

Derby & District Organists' Association

Registered Charity No. 510567

Newsletter



The Organ Club visits Symphony Hall

In addition to monthly visits to organs in many different parts of the country, the Organ Club organises annually a five-day tour in a region or city. A memorable tour for me a few years ago was to the city of Edinburgh where one discovered a cornucopia of wonderful organs of diverse styles and histories. Edinburgh is a 'must-visit' destination for organ lovers, as Richard Brice will endorse, having attended the IAO Festival there last year. (See [Newsletter 92](#)). For the Organ Club, this year's tour in September was in Birmingham, a city whose organs are world class by any measure and qualify for that 'must-visit' list. Sadly, due to illness, I was only able to

attend on one day, but it was a memorable day indeed, fulfilling all expectations. The itinerary was Symphony Hall, Town Hall, St Paul's (Jewellery Quarter) and St Chad's Cathedral. With an opportunity to play three of these organs, this was thrilling indeed. The Symphony Organ was a special treat, having admired its sound in many enjoyable recitals previously.

The prelude to our visit was an explanation of the acoustics by the resident technical team. The hall is rightly famed for its acoustics which affirm its careful planning at the design stage. Adjustable acoustic properties were at the top of the list of criteria for the hall design. The massive canopy above the stage may be lowered from its maximum height of 18.5 metres according to the type of event or performance. For orchestral

DDOA Meetings

Saturday 11th November 10.50 am
Annual General Meeting at St Matthew's, Darley Abbey. (See page 8)

Saturday 11th November 2.30 pm
Lecture - Recital at Chesterfield Parish Church: 'Byrd and His Contemporaries' (See page 8 for details)

Other Events

Monday Lunchtime Music at St Anne's, Derby DE1 3NB. 1.00 pm

- 6th Nov. Maria Garzon (piano)
Bach's Goldberg Variations
13th Nov. Roger Harrison (organ)
20th Nov. George Boyes (violin)
& Brenda Walker (piano)

Saturday 11th November 7.00pm
St Michael's Church, Kirk Langley DE6 4NG
Service of Dedication for the restored organ, taken by the Bishop of Derby. Includes a recital by Karen Thompson and the DDOA Chairman.

**Thursday Lunchtime Concerts
Chesterfield Parish Church 12.15 pm**

- 2nd Nov. Peter Shepherd (organ)
9th Nov. Lindsay Aithkenhead (viola)
& Neil Clark (piano)
16th Nov. Stanley Godfrey (organ)

Choral Concerts

Friday 10th November 7.30 pm
St Nicholas Church, Allestree DE22 2PE
Sitwell Singers - Bach, Puccini, MacMillan

Saturday 11th November 7.30pm
Derby Cathedral - Derby Bach Choir
Remembrance Day Concert

Saturday 18th November 7.30 pm
Broadway Baptist Church DE22 1BP
Derwent Singers - 'Byrdsong'

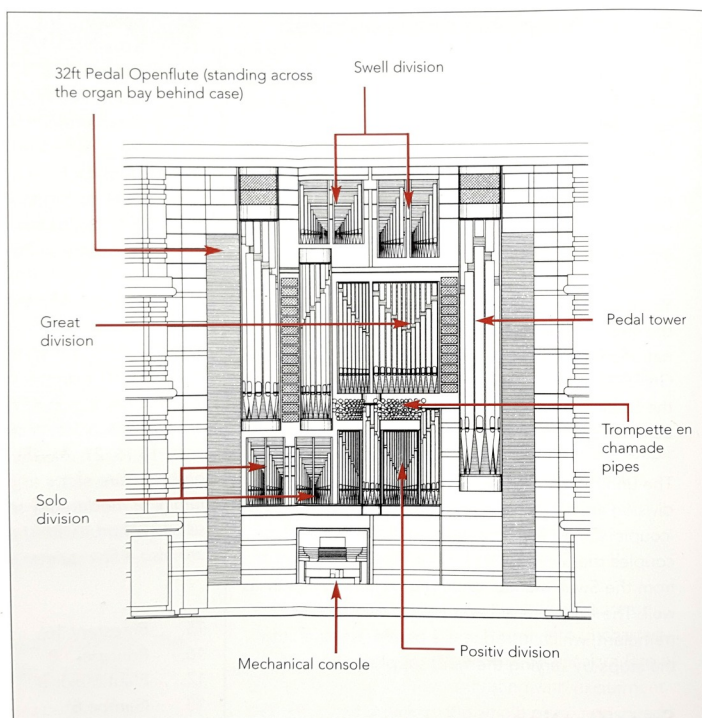
Saturday 25th November 10.30 am
St. George's Church, Ticknall, DE73 7JU
Come and Sing Handel's *Messiah* (excerpts) with Derby Bach Choir.

