

# The Journal

## Autumn 2017



Number 101

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The Editor writes...

Is this the beginning of a new regime? After Ron Watson's 100 (plus) Journals a new person is at the Editorial Desk. Some of you may know me (perhaps a smaller number than should be) and many of you will not. So, who is this new chap?

I come from a musical family and my three brothers and I were all cathedral choirboys under Roy Massey in his Birmingham days, a wonderful basis upon which to build – I spent a number of years standing next to David Briggs who was in the choir at the same time. When my voice broke I spent many months sitting in the cathedral organ loft observing and page-turning. I soon became a church organist (14-years-old) and organist and choirmaster (16-years-old) in a Parish next to David Dunnett's, and then university

organ scholar at Hull University. From there I went sideways and spent many years full-time in the record business (EMI and Warner Classics) in roles as diverse as royalties, marketing, production, A&R and internet content. I still work part-time for Chandos Records and now work as a self-employed musician with my main job being King's Lynn Minster; but I teach, play and write. I also work part-time in our own family business; my wife Josie runs an advertising agency which specialises in charity donor recruitment – she is the one that puts all of those inserts into your magazines!

As a result, I am also a hi-fi fanatic and run a very big system, but the joy of that is that I can also run my Hauptwerk practice organ through it in a dedicated music room.

As this is my first attempt at The Journal, I am ready and happy to accept comments and suggestions about the look (paper, font, font-size, layout) and content of it. I would be happy to have letters on all sorts of subjects, small items for inclusion – doesn't matter how small, a good music/organist joke would be welcomed; a large article on something that has pleased or

annoyed you; reviews of books/CDs/recitals you have recently been to or acquired. Also, I would like to reserve the outside back cover for what you might call 'organ pornography' – exciting pictures of organ innards. I've kicked off with a picture of my new Tuba (Nicholson) and new Cymbelstern (Holmes and Swift) in front of the Swell box, all about 30' in the air.

Ron Watson has provided a review of the new CD made on King's Lynn Minster organ by Priory Records. If you wish to buy a copy of it you can go to Priory Records' website, or alternatively, come to one of the Minster's Tuesday lunchtime recitals (season ends on September 26<sup>th</sup>) and buy one from the shop!

As Martin Cottam mentioned in his reminder email, if members don't send me the content, the Journal gets thinner, so please do send anything to me you would like to declare or share by 27<sup>th</sup> November for inclusion in the next Journal.

[anmr@btopenworld.com](mailto:anmr@btopenworld.com))

Adrian Richards



King's Lynn Minster

## President's Day 2017



Richard Bower at the Wroxham organ

**O**n Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> July a good number of NOA members, plus some visitors (including Martin Ellis – President of Suffolk Organists' Association) gathered at St. Mary's Church in Wroxham. We began with coffee and biscuits on arrival, kindly provided by members of the church. We then moved into the nave of the church for the main part of the day – a talk and recital by organ builder Richard Bower.

Richard gave a highly informative talk. First, about his early musical influences which included: Michael Allard who started Richard on the organ while he was still at Gresham's, he then went to

the RCM at 16 to study piano, but later changed to study organ under John Birch.

We then heard about the organ in Wroxham. The old organ was in a small cubical with a warm but uninspiring specification of 8,8,8 on the Great and 8,8,4 on the Swell. David Bird who was then the organist wanted a new organ to accompany the choir. The Storr brothers wanted an organ at the west end with a detached console at the front, but Richard wanted the design we have today. In the end the Church went for Richard's scheme. The budget for the new organ was £3000. To keep costs down the old pipes from the previous organ was reused and oak from pews in the North aisle was used to make the swell box! The Chancellor at the time said that no new organ was complete without a string stop and a reed, so these had to be added to the original scheme. Interestingly, the swell reed came from pipes that were auctioned from an old organ at the RCO. However, much new pipe-work (including a large-scale Chimney Flute) was made by Derek Jones whose wife Joyce was present. Richard ended by explaining the cleaning and

improvements that has recently been completed.

Richard interspersed his talk with pieces by Bach, John Stanley, Jean Adam Guilain, Timothy Albrecht, Thalben Ball, Oscar Lindberg and Louis Vierne. He also included two pieces that were played at the opening recital by John Birch namely, Prelude by Johann Christian Kittel and Toccata by Gigout.

Following this a few members took the opportunity to play the organ and also to look at the displays relating to the organ and opening recital that were in the North aisle.

Afterwards 14 people went to the nearby Salhouse Lodge to enjoy a delicious lunch (including dessert!) and each other's company which rounded off an enjoyable and informative day.

