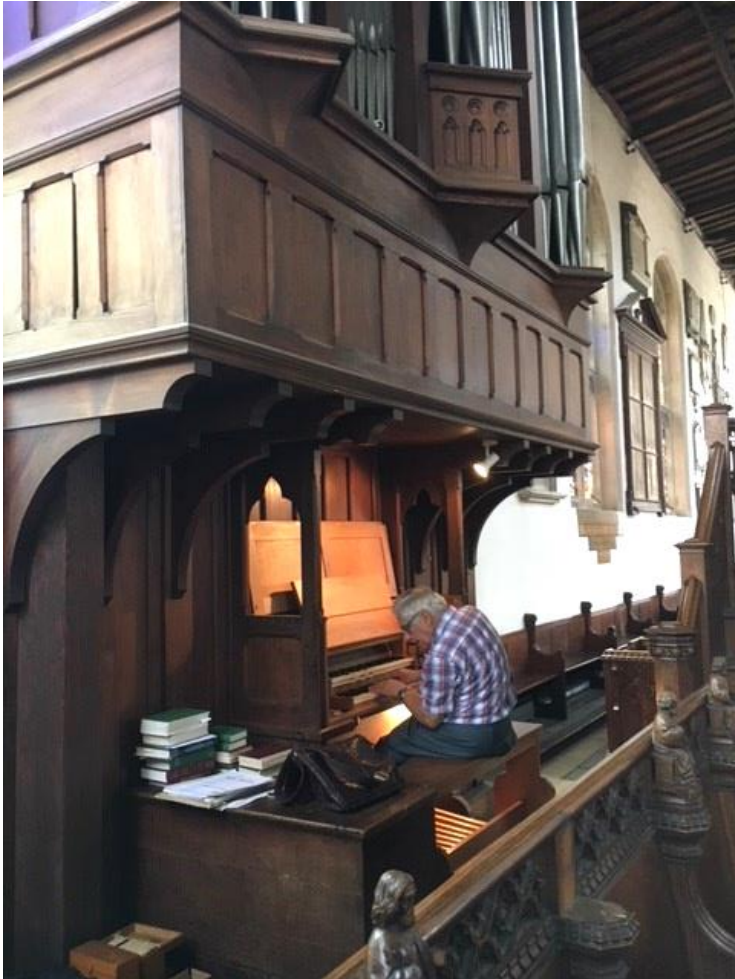


# The Journal

Autumn 2018



Number 105

Norfolk Organists' Association

# Norfolk Organists' Association

## The art of music as related to the organ

President – Matthew Bond	01692 409957
President Elect – Michael Flatman	01603 452485
Membership Secretary – Matthew Bond	01692 409957
Secretary – Timothy Patient	01603 402944
Events Secretary – Henry Macey	01692 501023
Treasurer – Sylvia Martin	01263 731075
Publicity Officer – Mathew Martin	01263 731075
Journal Editor – Adrian Richards	07768 582208 <a href="mailto:anmr@btopenworld.com">anmr@btopenworld.com</a>

### Committee Members

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Ralph Bootman, Bryan Ellum, Ronald Watson

### Front cover:

Carey Moore at the console of St Martin, Stamford  
(Photo Matthew Martin)

### Back cover:

Lammas Facing West (Photo, Harry Macey)

Copy deadline for next issue 26<sup>th</sup> November 2018

The views expressed herein by contributors to *The Journal* are their own views  
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## The Editor writes...



I often think I should go to more recitals. It's one of the best ways to discover more music, hear other organists play, consider one's own playing and be inspired: and of course, a chance to meet other like-minded organists. Every year I arrange and attend King's Lynn Minster's twenty-two or so recitals, carefully picking through the requests, trying to fit everyone in and then, most tricky of all, slotting someone into the last date without making them feel like an afterthought

It is a successful series and owes its success to many different things and to many different people. At King's Lynn we are very lucky to have our recitals on market day (although economic conditions in the town have

virtually decimated the Tuesday and Saturday market in Lynn). We have a good through-put of tourists during our May to September series. We also have a particularly fine organ. We have a large video screen. We have a café that serves tea and cakes, coffee and sandwiches. But probably most importantly, we have a large number of people affably buzzing around the Minster, easily found and approachable, and suggesting visitors stay for the recital. I make sure the screen is blazing away at least half-an-hour before the recital will start, so that it is obvious what is going on. Consequently, we get just under 70 per recital (although we have had two with 120-plus and previous years have been just under 90 each week. The building work has been troublesome as far as the regularity of the event/audience is concerned.) That's not bad for a provincial town with half of its catchment being sea.

