November / December 2026
Number 117

Derby & District Organists' Association

Registered Charity No. 510567

Newsletter



PAUL HALE

Liverpool Cathedral Centenary Celebration

Britain's largest organ is 100 years old! Its centenary was celebrated with Choral Evensong followed by an organ recital in Liverpool Cathedral on Saturday 17th October. With five manuals and over 200 stops, when built it was the largest organ in the world, a title that became eclipsed a few years later in America, but in the UK it still remains unsurpassed. During its lifetime, it has had only three long-standing organists; Harry Goss-Custard, Noel Rawsthorne and Ian Tracey. Ian's tenure has been for 46 years and the centenary event also marked his retirement as Titulaire; the Cathedral Chapter has now conferred on him the title 'Organist Emeritus' in respect of his intention to remain active in the Liverpool scene but retired from the top job at the Cathedral. His successor has been named as Martyn Noble, and like his illustrious predecessors, Martyn began his career as organ scholar at the cathedral. The tradition of appointing Liverpool-raised organists has served the Cathedral eminently well, and Martyn, presently Organist at the Chapel Royal in the Court of St James, is a popular choice and promises to fulfil the role with distinction.

A full capacity congregation (1800!) gathered at 3 pm for Choral Evensong which preceded the centenary recital given by Ian Tracey. The items in his programme were carefully chosen in part to honour his predecessors as organist. Thus Harry Goss-Custard's arrangement of J.S.Bach's violin Chaconne in D minor was a superb example of the Liverpool tradition of seeking inspiration beyond the standard organ repertoire. The enigmatic theme of the Chaconne is repeated in a set of 57 variations, an amazing vehicle for taking listeners on a complete tour of the organ. Beginning on a single 8' Flute in the Echo organ and finishing on full organ including Tuba Magna and Trompette Militaire, this was a fantastic journey of variety and contrasts. Sitting in the central space under the Corona organ, the final deluge of sound surpassed all previous thrills of loud organ! It was very informative to follow the registration scheme, listed in our programme notes, for all 58

DDOA Meetings 2026

Saturday 21st November
St Matthew's, Darley Abbey
AGM and Chairman's event. See page 8.

Other Events

Saturday 7th November, 7.30 pm
St John's, Mill Street, Derby.
Rachmaninoff *Vespers.* Sitwell Singers

Saturday 14th Nov. 4.00 pm
Holy Trinity, Millhouses S7 2GY.
Recital by Thomas Corns (Sheffield)

Saturday 14th November, 7.30 pm
Derby Cathedral, Rutter's *Requiem*
Derby Choral Union

Saturday 21st November, 7.30 pm
St Matthew's Darley Abbey. *Voices & Strings*
Derwent Singers

Monday 23rd Nov. 1.10-1.55 pm
Albert Hall, Nottingham. Colin Walsh (Lincoln)

Saturday 28th November, 4.00 pm
St John's, Mill Street, Derby. Haydn, Bach, Mozart. Derby Bach Choir

Wednesday 2nd December, 7.30 pm
Derby Cathedral, Handel's *Messiah*
Derby Choral Union

Sunday 13th December, 4.00 pm
All Saints, Curbar. *Carols with Chesterfield PC Choir*

Saturday 12th December, 2.30 pm
Christ Church, Belper *Family Christmas Concert.* Derwent Singers

Lunchtimes at Chesterfield PC 12.15 pm
15th Dec. Choral Recital (Cantiano)
16th Dec. Organ recital (Derek Grover)

Thursday 17th December, 7.30 pm
St Anne's, Derby. *Christmas Concert*
Derwent Singers

Member's News

Willis Garratt RIP
We are sad to record the recent death of Willis Garratt at the age of 94. For many years he was our regular coach driver for the annual outing. As a lover of organs, those trips always had a special personal interest for Willis and he always enjoyed the company of organists. The committee made him a Life Member of the Association in 2014 in recognition of his outstanding record of service to the members. May he rest in peace.

