

Derby & District Organists' Association

Registered Charity No. 510567

Newsletter



DDOA Visits to Radbourne and Ashbourne

To arrive at the tiny village of Radbourne, the roads are narrow and surrounded by fields and hedgerows. The sense of rural remoteness is complete as one approaches the Parish Church of St Andrew in a perfect idyllic setting. This is quite remarkable considering the village's proximity of less than a mile from Mickleover and the Derby conurbation. For a sunny Saturday afternoon in May, it was a most enjoyable venue for

the first leg of our organ crawl. We were welcomed by our member, Dr David Wells, who has so far clocked up 46 years as organist at the church. The longevity of his tenure is a testament to the joy the organ has given him. From his introductory remarks it was clear that the instrument has received much attention to its care and preservation. The original instrument by Conacher served for well over a century before it was restored by local builder Harold Cantrill in 1970. Later, in 1988 the Derby builder, Edmund Stow, overhauled the instrument together with some tonal changes. These are detailed in David's published history of the organ, reviewed here by John Maxwell-Jones. The present instrument is a great example of the enlightened vision of Ed Stow who, as an expert player himself, had a fine ear for the voicing of the pipes and in creating an impressive ensemble. The Great plenum certainly did justice to Bach, the



DDOA Meetings 2026

Saturday 25th July Day visit

Visit organs in Selby and South Yorks.
See page 6.

Saturday 26th September 2.00 pm

Members' Recital at St Laurence's, Long Eaton.

Saturday 31st October 1.00 pm

Association Lunch. Makeney Hall, Milford

Saturday 21st November venue TBC

AGM and Chairman's event.

Other Events

Saturday Tea-time Recitals at Holy Trinity, Millhouses S7 2GY. 4.00 pm

Free Entry, Refreshments and 'Have a go' on the organ for young and old.

11th July Robert Quinney (Oxford)

8th August George Parsons (Ecclesall)

12th Sept. Derek Grover (Ranmoor)

Monday Organ Concerts at Derby Cathedral

6th July Edward Turner at 7.00 pm

13th July Young Organists' Showcase 6.00 pm

13th July Alexander Binns at 7.00 pm

Thursday Lunchtime Concerts at Chesterfield Parish Church, 12.15-1.00 pm

23rd July Mary Cobbold (Millhouses)

6th August Paul Hale (Bingham)

13th August Colin Walsh (Lincoln)

20th August Ben Bloor (London)

Sept TBA Ian Brackenbury (Chesterfield)

17th Sept. Darius Battiwalla (Leeds)

8th Oct. Benjamin Green (Nottingham)

Sunday 30th August 3.00 pm

Melbourne Parish Church DE73 8JH

900 Years of Pipe Organs - A Musical Journey
(with snippets of history, geography & physics!)

Laurence Rogers and Simon Collins

Member's News

Marion Morris RIP

Members will wish to join in sending condolences to Trevor Morris whose wife Marion passed away recently.

Main Photos: Organ at St Andrew's, Radbourne with Andrew Cummings.
Left: St Andrew's Organist David Wells.

