

# The Journal

Number 60

Summer 2007



Published by the  
Norfolk Organists Association

## *Contents*

	Page
The Editor writes	2
A message from the President	3
Life's little ups and downs	<i>Martin J Cottam</i> 4
Memories of a master	<i>Martin J Cottam</i> 6
2007 Annual General Meeting	<i>David Watson</i> 8
A visit to Lyon	<i>David Watson</i> 10
Organ news	<i>Geoff Sankey</i> 11
St Anne's Church Limehouse	<i>John Plunkett</i> 12
A peep into the archives 4	<i>selected by Tim Patient</i> 14
Anne Page at Wymondham Abbey	<i>Ronald Watson</i> 15
From the mailbag	17
For your diary	18
Events	20

*Last date for copy for the next Journal is Saturday 18th August 2007*  
*Why not send your contribution by email to*  
*watron@tiscali.co.uk*

*The editor writes.....*

On the same page as the Beelzebub crossword in the magazine section of The Independent on Sunday is a puzzle for art lovers. A very small detail from a painting is portrayed from which the painting, and artist of course, are to be identified. Nothing remotely as obvious as the Laughing Cavalier's moustache or a Van Gogh sunflower here! A recent example was Winslow Homer's *Mink Pond* (1891) which is in the Winthrop Collection at Harvard University - you know the one. One would have to be somewhat more than a mere art lover to have this degree of detailed knowledge, yet every week someone's name appears as the winner. That there are people out there with this degree of knowledge about anything is quite humbling.

On a recent walk through the nature reserve at Titchwell we encountered other enthusiasts revelling in their chosen pastime of birdwatching. Here again, the amount of detailed knowledge some of these people have about birds and their ability to recognise them at considerable distances is impressive. *'Did you see the spotted redshank?'* one of them asked me. In an attempt not to look too gauche I replied *'No, just missed it'* (Liar!). But that was better than saying *"I wouldn't know a spotted redshank if it landed on my shoulder and whispered in my ear 'I am a spotted redshank'"*. Amazing though this twitcher's powers of observation were, however, he appeared not to have noticed that I was carrying neither binoculars nor a telescope and, effective though my varifocals are, I could not possibly have seen, let alone identified, anything smaller than an albatross half a mile away.

Without claiming an encyclopaedic knowledge of anything, I am aware of my total ignorance in a frighteningly wide range of things which would include tropical fish, football and country and western music (and I use the word *music* as a kindness to those who think it is).

Mr Twitcher might be able to recognise the distinctive cry of a reed warbler but would he recognise the distinctive sound of a Cavillé-Coll reed? Within our ranks there is a wealth of detailed knowledge of a wide range of things all differently related to the organ. There are those who have a detailed knowledge of organ actions, wind pressures and such like. I met someone recently who knew what a Barker lever was - amazing. There are those who know the organ repertoire (whilst not necessarily being able to play it!) and of course there are those who can and do play with varying degrees of virtuosity. In recent times such total enthusiasts have become known as *anoraks* and hearing a group of anoraks exchanging their experiences in their very limited field can be almost frightening but I suppose it signifies that everyone can learn something from someone.

Underlying all of this is the desire to know. Those with a desire to know about something can find out more or less anything now thanks to the internet - I even pulled up a picture of a spotted redshank (to which my initial reaction was 'so what?').

We may not all know, (or want to know), the wind pressure of the Llano on the organ in Santa Cruz, or that Whitlock had a deformed right thumb but I suppose it is a good job that someone somewhere knows these things just in case that one day it could save the planet.



## *A Message from the President*

I would like to thank all members for the support and encouragement I have been given at the start of my presidency. It is a privilege to have been elected as President of such a prominent association and to follow in the footsteps of so many illustrious people and I am looking forward to serving the Association over the next two years and beyond. If you have any comments or would like to speak with me, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Thanks were given to Alan Morris, Past President, at the A.G.M. The Association owes him a great deal of gratitude for all that he has done over the past two years. I look forward to continuing to work with him and the rest of the committee. I would also like to thank Gordon Barker who has worked very hard for the Association over the past few years as Events Secretary. The events of this special jubilee year were arranged under his oversight and I am sure that the rest of the year's events will be as successful as the A.G.M. and Anne Page's recital.

Finally we welcome Harry Macey to the committee.

I am writing this almost a year after Kenneth Ryder's death. I owe him a huge debt of gratitude. I first studied with him in 1977 when I was still at school, and continued to have lessons with him until only a few years ago. If it were not for him, I would not be writing this article.

Tim Patient

## *David Lowe.....*

.....has been appointed as Master of the Music at Norwich Cathedral from 1st September. David was a Choral Scholar at King's College, Cambridge from 1976 to 1979, a Lay Clerk at St George's, Windsor, from 1980 to 1992 and, since 1994, has been Professor of Singing at the Royal Academy of Music. He is a cornerstone of the choral establishment in Cambridge, conducting the University Chamber Choir and training choral scholars at King's, St John's, Trinity, Clare and Caius Colleges. He regularly teaches on the prestigious Eton Choral courses and maintains links as a regular choral manager for such conductors as Simon Rattle, Roger Norrington, Mark Elder and Richard Hickox.

