

BIOS

REPORTER

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THE BRITISH INSTITUTE OF ORGAN STUDIES

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[REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]

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BIOS REPORTER

Opinions expressed in the *BIOS Reporter* are those of the respective contributors.

Editor: Professor David Shuker



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Submit material to the Editor by post or e-mail.

SUBSCRIPTIONS

The annual subscription to BIOS is £30 (£24 concessionary). Full details of membership and subscriptions can be obtained from the **Membership Secretary:**

Melanie Harrison,



The cover illustration is of the west-end nave organ at St Mary's Collegiate Church in Stafford. The elaborate case is by John Geib and originally contained the organ that was built by him for the church in 1790. Since 1974 the case has contained a Hill, Norman and Beard organ of 25 stops. (Photo: Ian Miller)

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EDITORIAL

Sir Francis Bacon, the great Elizabethan political survivor and polymath, is often credited with the aphorism 'Knowledge is Power' but he may have been paraphrasing a much earlier author who said 'A wise man is strong; yea, a man of knowledge increaseth strength' (Proverbs 24:5, King James Bible). Either way, the message is clear, someone who has knowledge (=information and/or understanding) is at a definite advantage over someone who does not. The world is awash with information and has been for a long time. The problem is that useful amounts of information tend to aggregate in particular places such as archives and libraries that are not easily accessible to many people. One absolutely fabulous source of information is the British Library (BL), which is commendably generous in allowing ready access (for the moment) to its treasures freely to anyone who shows up with a good question to ask. On the one hand, so it should be, as we are all footing the bill. On the other hand, if you can't actually get to the BL the amount of information obtainable at a distance is severely limited. That is to say, the amount of free information is severely limited. Documents and images can be ordered but very quickly become a costly part of research. The great advantage in going to a library is being able to check the detail of something before deciding whether it is worth getting a copy (and, of course, the cheapest way is to transcribe information by hand). Thus, being in London (or, say, Oxford where the Bodleian library has a vast collection) confers a significant advantage. Having access to an academic library is the next best thing as they contain a wealth of both printed and electronic sources. Thus, the non-Londoner or non-academic is rapidly at a disadvantage when it comes to carrying out research. This is why your editor let out a small cheer recently when the launch of the London Lives project (see <http://www.londonlives.org>) was announced. It is possible to freely search, by name, a large index of information on London criminal trials, insurance policies and other types of data covering the period 1680 to 1800. This is only an index so the full documentation would have to be obtained by the usual routes (hence the small cheer). Nonetheless, like all gold (or data) mining small nuggets (of information) can still be sifted out. In my case a few minutes searching afforded a key detail about William Dowding, the father of organist Emily Dowding, that had hitherto escaped detection. Searching for information through electronic indexes or using web search engines can be a frustrating business as often the really useful information is going to cost you money. And, to be fair, covering the cost of providing bits of information has to be recognised. For example, as custodians of the British Organ Archive, the BIOS Council has recently approved a scale of charges for providing copies of photographs from the Freeman archives—not to generate a profit, but simply to cover the costs of printing and postage. One hopes that all custodians of databases of sources of information that were once (and continue to be) freely given see profit as of secondary importance when setting charges for providing access and copies to members of the public.

BIOS FACSIMILE OF THE LEFFLER MANUSCRIPT

If you haven't yet ordered your copy of the facsimile of the Leffler Manuscript published by BIOS please see details on p13.

FROM THE SECRETARY

MELVIN HUGHES

A number of issues are worth highlighting from discussion at BIOS Council in June 2010.

DAVID SANGER R.I.P.

Council noted with regret the death of BIOS Member, David Sanger. One of the evening organ recitals at the recent Oxford Organ Conference was given by David Sanger.

BIOS TREASURER

Adrian Mumford was co-opted to Council and following the indication given at the 2009 AGM, it was agreed by Council that Adrian would formally take over as BIOS Treasurer from July 2010.

HOSA IN THE SW REGION

A possible lottery-funded regional scheme to extend HOSA was under active consideration.

AGM 2010

A central London venue was being explored.

BIOS 40TH ANNIVERSARY (2016)

This was seen by Council as a major opportunity for BIOS and as well as planning for a residential Conference in Cambridge that year it was hoped that a number of anniversary projects might be achieved.

SWEETLAND FESTIVAL 18-25 September 2010

A Festival built around the Bath organ-builder William Sweetland will commemorate the centenary of his death in 1910. The festival is centered on the 1849/1900 Sweetland organ in St Michael's church, Bath. Recitals will be given by Thomas Trotter, Tim Campain and James Scott on what is one of only three Sweetland organs to have come to the notice of Sperling. Other features of the Festival will include concerts by local choirs, an exhibition of some of Sweetland's paintings, including the self-portrait reproduced on the cover of the *April Reporter*, together with other memorabilia and displays.

Details can be found at <http://www.bathcelebrities.co.uk/> and tickets can be had from the Bath Festivals Box Office <http://www.bathfestivals.org.uk/> or Tel. 01225 463362.

MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

MELANIE HARRISON

After much delay, a new edition of the BIOS leaflet *A Guide to Grants for funding work on historic pipe organs* has finally been published and is available for download from the BIOS webpage. In addition, the Constitution document has also undergone a re-typesetting to make available a new more easily read edition.

We are rapidly approaching the August date when unpaid memberships are considered to have lapsed. If you have any doubts about the status of your payment, please get in touch to prevent this being your final mailing from BIOS. The January *Reporter* had a large listing of new members and I expected to have space in this edition for personal musings. Happily another bumper crop of new memberships denies space for such indulgences.

T.E. Baker [REDACTED]

Chris Bragg BMus(Hons) UMus; [REDACTED]

James Collier [REDACTED]

Peter Harvey BSc (Hons) ARCO; [REDACTED]

Chris J. Mansfield [REDACTED]

Peter Munro [REDACTED]

Richard Timothy Quarmby BMus (Hons) MA PGCE; [REDACTED]

Iain Quinn FRSM, MM; [REDACTED]

Dr. Anthony Shedden PhD MA LTCL ACertM; [REDACTED]

Stewart Smith [REDACTED]

Following his tragic death, others have written more fully on the contributions made to many aspects of the organ world by David Sanger. He had been an active member of BIOS since 1976.

HISTORIC ORGANS CERTIFICATION SCHEME

PAUL JOSLIN

The following organs were awarded Historic Organ Certificates at the BIOS Council meeting on Saturday 19 June 2010:

Location	Builder(s) and Date(s)	Comments	Grade
London			
St George's Queens Square	Robson 1869	Significant survival of early pipework in fine Robson organ and decorated case by Teulon	II*
Holy Trinity Tottenham	Willis c.1859 John Gray 1838	Fine example of an early Willis in a Gray case	II*
Durham			
Weardale St John's Chapel	Anon early-19th Century	An outstanding anonymous early-19th century organ	I
Bishopston St Peter	Forster & Andrews 1871	An outstanding organ by Forster & Andrews in original condition	I
Hartlepool St Oswald	Ingram 1905	An outstanding intact example of an organ by Ingram built on the Hope-Jones system	I
Croxdale St Bartholomew	Forster & Andrews 1879	A fine organ	II*
Darlington Holy Trinity	Thomas Harrison 1868	A fine organ with minor changes by Nicholson & Lord 1901	II*
Darlington, St John	Vincent c. 1888	A fine organ	II*
Dawdon SS. Hilda & Helen	Harrison & Harrison 1912, 1965	A good organ	II
Durham St Margaret	Harrison & Harrison 1916	An outstanding organ	I
Easington, St Mary	Anon c.1850	A fine organ	II*
Easington Colliery Ascension	Harrison & Harrison 1889	A good organ originally from Hesleden	II
Evenwood, St Paul	Brindley & Foster 1882	A fine organ originally from St Peter Peebles	II*

