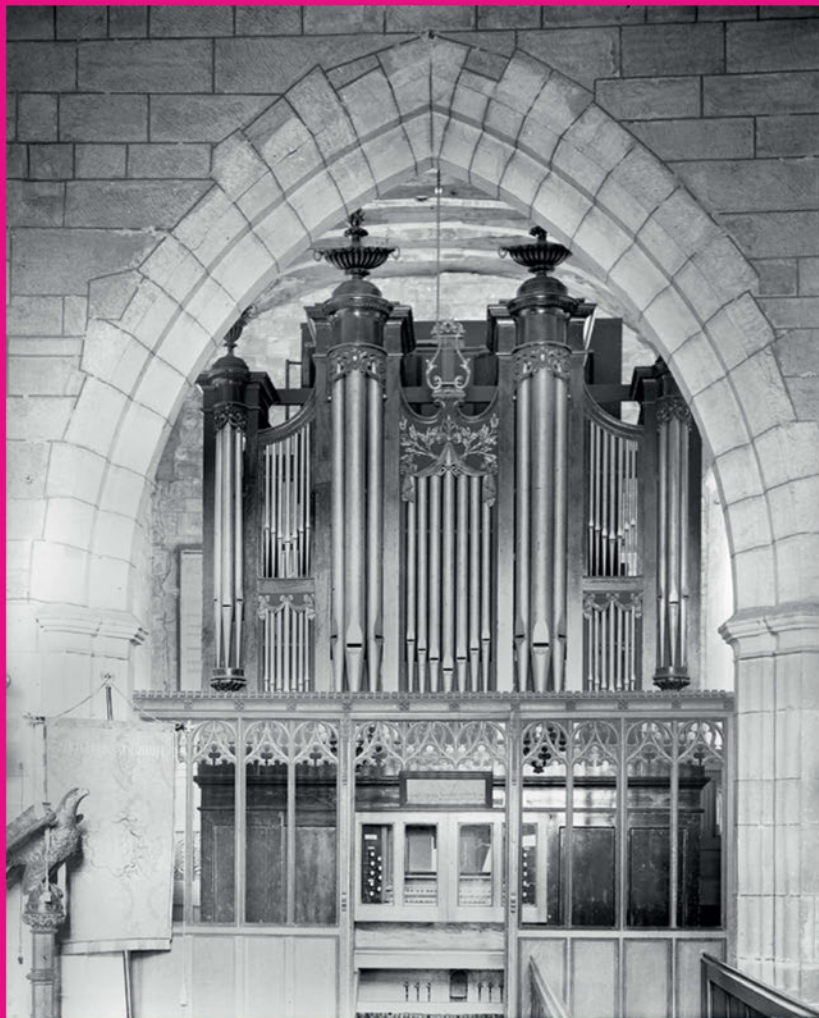


BIOS REPORTER

Volume 39 (2)
April 2015



THE BRITISH INSTITUTE OF ORGAN STUDIES

THE BRITISH INSTITUTE OF ORGAN STUDIES

Registered Charity No: 283936

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BIOS SUBSCRIPTIONS

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

BIOS REPORTER

*Opinions expressed in the BIOS Reporter are those of the respective contributors.
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The Reporter is printed and distributed by Anchorprint, Syston, Leicestershire. The layout and typesetting are by the editor. Copy for inclusion in the July edition should be sent to the Acting Editor by post or e-mail by Friday 19th June 2015.

Cover photos: St Peter's, Powick, Worcs. (*see article on pp. 41-44*).

Front - *Andrew Freeman's photograph of 1938 (Cadbury Research Library: Special Collections, University of Birmingham. Ref: FREEMAN/1259) ©The British Institute of Organ Studies.*

Back - *Present day view (Photo: David Allen).*

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VACANCIES

BIOS seeks volunteers to take on the following important roles:

- i) PUBLICITY OFFICER
- ii) COORDINATOR FOR

THE HISTORIC ORGANS LISTING COMMITTEE

Expressions of interest will be welcomed. Job descriptions are available for each of these positions. For BIOS to maintain the important work that it does, it is vital that we identify successors to the present holders.

If you are willing to help by working in either of the above roles, please contact our Secretary, Melvin Hughes, as soon as possible, by phone or email (tel: [REDACTED] email: secretary@bios.org.uk).

FROM THE CHAIRMAN

Members are aware that there are currently a number of changes of personnel taking place. We are pleased to announce that our member David Shepherd has volunteered to serve as our new Membership Secretary when Melanie Plumley steps down this month. Council has agreed to put David's name forward for nomination at the forthcoming AGM. David already acts as Membership Secretary for the Cinema Organ Society (a role which he will continue to fulfil if elected at our AGM) so he is well placed and prepared with all the routine requirements and procedures of the office. Council is very grateful to David for his offer to serve and, subject of course to his election by the membership, we look forward to working with him in the coming years.

In recent times Melanie Plumley has carried out not only our membership administration but has also dealt with BIOS publicity and the emerging website facilities for on-line marketing (currently sales of Journals, HOSA CDs and Leffler books). Colin Brookes has kindly agreed to take over the marketing aspect of Melanie's work after April and we are pleased to welcome him as a member of the administrative team. We hope to explore with Colin ways in which he can help us broaden the base of our marketing operation as, for example, in the sale of goods at meetings and joint

'organ days'. Colin already acts as Treasurer of the Organ Club, so both his appointment and that of David Shepherd give credence to the old saying 'if you want to find someone to do a job, ask a busy person'!

This still leaves BIOS with two important roles to fill. The work of the Publicity Officer is very significant in promoting BIOS to the wider organ world and helping us to attract new members. Although (given the inevitable constraints of finance available for costly advertising) this is not as busy a task as we would like it to be, it is nevertheless a critical one. We are seeking someone with the computer skills to continue designing the eye-catching adverts (with changing and topical information) of the kind that Melanie has been so successful in producing for publications such as Organists' Review and Choir & Organ. The HOCS Co-ordinator position is likewise a vital one in maintaining and developing the emerging role of BIOS as the amenity society for organs. It is very exciting that what began as the provision of Historical Organ Certificates has evolved almost of its own accord into a fully-blown Listing system which mirrors the state scheme for buildings in this country. Although the BIOS scheme has no status in law, it is increasingly being acknowledged and referred to when funds are sought for restoration of old organs, or historic organs are under threat of removal and possible destruction. These matters are fundamental to the existence of BIOS. On the back cover of this issue you will see among our stated aims the paragraph 'to work for the preservation, and where necessary, the faithful restoration of historic organs in Britain'. You will not find such an objective anywhere in the constitutions of the RCO, the RSCM, the IAO or even the IBO. This is pure BIOS territory, and we really need a volunteer to come forward to take over the sterling work so ably done by Paul Joslin.