Photo: The congregation awaits Festival Evensong preceding the Centenary Anniversary Recital at Liverpool Cathedral.



Ian Tracey takes a bow



PAUL HALE

A standing ovation for Ian Tracey

iterations of the theme. (At 50 inches wind pressure, the Tuba Magna, a single stop as loud as the rest of the organ, was a unique invention by Willis III in 1926. It now has a rival, the Trompette Militaire in the Corona organ, added in 1997).



Ian in informal mood after the recital

In tribute to Noel Rawthsthorne, Ian's predecessor and teacher, we heard *Prelude on a 'Londonderry Air'*. In this beautifully crafted arrangement the charismatic tune is heard in three versions, first in the treble (soft reed), then in tenor (diapason) and finally in a powerful chorus leading back to a tranquil ending. (Ian Tracey played this piece as part of Noel Rawsthorne's memorial service in 2019.)

Ian's own prowess as an arranger was represented by his transcription of *The Walk to the Paradise Garden* by Frederick Delius. The original, composed in 1906, evoked and pre-dated the genre of film scores that emerged thirty years later. Ian's organ version was a wonderful showcase of the panoply of orchestral tone colours available on the Solo Organ.

The recital concluded with *Lied Symphony* by Flor Peeters, a composer that Ian has championed throughout his career. Flor Peeters gave the inaugural recital of the Walker organ at Liverpool Metropolitan Cathedral and enjoyed association with Noel Rawsthorne and Ian Tracey.

Ian's brilliant playing earned a standing ovation after the recital and Ian treated the audience to three further rousing encores including the conclusion of Saint Saëns *3rd Symphony* and Garth Edmundson's *Toccata 'Vom himmel hoch'*. Thus concluded an historical occasion which will be long remembered by all present.

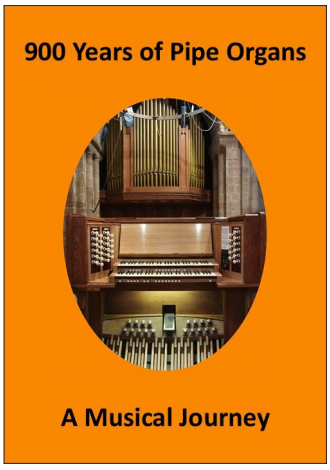
Laurence Rogers

Recent Event

900 Years of Pipe Organs, Melbourne Parish Church, 30th August

Last year Melbourne Parish Church celebrated 900 years since its foundation by the Bishop of Carlisle in the 12th century. As a contribution to the festivities, organists Laurence Rogers and Simon Collins entertained the Friends of the church to an afternoon of organ music and stories charting the evolution of pipe organs and their music over those 900 years. Illustrated with pictures of organs from all over the world, the story reflected church history and changing fashions as well technical innovations. It also showed how music and instruments shaped each other, and the presentation uncovered some of the personalities of composers and organ builders that collaborated to make great music.

A 16-page booklet summarising the story was made available at the end of the event. There are a few spare copies, and DDOA members who may be interested to obtain one are invited to contact the Editor. Alternatively, click on the image here to download the pdf version.



Recent Events

DDOA Members' Recital 2026 at St Laurence's Church, Long Eaton

A goodly number of our members and church congregation were treated to a programme of pieces played by some nine "volunteer" organists from within the association. Each was able to choose his/her repertoire from composers within the final part of the alphabet, with names T-Z. As can be imagined this threw up a number of diverting options, some familiar some less so, but all interesting and enjoyable Not only were we to hear unfamiliar pieces, but the occasion made possible a performance on the newly installed organ in a non-liturgical setting.

