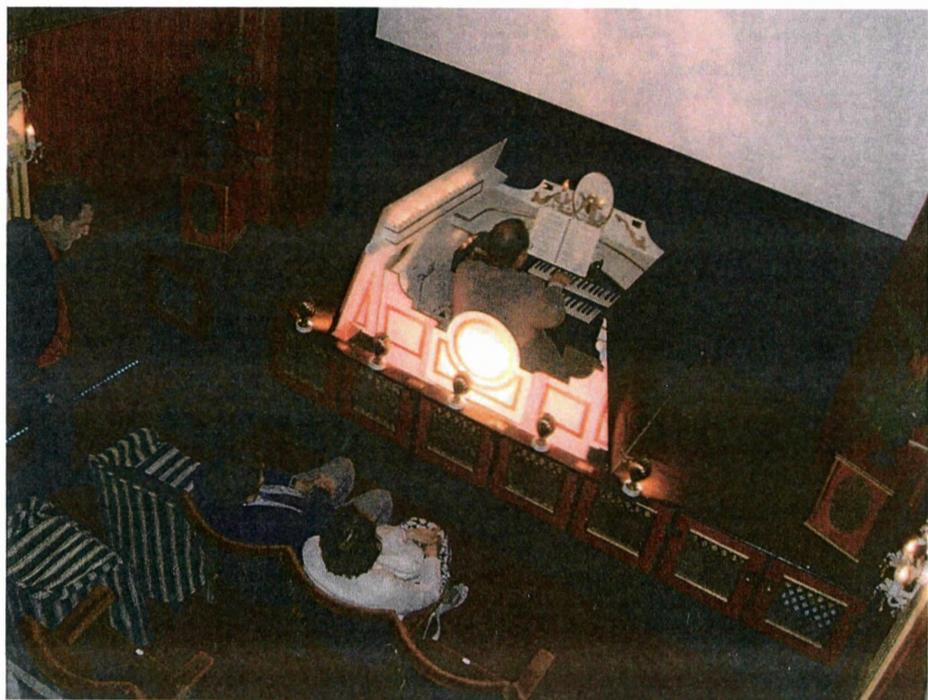


The Journal

Number 69

Autumn 2009



Published by the
Norfolk Organists Association

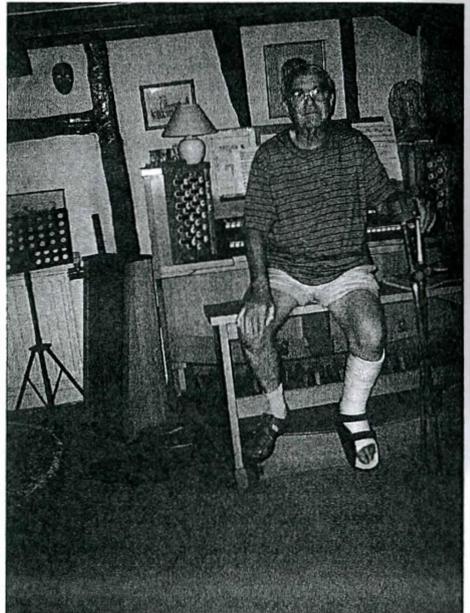
The editor writes.....

This Journal is a bit later than usual and it may be because I said 'white rabbits' on the morning of 1st August, or, of course it may have nothing to do with that at all. It all depends on how seriously you take superstition. I'm sort of superstitious and frequently recall the opening sequence of a film I used to show to management students at City College. The subject was Fred Herzberg who was an American management consultant and he told the tale of one of his clients coming into his office and noticing a horse-shoe on the wall. 'Surely, Fred', said the client, 'you don't believe in that sort of thing'. 'Of course not' said Herzberg, 'but it works whether you believe in it or not'.

On the strength of that I do have certain rituals and practices which I feel it safer to perform just in case a failure to do so brings misfortune down on my head. One such is making sure that first thing I utter on the 1st of a new month is 'white rabbits'. However, all of that is now up for questioning as, having made the utterance on 1st of August, I proceeded on 3rd to break my ankle in Eaton Park. Now was that bad luck or can I count it as good luck that an ambulance was only a few blocks away and was tending to me within a few minutes? Might it also have been good luck that the A&E at the NNUH were not that busy and I was dealt with very swiftly with my foot securely plastered, (after X-ray, blood test and ECG) within the hour. I had an overnight stay in hospital.

