

APRIL 2015 NEWSLETTER

RECENT LDOA VISITS/EVENTS

Saturday 21st March 2015, St Mary's, Lichfield, & AGM

Today's visit to St Mary's, Lichfield, was hosted by one of our youngest student members, Henry Metcalfe, who plays the organ both here at St Mary's and also at St Michael's. The visit also included our 2015 AGM, and matters arising of interest to members are covered under 'News from the LDOA Committee' section of this newsletter.

The visit was attended by 15 members, including our President Martyn Rawles, and our newest member Richard Redhead, who we were pleased to welcome to his first LDOA visit.



The organ in the Dyott Chapel of St Mary's, Lichfield.

Henry Metcalfe gave an outline of the history of the organ at St Mary's, produced by Stephen Alliss, who was Organist and Director of Music at St Michael's and St Mary's at the time of the last rebuild, and also worked on the rebuild, as he worked for organ builder Mike Thompson at the time.

The instrument in St Mary's is by the Walsall firm of Nicholson & Lord, and was completed in two stages in 1889 and 1907. It has its roots in an earlier instrument by Hill which was delivered in 1838. The locally held belief that the organ came from the great Exhibition of 1851 cannot be substantiated in any way.

When Nicholson & Lord first rebuilt the organ in 1889 it was to a standard two manual configuration, replacing what was in all likelihood an instrument of limited resources, the compass of the Great Organ being to low G

and the Swell finishing at Tenor C. Much of the old pipework was reused and still remains in the instrument today, characterised by its thin metal and wide and low cut mouths. At this stage provision was made for additional stops to be added at a later stage, no doubt when funds permitted. The cases were made of a standard piperack design, with the front pipes being the lower notes of the then Great Dulciana, and Open Diapason, the Dulciana being gilded and the Open Diapason being stencilled or 'diapered.'

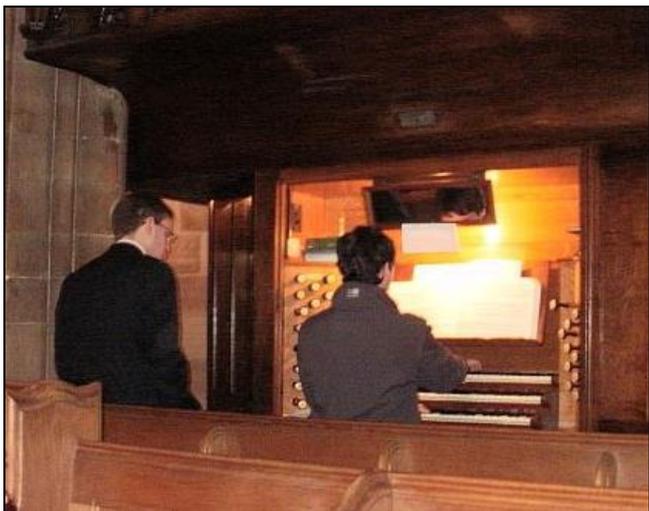
In 1907, the organ underwent a major rebuild. It became a three manual instrument with a new case on its north face, given by Robert Bridgeman, who was Churchwarden and Sheriff of Lichfield at the time. The Great Large Open Diapason was the gift of the then organist, Mr Parker, and his wife. Further new pipework was added to the Great Organ to complete the specification prepared in 1889, the new ranks being the Gamba and Harmonic Flute. The swell box was enlarged to accommodate a new Clarion stop and other pipework was relocated. The only rank not provided was the prepared for pedal stop – presumably a Trombone, and sadly still missing.

The instrument was thoroughly overhauled in 2010 by Mike Thompson thanks to a bequest from the late Dennis Birch. All of the internal leatherwork has been replaced, including re-leathering the large main reservoir. The only tonal change made during the work has been the fitting of the 2' Piccolo stop from the old organ of St Michael's in place of the String Gamba on the Choir organ. The main case pipes have been repainted once again, providing a visual reminder of the extensive work that has been carried out. The organ possesses another fine case on its west front in polished pine, and it would be wonderful to see this revealed in some future work on the building itself.

Henry Metcalfe assured us that there was pneumatic action on the Great and Pedal departments. As the historical notes by Stephen Alliss and the NPOR make no mention of this, clarification subsequently sought from Stephen Alliss has confirmed that the action of the St Mary's organ is tracker from the keys for all manuals. The Great and Swell do have pneumatic assistance at the soundboard to prevent the touch being too heavy, but this is original to the Nicholson & Lord organ (technically a massive rebuild of the earlier Hill, but that's another story). The pedal action is pneumatic throughout, all of the major tube run being renewed at the 2010 rebuild due to corrosion.

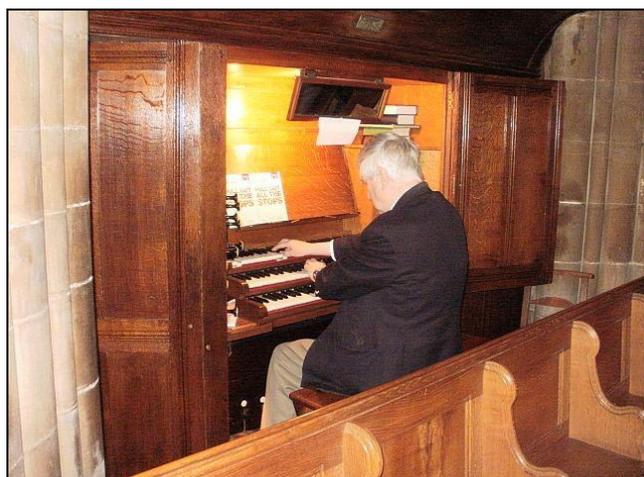
To demonstrate the organ, Henry first played J S Bach's *Wachet auf ruft uns die Stimmer* followed by *Festival Voluntary* by Flor Peeters, two contrasting pieces both performed with impressive assurance by a confident

young man, with his tutor Martyn Rawles on page turning duty.



Henry Metcalfe at the organ of St Mary's, Lichfield, with Martyn Rawles page turning.

Then over to members to put the organ through its paces, with first Peter King, followed by Pat Neville, Jon Woodward and Colin Brookes, Mike Rudd having had a play before the start of proceedings.



