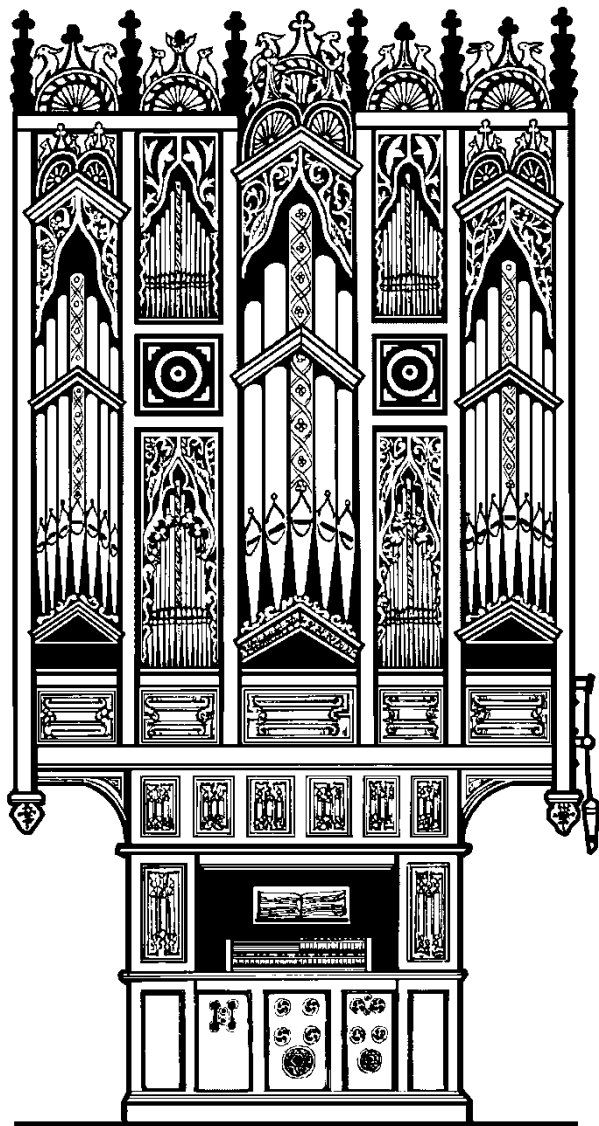


# BRITISH INSTITUTE OF ORGAN STUDIES

Registered Charity No: 283936

## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2025



**Agenda and Reports to be presented at the  
Annual General Meeting to be held at the  
The Dutch Church  
7 Austin Friars, London EC2N 2HA**

**on**

**Saturday 12 April 2025 at 14.00 hours**

## Annual Report for the period ended 31 December 2024

The British Institute of Organ Studies, is registered with the Charity Commission (No 283936) and administered through the Hon Secretary at Ashcroft, 10 Ridgeway Close, Reigate, Surrey, RH2 0HT under its revised Constitution adopted at the Annual General Meeting in 2023).

The management of the Charity is carried out by a Council, comprising:

Chairman	Dr Nicholas Thistlethwaite (to 18 May 2024) Dr William McVicker (from 18 May 2024)
Secretary	Melvin Hughes
Treasurer	Adrian Mumford
Membership	David Shepherd (to 18 May 2024) Stephen Alliss (18 May to 16 September 2024) Melanie Plumley (Acting Membership Secretary)
Meetings	Richard Hobson
Publications	Dr Katharine Pardee
Casework	Nigel Stark
Other Members	Christopher Gray Colin Menzies OBE (to 18 May 2024) Dr David Shuker Paul Tindall Leonard Sanderman (from 18 May 2024) Mark Venning Dr Jeffrey West (until 18 May 2024) Jeffrey Williams (to 18 May 2024) Owen Woods (from 18 May 2024)

1. The aims of the Institute are:
  - 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 and to encourage their use and appreciation;
  - 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.
2. Details of the current financial position will be found in the Financial Report and Accounts. Reports from individual Officers and others are provided, describing details of the Institute's activities during the year. Further information about the Institute is available at the BIOS Website:  
[www.bios.org.uk](http://www.bios.org.uk)
3. Council is supported by a number of sub-committees as follows:

### **LISTING COMMITTEE**

#### **Terms of Reference**

To receive applications, to consider and assess them and to make recommendations to BIOS Council for decision, within the agreed criteria and policy for the listing of historic pipe organs as laid down by BIOS Council, and otherwise deal with such routine matters on the subject of listing as may arise.

## **Membership**

Dr John Rowntree - Chair  
Jeffrey Williams - Administrator  
Dr William McVicker - BIOS Chairman ex-officio  
Dr Andrew Hayden  
Matthew Hynes  
Colin Menzies  
Nigel Stark  
David Wood  
Owen Woods.