On a different subject, Council has recently been reminded that the Directory of British Organ Builders (DBOB on the NPOR) gives information only up to the year 1950. The compilation of the Directory was originally started by David Wickens and then taken over by Paul Tindall, and a suggestion has been made that BIOS might now consider updating it until a more recent year. As with the original Directory, this would be quite a long-term project. Council would be very interested to hear from any member who would be interested in such a task and who might have time to give to it.

Alan Thurlow

FROM THE SECRETARY

BIOS Annual General Meeting

Notice was previously given (via an insert to *BIOS Reporter*, January 2015) that the Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the British Institute of Organ Studies will take place on Saturday 18 April 2015 at St John's, Lansdowne Crescent, Notting Hill, London W11 2NN at 14.00 hours.

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

The following election of officers and ordinary members of Council will be held: Treasurer, Secretary, Meetings Officer, Membership Secretary, Casework Officer, and three Ordinary Members of Council. Clause 7.4 of the Constitution states: 'Any two fully paid-up members of the Society shall be at liberty to nominate a member to serve on the Council'. Clause 7.5 states: 'the name of each member nominated under clause 7.4 shall be given to the Secretary not less than seven days before the date fixed for the Annual General Meeting, accompanied by the candidate's consent to serve, if elected'. Nomination forms for officers and ordinary members of Council are obtainable from the BIOS Secretary at Ashcroft, 10 Ridgeway Close, Reigate, Surrey RH2 0HT ([REDACTED] e-mail: Secretary@bios.org.uk).

BIOS Council (January 2015)

BIOS Council met at the Diocesan Office, the Diocese in Europe on 24 January 2015. Eleven members of Council were present. Also in attendance were John Norman (BIOS Webmaster) and Jeffrey West (Heritage Adviser). Unfortunately, the replacement of IT infrastructure in Church House this weekend meant that Melanie Plumley could not join in by Skype (as had been the intention).

Council discussed future possible arrangements for the Membership (and Publicity) Secretary roles following the forthcoming AGM.

Plans were proceeding for the BIOS 40th Anniversary Conference in Cambridge from 8 to 10 September 2016 and a contract was about to be signed with Magdalene College as the main venue and accommodation base for the event. There had been initial discussions about the content which might focus on what BIOS has achieved in 40 years, what aspirations that we have not been able to realise, where we are now and where we believe the Society was going. Ideas for the content of the Programme would be sought from the Council and the Membership. The scope of the proposed monograph on the Freeman archive, publication of which was intended to coincide with the celebrations was being established to enable further discussions with potential publishers. It was hoped to publish in advance a complete programme of events and meetings for the Anniversary year.

Council approved the draft Annual Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2014 and agreed that the draft accounts should be presented to the Independent Examiner. Council agreed that the proceeds of recent legacy bequests should be used to pay the cost of transferring the NPOR website from Emmanuel College to the RCO and as a seeding sum for the capital side of the new NPOR fund.

Council approved the listing of seven historic organs (two on appeal) and declined six applications (two of which were appeals). It noted that the Listing Committee had deferred consideration of seven applications pending further information.

The need for BIOS to liaise with the Amenity Bodies to see if statutory bodies could be encouraged to seek specialist opinion from BIOS where pipe organs were involved was recognised. BIOS had registered formal objection to the Diocesan authorities, on the basis of written evidence, to the proposed removal of the Robert Allen organ from Holy Trinity, Frome but BIOS was not party to the proceedings.

Council noted the progress being made towards seeking donations to support the work of the NPOR, including the development of a facility to encourage on-line donations.

Council meets next on 6 June 2015.

Melvin Hughes

MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

It is good to welcome to BIOS the following nine new members:

Mr Tom Bell: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Mr Julian Bonia: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Mr Daniel Cook BMus FRCO(Dip.CHD) LRAM ARCM ARAM: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Mr Peter J Dollimore: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Mrs R J Elliot: [REDACTED]

Dr Frederick Gavin Hardy MLitt MSc PhD: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

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

Mr Julius Weeks: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Mr John Wordsworth: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

I am sorry to have to advise that since the previous edition I have received notice of the deaths last year of both Mr. Donald Barford of Northampton, a member since 1989, and also Dr. Rodney Matthews of Harlow who joined BIOS in 2002.

I am grateful to the many members who have paid their 2015 subscriptions but there are 101 members whose banks paid a standing order at last year's rates, creating underpayments typically of £7 or £8 each. If your bank statement shows payment of £24 or £30 was made, please urgently send a top-up payment. More than another hundred people have yet to make any payment for 2015. The cost to post so many extra reminder letters is significant and cuts into the funds BIOS should be using for more worthwhile purposes.

A new membership secretary will be elected at the April AGM so although payments sent to the old one will of course get forwarded, please check the BIOS website for the new address when it is published.

Melanie Plumley

FROM THE PUBLICATIONS OFFICER

I am pleased to report that the JBIOS Index to volumes 16-25 is now available on the BIOS website. Volumes 26-30 have been completed individually, but not yet collected together. A volunteer would be greatly appreciated to put the individual indices together with the index to vols. 16-25. We do not intend to publish these indices in a hard copy. If anyone wishes to get started indexing Volumes 31-38, that would also be most welcome. Please contact me.

K. Pardee

COMMITTEE FOR THE LISTING OF HISTORIC ORGANS

Grade I organs are of exceptional interest

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

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

The following organs were awarded Historic Organ certificates at the BIOS Council meeting on 24 January 2015.