Location	Builder(s) and Date(s)	Comments	Grade
Fatfield ,Washington St George	Harrison & Harrison c.1885	A fine organ	II*
Ferryhill, St Luke	Brindley & Foster 1867	A fine organ originally from St James Derby	II*
Greatham St John Baptist	Brindley & Foster 1881	A fine organ	II*
Grindon Wynyard Hall Chapel	Forster & Andrews 1880/1903	A fine organ	II*
Hart St Mary Magdalene	Posthill 1872m	A fine organ	II*
Hartlepool St Aidan	Conacher 1890	A fine organ	II*
Hartlepool St Paul	Conacher 1885	An outstanding organ in a fine decorated case	I
Hebburn St Cuthbert	Harrison & Harrison 1879	A fine organ	II*
Dinsdale, Hurworth St John Baptist	Forster & Andrews 1871/1876	A fine organ	II*
Hurworth, All Saints	Conacher 1869	A fine organ	II*
Ingleton, St John	Harrison & Harrison 1897	A good organ built as a house organ for Lady Margaret Scott and moved in 1921	II
Marley Hill St Cuthbert	F C Nicholson 1880	A fine organ	II*
Medomsley St Mary Magdalene	Brindley & Foster 1882	A fine organ	II*
Monkwearmouth Roker St Andrew	Norman & Beard 1907	A good organ with Forster & Andrews pipework 1868 originally from St Wulfram Grantham	II
Ryton, Holy Cross	Lewis 1886	A fine organ	II*
Satley, St Cuthbert	Harrison & Harrison 1879	A fine example of a Scudamore-style organ	II*
Sherburn, St Mary	Harrison & Harrison 1873	A good organ and example of early work from the Durham factory	II

Location	Builder(s) and Date(s)	Comments	Grade
Shildon, St John	Forster & Andrews 1895	A fine organ moved here from Newland Congregational Church Hull	II*
Silksworth St Matthew	Monk 1875	A fine organ	II*
Stanley (Crook) St Thomas	Harrison & Harrison 1894	A fine organ	II*
Tudhoe Grange St Andrew	Harrison & Harrison 1887	A fine organ	II*
Washington Holy Trinity	Hill 1866	A outstanding organ originally Dr Monk of York's house organ	I
Whorlton St Mary	Harrison & Harrison 1876	A good organ incorporating pipework by Postill 1865	II
Willington St Stephen	Willis c. 1891	A good organ	II
Thornley Wolsingham St Bartholomew	Anon c. 1850	A good organ	II
Auckland Castle Chapel [Bishop's palace]	Harrison & Harrison 1903	An outstanding organ with sensitive incorporation of five ranks of pipes and case Father Smith 1688	I
Auckland St Helen	Postill 1862	Case and pipework. Great chest preserved out of use	CoR
Dipton St John Evangelist		Substantial amount of eighteenth-century pipework by Parker ex. Manchester Collegiate Church via Jesmond PC	CoR
Kelloe, St Helen	Bishop 1820	Pipework	CoR
Wingate, Grange Holy Trinity		Elaborate 'gothick' case probably by Renton from Roslin Chapel	CoR
Other UK			
St Helen Little Evesden Cambridge	Bevington & Sons (n.d.)	An outstanding example of Bevington organ in original condition	I
St Margaret & St George URC Harlesden, London	Hill & Son 1901	A fine organ in original condition	II*

Location	Builder(s) and Date(s)	Comments	Grade
Christ Church Llanfairfachan Conway North Wales	Hill & Son 1902	An outstanding organ in original condition	I
Seion Chapel Llanrwrst	Hill & Son 1914	An outstanding organ in original condition and one of the last organs built by the company	I
St Paul's, Llandudno	Hill & Son 1910	A good organ	II
Bethel Eglwys Y Bedyddwyr Aberystwyth	Rothwell 1924	A fine organ in original condition	II*
Acomb Methodist York	Binns 1906	Binns pipework incorporated in relocated organ	CoR
St Peter & St Paul Easton Maudit Northants	Sweetland 1862	A fine organ substantially in original condition. Made for All Saints Clevedon and moved 1878	II*
St Peter Parish Church Kelsale, Suffolk	August Gern 1878	An outstanding organ by Gern and a rare survival in original condition	I
St John the Baptist Parish Church Saxmundham Suffolk	attrib. Albert Pease n.d	A good organ	II
Saxmundham Masonic Suffolk	Joseph Greenwood Leeds 1830	An outstanding organ by Joseph Greenwood and a rare survival of the builders work	I
Church of the Blessed Virgin Mary with All Saints Fillongley Warwickshire	Hill & Son 1888-9	An outstanding organ in original condition	I
St Bride's Episcopal Church Kelvinside Glasgow	Hill 1865 Harrison 1888 James MacKenzie 1968	Surviving Hill pipework from organ originally built for Anderston Presbyterian Church and moved in 1968	CoR
Community Central Hall Maryhill, Glasgow	Lewis 1889	A fine organ originally built for Free St John's Church and moved in 1923	II*

Location	Builder(s) and Date(s)	Comments	Grade
Rowley Baptist Church Consett Co Durham	Henry Bevington c.1800	An outstanding organ in Regency style mahogany case with carved details formerly in private house in Hastings and moved in 1949	I
St Peter Hindley, Lancashire	Edmund Schulze 1873	A fine organ in a divided and decorated case	II*
Mount Zion Methodist, Per Lane Ogden Halifax	Charles Anneessens Grammont 1891	A fine organ substantially in original condition	II*
Trinity Methodist Church, Croston Lancashire	Henry Ainscough, Preston c.1880	A good organ	II
Stowmarket URC Suffolk	Henry Willis III 1955	An fine organ in original condition	II*
Dalziel St Andrew Parish Church Motherwell Scotland	G.F Walcker & Sons 1900	An outstanding organ in original condition	I

CORRECTION:

The entry for St Nicholas, Wilden, Bedfordshire (*BIOSRep.*, 34:2 [April 2010] 6) should read as follows:

Henry Willis 1859 **Robert Shaftoe 1990.**

CASEWORK REPORT

ANDREW HAYDEN

The Casework aspect of BIOS is ongoing with enquiries being received every month regarding such things as funding, redundancy, work to organs and applying for faculties. Some organs maintain a presence sometimes for years due to the protracted nature of events so I make no apology for returning to them as their sagas unfold.

St Helen's Ranworth, Norfolk (NPOR N06577). Following advice from the Church Buildings Council and BIOS, it has been decided not to proceed with plans to rebuild the organ.

Quorn Baptist Church, Leicestershire (NPOR P00530). The organ in Quorn Baptist Church was built in 1883 by Porritt of Leicester and added to in the 1920's in an unsightly fashion. Plans for reordering of the church interior were recently submitted upon which BIOS was asked to comment. The organ is to be made available for disposal subject to a suitable home being found.

St Andrew's Starbeck, Harrogate, N. Yorkshire (NPOR P00560). This two manual and pedal Binns organ was the subject of plans for its disposal. Following successful local lobbying based on advice from BIOS, the church has decided to retain it and look towards its renovation.

Struther's Memorial Pentecostal Church, 52, Westbourne Gardens, Glasgow. (NPOR D07161). This is a fine, substantial example of an organ originally by Gern, rebuilt by Norman & Beard in 1913. The casefront is by John Keppie. The organ is listed as part of the fixtures and fittings of the building and is thus protected. Proposals have recently been put forward for its removal but it is hoped that the fact of the listing will ensure its retention, albeit unused by the present occupants of the building.

St Andrew's Methodist Church, Sholing, Hampshire (NPOR D06975). This is a delightful, small J W Walker 1851 Exhibition organ in a case by Rattee with pipe decoration by Thomas Willement. It survives remarkably unscathed and is now available for rehusing following closure of the church. We understand there are several interested parties and fuller details will be given when an arrangement has been entered into.

Powderham Castle (NPOR NI2396). BIOS has recently been consulted about the 1769 Brice Seede chamber organ which is the subject of restoration proposals. The organ survives substantially unaltered though a number of minor changes were made by Dicker of Exeter in the 1860's. An interesting demonstration and recital on the organ given by Prof. George Pratt, has been posted on 'YouTube' which readers can visit by pasting *Powderham Castle 1769 Organ Fund* into their browsers. This opens a link to the relevant article on 'YouTube'.

Emmanuel Church, Forest Road, Loughborough (NPOR D00288). The future of this organ continues to give concern. Though the chancellor's ruling set out a number of conditions, it did not specify that the organ should remain in this country. This represents a loophole as far as the disposal of organs is concerned and one which is being exploited, since there is no doubt the UK is seen as a useful and seemingly inexhaustible quarry. Whereas it is being argued that it is better to see organs preserved in this way than see them scrapped outright, once they do end up abroad, there is nothing that can be done to ensure they maintain their integrity other than rely on the conscience and competence of the parties involved. A classic case of this happening was the 1865 IIP Forster & Andrews instrument from Castlegate Congregational Church in Nottingham. The organ was virtually intact having been very conservatively altered by Cousans for Hyson Green Congregational Church. It was exported to Holland whence its casefront which still possessed all the decoration hidden under a layer of grey emulsion, was sold to Japan and paired up with a Walker instrument. Needless to say, the exuberant pipe decoration so typical of Forster & Andrews is nowhere to be seen.

