

BIOS REPORTER

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THE BRITISH INSTITUTE OF ORGAN STUDIES

BIOS OFFICERS AND COUNCIL

Chairman	Dr Alan Thurlow, [REDACTED] [REDACTED] e-mail: chairman@bios.org.uk
Secretary	Melvin Hughes, [REDACTED] [REDACTED] e-mail: secretary@bios.org.uk
Treasurer	Adrian Mumford, [REDACTED] [REDACTED] e-mail: treasurer@bios.org.uk
Casework	Dr Andrew Hayden, [REDACTED] [REDACTED] e-mail: conservation@bios.org.uk
Meetings	Richard Hobson, [REDACTED]
Membership	David Shepherd, [REDACTED] [REDACTED] e-mail: membership@bios.org.uk
Publications	Dr Katharine Pardee, [REDACTED] [REDACTED] e-mail: publications@bios.org.uk
Council	Gordon Curtis (co-opted), Christopher Gray, Colin Menzies OBE, Dr David Shuker, Mark Venning, Jeffrey West (co-opted), Jeffrey Williams.

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COMMITTEE FOR THE LISTING OF HISTORIC ORGANS

Co-ordinator Jeffrey Williams, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

HISTORIC ORGANS AT RISK REGISTER (HOARR)

Co-ordinator Jonathan Goodchild, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

NATIONAL PIPE ORGAN REGISTER (NPOR) <http://www.bios.org.uk/npor.html>

Database Manager Andrew Macintosh, Royal College of Organists, PO Box 7328,
New Milton BH25 9DU
Tel: 05601 269426; e-mail: npor@bios.org.uk

HISTORIC ORGAN SOUND ARCHIVE (HOSA)

Curator Anne Page, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] e-mail: hosa@bios.org.uk

THE BRITISH INSTITUTE OF ORGAN STUDIES

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<http://www.bios.org.uk>

Honorary President: Dr Nicholas Thistlethwaite

BIOS REPORTER

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The Editor reserves the right to refuse or amend material.

Editor: Gordon Curtis

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BIOS SUBSCRIPTIONS

The annual subscription is £37 (£32 concessionary, £12 student). Full details of membership and subscriptions can be obtained from the Membership Secretary.

Cover photos, Front: *The new Drake organ at Chelsea Old Church* (Photo: William Drake Ltd). See p. 4 for details of AGM meeting. Back: *Gloucester URC organ by Sweetland recently removed from the At Risk register*. (Photo: the Editor).

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FROM THE CHAIRMAN

As I write this article I am conscious that we have just passed from the decade that saw the 40th anniversary of BIOS into the decade in which we will celebrate our half-centenary. There is much to look forward to, and Council is already giving some thought to a suitable project to mark that important milestone when it arrives. We have also to turn our minds to the coming OrganFest in 2021. The organisation of this biennial event, jointly promoted by BIOS, the Incorporated Association of Organists and the Royal College of Organists, rotates between the three bodies. In 2021 BIOS will once again be in the driving seat. Having started its life in central England (the first two OrganFests were held in Birmingham), it has since progressed via Edinburgh and Hull to last September's excellent programme arranged by the RCO in Cardiff. At our January Council meeting (which will have taken place by the time this edition of the *Reporter* appears) initial discussions will have taken place about selecting the venue that we will soon have to recommend to our partner organisations for the 2021 event. At the moment, and in accord with the clockwise pattern of rotation already established, somewhere in the mid-west of England seems a possible contender.

More immediately, on Saturday 29 February this year's BIOS programme begins as usual with the Bernard Edmonds Research Conference in Birmingham. The programme for the day promises to be as stimulating as always. In addition to Dr Jim Berrow (The development of gothic organ cases), Derrick Carrington (the Lusitanian baroque organ), John Norman (Twenty-five organ cases), Dr David Ponsford (his new edition of de Grigny's *Premier livre d'orgue*), and David Shuker (Organists of the Valentine family), we will be welcoming back from Reggio Emilia in Italy our member Professor Matteo Malagoli, who will introduce us to the work of William George Trice (1848-1920), who he bills as 'the only British organ builder who worked only in Italy'. Last year we had a particularly encouraging attendance of members for what is always an interesting and enjoyable day in a splendid setting. May I encourage as many members as can to make the journey to Birmingham and support what, for BIOS, is a high prestige academic occasion. Parking in the area of the Barber Institute is easy on Saturdays. For those coming by train, the University has its own railway station which is only four minutes' walk from the Institute (and just two stations away from New Street station, down the local line to Longbridge).

In the past I have sometimes used this column to assist in the recruitment of volunteers to help with important tasks that need to be undertaken. I'm pleased to say that, as one result of this, our member Tim Gray has kindly volunteered to take on the important work of being Co-ordinator for our relatively new and successful NPOR Fund. Tim has now taken charge of keeping the register of incoming donations and sending out acknowledgements, as well as keeping the register of standing order contributors and where necessary sending out requests and reminders

to other regular supporters who prefer to make an annual donation without signing up for a regular bankers' order. Thank you, Tim, for offering to help us in this way. It is much appreciated.