Location	Builder and Date	Comment	Grade
Emmanuel Church, Southea with Parson Drove and Murrow, Cambridgeshire	Conacher 1878	Listing granted on appeal	II
St Mary the Virgin, Orchardleigh, Wiltshire	Hill & Son 1881		II
Christ Church, Great Ayton Middlesbrough	J.J. Binns 1899		II
St John, Deptford, London SE8	J.J. Binns 1901		II*

St Mary and All Saints, Hawthornthwaite, Nottinghamshire	Bates & Son, early 1860s		II
St Francis Xavier, Liverpool, Merseyside	Hill, 1907	Pipework and case from earlier Gray & Davison organ of 1849	I
St Mary, Garforth, Leeds	Abbott, 1873		II*

The latest dates for new Applications for Listing are 31 March for 12 May Meeting, and 4 August for 15 September Meeting.

Melvin Hughes (Acting Co-ordinator)

MEETING REPORT

The Bernard Edmonds Research Conference

Barber Institute, University of Birmingham, Saturday 21st February

Thirty members gathered in the wonderful Barber Institute of Fine Arts at the University of Birmingham for this annual event. We are hugely grateful to Professor Andrew Kirkman and his colleagues who make the facilities available to us each year, and he began the day with a talk about the proposals for an MA in Organ Studies at the University which should be underway next year. The presence of the BIOS Archive in the Cadbury Research Library of the University, as well as the nearby RCO Library make Birmingham an obvious place for such a course which will have a varied structure which could also include a performance element. The substantial new Marc Garnier organ, inaugurated in November, could be a focus for this, and Emeritus Professor John Whenham explained the lengthy procurement process for the instrument which members were then able to visit and hear in the new Elgar Hall during the lunch break. The morning also included a paper from Jim Berrow on a Nicholson's involvement in the installation of the Snetzler organ at Halifax Parish Church, and John Norman's well illustrated talk on the organ at St

Mary's Church, Finedon, Northamptonshire revealed new evidence for the origins of this royal instrument which has come to light during its recent restoration, for which he was the consultant.



Members examine the Garnier organ during the lunch break.

(Photo: Philip Wells)

After lunch, Richard Hobson read a short paper on English music for divided and short compass stops which doesn't seem to fit the instruments, introducing his topic with a Blow Cornet Voluntary on the Snetzler instrument in the Barber concert room. The day was completed with papers from Derrick Carrington on further researches into the origins of organs in Madeira, and a 'completely new look at the history of the organ in Britain in 20 paragraphs' by Martin Renshaw.

Next year's conference will be the first event in our 40th anniversary year and I open the bidding now for slots to read papers at this important event on February 20th 2016. Let the research begin.

RNH

TIMES PAST

A copy of St Peter's, Islington, parish magazine of July 1908 was recently discovered by Len Pullinger amongst material donated to a charity for auction. It contained the following article, the text of which is reproduced verbatim. Amongst the photographs included in the original were views of the blower and console of the Hope-Jones organ in Worcester cathedral. The latter closely resembles the console of the Hope-Jones instrument recently destroyed in a fire at Battersea Arts Centre (see p. 48).

How Organs are Blown Today.

By Our Own Commissioner ...

An organ-blower was once asked who played the organ at a certain church. His reply was, "Mr. S--" (naming the organist) "and myself," thereby indicating that it was only by their united efforts that the instrument was made to perform its proper functions. "We do it," the aged blower would say with evident pride.

Yet, even in organ blowing, the human is being, if slowly, very surely superseded by the mechanical. We are all of us familiar with that most loyal and regular of churchmen, who in many churches "raises the wind" sometimes in full view of the congregation; indeed, such an institution has he become that many would be sorry to see him ousted from his accustomed place.

Imagine the feelings of a man who has been blowing the same old organ for half a century being called to resign his office. I do not think he would need to be ashamed of tears as he worked his lever up and down for the last few times at the Sunday evening service. Next Sunday he would feel that in a measure his work was done, with a patent electrically driven aeromotor installed in his place. Happily for those of us who have a real affection for the simple ways of the past the organ-blower will long retain his post in all but large churches and cathedrals.

There are various mechanical methods of providing organs with wind. For many years water has been extensively employed, and on one occasion this resulted in the flooding of Rochester Cathedral. The inundation was due to a defective pipe, connected with the hydraulic engine used to blow the organ, giving way, with the result that a powerful jet of water was thrown from the pipe. As no one knew how to turn the water off, the edifice was speedily flooded. Too little water may be as embarrassing as too much. An organ recital in the Parish Church at Chelmsford, with the assistant organist of Westminster Abbey at the keyboard, had long been looked forward to in the early summer of 1900 by a large congregation. But when the organist had struck several chords without the instrument responding with a sound, the rector had to announce that the town water supply had inconveniently dried up, and that the organ could not be played without.

In addition to water, gas, oil and petrol engines have been making considerable headway. It is, however, more than probable that electric motors will in time cause

all other power to take second place.

What is claimed to be the largest organ-blowing installation in the world may be seen at Worcester Cathedral, and I may perhaps be permitted to give a short account of it here. The organ, as many readers possibly know, is one of no ordinary magnitude, and more wind is required to blow it than any other organ in the country. The instrument has eighty stops, including three of 32 feet, and two diaphones. For many years the organ was blown by compressors and feeders, a gas engine supplying the motive power, but the wind thus generated was insufficient. The cathedral authorities, after much anxious consultation, eventually decided to place the whole matter in the hands of the Kinetic-Swanton Company, Limited, of London and Lincoln, and accordingly their apparatus was duly installed. It is, of course impossible to give anything like a full or technical description of the installation. It is, however, composed of two electric motors of $8\frac{1}{2}$ and $3\frac{1}{2}$ horse-power respectively, direct current 460 volts, coupled, without the intervention of belts or gearing, to two Kinetic blowers, the larger being capable of delivering 2,500 cubic feet of wind at 15" pressure, the smaller receiving 1,150 cubic feet of this wind and raising it to 23" pressure. The apparatus is controlled by means of ordinary switches at the keyboard. The blower itself consists of fans of somewhat peculiar construction, which are coupled together and securely boxed in. Dr. Forrest, the Dean of Worcester, is most pleased with the installation, and speaks of it as being both admirable and reliable.

Organ blowing, whether human or mechanical, costs a certain amount of money. The initial outlay in the latter case is often heavy, but when once the apparatus is purchased, the cost of working is comparatively insignificant.