St Andrew's Church, Radbourne

GREAT

8' Open Diapason
8' Stopt Diapason
4' Principal
4' Harmonic Flute
2' Fifteenth

SWELL

8' Violin Diapason
8' Salicional
4' Gemshorn
Mixture (19, 22)
8' Cornopean

PEDAL

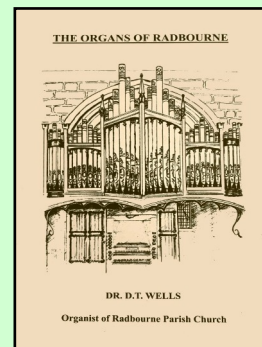
16' Bourdon

COUPLERS

Swell to Great
Great to Pedal
Swell to Pedal

The Organs of Radbourne by Dr D.T.Wells

Laurence refers to the tiny village of Radbourne and to the research that David has done into the various pipe organs that have been found in the parish in the last two hundred years. The Chandos-Pole family has dominated the village and church patronage for generations and two are known to have played the organ. Thus it is that there were two instruments in private residences and two in the parish. David goes into the detail of these instruments, their installations and removals, the peregrinations of one being particularly interesting in that it is likely to have served as a temporary organ in Hereford Cathedral before being purchased for a church in South Wales. What interests us most is the present instrument in St Andrew's. Dr W.L.Sumner examined the instrument in 1966 and recommended a thorough cleaning with the addition of a radiating and concave pedalboard, a balanced swell pedal and some tonal changes. The work was carried out by Harold Cantrill in 1970. Ed Stow carried out his rebuild in 1998 so effectively that we were able to enjoy his handiwork nearly thirty years later. David has produced a highly informative and very readable account of the instruments which also includes fascinating glimpses of parish life over the generations. I encourage you to contact David to purchase your own copy (at a cost of just £3.00). David's number is 01332 552403.
John Maxwell-Jones



Swell Cornopean added richness to the full organ sound and the softer tones had a delightful character. To find such a fulsome and versatile organ in a small village church is perhaps a surprising pleasure. Overall we were able to appreciate the pleasure that the instrument has given David for many years. During our visit, tea and a veritable feast of cakes was served by local volunteers. We are grateful for their friendly welcome and that of our host David.

A short car drive north west along the A52 brought us to Ashbourne. Here we visited St Oswald's, one Derbyshire's most notable churches. This cruciform building with a central tower and spire, commands views across meadows to the south,

not dissimilar to the view in John Constable's famous painting of Salisbury Cathedral, albeit on a slightly smaller scale! Here we were welcomed by another member, Michael Halls who, as long-serving Director of Music, has presided over one of the most successful choirs in the county. (He has recently chosen to retire from the role after 27 years, which happens to match the tenure of J.S.Bach in Leipzig.) Michael invited us to join him in the choirstalls for his introductory talk in which he described a thriving church music environment with a choir that sustains two choral services every Sunday.

The cathedral-style choirstalls are situated in an enormous chancel that is separated from the nave by the

space under the central tower. Herein lies an acoustic challenge for the organ situated on the corner with the south transept. For many years a classic problem prevailed; the organ would speak well into the chancel but struggle to support congregational singing in the nave. The major reconstruction by Henry Groves and Son in 2011 sought to balance the needs of the choir and congregation by adding a Great nave division facing westwards in the transept. A full report on this appeared in Newsletter 27, November 2011. A novel feature of the revised arrangement involved giving the Swell box a set of louvred doors on two sides, one facing north into the chancel and a second facing west. Switches on the console



The organ of St Oswald's, Ashbourne showing the chancel case facing the choir and south transept case facing west.



Michael Halls

allowed either or both sets to be operable at any one time. Thus it was possible to modify the balance for choir accompaniment or congregational singing appropriately. A previous rebuild had installed a detached console with tab stops and was made moveable in 1988. This is normally located beside the south choir stalls, but may be moved into the central chancel space for recitals. With 49 stops over three manuals, the organ offers a generous sound palette with sufficient diversity to support both recital programmes and the church's extensive choral repertoire. For playing members during our visit, choosing registrations was slightly



Richard Brice at the console.

daunting, especially as combination piston settings were not available on this occasion. However, perseverance rewarded our efforts handsomely with the variety of music that we played. Our thanks are to our host Michael and to John Maxwell-Jones who arranged both afternoon visits.

Laurence Rogers

Recent Event

Visit to St Andrew's Church, Kegworth

For those of us who learnt to play the organ in the aftermath of the Second World War, we might hold memories of an exciting change in the air of the organ world; after a rather depressed decade, completely new organs began to be built again as post-war restrictions were gradually lifted. History often recounts that the ideas of Ralph Downes set the pace with designs for new instruments at the Royal Festival Hall organ in 1954 and St Alban's Cathedral in 1962. Certainly a new movement gathered momentum, seeking to recover the sounds of organs of the Baroque period when Bach was active. However the seeds of fresh thinking can be traced back to the pre-war period with the pioneering work of Roger Yates (1905 - 1975). As it happens we are fortunate that we have a mature example of his work right on our doorstep at Kegworth. His organ at St Andrew's Church, completed at the cusp of change in 1953, was the focus of our evening visit on 11th June.