What makes people come along is that it is a regular weekly event, they can get refreshments, they can see the organist, they know roughly how long it will last so that if necessary they can arrange buses/transport accordingly. They

can meet people they have seen the week before and treat it as a social outing, not just a dry (yes, both meanings of the word!) lunchtime recital.

Due to the building work we had no organ recitals in May and June, but instead had a series of pianists, a soprano and a classical guitarist. The quality of the music making was exceptional, but there were only 19 people to the first one, which slowly increased to 29 for the last. The following organ recital attracted 120!

So why do so many organists play recitals to a handful? I know, for example, a well-regarded cathedral assistant who performed at Coventry Cathedral to just six people, and that's not the only instance I have heard of. I believe that there has to be a joy in making the effort to go out to a recital, and it is unlikely that the 'joy' can only be found merely in the recital, there is a lot more that must accompany it. Look at the website [organrecitals.com](http://organrecitals.com) and marvel at the huge number of recitals all over the country there are, most of exceptional quality music making, much of it free (with a pay-to-get-out clause).

Yes, I should go to more recitals, but I do hear many each year. I have been inspired or moved to learn and investigate more music. (I once even learned a big Bach Prelude and Fugue because I disagreed so much with the way that it was played!) With NOA events, it is so often the same people that make the effort to support the events or attend the AGM. We should all make the effort, in all walks of life, to broaden our horizons and increase our experiences. I'm as guilty as anyone for being a poor supporter of NOA events and I for one will be taking my advice and making the effort in the future.

Adrian Richards



The Cornet and Great upperwork, King's Lynn

## A GLORIOUS DAY IN BEAUTIFUL NORTH NORFOLK



NOA at Oxnead

**O**n Saturday morning, June 23rd, 22 members and friends visited St Michael and All Angels, Oxnead near Aylsham to enjoy the mediaeval church in its beautiful rural location adjacent to Oxnead Hall. The Hall is a popular venue for nuptials and the church hosts many weddings but until recently has not had an organ. With the establishment of the Aylsham Team Ministry and work done by the owners of Oxnead Hall, the church has been rejuvenated and become an active church in the Team. Over the past few years, and largely as a labour of love, John Plunkett has been restoring and building an 1875 organ by Ernest Norman.

I play for many weddings at Oxnead when the church is

packed. The small two-manual organ, sited at the north-west corner of the nave projects sound effectively down to the east end, thanks to the finely voiced Gemshorn which enhances upper harmonics to support congregational singing. Apart from the tonal character of the two-manual organ one must admire the beautifully restored casework.

### Pedal

Lieblich Gedackt 16

### Great

Open Diapason 8

Flute 4

Fifteenth 2

### Swell

Lieblich Gedackt 8

Gamba

Gemshorn 4

Sw/Gt, Sw/Ped, Gt/Ped  
Trigger Swell

We then adjourned to St Andrew's, Lamas where a warm welcome and hospitality were provided by the churchwarden, Major John Perkins. We enjoyed our picnic lunch in the shade of the trees by the River Bure; the setting was absolutely idyllic in the summer sunshine and we were not even annoyed by midges! The grounds and churchyard are

equally beautiful and we especially admired the brickwork of the long, complex zig-zag wall on the south perimeter, constructed by Napoleonic prisoners-of-war.

After a leisurely lunch, we strolled into the fine mediaeval church and several organists explored the single manual organ positioned in the north-west corner. According to the NPOR, the organ was built for the church in 1845 by Benjamin Collins, a boot maker in Lammas. It was then moved to Scottow Hall after which it was moved to Scottow church and, according to Richard Bower, the lowest open wood pipes are still in Scottow Church. The organ was returned to Lamas church in 1944 by Frederick Rothwell and beautifully restored by Richard Bower some years later.