Another important and major task, for which we have tried - unsuccessfully so far - to recruit a volunteer, is that of expanding and developing the content of the Directory of British Organ Builders, one of the constituent elements of the NPOR. As a resumé of the position: DBOB was originally a one-off project covering available data from earliest times until a cut-off year of 1950. The material was entered onto a database which was closed, so could be searched but not altered or added to. DBOB is an invaluable research tool, but as the years tick by the gulf between 1950 and the present time is constantly widening. Researchers find it increasingly frustrating that there is no data available to them beyond the middle of the last century. It is vital that BIOS seeks to plug that gap somehow. As a first step Mike Sayers, founder of the NPOR, kindly and generously arranged to open up the database so that it is now capable of being added to and extended. A few amendments to the existing content have already been made. For the future this leaves two different areas of need. First is the task of researching and filling in the data between 1950 and the present; second, ensuring thereafter that new and updated information continues to be added on a year by year basis so that the content remains up to date in the future. In respect of the second requirement, an initial approach to the Institute of British Organ Building has indicated to us that they would be prepared to supply the required data for BIOS from the results of the questionnaire which they send out annually to all organ builders in the country (not just to those who are accredited members). With regard to the first need, Council has recognised that we will need a piecemeal approach to gradually 'plug the gap' between 1950 and the present. Bit by bit, as information becomes available, the content will gradually fill out, in the same way that the massive NPOR operation, which now contains over thirty-six thousand organ specifications, began with the entering of just one. It is hoped that organ builders currently still in business would be in a position to compile and submit the required information relevant to their own firm.

BIOS was founded through the vision of a relatively small body of organ enthusiasts, who unstintingly devoted their time and energy into building up and developing the structured resource body that we have now become. It is vital that BIOS maintains and doesn't lose sight of that pioneering spirit. We must locate, enthuse and recruit those who in today's world have the time and energy to take us still further in the future. Is there any member out there, I wonder, who would be prepared to take on the challenge of turning DBOB into a living and ongoing database of organ building history, readily available to the public, rather than leaving it increasingly as an historic record of what was there before 1950? I would be very pleased to hear from any member who is interested in exploring this opportunity.

Finally, in thanking each and every one of you for your continuing support for

BIOS, may I please remind all members that subscriptions for 2020 were due on 1st January. If you don't pay by standing order and have not already renewed your subscription, may I please encourage you to do so now. David Shepherd, our efficient and tireless Membership Secretary, spent much of 2019 in chasing up members who had not renewed. The best present we can give him in 2020 is to pay up now! David is an excellent person to have in the job: we are very grateful to him for what he does, and would like to do everything we can to reduce the burden on him!

Alan Thurlow

FROM THE SECRETARY

BIOS Annual General Meeting

Saturday 28 March 2020 at Chelsea Old Church, Old Church Street, London SW3 5DQ

Notice is hereby given that the Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the British Institute of Organ Studies will take place on Saturday 28 March 2020 at Chelsea Old Church, Old Church Street, London SW3 5DQ at 11.15 hours.

The AGM forms part of the programme for the Day Conference at Chelsea Old Church. All members whose subscriptions have been paid are entitled to attend the AGM (free of charge) and to vote, but the Council hope that many members will wish to include their attendance at the meeting as part of their support for the whole day event.

Elections

The following election of officers and ordinary members of Council will be held:

Chairman
Publications Officer
2 Ordinary Members of Council

Clause 7.4 of the Constitution states: 'Any two fully paid-up members of the Society shall be at liberty to nominate a member to serve on the Council'. Clause 7.5 states: 'the name of each member nominated under clause 7.4 shall be given to the Secretary not less than seven days before the date fixed for the Annual General Meeting, accompanied by the candidate's consent to serve, if elected'.

Nomination forms for officers and ordinary members of Council are obtainable from the Secretary, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] e-mail: secretary@bios.org.uk

BIOS Council (January 2020)

BIOS Council met at the Grosvenor Chapel, 24 South Audley Street, London, W1K 2PA on Saturday 18 January 2020. Ten members of Council were present. John Norman (Webmaster) were also in attendance.

Council received reports and agreed or noted the following:

The draft Annual Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2019 and Statement of Financial Activities for the year ended 31 December 2019, had been prepared in the prescribed format required by the Charity Commission. It was anticipated that the Independent Examiner would scrutinise the prepared accounts shortly in preparation for the AGM.

A number of Membership Standing Orders had still not been up-dated to the current subscription rate and a further communication would be sent to individual Members about this.

The list of publications on the Website had been updated recently.

The Day Conference at New College, Oxford (5 October 2019) and the BIOS Lunch at Grosvenor Chapel (30 November 2019) were judged a success.

Current plans for Meetings included:

29 February 2020	Bernard Edmonds Research Conference at the Barber Institute, Birmingham
28 March 2020	Day Conference & AGM at the Old Church, Chelsea (new Drake organ).
2 May 2020	Day Conference on the Organ and Blind Organists at St Michael & All Angels, Aylsham, Norfolk
21 or 28 November 2020	BIOS Lunch at the Grosvenor Chapel

BIOS would be in the lead for the 2021 OrganFest and possible locations were being considered.

BIOS Journal 44 2020 was nearly completed and should be issued August/September 2020.

On the recommendations of the Listing Committee, Council approved the listing of four historic organs and agreed the recommendation to turn down the listing of three organs. The recommendation to increase the award for a listing previously given was also agreed.

The nine organs currently on the Historic Organs at Risk Register were reviewed and two were removed.

Four organs featured in the discussion of current casework. One of them appeared to be of sufficient historic significance to be worthy of Listing and the process for consideration of a Spot Listing was set in motion.

Progress had been made in catching up with the NPOR backlog after last year's technical problems with electronic submissions.

A volunteer was still needed to bring the Directory of British Organ Builders database up to date.

The HOSA YouTube channel had completed the objective of one video from each organ in the original project.

Council meets next on Saturday 20 June 2020 at 12.00 (to be confirmed).

