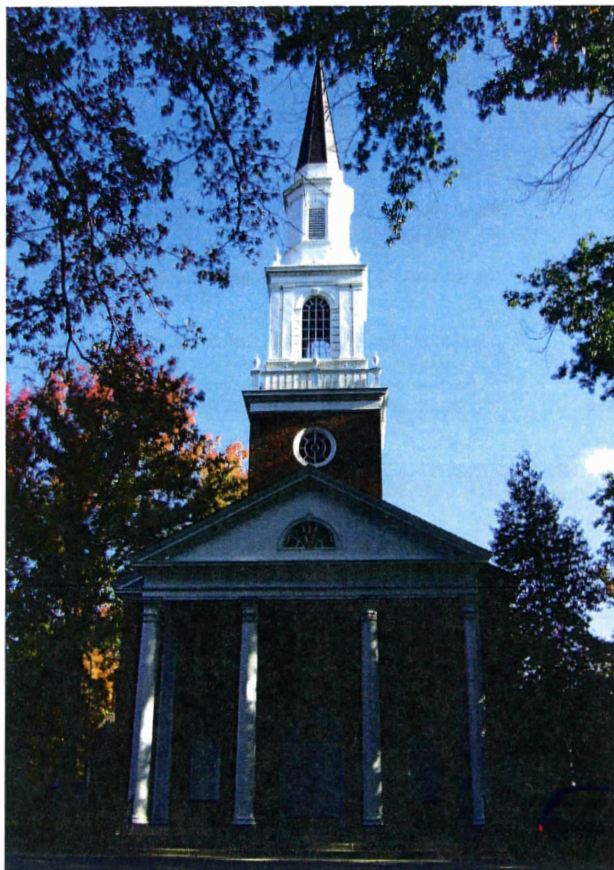


The Journal

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***Last date for copy for the next Journal is Saturday 17th February 2007
Why not send your contribution by email to
watron@tiscali.co.uk***

Our President sends a Diamond Jubilee Year message

1947 is known for the severest winter for decades when the snow curtailed travel for six weeks. One of the country's main industries, coal, was nationalised and to the annoyance of many youngsters the school leaving age was raised to 15. India and Pakistan were born of partition and The Princess Elizabeth (having collected her ration tokens for her dress) was married to Prince Philip Mountbatten.



The Mountbattens discuss the future of India with Mahatma Gandhi

In the county of Norfolk the distinguished Organist and Master of the Choristers - Dr Heathcote Statham was presiding at the rebuilt organ in Norwich Cathedral. It was in this year that the Norfolk & Norwich Organists Association was born.

Among its founder members was a young man called Peter Stevenson who subsequently left Norfolk and became not only a Cathedral Organist but a distinguished academic. Peter is still a member and, now retired, lives again in

Norfolk. Another founder member was the organist of Cromer Parish Church, the late Norman Cutting.

After many years the name was changed to The Norfolk Guild of Organists but has now reverted to the present NOA. So, as you can appreciate, the year 2007 is a very important milestone in our Association's history.

With this in mind the committee has arranged four events for this special year. Normally there are many more events but the committee felt that four extra-special events for 2007 would make it possible for members to attend most of these. It is really important that these are well supported. One has to say that this is not always the case, as recently members have been a 'little thin on the ground'!

Gordon Barker will be stepping down as Events Secretary in March so if any member is interested in donning the 'Events' mantle or to join the committee please speak to any committee member. Our General Secretary and President Elect, Timothy Patient, will begin his President's term of office in 2007 and I do encourage you to give him your full support especially during this Jubilee year.

Please make a point of attending the four spectacular events details of which are published on the final page.

The editor writes.....

I suppose I am getting used to playing for weddings and funerals where all I am required to play is hymns, and sometimes only one hymn. From a purely mercenary standpoint it is money for old rope and I have to counter feelings of guilt by telling myself that I am being paid not only for 3½ minutes of playing but the time getting there and back and being in attendance. Also that they could have had more organ music if they had wanted it - I was at their disposal for Widor's *Toccata* or *A Whiter Shade of Pale* or whatever they wanted, within reason, all for the same price.

Increasingly of late, whether it has been at St Peter Mancroft or Colney Wood Burial Park, the music for the entry and departure of the cortège/bride has been provided over the loudspeaker system from a recording.

One can only be grateful that when the choice is something like '*I did it my way*' one has been spared trying to bring this off on the organ (or, in the case of that particular piece, play it at all!). The other side of the coin is being asked to play some substantial piece on an organ on which it cannot be brought off convincingly.

However, recent experiences have made it obvious that the operators of sound systems should be given some basic training, which would incorporate getting the volume right, fading the music instead of just switching it off in mid flow when everyone is in their place, and similar tasteful niceties. (Mind you, I have on more than one occasion heard organists who adopted the same approach, simply lifting their hands off the keys once the

choir was in, without any attempt to find a suitable cadence).

Another fundamental might be playing the right piece. At a recent funeral service, despite it being printed on the service sheet that the cortège would leave to Bach's *Air on the G string*, reinforced by an announcement to the same effect, what came over the system was Pachelbel's *Canon*. Yet I noticed no raised eyebrows or quizzical looks amongst the mourners so assumed that they were none the wiser and that one bit of stuffy classical music sounds much like any other. I did suspect, however, that if they had been expecting '*My way*' and got Pachelbel's *Canon* there may have been some signs of puzzlement - but who knows?

