

NORTHAMPTON & DISTRICT ORGANISTS' ASSOCIATION



The Austin Organ of Rushden Baptist Chapel... p 3

August Bank Holiday Organ Crawl Programme... p 5

NDOA News... p 6

What's On... p 7

*The Organ I Play: St. Lawrence, Broughton
Milton Keynes... p 8*

English Church Musicians: Orlando Gibbons... p 11

Organ Building News... p 13

*Here Comes the Bride at St. Gregory's,
Northampton... p 14*

Reg. Charity No.274679

This striking front case view is of the Klais organ in the chapel of Haileybury School, Hertford. The organ is tuned and maintained by Kenneth Tickell & Co, Northampton. The organ sits on a gallery at the west end which makes it look even more imposing.

FROM THE EDITOR



Welcome to our June Newsletter. Hopefully, everyone will find something of interest inside. To start on a sad note though. Rodney Matthews, whose book on George Maydwell Holdich was reviewed in March, died a few days after the Newsletter went out from an aggressive brain tumour. Shortly before his death, however, he was gratified to learn that the book was selling well. And it is still available from the publishers: 'The Sign of the Pipe' if members are interested in this remarkable piece of research.

Also, apologies if I have not been able to include your recital or concert in the What's On section. There were so many events this time that there was no space available to list them all. Most of the events for June and July have been listed but with August still some way off I thought you might just pick up any information on such happenings as you go along. In fact I had to leave out the August Bank Holiday Organ Crawl which is on your annual calendar although it is mentioned elsewhere in the Newsletter. Don't miss it.

Elsewhere there are changes of music staff at St. Matthew's and All Saints, Northampton (see NDOA News) and an article by Dr Peter Collier on the Austin organ of Rushden Baptist Chapel which it is hoped as many members as possible will be able to play and hear on the August Bank Holiday Organ Crawl.

Roger Smith started a series called 'The organ I play' which rather petered out after two brave souls told us about their instruments. I thought that it might be time to resurrect this series. To encourage potential writer-organists I have begun with the small organ that I play myself (however badly). And we have reached no 5 in our series on English Church Composers with Orlando Gibbons, who is perhaps the first real English Church Composer unencumbered by Reformation politics.

And, as there are no great projects associated with Northamptonshire to put on the front cover I thought you might like the photograph of an organ that few members of the general public ever get to see – the Johannes Klais organ in the chapel of Haileybury School, near Hertford. This powerful instrument only has two manuals and pedals but can support a chapel filled with pupils. I look forward to seeing many of you on Monday, August 25th.



Editor, NDOA Newsletter

President:

Lee Dunleavy

MA (Oxon), FRCO (DipCHD), ACertCM
337 Wellingborough Road
Rushden
Northants
NN10 6BB
07817 695535
lee.dunleavy@talk21.com

Hon. Secretary:

Helen Murphy
23 Hawthorne Road
Finedon
Northamptonshire
NN9 5DR
01933 680955
helen.murphy1@tesco.net

Hon. Treasurer:

Jonathan Harris
11 Pytchley Way
Brixworth
Northamptonshire
NN6 9EF
01604 881182
treasurer.ndoa@gmail.com

Committee Members:

Christopher Colby
Sally Desbois
Tim Dolan
Tony Edwards (President Elect)
Andrew Moodie
Stephen Moore (Past President)
Robert Page
Roger Palmer
Robert Tucker

Newsletter Editor:

Barry Wadeson
24 Bransgill Court
Heelands
Milton Keynes
MK13 7LN
01908 315880
editor.ndoa@gmail.com

