

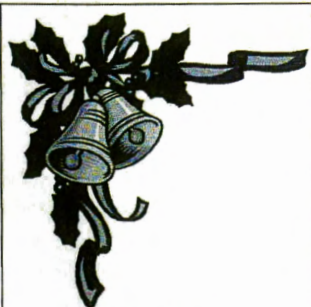
The Journal

Number 74



Winter 2010

Published by the
Norfolk Organists' Association



Seasonal good wishes from your
editorial team and Ralph and
Sandy Bootman

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Last date for copy for the next Journal is Saturday 19th February 2011
Why not send your contribution by email
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The editor writes.....

In 1631, despite strict quarantine arrangements, the Black Death was introduced to Oberammergau and as a result 84 villagers died. This was thought to be a punishment from God and that some form of penitence was required. And so in 1633 the village council held a meeting at which a vow was made to perform, every tenth year, the play of the Saviour's suffering and death.

Therefore since 1634, every ten years the village of Oberammergau puts on a Passion Play which involves everyone in the village in one way or another. In all of that time only twice has the play not taken place, once due to a ban, and the second due to the Second World War.

What came as a total surprise to me was the music which accompanies the action. It is wonderful music yet none of it ever seems to have become known in the same way that other great music has.

The music acts a mediator between the 'living pictures' (Tableaux Vivants) of the Old Testament and the drama of the Passion, helping to convey the spirit of the drama.



The composer of the music was Rochus Dedler 1779 – 1822 who was born in Oberammergau, the son of a local innkeeper. He was a chorister at the nearby Augustinian monastery of Rottenbuch and later studied in Munich. He returned to Oberammergau in 1802 as a teacher, choirmaster and organist and became widely known as a composer of sacred music. Some of his Masses and Requiems are still sung in the Parish Church. The plays he wrote for in the early 19th century were performed in the cemetery where they were performed on a stage erected over the graves of plague victims, which restricted the size of the orchestra and chorus. Dedler himself conducted, recited the lengthy prologues and sang the bass part. This was a colossal undertaking for one person and as a result his health deteriorated and he died within two years.

His 1820 score reflected the musical stylistic tradition of the liturgical music of Franz Joseph and Michael Haydn. It contained solo parts for all four voices in the form of recitatives and arias as well as many choral items.

The change of venue in 1830 from the cemetery to a site on the northern edge of the village meant an altogether more large-scale production attended by larger audiences. This in turn necessitated bigger musical resources hence a re-writing of the original score.

The music written for other major biblical musical dramas is widely known, but it seems that if you want to hear this then you must go to Oberammergau.

***Klavier Ubung III: An illustrated
Lecture Recital by Harry Macey***

David Watson

Organist, Director of Music, impresario, keyboard virtuoso, schoolmaster, parent, husband, composer of sacred and secular masterpieces in every known genre – Bach's achievements leave us gasping. And this is just the stuff that has survived. Think of all the manuscripts that got put on one side at the end of a concert, or the extemporizations – for which Bach was especially famous – which never got written down. In the midst of his busiest period at Leipzig he nevertheless found time to see through the printing press a collection of four volumes of keyboard music which include some of his greatest masterpieces. Vol 3 – published in 1739 – comprised 27 pieces for the organ, the majority being settings of the various chorale tunes associated with the different parts of the Lutheran Mass, the whole thing 'topped and tailed' by the stupendous E flat prelude and fugue known affectionately in England as the St Anne.

Harry Macey proved to be a first class guide to the complexities of the project. In his lucid and informative introductory remarks, he commented on Bach's fascination with numerology and the particular significance of the number 3, and went on to examine the different ways in which the chorales were treated – some in long and complex settings, others – for manuals alone – with what Schweitzer called exquisite simplicity. He warned us to look out for the 5 part Kyrie (BWV671) whose closing bars were as harmonically extraordinary as anything Bach wrote, and commented on several

other examples of Bach's ingenuity – thus the prelude on the 10 commandments has a fugue subject which enters precisely 10 times!

It was obviously not possible to play through the entire collection, but careful choice and splendid performance left the listener in no doubt of the many reasons why Bach continues to be prized by today's organists. And this organist was more than matched by his instrument; the organ in St Thomas by turns colourful, reflective and, in the concluding pages of St Anne, majestic. A splendid morning on every count.

***Schweitzer on the performance of
Bach's music***

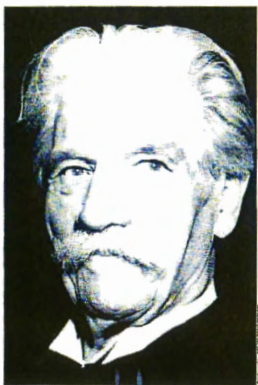
Submitted by Brent Palmer

These are re-arranged extracts from Albert Schweitzer's two-volume biography of Bach translated by Ernest Newman and published many years ago by A & C Black. I found them in the booklet which was published with the Columbia LP of Schweitzer playing Bach which I was lucky enough to purchase recently from Ron Watson along with some other splendid organ LPs. Many of today's organists would do well to note what he has to say.

“ The first thing is always to look for the simple architectural lines of the work. The registration that brings these out is the right one; any other, no matter how ingenious it may be, is less good, in that it obscures the real configuration of the work. We must keep to the principle that every fugue and every prelude is to begin and end on the great organ. It is quite wrong to give out a fugal theme piano or

pianissimo, and let each voice, as it enters, take it up more loudly. The theme, whether joyous or sad, must always be given out with a certain fulness of tone, leaving the cumulative effect to come from the entries of the different voices.