I have to say in fairness that some recorded music used at such services has been extremely tasteful and appropriate. The use of an excellent recording of Vaughan Williams' *The Lark Ascending* as the mourners filed out at Colney Wood was truly moving and could not have been so meaningfully reproduced on the organ.

On another occasion, this time in St Peter Mancroft, I couldn't understand why I was uncomfortable with *Jesus Christ Superstar* and wondered if I needed to examine my prejudices.

Coming back to the hymns, one wonders sometimes why a particular bunch chose to have hymns at all, given that only a handful of them mutter into their chests whilst furtively looking around to see if anyone else is 'doing it' whilst the rest stand mum and patiently wait until this embarrassing interlude is over and they can sit down again. In such instances I have no conscience about taking my fee at all!

Drop the aitch

Possibly the most mispronounced name in the music world is that of Jehan Alain. The trouble with it is the aitch. The pronunciation is in fact dead easy if you think of the English equivalent which is John. Now John sounds the same as Jon and Jehan sounds the same as Jean.

Think about this next time you are talking about Je-h-on Scott or Je-h-on Taverner! Ignore the aitch and you'll get it right.

Organists required

At St George Tombland, Norwich - a city centre traditional high Anglican church. Sunday Sung Eucharist: 10.30 am. Occasional extra services. No choir. RSCM rates. Apply Canon John Minns (john.minns@virgin.net): tel 01603 437000 or Rev Maggie Diffey: 01603 457248

and at Braydeston Church near Blofield, BCP services, for more details contact Ian Walters 01603 715948

THE JOURNAL - an announcement

As all of next year's events are flagged up in this issue and as there are only **four**, the Journals for 2007 will be consequently a little thin. The write-ups of events always take up several pages and with only four in the whole year there will be spare capacity.

It may make sense to publish only **three** Journals next year and even those would be thinner than usual unless there are far more items from the readership.

As it is a special year then publishing articles from previous Journals is an option alongside reminiscences from the membership from the 60 years of the Association's history being marked.

The Journal is this Association's house magazine and contributions from members are its life blood - so let's be hearing from you in 2007.

Would you **PLEASE** make a note of my current email address which is watron@tiscali.co.uk.

Emails to any other address could go unread.

Wanting something different for your 2007 recital?

An ORGAN DUO - pupil Matthew Bond who has already played in programmes in Sheringham and Mundesley parish churches and at the NOA AGM and who deputises at St Yarmouth and Trunch PCs, with teacher Peter Stevenson. They offer the Organ Duet by Samuel Wesley (1812), and individual solos. Contact Peter Stevenson. 01263 721838

Norwich Cathedral Choir in the USA

Ronald Watson

Reports on the foreign tours made by the musicians of Norwich Cathedral periodically feature in the Journal and I am indebted to Julian Thomas for giving up his time to furnish me with the following details of their most recent trip to the United States and with the photographs.RW.

Taking the choir of the cathedral on a foreign tour is a major undertaking and this most recent trip was all masterminded by the Organist, David Dunnett over many months. The first stage was to select venues and make contacts in order to arrange singing engagements. A personal contact of David's in St Louis led to others in and around Chicago and so the itinerary could be fixed.

Financing the trip was the next major task and trusts, sponsors and individuals were approached to this end. In addition to this the Cathedral made some contribution but by far the greatest input of funds was from the Promises Auction which raised in the region of £7,000. In the Summer, the boys did a sponsored bike ride, Julian Thomas performed Messiaen's *Ascension* and the takings from David Dunnett's August Bank Holiday recital all helped to swell the fund. David also contributed some of his fees from recitals and other musical events in the county.

And so at midnight on Monday 16th October a coach left The Close bound for Heathrow Airport from whence, at 6 a.m. on the Tuesday morning the party flew across to Schiphol and onward to Chicago, arriving, thanks to the time difference, at about midday. This gave the

18 boys, 12 men, the Master of the Music and 2 organists time for some rest before their first engagement on Wednesday at the 4th Presbyterian Church in Chicago. Also along on the trip were the Precentor, Nicky Dunnett and Sheila Hammer whose help in various ways is invaluable.



The party, and four suitcases of robes, arrived safely at an hotel on the outskirts of Chicago where they were to stay for four nights and where they enjoyed the hotel's indoor swimming pool. (On a previous trip the luggage containing the robes had gone adrift, causing not a little concern).

From this base the choir also performed on the Thursday at Christchurch, Winnetka, slightly north of the city, and on the Friday for the Illinois American Choral Directors' Association in the First Presbyterian Church of Wheaton to the west. There was time for sightseeing and ascending tall buildings

for the view and for Julian Thomas to unwind on a girder several storeys above street level.



On Saturday the choir set off by coach for a full day's journey to St Louis where the boys stayed with hosts from the John Burroughs School and the men were once again in an hotel.

On Sunday 22nd October the choir took part in the morning service at St Peter's La Due and in the afternoon sang a joint concert with the St Louis Chamber Chorus at the St Michael and St George Episcopal Church, Clayton when singing arrangements of *Chatanooga Choo-choo* and *Ain't misbehavin'* provided some relief from the otherwise sacred repertoire. It was after this concert that the girls from the school descended on the boys who were quite knocked sideways by the attention they were attracting, something they are quite unused to.