THE AUSTIN ORGAN OF THE BAPTIST CHAPEL, RUSHDEN

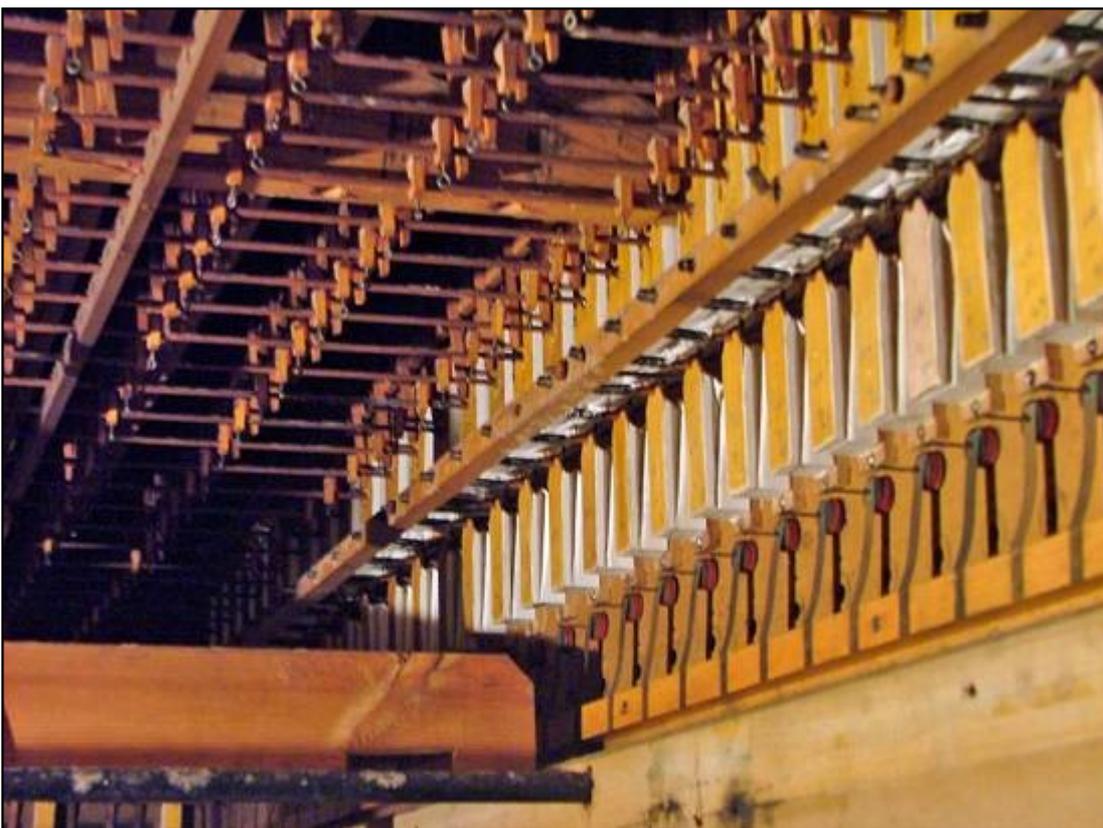
by
Dr. Peter Collier

The Austin Organ Company

The recorded history of Austin organs begins in the parish records of the church of St. Margaret, Denton (Northants) in which it is recorded that in 1866, a pipe organ was purchased for £80 from a certain Jonathan Austin. According to census records Jonathan was a farmer of Podington (Bedfordshire) and a keen amateur musician and organ-builder whose maternal family originated from Denton. (Charlotte Austin, a widow born in Denton, is recorded in the 1871 census as resident in Podington at the age of 83). It is unlikely that Jonathan had the facilities for making pipes, but had to rely on a supply of components from locally-available defunct instruments. Consistent with this is the observation that many of the pipes in the Denton organ are marked with dates preceding that of the Denton installation. Locally-persistent legend has it that the instrument came originally from Hinwick Hall, just down the road from Podington, though no documentary evidence to date has been found to support this. Of two manuals and a pedal department, the instrument is still in regular use for accompanying services, though in critical need of restoration. The NPOR entry records the builder as J. T. Austin - which is incorrect; John Turnell Austin was not born until 1869. His father Jonathan Austin was the builder of the instrument.

The Universal Air Chest

Jonathan's son (John Turnell Austin, born 1869, died 1948) enjoyed a childhood of choral singing and amateur organ building with his father and took organ lessons under the tutelage of Joseph Enos Smith (then organist at St. Mary's church, Rushden) who remained a lifelong friend, and kept a diary record of their association, now lodged in the Northamptonshire Records Office. John emigrated to the USA in 1889, where in 1893 whilst working with Farand and Votey of Detroit he developed the revolutionary Universal Air Chest system with its valve mechanism on the ceiling of the wind chest, allowing ready

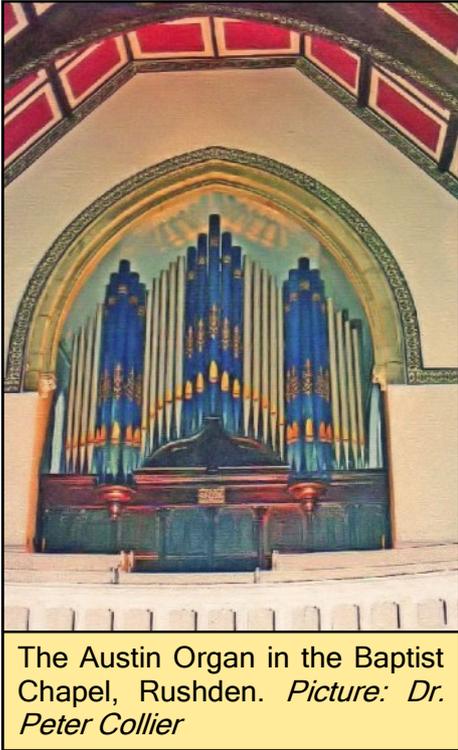


The Austin universal air chest could more properly be described as a 'wind room', with access via a normal room door. Inside, you can stand up at full height to reach and work on the action components mounted on the ceiling, even when someone is actually playing the organ! However you cannot get out of the wind-chest until the pressurised air is fully discharged by switching off the blower & playing to discharge the residual air.

access for maintenance and adjustment. Compared to the troubling complexities of some primitive electric actions, the Universal Air Chest was a marvel of simplicity and reliability. From then on - in association with the organ builders Warren and Clough - he built organs to his new design until in 1898 he founded with his brother Basil his own company, the Austin Organ Company of Boston

(subsequently transferred to Hartford, Connecticut). Up to that time, using Clough and Warren's factory, John had produced at least 25 instruments for American churches before the factory burned to the ground in 1898.

The Austin Organ of the Baptist Chapel, Rushden (Northants), England



The Austin Organ in the Baptist Chapel, Rushden. Picture: Dr. Peter Collier

Opus 25, a 2 manual instrument of 14 voices was the first to be exported from the USA - in this case to England in 1897, where it was assembled in the loft of father Jonathan's barn at Knuston Lodge Farm in Irchester. Why John decided on this remarkable step is open to speculation: possible motives include the desire to show his father how to build a better organ, and (with a business eye to the then burgeoning English market for new organs) to provide a demonstration instrument in support of prospective sales to English churches. The unlikely fact of its installation in a farm barn is supported by the contemporary eye-witness account recorded in the notebooks of John's former organ tutor, Joseph Enos Smith, who claimed to be the first to see the organ in the barn at Knuston Lodge Farm.

Only two other Austin organs are recorded as exports to England: they were ordered by Sir Herbert Marshall - an 'upper class' organ salesman of Leicester and London in the late Victorian and early Edwardian periods, who sold pianos and organs - mainly to the aristocracy for their large London houses and country mansions. He imported two Austin organs (Opus numbers 93 and 97) of 2 manuals and 19 voices, but nothing is recorded about their ultimate destinations.