Roger Yates began his career as an apprentice to Henry Willis III and during that period learnt about the voicing of the great instruments in Liverpool and Westminster Cathedrals. In 1928 he set up his own business, acquiring the firm of Charles Lloyd of Nottingham. Being well travelled and intellectually

curious, he evolved a tonal philosophy encompassing historical practice in organ design in Europe. For him, the peak of organ development was reached by Gottfried Silbermann at the time of J.S.Bach.

In 1937 he published a booklet that amounted to a personal manifesto for the character of

organs that he aimed to build. Uppermost in his ambition was to recreate the sound of pre-romantic organs characterised by natural voicing at low wind pressures with individual stops blending to make choruses possessing clarity rather than 'weight'. Yates was setting out principles which would become very familiar to us in the second half of the 20th century.



St Andrew's, Kegworth. Organ with reversed detached console in north transept.



Roger Yates (1905 - 1976)

Yates corresponded with many friends in the organ world and, in a letter to Ralph Downes about the Kegworth organ, he explained that he began by attempting 'to make a very small two-manual out of the basic contents of a one manual'. He wanted a sound that was 'bright and lively to wake up a dead acoustic'. Inspecting the specification, we can identify a complete principal diapason chorus of 8', 4', 2', and mixtures, alongside 8' and 4' flutes, but distributed between the two manuals. Yates gave a written suggestion for a 'Bach' plenum (see stops with asterisk) which, by use of the Swell Octave to Great coupler, involves no duplication of ranks at the same pitch. The provision of octave and sub octave couplers was intended for flexibility rather than making a louder sound. It is worth noting that none of Yates's organs attempted to create historical reconstructions; his primary aim was to focus on the sound he wanted, voicing was everything. This would explain his frequent use of efficient electro-pneumatic action, as at Kegworth, and the tab style console is clearly a product of the 20th century. Regarding the organ case, this was entirely of his own design and making; close inspection shows superb craftsmanship in fashioning the oak material employed.

To begin our visit Laurence Rogers gave a potted summary of these background ideas and principles referring frequently to the recent article *Roger Yates's 'Bach' Organs* by Alistair Johnston in *Organists' Review**. Then playing members explored their

practical reality, first putting Yates's 'Bach plenum' to the test with Bach's Chorale Prelude *Wir glauben all* BWV 680. The clarity of the counterpoint was certainly impressive and the pedal reed was effective in giving a pleasing definition to the recurring pedal passages. In a similar vein we heard the *Fantasia in G* BWV 572. The *Concerto in A minor* BWV 593 nicely demonstrated two contrasting choruses. Choosing registrations for pieces with solo and accompaniment required experimenting to understand better the distribution of resources between the two manuals. Similarly, registering a *Trio Sonata* proved a little tricky; probably more familiarity of using the octave couplers might have been helpful. As we know all too well, the touch and feel of different instruments can vary greatly, and here at Kegworth, for most of us, the console wasn't immediately comfortable; the depth of the key touch and the dimensions of the pedalboard seemed to call for more familiarisation time. Having said that, the response of the electromagnetic action superbly met the demand of staccato touch in Widor's *Toccata*.

St Andrew's is a beautiful and spacious church, always well worth visiting.** As organists it was especially rewarding to experience the organ, which, despite its modest size, occupies a significant place in the history of organ development in the last century. We are grateful to the Churchwarden, Jean Hayes, who made us so welcome.

Laurence Rogers



DDOA Chairman, Andy Storer and Secretary, John Maxwell-Jones

St Andrew's Church, Kegworth

GREAT

* Principal	8	
* Holzflöte	8	
Grosse Gedackt	8	From Swell
Salcional (<i>sic.</i>)	8	From Swell
* Octav	4	
* Rauschquint	II	(12, 15)

SWELL

* Grosse Gedackt	8	
Salcional (<i>sic.</i>)	8	
Flute	4	Harmonic
* Super Octav	2	
* Sequialter (<i>sic.</i>)	II	(12, 17)
Trumpet	8	
Tremulo		

PEDAL

Principal Bass	16	
* Sub Bass	16	
Floten Bass	8	
* Quintade	4	
* Trumpet Bass	16	From Swell

COUPLERS

Great Octave	
Swell to Great	
Swell Sub to Great	
* Swell Octave to Great	
Swell Octave	
Swell Sub Octave	
Great to Pedal	

* For an in-depth appreciation of Roger Yates's place in organ history, interested members are strongly recommended to look up Alistair Johnston's article in the June edition of *Organists' Review*. The author is indebted to this article for much of the detail presented here.