Melvin Hughes

MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

I am delighted to welcome the following new members who have joined BIOS since the publication of the October *Reporter*:

Mr Charles Brown, [REDACTED]

Mrs Lynn Butler, [REDACTED]

Mr Drew Adams, [REDACTED]

Miss Madeleine S. Killacky, BSc(Hons), BA(Hons), MA, [REDACTED]

Mr Stephen Rapkin, [REDACTED]

Please note the following seven changes to the new 2019 Membership List:

Mrs Jose Rigby; telephone number now [REDACTED]

Barry Wadeson, MA(Mus), MA, BA(Hons), DipMus, [REDACTED]

F.H. Browne & Sons (Organ Builders) Ltd, [REDACTED]

J. Saxon Aldred; telephone and email now: [REDACTED]

Catherine Ennis, [REDACTED]

Jeffrey West, [REDACTED]

John Plunkett; email address now [REDACTED]

I thought it might be useful to pose some FAQs (Frequently Asked Questions), following conversations with loyal BIOS members at a recent concert:

Q: Are you still doing the BIOS Membership-thing? *A:* Yes, of course I am.

Q: How do we get in touch with you? *A:* Look on the inside-cover of this issue of the *Reporter* for all contact details.

Q: Is my membership for this year due now? *A:* The BIOS membership year runs from January 1st to December 31st, so your BIOS membership is due now!

Q: I can pay by Direct Debit, can't I? *A:* Unfortunately not. That is one method that is impracticable for BIOS to administer. You can, however, pay in one of four ways: i) by Standing Order (as many hundreds of members do), ii) by direct transfer into the BIOS bank account, whose details are: NatWest; sort code: 52-30-44 account number: 05097169 account name: The British Institute of Organ Studies – Registered Charity, iii) via the BIOS website: <http://www.bios.org.uk> using PayPal and iv) by sending me a cheque to my address given on the inside front cover. Please 'Gift Aid' your subscription if you are able to, and are not already doing so.

Q: What are the subscription amounts? Have they gone up this year? *A:* No, they're still the same: £37 (£32 concessionary, £12 student). For those outside the UK, rates are £10 higher respectively, to reflect the additional postage costs for publications.

Q: You've sent me a reminder, haven't you? *A:* No, I haven't. BIOS members are considered to be big enough and old enough to be able to sort out an annual subscription at the beginning of the calendar year without an initial reminder, which will, however, be sent if the member hasn't paid-up by the end of the first quarter!

I hope the above is useful, and I do thank those members who have already paid their 2020 subscriptions. This year's subs battle is on again!

David Shepherd

COMMITTEE FOR THE LISTING OF HISTORIC ORGANS

Grade I organs are of exceptional interest

Grade II* organs are particularly important and of more than special interest

Grade II organs are of special interest, warranting every effort to preserve them

Future Submission Dates:

Friday 09:00 17 April for meeting of Listing Committee to be held on 4 June 2020

Friday 09:00 31 July for meeting of Listing Committee to be held on 17 Sept. 2020

Please note that any applications received close to or on the closing date for submissions may be deferred until the following Listing Meeting in the event of an over-subscribed agenda.

The organs listed overleaf were awarded Historic Organ Certificates at the BIOS Council meeting on 18 January 2020.

Location	Builder(s) and date	Comment	Grade
St Anne, Royton, Lancs.	1913 Hill & Sons with 1999 additions	One of the last Hill organs built before amalgamation with Norman & Beard	II
Assumption of Our Lady Torquay, Devon	c. 1890 Hele	In original condition except for the later addition of a balanced Swell Pedal	II*
Stoneygate Baptist Church, Leicester	1914 Taylor	Original condition except for one tonal alteration in 1960	II*
All Saints, Newmarket, Suffolk	1908 Binns	Fine example of the builder's work retaining original pneumatic actions	II* Reviewed listing
St James, New Brighton, Wirral	1833 Bewsher & Fleetwood 1902 Hele	1833 pipework retained in Hele rebuild with an unusual design of Barker-Lever action	II*

The following organs were awarded no listing

St Mary, North Elmham, Norfolk 1895 Nobel rebuilt Williamson & Hyatt
 St Chad, Lichfield 1852 Holdich, rebuilt 1892, alterations 1990
 St Andrew, Earsfield 1921 Harrison & Harrison

Jeffrey Williams

HISTORIC ORGANS AT RISK REGISTER (HOARR)

Applications to include an organ on the Register may be made by anyone concerned about an apparent threat to an organ. Eligibility is restricted to organs that have already been listed under the Historic Organs Listing Scheme or are potentially listable. The assessment panel consists of the Chairman of the Historic Organs Listing Scheme (John Rowntree), the Casework Officer (Andrew Hayden) and the HOARR Co-ordinator (Jonathan Goodchild). Details of the criteria and an application form can be found on the BIOS website.

Council has approved the removal from the Register of the organs at St Catherine's, Pontypridd and Gloucester URC as they are no longer under threat..

The inclusion of the following organs on the Register was approved by the Council following email consultation in October to December 2019:

Location	Post code	Building	NPOR Grade	Comment
Ipswich	IP3 8AH	St Clement's Congregational church	V00319 II	The church has closed and the building will be sold.
Cardiff	CF14 4PD	St Teilo's church	P00394 I	The relocation of this organ to St Teilo's church is no longer likely. It is hoped that an alternative home can be identified where it will be played and appreciated.
Bangor	LL57 2RL	St Mary's church	N11672 II	The church has been closed, and there are plans to remove the organ prior to converting the building to a new use.

Jonathan Goodchild

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Doncaster Schulze - a postscript

Sir,

Following Nathan Laube's review of the Doncaster Schulze published in the last edition of the *Reporter*, lack of mention of the Solo division was interestingly raised. The following explanation is proffered. The facts are that this division in its post 1910 form contains the main part of the Hill Norman & Beard accretions which, in my opinion comprise very indifferent material, fortunately within one easily ignored location! The original specification (appearing in E.J. Hopkins 3rd edition of 1877) shows that the Solo division was essentially duplexed (mechanically) by selected stops from the Swell; notably four reeds. HNB replaced this transfer by providing the six independent 1910 ranks listed in the NPOR record and relocating the lovely Schulze choir Clarinet to it and including the totally incongruous Tuba ('de rigueur' of the day!). As noted, my own opinion is that this was a very unworthy move. Moreover, the enclosed 'beehive' shuttered box and the Tuba standing in front of it partially obscure tonal egress from the swell division behind.

