

March 2014

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Reg. Charity No.274679

The newly installed Tickell organ in St. Michael's Church, Betchworth, Surrey (Picture: courtesy of Kenneth Tickell).



FROM THE EDITOR



Welcome to 2014 and a very belated Happy New Year to you all. With Holy Week and Easter only two weeks away I hope you will have time to read some of our articles, reviews and news of NDOA events.

Some of you may have been following the saga at Llandaff Cathedral. In order to save £45,000 from a total deficit of £81,000 (a paltry sum in terms of cathedral deficits) the Chapter of Llandaff has made all of its professional musicians (except for one organist) redundant.

With exquisite timing, 6 lay clerks, the assistant organist and the organ scholar were made redundant with immediate effect just five days before Christmas, leaving the cathedral with no altos, tenors or basses for its Christmas Eve and Christmas Day services. Llandaff was the last cathedral in Wales with a professional choir.

Despite a spirited campaign by the Incorporated Society of Musicians and the Save Llandaff Choir campaign the Chapter of Llandaff refused to entertain proposals by the ISM and Save Llandaff Choir to find alternative ways fund the choir for the future.

Llandaff Cathedral has just spent £1.5 million on a new organ built by Nicholson's of Malvern. Sitting on each side of the choir the cathedral now has a magnificent organ with no choir to accompany save for a treble line. The Chapter of Llandaff believes that for special occasions such as Christmas, Holy week and Easter it can just 'buy in' professional musicians on a sessional basis. We shall see.

For those unable to attend the Desert Island Discs afternoon at the President's house, Helen Murphy has kindly written a detailed account. And there is organ building news on page 14.

We also return to the series on English Church Musicians with a look at the scandalous life and times of Thomas Weelkes, whose wonderful anthem *Hosanna to the Son of David* will be sung by many choirs this coming Palm Sunday.

NDOA Members who visited Tickell's workshop last November may remember seeing the case of the new organ for Betchworth Parish Church; the finished instrument is on our front cover and there is a review of the organ on page 3. And there is even more, see page 16 for a review of a new book on George Maydwell Holdich.



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A NEW TICKELL ORGAN FOR ST. MICHAEL'S CHURCH , BETCHWORTH, SURREY.

by
The Editor



You will probably have seen St. Michael's Church, Betchworth even if you have never left Northamptonshire: It featured in the film 'Four Weddings and a Funeral'. Sadly, its old organ was neither as famous nor as photogenic (see below) as the church. The first recorded organ at St. Michael's was a two manual and pedal Bevington organ situated at the east end of the chancel aisle and installed in 1880. In 1898 a choir organ of three stops was added by Alfred Kirkland of Wakefield and London. Kirland's firm was bought out by Bryceson in 1893, which in turn was taken over by Hill, Norman & Beard in 1923. Before then, in 1905 HN&B had reconstructed the organ and in 1912 made some tonal additions (although we do not know what these were). In 1962 the organ was repaired and refurbished by J. W. Walker & Sons and remained more or less the same until 1990 when it was rebuilt with tonal additions, a new detached console and multiplex action. The result of this final work carried out by Kenneth James and Son in 1990 was described by the church as inferior and the company has since gone into liquidation. With little likelihood that the organ could be improved (it was poorly situated for leading a congregation) by spending further money on it the decision was taken in 2006 by St. Michael's PCC to purchase a new organ.



The Bevington/Kirkland/Bryson/Hill Norman & Beard/Walker/James organ at Betchworth.

In 2011 Kenneth Tickell & Company of Northampton was approached to build a two manual and pedal mechanical organ to be situated in the chancel close to the position of the former detached console (see picture left). Fundraising commenced when the proposal for a new organ was made and the church had raised almost all of the £324,000 for the organ by the end of 2013. The organ actually sits inside an arch and the space left by the old organ is to be used as a vestry and multi-purpose room.

It was long suspected that the old organ stood on the site of a former lady chapel. Whilst preparing the floor for a new room the builders accidentally broke into a burial vault containing 17th and 18th century lead coffins and some

The Tickell Organ Specification (2014)			
Great	Open Diapason	8	
	Stopped Diapason	8	
	Gamba	8	
	Principal	4	
	Chimney Flute	4	
	Fifteenth	2	
	Sesquialtera II	2 2/3	
	Furniture IV	1 1/3	
	Trumpet	8	
	Tremulant		
	Cymbelstern		
	Swell	Hohl Flute	8
		Viola	8
		Voix Celeste	8
Principal		4	
Traverse Flute		4	
Nazard		2 2/3	
Open Flute		2	
Tierce		1 3/5	
Mixture III		2	
Bassoon		16	
Hautboy		8	
Tremulant			
Pedal	Violone	16	
	Sub Bass	16	
	Principal	8	
	Bass Flute	8	
	Octave	4	
	Trombone	16	
Couplers	Great to Pedal		
	Swell to Great		
	Swell to Pedal		

disarticulated bones. The occupants of the coffins turned out to be the remains from two prominent local families one of whom fought in the battle of Waterloo.

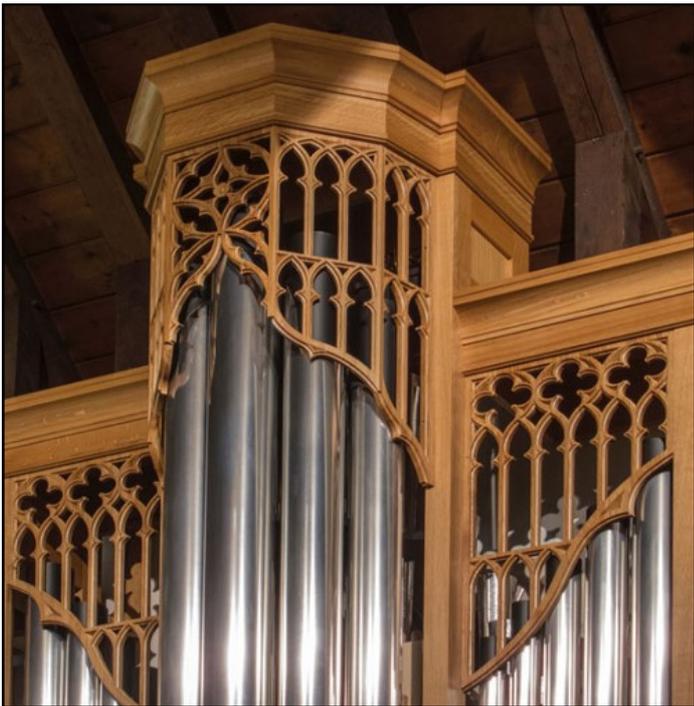
The Tickell organ was partly finished in time for Christmas so that the church could use it, and work has just reached completion with final voicing giving the church a fine organ which, it is hoped, will not need constant alteration over the years.

