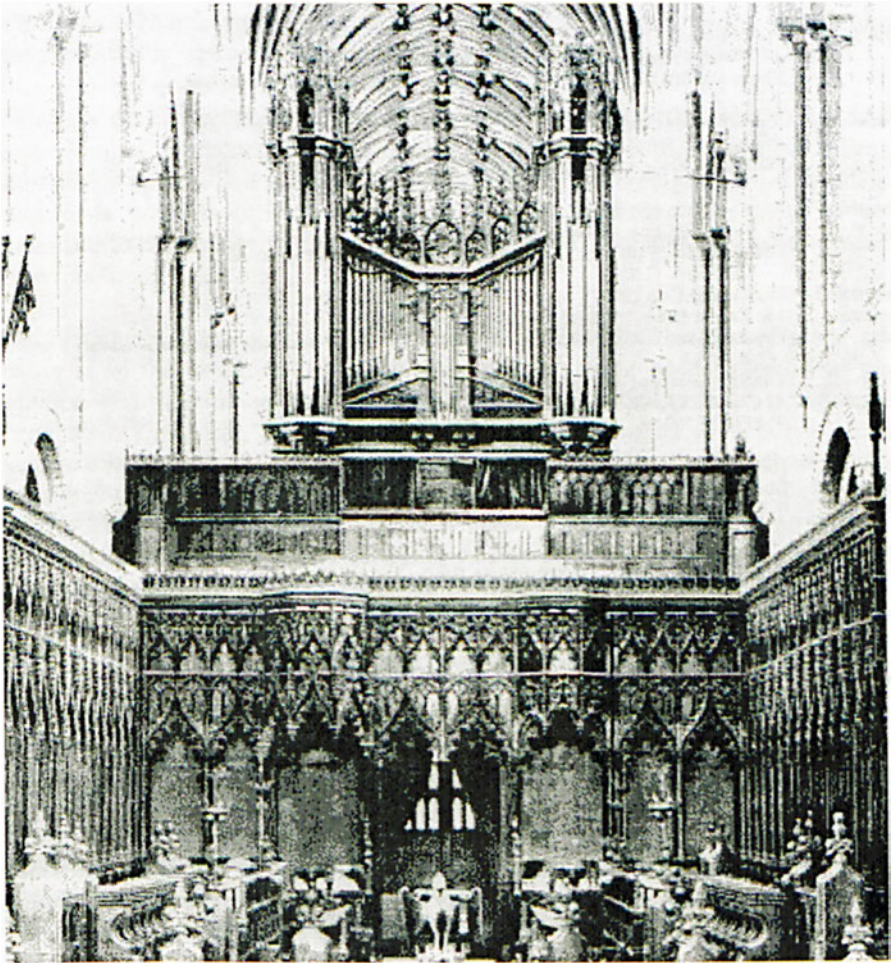


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# BIOS REPORTER

April 1999, Vol.XXTII No.2



# THE BRITISH INSTITUTE OF ORGAN STUDIES (BIOS)

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

BIOS is a registered charity (number 283936) and the amenity society for the British organ. It publishes a substantial annual *Journal* and the quarterly *Reporter*, organises regular day and residential meetings; administers the British Organ Archive, the National Pipe Organ Register and the Historic Organs Certificate Scheme; and undertakes casework in support of its aims. The annual subscription is £25 (ordinary) or £18 (concessionary - at Council's discretion). BIOS publications can be sent by Air Mail to overseas destinations for a further annual payment of £8. Subscriptions are payable by a variety of means and may also be cancelled.

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The Chairman is elected annually; other elected Officers and Councillors serve for two years, for a maximum of two consecutive terms. Respective election dates are given in brackets. Co-options are annual. All are trustees of the charity.)

**Overseas Liaison:** Christopher Kent, MMus, PhD, FRCO, ARMCM,  
Department of Music, University of Reading, [REDACTED]

## EDITORIAL

The recent BIOS - IBO joint conference at the British Organ Archive presented an important opportunity to state the need for adequate documentation of instruments prior to any reconstruction or restoration.

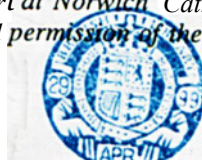
Present opinion is well informed of the necessity for recording an object's history; witness the work being carried out by NADFAS (National Association of Decorative and Fine Art Societies) in church recording. To date, some 800 churches have had their contents minutely catalogued and inventories prepared for posterity - the process continues. Assimilation of information is much easier than it used to be and need not involve lengthy written descriptions when a photograph can do half the job.

Why do it? Firstly, there is simply the historical perspective, the desire to know something of an instrument's provenance and the changes that may have taken place throughout its life. Secondly, there are occasions when rebuilding work is carried out which has been inadequately researched. Material which has pinpointed an 'as-was' condition is immensely valuable in helping establish the points of departure which led to errors being made.

Thirdly, there is the question of an attitude of mind on the part of those actually engaged in the work on the instrument. Builders have been called in to give an opinion of an instrument only to condemn its current state (even if it happens to be original) out of hand, or express the need to alter an organ to 'modern' standards; such cases indicate a failure to understand not only the historical aspect of the instrument, but also its musical rationale. This demeans the status of the craft and does nothing to encourage the view that organ building is an act of artistic creation founded on a long and venerable tradition. Fourthly, and probably most importantly, adequate documentation gives an opportunity for a corpus of knowledge to be built up of builders' working practices which can be made available to all who may have an interest.

Objections have been raised on the basis that such work is time-consuming or that the prospective customer is aware of the nature of the instrument involved. A carefully prepared initial appraisal of the organ can not only demonstrate the builder's expertise, it may well inform the customer and encourage a constructive attitude towards the proposed work. Documentation of the instrument can proceed alongside the work. It would probably be of assistance if a format could be devised which details areas requiring documentation in a way which is readily understood with a minimum of penpushing. A look at museum documentation techniques could probably give useful guidance [here](#).

