

The Journal

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Last date for copy for the next Journal is Saturday 18th February 2006
Why not send your contribution by email to
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The editor writes....

Association members certainly get about. In the last issue we chronicled David Dunnett's peregrinations and since then Gerald Gifford has been clocking up the miles, as has Gordon Barker. Julian Thomas has been to Malta with the Cathedral Girls' Choir and Isabel and I have been to Ireland.

There are many fine organs in Ireland and, I believe, possibly the most invisible organ anywhere, which is in St Patrick's Cathedral in Dublin. In the north transept stands the original console of the magnificent Father Willis of 1876 and very close to it the entrance to a spiral staircase which takes the organist up to almost total obscurity. Through stone arches and metal grilles the occasional pipe is visible high above the chancel as are the shutters of the swell box but, unless you were looking for it, you'd never know there was an organ there at all. However, it is no mean instrument.



There have been organs in St Patrick's since the 14th century, the most visually impressive of which was the Renatus Harris organ of 1697 which sat on a screen dividing the nave from the choir. A new organ by Henry Willis was built in 1902 and incorporated some of the

pipes from the Harris instrument. A new chamber was created above the north choir aisle which required the part removal of flying buttresses.

Willis planned the new organ in consultation with Sir George Martin, organist of St Paul's (London) but did not live to see its completion. Henry junior completed the job distinguishing himself in his treatment of the powerful reeds.

The opening recital by Dr Marchant would not have been to my taste including, as it did, only three original organ compositions, and Dr George Hewson who was organist from 1920 until 1960 played many transcriptions, including Wagner overtures, illustrating Willis's highly versatile and dynamic instrument.

This organ was restored in 1963 by Walker & Sons which grafted a good deal of upperwork onto the specification whilst the original design underwent little modification. Much of the orchestral palette was displaced by mutation and mixture stops which are of use in early and contemporary repertoires.

In 1995 Harrison & Harrison Ltd carried out major restoration work with a return to 19th century concepts. In addition to a thorough cleaning and overhaul, the work incorporated a sensitive restoration of the flue-work along classic Willis lines. New mixtures were made which were faithful copies of the best Willis models. All of this means that the cathedral now possesses one of the finest early 20th century organs in the world that can be heard almost exactly as it was when it was built.

Also near the spiral staircase is a plaque reminding visitors that Stanford received much of his early training in this cathedral.

Less than five minutes walk from St Patrick's is Christchurch Cathedral which offers the same diet of cathedral music under the direction of Judy Martin, whom we heard drilling the cathedral's girls' choir. The all tracker organ there, built in 1984 by Kenneth Jones & Associates of Bray in County Wicklow, is described as the most significant new Irish organ in history.

And only a few steps away from this, is the site where the first performance of Handel's Messiah took place. (The chair that Handel sat in during the performance can be seen at the Dublin Writers' Museum). This site neatly links the two cathedrals as the performance of Messiah was given by the combined choirs of these two cathedrals. There is a wealth of organs on the island of Ireland and thereby hangs not one but many tales.



Ben Giddens

New Organ Scholar

Ben Giddens was born in Peterborough in 1986. At the age of 8 he was accepted into the choir of Peterborough Cathedral. In 1995 his family relocated to Norwich and he was accepted into the Cathedral choir under the direction of Neil Taylor and began organ lessons with Bryan Ellum at the age of 13 when his voice broke.

In the summer of 1998 Ben moved to Leicester and whilst still at school became Organ Scholar at Leicester Cathedral and in his final year, Assistant Organist. At Leicester Ben accompanied the choir on many of their tours to other Cathedrals including Lincoln and Liverpool Metropolitan. He was also Organ Scholar at St Thomas's Church, South Wigston where he accompanied the choir on many Cathedral visits including their visit to sing at Canterbury Cathedral in 2003.

In September 2004 Ben was appointed Organ Scholar at St George's Chapel, Windsor Castle where he spent his gap year. Here he accompanied the choir for half of their weekly services and undertook duties at St George's School. He also played for the confirmation service of Princesses Beatrice and Eugenie during his time there.

Ben is now studying for a degree in Music at the University of East Anglia. At the Cathedral his duties involve accompanying the Girls' Choir and occasionally the Cathedral Choir as well as organising the visiting choirs diary.

Ben holds the ARCO diploma and studies with Jeremy Filsell. His ambition is to be a cathedral organist.

*The organ at Wycliffe Baptist church,
Reading (continued)*

Carey Moore

Having decided on the basic principle of the rebuild, scale drawings were made of the proposed console, wind chests, electronic and electrical circuits, cable looms etc.

Samples of materials were purchased at the outset, and Alan Douglas, (a name well known at the time) was able to supply us with the materials we needed for the organ building, i.e. keyboards, stops, pallet magnets, key contacts and so on. The electronic components and cables we purchased from various sources taking advantage of special offers and sales of redundant stock.

The main cable loom between the organ console and the organ is about one hundred feet in length and contains 280 telephone wires, so the cable loom alone used over five miles of telephone cable. This I made in our garden, using a former to keep the cables straight and untangled; these were then fed into a heavy duty plastic tube about one inch internal diameter, the whole cable being the full length of our garden. The individual wires were of many colours and combination of colours, and the whole thing is colour coded for easy identification of the cables. The cable loom was then taken to the church, was run inside a cavity and under the floors and concealed from view.

The console was made in our garage. The three manual 61 note Kimber Allen keyboards were specially purchased. Sixty K.A. drawstops, with magnets fitted, were supplied in several

stages because of the cost, during which time the switch design was changed, so some have wire contacts and some have magnetic reed switches fitted. These are on side jambs at 45 degrees. The removable pedal board is made to RCO specification, radiating and concave, using pedals from an earlier pedal board made by me. Access to the circuits is through the rear panels, and the keyboards are hinged for access to the key contacts. There are thumb pistons below each manual, and toe pistons, a balanced swell pedal and a crescendo pedal. Inside the console are housed the six coupler circuit boards Great to Ped, Swell to Ped, Choir to Ped, Swell to Great, Choir to Great and Swell to Choir comparator circuitry for the swell pedal operation. The original stool was used.

The console, after basic construction, (excluding wiring), was dismantled and taken in sections to the church and re-assembled and positioned, internal wiring was installed and connected to the main cable. The Swell Organ or the Great organ was operational at all times thus maintaining the use of the organ for all the services.

Because each pipe has its own pallet magnet, the original slider chests could not be used. The new chests were based on a similar pipe layout as the original, but two chests replaced the swell slider chests, and two chests replaced the Great chest, also the great organ layout was changed to 'sides' for the whole compass whereas before only the bottom bass pipes were arranged in sides. (The layout of the swell organ was originally already in sides). We were able to obtain a bottom octave for the Oboe (previously from tenor C) and this was incorporated in the Swell Box on the new chests. As well

as each top octave being extended to the B, an additional octave of small pipes was included for both Swell Organ and Great Organ, to provide the top octave for extended ranks, obviously these could not match exactly every rank to be extended but was the best we could achieve; in any case at that pitch it is difficult to tell the difference between a Flute and a Diapason. Matching rack boards were made. The topboard of each chest consisted of three layers; the top layer had holes drilled and countersunk for each pipe, the middle board had slots made which lined up with the appropriate hole in the bottom layer, designed to accept a kimber Allen magnet. The whole assembly was glued and pressed together so that the slots formed into grooves so that the pipes are not directly over the magnet holes. This was to ensure that the original pipe voicing was not unduly affected by a different design of chest. This proved to be entirely successful.

Two types of magnet were used, the lever arm magnet and the newer vertical magnet. Over the years, some of the vertical magnets have given some trouble by becoming sluggish and losing some of the very fast repetition rates, and needing cleaning. The older style lever arm magnets have given no trouble at all. Access to all the magnets in these chests is very easy. The magnets are all internally wired to connector blocks accessible on the outside of the chest. Each magnet is fitted with a free-wheeling diode.

Each circuit board provides a minus ten volt fuse protected common supply rail to twelve magnets (an octave). Twelve transistor driver plus five volt switched lines supply each of the twelve magnets

individually, so that the energised voltage across any magnet is 15 volts.

There are four main windchests, a separate windchest for the bottom octave of the Swell Open Diapason (unenclosed) and the unenclosed bottom octave of the stopped Flute, (originally for Clarabella and Keraulophon), all the new chests being made in our garage.

