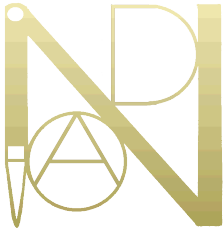


ND NORTHAMPTON & DISTRICT ORGANISTS' ASSOCIATION



NEWSLETTER - ISSUE 1/2021



FROM THE PRESIDENT. Happy New Year! Welcome to the first issue of *Newsletter* for our centenary year of 2021. It's a tremendous privilege to be your centenary President, and I hope you will enjoy the exciting programme in place for the year. We have online events, centenary projects and even (Covid regulations permitting, of course) physical events. You can find details on p.3, together with our preliminary programme on p.20.

Putting on my editorial hat for a moment, thank you to everyone who has contributed to this *Newsletter* - Paul Bland, Laurence Caldecote, Alan Cufaude, Lee Dunleavy, Helen Murphy, and John Wilson. It is particularly pleasing to be able to share Laurence's good news of the exciting forthcoming restoration of the west organ at All Saints' Northampton, and to read his telling of the organ's fascinating history.

I am delighted too to include an article about the American Guild of Organists' Chapter of Springfield MA - which covers our namesake of Northampton, Massachusetts. Like us, the Springfield Chapter is celebrating a milestone anniversary this year - of 75 years in their case. A number of their events take place in St John's Episcopal Church in Northampton, MA. It is a real pleasure to be in touch with them, and we send them sincere congratulations on their achievement.

While we at NDOA have not been able to meet in person in recent months, we have met via Zoom, and Helen and John report on John's virtual organ tours which we enjoyed in the Autumn. We also have reports of a 'real' recital at Fotheringhay, and of superb virtual ones from Thorpe Underwood, SMSG Stony Stratford and Peterborough Cathedral. Don't miss our first Zoom of 2021, on Saturday 16th January at 5pm, when Anne Marsden Thomas and Frederick Stocken talk about their *New Oxford Organ Method*.

Are you planning your playing for 2021? Do check out Lee's review of the year's musical anniversaries. You'll also find an update on the former Northampton School for Boys' Conacher, and a welcome reincarnation of an old friend from *Organists' Review* - Corno Dolce.

Finally, then, as it's New Year, perhaps you might consider some NDOA resolutions?

- Please pay your subscription if you haven't done so already (and thank you so much if you have)
- Please recruit a new member, and ask a young person to apply for an NDOA scholarship
- Please buy and enjoy our centenary CD and our centenary Organ Book when they're issued.

Most importantly, stay safe, keep well, and enjoy your membership to the full. With every good wish for 2021, and my sincere thanks for all your support.

Richard

NEWSLETTER 1/2021—IN THIS ISSUE

From the President - Richard Tapp. p.2
NDOA 100 Years 1921 - 2021. p.3
All Saints' Northampton - Laurence Caldecote. p.4
The New Oxford Organ Method - Zoom meeting 15th January. p.6
Looking Ahead - Looking forward to 2021 - Lee Dunleavy. p.7
Springfield AGO Chapter. p.8
Around the World in 80 Organs - Part II Helen Murphy. p.10
Back in business at Fotheringhay - John Wilson and Helen Murphy. p.12
Around the UK in 40 Organs - John Wilson and Helen Murphy. p.14
The NSB Conacher - an Update - Paul Bland. p.15
Dr Arthur Wills - an Appreciation. p.16
Peterborough Cathedral Advent Organ Meditation and Christmas Organ Spectacular p.17
Ring Out Wild Bells - Corno Dolce II. p.18
Association Notes and News. p.19
Preliminary Programme for 2021. p.20

The NDOA *Newsletter* is published four times a year. Contributions are always welcome and should be submitted to the Editor.

NORTHAMPTON AND DISTRICT ORGANISTS' ASSOCIATION

Registered Charity no. 274679
Affiliated to the Incorporated Association of Organists iao.org.uk

ASSOCIATION CONTACTS

President - Richard Tapp

editor@northamptonorganists.org.uk 01933 664896

Hon. Secretary - Helen Murphy

secretary@northamptonorganists.org.uk. 01933 680955

Hon. Treasurer - Glyn Hughes

treasurer@northamptonorganists.org.uk. 07505 798667

Newsletter Editor - Richard Tapp

editor@northamptonorganists.org.uk 01933 664896

Cover: All Saints' Northampton - the west organ. Photograph by kind permission of Laurence Caldecote, whose fascinating article on the organ, its forthcoming restoration and its history begins on p.4.

NDOA 100 YEARS: 1921 - 2021

NDOA 100: PROGRAMME. Our Preliminary Programme can be found on p.20. With thanks to everyone concerned, we've rescheduled a number of events from 2020, and will our start 2021 meetings on **Saturday 16th January at 5pm** with a Zoom presentation on *The New Oxford Organ Method* by Anne Marsden Thomas and Frederick Stocken. Anne and Frederick are well-known as performers and teachers of the highest order. Zoom login details will be sent to members in January. Do put the dates in your new diaries now!



NDOA 100: PROJECTS We have three centenary projects celebrating the organs our members play, the compositions of our members and friends, and the Association's history.

- **NDOA CD** *Alan Cufaude* reports: Our original plan was to release this CD before Christmas, so that members could wake to find it in their stockings on Christmas morning. Alas like so many other plans Covid restrictions intervened to prevent recording sessions during the second lockdown and currently under tier 2 restrictions. So far I have recordings from Stony Stratford, All Saints' Northampton, Crick and Finedon. Restrictions permitting we hope to supplement that with recordings from inter alia St. Matthew's and St. Gregory's, Northampton, St. Mary's Wellingborough, and Oakham. The level of response to this Project from potential performers and churches has been tremendous and we remain hopeful that the CD will be ready for release in Spring 2021, and that release will be accompanied by a blaze of publicity, and so you will be sure not to miss it!
- **NDOA Organ Book** *Lee Dunleavy* writes: Exciting plans are coming together for a celebratory book of organ music for our centenary year, though Covid has inevitably slowed our progress. A well-known music press has agreed to publish, and promote it, with copies being available at a discount to NDOA members. The book is hoped to be of interest to organists of all abilities both locally and further afield, and to that end we are negotiating with a number of copyright holders to make available for the first time works from the pens of famous sons of Northampton, which may include Arnold, Alwyn, Civil, Hold, Rubbra, Snell, and Walker. Alongside these, there will be a selection of works from lesser-known names, and we hope that this will include a work written as part of a composition competition.
- **NDOA: A Short History** A special, expanded, edition of the *Newsletter* will be published later in the year telling the story of the Association over the past 100 years, its founders, those who have worked so hard for it, and its achievements.

NDOA 100: CENTENARY SCHOLARSHIPS The Association will award a number of centenary scholarships from the David Morgan Education Fund to student members. Scholarships will be awarded following participation in the Young Organists' Day on Saturday 15th May. In addition to a grant of £100 towards the purchase of music or other materials to further their studies, scholars will have recital and concert performing opportunities as part of our calendar of events, an invitation to contribute a column to the *Newsletter* and assistance in finding a suitable church or parish to experience performing and playing at services. There will also be a related composition competition. Details available on the website soon.

NDOA MEMBERSHIP We hope you will enjoy the centenary events, projects and scholarships. We would love to use the opportunity to grow the membership substantially, and we would ask every member to take the challenge of recruiting at least one further member during the year. Our new membership rates for 2021 are:

- individual membership - £10 (reduced from £14);
- student membership - under 22 - £FREE (reduced from £7);
- family or corporate membership - £15 (reduced from £21). Our new corporate membership category allows churches, choirs, PCCs or businesses in the organ world to join us.

Rates include on-line copies of the quarterly *Newsletter*. If you would like a hard copy of the quarterly *Newsletter* there is an additional cost of £6. Do please consider who you know who might like to join us - and spread the word. Membership details and forms are on the website www.northamptonorganists.org.uk.

THE WEST ORGAN AT ALL SAINTS' NORTHAMPTON

LAURENCE CALDECOTE
Assistant Organist, All Saints' Northampton.