*The cover illustration shows the east end view of the organ at Norwich Cathedral after the rebuilding by Bishop in 1834. (Reproduced by kind permission of the Dean and Chapter, Norwich Cathedral.)*



# MEETINGS

## **Nigel Browne**

### **BIOS Day Meeting**

**Saturday 3rd July 1999**

**St. John the Baptist, Holland Road, London**

The theme will be: 'Aristide Cavaille-Coll: the influence on British Organ Design'. Full details and a booking form can be found on the flyer in the centre of this issue.

### **BIOS Annual Residential Conference**

**23rd-26th August 1999**

**Ethics and Conservation of the Organ**

This year the BIOS Residential Meeting, the Annual Diocesan Organ Advisers' Conference of the Council for the Care of Churches, and the IBO are joining together for a three day conference in Liverpool on the important and sometimes controversial area of conservation. You are warmly invited to join us for what promises to be an interesting and varied programme. A feature of this extended event will be time to stand back from our daily work of organbuilding or advising, and to consider what we do and why. A visit to the award winning Conservation Center in Liverpool will give us the opportunity to meet conservators working with the same materials we use, with experience of other disciplines. The organ as a musical instrument will be put into its liturgical and secular context - what is the musical purpose in conservation? The presence of concert and cathedral organists alongside museum conservators promises a stimulating mix for informed and realistic discussions. A booking form can be found in the centre of this issue - please make your booking as soon as possible.

### **BIOS Day Meeting**

**Saturday 12th June 1999**

**Welbeck, Nottinghamshire**

### **BIOS Day Conference**

**Saturday 2nd October 1999**

**Wingfield, Suffolk**

Dominic Gwynn writes:

The two meetings listed above which I am organising in the coming year have had to be postponed, for which I am most apologetic. In both cases the events are being organised with other organisations with their own priorities and timetables. The first meeting, scheduled for 12th June 1999, was part of an organ exhibition to be held at the Harley Gallery, a small craft gallery associated with a group of workshops of which Goetze and Gwynn are part. There has been a change of management at the Harley Gallery, as a result of which the organ exhibition will now be held in April - May 2000. Since the BIOS day depends on having chamber organs available, it has to coincide with the exhibition; the idea is to provide BIOS members with as full and rewarding a day as possible, and to provide the exhibition with more visitors.

The second meeting on the early Tudor organ and church music was to have been held on 2nd October 1999 at Wingfield in Suffolk. The impetus behind this event is provided by the Early English Organ Project, which is raising money with a view to reconstructing organs based on the soundboards discovered at Wingfield and Wetheringsett. The purpose of the event was to publicise the work of the project, the current state of research into the early Tudor organ, and to explore some of the musical implications. Since grant aid will finance research into late 15th and early 16th century organs in England and Europe during the coming year, the committee feels that the event at Wingfield will publicise unfinished business if it is held this year, and that it would be wise to wait until 2000. So the first Saturday in October 2000 it is.

## **BIOS DAY CONFERENCE**

**Saturday 26th February 1999**

**Department of Music, University of Reading**

### **Martin Renshaw**

Billed as a conference on current research, the papers given at Reading this year made up a mixed bunch of blossoms, both in content and presentation. However confident a speaker may be, it is surely not easy to read a paper in front of a small but critical audience which includes our charming but august chairman. Not many speakers can make a paper sound spontaneous enough to command interest, and indeed it might be doubted that a paper could ever be as absorbing to its audience as to its reader - and those who can speak well without notes for 45 minutes are not numerous. There is always a danger too that a less-than-confident presentation can mar what is otherwise an interesting approach to a subject and that confident presentation can mask poverty of content.

David Ponsford began the day with a cautious and partial opening of the Pandora's Box of notes inégales in late 17th-century French music, stressing that performers should be aware that the genre of music and its derivation might most helpfully indicate the use of this technique. For instance, music that is derived from vocal operatic airs would naturally lend itself to the keyboard player imitating the natural unequal inflection of the voice - which is indeed surely the origin of the practice? The chairman and the present writer pounced on his text afterwards, and a version of it will be included in the next edition of *The Organ Yearbook*. It is indeed much to be desired that organists should listen to intelligent singing, when they can find it, and imitate it - it would do a great deal to improve their style in not only French but also certainly in English and even German keyboard music.

Stylistically a million miles away, but still in France, an enthusiast for Charles Toumemire's music, Andrew Thomson, made a very good stab at selling this mystical-oriental and complex composer's work. Andrew was battling against the facts that this man had altered Cesar Franck's organ at Ste. Clothilde and that - like

Karg-Elert and other organ composers - he had left behind a great multitude of notes without destroying a critical percentage of them. Nonetheless the musical examples he played were impressive, especially the first, recorded on an unnamed French organ. The second was interesting to those of us who had not previously heard the pioneering Walker-Downes organ at Buckfast Abbey, but the decidedly unmythical quality of this organ subjected Toumemire's music to rather more analytical strain than it would really bear.

The isolated setting of Old Radnor shown in photographs taken by the next speaker, Richard Morton, appropriately introduced an examination of some of the many remaining mysteries surrounding this instrument. Perhaps he could have probed more deeply into, for example, Sutton's pre-'restoration' drawing which apparently shows a soundboard still in position, and what that might imply, but we were at least able to have a few glimpses inside this interesting organ and now know better why it emerged as it did after Sutton's and Walker's work.

Substituting at the last moment for the scheduled player, David Knight tried to shine some light into a corner of the history of the organ at Westminster Abbey, by demolishing a few myths concerning the introduction of pedals and Cooke's Service in G. However, as so often happens when light is directed into the dusty corners of an organ loft, nothing very certain was found to be lurking there, and the exact correlation of the installation of a pedalboard and Benjamin Cooke's rather advanced musical tastes seemed to remain uncertain.