Monday and Tuesday saw concerts at the John Burroughs School and at Illinois Wesleyan University, Bloomington. The programmes were selected from the following five groups:

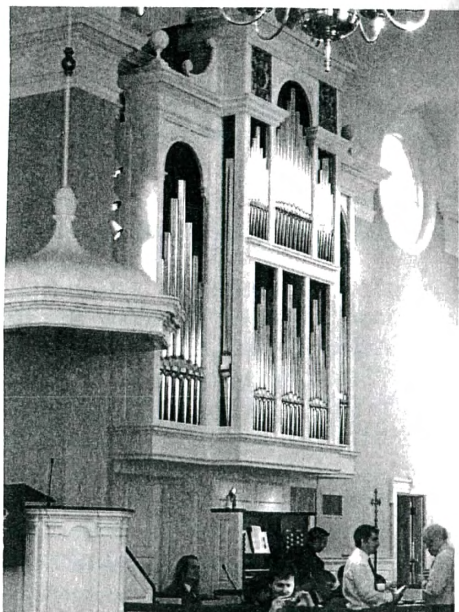
Advent, Christmas & Epiphany which included *Laetentur coeli* by Byrd, *There is no rose* by Joubert and *Epiphany* by Judith Bingham.

Lent, Passiontide and Easter: *Salvator mundi* by Tallis, *Richte mich Gott* by Mendelssohn, *My beloved spake* by Hadley and *Lo, the full, final sacrifice* by Finzi.

Ascension, Pentecost & Trinity: *God is gone up* by Finzi, *Dum complerentur* by Palestrina and *Alleluia, I heard a voice* by Weelkes

Communion & Evensong: *O sacrum convivium* by Messiaen, *Let all mortal flesh keep silence* by Bairstow, *Great Lord of Lords* by Wood and *Geistliches Lied* by Brahms

Canticles & Saints: *St Peter & St Paul* by Rutti and *Te Deum (Collegium Regale)* by Howells.



St Peter's La Due

In each concert there were organ solos played by Julian Thomas and Ben Giddens which featured among the composers Bach, Alain, Howells and Finzi. This being the 50th anniversary of

Finzi's death several of his pieces were featured and a contemporary piece, *In memoriam GRF*, by Sasha Johnson Manning.

As a general observation Julian Thomas considered that in each of the churches they visited the organs were far too large for the buildings and each had a cymbelstern and chimes. In St Louis the choir of Westminster Cathedral had sung in the Roman Catholic cathedral only four days earlier. Visits by English choirs are not the novelty they used to be, hence audiences tend to be smaller and the offers of financial support from the hosts, not as substantial as once was the case. However, all participants in this trip felt that it had been a huge success and most enjoyable.



This in a church about the size of St Thomas's, Earlham Road!

From the Secretary

You may remember an article in the Spring 2006 edition of 'The Journal' which included a plea from the IAO asking associations for a list of practice instruments. In its most recent mailing, Catherine Ennis, President of the IAO, asked each association if they could let the IAO have details of at least six practice instruments by 31st October 2006 in order to create a national practice organs database. Unfortunately the Norfolk Organists' Association has not been able to do so as there were no responses to the original article.

However, it is not too late for some Norfolk organs to be included in the database and so if you are able to help, I would be grateful if you could contact me. The details requested by the IAO are as follows:

Name of venue, with directions

Contact name and telephone number or E-mail

Charge if applicable

Brief specification of instrument.

(Permission will need to be sought from Church/Chapel/contact person).

The original article also suggested that each association might like to compile a list of organ teachers. Again no responses have so far been received. If you know any organ teachers who may be interested in being included in a list, please let me know. Thank you very much.

CD Review: Sounds of Splendour

Music for trumpet and organ from Norwich Cathedral. John Coulton trumpet and David Dunnett organ COUL01

Gordon Barker

This superb duo carry off a varied programme and succeed in sustaining the interest of the listener to the very last note. John Coulton's sparkling playing is matched by David Dunnett's imaginative accompaniments. Undoubtedly the core and highlight of the disc is their performance of Petr Eben's *Okna* (Windows) a series of contrasting movements reflecting four of Marc Chagall's twelve stained glass windows in the Hadassah Medical Centre in Jerusalem which represent the twelve tribes of Israel. The colour of each window does give the composer an opportunity to create a scenario and so the blue window suggests a seascape, whereas the green window evokes the countryside. Eben's red sound world is full of sunlight and glittering reflections, whereas the final golden window draws the listener into a misty atmosphere of icons and incense with it's haunting echoes of Russian chant.

The only other composed work on the disc is *Prayer of St Gregory* by the American composer Alan Hovhaness. His use of the aeolian mode suggests a bygone era and creates a fascinating programme contrast with the charming pre-baroque *Suite de Danses* of Melchior Franck.

Marie Claire Alain's arrangements of an Albinoni Concerto and a Martin organ Toccata come across with considerable style and panache and I loved the interplay of trumpet and organ in Purcell's *Sonata in D*, where David

Dunnett makes thrilling use of the organ's resources.

Warm, sensitive playing in the quieter pieces such as Faure's *Pie Jesu* and a very non-hackneyed realisation of the Bach-Gounod *Ave Maria* ensure contrast for the ear. The duo have certainly met the considerable challenges that a full-length trumpet/organ programme makes. Great sound quality throughout with interesting programme material; though it would have been helpful to have noted all John Coulton's changes of instrument. Good luck to this impressive duo - may we hear more from you!