## **NPOR JOINT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**

### **Terms of Reference**

To co-ordinate and monitor practical issues relating to the usage and management of the National Pipe Organ Register (NPOR) and to provide direction and oversight.

To report proceedings to the British Institute of Organ Studies (BIOS) Council.

### **Membership**

The Committee currently comprises the NPOR Manager and 5 members of BIOS viz Chairman, Secretary, one Member acting as NPOR link to Council, one Member offering specialist IT advice and the Webmaster. The 2023 Membership is recorded under Item 4.8 of the Agenda 'National Pipe Organ Register'.

The Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Studies of the Royal College of Organists (RCO) receives papers and may attend JMC Meetings.

### **Background**

BIOS owns and maintains the NPOR which aims to record details of every pipe organ in the country.

It is made available to the public as an online resource free of charge.

Under a Service Level Agreement with the RCO, day-to-day management services are provided by the RCO Administration Manager.

Under a second and separate SLA, BIOS had contracted (through the RCO) for the services of eStirling to host and maintain the NPOR Website. This arrangement was terminated in 2023 and the NPOR server is now hosted by Codeveloped Ltd.

The BIOS NPOR Joint Management Committee is a joint body which normally meets twice yearly at venues in London.

The Chairman of BIOS acts as Chairman of the Committee whilst the Secretary of BIOS acts as Secretary.

Proceedings of the JMC are reported to BIOS Council by the NPOR link nominee which includes including any issues which need to be discussed and resolved.

## **BRITISH ORGAN ARCHIVE STEERING COMMITTEE**

### **Terms of Reference**

To discuss and co-ordinate practical issues relating to the usage and management of the collection and policy with regard to matters such as acquisitions and storage.

To report proceedings to BIOS Council.

### **Membership**

The Committee currently comprises two members representing the Cadbury Research Library (CRL) and four members of BIOS plus by invitation the Librarian of the Royal College of Organists. Membership during 2024 was:

BIOS: Nicholas Thistlethwaite, Dr David Knight, Dr David Shuker and Dr William McVicker (the latter attending as BIOS Chair)

RCO: Andrew McCrea

CRL: Sue Worrall and Ivana Frlan

### **Background**

The British Organ Archive (BOA) is owned by BIOS and housed in the Cadbury Research Library at the University of Birmingham. The collection is professionally managed and curated by the staff of the Library.

The arrangement for the deposit of the Archive in the Library is governed by a signed agreement under which both parties reserve the right to give six months' notice of termination but in which the intention of the deposit is described on both sides as being 'for all time'.

The BIOS Organ Archive Steering Committee is a joint body which normally meets twice yearly at the Cadbury Library

The Chairman of BIOS acts as Chairman of the Committee and currently takes the minutes of its proceedings. The Chairman also reports on the proceedings to BIOS Council and highlights any issues which need to be discussed and resolved.

## **PUBLICATIONS COMMITTEE**

### **Terms of Reference**

To oversee the publishing and commissioning of articles for the *Reporter* and *Journal*, and work with the editors-in-chief of those publications.

To deal with all practical matters pertaining thereto: liaising with RILM, subscribers (particularly with ref to digital copies), etc.

To handle reviews (via a Reviews Editor), assist in the appointing of editors of the *Journal* and the *Reporter*.

To handle special publications: vet the submitted material and prepare it for publication (editing the material, working with other volunteers, working with the book designer, handling ISBN numbers, legal Book depository submissions, commissioning reviews, liaising with author, and all other matters related to presenting and publishing a book).

To report proceedings to BIOS Council.

### **Membership**

Katharine Pardee (Chair), Nicholas Thistlethwaite and David Knight

*Dr William McVicker*  
*For and on behalf of the Council*

*April 2025*

## AGENDA

**Annual General Meeting to be held at The Dutch Church, 7 Austin Friars, London EC2N on Saturday 12 April 2025 at 14.00**

*All members whose subscriptions have been duly paid are entitled to attend (free of charge) and to vote.*

**1. Apologies**

**2. Minutes of Annual Meeting held on 18 May 2024 (see pages 6 to 10)**

**3. Matters arising**

**4. Reports (see pages 10 to 25)**

4.1 Chairman

4.2 Secretary

4.3 Treasurer

4.3.1 Annual Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2024)

4.3.2 Appointment of an Independent Examiner

4.3.3 Subscription rates

4.4 Membership Secretary

4.5 Publications Officer

4.6 Meetings Officer

4.7 Publicity

4.8 Information Services: British Organ Archive (BOA); National Pipe Organ Register (NPOR); Historic Organs Sound Archive (HOSA); BIOS Website