The organist should realise that with Bach it is a question not so much of a gradual cumulation of effect as of the lucid opposition and combination of two or three bodies of tone. For this reason the modern swell really does our organists a disservice, in that it is always tempting them to indulge in these gradual crescendi. The true cumulative effects in Bach are made by the entry at definite moments of two or three new tone-masses, and the decrescendo by their departure.



As a rule Bach kept into the characteristic registration with which he began, getting variety and gradation in his playing by transitions from one manual to another. (This was taught by his pupil Kittel, which, through Hesse and Lemmens, reached Guilman and Widor.) It is noteworthy, however, that he played many organ pieces throughout on the great organ without any change whatever of manuals and without any graduation of

tone, the essence of them being the evolution of a single idea, free from any dramatic suggestions. This is especially the case with the works in which the pedal is employed uninterruptedly throughout for example in the Prelude in C major (BWV 545). Here any variation of tone-colour or alternation of strong and weak would destroy the ideal unity of the work.

To ascertain where and when the change of manual can be made we must endeavour by continual study of the work to discover the ground principles on which it is constructed. Bach's own playing must have been characterised by extraordinary refinement, since he expressly desired that the manuals shall lie quite close to each other so that he may easily pass from one to the other.

The more we play Bach's organ works, the slower we take the tempi. Every organist has this experience. The lines must stand out in calm plasticity. There must be time also to bring out their dovetailing and juxtaposition. At the first impression of obscurity and confusion, the whole effect of the piece is gone.

If so many organists imagine that they play Bach "interestingly" by playing him fast, this is because they have not mastered the art of playing plastically, so as to give vitality to the work by bringing out its detail clearly. It is quite a mistaken idea that what Bach chiefly wants is a monotonous smoothness. He certainly favoured the legato style. But his legato is not a mere levelling; it is alive. It must be filled with a fine phrasing which the hearer need not perceive as such, but of which he is conscious as a captivating lucidity in the playing. Within the legato the separate notes must be grouped into living phrases. That is the ideal to be aimed at."

The twiddly one

Tony Leake

When I first started my tour of Norfolk church organs a kindly churchwarden was pleased to open up the organ for me "Provided you play *The D minor Toccata*."

So as a matter of courtesy from then on I made a point of asking church officials if they would like me to play a request. Requests have ranged from favourite hymns to standards such as *Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring*, *Entry of the Queen of Sheba* etc. I am quite happy to oblige with any one of these provided there is no real organist within earshot.

But at one church the warden asked shyly 'I suppose you couldn't do Elvis Presley's *Love me Tender*? Of course I could, I used to take pub piano requests when I was in the army but it may be the first time this piece was heard in church. My repertoire is largely based on what I have found in music stools. My mother had visions of becoming a dance band leader so for my early years practice at home there were stacks of popular songs of the twenties and thirties. When I was fourteen and a Methodist Sunday School teacher I acquired my first reed organ that the chapel were disposing of. This coincided with the discovery in the maids' sitting room of the house next door of a Challen piano and in the stool a well-thumbed copy of Bach's *Short Preludes and Fugues*. So began my love affair with the works of Bach, my brother drafted in to stand at my side and play the pedal part on the bottom end of the reed organ keyboard.

By the way, my neighbour on the other side had a Hammond organ and we

could hear him practising hymns in advance of his stint at the piano in our local church. But he guarded this instrument so protectively no-one was allowed to even approach it, let alone rummage in his music stool.

Back to the Army and in 1971 I was on a course near Salisbury. In the music stool of the Sergeant's Mess piano was nothing but *The Bell-Bottom Blues* so it was this I played at the end of course party.

One Sunday while the rest of the course were out on the town doing what soldiers do, I was at the Cathedral to hear Gillian Weir give a Bach recital. And yes, I still have in my possession the recital programme, and the Bach and of course *The Bell-Bottom Blues*.

More recently the vicar and organist of a local church were kind enough to give me free rein at a magnificent organ and I really enjoyed myself working through my repertoire to an empty and resonant church. I bumped into the vicar later and he said casually: "I popped into the church for a while and listened to you." My heart sank because my programme had included not only Bach and Handel but my irreverent Wedding selection of *Waiting at the Church*, *In my little Bottom Drawer*, and *The Wedding of Lilli Marlene*.

'What was I playing?' I asked with some trepidation. The vicar waved his arms vaguely: "Oh, you know, the Twiddly One .."
So that was all right then.

NOA on Tour

Mathew Martin

James Lilwall and I had the pleasure of meeting up in Kitzbuhel, Austria during the first week of September 2010. We were asked if we would like to play the organ in the church again and of course came the usual reply "yes, please".



The first church that we played in was the Stadtpfarrkirche St Andreas which is the main Catholic church in Kitzbuhel. This was kindly organised by our dear friends Ulli and Lois Haselsberger who used to run the hotel where Sylvia and I stay. They had recently retired and Lois is an active member of their church council.

There was much external repair work going on on the west side of the church, work to restore windows and

shingles to the roof and they are planning to do much restoration of the tower too. The inside of the church is very highly decorated and mainly a Baroque interior in style and some beautiful paintings adorning the roof and walls. The voicing of the organ is superb and it sings out so beautifully from the west gallery in to the church with absolute clarity. This is not lost anywhere in the building; a wonderful example to any organ builder on the skill of voicing pipework. James and I have enjoyed playing here on more than one occasion over the years and are grateful that the priest appears to encourage us to do so. There is no name plate on the organ but towards the end of our time there an organ competition was to take place in this church among others and I was delighted to meet the organiser who gave me a book about the competition containing details of this organ. I can therefore tell you that the organ builder is Pirchner, but that is the only detail I can find. I have been unable to find anything further on the internet.