Coming to Norwich will allow him to realise his greatest ambition which is to work within the English cathedral music tradition at shaping, training and directing a choir of his own. He has a strong commitment to music education and will work with the new Singing in Schools initiative in this part of East Anglia.

## **Full with Wills**

**ISBN 1 - 905203 - 89 - 6**

Members will be interested in the recently published memoirs of Dr Arthur Wills in this illuminating, humorous and frequently disarming book.

Published by Pen Press at £8.99 available on line through Amazon. Autographed copies available from Ely Cathedral Shop.



## *Life's little ups and downs*

*Martin J Cottam*

We've all had them. You know - those moments of elation, frustration, joyous surprise or downright disappointment that stalk by turns those of us who love the organ. Maybe you made a special pilgrimage to hear a particular organ only to find the church locked or the instrument silent, or, worse still, the sound of music within and you shut out! Or maybe that much anticipated recital turned out to be a total duffer. Conversely there are those wonderful times when an unpromising recital blew you away or you walked into a church to find some glorious instrument being unexpectedly and beautifully played. Or maybe you have been fortunate enough to find yourself at the console of an organ you never thought you'd ever see, let alone play! I have innumerable such stories of my own. Allow me to indulge myself by relating just a couple.

Back in 1995 I found myself in the ancient and splendid Hanseatic town of Stralsund on the German Baltic coast. Unscathed by the war, its architectural treasures were recognised by the East German communist authorities who, uncharacteristically, built their ubiquitous Soviet-style concrete flats away from the historic town centre. Having done so, the latter was then perversely allowed to crumble neglected for the next forty years. But by the time of my visit the dancing, spiky Gothic brick gables of wealthy mediaeval merchants' houses were well on the way to full restoration.

The town's largest church is the mighty Marienkirche, a vast and magnificent gothic brick barn of a

building. Inside and filling the west wall resides a relatively unaltered and therefore exceedingly precious example of the north German Baroque tradition of organ building. With 51 stops spread over three manuals and pedals it was built by Friedrich Stellwagen and completed in 1659. The Principals (the German equivalent of our Diapasons) are all original and indeed the Pedal 32' Principal prospect is, apparently, the only one of this period in Germany to survive. Each of the many pipe towers that adorn the spectacular case, is topped with a large golden winged angel invariably blowing a trumpet. It is an enormously impressive ensemble. My travelling companion's 'Rough Guide to Germany' revealed this celebrated instrument could be heard at midday every Saturday. We were there on the right day at the right time, the late September sunlight streaming in from crisp blue skies. But we were the only people there. We waited but the church remained empty and the organ resolutely silent. Ah well, some other time perhaps.



Two days earlier I was roaming the streets of Lüneburg, another historic gothic brick Hanseatic town untouched by the war, but this time beautifully preserved and maintained by the superior West German economy. It was here that J S Bach was a student for a couple of years during his teens. His school was attached to St Michael's church in the western half of the town. Follow the picturesque streets eastwards and you reach the large brick church of St Johannis.



In the youthful Bach's time the celebrated organist and composer Georg Böhm (1661 - 1733) played here. It is virtually inconceivable that Bach did not meet him or have the occasional lesson with him. Significant amounts of the organ of Böhm's time survive. The 'Rough Guide' said there were recitals each Thursday evening. We arrived in town on Wednesday evening to find that Tuesday night was recital night! Sigh. But next morning as I approached the west door of St Johannis I thought I could hear music. I entered to the sound of a resounding organ chord dying away, immediately followed by the instantly recognisable fugue theme of Bach's great *G minor*

*Fantasia & Fugue*. Joy! To hear Bach on an organ he almost certainly played is an extraordinary thrill and all the more for being totally unexpected. I got the impression the organist was demonstrating the instrument for a group of friends but didn't have the courage to tag along. But I did hear an atmospheric rendering of Böhm's haunting chorale prelude on *Vater unser in Himmelreich*. Böhm played on Böhm's organ! and a piece I used to be able to play myself at that time. Marvellous moments!

Well that's just one 'down' and one 'up' from my pen. What about yours? In a year when our editor is pleading for articles maybe you should be writing of your own experiences.

I must just add that the 'Rough Guide to Germany' is a particularly fine example of its type and one of the few such guides unafraid to include a great deal of information about the many historic organs to be found all over that country. The recital information that so misled my friend and me in 1995 has been subsequently corrected in later editions.

**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*

HANDEL'S 12 ORGAN  
CONCERTOS are being played by Peter  
Stevenson at these monthly recitals.



## Memories of a Master

Martin J Cottam

2007 marks the centenary of the birth of Jean Langlais, the esteemed blind French organist/composer and one of the great triumvirate that so distinguished the post of Titulaire at the Basilica of Ste Clotilde in Paris for nigh on 116 years between them (César Franck and Charles Tournemire being the other two). Diminutive in physical stature, Langlais was immense in reputation as a teacher and as a prolific composer. As with his eminent predecessors, his music was informed and inspired both by his deeply held Catholic faith (and a passion for its mysticism and liturgical framework) and the distinctive sound world proffered by the famous Cavaillé-Coll organ of 1859 at Ste Clotilde. Liberally sprinkled amongst his works are a number of gems that have rightly taken their place in the remarkable and towering edifice that is the 20thC French organ repertoire.

