

The Journal

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The editor writes.....

Well this is what the cobbler threw at his wife; the last. It is in fact the 101st such booklet I have edited, as the first one, still entitled *The Newsletter*, (1992) was un-numbered.



Editing the Journal has not been a chore, quite the reverse as for a journalist manqué it was just what I wanted. Having a platform such as this from which to voice my opinions, (alongside the occasional letter to the press), has been a privilege. Oddly enough, considering the opinions I have voiced on a wide range of topics, no-one has ever written in to disagree with me which I suppose could be interpreted as meaning that they agreed with me or dismissed my observations as those of a crank, not worthy of comment.

The many and varied writings of contributors over the years have taught me a great deal and certainly broadened my horizons though not always changed my views. I still wouldn't go to a recital on anything other than a pipe organ; I still think that recitalists (some recitalists) talk too much and should just get on with the playing. In

my ideal world they wouldn't talk at all but provide programme notes for people to browse whilst they are listening.

The earliest publications date from a time before the existence of such wonderful computer software which today makes desktop publishing so easy. In those days 'Cut and Paste' meant cutting with scissors and pasting with glue, done in the earliest editions by David Berwick who actually pieced together the articles into booklet form.

It has always been reassuring to get correspondence arising from something in the Journal; an indication that it gets read. So saying, I have had quite a bit of feedback about 38 St Giles Street where the meeting was held which inaugurated the Norwich & District Organists Association. Initially built by the Gurneys as a residence, it was later occupied by John Stacy, a surgeon, and later still was a hostel for 'fallen women'. In 1947 it was being used as the office for the Norfolk & Suffolk Hospitals Contributors Association, the secretary of which was Arthur Bussey, hence the choice of location for the meeting of organists. There are some members still around who remember attending meetings there, at the rear along a passage, it seems. The premises is now a boutique hotel.

At a meeting in January 1982 a tribute was paid to Arthur Bussey following his decease and in 1983 it was agreed to commission the carving of the Bussey Bowl by Carl Raunce and this bowl still appears at most meetings as a receptacle for monetary contributions.

Your new President



Matthew was born in Norwich in April 1987. Both, his father and grandfather have sung in church choirs at some point in their lives. Matthew joined the choir of St Nicholas North Walsham while still at school. In 2000 he began organ lessons with Peter Stevenson (when Peter was living locally at Knapton) and fairly soon afterwards was organist at a local church. He studied A-levels at City College in Norwich, which included Music and Music Technology. While at college he passed his grade 7 and 8 organ exams, for the latter, winning the Willden Prize for that year. He then went to read music at the University of East Anglia, graduating with an honours degree in 2010. Matthew has completed a Diocesan Organ Scholarship, studying with Julian Hagggett, with whom he continues to have consultation lessons. He has recently taken part in two organ master

classes with Lionel Rogg (international concert organist) and Henry Fairs (Birmingham Conservatoire). Currently Matthew is organist/choir master of St Mary's Church, Sroxham where he has been since September 2012 and also plays at other churches in the Benefice. He is one of the organists at the recently opened Cromer Crematorium. Matthew accompanies several local choirs: The Norwich Singers, The Choir Worstead and The Broadland Youth Choir. Also, Matthew does some private teaching mainly in piano.

Matthew writes.....

I have been the Association's Membership Secretary since the 2014 AGM when I took over from David Bunkell and I will be continuing in this role. I am honoured in being elected as President by the committee and Association. As your new President I hope to build on the excellent work done by our Former President Mathew Martin and hopefully to encourage some organists who are not currently members to join our number. Of course this is not something I can do alone and I would like to thank the committee for all their hard work much of which I am sure goes unnoticed by many.

Also we have space available on the committee and it is always good to have new ideas and different people to call upon so if anyone would like to join us or has any ideas for any association event or matters do please get in touch with me or any committee member.

With best wishes, Matthew.

Norman & Beard - Origins in London and Diss

John Norman

William Norman (1830-1877) had two sons, Ernest William (1850 - 1927) and Herbert John (1861 - 1936). William was a cabinet maker, working for JW Walker in Francis Street, London. He made a one-manual house organ for himself that still survives in private hands.

It was perhaps hardly surprising that young Ernest, when he turned 16, was apprenticed to JW Walker. Documentary proof of this has surfaced from an unexpected source. Among the contents of a house that the son of the deceased owner was clearing were some papers. He was going to put them in a skip, but realising that the documents involved organs, passed them to a friend with an interest in mechanical instruments. The friend googled 'organ history' and alighted on BIOS.

Among the papers was a letter:
It is agreed between Joseph William Walker and George Frederick Walker, organbuilders of 27 Francis St Tott Ct Road, Saint Pancras, Middlesex, on the one part and Ernest W.Norman of 11 Clarence Gardens Munster Street in the parish of St Marylebone on the other part that with the consent of his father William Norman, the said Ernest Wm Norman shall be taught ... the business of an Organ Builder by the said Joseph William Walker & George Fedk Walker.

The letter goes on to outline pay of 5 shillings per week, rising by

annual increments to 9 shillings and is dated May 1866. There is a note to say that *Ernest William Norman will be 16 on 3rd August '66.*

There is also an almost identical letter dated 27 March 1867, but with a higher pay rate and an overtime rate. This suggests that Ernest's start at Walker's was delayed by some bargaining.

The third letter, dated 9 September 1870, is also quite formal: *E Norman affirms that when agreement was signed, it was verbally understood that that last year of his apprenticeship should be served in what we term the "Voicing Department", whereas we stated at the time that it depended on his behaviour during the first four years, and that if he conducted himself to our satisfaction, we would take the matter into consideration.*

The letter goes on to say ... *from Saturday last (he) has employed a good part of his time in reading in the factory. ... whether we should not be justified in withholding his weekly allowance of 14 shillings. He has lately had 3 weeks holiday ... he was aware ... previous to his holiday ... that we should not take him into the voicing department ...* The fourth letter, dated 21 April 1871, to Messrs Henderson & Redhead (Solicitors?) basically asks if 'JW Walker & Sons' is justified in withholding his pay.