What happened to the speaking part of the organ is unknown but it is an example of how it becomes impossible to influence the outcome of an export.

The Taylor organ is of equal importance. If it were to be sold abroad (it is currently being offered on eBay) maybe to Holland, France or Germany, there is nothing that could be done to stop it or influence its preservation. A case of winner takes all.

HERITAGE ADVISER REPORT

BARRIE CLARK

Following the considerable criticism of the draft PPS 15 (BIOS was one of the 500 organisations and individuals who commented) the previous government agreed to examine it again. The result was that without further public consultation a rather changed version was issued and renamed PPS 5. As far as pipe organs are concerned this made no difference to our concern about the need for 'fixtures and fittings' to be clarified and resolved.

In a speech last October Jeremy Hunt, when Shadow Minister for DCMS, supported in principle the Heritage Protection Bill, but put forward one of his own with a slightly different emphasis titled 'Museums and Heritage Bill', but which he said would incorporate the other bill's important elements.

BIOS has written to congratulate Mr. Hunt on his appointment as the new Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport reminding him of his statement about a heritage bill. We asked for a meeting with him or his officials to once again discuss our main concerns for the adequate protection of historic pipe organs. We await his reply.

The government announcement about a severe and prolonged reduction in public spending does not suggest any rapid progress for our cause, and no bill on the subject is tabled for the current session of Parliament. We can only wait and hope that when one is drafted it will be an improvement on the Heritage Protection Bill. Baroness Anelay, who in the past has tried to help BIOS with draft legislation is now Chief Whip for the Lords, which might be useful if a bill is tabled while she is still in office. In the mean time we will take any opportunity which arises to remind DCMS and EH that the protection of historic pipe organs has so far not been and still needs to be addressed.

LEFFLER MANUSCRIPT FACSIMILE EDITION

A facsimile edition of the Leffler Manuscript, with an introduction by Professor Peter Williams, was published by BIOS in April 2010 in a **limited edition of 200 copies.**

Copies (£48 per copy, plus postage and packing) are available from José Hopkins (email: [REDACTED]) tel. [REDACTED].

CONFERENCE REPORT: THE BRITISH ORGAN IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY AND BEYOND.

MERTON COLLEGE, OXFORD, 15-18 APRIL 2010.

DAVID SHUKER

The last of the series of Oxford Conferences took place under almost flawless blue skies and brought participants up to the latest stage of the evolution of the British organ and its music.

The opening session dealt with the great changes that took place in British organ-building in the latter half of the twentieth century. The recent announcement of substantial funding to complete the restoration of the Royal Festival Hall organ served as a reminder that an instrument that was once seen as the herald of a new generation of British organs now qualifies as an historic instrument. **William McVicker** explored some of the influences that lay behind Ralph Downes' ideas but pointed out that the political realities of post-war Europe meant that Downes did not visit Germany to see and hear the organs that inspired the Organ Reform Movement. The next generation of British organ-builders were luckier and **Dominic Gwynn** described how the sight and sound of historic European organs offered an inspiring alternative to the moribund tradition of the British eclectic-romantic organ. With hindsight the confrontations between protagonists of both types of organs that spilled over onto the pages of organ journals now seem overheated. However, neither side can be said to have won as a single continental style of organ has not prevailed and the 'romantic' organ has proved to be capable of re-invention. **Christopher Kent** reminded the conference that an early champion of the neo-classical organ from the perspective of performance was Lady Susi Jeans, who also took an interest in the preservation and historically informed conservation of organs. From the 1940s onwards Susi Jeans raised the profile of early English organs and their music through recitals, recordings and broadcasting and anticipated some of the key interests that have formed the heart of the work of BIOS, of which she was an early and enthusiastic supporter. In contrast, the early part of the twentieth century was a difficult period for women organists in general, at least in prominent positions. A number of important nineteenth-century women organists did not live long into the Edwardian period and the catastrophic societal changes brought about by the First World War did little to help the situation. **Judith Barger** showed that women organists were always there but mostly taking lesser roles in unpaid country parish church and chapel positions.

The characteristically provocative 'thoughts of a lapsed organist' touched on many questions that continue to occupy the mind of **Peter Williams**. A new idea on the origins of the organ as a church instrument is linked to its very specific roles in a wide range of situations — an adaptable work tool that doesn't have to be all-embracing in capabilities — at its heart a clever fifteenth-century idea that has been augmented by subsequent technologies. The significance of the keyboard — developed essentially for the organ — in extending the scope of music is probably still underappreciated. In the case of J S Bach it is possible to think of his use of the organ as a tool for learning, exploring and experimenting with music, and with perhaps little interest in older organs.

A fine evening recital by the late **David Sanger** on the organ of Christ Church Cathedral was made up of compositions that contrasted the late-Romantic English school (represented by Vaughan Williams, Howells and Harris) with the earlier exponents of the European Romantic tradition (Schumann and Reubke). This music set the scene for the first session on the next day that focused on some aspects of the evolution of British organ music through the twentieth century. **Iain Quinn** suggested that the sonata was the form that the organ as an instrument could address in the same way as string quartets and symphonies were used to explore the possibilities offered by small and large instrumental ensembles. Moreover, in the early part of the century the organ was a major force in public music making with large audiences, particularly for civic recitals. Composers would nonetheless return to that characteristic organ form of the prelude and fugue, even late in their careers as did C V Stanford with *Three Preludes and Fugues Op. 193* of 1922. Using early recordings and organ rolls **Wayne Leopold** showed very clearly how performance styles have changed since the early twentieth century. The English late-romantic organ repertoire reflected both the type of music (emotional themes and orchestral transcriptions) and interpretation (such as rubato and use of a large palette of orchestral colours) that were typical of other music of the period. **Jonathan White** showed that Stanford's approach of combining styles covering the preceding century was highly individual, even if the overall effect comes over as somewhat conservative. The late twentieth century has witnessed a resurgence of interest in improvisation by British organists and **Ronny Krippner** demonstrated how a structured approach could be taken, in this case based on the compositional style of Herbert Howells. **Joan Jeffrey** provided an appraisal of the contributions of Allan Wicks. Whilst cathedral organist at Canterbury, Wicks not only championed the organ music of Messiaen but also introduced choral pieces by Ligeti, Berkeley and Ridout. For sheer versatility it would be hard to beat **Calvert Johnson's** examination of the music of Nigerian-born Fela Sowande (awarded FRCO in 1943) in which Yoruba rhythms and thematic motifs provided the basis for five *Sacred Idioms of the Negro*. Jonathan White, Ronny Krippner and Calvert Johnson each illustrated their presentations with extracts and pieces played on the organ of Hertford College.

There is a two-way traffic in organs between Britain and the rest of Europe, which in both directions attracts controversy. **James Dalton** gave a fascinating insight into the decisions that led to the installation of the Frobenius organ in the chapel of Queen's College in 1965. Architectural considerations drove the case design to allow previously hidden decorative plasterwork to be seen. This organ remains a landmark in British organ history despite being built by Danish maker. The export of redundant British organs excites passions but **Martin Renshaw** reminded us of the fact that many organs which would otherwise remain unused or dismantled have been enthusiastically received by French congregations.

Martin Firth summarised results from recent surveys on church organists in two dioceses that provided the backdrop for the BIOS/RCO Panel Discussion 'What is the future of organists and organ music?' chaired by **David Sanger** (RCO President) with panel members **Dr Katharine Pardee** (BIOS/Wadham College), **James Parsons** (RCO), **Rev Leanne Roberts** (Chaplain, Hertford College) and **Simon Williams** (RCO). The fact that the discussion took place in Oxford inevitably led to a certain

emphasis on the current difficulties in the recruitment of organ scholars. Whilst this might lead to a shortage of high quality candidates for prestigious appointments in cathedrals and large churches, the point was also made that a number of organ scholars decide not to pursue a career as organists. Paradoxically, the very characteristics that make a good organist are also those that make good candidates for lucrative careers in the financial and other sectors. Even if recruitment of organ scholars could be improved it would be unlikely to have a great impact on the shortage of organists generally. The RCO has an active programme to introduce organs to young children and older children and young adults can take advantage of taster or longer courses at Oundle and similar places. The AGO in the US has a very active programme of week-long introductory courses to recruit young organists and there was some suggestion the UK initiatives did not compare favourably with these. Whilst private schools are well supplied with organs and do provide a source of organists the dearth of organs in state schools mitigates against the training of young organists in the larger population. In combination with the declining levels of church attendance, exposure generally to organs and organ music in the general public is reducing. However, whilst the obvious solution to this problem by putting more organs in state schools has merit, it is difficult to see how this might be achieved in the current climate. The present methods of manufacturing pipe organs do not lend themselves to mass production of cheaper mechanical instruments that could be used for domestic or school practice. Greater exposure of clergy trainees to the use of the organ in liturgy should be encouraged but would require changes to theological college curricula. This opportunity for this joint BIOS/RCO discussion and the later recitals arose from the planned presence by both organisations in Oxford at the same time. The day ended with a masterly recital by **Anne Page** on the organ in New College chapel that included a number of pieces by contemporary British composers.