Sadly, I enjoyed only one direct experience of the man himself. Back in October 1975 I was privileged to attend, along with several hundred others, a recital he gave at St Paul's Cathedral on the organ then recently restored by Noel Mander. Langlais played a number of works by Bach, Franck's *Prière* and several of his own compositions including the well-known *Te Deum*. But nearly 30 years on it is the other works that remain firmly embedded in my memory.

The centrepiece of the recital was a performance of Olivier Messiaen's *Apparition de l'Eglise Eternelle* (Vision of the Eternal Church). I'd only recently begun to encounter Messiaen's distinctive compositions and both I and the friend

with whom I attended the recital anticipated the start of the piece with a certain amount of trepidation, neither of us having ever heard it before. We were seated centrally under the cathedral's cavernous dome and the music began quietly and remotely from invisible pipes apparently located some way away towards the chancel end. Shifting mysterious chords building over a slow and persistent series of pedal points instantly proved atmospheric and compelling and with Langlais's unerring mastery of the considerable resources at his disposal, the 'Eternal Church' gradually began to hove into view like some awesome galleon.

The tonal build-up was inexorable and I began to quiver with anticipation as the slow crescendo finally overwhelmed the great void of St Paul's central spaces. The famed 'Hot Coals' of Father Willis's Dome section reeds now flared with all their collective might, underpinned by the 32' Contra Bombarde as the piece landed in the desired haven of C major. The vast chord was held and held as the pedal octaves continued to plod away remorselessly - the loudest unamplified sound I have ever heard. And don't forget, St Paul's has a 10 second reverberation time! Then, as inexorably as it had come into view, the 'Vision' began to slip away, receding eventually to a far-off whisper supported by the softest of 32 ft sounds more felt than heard.

That was Langlais masterfully interpreting Messiaen's genius. The end of the recital was all about the maître's own genius. Using a submitted theme he embarked on a tour de force of improvisation. This was no shapeless meander round a safe and predictable harmonic course. I can remember being



struck by a clear sense of structure throughout. As one quite unable to do it at all, I find the whole business of improvisation an enthralling marvel. Towards the climax of the piece Langlais embarked on presenting the theme and its developments in canon - feet and all! Intriguingly I heard another Langlais recital some weeks later, this time courtesy of Radio 3 (Yes, those were the days!) played at Worcester Cathedral this too ending with an extended improvisation; different theme but essentially the same structure including another canon towards the end. Many years later a cathedral organist told me that to carry a pre-worked structure for improvisation from recital to recital is not regarded as a cop-out.

Sitting in front of me were two young women. Punk Rock was at its height and the spiked hair, safety pins, dramatic make-up and contrived clothing showed these two had clear affiliations with the movement. What on earth were they doing at such a recital? Had they strayed in by mistake? As Langlais was led from the South Choir aisle by his attendants to acknowledge the rapturous applause, the two unlikely ladies got up and took copies of his music they'd brought to be autographed by the master! It was a long and bold walk they had to make to reach him, but how enviously I watched as they gained their prized reward. I wonder where they are now (the women and the signed copies!)?

*For sale*

DOLMETSCH Harpsichord/Spinet

One manual 8' 4' and lute pedals in excellent condition. Mahogany. Leg base detachable. Delivery possible. This magnificent instrument has recently been fully serviced by Alan Gotto of Norwich. It has been played by Lionel Rogg and other notable players.

Price £1250

Contact Allan Lloyd 01493 740304

**Matthew Bond**, aged 19, who has been learning the organ for less than 5 years, and previously had no piano lessons (self taught hitherto), was recently awarded the annual Willden Prize by the Associated Board for the highest marks in Grade 8 Organ examinations in Norfolk in 2006.

**2007 Annual General Meeting Saturday  
March 24<sup>th</sup>**

*David Watson*

It is probably not unfair to say that Annual General Meetings, even for as august an association as ours, are generally attended as a duty rather than a pleasure. Outgoing President Alan Morris was determined that this one should be different. Association business quickly concluded, there was time to greet friends and to look at the display of archive material brought in by members, as well as the beautiful display panels which Richard Bower brought with him. An excellent – free! – lunch was next on the agenda, followed by a fascinating talk from a distinguished guest speaker. The icing on the cake came in the shape of a composite recital by two recent winners of the Association's Young Organist recital award.