In January 1897, the church records of the Little Street Rushden Baptist Chapel show that an anonymous donor proposed the purchase of a new organ, offering to pay £200 (or half the cost, whichever the lesser) for a new instrument, on condition (minuted in the church records of September of 1897) that it be installed by the end of the year. In the meantime, the Baptist Chapel had put on a fund-raising concert (recorded in the local press). The Chapel records also show that John Austin offered the Knuston instrument to the Chapel at the carefully calculated cost of £400.

There then ensued a debate amongst the deacons of the Chapel as to whether the instrument should be immediately installed in the (Old) Chapel in Little Street, or installation delayed until the planned (New) Chapel was built nearby in Park Road. Enquiries were raised with John Turnell as to whether the instrument could continue to be stored until the new church was built. The Chapel organ committee ultimately settled the matter by organizing the organ's installation in the Old Chapel on the grounds that monies earned from concerts there would be useful in funding the new chapel building (also, no doubt, encouraged by the donor's condition that installation be complete by the end of the year!).

Austin's archives - in a handwritten specification dated 1897 - show that the instrument had two manuals with 14 voices, and was indeed designed according to John Turnell's patented Universal Air Chest system. The inaugural service was reported in the Wellingborough News issue of 19th October, 1897. On completion of the new church on Park Road in 1901, the organ was moved to this new location, when it is reasonably clear that some additions were made (probably the 16' Open Diapason and 8' Octave pedal voices noted in the subsequent Nicholson inspection of the late 1930s). Certainly press announcements made at the time of the move indicated that the organ had been "extended", though no details were recorded. Similar records appear in two contemporary publications by the Rev. W. F. Harris: *The Romance of a Northamptonshire Baptist Church* and *George Bayes, The story of the Park Road Baptist Church*.

Records reveal nothing further about the Rushden instrument until the mid - 1930s, when they show that Nicholson's of Malvern had a contract for tuning and maintenance. By the late 1930s, the instrument had developed major problems of (*inter alia*) corrosion of and leakage from the console's pneumatic system. Nicholson's recommended a complete rebuild - which because of the war and the

consequent requirement for licencing of limited metal supplies - was delayed until 1945, when discussions with the church deacons were resumed. At this time, Nicholson's fell under the control of Walker's until 1953, though trading still as Nicholson's and basically responsible for design and oversight of installation. Inspection showed that the specification no longer conformed to the original builder's specification of 1897, in that two extra voices (a 16' Open Diapason and 8' Octave) had been added to the pedal department, probably when the organ was moved from the Old Chapel to the new church in 1901.

Discussions rumbled on until, in 1947, Nicholson's proposed three alternative specifications for a restored instrument with a new console, blower and electric action. The first - a basic restoration to the then current specification - was costed at £1,278. The second was an enhanced specification costed at £1,825 (plus purchase tax) for restoration with the addition of a new console, blower and only five new voices - as shown in the current (NPOR) specification (which incidentally also confirms the specification preceding the subsequent restoration). The third was a much more ambitious specification ultimately costed (at the insistence of the then organist) at £3,230. This proposed the addition of a further 19 voices which, it was claimed, would give 'a bolder ensemble and better accompaniment for large congregations'. This third specification would have more than doubled the size of the organ, making it a truly magnificent instrument of 33 voices capable of rendering demanding recital works. It would also of course have incurred special requirements which could not have been met within the existing organ chamber, but would have called for additional side chambers intruding into the choir pews. Not surprisingly, the church elders settled for the second specification, which was conveyed to Walker's in 1949 for manufacture and installation.

Work began on October 3rd 1949 and was completed in time for the dedication service in December 1949 - just in time for Christmas. Walker's representative at the inaugural recital in January 1950 remarked on a cipher, and uncertain speech from the Gamba and Cornopean! The organ's pitch was adjusted down a semitone from 540Hz to 523Hz shortly after restoration at a cost of £180 and vents fitted to the Trombone and Tromba chests. Further refurbishment work was carried out in 1973: the church records indicate that this was limited to cleaning, overhaul and repair at an estimated cost of £1,400. In 1986 the main organ console was moved from the choir stalls in front of the organ pipes to the right hand side of a platform at ground floor level. At the same time a solid state switching system was supplied by Kimber-Allen and installed by Kenneth J. Canter. It remained in this position until 2008, when the refurbishment of the church required that the organ console be turned through 90 degrees so that the organist faced the congregation. The instrument continues to give reliable service in services and concerts: a tribute to John Austin's ingenious design and Nicholson's sound craftsmanship.



NDOA AUGUST BANK HOLIDAY ORGAN CRAWL

You will have a chance to see and hear the Austin organ on Monday, August 25th – August Bank Holiday (or as calendars now call it: Late Summer Holiday). Starting at 10:30 a.m. (earlier than in previous years) at St. Peter's Church, Raunds (said to have the second tallest spire in Northamptonshire) with a 3 manual and pedals, 38 stop Conacher organ, we will move on next to Rushden Baptist Chapel and the IIP, 21 stop Austin Organ (see above). Finally All Saints Church, Thorpe Malsor's IIP, 15 stop Casson organ. Depending on where you intend to join us, whether by SatNav or map, the directions are:

St. Peter's Church, Church Street, Raunds, NN9 6JB
Rushden Baptist Church, Park Road, Rushden, NN10 0LH
All Saints, Church Way, Thorpe Malsor, NN14 1JS

This is a bank holiday and you may wish to bring a packed lunch.

NDOA NEWS

ALL SAINTS, NORTHAMPTON

Hilary Punnett, Travis Organ Fellow at All Saints, Northampton, has been appointed assistant organist at Lincoln Cathedral. Born in Victoria, British Columbia, Canada, she held appointments in her home city and at Christ Church Cathedral, Montreal, where she studied for both the Bachelor's and Master's degrees in performance at the prestigious McGill University.

