

FEBRUARY 2015 NEWSLETTER

RECENT LDOA VISITS/EVENTS

Wednesday 3rd December 2014, Annual Dinner

This year's Annual Dinner was again a joint event with our colleagues from the Birmingham Organists' Association and the Worcester Organists' Association, and as last year was held at The School House, Weeford. Around 40 members and guests attended.

Prior to the meal, there was a surprise presentation by the BOA Treasurer Alan Taylor to their President Mick Perrier on the occasion today of his 65th birthday.

We were privileged to have as our guest speaker Adrian Lucas, together with his charming wife. From 1996 to 2011, Adrian was Organist & Director of Music at Worcester Cathedral, during which time the new Kenneth Tickell organ came into service. In 2011 he left Worcester Cathedral to pursue a career as a freelance organist, conductor and composer, as well as starting his own recording company, Acclaim Productions.



Adrian Lucas

After being suitably nourished by excellent food and drink, we were entertained by reminiscences of our guest speaker Adrian Lucas, commencing with the humorous Bricklayer's Lament, made famous by Gerard Hoffnung's speech to the Oxford Union in 1958.

Adrian explained that he had learnt to fly and drew a number of parallels between playing the organ and flying – observing that he considered there were some transferable attributes, notably the need for timing, co-ordination and skill, and offering the definition of a 'good pilot' as one who had the same number of landings and take-offs!

Adrian is an excellent speaker, and whilst Adrian's exploits and anecdotes were most entertaining, given the target audience, I think I was not alone in wishing perhaps he

had drawn more on reminiscences from his extensive career as a Cathedral Organist and Director of Music, rather than as a pilot.

All in all a most enjoyable and convivial evening with our colleagues from local organ associations, with excellent food and service provided by The School House. TS

Saturday 17th January 2015, St Thomas of Canterbury, Walsall, and Central Methodist Hall, Walsall

St Thomas of Canterbury Church, Walsall

Our visit to St Thomas of Canterbury was prompted by a chance remark by our honorary member Peter Morris, who recommended we should visit this church because of the unusual organ and the superb acoustic of the building. Peter had written an article on 'The Organs of Walsall' for the February 2004 edition of 'The Organ' magazine, in which this instrument was one of the three featured organs.



The bright spacious interior of St Thomas of Canterbury

We were welcomed by Fr Michael McGrail, and Alan Taylor also brought along a guest from the Birmingham Organists' Association, Jonathan Thorne, who at one time was trained in Austria by Rieger, the builder of the organ at St Thomas's.

Rieger is not well-known in this country, but in fact the company was established by Franz Rieger in what is now the Czech Republic, with the installation of their first organ as far back as 1845. The political turmoil following WW2 resulted in the owners and workers of Rieger being deported to Austria where in 1946 they established a new workshop at Scharzach, Vorarlberg, under the name Rieger Orgelbau.

Rieger builds and supplies organs world-wide, but as far as we can ascertain, in addition to the organ here at St Thomas's, there are just 4 Rieger organs in the UK, located St Giles' Cathedral (Edinburgh), St Marylebone Parish

Church (London), Christ Church Cathedral (Oxford) and Clifton Cathedral (Bristol). There are also a few Rieger one manual continuo organs in the UK and Ulster. See www.rieger-orgelbau.com for more details of the company, current projects and organs installed.



Organ of St Thomas of Canterbury on the gallery

Located at one end of the West Gallery, the installation of a 2 manual 11 stop Rieger organ, with its distinctive reverse coloured keys, is thanks to Rev. James Curtin. Following a significant pools win, he gifted the organ to the church in June 1971 in fond memory of his parents John & Mary Curtin, although why the choice of Rieger remains a mystery.

The specification of the organ is:

Manual I

Metallgedeckt 8', Principal 4', Sesquialter (12.17) II, Mixtur (22.26.29) III

Manual II

Holzgedeckt 8', Rohrflöte 4', Principal 2', Quintlein 1 1/3'

Pedal

Subbass 16', Subbass 8', Pommer 4'



Jonathan Thorne at the organ of St Thomas of Canterbury

Our Rieger trained guest Jonathan was the obvious choice to first try out the organ, but things got off to a rather stuttering start, when a cypher was discovered. It appeared to be caused by a tracker in need of adjustment to allow the pallet to fully close.

Alan Taylor, playing some Healy Willan and Georg Böhm pieces, was followed by Chris Booth, Peter King, David Gumbley, Andrew McMillan, Pat Neville and yours truly.