Our distinguished visiting speaker was, of course, no stranger to Norwich or to the Association. John Norman grew up here and attended Norwich School before starting his career in the family firm of Hill, Norman & Beard. He gave us a fascinating presentation on organ cases under the heading 'Traditional or Modern?'. Taking as his starting point Father Willis's well known view that casework was an irrelevance, he gave us a wide ranging over-view of the tensions which existed between those of the Father Willis School and those who believed that the organ should be a thing of beauty. John commented on the many benefits there were if the organ was an attractive freestanding piece of furniture in its own right. We then looked at instruments whose modern cases were designed to match the architecture of modern

buildings, with Coventry Cathedral and Robinson College Cambridge among the examples. Problems could arise, but happily did not at St Peter Mancroft, when modern casework was inserted into old buildings. Finally, John showed us how the new instruments at Worcester Cathedral encapsulated the two different ideals: Kenneth Tickell's Quire Organ re-using parts of the Victorian Hill casework, whereas the proposed new west end organ by Nicholsons had a fascinating new case designed by Didier Grassin.

There was time before the recital for a question and answer session during which John introduced us to the fascinating idea that the best laid out instruments were often those produced by organ builders of, shall we say, 'comfortable' proportions. We all had experiences of trying to wriggle our way towards the back of the swell box in mortal fear of sitting on the Great mixture!

The final part of the AGM was a shared recital given by two recent winners of the Association's Young Recitalist award. First to play was 17 year old Sohyun Park, who was our Young Recitalist in 2004. Sohyun is now in the Lower VI at Chethams where she studies the organ with Andrew Dean and piano with Jonathan Middleton. Her early interest in the organ was fostered by her first piano teacher, Carey Moore, custodian of the splendid Forster & Andrews instrument at St Andrew's Hingham recently restored by Holmes & Swift, and Sohyun still plays at Hingham when home from Manchester. Like many another Norfolk organist, Sohyun also owes a great deal to another of her teachers, the late Kenneth Ryder, who encouraged her to apply to Chethams.



She began her recital with an authoritative performance of Bach's *Fantasia & Fugue in g minor*. The different sections of the *Fantasia* were clearly contrasted, while the fugue was notable for its crisp and clear articulation and sensible tempo. Given a large three manual organ Bach might possibly have been tempted to change manuals for some at least of the episodes, but this thought should in no way detract from Sohyun's performance. There followed a well judged reading of Vierne's *Berceuse* which made good use of the quieter stops on the organ. Sohyun admits to a particular fondness for Widor, clearly demonstrated by a storming performance of her final item - the last movement of the 6th symphony. Its considerable technical difficulties held no terrors for our young recitalist, and the organ responded magnificently, bringing the first part of the programme to a resounding conclusion. We shall surely hear more of this talented young musician.

The second part of the proceedings belonged to 19 year old Hannah Parry, who was the Association's Young Recitalist in 2005. Hannah completed her A levels at the City of Norwich School, during which time she studied the organ with Ann Elise Smoot at St Giles Junior Organ Conservatoire. She was also a long-serving member of the Girls' Choir at Norwich Cathedral, finishing as Head Chorister. Hannah is now a first year undergraduate at the Royal College of Music, where she studies the organ with David Graham and harpsichord with Robert Woolley. When home from college she can be found playing the organ at Costessey where her father is Vicar.

Hannah began with Franck's *Prelude, fugue & variation*. Registration

and tempi were well-judged, and Franck's long legato lines were carefully shaped. So too was the often complex ornamentation of Bach's sublime prelude on *Schmucke dich*. Here Hannah found a piquant solo registration amongst the choir mutations. This was followed by a splendid tribute to local composer and Association stalwart, Ron(ald) Watson, with a fine performance of his *Pastorale*. Then came some more Bach, a moment of quiet reflection with the second movement of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Trio Sonata. For the grand finale it was back across the channel for a stirring performance of Gigout's *Toccata*, which provided an appropriate conclusion to a most enjoyable afternoon's music making.

Upwards of fifty members and guests who came to St Andrew's Hall on March 24<sup>th</sup> would attest that this was indeed an AGM with a difference. But then, it was no ordinary meeting, marking as it did the start of the celebrations of the Association's Diamond Jubilee.





## A visit to Lyon

David Watson

For a number of years now we have taken shameless advantage of the fact that our middle son Tim lives and works in Lyon. I can certainly vouch for the fact that Lyon fully deserves its title of the gastronomic capital of France, and there are some pretty decent vineyards within easy reach as well. A rather better kept secret is hidden away in the back streets of Vieux Lyon in the unprepossessing church of St François de Sales: namely, the most perfect and untouched three manual Cavaillé-Coll in the whole of France. A clue to its provenance can be gained from the simple inscription on the south wall of the church facing the Place Widor, which records that '*en cette église Charles François Widor 1811-99 initia son fils à l'art d'organiste*'.

Widor Père was lucky enough to be able to have two bites at the Cavaillé-Coll cherry. In 1865 the Great Man restored a west end gallery organ by Callinet, but in 1879 he was able to carry through a far more ambitious scheme, which was to rebuild the organ behind the High Altar, speaking straight down the church. There would be nothing strange in this to any English Free Church organist but I don't know of any other large Catholic church with the main organ in so privileged a position. The benefits in terms of sound projection are enormous. Since its installation, the organ has been well maintained but has not been altered in any way, which is more than one can say for most well known 19<sup>th</sup> century organs – both in the UK and abroad. To hear it is literally to hear His Master's Voice!