### **Manual**

Open Diapason 8

Gamba 8 TC

Clarabella 8 TC

Dulciana 8 TC

Stop Diapason Bass 8

Principal 4

Flute 4 TC

Twelfth 2 2/3

Fifteenth 2

Pedal FFF for 20 notes . Manual compass from low FF. “The lowest

7 notes of the manual and pedal sound whether or not there are any stops drawn.”(NPOR)

The event was well-attended; it was in response to a request for a more social occasion and your Events sub-committee already has ideas for a similar occasion in the future.

We are grateful to the vicar of the Aylsham Team Ministry’s Bure Valley Benefice, The Revd David Hagan-Palmer and to churchwardens, Clive Hamilton (Oxnead) and John Perkins (Lammas) for their kindness.

Harry Macey



NOA at Lammas



Oxnead  
(All photos Harry Macey)

## WILLIAM WHITEHEAD ROYAL FESTIVAL HALL 24<sup>th</sup> April 2018

**P**am and I attended this recital and the pre-concert talk, in which William Whitehead spoke of *The Orgelbüchlein Project* of which he is the curator. Bach left his personal hymnal which he entitled *Orgelbüchlein*, largely incomplete. Bach's *Little Organ Book* consisted of 46 short chorale settings for organ, and an incomplete 47<sup>th</sup>, but he left 117 blank pages, with only a chorale title at the top of each page. *The Orgelbuchlein Project*, begun five years ago, has taken up the vast challenge to complete the missing chorales and has commissioned composers from all over Europe to fill in all the gaps with an extended series of compositions. The new compositions are like Bach's miniature settings of the titled chorale, echoing the ethos of *Orgelbüchlein*, but reinventing it for modern times. The style of the compositions was completely open with each composer putting his or her own slant on their particular piece.

The resulting collection, which is going to be published by Peters Edition, will present a cross section of contemporary compositional style, where jazz and folk styles sit alongside minimalism and serialism. It is a kaleidoscope of what the contributing composers at this point in history have to offer.



Royal Festival Hall  
(Photo Michael Flatman)

William played five chorales, two from Bach himself from the *Little Organ Book*, and the other three newly commissioned pieces as part of the project. These three pieces were highly contrasted in style, ranging from eruptive responses to a text on the uncertainty of life, a piece based on plainsong though paying homage to the Baroque master through tightly woven contrapuntal strands and thirdly, Thierry Escaich's post-modal tonal

scales and Messiaen like rhythms. I was struck by how well the old and the new works sat alongside each other and produced a seamless sequence of five pieces.

The rest of the first half of the recital consisted of Bruhn's: *Praeludium in E Minor (Great)* which was well articulated and showed off varied registrations on the RFH organ, two of Schumann's *Fugues on the name of Bach: Nos. 5 and 6, Op.60* and Parry's *Fantasia and Fugue in G, Op. 188*. The second half of the concert consisted of Liszt's monumental *Fantasia and Fugue on 'Ad nos, ad salutarem undam', S.259*, which William played with dazzling virtuosic dexterity and a powerful sense of drama culminating with all guns blazing in those spine chilling final chords on full organ ending in C Major.

After much enthusiastic applause William returned to the console to calm us all down and send us on our way home with a delightful encore which was a performance of *Lied* by Louis Vierne from *24 Pièces en style libre, Op.31 Book 2*. A thoroughly enjoyable evening.

Michael Flatman

## TRIP TO STAMFORD 14<sup>th</sup> July 2018



St Mary Stamford  
(Photo Matthew Martin)

It is always good to visit Stamford especially on a hot summer's day!

As many of you know I spent some of my early working life with Richard Bower restoring the organ at St Marys Church back in 1986/7.

It's very disappointing that we could not raise enough people to cover a coach for today's trip, as I believe there was a great opportunity to visit the beautiful surroundings of Burghley House as well as the historic town centre.

Sylvia and I decided to make it a mini break for us and headed to Stamford on the Thursday. The



last few months have been a time of lots of studying as I near completion of my degree so a break was most welcome. We also took the opportunity to meet a friend, Jim Philips, who lives in Stamford who we see more of usually in Kitzbühel, Austria and he also joined us at both churches!!