By way of observation, the latter half of the twentieth century has not always been kind to historic instruments and we have witnessed some drastic abreakations. However, with a more balanced view nowadays, we realise that, for example, the Doncaster Schulze has had 150 years to write an ongoing history which is to be cautiously respected. However, this does not in any great part compromise the original glorious Schulze scheme.

L Carrick-Smith, Chesterfield

Mackintosh's organ cases

Sir,

I had never previously heard of Charles Rennie Mackintosh's designing for the organ, so how interesting to see his work in that line depicted in the October edition of the *Reporter*.

Great though Mackintosh's reputation is as an original and admirable leader in Scotland's and Britain's dabbling in *Art Nouveau* cum Arts-and-Crafts, it has to be said that these designs show again what I assume to be the combined ignorance and wilfulness of the designer-pioneer not really entitled to be as confident as he felt himself to be. When they turn to specialities outside their experience, these adventuring designers are all-too-labile to do strange violences to what they may not realise are the basic properties of their new subject. Not having made any study of past exemplars - historic organ-building and organ-cases - they found it easy to deny the natural progressions and proportions of organ pipes, and produced out of them designs that are original, yes, but in fact outlandish, distorting, and deeply unsatisfactory. That is all part of what went wrong with the organ in an age of new aesthetics and new technology.

The design for the organ at Queen's Cross, Glasgow, in which the lower pipe-field seems to hint at the lesser:greater relationship of the separated case-sections of old instruments, causes one to think at a glance that Mackintosh had seen organs with Rückpositiven, and made use of that memory. But the visual allusion, if that's what it is, barely helps in what is a pitiful treatment in this instance: Mackintosh's shelf-and-chamber design is for a mere wall of pipes with very strangely rendered mouths, partitioned by moulded horizontals in wood. It is nothing more than a pattern, an emblem, a frontispiece (to recall the architects' name for the central fig-leaf display at the Royal Festival Hall, and their clunky design-approach) which - not untypically - shows no understanding at all of what an organ is. The natural proportioning and spacing of organ pipes are offended against, dooming the design to falsity and ridiculousness. The pipes in the side-towers are merely clustered tubes with neither feet nor mouths. (This could, of course, be only a sign of draughtsman's haste or negligence or shorthand). Also, the whole frontage is only six or seven feet in height.

As a design, Queens' Cross is perhaps no worse than innumerable others of the period before, and especially of the period after, Mackintosh's time. But that's hardly a puff; and compared with the achievements of the great periods of organ history it is, literally enough, a travesty. It is no more organistic than if he had been designing a fireplace or a wardrobe. He could have tried harder.

The other organ illustrated, that in Craig Hall, declines to reveal the midribs of its visible pipes — a mere ten of them; and everything else is set behind what is a sort of wooden cowl, which, however interesting as period cabinetmaking, suggests that for Mackintosh, as for many architects, the innards of an organ, and even its speaking pipes, needed to be firmly concealed, like clockworks or engines or something indecent; and all is therefore stowed away in a pair of glorified broomcupboards.

These are curious instruments representative of those developmental trends towards modernity which now to us look experimental, superficial, and eccentric or misguided.

Alec Dingwall, Isleworth

Sir,

Peter Godden is in error. Queen's Cross Church, Glasgow, contained a Father Willis house organ of about 10 stops that was gifted from a house in Bearsden, a Northwest suburb of the city, in 1921. I was involved in introducing the instrument to Eaglesham Parish Church, on the southern fringe of Glasgow. It was acquired on closure of the Queen's Cross Church, and rapidly removed and re-erected in Eaglesham by Jim Mackenzie in the late 1970s.

Alterations were necessary as it was remarkably ineffectual even by domestic standards. The upper part of an unpleasantly small Clarabella was replaced with the former 4ft stopped flute, and one of Jim's glorious mixtures was installed on the vacant slide. Rapidity was essential in case the instrument became erroneously associated with Mackintosh. It was known that other conservation bodies were circling!

Andrew Baxter, Helensburgh

Sir,

Further to my letter in the October *Reporter*, I have come across another example of work by Charles Rennie Mackintosh to an organ case. The Church Organ World website refers to 'the beautiful Mackintosh designed pipe facade' at Bridge of Allan Parish Church Stirlingshire. More information is given on the Mackintosh website <https://www.mackintosh-architecture.gla.ac.uk/catalogue/pdf/M235.pdf> whilst the history of the organ itself is to be found at NPOR N18050. This tells us that it was

originally a Lewis of 1884, the case being added when Abbott & Smith enlarged it in 1904. Although overhauled in 2002, it is now out of use, sadly replaced by a digital instrument, hence the reference on the Church Organ World website. I found photographs at <https://www.flickr.com/photos/billcumming/13011648365>, including a close up of a detail at <https://www.pinterest.com/pin/416583034262951157/>. From a distance the wide case looks conventionally Victorian, and Lewis is known to have had an active interest in providing decent casework, but there is typically Rennie Mackintosh detail on the front of it.

I do wonder whether the majority of the case dates from 1884, the Mackintosh work simply being a canopy over the Communion table seats, in line with a wholesale reordering of this area undertaken at the same time as the organ was enlarged. Perhaps one of our Scottish brethren can tell us more?

Peter Godden, King's Lynn, Norfolk

St Mary, Twynning, Gloucs.

Sir,

After a fine historic restoration, it is good to see the substantial two-manual organ in St Mary, Twynning, Gloucestershire, rewarded with a II* certificate. In the report of this success, the October *Reporter* records that it was 'The last organ completed by John Nicholson'. In fact, it is the first built under the name of the new successor firm, 'Nicholson & Co'.