With all the uncertainty that 2020 has brought thus far, it is good to be able to share some wonderful news. The West Organ at All Saints' Northampton is to be cleaned and restored, along with an electrical upgrade, by the Devon-based organ firm William Drake Ltd. The work has been enabled by a generous donation from the Bernard Sunley Foundation, who were also the instrument's original benefactors. Alongside the original dedication plaque to Mary Sunley will be added a second plaque in memory of her daughter, Joan Tice.

For some time, it was becoming more noticeable that it would soon need some serious work to restore the instrument, which has seen almost daily use for the last 37 years. Stops would stick on/off, the keys and pedalboard were worn and very rattly and the piston system unreliable, all leading to a very unsatisfactory playing experience. Father Oliver Coss (Rector), Jem Lowther (Director of Music), and I, are very grateful to have received invaluable guidance from our consultant, William McVicker, along with input from others.

The West Organ was designed in the North-German baroque style, which was in fashion at the time. The consultant Nicholas Kynaston drew up the specification in consultation with Martin Williamson, Andrew Pennells and Andrew Dolby from J. W. Walker. Early drafts of the specification show a slightly smaller instrument than we have now, including some curious omissions in the tonal scheme, including no 8' Flute on the Swell, and the suggested use of many more Hill ranks from the previous organ than were actually used. Built in the latter part of 1982, and installed in early 1983, it was not without problems. The action proved a cause for concern and J. W. Walker were summoned back to rectify the problem by adding a 'coupler-assist': an experimental device to assist the coupling, as well as coupling the Orchestral Trumpet 8' which was treated as a floating stop. It has its own action which is then coupled to the action of the either the Swell or Choir manual when the relevant draw-stop is engaged. Although this helped to some extent, it ultimately proved a failure.

Only 3 ranks of the pipes survive from the previous instrument; two of these ranks are by William Hill: the Swell Wald Flute 4' (originally the Swell Flute 4') and Octavin 2' (originally part of the Solo Concert Flute 4'). The third rank is the Pedal Violone 16' by Brindley & Foster, dating from their 1912 rebuild. The remaining pipework was all new. The sides of the case were also new, to complement the 18th-century façade. The Pedal Division is at the back, with the Great Division in front. The Swell Division, with vertical shutters, is above the Great Division, and the Orchestral Trumpet 8' lies horizontally on top of the Swell box. The Choir Division is in the small case at the front. The action is mechanical, with additional electric action for the Great and Pedal and Orchestral Trumpet 8', allowing them to be played from the Chancel Organ console. Bass pipes from the Great Open Diapason 8' and Octave 4' form the façade of the main case and bass pipes of the Choir Prestant 4' form the façade of the choir case.

The Restoration

Work starts on 4th January 2021, which will include:

- Cleaning the pipework, with repair as required
- Repair any wind system leaks
- Cleaning the case
- Removal of the 'coupler assist' mechanism and action for the Orchestral Trumpet 8' and replacement with electric action – this will allow better access to parts of the instrument and make it reliable
- An upgrade of the solid-state piston and stop action replacing the existing one which dates from 1983.

The History of the Organs

Following the destruction of All Hallows' on 20th September 1675 in the Great Fire of Northampton, William Bell, a pupil of Sir Christopher Wren, designed the 'new' church. Only the tower remained of the Norman church and it was incorporated, the new church being completed by 1680, and portico being added in 1701.

The first organ to grace the new church was by the Warwick-based organ builder, Thomas Schwarbrick, in around 1709 on a gallery at the west end of the Nave. Sadly, the only part to survive from this instrument is the front part of the present west main case. Over the next 274 years, it went through a number of alterations, enlargements and moves ultimately leading to its replacement.

In 1803, the same year as he rebuilt the organ in York Minster, London-based organ builder Benjamin Blyth carried out unspecified work to the organ. William Hill's long association with All Saints' began in 1842. He estimated for a 2-manual organ. Whether this was brand new using the Schwarbrick case, or if it used any Schwarbrick pipework, is unknown. Only two years later in 1844, changes were made. Hill estimated for a new Swell, and to revoice the Trumpet at a cost of £240, extras at a cost of £506, and for 'improvements and additions' at a cost of £315, a total estimate of £1061, addressed to Charles McKorkell, (Organist, 1836–78).

In 1865, the Nave and Chancel were remodelled. The pulpit was reduced in height and moved to the north side of the chancel steps and the rood screen between the Nave and Chancel was taken down. Parts of the screen were used in the doorway to the Nave from the Narthex under the tower. In 1867, the organ was reviewed following a rebuilding and enlargement by Henry Thomas Wedlake. It is said that this was the first organ in England with a secondary Swell division, that is, that both the Swell and Choir divisions were enclosed.

Hill returned in 1872 to carry out a further rebuild of the organ, and it was at this time that the organ was increased to 5 manuals (including the addition of a Cavallé-Coll Voix Humaine 8' on the Echo division). In the early 1880s, a new organ chamber on the north side of the Chancel was built and in 1888 Alfred Hunter moved the organ from the west end to this chamber. The Schwarbrick case front was reused but was much wider than the chamber opening into the Chancel. With the creation of the organ chamber, the window at the head of the North Aisle was removed and a new case for the opening made. This case still exists and is the case for the present Chancel Organ. Ebenezer Law (Organist, 1878–98), gave a recital upon the re-opening of the church following work in 1888. This organ was viewed favourably by Heathcote Statham, Organist at Norwich Cathedral, who declared it 'very suitable for the works of Reger', given the bright choruses and fiery reeds, which were typical of the Hill firm at the end of the 19th-century.

The Edwardian era brought about change in organ design. In 1912, under the direction of Sir Frederick Bridge, Organist of Westminster Abbey, the Sheffield-based firm of Brindley and Foster rebuilt the organ reducing it to 4 manuals, with some tonal changes (including a new Euphone 8'). Before the opening recital, certain console aids were disconnected at Sir Frederick's request because he found them confusing; not least the infamous 'Bringradus', a type of general crescendo pedal. They returned in 1926 to overhaul the organ and add the pipework for the Large Open Diapason 8' on the Great, prepared for in 1912. The only rank of Brindley and Foster pipes from this organ to survive now form the current Pedal Violone 16' on the West Organ.

In the 1970s, nearly 50 years since its last rebuild, the organ started to become unreliable. Major renovations to the fabric of the building were carried out in 1974/5, but the money at the time did not stretch to allow any work on the organ. Following a report by the late Ralph Downes in 1977, a plan was made for the total replacement of the organ, with the best of the pipework being kept for further use, and the remainder scrapped. The English firm of J. W. Walker was selected and built three separate instruments for All Saints': Chancel (1981), West Gallery (1983) and the Memorial Chapel (1983).



LAMMAS RECORDS
THE GALLERY ORGAN OF ALL SAINTS NORTHAMPTON
made by
Buck, De Majo, Stanley
Brewer, Lisle, Walker
played by
Richard Tanner
LAMMAS 1000

The 1998 recording of the Gallery Organ by Richard Tanner on the Lammas label is still available as a download from Presto Classical www.prestomusic.com at £8.

The choirs of All Saints' have recorded a number of excellent CDs in recent years, available at only £10 each. Details can be found on the church's website at www.allsaintsnorthampton.co.uk. Why not buy one or two to support the church in completing the restoration programme?

All Saints' Northampton West Organ

J W Walker 1983

Abridged Specification

Mechanical action to manuals and pedals

Electric stop and combination actions

2 pedalboards: Radiating & Concave, and Straight & Concave (interchangeable)

38 Stops and 3,020 pipes

Manuals: 61 notes

Pedals: 32 notes.