The organ was built around 15-20 years ago using some of the old organ's casework. We enjoyed playing the music of Bach, Pachelbel and Mozart as well as improvising, especially in my case as I had not brought any music with me this year. Playing this fine 2 manual and pedal organ in this wonderful acoustic made us play things slower and with more articulation, thus enabling the building and the organ to work together very well.

The following day we would go to the Protestant church at the bottom of the cable car to the Kitzbuhler Horn Mountain. Could this be any better than what we had just experienced?.....



Christuskirche Protestant Church

Specification

<i>Oberwerk</i>	<i>Hauptwerk</i>
Salicional 8ft	Principal 8ft
Flute 4ft	Gemshorn 4ft
Octave 2ft	Mixtur 1 1/3ft
Gedackt 8ft	
<i>Pedal</i>	<i>Couplers</i>
Subbass 16ft	OW - HW
	HW - PED
	OW - PED

This church, which is much smaller than the previous one, is however a delightful building which is plainer inside but rather charming in itself. The architect Clemens Holzmeister, is very famous in Austria. It also made St Thomas's Heigham feel quite tropical!

The organ again was another box of delights albeit somewhat smaller than the last organ and perhaps with a more English quality. It is situated on the West Gallery and much closer to the edge. It was much more intimate to play and very different from the Stadtpfarrkirche.

Next year we are invited to play an historic organ in the small church next door to the Stadtpfarrkirche.

Where next? St Johann..... Salzburg.... Vienna.....? Perhaps a NOA tour of Austria beckons!

Organ news

Geoff Sankey

Holmes and Swift have two principal projects in hand. At St Mark's, Oulton Broad, the two manual Walker instrument is being reconstructed to more closely represent its original form. It started life as a large chamber organ around 1860, but was rebuilt in the 1950s by HNB, who put the swell and pedal departments on electric action. Holmes and Swift are building a new swell department and installing tracker action throughout. The new instrument is scheduled to be completed in late March. Their second project is at St Mark's, Lakenham, where the two manual N&B is currently being reinstalled. During recent restoration of the church building the organ was removed and put into storage.

W & A Boggis have been busy with autumn tunings, in addition to which they have restored the Methodist Church organ at Bradfield Combust (in Suffolk - near Bury St Edmunds). It is a small two manual and pedal by Laycock, with pneumatic action throughout.

They have re-leathered the drawstop machines at Scole, and at Redgrave, also Suffolk, they have added an Oboe stop and balanced swell pedal.

Members who remember visiting Potton Hall may be interested to know that Matthew Copley tells me that the organ from there has now been rebuilt in a fine new case and installed in Manchester. Not a trace of the old red case remains visible, although there are still some red pipes in the rafters at his workshop in Walton on Thames!

The organ in The Old Meeting House, Colegate, Norwich.

John Plunkett

In researching the history of the alleged Dallam connection here at The Old Meeting house, I naturally turned to Stephen Bicknell's masterpiece *The history of the English Organ*. In the chapter entitled *foreign influences before 1600* he notes that "Treasurer, an organ maker in London was joined in 1556 by one Jasper Blancard an immigrant. Treasurer and Blancard went on to work at Canterbury Cathedral. Numerous others from the low countries appear at this time. Charles Blancart with a T was known to have built the organ for the Bavokerk in Ghent in 1569. This organ was rebuilt by Guillames Langhedul in 1580. The Langheduls family have Norwich connections, moving here for a time from Brittany, the very area to which Dallam emigrated during the Commonwealth and Cromwell's destruction of organs. A "kinsman" of Oliver, one John Cromwell M.A. was minister to the "Old Meeting" congregation from 1675 to 1685 before the present building was erected. Some time ago, on a Heritage day, I noted in a reference book in the Walloon church in Norwich, containing a list of strangers, the arrival of a woman with the name of Blankaert around 1580.

I tell you all this because my name, Plunkett is but one of the many corruptions of this word for blanket. Many of my forbears were weavers and trades people in the streets around the OMH, this is part of where I come from. George Plunkett my father's cousin, has left us with an extensive family tree, back to 1685, compiled by accurate and diligent

work before the internet was ever invented, as well as a remarkable photographic record of old Norwich, which now is on the internet for all to see.

A good account of the history of this building can be found in the church guide book. It is one of the first non conformist buildings in the country. Initially dissenters held meetings in private houses, but could be imprisoned if caught. This congregation was formed in 1580, and met in Norwich until oppression forced them to leave the country and a large number moved to Middelberg in Holland where they lived and were welcome. Non-conformity then goes quiet or back underground for about 50yrs. Then further dissent erupted in Norwich, 50 ministers were suspended (not literally) by Bishop Wren, of Norwich, (Sir Christopher's father). The Act of uniformity of 1662 failed. The Act of toleration succeeded in 1689, some returned from Holland and built this wonderful plain but costly building in 1693, in the Dutch style.

My first memory of the building comes from about 1966 when having just restored a 1934 Morris Commercial 15 cwt. Lorry, I was asked to remove a grand piano from the Sunday school rooms, on the left of the drive here as you enter the gate. No one said the piano was upstairs! The lorry took some getting up the drive, the piano took some getting down the stairs. The stairs had wood worm, the piano fell partly through, damage was minimal and it was later professionally restored. We still use this Collard and Collard of 1850 for choir practice at Rosebery Road to this day, still a semitone flat and wonderfully fat in the bass.