Matthew Bond



Richard Bower

Photographs: Martin J. Cottam

## Aylsham Organ Day Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> June, 2017

**W**e arrived in Aylsham on a gloriously hot and sunny day to the sound of bells ringing out across the town. The formal proceedings started with Harry struggling to give a welcome above the noise of bells although his lively performance of Bach's Fantasia and Fugue in G Minor was an undoubted triumph over the sounds from the tower.

John Plunkett fought a noble, but at times losing, battle with the ongoing tintinnabulation. He explained the evolution of the organ from very simple instruments with one pipe to each key. The addition of sliders made it possible to have more than one pipe to each key; additional manuals and then the pedalboard gave increasing breadth to the instrument's repertoire. Each stage of John's story was illustrated by Harry playing a snippet to underline the words, moving from plainsong to Bach.

Nick Groves had it easy, speaking into a silent church, with the bell-ringers by then on their way to

cause trouble elsewhere. Without electronic aids Dr Groves addressed us directly and authoritatively on the twin subjects of the organs and organists of Aylsham.

The first recorded reference to an organ in Aylsham parish church dates from 1506 with a principal pipe "five quarters of a yard long" – i.e. approximately 4 ft. There are also records of an 8-stop instrument in 1700, pre-dating other larger towns in the county. The instrument installed in 1769 was of particular interest because the stops were pulled to silence a rank and pushed to cause a rank to speak. Like so many emerging technologies, it took a while for standards that we take for granted to emerge.

The west gallery position enjoyed by the instruments until then was unfortunately surrendered in 1853 since which time the organs have all been in the north-east area of the building. Dr Groves did not allow this retrograde step to go without comment in his summing up where he suggested that re-claiming the west end should be Harry's next project.

The first organists were amateurs, holding day-jobs variously as wig

maker, schoolmaster, publican, harness-maker and saddler. By 1853, the job had become a recognisable profession declared in census returns as “Organist”. A recurring theme was the need – some-times defined contractually, at other times just a practical arrangement – for the organists to spend Saturday nights in the town when they lived in Norwich or Yarmouth.

Lunch was a convivial affair with wide-ranging discussions inevitably turning to the value for money of this huge project. Some expressed disappointment that the Heritage Lottery Grants are so contingent upon technically unimaginative schemes, despite their noble insistence on the involvement of the wider community.

In the afternoon, NOA members presented a varied recital interweaving and overlapping contributions from the street organ outside. After the recital, a number of youngsters visited the console and were fascinated to see and learn more about the king of instruments.

Thanks to Harry for making the event happen, and congratulations to all who have been part of this project to give new life to this instrument. We all left Aylsham restored, renewed and inspired.

Geoff Sankey



## Young Organist's Recital Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> July, 2017

**W**ymondham Abbey with its magnificent Norman interior and splendid James Davis organ of 1793 (much enlarged) was the venue for this year's NOA Young Organist's Recital. As part of the Abbey's regular Saturday morning recital series a good number of people (though sadly only a handful of NOA members) were present to hear Ollie Neale's highly enjoyable programme of well-known pieces delivered with enviable aplomb.

A big screen video link revealed neat, flowing finger work and no visible sign of nerves. The performances were impressively 'musical' for one so young, though there will no doubt be even more to come in that regard as the years pass. Particularly impressive was the meticulous care Ollie took in delivering the upward scale passages in Karg-Elert's well known war horse, the Chorale-Improvisation on "Nun Danket Alle Gott". Too many other organists down the years have been heard to deliver those swift upward runs more as splurge than scales!

The organ itself sounded very fine, especially the reeds and Ollie made full use of its resources, his teacher, Julian Haggett being on hand to turn pages and assist with stop changes. Ollie has been receiving tuition from Julian thanks to a Diocesan Organ Scholarship and an Organ Scholarship at St. Peter Mancroft in Norwich.

Ollie has just completed his studies at Langley School near Loddon and from September will be a Choral Scholar at Truro Cathedral. After his year in Cornwall Ollie will move on to the Birmingham Conservatoire where he will continue his organ studies under the watchful and inspirational eye of Henry Fairs. Ollie's musical future is looking deservedly bright!

Martin J. Cottam



Wymondham Abbey



## ORGAN NEWS

**R**ichard Bower has cleaned and reset the organ at Wroxham, an organ which was one of his first creations. Richard writes: *“It has been fascinating work resetting all in the 1970s style which we did so well before moving back to more traditional ways. These things we rarely do these days - Wroxham is open plan, i.e. with all pipework visible and no upper case. The new Vicar was fascinated to learn that the highly visible solid oak swell-box was made from the pews once on the organ site. Wroxham is “open foot” voicing, i.e. the regulation takes place at the pipe mouth rather than at the foot. Wroxham is bright classical, i.e. has upperwork that is close in volume to the fundamental and has flutes of a big scale which are gentle in tone but big in body and which articulate beautifully with the mechanical action. Wroxham has survived the test of time though because it is not too extreme and is sensitively voiced – and a joy to play.”*

Richard has a few more days work at Upton where he is restoring the Holdich two-manual with 15 stops.