H = Hill, 1872; B = Brindley & Forster, 1912; W = Walker 1983

Floating

8' Orchestral Trumpet (*horizontal, ½ length bass*) W

Swell Organ

8' Echo Trumpet (*harmonic*) W

16' Bassoon (*½ length bass*) W

Vrks Furniture (*2'*) W

1-3/5' Tierce W

2' Octavin (*harmonic*) H

2-2/3' Nazard (*tapered*) W

4' Wald Flute H

4' Principal W

8' Tapered Flute W

8' Voix Celeste (*A10*) W

8' Viola da Gamba (*haskelled bass*) W

Tremulant

Orchestral Trumpet 8' on Swell

General Piston on Swell Toe Pistons

Great Organ

4' Clarion W

8' Trumpet W

Vrks Mounted Cornet (*TG# (8')*) W

IIIrks Acuta (*½'*) W

IVrks Grave Mixture (*2'*) W

2' Super Octave W

4' Octave (*bass in façade*) W

8' Chimney Flute W

8' Open Diapason (*bass in façade*) W

16' Quintaton W

Tremulant

Swell to Great

Choir to Great

Choir Organ

8' Cremona W

IVrks Sharp Mixture (*1'*) W

1-1/3' Larigot W

2' Principal W

4' Spindle Flute (*tapered*) W

4' Prestant (*bass in façade*) W

8' Stopped Diapason W

Tremulant

Swell to Choir

Orchestral Trumpet 8' on Choir

Pedal Organ

8' Trumpet W

16' Trombone (*full length*) W

IVrks Mixture (*2-2/3'*) W

4' Tenor Octave W

8' Gedackt W

8' Octave W

10-2/3' Quint W

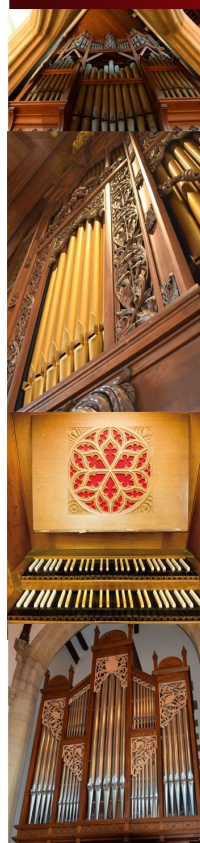
16' Bourdon W

16' Violone B

Swell to Pedal

Great to Pedal

NORTHAMPTON & DISTRICT ORGANISTS' ASSOCIATION



Northampton & District Organists' Association is 100 years young in 2021! Join us now and enjoy:

- hearing and playing organs
- help with learning the organ - both for young organists, and those reluctant organists who play but want to find out more
- the chance for student members to win one of five centenary scholarships, each worth £100
 - our Centenary and Members' Recitals
 - the Midlands Organ Day and Recital at St Matthew's Northampton in September
 - our forthcoming CD of local organs, and centenary organ book of new organ music
 - our fantastic quarterly full-colour Newsletter
 - online events, and help with lockdown music!

Everyone who loves the organ and its music is very welcome to join. You don't have to be an organist.

2021 individual membership is only £10
£15 for joint members, churches or corporate members, and entirely FREE for students under 22.

Find out more and join us now at
www.northamptonorganists.org.uk
or contact our Secretary at
secretary@northamptonorganists.org.uk

Registered Charity No 274679



Saturday 16th January 2021, 5pm

Online via Zoom

The New Oxford Organ Method

Anne Marsden Thomas and Frederick Stocken

On Saturday 16th January 2021 at 5pm Anne Marsden Thomas and Frederick Stocken will speak to NDOA about their newly-published and highly-acclaimed *The New Oxford Organ Method* - 'an inspired approach to learning which will help shape the student's learning journey, providing a framework of repertoire that is holistic and relevant'.

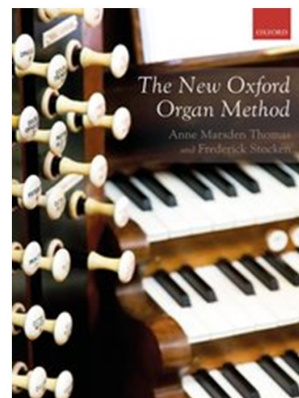
Anne Marsden Thomas is Director of Music at St Giles, Cripplegate, and one of the most influential organ teachers of today, having written and edited more than 20 books for organists.

Dr Frederick Stocken is organist of St. George's Metropolitan Cathedral, London, and a distinguished teacher and composer.

Do join this online event and hear these outstanding musicians and teachers share the latest techniques for learning the organ successfully. Students and experienced musicians alike will enjoy the session.

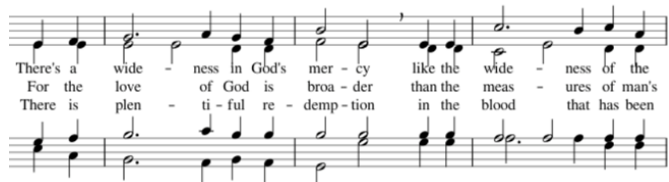
All are welcome. Joining details will be circulated to members before the event. If you are not a member and would like to attend, or have any queries please contact editor@northamptonorganists.org.uk.

The New Oxford Organ Method is available from www.oup.com/sheetmusic at £29.95.



Find us at www.northamptonorganists.org.uk and on Facebook

NORTHAMPTON & DISTRICT ORGANISTS' ASSOCIATION



LOOKING AHEAD - LOOKING FORWARD - 2021

LEE DUNLEAVY

Right now it seems very difficult to plan what might happen in a few weeks, let alone months ahead, but we can have some certainty that there will be more opportunities for organists once next Summer arrives. Now might be a good time, therefore, to look at repertoire which would be especially fitting for 2021 - music by composers who have significant anniversaries this year. Here are a small selection of those which might be easiest for church musicians and concert organists to mark ...

- 10th March - 100th anniversary of birth of Maurice Bevan
- 18th March - 75th birthday of Robert Walker
- 21st March - 75th birthday of Zsolt Gárdonyi
- 6th April - 50th anniversary of death of Igor Stravinsky
- 1st May - 75th anniversary of death of Sir Edward Bairstow
- 30st May - 50th anniversary of death of Marcel Dupré
- 24th June - 100th anniversary of birth of Philip Marshall
- 16th October - 400th anniversary of death of Jan Pieterszoon Sweelinck
- 21th October - 100th anniversary of birth of Sir Malcolm Arnold
- 24th November - 50th anniversary of death of C. S. Lang
- 16th December - 100th anniversary of death of Camille Saint-Saëns

... plus on 27th April there is the 200th anniversary of the birth of 'Father' Henry Willis. I hope to return to this topic in future *Newsletters*, but for now perhaps let's talk about the first two on the list - Maurice Bevan and Robert Walker.

Maurice Bevan (1921-2006) was a member of The Deller Consort and a Lay Clerk at St Paul's Cathedral for many years, but he is perhaps best known for his hymn tune Corvedale, which was designed for F. W. Faber's text, *There's a wide-ness in God's mercy*. This hymn would be suitable on either of the two Sundays around the anniversary of his birth, Lent 3 (7th March) or Lent 4 (14th March), and if congregational singing is still not allowed, it would sound well sung by a soloist or a choir. You can hear it using the link below, with the choir of Jesus College, Cambridge, directed by Northampton-born former All Saints' chorister and organ scholar Richard Pinel <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gMIiJdRa7Ls>.



You can find the sheet music in a number of the most recent hymn books, including (the new) *Ancient & Modern: Hymns and Songs for Refreshing Worship*, *Common Praise*, *New English Praise*, and *Singing the Faith*. You can hear a performance of it, given by the Boys and Men of All Saints', at <https://soundcloud.com/robert-walker-74/drop-drop-slow-tears>.

Our second composer anniversary is also associated with Jesus College, Cambridge. Robert Walker was born in Northampton in 1946, sang in the choir at St Matthew's, and - like Richard Pinel - went to Northampton Grammar School (now Northampton School for Boys). He then held choral and organ scholarships at Jesus College, Cambridge. His 75th birthday falls closest to Lent 5 (Sunday 21st March), so perhaps his wonderful setting of Phineas Fletcher's *Drop, drop, slow tears*, for SATB and organ, would be a very fitting tribute; it is available from the composer via his website at <http://www.robert-walker.net/>.



Also on the website you can find details of his organ works, including a stunning *Fantasia and Fugue on Themes of Benjamin Britten* (written for the former DoM at All Saints, Simon Johnson, in 2013) and a number of *Prelude and Fugues* (if you don't know where to start, the A flat one is simply beautiful). You might also look at his hymn tune Brinkwells, which is in the *New English Hymnal* at 463, and set to *Thine for ever! God of love*, or his ever-popular *As the apple tree* of 1985, published by Wise Music Classical (formerly Novello & Co Ltd).

Springfield AGO

Pioneer Valley Massachusetts - Chapter of the American Guild of Organists

Members may well be familiar with Northampton's namesake in Massachusetts - Northampton MA - but did you know that it also has an active and thriving organist community, served by the Springfield Chapter of the American Guild of Organists?