First memories of the organ also date from 1966, when I made a visit to see a colleague from work, and Wilfred

Johnson who were apparently “renovating the organ”. This now seems to have consisted of replacing the stop jambs and paring down the stop shanks to fit the baize lined holes cut in the replacement wood by a mortising machine, $\frac{3}{4}$ inch. Plywood side panels were provided to the front together with console sliding doors on white plastic runners. (The picture shown in “The Organ” Vol 172, April 1964 taken by Earnest E Adcock, (died 1961 aged 87) probably before the war, shows the original folding two part doors open, and covering the original side panels.) At the same time a low density chip board ($\frac{1}{2}$ inch) pipe rack for the 4ft Principal was provided and bodged in; pad-sawn holes lined with wedges of felt. This work could have been occasioned by an outbreak of woodworm. Recently small areas of inactive infestation were found in the pedal board and ply near the blower, and considerable damage to some of the bourdons. The work was completed with lashings of pale blue gloss paint to the entire case. *Indeed the whole job was glossed over!*

In 1996, I was asked by the congregation here if I could “make the organ go better”, this being a euphemism for a lot of work for no money! So I thought at least I would explore the venerable machine to see what it was all about.

Very little worked, nothing worked properly. Clipboard in hand I went to the blower, the usual “last for ever” Discus. Opening the lid carefully, I found this was insulated acoustically by asbestos. The top sheet had broken away from the lid and the bits might not all be there. The rest of the inspection was fairly cursory, since if the asbestos is ingested by the fan, it eventually spreads through the organ and

into the building. I reflected upon my mother who died aged 56 through indirect contact with asbestos, my mother who first made me interested in these matters as William Sumner says in the dedication of his book “The Organ”.

Because a deal had been struck with the City Council who took over the building in order to maintain it because of its high listed building status, they agreed to remove the asbestos if I would direct the operation from the organ building/electrical angle. This was quickly arranged with their “asbo” boys. By the way, this short form “asbo” once had a sensible use! They were excellent, and it took about 3 days. However, I declined further involvement as self employment blossomed. For the next 12 yrs the old lady languished and declined further.

I would like to thank Anne Page for playing such a delightful programme of music from the three periods of development of the OMH Organ. Without her the afternoon would have meant very little. I must also thank my colleagues Rodney Ferguson & Roger Moore for hours of unpaid work, and numerous members of the trade who have encouraged me and given wise council.



The Old Meeting House, Colegate

Geoff Sankey

The gathering at this elegant building on Oct 9th met with two surprises, one welcome but the other less so to our speaker. John Plunkett's enthusiasm for this instrument has been well known for some time, so this was bound to make for an interesting presentation. What many of us did not know until we arrived was that Anne Page shared this enthusiasm and had generously given of her time to provide suitable musical examples to support John's technical and historical presentation. A truly formidable team.



The less welcome surprise, for John, was that his presentation notes had disappeared. However, in the same resourceful spirit that has obviously characterised all his work on this instrument, he carried on totally unphased to give a talk every bit as fascinating as we had expected.

The instrument stands on a gallery to the left of the congregation. Its colour now is sympathetic to the Meeting House as a whole, but John explained that when he first met the instrument it was covered in blue gloss paint. As well as this incongruous covering, the instrument had also suffered from other insensitive

repairs, extremes of temperature following a thermostat failure and console changes wholly out of keeping with its 18th century origins. By a slow process of analysis, contortions, and other discomforts John has restored this instrument back to much of its original charm.

After investigating the pipe markings and comparing other work, the current working theory is that the casework is the chair case from the 1664 Dallam organ of Norwich Cathedral, which was rebuilt c1689 by Renatus Harris. Whilst the front of the case is well built, John drew our attention to the side of the case which had been completed with panels that had clearly been recycled from some other function. The sides of the case also show how the swell is of a totally different era to the great.

Inside the case, we learned that the great soundboard is from the 18th century, but the maker remains a mystery. The swell could well be the work of the young E W Norman around 1870: his initials appear in three places on the action.

These notes hardly do justice to the hours of work that John has put into turning this antique into a playable musical instrument, researching its background and preparing for a fascinating talk to NOA members. It was unfortunate that the final surprise of the afternoon, namely the fire alarm sounding just as Anne Page was playing the last notes of *The Heavens are telling* (arr. Nightingale), prevented John and Anne from being given the vote of thanks that all present clearly felt they deserved for a superb afternoon. We wish John well with the remaining tasks he has set himself.

Photographs by Barry Gordon



The details of the two manuals are as follows:-

GREAT

Open diapason 8, extension grooving for big wood basses;

Sesquialtera bass 12th & 17th, II rank, & Cornet treble, 12th 15th 17th III rank, (now used for the Twelfth) separate draws, twin sliders for shifting mechanism;

Single draw, 1 rank twin sliders (now used for 15th);

Single draw, 1 rank twin sliders (now the principal);

Stopt 8 treb and bass draws, 1 rank single slider (always the stopt);

Reed, (Trumpet 8th?), single slider, split treble and bass (now the Dulciana);

A double clamp, single sliders providing for the short compass 4ft flute, and maybe some case pipes in a former life by conveyancing;

SWELL

Full compass Stopt diapason 8' - split treble and bass;

Open Diapason 8' ten c;

Bell Gamba 8' ten c;

Gemshorn 4' (tapered) full compass.

60 years at the console

February 8th 2011 will be my 75th birthday and, thanks to the characteristic generosity of David Dunnett, on Wednesday 9th February at 7. 30 pm in Norwich Cathedral I am to have a birthday treat in that I will be let loose on the cathedral organ to play a programme of pieces which have meant something to me over the years.