A typical instance of this may be given. The blowing of the organ at Minehead Parish Church, owing to its size, the large scale of the pipes, and the high wind pressure, was the work – and by no means light work – of two men. It was not always possible to get able-bodied men just when they were required, and it was therefore decided to install a mechanical apparatus. The necessary plant was laid down at a cost of £60, and a year ago the organ was blown under the new conditions. The machine used is said to be a revelation in economy, costing under 2d. per hour in current. An interesting comparison was made as to the cost under the old and new regime, and it was found that the same work was mechanically performed for 6d., as against 4s. for manual labour on the preceding Sunday.

It is sometimes urged that the erection of an engine-house in the churchyard somewhat destroys the beauty and peacefulness of the surroundings. It does not, however, necessarily follow that the house need be in very close proximity to the church. At Claines, for instance, in Worcestershire, it is sixty yards away, and is separated from the church by a public roadway. This, however, is an extreme case, and probably no greater distance than this could be cited in any part of the country.

No attempt can, of course, be made to touch upon the specification of the many magnificent organs to be found in our cathedrals and large churches up and down the country, equipped as many of them are with splendid mechanical refinements

and miles of pneumatic tubing. Part of the organ at St. Paul's Cathedral is blown by means of a gas engine, the celestial organ in the dome being supplied with wind through the medium of two high-pressure hydraulic engines worked at 700 lb. pressure to the square inch. A gas engine is also responsible for the blowing of the organ in Westminster Abbey, whereas the enormous organ in the Albert Hall, London, is blown by a steam engine.

Some years ago, when electricity was employed in respect to the organ at St. Michael's, Chester Square, it was stated that 64,500 miles of wire were used in the instrument, including the magnets, or more than sufficient to go round the equator two and a half times, and the heart of every Briton swelled with pride until it was found that for miles "yards" should have been read. The Albert Hall organ, with its 4 manuals, 138 stops, and almost 10,000 pipes, and the instrument at Crystal Palace, with its 65 stops and 4,568 pipes, are organs to be proud of; while the £6,500 organ of Norwich Cathedral leaves little, if anything, to be desired; but they one and all are dwarfed by the organ exhibited at the St. Louis Exhibition. This instrument boasts 5 manuals, 140 stops, and 10,050 pipes, and it is said that there may be drawn from it 17,179,869,183 distinct tonal effects that would provide a musical recital that would last 32,600 years if a different combination were produced each minute. The national motto – *e pluribus unum* – appears to have been transposed in respect to this instrument.

We may conclude with one or two organ stories. Some few years ago, when the chief stop of the organ of a Norfolk church refused to perform its duties, at the expense of one guinea the parish authorities called in the services of a musical Sherlock Holmes, who discovered that the culprit was a mouse that had hidden away an acorn in the interior of the instrument. The fact that mice have a taste for music explains the presence of more than one cat discovered of late within these instruments. Llangollen Church, a church in North London, and Hampton Church have all within the last few years had the internal mechanism of their organs upset by cats that have lost themselves in the instrument, from whence they have been rescued in an emaciated and woebegone condition.

It is related that a New York choir, when practising some little time ago, gave the fortissimo passages with such vigour that the ceiling of the room in which they were engaged in their vocal exercise collapsed upon their heads. It is not often that a choir literally brings down the house to this extent, but it clearly indicates to the thoughtful man that noise as an explosive has its possibilities, and this theory was borne out by the Sidney organ when it was first played, and the vibration caused by its 42 (sic) feet open diapason pipes smashed several windows and dislodged several hundredweight of plaster from the roof.

On one occasion in a Swiss hotel where an English service was held in a room every Sunday the organ had to be thawed before it would produce a note! Unhappily the lamp used for the purpose was overturned by the organist and the sermon had to be abruptly finished while the flames were being put out. Another peculiarity of this organ was that the blower had to start work two minutes before the organist could play.

THE ORGAN OF ST PETER'S, POWICK, WORCS.

DAVID ALLEN

St Peter's boasts an elegant painted deal organ case with gilt pipes which Freeman¹ in 1938 described, somewhat underwhelmingly, as a 'very interesting case'. He nonetheless thought it worth sketching its profile twice^{2, 3} in his notebooks. Hard information as to its origin was lacking until 2007/8 when an invoice⁴ was discovered in the Worcestershire Archives from Wm. Hill & Co dated 1 March 1850 for the installation of a second-hand organ at Powick for £160 plus £15 for carriage and setting up. Two local press accounts,^{5, 6} of the reopening of the church after restoration mention that the organ was by 'Greene' (sic). Unfortunately the Church Council minutes and the Vicar's journals of this period have not come to light. This information countered Michael Gillingham's idea, expressed in a 1974 letter⁷ to the Diocesan Organ Adviser, where he suggested that the organ would have been installed in Powick in the late eighteenth century by G P England, citing various features of the case similar to those of St James, Clerkenwell Green, and elsewhere. Comparison with this and other cases by England shows that the Powick case is more delicately carved and the design more refined. However both Green and England used similar case details.

Hill's Letter book 1838 to 1861, although revealing no entries for Powick, does show that in 1849 Hill acquired one or possibly two old organs, by Green.^{8, 9} Looking at the dates of removal recorded by Wickens,¹⁰ two Green organs seemed serious contenders for Powick, i.e. those of St Mary-at-Hill Billingsgate 1788, replaced 1848 by Hill (who allowed 100 guineas for it), and St Michael Without, Bath 1783. The latter had been replaced in 1849 by a new Sweetland organ, but the church has information that the old Green organ had been taken by Clarke, a local builder, to the Bath Penitentiary Chapel;¹¹ this was also noted by Haycraft.¹² Thus the ex-St Mary-at-Hill organ seemed the most likely Green organ to have come to Powick via Hill in 1850. Sadly, extensive searches have so far failed to produce any image of the organ in St Mary-at-Hill prior to the installation of the William Hill 1848 instrument.

Considering the organ case first, Powick has a four-tower case, which was relatively unusual for Green, but in the year he installed the St Mary-at-Hill organ he did supply another four-tower case, to Tonbridge¹³ (removed 1876), and the engraving of that case in Wickens's book¹⁴ is very similar indeed to the Powick case (minus the ornaments). Freeman¹⁵ had initially (1911) believed that the case currently in St Mary-at-Hill had originally housed the 1693 Father Smith organ, and then the 1788 Green organ, but later¹⁶ became convinced that the present case was new in 1848.