Northampton is a city of around 30,000 people, and home to the historic Smith College. Springfield itself is only 20 miles from Northampton, and the Chapter area of Pioneer Valley covers a number of other local cities. Like NDOA, the Chapter is itself celebrating a milestone anniversary this year - 75 years in its case - and like us, it is finding new ways to meet whilst it is difficult or impossible to carry out physical events.

A look at Springfield's website shows it is a very active Chapter, hosting many events and meetings in normal times, and more than making up for the disruption of Covid with online recitals and Zoom calls. Just before lockdown, the Chapter ran an Introduction to Pipe Organ for Pianists event at St John's Episcopal church in Northampton. - it would be lovely to think our own Reluctant Organists' Day planned for November at Hardwick would have such an excellent turnout (*pictured, below*).

There's a regular newsletter - *Chiff Chaff* - and some fascinating events have been held, including Pedals, Pipes and Pizza, a silent movie night, and a Pastor-Organist Dinner - what a good idea! The last Installation of Officers was combined with an Anthem Reading, where members brought favourite anthems and sang through them with guidance from the member who brought them. Like us, too, the Chapter holds a Members' Recital, encouraging music for organ with other instruments and voices.

In lockdown, the Chapter's Zoom Happy Chat events have ranged from 'how are our non-church music endeavours going' through 'piano music that works well in church services' and 'how to plan church music for the holidays' - and an online Happy Chat Party! Local events include livestreams of a Wednesday online Recital Series, including recitals from the Flentrop Organ at Oberlin Conservatory and St John's Episcopal Church in Hartford.



Introduction to Pipe Organ for Pianists
St. John's Episcopal Church, Northampton

The Springfield Chapter is led by its Dean, Martha Sienkiewicz, its Treasurer James Barnes and Secretary Karen Banta, together with a Board of Directors. The Chapter is clearly very responsive - your Editor's email to the website was answered within minutes by Joe Geehern, one of the Directors, followed rapidly by emails from two others including the Dean. Very impressive! Like us, the Chapter advertises organist positions in its area, and offers help with cover for members, and clearly its Board and members put a huge amount of work into the running of the Chapter, into promoting the organ to new members - and also to making converts of pianists and 'reluctant' keyboard players.

St John's Episcopal Church in Northampton boasts a three-manual Austin organ of 38 ranks, and the Organ Historical Society's Pipe Organ Database records that Northampton has some 25 instruments - six of them at Smith College, as well as St John's just outside the campus.

In fact, five or six of the Northampton instruments hail from Austin Organs - and that brings to light another connection with our own county. Austin Organs has been based in Woodland Street in Hartford, Connecticut - some 25 miles from Northampton MA - since 1899.



Austin Organs was founded by John Turnell Austin, who emigrated from Northamptonshire in 1889, together with his brother Basil. John developed the unique and patented universal air chest system, which is still in use today, and of course worked with Robert Hope-Jones.

There are still Austin organs locally to us too - the Denton instrument is believed to have been built by J. T. Austin's father, and the recently-restored organ at Rushden Baptist Church (featured in an article by the late Dr Peter Collier in the June 2014 Newsletter) was built by Austin in the US and employs the universal air chest system. There is much more to be said about Austin Organs in future issues.

Sincere thanks are due to our friends at the Springfield Chapter of the AGO for their help in compiling this article, and their permission to use material from their website. We do hope you will have enjoyed learning about all their work - and that if any of their members are ever in 'our' Northampton we will be able to welcome them and let us tell them something about NDOA in return.

You can read all about the Springfield Chapter at [Springfield AGO \(agospringfieldma.org\)](http://agospringfieldma.org), and the American Guild of Organists at [American Guild of Organists \(agohq.org\)](http://agohq.org). More details of Austin Organs can be found at [Austin Organs, Inc.](http://AustinOrgans.com) Livestream recitals from St John's Episcopal Church, Hartford CT can be found at [Music at the Red Door | \(reddoormusic.org\)](http://reddoormusic.org).

Pictured below, left to right: the Austin organ at St John's Episcopal Church, Northampton, MA; the AEolian-Skinner Opus 1295/A at Helen Hills Chapel, Smith College, Northampton MA, and the E. M. Skinner & Son Opus 507 from 1936 in the First Churches of Northampton.

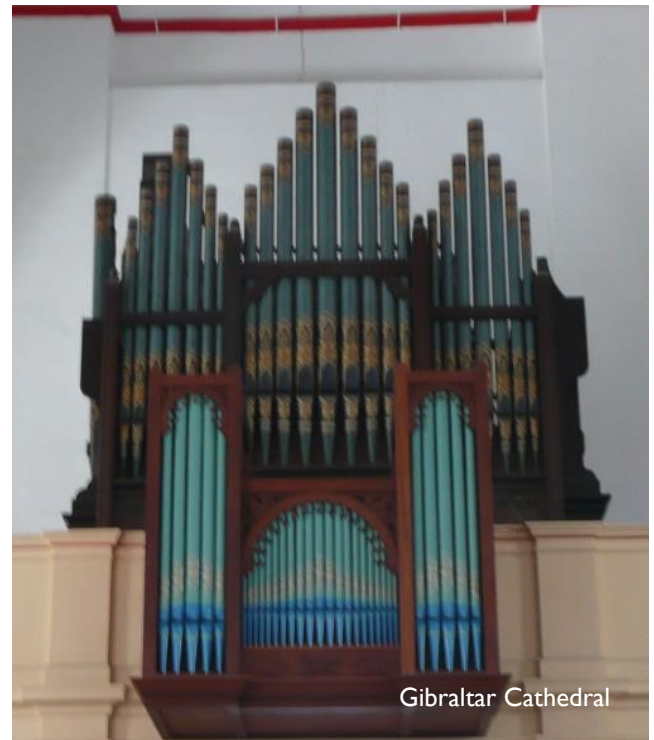


AROUND THE WORLD IN 80 ORGANS

Part 2: Europe and Scandinavia

In the October 2020 Newsletter I gave an account of the first part of the PowerPoint Zoom slideshow that our then President, John Wilson, presented in place of the planned visit to Thorpe Underwood and Harrington. This is an account of the remainder of that very interesting show.

From the Caribbean and the South Atlantic we came back to the Old World, fittingly to Gibraltar at the mouth of the Mediterranean, where John visited during his legal work from 2008 to 2010 and where it seems they have a cathedral and a military chapel, each with a pipe organ, and also a mosque (with no organ). That was a reminder that the Moors ruled Spain for nearly 700 years before being expelled by Ferdinand and Isabella in 1492, and that Gibraltar was part of Spain until granted to Great Britain under the Treaty of Utrecht of 1713 which brought an end to the War of the Spanish Succession. But that is definitely another story!



Gibraltar Cathedral

Not so very far up the Atlantic coast lies Aveiro in Portugal, which John and his wife Phylis visited for a conference in June 2018. They were intrigued to find that the old cathedral had a very modern-looking organ, but were not able to get any details as a service was in progress.

Even further up the Atlantic coast, and across the Bay of Biscay, we came to Jersey in the Channel Islands where John and Phylis attended another conference later in 2018. The parish church of St Helier has a fine Hill, Norman and Beard (and a brass ensemble that was performing at the time of their visit) and in the Methodist Centre they found, though didn't hear, a Rushworth and Dreaper.

We were then taken east to Austria, where, during two more conferences, John got to play the electronic organ in the Christian Science church in Vienna and saw (but didn't play) the splendid baroque instrument in Graz Cathedral.



Esbjerg Konservatorium

As readers will know, as Secretary of the NDOA I receive information from other organists' groups, so it came to our notice that the Nottingham and District Society of Organists were planning a tour of Denmark in 2016 organised by David Butterworth. John and Phylis and also our member Philip Bricher joined the tour and we saw several photos from the trip, beginning with the organs in the Konservatorium and the Treenighedskirken (Trinity Church) in Esbjerg, which was their base.

We saw the organ in the concert hall at Aarlborg, a four-manual beast

sporting those sideways-spreading stop mechanisms you see on French instruments which require a very good field of vision (*pictured, right*). We saw organs in the Frederiksborg Chapel and in the Royal Palace Conservatory in Copenhagen, including an English instrument. A rather modern imaginative church in the shape of an array of organ pipes greeted the group at Grundtvig's Kirke outside Copenhagen and on a visit to the Marcussen organ works in Aabenraa they watched the making of toe reinforcements from a single sheet of metal.