Dr. Christopher Kent very helpfully gave us a glimpse of the doings at the recent conference over the 1631 organ at Smithfield, Virginia, USA, and then went on to examine in a paper he had already given there the clues that the organ parts of consort music from that century might give in terms of possible pitch, registration and temperament.

Inevitably this concentrated on atypical writing in 'difficult' keys or chord sequences, and some in the audience were heard to mutter that Coprario, Jenkins and their contemporaries might have written 'strangely' within a given - perhaps meantone - system for deliberate and special effect, rather than that such music suggested a modified or even 'equal' temperament. For this writer, this was confirmed when Dr. Kent played a widely-modulating Verse of Four Parts on a not-very-well tuned equal-temperament small organ - the aural effect of the modulations being of course entirely lost. Is it not time for a conference around a well-tuned meantone organ to explore the supposed 'problems' and the undoubted benefits that this tuning produces in solo and concerted music?

Escaping as unscathed as one could from the excellent display of Positif Press goodies on offer at tea-time and braving Reading's one-way city-centre traffic maelstrom, most of us arrived at St. Giles's Church in time to hear a short recital played by Relf Clarke on the Bishop / Walker/ Harrison organ there, now placed on a

curvaceous new west gallery. Music offered to our ‘innocent ears’ (Relf was recklessly defying our powers of identification) included two composers all-too-recognisable from their bad characteristics plus at least one - the recitalist himself - not yet to be found in a CD catalogue. From an organ-technical point of view, it was interesting that this organ was in fact larger, at three manuals, than its tonal palette suggested - was this because it is now placed in the open in a typically unhelpful English-church acoustic? It was also puzzling that some front pipes were coloured ‘gold’ and some were not. *Notes inegales*, perhaps?

## **BIOS - IBO JOINT CONFERENCE**

**Saturday 6th March 1999**

**Birmingham Central Library**

### **John Hughes**

This joint conference with members of the Institute of Organ Builders entitled ‘Brush off the dust!’ enabled BIOS to demonstrate the relevance and implications of its work, notably through the BOA and the NPOR, to the organ building trade.

The day began with a description of the Birmingham City Archives and its associated collections by the City Archivist, Sian Roberts. The difficulties of preserving organ-related documents became apparent, particularly more recent examples, where relatively modern paper is disintegrating. A necessarily time-consuming process of micro-filming documents is under way to enable the originals to be placed in permanent storage. The expertise, technical skills, and the specialised storage made available to BIOS by the Birmingham City Library and Archives, is quite remarkable, and BIOS certainly owes a great debt of gratitude for this generosity and the assistance of the staff involved, in particular Sian Roberts and Emma West.

David Wickens, former BIOS Archivist, outlined the origins of the BOA in the acquisition of the Jardine records by Michael Sayer. It seems David became Archivist because he was ‘cornered by a gang of four or five Council members in long raincoats carrying big guns in violin cases’. David referred to the difficulty of handling the fragile Gray & Davison shopbooks and the process of making microfilm copies for back-up purposes off-site. Although the City Library can give researchers thirty minutes of their time to an enquiry, David emphasised the need for BIOS to engage research assistants for people unable to visit Birmingham.

Michael Sayers, NPOR Director, proved that using the NPOR ‘on-line’ was not only a highly productive research and information tool, with several hundred searches a week, but was also immense fun. Amid frequent laughter, Michael showed the delegates not only how to elicit information and illustrations from the NPOR, but how to avoid swamping the computer as the result of searching for references to such a stop as ‘Open Diapason’.

In a short paper, Hilary Davison dealt with written sources of information, few of which, if any, were complete in themselves. In pointing out that Britain lacks a law that all documents must be kept, he demonstrated how documents relating to organs can be found in strange contexts, such as estate accounts.

After the delegates had enjoyed an excellent buffet lunch and an opportunity to exchange views, David Wickens returned to the platform to illustrate how the BOA can be used. He showed the different and complementary types of information to be elicited from shopbooks, specification books, drawing books, and technical books, stressing that the totality of information available to the researcher is spread over several books. He concluded by pleading for organ builders to make available their templates and other archival material so that this totality of information can be preserved.

Christopher Gray, BIOS Casework and Conservation Officer, gave a forthright paper on the issues surrounding historic organ restorations, in which he defined the majority of such instruments as belonging to the period 1860-1910. Not only could there be difficulty in deciding to what date an organ should be restored, there was a need to apply a standard; to date, no organ builder has applied for accreditation to British Standards in regard to restoration work. Finding the date of an organ could be a problem where no builder's plate or marks were present; here Christopher gave a comprehensive, if somewhat overwhelming, list of sources which could be employed.

Courageously, Christopher opined that the contemplated Schulze restoration at Doncaster should remain true to the original conception. However, such an approach could not always be followed; there could well be cases where electrifying a pneumatic action could be the only economical way of saving an organ. The major problem is that there is no consensus on what should be done in dealing with an historic organ.

The final speaker was Jim Berrow, BIOS Secretary, who told the delegates that their motive in using the Archives should be financial. In dealing with sources, Jim advocated thoroughness and caution in checking the oral tradition, which might only be repeating a secondary source. As an example, he quoted a letter of Hope-Jones which showed a surprising recognition of the usefulness of a soft Swell mixture, casting illumination on the view that Hope-Jones showed little interest in anything other than unison tone. Scribbling and graffiti should be preserved, since they are archive material.

Similarly, much could be learnt from studying the history of workmen; in this respect, Jim recounted a harrowing tale whereby Noel Bonavia-Hunt was paid to write a critique of an organ; the outcome was that the voicer, who had previously had the temerity to ask for a pay rise, lost his job, which fact Bonavia-Hunt seemed not to regret, merely noting that he had been paid for his critique. Such history of the workmen and their reminiscences could supply much valuable information. Jim's final plea to the delegates was to respect the work of regional organ builders, whose individuality was most likely to suffer in the process of restoration or other work.