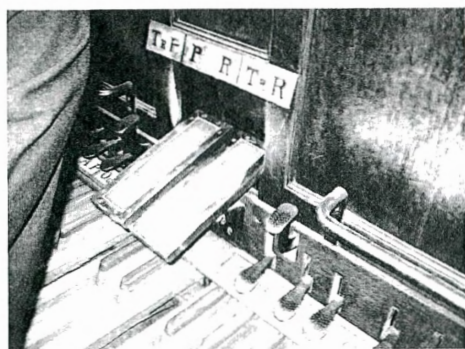


On our recent visit Tim was able to set up a meeting with the current *titulaire* M Louis Robilliard, who was kind enough to give us a superb guided tour of the instrument followed by our own private recital, beginning with a masterly improvisation and ending with a stunning performance from memory of the 1<sup>st</sup> movement of Widor V. It was an education to see him play, and especially to watch the way in which the unique Cavaillé-Coll system of couplers and vents allowed him to control the instrument in a way that is totally outside the experience of English organists. It was no light matter; moving the composition pedals required a degree of athleticism and accurate footwork not far short of a Jonny Wilkinson dropped goal!

Finally came my chance to try the instrument, historic Barker Lever and all. The key action was remarkable, light years away from modern electric actions, very different from fully mechanical actions, yet responsive in a way that set the tempo and helped the music to breathe. There simply wasn't enough time

to try all the many different registers, but M. Robilliard was kind enough to issue an invitation for a return match on our next visit, and I can't wait.

For those of you who have access to Organists Review, the May 2006 issue dealing with Cavallé-Coll is required reading and contains full details and some more photos of the Lyon organ. Those of you who like to Google will find lots of fascinating stuff if you do, starting with M Robilliard himself and moving on to the site for the organ itself: the Association Cavallé-Coll with St François de Sales, Lyon.



## *Organ News*

Edmund Holmes says that Holmes & Swift are busy outside the area working on a restoration of the two manual and pedal 1912 Harrison & Harrison instrument at Willingham in Cambridgeshire.

Bower & Company have been restoring a pair of organs by Norfolk's best Victorian builders. They have completed their full restoration of the organ at All Saints Catfield built by William Christmas Mack of Great Yarmouth. Whilst it has only seven stops it is a complete organ and sounds absolutely magnificent as well as looking splendid with its casework also restored and repolished; it is a true Norfolk gem. The restoration of the fine organ at St Helen's Bishopgate has its re-opening recital on 1st June by Anne Page. Mark Noble senior was, in my book, by far the best Norwich builder and his work is quite Holdich like. Noble junior here added the swell organ but Richard Bower suspects again altered things in 1871. As part of the work Bower have recreated the missing swell Hautboy (with a new stop copied from what seems to be the only surviving Noble Hautboy, at least in Norfolk, which is at West Bradenham).

Boggis & Co have been busy on a variety of maintenance jobs as well as the usual tuning rounds.



*St Anne's Church Limehouse  
The re-opening of the organ by Gray &  
Davidson built for The Great Exhibition  
of 1851.*

*John Plunkett*

Earlier in 2006, Bill Drake had suggested that Ginny and I might enjoy hearing his restoration of this famous landmark instrument at its grand opening in June.

Tickets were ordered and following my enquiry about parking, I received a call and was told early arrival could yield a space in the church yard. And so we set off, picking up Martin Cottam and leaving via the Southern bypass just after 7 am. June was truly flaming, tea was taken alfresco at Abington Comfort Café and without effort we arrived in St Anne's church yard at 9.45. We were the fourth car and there was bags of room.

St Anne's Church Limehouse



St Anne's stands to the south of the A13 near the point where it changes from the Commercial Road to the East India Dock Road, on the beat of P.C. George

Dixon, and was famous as a landmark used by shipping on the Thames for many years. It is one of the magnificent creations of Nicholas Hawksmoor, completed in 1725, being built under the 'Fifty New Churches Act' of 1711. It was paid for by a tax on coal coming into the port of London and, ironically, gutted by fire in 1850. However, being insured, it was fully restored to the original drawings by 1852. The organ by Richard Bridge had been destroyed but the exciting and up to date instrument exhibited by Gray & Davidson at the 1851 exhibition was cosmetically slightly altered and erected on the west gallery where it has stood for the last 150 years. The only work carried out had been renewal of the tracker action and the installation of an electric blower in 1949!

Events began at 11 o'clock with an explanatory introduction by the advisor for the restoration, Nicholas Thistlethwaite, covering the builders of the organ and its history. His talk was well pitched to appeal to the wide range of interests present in the large gathering in this 1,200 seat church. Technical detail was leavened with anecdote and humour and brought to life by musical demonstration from the console by William McVicker. Timing and interaction was worthy of the best double acts! These short excerpts excited our anticipation of the recital after lunch.

William Drake was then invited to elaborate on the technical aspects of the work. As usual, he feigned surprise and claimed he had not prepared anything, but said he would read some notes he had written on an order of service found under the pedal board whilst holding the keys during tuning earlier in the day. He then



proceeded to give all the credit to his staff, which of course they deserved.