Modestly hidden or totally naked represent the extremes of organs and their cases in the later nineteenth- and early twentieth centuries. Throughout the rest of the century a range of styles were used, more or less successfully, and **Barrie Clark** gave examples that included inspiration from the past and present (New College, 1965), from the Arts and Crafts movement (Calne PC, 1905) and contemporary styles (Norwich, St Peter Mancroft). An interesting contrast between the more radical organ designs favoured by Oxford compared to a more conservative approach taken in Cambridge colleges was explored by **Paul Hale**, particularly in the light of proposals for a new 'choral' organ for Merton College chapel. Throughout the twentieth century organs incorporated more and more playing aids as electrical and electronic technology advanced. **John Norman** also recalled that many new materials were also used but by the end of the century not all these innovations were necessarily seen as advantageous and a better understanding of the balance between the use of new technology and the 'feel' as experienced by the player has been appreciated. Robert Hope-Jones is a name that has fuelled warm discussions in the organ world over the decades but **Andrew Hayden** sought to place his ideas in the context of the late Victorian and Edwardian world of heady jingoism and loud brash music. There remains only one example of a fully-fledged Hope-Jones organ (St Oswald, Hartlepool) and it should be considered for a sympathetic rescue and restoration. Perhaps less controversial in the pantheon of British organ-building are the various members of the Willis dynasty but **Jonathan Ambrosino** suggested that their

many achievements need to be understood in terms of the family intense internal dynamics and conflicts.

The installation of new organs in cathedrals always presents challenges and stories of recently completed and ongoing projects provided major insights into the current state of British organ-building. **Andrew Moyes** described the problems encountered in the construction of a new organ in Llandaff Cathedral in a building that is very old but which also includes a modern concrete pulpitum, which housed the previous organ in the nave, that is now regarded as an architectural treasure. The architectural heritage of previous generations is also seen in Manchester Cathedral where the current proposal is to build a screen organ — a traditional and effective location for a cathedral organ. However, the current screen is not medieval but a largely nineteenth-century confection and this has thrown up all sorts of problems that were deftly summarised by **Jim Berrow**. The persistence of much-rebuilt organs of indifferent quality in some cathedrals was lamented by **John Rowntree**. Some new ideas have to be introduced in such situations and we were reminded of an opinion expressed by an early and influential organ reformer, Joseph von Glattergurtz, that the building of organs fit for purpose requires 'discerning cultivated patrons'.

Three organ-builders who built up substantial and influential businesses over the past decades were described. **Peter Collins** gave his own testimony about how he became an organ-builder and the influences on his work from the Organ Reform Movement that he encountered in northern Europe, having first learned the trade in a long-established British firm, Bishop and Son. Similarly, **John Mander**, who began his organ-building career in the shadow of his father's post-war achievements, also developed a different view after spending time working in Europe in the early 1970s. **Martin Goetze** summarised the achievements of the late Maurice Forsyth-Grant, whose lifetime passion for organs combined with a private income enabled him to establish Grant, Degens and Bradbeer, which was arguably the most radical organ-building company in Britain in the late 1960s. These experiences acted as a prelude for a panel discussion on the future of the British organ that was chaired by **Jonathan Ambrosino** and included contributions from **John Mander, Andrew Moyes, Martin Goetze** and **Peter Collins**. A concern was expressed about the shortage of new entrants into organ-building that echoes the earlier one about organists, but it was also recognised that salaries were low for trainees. Whilst rebuilding existing organs is all part of the business of an organ-builder, innovation requires the opportunity to build new organs. The early music movement has not led to an increased interest in the use of historical organs, especially in churches.

The experience of the Organ Reform Movement in different countries was revealing. **Rolf Claus** showed how the *Orgelbewegung* in Germany was not the 'pure' movement that it might appear from the outside. However, compared to Britain the effects were dramatic, for example, almost all the German Romantic instruments have disappeared. **Ann Blore** described how the Organ Reform Movement in Australia, on a different scale and appearing somewhat later than most, was driven by a few individuals but had a lasting effect though the establishment of organ festivals in Sydney and Melbourne. **Jaap Jan Steensma** pointed to the way in which Organ Reform Movement in the Netherlands led to the building of many historically-informed instruments that have

allowed a serious study of the older repertoire . **Nicholas Prozzillo** showed how an early revival in England of interest in the music of J S Bach performed on historical organs was encouraged by the broadcasts in the 1950s of Geraint Jones on German organs. Jones had made a controversial, but influential, suggestion that no existing English organ was up to the task.

A not-insubstantial band of participants have been to all four of the Oxford Organ conferences and have been rewarded with a high-level course on British organ history spanning five centuries. The indefatigable **Dr Katharine Pardee**, Betts Organ Scholar at Oxford, who has been a driving force behind these meetings, and **Melvin Hughes** have ensured that not only did these four conferences happen but that they ran extremely well. BIOS is ensuring that much of the new material presented over the past four years will be published in the *Journal*.

PNEUMATICS OR NEW-MATICS: RESTORE OR REPLACE? THE VEXED QUESTION OF HISTORIC PNEUMATIC ACTIONS.

**BIOS Day Conference, The Collegiate Church of St Mary,
Stafford, 22 May 2010.**

DAVID SHUKER

Every historic organ has a unique story to tell—the Collegiate Church of St Mary in Stafford has two large organs with fascinating stories attached to them. The main purpose of the day conference was to discuss the restoration and provenance of the largest of the two, a 50-stop four-manual Harrison and Harrison organ of 1909, located on the north side of the chancel and in largely original condition.

The Rector of Stafford, **Prebendary Graham Fowell**, introduced two important elements by way of background to the meeting. Firstly, the church does not have a traditional parish base and wishes to develop additional weekday ministry. Music, with organ music in particular, is seen as an important component in that work. Stafford does not have a large concert venue and the church with a seating capacity of 400 allied to an open arrangement of its nave and wide chancel could fulfil this role. Secondly, the liturgical requirements in the church have developed around the availability of both the chancel and west end organs. There is a strong historical precedent for using the nave as the parish church arising from a time when the wide chancel was used for the Stafford Assizes. The introduction of the 'parish communion' in the 1960s led to the location of a new three-manual Hill, Norman and Beard organ in 1974 on the floor at the west end. This organ made use of the 1790 John Geib case that had, at that point, ended up attached to the 32' pedal Open Wood pipes facing east. The chancel organ had begun to show its age at that point but was left untouched. St Mary's must be one of the few parish churches to have established a workable hybrid of the eighteenth century practice of west gallery organs with the nineteenth century move towards chancel organs. Fr Graham also shed some light on the reason why the Collegiate church came to have a cathedral scale organ.

At some point in the early 1900s an idea was abroad for the establishment of new dioceses within the very large Lichfield diocese, with one to be centred on Stafford. Although this proposal came to nothing it coincided with a large bequest that enabled the Harrison and Harrison instrument to be installed. Thus, given this history and ideas for the future, the conference was asked to consider how the 1909 organ should be restored to fulfil its role in the twenty-first century.

Ian Miller, assistant organist at St Mary's, and John Norman described the earlier history of organs at the church beginning with the 1790 organ. John Geib (1744-1819) was renowned as a maker of pianos and the case of the St Mary's organ is his only surviving example in the UK of his work as an organ-builder. The organ comprised twenty-four stops across three manuals. This was large for the time; St Paul's Cathedral had only twenty-seven stops and Canterbury only twenty-four. It was originally installed on a west gallery and lasted until the 1840s when Gilbert Scott undertook the restoration of St Mary's as one of his first major commissions. In what must have been one of the earliest moves of a west gallery organ to a chancel the Geib organ was moved and extended by the Birmingham organ-builder John Banfield. The original case was retained during further work by John Banfield's son, also John, in 1878. This instrument did not prove to be very reliable and prompted discussions about a complete replacement that led to the decision to install the Harrison and Harrison organ in 1909.

