

JUNE 2011 NEWSLETTER

RECENT LDOA VISITS

Saturday 9th April 2011 – visit to St Peter's Church Maney, Sutton Coldfield

The visit was at the kind invitation of our Chairman David Gumbley, who is Organist and Director of Music at St Peter's Church, and the visit was combined with our 2011 AGM, matters arising from which are covered under separate heading following this visit report.

The church was built on land purchased from Emmanuel College, and St Peter's was consecrated on 28th June 1905 by the Bishop of Birmingham, the Rt Revd Charles Gore, gaining full parish status in 1907. As originally consecrated, the church was incomplete owing to lack of funds, but in the late 1920's it was decided to build the final west bay and tower, the extension being consecrated by Bishop Barnes on 29th Sept 1935. There is also a large church hall with full facilities to accommodate many activities and events which take place at this very vibrant and well supported church.

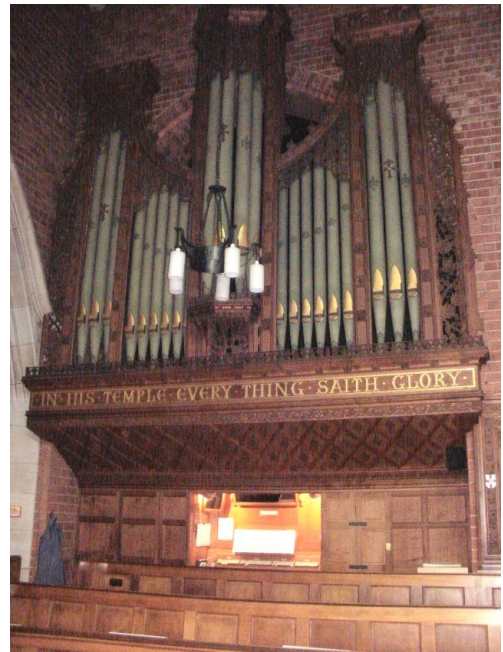


The Nicholson organ of St Peter's Church, Maney

The organ stands in the south east corner of the church, with the ornately carved front case in the chancel, and the organ chamber having an opening at the side through a screen in the stone archway into the south transept. The 3 manual organ was built and installed by Nicholson when the church was first built, and its action was originally tubular pneumatic. In 1939, Nicholson's renovated the organ, electrifying the action and adding the Twelfth, Fifteenth stops to the Great, and the Mixture and Oboe stops to the Swell. A recital (inaugural recital following the rebuild?) was given on the organ on 27th March 1939 by G D Cunningham, one of Thomas Trotter's illustrious predecessors as Birmingham City Organist and at the time President of the Royal College of Organists. I'm greatly

indebted to Nicholson's for providing a copy of the programme for this recital, which shows the specification after the 1939 rebuild and the recital pieces, comprising:

Tocatta & Fugue in D Minor – J S Bach
Andante Cantabile, from Symphony in C Minor – Hayden
Chorale in A Minor, no 3 – C Franck
Larghetto in F Sharp Minor – S S Wesley
Allegro Vivace from 5th Symphony – Widor
Andantino in D Flat – Chauvet
Scherzo from 5th Sonata – Guilman
Canon in B Minor – Schumann
Tocatta from Esquisses Byzantines – Mulet



The ornately carved chancel casework of the organ
of St Peter's Church, Maney

Overhaul and reconditioning was carried out by Nicholson's in 1955. It then seems there were further changes carried out around 1974 by Tom Sheffield, with extra stops being added to the Choir, the Clarinet moved from the Choir and changed to a Krummorn playable from the Great and Pedal, and the addition of a Trombone ex Burton-on-Trent Town Hall.

In the 2006 rebuild by Nicholson's, the main changes made were a Trumpet (2nd hand) on the Choir installed on a new chest, reversal of the 1974 change by restoring the Clarinet to the Choir, the wind pressure reduced on the pedal Trombone (apparently it used to part hair at 50 paces before the reduction!), a new pedal board, and a 16 channel computer capture system installed.

The very comprehensive 31 speaking stop full romantic specification as it stands today is:

Pedal

Harmonic Bass 32', Violone 16', Large Bourdon 16', Small Bourdon 16', Bass Flute 8', Octave Flute 4', Trombone 16'

Choir

Dulciana 8', Vox Celeste 8', Lieblich Gedeckt 8', Flute 4', Piccolo 2', Larigot 1¹/₃, Clarinet 8', Trumpet 8'

Great

Bourdon 16', Large Open Diapason 8', Small Open Diapason 8', Clarabella 8', Principal 4', Twelfth 2²/₃, Fifteenth 2', Mixture II, Trumpet 8'

Swell

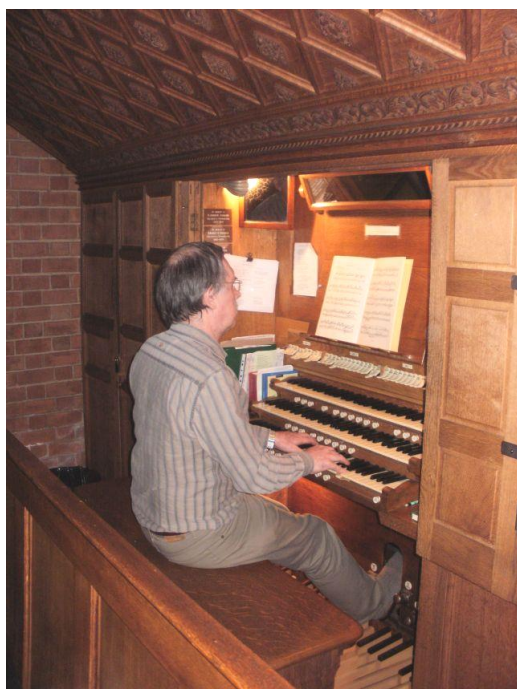
Bourdon 16', Violin Diapason 8', Stopped Diapason 8', Principal 4', Mixture II, Cornopean 8', Oboe 8', Tremulant.

Accessories

Very comprehensive range of couplers, including octave and sub octave, a very useful Gt/Ped Pistons Combined, a 16 channel computer capture system, with 6 general and 6 per division thumb pistons, and corresponding toe pistons to the Great and Swell.

To demonstrate the organ, a short recital followed with Pam Strong opening proceedings with Buxtehude's Prelude & Fugue in G Minor. David Gumbley then followed with Postlude in C Major by Henry Smart, comprising a mixture of styles with block chords and counterpoint, the rondo tune keeps coming back and 'ending in a heap' (David's own description - not mine!). After two very professional performances, it fell to yours truly to attempt to maintain the high standard, performing the first three movements of Mendelssohn's Sonata No 2. (My contribution arose as a result of David Gumbley generously allowing me to practice on the St Peter's organ on Wednesday mornings - an real treat for me.)