Colin Brookes at the organ of St Mary's, Lichfield



Jonathan Woodward at the organ of St Mary's, Lichfield

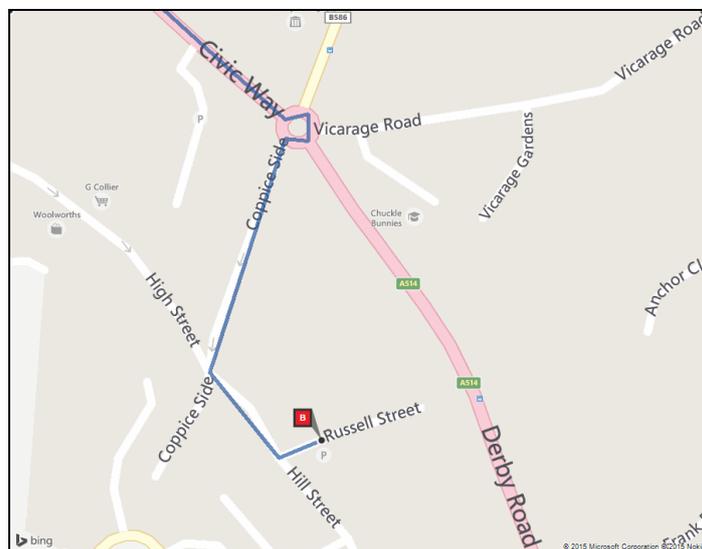
Our thanks to Henry for hosting the visit, and for his accomplished demonstration of this now all too rarely heard organ.
TS

FORTHCOMING LDOA VISITS/EVENTS

Saturday 25th April 2015, Hill Street Baptist Church, Swadlincote.

Visit commencing at 2 pm by kind invitation of our member Steve Mansfield to play the 2 manual 33 stop organ installed here under the auspices of the South Derbyshire Organ Trust, of which Steve is a founder trustee. Steve will give an illustrated talk on the history of the organ brought from Newhall Methodist Church and rebuilt (retaining some of the Compton pipework from the previous organ) and installed here by Mike Thompson in 2008. Recitals have been given on this fine organ by the late Carlo Curley and Midlands concert organist Keith Hearnshaw.

Hill Street Baptist Church is located at Hill Street, Swadlincote, Derbyshire, DE11 8HL, and is approximately 18 miles from Lichfield, via the A514 through the centre of Swadlincote. From Civic Way turn right down Coppice Side and then turn left onto Hill Street. The church is on your left with a large free carpark at the side.



Location of Hill Street Baptist Church, Swadlincote

Saturday 20th June 2015, Leicester Organ Crawl

Our member Andrew McMillan is also a member, and currently President, of the Leicester & District Organists' Association, and has kindly used their contacts in Leicester to arrange an all-day organ crawl. The visit commences at 12 noon at St Margaret's (large church with 4 manual Nicholson organ), then a 10 minute walk or short drive to arrive at 1.30 pm at St Nicholas (oldest church in Leicester, with 2 manual Porritt organ), then finally a 2 mile drive to arrive at 3 pm at St James the Greater (beautiful 19th century church inspired by Torcello Cathedral, Venice, with 3 manual Taylor organ, rebuilt by Walker/Nicholson).

An invitation will be extended to any members of the Leicester & District Organists' Association who wish to join us on the visits. Full details of venue locations etc. will be included in the 1st June Newsletter.

Saturday 12th September 2015, Abbots Bromley School Chapel and Church

Visit commencing at 2.30 pm to the school chapel to play the 2 manual 11 stop 1881 J W Walker organ, then on for

4 pm to St Nicholas Parish Church, Abbots Bromley to play the 2 manual 13 stop tracker action organ. Some members of the Leicester & District Organists' Association will be joining us for this visit.

Saturday 10th October 2015, President's Evening at Lichfield Cathedral

By kind invitation of our President, Martyn Rawles, a visit to Lichfield Cathedral for Evensong rehearsal and service, then opportunity to play the superb 4 manual Hill organ.

Saturday 28th November 2015, Derby Cathedral.

Meet at 4 pm at a local cafe, and then attend Evensong at 5.15 pm, followed by an opportunity to play the superb 4 manual 98-stop Compton organ.

Wednesday 2nd December 2015, Annual Dinner

As some members favour a joint dinner with our local sister associations, whilst others prefer one with just LDOA member/guests, this year's Annual Dinner will be just for LDOA member/guests at 7 pm for 7.30 pm on Wednesday 2nd December 2015, at The Plough Inn, Huddlesford, Nr. Lichfield.

NEWS FROM THE LDOA COMMITTEE

2015 AGM

14 members, including our President Martyn Rawles, attended the AGM, and the following matters arising may be of interest to members who weren't able to attend:

- Our Treasurer Mike Rudd reported a slight deficit of income v. expenditure for 2014, as was also the case in 2013, but the proceeds from the donated surplus music should enable us to balance the books in 2015. (No change in the subscription rates for 2016 was therefore discussed.)
- Election of Officers – Mike Rudd agreed to continue as Treasurer, but David Gumbley, Chairman, and Pam Strong, Secretary, having given tireless service to the Association for many years, confirmed they did not wish to continue in office. An invitation for members interested in putting their names forward for election to these two roles will be circulated shortly, with both David and Pam agreeing to continue in office in the interim until replacements are appointed at an extra ordinary meeting.

2015 Subscriptions

The 2015 Subscriptions were due on 1st January 2015, and a payment request was sent out in December.

So, a final plea from our Treasurer to those members who have not yet paid their 2015 subscription. Please will you send a cheque to our treasurer, Mike Rudd for £12 for a single membership or £17.50 for a joint membership (free for students in full time education)

Mike's address is: 8 Court Drive, Shenstone, Staffs, WS14 0JG.

Alternatively direct payments can be made; the bank details are

Lichfield & District Organists' Association
Lloyds TSB; 30-95-04, a/c no 00430916

Surplus Sheet Music

There is still remaining a mixture of organ, piano and harpsichord sheet music, a list of which has previously been circulated to members. Suggested donations of £3 per album and £2 per single item, but offered free to student members. Members wanting any of the remaining music please contact Trevor Smedley. You will have a final chance to view the remaining music on our visit to Hill Street Baptist Church, Swadlincote, in April.