Saturday 25th November 7.30 pm
Derby Cathedral - Derby Choral Union
Mozart & Haydn

Photo: The Symphony Organ, Birmingham by Klais (2001). The movable stage canopy is at the top of the picture and some of the resonance chambers may be seen on either side of the organ.



Top: Movable stage canopy with resonance chambers in background.
Below: The author's vanity shot at the console



Layout of the main case
The Echo division is situated in two resonance chambers on each side of the main case.

concerts it is typically set at 14 metres, but it might be adjusted even lower for a chamber ensemble or raised a bit above that for a large symphony orchestra. For organ concerts the maximum height is used, but two further modifications can be made to control the reverberation time, crucial for organ sound. Above the four balcony levels there is an additional storey of resonance chambers, each about the size of a house garage, circumscribing the circumference of the auditorium. Each chamber has thick doors which may be open or closed. When all are fully open, a reverberation time of about 2 seconds is possible, but this also depends upon the second modifying system whereby the sound absorption properties of the side walls may be adjusted. The default wall surfaces are solid wood and the technical team demonstrated how they could pull out on curtain-type tracks thick panels with coarse padded fabric surfaces and position them in front of the wooden surfaces. For the softest extreme, absolute silence in the hall is achievable because there is an isolating gap between the hall and its surroundings and the pillars are mounted on rubber blocks to suppress potential vibrations from a nearby railway tunnel. It is claimed that a pin dropped on stage can be heard anywhere in the hall!

Now to the organ. Its 6000 pipes were installed in 2001, ten years after the opening of the hall, although the wonderful case had

stood in splendour, albeit empty, from the beginning. The attached console with mechanical action was used during our visit. Having only seen it from a distance previously, I hadn't realised it was designed in the French 'amphitheatre' style, but close up it was elegant indeed with ebony naturals and beautifully engraved stops. When it was my turn to play I discovered, much to my relief, that this was a truly comfortable console, the pedals were exactly where your feet expected them and the manuals' touch was delightfully responsive; one could discriminate between staccato and legato, and all shades between, with amazing ease; there was almost an intimate feeling to your interaction with the console. The lightness of the touch was a fantastic achievement for such a massive organ. As for registration, an instant knowledge of the stop layout was impossible, but this was solved instantly thanks to Paul Hale who was to hand and a willing registrant. I had chosen to play Andriessen's *Theme and Variations*, hoping to explore both soft and loud tones leading up to a grand climax. In the event Paul accomplished all of that for me; I just had to think about playing the right notes! My ten minutes at the console was a truly satisfying experience and I might dine out on it for a while, but will always remember it as a great privilege. As members took to the console to play, we were free to sit and listen anywhere in the empty auditorium.

This was a wonderful opportunity to sample the sound of the organ in many different locations and choose a favourite spot. For me this was in the 'ledge' seats half way down the hall at the circle level, however with the new option to sit in the choir stalls near the attached console, it was also wonderful to listen at fairly close range. In particular, proximity to the Solo and Positiv divisions just above the console allowed one to appreciate the beautiful singing quality of the pipes, be they soft flutes or bright principals. The builder of the organ, Philip Klais, has written "My dream has been to build an instrument in which each individual stop is so beautiful that you could listen to it for a whole evening." I believe that he made his dream a reality in the Symphony Organ.

Members of the Organ Club are indebted to Paul Hale who, as current President, did a wonderful job of planning and organising the Birmingham tour. More information about the club and its activities are available at their [website](#).

Laurence Rogers

Links:

- [Specification](#),
- [Demonstration by Thomas Trotter](#),
- [Hall design](#).

Recent Events

DDOA Members' Recital St. John's Derby, Saturday 9th September.

For our September meeting this year the Committee decided to hold a recital by members. This was the first in a series of such recitals, the idea being to work alphabetically through composers. This first one saw us work through composers from A to G.

On what turned out to be the hottest day of the year we opened this series of recitals at St John the Evangelist, Mill Street, Derby, using the fine 1875 Henry Willis organ which was last overhauled by Ed Stow in 2009-10 and is one of the finest organs in the county.