As to the organ itself, this much-travelled instrument was built in 1905 by the excellent firm of Nicholson & Lord of Walsall, for Darlaston Methodist Church. When the church closed, the organ was gifted to Sedgley Methodist Church, which in turn closed around 2006/7. The church realised they had an excellent organ and hoped it would find a good home. The Sedgley church had by now been sold by the Methodists, and it was urgent that the organ be removed to storage as soon as possible. At that time the Methodist Conference Centre at Willersley Castle, Cromford was still in business, managed by Peter R Binks who was also a member of Cromford Methodist Church. Peter kindly arranged storage of the organ at Willersley. The organ was dismantled by Ed Stow together with help from David Roome and me within two days and transported to the old wine cellars at Willersley where it remained for 12 months or so, whilst the permissions for installation were put in place. To what extent the storage in the Wine cellar contributed to the richness of the instrument's tone has yet to be established.

The vital funds became available and Ed Stow was commissioned to rebuild the organ at Cromford as envisaged. Of course the organ was never large, just 9 ranks of pipes, but following Ed Stow's replacement of the Great Dulciana with a fine fifteenth and some improvement to the Principal 4ft on the Great, the organ was more than able to support lusty non-conformist hymn singing! The Swell division remained unchanged, but happily had a particularly "perky" Oboe, more akin to a small Trompette in the French style than the quieter romantic stops usually found. This stop performed well as both a chorus reed and solo stop.



St Laurence's Church, Long Eaton
Nicholson & Lord, 1905

GREAT		**SWELL**	
Open Diapason	8	Lieblich Gedact	8
Clarabella	8	Viol d'amour	8
Principal	4	Gemshorn	4
Harmonic Flute	4	Oboe	8
Fifteenth	2	**PEDAL**	
		Bourdon	16

COUPLERS
Super Swell Octave
Swell Octave
Swell to Great
Swell to Pedal
Great to Pedal

As is the way these days, the congregation at Cromford had dwindled to a level that could no longer justify keeping the church open and decided to join other congregations in nearby churches. The organ was once again available as a free gift. I was contacted by our friends at Cromford "Did I know of a church needing a free pipe organ in good playing order?" Well, of course, I knew of the dire state of the organ at St Laurence's, but did wonder whether the Cromford organ would be quite big enough for the church. I need not have worried, Messrs M C Thompson Organ builders Burton-on-Trent, visited Cromford, pronounced that the organ when rebuilt and installed would be just fine. The organ was duly installed, has amazingly light tracker action, looks and sounds fantastic and is a great credit to Simon Tipping and his team of organ builders. Saint Laurence's are delighted!

Terry Bennett

Members' Recital Programme

J. Travers	Voluntary in C.	*Frankie Storer*
K. Umbreit	Three Short Pieces i Moderato, ii Cantabile, iii Allegretto	*Andy Storer*
R. Vaughan Williams	Prelude on 'Rhosymedre'	*Gillian Chatto*
C.M. Widor	Adagio (3ème Symphonie)	*Denis Littleton*
S. Wright	Prelude on 'Brother James's Air'	*Karen Thompson*
J. Ximenez	Batalla de Sexton Tono	*April Darby*
P. Yon	Toccatina for the Flute	*Tony Westerman*
F. W. Zachau	Two Chorale Preludes on 'Vom Himmel Hoch'	*John Maxwell-Jones*
E. Thiman	Air and Variation	*John Maxwell-Jones*
R. Vaughan Williams	Prelude 'The New Commonwealth'	*John Maxwell-Jones*
L. Vierne	Pastorale	*Andy Storer*
J. G. Walther	Concerto in D Minor	*Gillian Chatto*
X	Mystery Piece *	*Laurence Rogers*
G. Young	Prelude in Classic Style	*Karen Thompson*
F. W. Zachow	Prelude and Fugue in G	*April Darby*
D. Zipoli	Al' Offertorio	*Denis Littleton*
A. Westerman	Toccata on 'Noel Nouvelet'	*Tony Westerman*

(* Audience was invited to guess: **Jesús Guridi** Offertorio)

Obituary

David Johnson 1944 - 2026

So many of us in the Derby area knew David Johnson - DJ as he was known to friends and fellow musicians alike. David was something of a character as well as a fine musician - his sense of humour could be as lively as his playing, and there was always so much energy and zest for life. A musician of no mean distinction, David was a director of choirs, an accompanist and a fine organist, recitalist and composer.