The existing chests were kept for the Bourdon rank, but two additional Bourdon pipes were obtained to provide the lowest notes, and mounted on a separate chest. The other pipes in the rank were then re-tuned to the next note but one up. It was originally intended to fit a 16 ft wood Pedal Open, and this rank was obtained for a small sum. However, the wind supply proved to be inadequate, so this was never connected and the pipes were later removed.

All the ranks that were available on the original organ are available on the same manuals in the new arrangement, together with one or two improvements as follows:-

- The swell bottom octave of the open diapason (unenclosed pipes) matches the Great Keraulophon pipework so this is used for the bottom octave of the Keraulophon instead of the stopped flute octave originally shared with the Clarabella.
- The Oboe on the swell is now full compass (originally from tenor C).
- The Pedal Super Octave coupler is now replaced by an independent stop at 8 ft pitch derived from the Bourdon and Clarabella.
- The Manual ranks are extended to 60 notes (five octaves). The pedal rank is extended to 32 notes. The Cornopean is now called Trumpet on the new stop label. All the other stops are derived

from the fifteen ranks in one way or another to produce the following (additional) stop list:- basic ranks not repeated.

Great Organ (Man II) middle manual.
Double Diapason 16' *from Open Diapason bottom octave from Bourdon*
Twelfth 2 $\frac{2}{3}$ ' *from Great Principal*
Fifteenth 2' *from Great Principal*
Tierce 1 $\frac{1}{5}$ ' *from Great Principal*
Larigot 1 $\frac{1}{3}$ ' *from Great Principal*
Quint. 5 $\frac{1}{3}$ ' *from Great Open Diapason (Below middle C is now at unison pitch)*
Clarabel Flute 4ft *from Clarabella*
Swell Organ (Man III) top manual.
Lieblich Bourdon 16' *from Lieblich Gedact bottom octave at 8ft pitch*
Nazard 2 $\frac{2}{3}$ ' *from Wald Flute*
Fifteenth 2' *from Swell Principal*
Gambette 4' *from Gamba*
Celestina 4' *from Celeste*
Clarion 4' *from Cornopean*
Double Trumpet 16' *from Cornopean. Bottom octave at 8ft pitch.*
Contra Oboe 16' *from Oboe, bottom octave at 8ft pitch.*
Choir Organ (Man I) lower manual. (Unenclosed)
Double Dulciana 16' *from Dulciana Bottom octave at 8ft pitch.*
Open diapason 8' *from Great Principal.*
Harmonic Flute 8' *from Harmonic Flute.*
Keraulophon 8' *from Keraulophon (duplicate)*
Keraulette 4' *from Keraulophon.*
Dulcet 4ft *from Dulciana.*
Harmonic Piccolo 2' *from Harmonic Flute.*
Choir Organ (Man I) lower manual (enclosed). Prepared for but not connected.
Gamba 8' *from Gamba (duplicate)*
Dolce Flute 8' *from Wald Flute*
Principal 4' *from Swell Open Diapason*

Lieblich Flute 4' *from Lieblich Gedact*
Twelfth 2 $\frac{2}{3}$ ' *from Swell Principal*
Oboe Clarion 4' *from Oboe*
Pedal Organ
Contra Bourdon 32' *from Bourdon Bottom octave (resultant 16' + 5 $\frac{1}{3}$)*
Not connected this way at present
Pedal Open Wood 16' *Not connected...no pipes or chests*
Bass Flute 8' *from Bourdon and Clarabella.*
Principal 4' *from Open Wood and Great Open Diapason (Not connected, no Wood pipes).*
Flute Nazard 5 $\frac{1}{3}$ ' *from Clarabella prepared for (Not connected)*
Fifteenth 4' *from Great Open Diapason*
Pedal Quint 10 $\frac{1}{2}$ ' *from Open Wood (taken from Bourdon Rank as there are no Open Wood Pipes).*
Top and bottom octaves, where not available from the basic rank, are derived from extensions or from the most suitable rank available.

The swell shutters are horizontal and when the central balanced swell pedal was fitted to the organ in the 1950s the shutters were balanced with a weight. This is retained, but the pedal disconnected. There is a single very large double acting pneumatic motor in the organ which is linked to the shutters by a shaft and square end rods. The two motors which have a common moving plate are enclosed in a chest of wind derived from the bellows. Two HD magnets for each motor either open the inside of the motor to atmosphere when energised or allow the pressure inside and outside of the motor to equalize. One of the magnets will go off before the other to slow the movement down for the final movement to prevent hunting. The position of the shaft is accurately determined by a rotary

potentiometer with a voltage fixed across it. This information is then fed back to the console in a screened cable where it is compared to a similar potentiometer with similar voltage across which is fixed to the swell pedal. A double comparator then determines whether the box should be opened or closed, and will be stationary when the voltages are equal. Whilst the system works, it has proved to be rather on the slow side, and needs modification to increase shutter speed.

The Crescendo pedal works on selected stops over the whole organ turning on one by one; this is entirely a mechanical switching device connected in parallel with the stop contacts. There are forty stages which provide a very smooth crescendo from nothing (or whatever stops are already drawn) to full organ.

A temporary adjustable piston setting system was fitted for the Great organ only. Other pistons are not at present set up.

There was no noticeable change to the voicing of the pipes on the new chests. However when we lowered the pitch, some ranks had to receive some re-voicing, some being moved a semitone up. All pipe voicing and tuning was carried out by Tony and Eileen Foster Waite, organ builders near Newbury, to whom I remain most grateful. Foster Waite still regularly tune the organ, and I attend to any other problems.

The organ is pleasing to play and tonally the many extra combinations of stops is exciting and well worth the effort of making the organ into what is essentially a unit organ. Many of the combinations of stops have proved most satisfactory, hundreds of combinations can be used which were not available on the old organ creating many pleasing effects.

The organ touch was rather light, and stronger springs were obtained from Kimber Allen to improve this. The response is instantaneous, and the nearest one can get to a light tracker action available today and a great improvement on the original heavy Victorian tracker action. One big advantage of a solid state action is that there are no moving parts to wear between key contact and pipe pallet magnet, and key contacts only rarely need cleaning or attention. Also, as with a mechanical action, the stop action is as prompt as the key action, and so registration changes can be made on the beat.

The position of the console is disappointing because of the distance between it and the organ pipes, the fact that the congregation is between player and organ and mostly because the console is under the gallery shielding direct sound from the player. This is not a problem in an empty church, but with a full church and other instruments playing as well, this can be off putting for the organist, so there is a lesson to be learned here. We did try a foldback amplification system with limited success. Be that as it may, I think that the decision to put the console where it is was the right one and it would not be difficult to move it if a better position were to be determined.

The solid state action has proved to be reliable for the twenty-five years some of it has been in use. There were minor problems with the one of the power supplies but these have been addressed.

The organ has been used for recitals, teaching, as well as for accompanying music for Sunday worship. Overall, all has gone very well to plan, and I wish to record my grateful thanks to all who have assisted me with this project.

Something old.....

Thomas Trotter delighted and thrilled an ample audience at St Nicholas's Dereham on 16th September to mark the 10th anniversary of the rebuilding and re-siting of the organ there by Richard Bower. CCTV not only allowed us to watch the player at work but also provided the opportunity for the recitalist to spend ten minutes or so explaining the console, the swell box and the sounds available on the different divisions of the instrument. Overheard snippets of conversation in the interval indicated that this had been greatly appreciated by many who had had no idea how an organ works or an organist works it.

The exemplary programme showed off the organ and the virtuosity of the player. Under the umbrella of 'something old' there was Vivaldi/Bach, Mozart and Liszt; for 'something borrowed' there were transcriptions of Elgar (and, I suppose, the Vivaldi/Bach); 'something blue' was provided by Antalfy-Ziross in the form of a triptych of Negro Spirituals, full of harmonies of which Gershwin would have been proud; and the 'something new' was *Miroir* by Ad Wammes, a mesmerising minimalist piece by a young Dutchman who is, amongst other things, a member of a pop group.

Thanks to an anonymous sponsor, all the proceeds were able to go to the church fund and more specifically the repair of the church roof, the need for which was perfectly demonstrated as water dripped noisily into the building during the recital thanks to the heaviest rain the region has seen for some weeks. Congratulations to Richard Bower for his organ and arranging the recital.RW.