Badinage - the CD

Philip Underwood has recorded a delightful programme designated as *A Celebration of Music for Chamber Organ* on the Holmes' Organ in Manchester featuring music by Bach, Walther, Mozart and several well known favourites including Underwood's own *Folksong Fancies* and the ubiquitous *Badinage* by your's truly. Philip Underwood's accomplished playing will, I'm sure, be enjoyed. A nice Christmas present for someone at only £8. 50 inc. postage from Philip L. Underwood, 28 Bracadale Drive, Davenport, Stockport, Cheshire SK3 8RS

Music for Small Organs

Gordon Barker

The detail of this event grew out of an organist's search for interesting and stimulating music that could be readily performed on local instruments of very limited resources. Indeed, much of the music demonstrated is now being played regularly on an indifferent Yamaha keyboard! Sadly, the small organ repertoire rarely finds article space in the major organ magazines despite the fact that the vast majority of players have to cope with such instruments and their frailties every week.

Mattishall Church possesses a reasonably well-endowed two manual organ, though it lacks a reed stop; while the neighbouring URC chapel instrument is a bright 19thC one manual. Unlike many local examples both instruments are regularly maintained.

It was suggested that the criteria for selection should be along the following lines:-

- a) The music must be playable on instruments of limited resources.
- b) The music should be within the capability of the player.
- c) The music should provide sufficient challenges to give satisfaction once the piece has been learnt thoroughly.
- d) The music should be relevant to the repertoire required by the player.

The music demonstrated and discussed provides examples of 'manuals only' material and most of the pieces only require minimal use of the pedals; a decided advantage if the pedal board is short compass or has pedal notes seemingly as thin as knitting needles. A large proportion of the selection is by

established organ composers who really know what they are doing. The list is offered as a suitable alternative to the glossily packaged albums so often seen on music shop shelves.

British Music:

A Coldridge Organ Book (manuals only)
Clucas *Animus*
Coldridge Baroque (manuals only) Clucas
Vesper Voluntaries Elgar *Faber*
Two Pieces for Organ (manuals only)
Howells *Novello*
Six Short Pieces (ed Wells) (2 man/ped)
Howells *Novello*
Georgian Suite (can be manuals only)
Jackson *OUP*
An Overture & Six Pieces (manuals only)
Marsh *Musik-Verlag St Augustine*
Mrs Thing series Watson *Fagus*

American Music:

Music for a Quiet Sunday Pinkham
Thorpe Publishing Co

French Music:

Eight Short Preludes on Gregorian
Themes (manuals only) Dupré *Summy*
Birchard Inc
Organ Book (Ten Pieces) Langlais *Elkan-*
Vogel Inc
Messe Basse Louis Vierne *Masters Music*
Pub Inc

German Music:

Selected Two & Three part Inventions
(manuals only) JS Bach

During the session members took the opportunity to try out examples. Virtually all the publications listed have movements that could be successfully learnt by reluctant organists. However, some of the material would satisfy the more advanced player too. Why not give some of them a try?

A Peep into the Archives 2

As you will remember, we are including extracts from previous editions of the Norwich and District Organists' Association newsletter.

From Issue No.2, July 1967:

Congratulations to our member Mr Norman Cutting, on completing twenty-five years as Organist at Cromer Parish Church.

It was a matter of deep regret that the Triennial Festival Organ Recital given by John Birch, Organist of Chichester Cathedral, was forced to be abandoned when only partly completed. Failure of the blower motors was the cause.

From Issue No.4, January 1968:

Our Committee Member, Mr Geoffrey Clarke, who also contributes the Record Reviews, has recently installed a two manual, six rank Compton Cinema Organ in the Palace Cinema, Gorleston, in collaboration with Mr J G Crampton. Originally built in 1928 for the Ritz Cinema, Aldershot, Hants, the organ was taken out of the cinema in 1962 to make room for a new heating apparatus. This work had to be completed in under a week or else the instrument would have been scrapped. It was stored in Norwich until work of installing it at Gorleston started in August 1967 and the work was completed in November.

From Issue No.5, April 1968:

...Mr Geoffrey Clarke...has almost completed the restoration of the Organ in the Old Meeting House Congregational Church, Norwich...the lovely front case has been stripped of seven or eight layers of dark paint and has been repainted Wedgewood Blue...

As you will all know, your Committee has arranged a series of Lunch Time Organ Recitals of Popular Music to take place on Wednesdays in July. These are to be given in the ex Chapel in the Fields Congregational Church where the 3 manual Norman & Beard organ of 1912 is available for members to play if they so wish.

Norwich Cathedral

New Year's Day at 11 am.

Bank Holiday recital

Julian Thomas

Admission free

Midday Music at Princes Street URC

*First Thursday of the month from 12.45
until 1.45*

*come when you can - leave when you
must*

*December 7th - programme includes
Lemmens' STORM*

January 4th ORGAN DUO

pupil Matthew Bond

and teacher Peter Stevenson

IAO Congress, Cologne - July 2006

Martin Cottam

I was in my mid-teens when first transfixed by a photograph of Cologne Cathedral in one of my father's old books. The twin spires of spiky masonry (just 3 feet lower than Blackpool Tower) rocketing high over the groups of ants traversing the cathedral steps ignited a love affair with Germany and Gothic architecture that remains undiminished. So when I saw the announcement that this year's IAO Congress was to be in Cologne my deposit was posted without delay. There is insufficient space here for a day by day account of so rich a week. For that I must direct you to the evocative report in November's issue of *Organists' Review*. All I can do is to try and give a few snapshots of some of my own personal highlights.