Proceedings were kicked off by Andy Storer, the resident organist at St John's, who played the *Theme and Variations* by Hendrik Andriessen. This well known piece ably demonstrated the full resources of the organ. For 'B' we had two pieces of J. S. Bach. The *Prelude in B minor* BWV 544 played by Gillian Chatto followed by the *Fugue in E flat* BWV 552 'St Anne' played by Tony Westerman. Stephen Johns performed next with the *Tierce en Taille* from Couperin's *Messe pour les Couvents*, which gave a good demonstration of the Sesquialtera stop added to the organ by Ed in 2010. Still with 'C' we were treated to two short *Chorale Preludes on Rockingham and Darwall's 148th* by Clement Charlton Palmer which were performed by John Maxwell-Jones. Margaret Eades chose to play the *Grand Choeur from 10 Pieces* by Theodore Dubois. 'E' is not so common for organ composers – none

the less Tom Corfield played the delightful little *Allegretto Piacevole* from the set of *Vesper Voluntaries* by Elgar. On to 'F' and two pieces by César Franck. Firstly Denis Littleton played the *Sortie* from a collection of early pieces published after the composer's death. Tom Corfield then returned to play the beautiful *Cantabile* with a rich solo line on the Swell Cornopean. The programme was concluded by our Chairman, Alexander Binns, playing Guillemant's *Grand Choeur In D alla Handel* which brought the recital to a rousing and vigorous conclusion.

The recital was followed by a time to chat and enjoy tea and cakes which were kindly provided by Pam, Frankie and Anna Storer and John Maxwell-Jones.

Our thanks go to those who volunteered to play and particularly to our Chairman, Alexander Binns, for organising the varied programme and producing the publicity.

We hope to do the same again in next year's programme with the next section of the alphabet. The committee urges members to offer to come forward and play something - it doesn't have to be virtuosic, just something you enjoy playing that fits with the next section of the alphabet.

Andy Storer

DDOA Annual Lunch 7th October

For this year's annual lunch, we had a change of venue to Makeney Hall Hotel. The room was spacious, (certainly for the small but select group of us) the quality of the food was excellent and the service very efficient. We were delighted that the Dean of Derby Cathedral, the Very

Revd. Peter Robinson and his wife, Sarah, accepted our invitation to be our guests and were very good company. Dean Peter gave us a very interesting speech in which he kindly outlined and complimented us as organists for our role in enhancing the beauty of worship Sunday by Sunday (something underlined by a message he brought from the Bishop of Derby), and as an association for the work we do in encouraging the next generation of organists through CATO. He was particularly appreciative of the support we gave Alexander Binns at the *Play the Cathedral Organ* event during the Coronation Celebrations. He also complimented us on and stressed how much they valued the Edmund Stow Chamber Organ, which features regularly in Choral Services and organ recitals. He went on to reminisce humorously on learning to intone the responses for Evensong and other pitfalls of leading worship during his first curacy in North Shields (near Newcastle) whose then assistant organist is now the MD of Harrison & Harrison. His last post before Derby was as Archdeacon of Lindisfarne and Peter reflected on the number of organ restoration schemes he had discussed, with the worry of who would be in post to play them in the next generation. He concluded by encouraging us to continue our good work, commended the new Derby Cathedral Music in Schools initiative and thanked us again for the sterling work of CATO. Thanks were expressed to Alexander Binns for inviting the Dean and to John Maxwell-Jones for his organisation of the event.

John Maxwell-Jones

Members' News

Arthur Tipper, BEM 1928 - 2023

Arthur served as Organist and Choirmaster at Tutbury Parish Church for 35 years, a role in which he endeared himself to the choir and church community. On Bank Holidays he would regularly give organ concerts entitled 'The Organist Entertains', taking a cue from the theatre organ world in which he was also an accomplished exponent as resident organist on the Wurlitzer at Burton Town Hall. He earned a living as an electrical engineer, but music was the love of his life and he shared it with many in the local community. It was very appropriate that he was awarded the British Empire

Medal in 2014 "for services to music in Burton-upon-Trent".

The Bank Holiday concerts at Tutbury have continued since his retirement from the church post and most recently the 28th August event became a Memorial Concert; the church was packed for a programme of music requested by Arthur. Performances included items by the augmented church choir, organist Roger Sharp and Arthur's son Robert who also played the organ. One of the choir pieces was the hymn "As We Gather in Thy House" which Arthur wrote for the late Queen's Silver Jubilee. The event was a truly fitting tribute to 'Tutbury's Man of Music'. May he rest in peace.



**40th Anniversary Concert by
Thomas Trotter
Symphony Hall, Birmingham
6th October 2023**

It is difficult to find enough superlatives to adequately describe this recital that thrilled the audience on the occasion celebrating Thomas Trotter's forty years as Birmingham's City Organist. It was inevitable that its conclusion brought a standing ovation. Thomas Trotter's performance and indeed the Klais organ itself were absolutely superb. Thomas is only the seventh holder of the post of Birmingham City Organist since its inauguration in 1834. With his year-round fortnightly lunchtime recitals, he is clearly a favourite with local audiences, and he is undoubtedly among the world's most celebrated organists. He was awarded the Queen's Medal for Music in 2020.