Several DDOA members have offered their reminiscences of DJ in which his humour and general goodwill come through as a *cantus firmus.* Margaret Eades recalls meeting David through the DDOA whilst she was teaching at Parkfields Cedars Girls' Grammar School and David was at Bemrose Grammar School. They agreed to combine forces to offer the pupils of the single-sex schools the experience of singing in four parts, offering performances of Handel's *Messiah* and Schutz's *Christmas Story* at St Werbergh's, where David was organist; there was also a joint performance of *Trial by Jury*.

John Gratton recalls David from an earlier period in 1955 when they were pupils at Bemrose Grammar School and sat together during their second and third-form years. Their music master was Dr Pope, from whom David took over as organist at St Werbergh's. John has mentioned to me in the past that David's ability as a musician was clear even in those early years.

Much later, when John took over as organist at St Matthew's, Darley Abbey, DJ would often turn up at Friday evening choir practices unannounced and would be invited to direct the choir. DJ also accompanied the St Matthew choir on their visits to many different cathedrals to sing services – Ripon, Chester, Peterborough, Gloucester, Hereford, Lichfield, Leicester, Coventry, Tewkesbury Abbey,



David Johnson at Liverpool Cathedral,

and Beverley Minster. Most of these occasions involved DJ playing for a week, supporting the choir for services, but also, of course, providing all of the voluntaries and rehearsal support. David had, in fact, played all of the cathedral organs in the country, as well as many in Wales and Scotland.

For David, perhaps, one of his most memorable performances was at Liverpool. The St Matthew's choir had been performing there for several days and David was asked to play the final voluntary after the Sunday morning service. This was quite an honour, as it was always the custom for one of the Liverpool organists to accompany visiting choirs. John recalls that turning pages for DJ was difficult, having to reach over five manuals. As a final thought, John observed that, "David was a good friend to both him and to St Matthew's; we will all miss his fine playing, professionalism and humour".

Stephen Johns' recollection of DJ reflects the now familiar *cantus firmus:* "David's fluent playing, especially his sight reading, his genial manner and his willingness to help or advise any colleague". On a more personal note, Stephen recalls a great kindness offered by David when he commissioned Francis Jackson to write three chorale preludes on well-known hymn tunes in memory of his parents. The compositions were dedicated to David's friends, indicated by their initials on the copy; the piece dedicated to Stephen and Anne was based on the hymn *Angel Voices*. Stephen observed that, "it was an extremely generous gesture and we were very moved".

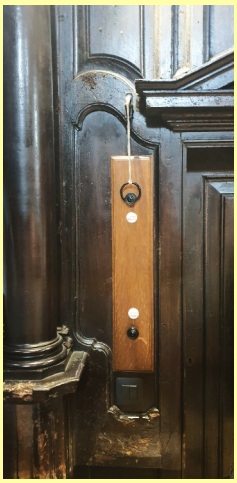
A change in liturgical direction at St Werbergh's occasioned a move to St John's, Derby, where David became organist, maintaining and building upon a fine tradition of choral services. Whilst there, David oversaw the rebuilding of the fine Fr Willis organ by his brother's firm, The Johnson Organ Company. As a pupil of David's at Bemrose, Andy Storer has offered his thoughts on David from another perspective. Andy took organ lessons from David at St John's, eventually taking his Grade VIII there. Later, Andy joined the choir and eventually became David's Assistant Organist. Recalling his harmony lessons with David, Andy observed that, "David could spot consecutive fifths and octaves a mile off", but successfully steered him through O and A level exams. Andy always admired David's ability to improvise, especially on hymn tunes where, he could play 'till the cows came home' an ability that was a significant influence on him, as was David's choral conducting. Under David's direction the Bemrose choir sang carol services in Derby Cathedral and an Evensong in Ely Cathedral, a place that held a special place in David's heart, as he took the Sitwell Singers and the St John choir there on several occasions. Andy summed up his thoughts in the observation that David had a strong influence in steering him through his early years as an organist.