My being in hospital when we normally look after two young grandchildren meant that their supervision was halved and that the 3 yr old having been duly schooled in hand washing put the plug in the downstairs

wash basin and turned on both taps. Having completed his hand washing he came out from the bathroom and closed the door as he has been trained to do. Within minutes the bathroom was awash with water which spilled out into the inner hall and soaked carpets and underlay. This was still squelchy the next morning and a machine had to be hired to suck up the water, of which there was quite a lot! Isabel and I both felt that somewhere there was a white rabbit not pulling his weight and both concluded that if we could get our hands on him he would certainly become next Sunday's lunch!



Who mentioned the D major!?

Luck is something I am very preoccupied with and am puzzled at the words in one of the psalms 'I wish you good luck in the name of the Lord'. If God is working his purpose out and I am a very small but essential part of some great

eternal plan how does luck come into it? I have put this point to several of the cloth, even suggested a sermon on it but none has ever been forthcoming.

However, I do believe that one cannot trust to luck and that one is more likely to pass, say, a driving test or any examination, if one is fully clued up and well prepared, rather than relying on the fact that it might be the examiner's birthday and he is in a mood to pass everyone that day, irrespective of their competence.

When one's mobility is severely curtailed there is little else one can do but read, and two books I got into reminded me of musicians who overcame quite severe adversity. Sir David Willcocks, in his book *A Life in Music* refers to Douglas Fox, a brilliant keyboard player who lost his right arm in the First World War and who overcame that quite remarkably. A second was the concert pianist (and native of Middlesbrough) Cyril Smith, who suffered a stroke whilst on a concert tour in Russia, losing the use of his left arm, but who, with his wife Phyllis Sellick, continued a concert career playing music arranged for three hands.

My own disability is temporary and much less severe than those cited above. I am therefore far less concerned about how to cope without the use of my left foot than what to do about continuing to say 'white rabbits', avoiding walking under ladders, and so forth.

As I left the trauma ward all my bedfellows, one with a leg broken in three places, one with a broken collar bone, one with a broken arm, one with digestive problems who was obviously in the wrong ward, all wished me good luck. I reciprocated, which I thought was kinder than asking 'what do you mean by luck?'

Back home after a few days I was able to clamber onto my organ bench and decided to tidy up some of the Bach works I've been playing since my teenage years. It is alarming how insecure the music on the manuals had become and tidying these up and inserting some long-overdue fingering has been a very useful exercise. There are passages which sound rather odd without the pedal part but in a sense that adds to the challenge of getting the notes right and tidily organised under the hand even though the music which emerges sounds incomplete – in some cases it has seemed almost like learning them from scratch. Also, to reduce the sense of idleness I've written a set of responses; quite what I'll do with them I'm not sure – if I still like them in a couple of months time I may offer them to the wider world which could include you!



Geoff Sankey asks.....

I have studied the picture of our new president in action which you printed on the front cover of the Summer Journal, but have been unable to determine what it is that is hovering over his head. Clearly he is continuing his performance totally undistracted, although it looks as if either he is sat under a hair drier, or perhaps something more sinister is descending from above. If you have any more information on the nature of this object, perhaps you could share it with us.

President's Day Sat July 11th 2009

Harry Macey

A bright, sunny day greeted us as we arrived at the magnificent 'Cathedral of the Marshes', Holy Trinity Parish Church, Blythburgh. Our President David Bunkell introduced the day and spoke briefly about the church and the two-manual Rodney Briscoe (Boggis) organ completed in 2002-3. Several members tried the organ whilst others listened or enjoyed looking round the church. Also available was a classically-voiced Copeman-Hart two-manual, formerly property of the late Keith Bond of Blackburn cathedral, which, despite having internal speakers only, spoke down the church very well from its position near the sanctuary.

We all then drove the short distance to St Felix School, Southwold where we investigated the large Copeman-Hart three-manual in the chapel. This is a very practical and eclectic instrument, sited at the east end and with speakers across the west gallery; the 32' flue and reed are particularly effective. This organ has two separate Harpsichord stops (on Great and Choir); playing a harpsichord from a detached console is certainly a weird sensation! Members played a range of pieces and improvisations which showed the versatility of this organ.