All this confirms a verbal tradition in the Norman family that Ernest left Walker's before his apprenticeship was up because they wouldn't teach him voicing. But these letters raise additional issues. Although the later instruments bear the label

E.W.Norman, the first two, in Diss Baptist Church, Norfolk, (probably 1870 and still extant) and Roydon Parish Church (near Diss, 1873, and later rebuilt), are labelled, according to the NPOR, **W. Norman & Son**. More interesting still, the organ in Denham Parish Church (also near Diss) is dated 1868 and was a conversion from a JW Walker barrel-operated organ. This suggests that Ernest's father William was already operating as an organbuilder whilst Ernest was learning his trade at Walker's. It also suggests that Ernest was desperate to learn voicing because he was already thinking of setting up an independent business with his cabinet-maker father. No doubt that was the reason why Ernest was taking an unpaid three-week holiday in the summer of 1870!

An interesting consequence of this is that the early EW Norman organs have fairly ordinary stop-lists and that when Ernest's younger brother Herbert John started in organbuilding he first went to TC Lewis, presumably to learn voicing. Lewis's influence can be seen in the stop-list of the Norman brothers' first four-manual organ, that for the chapel of Jesus College, Cambridge in 1887. Subsequently, EW Norman (known as 'Icky' in the factory) invented the famously reliable Norman & Beard exhaust pneumatic action whilst 'Mr Herbert' ran the tonal side of the business.

A small coincidence should perhaps be noted. The Denham organ was paid for, and farm workshop space provided, by the Pike family, forbears of Noel Mander.

The Walker letters quoted are but

some of the papers that have been passed to BIOS and are being studied by Alan Thurlow with a view to establishing what should be added to the British Organ Archive at Birmingham University. It now turns out that the father of the deceased house-owner where the papers were stored may have been Kenneth Campbell, a director of the Walker firm in the 1960s who ran the firm's administration.

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Platinum anniversary

Compiled from minutes of meetings.

Having got going in 1947 the Association launched 1948 with a lecture/recital in February in Christ Church Eaton on *Choral Preludes* given by the organist there, WH Perry at which there were 42 members present.

At the April meeting EE Adcock read a paper on *The organ as an architectural ornament* accompanied by a display of his own photographs. At that meeting members were encouraged to support a recital by Jeanne Demessieux in the cathedral in May. Also in May members met at St Stephen's Church to hear a talk by Revd W Sinnett who had found details in the church records of St Stephen's first organ. He also mentioned that the evening sermon had been replaced by a recital by Mr L Gobbett who also ended the meeting with a recital after which members were invited to play.

In September the Ipswich Association visited Norwich and were entertained to tea in rooms at the Samson & Hercules. Heathcote Statham gave a recital and invited members to inspect the console.

In January 1949 40 members attended an organ recital given by Nicholas Choveaux on the new Constant Martin organ and vocal items by Barbara Lind, granddaughter of Jenny Lind. Also in January 39 members attended a recital by CJ Coleman in St Peter's after which members inspected the church plate.

In February 30 members

attended a meeting at The Octagon Church for a talk by Ralph Mottram (deacon), on the history of the church. This was followed by a recital by RJ Butteris.

In April there was a recital in North Walsham by J Withers after which members were invited to play. Norman Cutting, Head of Paston Grammar School, demonstrated the four manual organ in the school after which members were shown Nelson relics.

In June 30 members of the London Organ Club attended evensong at the Cathedral, had tea in The Cloisters and heard a recital by Heathcote Statham. Also in June 30 members toured the John Compton Organ works.

In September members visited St Mary's Cathedral and Baptist and Methodist churches in Bury St Edmunds. Also in September 25 members visited Beeston Regis for the opening of the John Compton electronic organ. After a service, Norman Cutting gave a recital on the instrument.

In December 24 members attended a recital in Halesworth by Dr George Thalben-Ball.

Quite a busy couple of years with quite a lot of emphasis on resident organists putting on events and recitals in their own churches. RW.

The AGM

Jeremy Worth

Even by Norwich standards organists are spoilt for choice in Colegate. The organisers of this year's AGM on Saturday 18th March did their best by holding the meeting in St George's, the lunch at the Old Meeting House and spreading the organ recital by Professor Anne Page over both venues.

The AGM began with a minute's silence for departed members Ronald Buxton and Michael Dewhirst. Retiring chairman Mathew Martin, well practised by now, took us through the formal business briskly but with a certain amount of chiding. First for himself for not being able to expand the Association as much as he would have liked, and secondly to us members for not supporting the events organised during the year in sufficient numbers to always cover costs. Nonetheless he thanked everyone who had worked so hard over the year to make the Association and its events a success and who had supported them. Mathew concluded his address by presenting the retiring Journal Editor with a generous gift of a voucher for tickets to any concert of his choice at Aldeburgh for which the latter expressed his thanks. After the 100th edition of the Journal in May the new Editor Adrian Richards, who was elected during the meeting, will take over.

We welcomed Matthew Bond as our new President and Michael Flatman as our President Elect, and

congratulated Basil Cooper for renewing his subscription for a truly impressive 60th time*. The AGM took five minutes longer than in 2016, a trend our new President will have to keep an eye on.

Melanie Macey laid on her customary excellent spread, at the Old Meeting House, the venue a reminder that Puritans are alive and well and living in Norwich.

We were privileged to have as our recitalist Anne Page, an Australian, who in her own words 'In the pioneering spirit of her country of origin likes to explore some of the less well trodden musical paths and has been at the forefront of the revival of the harmonium' of which she is Professor at the Royal Academy of Music. Alas, we were not able to hear her on the harmonium since the instrument at St George's needs attention, but heard her instead on the organ of the Old Meeting House, some of which is by Renatus Harris, and the organ of St George's which began life in 1802. Anne based her performance around *The Art of the Fugue*, beginning the Old Meeting House recital with *Contrapunctus 1, 2, and 3* at the and concluding the St George's recital with *Contrapunctus 4 and 5*.