The 1974 organ was designed by John Norman and built by Hill, Norman and Beard using a direct electric action. The confined space delineated by the Geib case required the use of borrowing for much of the bass register, notably the choir organ situated above the swell in a werkprinzip design has no pipe longer than 2 ft. The versatility of the organ was amply demonstrated by the Director of Music at St Mary's **Harry Hitchen** in a recital programme that ranged from arrangements of Handel and Bach through late-Romantic (Reger, Karg-Elert and Brahms) to contemporary composers (William Matthias). For the purposes of the day conference **John Norman** focused his attention on a consideration of the advantages and disadvantages of pneumatic action as this is what is present in the 1909 organ. Pneumatic action was developed to achieve more than light touch, which it does very well. Early tubular actions were used to conquer distance, as found in large organs that were divided across choirs. The early actions used a direct pressure link between the key and pallet - a single stage action - and were simple and robust. However, a two stage action, in which the key acts upon a small valve that actuates a larger pneumatic motor to open the pallet, could be faster and was less expensive to make. Somewhat paradoxically, the use of a third stage, notably in an 1888 patent awarded to J J Binns, yielded an action that worked even faster than the two-stage version.

A disadvantage of early pneumatic actions was that mechanical coupling was retained and could become very complex in large instruments. However, the development of slide pneumatic couplers (initially by Hunter from 1885) alleviated this problem. The later relay couplers didn't require sliders but often entailed the use of large amounts of tubing leading to the familiar "rat's nest" phenomenon of congestion behind the console. Pneumatic actions could be very sensitive to variations in humidity and the low humidity associated with increased church heating has played havoc with many such actions. Membrane couplers overcame this problem to a large extent and have proved very reliable over many decades.

Pneumatic actions depend greatly upon leather, in many places very thin leather, and this natural material will inevitably degrade. Nonetheless, leather will last up to 50 years with internal components protected against changes in temperature and humidity lasting up to 100 years. The real advantage of leather is that it can be replaced like-for-like when required. Despite many experiments with new materials in organ building over the past decades there is no evidence that plastic offers any advantage over lead for tubing. The judicious and tidy design of well-supported tubing layouts not only aids future access (a significant problem in many instruments) but also virtually eliminates the risk of tubing collapse.

Original documents relating to the 1909 organ are still in the archives of Harrison and Harrison and **Mark Venning**, who was until recently the managing director of the company, displayed the original contract drawn up in 1906—a strikingly compact one-page letter! At the time the rector and organist, along with Arthur Harrison, favoured a west-end location for the organ but the rest of church won the day to retain a chancel organ. The fifty-stop specification was provided for £2,700. Nothing has been added or subtracted from the original organ with the exception of the blower—a 1908 Kinetic blower of heroic proportions remains in a subterranean chamber outside the church but is now disconnected having been replaced by a more compact modern blower some years ago. If the pneumatic action were to be restored the layout of the system needs attention and it is worth noting that the combination settings had to be set by the organ-builder. The opening recital in February 1909 was given by Sir Walter Parratt who thought highly of the organ.

Paul Hale summarised some other examples of restorations of pneumatic systems that illustrated cases where restoration was possible and/or desirable as well as those where conservative restoration was not realistically contemplated. A number of organ-builders agree that if a system is well made then it merits restoration. A badly-made pneumatic system is usually not worth restoring and most companies will simply not risk their reputations tackling them. Access is similarly a key question and the example was given of Malvern Priory where poor access tipped the scales in favour of electrification of the action. In contrast, the very well made and neatly installed pneumatic action at the De Montfort Hall organ (Taylor 1913) enabled a very successful conservative restoration some years ago. In the context of these examples the St Mary's organ it appears to be a prime candidate for restoration of the original action as it has survived in good condition.

The Church Buildings Council (CBC) has developed a set of principles that provide a framework to guide decision-making on projects of national interest (see www.churchcare.co.uk for details). **David Knight** indicated some distinctive features of the 1909 organ that raise it above the ordinary—it is a rare opportunity for conservative restoration of an early-20th century cathedral scale organ and of a large charge pneumatic action by Harrison and Harrison. Furthermore, there are no insurmountable problems at St Mary's with respect to the effects of heating that could not be addressed by suitable system of humidification. Despite the temptation to try and second guess the funding outcome it was suggested that a decision should first be made about the right course of action and then secondly to seek funding for its realisation.

The discussion aired a number of additional aspects of the 1909 organ that had not been previously covered, as well as seeking to draw some conclusions from the proceedings.

Barrie Clark offered some evidence to support the view that additional casework had been allowed for originally, most notably around the pipework on display in the north transept. However, there is no evidence that a more elaborate case was definitely planned at the time and, on balance, he thought it might be better to leave the organ uncased. **Geoffrey Holroyde** pointed out that the case for electrification had been made for the 1897 Hill pneumatic action organ at Holy Trinity Gosport primarily on the basis of poor access combined with a long term concern about the effects of heating. **Harry Hitchen** suggested that some consideration be given to siting the console in the north transept as the current console affords very limited visibility for the organist. **John Mander** argued strongly for a conservative restoration of the St Mary's organ and pointed out that additional playing aids would be difficult to overlay onto the existing system. Despite the concern about the possible high costs of a conservative restoration, **John Norman** cited a number of examples where such projects had been undertaken for between £100,000-£150,000.

In his concluding remarks **Jim Berrow** emphasised that there is a hierarchy of restoration, starting with a truly conservative approach that can attract heritage funding, but is difficult for many musicians to accept. Until recently, much of the organ world had drifted away from the conservation world. The introduction of the Heritage Lottery Fund and its spin-offs has started to change that and the guidelines and rules that apply to any cultural object, whether a building, sculpture or painting, must (and should) apply to historic organs. Some definitions from the Burra Charter were offered as an aid to thinking in this area. At the other end of the spectrum, there is a temptation to first, electrify primaries; then, electrify stop action; add pistons; add generals, add a sequencer; add playback; borrow or extend various ranks (especially to the Pedal); move the console; put the console on a mobile platform and so on. Some of these actions would lose some funding opportunities, but could cost less than a historic approach.

The parish of St Mary's in Stafford has taken a brave step in encouraging a broad debate, exemplified in this meeting, as they try to find an answer to the problems of balancing funding, conservation and musical application and use.

A CHANCE TO HEAR AN ORGAN WITH NEWLY-RESTORED PNEUMATIC ACTION.

JOHN NORMAN

The May conference at Stafford concentrated on the issues raised by the restoration of pneumatic actions. One instrument where this has been successfully accomplished is the 1905 J.W. Walker three-manual organ at St Peter, Kensington Park Road, Notting Hill, London. This 34-stop instrument with a Grade I Historic Organ Certificate has just been restored by T.W.Fearn & Son, with all the numerous adjustment points typical of a Walker charge pneumatic action meticulously attended to. The inaugural recital will be given by Thomas Trotter at 7.30 pm on Thursday 14th October, preceded at 6.30 pm by a pre-concert discussion on the design of the instrument and the work of its restoration.

The recital will include works by Bach, S S Wesley, Schumann, Vaughan-Williams, Boellmann, Festing and Mendelssohn.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Sir

It was good to see Dominic Gwynn's piece (*BIOSRep.*, 34:2) about early 10ft flue ranks, and to be able to concur that in the first half of the 16th century we are, on current evidence, effectively speaking of a divided keyboard. Agreement, too, on the details of the early 16th century artefacts, as follows : -

- (1519) All Hallows, Barking, probably had 10, 5, 2-1/2 etc available on the lowest 14-19 keys;
- (1526) Holy Trinity, Coventry, probably had the 14 lowest notes offering 10, 5 etc;
- (?1520s/?1530s) Wetheringsett's (?Debenham's) adjusted soundboard served a keyboard with 10, 5, 2-1/2 etc available for the lowest 19 keys.

To this list we may add : -

- (1513-1514) Exeter Cathedral bought much more tin than that required for a 5ft organ;
- (1542) Gyllains was paid "... ffor making of the Orgons ... Dobbyll se fautt ..." when a ?city church bought 10ft (CC fa ut) flue-work.