In 2004 Hilary was awarded the Royal Canadian College of Organists prize, and at McGill was awarded the W. Douglas Clark Memorial and the Douglas Mackey prizes for organ at McGill. Hilary came to All Saints after two years at Southwell Minster, where she was Director of the Girls' Choir and Organ Scholar.

Charlie Hubbard FRCO, who will graduate from Cambridge University this Summer, will come to All Saints as Interim Travis Organ Fellow. Charlie is a former Organ Scholar of both Peterborough Cathedral and Trinity Hall, Cambridge.

Peter Foggitt MA (Cantab), MMus, will succeed Lee Dunleavy as Director of Music from September 2014. Peter studied at Fettes College, Edinburgh, and at Chetham's School of Music in Manchester before going up to Cambridge where he was Senior Choral Scholar of King's College. Following Cambridge he studied piano and singing at Trinity College of Music and earned the degree of Master of Music at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama. He has recorded extensively as a choral singer, as vocal soloist and as organist, and is a highly-regarded composer with dozens of compositions to his credit. He is Director of the innovative vocal ensemble Cries of London, and the Musical Director of re:sound Musical Theatre. He has served as Baritone Soloist and Deputy Organist and Conductor of the Priory Church of St Bartholomew the Great in the City of London, and is at present Director of Music of All Saints' Church, Putney.

David Arcus will come to All Saints as interim Director of Music until Peter Foggitt takes up his position. Dr Arcus holds degrees from Yale University and has just completed thirty years as Organist of the Duke University Chapel in Durham, North Carolina, USA.

ST. MATTHEW'S, NORTHAMPTON

As many NDOA members will know Callum Alger who has been organ scholar at St. Matthew's for several years will, later this year, take up the post of Organ Scholar at Portsmouth Cathedral before moving on to Birmingham Conservatoire in 2015. St. Matthew's is advertising for an organ scholar to replace Callum at the present moment and an advert with application details can be found on page 15.

Callum will be giving his farewell solo recital on July 6th at St. Matthew's. Many of his friends and fans will no doubt be in attendance.



The PCC had forgotten to notify the organist that the organ had been moved.

Das Land Ohne Musik

Quizmaster: What type of instrument is a cornet: percussion, brass or string?

Contestant: I think you blow into a cornet, so I don't think its string. I'm going for percussion.

(Eggheads, BBC2)



What's On



Sunday 1st June	7:30 p.m.	Organ Recital. Hilary Punnett (All Saints, Northampton & Lincoln Minster) at St. Matthew's Church, Northampton, NN1 4RY. Retiring Collection.
Saturday 7th June	7:30 p.m.	Shakespeare in Song. Northampton Bach Choir. The British première of Steve Dobrogosz's setting of Shakespeare's most moving sonnets - <i>My Rose</i> . Spinney Theatre, Spinney Hill Road, Northampton, NN3 6DG. Tickets from: St Giles Music (01604) 250905 & Choir Box Office (01604) 403360
Thursday 12th June	1:10 p.m.	Organ Recital. Peter King (Bath Abbey) at All Saints Church, Northampton, NN1 1DF. Part of the Rage and Romance series.
Saturday 15th June	7:00 p.m.	Organ Recital. Lee Dunleavy (former DoM, All Saints, Northampton). St Mary the Virgin, Wellingborough, NN8 1HU. Part of the Wm Hill Organ Centenary.
Sunday 22nd June	4:30 p.m. & 6:30 p.m.	Come and Sing Choral Evensong. St. Matthew's Church Northampton, NN1 4RY. McKie, Brewer in D & Matthias. Singers rehearsal 4:00 p.m. and Choral Evensong 6:30 p.m. (Singers £5).
Thursday 26th June	12:30 p.m.	Organ Recital. Philip Bricher (Holy Trinity, Northampton) at Wesley Memorial Church, New Inn Hall Street, Oxford, OX1 2DH.
Also	1:10 p.m.	Organ Recital. Simon Hogan (Southwell Minster) at All Saints Church, Northampton, NN1 1DF. Part of the Rage and Romance series.
Saturday 28th June	3:00 p.m.	Encounters with Naji Hakim, other musicians and Olivier Messiaen. Some reminiscences by Don Kennedy (a former Head Chorister at St Matthew's) of his career as a literary editor in the 'classical' recording industry (1974 –2004) - focusing on the organ, with CD illustrations and rare film of Messiaen performing in Paris. St. Matthew's Parish Centre, 27A The Drive, Northampton, NN1 4RY.
Saturday 5th July	7:30 p.m.	Annual Organ Recital. Thomas Heywood (Melbourne Town Hall, Australia) at St Mary Magdalen, Castle Ashby. Admission: £10. Grounds of Castle Ashby House, NN7 1LQ.
Sunday 6th July	7:30 p.m.	Organ Recital. Callum Alger, departing organ scholar at St. Matthew's Church, Northampton, NN1 4RY. This is Callum's final solo recital before taking up his post as organ scholar at Portsmouth Cathedral.
Thursday 17th July	1:10 p.m.	 First David Morgan Memorial Recital. Richard Pinel (formerly organ scholar of All Saints, Northampton) currently Assistant Director of Music at St. George's Chapel, Windsor, performs Reubke's Sonata on the 94th Psalm. All proceeds from the recital will be given to the David Morgan Educational Fund. All Saints Church, Northampton, NN1 1DF.
Saturday 19th July	10:00 a.m. To 10:00 p.m.	Musical Marathon. St. Matthew's Church, Northampton, NN1 4RY. Hymn singing, organ recitals, chamber music. A day of non-stop music, something for everyone. (£2 first visit then free).
Sunday 20th July	3:00 p.m.	Organ and Flute Recital. Philip Bricher (organ) and Megan Kirsty Lloyd (flute) at SS Peter & Paul, Park Avenue South, Abington Park, Northampton, NN1 5LW