Following this, a brief service of dedication was held by the Bishop of Stepney, The Rt. Reverend Stephen Oliver. Together with the organ, a new peal of eight bells was dedicated. The enthusiastic singing of the St Anne's hymn *Towering over road and river* to Monk's *Angel voices* almost forced the organ to give the game away; we knew we would not be disappointed later.

An excellent buffet lunch was served in the cool of the crypt and most of us adjourned to the freshly mown churchyard to enjoy eating and drinking in the summer sun, whilst chatting to friends old and new. Meanwhile, Thomas Trotter practised in the church, for the most part at low level, but occasionally the lion tried to escape from its cage - titillation of the highest order - but we tried not to listen, much.

By 2.30 the church had filled with several hundred or so forming an eager audience for the recital. Those with larger wallets were seated in the gallery upstairs. We were treated to a well conceived programme of works by composers whose music naturally suited the abilities of the instrument and its place in history. Briefly they were as follows:

Handel arr. M Dupré, *Organ Concerto in B flat Op. 4 No. 2* Anon (16<sup>th</sup> cent.) *Four pieces* short and light, and rather secular!

Mozart, *Fantasia in F minor & major K59* Mendelssohn *Sonata in Bb op. 65 No. 4* H Smart *Andante in A C M* Widor *Allegro vivace (1<sup>st</sup> movt. Symphony No. 5 in F minor)*

The playing was invigorated and invigorating, meticulous, clean, clear, well phrased, and enjoyed by player and audience alike. None of these qualities

were obvious or exaggerated, but what else could it be that made the performance such a musical delight. The whole was even greater than the sum of the parts, especially true of the organ and its restoration also. William Drake has shown us how exciting a Victorian organ can be, without changing the original voicing and specification in any way. This instrument is a 3manual and pedals of some 34 stops, 3 mixtures, 8 reeds, 5 couplers and 6 composition pedals. The pedal 16ft Bombarde must be the best ever! If you would like to see the specification go to ([www.williamdrake.co.uk](http://www.williamdrake.co.uk)).

And there was more to come, but that must wait.



Norwich Cathedral

Thursday 14th June 7.30 pm

International Concert Organist

**DAVID BRIGGS**

live organ improvisation to the silent  
movie

The Phantom of the Opera  
on the big screen

Admission on the door

**£7.50 with concessions**

## *A Peep into the Archives 4*

### *Tim Patient*

#### *From Issue No. 11, January 1970:*

Those who attended the President's Recital prior to the Annual General Meeting thoroughly enjoyed Mr Runnett's playing – particularly are we grateful to him for including in his short recital, the Cymbelstern. Some thought that the use of this was the highlight of the recital! Afterwards, at the Annual General Meeting, we were more than pleased to welcome Dr Heathcote Statham to our gathering and later, at the Dinner, which was attended by over fifty people, we were privileged to hear our President, Mr Runnett, our guest, The Revd. Claud Palfrey, Precentor of the Cathedral and Mr Maxwell Betts, Organist of Wymondham Abbey. Each spoke of the vocation of being an organist and of the friendship that existed because of mutual interest in 'The King of Instruments' and of our relationship with the clergy and with the people. Words of wisdom, wittily spoken, gave those present much food for thought.

#### *From Issue No. 12, April 1970:*

A new small organ has been installed in East Dereham Roman Catholic Church by Messrs. Cedric Arnold, Williamson & Hyatt Ltd. and we also hear that our member, Mr Robin Wilson, of Taverham Hall, has recently installed a Compton Theatre Organ. It is hoped that further details of both these instruments may be given in the next issue.

#### *From Issue No. 13, July 1970:*

The old Norman Bros & Beard Organ of 1888, electrified by Hill, Norman & Beard in 1953 [in Cringleford Parish Church] has been completely rebuilt by Messrs.

Wood, Wordsworth and Co. Ltd. of Leeds and a re-opening recital is to be given by our President in the late summer.

The Snetzler Organ in Blickling Parish Church, which had considerable work carried out on it many years ago by Norman & Beard Ltd. has been moved from the west end of the Church to the east end. This work was carried out by Messrs. E. & W. Storr of Costessey. The same firm has also carried out a similar scheme at Reedham Parish Church.

#### *From Issue No. 14, October 1970:*

The news of tragic death of our President, Mr. Brian Runnett, Organist and Master of the Music at Norwich Cathedral, in a car accident near Lichfield, Staffs. on 20<sup>th</sup> August was heard by all members of the Association with a sense of profound shock and of personal bereavement. Aged but 35, he had firmly established himself as one of the most brilliant organists in the country and whose reputation was extending beyond the confines of these islands.

The Annual General Meeting will take place on Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> October and will be followed by "The Musical Life of Norwich" – a talk to be given by Mr Cyril Pearce – and here we offer to Mr Pearce our heartiest congratulations on having occupied the position of Organist at St. Mary's Baptist Church, Norwich, for 50 years, and we look forward to hearing his reminiscences on the Musical Life of the City.

If the proposals for the reorganisation of the City Parish Churches as put forward in 'Norwich City Commission Report' published in 1969 are put into effect, the following Churches would seem to be no longer required for Church of England Parish worship:



*Churches not in use for worship at present:*

St James, St Martin-at-Palace, St Saviour, St Paul, St Clement, St Mary, Coslany, St Laurence, St Michael at Plea, St Etheldreda.