Agreed, in all cases, the 5ft rank seems to have been the Principal. The importance of this is underlined - for some of us, at least - by the Old Radnor case/frame remains (?1500s-?1530s) showing the 5ft was in all probability permanently drawn here (as a bit later at ?Debenham). I, too, have always been impressed by the close correspondence between male vocal pitches as measured by Ellis and the range of pitches neatly covered by a 5ft rank (from, say, the 1460s if not earlier.)

Most of our extant Tudor music is from Cathedral composers. There are numerous references in Cathedral documentation to 'great' and 'litttle' organs - spelled of course in a variety of ways. Chronologically, from 1500 to 1548, such references to 2 distinct instrument designs occur at Wells, Worcester, Norwich, Bristol, Gloucester, Oxford, Lincoln, St Albans, Salisbury, Chichester, St Osyth Priory, Wimborne Minster, Westminster, Durham, Ely, Canterbury, Chester and Southwell Minster.

It is worth discussing this size distinction. My opinion is that both instruments contained the basic essential of a 5ft Principal, and that the larger instrument (often described as standing in the choir) had a 10ft rank which may or may not have been full-compass. No regals are ever mentioned, so these could not be called upon to 'stiffen' or 'darken' even the lower reaches of a musical piece.

As noted, our information on the topic of transposition accumulates rather slowly. Caius Choirbook (Gonville and Caius ms 667, ?1500s-?1530s) has intriguing performance notes on 3 pieces written in F. On pieces by Ludford and Turges, the annotations read "c fa ut", and on a piece by Cornysh "Ut in c fa ut". These handwritten instructions may not be of the same date as the compositions they comment on; for example, they may be reminders to post-1680s organists that early 16th century organs did a transposing job. Next in time, Office Hymns (?1530s-?1560s) frequently have C as the lowest note for the organ, F as the lowest note for the choir. Then the (hardly revolutionary) 1613-1614 Worcester Cathedral Dallam is described (Tomkins-Sayer 1665 letter) as having "...double C fa ut an open pipe of ten foot long ye diameter 7 inches & an half ..." the same pitch as ".... double F fa ut (of the quire pitch" This refers to a note (CC/FF) around 50 or 51Hz.

So convention allows us to call the lowest Principal sound C/F, the next whole tones D/G, E/A and so forth. Sternhold's (1564) Psalter encourages us to label the octaves CC/FF, C/F, c/f, cc/ff and so on.

Several modern editions generally place Tudor choral music pitch around a third away from that of the original (organ stave) mss, and choirs generally don't complain. Some editions open each piece with a bar or so of the original manuscript, so editorial pitch re-setting can be understood. It would be informative to hear from Early English Organ Project (EEOP) keyboard players on this pitch question. Which Tudor mss (not modern re-pitched editions) have demanded transposition, to sit the choir members at comfortable registers?

The choice of octave for colour is documented more than once. For example, Durham ms A2 f56 (?1580s/?1590s at the earliest) has "Play this

... in the viij under" while Tenbury ms 791 f48 (?1600s/?1610s at the earliest) has "play this anthem 8 notes loer." These performance notes appear on music ostensibly written for the usual 5ft Principal, and may or may not be in the original composers' hands (Giles, Gibbons). Later still, Luggé (?1620s/?1630s) frequently indicates when to use double (?10ft) or single (?5ft) manuals. Have EOP players found similar markings on any pre-Edwardian mss?

Jo Huddleston

Sir,

It is very good to have the Leffler MS at last in the public domain and in the possession of those interested in that crucial period in English organ making. I hope that BIOS can follow this up with other occasional publications, and can become a facsimile and documentary outlet - one much needed since the lamentable demise of *Bibliotheca Organologica*.

I just want to comment briefly on the possible role of the organ-building Russell family in the MS. The compiler certainly knew of William Russell, possibly London's best-known organist, but the most personal reference to him may not be clear without some background knowledge. On page 78 of the MS, in notes on the organ at St Paul, Deptford, we find first an account of the election, supervised by Charles Wesley, of Mr J. C. Nightingale, the best player among fifteen candidates. This seems to be derived from a note made at the time (it includes 'Thursday' in the date), and is followed in the same writing - again as if the whole entry was written up from notes made elsewhere - by a further note that the post was 'Vacant. March 1814. - by [= in consequence of] Mr Nightingale being elected at the Foundling [Hospital] Chapel in the room [= place] of My Much Lamented Friend'. The capital emphases show some emotion, I think, as well they might.

This 'Friend' was William Russell, who had been organist at the Foundling Hospital since 1801. He died 21 November 1813, probably as a result of the hard times, when London's population was under severe food pressure, with artificially high bread prices, during the

latter stages of the Napoleonic wars. George Pyke England died later during that same very cold winter, in 1814, as his friend, John Marsh, recorded. And many others did, too.

The entry 'Mr J. Adams' at the foot of the Deptford notes refers to his subsequent election, as is confirmed in Vincent Novello's notes to vol. I, p 18 of his *Select Organ Pieces* (etc) where in 1831 he summarised Mr Adam's career : '...he was, in 1814, chosen (by competition of playing against twenty-eight other Candidates) Organist of St Paul's Deptford....' (Incidentally, does all this mighty competitiveness tell us anything about the quality of Griffin's organ ?)

In view of Leffler's friendship with William Russell, and since the 'R' marks on various pages of the Account occur right from the start of the compilation, one might ask if 'R' was actually the inspiration for this particular Account of Organs? Did Leffler visit the organs with 'R' or did he take their stop-lists (and comments ?) from notes made by 'R' ? William Russell is known to have compiled stop-lists with similar comments (forty-one of these comments were printed in *Musical Journal* in 1840 - see Thistlethwaite, *JBIOS* I, 87) and his stop-lists might, I suggest, even be the ultimate source for the three surviving stop-list compilations of this period. Every one of the organs marked 'R' is either on William's rather large patch as organist (he was his father's deputy organist at St Mary Aldermary from the age of eleven, then at Great Queen Street chapel, Lincoln's Inn Fields, and then at St Ann, Limehouse from 1798, before being elected additionally to the Foundling Hospital post) or was maintained by his organ-building father, Hugh, or both. (Hugh claimed in 1806 that he had 'repaired and improved most of the old organs in and near [the city of] London'.)

William's reputation as a skilled organist led to his being asked to 'open' organs, even those not made or rebuilt by his family. This was the case with the organ at Great Yarmouth parish church, rebuilt by the England combine and 'Open'd on the 8 & 10th of Sepr [1812] By Wm Russell' (MS. p190). An earlier stop-list (p177) has two comments indicating someone's actual acquaintance with this instrument and with that

in St George's chapel-of-ease in the same important part. It also crucially includes the information that 'the composition' and the Sesquialtera are 'the same as Limehouse'. As this is not strictly the case, on paper at least, this sounds like a verbal remark made to the compiler by the organist of Limehouse, intending to convey his impression that the two organs were of similar sound and style in general. (They were, indeed, built at least in part by the same excellent builder, Bridge.)

The other large Norfolk organs are described in a group with St George's (p141) and in more detail than usual : at St Peter, Mancroft (Norwich ; p142) and Lynn (p143). This suggests strongly to me that either Leffler went on tour with William Russell or had this technical information from him. The latter seems more likely than any other explanation ; these are not matters that are normally of huge interest to organists (now or then, I suspect), who seem otherwise to be the compiler's usual correspondents and informants. It is most unlikely that the compiler had either the time or resources to visit the organs noted outside London ; even John Marsh, a monied gentleman, finally managed to visit all the cathedrals only towards the end of a long and active life.

When there has been time to study and reflect on the MS, I would be interested to see any comments on my idea that the Russells, and in particular William, were behind this rather sudden interest in recording some details of organs and 'accounting' for their numbers of pipes.

We are fortunate that Alexander Buckingham's subsequent work-notes happen to supply much of the information missing from Leffler and the other two parallel compilations, *Organographia* and the so-called G.P. England notebook. Though Leffler clearly knew of the existence of Snetzler's organs, as can be seen from his Index, he seems to have been in some difficulty in obtaining information about them. I have the sense that Snetzler's work and legacy stand apart from what was thought of as the mainstream at that time ; but that is another story.