THE ORGAN I PLAY

by
The Editor



The interior of St. Lawrence Church, Broughton, Milton Keynes. The organ is situated on the left and all the pipes of the case are decorative. When the organ was dismantled recently the work exposed some of the butchery that the instrument had endured. The side nearest the chancel wall had been crudely hacked off (presumably on the grounds that what the eye doesn't see the heart doesn't grieve). The organ would have looked the same on both sides, suggesting that it once held a prominent place in a large house. *Picture: © Churches Conservation Trust.*

Some members may know that your editor is a volunteer and supporter of the Churches Conservation Trust (CCT) - the organisation that looks after redundant Anglican Churches of historic interest. Examples of CCT churches are: St. Peter's, Marefair, Northampton; All Saints at Aldwinckle; St. Andrew's at Cranford; All Saints at Holdenby and St. Andrew's at Deene Park near Corby. In all, Northamptonshire has 10 redundant churches cared for by the CCT (originally called the Redundant Churches Fund). Part-funded by the Church of England, the rest of the CCT's income needed to maintain and keep these beautiful buildings open to the public is raised by supporters, and by money-raising events put on by local volunteers.

It was through the CCT that I came to have an organ all to myself to play, more-or-less whenever I want. St. Lawrence's Church, Broughton is situated just off the A5130 and within the boundary of Milton Keynes with Newport Pagnell to the west and the Bedfordshire border to the north. Broughton is one of the old medieval villages on which Milton Keynes was built. Now surrounded by new development (including a Tesco superstore) the old village is hidden away from the heavy traffic using the nearby M1 and the busy grid roads of Milton Keynes. The old London Road which ran through the village and past the church is truncated by a busy grid road. On the opposite side of the road from St.

Lawrence's is one of Broughton's old manor houses and next to the church is the Old Rectory now occupied by one of the volunteers that look after the church and grounds.

The Church of St. Lawrence dates back to the twelfth century and is notable for two things, its medieval wall paintings (uncovered in the first half of the nineteenth century) and the fact that a former incumbent, Andrew Byng (1599 – 1618), was one of the translators of the King James Bible. The church is small with only a nave and no side aisles. It can just about seat 80 by squeezing as many people as possible into its 18th century pews. The church became redundant in 1990 and the inside is a time capsule of past Anglicanism. A traditional King James Bible still sits upon the lectern and two chained 16th century books are on display at the chancel entrance.* As well as the medieval wall paintings, which include a doom painting of the last judgement and St. George (minus his head) slaying a dragon, there are some delightful Victorian stained glass windows and a small one manual and pedal organ situated at the north east end of the nave. Although floodlighting has been added to the inside of the church for lectures and concerts the Christmas carol service is held by candle light.

Now, being somewhat uncouth in my musical tastes, I would prefer a four manual organ of the proportions of that at St. Matthew's. However, over the last couple of years I have become quite attached to this little organ and, it poses something of a mystery too since, despite extensive research, its provenance remains unknown. No builder's label or markings inside the organ give a clue as to who may have made it (the only label is to a past organist). We know that it was in the church in 1881 (which, in all probability, was the year that it was installed) however, it was originally located inside the tiny chancel on the south side. In 1903 a faculty was granted to move the organ to its present position. Much guesswork has gone on but it seems likely that it was originally a house organ donated to St. Lawrence's by a local worthy rather than built specifically for the church and it appears, from architects drawings, to have been re-modelled when it was moved. The inside of the organ suggests that it was built by a skilled craftsman, although there are also signs of early twentieth century harsh treatment.



At the beginning of 2013 I joined the newly formed Friends of St. Lawrence. The church had not been used for over 20 years (except for the very occasional service) and the organ had been unplayable for at least ten years with ciphers (due to broken pallet springs) and runs on the soundboard. An early priority was to raise enough funds to get the organ into a playable condition. In fact, the money was raised very quickly and the work was carried out last year by Vincent Woodstock of Leighton Buzzard. There was just enough money in the kitty to pay for the remedial work; replacing broken pallet springs, repairing trackers etc. and a good tuning. Sadly, the organ needs a complete clean and a full overhaul but that will have to wait. In the meantime, I play it a couple of times a week in the summer and less often in the winter (no heating and creeping arthritis in both hands have taken their toll). The church has been brought back into use more recently with a Christmas carol service and an Easter service. The church is still consecrated and a short service is held on August 10th – St. Lawrence's day. Because my wife has multiple sclerosis, I am limited in the times that I can play the organ – which is usually in the afternoons. However, a young lady from nearby Milton Keynes Village is happy to take on the light duties of playing for the Christmas and Easter services, although I think her experience is generally with electronic keyboards rather than organs.

As this is a family Newsletter I can best describe this organ as a blighter to play. All the pipework except the Bourdon is contained within a swell box operated by a lever – which slams the horizontal shutters closed when the foot is removed. It is possible to keep the shutters open by sliding the lever

The writer demonstrating the St. Lawrence organ to the Friends of St. Lawrence (FOSL) at their June meeting. Picture by Julia Campion (FOSL).



into a slot, however, anything between *pp* and *ff* requires one foot permanently on the swell pedal. It is almost impossible to make a crescendo or decrescendo whilst also playing the tiny 1½ octave pedal board. The pedals are only an inch wide and I have found that the only way to avoid holding down two at once is to wear just a pair of thick socks. It seems unlikely that the pedals were much used in the past.

The picture on the left shows the piano-lid style cover with stops arranged horizontally above the keyboard. In the early 1990s St. Lawrence's became part of an

ecumenical group of churches and was seldom used; not surprisingly, the organ was seen as simply a piece of furniture rather than as a valuable musical instrument.