** St Andrew's is open for coffee and contemplation every Wednesday morning and an organist is often present.

BIOS Conference - The Global British Organ - 9th-11th April

The conference was convened to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the British Institute of Organ Studies (BIOS). Based at Wadham College Oxford, delegates also visited Keble, Brasnose, Queens and Magdalen colleges during the course of the programme.

Richard Brice offers some personal reflections:

Having arrived at Oxford Station, I had to find Wadham College. This is quite difficult as the universities are shy about their entrances. Having crossed this hurdle, I dropped my bags and went into the city for some lunch. As always, it was nice to meet up with old friends, acquaintances and make new friends - as with all residential courses, everyone is in the same place and 'networking' was easy, and a very important part of the conference.

I must say that, without exception, all the speakers had prepared well and their presentations were exactly within the somewhat tight schedule. However, it is unfortunate that the College authorities were incapable of working out that if 80 or so people have a 15 minute coffee break, it is no good just a placing coffee table up against a wall in the corner. So taking coffee was somewhat fraught, resulting in lecturers having less time than anticipated.

The opening session attempted to unpack the meaning of the title 'The Global British Organ'. There was some discussion, led by Michael Koenig, an Austrian, about whether we talk of "British" or "English" organs. So often in the past "English" includes Scotland, Ireland and Wales. As the three-day programme unfolded, the theme of organs in the former colonies



The Queen's College, Oxford

emerged. Presentations described organ history in Australia, India, South Africa and the Caribbean.

The first evening recital was at Keble College, given by Katelyn Emerson, a prolific prizewinner of competitions in the USA, Russia and France. Her virtuoso programme concluded with *Carillon de Westminster* by Vierne. For me, an added bonus of visiting the Keble chapel was being able to see the famous painting 'Light of the World' by Holman Hunt.

The recital on the second afternoon was at The Queen's College. The famous organ there, built by Danish firm of Frobenius in 1965, was a pace-setter for the organ reform movement in Britain. Appropriately, Daniel Moul's programme began with works by Sweelinck, Buxtehude and J.S. Bach, but the latter three works by Lutyens, Leighton and Brockless (20th century), were equally effective.

Margaret Phillips gave a lovely evening recital at Wadham, including a super piece called *Marcietta* by Dubois which I commend to everyone, having heard our own Margaret Eades play it some years back.

An interesting talk was given by Dave Brown, an organ builder from Australia, who had gone to Trinidad to sort out some of the organs there. I was recently in Barbados which is where the sole organ builder for the Caribbean resides. I think I can understand why Trinidad organists decided to go outside the Caribbean for work - most of the Bajan organs have been replaced with electronic instruments.

John S Dixon, an Englishman from Southend who has lived in the USA for many years, has a project to play an organ in every US state. He talked about this and some of the more memorable organs encountered including the huge Atlantic City organ. (What a beast!) He usually played his own compositions and these are readily available. He can be e-mailed at JohnSDixon@aol.com. I came away with a couple of his pieces which are pleasant enough and readily sight-readable so good as standbys.

The last evening was a formal celebratory dinner: It's a shame that the guest of honour, Sir Andrew Parmley, spent most of his speech telling us all how wonderful the RCO is! Before the dinner, Dr William McVicker's magnum opus, *The Tonal Architecture and Music of the English Organ* was launched. There are two volumes, 800 illustrations and is £145 from Bookshops or £100 from the BIOS website. I didn't get a copy myself but commend it to you all; it is the last word on the combined influences of musicians, organ builders, society and foreign influences on our instruments and their playing practices.

All in all, 22 excellent lectures, 5 recitals and plenty of organ chat - what more could you want?