Replacing an established larger organ with a smaller organ (less a division) would seem to many as unambitious, but as anyone who has played a Tickell organ knows small can be beautiful, and you do get a lot of organ in a small space from this company. With tracker action, slider soundboards and electric stop and combination actions this is an instrument that is beautifully balanced without the necessity of adding on any further divisions. This is a typical Tickell organ which can cope with a wide range of styles from romantic to early English and continental music. In addition it has a capture system with 255 levels of memory for the general pistons and 9 levels of memory for the divisional pistons, with digital display;

It sits neatly within an arch with only its front case, pipes and console visible in the chancel, yet behind this facade is an organ of distinction that will provide both accompaniment to the choir and will lead the congregation without overwhelming either. A well laid out modern console and delicately decorated pipe shades completes this imaginative organ.

A special festival service of dedication by the Bishop of Southwark will take place on Sunday 4th May 2014 at 10:30 a.m. and on 31st May 2014 the opening recital on the organ will be given by Thomas Trotter, Organist of the City of Birmingham and international recitalist, at 4:00 p.m.

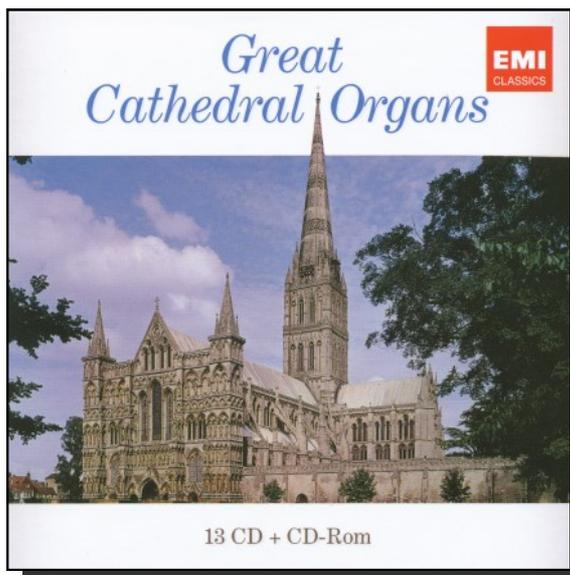
Former Betchworth Organ (1880–2013)			
1880	Bevington	IIP	Ped: 2 stops Gt: 8 stops Sw: 6 stops
1898	Kirkland	IIIP	Ped: 2 stops Ch: 3 stops Gt: 8 stops Sw: 6 stops
1905–1962	HN&B/ Walker	IIIP	Ped: 16,16,8,8 Ch: 8,8,8,8,4 Gt: 8,8,8,8,4,4,2,II Sw: 16,8,8,8,8,8,4,II
1990	James	IIIP	Ped: 16,16,16,10 2/3,8,8, 8,4,16,16,8,4,4 Ch: 16,8,8,8,8,8,4,2,1 1/3 Gt: 16,8,8,8,8,4,4,2,2 2/3 Sw: 16,8,8,8,8,8,8,II,II



The Tickell organ pipe-shades in detail. (Picture: Kenneth Tickell).

GREAT CATHEDRAL ORGANS

by
Spitzflöte



In the 1960s EMI brought out a series of LP records called *Great Cathedral Organs*. The whole collection of 19 LPs has since been reissued on 13 CDs plus a CD-ROM of additional material (which replaces the traditional booklet). The illustration for this review comes from my own set bought in 2012 sporting the EMI label. The same complete set is now relabelled Warner Classics and is available from Amazon UK for £37.83 with free delivery.

So what do you get for what is effectively £2.91 per CD? Well, you get the organs of the following cathedrals as they were in the late nineteen-sixties played by the organists of: **Liverpool** (Noel Rawsthorne), **Gloucester** (Herbert Sumsion), **Coventry** (David Lepine), **Exeter** (Lionel Dakers), **St Giles** (Herrick Bunney), **Llandaff** (Robert Joyce), **Durham** (Conrad Eden), **Hereford** (Melville Cook), **Salisbury** (Christopher Dearnley), **Norwich** (Heathcote Statham), **Ely** (Arthur Wills), **Worcester** (Christopher Robinson), **Westminster R.C.** (Nicholas Kynaston), **Canterbury** (Alan Wicks), **St Paul's** (Christopher Dearnley), **Lincoln** (Philip Marshall), **Chester** (Roger Fisher), **Norwich** (Brian Runnett), **York Minster** (Francis Jackson), **Westminster Abbey** (Douglas Guest and Simon Preston) and **Selby Abbey** (Fernando Germani).

Bonus tracks not included on the original set of LPs feature Fernando Germani and Simon Preston. The CD-ROM is a mine of information which includes the organ specifications as they were at the time, notes on the organists and the music, and a reminiscence by Brian Culverhouse, the producer. My favourite being of:

Conrad Eden in a freezing Durham Cathedral - it was February, but even so, he assured us, 'It never reaches above 50°F in here' - recording with hot water bottles strapped to his midriff and wearing mittens. And of the aged Heathcote Statham at Norwich, his doctor at the console to give him medication from time to time; we had to return some weeks later to resume the recording.

EMI returned later to record the Norwich Cathedral organ again, this time played by Brian Runnett, Heathcote Statham's successor. John Dykes Bower declined to be recorded at St. Paul's on the grounds that his playing was no longer up to the standard required and, so it was that Christopher Dearnley made two appearances. Having already been recorded at Salisbury Cathedral EMI seized their chance to record the organ at St. Paul's when Dearnley succeeded Dykes Bower.