A NOTE OF THANKS from Brent Palmer.

I would like through the pages of the Journal to say a personal note of thanks to all those who sent letters and cards or offered personal condolences after the recent very sad, very sudden and very unexpected death of my father. For those who don't know, he died as the result of a massive stroke which came without warning. It has obviously been a great shock to me and my sister as only two days before his death he had been mentally as bright as a button although severely crippled physically with arthritis.

It will also mean quite an upheaval for me as I lived at home with him and will have to sell the house and find other accommodation. However, I hope that will not be too difficult.

Meanwhile, I hope to be able to attend meetings during the difficult months that lie ahead.



John Plunkett at Roxton

Car share outing to Bedfordshire

John Plunkett

Last year's visit occasioned the request for more of the same, and my good and generous friend, Robert Shaftoe, had already offered just that at the time, and so it was that a further exploration was engineered between us. We hoped more would come, but those who did were not disappointed.

Just off the A1 and a short distance along the A421 lies Roxton. Looking for the Congregational Church, I found a man mowing the lawns of a delightful garden surrounding a large thatched cottage in the £750,000 range. I was stunned even though I already knew this was in fact the church! The 'gardener' and his wife were our hosts for as long as we liked. They provided tea and biscuits and a brief guided history of this barn conversion of 1808, with its galleried church, Sunday school room, hall, and secret vestry. The chamber organ dates from 1848, but was a gift to the church just before the war. It has a rosewood case, the second manual is a short compass (three octaves f to f) enclosed division, it has no pedal board and is largely original. A charming English sound with mutations, and particularly pleasing a Sesquialtera, from before the dull fat woolly period of organ building later in the 19th c. We could have stayed all day!

Next call was Ravensden, which was, by request, a repeat of last year's visit. This is a must if you are in the area. This essentially English instrument with mutations, although a small two manual and pedals, will play a wide range of music including Fats Waller! Several well known organists travel here to

practise on this gem. This year space was available by arrangement in the 'Horse and Jockey' next door where we all enjoyed lunch with a drink, good conversation and fun.

After lunch we wound our way across to Felmersham with its grand mediaeval parish church, well lit and with a crossing of cathedral proportions, and wonderfully re-vamped Victorian chancel. The north transept houses a large and heavily constructed two manual and pedals Nicholson from around 1900. Despite being 'rebuilt' by J. W. Walker in 1936 it is still a tribute to its creators, and maintains a brightness and life barely masked by interference or the dust of time. It already possesses two reeds and a Sesquialtera and, when restored, should gain two prepared for stops on the swell making it 8+8+2.

We retraced our steps to Milton Ernest (a possible 1930s organist's name?). Here we found a neat and comfortable parish church, with the chancel re-ordered by Butterfield whose remains lie buried just outside. In the chancel was a minuscule niche into which the organ by C. H. Walker had originally been shoehorned. The totally unmaintainable and inaudible instrument was prised out and a local farmer built a west end gallery in wrought iron, and the organ was rebuilt on it. This was Robert Shaftoe's first job on his own in the 1960s. The pedal division was extended electrically to give 8ft & 4ft flutes, and the rest treated sympathetically. We doubt that this would be allowed today, but the organ serves God, the congregation, and the organist far better than before.

Our thanks to Robert Shaftoe for his time and effort in arranging such a sensational day for hand, ear and eye.

Norfolk Organists' Association Young Organist's Recital - 2005

Gordon Barker

It was a pleasure to attend Hannah Parry's recital at the organ of St Thomas's Church, Earlham Road, Norwich. Hannah had been nominated for our annual award by Julian Thomas, Assistant Organist of Norwich Cathedral. Hannah's vibrant playing gave a three-figure audience plenty to enjoy and discuss afterwards.

She chose to open with Buxtehude's *Praeludium in C major* and her beautifully articulated pedal solo soon had several very experienced listeners nodding and smiling. Two neat Stanley Voluntaries preceded movements from Couperin's *Messe pour les Couvents* which received stylish treatment.

The Chorale Preludes (Opus 122) of Brahms have elusive qualities which present a considerable challenge to the performer; *'Blessed are ye faithful souls'* was gently atmospheric and led smoothly into the more complex *'O God, thou faithful God'*.

Franck's *'Prelude'* was a joy, the delicate colouring was handled convincingly, while her final offering, the *Toccata* from Percy Whitlock's *'Plymouth Suite'* came across with great panache and I'm sure that everyone enjoyed the thrilling build-up in the final pages. Her musicianship shone brightly throughout her recital and we look forward to hearing much more from her in the next few years.

Hannah was presented with her deserved award by Mathew Martin our Past-President.

Hannah began playing the organ aged 13 under our Diocesan Scholarship scheme. She attended the famous Oundle

Summer School for Young Organists and in 2004 joined the St Giles Junior Organ Conservatoire in London. She is now in her final year at the Eaton CNS School.

It has been very pleasing to note that Hannah and Matthew Bond (who played for us at the AGM recital in March) have performed at churches in Norfolk recently and have bookings for next year! They deserve every encouragement and opportunity.

Something to read

Humphrey Clucas, of 'responses' fame, singer, English teacher, composer, cricketer, poet and lay vicar at Westminster Abbey has written a most absorbing book about his life to date - *Taking Stock - the first 60 years*. It is packed with interest and amusement and contains an insider's account of the Martin Neary/Westminster Abbey affair but with other fascinating insights into life at King's, Guildford and Winchester Cathedrals et al. Clucas's very personal assessments of household names in the music world will certainly raise a few eyebrows. Published by The Lewin Press at £9.99. ISBN 0-09550470-0-5.

For sale

Yamaha Electone organ. Two manuals and one octave of pedals with stool, all in excellent condition. Length 42" height 45" and width 16"
Offers to Mrs Denington, 21 Aylesbury Close, Norwich NR3 3LB Tel: 01603 400384

A visit to Troidhaugen

Gordon Barker

One of my very earliest musical memories is of hearing my father playing Grieg's '*Wedding Day at Troidhaugen*' (pronounced Trollhowen) and relating the programme of the music to me as he went along. That all happened some sixty-four years ago and so my deep longing to visit the site of the occasion and the music it generated took a very long time to become reality.

In 1884-85 Nina and Edvard Grieg started building their first home. They had purchased from a local farmer a plot of land situated on a rocky promontory jutting into Lake Nordas, 10 km south of Bergen.

It was Nina who suggested calling their new home Troidhaugen (Troll Hill)-the narrow valley they had to cross before reaching their new home was known to the locals as Trolddalen. The Griegs wanted a traditional farmhouse style home with plenty of light. It was a costly operation - the equivalent of ten sizeable annual incomes. Fortunately, Grieg received financial support from Peters Verlag in Leipzig so that their plans could be completed without financial disaster. In 1885 they moved in.

The rain was lashing down in Bergen as our ship docked but by lunchtime the cloud was breaking up and by the time we set off for Grieg's home a watery sun had broken through.

The unpaved road up to the house is lined with twisted beech trees - unchanged since Grieg's time. As we approached the house we passed the museum and the Grieg monument which was unveiled in 1995. Before arriving at the house we

crossed a bridge which gave us views of the composer's famous composing hut as well as the entrance to the Troldsalen, a wonderful sunken concert hall which can seat up to two hundred people. Outside the entrance stands a statue of the composer - to our surprise we discovered he was only five feet tall.

A short piano recital consisting of '*Lyric Pieces*' preceded our tour of the house itself. The decorations and furnishings reflect Norwegian tradition and personal taste, wooden panelling and unpainted wooden floors dominating the rooms. In Grieg's day the rather rustic interior must have appeared odd to visitors accustomed to Victorian style.

Since 1953 the house has been a celebrated venue. The original kitchen and maid's room have been converted into a memento room. The exhibition has been carefully planned around the key events of Grieg's life. The walls are covered with paintings and drawings of the composer who was a popular model. Display cases contain table cards and concert programmes as well as impressive looking awards and decorations. His smoking jacket, hat, fishing pole and tackle bag hang on the wall of the maid's room. A central table displays some original scores together with a lock of hair in a silver frame.