It was then over to members for their opportunity to put the organ through its paces, and Pat Neville, Andrew McMillan and Colin Brookes certainly seemed to enjoy themselves.



Andrew McMillan at the organ of St Peter's, Maney

As might be expected from the specification, the organ produces a very fine sound and is suited to music by a wide range of composers. The organ gives a full rich sound and has some splendid reed stops – a fine Trumpet stop playable from the Great and Choir, a delightful Oboe on the Swell, a Cornopean which adds some fullness to the Swell and the 16' Trombone, which adds some significant 'oomph' to the pedal department, despite the previously mentioned reduction in pressure. The keyboard and recently replaced pedal board actions make this fine Nicholson organ a joy to play.

Chris Stormont commented that he was surprised the volume wasn't rather louder, and we concluded that the reason was likely to be that the sound has to pass from the organ chamber through two stone archways to reach the nave, with the arch into the South Transept being rather low. There is also a large stone pillar at the front RH corner of the organ chamber, which presents a substantial obstacle to the passage of sound from the organ chamber into the nave. Behind the front pipes of the main case, the remaining pipes are set well back, and we surmised this may well be a throwback to the days when the action was tubular pneumatic.

We are most appreciative of the hospitality of David Gumbley, ably assisted by Pam Strong, for hosting the visit and provision of very welcome drinks and nibbles. Our thanks also to Revd Dr Matthew Rhodes, Vicar of St Peter's.

Acknowledgements to Nicholson's for their assistance in providing historical information from their job files on the changes made to the organ over the years.

TS

[2011 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING](#)

The AGM was held at St Peter's Church, Maney, Sutton Coldfield as part of our visit reported above. Thirteen members attended, including new member William Alexander who joined today, and matters arising likely to be of general interest to members are as follows:

- The present Committee was re-elected en bloc, and it was proposed and seconded that Clive Smith, who has regularly attended Committee Meetings as Publicity Officer, be formally elected to the Committee. We would also like to encourage one of our younger members to put themselves forward to join the Committee.
- The bank balance is healthy and it was therefore agreed that the subscription rate for 2012 would remain unchanged.
- Pat Neville handed out Standing Order forms as she would like to encourage members to pay subscriptions in future by standing order rather than cash or cheques.
- The draft Constitution was formally ratified by the meeting, and subject to one or two grammatical corrections, is now adopted as our Association's Constitution.

- Our present auditor does not wish to continue, so Mike Rudd, a recent new member, has kindly agreed to act as auditor for the 2011 Accounts.

FORTHCOMING LDOA VISITS

Friday 24th June 2011 – President's Evening at Lichfield Cathedral

Visit to Lichfield Cathedral at the kind invitation of our President Martyn Rawles, commencing at 5.30 pm with Evensong, followed by Open Choir practice, and then opportunity for members to play the magnificent four manual Hill organ. Drinks and nibbles.

Saturday 15th October 2011 visit to Liverpool (extra visit)

Visit by members who have already put their names forward for this visit in conjunction with the Leicester & District Organists' Association on their visit by coach to Liverpool, visiting/playing at Mossley Hill Parish Church and Liverpool's Metropolitan (Catholic) Cathedral where we will have the opportunity to play their 4 manual Walker organ, and a 2 manual Rushworth & Dreaper Crypt organ.

Then it's on to Liverpool's Anglican Cathedral for Evensong at 3pm followed by the highlight of the visit – the 85th Anniversary Organ Recital by Prof. Ian Tracey on the 5 manual Willis organ, the largest pipe organ in the UK.

Saturday 22nd October 2011 visit to organ builder Peter Collins' factory and Oakham School Chapel

The organ builder Peter Collins' factory, which is fully equipped with pipe making, joinery and all other facilities needed for organ building, is located at Melton Mowbray. The visit commences at 11 am at the factory, and Peter Collins is making arrangements for us to then visit nearby Oakham School Chapel in the afternoon, where in 1992/3 they installed a 3-manual 32-speaking stop tracker action organ. Those of you fortunate enough to go on our visit to Nicholson's factory in January 2009 will recall what a fascinating insight this gave into the organ builder's art, and we're sure this visit will be just as absorbing.

Saturday 14th January 2012 visit to St Oswald's Parish Church, Asbourne

Visit by kind invitation of Organist Michael Hall at 11am, following planned restoration and enhancement work on the fine 3 manual Hill organ.

NEWS FROM THE LDOA COMMITTEE

Children and the Organ

To maintain the playing of organs in our churches, the Committee is conscious of the need to stimulate interest of the younger generation in the organ. Following the feedback from the Derby & District Organists' Assoc. on their initiative, it was agreed that we needed to arrange a separate meeting to fully discuss how we take this important issue forward. We were very grateful that Martyn

Rawles was able to attend this Committee Meeting, and he also is clearly very passionate about this subject.

Honorary Membership

Following the appointment of Martyn Rawles as our President, we are delighted to announce that Cathy and Ben Lamb, Joint Directors of Music at Lichfield Cathedral, have accepted honorary membership of our Association.

Annual Dinner 2012

The Annual Dinner in 2012 will be moved back to mid-week, and it is intended to try a different venue.

Surplus Organ Music

As reported in previous newsletters, following the death of her husband James, Margaret Pinder generously donated some 20 boxes of his music to the organists of Lichfield Cathedral, with remaining music to be offered for sale in due course to LDOA members, and with any revenue going to LDOA funds. Some members have purchased scores, but there is still a quantity of music remaining, and if other members are interested in purchasing any of the remainder, they are invited to contact Pat Neville on 01543 481195 to make arrangements to view.

Next Committee Meeting is at 2 pm Tuesday 21st June 2011, at Weeford Church.

MEMBERS' NEWS

New Members

Our membership continues to go from strength to strength, through personal recommendations, advertising flyers, and our website. We are delighted to welcome the following new members joining us since the last newsletter, and I believe now taking our membership to 53:

Peter Bowes

Peter lives in Tamworth and works as Safety & Environmental Director for Virgin Trains in Birmingham.

Stuart Ramsden

Until his retirement from ITN, Stuart was a graphics designer. He has a Technics organ at home, and is learning the organ via the Open University. Stuart lives in Lichfield.

William Alexander

William joined at the AGM/visit to Maney, and is learning to play his Viscount home organ. He is retired and lives in Burntwood.