We then had some time for lunch so journeyed into Southwold to enjoy Adnam's ale, fish and chips, a restaurant meal or a good breath of sea air. A stroll inland from the sea-front brought us to the The Southwold Electric Picture Palace, a fascinating edifice finished in 2002 with all the style, detail and ambience of an old Picture Palace. The manager, John

Bennett, resplendent in dinner-jacket, gave us a warm welcome, and reminded us that the ice-cream girl would come down to the front during the interval and that we were expected to stand for the National Anthem at the end of the show - customs they retain for public film-shows. Our President had selected two fascinating and informative films. The first (from Vol. III of *The History of the Organ* series) explored the French classical organ focussing on the massive five-manual organ by Christopher Moucherele (1736) in Albi Cathedral, rebuilt by Bartholomeo Formentelli and completed in 1981. Gustav Leonhardt and André Isoir showed the organ's power and colour through pieces by JS Bach and Louis Marchand. As the intermission began, not only did the lights come up but so did the organ bearing our President, ascending through the stage to rapturous applause. He delighted the audience with veritable confection of lighter music and old-tyme songs. With the second film about to start, David disappeared into the bowels of the earth as we finished our ice-creams.

Our second film was part of Sir John Eliot Gardiner's account of the Monteverdi Choir/English Baroque Soloists' *Bach Pilgrimage* in 2000, when they focussed on the extant Bach Cantatas. We enjoyed interviews and excerpts from concerts and rehearsals in Esienach, Arnstadt, Weimar and, of course, Leipzig, as the Monteverdi Choir and Orchestra began their international tour. The English leg of the Bach Pilgrimage began in Blythburgh so it was especially interesting to see JEG working in the church we had just visited.

At about 4pm we walked across to St Edmund's Parish Church where Victor

Scott, the organist, introduced the Cedric Arnold 1966 rebuild of the 1877 Walker designed by Ouseley. Tim Patient then played Guy Bovet's *Salamanca*, and later, Messiaen's *Offrande au Saint Sacrement*, written in 1928 but only published by Yvonne Loriod in 1997. Both pieces effectively demonstrated many of the colours of the organ including its characteristic Clarinet-Flute and a Pedal Trombone which can probably hear back in Blythburgh! Brent Palmer played a transcription of the Albinoni *Adagio*, Carey Moore played Karg-Elert's *Nun danket* and I played the Elgar *Sonata (i)*.

A very special expression of thanks is due to David Bunkell, our President, for putting together a most fascinating, varied and enjoyable day's programme. We also thank the authorities at the various venues we visited and those who gave of their time to welcome us. Do ensure you all attend David's second President's Day in July 2010; I for one can't wait.



Photographs supplied by Henry Macey

Gentle Delights in the Glaven Valley

Martin J Cottam

Cheered no doubt by bright skies and the prospect of good things, a most encouraging number of NOA members (I counted at least 17), assorted spouses and friends gathered at Cley church on the morning of May 23rd. In the adjoining church field a thatcher displayed the mysteries of his craft as part of the 'Art Alive in Churches' festival that felicitously coincided with our outing.

Spacious and glorious, the interior of St. Margaret's houses a most delightful little organ in a gothick case that once graced the nave at nearby Blakeney church until transferred here in 1913. At its heart is pipework by Bryceson (1860) and Norman & Beard (1900) but additional stops by Richard Bower (2002) have transformed the organ into a gem of surprizing versatility. Of just 13 stops it possesses colours of great individuality. The flutes on each manual are especially lovely and sound refreshingly different from each other. To the Swell Bower has added a well-mannered but bright, brassy Trumpet, and to the Great a 3 rank Mixture and an all important 2 rank Cornet. The Cornet stop (whether 2, 3, or 5 ranks) is such an indispensable colour for so much of the classical organ repertoire its eradication and continued absence from the vast majority of British organs remains an incomprehensible mystery to me.

The east end of our next church presents a fine sight viewed across the River Glaven at Cley. But first to lunch, several members opting for the tasty full English breakfast option at a nearby garden centre.

Refuelled and refreshed we duly reconvened at Wiveton, another handsome, spacious church but oddly blighted by the most bizarre Victorian stained glass filling the large aisle windows. The broad, alternate horizontal bands of bilious yellow and green had our new president musing on the possibility that the benefactor had been an ardent Norwich City supporter.