A lively question and answer session followed. John Rowntree suggested that organ builders should document their work, which prompted concern at the amount of paperwork this could involve; several delegates claimed it was not necessary.

This conference was a valuable opportunity for BIOS to address the organ building trade, not only to state its policy and views, but to show the wealth of information and expertise that it has to offer. That the conference was so successful was due in no small measure to the meticulous planning and organisation of Jim Berrow (the microphones, slide projector, overhead projector, and lighting alterations all worked properly first time), and the excellent choice of venue. Above all, the various speakers forcefully conveyed the impression that the work of BIOS is not only substantially informative and educative, but rewarding and enjoyable as well.

## **MEMBERSHIP MATTERS**

### **Kerr Jamieson**

Many thanks to those members who have responded promptly to the subscription renewal reminder distributed with the January Reporter. Those whose renewals are still outstanding should receive a further reminder form with the present issue.

We congratulate one of our Australian members, John **Maidment**, on the award, in the Australia Day Honours List, of the Order of Australia Medal for his services to Australia's cultural heritage through the Organ Historical Trust of Australia.

We extend a warm welcome to the following new members:-

**Richard M. Allen:** [REDACTED]

**William O. Clarke:** [REDACTED]

**Dr. Peter Horton:** [REDACTED]

**Daniel A.A. Moulton MA FRCO:** [REDACTED]

**C. Victor Potter:** [REDACTED]

**Dr. John C. Smaje:** [REDACTED]

**David A. Wakefield FInstD:** [REDACTED]

**Alan G. Wooley BSc CPFA:** [REDACTED]

Please note the following additions/corrections/changes of address/deletions, etc.

[REDACTED]



## **PUBLICATIONS**

### ***Journal 23 (1999)***

The editor is Relf Clark to whom enquiries should be addressed.

### ***Journal 24 (2000)***

The editor is Alan Buchan to whom enquiries should be addressed.

### ***Journal 25 (2001)***

The editor is William McVicker to whom enquiries should be addressed.

### ***BIOS Membership List 1999***

The bi-annual *BIOS Membership* list will be published in July.

### ***Reporter July 1999***

The cut-off date for receipt of copy for the July 1999 issue is 5th June 1999.

### ***Journal Reviews***

Please note that Andrea McCrea can only accept review copy intended for the *Journal*, he cannot accept copy intended for the *Reporter*, which should be sent direct to the Editors, at the addresses on page 23.

# REDUNDANT ORGANS

## Roy Williamson (Redundant Organ Rehousing Company Ltd.)

<b>London (99/03)</b>	<b>Conacher 1923</b>	
Action	pneumatic	
Specification	Gt 8 8 8 4 Sw 8 8 4 8 Pd 16	Casework: post and rail front in 5 fields Dimensions: h 15' 8" w 13'9" d 4'4"
<b>N. England (99/01)</b>	<b>Wilkinson 1872 *</b>	
Action	mechanical	
Specification	Gt 8 8b 8 4 4 22/3 2 Sw (tc) 16 8 8 8 4 2 8 Pd 16 (25 notes)	Casework: details awaited Dimensions: h 19' w 13' 9" d8' 6" plus pedalboard
<b>N. England (99/02)</b>	<b>James Conacher 1894</b>	
Action	mechanical (manuals), electric (pedals)	
Specification	Gt 8 8 8 8 4 4 2 III 8 Sw 1 6 8 8 8 8 4 2 II 8 8 Pd 16 16 8	Casework: details awaited Dimensions: details awaited
<b>N. England (99/04)</b>	<b>Walker 1904</b>	
Action	mechanical (manuals), pneumatic (pedals)	
Specification	Gt 8 8 8 4 Sw 8 8 8 4 8 Pd 16 16	Casework: pipe-racks to front and bass side Dimensions: (approx): h 14' w 8' d 12'
<b>N. England (99/05)</b>	<b>Nelson 1929</b>	
Action	mechanical to Great, pneumatic to Swell and Pedals	
Specification	Gt 8 8 8 4 4 2 Sw 8 8 8 8 4 8 Pd 16 8	Casework: post and rail front, five fields fully panelled sides Dimensions: details awaited

**Please contact Roy Williamson with any redundancy or placement query at:**



## FATES

The fate of the chamber organ in Trinity Methodist Church, Kidwelly, Carmarthenshire was particularly unfortunate. It dated from about 1780, and the pipework and windchests appeared to be original. The builder was unknown; two of the reservoir weights bore Holdich's initials. The wedge reservoir was of German design. Sadly, the instrument was destroyed and the church badly damaged as the result of arson, in October 1998. Details of the organ may be found in the NPOR. (JH)

## LETTER TO THE EDITORS

Sirs,

Throughout the centuries the organ in this country has suffered from the ambivalent attitude of the population towards the instrument. I recently came across a splendid example, taken from the *Souvenir of Jubilee Services* for St. Paul's Wesleyan Church, Runcorn, February 1917, involving a revered forebear of mine, Mr. William Holt. (I have no information about the instrument concerned, except that it was in the chapel at Weston in 1917). In summary: it was through the preaching of Wesley in the neighbourhood of Aston and Weston, that the Evangelical Revival of the eighteenth century reached Northern Cheshire. Mr. William Holt was appointed as superintendent of the Sunday school in Runcorn during or shortly after 1800. Earlier unsatisfactory preaching rooms were replaced by Brunswick Chapel in 1827, itself displaced by St. Paul's Church in 1866. Musical arrangements at Brunswick Chapel underwent alteration soon after 1840.1 quote:

The orchestra which had provided instrumental music for the services - and was efficient so long as the leading players were not absent - had given place to an organ installed at the expense of Mr. Thomas Hazlehurst. This attempt to remedy slight defects and to secure a better balance of parts did not meet with the full approval of all the parties concerned, judging by a conversation between Mr. Thomas Hazlehurst and 'Old William Holt'.