Andrew McMillan at the organ of St Thomas of Canterbury

The touch is nice and light, even with SW/Gt coupled, although it is disconcertingly sensitive, as the very slightest touch of the key causes the pipe to speak, and could perhaps benefit from some adjustment. Interestingly, engagement of the SW/Gt coupler causes the whole Swell manual to lift up a couple of centimetres.

The organ speaks with wonderful clarity into the light and spacious church, which has acoustic tiles on the walls, perhaps for the benefit of the human voice rather than the organ? As for the voicing, Peter Morris in his article in 'The Organ' summed it up perfectly with: 'bright, somewhat nasal in tone, with very forceful choruses and yet capable of delicate effects too.'

Most welcome refreshments rounded off a fascinating visit to an unusual organ in a superb acoustic.

Central Methodist Hall, Walsall

The short ride to the centre of Walsall took us to our second venue, Central Methodist Hall. We were warmly welcomed by Rev John Davies, who gave a brief history of the hall and the organ, and handed out a detailed booklet to all members covering 250 years of history of Methodism in Walsall, and the organs of Central Methodist Hall.

The present hall was built in 1859 with seating for 1700, reconstructed in 1929, and then in 1970 the hall was floored at gallery level, providing seating for 550, the lower floor being rented out to a local charity. In 2000, the Victorian ancillary rooms to the rear of the main Hall were demolished and replaced with a suite of modern meeting rooms.

With regard to the organs of Central Hall, there is a photo of what is thought to be a Nicholson organ dating from 1859, located on the gallery at the front (Ablewell St. end) of the building. The booklet states that the present Nicholson & Lord organ was installed in the 1920's, but the NPOR indicates it dates from circa 1890. Being originally installed when the hall had a ground floor and a gallery, and moved to the opposite other end of the worship area when the Hall was reconstructed in 1929, the subsequent flooring of the gallery left the console some 7 feet below the level of the new floor, with the organist sitting in a windowless 'well', unable to see the congregation!

In 2000, the worn out pneumatic action was replaced by electric action, along with toe pistons and some tonal changes, and provided the opportunity to move the console into the worship area. Then, after 85 years of continuous use, it needed a complete rebuild, and it was decided to restore it as near as possible to its original specification, whilst retaining the extra stops and the electric action. The contract was awarded to Mike Thompson, and work started in 2011, being eventually completed in August 2012 at a cost of some £97,000. £50,000 was provided from the Heritage Lottery Fund, with the remainder having to be found from concerts, special activities and personal donations, of which there remains some £12,000 still to find.



The organ of Central Methodist Hall, Walsall

As can be seen from the picture above, the three manual organ of 2100 pipes is imposingly sited at the front of the hall, with the detached console visible on the LH side, and the current specification is:

Pedal

Open Diapason No 1 16', Open Diapason No 2 16', Bourdon 16', Violincello 8', Bass Flute 8', Fifteenth 4', Trombone 16', Tromba 8'

Choir

Stopped Diapason 8', Gamba 8', Suabe Flute 4', Piccolo 2', Larigot 1¹/₃', Sesquialtera II, Clarinet 8', Tromba 8'

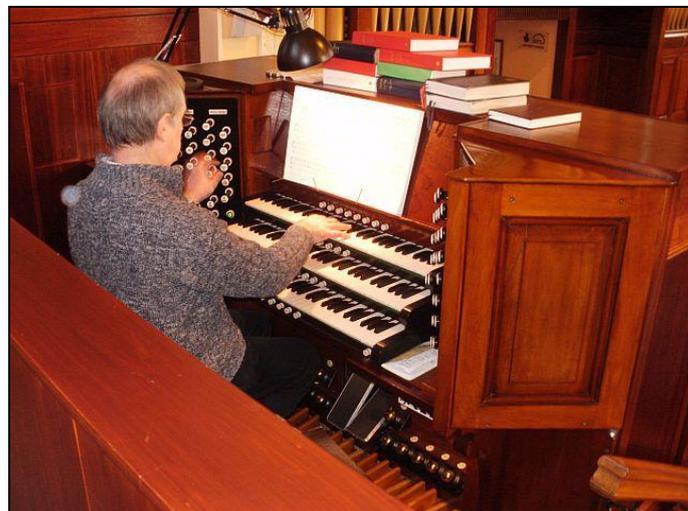
Great

Open Diapason Major 8', Open Diapason Minor 8', Clarabella 8', Salicional 8', Principal 4', Flute 4', Twelfth 2²/₃', Fifteenth 2', Mixture III, Trumpet 8'

Swell

Lieblich Bourdon 16', Horn Diapason 8', Gedackt 8', Viol d'Orchestra 8', Voix Celeste 8', Gemshorn 4', Fifteenth 2', Mixture III, Horn 8', Oboe 8'

Chris Booth was first up to sample the organ, playing War March of the Priests, then Andrew McMillan with a Chorale Prelude by Malcolm Archer and Prelude & Fugue in C by Bach, then David Gumbley, and finally yours truly, giving a first public 'airing' of Garth Edmundson's Toccata Vom Himmel Hoch.