Glass aside, Wiveton church is the proud possessor of a small organ of national importance having been built by G.M. Holdich for the Great Exhibition of 1851. The free standing case is accordingly embellished with barley sugar columns at the corners and sumptuous amounts of intricate fretwork. The 4 stops are afforded extra versatility by the addition of a 'Diaocton', effectively a conventional octave coupler but possessing its own extra octave of pipes to supply the missing notes at the top of the keyboard. The overall sound is bright and light and reflects that of an earlier age in a way that is typical of Holdich. Wholly charming.

And so to Blakeney. A fascinating display of old photographs revealed how the interior looked before the restorations of the early twentieth century including the organ now to be seen at Cley. The current organ by Norman & Beard dates from 1910 and is housed in two cases incorporated into either end of the richly carved rood screen of the same date. There is a detached console.

The organ is very much of its time. Several members found the move from the tracker action of the day's previous instruments to electric action a touch disorientating. I thought the sound rather disappointing, finding the flue stops somewhat lacking in individuality and a

touch 'hooty'. To my ears the one reed stop, the Swell Coroboe, was bland, almost colourless. It's all a matter of preference, of course and for those who take particular pleasure in liturgical accompaniment this was probably the most effective instrument of the day.

Whatever your taste the day was full of riches for all who travelled to this especially agreeable corner of Norfolk. The churches, the organs, the artists, and the scenery all made for a very fine day out and our thanks go to the Rev. Neil Batcock for graciously allowing us to inflict our music-making on the unsuspecting visitors to the 'Art Alive' events.

Organ News

Geoff Sankey

W & A Boggis have been working on the restoration of a two manual, 7 stop, Norman and Beard instrument at St Mary's, Worlingworth, Suffolk. They have carried out further work on another two manual Norman & Beard at Brome, also Suffolk, on the pedal department as part of their on-going restoration. Amongst other repairs, they have attended to the soundboard at Diss United Reformed Church.

Bower & Company have been restoring the chamber organ in the parish church of Ashby St Mary. It is an organ rebuilt by J W Walker in 1866. The grained oak case had mahogany underneath; they have stripped this and restored the polished mahogany finish; a special effort by the Ashby people has allowed for the facade and pipeshades to be properly gilded in gold leaf, as they

were originally. The voicing has also been renewed, and all internal aspects of the organ have been restored to the 1866 specification as required by those who give grants. Richard tells me that the result is beautiful. According to the Walker records, this instrument was rebuilt from a much earlier instrument and supplied to a lady to be completed by her birthday on April 15th 1866 to be installed in a house in Godstone Surrey. In 1868 Walkers dismantled it and packed it for delivery by the Great Eastern Railway to Horstead Hall where they set it up, returning in August 1873 to maintain it and insert the Keraulophon and Wald Flute treble. The instrument will be returned to Ashby in early September to be seen and heard by all in its full glory.

Other recent work has been the overhaul of the single manual organ at St Andrew's in Lamas, built by Benjamin Collins who was the bootmaker of the parish in the early 19th century and previously overhauled by Bower & Company in the 70s. This time they have removed the pneumatics which Rothwell added for the low compass. The organ is again tracker action throughout. The original Sesquialtra has been recreated.

They have also worked on the substantial Willis instrument in Hampstead parish church which was the subject of extensive work by Richard's company in the 90s.

Holmes & Swift are continuing their major renovation of the three manual Walker organ in Sandringham parish church, as well as working in Alciston, Sussex.



Letter from France

Ralph Bootman

Until very recently the 'summer' weather over here has been anything but summer and we have had many days when we stayed indoors to avoid the heavy storms which have affected the Champagne region. Luckily, these appear to have left us and the weather has been as one hopes for at this time of year. On one of the 'off' days I was going through my books and found details of an organ we had visited some time ago in the Monastery at Orval, in Belgium. At the time, the monk, who showed me the instrument, did not know its original builder as all the Abbey's records had been seized during the war. I knew I had it somewhere and told him that if I ever came across it, I would let him know. Going through a book given to me by the London representative of the firm of E F Walcker of Ludwigsburg, Germany, which I had never read, (it being printed in German), although I had looked at the photographs, in their list of organs built by them, I read that they built the original west gallery organ there with 3 manuals and 35 stops way back in 1935. This was indeed a find and I lost no time in letting the organist there know. I was quite surprised to read that they had built many organs in Great Britain dating from the late 1800's up to the second World War. In England they noted instruments in Bedford, Ben Rhydding, Birmingham, Bradford, Hull, 15 organs in London, Manchester and St Annes. This number was exceeded in Scotland where they built a total of 87 – including 7 in Aberdeen, 12 in Edinburgh, and 20 in Edinburgh. Quite a list! I wonder how many of them