Apparently, the opening events will take place in September.

Boggis and Co have been busy outside the county; within our area they have carried out a restoration of the soundboard at Hempnall Parish Church. This had been damaged by rain following the theft of lead from the Church roof.

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](mailto:GPSankey@btconnect.com).

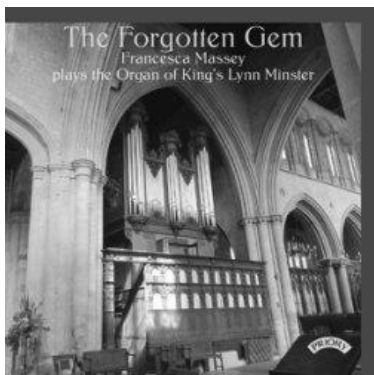
Geoff Sankey



Hempnall Parish Church

## CD REVIEW

### The Forgotten Gem



This was the subtitle for a recital on the 20<sup>th</sup> July in Kings Lynn Minster by Francesca Massey, sub-organist at Durham Cathedral, which we went to hear and how glad we are that we did. This was a recital which, for me, ticked all the boxes. It was a very demanding programme for both the audience and the player. Every item on the programme demanded phenomenal technique which Ms Massey has aplenty. It can be seen from her repertoire and both of the CDs which she has made to date that she goes places that not many recitalists go and does so with great aplomb. Watching her at work in the demanding *Suite Opus 5* by Duruflé and indeed all of the items

on the programme was totally riveting.

Her programme was *Moto Ostinato* from *Sunday Music* Eben; *Chorale Partita on Sei gegrüset*, *Jesu gütig* BWV 768 JS Bach; *Prelude, Scherzo and Passacaglia Op 41* Leighton; *Suite Op. 5* Duruflé and *Vallée des danses* Wammes.

Two other aspects of this recital appealed to me greatly. The first was that she chose not to talk to the audience but provide meaningful programme notes to which one could refer whilst listening, instead of trying to hold in one's mind what was said about the various pieces at the outset.

The second was that there was no attempt to appeal to a wider audience by including items which didn't fit with the scheme of the programme. I remember once comparing an organ recital to having a meal; 'em as wants burger and chips go to one establishment, 'em as wants haute cuisine go to another. At Gavroche they don't have a bottle of Ketchup on the table just to make everyone feel at home!

The Minster organ sounded

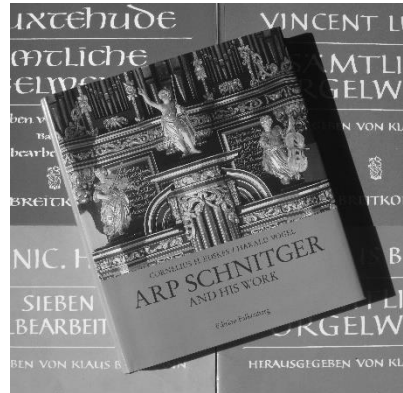
superb and I thought handled the various genres of the music admirably. It is a well-stocked instrument in fine shape and well worth going to hear which I intend to do more often.

On sale at this recital was a CD, also entitled *The Forgotten Gem*, made by Francesca Massey on the Minster organ, sold copies of which she autographed, and there was quite a queue! The CD from Priory (PRCD 1178) is well worth investing in as it shows off all the aspects of the instrument admirably. No famous *Toccata & Fugue in D minor* here but all interesting pieces, some rarely heard. Composers include Whitlock, John Jordan, (familiar to some), JS Bach (BWV768), Stanley, de Grigny, Burney, Litaize, Fricker and Reger. The sleeve notes are very comprehensive and give, amongst other things, the complete history of the instrument. A gem indeed!