The organ console of Central Methodist Hall, Walsall

The comprehensive specification makes this a most versatile instrument, blessed with a console that is very comfortable to play, including thumb pistons, toe pistons and an 8 channel memory to aid registration.

At the end of the visit, when most members had departed, Andrew McMillan spotted a rather splendid grand piano in the Hall, just begging to be sampled, so promptly gave an impromptu performance from memory of the whole of The Dambusters March by Eric Coates, to the delight of the Central Hall staff!

The inaugural recital on this organ was given by none other than Thomas Trotter in October 2013, with Cathy Lamb following in March 2014, and it is hoped to present one celebrity recital each year. Discussions had commenced to try and obtain the services of Carlo Curley before his sudden demise, so discussions are now under way with Nigel Ogden.

Our thanks to Rev. John Davies for his hospitality and for the welcome refreshments.

A most interesting and enjoyable afternoon for the 11 members attending, visiting two contrasting organs, with the added bonus of both venues being commendably warm. TS

[FORTHCOMING LDOA VISITS/EVENTS](#)

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

Visit commencing at 2.30 pm to St Mary's, Lichfield, for the 2015 AGM, followed by a demonstration of the organ by our student member Henry Metcalfe, and then over to

members to play the 3 manual Nicholson & Lord tracker action organ refurbished by Mike Thompson in 2010. St Mary's is located in Market Square in the centre of Lichfield; the post code for Satnav users is WS13 6LE.

Saturday 25th April 2015, Hill Street Baptist Church, Swadlincote. (Note change of date/venue)

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.

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 then 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.

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. (Note change of date/venue)

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.

Annual Dinner 2015

Date and venue TBA

NEWS FROM THE LDOA COMMITTEE

2015 Subscriptions

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

So, a gentle reminder from our Treasurer to those that 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

Margaret Turner, a friend of Clive Smith, kindly donated some surplus sheet music to our Association, to be offered to members, and 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 music at our AGM/visit to St Mary's in March.

Next Committee Meeting

The next Committee Meeting t.b.a.

MEMBERS' NEWS

New Member

We are delighted to welcome Richard Redhead as a new member. Richard doesn't play the organ, but loves listening to the organ and attending recitals. He lives in Ashbourne and heard about our Association via the flyers on display at the recital given by Colin Walsh at Lichfield Cathedral in autumn 2014.

We look forward to meeting Richard at a future event/recital.

LICHFIELD CATHEDRAL NEWS/EVENTS

Young Persons' Cathedral Organ Day 2015

Following the success of the 2013 and 2104 events, Lichfield & District Organists' Association and Lichfield Cathedral are jointly presenting 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 and Trevor Smedley are all contributing to the event. Full details are to be found on the Cathedral's

website and in the flyer accompanying this newsletter. We would be most grateful to members for helping to promote the event by bringing it to the attention of any relatives/parents with children in the 10-14 age range, and if possible displaying the flyer in your churches.

2015 Organ Recitals at the Cathedral

Details when available 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 Normal & 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 Tamar 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

London Organ Day

The 2015 London Organ Day will take place at Methodist Central Hall, Westminster, on Saturday 7th March 2015, with a theme of 'Transcriptions & Edwardiana'. Programme:

- Gerard Brooks introduces the organ and the venue, and performs music by some of his predecessors as organist of Central Hall
- Timothy Bryam-Wigfield explores the art of transcription
- James Lancelot performs a recital of music by Parry
- Rachel Cox (soprano) and Ian Tindale (Piano) perform music by Stanford
- Weston Jennings performs some of Lemare's remarkable but neglected solo organ works.

- Richard Brasier and Tom Bell perform some transcriptions and some Edwardiana!

Book and pay online via: <http://book.londonorganday.co.uk>

East Yorkshire Organ Day

This will take place on Wednesday 18th March 2015 at Hull City Hall, 9.45 am – 4.15 pm, with Gordon Stewart, John Scott-Whiteley, and John Pemberton.

West Yorkshire Organ Day

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

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

October 2015 at Bristol

Midlands Organ Day 2016

Will be held on 24th September 2016 at Nottingham.

RECENT LOCAL ORGAN RECITALS REVIEWS

Pat Neville recital at Trinity Methodist Church, Shenstone, Monday 1st December 2014

This Festive Organ Recital by our member Pat Neville, had its usual excellent support, including 6 LDOA members, and also included visitors from Tasmania.