We look forward to meeting them at our future events.

Martyn Rawles' Wedding

Our President Martyn Rawles married his fiancée Harriet at 2 pm on 28th May at Lichfield Cathedral. The service was conducted by The Revd Canon Wealands Bell, bringing his customary irreverent sense of humour to the proceedings, with Cathy Lamb one of three bridesmaids

and Honorary Assistant Organist Nigel Argust at the Hill organ.

With such a wealth of music at their disposal, I'm sure members will be interested in their choice of service music. Prelude & Fugue ('St Anne Fugue') in E flat BWV 552 was their choice of music before the service, with Trumpet Tune by Purcell for the entry of the bride. The hymns chosen were 'All my hope on God is founded', 'How shall I sing that majesty', and 'O perfect Love all human thought transcending'. Fauré's Cantique de Jean Racine was sung by the choir during the signing of the register, and the recessional was the very popular Toccata from Symphony No 5 by Widor. Nigel Argust is to be congratulated on his superb playing throughout the service, with special mention for his playing of the Widor, combining the nave organ division with the main organ to produce a wonderful climax to the service.

As Martyn and Harriet emerged through the main West End doors of the Cathedral, they were met with the Cathedral Bells ringing forth, bright sunshine, but a rather cool blustery wind making for a chilly photo shoot.



The happy couple - Martyn & Harriet at the West Front of Lichfield Cathedral

On behalf of the Committee and all the members, may we take this opportunity of offering our Congratulations, and Very Best Wishes to Martyn and Harriet for a long and happy marriage.

[LICHFIELD CATHEDRAL NEWS/EVENTS](#)

2011 Organ Recitals

Saturday 4th June 2011, 7.30 pm

Concert of 'Choral Greats' performed by Lichfield Cathedral Chorus, conducted by Ben Lamb with organist Cathy Lamb. The concert includes Handel's Zadok the Priest and three works by Parry, but as there are also organ works, it seemed likely to be of interest to members.

Friday 8th July 2011, 12 noon

Recital as part of The 30th Lichfield Festival by Peter King,

Director of Music at Bath Abbey. Peter was a former Assistant Organist at Lichfield Cathedral, and also the founder of Lichfield Cathedral Chamber Choir.

Tuesday 13th September 2011, 7:30 pm

Cathy Lamb, Joint Director of Music at Lichfield Cathedral. A programme of Cathy's personal favourites includes music by Bach, Fauré, Wagner and Ives' Variations on America.

Tuesday 11th October 2011, 7:30 pm

Martyn Rawles, Organist Lichfield Cathedral.

The theme of the programme is anniversaries that fall in 2011, and will include works by Alain, Duruflé, Respighi and Guilmant.

Tuesday 8th November 2011, 7:30 pm

Lichfield Cathedral Music Dept playing their annual extravaganza of duets, trios and audience requests. Requests are invited, and should be submitted to martyn.rawles@lichfield-cathedral.org.

Martyn Rawles has confirmed that although a series of lunchtime recitals is intended for this year, it is 'still evolving'. We will pass on details of any other lunchtime recitals when they are finalised.

Given the musical talent we are blessed with in the organists at the Cathedral, can I make a special plea to LDOA members to do your utmost to support our President and these recitals.

The Hill Organ of Lichfield Cathedral

Martyn Rawles has asked me to mention to members that the current (May/July 2011) issue of 'The Organ' magazine features as its headline article the history of the Hill organ of Lichfield Cathedral, from the middle of the 19th century to the present. Martyn is the author of this article, which gives an enthralling insight into the struggle to overcome the longstanding problem of leading a packed congregation in the nave without deafening those in the Quire, only finally resolved with the highly successful installation of a nave organ in 2000. Well worth a read!

The Early English Organ Project

Martyn Rawles updated us on this project to bring two reconstructed Tudor organs to Lichfield Cathedral (see the February 2011 Newsletter for details of this project). He is awaiting a response from the RCO, but he is reconciled to the organs not coming to the Cathedral until 2012. There has been a good response from our sister associations in the Midlands region willing to lend their support to the project. We will advise you of progress on this project in future newsletters.

Lichfield Cathedral Psalmathon

The event took place over a period of 24 hours on 4/5th February 2011, with all the choirs associated with the Cathedral singing their way through 150 psalms, and to date has raised over £9,000 in aid of the Cathedral's East End Appeal.

FEATURE FOR THIS MONTH

Our new member Peter Bowes (See Members' News) has kindly sent me a write-up of a visit he made recently to notable organs in Paris, and I thought you may also find the article of interest:

An Organ Enthusiast In Paris

A busy fortnight's family holiday in France concluded with me staying on for Easter Sunday in Paris – whilst the rest of the family went home to recover (and Egg Hunt). I planned visits to Saint Sulpice, Notre Dame and Saint Eustache, interspersed with the odd Pression or two.

Grande Messe at St Sulpice is an inspirational event with a large congregation in a magnificent building. The service was led by Daniel Roth playing the 102 stop Cavaillé-Coll Grand Organ. Imagine my pleasure when I discovered Mr Roth had chosen to play all movements from Widor's Symphony Romaine before, during and after the service – together with "Offertoire pour le jour de Pâques" by J.F. Dandrieu and Choral-improvisation on Victimæ Paschali by Charles Tournemire (as transcribed by Maurice Durufle). 10.30 Mass overran so there was no time for the Widor Final before the following 12.05 service. So, in anticipation, I joined a queue to view the organ loft and, by 12.30, I was exploring this unmodernised masterpiece where Widor himself played as Organiste Titulaire for 60 years. The highlight for me was being allowed to stand next to the console watching Mr Roth play the Final from Widor's Symphony Romaine – on Widor's organ. What a privilege, and very moving in every way. I cannot recommend the experience more highly; organ loft visits are made available every Sunday during the 12.05 Mass. The custodians of this beautiful instrument are rightly proud of what they have.