Anne told us she is still experimenting with an organ version of the *Art of the Fugue*, we heard work in progress. The rest of her programme was intended as context, with pieces of the time intended for one or two manuals, with or without pedals, which could have been in Bach's mind during his composition of *The Art of the Fugue*. We heard in the Old Meeting

House three pieces by Buxtehude – three choral preludes on *Vater unser in Himmelreich*, and two Italianate pieces, a *Canzonetta* and a *Ciaccona in E minor*. Then, at St George's a concerto by Handel in G minor arranged for one player and, using the Hautboy stop on the organ, the *Concerto de Hautbois* by the eighteenth century Jean-Paul-Egide Martini. A wonderful programme that was as impressive to an audience of organists as it was enjoyable.

**Also present was Peter Stevenson who had been present at the inaugural meeting of the Norwich & District Organists Association 70 years ago. Ed.*

Laurie Bannister OBE



Many members will remember Laurie Bannister who died on March 26th aged 89. Laurie served as our chairman from 1994 to 1996. He was very interested in organs and actually rescued one and installed it at his premises. The following article that he wrote tells the story.

When I retired, there were a few seconds of inactivity, quickly followed

by a sort of panic. The question to be answered was, 'what would I do with all the spare time that retirement was bound to make?' After forty five years of working there were many 'Just Causes' beckoning, such as 'Just do this' and 'Just do that', I felt the need for some major project to soak up this spare time. I debated whether I should build a model railway, or do up an old car, or better still an old tractor, and then the thought struck, why not an old cinema organ, there must be thousands of them.

The first thing was to try and find a cheap cinema organ, they are a bit like dinosaurs - very large and very dead, if they are active and working they are elusive and expensive. Dead or alive they need a big building, preferably with all mod cons such as a solid floor, some form of heating and insulation and no near neighbours, and of these, I could satisfy only the latter.

It came as a surprise to find out that there were now less than 190 cinema organs in the British Isles, of these 20 were installed in churches and chapels and in use each Sunday, about 60 were in public halls and buildings (Thursford, Fleggburgh, Gunton Hall etc.), and a further 65 were in private locations (Oxnead Mill, Aylsham, Spalding etc.). There were still about 20 left in cinemas, but most were boarded over and not used, as bingo reigned supreme. This meant that somewhere there were about 20 dismantled and stored, - and I only needed one of them.

I heard there was an organ for sale in Barrow in Furness, which is about as far as you can get from

Beccles. On arrival there and after much asking around I was shown into the bar room of a club and shown the screw holes and marks in the linoleum where the ex Hull Astoria Compton had stood until it had been removed the week before. Next there was said to be something in bits in a barn in Yorkshire, so again I drove across Norfolk, turned right and eventually found it near Ripon. It was a heap in every sense of the word, but at least it was available and said to be complete, and as frightened angels trod by, I rushed in. It was a 10 rank Compton and originally had a good home at The Forum Cinema, Southampton, where it had been played by some of the best organists from its birth in May 1935 until 1970. It came through the war with only a small hole here and there, but couldn't stand the later attack of bingo and went silent and was removed. It eventually ended up in Yorkshire in its many parts and has not been assembled for about 20 years until I came along.

You do not need to be a musician to rebuild a cinema organ, I found that I had to be a lorry driver (three trips to Yorkshire), a labourer with weight lifting ability, and since then a bricklayer, carpenter, plumber, electrician, leather worker and french-polisher. Needless to say I did not possess this wide range of trade skills on day one, and it has been a bit of a struggle. But most people did not see me as a threat to their livelihood and have been most helpful in sharing their trade secrets, especially the church organ builder who is willing to sell me bits of leather, felt of various

thicknesses and old screws and things that are unobtainable in this plastic age.

When you are the proud possessor of all these bits of organ, you realise that if you had bought an organ in situ, and then had the experience of removing it piece by piece, the chances are that by doing it in reverse order you would end up with something that is recognisable as an organ. Before buying I had spent considerable time and effort in travelling around the country visiting and photographing organ transplants. Some were in large houses, some in extensions built on to small bungalows, others in redundant chapels and barns. No two installations were alike, and it did seem that certain liberties could be taken and that it was not an exact science.

Most owners were very helpful, and very proud of their instruments which they demonstrated with great gusto and were quickly off into the fantasy world that only great volume seems to conjure. To each and all I asked the same question - 'if starting again what would you do differently?', - and it was from these answers and my observation and conversation with some of the nicest people you could ever wish to meet that I started my planning.

Unlike church organs that are usually free standing and unenclosed, (except for the swell box), a cinema organ is fully enclosed in brick built chambers and the sound can only escape through thick wooden shutters. The volume is completely controllable, to the extent that in a good installation 'full organ' can only just be heard when the shutters are closed. Very few

achieve this, but I came to the conclusion that the chambers were very important so I started laying bricks. I decided that the chambers needed to be large, as they had to accommodate the wind chests, the pipes and percussion, and as I was to be the maintenance man and tuner, there had to be room for me as well. The floor, walls and ceiling need to be hard in order to reflect the sound, and I have used squash court plaster on the walls. All surfaces have been painted white to reflect the light from strip lights as I am going to spend hundreds of man hours in there putting this thing together. I see the chambers as the sound mixing room so that the sound that is allowed to escape through the swell shutters is fully mixed for consumption by the listener, - not a squeak from here and a grunt from over there.

A good installation in the chambers does not necessarily guarantee a good sound in the auditorium, - but it helps. The church organ is geared to sound right in a large lofty building with hard floors and walls, the cinema organ however is geared to sound well in a large building full of plush seating, heavily carpeted and with enormous curtains and drapes that soak up the sound and is acoustically dead. To overcome this the pipes are of a large scale (diameter) at high wind pressures with heavy tremulants to get the sound where others can't reach.

Organ transplants rarely have either of these two types of building to perform in and most end up speaking into rooms of fairly small dimension which is a great disadvantage. Some try

to overcome this by cutting down the area of the swell shutters to about two feet square and 'squirting' the sound at the audience, but this is far too directional and you lose the 'all around' sound of these great instruments. I am retaining fairly large shutters that will ripple open and closed in a very sedate manner by a carefully controlled right foot, - it could be yours! To date I have not had a squeak out of it, perhaps that is why I am so pleased with it.