His programme began with Bach's *Fantasia and Fugue in G minor*, a wonderful pair of pieces in startling contrast with each other; the *Fantasia* with its torturous recitative theme punctuated by massive chords and passages of intense harmony, the *Fugue* with its rollicking subject which dances, soars and sings through Bach's quintessential counterpoint. Thomas captured the drama of the *Fantasia* and the irresistible energy of the *Fugue* with perfectly judged tempi, absolute clarity in articulation and his inimitable nimble footwork.

After this Baroque brilliance, Thomas changed the mood and caressed the soft stops with the short *Canonic Study in A flat* by Schumann. This gentle romantic 'song without words' was a prelude to a specially commissioned work, *Celebration Fantasia: Rhapsody on the name of Thomas Trotter*, composed by Cheryl Frances-Hoad. (Last year her choral tribute to the Queen, *Your servant, Elizabeth*, was hailed as the stand-out commission of the whole BBC Proms season.) The composer converted each letter in Thomas's name into a note to create a quirky theme. (Apparently she used a combination staff notation, tonic solfa and German note names to derive the notes.) The piece was structured in ten sections, each inspired by an aspect of Birmingham's history over the last 40 years, beginning with Thomas's appointment as City Organist in 1983 and ending with the 40th Anniversary concert. For each section the theme was employed liberally, providing a



rich variety of textures involving all four manuals and pedals and virtually every stop on the organ. Thus Thomas took us on a colourful tour of the instrument using a full range of virtuoso techniques. The resulting harmonic effects and fascinating rhythms made a thrilling and thoroughly musical experience for the audience.

The two remaining pieces in the programme took us into the world of grand opera. The *Overture to Rienzi*, arranged for organ by Edwin Lemare featured in Thomas's programme for the inaugural recital of the Symphony Hall organ in 2001. Here, Thomas made no apology for presenting an orchestral work transcribed for organ; forty years ago he was one of the few exponents of the genre when transcriptions were generally frowned upon in much of the organ community. Our programme note outlined the *Overture*, "beginning slowly with a motto theme on a single trumpet note, leading to a soaring hymn-like theme with a majestic climax which erupts into an extended allegro movement. Dominated by ringing fanfares [on the chamade trumpets], the music maintains a lively martial character throughout." The Symphony Hall organ was the ideal vehicle for such a work, and with breath-

taking virtuosity, Thomas employed its vast resources to recreate vividly Lemare's exuberantly colourful score.

After the interval we were treated to one of the giants of the romantic repertoire, Liszt's *Fantasia & Fugue* on the chorale 'Ad nos, ad salutarem undam'. This piece is rarely performed, probably in view of its technical demands on player and instrument, but Thomas jested that, at 30 minutes, its performance length was a bit too much for his lunchtime concerts. The chorale theme is a Latin chant ("Come to us, to the waters of salvation...") from Meyerbeer's opera *Le Prophète*. In Liszt's day, flashy paraphrases based on opera tunes were popular with virtuoso pianists, but in 1850 Liszt attempted something quite unprecedented, a work of symphonic proportions based on a single theme, and written not for piano, but for organ. Such an achievement was only possible with the extraordinary prolific imagination possessed by Liszt. No less extraordinary was Thomas's performance; with torrents of notes, fingers flying up and down and between all four manuals, dazzling pedalwork, this was another performance of amazing virtuosity.

After a standing ovation, a soft romantic encore to calm down the audience, *Träumerei* from *Scenes of Childhood* by Schumann. Then to further applause, Thomas was presented with a gleaming organ pipe bearing an engraved celebratory inscription, a gift from Philip Klais, builder of the organ. Finally, Thomas signed off with the reprise of Widor's Toccata, played from memory. So ended a memorable occasion, a milestone in contemporary organ history.

Laurence Rogers



Thomas Trotter is presented with a celebratory organ pipe.

Obituary

Music, Medicine and Ministry The Rev. Dr. William Stanley Monkhouse 1950 - 2023

Where does one begin to describe a life in which someone has excelled in not just one field of expertise, but in four? 'Four,' you ask? The fourth is family, but I couldn't make the alliteration stretch that far; Stanley, without doubt, would have had an immediate solution.

Beginning at the beginning is not the answer here. In this case I think that it has to be with the man, because whilst all of us are the sum of our experiences, few of us have the unshakeable strength of will and commitment to mould those life experiences in the direction we would wish them to go. Stanley, quite simply, was a force of nature.

Of primary interest to readers of this Newsletter is the fact that Stanley was an FRCO and to prepare for the FRCO examination took lessons with Noel Rawsthorne, an experience which both appeared to enjoy. Stanley was a very good musician by any standards, but also one with an open mind; like Marie-Claire Alain, he believed that there was more than one way to perform a piece of music successfully.