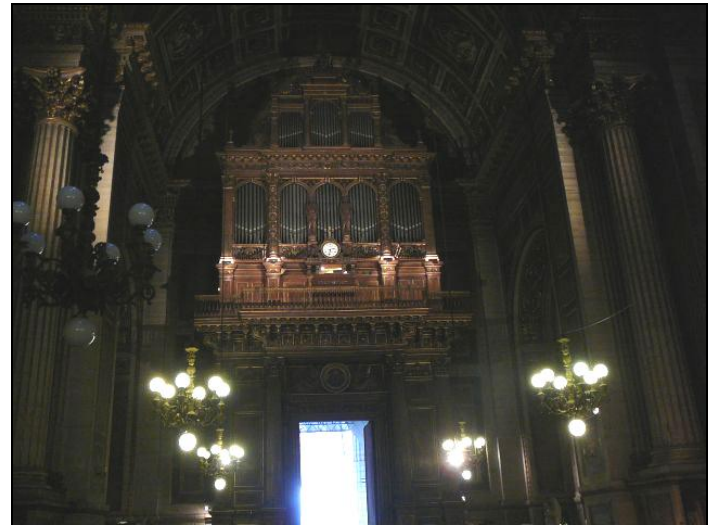
Mr Daniel Roth at the console of Saint Sulpice Grande Cavaillé-Coll Organ, Paris, Easter Sunday 2011

After lunch to Notre Dame for the weekly 16.30 Audition d'Orgue (recital) – this Easter an all Bach programme played by Jean-Pierre Leguay. Not really to my taste as the great organ produces a rather forced sound – maybe needed to lead worship in this great cathedral, but (in my view) not best suited to J S Bach. So I leave this tourist mecca to walk around Chatelet les Halles to the spectacular Saint Eustache Parish church. Here I manage to get a second row seat to view octogenarian Jean Gillou give the weekly 17.30 Sunday recital. The organ is a 1989 vintage 5 manual Dutch Van den Heuvel instrument with two consoles – organ loft and a portable one in use

downstairs in the main church. By chance, I've heard and enjoyed this organ before during a practice session for a wedding two years previously, and initially I'm not disappointed this time as Mr Gillou demonstrates it's delightful tones, playing a J S Bach Easter Chorale Prelude before commencing Robert Schumann's four Studies (originally for Pedal Piano).

Disappointment hits after ten minutes though when a cipher strikes and, despite temporary repairs, returns immediately playing starts again. I understood 'desolee' and 'fini' enough to know that was it for the day, but I certainly hope to go back sometime soon.

"What to do now?" I thought and, checking the Lonely Planet Guide, I noticed a comment that the organ is played at La Madeleine Church 19.00 Mass. Some weeks before I'd heard Liverpool City Organist Professor Ian Tracey play at Saint George's Hall (in Liverpool), and he told his audience how, when studying in Paris, if homesick a visit to la Madeleine would remind him of St George's Hall's architecture and home. He compared the 1846 vintage Cavaillé-Coll there to the great Father Willis organ in St George's Hall most favourably. "Nothing ventured, nothing gained" I thought, and, footsore, headed for la Madeleine. I was so pleased I made the effort. Externally, the church possesses great similarities with Birmingham's Town Hall too. Organiste Titulaire, François-Henri Houbart, played the 4 manual Cavaillé-Coll with great panache – more J S Bach, and (I think) improvisation in the style of Tournemire, culminating with a great rendition of the famous Toccata and Fugue in D minor (BWV 565) when the service ended.



La Madeleine Cavaillé-Coll Organ, Easter Sunday 2011

So, if you include the (separate) choir organs in Saint Sulpice and Saint Eustache, that's 6 organs, 4 great churches, lots of organ music and the enjoyment of being in Paris. Details of organ music programmed can be found on the following websites and I was able to establish la Madeleine has a concert programme through the summer on Sundays at 16.00 – some of these are organ recitals.

- <http://www.stsulpice.com/Docs/concerts.html>
- <http://www.musique-sacree-notredamedeparis.fr/spip.php?article8>

- <http://www.saint-eustache.org/dotclear/index.php?Auditions-d-orgue>
- <http://www.concerts-lamadeleine.com/index.php?action=concerts>

If you get the chance I recommend it. It's just 2 hours from St Pancras by Eurostar.

Our thanks to Peter Bowes for his personal insight into some of the notable organs of Paris.

RECENT LOCAL RECITALS REVIEWS

Andrew Fletcher Recital, Emmanuel Church Wyldre Green, Friday 1st April 2011

Andrew opened today's lunchtime recital with J S Bach's Fantasia & Fugue in G minor, with its bold opening passage, then the well-known theme of the Fugue.

This was followed by Garth Edmundson's Four Modern Preludes on Old Chorales – Vater Unser, Eudoxia, Evan, and finishing with Von Himmel Hoch, reminiscent of the composer's popular Toccata on Von Himmel Hoch.

William Walton's Crown Imperial followed, and brought back memories, as part of this was used for the bride's processional at our wedding!

Then a very descriptive piece in the form of Messiaen's L'Apparition de l'église éternelle, with its doom-laden opening, building to full organ and then dying away again, suggestive of the apparition fading away.

For the final piece, Andrew chose Homage to Handel by Karg-Elert, a set of 54 Studies in Variation Form for Organ on a ground bass of Handel. Following the Messiaen, the solemn opening of this piece thankfully gives way to a lighter mood and easier listening. These variations involve many registration changes, with the sequencer working overtime! Quite a lengthy work, being some 14 minutes long, with the last couple of minutes providing a dramatic and majestic ending to today's recital.

As ever with Andrew Fletcher, a most varied and enjoyable recital. The final recital of this 2010/11 series on 3rd June is a requests programme, and we were reminded to submit our requests no later than Friday 6th May.

TS

Thomas Trotter Recital, Birmingham Symphony Hall, Monday 4th April 2011

In his introduction to today's recital, Thomas let slip that it was his birthday today, but he assured us that he couldn't think of a better way of spending it than playing a recital in Birmingham!

The programme comprised music Thomas particularly enjoys playing in recitals, and he opened this afternoon's recital with the Symphonic Poem: Prometheus by Liszt, arranged for organ by the French virtuoso Jean Guillou,

with its dramatic opening soon exploding into a wild Allegro Molto Appassionato, full of rushing chromatic scales. This wonderfully descriptive piece passes through various moods before building to a gloriously triumphant conclusion – what a way to open a recital!

Then followed J S Bach's Trio Sonata No 4 in E Minor, one of six deceptively difficult Trio Sonatas Bach wrote for his eldest son Wilhelm Friedemann Bach. When Bach died, his music was little played, but the 19th century saw a revival of Bach's music by Robert Schumann amongst others. He wrote his six Canonic Studies in 1845 for the pedal-piano, now a virtually obsolete instrument, and Thomas chose to play Nos. 3, 4 and 5.

Nigel Ogden first introduced Thomas to the next piece – Caribbean Dance, originally written for two pianos by Madeleine Dring, the singer, pianist, cartoonist and actress, who loved the rhythms of Latin American music.