I hope as many of you as possible will come along and help me celebrate this particular milestone with a glass of wine on the house.

The event is *not* open to the public and once we are all inside the cathedral via the **south door**, it will be locked, so don't be left out in the cold!

Graham Watt



Members were saddened to hear of the death of Graham Watt on 3rd October aged 73. Graham was a keen supporter of Guild/Association events and recitals until ill health intervened. Since 2001 he helped out as regular page turner at the URC Recitals. He invariably had a camera with him and supplied many a photograph for use in the Journal. He will be missed.

Dr Francis Jackson: Desert Island Discs

Barry Gordon

This annual Norfolk Organists' Association event took place on 13th November 2010 in the fine modern (and warm) building extension at St Andrew's Church, Eaton in front of an audience of over 50 people – including members of NOA and many visitors.

We were very privileged to have Dr Francis Jackson CBE as our 'castaway' this year.

Now in his nineties, Dr Jackson is a hugely respected figure in the world of music. He was formerly the Master of Music at York Minster and has received considerable acclaim over many decades as a performer, teacher, and composer.

Dr Jackson, who had made the journey by train from York, was welcomed by Ron Watson who described him as a legend, (a phrase that he had previously cleared with the latter). Dr Jackson said that he took it as a compliment and thanked NOA for asking him to participate. However, he found it daunting to be in front of such a distinguished gathering.

Dr Jackson was gently probed with questions about his life and times and the result was absolutely riveting. Despite his senior years Dr Jackson was full of sparkle, and told us interesting and amusing anecdotes as he proceeded through the list of 8 gramophone records (below) that he would take with him to the imaginary desert island.

Francis Jackson was born in 1917 at Malton, Yorkshire. He was introduced to music by his mother, who was a good pianist, during musical evenings in the

family home. He became a member of the choir of St Michael's Malton.

Normally choristers joined the Minster choir at aged 8-10, but Master Jackson's father wrote a letter to the choirmaster and Francis, already 11, was preferentially allowed to audition. His easy entry into the choir was resented by the other choirboys as they normally had to undergo probation. However, he could read music, play and sing and this greatly helped. As a result he became a chorister at York Minster, commuting 20 miles daily, until his voice broke at aged 15. The building created a great impression on him because of its size, the glass and the organ (particularly the "full swell" by which he claims to have been seduced); and thus began his love affair with music.

It should be noted that choirmaster and organist Edward Bairstow, who was regarded as a fearsome individual who was alarming to deal with, wanted all-rounders and not just organists. His teaching method, therefore, was to encourage the use of transcription and consequently Dr Jackson learnt to play organ transcriptions when very young. During this time he learnt to play the organ transcription of Dvorak's *In Nature's Realm* (Disc 1) although it sounds little like the orchestral version.

He became organist at Malton parish church aged 16 in 1933 (until 1940). In 1936 he gained the ARCO and in 1937 the FRCO with the Limpus prize.

In 1940 Dr Jackson was called up and joined the 9th Lancers. He told us how, during training, he had afternoon tea with Ralph Vaughan-Williams. Apparently Bairstow had said that as Vaughan-Williams lived in Dorking, close to where Dr Jackson was receiving his basic army training, he should arrange to

see him and provided a letter by way of introduction. Dr Jackson made the phone call from a very crackly line in the canteen and consequently arranged a meeting. Unfortunately, Dorking turned out to be 40 miles away and the journey had to be made by hitch-hiking in the pouring rain, during which time he got exceedingly wet.

After training was complete Dr Jackson was moved to El-Alamein. He became a member of the company concert party where he played accordion and saxophone, the latter he taught himself after he discovered it in the quartermaster's depot. Apparently this was easy to do and he later learnt the clarinet as well. The accordion had lost all its black keys so he inserted screws where they were missing and his party piece was to play *Under the Double Eagle* on the buttons. As there was a lot of "standing around" in the desert of North Africa, he composed songs and also his first published organ piece using manuscript paper created painfully slowly using an old typewriter.

In 1946 Dr Jackson returned to York Minster as assistant organist to Edward Bairstow. Unfortunately Bairstow, who was a heavy smoker, had been ill for some time and subsequently died two weeks later. Dr Jackson was promoted to full organist as a result and became one of the few cathedral organists to remain in the same post for the whole of his career.

In 1950 he married his wife Priscilla and they recently celebrated their diamond wedding. In 1957 he received his Doctorate at Durham University.

We learnt that Dr Jackson is keen on big band music (Terig Tucci disc 5) and was a member of the Big Band Club. He listened a great deal to this type of music on the radio during the big-band

heyday and believed the musicians to be very good. Indeed he mentioned that he wondered whether "Terig Tucci" was the nom-de-plume of somebody really great. (We have subsequently discovered that TT was an Argentinian composer. Ed).

In 1961 he played for the Royal Wedding of the Duke and Duchess of Kent, which he regarded as his most enjoyable occasion. Ron Watson suggested that Dr Jackson was single handedly responsible for organists having to go through the trauma of learning Widor's Toccata as this was the final voluntary played by Dr Jackson. However, it transpires that Dr Jackson had suggested four pieces to the couple and this was the one that was chosen.

Other notable events in his career included playing at two Proms; playing at the Royal Albert Hall at the RCO centenary; playing organ duet with Peter Hurford and playing numerous concerts around the world including six tours of the USA. He is also the only English organist to have recorded on 78s, LPs and CDs.

Dr Jackson had been heavily involved with the maintenance and modification of the York Minister organ including the installation of a second console in the nave; the lowering of wind pressure and the reorganisation of stops.