David will be missed by many, both as a friend and as a fine musician.

Tony Westerman

A Memorial Service for David Johnson will be held at Derby Cathedral on Friday 6th November at 11.00 am

To be followed by a wake at The Italian Mill at the Museum of Making, 1 Silk Mill Lane, Derby, DE1 3AF



What is this all about?

See page 6 to find out.

Recent Event

ORGANIC METAL at St Anne's, Derby, 19th September

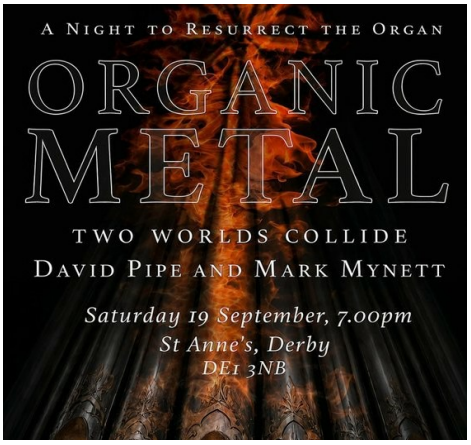
For the world of pipe organs this was an extremely unusual event inspired by concerts in the last couple of years at the University of Huddersfield and York Minster, featuring a collaboration between organ and 'heavy metal' rock music. Motivation for the event at St Anne's was to publicise the fund-raising efforts to rebuild the pipe organ given to the church last year. The hope was to reach a broader audience than classical organ music devotees. It was gratifying that it succeeded in drawing a substantial audience, but it was difficult to spot many younger fans of rock music. I guess that many in the audience were intrigued and curious to find out how the juxtaposition of two totally different music genres might work out.

The programme was presented by organist David Pipe and guitarist Mark Mynett. David is Organist of Leeds Cathedral and Huddersfield Town Hall, and Mark is the Lead Guitarist in the heavy-metal band called *Plague of Angels*. Their collaboration is partly inspired by their mutual passion for broadening awareness of the perilous state of pipe organs nationally, which are currently falling silent or being scrapped at the rate of four per week; 2,500 have been lost in the last decade due to dwindling congregations and church closures.

Two points of view:

1. Laurence Rogers writes:

The programme began with the familiar tones of Bach's *Toccata and Fugue in D minor*. Then we were introduced to a piece for organ and guitar together. The organ normally enjoys the reputation of being the loudest of musical instruments, but in this instance the amplification of the electric guitar was more than a match for St Anne's electronic organ. The piece was based on 'Stigmata', one of the compositions of the *Plague of Angels* group. If you had not heard heavy metal music previously, this was a shock introduction to it. Wikipedia explains that the defining characteristics of the genre are "thick, monumental sound characterized by distorted guitars,



extended guitar solos, emphatic beats and loudness". Of these, emphatic beats were the weakest element in that no drums were present on this occasion. Certainly there were plenty of guitar solos in which Mark demonstrated impressive virtuosity. His improvisations reminded me of inspiring solos in jazz concerts that I attended in my youth. There were times however when the guitar sound was heavily distorted, suggesting that the volume needed to be turned down, but loudness prevailed, being supported by generally loud sustained chords on full organ.

Mark prefaced the remaining programme with a declaration of his love for the sound of the organ and his hopes for spreading awareness of it amongst a broader audience. He also endorsed the efforts of St Anne's to rebuild its pipe organ. The programme continued with further pieces which took their cue from *Plague of Angels* videos, including *A Great Awakening* and *Beyond Salvation*.