Judgement will eventually be by others, on firstly the standard of workmanship in assembling it, and secondly what it sounds like. If it fails on sound, then so be it, it will just have to be seen as a silent museum piece in good condition. I am not an organ builder, but an amateur organ cleaner, repairer and reconstructor. What I am doing is 90% common sense and 10% magic, and I am hellish short on magic and that is the bit I am now coming to.

Oh, by the way, I have solved the problem of spare time; I haven't any!

First published in Journal No 15 Spring 1996.

Footnote: The organ was given its first airing by Nigel Ogden with Association members in attendance.

Touching History: Playing Two Early 18th Century Organs in the City of London

Martin J Cottam

In marked contrast to the situation across the continental mainland of Europe our islands are not blessed with significant numbers of early church organ survivals. Of the Gothic and Tudor ages there is nothing at all save for the battered but precious remains of two Tudor soundboards discovered in Suffolk a few decades ago and the celebrated but much altered early 16th century case in St. Stephen's, Old Radnor. Oliver Cromwell's Commonwealth sealed the fate of anything else that had come through the English Reformation and all but obliterated the new instruments of the Laudian Revival in the early 17th century. Some casework and a handful of pipes are all that we have of that era.

The restoration of the monarchy in 1660 thankfully ushered in a new wave of English organ building. Though colourful these late 17th century instruments and those of the Georgian era tended to be fairly small and their classical voices and lack of pedals made them easy prey to radical alteration and enlargement as the technical and liturgical developments of the Victorian age coupled with the taste for more a romantic style of voicing took hold and held sway. Such intrusive interventions were wholly understandable in such a context, but the loss of quite so much fine historic material is to be regretted. Of course, history never stands still and

many of those Victorian instruments have themselves fallen victim to the changing tastes of our own times!

Whatever your views on the morality of the National Lottery its offspring, the Heritage Lottery Fund has been of inestimable importance in helping to pay for the recovery and reinstatement of so much of our national organ heritage as long buried historic material has been brought to light and given new life in an ongoing series of reconstructive organ restorations around the country. Greater understanding of and sensitivity to more historically appropriate methods of organ restoration have developed alongside this vital flow of funding and the re-emergence of many long lost and historic voices has been the welcome result.

By a quirk of fate the country's two most significant early eighteenth century organ survivals are located in the City of London within ten minutes walk of each other and Liverpool Street Station, and it was to these two instruments a select band of NOA members made pilgrimage on Tuesday 11th April, a day blessed by soft, warm, spring sunshine. Perfect.

St Botolph-without-Aldgate was our first port of call where stands the organ thought to be built in about 1704 by the famed Renuus Harris. Joining us there was John Bamford, the former organist at the church and the driving force behind the project to restore the organ back to something like its original condition in 2006, the work being expertly executed by Goetze & Gwynn. Remarkably the Harris support

frame and the Great and Chair Organ windchests survived the alterations of the 19th and 20th centuries along with eleven almost complete ranks of Harris pipework (including the Great 8ft Trumpet and the Chair 8ft Bassoon). This surviving material was vital in helping to determine the organ's original layout and specification and the decision was made to return the instrument to its 1744 state when John Byfield replaced the Harris Tierce and Larigot stops with a 3 rank Furniture. The original long GG compass was reinstated on the Great and Chair manuals, and a short compass Swell reconstructed. The provision of a small Pedal organ and a Tremulant were the only concessions to non 18th century English practice.

I recall hearing Dominic Gwynn himself say that this instrument could not be said to be 'top notch' Renuis Harris work; the historic pipework is not homogenous and may be the result of Harris employing the services of several different pipemakers to ease the workload in his own workshop at the time of construction. In addition some aspects of the casework betray lower standards than are most usually found in Harris organs. But as Dominic also said, this is all we've got! It is by far the most complete Renuis Harris organ in existence and as such can arguably be said to be the earliest playable church organ in Britain.

'Second rate' it may or may not be but the St. Botolph's organ as it now stands (III/P 21) is a delight both to play and to listen to. The main chorus is wonderfully virile, the flute stops

exquisite. The reeds, both original and reconstructed, are full of colour and character and far removed from the smooth, fat creations of two centuries later. The instrument is, of course, tailor-made for the English 18th century repertoire which truly comes alive on it but baroque era French and German music can work wonderfully well too. The slow, wafting Tremulant is an expressive joy for quiet, meditative chorale preludes. This was the third time I've had the opportunity to play this organ and my pleasure only increases with each re-acquaintance.

After two happy hours at St. Botolph's we strolled northwards for lunch before regathering at Nicholas Hawksmoor's monumental masterpiece, Christ Church Spitalfields (completed in 1729). Inside, concert organist and current curator of the Christ Church organ, Gerard Brooks was waiting to welcome us. He gave us a brief history of the organ installed by Richard Bridge in 1735. It was the largest organ in England at the time but not considered loud enough or large enough for later tastes and a succession of builders including Gray & Davison made various alterations and additions, culminating in the provision of a Tuba stop in 1926.

By the late 1950s structural faults in the building began to cause major concern and the church remained locked and essentially abandoned through the 1960s, the organ by then being unplayable. By the 70s there was a real threat of demolition, a fate that had already befallen much of the surrounding streetscape which up to the

early 60s had been the largest and most intact area of early 18th century housing in London. Mercifully the charity 'The Friends of Christ Church Spitalfields' was founded and since 1976 their tireless efforts have raised funds for an award winning £10 million restoration project. The church today looks superb and is well loved and used. The restoration of the Bridge organ (III/P 37) by William Drake Ltd in 2015 was the final crowning glory of this tremendous project.

The decision to reconstruct the organ as far as possible to its 1735 state was not without controversy but the historical significance of the instrument and the large amount of surviving pipework, not least many of the reeds, determined the final outcome. Drake's work was meticulous in its research and execution. The exceptionally fine case looks truly resplendent clothed in its new colouring and gilding. The Great and Choir Organs have had their long GG compasses reinstated whilst the Swell has an authentic Tenor G Compass. A pedal organ extending down to GG was first added by Lincoln in 1836 and his 16ft pipes have been retained as have two pedal ranks by Gray & Davison. Twenty of the organ's thirty seven registers contain pipework by Richard Bridge, eight of them in their entirety.