Aarborg Concert Hall

Still in Scandinavia they crossed by the ferry from Helsingor (Elsinore in Shakespeare's *Hamlet*) in Denmark, to Helsingborg (are you paying attention at the back?) in Sweden. (I'm up to speed on the Helsingor/Helsingborg business because, many years ago, I was on a choir trip to Sweden and we did this very crossing, to the confusion of all.) A little further south on the Swedish side lies Malmö, where John got up his courage to play on a small 2-manual instrument, and where I think I sang in a concert some years ago. (Though I can't find the programme I do still have paperwork from that trip!) The Denmark tour concluded with a visit to Fano Island where John played on the organ of the Sonderho Kirke.

John then showed us photos of organs taken during a Baltic cruise that he and Phylis undertook in 2018, beginning with Helsinki (the Sibelius memorial and the Church in the Rock), going on to St Petersburg and Tallinn, and ending in Stockholm. I remember singing in the cathedral at Stockholm, where a suspended model sailing ship keeps watch over the four organs.



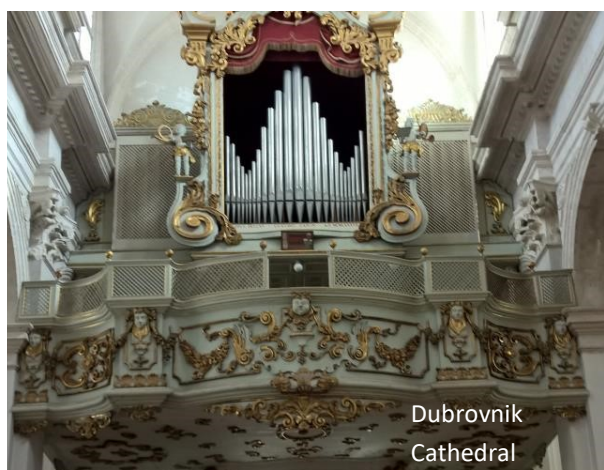
Stockholm Cathedral

I also remember being amazed at the 'frilly' architecture and interior decoration and, bearing in mind the damage unleashed by the Reformation in England on church buildings and interiors, I expressed my surprise to one of our hosts at such elaborate interiors in a Protestant church. I was told that the Reformation in Sweden had been very different affair – not destructive as in England (where it had been led by the hard-line advisers of Edward VI, whose 'reforms' wrought tremendous damage), as the Lutheran Church had no hang-ups about decoration. We know that Luther was a great lover of music and singing, so it was no surprise therefore to see that the Lutheran Cathedral in Helsinki had some beautiful statues of Luther and Melancthon, as well as a fine organ.

John's presentation ended with organs from trips that he and Phylis made in 2019 - the Roman Catholic church in Athens and the Greek Orthodox cathedral in Dubrovnik.

In just over an hour we had been on a whistle-stop tour of 6 continents and seen nearly 60 organs, and it was evident that John has achieved his aim of balancing his legal work and travels with an enjoyment of organ playing and an appreciation of organs and their surroundings generally. He promised us that his next show would be about organs in the UK, so that more of us might have a chance to visit the places he shows. You can read all about that later in this Issue!

Helen Murphy



Dubrovnik Cathedral

BACK IN BUSINESS AT FOTHERINGHAY

JOHN WILSON AND HELEN MURPHY

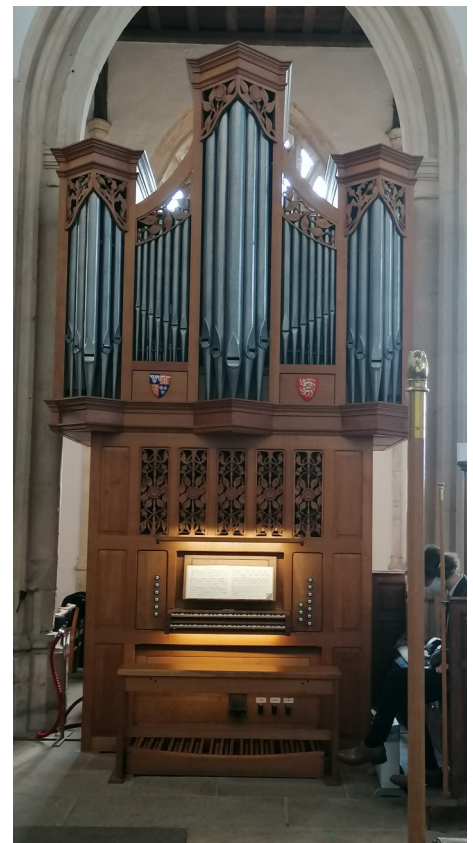
It was good to be back in Fotheringhay Church! We'd received notification via the Peterborough Organists' Association that James Parsons (organist at Fotheringhay and Founder/Director of the Oundle International Festival/Oundle for Organists) was due to give the Twentieth Anniversary recital of the installation of the Vincent Woodstock instrument. The church had been closed for some time and the organ safely under wraps to protect it for the duration of the building work on the tower, so it was doubly good to be able to return to some sort of normality in a time of pandemic.

However, we were not only able to enjoy the Woodstock, but also the little Wingfield Early English organ on loan from the RCO for a return visit. Helen remembers some years back that it came on a tour, together with its stable-mate, the larger Wetheringsetts organ, both reconstructions based on old pieces of timber identified as sound boards (probably from the early 16th-century) - the Wingfield one was found in an outbuilding in Wingfield in Suffolk by Dominic Gwynn (of Goetz and Gwynn organ builders, still going strong despite the death of Martin Goetz in 2015) who was able to build an imagined re-construction in 2001. Crucially (for singers!) the main Principal is a 5ft rank - i.e. sounding a fourth above pitch as we know it now. But James wasn't singing, he was playing, mainly on the Woodstock, though also on the Wingfield.

So, as a prelude to the recital itself, we heard a piece by John Bull (1562-1628). The actual recital began with a Prelude by Buxtehude (1637-1707), a brilliant piece with several sections, unlike the more austere works of J S Bach (who famously walked several hundred miles to visit Buxtehude in Lübeck). *In nomine* by Bull followed, played on the Wingfield instrument, and it was pleasing to see the double bellows lifted (not pressed) by James's young assistant, Bayley Halpin. Sadly, we can't claim that the parishioners of Fotheringhay might have heard this, as Bull was born some time after the Dissolution of the Monasteries in the late 1530s. Although Fotheringhay was a collegiate church (and therefore not monastic), along with chantry chapels, it still suffered the same fate - hence its severely truncated state. And it would undoubtedly have had an organ, probably rather larger than the Wingfield 'baby'.

Back on the main organ, we heard two Chorale Preludes by Bach (1685-1750). The theme of *Allein Gott* (BWV 662) was played on a 4ft Principal and sang out beautifully. Then there followed a Trio in C Minor by Fasch (1688-1758) who, James told us, had also bid for the post in Leipzig that Bach obtained in 1723.

To demonstrate the range of this remarkable two-manual tracker organ, James then played *Fluorescence*, a brilliant piece by Paul Patterson (b. 1947). John was particularly pleased to hear this as he has known Paul for many years (Paul's wife, another Wilson, grew up in the same town and church as John), but he had never heard any Patterson played 'live'.



We then had two richly harmonised hymn-tune voluntaries by Parry (1848-1918) and the recital ended with a piece by James MacMillan (b. 1959) - his *Gaudeamus in loci pace* (Let us rejoice in the peace of the place). Although some might have found this a difficult one, James explained how the underlying slow plainsong-based sub-structure was elaborated by occasional bursts of birdsong. It was not new to Helen who has it on a CD and is familiar with its (to her) evocation of a summer meadow, with its drone of insects - something we don't hear much of these days - punctuated by the birds' twittering!

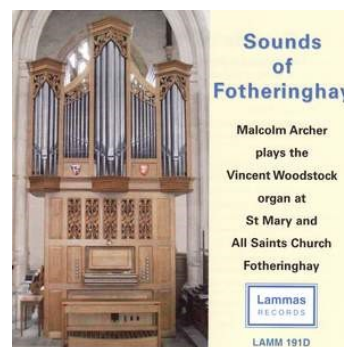
Fotheringhay church is always interesting to visit and an organ recital is a good time to notice that above the console there are five pierced/carved thistles and Yorkshire rose panels (hiding the Swell shutters), suitable for a church with its connections to the doomed family of York.