After a refreshments interval, David stepped back into classical mode with a performance of Bach's *Passacaglia and Fugue in C minor*. Considering the electronic resources available, I particularly admired his registrations in this piece. He followed this with an



David Pipe (left) and Mark Mynett

organ improvisation of a medley of rock band tunes including those of *Black Sabbath* and *Deep Purple* bands. I'm afraid I am completely unfamiliar with the music of these groups but I did discern some tunes in the mix. There were three more organ and guitar pieces, concluding with a reprise of *A Great Awakening*. Strangely, several of the pieces finished with an abrupt end; no allargando, no cadence, just a stop, as if a fuse had blown!

To sum up my response to the concert, I am not a fan of 'distortion' and I was wearied by repetitive slow alternating organ chords. My ears were continually searching for a tune and some exciting rhythms. There were some potentially exciting modulations, but they seemed rather arbitrary. However, the concert was an admirable collaboration, and David and Mark are to be thanked for challenging us to consider music outside the traditional domain.

2. Canon Michael Futers writes:

Over the course of the evening, we enjoyed the organ and guitar working together playing heavy metal. With sweeping power chords and rich melodies our musicians demonstrated that both genres can blend well to create music of beauty and emotional depth. Mark suggested that the essential element of all heavy metal is "harmonic distortion" and displayed this as he and David played tracks from Mark's band, *Plague of Angels*. They also treated us to a medley of tracks of classic heavy metal from Black Sabbath and Deep Purple. Here the limitation was from a metal perspective given that we only had one guitar, an organ and minimal backing tapes. The distortion in metal is so often emphasised by roared vocals, frenetic drumming (blast beats) and the down-tuning of guitars which were not possible on this occasion. I would have loved to have been at the concert at York Minister (where David used to work as assistant Organist) which featured pipe organ and a full metal band.

All in all, it was a highly enjoyable and thought-provoking concert, and thanks are due to David and Mark for this terrific collaboration. I look forward to more.

Cavaillé-Coll in the Basque Country - Laurence Rogers

Organ Club Basque Tour

The celebrated organ builder Aristide Cavaillé-Coll (1811-1899) was most prolific in providing organs for his native France, but there are not an insignificant number of his treasured instruments abroad. In the UK, his instruments at Manchester Town Hall and Warrington's Parr Hall are perhaps the most notable. There is also a rich seam of instruments in the Basque Country of northern Spain where the Organ Club devoted its most recent tour in September. The base was the beautiful city of San Sebastian (Donostia in Basque) with its elegant architecture and 2 km of glorious sandy beaches.

Our host was Loreto Aramendi, organist at the Basilica of Santa Maria del Coro, in the heart of the Old Town. Completed in 1774, the church is a grand building in the characteristic Spanish Baroque style. The view of the main portal gives a taste of the lavish ornamentation. High above the entrance stands a statue of San Sebestian, one of the two patron saints of the city. The interior of the church is no less sumptuous. To reach the spacious choir and organ gallery, one ascends a grand staircase, in stark contrast with many spiral staircases to organ lofts elsewhere. The Cavaillé-Coll organ stands on the north side of the gallery and dates from 1863. Installed by Vincent Cavaillé-Coll, Aristide's brother, it has 3 manuals and 44 stops. The classic tiered console stands reversed in front of the case which dates from a previous Baroque instrument. Close inspection of the stop knobs reveals many familiar names together with Basque language names. However there is a surprise with the numbers that accompany the names; normal unison pitch is indicated as '13', not '8'! How is this so? The historical tradition in Spain was to express speaking length measurements in 'palmos' or 'hands'. It appears that 13 hands is equivalent to 8 feet, so the familiar 16, 8 , 4, 2 labels show as 26, 13, 6½, 3¼.