This afternoon's programme ended with two musical tributes to Handel. Firstly, Percy Grainger's Handel in the Strand, arranged for organ by Stockmeier, a jolly dance-like piece I recall hearing for the first time on Nigel Ogden's radio programme 'The Organist Entertains'. The second tribute, March on a Theme of Handel by Guilmant, takes the first four notes of the chorus 'Lift up your heads' from Messiah, and creates a grand march to end a wonderfully varied recital.

Thomas is working on music for the autumn series, including a programme inspired by animals, so to whet our appetite for the new series he played Little Bird by Grieg as an encore.

TS

Roger Fisher Recital, Chester Cathedral, Thursday 28th April 2011



The Organ of Chester Cathedral

Having never heard Roger Fisher perform nor heard the organ of Chester Cathedral, Roger's programme for his

recital the day before the royal wedding entitled 'Music for Royal Occasions' seemed an excellent opportunity to redress this oversight, although it's perhaps stretching it a little to include it in reviews of local recitals!

The organ of Chester Cathedral was built by Gray & Davidson of London, and dates back to 1846. It was rebuilt and enlarged by the Chester firm of Whiteley Bros in 1876, and the organ was re-erected in the present position at the front of the North Transept in a new case designed by Sir George Gilbert Scott. In 1910, William Hill & Son extensively rebuilt and revoiced the organ, and the choir organ was enlarged and moved to a site behind the choir stalls on the South side. In 1969, Rushworth & Dreaper of Liverpool overhauled the instrument, providing new mechanisms and some new pipework, notably flute mutations on the solo organ and extra mixtures on each division. This design, drawn up by today's recitalist, respected the sterling quality of the Hill work, while adding significantly to the tonal palette available for effective performance of baroque and modern music. The 4 manual organ now has 71 speaking stops.

As for today's recitalist, Roger Fisher was born in Woodford, Essex, educated at Bancroft's School and went on to study at the Royal College of Music under such giants of English music as Harold Darke and Herbert Howells, gaining his ARCM, FRCO and CHM diplomas, and winning the Geoffrey Tankard Prize for Organ playing.



Roger Fisher

He went to Christ Church Oxford, and having graduated, he accepted the post of Assistant Organist at Hereford Cathedral. In 1967 he was appointed Organist and Master of the Choristers at Chester Cathedral, and remained there until he took early retirement in 1996 to concentrate on a career as a recitalist, teacher and adviser on organ construction. He has many organ recordings to his name.

Today's programme comprised, with one exception, music composed or played at royal weddings. Indeed the first piece, Crown Imperial by William Walton, was to be played at William and Kate's Wedding, and got the recital off to a rousing start.

The next piece, Ravel's Pavane pour une infant defunté (Pavane for a dead princess), is the exception referred to above, being in memory of Princess Diana, rather than for a royal wedding. This was followed by Elgar's majestic Pomp & Circumstance March No 4.

A beautifully played and registered Air from Suite No 3 in D Major by J S Bach set a more tranquil mood, before a return to grander fare in the form of Elgar's Pomp & Circumstance March No 1, famous for providing the tune of Land of Hope & Glory.

Then a jolly little ditty in the form of A Fancy by W H Harris, before a return to William Walton and his March – Orb & Sceptre for a very fitting finale to a splendid programme. With 29 years at Chester, not to mention his design role in the organ's 1969 rebuild, Roger Fisher certainly demonstrated his mastery of the Cathedral organ.

TS

Andrew Fletcher Recital, Emmanuel Church Wyldre Green, Friday 6th May 2011

The attendance at today's lunchtime recital was 'a bit thin', as Andrew Fletcher commented, due to a number of regulars being on holiday.

Andrew went on to observe that, coincidentally, the first three composers in today's recital were either born blind or became blind. Alfred Hollins was the first of these, and his splendid Concert Overture in C Minor is a personal favourite of mine. This was followed by the very well-known Voluntary in D by John Stanley, coming as Andrew described it, 'from 'the ostrich period' of English organ music, i.e. when the organ establishment in the UK was in denial about the newfangled pedals, despite being well-established on the continent! Accordingly Andrew performed this piece, as written, without pedals.

Then in total contrast the four movements of Suite Brève by Langlais, the first movement, Grand Jeux, commencing dramatically, before the darker middle movements, and finishing with the very lively Dialogue on the Mixtures and final chord blast on full organ.

Next followed G B Nevin's Will O' the Wisp – 'short fast nonsense' as Andrew described it! J S Bach's contribution to today's recital was in the form of the popular Prelude & Fugue in E flat, BWV 552 commonly known as the 'St Anne Fugue'.

Dupré's Cortège & Litanie was the chosen finale, building from a meditative opening to its quite majestic ending, before Andrew made a hasty departure to fulfil another afternoon commitment at Birmingham University.

The next recital on 3rd June is the final one of the 2010/11 series, and is a programme of requests for works not performed in this series. Last year's Requests Recital was one of the best recitals I've ever attended, so if you are able to attend, you are in for a real treat.

PS. It later transpired that the retiring collection for today's recital had been stolen – quite despicable, and a great shame for Andrew after his efforts to provide such a splendidly varied programme for us.

TS

Thomas Trotter Recital, Birmingham Town Hall, Monday 9th May 2011

In his introduction to today's lunchtime recital, Thomas Trotter reminded us that his requests programme of works he has performed in this year's series will be on 20th June. By a strange coincidence, his new CD performed on the organ of the Royal Albert Hall will be available for purchase at this recital!

So to today's recital, which opened dramatically with Liszt's Prelude & Fugue on 'BACH', with its distinctive ostinato four note theme in the pedals opening the Prelude, progressing to the Fugue with its grandiose climax. A breathtakingly virtuoso performance.

In total contrast, Song of Sunshine is a jolly piece by the blind composer Alfred Hollins, who began life as a pianist. This music was composed for concert rather than church use, and although his music fell from favour in the 1960's, his Concert Overture was one of the pieces used for the St Albans Organ Festival.

Then followed another substantial work in the form of Prelude & Fugue on the name of Alain, a musical tribute by Duruflé to the young French composer who died a century ago this year. The work uses the tune from Alain's most famous work Litanies, and the Fugue builds in a great crescendo to a toccata-style conclusion.

The contemporary composer Judith Weir had a special connection with Birmingham in the 1990's, when she was Composer in Association with the CBSO. She composed this next piece, 'Ettrick Banks', for the Edinburgh Festival in 1985. This tone poem uses fragments from the folksong of the same name, and paints an evocative picture of the waterfall at Ettrick in the Scottish Borders.