The sitting room contains Grieg's Steinway piano built in 1892. On the morning of the Griegs' Silver Wedding some of their friends had managed to install it before the couple had arrived downstairs. There was room for both of them on the low piano chair. Nina was not only a wonderful singer, but a good pianist, so she and Edvard often played duets. The walls contain family portraits including one of Grieg's great-grandfather

Alexander Grieg who emigrated to Bergen from Scotland in 1770. The little writing desk in the corner displays the writing set used by the composer on his travels. He wrote almost twenty thousand letters in the course of his life as well as a large number of articles. The last photograph of Nina Grieg stands on the Steinway. It was taken on her 90th birthday in November 1935.

The house is wonderfully positioned giving views of hills and fiord, though today the surrounding countryside is built over. The same railway line that conveyed Grieg into Bergen still serves the local commuters.

Our visit has reawakened my interest in Grieg's music. Whilst at the house I purchased a CD of Grieg's choral music performed by the splendid mixed choir of Bergen Cathedral. His evocative *'Ave Maris Stella'* has found its way into the cathedral repertoire; however, I have been bowled over by the rich sonorities of the *'Four Psalms'* for mixed choir and baritone Op. 74, his last work written in 1906.

And I almost forgot - *'Wedding Day'* was written following the celebration of the Griegs' Silver Wedding in 1896. The original title was *'The Well-Wishers Arrive'* a present to my wife on the 11th June. Apparently there were many more guests than invitations but the hospitable Griegs dined them all with last moment help from friendly tradespeople in Bergen.

Nearly a hundred years on there is no doubt that Grieg's reputation as composer and person still resounds in Norway and especially in Bergen. He was a compassionate, generous man who believed strongly in the power of good art and its potential influence upon society.

'Cheap art is bad art, and does the opposite of educating the people. The greatest secret of our timeis good spiritual nourishment for all - for the people, nothing is too high.'



Organist wanted
at St Stephen's Church, Norwich
Sunday service starts at 10. 30 am.
There is a small but appreciative
congregation and a limited choir
which meets for one hour each
month. There is a fee of £20 and
free parking. Further details from
Canon Hereward Cooke on 01603
624827

Musical Encounters

Gerald Gifford

Spending a few moments, from time to time, reflecting upon the highlights and milestones of one's career in music can be a pleasantly rewarding and gratifying experience. Personally, I can still vividly recall the honour of playing the organ for a performance of Herbert Howells' *Hymnus Paradisi* at the Royal College of Music for the composer's eightieth birthday in 1972, and the delight of playing harpsichord continuo for a performance of Bach's *B Minor Mass* in Bath Abbey, conducted by Sir David Willcocks, shortly after I joined his RCM staff. It was also an honour to play the Frobenius organ of Robinson College, Cambridge, for the formal opening of the College by the Queen, and some years earlier, for her visit to Ely Cathedral, to mark the 1300th anniversary of its foundation. I also have special memories of various concert, recording and broadcasting activities with the singers Catherine Bott, James Bowman, Dame Felicity Lott, Emma Kirkby, with the recorder player Carl Dolmetsch, the 'cellist Alexander Baillie, and the trumpeter Crispian Steele-Perkins amongst many others. And to this day I vividly recall recording the John Stanley organ concertos (Op. 10) in Hexham Abbey, Northumberland, with the Northern Sinfonia Orchestra in the late 1970s. All of these memories are cherished, though articulate but a single aspect of my musical life – as a performing musician.

These events, and a host of others, are recalled with affection and gratitude, as too are my encounters and associations with various instruments – organs,

harpsichords and other early keyboard instruments both in the UK and further afield. In recent months a redefinition of my freelance career has helped me to develop these interests in a remarkable way. Having taken early retirement from my Professorship at the Royal College of Music in September 2004, I have had a number of opportunities to play some outstanding musical instruments both in the UK and abroad, and the concentration of these experiences has been without parallel in my career thus far. Although whilst teaching full-time I was able to undertake visits to selected destinations abroad – notably in Scandinavia, Germany and Switzerland – I was unable to plan more extended tours because of my academic commitments. But this has now all changed.

I began my more recent travels with a visit to the Czech Republic, during which the opportunity of playing the superb 1673 Mundt organ at the Church of Our Lady before the Týn in Prague was unquestionably the highlight. This 2-manual instrument in an ornate gilded and decorated case matching the Church's own furnishings, was magnificently restored in 2000 by Klais, and is undoubtedly one of the most rewarding instruments that I have ever played. My repertoire included works by Josef Seeger, who had been organist there in the 17th century, and knew this very instrument. I also attended a splendid recital by Phillippe Brandeis during a Festival at St James's Basilica, Prague, dedicated to the music of Petr Eben, and unexpectedly found myself sitting next to the composer! Afterwards I had the pleasure of briefly discussing with him certain works of his that I have in my repertoire.

In December 2004 I visited Vienna, when I had the great privilege of playing the 4-manual 1991 Rieger organ in St. Stephen's Cathedral. This organ, which is widely known through the recordings of Peter Planyavsky, was a joy to play, and my repertoire included music by some of the well-known musical associations of the Stephansdom, notably Haydn and Mozart, and also some works by Wolfgang Ebner, who had been organist there a century before their time. The large organ which Anton Heiller would have known still remains in the Cathedral's west gallery. I also visited the famous 1642 Freundt *Festorgel* at Klosterneuberg Stiftsbasilika near Vienna. This sumptuous instrument, most memorably recorded by Gustav Leonhardt and Herbert Tachezi, is shortly to undergo restoration. Whilst in Vienna I also visited the Kunsthistorisches Museum, and spent some time examining Haydn's Shudi & Broadwood harpsichord which is exhibited there. The Curator was particularly amenable when I mentioned that I had one of my own!

The opportunity of spending several weeks in the USA at Easter allowed me to become further acquainted with some outstanding instruments there, including the 4-manual 1974 Flentrop at Duke University, North Carolina, a lovely 2-manual 2002 Paul Fritts organ in the concert hall of Vassar College, Poughkeepsie in up-state New York, and the famous J. D. Dulcken harpsichord of 1745 in the collection at the Smithsonian Institution, Washington DC. I also played some fine modern copies of early keyboard instruments in New Jersey and elsewhere, including a lovely small Italian-style harpsichord by David Werbeloff of Boston that I used during a

lecture-recital that I gave for the Royal Shakespeare Company's residency in North Carolina. I revisited the USA in late August 2005 when my engagements included a recital, which was also recorded live, on the vast 4-manual Aeolian-Skinner organ at Washington National Cathedral. (The programme was built around Bach effusions - my own based on extracts from Cantatas 207, 150 and 35, Liszt based on Cantata 27, Karg-Elert based on the motet BWV 225 and selected others, too. These all made for an eclectic and colourful experience, for player and listeners alike!)

The thrill of playing huge instruments such as this lingers in the memory, but then so too can the sheer musicality and responsiveness of much smaller instruments as well. I have extremely fond recollections of playing the lovely 2-manual 1787 Bätz organ in the Pieterskerk, Breukelen in the Netherlands (Mozart, naturally), and also during the same trip in September, played the marvellous 3-manual 1831 Bätz organ at Utrecht Cathedral (Mendelssohn was a particular delight there). An earlier visit to the Netherlands in April 2004 had been for the express purpose of playing the great Christian Müller organ of 1735-1738 at the Grote Kerke of St. Bavo, Haarlem. One may listen to as many recordings of this world famous organ as one wishes, but there is nothing to equate with the sheer thrill of playing the instrument oneself. My repertoire included Dutch organ music of the 17th and 18th-centuries, and works by Handel, Mozart and Liszt, who had themselves played the instrument.

As I write in late October, I have just returned from Florence where I played some remarkable fortepianos in the

Accademia Bartolomeo Cristofori (my repertoire included some pioneering sonatas for fortepiano by Lodovico Giustini, published in Florence in 1732), and the wonderful Lorenzo da Lucca organ of 1509/1521 in the SS. Annunziata Basilica there. This is one of the oldest surviving instruments in Italy, and was most sensitively restored in 1994 by Gabinetto di Restauro Organi di Palazzo Pitti, Florence. It is one of two organs facing each other in galleries above the nave of the Basilica, resplendent in sumptuously gilded matching cases (the second instrument was built by Cosimo Ravani of Lucca in 1634). Suffice it to say that, from now on, my performances of organ works by Cavazzoni, Banchieri, Frescobaldi (and even BWV 590!) will never be the same!