*Churches in use for worship at present:*

St Bartholomew, Heigham, St Barnabas or St Philip, Heigham, St Margaret, St Augustine, St Michael, Coslany, St Gregory, St John, Maddermarket, St John, Timberhill, All Saints, St Mark, Lakenham or St Peter Parmentergate.

At long last, our Secretary, Mr. Arthur Bussey, now has a pedal stop on his organ at Mulbarton. A Bourdon has been added by Messrs. W. & A. Boggis of Diss and the manual stops were altered by Ralph Bootman.

### *Anne Page at Wymondham Abbey*

The second of this year's celebratory events was the celebrity recital in Wymondham Abbey scheduled to be given by IAO President Catherine Ennis. Due to the indisposition of Miss Ennis the recital was given at short notice by the eminent recitalist and one of our Centenary members, Anne Page. After a very gracious plug for the Association and an expression of good wishes to Catherine Ennis, Anne Page launched into her recital with Handel's *Concerto in B $\flat$*  played on the Abbey's chamber organ, with the audience gathered around in the lady chapel. What struck one here was the recitalist's involvement with every note and phrase which rendered a fresh and telling performance of this well known work.

Once the audience was in place in the nave the recital continued with Bach's *Fantasia & Fugue in G minor*, followed by the less frequently heard *5th Sonata* of Mendelssohn and Harwood's *1st Sonata*. The recital ended back on more familiar territory with two pieces by Vierne, his *Berceuse* from the 24 *pièces en style libre* and the *Final* from his 1st Symphony.

Miss Page brought a rare insight to all of these works which thrilled those present and held them in eager anticipation as the music unfolded. This was no mere trotting off of the pieces but a very telling and individual interpretation which marks Anne Page as a most discerning and gifted performer.

We owe her a great debt of thanks and can count ourselves most fortunate that she was able and willing to give us this recital - a truly memorable evening. RW.



## *The organ in the Auditorio de Tenerife*

Ronald Watson

The Auditorio de Tenerife is a stunning building and makes the Sydney Opera House look positively old fashioned. And in it, not surprisingly, is a truly 21st century organ. The organ's avant-garde features, like the building which houses it, make this a unique and ultra modern instrument. This is reflected in its location, spread over different sections surrounding the pit, which gives the audience and exceptionally clear acoustic perception and a 3D sound effect.

The Trumpets en chamade are located inside the building and are only visible when the organ is being played. The two sections of horizontal trumpets burst into view thanks to an automatic mechanism activated from the console, which opens a hatch allowing each 400 kg block to slide into view. The console is located on the stage and is an exceptionally fine geometrically complex piece of woodwork. The organ has four manuals and pedals on the main console and a mobile portable resonator. Eight external supplementary keyboards mean that the organ can be played simultaneously by an 'orchestra' of up to 10 organists. If you have access to the internet then do visit [www.auditoriodetenerife.com](http://www.auditoriodetenerife.com) and take a look at this amazing building and its organ. Or if you are going to Tenerife on holiday.....!

## **Organ museum at Windesheim**

Not far from our twin city of Koblenz there is a very interesting organ museum with a goodly collection of widely differing instruments and a concert hall in which they can be heard in use. Should you be going this way and want to visit it then visit their website [www.orgel-art-museum.de](http://www.orgel-art-museum.de) before setting off to check opening times and admission charges. From a brochure I was given it looks well worth a detour.

## *An Apology from the Secretary*

I am sorry for any confusion caused by the incorrect date in the letter giving details of the change of recitalist for the Wymondham Abbey event. In spite of re-reading the letter several times as well as checking the time three times, I still failed to notice my typing error!

## *Letter from France*

It is beginning of May as I write and we have been told over here that the month of April was the warmest on record. It certainly has been very warm indeed. We live in the Champagne region and 2006 was an extremely good one for the grape harvest which should please the wine drinkers later on.

It may seem strange that we, over here, often seem to know more about the British organ scene than is mentioned over there. We hear that Norfolk has done pretty well in the granting of Historic Organ Certificates from the British Institute of Organ Studies. These have been awarded recently to both instruments in Sr Mary's, Tittleshall - the Binns organ dating from 1897 and recently restored and added to by Robert Ince receiving a grade II certificate and the Holdich barrel and finger organ by Holdich which received a Grade I certificate. St Peter's Methodist Church at Fornsett St Peter, built by the Glasspoole Brothers of Wymondham in 1903 was awarded a Grade II\* certificate and All Saints at Swanton Morley, previously in St Michael at Plea, Norwich and built by Norman Bros. & Beard in 1887 was granted a Grade II certificate. Norfolk is the proud possessor of several more certificates granted earlier and no doubt more will be added to the list as time goes by. I wonder which instruments you would add to the list?