With 204 tracks of organ music ranging from Bach, Mendelssohn, Howells, Murrill, Rheinberger, Elgar, Buxtehude, Wesley and Peeters to Alain, Couperin, Britten (yes, the St. Matthew's Commission is there, played on the organ of St. Giles, Edinburgh by Herrick Bunney), Brahms, Liszt, Bull, Langlais, Franck, Saint-Saëns, Messiaen, Vierne, Ridout, Parry, Stanley, Reubke and Reger. But no Widor!

This is a remarkable collection of the very best of organs and organists of the nineteen-sixties. We can hear not only what the organs sounded like at the time, some of which have now been replaced (for example Worcester and Llandaff), but this collection is also a living history of performing practice fifty years ago. No doubt there are, like me, many members who managed to purchase a few of these LPs at the time (mine disappeared in one of my many moves around the country). Digitally remastered and free of the crackles on vinyl (I've never been convinced that vinyl is superior to digital CDs) this is a superb collection of organ music worth every penny.

It was originally intended to record the organ of Peterborough Cathedral as part of the series but for reasons not explained EMI decided not to include our mother cathedral in the series.

NDOA NEWS

CAREER CHANGE FOR PRESIDENT

Lee Dunleavy, NDOA President, will be leaving his post as Director of Music at All Saints Church, Northampton at Easter to pursue an independent career. Lee will continue as President of the NDOA and we wish him well with his career change. An advertisement is already in the *Church Times* for a replacement for Lee who in his eight years at All Saints has raised the profile of the music in Northampton's civic church and with the Bach Choir with some 60 commissioned works. All Saints Choirs with Lee Dunleavy as its Director of Music have performed at many important venues (including St. George's Chapel, Windsor) and have toured abroad in: Germany, the United States, Poland, France, Denmark and Austria.

For those who wish to celebrate Lee's time at All Saints and his contribution to the Church Music of Northampton his final services will be on Easter Sunday, 20th April, 2014:

10:30am : AN OPERA MASS

Puccini *Messa di Gloria*

Mascagni *O rejoice that the Lord has arisen* from *Cavalleria Rusticana*

Giorza *Regina Coeli*

3:00pm : EASTER HYMN FESTIVAL with the première of a new anthem by Francis Jackson

His final organ recital at All Saints will be on Thursday 1st of May at 1:10pm and includes the first performance of a new work for two organs by Francis Jackson. Admission free with retiring collection

PETERBOROUGH ORGAN TO BE RE-PITCHED

Peterborough Cathedral is launching a fundraising campaign to re-pitch the whole of the Cathedral's Hill organ to A440. The present organ is pitched half a semitone sharp so each of the 5,000 pipes will have to be lengthened. The estimated cost is in the region of £350,000 The work will be carried out by Harrison and Harrison of Durham and is expected to take about two years to complete. The organ was built before 1939 when a standard concert pitch was agreed. For more than 70 years directors of music at Peterborough have been making requests to the Cathedral's Fabric Advisory Committee for permission to

re-pitch the organ, which has now been granted to coincide with the Cathedral's approaching 900th anniversary in 2018.

OLNEY DoM VACANCY

The Anglican church of SS Peter and Paul, Olney are looking for a new director of music to replace John Witchell who is retiring in the Summer. Remuneration and fees will be at RSCM rates and deputies are available. This post is subject to an Enhanced DBS check with salary according to RSCM guidelines. Further details about this post and the parish can be obtained from the Rector, Rev'd Claire Wood Tel: 01234 713308 or email: revclairewood@gmail.com

Closing date Monday 12th May 2014. Full details, including duties, are available on the NDOA Website.

NEW MEMBER

Welcome to our new student member Shanna Hart who, in September 2014, will become Organ Scholar of Selwyn College, Cambridge. Shanna studies the organ with Simon Williams and, during school holidays, plays for services at St Mary's, Finedon.

DAVID MORGAN EDUCATION FUND

This fund is administered by the NDOA and supports young organists with grants towards the cost of organ lessons, courses, music etc. Grants from the David Morgan Education Fund will be offered annually; the amounts offered will be dependent on the level of funds available and the number of applications.

The deadline for grant applications is 30th June each year; applications should be by letter or email to the NDOA Hon. Secretary, outlining the purpose for which the grant is requested. Applicants are normally Student Members of the NDOA.

The decision to award the grant, and the level of the grant, will be taken by the NDOA Committee. An acknowledgement of the application will be made shortly after receipt and the committee aims to make their decision and award the grant by early September each year.



What's On



Monday 31st March	7:00 p.m.	 A Feast for Bach's Birthday. The first annual dinner for NDOA members, and a chance to celebrate the 339th of J. S. Bach, With Bratwurst and Potatoes (and not a little sauerkraut), and Black Forest Gateau. The guest speaker is Adrian Lucas, former Director of Music at Worcester Cathedral, amateur pilot and <i>bon viveur</i> . The Roade House, Roade, NN7 2NW. Please contact the Secretary, Helen Murphy, to let her know if you will be attending.
Saturday 12th April	7:30 p.m.	Rutter Requiem and Fauré Requiem. Wellingborough Orpheus Choir, Orpheus Players, Organ: Mark Pescott, Cond. Andrew Moodie. St. Barnabas Church, Wellingborough, NN8 3HB. Tickets: Irvine's House of Flavour or Choir Secretary : (01933) 665191. Concert in memory of Ellen Mary Gurr. Retiring collection in aid of Crazy Hats Breast Cancer Appeal.
Saturday 26th April	11:30 a.m.	Organ Recital. Simon Bland (Assistant Director of Music, St. John's School, Leatherhead). St. Mary the Virgin, Wellingborough, NN8 1HJ.
Thursday 1st May	1:10 p.m.	Lunchtime Organ Recital. Lee Dunleavy (Departing Organist, All Saints, Northampton). All Saints Church, Northampton, NN1 1DF
Saturday 3rd May	2:00 p.m.	 Here Comes the Bride. A practical guide to organ music suitable for Weddings. How you can help the happy couple pick appropriate music, how the ceremony can be stress-free for the organist and the help provided by new editions of classic pieces. St. Gregory's Church, Northampton, NN3 2HS.
Saturday 17th May	7:30 p.m.	Concert: Northampton Philharmonic Choir. Stanford, Elgar, Schubert, Vaughan Williams. St. Michael's Church, Northampton, NN1 4HL
Tuesday 20th May	7:30 p.m.	Inside the Psalms. St Gregory the Great, Park Avenue North, Northampton NN3 2HS. Workshop led by Andrew Reid, exploring the Church's heritage of psalms in text and music. Cost £6. Further details: www.rscmpeterboroughandnorthampton.co.uk
Saturday 31st May	7:00 p.m.	Piano Recital. Pamela Rawlinson on the 1899 Broadwood Grand. St. Mary the Virgin, Wellingborough, NN8 1HJ.
Sunday May 4th	7:30 p.m.	Organ Recital. David Humphreys (Assistant Organist, Peterborough Cathedral). St. Matthew's Church, Northampton, NN1 9RY.
Saturday 10th May	10:00 a.m.	Organ Recital. Philip Bricher at Kingsley Park Methodist Church, Northampton, NN2 7JF. Part of the Church's Spring Fair.
Sunday 1st June	7:30 p.m.	Organ Recital. Hilary Punnet (Assistant Organist, All Saints Church, Northampton). St. Matthew's Church, Northampton, NN1 9RY.
Monday 28th July to Saturday 2nd August	Advance Notice	IAO Annual Congress Durham 2014. Includes recitals at Durham Cathedral, St. Mary's R.C. Cathedral, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Hexham Abbey, Elvet Methodist Church and visit to Bowes Museum. Accommodation at St. Chad's College and Radisson Blu Hotel. For bookings contact: Rob Miller, IAO Administrator, 2 Ash Road, Sandwich, Kent. CT13 9JA or Tel: 01304 619095.