'How do you like the new organ, William?' enquired Mr. Hazlehurst. To which 'Old William' replied, 'Well! Mestur Thomas, if I saw the devil runnin' away wi' it I wouldn't shout "stop thief".'

Dr. A.H. Seymour,



## MONEY FROM WASTE

**Richard Hird**

Since early 1997 the waste industry has been able to give money to 'good causes' through arms-length or independent Environmental Trusts, in lieu of landfill tax that would otherwise be paid to the Inland Revenue. Landfill tax, and consequently the spin-off income to trusts, is being increased year by year, to encourage more recycling and more sustainable / less wasteful use of primary resource. A body called ENTRUST (website: <http://www.entrust.org.uk>) registers the trusts, of which there are currently several hundred, some geared to funding specific projects, others acting as middlemen giving funds to deserving projects.

Of interest to those working for the faithful restoration of historic organs in Britain (BIOS's third Aim) is one of the overriding funding criteria ('approved objects'), which states:

'Where it is for the protection of the environment, the maintenance, repair or restoration of a building or other structure which is a place of religious worship, or of historic or architectural interest.'

Note however that:

'Such places must be open to the public, must be located within the vicinity of a landfill site (within 10 miles) and must not be operated with a view to profit.'

Money is available for churches, including organs, if it can be shown that the criteria are met and a sympathetic trust can be found (or one set up, as it seems some churches have been doing). It is being said that already organs have benefitted from grants derived from landfill tax credits. Is there anyone reading this who has experience of an environmental trust or about obtaining such grant funding for a church and/or organ, who would be willing to share information? Equally or better, if there are persons of influence in waste management who might be interested in liaising with BIOS about the prospect of using waste tax credits to help supplement grant funding for organ restorations, the writer would be delighted to hear from them. (Richard Hird's contact details may be found on page 2.)

## **THE 1631 HUNSTANTON HALL ORGAN**

### **HISTORIC ORGANS RECONSIDERED: RESTORATION AND CONSERVATION FOR A NEW CENTURY**

**A conference held at St. Luke's Church, Smithfield, Virginia, USA  
14th January 1999**

#### **Dominic Gwynn**

St. Luke's Church, Smithfield, dates from 1632, when early English settlers sailed up a creek off the James River. After periods of disuse, storm damage and restorations, the church has been set up as it might have been originally. There are few old objects in it, but one is the result of a search in the 1950s for an organ to complement the fittings, preferably of the same date.

An organ in the collection of Captain Lane was for sale at the time of the search. He had bought it at a sale in 1949 at Hunstanton Hall, near Kings Lynn, the seat of the Lestrangle family. It seems to have spent its life there and can be related to the purchase of an organ in 1630. Since the Lestranges employed John Jenkins and William Lawes, this is a particularly important organ. A committee has been set up to

consider the correct course of action for the organ, to assess its authenticity and physical condition, whether to leave it alone, etc. The committee has called on the advice of John Watson, Conservator in Early Keyboard Instruments at the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation. It was he who conceived and organised this conference.

It might seem strange that such a small object should attract the attention of 36 delegates and speakers from the United States, Toronto, Melbourne, Stockholm, and Groningen, but it was serious in a way that the Americans have made their own. It addressed issues of which most organs have been innocent hitherto; its scope went far beyond those issues posed by the Hunstanton Hall organ. Presumably for this reason the conference preceded the examination of the organ itself which justifiably irritated those who had travelled around the world to see it.

The more successful papers spoke of particular instruments and the issues posed by their restoration. These included John Watson's beautifully prepared talk on the evidence of original manufacturing techniques deduced from old instruments, David Blanchfield's illustration of museum restoration of historic instruments, Goran Grahn's surveys of derelict organs in the Baltic States, Laurence Libin's account of the restoration of the Appleton organ at the Metropolitan Museum, New York, Ray Brunner's restoration of organs by Samuel Green and Tannenberg, and Taylor and Boody's projected restoration of the Tannenberg organ at Winton-Salem.

The important talks established the parameters for future conservation / restoration. Talks by John Watson and Barbara Owen introduced the two sides of an argument: should the organ's voice as a musical instrument be restored, or should it be left as an archaeological site, preserving for future generations the evidence necessary for correct reproductions? The preponderance of museum conservators weighted one side of the argument, but perhaps people opt for responsible-sounding arguments in public, but acquiesce in emotionally-satisfying ones in practice.

The organ itself was introduced by contributions from BIOS members Christopher Kent, on the role of the organ in Jacobean consort music, and myself on the chamber organ in Stuart England, providing the context in which the Hunstanton organ was made and used.

The organ was examined by four 'experts'. Bob Barclay (Canadian Conservation Institute, author of *The Art of the Trumpet Maker*, OUP 1995), Barbara Owen (author of a number of books and articles on the historic organ and a BIOS member), John Watson and myself. We were assisted by James Collier (who has studied the other pre-Civil War chamber organs) and George Taylor (one of the foremost builders of historic-style organs). The aim was to assess the authenticity of the organ, its cultural importance, its physical condition and offer advice on its future care. The report and recommendation await collation and action, but the following gives a brief history of the organ in the light of the archaeological evidence. Greater detail, including the association with John Jenkins, may be found in Barbara Owen's excellent article in *The Tracker*.

The builder is unknown. There are graffiti at the top of Stop Diapason C: *Pamplyn* and *Allestree 1631*. If anyone has theories about these names, please contact me. 1631 is a plausible date; there is no reason to discount this organ being the ‘payer of organs’ for which £11 was paid in Alice Lestrangle’s account book in 1630, since we know nothing of the circumstances in which it was made or bought. There is a basic similarity with other instruments dating from before the Civil War. All surviving early 17th century organs are individual; this one stands on table legs with bellows in the roof. It is closely related to the other two surviving table organs (Dean Bargrave’s organ 1629 and Christian Smith’s 1643).