Bonn, St Elisabeth: Large, late 19thC church in impeccable Romanesque style with a west gallery organ by Klais, 1910 - 13. Four manuals and pedals including an Echo division (Fernwerk) tightly enclosed in a chamber behind the altar far away at the east end. Recital of music by the German romantics - something of a blind spot in my appreciation of organ repertoire. Revelation! Johannes Geffert's stylish and affecting playing coupled with the warm and haunting sonorities of a real German romantic organ proved deeply moving. Lots of 8' texture but never woolly or cloying; growling reeds used sparingly but to telling effect, and how clearly the Echo division breathed beautifully into the body of the church. Gorgeous.

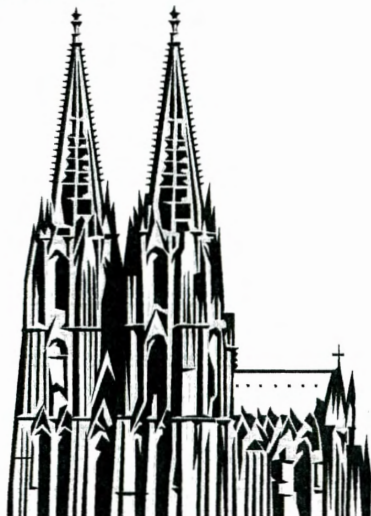
Schwarzheindorf, St Clemens: Just across the Rhine from Bonn, a sublime

Romanesque church with a highly unusual interior of two separate storeys, upper and lower churches both aglow with stunningly preserved original fresco cycles. Organ by Stumm, 1728, two manuals and pedals, twenty-five stops. A master work and an object lesson in small organ design demonstrating qualities shared by the other baroque organs we heard during the week: clear, bright principal chorus work but so much warmer than the neo-classical organs of the late 20thC would lead most people to anticipate. Luscious flutes and surprisingly fiery reeds - do such colour notes arise from the Rhineland's close proximity to France? The organ proved itself to be a remarkable chameleon of an instrument as capable of delivering classical French Grands Jeux sounds or soft romantic subtlety as the more expected German baroque sonorities. Where are the English equivalents? And who needs high wind pressures?

The Rhine boat trip: Chance brought the tirelessly effervescent President of the IAO, Catherine Ennis to my table. Her personality is as engaging as her playing - don't miss her recital in Wymondham Abbey next May! Alongside her an extremely handsome and articulate young man proved to be none other than Philipp Klais, fourth generation managing director of Klais organ builders. Charismatic, charming, witty and sociable in equal measure Philipp wears his knowledge lightly and communicates his passion for the organ with irresistible enthusiasm - qualities energetically demonstrated when he led our tour of the Klais organ works in the evening. An extraordinary afternoon passed in a heady haze of rich conversation, German wine, powerful scenery and the occasional

lightning flash, not to mention the apparently limitless buffet! On the evidence of the ham we watched being carved, German pigs are most surely the size of an English ox.

Free evening recital, Cologne Cathedral: I'd often heard tales of continental recitals being better attended than British ones but nothing prepared me for this. Cologne Cathedral is a truly vast building but the pews were completely full a good half an hour or more before the recital's start. Still the crowds poured in, hundreds bringing their own fold-up chairs and stools with which they filled the aisles. Others simply stood where they could or sat or lay on the floor. Guido Graumann, our German guide, estimated there were at least four thousand present, possibly four and a half! Apparently there are rarely less than three thousand for these summer recitals. Surveys have revealed most listeners to be local, not tourists. What sort of music education do the Germans give their children that we British don't?!



The cathedral possesses two large organs both by Klais. The earliest (1948/56) is housed in the angle between choir and north transept, the more recent (1998) is a 'swallow's nest' organ suspended from the vault on the north side of the nave. From the floor it looks almost diminutive, the vault being so high, but the case front displays the full length pipes of the 32' Violon! Both organs can be played from the console of the earlier instrument. Philipp Klais told me an 8' Bourdon is housed next to the console and the organist must listen to these pipes as he plays in order to keep his bearings. Intriguingly he added that apart from the cathedral organist himself it is invariably the British players who seem best able to maintain a measure of control and aural balance when both instruments are combined. Regularly playing instruments deployed around disparate parts of a building (as most of our organists have to!) has its advantages then!

Maria Laach: Arguably the most perfect of the great Romanesque churches that so grace the Rhineland territories. Yellow brown tufa stone with architectural highlights in dark basalt. Exquisitely sited amidst wooded hills surrounding a large, serene lake. Even the pouring rain could not fully dampen the loveliness. Inside, another large romantic instrument (Georg Stahlhuth, 1910) housed in a deceptively small modern case high in a west gallery. Our last recital of an extraordinary week spared no quarter! What force roared forth at the start of Reger's Op 46 *Fantasia und Fuga über BACH* only to be increased after just a few bars! I wondered if our recitalist, Daniel Moulton, unused to German romantic stop controls had inadvertently engaged something he hadn't intended, but no. He

told me afterwards that's just the effect this music indicates. Reger is a totally different beast when played on an organ of his own time and country: all those notes and massed textures work in a way quite impossible with the heavier, thicker tones of a typically British instrument.



Throw in the thrillingly effective use of the 'Walze' pedal (a sophisticated German equivalent of our 'crescendo' pedal and an essential component in the proper rendering of Reger's organ music) and suddenly I find myself almost believing Reger has to be counted amongst the greats!