NDOA DESERT ISLAND DISCS: 18th JANUARY 2014

by Helen Murphy



A convivial January afternoon was spent by NDOA members at the President's home listening to a selection of CDs.

In anticipation of the possibility of encountering an iceberg (or a WWII unexploded bomb, Long John Silver or abduction by aliens) while on his Pacific cruise, NDOA President Lee Dunleavy was well prepared for impending maroonment on a desert island, having rationalised his choice of discs on a chronological basis to illustrate the various stages in his life. In addition to an endless supply of violet creams - bliss! (his permitted luxury) and the volume of Leonard Bernstein's letters (his current reading) he launched into his choices by playing us a DVD of a staggeringly virtuosic performance by Richard Hills on the four-manual Assembly Hall Theatre Organ Worthing of 'Tiger Rag'; Richard's hand were but a blur as they flashed

between the manuals, miraculously producing a sound that was anything but a blur - crystal clarity. For Lee, it brought back childhood memories of seaside holidays at Scarborough and of cinema-organ-playing grandparents. For me, 'Tiger Rag' also evoked childhood memories - of coming across a pile of ancient 78s up in the attic rooms, left behind by my jazz-loving uncle (still alive at 97!), of which 'Tiger Rag' was just one of many featuring the great Nat Gonella. My brother and I had just been given a record player - but I digress...

To illustrate Lee's first experience of a pipe organ 'in the flesh', we heard Piet Kee at Alkmaar playing JSB's 'Christ lag in Todesbanden' (from the *Orgelbüchlein*). His first encounter with his much-loved Sibelius (and indeed with Cavallé-Coll) was illustrated by *Finlandia* which we heard played by Thomas Wilkinson at Paisley Abbey. As an undergraduate at Oxford (where he met his future wife) he experienced much contemporary music-making, represented here by Thomas Adès's 'Under Hamelin Hill' (played by David Goode with Adès himself and Stephen Farr on an unidentified box organ), speculating on the fate of the abducted children led away by the Pied Piper into the hillside - were they enjoying themselves, were they missing their families? Who knows?

James Lancelot playing Parry's 'Chorale Prelude on Old 104th' on the organ at Durham Cathedral brought back memories of his first job in London and of James as his FRCO examiner. As for his time at York, one was never, as he put it, not aware of the legacy of Bairstow and more recently of Francis Jackson, so on the next disc we heard Jackson playing Bach's 'St Anne's Fugue' on the York Minster organ. Moving on to Northampton, and the All Saints' choir trip to New York, he played us the late Gerre Hancock improvising on 'Praise God from whom all blessings flow' on the instrument at St Thomas's church, Fifth Avenue. Sadly, owing to time constraints, Lee had to forego his eighth and final choice (which would have been Daniel Roth playing Widor's Allegro from the 6th Symphony at Saint-Sulpice in Paris) evoking memories of working with him.

* * * * *

The 18 potential fellow castaways gathered with him clutching their last (musical) requests had to be satisfied, as darkness began to fall, with hearing but a few and not all organs! This is what we heard (in no particular order):

Mark Gibson brought the final chorus, 'In tears of grief' from J S Bach's *St Matthew's Passion*, which he had sung as a treble in All Saints' choir in the early fifties - a significant influence on his life - and he is still singing, he assured us! The version he chose was the 1947 recording of the Bach Choir conducted by Reginald Jacques with the Jacques Orchestra and soloists Elsie Suddaby (soprano), Kathleen Ferrier (contralto), Eric Greene (tenor) and Henry Cummings (bass).

Robert Tucker brought the Concert Overture No 2 in C Minor by Alfred Hollins, played by Tim Byram-Wigfield on the organ at the Laird Hall, Dundee.

As a change from the organ, I brought a recording by the late Lorraine Hunt Lieberson of Bach's solo cantata BWVB 82 *Ich Habe Genug*, written for the Feast of the Purification (2nd February) when the old man Simeon recognises the Christ Child and says that he can now 'depart in peace'. The opening section of the third movement, *Schlummert Ein*, is the most sublime lullaby, whether for the Infant Jesus or for Simeon at the end of his life. I recalled how I first heard it on the car radio while driving somewhere in the Cotswolds (down a single-track road if I remember rightly), managed to trace and purchase the CD, only to learn shortly afterwards of the singer's early death.

Alan Cufaude faithfully followed the original format and brought with him an LP of 'Hymne d'Action de Grâce (Te Deum)' from the *Three Gregorian Paraphrases* by Jean Langlais (1907 - 1991) composed in 1933/4, produced as part of the EMI Great Cathedral Organ Series, with David Lepine playing on the Coventry Cathedral Harrison and Harrison instrument in 1966 . Luckily, he had also brought the CD re-release from 2011 (as part of a box set of 13 CDs). Phew!

Liturgically aware Michael Woodward (knowing that January 18th is well within the Christmas season) brought Leroy Anderson's *Sleigh Ride* in a very jaunty, jolly arrangement for brass band, guaranteed to cheer anyone up.