Next Committee Meeting

The next Committee Meeting t.b.a.

MEMBERS' NEWS

Henry Metcalfe

Having first heard one of our youngest student members play at the Birmingham Oratory during our visit in February 2012, his confident and accomplished playing at only 12 years of age marked him out as a young man to watch out for in the future. Now 15, and having organ lessons with Martyn Rawles, he has passed his Grade 5 with distinction and is now working towards his Grade 7.



Article in the Lichfield Mercury 12th March 2015 (with apologies to Martyn Rawles!)

Henry plays for services at St Michael's on Greenhill and St Mary's, Lichfield, and it was whilst playing for the annual church service of Lichfield's Worshipful Company of Smiths at the Guild Church of St Mary's that he caught the attention of their Chairman Robert White, resulting in the article above in the Lichfield Mercury.

Henry's ambition, since he was 7 he tells me, is to become a Cathedral Organist, and it seems highly likely that with hard work he will realise his ambition. We add our good wishes to those of Lichfield's Worshipful Company of Smiths for every success for the future in realising his ambition.

Joe Sneddon

Educated at King Edward VI School in Lichfield, our member Joe Sneddon has joined Harrison & Harrison as an apprentice, and is currently working for them in Scotland. Joe did a splendid job as one of the presenters at our recent Young Persons' Cathedral Organ Day 2015. (See report on the event below).

[SHENSTONE VILLAGE FESTIVAL - REQUEST FOR VOLUNTEERS TO PLAY](#)

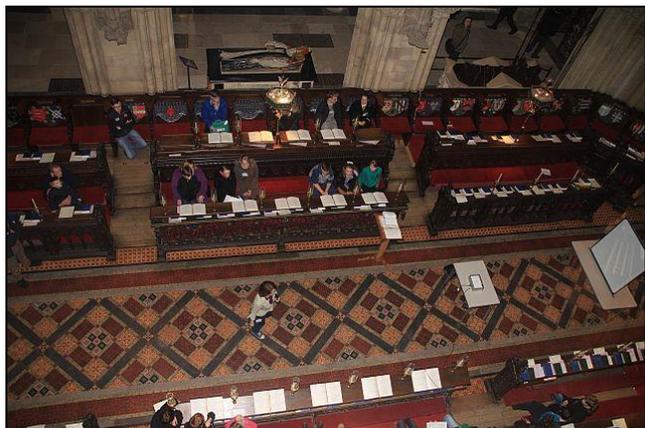
Shenstone Village Festival will take place on Sunday 28th June 2015, and the organisers would like members of Lichfield & District Organists' Association to play the organs in Shenstone's churches in the afternoon, from 2.00 – 4.00 pm at St John's, and from 2.30 – 4.30 pm at Trinity Methodist Church.

Volunteers willing to play in 15 minute 'slots' should contact Pat Neville, who will co-ordinate the booking of 'slots'. Pat can be contacted at: patorgan@hotmail.co.uk.

[LICHFIELD CATHEDRAL NEWS/EVENTS](#)

Young Persons' Cathedral Organ Day 2015

After the success of the 2013 and 2014 events, Lichfield & District Organists' Association and Lichfield Cathedral jointly presented another event on Saturday 14th March 2015, based at Lichfield Cathedral, commencing at 1.15 pm. LDOA members Martyn Rawles, Cathy Lamb, Eric Lunt, Steve Mansfield, Henry Metcalfe, Joe Sneddon, Chris Booth and Trevor Smedley, with Dr Jonathan Ewington of Lichfield Cathedral School, all participated in the event, attended by 21 children aged 10-14 years of age, including 7 from St Michael's Primary School, Lichfield. Stephen Johns and John Maxwell-Jones from the Derby & District Organists' Association attended as guests, hoping to pick up ideas to incorporate into their own 'Children & The Organ' events.



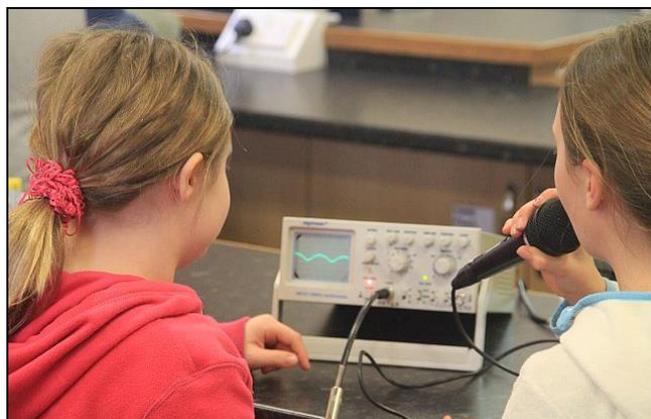
Cathy Lamb leading the presentation demonstrating the sounds of the Hill organ, played by Martyn Rawles

Following the welcome by Martyn Rawles in College Hall, it was over to the Cathedral for a demonstration of the sounds of the Cathedral Hill organ led by Cathy Lamb, with Martyn at the console choosing pieces suited to the sounds being demonstrated, and with video screening in the Quire, courtesy of Steve Mansfield. Raiders of the Lost Ark provided a suitably impressive demo of Full Organ to finish! Then a split into two groups for the workshops.

The science workshop was held in a laboratory in Lichfield Cathedral School, and was led by Dr Jonathan Ewington, Head of Physics at the school. He used a slinky, a Rubens' tube, 5 oscilloscopes, and a weighted cord attached to an oscillator to perform experiments to demonstrate wavelength, frequency and amplitude of sounds, and how harmonics create different sounds.



Dr Jonathan Ewington demonstrating the effect of sound waves on gas flames from a Rubens' Tube.



Children watching the waveform of their voices displayed on an oscilloscope screen



Joe Sneddon leading the model organ demonstration

Jonathan then handed over to Joe Sneddon, an LDOA member and now an apprentice with Harrison & Harrison,

to lead the demonstration of the construction of a pipe organ, and with the children getting hands-on with a model organ to see how the bellows, keys, stops and pipes are used to produce the sound an organ makes.

Steve Mansfield, LDOA member and Principal & Managing Director of Excel Music Schools Ltd, presented the workshop demonstrating the controls of an organ, and building an excellent rapport with the children to encourage them to 'have a go' on the Phoenix electronic organ, playing their own music.