Before its sale in 1949 it seems to have been repaired twice and in the process somewhat rebuilt. In the middle of the 18th century, new pipes were made to replace missing pipes close to the style of the original, and some work may have been done on the chest including new pallets. In 1855 George Dawson of Cambridge replaced the bellows with a Victorian one. According to the stop labels, the stops are (from front to back and from the top):

**bass side** Principal bass

Fifteenth bass

Stop Diapason Bass

**treble side** Principal treble

Fifteenth treble

Stop Diapason Treble

Open Flute

The compass is, and always was C AA D - c3. The Stop Diapason, Principal and Fifteenth are divided  $b^{\wedge}c^{\dagger}$ ; the pitch is a bit flat to A440. All the pipes are wood; most of the Principal is in the front. They are in the usual style of the English 17th century chamber organ, with the flue in the cap, and the block above the cap with a bevelled front edge, very narrow scales, low wind pressure, low cut ups, thin upper lips, and closed toes. The keys are barely longer than the coverings, boxwood for the naturals, ebony for the sharps, and gilded embossed for the fronts. The stops project from the sides of the case, in line with the sliders, which seems to be characteristic of the earlier 17th century organ.

The chest is typical, with a small bar frame and upperboards in layers at the back of the chest and one on top, with complex grooving to the pipes. The channels are grooved into a single block of oak, which is unusual. There is a second chest for the bottom octave, whose purpose seems to be to correct the winding problems caused by using the Stop Diapason and Principal in the bottom octave of the Open Flute. It is intriguing to find this solution to the problem of providing an open 8' in such an early chamber organ. The other early 17th century chamber organs all had an Open 8', starting at 4'c or 2'c.

The Principal in the front is disposed to provide a perspective, reinforced by the painted decoration and the boards above and below, which are painted to represent a tiled floor and a barrel vaulted roof. The case has characteristic mouldings and small panels, with thin column legs. The floor of the organ in the upper section is level with the bottom edge of the rails of the table, so that it cannot be used independently



within revealing an unornamented area. The doors were painted (as an afterthought) with David soothing Saul and Jephtha's daughter greeting her victorious father. The alterations to the Hunstanton organ are straightforward, and it is in good condition. Although now unplayable, it has been played since its removal to St. Luke's. Its present condition may owe something to an enthusiastically heated environment (which it shares with many European organs exported to the USA) and repeated examination.

I cannot pre-empt the judgements of the committee, but I think the organ could be set up to work again. 17th century organs were made using an additive method starting with the baseboard (which might have the plan drawn on it) and then building the organ up piece by piece, adjusting each part to its optimum as it was added. It follows that each time the organ is dismantled and re-assembled, the same care in joining the parts has to be exercised. Changes in the humidity and transporting the organ can also affect the moving parts in relation to one another. There should be a careful check on the stability of the atmosphere and on access, both to players and researchers, on creating a tranquil environment and respecting its worth and fragility. As a witness to the vigorous culture of early 17th century music making, its potential is very exciting.

## TUNING THE TUDOR ORGAN

### Jo Huddleston

To begin before the beginning, there are a few textbook allegations which ceaselessly fill one with stunned admiration.

Firstly, addressing the period 800s - 1400s or thereabouts, singing in parallel octaves, fourths and fifths made Pythagorean or  $V_4$  comma temperament the only acceptable ones throughout Europe. With what purity of interval did these singers sing unaccompanied? For the sad bits of plainchant, or only the rejoicing ones? Did one organ play two or three parts, or was one organ the octave organ, a second the descant organ? Who tuned the organ(s), and how (by cutting down over length pipes on the basis of what rule)? With what assiduity did choral sessions observe any preceding pipe determined colours? Would life be enriched if we compared their intonation with that at contemporaneous Aachen, Roma, Halberstadt, Paris, Santiago? Secondly, addressing the period 1300s - 1450s singing in thirds and sixths produced a change in key flavour such that  $V_4$  comma was now too 'raw' for routine use.

Thirdly, a body of men, mainly adult at first, provided countertenor plus tenor voices, then bass voices, then boy treble voices. Thus to summarise the 1250s - 1500s or thereabouts. What pitch they sang at, when and where bass voices and boy voices became established instead of barely mentionable, and how long they practised with any organ before singing unaccompanied are queries likely to proliferate the already plentiful bloodshed amongst scholars. At the establishment first introducing *altematim*, how was the final organ chord related to the next chorus only chord?

And so to the 1520s - 1630s period. Here we have:

- some written choral and organ music on staves with pitch markings crying out for careful definition of thirds and fifths
- some documents and relics showing organs with chromatic keyboards from C to a2 (early part of period, or later parish churches) or C to e3 (later part of period, or prestigious places like St Paul's), based on a Principal originating at 5ft speaking length
- a radiant awareness that organ pipes were not to be treated like plucked or bowed strings.

In short, we are driven to consider two temperaments described well enough (between 1482 and 1631) to have been reacted to by organ builders in England; that is,  $V_4$  comma and 75th comma. (V6th Pythagoras is effectively V5th Syntonic.) Charles Padgham's *The Well Tempered Organ* serves as a useful thorough bass here.

- For over a century, equal temperament on organs has taught us to ignore semitones being out of tune by 14-27 cents (*Padgham* pages 35, 48, 49) and held as long chords; even with full diapason chorus up to VIII rank mixtures or reeds on rock steady wind enough to drive all five of Durham's 1530s organs simultaneously.
- Probably the users of  $V_4$  comma or V5th comma would have taken any 20 cents or so 'error' as just the way of the music they loved.
- This calls into question the conventional listing of keys 'unacceptable' in  $v_4$  comma or V5th comma (*Padgham*, pages 54, 57).