As usual, Pat had selected a varied programme, with works from composers from the 17th century to the 21st century, including many composers new to me as well as the more familiar ones of Franck, Guilmant and Gounod. As might be expected, the festive fare included a chorale prelude on the very familiar 'In Dulci Jubilo', but with this version by the rather less than familiar composer Friedrich Wilhelm Zachau. Trumpet Voluntary by William Goodwin provided a lively conclusion to the recital.

Pat's hard work learning music and performing the recital was warmly applauded, and most deserving of the bouquet of flowers presented by Prof. Colin Fishwick. TS

Lichfield Cathedral Music Department recital at Lichfield Cathedral, Tuesday 2nd December 2014

The final recital in the 2014 Evening Series of Organ Recitals was a request programme performed by the Cathedral's 4 resident organists, Nigel Argust, Ben Lamb, Cathy Lamb and Martyn Rawles. Sadly Cathy could not be

with us as her young son had been admitted to hospital earlier in the day. We were pleased to hear at the end of the recital that Joshua and mother had returned home.

The usual arrangement of the audience sitting on the Crossing facing north with the screen in the north transept was changed, with the audience sitting in the choir stalls with the screen positioned in the Presbytery. This allowed the Phoenix organ and a grand piano to be positioned on the Crossing. In his words of welcome, the Dean observed that the choir stalls were full with extra seats set out in the centre aisle, a mark of the affection in which the Cathedral organists are held.

First off on the Hill organ was Nigel who played Trumpet Tune, which seems to have been written by everyone except Henry Purcell to whom it was originally attributed! Nigel played an arrangement by Robert Gower and Martyn's identifiable hand turned the pages! Nigel followed this with Walford-Davies' Solemn Melody written as a prelude to Milton's *Ode on Time* and performed at the Southport Music Festival in 1909. (George Thalben-Ball improvised on this Melody at the end of a broadcast service during World War 2, and a piece which we now know as his Elegy in B flat.)

In a substitution to the published programme, Martyn played the mighty Toccata in D by Marcel Lanquetuit, born in 1894 and died as recently as 1985. Sadly much of Lanquetuit's music was destroyed in a house fire in 1940. This was a 'Rawles family event' since the identifiable hand of Harriet was present to turn the pages! (Sheet music often has a mind of its own, but when Harriet is turning, the pages are placed firmly on the music desk, deft adjustments are made and the music page concedes defeat!)

Ben followed with a Bach short Prelude *O Mensch bewein* BWV 622. This was beautifully played without the use of organ shoes! When I suggested to Ben during the interval that we should pass around a plate to raise funds to buy a pair of organ shoes, he replied 'you do not play the piano with gloves on the hand!'

The first half ended with a rousing performance of Henri Mulet's Carillon-Sortie performed by Martyn. This piece is lucky to survive since in 1937 the composer burnt all of his manuscripts. Thankfully Carillon-Sortie had been published prior to the fire.

During the interval Lichfield Cathedral Chorus's new CD of music for Christmastide was on sale, which includes organ solos by Martyn Rawles and LDOA student member Henry Metcalfe. After the refreshments break, Martyn Rawles opened the second half with Rhapsodies sur des Noël's on the Hill organ, drawing on 3 principal carols for its material. The first section is based on Joseph est bien marié, and conjures up images of tolling bells. The second quiet section uses Adeste Fideles, leading to the final section, in which Angels from the Realms of Glory is combined with the second carol, and then harking back to the first carol for a triumphant blazing conclusion.

Mendelssohn's Andante with Variations followed, with Ben Lamb playing the delicious opening hymn-like theme on the Phoenix organ, before Martyn on the Hill organ joined Ben to play the tune through different sonorities,

harmonies and metres, and finally Ben returning to the opening theme to reach a quiet close.

Ben then swapped instruments to perform Adagio Sostenuto from Rachmaninov's Piano Concerto No 2, with Nigel Argust playing the orchestral part on the Phoenix organ. A most effective combination!

Andante from Handel's Organ Concerto Op 4 No 2 followed with Martyn Rawles on the Hill organ alternating with Nigel Argust on the Phoenix organ.

The 'Grande Finale' to tonight's recital provided the customary end of year knock about with what was described in the programme notes as 'a f.a.b. musical puppetuum mobile'. Starting with a familiar-sounding 5, 4, 3, 2, 1 count down, then 'Thunderbirds are go', the Thunderbirds theme was unleashed upon us, comprising Martyn on the Hill organ, Nigel on the Phoenix organ, and Ben showing his versatility with his third different instrument of the evening on snare drums! Quite a finale!