Amongst other instruments encountered during my tours of the USA this year have been the large 4-manual Gress-Mills in the Chapel of Vassar College, Poughkeepsie (restored by Foley-Baker Inc in 2004) and the 3-manual 1970 Wicks organ, divided in two chambers either side of the chancel in the Presbyterian Church at Davidson College, North Carolina. (Merkel's Second Sonata well-suited the former, whilst my programme for the latter pursued parallels and contrasts in English and German organ music through the centuries). I also used a characterful chamber organ by Ott, built in 1991, during a lecture recital on Elizabethan keyboard music given the following afternoon in Davidson College's Lingle Chapel. Earlier on during that visit a particularly enjoyable morning had been spent examining the historic keyboard instrument collection preserved in the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, and a pleasurable

afternoon listening to the fruits of John Scott's work with the choir of St Thomas' Church, Fifth Avenue (and afterwards speaking with him and the distinguished singer Ian Partridge, who was about to rehearse for a concert the next day). And whilst in Chicago, one naturally attended the Symphony there!

In addition to these various overseas activities, this year I have also given recitals at some wonderful venues in England too. These include two organ recitals at King's College Chapel, Cambridge (one public, the other private), the 2005 Magnus Black Memorial Recital at Doncaster Minster (my first encounter with the 5-manual 1862 Schulze organ there), and I have also revisited my familiar haunts of Burghley House, Stamford, and Houghton Hall, Norfolk, for harpsichord recitals. During June I greatly enjoyed playing my spinet in a concert with the recorder player Jeanne Dolmetsch in the wooden panelled Music Room of the 17th century Merchant's House in Marlborough (where we were celebrating the publication of a late 17th-century recorder treatise that we had just published in facsimile from a rare original in the Dolmetsch Library, Haslemere).

My year has thus been blessed with some unforgettable music experiences, and I am sure will soon be enriched still further during a forthcoming visit to Salzburg this December. From a professional point of view, it is a pleasure to still be able to relate some specific outcomes of these experiences to my students at Cambridge University, and I also eagerly anticipate making full use of the rare privilege provided by my forthcoming musical residency at the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge, during 2006. What treasures the Founder's great

collection of manuscript and printed music holds! And without doubt, a number of programmes thus derived will feature prominently in my concert activity both here and abroad throughout the coming year. Maybe, too, one of these days, I might at last have an opportunity to accept a long-standing invitation to join the organ faculty for the annual *Festival Internacional de Órgano del Uruguay*. Time will tell!

Present specification of the Organ at SS. Annunziata Basilica, Florence
Built by Lorenzo da Lucca, 1509-1521

Manual

- 1 Principale (P)
- 2 Ottava (O)
- 3 XV
- 4 XIX
- 5 XXII-XXVI-XXIX
- 6 Flauto in Quintadecima (F)
Ripieno

Pedals

18 keys with short octave, permanently coupled to the manual.



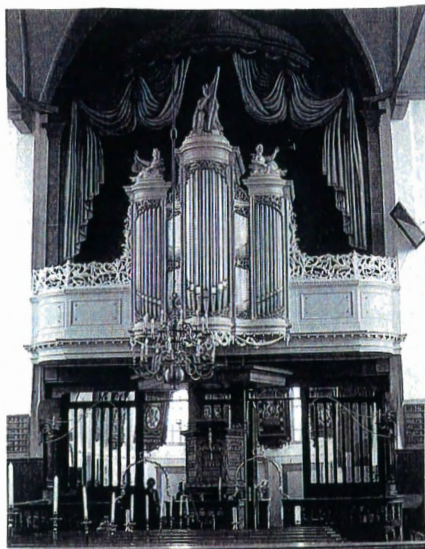
Present specification of the Organ at the Church of Our Lady before the Týn, Prague

Built by Johann Heinrich Mundt, Prague 1671-1673

Manuál

Bordunfluta	16
Principal	8
Copula major	8
Flauta dulcis	8
Salicional	8
Quintadena	8
Octava	4
Quinta	2 ² / ₃
Superoctava	2
Quintdecima	1 ¹ / ₃
Sedecima	1
Cembalo	1
Mixtura	(from 1)
Copula minor	4
<i>Positiv</i>	
Principal	4
Octava	2
Quinte	1 ¹ / ₃
Quintadecima	1
Quinta šustice	1/2
Mixtura	(based on 2 ² / ₃)
Copula major	8
Flauta amabilis	4
<i>Pedál</i>	
Subbass nekrytý	16
Subbass krytý	16
Octavbass nekrytý	8
Quinta krytý	5 ¹ / ₃
Superoctav	4
Mixtura	(from 2)
Bas frčák	8
2 Címbelsterne	
Kalkantenglocke	
Manualkoppel	

Pictured opposite



Present specification of the Organ at the Pieterskerk, Breukelen, The Netherlands

Built by Gideon Thomas Bätz in 1787
Hoofdwerk

Bourdon	16	
Prestant	8	
Quintadeen	8	Bas
Holpijp	8	
Octaaf	4	
Fluit	4	Bas en Discant
Quint	2 ² / ₃	Bas en Discant
Octaaf	2	Bas en Discant
Cornet	IV	Discant
Sexquialter	IV	Discant
Mixtuur	IV-VIII	Bas en Discant
Trompet	8	Bas en Discant

Onderwerk (added in 1867)

Holfluit	8
Roerfluit	4
Viola di Gamba	8

Pedals permanently coupled to Manual I
 Tremulant

Congratulations.....

.....to Julian Haggett, a St Peter Mancroft Organ Scholar under the tuition of Kenneth Ryder, who gained a distinction in his grade 8 organ examination in June. He gave a very splendid recital in Dereham Parish Church earlier in the year and went off to Durham University to read music in September.

Dominic de Cogan broke with tradition at St Peter Mancroft when, in his Saturday 12 noon Concert, in which normally 17th and 18th century music only feature, he gave an outstanding performance of the complete *Symphonie V* of Widor to a large and enthusiastic audience. Dominic is a St Peter Mancroft Organ Scholar and is a very talented viola player and pianist as well as an organist. His SPM Scholarship runs out this year but he will continue his organ tuition with Kenneth Ryder. He is Organist at St John the Baptist RC Cathedral.

Can anyone identify this organ?

The organ consists of five manuals with sixty-four speaking stops and is built on the screen. The Echo organ is at the extreme east end of the Cathedral behind the High Altar. The console is placed on the south side of the instrument so that the organist has an uninterrupted view of both Choir and Nave.

Trafalgar concert at Great Yarmouth

Colin Fenn

The Priory and Parish Church of St Nicholas, Great Yarmouth was the setting on 22nd October for a choral and orchestral concert celebrating the bicentenary of Nelson's victory at Trafalgar. Nelson came to Gt Yarmouth on 6th November 1800 and 1st July 1801. During his first visit he was made a Freeman of the town and attended a packed thanksgiving service in St Nicholas Church.

The performance was given by the 60 strong 'Nelson' Chorus and Orchestra (leader Alison Mills) with Bryan Ellum (organ) and Terry Cunnane (piano) all under the direction of John Farmer, who was Master of the Music at St Nicholas from 1977 to 1993.

The two works in the programme were the *Imperial 'Nelson' Mass* by Josef Haydn and the premiere of a new Cantata '*Trafalgar 200*' by John Farmer to words specially written by Canon Michael Woods, Team Rector at St Nicholas.

The concert opened by the singing of two verses of the National Anthem to an arrangement by John Farmer followed by the Haydn. The soloists were Lisa Cassidy (Soprano), Sheelagh Whitear (Contralto), Christopher Speake (Tenor), Christopher Bell (Bass). First performed on 23rd September 1798 it was named the Nelson Mass after Nelson heard it two years later on his visit to Eisenstadt.

The hour long Cantata occupied the second half of the programme. Written in a modern style for full chorus and orchestra with tenor and bass soloists, it portrays in a dramatic style the life of Nelson in an excellent match of words and music. The work opens with a Fanfare

and Variation on 'Ein' Feste Burg' (words by Martin Luther) and an opening song. The three movements which then follow are celebrations of Nelson's life, loves and victories. The first movement refers to his upbringing in Norfolk, and the two repeating choruses during this movement are very effective between the solo parts.