April by John Ireland (from the 3rd Volume of his Collected Works) was Pamela Rawlinson's choice, written in 1925 and published together with *Bergamasque*. At her recital during the Britten centenary celebrations at All Saints' church, at Lee's request, Pamela had played some Ireland (he had been Britten's teacher) and so enjoyed it that she resolved to discover more of his work and was delighted to have found this recording by Mark Bebbington, a young British pianist considered a champion of 20th-Century British music. Ireland himself had made a number of recordings on 78rpm vinyl, some of which are now being transferred to CD by the wonders of modern technology.

Philip Bricher's choice of *The Church's One Foundation* was for the tune, the lovely but little-known *Somerstown* by A. T. Batts (1900 - 78), found in the NEH at 484 - the only hymnal, as Philip observed, where the set tune is NOT *Aurelia*. On this recording it was sung by Keble College Choir, conducted by Gavin Plumley and accompanied by Mark Laflin on the electronic predecessor to the present Tickell instrument.

* * * * *

Finally, here is a selection of what we *might* have heard, had we more time (again, in no particular order):

Sally Desbois had chosen an old favourite, the well-known and much-loved 'elegy' by George Thalben-Ball, which takes her back to her early childhood and the church where she heard it regularly, bringing back fond memories of Church Parade Sundays, full of uniformed children. Although she has several recordings, the one she chose for her desert island experience is of Huw Williams on the organ at St Paul's cathedral in 2006.

Richard Halton wanted Vaughan Williams's *The Lark Ascending* as his evocative castaway comfort, while Rodrigo's *Concierto de Aranjuez* was chosen by Alison.

Barry Wadeson's choice was the hymn *O love that will not let me go* (words by the Scottish minister George Matheson) to the tune *St Margaret* (by Albert Peace), which he first encountered while singing as a teenager in a village church choir in North Bucks. Years later, he still loves it - to the extent of naming it for his funeral. I first came across it when singing in the choir at the memorial service for the

Earl Spencer (the grandfather of Diana, Princess of Wales) - it was his favourite too, apparently - in Great Brington church. A violent thunderstorm worthy of a Hammer Horror film at its most dramatic caused an electrical failure - the lights went out and the organ ground to a halt. As a well-trained choir, we simply carried on singing. Fortunately there was a still-working handle for the bellows and, with the tenors and basses working in relay, normal service was resumed as soon as possible.

Jonathan Harris chose the choir of Peterborough Cathedral under the direction of Andrew Reid on the CD *The Complete Psalms of David Vol 4* singing, among others, Psalm 64 with a chant composed by Ron Gates (an honorary NDOA member).

And so, as the sun sank gently in the west over Lee's garden (NB no wind, no rain!), we thanked him for his hospitality and entertainment, and made our various ways home to a quiet and thoughtful evening.

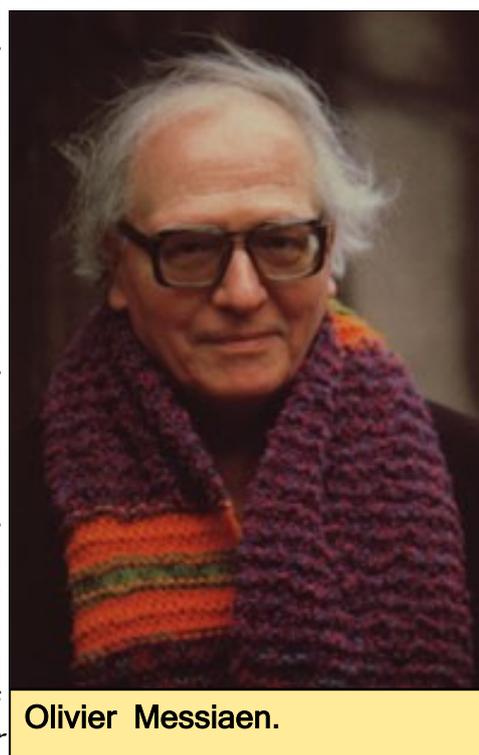
FORTHCOMING EVENT

Saturday 28th June 3.00p.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.

Don Kennedy's illustrated talk at St Matthew's Parish Rooms, Northampton, on June 28th will provide members with the very rare opportunity to view film of Olivier Messiaen playing at his church in Paris in 1988 and 1991. In 1998 one of Don's literary projects at EMI Classics was to take care of the CD booklet for a recording by Naji Hakim, Messiaen's successor at the Eglise de la Sainte-Trinité. The need to include the organ specification in the booklet brought him into contact with the facteur d'orgues in charge of the technical aspect of the Cavaillé-Coll Grand-Orgue - who, remarkably, had been granted special permission to film Messiaen in the organ gallery during services (largely his improvisations). We'll view some of these remarkable scenes. Also, with the help of recorded examples, Don will deal with his work on the Naji Hakim booklet and on the reissue of Messiaen's own 1956 recording of *La Nativité du Seigneur* (with booklet notes by Felix Aprahamian, who arranged the first UK performance of the work in 1938). Other related matters will include how, through these unusual circumstances, Don also came to sing Messiaen's *O Sacrum Convivium* and Leighton's *Let All The World* at La Trinité itself!



Olivier Messiaen.

St Matthew's Parish Centre,
27A The Drive,
Northampton.
NN1 4RY.

English Church Musicians IV

Thomas Weelkes (1576-1623)

by Barry Wadeson

In Chichester Cathedral there is a simple, dignified memorial tablet (probably Victorian) commemorating Thomas Weelkes who was organist at Chichester Cathedral from 1602 to 1623. “Remember in the Lord Thomas Weelkes the great Elizabethan composer. Organist of Winchester College 1598 and of this cathedral church from 1602 until his death” it declaims. An addendum in red lettering tells us that Weelkes died on 30th November 1623 and is buried at St. Bride’s Church, Fleet Street, London.



Chichester Cathedral today.

What it does not tell us is that in Chichester Weelkes is probably more famous for having once urinated from the organ loft onto the Dean during Evensong. We do not know if this was accidental or whether Weelkes was expressing criticism of the Dean. Throughout most of his time at Chichester Weelkes was in almost

perpetual trouble with the cathedral authorities not only for being regularly drunk in charge of the organ but for cursing and swearing from the organ loft during services.