Despite the unavoidable loss of Cathy Lamb's contribution to the evening's activities, a terrific final organ recital of the year, with for once an attendance befitting of the musical talent on display at Lichfield Cathedral every day of the year, and including commendably good support from at least 14 LDOA members/partners. John Allen & TS

Andrew Fletcher recital at Emmanuel Wylde Green, Friday 5th December 2014

The gremlins had been at work on the organ this morning, but happily the organ tuner had managed to cure the cyphering Swell reeds on middle 'C', but rather to the detriment of Andrew's practice time!

Continuing the 'Hymns & Psalms' theme of this recital series, two pieces entitled Wachet auf, the first a bold opening provided by Karg-Elert, then the rather more familiar gentler offering by J S Bach.

Staying with J S Bach, choral partita O Gott, du frommer Gott was followed by the beautiful Psalm Prelude Set 1, No 2 by Howells, then the decidedly lively festive Toccata on 'Veni Emmanuel' by Andrew Carter.

In place of the next piece on the published programme, Andrew substituted a commission by Paul, until very recently Andrew's long-standing page turner. Andrew was commissioned to write a piece for Paul's first granddaughter a couple of years ago, and this latest commission was for Paul's second grand-daughter, Xenia Rose, and being present for this premier of the piece, she seemed to approve.

For today's finale, Andrew turned to Percy Whitlock and Exultemus, providing a rousing conclusion to the recital, with lots of Willis reeds deployed.

Following presentation of poinsettias by Andrew to his page turner David and the 'tea ladies', it was off to the church hall to sample the festive mulled wine and mince pies. TS

**Winchester Cathedral Choir/Thomas Trotter Concert at
Symphony Hall, Tuesday 9th December 2014**

As is now the tradition, Thomas Trotter's very popular December recital featured a foremost guest cathedral choir, with Thomas providing the accompaniment and a short solo organ 'spot'. Winchester Cathedral Choir was Thomas's guests this year, conducted by Andrew Lumsden, making a very welcome return to the Midlands, as of course from 1992 to 2002 he was Organist & Master of the Choristers at Lichfield Cathedral.

Andrew brought with him not only the 12 lay clerks and the boy choristers, but also the Winchester Cathedral Girl Choristers, which were founded in 1999, and who sing one of the Sunday services each week in the Cathedral.

The choir's programme comprised Sussex Carol (Arr. Ledger), Away in a Manger (Arr. Hill), Wither's Rocking Carol (Arr. Lumsden), Tomorrow shall be my Dancing Day (Gardner), San's Day Carol (Arr. Rutter), Noel nouvelet (Arr. Jackson), O magnum mysterium (Lauridsen), Calypso Carol (Arr. Bertalot), Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas (Arr. Gritton), Jingle Bells (Arr. Westley), and The Twelve Days of Christmas (Arr. Rutter) with lusty contributions from the audience for two carols.

The singing of the choir was outstanding, with much of it sung unaccompanied, and with Thomas Trotter giving his usual immaculately judged accompaniment when called upon. For his 'solo spot', Thomas continued the festive mood with two of his own superb arrangements of Sleigh Ride, with first the ever-popular Leroy Anderson version, followed by Prokofiev's version (Troika from Lieutenant Kijé).

The deservedly profuse applause demanded an encore, Bethlehem Down by Peter Warlock, and as Andrew Lumsden observed 'it is most suitable for a choir as it was written in a pub!'

A superb choice of programme, and immaculately performed, which certainly served to raise a capacity audience's festive spirits. TS

**Andrew Fletcher recital at Emmanuel Wylde Green,
Friday 2nd January 2015**

Continuing the theme for this series of 'Hymns & Psalms', Te Deum by Langlais is based on plainsong and provided a rather strident opening to today's recital. Two J S Bach preludes from the Orgnenbüchlein for the New Year followed, with first a solemn look back to the old year with Das alt Jahr vergangen ist BWV 614, then the rather more joyful In Dir ist Freude BWV 615.

St Peter by Harold Darke was followed by Mendelssohn's Sonata No 5 in D, with the opening Chorale thought to be actually written by Mendelssohn, followed by Andante con moto, and finally the uplifting Allegro Maestoso. Next, the gentle Brother James's Air, to the words of the 23rd Psalm, by Searle Wright, then Wolvercote by Edward Matthews.

Andrew's choice to end the recital was a work new to me, Basil Harwood's Sonata No 1, playing the Andante and then the beginning and end of the last movement

(Maestoso), providing a suitably grand full organ climax to the recital. TS

**Peter Morris recital at Walsall Town Hall, Thursday 15th
January 2015**

Peter Morris was joined for today's recital by his wife Jane Eminson, an experienced flautist who is currently undertaking a postgraduate flute course at Birmingham Conservatoire. Usually Peter very ably manages his own page turning, but as well as performing Jane also provided the luxury of a page turner for today's delve into the 'M' box.