Steve Mansfield leading the demonstration of the Phoenix organ

Cathy Lamb/Martyn Rawles escorted groups of 3 children up to the organ loft to see the Hill console at close quarters, giving one talented young man the opportunity to play the Hill organ.



A visit with Cathy Lamb to the organ loft to see the Hill console up close

Fittingly, the organs of Lichfield Cathedral combined to have the final 'say', with Cathy Lamb on the Hill organ and Martyn Rawles on the Phoenix organ playing the Star Wars theme, ensuring a thrilling climax to the event, if not quite the usual prelude to Evensong choir practice!

The handouts given to the children included an offer of a free 'taster' organ lesson to any child thinking of learning to play the organ, with enquiries received from parents of two children almost immediately after the event, as well as some very complimentary feedback both from parents and the Headteacher of St Michael's Primary School.

A big 'thank-you' to all participants for giving the children a wonderful experience, to Lichfield Cathedral and Lichfield Cathedral School for hosting the event, and to Eric Lunt for his photographic record of the event. TS

2015 Organ Recitals at the Cathedral

Lichfield Cathedral is due to be rewired in 2015, and the expected disruption to activities in the Cathedral will impact on organ recitals. When the situation becomes clearer, details of any organ recitals will be included in future newsletters.

IAO MATTERS

IAO 2015 Congress

The IAO 2015 Congress will take place on 27th – 31 July 2015 based in Norwich. Details as follows:

Events start on Monday 27th July with open consoles followed by an early-evening recital at St Peter Mancroft (Peter Collins organ) by James Lancelot. Tuesday will see an afternoon recital at St Edmundsbury Cathedral by James Thomas (Harrison & Harrison organ) and a recital at Wymondham Abbey by Andrew Cantrill. On Wednesday the AGM will be held at St Andrew's Hall, followed by a recital given by Keith Wright on the Hall's Hill, Norman & Beard organ. A boat trip is planned for the afternoon and in the evening David Dunnett will give a recital in Norwich Cathedral.

On Thursday, we shall visit the Royal Hospital School Chapel, Holbrook, for a demonstration of the organ (Hill Norman & Beard) by Andrew Cantrill and a recital by Tom Bell. The return journey will include a visit to the Thomas Thamar organ in Framlingham Parish Church.

On Friday morning, Anne Page will give the RCO lecture Recital, during which we shall visit three churches (one of which houses a harmonium belonging to Anne); there will then be an afternoon trip to the Thursford Collection (a collection of mechanical organs and steam engines) culminating with a performance on the Wurlitzer. The day concludes with the Annual dinner at Norwich Cathedral refectory. On Saturday morning there will once again be open consoles.

Tickets may be purchased on-line at www.iao.org.uk

Peninsular Organ Day

This will take place on 25th April 2015 at Exeter.

West Yorkshire Organ Day

This will take place on 9th May 2015 at Bradford.

East of England Organ Day

This will take place at The Royal Hospital School Chapel, Holbrook, Suffolk, from 10:00 - 18:00. The event comprises organ recital and improvisation masterclass by Olivier Latty (Notre Dame de Paris), organ recital by Tom Bell, piano recital by Gemma Beeson, lecture by Andrew Cantrill, and with the students from Birmingham Conservatoire. Tickets from: www.ipswichregent.com

Derby Cathedral – Lecture Recital featuring the music of Alfred Hollins

Wednesday 16th September 2015 at 7.30 pm. Lecture recital at Derby Cathedral by David Liddle, organised by Derby & District Organists' Association, and featuring the music of the blind organist/composer Alfred Hollins. David Liddle is himself blind, and so will be able to offer us a unique insight into the learning of music scores and managing large instruments by blind organists. Note that LDOA members have been generously invited to join DDOA members for this unique event.

West of England & S E Wales Organ Day

Will take place on 17th October 2015 at Bristol.

Midlands Organ Day 2016

Will be held on 24th September 2016 at Nottingham.

DAVID LEEKE

On Saturday 21st March, I had the pleasure of attending a concert by the Sutton Chamber Choir, conducted by Richard Mason, at St Peter's Church, Maney, Sutton Coldfield. The organist accompanying the choir was Anthony Pinel, now Director of Music at St Chad's, Shrewsbury, who provided much early encouragement to Martyn Rawles when he was a chorister at St Mary Redcliffe, Bristol, and Anthony Pinel was Choirmaster.

When the LDOA visited Shrewsbury in September 2013, David Leeke was the Director of Music at St Chad's, prompting me to enquire after him, but with some apprehension, for reasons that will become apparent below.

For our visit to Shrewsbury, we were welcomed at St Chad's by David Leeke, and during his welcome he happened to mention in passing that he'd been ill with cancer. David hosted not only our visit to St Chad's, but also to St Mary's, and finally St Alkmund's, thus most generously devoting the whole of his day to looking after us, despite having to travel down to the South of England the same evening to play at a service on Sunday morning. During the day, I was able to enquire of David as to whether his cancer treatment was proving effective, whereupon I was rather taken aback when he confided that in fact his cancer was terminal! Having been given 12 weeks to live, but having by then gone beyond this

deadline, he was determined to fight on and prove the experts wrong!



David Leeke

In reporting our visit in the October 2013 Newsletter, I refrained from referring to his cancer, and I'm sure the 9 members who had the pleasure of David Leeke's company for our most interesting and enjoyable day in Shrewsbury will be greatly saddened to rather belatedly learn that, some 8 months after our visit, David tragically lost his fight with cancer, and died in May 2014 at the age of just 57. A tragic loss to his wife Kathryn and family, and also to all lovers of organ and church music in the Midlands and beyond. TS

RECENT LOCAL ORGAN RECITALS REVIEWS

Thomas Trotter with Birmingham Conservatoire Chamber Choir Concert at Symphony Hall, Monday 2nd February 2015

Thomas's guests for this concert were Birmingham Chamber Choir, conducted by Paul Spicer. Paul Spicer is one of the UK's most widely respected choral conductors, as well as being a composer and author. He teaches at the Birmingham Conservatory and at Oxford and Durham Universities, and of course he is also an honorary member of our Association. The Birmingham Conservatoire Choir is a group of 24 auditioned student singers who form an expert and flexible group. The choir has gained an enviable reputation for their recordings, which reflect their conductor's specialist interest in 20th and 21st century British music.