Martin Renshaw



Sir,

Alec Dingwall, in his letter about organ cases in the last issue of the Reporter, is concerned by my criticism of Basil Spence's pipe display at Coventry Cathedral (*BIOSRep*, 32:1 [January 2008],36). I had said that it showed a two-dimensional approach to a three-dimensional object and illustrated this with Spence's original design sketch. This was drawn by Spence under the illusion that the front pipes constituted the whole organ. I agree with Alec Dingwall when he says that the Coventry design "fits the architect's visual conception of the new cathedral". Although that statement is true when looking at the organ from the liturgical west, the problem is that, as executed, the appearance of the organ is three-dimensional. When one advances eastwards and looks at a three-quarter view the design rather falls apart, as can be seen from the photograph in the 2008 article.

Mr Dingwall also castigates the superficiality of some otherwise rather grand nineteenth-century cases, as bearing little relationship to the instruments with which they are associated. He cites, quite correctly, the sumptuous J.L. Pearson cases at Westminster Abbey. Just as at Coventry, they are the result of the architect designing the appearance of an organ as a decorative object rather as part of a working musical instrument. I happen to think that, at the Abbey, the quality of the result overwhelms the basic fault, but that must be a matter of opinion.

Alec Dingwall goes on to criticise Victorian pipe-racks as the product of cost-cutting. I think the truth is a little more complex than that. It is common ground that the true concept of an 'organ case' is that of a large wooden wardrobe with bass pipes which, for good practical reasons, are arranged along the front. However, organ-builders in the mid-19th century were faced with the then new problem that their main customer, the Church of England, as a matter of liturgical fashion, had decided to move the choirs (and therefore usually the organs) from the west end of the church to the east. Almost always, the result was that the organ

could no longer strand under the main roof of the building but had to be placed in a space with restricted headroom. The science of acoustics was then in its infancy but organ-builders were smart enough to realise that in such circumstances any woodwork above the tops of the front pipes would tend to aggravate an already serious problem of sound projection. At first their adaptation of traditional forms to this new circumstance owed something to medievalist interpretations of portative organs, moving on to providing decoration, not on the now abolished woodwork, but on the surfaces of the pipes themselves. This fashion was abhorred in my youth but is now becoming accepted as a minor art form. The best later examples used the arch behind which the organ stood as, conceptually, the frame of the organ case. One such is the instrument in Manchester College Chapel, Oxford, where, incidentally, the front pipe decoration was designed by William Morris. I'm not entirely reconciled to it, but I recognise the route by which it came into being.

John Norman
[REDACTED]

Sir,

Three places have recently caught my attention and I would like to share them with readers.

Picton Castle, Pembrokeshire, is known in organ circles because of the Snetzler chamber organ in The Hall. Barnes and Renshaw (*The Life and Work of John Snetzler*, Scholar Press 1994 p78) question whether the gallery was specially made to house it. An 1879 plan of the castle in a corridor off the ticket hall shows an organ between two windows on the north side of The Hall. It may have been moved to the east gallery after 1934 following a fire.

However, there is another organ in the castle; the guide book refers to a 'George III harmonium'! Limited time on a castle tour revealed that it is an inlaid satin wood square pianoforte with an integral organ beneath by Henricus Holland. Wilson (*The Chamber Organ in Britain, 1600-1830* Ashgate 2001 p230) quotes from Langwill and Boston (*Church and Chamber*

Barrel Organs, Langwill 1967 p59) which gives the text of a printed label in one of Henry Holland's barrel organs which includes 'N.B. Any lady or Gentleman having a pianoforte and wishing to have an organ under it may have it made on reasonable terms at the above warehouse'. Wilson notes one surviving example in a private collection in Scotland and implies the existence of others but no further examples are given and stop specifications are not known.

St Nicholas Church, Warndon, Worcestershire, has, since 1995, housed a single manual chamber organ built by Samuel Parsons. There are 6 stops, a Manual compass from GG of 58 notes and a Pedal from GG of 12 notes (retractable). It was originally built in 1862 for Handel Hall, Cheltenham, which subsequently became Portland Tabernacle, and was rescued in 1962 prior to demolition of the building.

All Saints, Somerford Keynes, Gloucestershire, has a IP instrument bearing the nameplate of A J Price & Sons, Cheltenham. When I examined the organ for its NPOR entry in 2004, I noted that the case seemed to be too large for its contents. The Walker website (June 2010) detailing their recent conservation work has identified the internal parts to William Chambers (1808-1883) and dated them to 1861. They concluded that it was likely that Price brought a pre-existing organ and case (no builder identified) together. The NPOR currently only lists two other organs by Chambers.

Details of the above have been sent to the NPOR.

Philip J Wells
[REDACTED]

RESEARCH NOTES

PAUL TINDALL

Byfields¹

If John Joachim Byfield or Bielfeld (born. c.1662) was in fact German, then it is worth remembering that there was an organ-builder in Stade named Erasmus Bielfeldt (c.1682-1753), whose large Schnitger-school organ at St. Wilhadi Stade (1730-36) survives. He came from a family of *Tischlermeister* (cabinet makers) and organ-builders in Stade, but worked for Matthias Dropa in Lüneburg 1707-15, and spent the years 1728-48 in Bremen, a larger city about forty-five miles to the south-west.² From Bremen came Baerent Smitt to Hoorn in Holland in 1657.³

John Byfield (I, presumably), received £12 from Cloyne Cathedral in 1732:⁴ further evidence that he was in Ireland c.1730-33. He was succeeded by the Hollisters, as in Dublin.

It is well known that John Byfield I was buried at St. Sepulchre-without-Newgate in 1756, even though he was 'of the parish of Saint George the Martyr' in his will of the same year.⁵ According to the *Christian Remembrancer*:⁶

So partial was Byfield the elder to the instrument under consideration, that he would forbid any one beside himself to tune it, alleging that he never could attend to a second on the same day; inasmuch as he could not bear "to hear any reed work after it." Indeed, his partiality was carried so far as to request that his body might, after death, be interred as near to it as possible; and which request has since been complied with, he now lying in the south-western part of the church-yard.

John Byfield II was also buried at St. Sepulchre, on 10 November 1799,⁷ when he was recorded as 67 years old. Therefore he was born c. 1731-2, about ten years before his supposed date of birth, as deduced (very reasonably) in the most recent research.⁸ This makes sense of Byfield's appearance for a dressing-down at St Mary Abbots Kensington in 1759:⁹

¹ *BIOSRep*, 34:2 (April 2010), 24-6

² Golon, Peter (ed.), *Die Erasmus-Bielfeldt-Orgel in St. Wilhadi zu Stade*, Stade 1990 especially 79-81

³ Rowntree, John, 'Bernard Smith (c. 1629-1708) Organist and Organbuilder, his origins,' *JBIOS* 2 (1978), 10

⁴ Caulfield, Richard, *Annals of the Cathedral of St Coleman, Cloyne*, Cork 1882, 27

⁵ *JBIOS* 25 (2001), 171: 25 July 1756 'John Byfield from Holborn in Church 62.' Study of the registers of these parishes just outside the City of London reveals that people very regularly came (or were taken) from one parish to another to be married or buried. The reasons are not clear. Red Lion Square and the west side of Red Lion Street were in St George the Martyr and the east side in St Andrew Holborn, but the bottom end was in St George, Bloomsbury

⁶ volume V, 1833, 625-6

⁷ London Metropolitan Archive, Guildhall MS 7223/4, St. Sepulchre burial register 1792-1812 'John Byfield, Front [of church yard], from St. Pancras.' Byfield had been living in Constitution Row, in the parish of St. Pancras.

⁸ *BIOSRep*, 33: 1 (January 2009), 33 and Jeffery, Joan, 'Organ-builder history from fire insurance policies,' *JBIOS* 26 (2002), 114

⁹ Kensington & Chelsea Archives, Kensington Central Library, MS 58/5605: St Mary Abbots Vestry Minute book 1757-66

5 December 1759...Touching the Parish Organ and having heard what Mr. Byfield had to say with Regard to his Conduct in taking Care of the said Organ which Appearing to be Frivolous [sic]...Ordered that the said Mr Byfield be Dismissed from his Employment...