Friday is a massive market day in the town with such a vast range of goods and wares on sale and there was a great buzz and vibrancy there. We also visited All Saints Church for its lunchtime organ recital held weekly throughout July and their organist has invited the Association to visit there in the future. The recital was very well attended too!

On the Saturday we commenced our visit to St Martins, Stamford Barren. The Director of Music Nigel Stark gave us a warm welcome. He spoke briefly on the history of the Bevington organ and demonstrated the instrument to us. He is also involved with a Dutch company selling Hauptwerk organs and there was a demonstration instrument in situ based on a Cavaillé-Coll organ in Cannes, France. We were able to use this organ too and despite my liking of 'proper pipe organs' I was very impressed with the sound

quality. Nigel explained how they captured the sound from the real organ and the acoustics of the buildings in which the original instruments were housed, achieving the most realistic sounding virtual organ. All fascinating stuff but very technical. One of our group Philip Clarke remembered tuning the Bevington organ here in the days he worked for Willis's. St Martin's probably boasts the best acoustics of the several churches in Stamford.



St Martin, Stamford  
(Photo Matthew Martin)

After those who chose to had played, we walked up the hill to St Mary's. Bedwell's built the organ here originally and Richard Bower rebuilt it. Once again, following a

demonstration of the organ, members were left to indulge themselves. This organ certainly sings well and a clarinet stop on the great is just a thrill to listen to. A good comprehensive tonal scheme is evident and Richard and the then organist Harold Harvey put a well-planned scheme together.

Please look at our NOA Facebook page for the few photos taken at the event. Out grateful thanks go to Nigel Stark and to Father Gavin Cooper for allowing NOA to visit these two wonderful churches. We all had a great time and my only wish was to have shared it with more of you there. You missed a treat!

For me this brought back many happy memories working with Richard there. Remembering the hard work, painstaking hours of final voicing and reliving many fun moments in my mind.

Matthew Martin

## OUT OF THE WINDOW

**B**y all accounts Chopin was a superb improviser and, according to Donald

McLeod, who presents Composer of the Week, one of the objectives of Chopin's somewhat disastrous excursion to Majorca was to spend some time knocking some of his ideas into shape for publication. As McLeod wisely remarked, much of Chopin's finest music went out of the window. If Chopin had only asked me I could have told him that it is very rare indeed that one can actually remember for further development, some moment of magic that came out of the ends of one's fingers. (The lost chord indeed!). A philosophical approach to this is that if the music was so unmemorable then it probably wouldn't have been much use.

In my view, one of the church/cathedral organist's essential tools is the ability to extemporise. There frequently occur during services short periods of time which need 'covering'; when the collection takes longer than usual because Mr & Mrs Nonplus, who haven't set foot in a church since they were married, need to fumble in pocket or purse or both to find some low denomination coins to put in the bowl, or when there are more communicants than usual and the chosen hymn isn't long enough.

Some are better at this than others, (some can't do it at all!) and there are composers out there churning out very small fragments of music which an organist, who is not very good at extemporising, can play in such moments of need.

Very occasionally, however, these impromptu moments are filled with music of pure creative genius. One of my most vivid memories is of a Eucharist at Norwich Cathedral when the Gospel reading dealt with the story of the Gadarene Swine. There are always two or three minutes to be covered as the cross and lights make their way back from the centre of the nave into the sanctuary and the preacher ascends to pulpit. The preacher on this occasion was Canon Perham (later to become Bishop of Gloucester) who would also preach on the subject of the Gadarene Swine. Meanwhile, the organ scholar (Simon Johnson, now at St Paul's Cathedral), launched into an outpouring of music which breathtakingly created the image of the swine dashing headlong for the cliff edge. Everyone, clergy and congregation alike, were spellbound and it took the preacher what seemed like ages to collect his wits after the music had

stopped to begin his sermon.

This two or three minutes of music certainly would never be, nor could ever be recaptured but it was entirely right for the moment. I doubt very much if Simon, gifted though he is, could reproduce it; in fact why bother? It would be useless in any other context; far too short for a recital piece and largely meaningless out of the context in which the initial inspiration came to him. I also remember Arthur Wills on the subject who said that if one were to somehow reproduce one of one's impromptu musings, on second hearing you probably wouldn't like it.