Purcell J Mansfield was the first composer from the 'M' box. With two musical parents, and named after his father's favourite composer, he gained his FRCO by the age of 18, and was in fact a powerful supporter and Vice President of the IAO. His concert Scherzo in F, written for Leeds Town Hall organ provided a lively opening to the recital.

Recit and Basse de Cromorne by Louis Marchand were followed by Benedetto Marcello's Sonata Op 2 No 1 in F, a short flute sonata with 4 movements - an elegant 1st movement, a bright 2nd movement, a short sedate 3rd movement and a jaunty dance-like final movement.

The delve into the 'M' box unearthed St David's Suite, a composition from many years ago by a certain Peter Morris, and still in manuscript form. A very worthy work indeed, given a long overdue airing by the composer at Walsall Town Hall.

Following Mendelssohn's Prelude & Fugue No 2 in G from a book of 3, a return to the stage for Jane to perform Sonata de Chiesa with Peter accompanying on the organ.

Chorus of Praise by the little-known Reginald Martin was followed by one of the favourite finales to organ recitals, Carillon Sortie by Henry Mulet, and providing a suitably grand climax to today's excellent husband and wife concert. TS

**Thomas Trotter recital at Symphony Hall, Monday 19th
January 2015**

Today's recital opened with one of the less frequently performed J S Bach Prelude & Fugues, the A Major BWV 536. Then to four 16th century pieces, with La shy Myze, Belle et jeune fleur de quinze ans and Salterelle being arrangement of Renaissance dances from different countries, and Upon La Mi Re being from a manuscript from the early 1500's, using the notes A, E and D. Thomas described the pieces as 'fun to play', in part due to the range of registrations he employed, ranging from the Voix Humaine to the Klais's WMD's - the En Chamade Trompettes!

Francis Grier began his musical career at Christ Church Cathedral Oxford, but now pursues a dual career as a psychoanalyst and composer, as well as performing with his two talented daughters playing the piano in chamber music concerts. Deo Gratis was commissioned for Thomas Trotter by 'Sounds like Birmingham' in 1992, and is inspired by the form and texture of one of J S Bach's best-known organ pieces, Toccata, Adagio & Fugue in C.

The Sorcerer's Apprentice by Paul Dukas became universally recognisable when, 43 years after its original performance, it was used in the score of Disney's cartoon film Fantasia. Thomas arranged this transcription for Symphony Hall's Klais organ two years ago, and it is a sufficiently brilliant but fiendishly difficult arrangement for Thomas to observe that it was 'too early in the day for such a complicated piece.' Stunning performance!

Another Thomas Trotter transcription of a piece also used by Disney, Ponchielli's Dance of the Hours, provided a rip roaring finale to today's recital. TS

Organ recital at Lichfield Methodist Church, Saturday 24th January 2015

Having been married in Lichfield Methodist Church in 1992, and not been in the church since its recent major refurbishment, hearing that one of our long-standing members Eric Lunt was to participate in an organ recital provided the incentive to attend this event.

With its now impressive access from Tamworth St through two pairs of glass doors, there has been a transformation to the church, which has gained a bright and airy feel, with the altar now at the far end of the building. The massive improvement in the church and its facilities has been achieved at a cost as far as organ lovers are concerned, in that after a lot of soul-searching it was reluctantly decided the pipe organ would have to 'go', due to the space limitations and the cost of relocating/rebuilding it. The pipe organ has been replaced by a two manual Allen electronic organ, which is no doubt adequate for the needs of this church, but the loss of yet another pipe organ is still regrettable.

Proceeds from this Organ Concert go towards this year's Mission & Outreach project, the Francisco Rojas School in Peru, to fund free education for the local children. The organists who volunteered their services were Marian Brannan, the present organist, Christine Hands, and LDOA member Eric Lunt, who up to 4 or 5 years ago was the organist here for many years.

Marian Brannan provided a lively opening to the concert with Handel's Arrival of the Queen of Sheba, followed by two Gavottes, by Grieg and Wesley, the Slow Movement from the New World Symphony by Grieg, and Allegro from Voluntary in D by Boyce.

Christine Hands love for the theatre organ saw a change of mood, playing a selection from Oklahoma by Rogers and Hammerstein. Eric Lunt then took us to the interval with a return to more classical repertoire in the form of Prelude, Fugue & Chaconne in C Major by Buxtehude, Rheinberger's Trio in G Minor, finishing with the sublime final movement Andante tranquillo from Mendelssohn's 3rd Sonata.