Gerard Brooks treated us to a delightful demonstration recital of mainly 18th century English pieces (cue the inevitable tourist talking loudly on his phone!) including works by Peter Prellleur (the church's first organist), John Stanley, and Handel. A 'Coranto' by John Bull allowed us to

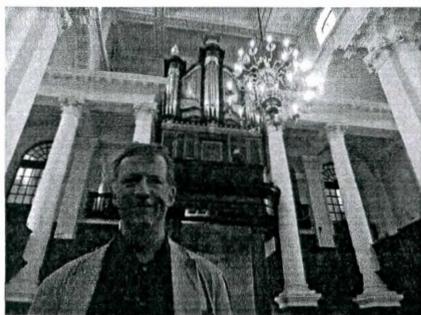
enjoy the delights of the restored Drum stop! Gerard had told us it's not an especially loud organ despite its size; its tone is perhaps better described as 'refined' or 'elegant', qualities that were characteristic of most organs in England during the 18th century. I've heard the organ when the church is empty and also when packed with people; in the latter scenario it can indeed sound a mite reticent. Christ Church is a huge building and one can appreciate why later builders sought to increase the volume of the organ.

After the recital we joined Gerard in the organ loft where he gave us a further demonstration of the various colours including the new 4ft German Flute on the choir with its intriguing, almost "glassy" tone, a quality shared to a fair degree by the original Bridge Flute on the Choir. We then had plenty of time to make our own explorations, revelling in the beautifully light and responsive action. Some delighted in being able to make full use of the long compass whilst I chose to put the instrument's ability to emulate a classical French 'Grand Jeu' to the test, all Trumpets, Cornets, and Mutation stops blazing! The Bridge reeds are not quite so strident as their French counterparts but they come as close as any I've heard in England and the sound is glorious. If only my playing matched their quality!

As Gerard rightly said at the end of our visit, the Bridge organ as now restored is most definitely a "niche" instrument with obvious limitations as to what can be played on it. There will be many who will question the wisdom of reverting to non-standard compasses

and historic tunings etc. As for the total lack of playing aids! But our land is full of more 'normal' instruments that cater for those who need such things. For those with a particular interest in knowing what our historic instruments sound like and discovering how the repertoire they inspired might have been played, such reconstructive restorations are a god-send. Safeguarding what little such material remains to us is of paramount importance. For the small group of us who travelled down to London it was a privilege to have chance to play both these internationally important instruments and be transported back to their heyday.

N.B Readers may like to refer back to an article I wrote during the restoration of the Spitalfields organ on page 13 of the Spring 2014 edition of The Journal.



Gerard Brooks at Christ Church Spitalfields

Rt Revd Michael Perham died on Easter Monday aged 69. He was only recently retired from being Bishop of Gloucester but was at one time Precentor of Norwich Cathedral at which time he wrote this article for the Journal.

Modern monks and empty stalls

It was when I was Bishop's Chaplain in Winchester in the early 1980s that I first came to value the cathedral daily choral evensong tradition. Years before in Oxford as an undergraduate I had enjoyed the occasional visit to Christ Church, Magdalen or New College for evensong, but only in Winchester was I able to make it part of the regular, all but daily, pattern, and to learn both to pray and to find a sense of space through it.

After that I had eight years of parish life where the staff gathered to say Evensong each day, and even sang a hymn, unaccompanied and without even the benefit of the tuning fork that I now regard as the essential tool of the precentor's trade. So I know that to be a satisfying offering of worship, you don't have to have a cathedral choir, let alone a choral tradition as rich as ours.

Nevertheless it has been a marvellous joy to be working again where that is on offer day after day, and I count it a great privilege to be present, and never miss it if I can avoid it.

Sometimes, when interviewing potential new members of the choir, I ask them whether they can make sense of the fact that all the time and energy

and skill that we put into the daily worship sometimes seems to attract a congregation of five or six. It happens that in this week when am writing, there has not been on any single weekday as many as twelve people present beyond the choir, vergers and clergy. I have to say that those to whom I pose the question struggle a bit for a satisfactory answer.

My own answer is in two parts. First that the congregation is larger than you think (and I don't mean the angels, though they should always be taken into account). For the basic 'congregation' is the cathedral foundation choir and clergy nearly forty of us. We are the successors to the monks. And the monks didn't lay on liturgy for visitors and tourists. They got on with saying their prayers and offering their praises. That is what we do. It's what we are here for above all else. The foundation is the heart of a praying community. Other people who come to share with us, or hover on the edge half-involved, are a bonus, and a very welcome one. Some of them come so regularly that they almost feel part of the foundation, if not of the cathedral fabric itself. But in the end if not one of them were there, the foundation would still be able to fulfil its function of offering daily prayer and praise without any sense of futility.

But, secondly, there is the *vicarious* nature of what we do. The foundation offers its prayers and praises for others, for the cathedral's wider community of worshippers, most of whom are busily engaged in the world, for the bishop, whose church we service, and for the diocese for whom

we ought to be a resource of prayer, for men and women the world over, and especially for those who suffer, and for the peace and integrity of the whole creation. All that we offer day by day in word and song, and we make that sort of intention explicit when, towards the end of the service, we come to the prayers of intercession. I believe that this offering of the human family to the Father is very near the heart of our vocation. If we take it with deadly seriousness it protects us from the danger of isolationism and irrelevance, living in a close cloud cuckoo land, because in the liturgy we are engaging with the complexities and tensions of the world and raising them to the Father. I sometimes feel that about some of the contemporary music that is not easily heard and enjoyed: somehow, more than some parts of the tradition, it conveys something of the tension and struggle of creation that we are offering up to the Father. So I am not worried on those days when there is almost nobody present but the foundation. Nevertheless it saddens me that so few people are being drawn into an experience that I believe many could find enriching. I suppose it would seem a trifle vulgar to set out to 'sell the product'. But here is a treasure that we have to offer - an experience that can heal, that can refresh, that can stimulate, that can calm, that can electrify.

So why not come, if you don't already? Could there be a place for this in your pattern of living and praying? Could you not be part of this daily praying community? And, if you were, wouldn't that be a blessing for you as

well as for the cathedral? I invite you also to tell others. When did you last say to an acquaintance: "Have you been to Evensong at the cathedral? How fortunate we are to have something like this there every day just waiting for us to come along!"?

