

FROM THE PRESIDENT: WHAT HAST THOU IN THE HOUSE? During this period of 'lockdown' people around the world have been driven to reviewing the resources of their own home for things to do – interests to take up or resume, books to read, tasks to be done (some that have been put off for years.) It is like the story in the Old Testament when Elisha asked a poor widow woman what she had in her house. She said she had only a pot of oil; but the oil increased and by selling it she was able to pay her debt. (See 2 Kings 4 vv.1 - 7.)

The moral – to make the best of our circumstances and use what we have – is clear, and for organists at this time it can mean sorting out old music, rediscovering pieces long forgotten (if there is a keyboard in the house) and perhaps even writing music. I found myself thinking of the *Lost Chord*, and have written a version - *The Lost Cypher* (sent with the email edition of this *Newsletter Extra*, together with a copy of the original poem). I realise the original will mean a lot to some bereaved families at this time, as it did to Arthur Sullivan, who composed the music. This 'spoof' is not meant in disrespect but to add a touch of humour to these otherwise rather dour times.

For those who suffer from 'fugue withdrawal' there are several remedies. One is to try out the keyboard Toccatas of J S Bach – there are 7 of them, and they all contain at least one fugue and sometimes two or three, along with rhapsodic flourishes reminiscent – or prescient – of the famous D minor Toccata and Fugue. There are other keyboard fugues, including those by Schumann and Mendelssohn, and I found an *Introduction and Fugato* by Cuthbert Harris that I might even try on the organ at the next Members' Recital.

For those who are members of the Incorporated Association of Organists (which I recommend) there is the quarterly *Organists' Review*, the June issue of which has just arrived. Sarah Beedle, the Editor, points out that 'some good will have come out of this crisis', including us all learning new skills and using our home-based resources. Using Zoom, I managed to host an NDOA committee meeting recently, and you will be glad to know we are all safe and well and raring to go once the rules are relaxed. The visit to Southwell Minster has had to be cancelled (or deferred) but other events are still scheduled for now and I hope to see some of you there. **John Wilson**

THE LOST CHORD. The poem *A Lost Chord* was written by Adelaide Proctor in the late 1850s before being set to music by Sir Arthur Sullivan in 1877 at the time of the death of his beloved brother, Fred. You can listen to the original [here](#) performed by the tenor Webster Booth in a recording from 1939. There is a fascinating analysis of the poem [here](#) which suggests that its origins may be much more complex than supposed.



ORGANS IN CHURCHES. The question of access to organs in churches during Covid-19 precautions is a challenging one. Different denominations may have varying interpretations, but the [Church of England position](#) issued on 27 May (and dated 22 May) is as follows:

“Can I access the church for organ practice?” At present regular access for organ practice is not advised. This advice will be reviewed when there is a prospect of services happening in the church when music will be required. At present access, even for services, is limited to a member of the clergy or worship leader.

Can I perform weekly maintenance of the organ when the church is closed? Yes. For a cathedral or church with a larger or mechanically complex organ prolonged lack of use will result in long-term problems with its performance. If an organist is available in the neighbourhood to keep all the action parts moving it is appropriate for them to do so. This is to run through all the stops on all keyboards, and the pedalboard to keep leatherwork from sticking and keep electrical contacts clean.

Can the organ humidifier and blower be serviced? Yes. If your organ has a humidifier it will have a maintenance requirement that will differ according to its type. Some are safe with annual maintenance, and others require more frequent attention. The blower will also have a maintenance requirement that will differ according to its type. For most installations it will be an annual service. Now is a good time to contact the contractor who maintains your blower to confirm when the service is due. If you do not have a maintenance contract please contact your organ builder for advice. “

Further guidance offered by Harrison & Harrison is [here](#), and by the Institute of British Organ Builders [here](#).