The organ of St. Lawrence, Broughton, Bucks.		
Manual	Viol di Gamba (Tc)	8
	Principal (Tc)	4
	Stopped Diapason Bass	8
	Open Diapason (Tc)	8
	Clarabella Treble (Tc)	8
	Bourdon (bottom octave)	16
	Flute (Tc)	4
Pedals	18 pull-downs	

Now let us see what this little instrument has in store for the organist. Despite its rather limited specification (most stops ending at Tenor C – the Principal being the exception) it has more than enough power to accompany a congregation of 80 with the swell box open. The Viol di Gamba sounds a bit weedy played on its own with the box closed, however the Open Diapason is mellow and when the Clarabella is added the sound becomes warm and beautifully rounded. The Principal is almost gentle and is only noticeable by its absence. The 4' Flute, unfortunately, suffers from running and combined with other stops loses tuning; it is, therefore, best not used. The Bourdon provides just that fullness to underpin either a few stops or full organ (just). Whoever the builder was he went to a great deal of trouble to achieve a well-balanced sound from this tiny organ.

This is not an organ for playing Widor's Toccata (and it is unlikely to have to rise to the challenge since I long ago gave up at the first bar). It is, quite simply, a small organ for village church accompaniment of psalms, hymns and single manual voluntaries. Its limited pedal compass rules it out for most other music. The 54 note manual has a pleasant and responsive touch and there are two combination pedals just above the pedal board. It undoubtedly needs a good clean and refurbishment; and thanks to somebody's foresight many years ago when the organ was left with the shutters closed it has survived with less dirt and dust in the pipework than might have been expected.

The last NPOR entry is dated c1970 and even has the name of the church wrong calling it St. Mary the Virgin instead of St. Lawrence (although the map grid reference is correct). For some reason it also describes the Flute (Clarabella 8') as being unenclosed when it is firmly inside the swell box.

Organists do get around and if there are any of you who may, at sometime in the distant past, have crossed the county border to play this little organ we would be grateful for any information as to its origins. There is still much research to do but as the church's records have been split up with some held by the Oxford Diocese and some by the Buckinghamshire County Records Office it is proving something of difficult task.

* For those of you interested in such things, the two chained books are not, as you might think the *Book of Common Prayer* and *The Bible* but books which were essential to the establishment of Protestant Reformation following the Act of Settlement of 1549. The first is Bishop of Salisbury John Jewell's *An Apology for the Church of England* (1560) a closely argued refutation of Catholic claims that the Church of England was no longer a part of the Catholic Church. On the contrary, argued Jewell, it was the Church of England that continued the true Catholic Church's traditions and not the Church of Rome. The word apology in the title is not used here as an expression of regret but in its old English meaning of defence.

The second book is Desiderius Erasmus' *Paraphrases of the Gospels* (1547). Believed to have been the idea of Catherine Parr (the last, and surviving, wife of Henry VIII) it has an interesting history of both Protestant and Catholic translators into English from the original Latin. It is believed that Catherine translated the Gospel of Matthew and the Acts of the Apostles and the Catholic Princess Mary (later Queen Mary I) translated the Gospel of John. Edward VI, who succeeded Henry VIII ordered that a copy should be placed in every church. Erasmus, was also tutor to the future King James I.

Both books were placed in every church in the realm, on public display, so that anyone who could read would be able to read them. St. Lawrence's copies are probably the last surviving books still on public display in a church. In fact, they are quite difficult to read if you are used to modern wide fonts such as used here for they are in a very narrow gothic script known as black letter. Doubtless, though, our predecessors would have had no problem reading them. Finally, if you have an organ that you play that you think we should hear about—contact the editor.

English Church Musicians V

Orlando Gibbons (1583-1625)

by Barry Wadeson

Skipping, for the moment, William Byrd and Thomas Tallis we move on to a church musician who is surely the first real English Church composer. A protestant, who wrote music only to English texts he was, says Phillips (1968), a man who had his feet firmly on the ground; a Christian struggling in a world at odds with his ideals. Without entering into a lengthy exposition on the existential differences between Catholicism and Protestantism it is, nevertheless, important to understand the mind-set of Gibbons. For Catholics, entry to heaven was through penance and absolution regardless of what they had done, whether of high or low estate. Protestants carried a much heavier burden for it was through good works during their lifetime that they would be judged; through charity or through industrious labour in the service of God, whether it was for God himself or an earthly master (this would come to be known as the 'protestant work ethic' during the industrial revolution). OK, this is rather simplistic but you get the picture and I want to avoid a theological debate with those who have a greater knowledge of these things. Nevertheless, it is this that influences Gibbons choice of texts and the music he composed. This is also an age when sacred and secular music began to diverge, an age in which Gibbons felt at ease playing both virginals at the court of James I and Charles I and the organs of Westminster Abbey.



Gibbons was born in Oxford and became a chorister in 1596 in the choir of King's College, Cambridge. Why not Oxford, you may ask, his place of birth? Well, his older brother, Edward, just happened to be master of the choristers at King's at this time. He entered the university in 1598 and in 1608 graduated with a bachelor of music degree. He was appointed a Gentleman of the Chapel Royal by James I and from 1615 until his death he held the post of organist to the Chapel Royal. In 1623 he became senior organist with Thomas Tomkins as his junior. It seems Gibbons was much in demand for in 1619 he was also made one of the 'kings musicians for the virginalls' at court. In 1622 he was awarded an honorary doctorate by Oxford University. Concurrently with his post of organist of the Chapel Royal in 1623 he became organist of Westminster Abbey where he would later play for the funeral of James I.