It was good too to see some old friends again and meet new ones from the Peterborough and District Organists' Association and organists from the north of 'our' county. We took the opportunity to exchange information about our respective associations and events and were glad to reinforce contacts. And it was particularly pleasing that the new Vicar of the Fotheringhay Benefice leapt up afterwards to give an enthusiastic and welcome endorsement. Life goes on!

Sounds of Fotheringhay

Malcolm Archer's CD of the Vincent Woodstock organ at Fotheringhay (Lammas LAMM 191D) includes Bach's Jig Fugue and 'St Anne' Prelude and Fugue, two Buxtehude Chorale Preludes including the exquisite *Komm Heliger Geist*, *Herre Gott* and the Ciacona in E Minor, as well as Stanley's Voluntary Op. 6 no.6 in D major and Traver's Voluntary in C major.

The CD is available from Presto Classical at £13.25, and individual tracks are available for download. See www.prestomusic.com.



AROUND THE UK IN 40 ORGANS

HELEN MURPHY

On 26th September, in happier times, we would have been celebrating the Midlands Organ Day in St Matthew's, Northampton. Instead, then-NDOA President John Wilson took us on a virtual tour of organs he has seen (and sometimes played) around the UK. Some of these places we had already been to for NDOA events, kicking off with Ss Peter and Paul, Abington Park for the AGM in 2019, St Andrew's in Kimbolton (15th Feb) and our last outing before lockdown – the Corby Crawl on 14th March (which were both reported on in *Newsletter 2/2020*).

But the planned visit to Southwell and David Butterworth at Halam had to be cancelled – so we were given a vicarious look at David Butterworth's Grant, Degens and Bradbeer house organ, originally from Wellingborough School - to see what we had missed. In 2019 some members managed to get out to Sulgrave to appreciate their recently restored historic Binns (which John has played). Still in the western end of the county, he 'took' us to the Nicolson at St Lawrence's at Towcester and on a visit to Stowe, kindly arranged by Jonathan Kingston when the original plans foundered. He reminded us of Castle Ashby – where its 'guardian' Richard Tapp had given us a virtual tour on 31st August in lieu of the President's Garden Party.

John being a member of the Christian Science Church, he 'took' us to see the organs in a number of these, many of which he has played: Bedford, Cambridge, London, Liverpool and an interesting one-manual, two-division positive instrument in Kendal (with the picture showing John's friend seated on the bench). Nearer to home, at the former Christian Science Church in Northampton (where John used to play and which is now a Muslim school), we witnessed the organ being dismantled with the assistance of Cousins of Leicester, prior to being taken to its new home in a Baptist chapel in Bedfordshire.

We were fortunate to have had two visits in the past to the late Ken Tickell's workshop and showroom in Northampton to see (really see!) the instrument for Manchester cathedral in its construction – once in the early stages (which included being shown how tuning and voicing is done) – and the second when almost complete, showing the treatment of the casework designed to match the different styles of the nave and how the organ would speak into each area according to need. These pictures reminded me of the care and thought that went into Ken's designs. I had been able to go to the inaugural recital given by Thomas Trotter and could truly appreciate the significance of what I had seen in the workshop.

At a swift gallop we were 'taken' to Leamington Spa (Hill Norman and Beard), north to Cartmel Priory (with Adrian Self playing) and Carlisle (Wills, Harrison and Walker) and then back south to Devon to Kilverton House, a National Trust property with a music room where apparently one is allowed to play the William Grey (1807). Amazing!

Heading now for the east of England, we thundered on through Bury St Edmunds (Walker 1860), Southwold (Walker 1887), then, on a trip with the Nottinghamshire Society of Organists, on to Cambridge (St John's College and Sidney Sussex College, with its 2016 Flentrop).



As for the ‘other place’, we were reminded that in 2018 we had enjoyed our own NDOA visit to St Mary Magdalene’s Church and Keble College (among others).

Then it was down to London to ‘see’ the 3-manual keyboard of Handel’s organ at the Foundling Hospital (where we most definitely would not have been allowed to play!), followed by the temporary chamber organ in the Queen’s Chapel in St James’s (where John *did* play). However, one he didn’t get at was the Willis in the Royal Albert Hall – but John hoped we all heard Jonathan Scott at his live BBC Proms recital earlier in the year.

Closer to home, Kingsley Park Methodist Church, with non-speaking for-decoration-only pipes disguising an electronic instrument, was graced by John and Philip Bricher playing a duet, as was Holy Trinity Church on the way to Kingsthorpe. John also told us about the 2016 Midlands Organ Day which had been held in Nottingham and we ‘visited’ a number of instruments they had experienced that day, including the Binns in the ‘other’ Albert Hall.

Finally - to John’s home, where we saw the pedal board that had been languishing in Roger Skoyles’s garage before being connected to an electronic harpsichord and rendered fit at least for practice purposes.

After that breath-taking tour, which I imagined taking place in something like Father Christmas’s sleigh – definitely aerial, definitely mad-dash, definitely in need of a drink afterwards (and did Rudolph have a satnav?) – there was even time for a chat when we touched down again!



THE NORTHAMPTON SCHOOL FOR BOYS’ CONACHER - AN UPDATE

Paul Bland kindly writes with an update on the NSB Conacher’s restoration - see Issues 2 and 3/2020 for the full story. The pictures show the amazing progress made, and now the team has another Conacher! One of only two other remaining Conacher Theatre Organs (from the Regal/Odeon Rotherham 1934 - 93 below, then in private hands) it will share the chambers with the Coventry organ ex-NSB.



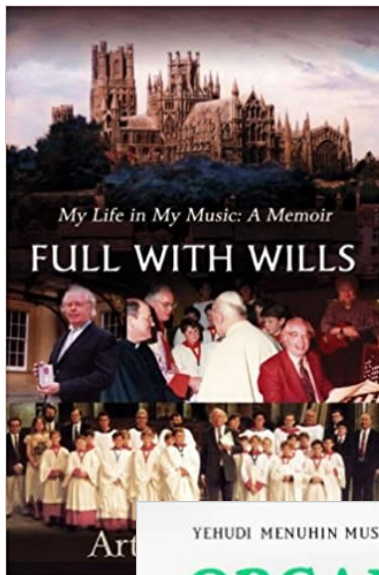
DR ARTHUR WILLS OBE - AN APPRECIATION



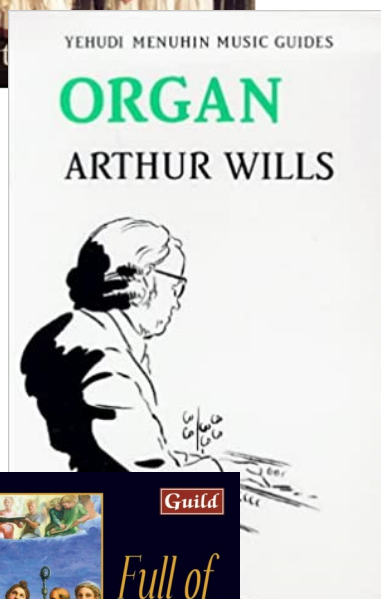
NDOA is greatly saddened to learn of the passing of Dr Arthur Wills, Director of Music at Ely between 1958 and 1990. Dr Wills spent almost his entire career at Ely, having arrived in 1949 as Assistant Organist.

Ely's current DoM, Edmund Aldhouse, paid tribute, saying 'Arthur Wills was a towering figure in English Cathedral music, and far beyond, for much of the twentieth century and to this day. As well as his daily work in Ely, he held a professorship for many years at the Royal Academy of Music. In both posts he taught and inspired countless musicians, young and adult, who went on to enrich this country's musical life. Arthur was also a virtuoso organist and a composer of distinction, with an instantly recognisable musical language, and a talent for capturing the mystery and beauty of the written word in music.'