The second movement contains a song about Lady Hamilton, written in the style of a can-can, and in the third movement the drama of warfare is captured in the underlying orchestral accompaniment. The work ends with John Farmer's '*Victory*' *Toccata* played on the organ by Bryan Ellum. These two works, each with their drama and emotion were well received by the large audience who gave a standing ovation at the end of the concert. The Cantata should not now be put on the shelf; hopefully we will hear further performances.



Gerald Gifford at Wyomndham Abbey

For our October event we met at Wyomndham Abbey and were treated to a highly informative and entertaining afternoon by Gerald Gifford who told us of Bach's organ works for manuals only and other repertoire available for a chamber organ, all of which was illustrated on the Abbey's delightful chamber organ.

It was fascinating to hear pieces with which we were familiar (*Canzona in D minor BWV 588* for example) but played on a single manual with no 16' filling out of the lowest part. 'It would be like a string quartet with an additional double bass duplicating the 'cello part an octave lower and thus distorting the balance and texture' we were told.

All of Bach's single manual compositions and works by other composers of that period fit comfortably under the hand, clearly necessary as the organ does not have the ability to sustain notes after they have been released.

Dr Gifford informed us that by no means all of the 48 sound convincing on the organ, the first C major Prelude for example, but we were treated to others which do work well in that medium alongside movements from cantatas and some transcriptions of Vivaldi. It was also demonstrated how much greater clarity is achievable on such an intimate instrument whereas on a large instrument in a very reverberant building much of the essential detail is confused and the delights of the counterpoint lost.

As is always the case with Gerald Gifford one finds oneself learning and being given fresh insights with each sentence he utters yet without feeling that

one is being lectured at, more that one is part of a relaxed exploration of the subject in hand, all of this being helped by most informative notes and references. In such circumstances it is easy to overlook the scholarship which underpins all that Gerald has to tell us and the consummate keyboard skill which brings the music to life in a seemingly effortless way.

An afternoon of delights too numerous and diverse to be reproduced here. How fortunate we are to have Gerald Gifford as a fellow member and so close at hand.RW.

A Bach Christmas - The Toccata and Fugue Celebration

Between 16th and 25th December BBC Radio3 will be broadcasting all of Bach's surviving works and the Celebration of the Toccata and Fugue in D minor BWV565 will be launched at 9 am by Rob Cowan.

At 1.30 pm Wayne Marshall will broadcast this famous work from St John's Smith Square.

Organists everywhere are being invited to participate by playing the T&F as part of a regular service on 18th December or as a separate event which could provide the opportunity to raise money for a favourite charity.

If you want to be involved in this exciting event then visit www.bbc.co.uk/radio3 and follow the links to 'A Bach Christmas' or 'phone on 08700 100 300. You will receive a T&F celebration pack.

*From Kenneth Ryder's Retirement
Speeches 25th September, 2005*

"My associations with music in church services go back to 1947 when I was a choirboy in London, and have continued without a significant break until this moment.

During that time I have served under 9 vicars, 4 of them here, and about 20 curates, three of whom have become Bishops in the Church of England. I was commissioned to do a specific job here at St Peter's by the Revd Frank Jarvis, vicar of this church in the 1960s and I trust I have done my best to accomplish that commission, namely to establish a vibrant musical establishment within the church building in which organ and piano tuition should run alongside the church choral requirements.

I would like to thank all my assistant organists who have given me such tremendous support, especially Roger Rayner for over 30 years and Tim Patient for almost a similar length of time.

But I would also like to thank my various organ scholars over the years who have contributed unseen to the music of this place. Almost the entire organ repertoire of the great composers for the instrument has been performed here by Tim, Roger, myself and my pupils, quite apart from complete cycles of works performed, recorded and broadcast by visiting soloists. Who will ever forget the church filled with incense for Tim's two performances of Messiaen's '*Livre du Saint Sacrement*' or the complete organ works of Maurice Duruflé? Roger's thrilling and flamboyant performances of the Widor and Vierne Symphonies, my various pupils' performances of Reubke's *94th Psalm*? Then again, Roger

performing Couperin with the actor John Stewart Anderson?

Apart from my private pupils I have taught many so called SPM Organ Scholars funded by Risebrow Charity. Some of you will call to mind those piano recitals by young James Duddle in the Assembly House which were so enjoyed. He is now conductor of his own orchestra and choir in Sweden. Danny Evans, another of my former SPM Organ Scholars, gave an astonishing recital to the International Franz Liszt Society in London earlier this year which I reported in the magazine. Two months back he played to a packed Wigmore Hall; he is still only 17! Then there is Robert Houssart who, together with James Duddle, gained the highest marks ever awarded for a professional diploma at the RCM whilst still a schoolboy, and who last year won the Improvisation Class in the St Alban's International Organ Festival. Philip Sunderland conducted the Verdi Requiem in a packed York Minster to national acclaim. He now has his own Opera Company in Wales, having been Chorus Master for Opera North for a number of years.

These and many more have been the highlights of my work here outside of the church services themselves. After forty years the County Music Festival with over four hours of non-stop organ playing is now a thing of the past. Until this present year it has remained one of the most important events of its sort in the whole of Britain. During my 42 years here I have trained all my Assistant Organists. One and all have been of school age; all, save two, have become professional musicians; many leaving here with Oxbridge Organ Scholarships, others with places at conservatoires.

It is always a privilege and responsibility teaching students with a high degree of talent and I owe a debt to them all for the work they have done here in accompanying the choirs.

As I relinquished training the choir here some years back it is not the place to talk about that work. But I would like to thank David Burton, without whose presence from the day I arrived the choir of men and boys as we knew it could not have existed. Yes, time moves on and others will take up the challenge of making this fantastic piece of architecture a power-house of the things of the spirit in the centre of Norwich.”

Footnote: Regrettably, the new organist resigned after only 48 hours. In many ways, this was totally predictable. As in a number of churches, there are serious problems of many kinds. The authorities at St Peter's were well informed of many issues which needed to be sorted out before a new organist could be expected to take over. The fact that none of these issues was dealt with has resulted in the church now being without a proper organist. A smooth transition had been well planned but the church authorities mishandled the appointment of a new organist in a manner that beggars belief.

The 12 noon Organ Recitals at St Peter Mancroft every Saturday of the year for over twenty years, have always attracted a wide range of people from all walks of life. Audiences ranged from about 25 to over 50, many of whom came for what they described as their weekly 'fix' or their weekly experience of 'paradise'. The concerts were free and featured a vast range of musical styles. Sadly, as the church now has no official organist, these concerts, have been stopped by the church authorities. KR.

Work on the East End Organ in St Peter Mancroft

The organ at the east end of St Peter's was modelled out of some of the pipework of the instrument that formerly occupied the whole of the south transept. The work was left incomplete in 1986 due to lack of funds and it lacked essential controls.

When Vera Page died many years ago she left a generous legacy to be spent on the choir of the day and on related musical matters including the completion of the east end organ and was most anxious that her money should enable this project to be carried out. So, after many years, Rodney Briscoe of Messrs Boggis of Diss, who created the instrument in 1986, completed the work during August.

For the technically minded this means that the whole organ is re-enclosed, as it was formerly, behind swell shutters (not visible behind the dummy pipe façade). Thumb and toe pistons have been added together with other up to date controls. This means that it is now possible for the instrument to be much more expressively played, and that the accompaniments for the various singing groups in the church can be performed with a much greater variety of stop changes without drowning the singers. The appearance of the instrument has not changed.

Vera Page was a great friend to me and I would like to record my posthumous thanks to her for enabling this work to be carried out, albeit it for my successor rather than for myself. KR.

Organ news

Geoff Sankey

Johnson & Son have completed the re-leathering of the perished pneumatics at Hethersett, and are now working at St George's, Methwold. This Walker instrument with 15 unenclosed stops, in a striking blue 1970s case, was erected here in 1975 by Keith Bunce and is now being thoroughly cleaned. They continue to be very busy in the Cambridgeshire area, having completed restorations at West Wickham, Sawston, Cambridge and Ely to name but a few. Nearer to home, earlier this year they carried out pipe repairs, Tremulant restoration and improvement to the Choir winding at St Andrew's Hall in Norwich.