Five snapshots: I could easily have provided double that number again (and I've made no mention of litter free streets, integrated transport systems, the refreshing absence of 'last buses' and binge drinking culture). However, I must add a couple more comments. One of the great joys of attending congress is the opportunity to spend a week in the company of kindred spirits - fully rounded and diverse characters who happen to share a knowledge and enthusiasm for the organ and its repertoire. No longer are you a lone voice trying to explain your passion to bemused people who invariably regard the organ as a decidedly oddball sort of instrument apparently the preserve of

anorak types (a musician friend of mine once admitted they couldn't imagine anyone listening to organ music at home!). The wine tasting in the Eifel hills on our last golden evening could not have been bettered as a congenial opportunity for cementing new friendships and basking in the shared recollection of a life enhancing week.

And finally I must sing the praises of the clutch of British organists who came to Germany with us and demonstrated such outstanding talent and musicianship in various of our recitals. The continued failure of Radio 3 to showcase such extraordinary talent while the young pianists, violinists et al get their due airing is nothing short of a national disgrace.

St Peter Mancroft

Saturday 2nd December at 7.30 pm

*An evening of Advent and Christmas
music presented by the St Peter Mancroft
Girls' Choir & Choral Scholars*

directed by ***Jody Butler*** with ***Matthew
Pitts*** - organ

*£5 (£3 Concessions) includes interval
refreshments*

Into the valley.....

Martin J Cottam

Three fine medieval churches and three intriguingly individual organs; six classic examples of treasures with which Norfolk abounds. Such then were the delights that awaited the intrepid band of Association members who rode into the valley of the Wensum on Saturday 16th September.

First up, Whissonset church where an exhibition of local history gave Dennis Stratton delightful distraction as he sought out the names of his father and aunt on the old school registers. The rest of us made for the 1830s Richard Nicholson organ superb in its beautifully finished case of mahogany and walnut with gilded show pipes. This and the gentleness of the voicing betray the instrument's possible origins in a country house. Some found the short, flat pedal board a challenge while others struggled to hear the delicate tones above the hubbub of enthusiastic locals perusing the exhibition. But what an exquisite instrument and Richard Bower is to be congratulated on restoring such a treasure to its full glory both tonally and visually. Do re-read his article in the Summer 2005 issue of the Journal for more detail.

An administrative error on the part of our victualling establishment led to the main party lunching at the Bridge Inn, Lenwade, while Dick le Grice dined alone in The Parson Woodforde at Weston Longville. However, we were reunited in the parish church made famous by the diary writing parson. Light, spacious and textured interior, box pews in the south aisle and splendid medieval paintings on the walls and the chancel screen. In the

shadow of the latter stands the 2 manual and pedals organ of 1906 by Walker that Dick has played faithfully for many years. In my opinion Walkers made some of the best organs to come out of the Edwardian era. Clear and well balanced chorus work and reeds plus characterful string and solo stops and good blending qualities. Even the smaller organs like this one have specifications that are pleasingly complete and versatile, especially for their time.

From Weston Longville we crossed the valley and climbed to the towering magnificence that is Swanton Morley church. What noble, soaring arcades and such graceful mouldings all beautifully illuminated by the sun that was now pouring through the clear glass windows of the south aisle. We were warmly welcomed by Dougal Smith, the church organist, hotfoot from wedding duties. Dougal first played the organ as an occasional stand-in while stationed at the nearby RAF base in the early 70s I believe. He's been at Swanton Morley ever since. Another 2 manual and pedals organ, this time circa 1871. Dougal believes this could well be the first instrument to emerge following the amalgamation of the Norman brothers with Mr Beard. Like the two instruments played earlier, this one is free standing and speaks well into the church. Norfolk's organs are rarely crushed into purpose built chambers that so hinder the proper egress of sound in most English churches.

Finally our host gave an impressive rendition of the first movement of Widor's 5th organ symphony demonstrating the organ's full potential and sending us out all smiles. All involved in the day's organisation must be heartily thanked for providing such a fine and fulfilling day's outing.

.....and some extracts from Parson Woodforde's diary give an impression of Christmases past

Dec. 25 1773

I dined in the Hall and 14 Sen' Fellows with me. We had a very handsome dinner of my ordering, as I order dinner every day being Sub Warden.

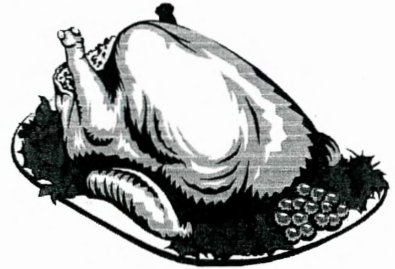
We had for dinner, two fine Cods boiled with fried Souls round them and oyster sauce, a fine sirloin of Beef roasted, some peas soup and an orange Pudding for the first course, for the second, we had a lease of Wild Ducks roasted, a fore Qu: of Lamb and sallad and mince pies. We had a grace cup before the second course brought in by the Butler to the Steward of the Hall who was Mr Adams a Senior Fellow, who got out of his place and came to my chair and there drank to me out of it, wishing me a merry Xmas. I then took it of him and drank wishing him the same, and then it went the round, three standing up all the time. From the high Table the grace Cup goes to the Batchelors and Scholars. After the second course there was a fine plumb cake brought to the sen' Table as is usual on this day, which also goes to the Batchelors after.

Dec. 31 1780

This being the last day of the year we sat up till after 12 o'clock, then drank a Happy New Year to all our Friends and went to bed. We were very merry indeed after Supper till 12. Nancy and Betsie Davie locked me into the great Parlour, and both fell on me and pulled my Wigg almost to pieces - I paid them for it however.