ORGAN AND CHORAL MUSIC. Looking for new ideas? Try these:

- Preludes and postludes for every Sunday. There is an excellent Facebook resource offering public domain suggestions of Preludes and Postludes for every Sunday of the liturgical year, based (when possible) on the readings and scriptures of the day. Click on this link for information [Sunday](#).
- Gert van Hoef. A number of colleagues are now watching the young Dutch concert organist Gert van Hoef as he performs live recitals every Thursday evening, either from his own home Hauptwerk organ, or from churches in the Netherlands which are now permitted livestreaming, albeit without an audience. Try his YouTube channel [here](#). As well as the usual repertoire, Gert performs many of his own improvisations, often on hymns and psalms in the Lutheran tradition. The Editor particularly enjoyed this one, on the hymn tune known here as [Spanish Chant](#), played on the Bätz organ of the Oude Kerk at Zeist.
- Minne Veldman. Another Dutch concert organist now able to broadcast live recitals on YouTube is Minne Veldman. He has scheduled concerts on Whit Monday 1 June from Bethel Church, Urk, Friday 5 June from Bovenkerk, Kampen and Saturday 6 June from the Grote Kerk at Dordrecht - all at 7pm UK time. Details and links are Minne's [website](#). The website is in Dutch but concert details can easily be found.
- Scott Brothers Duo. Back in England, Jonathan Scott has been able to give several live recitals on YouTube from his home, as well as from Albion Church, Ashton-Under-Lyme, which houses a lovely four-manual T.C. Lewis instrument. Details and links from their [website](#).
- Richard McVeigh is livestreaming concerts every Saturday at present, with a 'virtual church' of hymn tune requests on most Sundays. He has also now been able to play a recital at Arundel Cathedral, available on YouTube [here](#). A further Arundel session (due at 7pm on 30 May) and much more are at [Beauty in Sound](#).
- Christopher Cromar, DoM at St Andrew's Cathedral, Aberdeen, will play livestream recitals from the Cathedral at 11.30 on Sat 6 June and Sat 13 June on the Cathedral's [Facebook page](#).



WORSHIP ON THE WEB. Are you playing and recording material for your church's online resources at the moment? There are a number of other sources which you may like to try:

- St Martin-in-the-Fields choral scholars are recording hymns which you can use in your online services. Details are available [here](#).
- St Paul's vocal flashmob choir continues to invite us all to join their virtual choir and has a number of hymns now available for download. It even progressed to a virtual evensong for Ascension Day with a splendid rendition of *Hail the Day that sees Him Rise*. Details are [here](#).
- Peterborough Cathedral is now online with weekly services at its [website](#).
- The Fellowship of Independent Churches has published a series of links to those of its member churches who are now online, which you can find [here](#).
- RSCM continues to publish a number of most helpful resources, including a [guide](#) to recording your choir by contributors including Andrew and Nicholas Moodie., and a [webinar](#) on *What next for the ministry of music?*
- And if you're missing live choral worship, [St. James, Sydney](#) (a church in the Anglican High Church tradition) is livestreaming weekly services of Eucharist and Choral Evensong with organ and a small (but thoroughly outstanding) choir, suitably socially-distanced - and with the promise of a small congregation from Pentecost.

NDOA RESOURCES. Check out our [website](#) and [Facebook](#) pages for up-to-date information. The next full quarterly [Newsletter](#) edition, issue 3/2020, will be published for members on 1 July. This is again an enlarged edition, running to some 20 pages, and will include some super articles, including:

- An exclusive *NDOA Interview* with Rachel Mahon, DoM-designate at Coventry Cathedral
- *My First Console* - Lee Dunleavy writing on the glorious Schulze organ of St. Peter's, Harrogate
- The second part of Paul Bland's article on the Northampton School for Boys' Conacher
- Robert Tucker, writing on the organ of St Andrew, Kimbolton, and Jonathan Mack on his Positive Organ.



AND FINALLY... From the [Facebook Organists' Association](#) pages: 'Isn't it fantastic that digitised consoles today have so much memory? All we have to do is to equip organists with enough memory to remember what is stored where!'

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