William Haynes took possession of the Nicholson business on 6 January 1886 and his personal notebook and the firm's publicity records Twynning as his Opus 1. The shop-books also record the wind pressure ('2 5/8" [+]
1/16"' [sic]) and a 'Handsome Oak Case', designed by the architect and antiquarian F.S. Waller of Gloucester, which may owe something to that of Hereford Cathedral. The organ was part of a suite of new furnishings – stalls and screen – designed by Waller for a local patron. The brass console plate is another clue to provenance, with the new company name proudly displayed as 'Nicholson & Co. / Organ Builders / Palace Yard, / Worcester.' Noteworthy at that time are that all stops are generously full compass, apart from the Cremona and Celeste and the stool is an unusual (Nicholson) design of four unbraced legs. At the opening celebrations, at the end of January 1886, the case and new chamber were unfinished, so the instrument had to be relocated for the formal dedication by the Bishop in late March 1886.

It presents some manufacturing novelties, with clear differences in materials and design to the John Nicholson tradition. For example, the soundboard tables are in cedar and walnut; the soundboard upperboards in an American whitewood (similar to poplar); the soundboards are sealed externally with an animal glue size; all pallets

are connected to the pull-downs wires by a thin twine (this was threaded through a hole drilled across the pallet and held in position by a wedge in the top of the pallet above, then covered with traditional felt and leather). Were these departures from John Nicholson's practice experimental (working with inherited managers), or were they an attempt to use up old timber stocks? I have not had an opportunity to record pipe scalings.

All that said it is a fine instrument, featured in subsequent advertisements and the unusually high standard of decorative finish suggests that it was probably used for customer demonstrations by the ambitious Haynes. Apart from his role as organist of Malvern Priory, he also ran an extensive music retail business, with large performance spaces and studio practise rooms. The latter made famous as the location for the first romantic meetings between Edward Elgar and his violin pupil, Alice Roberts.

If a candidate for the last John Nicholson organ is sought (given the lack of primary evidence), my money is on the substantial three-manual instrument built for St Mary, Newbury (Speenhamland), Berks and opened, in part, to the music of Worcester's Caleb Simper, on the 8 December 1885.

Jim Berrow, Worcester

JOURNAL WATCH

An occasional listing of articles of interest in the wider musical press.

Martin, Darryl, (2019) A Real Instrument or Historical Fantasy?: The 'Old Organ' of Christian IV, and Michael Praetorius. *Galpin Society Journal*, LXXII, March 2019

Plank, Dana. (2019) From the Concert Hall to the Console: Three 8-bit Translations of the Toccata and Fugue in D Minor. *Bach*, vol. 50, no. 1. May 2019

Range, Matthias (2019) Mendelssohn's Wedding March at weddings. *Musical Times*, Summer 2019

Woods, Owen. (2019) The Gamba Oboe – a Forgotten Organ Stop Rediscovered *Galpin Society Journal*, March 2019

NEWS FROM MEMBERS

Our Chairman, **Dr. Alan Thurlow**, sends the following taken from a letter which recently came to light in the British Organ Archive at the Cadbury Research Library. We are indebted to Ivana Frlan, a member of staff at the CRL, for bringing it to our attention. The letter, dated 27 January 1952, was sent to an organ builder by the organist of a church in Wales. The letter does not give the identity of the church and, since it is possible that the writer could still be with us, we are protecting his identity and that of the address from which the letter was sent:-

I also mentioned the fact that I was having trouble with the present Organ Blower, who I am sorry to say has no respect for the instrument. I was really scared on Sunday as he goes at it so hard he really shakes the whole instrument and one of these next Sundays the whole lot will come down on top of me. I have told him and shown him the way to do the job properly, he remembers for a time and then he is as bad as ever: you can hear the thuds from the bottom of the church and this is putting it quite mildly.

Perhaps BIOS or the IBO should offer courses on the proper technique to be used by Organ Blowers!

Dr Christopher Kent writes to draw attention to his recently published book *Music, Organs and Composers of St Andrew's Parish Church Chippenham*, a review of which appears in this issue on p. 18. He will have copies with him at the Bernard Edmonds Research Conference for sale at the advantageous price of £10.

Martin Renshaw has written to update information relating to work he carried out at St Mary's Sprotbrough, Yorks. and the nearby Newby Hall in the 1980s. He will also be at Birmingham talking about 'The Perils of Preservation'.

The President's long-awaited book on the work of Gray & Davison will shortly be published. **Dr Nicholas Thistlethwaite's** new book, *Organ-building in Georgian and Victorian England: the work of Gray & Davison, 1772-1890*, will be published by the Boydell Press in February. An order form with a special offer price for BIOS members (to whom the author has dedicated the book) is enclosed with this *Reporter*. Between the later Georgian years and the end of Queen Victoria's reign, organ-building in England was transformed from a craft industry carried out in small workshops staffed by a handful of skilled journeymen, to a major industry increasingly based in purpose-built organ factories equipped with large workforces and power-driven machinery. The author explores these developments, alongside the changing tonal design and use of the organ in church, concert and domestic settings, through a detailed study of the work of Gray & Davison drawing on the archival resources available in the British Organ Archive, as well as documentation in church

archives and contemporary musical journals. The main text is supported by a website with extensive transcriptions of many of these sources, and the book includes 99 illustrations as well as detailed specifications and tables.