With regard to the pipework, the initial specification of the 1788 organ of 901 pipes

at St Mary-at-Hill quoted for by Green was copied into the Church Council minutes¹⁷ and a modification in subsequent minutes¹⁸ added 16 more pipes giving a final count of 917. This was to be a new organ, not a rebuild. The final price was agreed at £320 plus the old Father Smith organ; this price also included the provision of a more elegant design of case than had been originally agreed. Interestingly, the Leffler MS¹⁹ quotes 974 pipes, which would allow a four rank Sesquialtera, and a number of the other writers follow Leffler but his specification states the Sesquialtera as being '3 Ranks 228 pipes', a mathematical impossibility when the Great compass was 57 notes. Thus a three rank Sesquialtera would contain 171 pipes making the total count 917. Nearly all Green's Sesquialteras are of three ranks. The final St Mary-at-Hill specification was as follows:

GREAT (GG, AA-e ³), 57 notes	SWELL (f-e ³), 36 notes
Stop Diapason	Stop Diapason
Open Diapason	Dulciana
Principal	Principal
Twelfth	Cornet III
Fifteenth	Trumpet
Sesquialtera III	Hautboy
Cornet IV (from c ¹) ²⁰	
Trumpet bass/treble	

Shifting movement, long octaves. Total pipes 917.

In addition to the above, we need to bear in mind the following information:

- The *Dictionary of Organs & Organists*²¹ states that the 1848 Hill at St Mary-at-Hill incorporated parts of the 1788 organ, but this is incorrect.²²
- We know that the previous Powick organ had been sold.²³
- To my knowledge no one in the intervening 165 years has claimed the former St Mary-at-Hill instrument.^{24, 25}
- I have not found any evidence which would prove that the Powick organ is not ex St Mary-at-Hill.
- The ex-St Mary-at-Hill organ is the only Green organ which can be positively identified as having a connection to Hill at around this time.
- The earliest specification we have for the Powick instrument (1888),²⁶ shows it having the same number of pipes as the St Mary-at-Hill Green plus one (St Mary-at-Hill 917, Powick 918), and the same top note (e³).
- The Great Stopped Diapason of the Powick organ is of wooden construction, in common with nearly all those of Green, and the dimensions of the Tenor C pipe²⁷ at Powick are virtually identical to those of the Green instruments now in St Kather-

ine's, Regent's Park²⁸ and St John the Baptist's, Armitage (ex Lichfield Cathedral).²⁹

The circumstantial evidence is very strong, and it is most likely that the St Mary-at-Hill organ came to Powick in 1850, and the rest of this article assumes that to be so. Following the renovation carried out in 1888 by Nicholson & Co, then under the direction of William Haynes, the specification differed very substantially from that of St Mary-at-Hill. How much of the difference was brought about by Hill in 1850, and how much by Nicholson & Co is not known. Nicholsons have no information on the organ prior to 1927.³⁰

While the front of the case could be almost exactly as it left St Mary-at-Hill, the situation regarding the rest of the organ is very different. A new pedal board was constructed in 1850.³¹ By 1888 it had 30 notes and a recent inspection by Trevor Tipple strongly suggests that all 30 pipes of each of the two 16' stops were made at the same time (i.e. 1850) by Hill. The pedalboard is now concave and radiating but not quite to the current standard and there is no information as to when this board was installed. The 1888 specification shows the Great to have lost the four-rank Cornet and Trumpet stops but acquired a second 8' Open Diapason (transferred to the Pedals in 1975) and a Stopt (sic) Flute (later removed). The 1923 specification³² shows the loss of the original three-rank Sesquialtera. Recent inspection of the pipes of the Great manual suggest that, apart from the upward extension from 53 to 58 notes (1923), the Stopped Diapason, Principal, Twelfth, and Fifteenth stops consist of Green pipes. The Open Diapason appears to be a mixture of Green and Hill pipes; some of the former are in the case. The Swell was increased from 36 notes to 41 in 1850 or 1888, and also lost its three-rank Cornet and Trumpet but acquired four new stops. It was increased again to 58 notes in 1923, and there is now little sign of Green's work in that department. Green's designs had gone substantially out of favour by the mid-nineteenth century. Burrowes,³³ the last St Mary-at-Hill organist to play the 1788 instrument, had very little good to say about it to the Church Council. Hill was present at the meeting, and, not surprisingly, supported Burrowes's statement. I am inclined to think that Hill would have done the substantial alterations in 1850, and that the description of the 1888 work in the William Haynes notebook as 'renovation' would indicate that it was of a lesser magnitude. There is a note in the Vicar's journal saying that the 1887/8 work cost £136.³⁴ Later alterations were made by Nicholson 1923, Snell 1975, and T Tipple 1985.

I would like to thank Trevor Tipple, John Norman, Michael Latham, Samantha Watson, Dr Jim Berrow, Peter Horton, Keith Bridges, Mary Ward and the staff at the Cadbury Research Library, Birmingham University for their assistance in researching this material, and I am indebted to the work of many organ observers and researchers over the years. I hope that the result of publishing this will be that some additional and hopefully conclusive information will come to light.