Gibbons has been described as worthy but dull (see Phillips) and his counterpoint has been pronounced distinctly old school compared to that of his contemporaries, however, he is still considered a master of counterpoint by others and an expert in producing simple melodies of great charm. Nevertheless, Gibbons is a composer who is a realist, he paints the world as it is rather than what it might be so there are no moments of the sort of transcending music that we get with Byrd (who never shook off his Catholic origins). Gibbons is an adroit but reactionary composer who has cast off the shadow of Catholicism but also rejects the new fashions developing around him. Whilst Dowland and Campion were writing tunes in the base line Gibbons stuck to what he knew best, and his chorus parts might as well be written for strings. And yet, there is also something prescient about Gibbons' work, it is as if Gibbons sensed a great age coming to an end. Type into Google *The Silver Swan* and you will come across dozens of references to, and You Tube performances of, his beautiful SSATB madrigal the words of which melt the heart:

The silver swan, who living had no note, When death approach'd, unlock'd her silent throat; Leaning her breast against the reedy shore, Thus sung her first and last, and sung no more. Farewell, all joys; O Death, come close mine eyes; More geese than swans now live, more fools than wise.

And the first sign of that great age coming to an end occurred when James I died on the 27th March in 1625. Gibbons presided over the musical obsequies the strain of which was no doubt enormous on one who had risen so rapidly within court circles. James's son Charles I was the heir apparent and whereas James had fought the French, Charles intended to make an alliance by marrying the French Princess Henrietta Maria. In May 1625 Charles set out for Canterbury where the marriage was to take place. Princess Henrietta had arrived with a retinue of 4,000 and not to be outdone Charles summoned an entourage that included the whole Chapel Royal, the royal string band and twelve wind musicians, not to mention clerics, servants, organists and baggage handlers. It was expected that Gibbons, the foremost organist in England, would provide the music for such an auspicious occasion.

Gibbons died, aged 42, before the marriage could take place on 5th June 1625 at Canterbury. His lingering death caused great consternation throughout the royal companies for the Great Plague had returned to England again that year with 5,000 being buried in London alone every week. Doctors were hastily summoned to examine the body and reported thus:

We whose names are here underwritten: having been called to give our counsels to Mr. Orlando Gibbons; in the time of his late and sudden sickness, which we found in the beginning lethargical, or a profound sleep; out of which, we could never recover him, neither by inward nor outward medicines, & then instantly he fell in most strong, & sharp convulsions; which did wring his mouth up to his ears, & his eyes were distorted, as though they would have been thrust out of his head & then suddenly he lost both speech, sight and hearing, & so grew apoplectical & lost the whole motion of every part of his body, & so died. Then here upon (his death being so sudden) rumours were cast out that he did die of the plague, whereupon we . . . caused his body to be searched by certain women that were sworn to deliver the truth, who did affirm that they never saw a fairer corpse. Yet notwithstanding we to give full satisfaction to all did cause the skull to be opened in our presence & we carefully viewed the body, which we found also to be very clean without any show or spot of any contagious matter. In the brain we found the

whole & sole cause of his sickness namely a great admirable blackness & syderation in the outside of the brain. Within the brain (being opened) there did issue out abundance of water intermixed with blood & this we affirm to be the only cause of his sudden death.

In other words, Gibbons died of a massive stroke. Starkey (2013) suggests this was due to the strain imposed by James I's funeral and Charles I's demands for pomp and ceremony for his marriage to the French Princess within such a short period of time. Charles would not be crowned King until the 2nd February 1626 but without his wife by his side – the Catholic Henrietta Maria refused to participate in a Protestant ceremony. Almost within days of his accession to the throne Charles was picking fights with parliament, the outcome of which led eventually to his deposition and execution. In the intervening years Charles took England into a civil war the like of which had not been seen since the internecine wars of the Plantagenets. *'More geese than swans now live, more fools than wise'* as the last line of Gibbons' bitter – sweet *Silver Swan* has it. After Charles's execution in 1649 there would be no more courtly music for many a long year and it would take even longer for the English Church to recover its glorious music tradition. It is as well, perhaps, that Gibbons did not live to see the destruction of so much that he held dear.

Gibbons is best known to church musicians today as the composer of *This is the Record of John*. But there is much more to Gibbons than a single verse anthem. In fact, during his short life Gibbons was a prodigious composer of both secular and sacred music. He left 5 services (including the Short Evening Service and the Second Evening Service), 13 full anthems, 25 verse anthems, 20 madrigals, 30 fantasies for strings, 4 *In Nomine* for strings, 2 pavaues, 2 galliards for strings, 16 keyboard fantasies and 6 sets of variations for keyboard. Very little of his music was published in his own lifetime and no copy of the ode commissioned by Charles I for his wedding celebration has survived. Gibbons was buried at Canterbury and a bust placed in the cathedral to commemorate his life.

Bibliography

Harper, J. (2014) *Orlando Gibbons*. Grove Dictionary Online.

Jones, B. (1998) *The Hutchinson Concise Dictionary of Music*. Oxford: Helicon Publishing Ltd

Phillips, C. H. (1968) *The Singing Church*. London: Faber.

Starkey, D., Greening, K. (2013) *Music and Monarchy*. London: BBC Books

ORGAN BUILDING NEWS

St. John the Baptist, Kingsthorpe

Work will begin to electrify stop and piston actions on the Kingsthorpe organ in July. The work will be carried out by Alan Goulding of Pipe Organ Services.

St. Mary the Virgin, Finedon

Many of us have been watching how the work on the famous Queen Ann organ has progressed over the last few months. The front case pipework is now gleaming brightly after its restoration by Jenny Duffy. After some historical record-taking by John Norman the organ is expected to be back in service around July.

Kenneth Tickell & Co Ltd of Northampton is currently building a new 17-stop, two manual and pedal organ for Downing College Chapel, Cambridge and a 6-stop, two manual and pedal studio organ for a private residence. The company has also been commissioned to build a new 36-stop, three-manual and pedal organ for the chapel of St. John's School, Leatherhead to be completed for summer 2015.