So take heart; if you have ever mused on the communion hymn until the celebrant had finished the ablutions, and your music added another dimension to the experience of those few moments, then rejoice and don't rack your brains trying to remember exactly how it went; it may have made a lasting impression (let's hope so!) but the music, having gone out of the window, is gone forever.

Ronald Watson



## **FORTHCOMING NOA EVENTS 2018-2019**

**SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 22<sup>ND</sup> 2018**

**Visit to King's Lynn Minster  
To inspect and play this fine  
historic instrument, restored and  
extended.**

Hear and play some wonderful  
Snetzler pipework from 1754.  
(Snetzler 1754, Holditch 1847,  
Holmes and Swift/Nicholson  
2003/2014)

Our host will be Adrian Richards,  
Director of Music and Editor of our  
NOA Journal. Venue: King's Lynn  
Minster, Church St, King's Lynn  
PE30 5EB

**Time: 11:00** Arrive. We have  
plenty of time to enjoy the  
Minster, its organ and the town.  
Bring your Cornet Voluntaries!  
We must leave the Minster by  
1400.  
Make your own arrangements for  
travel and subsistence.  
Large NCP car-park opposite the  
east end of the church. [PE30 5EB]  
(c.£1 per hr)

**TUESDAY NOVEMBER 20<sup>TH</sup> 2018**

**Visit to Norwich Cathedral**

**Time: 17:30** Choral Evensong  
(girls and lay-clerks)

18:30-19:30 Opportunity to play  
the organ afterwards.

Visit through the kindness of  
Ashley Grote and David Dunnett.

**DECEMBER 2018**

There is no NOA event in  
December.

**SATURDAY JANUARY 12<sup>TH</sup> 2019  
Quiz and Chips**

Venue: Holy Trinity, Essex Street,  
Norwich, NR2 2BJ

**Time: 19:00 sharp.** We begin with  
the victuals (£8) followed by the  
quiz on General  
Knowledge with music. Bring your  
own drinks, cutlery etc;  
condiments and the NOA pickled-  
onion jar will be provided.  
Quizmasters: Pamela and Michael  
Flatman

**SATURDAY FEBRUARY 23<sup>RD</sup> 2019  
Desert Island Discs**

Venue: St Martin-at-Palace, Palace  
Plain, Norwich NR3 1GU

**Time: 14:00** Our castaway will be  
**Adrian Richards** (Director of  
Music, King's Lynn Minster and  
Editor of our NOA Journal)  
A guaranteed afternoon of  
interesting tales, anecdotes,  
laughter and good music.  
Host: Ron Watson  
Followed by Melanie's Tea and  
Home-made Cake (£2)

St Martin-at-Palace is newly – and cleverly - refurbished and is now the Headquarters of the Norwich Historic Churches' Trust.  
[[www.fnhct.org.uk](http://www.fnhct.org.uk)]

**SATURDAY MARCH 16<sup>TH</sup> 2019**  
**Annual General Meeting, Lunch and Recital**

Venue: Christ Church, Eaton,  
Church Ave, Norwich, NR2 2AQ

**Schedule:**

11:30 Annual General Meeting

12:30 Lunch (arrangements to be advised)

13:30 Welcome to Christ Church

Organ : Matthew Wright (organist:  
Christ Church)

13:40 Organ Music (Recitalist:  
Harry Macey; Music by J.S.Bach)

14:30 End

Non-members are warmly invited to attend most events for £5.

Full details of events will appear in The Journal, the NOA website and our Facebook page.

Please let Harry Macey know if you would like to do a write-up of an event. New writers are welcome. Reports should be emailed (in WORD) to our Journal editor, Adrian Richards. Deadline for copy for the Winter issue is Monday 26<sup>th</sup> November 2018  
[anmr@btopenworld.com](mailto:anmr@btopenworld.com)

Good quality digital photographs are very welcome.

Where an event has a closing date for orders or reservations, please do not leave it to the last minute!

Please let the sub-committee have feedback and ideas for future events.

Enquiries: ask any member of the Events Sub-committee.