Mendelssohn was the chosen composer for the final three pieces, with the first two being incidental music to Shakespeare's 'Midsummer Night's Dream' - firstly the beautiful sedate melody of Nocturne, followed by the featherlight Scherzo. In total contrast, the third of Mendelssohn's pieces was the well-known War March of the Priests, with this fine arrangement by W T Best providing a splendid rousing finale to today's Town Hall recital.

TS

Carlo Curley Recital, Lichfield Cathedral, Tuesday 10th May 2011

Carlo Curley gave a recital at Lichfield Cathedral in October 2009, and tonight he was paying a welcome return visit 'to his old friend', as he referred to Lichfield Cathedral's Hill organ. This opening recital of the 2011 Recital Series forms part of Carlo's 40th anniversary tour, which commenced at Manchester's Bridgewater Hall in January and concludes at Nottingham's Albert Hall in October.

Carlo was born into a musical family in North Carolina, USA in 1952, and is a flamboyant and popular concert organist, dubbed the 'Pavarotti of the Organ' by the press. He was coached privately by Arthur Poster and Robert Elmore and ultimately studied with two of the world's

greatest organists – America's legendary Virgil Fox and Britain's Sir George Thalben-Ball.

He was the first classical organist to be invited to give a solo recital at the White House, and has played before many crowned heads of Europe. Today he tours the world having played in every state and province in North America and Canada, as well as Europe, Asia, Australia New Zealand, South Africa and Hong Kong. He has made numerous recordings, and always makes sure he has a copious supply of these for sale at his recitals, to which he is always happy to append his flamboyant autograph! He used to tour with a substantial Allen Digital Computer Organ, complete with a vast array of speakers, and indeed having heard him play this on a few occasions, it was the catalyst for the acquisition of my Allen organ, albeit on a rather more modest scale than Carlo's!



Carlo Curley

For his opening piece Carlo rather surprisingly chose a Carlo Curley/Lyn Larsen arrangement of All Through the Night, exploring the quieter stops of the Hill organ. This was followed by a piece evidently very popular in North America - Gordon Young's Prelude in Classic Style.

Then it was Aria for Strings (XII Concerto Grosso) by Handel, and featuring the fine string stops of the Hill organ. Minuet in A by John Stanley was the cue for Carlo's trademark singing birds automaton accompaniment. Then it was time for the first of two pieces by J S Bach – Chorale Prelude: O Mensch bewein' dein' Sunde gross. The second piece by Bach, impressively played from memory was Toccata, Adagio & Fugue in C BWV 564, the Toccata showing off Carlo's quick sensitive fingers, and with a rousing finish to the Fugue.

Instead of the programmed Massenet's Meditation, Carlo substituted To A Wild Rose by the American composer Edward MacDowell, followed by Andante in F by Dussek, providing the opportunity to explore the stops of the Hill organ. To take us to the interval in grand style, Carlo played his own arrangement of The Liberty Bell, a piece he used to enjoy playing at the Alexandra Palace, where he was one time resident organist.

Melody in A by Charles Dawes opened the second half, followed by the splendid and popular Fantasy in F Minor K608 by Mozart, this time played with music. Next was John Stanley's Introduction and Trumpet Tune in D arranged by Carlo's one time mentor Thalben-Ball.

Londonderry Air was then another opportunity to experiment with the Hill's stops, before finishing with a very lively march in the form of Marche Militaire Française by Saint-Saëns. The sustained applause was rewarded with an encore in the form of Handel's Largo from Xerxes.

When I first attended a Carlo Curley recital some 30 years ago, I remember him as an imposing figure in his magnificent tuxedo, somehow managing to skip dexterously over the pedals despite his size 12 shoes. It was sad to see him now walking with a stick, playing the pedals in his stocking feet, and clearly not enjoying the best of health - the steep twisting climb up to the organ loft must have been a bit of a struggle. It was however good to see that he has lost none of his obvious joy at playing the organ, and going to great pains to meet and communicate his enjoyment of the instrument to his audience, attracting people who would not normally attend organ concerts. For a big chap, he has exceptionally delicate and nimble fingers, and is able to play much of his vast repertoire from memory, leaving him free to manage the stops and explore the variety of sounds he can extract from an organ, the video screen proving invaluable in enabling the audience to see Carlo in action.

A varied programme, clearly much enjoyed by the audience for this well-attended opening recital of this year's evening recital series.

PS. Carlo Curley is profiled in the May 2011 issue of 'Organists' Review' – see 'Postscript' Pg 110.

TS

Cathy Lamb Recital, St Leonard's Parish Church, Blithfield, Saturday 21st May



The Organ of St Leonard's Parish Church, Blithfield

Cathy Lamb's recital at the remote Blithfield Parish Church of St Leonard near Rugeley would have been an opportunity for a pleasant run out into the countryside on a balmy summer's evening, except that in the event it was a cold blustery wind and very overcast. This did not however deter people, including at least six LDOA members/wives,

turning out in force for Cathy's recital on the 2 manual organ dating from 1865, rebuilt/extended by Alfred Kirkland in 1895, and then again by John Oakes & Son of Blythe Bridge in 1964.

The 1964 rebuild saw the organ repositioned high up at the rear of the nave, the front casework comprising 17 pipes of the Great 8' Open Diapason and 16 wooden pipes of the Pedal 16' Bourdon, with a remote Compton console towards the front of the nave.

Cathy introduced the first half of her programme, which contained some changes from the published programme to avoid duplication of pieces performed here by Phil Scriven last year. The opening piece was Tuba Tune by C S Lang, the first time Cathy had played this one in public, and the organ not having a Tuba, employing the Horn reed stop.

Next followed J S Bach's Prelude & Fugue in G Major BWV 541, a piece she had originally learned in a week when she discovered with a week to go she was required to play it at a wedding! Then Greensleeves, arranged for organ by Roper, was the opportunity to hear some of the quieter stops of this organ.

The four movements of the 4th of Mendelssohn's six Sonatas followed, with the beautiful melodies of the Andante Religioso and Allegretto movements, and the final movement, Allegro Maestoso, providing a rousing finish to the first half of the programme.

After a welcome break from the most uncomfortable 400 year old pews, Cathy introduced the second half of her programme, which commenced with the popular Suite Gothique by Boëllman. Cathy recalled when she went for her first organ lesson determined to impress, she played the Toccata from this suite, whereupon her teacher commented 'very nice' before rather pointedly giving her a book of pedal exercises, and not allowing her to play the piece again until some years later! The lessons obviously paid off as this piece received possibly the most enthusiastic applause of the evening.