Paul Spicer provided a helpful introduction for each work, with Herbert Howell's A Hymn for St Cecilia, accompanied by Thomas Trotter, providing the opening to the concert. Sung unaccompanied, the motet Sing We The Men Op 43 No 2 by Gustav Holst followed.

As Mass in G Minor by Vaughan Williams received its first performance here at the Town Hall by the newly formed City of Birmingham Choir in December 1922, its inclusion in today's concert was a most appropriate choice to show the qualities of both the choir and the beautiful voices of the 2 male and 2 female soloists.

The final offering in today's recital was a rarely heard substantial work, lasting some 20 minutes, by Hungarian composer Zoltan Kodaly, entitled Laudes Organi. It was commissioned by the American Guild of Organists for their

National Convention in 1966, and appropriately is in praise of the organ. Having been a spectator for much of the concert, the choir having sung mostly unaccompanied, Thomas had an extended organ prelude, by turns majestic and lively, before the choir came in quietly with the first verse. After the fourth and final verse, the final Amen built up in a great crescendo, ending in an amazing final cadence for the choir, with the soaring soprano voices, and a triumphant conclusion for the organ providing Thomas Trotter with the final word.

Yet again a most polished and professional performance by this superb student choir. One imagines that it must be quite a challenge for Paul Spicer to maintain such a high choral standard with a constant turnover of experienced student members leaving and being replaced by new members. Thomas Trotter contributed his customary immaculately crafted accompaniment. TS

Simon Johnson recital at Birmingham Town Hall, 16th February 2015

No Thomas Trotter for today's recital at the Town Hall but instead the Town Hall organ was in the very capable hands of Simon Johnson, Organist & Assistant Director of Music at St Paul's Cathedral.



Simon Johnson

Simon Johnson was Head Chorister of Peterborough Cathedral Choir, and went on to hold organ scholarships at Rochester, Norwich and St Paul's Cathedrals, before becoming Director of Music at All Saints' Church, Northampton in 1998, and Assistant Master of Music and Director of the Abbey Girls' Choir at St Albans Cathedral in 2001. He took up his present position in September 2008.

As a soloist, his work has taken him all over Europe and the USA. He is also a conductor, composer and arranger, and can be heard on a number of critically acclaimed recordings.

Today's recital was billed as having the theme 'War & Peace', and having recently recorded Holst's The Planets for Priory, it was perhaps unsurprising that Simon opened with two pieces from this suite. The menacing ostinato rhythms and full organ climax of Mars, The Bringer of War, was followed by the tranquillity of Venus, The Bringer of Peace.

Continuing the theme of today's recital, the Czech composer Petr Eben's Moto Ostinato, from the four movement suite 'Sunday Music' is descriptive of the apocalyptic battle between good evil, reflecting his own experiences as a teenage internee in a Nazi concentration camp. This spectacular piece is built around an obsessive ostinato rhythm, initially subdued then becoming progressively louder and more frenzied.

Chant de Paix from the set of Neuf Pieces by Jean Langlais, a simple beautiful piece featuring flutes and strings, was followed by the major work of today's recital, Sonata on the 94th Psalm by Julius Reubke, who died at the age 24 from TB. This monumental dramatic work has been featured a number of times by Thomas Trotter, including at Birmingham Town Hall in October 2014. One wonders what other great works would have followed had the composer's life not been cut so tragically short.

An immaculate performance by an organist who seemed very much at home on the Klais organ. TS

Peter Morris recital at Walsall Town Hall, Thursday 19th February 2015

Continuing the theme for this series of recitals of working his way through the alphabet of composers, today we arrived at the 'N' box, or more accurately the N-P box, given the scarcity of composers with names starting with 'N' and 'O'.

Gordon Nevin is the composer of the first two pieces, with first Will o' the Wisp providing a rather gentler opening to the recital than normal, followed by The Tragedy of a Tin Soldier, the story being first narrated by Peter Morris.

Peter turned to York Minster and two of its organists for the next works, with first John Nares, Introduction & Fugue in C Minor, with its grand opening then bright fugue. Works by T Tertius Noble followed with the jolly An Elizabethan Idyll, then Elegy, and then Finale, sounding decidedly like a work Lefébure-Wély might have written!

A piece much favoured by Carlo Curley, Deep River by Jeffrey L Nall, was followed by 3 Liturgical Preludes by George Oldroyd, a composer Peter had admired ever since he sang them as a 7 year old chorister, a work rather Karg-Elert in style.

Finally to Nigel Ogden, who at one time was a student in Walsall, and first Leprechaun in London, then the fun piece Penguins' Playtime, and finally Saints on a Spree, comprising variations on the tune 'When the Saints Go Marching In', including a Widor's Toccata version with the tune picked out in the pedals, not to mention a bit of Brahms Lullaby! A fun ending to the recital. TS

Thomas Trotter recital at Birmingham Town Hall, Monday 2nd March 2015

In his introduction to today's recital on a cold winter's day, Thomas commented that having just spent 2 weeks in America, where the temperature was -25°, he was finding Birmingham 'positively tropical'!

Thomas opened with Sir Charles Villiers Stanford's Fantasia & Toccata in D Minor, one of the few outstanding

British organ works of its time, with its dramatic opening to the Fantasia and majestic climax to the Fugue.

John Stanley's two movement Voluntary in F Op 7 No 6, was followed by Sonata No 3 by the German born viola player and conductor Paul Hindemith, with each of the 3 movements being based on old German folk songs.

Stalactites is a contemporary piece by the young Russian composer Katya Kulkova, who won first prize in the Composition Competition organised by Choir and Organ magazine in 2009, when it was premiered here at Birmingham Town Hall in 2009 by Thomas Trotter. It comprises a slow Fantasia, followed by a quick Toccata.

The final works in today's recital were provided by Saint-Saëns with first his distinctive The Swan from The Carnival of the Animals, followed by a favourite piece of mine, Fantaisie in E Flat, written whilst the composer was Organist of Saint-Merry in Paris, and which he played at the inaugural recital following the organ's rebuild. The first movement hops around deftly between three manuals, before the final movement, a vigorous march with some sensational flourishes for both hands and feet. A terrific climax!