John Byfield II had four sisters, Elizabeth, Ann, Catherine,¹⁰ and Jane, wife of Francis Ridsen.¹¹ It is interesting that an Elizabeth Byfield, spinster, married a Thomas Chapman, bachelor, both of the parish, on 29 November 1757 at St George the Martyr, Queen Square (the correct parish for the Byfields). Was this the Thomas Chapman who built the chamber organ in the New York museum ('Londini Fecit 1779'), and who appears in John Marsh's diary in 1780-1?¹²

Certain mysteries remain. Byfield II's christening has failed to come to light, though there is a faint possibility that he might have been born in Ireland, if my thesis regarding his father's whereabouts in the early 1730s is correct. His marriage to Miss Hays 'of Covent Garden' shortly before 12 October 1763¹³ has not been traced at St. Paul, Covent Garden, nor at St George the Martyr, St George, Bloomsbury, St Andrew, Holborn or anywhere else, although the baptism of their son John Byfield III appears at St Andrew Holborn in 1766.¹⁴

A tentative Byfield trail can lead well into the nineteenth century. John Byfield III was 'of Constitution Row' in St Pancras with his father in 1794,¹⁵ and seems to have married Ann Fulcher on 25 April 1797.¹⁶ They rather swiftly had a child, also John,¹⁷ and it seems very possible that he is the John Byfield, 'Music and drawing master,' who appears in the 1861 census¹⁸ at 44 High Street, Marlborough. He was born in Middlesex, and seems to have been uncertain about his precise age: 60 in 1861, but 73 in the 1871 census,¹⁹ ('Professor of Music'), and 77 at St Peter and Paul, Marlborough when he was buried on 20 December 1872. He married Mary Ann Dobson at the same church on 15 January 1834, and they had a son, John Hayes Byfield (note the middle name), christened 29 June 1837.²⁰

A John Byfield was organist of St Nicholas, Newbury, eighteen miles away, from 1812-1833 when he resigned.²¹ This could have been John Byfield IV,²² or even his father, who was organist at St Bartholomew-the-Less, and disappears from view in London after 1806.²³

¹⁰ Jeffery, op. cit.

¹¹ From her father's will

¹² Renshaw, Martin, *JOHN MARSH/A Most Elegant & Beautiful Instrument/THE ORGAN*, Chichester 2002, 82, 85-6

¹³ *Gazetteer and London Daily Advertiser*, 12 October 1763

¹⁴ LMA, Gh MS 6667/11, Baptism register 1761-70: christened 1 May 1766, 'John, of John Byfield and Frances of Red Lion Street'

¹⁵ Plumley, Nicholas, *The Organs of the City of London*, Oxford 1996, 52

¹⁶ LMA P90/PAN1/055, St Pancras marriage register 1794-1804. Bachelor and spinster of the parish. Witnesses are Mary [Frances] Byfield (his sister, born 1770), and James Crookey [?]. The groom signs the register as 'John Byfield Jun.'

¹⁷ LMA P90/PAN1/008, St Pancras baptism register 1793-1801: John, son of John Byfield and Ann, born 23 October 1797, christened 21 January 1798

¹⁸ RG9/1289, f. 46, p. 10

¹⁹ RG10/1906, f. 45, p. 6

²⁰ JGI

²¹ Money, Walter, *The history of the ancient town and borough of Newbury*, Oxford 1887, 517

²² There are no Byfields in the Berkshire Commercial Directory of 1833

It appears from all this that there may even today be people who have a direct line of descent all the way back to Thomas Dallam.

There were other Byfields in Wiltshire involved in the cloth-making trade of Bradford-on-Avon and Westbury, but they seem to have been there since the seventeenth century: John Byfield IV is the only incomer from Middlesex recorded. Other London Byfields who ought to be kept in mind are James Byfield and his descendants of Soho (fl. 1777-1834), 'Carvers and Gilders to his Majesty': again a woodworking trade.²⁴

Finally, two stray Byfields: John Byfield, son of 'Bernard-Merest Byfield,' was christened on 31 July 1740 at St John, Hackney.²⁵ The register of St John, Clerkenwell²⁶ records the burial of a John Byfield 'from Swan Alley' on August 3 1743. Swan Alley is the other side of St. John Street, not far from Red Lion Square. John Harris also died in 1743, but not until December.

Joseph Robson

When Robson was prosecuted by his master John Avery in 1797, a description of him appeared in the Criminal Registers of Prisoners in Middlesex..²⁷

'Joseph Robson, Aged 26, 5ft 9in, Fair Complexion, brown hair, hazel eyes, born in Warkworth, Northumberland, an Organ builder, in Tothill fields prison.' He was therefore born, it appears, in 1771.

²³ Plumley, op. cit

²⁴ Butler, Judith, 'An Ingenious and Worthy Firm: The Byfields,' *The Private Library*, 3rd series, volume 3 (1980), 149-50

²⁵ IGI. Bernard Maris the joiner was the son of John Joachim: see *BIOSRep* 34:2 (April 2010), 25

²⁶ *LMA MS P76/JNB/20*, burials 1723-1812

²⁷ National Archives H026/5

101 USES FOR SURPLUS STOPKNOBS

Spotted in the stair-well of the new organ loft at Worcester Cathedral last year:



One wonders if the cathedral organist and director of music each have the use of the 32' coat-hooks (left) and the newest organ scholar uses only the tremulant (right).

**THE BRITISH INSTITUTE OF ORGAN STUDIES
DAY CONFERENCE**

DE MONTFORT HALL & ST PETER'S, HIGHFIELDS, LEICESTER

SATURDAY 30 OCTOBER 2010

THE LEGACY OF PROVINCIAL ORGAN-BUILDING IN THE EAST MIDLANDS

Draft Programme (Subject to Confirmation)

- 10.30 Registration & Coffee
11.00 De Montfort Hall Organ (Taylor 1913) - visit *Richard Young*
12.00 Organs, personalities and festivals in 18th- and early-19th century Leicestershire
Martin Renshaw
12.30 'A Singular Place'—18th- and 19th century Leicester organists *David Shuker*
13.00 Lunch
14.00 Stephen Taylor and Sons - their history and techniques *Richard Young*
14.30 History of the St Peter's 1910 Taylor organ *Christopher Gray*
15.00 Organ-building in Leicestershire in the 20th century and beyond *Peter Collins*
15.30 Recital - tba
16.30 Tea & Close

.....
BOOKING FORM

Please reserve a place at the BIOS Day Conference at De Montfort Hall and St Peter's Highfields, Leicester at £25.00. Cheques should be made payable to 'BIOS'.

Please fill in a separate booking form (or photocopy) for each person

Name (including title).....

Address.....

Tel No (Eve)..... Tel No (Day).....

e-mail:.....

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

Melvin Hughes,

BIOS Meetings, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

CALL FOR PAPERS - RECENT RESEARCH IN ORGAN STUDIES

BERNARD EDMONDS RESEARCH CONFERENCE THE BARBER INSTITUTE, UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM

SATURDAY 26 FEBRUARY 2011

Proposals for papers are invited for the British Institute of Organ Studies *Bernard Edmonds Recent Research Conference* at the Barber Institute, University of Birmingham, on Saturday 26 February 2011.

Proposals should present some recent research into aspects of organ history, including music and performance. A broad range of subjects are encouraged and papers on organs and organ builders, including British organ-builders working overseas and organs built in Britain by foreign organ-builders, will be welcomed alongside papers more broadly based.

Papers should be around twenty-five minutes in length, and the use of musical and pictorial illustrations is encouraged.

Proposals will be reviewed by a panel including Professor Peter Williams. The authors of successful proposals will be notified by 30 September 2010.

A summary proposal of 200 words, along with a brief biographical note, should be sent by **31 August 2010** to:

Melvin Hughes,

BIOS MEETINGS AND CONFERENCES 2010-2011

Saturday 30 October 2010

Day Conference at De Montfort Hall & St Peter, Highfields, Leicester - 'The Legacy of Provincial Organ Building in the East Midlands'. See Programme and Booking Form on p 29

Saturday 26 November 2010

A Study Day and AGM is being planned at a central London venue. Further details will appear in the next BIOS Reporter.

Saturday 26 February 2011

Bernard Edmonds Recent Research Conference, Barber Institute, University of Birmingham. See Call for Papers on p 30.

Future Conferences 2010/2011

Day Conferences are being planned at:

- " St Swithun, Worcester (Spring/Summer 2011)
- " St Margaret of Antioch, Crick, Northampton (Spring/Summer 2011)
- " St George, Southall (Spring/Summer 2011)

For further information please contact:

Melvin Hughes



Ideas for future Conferences are always welcome.

For further information please contact:

The Meetings Officer, Melvin Hughes



Rear cover: St Mary's Collegiate Church in Stafford possesses an unaltered Harrison and Harrison four-manual organ installed in 1908. The options for restoration of this organ formed the basis of a BIOS Day Conference at Stafford and a report of this meeting is to be found on pp.18-21 of this issue. The console is in its original state with distinctive ebonised panels on the stop jambs. (Photo: Ian Miller)



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.