This last was brought home to me when he was almost overcome by the phrasing used by Tom Corfield during a performance of Bach's 'Giant' Fugue *Wir glauben all' an einen Gott*. It was clearly something of an epiphany regarding the interpretation of a piece Stanley knew well; the greater part of his wonderment was that something so simple, a matter of a fraction of a second in the opening phrase, had escaped him – a rare occurrence. I realised very quickly that Stanley not only appreciated the arresting effect this had on the opening, but that he saw the implications this would have throughout the entire piece.

A love of music was clear at an early age when he took piano lessons in the village of Langwathby, Cumbria, where he grew up. The lessons represented an escape from sport, farming and other local interests for which he had no aptitude or interest. He appreciated the thoroughness with which he was taught and, in one of his blogs, offered fulsome praise to the lady who taught him well enough for him



to take organ lessons with the organist of Carlisle cathedral, Andrew Seivewright. Stanley's love of organ music and playing lasted a lifetime – a joy to which many of us can relate.

Stanley was a polymath; very little escaped his very sharp and critical mind, a mind that he used to expose humbug and pretention, which he loathed. As the Rev Rod Prince commented in his Eulogy during Stanley's Requiem:

'It has been remarked that Stanley pricked pomposity. He didn't, he detonated it wherever he found it. Status, rank, title – as a number of bishops discovered – and wealth accorded no advantage or protection in Stanley's eyes.'

As one might imagine, some people found Stanley's somewhat direct approach a little hard to take – especially bishops; the sensible ones acknowledged a pointed barb with a smile and moved on – clearly, Stanley never expected, or wanted, preferment in the church.

It was, however, medicine that he studied at Cambridge and not music, which led to a stellar career as a Professor of Anatomy in two leading Medical Schools during which time he revolutionised the teaching of anatomy to medical students. He was also the author of several medical text books that have become standard reading for students of medicine.

Developing the minds of young people and teaching them to question, think and challenge was always part of Stanley's approach. He often provoked people to make them think: the less open-minded took offence; the more open-minded learned from the experience. No matter how challenging Stanley was he was never malicious and often softened his challenges with his wonderful, mischievous sense of humour. He had the ability to see the ridiculous in much of our world and expose it for what it was – particularly with bishops. There were, of course, some bishops for

whom Stanley had respect – one of them even arranged for Stan (or Satan, as he sometimes described himself) to meet an Archbishop of Canterbury – please see the first quote from Rev. Prince's eulogy and imagine the result.

As a priest, Stanley spent time as part of the Wirksworth Team Ministry, then in Chesterfield and later in Ireland before returning to England to become Vicar of Burton. His views on religion were controversial – one would expect no less. Some of his more quotable opinions are best summed up by Rev Prince:

'Stanley did not do sentimentality, least of all in matters of faith. Always in his target sights was the notion of God as the Sky Pixie who existed solely to hear our shopping list of self-centred prayers and to grant our selfish whims. He firmly believed that the path to the divine required the sacrifice of ego. For him, the agony of Our Lord in the Garden of Gethsemane was a pivotal instruction on the Christian life.'

Finally, I have arrived at the fourth and perhaps most fundamental element of my good friend Satan that shaped him far more than the other three: his family. Stanley's love for his family was boundless. Susan, with whom he shared fifty years of marriage, is quite possibly the only woman in this country or in Ireland who had the strength of character to deal with Stanley on her own terms and for whom Stanley had great love and enormous respect. Their son, Hugh, who lived in America, died relatively recently – a great shock to the family and one from which Stanley, even with his great strength of mind, found it difficult to recover. Vicky and Edward are very much chips-off-the-parental-blocks in their own way – there is great strength there yet the character of each is quite different.

One last thought has finally stirred the Muse: Stanley was rather good at inventing words, though this obituary is not a suitable place to discuss most of them. However, he often used the term 'Monkhice' to indicate the Monkhouses in the plural, thus giving me the title for which I fruitlessly searched: Music, Medicine, Monkhice and Ministry.

Tony Westerman

Readers are commended to sample Stanley's [blog](#), while it remains online. - Ed.

Willis 'Specials' - Train Trips to the Liverpool Organs - Alan Dronsfield

For a substantial part of my life, Bank Holidays would be marked by setting off, usually by train from Alfreton, to attend recitals in Liverpool's Anglican cathedral. These much loved events would attract large audiences, usually in the high hundreds, sometimes touching 1,000. I had heard stories of trainfulls of enthusiasts making day-trips from London on dedicated trains – the "Willis Specials" but was inclined to think that these were verging on the apocryphal. Recently, Linda Carrington, who curates the archives left by her late husband, Douglas, located a copy of a flyer used to advertise a 1931 day-trip from London Euston to hear recitals both at the Cathedral and later the same day, at St George's Hall. It is instructive to compare the details it provides with present day London to Lime Street Station train travel.