Coincidentally, Dr Wills' death at the age of 94 came as your Editor was preparing an article for our *From an Organist's Bookshelf* series on Dr Wills' fascinating memoir *Full with Wills: My Life in My Music*, published in 2006. The book's advertising copy described it as 'a modestly-told biography, paying tribute to the many people who have touched his life' - but could as easily have recorded the impact which he himself had on the lives of others.

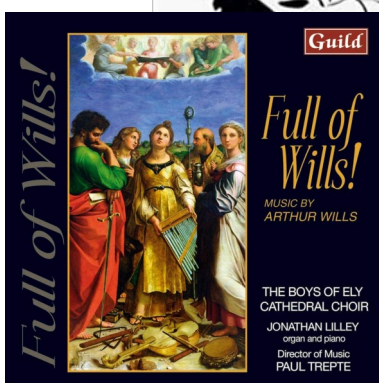


From a terraced house in Coventry, he was influenced greatly by the Anglo-Catholic churchmanship of St John the Baptist, his local church, where he was a member of the choir. Not content with a piano, he acquired a harmonium locally for 5/-, and using his carpentry skills, adapted it so that the stops emerged from either side of the keyboard, as if an organ. He tells of the day his house was hit by an incendiary bomb, necessitating a move to stay with relatives in Warwick - leading to his organ lessons with Stanley Vann, at that time organist of Holy Trinity, Leamington Spa.



His journey to Ely began in 1949, when he was appointed Assistant Organist - and Tenor Lay Clerk - leading in turn to his appointment as DoM at Kings School Ely in 1953 (a post later held by our own President-Elect, Jonathan Kingston, of course), and his subsequent elevation to DoM at the cathedral in 1958 at the age of 32, to a post he would hold for another 32 years until his retirement in 1990. Clearly such longevity would come to be the norm at Ely, with his successor Paul Trepte retiring only recently to be succeeded by Edmund Aldhouse.

Dr Wills' limited early formal education was no barrier to his subsequent academic life, including progression to a Durham DMus and fellowship of the RCO. He held a chair at the Royal College of Music for many years, and as Edmund Aldhouse noted in his tribute, his work most certainly enriched the musical life both of Ely, the Diocese and the Country. He continued to compose extensively during retirement, and was an active member of the cathedral community until his death.



Full with Wills is published by Pen Press (penpress.net); his outstanding *Guide to the Organ* in the Yehudi Menuhin Music Guide series is still in print. The boys of the cathedral choir celebrate his repertoire on *Full of Wills* on Guild Records, and his narration of *Wondrous Machine - A Young Person's Guide to the Organ* can also be found on Guild.

PETERBOROUGH CATHEDRAL ADVENT ORGAN MEDITATION

CHRIS STRANGE

CHRISTMAS ORGAN SPECTACULAR

IMOGEN MORGAN



The Music Department at Peterborough is to be congratulated for tackling lockdown restrictions head-on with a very full programme of services and events - and including both an Advent Organ Meditation and a Christmas Organ Spectacular in its recent online offerings.

Chris Strange, the Cathedral Organist, began his reflective and evocative Advent Organ Meditation with Buxtehude's Praeludium in G minor BuxWVI49 and Bach's *Wachet auf, ruft uns die Stimme* BWV645. Chris changed tone and pace to Henri Mulet's *Rosace* from *Esquisses Byzantines* and Mendelssohn's Allegro, Chorale and Fugue in D before concluding with Johannes Brahms *Es ist ein Ros' entsprungen* and *Le Monde dans l'attente du Sauveur* by Marcel Dupré. The programme was very successful and is to be hoped that the team will follow with other meditations in future.

You can still find the Meditation at [Advent Organ Meditation - YouTube](#).

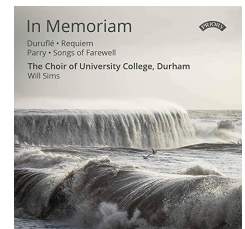


Chris took up the post of Cathedral Organist in September 2020. Born and raised in Cheshire, he studied at Chetham's School of Music before moving to London to study at the Royal College of Music with Margaret Phillips and Sophie-Véronique Cauchefer-Choplin. In 2018 he obtained the Fellowship of the Royal College of Organists winning all the available prizes and later in the same year graduated with a first-class honours degree. He has held posts at Manchester Cathedral, Grosvenor Chapel, London and Chelmsford Cathedral. Most recently before moving to Peterborough, Chris was Assisting Organist at York Minster.

Imogen Morgan, the Organ Scholar, kept up the standard with a Christmas Organ Spectacular - which was certainly nothing less than spectacular! Beginning with *Variations sur 'In dulci jubilo'* by Denis Bédard, Imogen then treated us to John Ireland's *The Holy Boy* and Guilmant's *Offertoire sur deux Noels*, Op. 19 No. 2. The fourth of Karg-Elert's *Cathedral Windows*, Op. 106 *Adeste Fideles* followed, before Imogen concluded with Thomas Trotter's arrangement of Leroy Anderson's *Sleigh Ride*. Imogen's thoughtful and imaginative playing is evident throughout and most enjoyable. And who knew that H&H's recent work included the addition of *Sleigh Bells*? The Christmas Organ Spectacular is at [A Christmas Organ Spectacular - YouTube](#).



Imogen also joined the Cathedral in the Autumn, having completed her undergraduate degree in Music at Durham University and gained her Associateship of the RCO. As Senior Organ Scholar of Durham Cathedral, she regularly accompanied and directed the choir and led rehearsals. She was also Senior Organ Scholar at University College, Durham, with whose choir she recorded Duruflé's *Requiem* on their album *In Memoriam*, released by Priory Records in July 2020 and available for download on Amazon and elsewhere.



Epiphany Organ Meditation. Chris Strange will play an online Epiphany Meditation, including Gigout's *Rhapsodie sur des Noël's* and the Dubois *March of The Three Kings*, on Sunday 3rd January at 6pm. Details from [Epiphany Organ Meditation - Peterborough Cathedral \(peterborough-cathedral.org.uk\)](#). If you enjoy these online organ events and would like to make a donation to support the Cathedral's work and to help defray the cost of producing them, do please consider doing so via [Virgin Money Giving | Peterborough Cathedral](#).

RING OUT, WILD BELLS CORNO DOLCE II I

*'Ring out, wild bells, to the wild sky,
The flying cloud, the frosty light:
The year is dying in the night -
Ring out, wild bells, and let him die.'*

These words by Tennyson seem appropriate for the first Newsletter of a New Year, reviewing the old year and looking forward to the new. 2020 was an unusual year for everyone and brought disappointments and challenges. But it also brought in many new ideas and opportunities. For our Association it brought the disappointment of not being able to present the Midlands Organ Day or visit Harrington and Thorpe Underwood, or have the President's garden party.² But it did provide an opportunity to experience virtual visits to organs in the UK and around the world. And it meant that more people joined in the 'zoomed' AGM. After the 'virtual' installation of Richard Tapp as this year's President, John Wilson handed over the presidential medal and ribbon to Richard. The photo shows John in an apparently prayerful attitude - perhaps giving thanks for being able to hand over responsibilities to Richard.



*'Ring out a slowly dying cause,
And ancient forms of party strife;
Ring in the nobler modes of life,
With sweeter manners, purer laws'*

These lines don't refer to any strife in the Association committee, which continues to work harmoniously together, despite having three lawyers in succession as President.³ They might be relevant to events in the public sphere, such as leaving the EU, but Corno Dolce II would not dream of referring to those and this column will assiduously avoid any political topics (?). So it would not be appropriate to dwell too much on Tennyson's next lines:

*'Ring out false pride in place and blood,
The civic slander and the spite;
Ring in the love of truth and right,
Ring in the common love of good.'*

We would much rather report on two beautiful local online organ events. One was a recital by Richard Pinel of Jesus College, Cambridge, on the Walker organ at Thorpe Underwood House, the home of Benedict and Katherine Cadbury. The other was by Jonathan Kingston on the 3-manual Father Willis at St Mary & St Giles, Stony Stratford. Richard Pinel's recital was part of the Harrington Concerts series, which usually includes such an event, and hopefully will be able to present it live in 2021. It can be seen on <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3PEzC9Gddik&feature=youtu.be>. Jonathan's recital was part of the Stony Stratford Online Organ Festival 2020 and can be seen on <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kcRQbR2Banc&feature=youtu.be>. Richard's recital was designed to bring out the best of the 2-manual tracker action organ, with its delicate reeds and flutes. Its versatility was shown by pieces from Bach (including a complete Trio Sonata), Buxtehude and Bohm; French romantic pieces by Franck and Vierne; and modern English pieces by Harris and Leighton. Jonathan showed the full range of the Willis in modern triumphal music by David Johnson and Philip Moore, followed by a Handel concerto, some Jongen, Pablo Bruna and Vierne and ending with Mendelssohn's *War March of the Priests* - a noble sound in a splendidly resonant acoustic. Both recitals were a visual joy (the Thorpe Underwood one aided by technical experts of the Oundle International Festival) and it was good that the camera angles showed some fleet footwork by both performers. So 2020 was a mixed year, but memorable for innovative technology bringing us a wide range of organ music. 2021 will surely be just as good, and Corno Dolce II wishes the very best for the year to all readers of the Newsletter!