Then to the altogether quieter mood of Pavane by Fauré, before one of Cathy's personal favourites – Prelude, Fugue & Chaconne by Buxtehude. Next Barcarolle, by Offenbach, bringing back memories of piano lessons from my childhood. Then followed a piece by Josef Rheinberger, who Cathy commented 'gets bad press for his organ music', but the Fugue from Sonata No 3 is a 'real gem', and for a fugue quite a jolly piece.

For her finale, Cathy chose to send people on their way home with the same rousing piece Carlo Curley chose to end the first half of his recent recital at the Cathedral – De Sousa's Liberty Bell March.

Being a fairly small country church, the acoustics are rather dead, but for a church of this size the organ has a commendable specification, lacking only a mixture and maybe a trumpet/tuba reed stop. Cathy created an instant rapport with her audience, and her infectious enthusiasm for her music showed through, as always, in her performance, which received well deserved rapturous applause from the capacity audience.

The Blithfield organisers are to be congratulated for providing such a splendid evening, rounded off with copious supplies of drinks and nibbles.

TS

IAO MATTERS

Cirencester Parish Church 2011 Organ Festival, 18th - 25th June 2011

Following the success of the 2010 Festival celebrating the rebuilt Cirencester Parish Church organ, the 2011 festival will be opened on Sat 18/06 with a recital by Dame Gillian Weir, followed by further recitals by Roger Fisher (20/06), Daniel Cook (21/06), Anthony Hammond (22/06), Christopher Kent (23/06), Keith Hearnshaw (24/06), and with Nigel Ogden performing the closing recital on Saturday 25/06.

IAO Congress, July 2011

This year's Organ Congress takes place 20-25 July 2011 based at the Europa Hotel in Belfast, as well as spending an exciting day in Dublin, visiting Armagh and Londonderry, and making a trip to the Giant's Causeway.

Salisbury Organ Day Saturday 1st October 2011

Based in Salisbury at St Martin's Church (talk on 'William Hill, Master Organ Builder'), Salisbury Methodist Church (Anne Marsden Thomas) and Salisbury Cathedral (recital by Daniel Cook and Evensong).

ORGAN THEMED BRAIN TEASER!

Attached to the newsletter is an 'Organ Themed Brain Teaser', produced by one of our members, to test your mettle, and to make it interesting he has also kindly donated a £10 M&S Gift Voucher for the first correct solution received from a member by the Editor. So get the brain cells working!

FORTHCOMING LOCAL ORGAN RECITALS

LDOA Members' Recitals/Events

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

Walsall Town Hall Organ Recital

Following the summer break, the 2011/12 organ recital series by our Honorary Member Peter Morris commences on Thursday 15th September 2011. However, please note that in the interim Peter Morris is giving a recital at St Thomas' Stourbridge on Saturday 2nd July at 1 pm.

Recitals at Shenstone Methodist Church

Further free organ recitals will be held on Monday 1st August, All Saints Day Tuesday 1st November and Monday 5th December by our Treasurer and 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.

Cathy Lamb Recital

Cathy is giving a recital on Saturday 13th August 2011 from 12:00 noon to 1:00 pm at Victoria Hall, Hanley

Martyn Rawles Recital

Martyn is giving a recital on Bank Holiday Monday 29th August 2011 from 1:00 pm to 1:30 pm at Coventry Cathedral.

Recitals In Local Area (to 31/08/2011)

June 2011

Wed 1 June 2011 • 7:30 • St Chad's Cathedral, Birmingham

David Saint (St Chad's Cathedral)

Thurs 2 June 2011 • 1:15 to 1:45 • St Paul's, Birmingham
Keith Hearnshaw (Concert Organist)

Frid 3 June 2011 • 1:00 to 1:45 • Emmanuel Church, Wylde Green

Andrew Fletcher (West Midlands) - Requests programme

Frid 3 June 2011 • 1:10 to 1:50 • Birmingham Cathedral
James Scott (Bath Abbey)

Sat 4 June 2011 • 1:00 to 1:45 • St Thomas' Stourbridge
Jon Payne (St Thomas' Stourbridge)

Sun 5 June 2011 • 3:00 • Holy Trinity, Wordsley
Paul Carr (St Paul's, Birmingham)

Mon 6 June 2011 • 1:00 to 2:00 • Birmingham Town Hall
Martin Setchell (Christchurch Town Hall, New Zealand)

Mon 6 June 2011 • 1:00 to 1:30 • Coventry Cathedral
Paul Leddington Wright (Coventry Cathedral)

Tues 7 June 2011 • 1:10 to 1:50 • Warwick Road United Reformed Church
Paul Dewhurst (St Giles', Pontefract)

Thurs 9 June 2011 • 1:10 to 2:00 • Kidderminster Town Hall
David Morgan (St Mary's, Kidderminster)

Frid 10 June 2011 • 1:00 to 1:40 • St Swithun's, Worcester
Henry Fairs (Birmingham University)

Frid 10 June 2011 • 1:10 to 1:50 • Birmingham Cathedral
Andrew J Wyatt (Birmingham Cathedral)

Sat 11 June 2011 • 12:00 to 1:00 • Victoria Hall, Hanley
Donald MacKenzie (The Odeon Cinema, Leicester Square)

Sat 11 June 2011 • 12:30 to 1:15 • St Mary's Collegiate Church, Warwick
David Hardie (St Peter's, Hale, Cheshire)

Mon 13 June 2011 • 1:00 to 1:30 • Coventry Cathedral
Kerry Beaumont (Coventry Cathedral)

Mon 13 June 2011 • 7:30 • St Chad's Cathedral, Birmingham
Douglas Hollick (Birmingham Conservatoire)

Sat 18 June 2011 • 12:30 to 1:15 • St Mary's Collegiate Church, Warwick

Richard Brasier (St Marylebone Parish Church)

Mon 20 June 2011 • 1:00 to 2:00 • Birmingham Town Hall
Thomas Trotter (Birmingham City Organist), Summer Requests Programme

Mon 20 June 2011 • 1:00 to 1:30 • Coventry Cathedral
Alistair Reid (Coventry Cathedral)

Tues 21 June 2011 • 7:30 • St Chad's Cathedral, Birmingham

John Sherer (Fourth Presbyterian Church, Chicago, USA)

Sat 25 June 2011 • 12:30 to 1:15 • St Mary's Collegiate Church, Warwick

Thomas Corns (St Mary's Collegiate Church, Warwick)

Mon 27 June 2011 • 1:00 to 1:30 • Coventry Cathedral
Iain Quinn (Durham)

July 2011

Sat 2 July 2011 • 12:30 to 1:15 • St Mary's Collegiate Church, Warwick

Joseph Causby (St Mark's, San Antonio, Texas, USA)