- ¹ Freeman, A. BOA Box 83 (SBN) No.2265.
- ² Freeman, A. BOA Box 87, 170.
- ³ Freeman, A. BOA Box 87, 302.
- ⁴ Worcester Archives, BA 3802/12 (i).
- ⁵ *Worcester Chronicle*, 27 February 1850.
- ⁶ *Berrows Journal*, 28 February 1850.
- ⁷ Worcester Archives, BA 8444/6.
- ⁸ BOA Box 312, 1849, 243.
- ⁹ *Ibid.* Box 312, 1849, 247.
- ¹⁰ Wickens, D. *The Instruments of Samuel Green*, (London, Macmillan, 1987), 131, 132, 119.
- ¹¹ Personal email 5/2/2014 from St Michael's Without to the author.
- ¹² BOA Box 36, 085.
- ¹³ Wickens, op.cit., 132.
- ¹⁴ Wickens, op.cit., Plate 20.
- ¹⁵ Freeman, A., BOA Box 81 (NO) Vol. III, 646, 25 September 1911.
- ¹⁶ Freeman, A., 'Samuel Green', *The Organ*, XXIV (1944), 17-25, 22.
- ¹⁷ London Metropolitan Archives, P69/MRY4/B/001/MS01240/002, Vestry 1752-1804, 3 July 1787.
- ¹⁸ *Ibid.* Vestry, 13 March 1788.
- ¹⁹ BOA Box 59, Leffler MS, 33.
- ²⁰ *Ibid.*
- ²¹ Thornsby, F.W., *Dictionary of Organs and Organists*, London, Geo. Aug. Mate & Son, Second edition, 1921, 157, (UCLA Digitisation).
- ²² Personal email from John Norman 9 September 2011 derived from first-hand knowledge of the instrument.
- ²³ Worcester Archives, BA 3802/12 (i).
- ²⁴ Boeringer, J., *Organa Britannica*, Vol. 2, (Lewisburg PA: Bucknell University Press, 1986), 192.
- ²⁵ Plumley, N., *The Organs of the City of London*, (Oxford, Positif Press 1996), 101.
- ²⁶ BOA Box 360 William Haynes Notebook SB1, 42 Powick.
- ²⁷ Personal email from M. Latham following tuning visit 12 November 2014. Tenor C = 57.5mm x 67mm.
- ²⁸ Personal email from John Norman 5 August 2014 based on his own records. Tenor C = 57.2mm x 65mm.
- ²⁹ Wickens, D., op cit., 93, Lichfield (now St John the Baptist's, Armitage) Tenor C = 57mm x 67mm.
- ³⁰ Personal letter from Nicholson, 12 January 2010 to the author in reply to an enquiry.
- ³¹ Worcester Archives, BA3802/12 (i), Bullock invoice.
- ³² NPOR N03779.
- ³³ London Metropolitan Archives, op. cit, MS01240/004, Vestry minutes 14 March 1848.
- ³⁴ Vicar's Journal (1888), held by Mrs M. Ward, Churchwarden, Powick.

A SHORT INTRODUCTION TO THE CONACHERS

PAUL TINDALL

The Conachers, after shaky beginnings in Edinburgh and Huddersfield in the 1850s, became very prolific, riding the wave of factory organ-building in the later nineteenth century most successfully. The brothers Peter and James Conacher separated, rancorously, into two firms in 1879.¹ A court case, *Conacher v. Conacher* is recorded in 1881.² Peter Conacher complained that he had taken the defendant (not recorded – one of his sons?) into partnership in 1879, but that it had since been dissolved, and the defendant had been representing himself as ‘Peter Conacher and Co.’ The firm split into Peter Conacher & Co and James Conacher & Sons. Both were quite successful at first until James Conacher & Sons was dissolved in 1901. Peter Conacher & Co survived the first war, and built some theatre organs in the 1930s. It was still advertising widely in the 1950s. Disentangling the relationships of the various members of the family is complex, but census and other records give an outline.

John Conacher c. 1787- 1865³ (‘John Thomas Soutar Conacher’)

He was described as a cabinet maker of Moulin, Perthshire 1820 and Auchtergaven 1823 when his sons James and Peter were born. He continued the trade in Blairgowrie 1841 with Peter, then moved to Edinburgh where, from 1851 to 1854 they advertised as J. & P. Conacher, Organ Builders, though John is still described as a cabinet maker in the census.⁴ It is likely that he moved to Huddersfield with Peter, since Peter and John Conacher are described as organ builders of Huddersfield when both signed a public petition against the Ramsden Estate in 1858.⁵

Peter Conacher 1823-1894

Born in Auchtergaven, Perthshire, son of John and Ann Conacher. An obituary claims that he was apprenticed to a piano maker in Glasgow.⁶ Another says that he learnt organ-building in Leipzig, and that he worked for Hill and Walker.⁷ In 1841⁸ he and his father (and another, ?son, James, 20) were cabinet makers in Leslie street Blairgowrie. By 1851 he was described as an organ builder in Edinburgh, advertising with his father as J. & P. Conacher 1851-54, though there is no evidence they found any work there.

In the court case of 1881 Peter Conacher said that he set up in business in 1849. In 1854 Peter Conacher started a business in Huddersfield with Charles Martin (another former Hill employee) as Martin & Conacher. The partnership was dissolved 31 August 1855.⁹ He was then partner with Richard Brown, formerly of Doncaster, as Conacher & Brown of Upperhead Row, Huddersfield until 1857.¹⁰ A court case of July 1858¹¹ where Richard Brown was convicted of damaging pipes

and woodwork of an organ belonging to Joseph Hirst Hebblethwaite (c. 1825-1864)¹² gives detailed information regarding the firm's fate. Conacher & Brown's factory was burnt out in June 1858,¹³ and Hebblethwaite, a rich wool merchant who was the financial backer, provided temporary premises. After the dissolution of the partnership Hebblethwaite became Conacher's partner and Brown became an employee in February 1858, though the title 'Conacher & Brown' continued until the fire. Brown had attacked the organ with a hatchet, having been docked wages for absence. Drink played a part.

'Conacher & Co.' announced that they were still in business at Upperhead Row in July 1858,¹⁴ and Hebblethwaite financed a new factory c. 1859-60. Conacher & Co. continued in Huddersfield, building hundreds of organs and becoming one of the most successful firms in the north of England. An advert in a Dundee paper in 1864 listed 100 organs 'built in the last ten years' and dozens of testimonials.¹⁵ Peter Conacher was employing 25 men and 10 boys in 1871¹⁶ and 50 men and 20 boys in 1881.¹⁷ Peter was succeeded by his son *Joseph Hebblethwaite Conacher* (1856-1913) as head of the firm. According to Peter Conacher's obituary Joseph studied organ-building in France, and brought French workmen back to Huddersfield.¹⁸ After J. H. Conacher's death, his son *Philip Gordon Conacher* (c. 1893-1952) became titular head, but it was in practice run by James Stott (c. 1886-1957), a manager. An earlier James Stott, chemist, was elected to Huddersfield Council with Peter Conacher on a joint ticket in 1876.¹⁹ Later there were branches in Belfast and Dublin. The firm continued in family hands until 1972, when it was purchased by Henry Willis & Sons. The large factory in Huddersfield survives, and was run in the 1990s as a restoration company and for craft workshops by John Sinclair Willis. Eventually it was sold for apartments, and the surviving period machinery disappeared.²⁰

James Conacher 1820-1886

Son of John and Ann Conacher, baptised Moulin 4 May 1820, he was recorded as a cabinet maker of Brown Street, Blairgowrie in 1841²¹ and 1851²² with sons John (5) and James (8). However, he was in Glasgow in 1846 when his son James was born, according to the 1911 census. It appears that the 1851 census has reversed the ages of the sons James and John: 1861 has it correctly. By 1861 he had moved to Huddersfield to work with Peter, along with the sons. When the firm was dissolved in 1901 the partners were John C. Conacher (son, 1841-1902) and George Walter Hirst (born c. 1833). The latter must be related to Joseph Hirst Hebblethwaite and was probably a sleeping partner since no organ builder called Hirst is recorded in 1881 (which is searchable for occupation, unlike every other census).²³ There is however a George Hirst, wool stapler in Huddersfield.