*'Ring in the valiant man and free,
The larger heart, the kindlier hand;
Ring out the darkness of the land
Ring in the Christ that is to be.'*

1. Organists Review had a column by 'Corno Dolce' for several years. This is the NDOA successor!
2. It is hoped that these events will all happen during 2021 - see our provisional programme on p.20.
3. Legal Executive (Alan Cufau), Law Drafter (John) and Solicitor (Richard).

ASSOCIATION NOTES AND NEWS



Annual General Meeting. The Association's 96th AGM was held by Zoom on Saturday 7th November. After the President's welcome by John Wilson, Helen Murphy presented the Secretary's report, noting the number of virtual events that the Association had managed to hold, in spite of the restrictions. Glyn Hughes presented the Treasurer's report, drawing attention to the reduction in income resulting from the cancellation of some live events and the subsequent loss of donations. He urged members to make a Gift Aid declaration where appropriate, and thanked Barry Wadeson for his auditing of the accounts. With no further questions, the report and accounts were accepted.

Jonathan Kingston was elected as the new President-Elect. Helen Murphy and Glyn Hughes had kindly agreed to stand again as Hon Secretary and Hon Treasurer respectively, and were duly elected, together with Barry Wadeson as Hon Auditor. The *Newsletter* report noted that *Newsletter Extra* was being published monthly to enhance contact with members during the pandemic. Justin Miller stood down at the end of his term of office and was thanked by the President. There were three vacancies, to which Lee Dunleavy, Alan Cufaude and Laurence Caldecote were elected. The Association would celebrate its centenary in 2021, and the centenary projects were detailed to the meeting. New membership arrangements were agreed for 2020/21 resulting in significant reductions in the cost of subscriptions for the year, the introduction of corporate membership, and free membership for student members (see p.3 for details of the centenary projects and 2021 subscriptions).

Members were reminded that fees for funerals, weddings and other services should be negotiated individually with those concerned, and it was noted that the Association would shortly publish a note identifying possible sources of advice entitled *Guidance Information - Paying Musicians*. Alan Cufaude summarised his report on the Midlands Organ Day, now due to take place on 25th September 2021, thanking members of the sub-committee and urging all members to support the day, with the opportunity to help in many areas. In conclusion, John Wilson looked back over the very strange year of his presidency, when so much had needed to change because of the pandemic. He noted that contact with other associations and the IAO had increased and that, in spite of the difficult circumstances, members had been able to have fun together (if only by Zoom). Richard Tapp was Installed as President, and thanked all the committee members for their work over this past difficult year and looked forward to the Centenary Year and its events – whether live or virtual. He urged each member to try to recruit someone else which would soon increase numbers. He was sorry not to have been able to welcome members to Castle Ashby Church for the AGM, but looked forward to doing so in future (and we have subsequently planned an *Organ Crawl in March - Covid permitting*).

Congratulations! Sincere congratulations to our student member **Matthew Foster** who has won a place at the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire. Thinking of following Matthew's example? Book the Conservatoire's virtual open day in January at [Royal Birmingham Conservatoire | Birmingham City University \(bcu.ac.uk\)](https://www.bcu.ac.uk/conservatoire).

Springfield AGO. We hope you have enjoyed reading about our fellow organists in Springfield, MA, whose American Guild of Organists' Chapter covers 'their' Northampton. Their Dean, Martha Sienkiewicz also tells us that they are (rightly) proud of hosting one of the AGO's Pipe Organ Encounter experiences, which allow teenagers to explore the organ as beginners or to hone their skills. They had 40 participants housed at Smith College in Northampton. Students were assigned to teachers, including major teachers from Hartford and Boston as well as from the Springfield Chapter, spending the morning at various venues including St John's Episcopal in Northampton, and field trips including Austin Organs in Hertford in the afternoons. The programme runs five or six times each summer around the US. More information can be found at the national website <https://www.agohq.org/education/poe/>. What an excellent initiative!

In the next Issue. The next *Newsletter* will include an article on the history of the much-rebuilt 'Hill' of All Saints' Earls Barton, ahead of the planned Members' Composite Recital on Saturday 5th June. We also hope to write about Northampton organ builder W Starmer Shaw & Son, which traded in the area for virtually a century until the 1980s, which rebuilt and enlarged the Earls Barton organ in the 1930s and was latterly owned by the village doctor. Do you have any memories of the firm, or the organs they worked on? Do please email the Editor with any memories of the firm or its organs for the article.



May we take the opportunity to wish you a very happy New Year

NORTHAMPTON AND DISTRICT ORGANISTS' ASSOCIATION CENTENARY YEAR 2021- PRELIMINARY PROGRAMME OF EVENTS

Please note that all events are subject to change and cancellation to comply with Covid-19 regulations.
Please see *Newsletter Extra*, www.northamptonorganists.org.uk and our Facebook pages for updates.

THE NEW OXFORD ORGAN METHOD - ZOOM MEETING **Saturday 16th January - 5pm**
Anne Marsden Thomas, Director of Music at St Giles' Cripplegate and renowned organ teacher, and Frederick Stocken, Organist of St George's Metropolitan Cathedral, London, will speak about their new organ method book. Login details will be sent to members in January.

ZOOM MEETING **February - date and time tba**

CASTLE ASHBY ORGAN CRAWL **March - date and time tba**

VISIT TO THORPE UNDERWOOD (house organ) AND HARRINGTON CHURCH **Saturday 17th April 2pm - 5pm**
Visit to Benedict Cadbury's house organ at Thorpe Underwood and to Harrington Church: talk on the Northamptonshire Villages Church Organ Trust.

YOUNG ORGANISTS' DAY jointly with RSCM and Bucks OA **Saturday 15th May 10am - 1pm**
St Mary & St Giles, Stony Stratford - hosted by Jonathan Kingston.

MEMBERS' COMPOSITE RECITAL **Saturday 5th June - time tba**
All Saints' Earls Barton.

CENTENARY RECITAL **Saturday 10th July - 7.30pm**
Martin Setchell is scheduled to play the Association's Centenary Recital at St Mary Magdalene Castle Ashby.

CENTENARY GARDEN PARTY FUNDRAISER **Bank Holiday Monday 30th August - 2pm**
At the home of our Past President, 84 Headlands, Kettering, NN15 5DQ by kind permission of John and Phylis Wilson. Garden Party 2pm; Tea from 4pm.

MIDLANDS ORGAN DAY **Saturday 25th September - 10am**
St. Matthew's Church, Northampton. IAO Regional Organ Day focusing on liturgical playing, including a short recital by Callum Alger (Westminster Cathedral) and masterclasses hosted by Simon Johnson (St. Paul's Cathedral) and Richard Pinel (Jesus College, Cambridge). Open consoles will be available at St Matthew's and elsewhere.

CELEBRITY ORGAN RECITAL WITH SIMON JOHNSON AND RICHARD PINEL **Saturday 25th September - 7pm**
St. Matthew's Church, Northampton, on the J.W. Walker organ - *'the finest parish church organ in England.'*

RELUCTANT ORGANISTS' AFTERNOON **October - date and time tba**
Hardwick Parish Church, hosted by Tony Edwards.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING AND INAUGURATION **November, date and time tba**
St. Mary & St Giles, Stony Stratford.

More details from our President, Richard Tapp at editor@northamptonorganists.org.uk or 01933 664896.

Find us at www.northamptonorganists.org.uk and on Facebook