As yesterday was St David's Day, there was just time for an encore, from Three Preludes on Welsh Hymn Tunes by Vaughan Williams, No. 3 in C major 'Hyfrydol'. TS

Andrew Fletcher recital at Emmanuel Wylde Green, Friday 6th March 2015

After his return from holidaying in South Africa, Andrew Fletcher continued with the theme for this series of recitals of 'Hymns & Psalms'. Today's recital opened with Mendelssohn's Sonata No 6 in D Minor, which uses more of the chorale than any other of his 6 sonatas, all of which contain some beautiful melodies.

Then on to two Chorale Preludes by Parry, with first St Cross then Rockingham, before turning to another famous British composer Herbert Howells and Psalm Prelude Set 2 No 1, based on Psalm 130.

Finally to the major work in today's programme, Chorale Partita Sei Gegrüßet BWV 768 by J S Bach, who Andrew commented had 'done all sorts of magical things with it'. It comprises a chorale and 11 masterful variations, with the final variation providing a suitably majestic climax to today's recital. TS

Thomas Trotter recital at Birmingham Symphony Hall, Monday 16th March 2015

The opening to today's recital at the Town Hall was provided by J S Bach's Prelude & Fugue in G BWV 541, a rare manuscript of which has survived in the composer's own hand, and played as ever with Thomas's customary immaculate clarity.

John Ireland's Miniature Suite, comprising Intrada, Villanella and Minuetto-Impromptu, followed with Thomas providing us with forewarning of things to come in describing it as 'a nice mellifluous piece before the more discordant James MacMillan work'.

So to the aforementioned work by the leading Scottish composer of our time, James MacMillan, and his Le Tombeau de Georges Rouault, commissioned for Thomas Trotter by Symphony Hall 10 years ago, and premiered here by Thomas. The piece uses variations on two themes, and gets quite strident, sounding rather improvisatory in form, and ending in a blaze with the en chamade Trompettes.

As it's the first day of spring on 20th March, Thomas next included two pieces appropriate to the season. Firstly the jaunty Spring Song by the blind musician Alfred Hollins, and with the composer having spent much of the latter part of his life in Scotland, perhaps explaining the Scottish feel to it. Then followed On a Spring Note by the British pianist, cinema organist, conductor, orchestral arranger and a composer of light music Sydney Torch, who despite his very English sounding name was in fact born Sydney Torchinsky, of a Ukrainian father and Estonian mother, in London.

The final work in today's programme was provided by another blind organist, Gaston Litaize, with his Prélude et Danse Fuguée, commissioned in 1964 as a test piece for the diploma examination at the Paris Conservatoire. Providing quite a test for any student, it becomes progressively more frenetic and strident, ending in a savage explosion of raw energy. TS

Peter Morris recital at Walsall Town Hall, Thursday 19th March 2015

The spring weather had seemingly failed to encourage a good turn-out for today's lunchtime recital, with a rather sparse audience of only just over 20 to hear Peter Morris trawl through his fertile 'P' box of composers, with 7 tunes based on hymn tunes.

Parry's Jerusalem provided a stirring opening, followed by Toccata in E Minor by Pachelbel, a dramatic short but very nice piece, new to me. Next three works by Purcell with first Voluntary on the Old 100th, then the tuneful gentle gavotte Cebell, and finally, predictably, Purcell's famous Trumpet Tune.

Turning next to Flor Peeters for a further three pieces, Peter Morris recalled that Flor Peeters came to play at St Peter's, Wolverhampton, in 1970, but being during the 'Winter of Discontent', the power went off, courtesy of the miners' strike, so no recital! The beautiful Aria was followed by Partita: Awake my Heart with Gladness, comprising 7 verses, and then finally as we were coming up to Passiontide, Flor Peeters' haunting take on 'The Passion Chorale'.

Then to Pierné and Trois Pièces, with first the rippling runs of the Prélude, followed by the gentle melodious Cantilène, and finally the lively Scherzando.

Having opened today's recital, Parry was also the choice to close with Three Chorale Preludes, contrasting works, commencing with The Old 104th, then the gentle Melcombe with the melody almost concealed in the pedals, and finally St Anne, as used also by both J S Bach and Handel, and providing a very full organ climax to today's recital. TS

Thomas Trotter recital at Birmingham Town Hall, Monday 30th March 2015

In his introduction to today's programme, Thomas Trotter commented that Marcel Dupré visited Birmingham Town Hall at least twice, and indeed his signature is in the guest book. During Dupré's first visit to America in 1921, he improvised on plainsong themes, and received such an enthusiastic reception that he decided to compose a written work along the same lines, resulting in his Passion Symphony. Being the first day of Holy Week, this work was the choice to open today's recital.

The work comprises four movements, with the pounding chords and irregular rhythms of 'Le monde dans l'attente du Sauveur', then 'Nativité' using the melody Adeste Fideles towards the end and a little cameo for the Whitechapel Bells of the Town Hall organ, then the menacing theme of the 'Crucifixion', and finally 'Resurrection', with its 'real typical French toccata', becoming progressively louder and more frenetic, culminating in thunderous chords.

After such a demanding virtuoso work, only Thomas Trotter would regard Trio Sonata No 1 in E Flat BWV 525 by J S Bach an 'easy piece' with which to follow! Played with consummate ease, and beautiful clarity of the three separate lines of melody.

Leroy Anderson was the son of an organist, and in fact stayed on at Harvard University as organist and choirmaster for six years, so it's perhaps not so strange for the next work, Anderson's catchy Jazz Legato – Jazz Pizzicato, to be played on the organ.

The final work on today's eclectic programme was Isaac Flagler's Variations on an Old American Air. It comprises the theme 'Way down upon the Swanee River', followed by four contrasting variations, the final one of which is quite majestic with some fiendish pedalling!

No time for an encore really, but as Thomas had prepared one it would be a shame for it to go to waste, so it was a return to Dupré and Fileuse (The Spinner), the second movement of his Suite Bretonne, described by Thomas as a 'cute piece'. TS

VACANCY

As the vacancy advertised in the last newsletter remains unfilled, our member Alistair Timmis has requested that it be run again in this issue of the newsletter:

Vacancy for a Part Time Organist/Pianist

All Saints' Church, Etwall Rd, Mickleover

All Saints is seeking a Part Time Organist/Pianist to play for services. This is a busy church holding together traditional worship (9.15am) and informal chorus-led worship (11.15am) within two Sunday morning services. The church is also asked to host a number of occasional services; as such there will be potential for a number of ad hoc commitments (funerals/weddings) in addition to a proposed offering of one Sunday per month. Fees will be in line with RSCM standards and are regularly reviewed.