MEETING REPORT

Day Conference at New College, Oxford, 5 October 2019

The Grant, Degens & Bradbeer organ at New College, Oxford was still a child when Paul Hale gave me a demonstration of it one Sunday in 1974. A visit to the chapel forty-five years later was necessarily a cause for reflection, and not only about organs and organ-building. Anyone who in 1969 thought that GDB had done something irrevocable to the course of English organ-building was holding a widely shared belief; but organs with electro-pneumatic action and with tonal schemes quite different from those of GDB continue to be built and restored. Invaluable lessons have been learned from the Organ Reform Movement, but the stop-list of a new organ is unlikely to include a Messing Regal, Holzgedackt or Teint. This may to some extent be a result of BIOS having revealed to the neo-classicists the fine things done by English organ-builders before the wrong turnings of the late nineteenth century, but it would of course be wrong to say that the neo-classical organ has had its day. The best examples have much to commend them, and one hopes that their custodians, encouraged by BIOS, will continue to treat them respectfully; but the advocates of this kind of instrument do not seem to be getting any younger, and the repertoire associated with it is nowadays less in evidence. One is more likely to hear Cocker than Couperin, Hollins than Hindemith, Tournemire than Tomkins (no value-judgements to be inferred). The Saturday recitals at New College are in my experience reasonably well attended, but there are not the crowds that the instrument drew in its early years. It was recorded a number of times in the 1970s but no commercial recordings appear to exist today, so that although visitors to Oxford can purchase Paul Hale's excellent book, they cannot take away a souvenir of the organ in the form of a CD. The instrument has become just another of Oxford's organs and perhaps (recalling Dr Johnson and the Giant's Causeway) something worth seeing but not worth going to see. That the organ is still highly valued is evident, though, from the work recently carried out by Goetze & Gwynn; and this well-planned and deftly executed conference (for which grateful thanks go to Richard Hobson) testified to its continuing importance in the context of Organ Studies, and to the fact that at least forty or so BIOS members think it worth going to see.

Robert Quinney, the Organist of New College, opened the proceedings with a sparkling account of the Prelude and Fugue in G major, BWV 541. John Rowntree

then talked about the Orgelbewegung, outlined the history of its reception in Britain, and took the story as far as its manifestation in the work of GDB. Paul Hale continued by giving an account of the Byzantine to-ing and fro-ing that the building of the New College organ involved. The appointment of George Pace created delay and muddle, and even the relationship between Maurice Forsyth-Grant and David Lumsden was not without its difficulties, for the final stop-list lacked both the Sesquialtera and the Swell to Positiv coupler requested by the client (omissions made good in 2014-5).

Delegates who viewed without excitement the prospect of the buffet lunch referred to in the conference publicity material were delighted by the generous sit-down meal provided by New College, which enabled them not only to fuel themselves for the afternoon but also to indulge more comfortably in the wide-ranging conversations which are such a valuable feature of these events.

The morning having been devoted to history, Geoffrey Webber began the afternoon with a paper on the musical use of the organ, and we learned how in his years as organ scholar at New College he was encouraged by David Lumsden to perform early music and in particular works by Byrd, Gibbons and Tomkins. This led to observations from the floor about the repertoire favoured by present-day students of the organ: it appears from the comments of William McVicker that today's organ scholars feel that their obligation to play Early Music is discharged by the occasional performance of a work by Buxtehude, that even Bach is becoming something of a rarity, and that French symphonic works are hugely popular. There was discussion about Maurice Forsyth-Grant's somewhat mysterious reference to 'modern German organ music' and 'Aliquot and Oberton harmonics' in the notes he promulgated at the time of the opening of the organ (which were helpfully set out in the conference paperwork). John Rowntree thought that he had had in mind here Distler, Pepping and other composers of that kind, and no doubt MFG was indeed thinking of those now largely forgotten composers referred to on the back cover of old-style Schott editions. Perhaps this goes some way towards explaining the apparent wane in the popularity of the neo-classical organ, for it is surely a mistake for a builder to draw up stop-lists pegged to recent trends in organ composition (at this point, it occurred to at least one delegate that builders should concentrate on making fine musical instruments and leave it to organists to work out how - if at all - this or that school of composition may be accommodated). I would have welcomed an account of the way in which the New College organ was, and is, used to accompany such things as Dyson in D and Like as the Hart, but to some extent the omission was remedied by Paul Hale's personal assessment of the organ, which formed part of the conference paperwork and which referred to the difficulties created for choral accompaniment by, for example, the volume of the Swell reeds and the high pitch of the Swell mixture. (I note that at New College, as at Magdalen, the organ is no longer used to accompany the psalms).

Dominic Gwynn's was the final paper of the day. He admitted that the partial restoration of the New College organ was not exactly an obvious project for craftsmen organ-builders noted for instruments in early styles; but he and his colleagues had acquired through working on it much affection for the organ, and he expressed admiration for the work of John Degens, who voiced it. He too was acquainted with it in his undergraduate years and made the disarming admission that his company's best efforts did not seem to have restored to the organ the 'verve' (his word) that he recalled from his youth. He underlined the sheer novelty of the instrument in 1969 and the excitement it generated, for with the exception of the Willis ranks retained from the previous organ, nothing in it had an exact counterpart in an existing British organ.

For what I imagine were practical reasons, the greater part of the conference took place in the ante-chapel, where all that could be seen of the organ was the Pace-designed west side. We moved into the main part of the building when the proceedings involved listening to the organ. Had some of the discussions taken place there, they could perhaps have focused more fully on the case, and I might have had the courage to volunteer reflections on the 'dinosaur teeth' effect of the smallest front pipes of the Positiv; the Swell shutters, which this worshipper finds hugely distracting in the summer months; and on the taste implied by the tout ensemble. None of the organ's predecessors had a horizontal trumpet, a set of bells, a visible Swell box, or a thirty-two-foot Pedal reed, and such things can sometimes give your reporter the impression that the instrument was designed by and for the benefit of enthusiasts rather than connoisseurs (an impression reinforced by the very considerable increase in the number of pistons). Some critical discussion would have been welcome. One wonders, for example, what the Victorian Society thinks about the case. 'Rather spiky for its setting' was Pevsner's comment on it, 'almost brutalist' John Norman's (in his gazetteer). And in a way it was a pity that the meeting took place outside term, for had it run into Choral Evensong we could have assessed anew its ability to perform its main task. But these are ungenerous comments, given what was an altogether most memorable and worthwhile day. The event concluded with a recital by Margaret Phillips, whose thoughtful programme took its cue from David Lumsden by including music from England, France, Germany, Spain and Switzerland. One was again reminded that one of the chief aims in 1966-9 was an organ capable of doing justice to as many schools of composition as possible. The English work was Sebastian Forbes's *Haec dies*, and we were fortunate in having the composer himself in attendance; but the highlight of the programme - indeed, of the whole conference - was the *Passacaglia and Fugue in C minor*, BWV 582, by which the essential nobility of the New College organ was movingly demonstrated.