Ronald Watson

## BOOK REVIEW

**Arp Schnitger and his Work** by Cornelius Edskes and Harald Vogel (Edition Falkenberg. English edition published 2016, ISBN 978-3-95494-092-9, 256 pages)



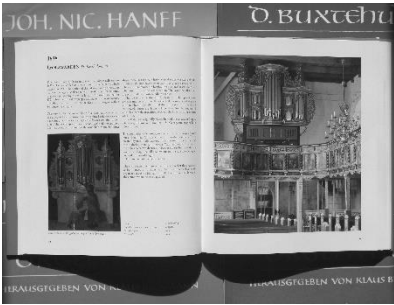
**B**y general consent the name 'Arp Schnitger' surely ranks as high as any in the pantheon of great organ builders. Born in 1648 Schnitger came to dominate the organ building scene around Hamburg and the northern plains of both Germany and the Netherlands by dint of the high quality, reliability, and suitability of his instruments for the growing need to support congregational singing as it developed through the seventeenth century. The structural logic of his designs, his cultivation of a large team of

highly skilled journeymen craftsmen, and his sheer business acumen enabled him to provide beautiful instruments at a hitherto unparalleled rate of production and often at nearly half the cost of his competitors. It is no wonder his fame spread, his organs being supplied as far as Portugal in the west and Russia in the east. So fit for purpose were his concepts of design, construction, and sound that his disciples carried on the 'Schnitger tradition' long after the Master's death in 1719 and even into the nineteenth century in the case of the Netherlands. The 'rediscovery' of his instruments in the early twentieth century contributed significantly to the formation of the Organ Reform Movement (Orgelbewegung) and the widespread adoption of the 'Werkprinzip' (a term Schnitger himself never knew). The resulting return to mechanical action organs and more classically inspired specifications is testimony to the enduring soundness of Schnitger's concepts and models.

The most comprehensive and authoritative work on Schnitger hitherto was Gustav Fock's "Arp Schnitger und seine Schule" published in 1974. The product of over fifty years of research (Fock's

initial draft being lost in a 1945 air raid just prior to publication!) this indispensable work has, inexplicably, yet to be published in an English translation. Furthermore, Fock (1893-1974) felt unable to do proper justice to the subject of Schnitger's organ building practice until the process of restoring and documenting his instruments begun in the 1950s was complete. The present volume for review is, in part, the response to that need and as such forms "the first complete pictorial record of the surviving organs and façades from the Schnitger workshops". The first edition was published in 2009 in Dutch and German. This new English edition incorporates the results of subsequent restoration work and research.

The main meat of the book comprises a chronological presentation of all the surviving Schnitger cases and façades, each described in methodical detail and illustrated with a mouth-watering full-page colour photograph. The quality of the printing throughout is exemplary. [Sadly, we are unable to do it justice in The Journal reproductions – Ed.]



This survey is followed by another, in alphabetical order by place name, of the same instruments but grouped according to country (Germany, the Netherlands, and Portugal). This time a summary of the relevant local and church history is given placing each organ in its context to which is added a history of the instrument itself and its specification. An intervening chapter describes and illustrates with old black and white photographs a number of the Schnitger organs lost during the twentieth century. The destruction of all these instruments, whether by wilful decision or the ravages of war is to be regretted but the loss to Allied bombs of the magnificent Schnitger case in Lübeck Dom with its remarkably exuberant pipeshade carvings was especially tragic (the pipework having already been replaced by 1893). There are additional, shorter

essays giving further details and analysis of Schnitger's life and achievement and one on his contact and relationship with significant organists of his time, not least Vincent Lübeck and Dieterich Buxtehude. Yet another chapter details and reproduces all of Schnitger's known surviving drawings and sketches of organ façades, the first time they have been published together.

As if all this were not treasure enough there is a most fascinating chapter reproducing in both facsimile and English translation three short short articles printed in "Caecilia", the 'General Musical Journal of the Netherlands' in 1853/54. Written by the Groningen organist, Siwert Meijer (1817-77) they document Arp Schnitger's output in chronological order. What makes these articles of such vital importance is that Meijer had access to Schnitger's own archive of contracts, workbooks, manuscripts etc, an archive that has long since been dispersed, presumed lost (alas!). Sadly Meijer did not include specifications in his outline but there is frequent reference to little asides written by Schnitger himself. In the absence of the original papers, these articles have

become a primary source of much of what we know of Schnitger and his oeuvre. One especially tantalising paragraph reads as follows: "1690. Made a small organ and sent it to England. An instrument with two manual keyboards and sixteen stops for Dr. Hinckelmann in Hamburg. For these two organs, says A. Schnitger he was paid only half of their value." A Schnitger in England (and a half price one at that!)?! Who commissioned it and where exactly did it end up?! What form did it take and what was its fate? Does any trace of it still exist hidden somewhere on these shores?!