The main service relevant to this vacancy is the 9:15 Sunday morning Holy Communion. All applications are welcome: this post would suit a newer player seeking an opportunity, as much as an experienced organist seeking a less time demanding and yet very fulfilling playing role.

Interested individuals should contact Alistair Timmis on 07852524028 or Peter Walley on 07725740407 for an informal discussion.

FORTHCOMING LOCAL ORGAN RECITALS

LDOA Members' Recitals/Events

Cathy Lamb

In addition to Lichfield Cathedral events, Cathy is also giving the following recitals:

- 12.00 – 12.45 pm on Saturday 23rd May 2015 at Stoke Minster.
- 7.30 pm on Saturday 13th June at Blithfield Church, Admaston, Rugeley, celebrating the organ's 50th anniversary.

Martyn Rawles

In addition to Lichfield Cathedral events, Martyn is also giving the following recital:

- 11.15 am on Bank Holiday Monday 4th May 2015 at Liverpool Cathedral. This is the first of a trilogy of recitals that constitute Liverpool Organ Day, the other two being by Richard Lea at Liverpool's Metropolitan Cathedral at 3 pm, then finally to St George's Hall for a recital by Ian Tracey at 5.30 pm. Something of an accolade for Martyn to be invited to perform at such a prestigious event.

Peter Morris

The Walsall Town Hall 2014/15 recital series commenced in September, and will continue generally on the third Thursday of the month, with Peter working his way through the A-Z of composers. The next recital is on Thursday 16th April 2015.

In addition to the recitals at Walsall Town Hall, Peter is also giving the following recitals:

- 3:00 to 3:45 pm on Sunday 19th April 2015 at St James' Methodist Church, Pensnett
- 1.00 pm to 1.30 pm on Monday June 15th 2015 at Coventry Cathedral
- 1.10 pm to 1.45 pm on Thursday 10th September 2015 at Chester Cathedral (where Peter was once a chorister)

Mervin Jones – Darlaston Town Hall

Concert of popular theatre organ music on 2nd Thursday of every month at Darlaston Town Hall, with Mervin Jones at the 3 manual Binns Organ, 1.30 to 3.30 pm.

Pat Neville - Trinity Methodist Church, Shenstone

A further lunchtime organ recital will be given on Monday 18th May 2015 by Shenstone resident organist Pat Neville at 12.45 pm to 1.30 pm. Bring your sandwiches – drinks will be available. Come and go as you please.

Alex Goldsmith – St Modwen's, Burton-on-Trent

Following the success of the 2014 concert, Alex is organising and is one of the performers in another 'afternoon at the proms' themed concert at St Modwen's, Burton-on-Trent. It is planned for 3 pm on Saturday 25th July 2015, and your support for this initiative by one of our talented student members, who is just starting to study for his ARCO, would of course be greatly appreciated.

Recitals In Local Area (to mid June 2015)

April 2015

Maundy Thurs 2 April 2015 • 1:15 to 1:45 • St Paul's, Birmingham
Paul Carr (St Paul's, Birmingham)

Sat 4 April 2015 • 1:00 to 1:45 • St Thomas', Stourbridge
Jon Payne (St Thomas', Stourbridge)

Easter Sun 5 April 2015 • 3:00 to 3:45 • Holy Trinity, Wordsley
Paul Carr (St Paul's, Birmingham)

Bank Holiday Mon 6 April • 11:00 to 11:45 • All Saints' Leamington Spa
Mark Swinton (St Mary's Collegiate Church, Warwick)

Bank Holiday Mon 6 April • 11:00 • St Michael & All Angels, South Yardley
Ian Biggs (St Michael & All Angels, South Yardley)

Frid 10 April 2015 • 1:00 to 1:45 • Emmanuel Wylde Green
Andrew Fletcher (Birmingham University)

Mon 13 April 2015 • 1:00 to 2:00 • Birmingham Town Hall
Thomas Trotter (Birmingham City Organist)

Thurs 16 April 2015 • 1:00 to 1:50 • Walsall Town Hall
Peter Morris (Walsall Borough Organist)

Sat 18 April 2015 • 12:00 to 1:00 • Victoria Hall, Hanley
Jonathan Scott (Failsworth)

Sun 19 April 2015 • 3:00 to 3:45 • St James' Methodist Church, Pensnett
Peter Morris, (Walsall Borough Organist)

Tues 21 April 2015 • 12:40 to 1:20 • St Chad's, Shrewsbury
Anthony Pinel (St Chad's, Shrewsbury)

Tues 21 April 2015 • 1:10 to 1:50 • Worcester Cathedral
Tom Winpenny (St Albans Cathedral & Abbey)

Wed 22 April 2015 • 1:10 to 2:00 • St Alphege, Solihull
Jonathan Cunliffe (Parish of Little Venice, West London)

Thurs 23 April 2015 • 7:00 to 9:30 • St Michael's, Tenbury Wells
David Briggs (Concert Organist)

Sat 25 April 2015 • 12:00 to 12:45 • Stoke Minster
Jon Payne (St Thomas', Stourbridge)

Mon 27 April 2015 • 1:00 to 2:00 • Birmingham Town Hall
Tom Winpenny (St Albans Cathedral & Abbey)

Tues 28 April 2015 • 1:10 to 1:50 • Worcester Cathedral
Christopher Allsop (Worcester Cathedral)

May 2015

Frid 1 May 2015 • 12:40 to 1:20 • St Chad's, Shrewsbury
John Goodwin (Shrewsbury School)

Frid 1 May 2015 • 7:30 • St Philip & St James, Milton
Simon Russell (St Mary's, Nantwich)

Sat 2 May 2015 • 1:00 to 1:45 • St Thomas', Stourbridge
Lee Dunleavy (St Mary's, Wellingborough)

Sun 3 May 2015 • 3:00 to 3:45 • Holy Trinity, Wordsley
Paul Carr (St Paul's, Birmingham)