He told us that in 1971, when doing some playing at Notre Dame, he visited Ravel's garden and saw some seedlings from a cherry tree growing in a hedge. The temptation was too much and these were "borrowed" and transplanted into the Jackson family garden in Yorkshire. And the result was that a very tall cherry tree from Ravel's garden now lives very happily in Dr Jackson's garden.

In 1972-74 he was President of the Royal College of Organists, in 1978 received the OBE and then in 2007 the CBE.

As this was Desert Island Discs, Dr Jackson was asked if he would survive being stranded alone on a desert island. He replied that he probably would, although he was not good at fishing (that was normally left to his son); but he could build a shelter.

Dr Jackson would be given the *Complete Works of Shakespeare* and he thought that they would keep him occupied. His own chosen book would be Bill Bryson's *Mother Tongue*. His luxury, an endless supply of dark chocolate! If seven of the eight discs were washed away then he would rush to save the Ravel.

It was at this point that the audience moved to the old part of the church for a real treat. When we had got to the point of playing disc number 8 (Johann Sebastian Bach, Fugue in E Flat (St Anne) (BWV552) played by Dr Jackson) – John Plunkett (our trusty DJ for the afternoon) indicated that the disc was missing from its case. At this point a search was instigated but no disc was found. However, it was suggested that as the church had 2 organs then perhaps Dr Jackson might consider playing the piece for us on one of these. This he readily agreed to do and the result was that we had the magical pleasure of hearing this maestro give us a rendition (without the use of music) of the Bach St Anne on the old Walker organ in the main church.

Our President David Bunkell thanked Dr Jackson and everyone for attending and thus ended a great afternoon in the company of a real gentleman.



As a footnote: during his welcome Rev Rodd mentioned that the Walker organ was looking for a new home. The cost was free, although the new owner would be expected to pay for its removal. Perhaps he should amend the advert to say: "As played by Dr Francis Jackson CBE Organist Emeritus of York Minster"....

The 8 "Gramophone" Records:-

Disc 1: Antonin Dvorak - In Nature's Realm

Disc 2: Heathcote Statham - Rhapsody on a Ground

Disc 3: Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart - Piano Trio in E Flat, K498 (Kegelstatt)

Disc 4: Edward C Bairstow - Lord, Though Hast Been Our Refuge (1917)

Disc 5: Terig Tucci - Edelma (arrangement by Strings by Starlight)

Disc 6: Claude Debussy - Sarabande

Disc 7: Maurice Ravel - L'Enfant et les Sortilèges

Disc 8: Johann Sebastian Bach - Fugue in E Flat (St Anne) (BWV552)

Organists wanted

Costessey

Norman & Beard two manual in good condition. For full details of the post contact The Revd Nicholas Parry, The Vicarage, Folgate Lane, Costessey, Norwich NR8 5DP 01603 742818.

St. Margaret's, Lowestoft

Church Organist and Choir Director required. The post is available from January 2011. We have a very fine 3 manual organ built by Forster & Andrews in 1871, enlarged in 1902 by the same firm, and then extensively rebuilt by Hill, Norman & Beard in 1937 and completely overhauled in 2008. We have an RSCM affiliated SATB Choir. Sunday services include: 10.00 a.m. Eucharist and 6.30 p.m. Evensong/Evening services. RSCM recommended fees, plus fees for weddings and funerals. To apply or seek further information please contact Mrs. Elizabeth Hudd, Church Warden, 18 Bramfield Road, Lowestoft NR32 3DT. Tel. 01502 582166. e-mail: elizabethhudd@btinternet.com

Organs for sale

Electronic Norwich Organ, suitable for church or home use. Matching oak bench seat, separate speaker, 2 manuals, full pedal board plus 2 expression pedals.

Wide range of pull/push stops -- which really do make a difference.

Pleasant mellow tone with plenty of power for church use.

Measurements: H 53"/135cm W 60"/152cm D inc pedal board 43"/109cm

£800 buyer to collect. Contact Tel. no. 01526 328642

June Greenhough 10 Newton Close, Metheringham, Lincs, LN4 3EQ

Eminent Cantata 1 drawstop Computer organ. 2 manual & pedal, 27 speaking stops. Excellent sound quality, mahogany console with matching bench. Suitable for church or home practice. Owner upgrading to a 3 manual. Cost £12,500 new in 2005. Offers over £8,000.

Tel: 01263 713505 or

email: j.laird195@btinternet.com

The 1939 two-manual J W Walker organ in St Andrew's, Eaton is for disposal. Regularly serviced by W & A Boggis who describe it as well designed, well built and capable of giving good service for many years. Free to a good home, new owner to pay removal costs. Contact John Nowell 07733046966

Organs in Hungary

Peter Stevenson

An invitation to join a small group visiting Hungary to see and play their organs recently was very warmly welcomed. The well-known travel guides of *Eyewitness Travel* introduces this Eastern European country: *Situated in the heart of Europe at the centre of the continent, Hungary is a land with a rich history, a charming people and a culture that encompasses music, art and wine, to which I would add many impressive buildings in contemporary style despite their years behind the Iron Curtain.*

The visit began with a three-night stop in the city of Pecs, founded by the Romans in the third century AD. The Cathedral has four corner towers, unusually, its large interior is amply filled by the fine 4 manual organ which was demonstrated by the cathedral organist before a few of us played (a pattern which was repeated in most places in the tour). The tour included two visits to Organ builders: firstly to the Pecs Organ Manufactory which was founded on the traditions of the most famous organ builders in Europe in the C19th, Jozsef Angster. Compared with organs seen in Slovakia three years ago, we found the pedal boards in Hungarian organs more complete and comfortable with full compass (C to F/G), slightly radiating, though also straight.