Just over the border with Belgium, only a few miles kilometres from us, the church at Braux has acquired a small chest organ built by one Michael Schumaker - no, not *the* Michael Schumaker - which has a compass of four octaves from ten f and three stops - Stopped Diapason 8: Octave 4 and Fifteenth 2. It is a jolly little affair taking up less room than a harmonium or American organ and sounding extremely well in this resonant church. It is finished in oak and the casework contains its own little electric blower. Stop control is by small levers at the treble end of the keyboard.

Sandy and I hope that the NOA may have a most successful and memorable Anniversary Year. The events should encourage all members to participate in something, and it may even be possible for us to join with you for one of these.

Ralph Bootman

### *Congratulations.....*

.....to **Gordon Barker** on attaining three score years and ten on 22nd May. On the auspicious day he attended evensong in Canterbury Cathedral, where his grandson is a chorister, and heard the first performance of an anthem specially written to mark the occasion.

A fitting tribute to a dedicated church musician.

Happy Birthday Gordon and many happy returns.



*For your diary*

Norwich Cathedral recitals and concerts 2007

*Saturday 16th June*

*The Cathedral Consort - Conductor Julian Thomas  
Admission £6 with concessions*

*Saturday 14th July 7.30 pm*

**Robert Houssart**

Norfolk Organists' Association 60 years Celebration Recital

**Wednesday evening recitals at 8 pm**

*Admission £6 with concessions*

*25th July Ben Giddens* (Organ Scholar, Norwich cathedral)

*1st August Julian Thomas* (Assistant Organist, Norwich Cathedral)

*8th August Nigel Kerry* (Cambridge)

*15th August David Dunnett* (Norwich Cathedral)

*Monday 27th August 11 am Timothy Patient* (Norwich)

*Admission free - retiring collection*

\*\*\*\*\*

*St. Andrew's Parish Church, Hingham*

*Saturday 25th August 2007 at 7.30 pm.*

*Organ Recital by Sohyun Park*

*Admission Free - retiring collection.*

\*\*\*\*\*

*Wymondham Abbey organ recitals 2007*

*Retiring collection*

*Wednesday 4th July at 1. 10 pm Stephen Cleobury*

*Saturday 18th August 11. 30 am Howard Thomas*

St Peter Mancroft  
Summer Recitals 2007

*Saturdays at 1 pm    Admission Free*

16<sup>th</sup> June **Matthew Pitts** Organist St Peter Mancroft - organ

23<sup>rd</sup> June **David Dunnett** - organ

30<sup>th</sup> June **Philip Trzebiatowski** - Principal 'cellist, Academy of St Thomas & Norwich Pops Orchestra

14<sup>th</sup> July **Julian Cooper** FRCO prize-winner - organ

21<sup>st</sup> July **CONVIVIUM** - London-based quintet of young solo voices

For further information please contact the Church Office on 01603 610443 or music@stpetermancroft.org.uk

\*\*\*\*\*

St Nicholas Dereham

*Lunchtime Recitals in June on Fridays at 1.10 pm*

*Admission free - retiring collection. Sandwiches etc. on sale from 12.40 pm.*

8th **Victoria Hay** (St Pauls Harringay).

15th **Henry Macey** (St Michael's Aylsham)

22nd **Philip Luke** (Bloomsbury Central Baptist)

29th **Freddie James** (Oundle for Organists award winner aged 15; organ scholar at Croydon PC).

Advance notice 22nd September 7.30pm **Malcolm Archer**

**Richard Bower** plays at *Cromer Parish Church* on *Thursday 19th June at 8pm*

\*\*\*\*\*

**Attention all those members who enjoy a good mardle**

To finish our Diamond Celebration Year, we thought that a social gathering would be a pleasant occasion, so please book:-

Saturday 6th October 2007, 4 -30pm onwards, at Oxnead Mill (near Buxton/Aylsham) for a semi self-catering social.

Full and final details in the September Journal.

Ginny Plunkett.



# *Diamond Jubilee Celebrations 2007*

Saturday 14th July Norwich Cathedral 7. 30 pm

Free to Association members

*Recital by Robert Houssart Assistant Organist at Gloucester Cathedral, former chorister of Norwich Cathedral and pupil of Kenneth Ryder. Drinks will be served during the interval.*

## ORGAN DAY September 8th 2007

As the penultimate event in our Diamond Jubilee celebrations we have set ourselves the target of attempting to have as many organs in the county as possible playing at some time during the day. September 8th is also the day of the annual Norfolk Historic Churches Bicycle ride and our hope is that each of our churches will be able to mobilize one or more organists to play during the day so that the cyclists can fill in a special record sheet each time they hear the organ being played in the church they are visiting. Obviously not every Association member will want to cycle round the diocese and there is a separate record sheet for people who will be travelling by car – I am sure that any motorized participants will understand that they won't be able to count in the Historic Churches statistics!



For the day to be a success, we need **your** help.

*Can you* organize a rota for the church(es) in which you play?

*Can you* make contact with and mobilize any other organists you know who are not members of the Association?

*Can you* alert the association committee with details of any instrument which you know will not be played so that we can try to find someone to play there?

***Over to you!***

Further details of the arrangements, including record forms to download, will shortly be found on the Association website, which is [www.norfolkorganists.org.uk](http://www.norfolkorganists.org.uk)