Holmes & Swift have completed work on the Hill instrument at Barsham, and are now overhauling the Thomas Jones organ dating from around 1910 at Saxthorpe. Originally built for the Cordwalles School in Camberley, it was installed here by Manders in 1947. They are also continuing to work on the one manual and pedal instrument at Bale near Fakenham. This 8 stop instrument was last restored by Ralph Bootman in 1974. Although the casework is likely to be by Norman & Beard who installed the instrument here in 1894, the early 19th century organ itself has been attributed to Holditch.

Richard Bower & Company's *magnum opus* over the last period has been the completion of a new instrument for St Augustine's in Wisbech. Although making use of the original Forster & Andrews pipework and casework, this is essentially a new instrument. It is contained in two bracketed units on the

south chancel wall, with an impressive stop list. Combining the best of traditional and modern, the action is mechanical, but the player is supported by a console with electronic drawstops and pistons. At Poringland All Saints, a 7 stop 2 manual pneumatic Bishop organ rebuilt by E & W Storr in 1964 with electric action, has again been rebuilt. Two stops have exchanged manuals and been revoiced, the stopped diapason moving from swell to great, and the Dulciana moving from great to swell and becoming a Celeste.

Boggis & Co have restored the pneumatic action on the George White organ at Friston, near Saxmundham. This has one manual and 4 stops with an unusual pneumatic action with melodic bass and octave couplers. These hadn't worked for years until the restoration. At Salle, Norfolk, they carried out a minor repair which has given a very significant improvement to the organ. They re-leathered the pneumatic drawstop machines which had also not operated properly for several years. They have moved the 1870 Bevington instrument from Great Ellingham to Thompson, where it has replaced an unreliable Positif. This 6 stop, one manual and pedal, Bevington had come to Gt Ellingham from Solihull in 1938. At Dickleburgh, they have fitted a new connection box in the chancel to the instrument (built by themselves a few years ago) so that the console can now be positioned either in the chancel or the nave.

Norwich Organs have been busy outside the area, including work on instruments in Derby, Chelmsford and Peterborough.

Norfolk Organists' Association on the Web



Any members who looked at the Association's website before the end of October will have noticed that it was somewhat out of date. At a recent committee meeting it was decided to update the website ourselves – previously the Incorporated Association of Organists had done this. This has also meant that we are able to use a more personal and obvious address. The website can be viewed at www.norfolkorganists.org.uk The presentation will be updated in due course and the events for 2006 will be added as soon as they are finalised.

The Norfolk Organists' Association, like many other local associations, is affiliated to the Incorporated Association of Organists. They have their own extensive website at www.iao.org.uk and our affiliation provides several benefits to members. The most obvious benefit is the subsidised price for subscriptions to the Organists' Review Journal. The IAO also provides public liability insurance at all events – the cost of this is included in the capitation fees that our Association pays to the IAO. They also give financial support for certain events, most recently £130 towards the Gerald Gifford event in Wymondham Abbey for which we are very grateful.
Tim Patient.

Membership notes

Sylvia Martin

We extend a warm welcome to Richard Baker who joined the Association in September and our condolences go to the family of Brian Taylor who had been a member since 1992 and who died in September.

Subscriptions, £16 for ordinary members and £8 for Student Members, are due for renewal on 1st January 2006. A renewal form is included with this Journal which should be completed and returned to me with a cheque made payable to 'Norfolk Organists Association'.



For those wishing to make payments directly into the bank the details are as follows:
CAF Bank Ltd, West Malling, Kent
Sort code: 40-52-40
Account name: Norfolk Organists Association
Gold account number: 00089291.

If you pay directly I only require a membership renewal form if any of your details have changed since last year or if it is your first application.

Completing a Gift Aid declaration gains additional income for the Association at no extra cost to yourself. Please consider this.

Best wishes to you all for Christmas and the New Year.

Desert Island Discs

Isabel Watson

One of the select band of founder members of NOA was the happy choice as castaway for this year's desert island adventure, an event which is always much enjoyed, revealing the life and personality of the subject through his choice of music. Peter Stevenson certainly has had a life of great variety and interest, whose details were skillfully elicited by our resident presenter, Ron Watson.

Peter is a local lad, born and educated in Norwich, and, although not from a musical background, discovered the delights of music in his schooldays at City of Norwich School, where he was charged with learning the double bass to play in the school orchestra. Norwich Cathedral introduced him to the world of choral and organ music, and although he was too old to become a chorister when presented to Statham, he was able to learn the organ with CJR Colman at St Peter Mancroft. The obligatory period of National Service was followed by an Organ Scholarship at Hatfield College, Durham University, then further study at the Royal College of Music with Harold Darke.

His long career was woven from three strands: church and cathedral music posts, notably at Ripon and Portsmouth; teaching both in schools and as Dean of the Faculty of Music at Hong Kong University; examining and adjudicating all over the world. Indeed he set up his own Music Festival whilst teaching at Berkhamstead, having persuaded eminent local resident, Moiseivitch, the great pianist, not only to be its patron, but to give a free annual recital. Throughout

his career he met and worked with many international figures such as Michael Tippett, who came to Hong Kong as Composer in Residence for the Arts Festival. Peter's 'retirement' brought him back to the UK where he continued both to teach and play. After a period in Cumbria, the pull of his Norfolk roots drew him back to his present life here.

His musical choices traced the path of his awakening to different aspects of musical expression, from Howells' *A Spotless Rose* sung by the choir of Chichester Cathedral when his son Tim was a chorister there, the glorious orchestral colour of Vaughan Williams' *Tallis Fantasia*, via Bach's *Lobe den Herrn* motet, Franck (with Peter himself at the organ of Portsmouth Cathedral), Britten, Tippett and the eerily atmospheric combination of the Hilliard Ensemble and saxophonist Jan Gabarek performing *Parce Mihi* by Morales. His final choice epitomised the nostalgia which had brought him back home, with the wistful *Cancion y Danza* of Federico Mompou in the sensitive hands of Stephen Hough. This last record was to be the one to take if only one record was allowed.

The customary final questions revealed Peter as a man who could fish in order to eat, but who would appreciate a liberal supply of his favourite New Zealand Sauvignon Blanc wine as his one luxury to accompany his meagre diet. Armed with Nelson Mandela's *The Long Road to Freedom* as his book choice, and possibly enjoying the company of Dame Judi Dench as his fellow castaway of preference, Peter would survive quite happily until the NOA rescue mission could reach him.

LETTER FROM FRANCE

In many of the churches hereabouts there is a harmonium and on a recent visit to a church which proudly had one of these in full view of the congregation, I found that the name of the maker was somehow familiar to me – where had I seen it before ? A chance sort-out of my books, pamphlets and the like dealing with reed organs provided the answer. I came across an old catalogue produced by the local Pianoforte and Organ dealers, A. W. Cooke & Son of 19 St Benedict Street, Norwich which gave details of these instruments they were offering for sale. At what date this had been issued, I know not, for their then telephone number was given as ‘1120 Y’ and the prices within seemed quite unreal. It was here that I had seen the name - *Christophe & Etienne* and the illustration was of the identical model to that which I had seen here in France ! It was of a model No 8 described in the catalogue as follows –

No 8 14 stops 5 octaves 4 rows of reeds

<i>Bass</i>		<i>Treble</i>	
Cor Anglais	8 ft	Flute	8 ft
Bourdon	16 ft	Clarinette	16 ft
Voix Humaine	2 ft	Voix Celeste	8 ft
Basson	8 ft	Hautboy	8 ft
Sourdine		Tremolo	
Forte		Forte	
Expression		Grand Jeu at knee	

In place of Voix Humaine and Voix Celeste, Clairon and Fifre may be substituted

Price £37 10s.

The fame of these instruments is worldwide. They are of the finest French manufacture, and the many thousands which have been sold is sufficient testimony to their unsurpassable excellence. The prices marked are List prices and are subject to a 25% discount for cash. They may also be obtained on our hire purchase system.

If you wished to use your feet to blow, rather than suck, then American Organs were also available – the cheapest started at £4 17s 6d and the ‘Ideal’ model in a walnut case with three bevelled mirrors, a Knee Swell and Patent Grand Organ Knee Swell, seven sets of reeds, 15 stops would cost £18 10s 0d nett cash or on hire purchase 12/6d monthly, £1 17s 6d quarterly.

The cheapest model was £4 17s 6d (5/- a month or 15/- quarterly) and ‘fold-up’ models, ideal for beach and other Mission Services cost £4 17s 6d nett cash or, with two sets of reeds, £6 6s 0d nett cash – and also available on the hire purchase system. Now, what date would you put on this – pre World War I – between the wars ? It would be interesting to know ! Is there anyone who could tell us ?