It makes sense even when there is only the foundation present. It is something very crucial, very near the heart of the cathedral's vocation. But it would be marvellous to see the stalls and the chairs fill up as more and more people discovered this pearl of great price.



The Restoration of the Organ at Aylsham Parish Church

Henry Macey

The earliest record of an organ in Aylsham Parish Church is in 1506; this was followed by West Gallery instruments in 1700, 1751 and 1769! In 1853 as part of the major restoration of the church a new organ by J.C.Bishop was built in the north transept. To conform to developing choral and liturgical practices, the organ was moved, with new casework, to its present position in the north choir aisle

in 1885. In 1911 the organ underwent a complete rebuild by Norman & Beard of London and Norwich at a cost of £830-15-7d. The company was at its peak from 1887-1916. The Norwich factory employed 300 people and produced 100 bespoke organs a year across Britain and the Empire. The new organ had a gas engine to power the blower but this produced an emission called 'gas green' which corroded the fascia pipes. The resulting appearance led to the pipes being painted a dull grey in the late 1940s/early 1950s. The church has lived with that for 65 years, but following much soul-searching and research, the fascia pipes now look resplendent in their gold livery. An electric blower superseded the gas engine in 1931.

I became organist at Aylsham in February 2006 and my first report on the poor condition of the organ was submitted the following month. No progress was possible until March 2012 when a new incumbent enabled the PCC to sanction an Organ Restoration Committee and serious work could then begin. For many years, organists have had to compromise their playing in order to mask deficiencies.

In January 2012, I applied for an Historic Organ Certificate which has supported the move to preserve. After inspection, the British Institute of Organ Studies awarded us a Grade 1 certificate. A faculty was obtained and quotations for the work were solicited from three organ builders – one local company, one large national company and one smaller national company. The contract was awarded to Henry Willis

& Sons Ltd of Liverpool. Willis's were founded in 1845 and, since then, have built over 2500 organs including many cathedrals and concert halls in the UK and across the world. During the immensely complex project, we have been impressed by their professionalism, their myriad skills and their attention to the finest detail. Willis's craftsmen range from those with 50 years' experience to enthusiastic young apprentices whose commitment augurs well for the future.

The organ has been re-built with no tonal modifications or additions. No two organs are the same and we have continually pointed out that organs are built and re-built – not *installed* like a washing-machine! The action of the organ in our case is wholly pneumatic, originally developed to lighten the playing action. Aylsham's particular pneumatic action was patented by Norman and Beard in the early 1900s and designed by E. W. Norman together with Alfred Hollins, the blind organist and composer. At our second attempt, the Heritage Lottery Fund awarded us £74,800 towards the £120,000 total thus allowing for educational and social projects involving the community. These projects encompass work with Dementia patients, the Norfolk and Norwich Association for the Blind as well as an Organ Scholarship Scheme.

Each Monday, people from the church and the town host a Market in the nave. Originally a Millennium initiative begun in 2000, the market has since raised over £270,000 for capital projects in the church. Aside from the

HLF award, the Market contributed £20,000 with the balance coming from numerous small and large fund-raising events, concerts, lunches, sales, legacies, bequests and donations. This fine achievement is the result of hard work by countless people over five long years,

The current rebuild should serve the community for at least 75 years; we shall no longer have to pay for urgent, make-shift repairs, many of which could not be permanent because of difficulties in accessing the fault.

The Organ Restoration committee consists of David Elsegood, Richard Hodder, the vicar and NOA members John Plunkett and Keith Shaw with myself as chairman. Each lends their special skills, experience and expertise as work continues.

Celebrations have begun with three recitals, one by me and the others by David Dunnett (June 22nd at 7pm) and Paul Hale (July 13th at 7pm).

Aylsham Parish Church, Norfolk
Norman & Beard 1911; HOCS
Grade 1
Restored by Henry Willis & Sons Ltd
2016-17

Compass: Pedal (C-f1); Manuals (C-a3)

Pedal

Open Diapason	16	A wood
Bourdon	16	B
Octave	8	A
Bass Flute	8	B

Choir (Enclosed)

Stopped Diapason	8
Dulciana	8
Keraulophon	8
Viol d'Orchestre	8
Flauto Traverso	4

Clarinet 8

Great
Open Diapason I 8
Open Diapason 2 8
Hohl Flöte 8
Principal 4
Harmonic Flute 4
Fifteenth 2
Tromba 8

Swell (Enclosed)
Lieblich Bourdun 16
Open Diapason 8
Rohr Flute 8
Echo Gamba 8
Voix Celeste 8 TC
Principal 4
Lieblich Flute 4
Mixture III 17.19.22 to
middle b*
Horn 8
Oboe 8

Couplers
Swell to Pedal
Swell to Great
Swell to Choir
Swell Octave
Choir to Great
Choir to Pedal
Great to Pedal
Choir Sub-octave to Great

Balanced Swell and Choir pedals
3 thumb pistons to Great
4 thumb pistons to Swell
Great to Pedal (reversible toe piston)

* Swell Mixture moves to quints and octaves from middle c, with a final break at soprano G, going back to a tierce.

Further reading: *"The Organs and Organists of Aylsham Parish Church"* by Dr Nicholas Groves (£3) available in the church or from me.

Deopham revisited

Michael Flatman

It was three years ago that we last visited the home of Geoff and Liz Sankey in Deopham. Much has changed since then not least the fact that Geoff and Liz have married and the collection of organs has had one major addition.

So it was that twelve of us arrived to enjoy the hospitality of Geoff and Liz. It was encouraging to meet Janet Gray, Andrew Riches and Emma Hulett who were joining us for their very first time at one of our monthly meetings.

After a welcoming cuppa and biscuits Geoff gave us a brief résumé of the work he has been doing since our last visit. In 2014 Geoff had just completed a fine German organ housed in an English case and lying scattered around the barn were various boxes and crates containing two organs. One was from St John the Baptist Church in Capel, Surrey and the other was from North Street Methodist Church in Guildford Surrey which was built by Hunters around 1885 which was then moved and rebuilt by Manders for the new Woodbridge Road Methodist Church in 1966. The inaugural recital was given by Charles Cleall in 1966 who had acted as organ adviser on the rebuild.