Another curiosity on the console is dual control of the Recit Expressif division (equivalent to Swell). The original control for this is a spoon-shaped pedal on the right hand side of the pedalboard. (It is spring-loaded, similar to the ratchet-type swell pedal on older English organs.) At some later time a balanced expression pedal was also installed in the usual central position above the pedal board, but the spoon pedal was not abandoned. The two controls co-exist, although one has to choose to use one or the other by moving a cord behind the console. (See photo on page 4.) One of the few advantages of the spoon pedal is its swift action, useful for realising rapid crescendos and diminuendos indicated in some scores of French romantic composers. For playing, both pedals and manuals were very comfortable, such was the efficiency of the mechanical action. As for the sound, it was out of this world; the singing quality of the flue stops was outstanding, surely benefiting from the wonderful acoustic of the building. As well as enjoying beautiful solo effects, one could blend stops effortlessly and the full chorus ensemble was thrilling. Members of the party explored all this playing mainly French repertoire (Gigout, Tournemire, Widor). This author was pleased to be able to test a piece by the one-time local organist composer, Jesús Guridi (1886-1961). Our host, Loreto, was brilliant at giving console assistance.



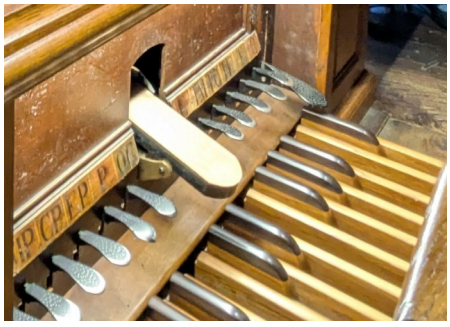
Santa Maria del Coro Basilica - View from the organ and choir gallery



Tour host, Loreto Aramendi (centre)



Cavaillé-Coll organ, 1863



Note the spoon-shaped pedal on the far right



San Ignacio de Loyola Basilica, Azpeitia



Cavaillé-Coll organ, 1889



Note the crowd of cherubs in the ceiling.

Among the seven instruments visited on the tour, I will choose one other for special mention. Located in the foothills outside the city, after a short bus ride, we visited the Basilica of Loiola in Azpeitia. The basilica is part of a complex built around the birthplace of San Ignacio de Loyola (1491-1556) who founded the Jesuits (Society of Jesus). Dedicated in 1738, the enormous rotunda, in flamboyant Baroque style, underlines the significance of the saint's veneration. The cavernous interior replete with marble surfaces possesses an acoustic which invites you to hum and fill the space with sound effortlessly. This promises well for the sound of the organ situated in a lofty gallery above the main door.

Installed by Cavaillé-Coll in 1889, it is completely unaltered, having had just two restorations in 1927 and 1973 it fills the available space but has a rather squat appearance. Sitting at the console, there is a feeling of cosiness as the lack of height makes one very close to the pipes behind, accentuated by a battery of en chamade reed pipes just above your head. These belong to the 'Trompeta de Batalla', much beloved in Spanish organs. For my turn, I chose to exercise the Trompeta Real which is within the case; this was pleasingly fulsome without blasting one's head off like the en chamade stop. The number of loud reed stops on this organ was remarkable; Grand: 8', 8', 16'; Eco: 8', 4'; Pedal: 16', 8' 4'. Altogether this organ had three manuals and 37 stops. Like the first organ described here, the pitch of the pipes is indicated in 'hands' rather than feet. One of the novelty effects invented by Cavaillé-Coll and present here was an 'Orage' pedal for creating the sound of thunder. When depressed, this sounds several consecutive notes simultaneously at the bottom of the pedal board!

From the console position, assessing the blend and balance of stops in general was very difficult. Taking turns to listen at floor level to each other's playing, the beauty of the flue tones was much more appreciated. For my taste, it was the softer pieces that succeeded best. Pieces with full chorus and reeds sounded really grand, but the reverberation in the building, at six seconds or more, was overwhelming. The thrill of drowning in full-organ sound soon becomes wearying when the detail of the music texture becomes blurred by the acoustic. Nevertheless, the rich sound and the sumptuous surroundings made a wonderful experience.

Laurence Rogers



'Cosy' console



Note the pitch indications in 'hands' rather than 'feet'.