Firstly, the cost of the pre-booked return fare is 10/6 (ten shillings and sixpence). Various internet sites convert "old" currency to 2023 values and typical estimates vary between £46.00 and £62.00. How do these sums compare with present day ticket prices? Well, we have a lot of tickets to choose from, depending on the length of notice we are giving for booking. Most flexible is an off-peak return (day returns are not offered) costing £103.90 but, by booking separate journeys in advance, savings are possible, taking the price down to about £67.00. Compared with these prices, the 10/6 return ticket is a clear bargain. Two meals (one on each journey) cost five shillings or, converting, £11.00 per meal. But we have no indication what we would have been given for this outlay, save from a comment of an earlier Willis Special trip (1927)¹ that *"At mid-day an interesting diversion was caused by the serving of luncheon. The staff of the restaurant cars had been busy to some effect. It is no light task to cater for over 400 people on a train, and the company is to be complimented on the excellent manner in which both meals were served"*. Few trains today offer on-board catering, other than the provision of snacks, sandwiches and drinks all served from a trolley, and one must presume that these "Specials" would have been a notch or two up from this – maybe even a three-course meal.

The flyer does not say if the 10/6 includes admission costs to the recitals, but if it was modelled on the 1927 trip, then there is the implication that it does. With respect to the Cathedral event: *"The shrewd organisers arranged*

PLEASE RETAIN THIS BILL FOR REFERENCE.

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LONDON MIDLAND AND SCOTTISH RAILWAY.

ORGAN RECITALS

at **LIVERPOOL CATHEDRAL**
(THE LARGEST ORGAN IN GREAT BRITAIN)

and **ST. GEORGE'S HALL, Liverpool**
(THE LARGEST CONCERT ORGAN IN GREAT BRITAIN)

Half-Day Excursion Tickets

WILL BE ISSUED FOR USE ON THE
"WILLIS" Special Restaurant Car Train

On Saturday, October 24th

TO

LIVERPOOL

RETURN FARE

Euston dep. 11.5 a.m.

10/6

Liverpool (Lime St.) arr. 2.50 p.m.

Passengers return the same day by Special Train leaving Liverpool (Lime Street) at 6.45 p.m., due Euston 10.52 p.m.

LUNCHEON will be served on the Outward Journey and SUPPER on the Return. Meal Tickets at 5s. each, to include the two meals, must be obtained in advance. They will only be issued at the Booking Office at Euston Station, and at the offices of Messrs. THOS. COOK & SON, LTD., Berkeley Street, Piccadilly, W.1., and Ludgate Circus, E.C.4.; PICKFORDS LD., 53 & 54, Haymarket, S.W.1; FRAMES' TOURS LTD., 92 & 118, Southampton Row, W.C.1; AMERICAN EXPRESS CO., INC., 6, Haymarket, S.W.1.

The Grand Organ at St. George's Hall, built in 1855, has now been electrified and enlarged. A Special Recital at 5.0 p.m. will be given for Visitors. The Recital at the Cathedral begins at 3.15 p.m.

Tickets for the "WILLIS" Special Train should be obtained in advance.

Children under three years of age, Free; three years and under fourteen, Half-fares.

LUGGAGE.—Passengers holding Day or Half-day Excursion Tickets by special trains are not allowed to take any luggage except small handbags, luncheon baskets, or other small articles intended for the passenger's use during the day. On the return journey only, passengers may take with them, free of charge at Owner's Risk, goods for their own use, not exceeding 60 lbs.

CONDITIONS OF ISSUE OF EXCURSION TICKETS AND OTHER REDUCED FARE TICKETS.

EXCURSION Tickets and Tickets issued at fares less than the ordinary fares are issued subject to the Notices and Conditions shown in the Company's current Time Tables.

Further information may be obtained on application to any LMS Station, Office, or Agency, or to the Divisional Passenger Commercial Superintendent, Euston Station, London, N.W.1.

August, 1931. J. H. FOLLOWS, Vice-President.

that the return half of the railway ticket should become a pass for a special door (which enabled) all the visitors to be in their seats before the main entrances were opened".¹

The timings of the journeys repay comparison with today's travel. It's 176 miles Euston to Lime Street station and in 1931 the northward steam-hauled journey, presumably non-stop, took three hours 45 minutes, and the return, four hours 7 minutes. Averaging 45 mph, this is typical of steam-haulage. Some express trains of the era could do

better than this.² Today's journeys, powered by electric traction, take two hours 34 minutes, averaging 70 mph, even when stopping at four stations on the way. The scheduled arrival time at Liverpool was 2.50 pm and the recital started at 3.15pm giving passengers just 25 minutes to disembark and walk the 0.8 miles up-hill to the Cathedral. I can just about manage it, somewhat breathlessly, in 20 minutes, so unless the train crew anticipated an early arrival in the station, timings would have been,

so say the least, very tight. And what if the train was late arriving....?