are still there. The firm of E F Walcker is still making instruments after almost 200 years and they continue to be made for Germany and its neighbours and are exported all over the world. Some record! How many British builders can claim a similar length of time – with the descendants of the founders still actively pursuing the craft? Another interesting fact gleaned was that during the war of 1939-1945 Walcker's continued to make organs and installed them in many towns and cities including 5 in Berlin, 3 in Cologne, 3 in Stuttgart and in Heidelberg, Karlsruhe, Mannheim, Dortmund, Dusseldorf, Freiburg and Keil and in many other places. One wonders, reading the names of these towns, how many organs were destroyed by our air raids on Germany.

This summer has seen the arrival of several English church choirs with their organists and choirmasters to give very well attended concerts in churches in the area. It must have been heartening for them to have such appreciation at the venues and such friendly welcomes.

Likewise, recitals at Notre Dame d'Espérance in Charleville Mézières continue to attract large audiences every week – generally on Sunday afternoons or evenings and weekday recitals at the Abbey at Mouzon have similar numbers, often running in to three figures.



A Peep into the Archives 13

Compiled by Tim Patient

From Issue No.32, April 1975:

It seems fitting that, as Messrs J W Walker move to Brandon we offer a brief review of their work in Norfolk. Joseph William Walker was a 'parlour apprentice' to George Pike England from about 1818 and competed with W A Nicholls, England's son-in-law, for some of the contracts that were outstanding at the time of England's death. Instruments by this firm are to be found in the following Norfolk churches: Ashby St Mary, Ashill, Bergh Apton, Bradwell, Buxton, Dilham, St Andrew Eaton, Filby, Fritcham, Happisburgh, Hedenham, Hethersett, Holme-next-the-Sea, Horningtoft ex Bodiam Manor in Sussex, St Mary Hunstanton, Ickburgh, Metton, ex a private house in York, Mileham, Newton (west), Oulton Broad, ex Willesden, Roughton, Roydon near Kings Lynn, Rudham (east), Sandringham, Shelfhanger, Weasenham St Peter ex Sussex, Witton, North Walsham and Downham Market.

It will be a great pleasure to welcome the Organ Club to Norfolk on Saturday 17th May and I am sure that any members who might care to join in the day's arrangements will be most welcome. These are as follows:

At noon, the two organs at Taverham Hall; 2.30 pm. St. Mary's, Little Walsingham and 4.15 p.m. Cromer Parish Church. It is to be hoped that an al fresco lunch may be taken at Taverham Hall and tea may be obtained at Cromer. The coach will leave Cromer in time to connect with the 6.40 pm. train. This year

the Organ Club is celebrating its Golden Jubilee and we congratulate this world-wide Society and wish it well for the next 50 years!

From Issue No.33, Summer 1975:

Heartiest congratulations to our President, Michael Nicholas, whose engagement to Miss Heather Rowden has recently been announced.

The magnificent Marshland church at West Walton, in the County of Norfolk but in the Diocese of Ely, is having a large three-manual organ installed at the west end of the north aisle. Originally built by a Sheffield firm for a church in that City, it was completely rebuilt and equipped with all-electric action by Henry Willis & Sons in 1960-1961. At West Walton, it will be provided with a detached console which will stand at the north side of the choir. There are 8 stops on the Great: 6 stops on the Swell: 6 stops on the Choir and 4 stops on the Pedal. The work is being carried out by Messrs Boggis & Briscoe, of Diss.

From Issue No. 34, Autumn 1975:

The Hunter organ (originally in the LCC Institution, Wandsworth) standing in Wreningham Parish Church has been cleaned and overhauled and a new centrally-placed balanced swell pedal added by Messrs. Boggis & Briscoe of Diss. The same firm have the work of restoration and additions and alterations to the tonal scheme of the George Pike England/Rushworth & Dreaper organ in Beccles Parish Church in hand.