Our coach and tour-guide who was with us for the whole time took us over the transdanubian hills on a real summery day to Lake Balaton, the largest freshwater lake in central Europe; about half way along we joined the Tihany Peninsula, an outcrop of volcanic rock

extending for three miles into the lake. The baroque Abbey Church (the original church was built in 1060 but later destroyed and replaced in 1700s) was the centre of our attention.

During the afternoon we played two more organs in the Cistercian Abbey of Zirc - a loftily placed baroque instrument at the shrine, and a large Romantic organ built by a subsidiary of the Rieger company in the west end.



A three-hour drive took us to Budapest for our four-night stopover. The first appointment was at the hugely attractive Palace of Art to see and play one of the newest and most prestigious concert organs in Europe; inaugurated in 2006, with five manuals and 92 stops built by the Muhleisen and Pecs Organ Manufactory; the fifth manual in such organs seen in Hungary is the Bombarde (the en chamade powerful trumpets at 16, 8, and 4' pitches), not the "Echo" Organs seen in the 6 manual Wannamaker Store organ in Philadelphia, and in London's St

Paul's Cathedral. This organ and others in Hungary employed the latest technology, with small rocker tabs plus lights lighting-up when 'stop drawn'. But unlike the similar system in Compton Organs (eg the old BBC Concert Hall) where the electric bulbs frequently failed! A welcome sight-seeing tour in our coach plus some walking took us to the Heroes Square and in the Castle District, parks and avenues, plus a great view from the Gellert Hill, What was agreed to be the best meal of the tour was taken at a hunting lodge overlooking the picturesque curve in the Danube, following a visit to another 5 manual organ with 146 stops.

The last organ to be seen was a reconstruction of the historic hydraulus (Water Organ) of AD 288 at the Aquincum Museum.

We were particularly impressed by the high standard of performance by most organists heard, all of whom, save one (who had studied with Oliver Latry in Paris), had studied in Eastern Europe. Performances included impeccable from memory accounts of the *Great G minor* and the *A minor* Bach fugues and two performances of *Mozart Changes*, a challenging work by the contemporary Hungarian composer Zsolt Gárdonyi written in 1995.

A farewell dinner with candlelight cruising on the Danube occupied the last evening of this memorable tour.

Robbens reflects

We've just celebrated the Annual Festival of Remembrance and thanksgiving for those who made the supreme sacrifice in service to our country. It struck me that we, as members of the Association, might think back and

remember, with gratitude, those members of the 'Guild / Association' who have passed on and are now gathered in the 'Great Loft Above'. We thank them for their support in setting up and nurturing the organisation, and for their wisdom and friendship. The following names come to mind, in no particular order of preference and, no doubt, there are others who should be included. Our heartfelt thanks go to all of them for their service to the Association:

Arthur Bussey (remember the 'Bussey Bowl!'). George Hawkins. Donald Spinks. Ernest Thompson. Jessie Steadman. Stanley Fuller. Norman Cutting. Peter Walder. Kenneth Ryder. Arthur Cooke. Alan Thorne. Martin Dupont. George Marley. Leslie Chambers. Brian Taylor.

For my part, I have met and befriended many people I would not otherwise have met, visited many places I would not otherwise have visited, done many things I would not otherwise have done and derived therefrom great pleasure.

Having been a keen follower and sometime participant of Songs of Praise since its inception, I'm sad to find that it is becoming a part-time 'chat show' and note that on occasions there is more chat than songs. Whilst I have no criticism of the chat content, it most definitely is not Song.

Why, when you have splendid venues, singers, organs and instrumental accompaniment, are they not used to the full?

There are many elderly and housebound folk who love to join in the singing and would happily manage without the chat. Let the people sing! JR

Farmer's market

Bryan Ellum

A few years ago, our member, John Farmer, produced a collection of his piano compositions under the title *Pianorama* plus a CD recorded by John on his Broadwood Grand. Now, a copy of his *Organorama* an anthology of 20 pieces for the organ, has come my way, and I felt it would be good to bring this to the notice of our wider membership, with perhaps, some comments regarding the style and demands of these pieces.

Twenty pieces would take too much space, so I have picked out some items with particular appeal for me. Part 1 of the anthology consists of 8 pieces ranging from serious to light, and for an exhilarating start try *Full Steam Ahead*, a first-class piece with a driving rhythm, inspired by the Oliver Cromwell steam locomotive at Sheringham earlier this year. Of medium difficulty, this piece would suit both classical and theatre organ. On a less energetic note is *Blades across the Water* - a musical impression of the wind turbine farm on Scroby Sands. This gently lilting piece started life as a piano solo but has translated well to the organ and would benefit from quieter, more orchestral tone colours. Not too demanding!

Part 2 contains 12 items, all based on hymn tunes/chorales. I was very impressed with the *Variants on Rangoon* a splendid tune associated with the hymn 'Trumpet of God, sound high'(AMR 270), but hardly sung these days. Opening fanfares set the scene for an exciting first section, leading to some engaging manuals-only syncopation. A further variation flows into a final section of

fanfares, pedal solo, and a full-blooded conclusion. A piece for recital or service, needing a competent technique and organ to match.