John Conacher c. 1815-1884

He was recorded as 'Clerk to an Organ Builder' in 1881²⁴ in Huddersfield 'who

became a missionary in Turkey' but evidently returned. He is thought to be the eldest son of John senior and Ann.

Other Conachers were also organ builders in the two firms:

Ernest born c. 1870, son of John C. and grandson of James was in Huddersfield in 1891 and later manager for Allan Watson in Dundee in 1910. (DBOB)

Arnold born c. 1873 son of John C. and grandson of James. In 1891²⁵ he was recorded as an ob apprentice but in 1911²⁶ Mill Engineer's Labourer in Huddersfield. He died in Huddersfield in 1943.²⁷

Peter 1849-1921, son of James was voicer for his father and then an independent trade voicer 1896-1917 in Huddersfield. One of the witnesses to his probate was 'Tim Wadsworth, organ tuner.'²⁸

James born c. 1846 Glasgow, son of James.²⁹ Died Huddersfield 1932.³⁰

Herbert son of James junior c. 1874-1951. In the 1901 census he is recorded as an ob in Huddersfield. He married in Birmingham on 13 February 1915³¹ and died there March 1951, so presumably was the man who set up in Birmingham with P.H. Sheffield as Conacher, Sheffield & Co. in 1919.

¹ *Huddersfield Chronicle*, Saturday 29 March 1879: (advert from James Conacher & Sons)
– 'We have had the entire management of the practical part of the business of Messrs.
Conacher & Co.'

² *Yorkshire Post*, Wednesday 12 January 1881

³ died Huddersfield 4th quarter 1865

⁴ ED25B p. 8, 10 Randolph Crescent

⁵ *Huddersfield Chronicle*, Saturday 17 July 1858

⁶ *Dundee Courier*, Friday 13 April 1894

⁷ *Huddersfield Chronicle*, Thursday 12 April 1894.

⁸ ED6 p. 1

⁹ *London Gazette* 4 September 1855, 3333

¹⁰ Dissolved 28 February 1857: *London Gazette* 27 July 1857, 3496

¹¹ *Huddersfield Chronicle*, 31 July 1858

¹² Died 15 August 1864 at Cooper-Bridge Villa near Huddersfield: National Probate
Calendar

¹³ Destroying a new Swell organ for Leeds Parish Church. *Huddersfield Guardian*, Saturday
26 June 1858

¹⁴ *Huddersfield Chronicle*, Wednesday 31 July 1858

¹⁵ *Dundee Advertiser*, Monday 14 March 1864

¹⁶ 1871 census

¹⁷ 1881 census

¹⁸ See note 7

- ¹⁹ *Huddersfield Chronicle*, Saturday 28 October 1876
- ²⁰ David Wood, personal communication, January 2015. His father Philip Wood (1929-2011) was apprenticed to Conacher's and was briefly General Manager after having served as their Belfast and then Irish manager, before starting his own firm in 1966. In the *Huddersfield Chronicle* obituary (1894) it was said that Conacher had a steam engine and a circular saw powered by it in George Street (so before 1873 - DBOB)
- ²¹ ED7 p. 17
- ²² ED8 p. 2/5
- ²³ There were more than eleven thousand organ-builders in 1881
- ²⁴ 1881 census
- ²⁵ 1891 census
- ²⁶ 1911 census
- ²⁷ England and Wales Death Index, accessed via Ancestry.com January 2015
- ²⁸ National Probate Calendar, 9 March 1921
- ²⁹ 1911 census, ob at 41 Prospect Street
- ³⁰ *Yorkshire Post*, Tuesday 6 September 1932
- ³¹ Marriages and Banns, accessed via Ancestry.com January 2015
- ³² National Probate Calendar

FIRE AT BATTERSEA ARTS CENTRE

Just as this issue was being prepared news came of an extensive fire at Battersea Arts Centre, formerly Battersea Town Hall. The fire destroyed about a third of the building and appeared to have started in the Grand Hall which housed the large Hope-Jones organ. It had been unplayable for thirty years and restoration was in progress to bring it back into use. Damage to the organ included the destruction of the console, bellows, the five cases together with their pipes and the unique electrical wiring. By good fortune all the other pipework and the soundboards were being restored and were at the workshop of F H Browne & Sons at Canterbury. Work on these is continuing but no decisions have been made as to the replacement of the ruined console and casework. The instrument was probably the largest Hope-Jones organ remaining in near-original condition.

REVIEWS

Paul Tindall

Tom Roast. *The Organs and Organists of Norwich Cathedral* (Norwich, Gateway Music Norwich, 2012), 43pp, £4.

It has been a long time since anything has been published about the Norwich Cathedral

organs. Tom Roast's booklet is happily cheap to buy. He has clearly trawled through the Chapter Acts and local newspapers, but there are only bare references. There are some informative old pictures, though they have not been reproduced very well. It would be nice to see a much longer version quoting the sources more fully, and I'm sure that he would be in a good position to do this. Perhaps 100 pages at £10 would have been more satisfying. It's a pity that Dr. Roast seems not to have used any of the resources provided by BIOS. There is no mention of the Norman & Beard records. The Leffler specification (p. 4) is quoted from the Pearce version, and he makes no mention of the problematic cases at the Old Meeting and the Octagon Chapel. He is evidently unaware that the Byfields who worked at Norwich in 1742 and 1760 were different people. There is also little made of the most dramatic part of the story; that the present enormous organ was built successfully between 1939 and 1942. Rather curiously, although Dr. Roast acknowledges that the posts of Organist and Master of the Choristers have been separated at various times (notably since 2007), he devotes very little space to the latter. It's alarming to read (p. 18) that the Snetzler chamber organ 'was dismantled in recent years.'