Messrs William Hill & Son and Norman & Beard Ltd. are to carry out

some restoration work to the organ in Norwich Cathedral.

Intwood Parish church is to install a 'Sprowston' electronic organ made by Norwich Organ Manufacturers early in the New Year. This will be a two-manual and pedal instrument with two separate tone-cabinets and will oust a Hammond organ which has been on loan to the church since the small one-manual pipe-organ built c. 1865 by Corps & Son of Norwich was sold to Felmingham Parish Church, near North Walsham, a few years ago.

Saturday 19th July saw a large number of Guild Members and their friends attending the Assembly House for a talk, illustrated by tape-recording and colour-slides on 'Some Chamber Organs of Norfolk' given by Peter Bullett and Stephen Boffey.

A half-day visit was made on Saturday 20th September to the organs at Somerleyton, Great Yarmouth and Acle Parish Churches and was greatly enjoyed by those attending.

Somerleyton Church, of course, contains the old Norman and Beard organ of 1912 which originally stood in the Chapel-in-the-Field Congregational Church, Norwich. Our Host, member John Robbins has very kindly allowed free access to this fine three-manual instrument. Great Yarmouth Parish Church, reputedly the largest in England, contains the old 1908 Hill organ ex St Mary le Boltons, Kensington, London, and it was rebuilt here in 1961 by the John Compton Organ Company. Recently, Messrs Rushworth & Dreaper have carried out work on the restoration of this large three-manual organ, complete with two consoles.

The Norwich Millennium Male Voice Choir



was formed (believe it or not) to mark the millennium but was so popular that at the request of its membership was continued and is still going strong and is eager to continue to do so.

However, its conductor David Storey has retired and they are looking for a replacement conductor to take them forward. Anyone interested should contact Christopher Williams on 01362 821407 or by email - cjwilliams@hotmail.co.uk

Jim Laird, Organist at Gresham's School in Holt, has recently been appointed Organist at St Mary's, Little Walsingham, in succession to Jack Burns, who has retired after many years' service.

Last date for copy for next Journal 21st November

For your diary

Big screen recitals at Norwich Cathedral

£6 with concessions

September 16 th	David Dunnnett	Norwich Cathedral
October 14 th	Thomas Leech	Leeds

St Nicholas Dereham

Thursday 17 September, 7.30pm also with screen

Celebrity recital by Peter King – Bath Abbey

Tickets £5

Forthcoming Association Events

Saturday 19th September, St Thomas's Church, Earlham Road, Norwich at 11am:

J.S. Bach's 'Orgelbuchlein': Tim Patient presents a Lecture Recital on this most enduringly popular collection of Bach's Chorale Preludes. There will also be opportunity for members to perform the chorales for themselves, both on the fine neo-classical organ at St Thomas's and with their voices! *Please note the new starting time.*

Saturday 10th October:

Pipe & Digital: 10.30am, meet at the mighty church of **St Agnes, Cawston** where we shall inspect and play the 1813 George Pike England organ newly restored by Richard Bower. Richard himself will give a short introductory talk about the instrument.

Lunch; please make your own arrangements but several members hope to invade a suitable hostelry in Reepham.

2.30pm; Regather at **All Saints, Bawdeswell** where James Lilwall will introduce us to the Makin digital organ recently installed in the existing west end gallery case (see article in the Winter 2008 edition of The Journal, page 19). James has very kindly extended an invitation to members to join him at his home, Church View, for tea and refreshments following our time playing the Makin.

Members are most welcome to come for all or part of the day's events as convenient.

Saturday 14th November, Brooke Church at 2.30pm;

Henry Purcell; David Watson presents a talk illustrated with recordings in celebration of the genius of Henry Purcell, born 350 years ago this year.

Saturday 16th January 2010, Holy Trinity Church, Essex St, Norwich at 7pm;

Quiz & Chips: We welcome in a new year of events in the traditional manner by eating fried food and wrestling with a new selection of Martin Cottam's brain teasers. Please let Martin know by Saturday 10th January **at the latest** if you are coming and require Fish & Chips. £5 per head. Mouth watering!

Please don't hesitate to contact Martin Cottam (01603 703921 or martin@cottam.eclipse.co.uk) if you have any queries or require further details of any of our events.