Relf Clark

REVIEWS

Kent, Christopher, Music, organs and composers of St Andrew's Parish Church Chippenham, (Chippenham Town Council, 2019), xiii + 127 pages, £12.95+£3 postage, softcover. Available from Chippenham Museum (<http://www.chippenham.gov.uk/chippenham-museum>)

The history of an organ is about more than the instrument in isolation. Whatever building it is housed in its context will be part of its history just as much as trends and fashions in organ building at the time of organ building and rebuilding. At Chippenham this is seen in the treatment of both the organ and the significant Brice Seede organ case. The rate of change to the case is much slower than to the organ but both are a long way removed from their original condition whilst retaining considerable historic significance.

This new and well-illustrated history of the organ of Chippenham, St Andrew, has a broad approach to the history of the organ and music at this church. It follows its fortunes with the finances of the church and the personalities of leaders at the church, in addition to the organists and music directors. Actions and attitudes of all these figures have had an impact on the organ. This is explored with a surprising candour.

The organists of the church and their musical activities are explored, along with that of the composer-vicar the Revd Canon John Rich. Where there is a record of music performed on special occasions scores of some of the music are included. This is helpful and broadens the understanding of the accomplishments of the choir to readers to whom works such as the Boardman Nunc Dimittis or Coombs II Sanctus are not familiar. Coombs I (1769-1820) was organist of St Andrew's from 1789 until his death and was, like his son, a composer. Coombs I was of sufficient stature as a composer to achieve publication of some works with Preston (London) as well as Novello.

The author allows himself to explore areas of overlapping personal interest. The nineteenth-century link between the church and Bowood House, where Coombs II also served as organist, gives an opportunity to introduce the author's successful scheme for a new organ in the chapel there. Intentionally or not this draws a contrast with his proposals for the St Andrew's organ that remain unrealised.

The text is generously supported with appendices of original documents, which allow the reader to draw their own insights from the wealth of material provided. They illustrate attitudes to organ building and rebuilding over the past century.

The first print run of the book was short. Readers who acquire a copy from this printing will find a sufficient level of matters that should have been resolved in proof

reading to be frustrating. Nearly all of the difficulties these cause can be resolved fairly easily, but not all. A price quoted in 'pounds/guineas' can only be one or the other and a Choir Clarinet transferred to the Swell (p. 71) does not appear in the specification that follows (p. 73), on either the Swell or the Choir. The second impression will reveal what is meant.

Organ history goes well beyond organ building and performance. Kent leads us into a complex web of overlapping interests which, at the time of writing await resolution.

David S Knight

Thomas Roseingrave: A celebrated Concerto

Editor: David Patrick.

Publisher: Fitzjohn Music Publications £5.00

This version of Roseingrave's concerto was published by C & S Thompson after the composer's death in 1766 as 'for the harpsichord'; many keyboard concerti of the time were published in the UK for either organ or harpsichord and this piece certainly works well on the organ with a light registration. It is in three quite short through-composed movements, the opening movement of 69 bars in D major in C time being an allegro, although not so marked, with dynamic contrasts of *f* and *p*, followed by a short Adagio of seven bars in D minor, a Phrygian cadence leading into a closing Allegro of 72 bars in 3/8 in D major. It is different in many details from the version in four movements edited by Laura Cerutti for Armelin (her edition has no source details but it is probably Ms 106F in Cambridge Fitzwilliam Museum, before 1750) which includes an andante leading back to the opening allegro, a completely different slow movement, and the final movement in ternary form and with many instances of rh thirds and sixths implying trumpets. Whether the piece is a keyboard reduction of a now lost orchestral concerto – perhaps even one of the earliest in the UK – or an original work for solo harpsichord in imitation of an orchestral piece like those by, for example, J.S.Bach, Christian Petzold, Michael Scheuenstuhl or Matthew Camidge, is open to conjecture; there is a putative reconstruction for chamber orchestra in the *Musica Britannica* edition of Roseingrave's complete keyboard works.

Technically not over demanding, although the repeated rh leaps of quaver thirds which occur several times in the first movement need care, this charming version is far removed from the composer's volatile and dissonant Fugues and Voluntaries of 1728. The edition presents an accurate text from the original print, with brief suggestions about interpretation of ornaments taken from contemporary and later

sources. As a lighter counterpart to the longer and more detailed Ms version, it works very well.

John Collins

New from Oxford University Press

www.oup.com/sheetmusic

OUP has recently signed Bristol-based David Bednall as a House Composer and published two new pieces by him in 2019. Walton's *Paeon*, dedicated to Paul Walton takes inspiration from the style of the eponymous William Walton (£7.75, duration 6.5m). His *Evocation of Wells Cathedral* is based on the third Advent Antiphon. It is dedicated to Elsa van der Zee, here celebrating her work as an art historian, referencing the Jesse Window. A meditative contribution to the Advent repertoire (£7.75, duration 6.5m).

James Whitbourn, Composer and Senior Research Fellow at St Stephen's House, Oxford was commissioned to write *Apollo* to celebrate the first human spaceflight, and received its premier in Houston, Texas, in July 2019 (£8.75, duration 7m).