These are good times for the devotee of Schnitger's work. An ever-growing number of his surviving instruments have now benefitted from meticulous reconstructive restorations in recent decades employing historically informed techniques and insights to rectify the alterations and errors of past restorers (indeed the opening recital of the newly restored organ in Schnitger's own church and last resting place at Neuenfelde just outside Hamburg took place only in June of this year). Arguably

they are now sounding as fine and as near to how they did in Schnitger's own time as it's possible for them to do so some three hundred years and more on from their construction. With the multiplicity of recordings available on CD, DVD, and online it has never been easier to hear these wonderful and highly influential instruments, or indeed to visit and play them thanks to the continuing peace and relative prosperity of our own times (which, I suspect, we too often take for granted). The sumptuous, authoritative, and highly readable volume I have reviewed is the icing on the cake of this state of affairs. A good English translation of Fock's seminal 1974 biography of Schnitger would be the cherry on top!

*Martin J. Cottam*

## ORGAN RECITALS OUT AND ABOUT

**DEREHAM**  
**St Nicholas**  
the anniversary  
**ORGAN CONCERT**  
**SEPTEMBER 16<sup>TH</sup>**  
**7.30<sup>PM</sup>**  
**Richard Bower**

*Bairdston, Handel, Bach,  
Boyce's Trumpet Tune,  
Best's Concert Fantasia  
"Men of Harlech"*

*Music by Mendelssohn,  
A pair of modern hymn tune  
settings, Vierne's  
"Carillon de Westminster"*

Free Admission - Retiring Collection -  
drinks & nibbles available in the interval

**St John the Baptist Church, Snape**  
Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> October at 2.30pm

Bach's final masterpiece  
**The Art of Fugue**  
played on the organ by  
**Anne Page**

Cambridge-based international recitalist who will perform the work at  
the Royal Festival Hall on November 21<sup>st</sup>.

This work was written by Bach in the last decade of his life and  
published in May 1751, the year after his death.

Light refreshments available in interval. Free admission, with a retiring  
collection to support the church building project.

**Christ Church Eaton 7:30pm**

23 September David Dunnnett (Norwich Cathedral)

**Cromer Parish Church 8pm**

12 September John Dillistone (St Mary Huntingdon)

19 September Othar Chedlivii (Montpelier Cathedral)

26 September David Shippey (Cromer PC)

**Great Yarmouth Minster 12:30pm**

27 September Peter O'Connor (Wymondham Abbey)

**King's Lynn Minster 12:30pm**

12 September John Pryer (Alexandra Palace, London)

19 September Michael Whitehall (Wisbech)

26 September Adrian Richards (King's Lynn Minster)

**Norwich Cathedral 1:10pm**

21 September Norwich Cathedral (Adrian Richards)

17 October John Keys (St Mary the Virgin, Nottingham) n.b. 7pm

18 October John Challenger (Salisbury Cathedral)

16 November James Kealey (St Aloysius' College, Glasgow)

**Old Meeting House, Norwich 4pm**

10 September Anne Page (Cambridge)

**St Mary and All Saints' Little Walsingham 3pm**

16 September Othar Chedlivii (Montpelier Cathedral)

**St Mary, Hemsby 7:30pm**

16 September Colin Porter (Mossley Hill Parish Church)



## FORTHCOMING ASSOCIATION EVENTS

### Sat 16th Sept 2017, Electric Picture Palace, Blackmill Rd, Southwold, IP18 6AQ 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](http://www.southwoldcinema.co.uk)) to watch two of the excellent and critically acclaimed organ DVDs by Fugue State Films. "**The Elusive English Organ**" presented by Daniel Moulst 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.

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

**"Reminiscences of Francis Jackson: his life and music";** Ron Watson presents a lecture recital to celebrate the centenary of his friend, the legend that is Dr. Francis Jackson. 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.

### Saturday 13th January 2018, Holy Trinity Church, Essex St, Norwich at 7pm:

**"Quiz & Chips";** Michael and Pamela Flatman reprise their roles as Quizmasters General in our traditional curtain raiser to a new year of events. **£7 per head** for fish & chips. Please let Mathew Martin ([mathewmartin@hotmail.com](mailto:mathewmartin@hotmail.com)) know **by 6th January at the latest** if you require fish & chips.

**Saturday 17th February 2018, St Cuthbert's Church Hall, Wroxham Road, Sprowston, Norwich, NR7 8TZ at 2pm:**

*"Desert Island Discs"*; Chris Duarte of St. George's Music Shop fame (amongst other accolades) has very kindly agreed to be our castaway this time round. Ron Watson will once again preside as Grand Inquisitor.

**Saturday 17th March 2018, Rosebery Road Methodist Church, Norwich at 11.30am:**

***AGM, Buffet Lunch, and Recital***; £7 per head for lunch.

*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](http://www.norfolkorganists.org.uk)*

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

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