The excursionists are scheduled to arrive back at Euston at 10.52 pm which would give them little time for their onward (tube?) journeys, especially if they involved an interchange.

Finally, a perplexity in the flyer. We see that passengers are allowed only hand-luggage on the outward journey, but may return taking with them goods not exceeding 60 lbs (= 27 kg). What is the thinking behind this restriction, and moreover what are our travellers likely to purchase in their crowded musical day to take advantage of this dispensation? Answers to the Editor, please.

At the Cathedral, assuming they arrived on time, they would have heard the organist, Harry Goss-Custard,³ play [1] *Etude Symphonique* (Enrico Bossi) [2] *Prelude and Angel's Farewell from the Dream of Gerontius* (Elgar) [3] *Toccata and Fugue in D minor (the Dorian)* (J. S. Bach) [4] *Triptych (Legend, Gregorian Rhapsody, and Marche Pontificale)* (Karg Elert) [5] *Finale from the Third Symphony* (Vierne).⁴

The St. George's Hall concert started at 5.00 pm and was played by the resident organist, Herbert F. Ellingford.⁵ The organ had just been restored and he had given at least two re-opening recitals the previous week.⁶

The rail trips continued post-War. Seats on the 1951 dedicated "Willis Special" were 30/- each (= £58.00 at today's prices) with the meals now 6/- each (= £12.00 today).

But the following year, and again in 1953, the Willis Company announced "Owing to high British Railways charges, no special trains will be run from London, but special terms are available by booking ordinary trains from any part of the country for parties of eight or over. Enquiries to British Railways".⁷

I approached Ian Tracey, Liverpool Cathedral Organist, for any related recollections, anticipating little in return, but he has contributed handsomely. He told me that he could remember, as a small boy, the sight of Henry Willis 4 at the conclusion of the recitals, standing at the West-end suitably suited, booted and badged, inviting clients down to the select

post-recital Willis 'Tea Party' in the Western Rooms of the Cathedral. At this point, carriages were still reserved on the London train, which persisted until the contract for the overhaul and cleaning of the organ was awarded to another firm in 1973. At about this time, the London-based *Organ Club* decided to hold its annual lunch at the Café Royal on a day that coincided with the Anniversary Recital. This reduced the number of likely Liverpool 'pilgrims' and so the reservations on the London trains fell into abeyance.

This year's 97th Anniversary Recital (21st October) marks Ian's 44th year as Organist, and that the recital will be the 42nd Anniversary for which he has played, though his attendance at the recitals goes back to the 35th annual recital in 1961. (This was his predecessor and teacher, Noel Rawsthorne's 6th as Organist). Ian says he has loved the instrument since his first lesson on it on 6th September 1966 when the Lady Chapel blower failed and the lesson thus was not possible on the two-manual Willis II organ, so the main Cathedral Organ had to be used as a substitute - in his own words, "all his Christmases had just come at once". He has therefore grown up with the instrument from an early age and, as he said on a recent radio broadcast, going up and switching on and playing the quire console still thrills him as much as ever it did.

He also told me about the impending installation of the *Echo Organ*, which is being realised after a pause of some 100 years thanks to the generosity of the estate of Mrs. Eileen Golby, a longstanding supporter of the organ and music of the Cathedral. References were made to its inclusion from the very inception of the specification, however, as a result of the financial losses from World War I, and then World War II, it never came into being. In a letter to Chapter of 5th October 1922, Henry Goss-Custard, the first Organist writes: "I assume that the *Echo Organ*, though now only prepared for, is still to be considered an intrinsic part of the complete design, and its subsequent insertion eminently desirable".

It was always the hope that the addition of this division would be one of the final acts of the 2007-2022 Appeal, completing, as it does, the original scheme for the Cathedral's Grand Organ. The pipe-work is from

the same Willis III organ from St. James, Waterfoot, Rossendale, Lancs., which was used for the Central Organ back in 2007. It is contemporaneous with the pipes of the Grand Organ and probably made at the same time by the same workforce. The division will be housed in the Easternmost bay of the South-East Triforium, just above the Sanctuary and provide a distant 'echo' effect, but also, an accompanimental division for the choir when singing in the Sanctuary area. Its erection in David Wells' works is almost complete and it will be hoisted up into position in January and February and dedicated as a part of the Cathedral's centenary celebrations in July 2024.