It all began quite differently. Weelkes (believed to be the son of clergyman John Weeke, the Rector of Elsted) was a talented madrigalist, organist and composer of church music. His exact date of birth is unknown but he was baptised in 1576 on October 25th. In 1597. At the age of only 21, he published his first volume of madrigals. Towards the end of 1598 he was appointed organist of Winchester College and in that year republished his first volume of madrigals and published a further volume. This second volume contains some of his finest compositions which are regarded as important examples of the English madrigal. Weelkes is reported to have said that he had no gifts other than his musical ones and it seems that he felt unsettled at Winchester (Brown, 2012). No doubt he thought a cathedral post more congenial.

In October 1602 Weelkes took up his appointment as organist and *informator choristarum* at Chichester Cathedral. Chichester had one of the smallest and most poorly paid choirs in the country, however, Weelkes was also appointed to one of the lay-clerkships of Bishop Sherborne’s foundation which no doubt made up for his poor remuneration as organist. Out of his £15, 2s and 4d annual income (including gratuities) Weelkes was expected to provide for the board, clothing and feeding of his small band of boy choristers, and to educate them too. Also in 1602 he was awarded a BMus degree from Oxford and the following year he married Elizabeth Sandham the daughter of a wealthy Chichester merchant. Elizabeth bore him three children and to all intents and purposes it seemed that Weelkes was destined to become a pillar of the Chichester establishment. He also described himself as a Gentleman of the Chapel Royal but, as his name does not appear in the Chapel records, it seems most likely that he was a Gentleman Extraordinary (a deputy).

Chichester Cathedral, however, was not a happy place. Like many cathedrals it had been left to run down following the *Act of Settlement* in 1559 (Le Hurey, 1967).

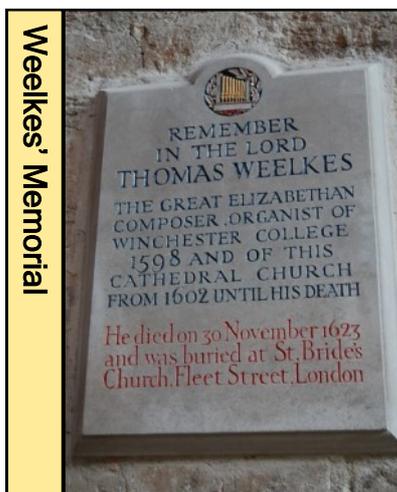
Much about Chichester was shoddy, and the place had a habit of doing funny things to people. A visitation by Bishop Samuel Harnsnett in 1616 found that the sub dean had provoked 'public scandal' for 'his levity & impure preaching'. Alehouses were plying their trade within the walls of the cathedral close; 'boys and hogs ... [did] beastly defile the walls & yard' and the choir and choristers were 'deficient' and did 'audaciously condemn' the performance of their duties (Saunders, 2002).

With one of the most ill-paid choirs in England the choir men were reduced to taking what other jobs they could find to supplement their meagre stipends. The vicars choral were at war with each other and made regular accusations of impropriety (many of them true) against their colleagues. So ferocious were the battles over position, lodgings, income, reputation and status that the men of the choir could barely stand the sight of each other. Cabals were formed and plots and counter plots were hatched to deprive one another of their income or houses. Lawsuit followed lawsuit as scores were settled. Some of these men were ordained priests yet it did not stop them insulting each other whenever the opportunity arose. On one occasion, William Lawes the succentor and senior vicar choral was spat at during divine service and called: 'villain, rogue, rascal, arrant knave, roguish knave and cozening knave'. In 1619 the same William Lawes pleaded with the bishop to be relieved of his position 'it being held in such small regard & so much trouble'. As Saunders puts it:

While the cathedral community was undoubtedly small, it could not be described as close-knit - unless you are the sort to refer to Montagues and Capulets as 'close-knit'.

But so desperate was the Cathedral to keep its choir that the men were hardly ever dismissed. One old man, whose voice was no more than a feeble wobble, was allowed to remain in the choir. Whatever the reason we will never know, perhaps it was the strain of keeping such a fractious ship afloat, but in 1609 Weelkes was charged with being absent throughout the whole of the bishop's visitation and in 1613 he was charged with being drunk in public. By 1616 he was perpetually inebriated and was causing a scandal in Chichester. He was reported to the Bishop as being 'noted and famed for a comon drunckard and notorious swearer & blasphemmer'. In 1617 he was dismissed as organist and *informator choristarum* by the Bishop but allowed to keep his Sherborne clerkship. His dismissal had little effect on his behaviour and perhaps out of a sense of desperation the Cathedral authorities eventually allowed him back into the organ loft (it being difficult to get church musicians for next-to-nothing wages). Despite all the efforts by the authorities to reform their wayward organist his decline continued:

Even the musically unskilled surmised that the inebriated thrashings emanating from the organ at Evensong must bear little relation to the notes written into Weelkes' part-book. By 1619, the combined efforts of bishop, dean and chapter to reform Weelkes had been of no avail: 'he daily continue the same, & is rather worse than better therein'. It was a serious disruption to divine service, 'for [Weelkes] often came so disguised from the tavern or alehouse into the choir as is much to be lamented, for in those humors he doth both curse and swear most dreadfully, and so profane the service of God (& especially on the Sabbath days) as is most fearful to hear, & to the great amazement of all the people present' (Saunders, 2002).



By 1622 Weelkes' attendance was becoming more and more erratic as he spent much of his time in London. In September of that year his wife died and on the 30th November 1623 Weelkes died at the house of his friend Henry Drinkwater in London. He left 50s to his friend for meat, drink and lodging, and was buried in the churchyard of St. Bride's the next day.

Weelkes was one of England's foremost madrigalists leaving 3 volumes of some of the finest examples of madrigals in both his own and other collections; it is clear he owed much to his friend and fellow composer Thomas Morley in this respect. Very little, however, of Weelkes' church music remains intact. It was certainly not published in his lifetime. Consisting of ten service settings, only settings 1 and 2 include a communion service (unusual in that, post-Reformation, they contain a Kyrie) the rest are Morning and Evening Prayer settings (Long, 1972). There are also a few

anthems that have survived, for instance: *When David Heard that Absalom was Slain*, *Gloria in excelsis Deo*, *Hosanna to the son of David* and *Alleluia, I heard a voice*. Weelkes' *Hosanna to the son of David* is regularly sung by Anglican choirs today, it is a splendid six-part anthem started off by the first basses but since it ends in the Latin phrase 'Hosanna in Excelsis Deo' it is likely that this and other anthems was destined for private performance rather than Chichester Cathedral.