Scorn may be poured upon such instruments, but there is no denying that in a resonant building they can sound very well. So many of our French churches have superb acoustic properties and, from a distance, the one I tried sounded extremely well. Many of the great French composers wrote pieces especially for such instruments and to play them properly

entails the use of the feet in pedalling to a fine art – no *left-right, left-right* – but a careful ‘*quick-slow, quick-slow*’ or ‘*soft-hard, soft-hard*’ use of the feet according to the music being played. Some years ago the NGO (as it then was) was treated to a recital of music for the French harmonium given in Shelton parish church by Anne Page who proved to us that they really are musical instruments in their own right. How many of us did not, perhaps, learn our earliest hymns to their accompaniment? I know that I did. A few of our members actually possessed one of their own – but nowadays, of course, we have their successors – the electronic instrument ! I wonder what our forebears would have made of these? I am reminded of the words from Anna Russell’s *Yesteryear* –

‘How sad and sweet the thoughts do come,

While playing my harmonium ‘

Sandy joins me in sending you all our best wishes for Christmas and the New Year.
Ralph Bootman.

Dear Mr Watson, Brian Runnett and the Norwich Cathedral Cymbelstern

It was good to be reminded of Brian Runnett in the Autumn issue of The Journal. He was such an inspirational person to work with in matters of tonal design.

I remember two stories about the installation of the Cymbelstern, one musical, one visual. The musical one was that, although we had obtained the bells from a specialist in Germany, we were not quite sure quite how loud they should be. I designed the operating mechanism (direct-electric action!) so that the force of the hammers on the bells was readily adjustable. This was just as well, as their first use in recital was by Anton Heiller. He had played many organs in Bavaria with Cymbelsterns and, after his rehearsal, Anton told me that they were much too loud. The hammers were quickly adjusted so that the sound was to his satisfaction and, as far as I am aware, that is how they have remained.

Stepping back in time a few months, when we were first designing the Cymbelstern and were contemplating putting it in the central tower of the nave case, I did a little sketch and, with great trepidation, went to see Stephen Dykes-Bower. Stephen had designed the Norwich case in 1940 and, by 1969, was Surveyor to the Fabric of Westminster Abbey. I felt that he was too influential for me to risk upsetting him and that I therefore had to get his support for what was, after all, an alteration to his design. With some trepidation I approached his office through the beautiful Little Cloister at Westminster, with its tinkling fountain in the middle. I was received kindly but subjected to a quick round-up of his views on all the dreadful things that other people had done in the way of organ cases. This did nothing to ease my nerves. When he eventually turned to my sketch drawing of the star, he just said "That's all right, but you ought to have some little twisted spokes in between each point of the star". So, with great relief, we did as he said, and that is how the star got to be where it is.

Yours sincerely, John Norman

SUFFOLK ORGANISTS' ASSOCIATION TOUR OF HOLLAND 2006

Members of NOA are welcome to join this trip.

Dates - Tuesday 18th to Friday 21st -April, 2006.

Tour Company - Leisuretime Tours

Hotel - Old Dutch Hotel, Volendam.

Sea crossing - on the Stena Discovery from Harwich, about 11am, arriving at Hoek van Holland 4pm. Cost - £400

Haarlem and Alkmaar are the main objects of the tour, it may well include Delft, Keukenhoff gardens, Edam, and Flentropp's organ works at Zaandamm. Also we may be allowed to play both organs at St. Bavo's and St. Laurenskirk.

*Once your form is returned to Mrs Ann Little, you will receive the company's official application form, this will arrange your insurance cover as well, and you will send it direct to the company with the deposit.

The SOA Council hope this will be your dream tour of Holland, the organs in St. Bavo's, Haarlem, and St. Laurens, Alkmaar, are among the most beautiful in the world and you might be able to play them. There are many other good instruments in both places, and a wealth of galleries and museums too.

*Preliminary Booking Form available from Mrs. A. Little, 60, Deben Avenue, Martlesham Heath, IPSWICH, IP5 3QP or phone 01473 624002

Solution to Godoku in previous issue – hidden organist *Eric Fenby* (*diagonal*)

E	B	Y	F	I	C	R	U	N
U	R	C	E	N	B	I	Y	F
N	F	I	R	U	Y	C	E	B
B	E	F	C	R	N	Y	I	U
Y	C	N	I	F	U	B	R	E
R	I	U	B	Y	E	F	N	C
I	U	B	Y	E	F	N	C	R
F	Y	E	N	C	R	U	B	I
C	N	R	U	B	I	E	F	Y

A greeting

Being full of good will at all times for all my fellow travellers I constantly wish for everyone all they could possibly wish for themselves.

You may be assured that these sentiments apply, to no greater or lesser extent, during the latter part of December and what has become known as *The Festive Season*



NOA Membership 2005

Mr Richard Baker	Mrs Margaret Hunter	Mr Rod Paton
Dr David V Baldwin	Mr Freddie Hutchins	Mr James A Pewton
Mr David Ballard	Mr Robert G Ince	Mrs Rita M Piesse
Mr Lawrence H Bannister	Mrs Alice M C Ingrey	Mrs Ginny M Plunkett
Mr Gordon L Barker	Mr Arthur W Ingrey	Mr John G Plunkett
Mrs Margaret Barrell	Dr Francis Jackson	Mr Gordon M Pollard
Mrs Nora E Barwood	Mr Mark D Jameson	Mrs Josephine A M Pollard
Mrs Jean E Bedwell	Miss Celia A Joice	Mr Gary A Rant
Mr Matthew Bond	Mr John W Jordan	Miss Nellie W Reeder
Mr Ralph Bootman	Mr Steven Kirk	Mr John P Robbins
Mr Richard A J Bower	Mr Michael S Kisby	Miss Lis Room
Mr Simon J N Bracken	Dr Barbara Knowles	Mr Kenneth S Ryder
Mr Rodney E Briscoe	Mr James N Laird	Mr Geoff P Sankey
Mrs Ann Brown	Mr Paul Leeder	Miss Clare Seabrook
Mr David H Bunkell	Mr Anthony N Leeson	Mr Keith L Shaw
Mrs Ruth A Burrows	Mr J Richard W le Grice	Mr Nigel Singleterry
Mr John Burton	Mr P James Lilwall	Mr Kenneth G Smith
Mr Ronald C Buxton	Dr Allan H Lloyd	Miss WinnieSmith
Mr L G Andrew Campbell	Mr Cyril J Lockwood	Mrs Jessie Steadman
Ms Chrissie Clement	Mr Dennis A Long	Mr Peter A S Stevenson
Mrs Penelope M Cooke	Mr Philip Luke	Mrs Pauline M Stratton
Mr Basil A Cooper	Mrs Claire R MacArthur	Mr Martin Sussams
Mr Martin J Cottam	Mr David R Marquis	Mr Brian W Taylor (dec'd)
Mrs Sally G Desbois	Mr Mathew R Martin	Mr Julian R P Thomas
Mrs Anne Duarte	Mrs Sylvia Martin	Mrs K Hilda Thompson
Mr David Dunnett	Dr Richard G May	Mr Peter G Walder
Miss Lynda M Edwards	Mr Brian C Milward	Mr H David Watson
Mr Samuel D Eglington	Mr Carey Moore	Mrs Isabel Watson
Mr Bryan Ellum	Mr Alan R Morris	Mr W Ronald Watson
Mr John A Farmer	Mr Peter H Moss	Mr Graham Watt
Mr Colin H Fenn	Mr William Moss	Mr William S White
Mrs Margaret Foot	Mr Ian P Murphy	Miss Elizabeth A Wilson
Mrs Maria Gash	Mr Barry R Newman	Mr Robert P Woodcock
Dr Gerald M Gifford	Mr Raymond G Newman	Mr Brian A Woodcroft
Ms Prue Goldsmith	Mr Peter O'Connor	Mr Marcus E D Wortley
Mr William S Ham	Mr Timothy R A Osborne	Mr Paul H Wraith
Mr Rodney J Head	Mr Brent L Palmer	Mr Matthew C Wright
Miss Alexandra A Herring	Miss Hannah Parry	Mrs Joan Wylie
Mr John R Hudson	Mr Timothy I Patient	