Dec 26 1786

We breakfasted, dined &c. &c. again at home. To the Weston Ringgers, their annual Gift of 0. 2. 6 To my Malsters Man a Christmas Gift gave 0. 1. 0. To my Blacksmiths Son a Christmas Gift 0. 0. 6, Mr Girling, Mr Custances Steward, called here this Afternoon and paid me Mr Custances Composition for Land in hand, for the Tithe Sum of 13. 12. 6. Very sharp frost indeed last Night and this Morning it froze the Water in my Bason this morning that I wash in, quite over, in half an Hour after it had been brought up Stairs.



Dec. 25 1793

Wednesday also Christmas Day. Had a very respectable Appearance at the Altar to partake with me of the H. Sacrament, 2 Rails. The Singers sang the Christmas Anthem and very well, between the Litany and Communion. The following poor People dined at my House or had their dinner sent them & one Shilling each - Widow Case, my Clerk Tom Thurston, Christopher Dunnell, John Peachman, Tom Carr and Nathaniel Heavers. Nat. Heavers and Tom Carr had their Dinners sent them being ill. Gave to the above people in all 0. 6. 0. Dinner today, a boiled Rabbit and Onion Sauce, Surloin of Beef roasted, plumb Puddings and Mince Pies.

Letter from France

Ralph Bootman

Directives are now a part of our everyday lives encompassing almost everything we do and the world of organ building and maintenance is no exception to the innumerable rules and regulations put out by the faceless bureaucrats in Strasbourg, Brussels and other centres of the EU and by the ever increasingly important Health & Safety Executive in England. Some of these apply equally to us, over here in France, but the French have a penchant for either conveniently forgetting or deliberately ignoring many of the edicts which would upset their normal ways of life.

There is still another and quite important law which must be obeyed concerning the use of asbestos and is covered by the 2002 Control of Asbestos at Work Regulations effective from 21st May 2004 which states that anyone involved in the maintenance of public buildings - and this includes church premises - must be aware of any asbestos in the building and notify all others of its presence and to manage the material in a safe manner. For most of us this means that if we know of asbestos in the church, we must notify the organ builder/tuner and he, in his turn, must notify the church if he knows any exists! Now, what concerns us as organists? About the only place where asbestos is to be found is within the blower cabinet and not all of these contain it. Among the more popular makes of blowers the older models from Watkins & Watson - the 'Discus' - often found in a dark brown cabinet and produced after the war when organ building was regaining its feet - are the

most likely. Later, Watkins & Watson used a wadding contained within a plastic envelope.



B.O.B. blowers rarely used asbestos and amongst the other manufacturers, Taylor's of Leicester - there are several of their machines still functioning well today - are quite likely to have asbestos as are those from the now defunct firm of Rockingham, the smaller Duplex machines, Mecvent and those from builders who manufactured their own. I cannot ascertain whether asbestos, if found in the cabinets today, should be allowed to remain or should be removed - in case of doubt, your organ tuner should know!

Over here many of the smaller electrically blown instruments I have come across have completely unenclosed machines that are extremely silent in operation. These are made by Meidinger & Cie. or by the famous organ supply house of Lauikhauf of Germany, and when these are in operation only a short distance from the player, they are virtually inaudible and some provide wind for some 15-20 ranks. On the newer and larger instruments one often finds the wind is provided by wedge-shaped bellows worked by a series of ropes and pulleys. The new-ish four-manual Formentelli instrument at Mouzon uses

this system and remarkably silent and efficient it is. Of course, many of our larger instruments have their blower placed outside the building or in a cellar and asbestos is not used in these cases.

Now, if a church should find asbestos within its walls, it must be removed - something which may only be undertaken by a registered asbestos remover. At least one church has suffered from 'doing the right thing' and engaged a so-called asbestos consultant firm to examine their blower cabinet. Unfortunately, this firm was not registered but the church was not to know until the firm concerned told them that indeed they had asbestos and in such quantity that the church had to be closed pending decontamination, the cost of this being in excess of £100,000.00. However, a real expert was called in to give a second opinion, pronounced the building 'all clear' and the church could be re-opened and a large sum of money was saved!

Finally, yet another directive which does concern us! It has been brought to the attention of the European Commission that organists' safety is being compromised by the inherent design problems of organ benches. According to EU directive No.765/432/1, from 1st April 2007 all organ benches must be fitted with an approved pattern seat belt conforming to BS 987/654/321 or the organ cannot be played. The belt is required to have a quick-release button in case the performance is such that the organist has to leave the church in a hurry.

All organists will understand the need for such essential legislation for their own safety. Will the French take notice of these directives? I doubt it!

Good wishes for a very Happy Christmas and New Year.

Organist wanted

by The Unitarian church in Great Yarmouth. The organ is an electronic Yamaha. Services are the first and third Sunday of the month at 3 pm. They are willing to pay £15+ per service. Contact Revd Chris Wilson 01638 742091



Isabel and I send you our warmest wishes for the festive season



Beethoven and the organ

Peter Stevenson

We know that Beethoven received organ instruction at an early age from professional organists, and that he was an assistant Court Organist from 1784 in Bonn. As well as playing cembalo parts and accompanying choir rehearsals in the Theatre, he played for Masses at the Minorite Church.



A few student compositions from these early days exist in manuscript in the West German Library in Marburg; but the first edition of actual organ music did not appear until as recently as 1962, based on original manuscripts now in the "Deutsche Staatsbibliothek" in Berlin. These pieces are little known, most probably because they are not included in the Collected Works of Beethoven (Gesamtausgabe).

