published in the West. Realising this, on his return to England, he encouraged home students to send genuine copies to Russian students.

We thoroughly enjoyed Nigel's musings, an animated mixture of the serious and humorous. We wish him well as he prepares for his busy round of seminars and recitals, at home and abroad.

Laurence Rogers

Tom Corfield recital

It is a testament to the high esteem that the Derbyshire musical community still holds for Tom Corfield, that his 'Wine and Cheese' recital at St Michael's, Holbrook, in May attracted a full house. Our high expectations were rewarded by a diverse programme brilliantly executed.

Starting with great panache, the *Grand Choeur* by Théodore Salomé was launched at a ripping speed and set the tone for a virtuoso programme. It was lovely to hear the whole set of Whitlock's *Five Short Pieces*, in particular the *Scherzo* and *Pæan* which demand an exceptional technique of the player. The modest title of this suite does no justice to its demonstration of the breadth of the composer's musical imagination and craftsmanship. Tom introduced every piece with his characteristic pithy remarks. Before the *Partita on 'Veni creator spiritus'* by Flor Peeters, he recalled that he once turned pages for Peeters, remembering his terror of not wishing to lose his place in the score or turning over too many pages at once. (Members may recall Tom's former *Newsletter* article setting out the criteria for distinction in the skill of page turning – See July, 2014.)

Bach's *Prelude & Fugue in G* followed at a cracking pace, perhaps too much so for my taste, nevertheless full of the joyfulness that one expects of a piece in G major. *Prelude, Fugue and Variation* by César Franck, came over as the masterpiece it truly is; Tom's command of registration seemed to be unhindered by the modest resources of Holbrook's two-manual instrument. Again, registration was the key to the entertainment value of the *Two Derbyshire Marches* by Haydn. Originally scored for military band, in Tom's hands we had a clear glimpse of Haydn's irrepressible sense of humour. Then Tom presented a guessing game in playing just two pieces from *Animal Parade* by Iain Farrington. Out of nine different animals represented in the suite, I think most of us identified the ponderous gait of the hippopotamus, but the second movement was more of a teaser. This animal must have been schizophrenic, alternating between ambling along and chirping like a canary. It turned out to be a giraffe!

In triumphal conclusion, Tom rounded off his splendid recital with *Carillon* by Vierne. Then came the wine and cheese!

Laurence Rogers

The Big Welsh Sing – A Celebration of Welsh Hymns

The resonance of Welsh Hymns is an indispensable component of Christian worship and this was an inspired focus for the May meeting of the Nottingham and District Society of Organists (NDSO). Brainchild of Ian Watts, NDSO President, the programme gave us Welsh organ music, a seminar on Welsh history and the 'Big Welsh Sing'.

The venue was Beeston Methodist Church, an ideal location for enjoying massed singing. (DDOA members visited here in April and were very impressed with this fine building and its 1902 Wadsworth organ.) A challenge of organising such an event is to attract sufficient 'mass' to realise this joy. On this occasion there was no doubt; the church was heaving with supporters eager to sing.

After an introductory voluntary played by Denis Littleton, a fascinating seminar was presented by Derek Wileman, David Gabe and Rick Morrish. We heard about the cultural and religious history of Wales, its music, the composers of hymns, and the birth of the male voice choir tradition. From the Anglo-centric perspective that pervades most public discourse in our lives today, this was a poignant reminder of the distinct identity of the Welsh nation. From Celtic times Wales had traded copper with Mediterranean countries and its links with Europe developed quite independently from those of England. In religion, links with Rome were stronger than those with Canterbury. At the Reformation, Calvinist theology

had a greater hold than in England and the growth of independent churches was strong – Congregational, Baptists and Welsh Methodist Presbyterians. In this environment, congregational singing developed an important role and hymnody thrived.

With the industrialisation of Wales, slate in the north and coal in the south, the population increase created close-knit communities. Chapels became a common focus of community life and male voice choirs were born. Many have survived into the post-industrial period and continue to thrive today, as is evidenced by the annual '1000 voices' concerts at the Royal Albert Hall. The NDSO event gave us a taste of this great tradition with Carlton, Mansfield, South Notts and Bestwood Male Voice Choirs performing the most celebrated icons of the repertoire, *Gwahoddiad* and *Morte Christe*.

The programme concluded with the massed singing of Welsh hymns, eighteen in all! So many favourite tunes raised the roof – *Hyfrydol*, *Blaenwern*, *St Denio*, *Aberystwyth*, *Ar hyd y nos*, *Llanfair* and inevitably *Cwm Rhondda*. Surprisingly, *Guide me O thou great Jehovah* was sung to a Welsh tune, *Capel y Ddôl* for a hundred years before the now famous tune by John Hughes was adopted from 1907. After a bit of phonetic coaching we even sang two hymns in Welsh! NDSO members took turns in playing the organ for the hymns. This was a joyful event, notable for the many smiling faces as well as the stirring and uplifting singing.

Laurence Rogers



Bedfordshire Organs - Rodney Tomkins

I am nowadays a regular visitor to Bedfordshire where I stay with my son, Nicholas, in a village on the A6 a few miles south of Bedford. Now, without the tie of a regular organ post, I am even able to spend a weekend away.

Over the twenty years or so I have been visiting the area I have made the acquaintance of several interesting instruments, quite a number of which are what I would regard as historic – something about which I have always been very enthusiastic. Bedford itself can boast its own Victorian builder, J Trustam, in the middle years of the C19th. The two examples I have played (a 1m and a 2m) seem to be in the tradition of Hill or Bevington. As for an example by the latter builder, there is a delightful 2m west gallery organ in the village of Silsoe; this instrument boasts a BIOS Historic Organs Certificate.