Postscript.

Weelkes was succeeded as organist at Chichester by John Lilliat who had been a vicar choral in the choir. Lilliat (an ordained priest) turned out to be a notorious drunkard, great fornicator and habitual frequenter of houses of ill-fame (something the Cathedral authorities could not have been unaware of since he had arrived at Chichester some thirty years earlier). He was, evidently, still a vigorous fornicator well into his seventies. Lilliat was to cause the cathedral even more scandal by giving shelter to one Joanna Lang, a pregnant adulteress. Furthermore, his wife Mary, whom he had acquired in London, was a woman of lurid reputation and noted for her 'most lewd life and conversation'. It seems that John and Mary were equally matched; 'how many clerks in holy orders', asks Saunders, 'write poems that begin: "Ten tough turds did I toss in thy teeth from my tush-hole" or draw large male members in their day books?'

Brown, D. (2012) Thomas Weelkes, *Grove Dictionary of Music Online*. Oxford: Oxford University Press

Le Hurey, P. (1967) *Music and the Reformation in England 1549 - 1660*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Long, K. R. (1972) *The Music of the English Church*. London: Hodder and Stoughton

Phillips, C. H. (1945) *The Singing Church*. (Revised: Hutchings, A., 1968). London: Faber

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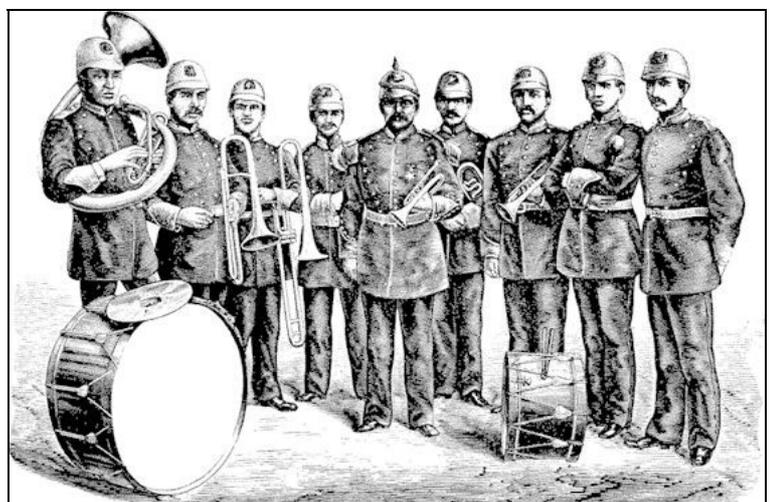
OBSOLETE MUSICAL TERMS

Con belto was a style of singing much favoured by large parish church choirs and choral societies in Victorian times but is universally deplored today by directors of music. The style first emerged in the late nineteenth century at Handel Festivals when 3,000 or so performers at a time would sing the Hallelujah Chorus *ffffff*, however, some scholars suggest that Beethoven originally included the instruction *allegro con belto* for the last movement of his ninth symphony.

The origin of the term is said to come from the frequently self-satisfied murmuring of 'That were a right belter' from the men's section of a choir after a particularly loud piece of music.

Most church music is marked *non con belto* although many singers, especially basses, ignore this instruction when confronted with a particularly good tune.

Con belto should not be confused with a good belting which is what you are likely to get if you ask a drunk singing in the street to shut up.



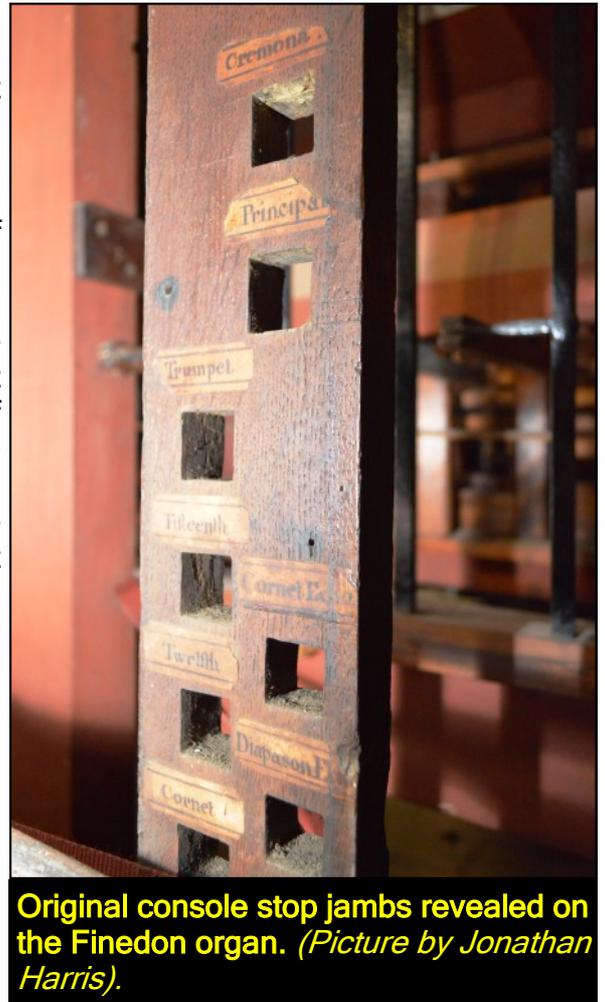
The new worship band was not exactly what the Vicar had in mind.

WORK BEGINS ON KINGSTHORPE ORGAN AFTER EASTER

Cleaning and restoration work will commence on the organ of St. John the Baptist at Kingsthorpe after Easter. In addition the stop action will be electrified to allow for manual and toe pistons to be added. The organ at St. John's was originally built by Bevington in 1874 and in c1984 was rebuilt within the original Bevington case by Kenneth Tickell & Company. The cleaning and electrification work will be carried out by Alan Goulding of Pipe Organ Services, Melton Mowbray.