**Here comes the bride... 3rd May 2014, with Laurence Caldecote
at St Gregory's Church, Northampton
by Helen Murphy**

I closed the case doors, the strains of that triumphant final chord from the Mendelssohn, with its wonderful bottom C, still resounding in my ears, switched off the organ and made a dash for the presbytery door - and my car. Phew!

I knew Saturday 3rd May was going to be a busy day for me: a choir rehearsal in Northampton at 10.30 (which should have been all day, but I made my excuses and left at midday), then back to Wellingborough to play for a wedding in my own church at 1.00 - a Nuptial Mass in fact, so there was no chance of getting away in much less than an hour. Getting away? Well, I needed to be back in Northampton for an NDOA event which was starting at 2.00 - Here comes the bride... - billed as 'A practical guide to organ music suitable for weddings - how you can help the happy couple pick appropriate music [chance would be a fine thing], how the ceremony can be stress-free for the organist [that'll be the day!] and the help provided by new editions of classic pieces.'

Having arrived at St Gregory's, I legged it up the stairs to the west gallery to find a small group of NDOA members (about ten of us, which was just about right for the space available), including our host Fr

Andrew Behrens, who had somehow managed to bring a tray of refreshments up there, including a kettle, ready to do the business when the time came. I had conveyed my apologies to Laurence in advance for my late arrival, so by the time I got there, he had already dealt with 'Picking appropriate voluntaries for the organ you have'; 'Making difficult hymns easy (e.g. Jerusalem); and was well into 'New music for weddings/editions of pieces that are easy to use'. He went on to deal with books (wedding albums of varying types and publications) and, finally, suggestions for hymns, with the sound advice that they must be well known if you want your guests to sing them (and not some infantile ditty that the bride fondly remembers from her primary school days).

I asked about the printed programmes (often self-produced rather than from a printer), which need to be checked with an eagle eye prior to embarking on playing the hymn (we have all had the experience of the wedding booklet that contradicts the hymn book, as mine had that afternoon!). There is a particular risk that the person typing the programme has used a different hymnal - one of those that has taken the liberty of changing the once-familiar words, or increased/reduced the number of verses, that can so easily catch one out. The hazards of playing at a church not your own were also explored: moral - always take your own hymnal, as you never know what you might find - such as a locked music cupboard for which no one has the key! It happens.

There was time too for exchange of ideas/experiences and advice - all invaluable for the humble organist trying to play (sorry!) his/her part in someone's big day. Thank you Laurence!



St Matthew's Church, Organ Scholarship

St Matthew's Church has an important standing within the town of Northampton and is a church famous for many things; Henry Moore's Madonna and Child, The Graham Sutherland painting of the Crucifixion, as well as the musical commissions - many of which have now firmly established themselves in the repertoire of choirs all over the world. Most recently, the church has commissioned new works from Paul Mealar, David Halls and Philip Stopford.

St Matthew's has one of the best Parish Church choirs of its type in the country, and is part of a musical tradition at the church that stretches back over 100 years. The current choir, which consists of boy and girl choristers, aged 10-18, and a back row of adult volunteers who provide the three lower parts, rehearses twice a week and sings two services on a Sunday. St Matthew's choir also enjoys a busy schedule of concerts, broadcasts and tours (weeks at the Cathedrals of St Davids 2012, Portsmouth 2013, with bookings for Carlisle 2014 and Exeter 2015).

An opportunity has arisen to appoint a new Organ Scholar to begin in September 2014. The present holder of the post, Callum Alger, achieved Grade 8 with 142 marks in March 2013 and will later this year take up the post of Organ Scholar at Portsmouth Cathedral before moving on to Birmingham Conservatoire in 2015.

The post of Organ Scholar at St Matthew's offers the chance for a young organist to further his/her experience on the instrument or for a pianist who has an interest in taking up the organ to begin their studies. It is more than just a 'page turning' scholarship, and the post holder, through careful planning appropriate to their level of expertise, will be expected to take an active role in the music department, assisting the Director of Music and Parish Organist in the week-by-week playing of services and, where appropriate, in training the choir. The Organ Scholar will also be expected to assist with administration of the department, most particularly with the music library.

The Organ Scholar will be allowed to use the 1895 4-manual Walker Organ at St Matthew's for practise, subject to booking with the Parish diary.

The value of the Scholarship is £500 p.a. which will be paid in 3 instalments, one at the beginning of each term. This is intended to be put towards music and books to assist the scholar their career development and to fund any lessons they may wish to take. In addition, Organ lessons are offered free of charge with the Director of Music.

For more information about this post please contact:

THE DIRECTOR OF MUSIC

Stephen Moore BMus (Hons) ARCO FTCL
Parish Office, 27A The Drive, Kingsley Park, Northampton, NN1 4RY
Telephone: 01604 371355 or 07814 427848
Email: music@stmatthews-northampton.org.uk

The Parish Church of St Matthew • Northampton

MUSICAL MARATHON!

Hymn Singing

Organ Recitals

St Matthew's Uniformed
Organisations

Choral Evensong

Chamber Music

Tea & Cake!

Come & Sing Joseph!

SATURDAY 19 JULY FROM 10.00 AM FOR 12 HOURS!

A day of NON-STOP MUSIC at St Matthew's Church between 10.00 am and 10.00 pm
with *SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE!*

Entrance to the church is £2 initially and FREE thereafter

*There will be an opportunity to vote in advance of the day for your favourite hymns
and organ music to be performed*

ALL PROCEEDS GO TOWARDS FRIENDS OF ST MATTHEW'S MUSIC FUNDS

THE PARISH CHURCH OF ST MATTHEW NORTHAMPTON NN1 4RY

01604 791251 • music@stmatthews-northampton.org.uk

www.stmatthews-northampton.org.uk