Richard Brice

Nigel Ogden 1954 - 2026

Several warm tributes have appeared in the press, including the recent June edition of *Organists' Review*, remembering Nigel Ogden who died in January. He was well known as a theatre organ performer, composer and as the presenter of the BBC Radio 2 weekly programme *The Organist Entertains* from 1980 until its controversial termination in 2018. I once attended one of his public recitals at Bishop Street Methodist Church in the centre of Leicester, and to usual form he played the

complete programme with not a score in sight. An amazing talent. On that occasion he was also asked to improvise on a hymn tune. What joy and inspiration! The genre was perfectly suited to a religious service context. I understand that alongside his theatre organ career he played regularly at a church in his home town of Lytham St Annes. What a lucky congregation to have access to such talent. After that concert in Leicester, graciously, he autographed my copy of one of his compositions, a copy I shall always treasure.

Laurence Rogers



Forthcoming DDOA Meeting

Saturday 25th July

Visits to Organs in South Yorkshire

11.00 am - 1.00 pm at Howden Minster

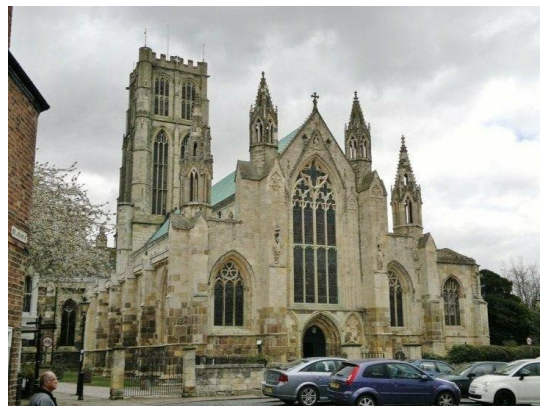
2.00 pm - 4.00 pm Selby Abbey

Howden is a typical East Riding market town, much of it Georgian. The Minster is a fascinating building, in fact the remaining section of a large abbey, but still of substantial proportions. The III+P Rushworth & Dreaper organ of 40 stops ([NPOR R01162](#)) was last overhauled in 1996 and has the promise of being a most rewarding instrument to play.

Lunch: There are plenty of places close to the Minster where one might find some lunch.

Parking can be found at Hailgate DN14 7ST and at Charles Briggs Avenue DN14 7GP. It is a short walk to the Minster from both car parks.

It is a twenty-five minute drive from the Minster to Selby.



The Association visited **Selby** several years ago. Members who visited on that occasion will recall a splendid IV+P instrument in a large and resonant building. The organ was rebuilt by Principal Pipe Organs in 2016 ([NPOR K01532](#)). The Abbey is charging the DDOA £150 for the use of the organ for two hours and to cover this cost players will be asked for £10 to play for 10 minutes. Players are asked to be ready to play and not to overrun their allocated time. If you wish to play, please inform the Hon. Secretary, John Maxwell-Jones

Car parking can be found at YO8 4PR; it is a short walk to the Abbey.

Participation and Travel

Members are asked to travel independently.

Please inform the secretary that you wish to attend or request or can offer a lift. Also, please inform the secretary if you wish to play at Selby. Our secretary, John Maxwell-Jones, may be contacted by email mail@derbyorganists.co.uk or by phone 0789 0241673.



Saturday 26th September, 2.00 pm

Members' Recital at St Laurence's Church, Long Eaton

This year members will present pieces by composers whose surnames are at the end of the alphabet, T to Z. The Chairman is looking for volunteers to perform a piece or two. If you have a piece to offer, please contact DDOChairman@gmail.com before 1st September, so that a programme can be organised.

Considering the paucity of eligible composers for X, perhaps we might use X to offer a surprise composer of any letter, avoiding those already featured in previous members' recitals:

Andreissen, J.S.Bach, Couperin, Charlton Palmer, Dubois, Elgar, Franck, Guilmant, Heron, Ibert, Jongen, Knecht, Lang, Mendelssohn, Nares, Ogden, Purcell, Piroye, Praelleur, Quantz, Quignard, Rheinberger, Schumann.

Items of news or articles for the September / October edition of the *Newsletter* should reach the Editor by **Monday 24th August**, either via e-mail: DDOnews@gmail.com or by post: Dr Laurence Rogers, 24 St.David's Crescent, Coalville, Leicestershire LE67 4SS. The Secretary, John Maxwell-Jones, 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