It is not keys which are important, but intervals and the musical reasons for using them or avoiding them. The debatable keys are effectively less than the usually quoted set:

	<i><math>1/4</math> comma</i>	<i><math>1/1</math>th comma</i>
major	Db/C#	Db/C#
	F#	F#
	Ab/G#	Ab/G#
	B	-
minor	Eb	Eb
	F	.
	Ab/G#	.
	Bb	.

Note from these lists that it might already be clear that V5th comma is usefully nearer to the much desired all key, wolf free tunings taken up in the 18th century, and that C# is not going to be a particularly popular bottom note. Next time we send a homeless Victorian octopod for scrap, it would be worth saving two flue ranks (5V3 G and upwards) for cutting down to Tudor lengths. Two stop knobs, one marked  $V_5C$ , the other  $V_4C$ , would serve. Tethered to a C-e3 keyboard, the wolf will generally sleep in its architected cage, Eb-G#, passing notes and moments of emotive coloration apart. Keep the modern keyboard connection (5ft is G and so on upwards), and the wolf will live in a truly silly place, enlivened only by the torture of many available music editions.

## EVENTS

### Grosvenor Chapel, London

Concerts at the Grosvenor Chapel, South Audley Street, London begin on Tuesday April 13th and then on subsequent Tuesdays at 1.10 pm. Visiting recitalists will include Christopher Kent, Andrew Benson-Wilson and John Kitchen. Full programme details may be had on [REDACTED].

### The East Anglian Academy of Organ and Early Keyboard Music

This year the Academy presents a varied programme based upon the Concertos, Sonatas and Trios of J. S. Bach and some of his successors. Performers will include Fabio Ciofini (4th June) organist of the 17th century 'Hermans' organ in Collescipoli and Emanuele Cardì (4th September) organist of the classical organ in Battipaglia (Naples). Gerald Gifford, harpsichord / organ, will open this year's Festival on 3rd September. All concerts except for the 29th May (St Mary's, Redenhall) will be in St. Michael's Church, Framlingham. For full details of the Academy's 1999 programme please contact Judith Russell [REDACTED]

## FOR SALE

ATTIC CLEARANCE: Complete run of *Musical Opinion* 1945-1980, contains many organ articles and specifications. *Journal of the Organ Club* 1967-1984, almost complete. Volumes of *The Organ*, some early ones & 135-153, *The Rotunda* vol.4, nos. 3,4,5, vol.5 nos. 1,2,3. Also miscellaneous pamphlets and leaflets on individual organs and church music matters, and organ builders' publicity leaflets with details of organs built. Robert Pacey, [REDACTED]

## NOTES & QUERIES

### Bernard Edmonds

I have been unwell for several weeks and my age has caught up with me. I am sorry that many letters have been unanswered. I cannot yet cope with letters requiring information so please, no more. Please direct your enquiries to The Archive.

### Who said this?

1. Temporary silence of the organ is golden indeed.
2. Tradition that will not negotiate with modernity leads to fundamentalism.
3. No doubt the ardent conservationist would say 'Leave well alone'. A pragmatic musician would value the greater versatility. Perhaps we should remind ourselves that music-making is the *raison d'être* of any instrument.
4. The smoother the tone, the less tonal distance we travel, and the sooner does the whole instrument invariably weary one.

‘We use (Schulze’s) scales in many instances, especially his triangular Hohlfloetes, and our head Voicer was trained with him, and we always consider he has no equal, (He finished the (All Souls) Halifax Organ). We saw a good deal of Herr Schulze as he used Hull as his port when building the different organs at Armley, Doncaster, &c. and he was a personal friend of the founder of this Firm the late James A. Forster, and also of his son Mr. James Forster.

Yours faithfully, Forster & Andrews. 16th March 1908.’

‘Wood pipes, trackers etc. to be varnished. The front of pine, plain Gothic design, stained & varnished. To be packed in metal lined cases, very carefully, and marked so that they may be put together by comparatively inexperienced persons. In the order they have to be put together. Send with the organ a set of tuning instruments and extra trackers, buttons &c, & any requisite tool not likely to be procurable in South Africa.’ (Instructions in Gray & Davison’s shop book concerning the 1879 organ for St. Cyprian, Kimberley)

### **Odd bits**

- Eustace Ingram recorded that the organ-builder Fred Hughes of Albany Street always dressed immaculately but indoors always used a petticoat as a working apron.
- The old west gallery organ at Rhyl R.C. Church had a ‘double octave’ on the pedals which, contrary to the usual, gave a suboctave on the upper part of the board.
- The early Gray & Davison chamber organ at Sidholme in Devon, built for the Duke of Buckingham, has the tenor octave of the Dulciana drawing separately, and a 4ft Flageolet.
- A programme note at the RFH: ‘During tests in the Hall, a note played mezzo-forte on the hom measured approximately 65 decibels of sound. A single uncovered cough gave the same reading. A handkerchief placed over the mouth when coughing assists in obtaining a pianissimo.’ Parish magazines please copy!
- Greenwich St. Alphege, December 1710 ‘To John Knopple, organmaker, for taking down ye organ and securing same and storing in chamel-house £1.1 Os.

At Litton Cheney near Dorchester, 22nd October 1897, Gray & Davison altered the organ to equal temperament. Surely the last example?

The organ (designed by Cunningham) at King Edward’s School, Birmingham, was being re-erected in new buildings and a new set of Swell chorus reeds was needed. Said Mr. Lambert of Nicholsons, ‘There is nothing wrong with the old ones, except perhaps the zinc goes up a bit far. I wonder whether the original builder would like them?’ The offer came back of £100. Lambert said he couldn’t resist replying ‘I should have thought they were worth more, but you should know!’