Yet another such certification has been awarded to the 4m early Hill (1846) at Turvey. This is a fairly medium sized village church and, needless to say, the organ's fourth manual has but one all-important stop.

Action, of course, is all mechanical. Some further work by Hill in 1855 (and later) would account for certain more Romantic colours which could not have featured in the original 1846 instrument. I have an invitation to go back whenever I like, so perhaps I will have the opportunity to fathom out some of its anomalies. Perhaps the most obvious substitution must have been, at some point, the replacement of a Great Mixture by the additional Diapason.

Judging by the quality of the houses in the village street, Turvey must always have been quite a desirable place. On closer scrutiny of the stop list it becomes clear that this is what may be regarded as a modest 3 manual organ of up-market village proportions, to which some megalomaniac benefactor may quite well have suggested "it would be nice to have a Tuba stop" !



Turvey: Decorated pipes of the central facade.

To conclude, something very different – a brand new (2016) H&H in St Andrew's, Bedford, which I recently visited. The early C20th building with later, east end, extension has excellent acoustics and the organ, located to the left, in front of the chancel arch, fills all parts of the spacious church with a gloriously rich tone – a truly aristocratic instrument by a 'Rolls Royce' builder. There are two carved Gothic cases, side by side, the westernmost one for console and Manual pipework, the further one, with 16ft frontage, for Pedal.

Key action is mechanical throughout and conveyed sideways to the Pedal case.

Stop action is electric, with state-of-the-art divisional and general pistons equipped with stepper and sequencer. What more could one ask for ?

Rodney Tomkins

All Saints, Turvey			
Organ by Hill 1846			
Great		Swell	
Tenoroon Diapason		Tenoroon Diapason	
Bourdon		Open Diapason	
Open Diapason		Stopt Diapason	
Stopt Diapason		Salicional	
Principal		Voix Céleste	
Twelfth		Principal	
Fifteenth		Fifteenth	
Posaune		Cornopean	
Open Diapason		Hautboy	
Tuba to Great		5 unison couplers	
Choir		Pedal	
Open Diapason		Bourdon	
Stopt Diapason Bass		Open (wood)	
Stopt Diapason Treble		Violoncello	
Hohl Flute		Violone	
Principal			
Wald Flute			
Cromorne			
Hautboy			
		Solo	
		Tuba Mirabilis	
		(encl. In Sw.)	



St Andrew's, Bedford: Pedal case on the right.

St Andrew's, Bedford			
Organ by Harrison & Harrison 2016			
Great		Swell	
Open Diapason	8	Gedackt	8
Stopped Diapason	8	Salicional	8
Principal	4	Voix céleste	8
Harmonic Flute	4	Gemshorn	4
Fifteenth	2	Flageolet	2
Sesquialtera	II	Larigot	1 1/3
Mixture	IV	Mixture	III
Trumpet	8	Hautboy	8
Clarinet	8	Tremulant	
Tremulant		Sub Octave	
		Pedal	
		Open Diapason	16
		Bourdon	16
		Principal (ext.)	8
		Bass Flute (ext.)	8
		Trombone (wood)	16
		3 unison couplers	

Professor Robert Pascall R.I.P.

Members will, I'm sure, be sad to hear of the death of Prof Robert Pascall who was an engaging after-dinner speaker for us a few years ago and also guest speaker at some of our meetings. He was very well known in the East Midlands and further afield. Quite a few of us knew him personally – James Muckle worked with him at Clifton Parish Church as well as being an academic contemporary at Nottingham University. I had the pleasure of sharing his company as an undergraduate at Keble College where he was Organ Scholar in the 1960s and he was also Best Man at our wedding in 1966, Godfather to our elder son Chris and Patrick's Professor at Nottingham.

Robert had originally, as a pupil of HA Bate in London, intended to become a cathedral organist but,



having obtained a D Phil at Oxford decided the academic life was for him. He became a Lecturer at Nottingham and subsequently Professor before moving to Bangor in 1998. His interests were wide-ranging but he was perhaps best

known for his work on Brahms, whose music he loved and edited extensively, as well as his expertise in Musical Analysis – an extremely taxing discipline! He was also a dedicated teacher of undergraduates and an able administrator, seeing through the establishment of the new Music Department premises linked to the Djanogly Hall. His organ playing was informed by scholarship but also a common sense approach which eschewed any suggestion of 'flashiness'. Above all Robert was a man of absolute integrity, dedicated to the highest standards in his own work and that of those he with whom he came into contact – he was also great fun to be with and wore his learning lightly. Many people will mourn his passing and count it a great blessing to have known him.

Stephen Johns

Forthcoming DDOA Outing

Saturday 7th July 2018

A VINTAGE DAY IN MANCHESTER

LAST MINUTE BOOKING NOW

Three fine organs are on offer at three vintage locations:

- Manchester Town Hall (Cavaillé-Coll, T.C.Lewis)
- St Philip's Salford (Samuel Renn)
- Manchester Cathedral (Kenneth Tickell)

Descriptions of the organs appeared on Page 7 of the May/June Newsletter

Coach pick-up details:

0800 Belper - Lion Hotel

0815 Darley Abbey - Church Lane (towards Derby)

Then pick up along A6 to Five Lamps pub (if needed).

1100 Manchester Town Hall

1400 St Phillip's, Salford

1730 Evensong at Manchester Cathedral and try the new organ

Return

1900 (approx.) Manchester Cathedral

2100 (approx.) Derby



Please make your booking as soon as possible in this format:

To: Andy Storer, 33 Radcliffe Drive, Derby DE22 3LB. storer35@btinternet.com (01332 341852)

Name..... Number of places..... Pick-up point.....

Cheque payable to "Derby & District Organists' Association" (£20 per person)

Items of news or articles for the September/October edition of the *Newsletter* should reach the Editor by **Monday 27th August**, 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.