When the division is complete, the organ will consist of 220 stops and 11,000 pipes, and will finally complete the vision of Walter Henry Goss-Custard and donor Mrs. James Barrow for Henry Willis' undoubted magnum opus.

Acknowledgements

I thank Linda Carrington (Lytham) and Professor Ian Tracey, Liverpool Cathedral Organist, for help in the preparation of this article.

Alan Dronsfield with Ian Tracey

Notes and references

1. Anon (but with initials F. G.), *The Rotunda*, 1927, **1**, 8-10. This was the house magazine of Henry Willis & Sons (organ builders), Liverpool.

2. The *Flying Scotsman* would average 52 mph on its trip London to Edinburgh.

3. Walter Henry ('Harry') Goss Custard (1871-1964) was the Cathedral Organist 1917-1955. He was succeeded by his student, Noel Rawsthorne (Organist 1955-80) who in turn was succeeded by his student, Ian Tracey (1980 to date).

4. News item, *The Rotunda*, 1931, **4**, 49.

5. Herbert Ellingford (1876-1966), City Organist at St. George's Hall, Liverpool (1913-43).

6. D. Carrington, *St. George's Hall: the hall, organ and organists*, Liverpool City Council Publications, 1981.

7. Advertisements, *Musical Opinion*, October 1952, October 1953.

The specification of the new Echo organ may be viewed [here](#).

Your Association

Children and the Organ (CATO)

October saw a workshop held at St Michael's Church, Bramcote for the local primary school. As ever, it was a delight to engage with the Year 5 children who were very responsive, taking a lively interest in all our activities. On this occasion it was great to work with David Hanford, the resident organist. Richard Marsden from the Nottingham and District Society of Organists (NDSO) was also in attendance, and we look forward to exploring collaboration with the NDSO for future workshops.

Sadly this was the last time that Chris Darrall participated as a CATO team member, as he will shortly

move away from Derbyshire. Chris has been a stalwart member of the team for as long as we can remember so we are very grateful for his valuable support and wish him well in his retirement to the Lake District.

This leaves a vacancy in the team. Participation is always very rewarding and we welcome members to consider joining us. Please contact Stephen Johns via the Hon. Secretary.

Presently we are taking bookings for the Spring Term 2024. Members are asked to seek out more schools that would like to enrich their curriculum with our organ experience. Please see our [website](#).

Organ Tuition Scheme

A reminder that, as part of the Edmund Stow legacy, the DDOA offers an initial set of six free lessons on the organ to anyone who might benefit from them. So far seven people have received lessons and we are very pleased with positive outcomes. It is best for applicants who already play the piano to around the level of Grade V, but there is room for some negotiation. In the first instance we invite people to contact ddoachairman@gmail.com. We then arrange an initial assessment.

Forthcoming DDOA Meetings

Saturday 11th November at 10.50 am

Annual General meeting at St Matthew's, Darley Abbey DE22 1EF

Please note the starting time of 10.50 am. This is to allow observance of the National Act of Remembrance at 11.00 am.

After 2 minutes silence, the meeting will proceed in the usual format.

The minutes of the 2022 AGM are available via email attachment or by visiting the link:

<https://derbyorganists.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/agm2022.pdf>

The AGM meeting will be followed by social and refreshments. After a lunch break members are invited to travel to Chesterfield for a special afternoon event promoted by the DDOA in collaboration with Chesterfield Parish Church:

Saturday 11th November, 2.30 pm

Chesterfield Parish Church

Byrd and His Contemporaries

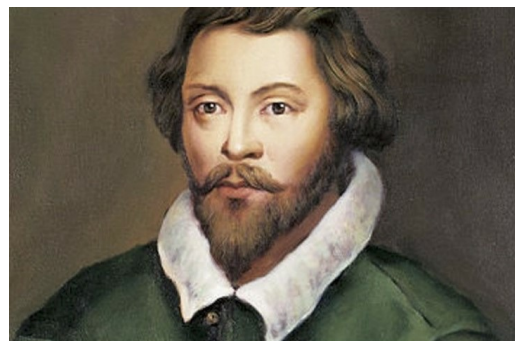
Lecture - Recital

given by Professor David J. Smith (Northumbria University)

In celebration of the quadricentenary of William Byrd this year, in conjunction with Chesterfield Parish Church, Professor David Smith will introduce us to the world of Byrd's keyboard music, and show us how to interpret the stylistic performance practice of the time, with illustrations and demonstrations using example from the contemporary literature. There will also be Q & A afterwards with refreshments.

The recital will be given on the 2010 Vincent Woodstock continuo organ.

Tickets for DDOA members £5 - including refreshments.



Items of news or articles for the January / February edition of the *Newsletter* should reach the Editor by **Monday 18th December**, 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.



www.derbyorganists.co.uk