Following the interval, Eric continued with Berceuse sur les Paroles Classiques in A by Vierne, J S Bach's beautiful Passiontide chorale prelude O Mensch, bewein' dein' Sünde gross BWV 622, and finally Toccata in E minor by Pachelbel. Eric's hard work in recently passing his Grade 8 Organ has clearly borne fruit on the evidence of his playing tonight.

Marian Brannan then took over with an eclectic mix of pieces, commencing with part of the well-known Toccata by Dubois, then Cole Porter's Anything Goes, Ladies in Lavender by Nigel Hess, Scott Joplin's The Entertainer and finally the jolly romp that is Lefébure-Wély's Sortie in E Flat.

Great credit to all three organists for giving so generously of their time to provide a splendid evening's entertainment to an appreciative near-capacity audience. TS

Andrew Fletcher recital at Emmanuel Wylde Green, Friday 30th January 2015

Today's recital was brought forward a week from the normal monthly slot to enable Andrew to jet off on Sunday to the sun of South Africa for a 3 week vacation.

Continuing the 'Hymns & Psalms' theme of this series, Karg-Elert's Praise the Lord, O My Soul provided an uplifting opening to today's recital, building as it does to a full organ climax. Next, two pieces by Herbert Howells, first 'doffing his cap' in the direction of Thomas Tallis with Master Tallis's Testament, followed by Psalm Prelude Set 1 No 3, 'Yea thou I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil', with its sombre opening, gradually building to a climax then back to a quiet ending.

Then to what for me was today's highlight with Mendelssohn's chorale based Sonata No 1, with three movements, culminating in the thrilling but challenging Allegro assai vivace.

Two works by Percy Whitlock concluded the recital, with Intermezzo (Psalm 37) followed by Sortie (Psalm 68) with an 'Elgarian melody', quiet at first, then building to finish majestically on full organ for the last 7 bars.

Having explained at an earlier Wylde Green recital that he was suffering from focal dystonia, also known as musician's cramp, straight after today's recital he was to be videoed whilst playing to see if any treatment could be identified to address the problem affecting his right hand. We sincerely wish Andrew every success in this quest. TS

Martyn Rawles recital at Lichfield Cathedral, Saturday 31st January 2015

Performing his third different recital programme in 8 days, tonight's recital by Martyn Rawles of the whole of Olivier Messiaen's 'La Nativité du Seigneur' seems to have now become something of a tradition at Lichfield Cathedral on the eve of Candlemass, this being its third successive year, but with thankfully a rather better attendance on this blustery winter's evening than last year.

Whilst not to everyone's taste, Messiaen's work is to be experienced rather than listened to as with a normal recital, and the Cathedral's candlelit quire perfectly complemented the act of devotion that is Messiaen's masterpiece. The suite is divided into nine movements to honour the Virgin's maternity. All are preceded by a compilation of Biblical quotations, explaining the meaning of the movement, helpfully reproduced in the programme notes to aid our appreciation of the work.

In the contrasting movements, Martyn exploited to the full the range of colours of the Hill organ. The final movement, 'Dieu Parmi Nous', is often played as a solo piece, with the toccata culminating in a sustained final triumphant chord, enhanced by four descending thunderous double pedal notes, filling the Cathedral with an absolutely overwhelming sound.

Wanting to show their appreciation to Martyn, yet reluctant to spoil the calm that had descended upon the Cathedral, there followed a prolonged silence, eventually broken by rapturous applause for a quite inspired performance by Martyn Rawles, clearly one now honed to perfection over the last three years. (Well worth viewing are YouTube clips of either Gillian Weir at St Ouen, or Olivier Latry at Notre Dame, playing 'Dieu Parmi Nous'.) TS

VACANCY

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 a recital at 12.00 – 12.45 pm on Saturday 23rd May 2015 at Stoke Minster.

Martyn Rawles

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

- 1.15 – 2.00 pm on Thursday 26th March 2015 at St Mary Redcliffe, Bristol, where Martyn was once a chorister
- 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 19th February 2015.

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

- 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 end April 2015)

February 2015

Sun 1 February 2015 • 3:00 to 3:45 • Holy Trinity, Wordsley

Paul Carr (St Paul's, Birmingham)

Mon 2 February 2015 • 1:00 to 2:00 • Birmingham Town Hall

Thomas Trotter with the Birmingham Conservatoire Choir conducted by LDOA honorary member Paul Spicer.