Your Association

CATO

A Message from Stephen Johns

The Children and the Organ (CATO) project was set up in response to the Association's obligation as a charity to engage in 'Educational work'. It was originally designed and led by James Muckle and me with the first event taking place in July 2008 at Repton Parish church involving two local Junior schools. The occasion was not without its challenges; one school arrived 20 minutes late which necessitated rapid alteration to the programme a good deal of rather frantic improvisation, but we got through.

In due course other members of the Association joined the group or helped with making items and, as a result of their ideas, we revised and adapted the activities. We worked with a variety of Junior Schools as well as putting on some events at Derby and Leicester Cathedrals. I think we can fairly say that what we had to offer was almost always well received by staff and children alike and we felt we were achieving something in persuading schools that the organ was a rich source of exploration relating not just to music, but also to Technology, Sound and Visual design. The RCO has on occasions shown an interest in our work but, sadly, as the years have gone on, engaging with schools has become more and more difficult, largely due to the pressure teachers feel in trying to meet endless targets and responding to 'initiatives' and so on. Initial approaches have always been met with enthusiasm but this has increasingly been as far as it goes. We have also had difficulties in staffing events as the pool on which we can call has become smaller and smaller.

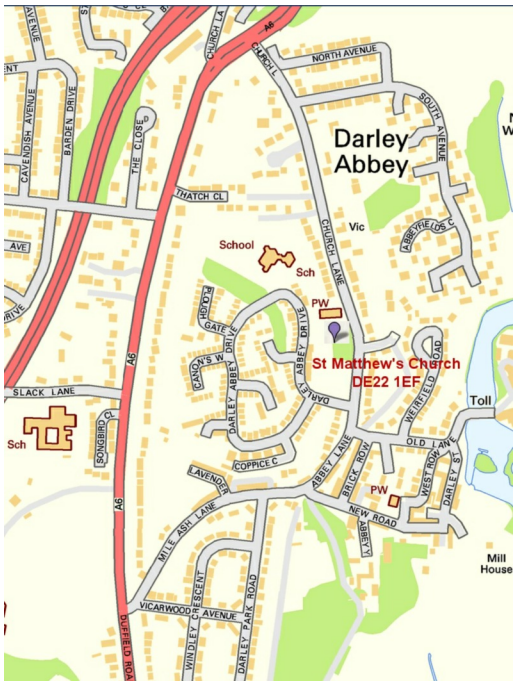
So, reluctantly it has been decided to end the project, but not without some satisfaction that our work has not been insignificant. I'd like to pay tribute to the various varied contributions of several past and present members of the Association: Ed Stow (who built us a lovely mini organ), James Muckle, Rodney Tomkins, Chris Darrell, Richard Brice, Gillian Chatto, John Maxwell-Jones, John Forster, Margaret Eades, Terry Bennett, David Wells (both of whom made valuable equipment for us), David Johnson, Tim Capes, Alex Binns, Siann Hurt, David Hanford (Nottingham Association) and, in emergencies, Anne Johns.

I'd particularly wish to thank Laurence Rogers, who has been constant source of fruitful ideas, wise counsel, and an extremely effective 'presenter' in our sessions. His enthusiasm for creating sounds, striking his coloured batch of plastic tubes much to the entertainment of the young, has been an endless source of joy.

CATO WAS FUN!

Forthcoming DDOA Meeting

Saturday 21st November at 10.00 am
Annual General Meeting
at St Matthew's Church, Darley Abbey,
Derby DE22 1EF



The minutes of the 2025 AGM are available via email attachment or by visiting the link:

https://derbyorganists.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/agm2025.pdf

As well as reports on the past year's activities, the meeting will elect new officers for Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Secretary, together with committee members. The committee is always seeking new members, so **please consider volunteering** for this. The freshness of our programme benefits greatly from new members.

The AGM meeting will be followed by refreshments (including John Maxwell-Jones' delicious cakes) and social chat.

Items of news or articles for the January / February edition of the *Newsletter* should reach the Editor by **Monday 14th 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, 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.