‘Let it be remembered that the parson has to compose his two Sunday sermons before he can deliver them, while the organist does not have to compose the Sunday music, but only to play it. There is, however, one thing in common between them. Neither organist nor parson can know the effect he is producing unless he is told.’

(N.A. Bonavia Hunt, *Musical Opinion* Vol. 4, p.220)

‘When recitalists play Bach’s music would they play it slowly enough that my ear and brain may make some attempt to follow the rich and unending stream of contrapuntal beauty that flowed from his master mind? I listened to a first-rate performer the other day..... I felt like a man being whirled along through the winding lanes of Buckinghamshire at sixty miles an hour. We certainly got the impression of speed, but I lost the exquisite succession of beautiful ideas that the grand old man weaves together to make his texture of otherworldliness.  
(L. D. Ford, *Musical Opinion* Vol.12, 1946, p.102)

From the bran-tub come some reminiscences by J.R. Knott of organs which he had known or played on as a youth:

St. Olave, Tooley Street, had the noted Gauntlett-Lincoln-Hill organ which had been neglected and suffered piecemeal destruction during the period 1914-1926. The parish was united with that of St. John, Horsleydown, and ultimately, after completion of the removal elsewhere of the remains in the burial ground, and some legal delays, the church was demolished and Hay’s Wharf took over the site. The then organist of St. Mary Rotherhithe persuaded his church authorities to purchase the remains of the organ for inclusion in a massive rebuild at St. Mary’s, and JRK was one of the volunteers who helped to transport some 15 tons of organ to the organ-builders - he does not say which, but I am sure it was Monk & Gunther. Knott says that practically all the metal pipework had already been taken by metal thieves, and there was very little wooden pipework above middle C on the Great chest.

Fortunately the crazy scheme for St. Mary’s, which Knott accurately categorises ‘fantasy’, never took place and the material remained with M&C. A similar fate threatened St. James, Bermondsey, where some botching was commenced with the idea of incorporating the organ from the blitzed Astoria Cinema in Old Kent Road and using the Compton action. Fortunately this scheme, by a volunteer whom Knott declines to name, with no organ-building qualification or experience, fell through before too much damage had been done. After a period in the doldrums the church and organ entered on a new life and, as members of BIOS will have experienced, the organ on a period of restoration and appreciation.

St. John, Horsleydown, had a 1770 Crang & Hancock which, by Knott’s time, was being allowed to fall into decay following the gift of a Lewis & Co. organ by the Courage family, whose brewery was in the parish. The Lewis had a Rotasphere blower (*BIOSR* vol.18 no.1, p.22; vol.18, no.2 p.20), very efficient until the bicycle tyre became worn. The church and both organs were destroyed in WWII, but by that time all the metal pipes had been stolen. The Courage family were also donors of Lewis & Co. organs to St. Olave’s Grammar School and, of course, Southwark Cathedral.

I have received a letter commenting on the article on Taylor of Leicester in *BIOSJ* 18. Hie writer, Bernard Green, joined the Choir at St. John the Divine as a boy just before the war, under J.H.Taylor, staying until leaving Leicester some ten years later, during

which time he learned to play the organ. Occasionally he was sent to Nelson Street with notes from J.H. to Stephen(ii). 'On arrival I would be shown into a room to await Mr. Stephen. This room had music everywhere: all over shelves around the room and all over the floor. The brothers always seemed to have music around them, both printed and manuscript. The console at St. John's was quite deeply set in the organ. On the right, in line with the organ bench, there was a door leading into the organ, of a size such that one could slide comfortably straight off the bench. This John Henry did during every sermon, settling in his 'den' next to pedal reed ranks, which contained a desk and chair and there he would read the Sunday paper, or write music until the homily had ended. In his latter days, he sometimes fell asleep and had to be 'winkled' out. He did more than any other person to instil in me a lifelong love of music and of the organ.

1. like you, have heard the derogatory remarks about Taylor organs which certainly were current in Leicester in the 1940s. I have always maintained that I was privileged (and spoilt) to have had a Taylor organ to "cut my organ teeth" on. One does not come across instruments of this constructional and tonal quality often; and surely, they must typify all that was best in early twentieth century organ building.'

Answers to 'Who said this?'

- 1) Thomas Elliston.
2. Christopher Hancock.
3. Anthony Boden.
4. Gilbert Benham.

## TAILPIECES

Treharris Choir is seeking new members. No vice test given. (*Merthyr Express*)

Trip to Rome, Assisi and Venus. (*Parish newsletter*)

If you have no children at school you can obtain them from the school office or the village stores. (*Roxwell Recorder*)

Police were called and diffused the situation. (*Berwick Advertiser*)

Are your previous fiance problems behind you? (*Auto Exchange*)

Applicants must have genuine apathy towards the needs of our guests. (*Bournemouth Daily Echo*)

Subsidised accommodation will be provided. (*N.Wales Weekly News*). A let-down?

Much of the food prepared for customers has been handed down through generations of the family. (*Blackmore Vale Magazine*) Food chain?

We are looking for a junior administrator to join a successful shoplifting company. (*Basingstoke Gazette*)

If you become employed through no fault of your own.... (*Barclaycard Leaflet*)

The Golden Rule is: Do one to others before they do one to you.

## REPORTER

Editors: Andrew Hayden, BMus, MPhil, FTCL,

[REDACTED]

John Hughes, BMus, CertEd,

[REDACTED]

Distribution: Kerr Jamieson

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[REDACTED]

## THE NATIONAL PIPE ORGAN REGISTER (NPOR)

NPOR Director: Michael D. Sayers, BSc, MA, DPhil,  
The Computer Laboratory, New Museums Site, Pembroke Street,  
Cambridge CB2 3QG

Web address: <http://www.bios.org.uk/npor.html>

[REDACTED]

Manager: Paul Houghton, BSc(Eng), MIEE,

[REDACTED]

Editor: David Atkinson, ARCO,

[REDACTED]

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# **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.