In complete contrast is *A Solemn March on Eventide*. Here, the melody is set against a rhythmic figure, similar to that used in Healey Willan's Prelude on *Gelobt Sei Gott*. A delightful setting - easy-medium - ideal for a funeral, requiring only a modest 2-manual. For Christmas a Prelude on *In Dulci Jubilo* would prove most attractive and accessible, with opportunities for colourful, maybe French-style registrations, to highlight the varied textures of this piece. This, plus the following Postlude on "Mendelssohn" will certainly feature in my choice of organ music for Christmas this year.

I should also mention the *Discourse for Organ* on *O Filii et Filiae* a fine piece to prepare for Easter; with the direction to play 'Joyously' a good sense of rhythm is needed to cope with the catchy syncopation of the final section - plus the double pedalling!

All pieces within this anthology are available separately with attractive pictorial covers. If anyone is interested in exploring John's music, in all its diversity, you are invited to contact him on 01493 842802, or by writing to him at 25 Barnard Avenue, Great Yarmouth, NR30 4DX



For your diary

Forthcoming Association Events

Saturday 15th January, Holy Trinity Church, Essex St, Norwich at 7pm:

Quiz & Chips: We return to the Meeting Place at Holy Trinity for our traditional curtain raiser to a new NOA year. Martin Cottam will be posing the brain-teasers one last time before handing the role of quizmaster to another in 2012.

Excellent fish & chips will once again be on offer at a cost of **£5 per head**. Please let Martin know by **Saturday 8th January at the latest** if you require them.

Saturday 19th February, Brooke Church Rooms at 2.30pm:

The Heart of the Matter: Following his highly entertaining and illuminating talk on compositional 'sins' last February, Ron Watson returns this time to bring enlightenment on the subject of *rhythm* in music.

Saturday 26th March, URC, Princes St, Norwich at 11.30am (tbc):

AGM, Buffet, and Recital: We intend, once again, to follow the format established in recent years for our AGM by providing a buffet after our business meeting and concluding proceedings with an organ recital. We hope to hold the meeting, as in 2009, at the excellently appointed Princes St URC with its splendid *Father Willis* organ but confirmation of the date and venue was still awaited at the time of going to press.

Saturday 16th April, St. George's RC Church, Sprowston Rd, Norwich at 11.30am:

A Rodgers Digital Organ Revealed: In recent years an impressive 3-manual and pedal digital organ made by the American company, *Rodgers* has been installed at St. George's RC church. Possessing a predominantly *French stop-list* it speaks into a splendidly spacious acoustic. Resident 'titulaire', Paul Allen will be on hand to talk about the project and demonstrate this highly interesting instrument before members have the chance to play it for themselves.

Saturday 21st May, St. George's Colegate, Norwich, at 2.30pm:

L'Orgue Expressif: It was with great regret that Anne Page had to postpone her Harmonium presentation last May because of illness so we are delighted she has agreed to return and have another go.

Anne is Professor of Harmonium Studies at the Royal Academy of Music in London and she will be using her own 19th century *Alexandre Harmonium* during her presentation about this unjustly neglected instrument for which the likes of Franck, Widor, Guilmant, Vierne, and Langlais wrote much fine music. The 19th French Harmonium is a very different creature from the more familiar 'American' organ that resided in so many English Victorian and Edwardian parlours.

This event will conclude with the opportunity to take part in a *masterclass* so get out your copies of Vierne's 'Pièces en Style Libre' and get practising!

June:

Outing to West Norfolk: We are hoping to arrange visits to see and play 3 very interesting and important mid-19th century organs at Gooderstone (J.C.Bishop 1835), Hilborough (Bevington 1857), and Oxborough (W.C.Mack 1850). Date and details to be confirmed.

Saturday 16th July:

President's Day: The date has been decided but the details remain work in progress.

August:

Young Organist's Recital: All suggestions as to a possible recitalist and a suitable venue gratefully received!

Saturday 17th September:

Liszt, Composer and Transcriber: Brent Palmer celebrates the work of the great Hungarian, the bi-centenary of whose birth falls in 2011. Time and venue to be confirmed.

October:

Trip to Groningen: Inspired by the stunning sights and sounds of the historic organs revealed during the showing of the 'Martinikerk Rondeau' film at Southwold's Electric Picture Palace back in June we very much hope to arrange a trip to the city of Groningen during half term week. This Dutch city and its surrounding province arguably possesses the greatest concentration of fine historic organs in the world.

Planning is still in the early stages but we very much hope to liaise with the flourishing local organ association in Groningen enabling us to visit and play a number of these wonderful instruments. Start saving your Euros now!

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.

St Thomas's Church Heigham

*Saturday 11th December 7.30pm
The Icenii Choir directed by James Lilwall*

*Saturday 18th December 7.30pm
'A box of delights- a selection of seasonal music'
Framingham Earl Singers, Cantaria, Bure Valley Male Voice Choir, The Lark Quartet and the Sub-organist of Magdalen College, Oxford, Ben Giddens, all directed by Jason Collins.*

James Parsons has recorded a new CD at St Thomas's which is soon to be released. James will be launching the 2011 Series on Saturday 26th February.

Eaton Concert Series

*Sundays at 3 pm
Admission by programme on the door
Adults £6 – Students £3 Accompanied children free
5th December The Jay Singers directed by Jeremy Jackman
6th February 2011 The Ancora Duo
Anne Allen – flute Sarah Freestone - guitar*

St Peter Mancroft

*Saturday 4th December at 1 pm
The Girls' Choir & Choral Scholars of St Peter Mancroft with Julian Haggett organ
Rhian Hanson harp and Jody Butler director
Admission free*

Norwich Cathedral

9th February at 7.30

Private recital by Ronald Watson – 60 years at the console (see page 10)