Marek Cepko and Marian Alojz Mayer. *Organy a Organari na Slovensku 1651-2006*. (Bratislava, Music Centre of Slovakia). Available via Roy Williamson

This is a set of two DVDs. The first is a database, with parallel translations in German, and in English by our distinguished member Roy Williamson, the second a video record of many Slovakian organs, including many important historical ones. The database is extremely thorough and is full of photos. It contains hundreds of organs but is only part of a project to record the total organ history of Slovakia. The video disc is a marvel: the director makes a great deal of the visual details of old Slovakian organs. The sound quality is also excellent. It is a little curious that none of the players are seen in-shot. Well-recommended.

REVIEWS

We have had several incidences lately of the same book being reviewed by two different people for the BIOS *Journal* and the *Reporter*. This is not good practice, and gives a deleterious impression of BIOS to publishers and authors. Therefore, would members wishing to review books, CDs or music for either the *Reporter* or the *Journal* please clear it with the Publications Officer first.

BOOKING FORM

**BRITISH INSTITUTE OF ORGAN STUDIES
DAY CONFERENCE & ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

SATURDAY 18th April 2015 10.30am

**St Peter's, Kensington Park Road, and St John's Lansdowne Crescent,
Notting Hill, London, W11 2NN**

Please reserve a place for the BIOS Day Conference and AGM for £25.00, or book online: meetings@bios.org.uk

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

Name (including title)

Address

..... Post Code

Telephone (daytime or mobile)

Telephone (evening)

e-mail

Please note any dietary requirements

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

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

Richard Hobson,

[Redacted contact information]

BOOKING FORM

**BRITISH INSTITUTE OF ORGAN STUDIES
DAY CONFERENCE**

SATURDAY 27th June 2015 11.00am

All Saints with St Michael, Castlefields, Shrewsbury

Please reserve a place for the BIOS Day Conference for £25.00, or book online:
meetings@bios.org.uk

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

Name (including title)

Address

..... Post Code

Telephone (daytime or mobile)

Telephone (evening)

e-mail

Please note any dietary requirements

Please indicate if you will be arriving on Friday 26th and would like to visit other instruments during the afternoon and meet for dinner in the evening: yes/no

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

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

Richard Hobson,

[Redacted]
[Redacted]
[Redacted]
[Redacted]

[Redacted]

FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

Saturday 18 April 2015

Annual General Meeting and Day Conference

St John's Church, Lansdowne Crescent and St Peter's, Kensington Park Road,
Notting Hill, London W11 2PN

Programme

- 10.30 Coffee and registration at St Peter's, Kensington Park Road
- 11.00 The 3 manual 1905 J.W.Walker organ (HOC grade I) and its restoration
– John Norman
- 11.30 Demonstration of the organ by Richard Hobson
- 12.00 Walk to St John's Church, Lansdowne Crescent (250 yards)
- 12.30 The 1794 Gray/1845 Bishop/1885 Hele organ – John Norman
- 1.00 Lunch (included)

- 2.00 AGM

- 3.00 The recent restoration of the organ – Andrew Fearn
- 3.30 Tea
- 3.45 Recital by Alexander Hamilton, Organ Scholar at St George's Chapel,
Windsor.
- 4.30 end

Saturday 27th June 2015

Day Conference

All Saints with St Michael, North Street, Castlefields, Shrewsbury

2015 celebrates the 200th anniversary of the birth of John Nicholson of Worcester (1815-1895). Cecil Clutton, never a man to offer unwarranted praise, wrote: 'a firm that in the days of the original John Nicholson, did as much as anyone to establish the great Victorian school ... the few remaining untouched instruments show that the voicing was of the best.' (Incidentally, the successor firm is one of the oldest in the United Kingdom.)

John's output can now be seen as some of the finest of the period and, in his early career, he experimented with many progressive ideas and produced some of the most adventurous of early-Victorian organ-building. He also worked within an unprecedented period of change and typified the energy and enterprise of the best of British industry.

This conference marks this emergence and celebrates one of his mature organs,

installed in All Saints' in 1878/9. It is hoped that the event will bring this remarkable organ to wider attention and encourage a full, historic restoration. A substantial three-manual instrument, it is probably the largest surviving example of his work in original condition. It was designed by the Reverend Sir Frederick Arthur Gore Ouseley for his friend, the Revd Thomas Mainwaring Bulkeley Bulkeley-Owen, who built the church, and the original documentation survives and will be on display. It is the only John Nicholson instrument to survive with its pneumatic-lever action intact and, for students of engineering, the original electric blower (and accessories) of the 1920s (housed in the tower!) will be of interest.

The day offers an over-view of Nicholson and his work, especially for Ouseley, presented by Dr Jim Berrow; Dr Gerald Sumner will talk about the history and introduction of the pneumatic lever to this country; we hope to explore Ouseley's contribution to the music of his time and are especially pleased that Roger Judd will talk about St Michael's College, Tenbury (built by Ouseley) and round off the day with a recital of music appropriate to this instrument.

The town is well served by rail and there are regular trains from Euston (via Birmingham New Street or Crewe), relevantly: 07:35 (arriving 10:12); 07:43 (10:19); 08:10 (10:36). The formal proceedings will start at 11:00 (following coffee) and the day will end around 16:00.

All Saints' church is about ten minutes' walk from the centrally situated rail station and Shrewsbury is a delightful destination in its own right, well worth a weekend visit.

Tourist and accommodation information can be obtained from:

<<http://www.shrewsburyguide.info/>>

If delegates express a preference for a Friday arrival, additional activities, visits and a group meal can be arranged, but early notice of interest is requested.

Saturday 5th September 2015

A Day with Henry Willis

We visit Union Chapel, Islington in the morning where the 1877 instrument has recently been restored by Harrison and Harrison, and St Dominic's Priory, Haverstock Hill (completed 1883) in the afternoon. Representatives of Harrison and Harrison will join us at Union Chapel, and we hope to explore the current state of research on Father Willis. Demonstrations of both instruments with appropriate repertoire will be included. Further details and booking form will be found in the *July Reporter*.



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.