There are several short pieces from 1799 which were written for a mechanical organ in the style of Haydn's clock pieces, in fact the same mechanical organ-clock for which Mozart composed his well-known music now in transcriptions for organ - K. 594, K.608, and K.611 - in the

last year of his short life. An extended Adagio for organ is reminiscent of Beethoven's 'middle period' and was written about the same time as the well-known *Romance in F* Opus 50 for violin, later orchestrated. Of course it is not unreasonable to surmise that there were other pieces of this calibre but now lost.

Of the few other pieces there are two Preludes to which the composer allocated the opus number 39; the first of these which is of some nine minutes duration has unusual features including many modulations through all the major keys. Bach, in his "short harmonical Labyrinthus" to be found in the Complete Organ Works of J S Bach (Peeters edition no. 2067) followed a similar principle, as did Caldara and Locatelli in the early C18th.

These rarely heard pieces by Beethoven will be included in the monthly Lunchtime Recitals at Princes Street U.R.C. on 2nd November and 7th December this year.

Although both Mozart and Beethoven spoke in the highest terms of the organ and the organist - "in my eyes and ears the organ will ever be the King of Instruments" (Mozart), and "I maintain that an organist, who is a master of his instrument, is a virtuoso of the highest order" (Beethoven), the repertoire of these great composers was devoted to the development of instrumental/orchestral and operatic/choral Music with the extensive "growth of music" from the mid C18th in Western Europe.

Organ News

Geoff Sankey

The major project in hand for Holmes & Swift is the restoration which they are carrying out on the large 1926 Hele instrument in Fakenham parish church. Those who saw the EDP's picture of Edmund Holmes crouching amongst its pipes may have wondered about the accompanying article's description of the German leather motors being used. Edmund explains however that there really are thousands of these devices because the cone chest mechanism uses one motor for every pipe. It is hoped that this work will be completed by Christmas.

At East Lexham, they will shortly be installing a single manual Sweetland, built in 1873. This organ, which has a stop list of Open Diapason, Dulciana, Stopped Diapason, Principal and Fifteenth, is currently undergoing restoration in the workshop. They are also still active on the instrument at All Saints, Hethel.

Holmes & Swift are looking to find a new home for the recently renovated organ from the now redundant Silver Road Baptist church. This Norman & Beard, all-tracker action, instrument has the following resources:

Pedal:

Bourdon 16 Bass Flute 8

Great:

Open Diapason 8 Dulciana 8

Stopped Diapason 8 Principal 4

Wald Flute 4

Swell:

Open Diapason 8 Lieblich Gedact 8

Keraulophon 8 Principal 4 Piccolo 2

Cornoepen 8

They also have the following instruments are for sale:

One manual 5-stop Bates which will be rebuilt once a new home has been located and

Casson Positive Organ.

Boggis & Co have not only been carrying out a lot of tuning but have also been active at Ashwicken where they have improved the one manual and pedal Norman & Beard installed in 1910. In 1974 the Gamba and Celeste were apparently added on to spare slides. They have now restored the keys, pedals and mechanical action and cleaned and repaired the pipework. They also restored the casework and re-sprayed the front pipes, which has apparently enhanced the appearance of the organ. They changed the Flute 4 to Principal 4 and the Voix Celeste to Fifteenth, so the new specification is: Fifteenth 2 Principal 4 Gamba 8 Gedackt 8 Open Diapason 8. All pipes apart from the Open Diapason are enclosed.

At Christchurch, Lowestoft they have carried out repairs and adjustments to the Bourdon pipe chests, piston action wind system, lead tubing and general cleaning and tuning.

They have also managed to include time for the replacement of the Celeste at Ellingham (near Bungay) and a works outing to check the water organ they recently installed in Seville.

Richard Bower has nearly completed his work on the 50-stop Father Willis instrument at St Mary le Tower, Ipswich where he has re-hung the keyboard, made a new pedal board, revised the wind system and is now in the process of re-voicing. He is also carrying out a complete workshop restoration of the single manual and pedal WC Mack from Catfield, built in 1899.

Events

The final event of 2006 is
Desert Island Discs with castaway **Anne Page**
on Saturday 9th December at 2. 30 pm at Brooke Church rooms.
An exploratory chat with Ms Page indicates that members will find this a riveting
afternoon.

Diamond Jubilee Celebrations 2007

Saturday 24th March at St Andrew's Hall commencing at 11. 30 am.

Annual General Meeting followed by a **FREE** lunch for members with guest speaker **John Norman**

Afternoon recital given by two former winners of the NOA Young Organist Recital Award, **Sohyun Park** and **Hannah Parry**.

It is hoped there will be an exhibition from local organ builders.

Saturday 19th May at Wymondham Abbey at 7.00 pm

Recital by **Catherine Ennis**, organist of St Lawrence Jewry, international recitalist and President of the IAO.

Saturday 14th July Norwich Cathedral (time to be confirmed)

Recital by **Robert Houssart** Assistant Organist at Gloucester Cathedral, former chorister of Norwich Cathedral and pupil of Kenneth Ryder.

Saturday 8th September (final arrangements to be confirmed) Norfolk Organ Day

The Association will be encouraging members and friends to ensure that as many organs in Norfolk as possible are played during the day, thus raising the profile of the 'King of Instruments'. It is planned to coincide with the annual Norfolk Churches Trust Bicycle Run. This is an opportunity for **EVERY** member to become involved.

!Attend in your droves!