Bank Holiday Mon 4 May • 11:00 • St Michael & All Angels, South Yardley
Ronald Shillingford (Holy Family, Small Heath)

Bank Holiday Mon 4 May 2015 • 12:15 to 12:55 • Worcester Cathedral
Andrew Forbes (St Mungo's Cathedral, Glasgow)

Bank Holiday Mon 4 May 2015 • 1:00 to 1:30 • Coventry Cathedral
Paul Leddington-Wright (Coventry Cathedral)

Wed 6 May 2015 • 1:00 to 1:45 • St Mary's, Hinckley
Peter Harris (St Mary's, Hinckley)

Thurs 7 May 2015 • 1:15 to 1:45 • St Paul's, Birmingham
Paul Carr (St Paul's, Birmingham)

Frid 8 May 2015 • 1:00 to 1:45 • Emmanuel Wylde Green
Andrew Fletcher (Birmingham University)

Sat 9 May 2015 • 12:00 to 1:00 • Victoria Hall, Hanley
Ian Tracey (Liverpool Cathedral/Liverpool City Organist)

Sat 9 May 2015 • 3:30 • Ellesmere College (Chapel/Great Hall
Robert Munns (Eastbourne)

Mon 11 May 2015 • 1:00 to 2:00 • Birmingham Town Hall
Thomas Trotter (Birmingham City Organist)

Mon 11 May 2015 • 1:00 to 1:30 • Coventry Cathedral
Sebastian Thomson (Bloxham School, Oxfordshire)

Tues 12 May 2015 • 1:10 to 1:45 • Warwick Road URC, Coventry
Graham Davies (St Mary the Virgin, Hayes)

Tues 12 May 2015 • 1:10 to 1:50 • Worcester Cathedral
David Aprahamian Liddle (St Barnabas, Pimlico)

Frid 15 May 2015 • 1:10 to 1:50 • Bourneville Friends Meeting House, Bourneville, Birmingham
William Weir

Sun 17 May 2015 • 3:00 to 3:45 • St James' Methodist Church, Pensnett
Andrew Biggs (Dudley)

Mon 18 May 2015 • 1:00 to 1:30 • Coventry Cathedral
Ben Bloor (Westminster Cathedral)

Tues 19 May 2015 • 12:40 to 1:20 • St Chad's, Shrewsbury
Andrew Cantrill (Royal Hospital School, Holbrook)

Thurs 21 May 2015 • 1:00 to 1:50 • Walsall Town Hall
Peter Morris (Walsall Borough Organist)

Sat 23 May 2015 • 12:00 to 12:45 • Stoke Minster
Cathy Lamb (Lichfield Cathedral)

Sat 23 May 2015 • 1:00 • St Laurence, Ludlow
Organ Students from Birmingham Conservatoire

Bank Holiday Mon 25 May • 11:00 to 11:45 • All Saints' Leamington Spa
Norman Harper (St George's Cathedral, Southwark)

Bank Holiday Mon 25 May • 11:00 • St Michael & All Angels, South Yardley
Ronald Shillingford (Holy Family, Small Heath)

Bank Holiday Mon 25 May • 1:00 to 1:30 • Coventry Cathedral
Laurence Lyndon-Jones (Chelmsford Cathedral)

Tues 26 May 2015 • 1:10 to 1:45 • Warwick Road URC, Coventry
Justin Vickery (Norway)

Wed 27 May 2015 • 1:10 to 2:00 • St Alphege, Solihull
David Houlder (Leeds Minster)

Sat 30 May 2015 • 12:00 to 1:00 • Malvern Priory
Paul Rosoman (St Luke's, Wellington, New Zealand)

Sat 30 May 2015 • 12:15 to 1:00 • St Mary's Collegiate Church, Warwick
Mark Swinton (St Mary's Collegiate Church, Warwick)

Sat 30 May 2015 • 6:30 • St Mark's, Frodesley
Ian Tracey (Liverpool Cathedral & Liverpool City Organist)

June 2015

Mon 1 June 2015 • 1:00 to 2:00 • Birmingham Town Hall
Simon Gledhill & Thomas Trotter

Mon 1 June • 1:00 to 1:30 • Coventry Cathedral
Nicholas Wearne (Birmingham Conservatoire)

Tues 2 June 2015 • 1:10 to 1:50 • Worcester Cathedral
Justin Miller (Worcester Cathedral)

Thurs 4 June 2015 • 1:15 to 1:45 • St Paul's, Birmingham
Paul Carr (St Paul's, Birmingham)

Frid 5 June 2015 • 12:40 to 1:20 • St Chad's, Shrewsbury
Simon Russell (St Mary's, Nantwich)

Frid 5 June 2015 • 1:00 to 1:45 • Emmanuel Wylde Green
Andrew Fletcher (Birmingham University)

Sun 7 June 2015 • 3:00 to 3:45 • Holy Trinity, Wordsley
Paul Carr (St Paul's, Birmingham)

Thurs 11 June 2015 • 1:10 to 2:00 • Kidderminster Town Hall
Jon Payne (St Thomas', Stourbridge)

Sat 13 June 2015 • 7:30 • Blithfield Church, Admaston, Rugeley
Cathy Lamb (Lichfield Cathedral)

Sat 13 June 2015 • 12:00 to 1:00 • Victoria Hall, Hanley
Keith Hearnshaw (Concert Organist)

Sat 13 June 2015 • 12:15 to 1:00 • St Mary's Collegiate Church, Warwick
Thomas Corns (St Mary's Collegiate Church, Warwick)

Sat 13 June 2015 • 4:00 • St Laurence, Ludlow
Henry Fairs (Birmingham University)

Mon 15 June 2015 • 1:00 to 2:00 • Birmingham Town Hall
Paul Jacobs (Julliard School, New York)

Mon 15 June • 1:00 to 1:30 • Coventry Cathedral
Peter Morris (Walsall Borough Organist)

For a complete listing of organ recitals in the UK and further details go to www.organrecitals.com
For details of recital organ specifications go to the National Pipe Organ Register at www.npor.org.uk

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Editorial Note - next newsletter is planned for June 2015, with deadline for submission of items for inclusion of 24/05/15, to Trevor Smedley by e-mail as above, or by mail to 8 The Parchments, Lichfield, Staffordshire, WS13 7NA