Thurs 5 February 2015 • 1:15 to 1:45 • St Paul's, Birmingham

Paul Carr (St Paul's, Birmingham)

Frid 6 February 2015 • 12:40 to 1:20 • St Chad's, Shrewsbury

Simon Hogan (Southwell Minster)

Sun 15 February 2015 • 3:00 • The Buttermarket, Shrewsbury

Michael Wooldridge

Mon 16 February 2015 • 1:00 to 2:00 • Birmingham Town Hall

Simon Johnson (St Paul's Cathedral)

Shrove Tues 17 February 2015 • 7:30 • St Andrew's, Netherton

Paul Carr (St Paul's, Birmingham)

Thurs 19 February 2015 • 1:00 to 1:50 • Walsall Town Hall

Peter Morris (Walsall Borough Organist)

Sat 21 February 2015 • 12:00 to 1:00 • Malvern Priory

Graham Davies (St Mary the Virgin, Hayes)

Sat 21 February 2015 • 12:00 to 12:45 • Stoke Minster

Jonathan Eyre (Bradford Cathedral)

Tues 24 February 2015 • 1:00 to 1:50 • St Andrew's, Rugby

Philip J Bricher (Holy Trinity, Northampton)

Wed 25 February 2015 • 1:10 to 2:00 • St Alphege, Solihull

Nicholas Johnson (St Alphege, Solihull)

Sat 28 February 2015 • 3:30 • Ellesmere College (Chapel/Great Hall)

Gerry Howe (Oswestry Parish Church)

March 2015

Sun 1 March 2015 • 3:00 to 3:45 • Holy Trinity, Wordsley

Paul Carr (St Paul's, Birmingham)

Mon 2 March 2015 • 1:00 to 2:00 • Birmingham Town Hall

Thomas Trotter

Thurs 5 March 2015 • 1:15 to 1:45 • St Paul's, Birmingham

David Saint (St Chad's Cathedral, Birmingham)

Frid 6 March 2015 • 1:00 to 1:45 • Emmanuel Wyld Green

Andrew Fletcher (Birmingham University)

Sat 7 March 2015 • 12:00 to 1:00 • Victoria Hall, Hanley

Simon Gledhill (Concert Organist)

Sat 7 March 2015 • 5:00 to 6:00 • Guild Chapel, Stratford-upon-Avon

Alexander Berry (Ely Cathedral)

Mon 16 March 2015 • 1:00 to 2:00 • Symphony Hall Birmingham

Thomas Trotter

Tues 17 March 2015 • 12:40 to 1:20 • St Chad's, Shrewsbury

Paul Pinel (St George's Chapel, Windsor)

Thurs 19 March 2015 • 1:00 to 1:50 • Walsall Town Hall

Peter Morris (Walsall Borough Organist)

Sun 22 March 2015 • 3:00 • The Buttermarket, Shrewsbury

David Ivory (Mechanical Music Museum, Cotton)

Wed 25 March 2015 • 1:10 to 2:00 • St Alphege, Solihull

Claudia Grinnell (Peterhouse College, Cambridge)

Sat 28 March 2015 • 12:00 to 1:00 • Malvern Priory

Kristiaan Seynhave (National Basilica, Brussels)

Sat 28 March 2015 • 12:00 to 12:45 • Stoke Minster

Christopher Enston (St Mary the Virgin, Mold)

Mon 30 March 2015 • 1:00 to 2:00 • Birmingham Town Hall

Thomas Trotter

April 2015

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

Paul Carr (St Paul's, Birmingham)

Easter Sun 5 April 2015 • 3:00 to 3:45 • Holy Trinity, Wordsley

Paul Carr (St Paul's, Birmingham)

Frid 10 April 2015 • 1:00 to 1:45 • Emmanuel Wyld Green

Andrew Fletcher (Birmingham University)

Mon 13 April 2015 • 1:00 to 2:00 • Birmingham Town Hall

Thomas Trotter

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)

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)

Mon 27 April 2015 • 1:00 to 2:00 • Birmingham Town Hall

Tom Winpenny (St Albans Cathedral & Abbey)

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

LICHFIELD & DISTRICT ORGANISTS' ASSOCIATION CONTACTS

President: Martyn Rawles, FRCO

Chairman: David Gumbley, 0121 308 4845, e-mail Davidgumbley@msn.com

Secretary: Pam Strong, 01543 433368, e-mail Pamstrong5@aol.com

Treasurer: Mike Rudd, 01543 480411, e-mail mike.rudd@fotas.co.uk

Newsletter Editor: Trevor Smedley, 01543 319329, e-mail trevorsmedley@ntlworld.com

Editorial Note - next newsletter is planned for April 2015, with deadline for submission of items for inclusion of 24/03/15, to Trevor Smedley by e-mail as above, or by mail to 8 The Parchments, Lichfield, Staffordshire, WS13 7NA