Sat 2 July 2011 • 1:00 to 1:45 • St Thomas's, Stourbridge
Peter Morris (Walsall Borough Organist)

Sun 3 July 2011 • 3:00 • Holy Trinity, Wordsley
Paul Carr (St Paul's, Birmingham)

Mon 4 July 2011 • 1:00 to 1:30 • Coventry Cathedral
Ashley Grote (Gloucester Cathedral)

Wed 6 July 2011 • 7:45 • Derby Cathedral
Hans Uwe Hielscher (Marktkirche, Weisbaden, Germany)

Thurs 7 July 2011 • 1:10 to 2:00 • Kidderminster Town Hall
Timothy Morris (Kidderminster Town Hall)

Thurs 7 July 2011 • 1:15 to 1:45 • St Paul's, Birmingham
Paul Carr (St Paul's, Birmingham)

Frid 8 July 2011 • 12:00 • Lichfield Cathedral
Recital as part of the 2011 Lichfield Festival by Peter King (Bath Abbey)

Sat 9 July 2011 • 12:30 to 1:15 • St Mary's Collegiate Church, Warwick
Sigurd Øgaard (First United Methodist Church, Lubbock, Texas, USA)

Mon 11 July 2011 • 1:00 to 1:30 • Coventry Cathedral
Sigurd Øgaard (First United Methodist Church, Lubbock, Texas, USA)

Tues 12 July 2011 • 1:10 to 1:50 • Warwick Road United Reformed Church
Adrian Moore (Holy Trinity, Leamington Spa)

Wed 13 July 2011 • 7:45 • Derby Cathedral
Timothy Byram-Wigfield (St George's Chapel, Windsor)

Sat 16 July 2011 • 12:00 to 1:00 • Victoria Hall, Hanley
Ian Tracey (Liverpool Cathedral)

Sat 16 July 2011 • 12:30 to 1:15 • St Mary's Collegiate Church, Warwick
Stuart Nicholson (St Patrick's Cathedral, Dublin)

Sat 16 July 2011 • 7:30 • St Swithun's, Worcester
Thomas Trotter (Birmingham City Organist)

Mon 18 July 2011 • 1:00 to 1:30 • Coventry Cathedral
Karen Christianson (Philadelphia, USA)

Wed 20 July 2011 • 7:45 • Derby Cathedral
Anthony Hammond (Cirencester Parish Church)

Sat 23 July 2011 • 12:30 to 1:15 • St Mary's Collegiate Church, Warwick
Benjamin Giddens (Magdalen College, Oxford)

Sat 23 July 2011 • 6:00 to 7:00 • All Saints', Bromsgrove
Will McDonald (Eton College)

Sat 23 July 2011 • 7:00 • St John the Baptist, Bromsgrove
Jonathan Kingston (Bromsgrove School, Worcestershire)

Mon 25 July 2011 • 1:00 to 1:30 • Coventry Cathedral
David Stevens (Newcastle Cathedral)

Wed 27 July 2011 • 7:45 • Derby Cathedral
David Briggs (Concert Organist)

Sat 30 July 2011 • 12:30 to 1:15 • St Mary's Collegiate Church, Warwick
Ruahraidh Sutherland (St Mary's Collegiate Church)

August

Mon 1 August 2011 • 1:00 to 1:30 • Coventry Cathedral
Sean Jackson (Stamford, Connecticut, USA)

Wed 3 August 2011 • 7:45 • Derby Cathedral
Andrew Dewar (The American Cathedral in Paris, France)

Thurs 4 August 2011 • 1:15 to 1:45 • St Paul's, Birmingham
Paul Carr (St Paul's, Birmingham)

Sat 6 August 2011 • 1:00 to 1:45 • St Thomas', Stourbridge
Matt Rose (St Thomas', Stourbridge)

Sat 6 August 2011 • 6:00 to 7:00 • All Saints', Bromsgrove
Rex Roxburgh

Sun 7 August 2011 • 3:00 • Holy Trinity, Wordsley
Paul Carr (St Paul's, Birmingham)

Mon 8 August 2011 • 1:00 to 1:30 • Coventry Cathedral
Alexander Pott

Tues 9 August 2011 • 1:10 to 1:50 • Warwick Road United Reformed Church
Christopher Beaumont (Aberdeen University)

Wed 10 August 2011 • 7:45 • Derby Cathedral
Peter Gould, Tom Corfield, Sachin Gunga, Ben Bloor, Christopher Johns (Derby Cathedral)

Sat 13 August 2011 • 12:00 to 1:00 • Victoria Hall, Hanley
Cathy Lamb (Lichfield Cathedral)

Mon 15 August 2011 • 1:00 to 1:30 • Coventry Cathedral
Kerry Beaumont (Coventry Cathedral)

Wed 17 August 2011 • 7:45 • Derby Cathedral
Michael Harris (St Giles' Cathedral, Edinburgh)

Mon 22 August 2011 • 1:00 to 1:30 • Coventry Cathedral
Paul Leddington Wright (Coventry Cathedral)

Tues 23 August 2011 • 1:10 to 1:50 • Warwick Road
United Reformed Church
Thomas Allery (Canterbury Cathedral)

Wed 24 August 2011 • 7:45 • Derby Cathedral
Peter Litman (St Peter's Collegiate Church, Ruthin)

Bank Holiday Monday 29 August 2011 • 1:00 to 1:30 •
Coventry Cathedral
Martyn Rawles (Lichfield Cathedral)

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 Aug 2011, with deadline for submission of items for inclusion of 31/07/11, to Trevor Smedley by e-mail as above, or by mail to 8 The Parchments, Lichfield, Staffordshire, WS13 7NA

[VACANCY](#)

Vacancy at St Michael's Church, Lichfield

The vacancy at St Michael's Church, Lichfield, remains as yet unfilled, and Revd David Beedon is most appreciative of our member Mervin Jones helping out and giving great support in the interim. We have therefore been requested to run again the advert placed in the April 2011 newsletter advertising the position. If any member knows of anyone who might be interested in this position, please pass on Rev'd David Kirk Beedon's contact details to them.

Saint Michael's Church, Lichfield is seeking to appoint an Organist/Choir Director to work with our robed choir as well as supporting the Girls' Choir leader in her role. Our choirs serve a parish with two centres of worship offering both traditional and contemporary forms of services. More information can be obtained from: The Reverend David Kirk Beedon, St Michael's Rectory, St Michael Road, Lichfield, Staffs WS13 6SN Tel: 01543 262420 or email dkbeedon@btinternet.com