In spring 2013 the organ was advertised in Organists Review for sale because the church was about to be demolished. Geoff visited the church on a couple of occasions to have a look at the organ and put in a offer which

was accepted as they wanted the instrument to go to a good home. The Organ Club had a visit planned to play the organ so there was a slight delay before Geoff could make arrangements for the collection of the organ. Between the 21st and 28th April 2013 Geoff and his team dismantled the instrument and removed it to the barn in Deopham which was quite some task. So this was the state of things when we last visited Geoff in 2014.

Since then Geoff has rebuilt the organ in his barn incorporating an enlarged swell box from the Capel instrument, moving the reeds to a newly constructed platform above the blower and moving the Open Wood back further to allow access to rear of upper manual soundboards. An all new solid state action was installed to replace the old cotton covered cabling, plus all new winding ducts. The blower motor had to be rebuilt which, together with the old cabling in the former organ, constituted a considerable fire risk in the state that it was! Finally, the reservoirs have all been re-leathered. The work from dismantling to reinstallation taking three years, being completed by late summer 2016.

The inaugural recital was given by Roger Rayner on September 15th 2016 just over 50 years after the previous inaugural recital! Geoff commented that this was a large instrument for the space in the barn and would now appreciate a larger home if any church was looking for a new organ. Geoff then gave us a demonstration of the organ by playing a Pastoral by Rheinberger.

Geoff then extended an invitation to all those present to play all of the instruments available together with the organ in the adjacent St. Andrew's Church. So we had at our disposal the newly installed instrument, the German organ and then in the neighbouring building two harmoniums, the foot pumped W Norman organ, the Norwich 3 manual and pedal digital organ, plus the single manual and pedal organ of 1870 build by Nicolson and overhauled by Boggis in 2010 in the church. Details of all the other instruments mentioned can be found in the Autumn 2014 edition of The Journal so I will not repeat myself here.

All those present enjoyed their packed lunches in the conservatory of Geoff and Liz's house and it proved to be a very relaxed, sociable and interesting meeting, and with no time restraints which some of our visits inevitably have, there was plenty of time to play, chat and explore the lovely garden at our leisure.

Our thanks must go to Geoff and Liz for making us all feel so welcome and hosting a very pleasant and enjoyable event.

*Specification of the
Sankey/Mander/Hunter organ at
Church Farmhouse, Deopham*

UPPER MANUAL (Enclosed)

Stopped Diapason	8
Gamba (to tenor C)	8
Principal	4
Flute	4
Twelfth	2 ² / ₃
Super Octave	2
Fifteenth	2
Larigot	1 ¹ / ₃

Fagotto unenclosed)	16	(B,
Trumpet unenclosed)	8	(B,
Clarion	4	

Some pictures from Geoff Sankey's organ sanctuary

LOWER MANUAL

Stopped Diapason	8	
Dulciana	8	
Open Diapason	8	(A)
Principal	4	(A)
Gemshorn	4	
Twelfth	2 ² / ₃	
Fifteenth	2	
Seventeenth	1 ³ / ₅	
Nineteenth	1 ¹ / ₃	
Twenty-Second	1	
Trumpet	8	(B)



PEDAL ORGAN

Bourdon	16	
Flute	8	
Flute	4	
Open Wood	16	
Octave Wood	8	
Principal	8 from (A)	
Fifteenth	4 from (A)	
Nineteenth	2 ² / ₃ from(A)	
Twenty-Second	2 from (A)	
Fagotto	16 from (B)	
Trumpet	8 from (B)	
Octave Trumpet	4 from (B)	

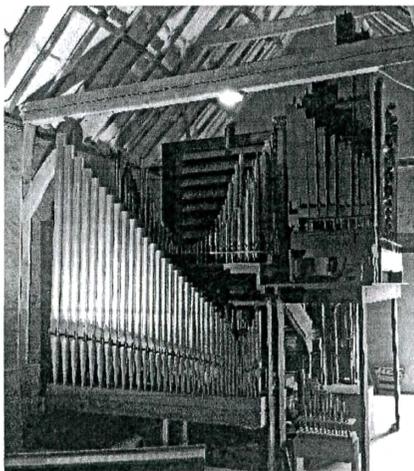
No, dear, you sit at the other side!

COUPLERS

- Upper to Pedal
- Lower to Pedal
- Upper to Lower

PISTONS

- 3 adjustable pistons to each manual
- 1 reversible piston (Upper to Lower)



WIND PRESSURES

Manuels	2 1/2"
Trumpet Rank & Pedals	3 1/2"

Organ News

Geoff Sankey

Boggis & Co have carried out a complete rebuild of the two manual Norman & Beard instrument at St Mary's, Watton. They have fitted a new action, new piston selector electronics and a new wind system. They also made some tonal alterations to re-instate the specification nearer to its original. At All Saints Church, Warham, this time a one manual Norman & Beard, they fitted a new mechanical action to the Bourdon in place of the unreliable pneumatic system and made a few repairs to the bellows.



The Aylsham project carried out by Willis has been completed and the opening recital presented to a large

audience. The Aylsham Organ Day on June 17th will present another opportunity to hear this revitalised instrument.

Richard Bower is just back from Norway having restored the vandalised organ in Eid where Ralph Cupper is the organist. Bower & Company rebuilt this organ in 2015. Shortly after the tuning of the organ last November, a vandal broke into the church and after doing damage everywhere else broke into the organ case and trampled on the pipework completely flattening three hundred mixture pipes and damaging many other stops. Richard spent many hours rounding out pipes before resoldering and revoicing. He tells me that setting up the five rank swell mixture (as well as the 4 rank great mixture and II-III rank choir mixture) was a particularly challenging and intense operation, but he says the result is thrilling!

Back in Norfolk, the reassembly of the restored Upton Holdich is taking shape. The Plunkett installation at Oxnead is progressing, despite problems with damp and crumbling plaster.

If members have information on any other work that I've missed which is being carried out on Norfolk organs, please let me know on GPSankey@btconnect.com.