## **ORGAN RECITALS**

### **GREAT YARMOUTH MINSTER**

Wednesday lunchtime, 12:30pm  
September 5 Martyn Marshall  
September 12 Stewart Whillis  
September 19 Mike Webb  
September 26 Ashley Grote

### **ST NICHOLAS, DEREHAM**

Saturday September 15, 7:30pm  
Organ Spectacular with Ashley Grote

### **ST PETER AND ST PAUL CROMER**

Tuesday evenings, 8pm  
4 September Keith John  
11 September Matthew Bond  
18 September John Dillistone  
25 September David Shippey

### **NORWICH CATHEDRAL**

5 September 7pm Ashley Grote  
20 September 1:10 Mark Brafield  
17 October 7pm John Keys

### **ST NICHOLAS NORTH WALSHAM**

12:30pm  
6 September Michael Nicholas  
13 September Matthew Bond

### **HOLY TRINITY CAISTER-ON-SEA**

8 September 7pm  
Colin Porter

### **KING'S LYNN MINSTER**

Tuesday with café 12:30  
4 September Michael Nicholas  
11 September Peter Godden  
18 September Jo Richards  
25 September Adrian Richards  
(featuring Reubke's Sonata on the  
94<sup>th</sup> Psalm)

### **ST NICHOLAS KING'S LYNN**

21 September 7:30  
Peter Godden

### **WYMONDHAM ABBEY 11:00**

15 September Mike Webb  
20 October Martin Gowman  
8 December Peter O'Connor

### **THE GRANGE MUSICAL COLLECTION, PALGRAVE**

2 December 12pm-5pm  
David Ivory

## **ONLINE ARCHIVE OF BACK NUMBERS OF THE JOURNAL**

**W**e are grateful to Michael Flatman who has now completed the mammoth task of scanning and uploading copies of the Journal from the Summer 1992 issue to the present day and making them available to view online here:-  
<https://issuu.com/norfolkorganistsassociation>

### **CLASSIFIED**

"The Musical Times"  
Hardback Annual volumes for  
1895, 1897, 1898, 1899, 1900,  
1901, 1902, 1903, 1904, 1905,  
1906, 1909.

A few pages are missing but there  
still much of interest.

Contact: Pauline Stratton 01603  
435 585

How many organists does it take to  
change a light bulb?  
Two. One to change the bulb, and  
one to complain that the switch  
doesn't have any combination pistons.

**SIR THOMAS HENRY WAIT  
ARMSTRONG (1898-1994)**



Armstrong by John Aubrey, 1970

**T**homas was born in Peterborough. His mother was a former headmistress and his father was music master at the King's School, organist and choirmaster at St Augustine's Church, Woodston, and conductor of the local operatic, orchestral and choral societies. Thomas was a chorister at the Chapel Royal, St James's palace from 1907 to 1910. In 1912 he was appointed organist at Thorney Abbey and the following year organist of Peterborough Cathedral. He was a lifelong friend of Malcolm Sargent.

Thomas joined the Royal Artillery in 1916, being commissioned towards the end of the war. During his war service he met Ralph Vaughan Williams, with whom he studied in the 1920s. In 1927 Armstrong made his first broadcast, an organ recital for the BBC, playing music ranging from Buxtehude to Stanford and Parry;

his long association with the BBC included many talks on the radio about topics such as British music. In 1955 he was appointed principal of the Royal Academy of Music and was knighted in 1958.

Thomas was modest about his music, although he composed all his life, despite the other demands on his time. For his *Who's Who* entry he confined himself to seven words on the subject: *Compositions various, the larger ones remain unpublished.* He admitted that he had not lived up to Vaughan Williams's advice that 'if you write a little bit of music to the best of your ability on every day of your life you will write one good piece before you die.' He continued to compose into his nineties: 'I still try to write a little music in my antiquated idiom. But I suppose nothing is so antiquated as what was avant-garde five years ago'

Thomas composed 25 anthems, carols, services and a large number of songs. The ambitious secular works composed for his doctorate remained unperformed until after his death. A CD recording of some of his compositions was made in the late 1990s and his music shows the influence of Vaughan Williams

Martyn Marshall