FINEDON RESTORATION UNDER WAY

Restoration of the historic organ at St. Mary the Virgin, Finedon is now well under way. The Queen Anne organ, built around 1705 by Father Smith for St George's Chapel, Windsor and moved to Finedon in 1717 is being restored. The work is being carried out by Holmes and Swift of Fakenham, Norfolk. As NDOA members will know, in the 19th century, George Maydwell Holdich carried out restoration work on the organ and moved the console from the front of the organ to the side. With all the panels of the organ removed the stop jambs of the original console have been revealed with their paper labels still intact (see picture right). Jonathan Harris, Director of Music at St. Mary's, has placed videos on You Tube, so if you want to follow the progress of the work just go to You Tube and type in Finedon Organ, and up will pop the four videos of the work to date. Jenny Duffy, who featured in a previous Newsletter can be seen cleaning and restoring the case pipes in video 4. Jonathan's video blog is an opportunity to see something that most of us rarely see, the fine detail of the case pipes in all their glory, including the coat of arms of Queen Anne on the middle front pipe (see back page).



Original console stop jambs revealed on the Finedon organ. (Picture by Jonathan Harris).

TICKELL'S NEW ORGAN FOR CAMBRIDGE

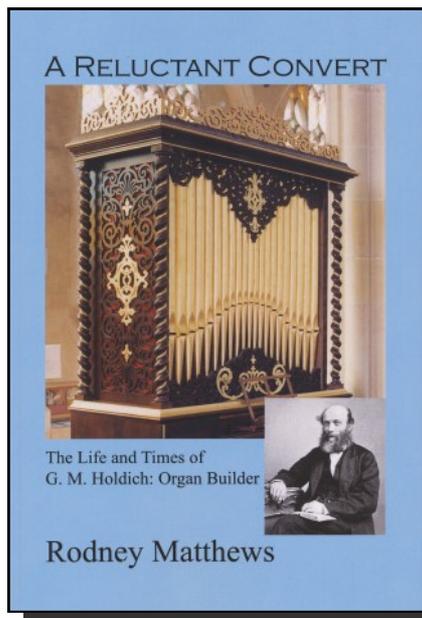
Kenneth Tickell and Company has begun work on a new organ for Downing College Chapel, Cambridge. The case is traditional and the organ will be situated on a gallery about the choir stalls. The design of the 2 manual and pedalboard organ incorporates 17 speaking stops with the usual couplers and tremulants on both Great and Swell. The action is tracker with slider soundboards and electric stop and combination action

The Tickell instrument replaces a 1966 J. W. Walker organ built in the functionalist style with pipework on display. It was rebuilt in 1981 by Grant, Degens and Bradbeer of Northampton retaining the original hybrid Walker tracker manual action with electric action on the pedalboard.

A RELUCTANT CONVERT

The Life and Times of G. M. Holdich: Organ Builder

Book Review



George Maydwell Holdich (1816-1896) is one of our own. A man born into a Northamptonshire landowning family with clerical connections (which was to come in useful to a London based organ builder). He was brought up, as many NDOA members know at Maidwell Rectory but rather than following in the family tradition of entering one of the clerical, medical, legal or military professions became fascinated instead by the organ and set up business as an organ builder. Several of his relatives, as well as entering the typical upper middle-class professions, demonstrated an aptitude for working with their hands: fretwork, wood-work, wood-carving etc. and his sister Jane made models of churches that were described as 'done very neatly'.

Educated at Uppingham School, Holdich appears not to have followed the rest of his family to university. There is a gap between leaving Uppingham in 1832 and his first appearance in the trade directories as an organ builder in 1837. No record exists of his apprenticeship although it is generally believed to have been with J. C. Bishop of London.

The rather obscure title of the book appears to come from Holdich's preference for building organs in the pre-Victorian English style, eschewing the continental influences which were beginning to change the way that English organ builders approached the building and re-building of organs. Like Bishop, Holdich showed a preference for a mellow sound as opposed to the bright continental choruses that were to become the fashion. Over a fifty year period Holdich built some 500 organs. Sadly, almost all of his larger organs were replaced as fashions changed, but many of those he built for country churches have survived and are highly regarded as examples of an earlier English tradition. With their octave and a half pedal boards and only an octave of bourdons, Holdich's organs were ill-suited to the organ music of J. S. Bach which Mendelssohn promoted in England in the 1840s. Nevertheless, Holdich embraced innovations such as independent pedal divisions on his larger organs. He also claimed to have invented the Diaocton, an octave coupler that brought into play an extra octave of pipes although this was widely disputed at the time as other organ builders had also developed similar stops on their organs. He was accused, rather unfairly, of copying this device from others and it does appear that Holdich came up with the idea independently of other organ builders.

There is some background history of the Holdich family as well as maps showing the clusters of Holdich organs. Out of the 500 or so organs that Holdich built many were in London but fifteen organs went to Leicestershire and thirty-eight to Northamptonshire. The rest were more sparsely spread out and in the South West far less frequent. By and large, Holdich seems to have been most busy in London and the South East, the East and West Midlands and East Anglia although seventeen organs went to Yorkshire.

This book is based on the Reading University PhD thesis of Rodney Matthews who has rendered a great service to all who play, or are interested in, Holdich organs. Most of the material in the book is from Matthews' original research, but there is also new information that has since come to light. The NPOR depends upon voluntary reporting and enthusiastic organ watchers, and it is not always accurate. Holdich's own records were lost or destroyed some years ago when an old filing cabinet was thrown out by its owners. As well as maps showing locations of Holdich organs, there are also charts revealing how his organ specifications developed over time and photographs of several Holdich organs.

At £20.00 plus £3.50 postage and packing this is a rather pricey book (177 pages). It is available at present only from the publisher: At the Sign of the Pipe, The Grain Store Workshop, Coney Lodge, Park Farm Road, Birling, West Malling, ME19 5JZ. <http://www.signofthepipe.com/index.html> Should you wish, however, to know everything there is to know about G. M. Holdich this is the book for you. (BW).



Front pipes of the organ of St. Mary the Virgin, Finedon are being restored by Jenny Duffy. The decoration is being revealed with meticulous, cleaning bringing to life the brightly painted pipes of the Queen Anne organ which had become dull due to candle and incense smoke. About a third of the way down (centre) can be seen Queen Anne's coat of arms. *(Picture by Jonathan Harris).*