Forthcoming Association Events

Saturday 17th June 2017, Aylsham Parish Church at 11am:

Aylsham Organ Day; A day of events open to all in celebration of the restoration of the 1911 Norman & Beard organ (III/P 27). The opening welcome and 'fanfare' will be followed by a demonstration of the organ. At 11.45am Dr. Nicholas Groves will deliver a talk on the Organs and Organists of Aylsham. Lunch (own arrangements) follows at 12.30pm during which anyone can play the organ. From 1.30pm to 2.30pm there will be a composite recital given by invited NOA members. Tea and cake (donations welcome) from 3.30pm and the day concludes at 4pm.

Saturday 22nd July 2017, Wroxham Parish Church at 10.30am:

President's Day; After coffee on arrival at the church, Richard Bower will give a talk about the organ (II/P 17) and a recital after which members are invited to play too. At 1pm there will be an informal 'President's Lunch' at Salhouse Lodge (NR12 6HD). Please feel free to come for all or part of the day.

Please let Matthew Bond (01692 409957 or president@norfolkorganists.org.uk) know by Saturday 8th July if you wish to have the lunch.

Saturday 29th July 2017, Wymondham Abbey at 11am:

Young Organist's Recital; Our young organist this year is Ollie Neale, a sixth former at Langley School and one of the current Organ Scholars at St. Peter Mancroft. His recital forms part of the regular Saturday morning series at the Abbey.

Saturday 16th September 2017, Electric Picture Palace, Blackmill Rd, Southwold, IP18 6AQ at 3pm:

Organ DVD Show; We pay a return visit to the exquisite recreation of a very early cinema that is the Electric Picture Palace (www.southwoldcinema.co.uk) to view two of the excellent and critically acclaimed organ DVDs by Fugue State Films. "**The Elusive English Organ**" presented by Daniel Moults charts the history of the English organ from Tudor times to the early 19th century. Following an interval we shall watch the second part of a trilogy of films entitled "**Widor: Master of the Organ Symphony**". Part II pays particular attention to the organ symphonies 5, 6, 7, and 8 and includes extensive contributions by Daniel Roth at the console of St Sulpice in Paris.

£5 per head. The event is due to conclude at 5pm.

We are also trying to arrange a visit to play the organ at Southwold Parish Church earlier in the day.

Saturday 14th October 2017, Princes Street URC, Norwich at 2pm:

"Reminiscences of Francis Jackson"; Ron Watson reflects on the life and music of Dr Francis Jackson illustrated with readings and recordings.

Tea & cakes will be available afterwards for £2 per head.

Wednesday 22nd November 2017, Norwich Cathedral at 5.30pm:

Choral Evensong; Once again there will be opportunity for members to play the Cathedral organ after the service.

N.B. All events are free for NOA members (unless stated otherwise). There is an admission charge of £5 per head per event for non-members. A full list of events can also be found on the NOA website: www.norfolkorganists.org.uk

Please don't hesitate to contact Harry Macey (01692 501023 or events@norfolkorganists.org.uk) if you have any queries or require further details of any of our events.

St. Peter Mancroft, Norwich

Saturday Lunchtime Organ Recitals at 1pm

Admission free - retiring collection

24th June Julian Haggett: "B.A.C.H to Bach and B.A.C.H again"
15th July Mancroft's three Organ Scholars play Bach, Mendelssohn, Messiaen,
and more

St Nicholas Church Dereham

Sandwiches and Organ Music

Four Lunchtimes in June

Sandwiches from 12. 40

Music 1.00 – 1.45

Admission free – retiring collection

June 2 nd	David Ballard	North Walsham
June 9 th	Prue Goldsmith	Norwich
June 16 th	Nigel Waring	Norwich
June 23 rd	David Shippey	Cromer

King's Lynn Minster

Tuesday Lunchtime Recitals 2017 12.30 pm Cafe is open from 10.30 am

6th June	Richard Vogt	Litcham, All Saints'
13th June	Charlotte Rowan	Violin and piano
20th June	Robin Jackson & Maureen McAllister	- Organ Duo
27th June	Michael Overbury	Newark
4th July	David & Carol Shippey	Cromer Parish Church
11th July	Frederico Andreoni	St John the Evangelist in Montreal
18th July	David Dunnett	Norwich Cathedral
25th July	Adrian Richards	King's Lynn Minster
1st August	Carl Grainger	Welsh Sinfonia
8th August	John Stephens	Great Yarmouth Minster
15th August	Henry Macey	Aylsham
22th August	Prof David Baker	Mytholmroyd
29th August	Simon Kirk	St John's College School, Cambridge
5th September	George Ford	Boston
12th September	John Pryer	Alexandra Palace, Iondon
19th September	Michael Whitehall	Wisbech
26th September	Adrian Richards	King's Lynn Minster

20th July 7:30pm Tickets £5.00 on the door

Festival Organ recital and launch of *Forgotten Gem* the new CD of the Minster
Organ played by Francesca Massey (Sub Organist, Durham Cathedral)

Most organ recitals will be accompanied by a big screen so that the organist may be seen

St Nicholas North Walsham

Recitals start at 12. 30 pm. Admission free with retiring collection

Light lunches available

July

6th Richard Bower – Dereham

13th Carol Shippey Soprano with David Shippey organ

20th Bryan Ellum – Swaffham

27th Tim Patient – Norwich

August

3rd David Ballard St Nicholas North Walsham

10th David Price formerly Norwich RC Cathedral

17th Philip Adams Sheringham

24th John Farmer Gt Yarmouth

31st Henry Macey - Aylsham

30th September – St Nicholas Choir perform Haydn Little Organ Mass and choral favourites – Admission £7

St Andrew's Hall Lunchstop Recitals 2017

All recitals are on Mondays at 1. 10 pm unless otherwise indicated. Tickets £5 on the door.

June 26th Ashley Grote

July 10th Adrian Richards

July 17th Andrew Parnell

July 24th Henry Macey

July 31st Tim Patient

*August 3rd Michael Nicholas

August 7th Peter O'Connor

August 14th David Ivory

August 21st Paul Dewhurst

* Thursday