John Rutter has returned to organ composition with *Elegy* and *Festive Bells* (£10.25, Duration 7m). Rutter is among the composers represented in single work reprints of popular pieces that have previously appeared in OUP collections. These include Rutter's *Toccata in Seven* (1975, £7.75); Leighton's *Paeon* (1967, £7.75) and the *Mushel Toccata* (1966, £7.75)

Ceremonial music for organ, book 2, edited by Robert Gower, (£22.50, 25 pieces). The title should not be a distraction from the inclusion of contemporary pieces, some published for the first time. These include posthumous publication of *Paeon* by Peter Hurford, and Gabriel Jackson's *Carillon for Louise and Nick*, manuals only (2001), possibly its first publication. York Bowen (1884-1961), *Wedding March* is published for the first time and Francis Jackson's revised version of his *Prelude on 'East Acklam'* (1984, 2019) is also included (£22.50).

DSK

FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

Saturday 29 February 2020 10.30 for 11.00

The Bernard Edmonds Research Conference
at the Barber Institute of Fine Arts, University of Birmingham

The day will include papers by:

Dr Jim Berrow 'Craftsman's art and music's measure': the gothic revival, true principles and organs.' The development of gothic organ cases from pre-Oxford Movement to the present day. Derrick Carrington 'Towards an understanding of the Lusitanian Baroque Organ'. Professor Matteo Malagoli 'William George Trice on the centenary of his death'. A British organ builder who worked only in Italy. John Norman 'Twenty Five Organ Cases' A discussion of twenty-five of the organ cases with which I have been associated, over the years, both as an organbuilder and as a consultant. Dr David Ponsford 'On a new edition of Nicolas de Grigny's Premier livre d'orgue'. Martin Renshaw 'The perils of preservation: the organs at Newby, North Yorkshire'. Dr David Shuker 'Organists of the Valentine Family: A very British musical dynasty'. The Valentine family of musicians who came to prominence in Leicester in the late seventeenth century.

Saturday 20 March 2020 10.30 for 11.00

Day Conference and Annual General Meeting
Chelsea Old Church, Old Church Street, London SW3 5DQ

William Drake Ltd have recently completed a new 3 manual instrument of 33 stops in mid-nineteenth century style on the west gallery of this historic church. Dr William McVicker, the consultant, will introduce the instrument. There will also be a demonstration and recital. The programme for the day will include an introduction by Dr Nicholas Thistlethwaite to his new book *Organ-building in Georgian and Victorian England: the work of Gray and Davison 1772 – 1890*.

Saturday 2 May 2020 10.30 for 11.00

The Organ and the Blind Player, an historical introduction
St Michael's Church, The Market Place, Aylsham, Norfolk NR11 6EL

David Wyld 'The Restoration of the 1911 Norman & Beard (III/27) organ and its 'Hollins' console'. Owen Woods 'Harrison & Harrison and Alfred Hollins' David Shuker 'Training of blind organists – a history beginning in the eighteenth century' Andrew Hayden 'Henry Chicheley and George Warne, the blind organists of Great Yarmouth, St Nicholas'. The day will conclude with a short recital by Henry Macey, organist of St Michael's, Aylsham

**BOOKING FORM
BRITISH INSTITUTE OF ORGAN STUDIES**

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING & DAY CONFERENCE 2020

Chelsea Old Church, Old Church Street, London SW3 5DQ

Saturday 29 March 2020 10.30 for 11.00

Please reserve a place for the BIOS Day Conference in London for £30.00 (including lunch), or book online on the BIOS website

Cheques should be payable to 'BIOS'. Please fill out a separate form for each person.

Name (including title)

Address

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..... Post Code

Telephone (daytime and/or mobile)

Telephone (evening)

e-mail

Please note any dietary requirements

Acknowledgements will be sent by e-mail. If you do not have an e-mail address, and require an acknowledgement, please send a SAE with your booking form.

Please return this booking form (or a photocopy) to:



**BOOKING FORM
BRITISH INSTITUTE OF ORGAN STUDIES
DAY CONFERENCE**

Saturday 2 May 2020 at Aylesham, Norwich

The Organ and the Blind Player, an historical introduction

Please reserve a place for the BIOS Day Conference in Aylesham for £30.00 (including lunch), or book online on the BIOS website

Cheques should be payable to 'BIOS'. Please fill out a separate form for each person.

Name (including title)

Address

.....

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Telephone (daytime and/or mobile)

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Please return this booking form (or a photocopy) to:



FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

Saturday 29 February 2020

Barber Institute, University of Birmingham

Bernard Edmonds Research Conference

For details and booking form see pp. 21 and 22.

Saturday 28 March 2020

Chelsea Old Church, Old Church Street, SW3 5DQ

AGM and Day Conference

For details and booking form see pp. 21 and 23.

Saturday 2 May 2020

Aylsham, Norfolk

The Organ and the Blind Player, an historical introduction

For details and booking form see pp. 21 and 24.

Saturday 19 September 2020

Milton Abbey and Blandford Forum, Dorset

Saturday 21 or 28 November 2020

The BIOS Lunch

The Meetings Officer, Richard Hobson, is always interested to hear from members who would like to arrange, or who have ideas for a day conference. Planning for 2021 is underway – please get in touch.



AIMS OF BIOS

To promote objective, scholarly research into the history of the organ and its music in all its aspects, and, in particular, into the organ and its music in Britain.

To conserve the sources and materials for the history of the organ in Britain, and to make them accessible to scholars.

To work for the preservation, and where necessary, the faithful restoration of historic organs in Britain.

To encourage an exchange of scholarship with similar bodies and individuals abroad, and to promote, in Britain, a greater appreciation of historical overseas schools of organ-building.