4.9 Casework Officer

4.10 Committee for the Listing of Historic Organs

4.11 Historic Organs at Risk Register

4.12 Heritage Adviser.

**5. Elections (see pages 26 to 27)**

The following appointments of Officers and Ordinary members of Council (to serve for terms of two years) should be made:

- Membership Secretary
- Publications Officer
- Casework Officer
- 3 Ordinary Members of Council

**6. Any other business**

## **AGENDA ITEM 1 - Apologies**

## **AGENDA ITEM 2 - Minutes of previous AGM**

**Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held at the Welsh Church of Central London (*Eglwys Gymraeg Carol Llundain*), 30 Eastcastle Street, London W1W 8DJ on Saturday 18 May 2024 at 14.00 hours.**

The Chairman (Nicholas Thistlethwaite) had suffered an accident in the morning and was not able to attend the Meeting. Alan Thurlow (immediate previous Chairman) took the Chair and welcomed Members to the Meeting.

27 Members were present.

The list of members who had died was read as follows: Jonathan Holl, Alistair Dixon, Revd. Tony Newnham and John Emmerson.

### **1. Apologies**

These were received from: Andrew Benson-Wilson, Gordon Curtis, Vicki Harding, Mervyn Hogg, Mark Jameson, Henry Macey, Christopher Moore, John Norman, Katie Pardee, Melanie Plumley, Martin Renshaw, John Rowntree, Ken Sagar, David Shuker, Jeffrey West and Owen Woods

### **2. Minutes**

The minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on Saturday 22 April 2023 were agreed.

### **3. Matters arising**

There were none.

### **4. Reports**

**4.1 Chairman's Report:** The Chairman's Report (printed in the AGM booklet) was read to the Meeting by the Acting Chairman. In summary, Nicholas had noted that

- When he undertook the role of Chairman at last year's BIOS AGM it was on the understanding that he would hold the post for no longer than was necessary to identify a more permanent successor to Alan Thurlow.
- In the May 2023 issue of the *BIOS Reporter* he underlined the point by stating that, as a caretaker, he had no programme to unfold to members.
- Yet somehow the work of BIOS has continued in the hands of many able officers, and to them he extended his sincere gratitude on behalf of all.
- A Conference took place in Dorset including visits to the G P England organ in Blandford Forum, rebuilt by Hill & Son, and to Milton Abbey to hear the Gray & Davison organ; a second conference occurred more recently in Cambridge focusing upon the reconstructed Snetzler instrument in Peterhouse.
- Our regular publications have appeared, maintaining the standard of excellence to which we have become accustomed, and our occasional publications (notably the splendid studies of the organ-building Nicholsons and Walkers, respectively by James Berrow and Nicholas Plumley) have continued to sell well; other forthcoming publications were in the pipeline.
- The Listing Committee and the Joint Management Committee of the National Pipe Organ Register have continued their important work, making a major contribution to the recording and protection of our cultural heritage.
- Meanwhile, the British Organ Archive remains in the safe hands of the Cadbury Research Library at Birmingham University, and the Historic Organ Sound Archive is making plans for further recordings to add to the existing collection.
- There have been some new initiatives. There was an urgent need to recruit younger members so that the work should go on in future years. A Task Force was created to 'brainstorm' ideas and fashion a vision of where BIOS might be in five, ten or twenty-years' time. This has met three times to discuss objectives and strategies for achieving them, and the plan is to draw all Council members into the discussion later this year.

- Another initiative is one shared by all the principal organ-related societies, including the RCO, IBO, AIOA, RSCM, IAO and BIOS. At a meeting held in July last year, it was agreed that we all want to find ways of raising the profile of the organ and its makers and players. The suggestion was that an online 'hub' be created from which the websites of all these organisations could be accessed, and where information about forthcoming events organised by each body could be found. It was also agreed that there should be an attempt to work more collaboratively, sharing events and overhauling our communications, not least (again) with the younger generation.
- Thus, a start has been made on laying foundations for some important future developments. BIOS was (he believed) in good heart and good hands, and he thanked all for their support both for him, and for all our officers and Council members.

The Report was accepted by the Meeting.

#### **4.2 Secretary's Report:**

4.2.1 The Report was printed in the AGM Booklet.

The Secretary was thanked for his Report which was accepted by the Meeting.

#### **4.3 Treasurer's Report:**

4.3.1 *Presentation and approval of accounts for the period ended 31 December 2023:* The BIOS Annual Report and Financial Statements for the period ended 31 December 2023 were printed in the AGM booklet. This was in the prescribed format under the *Charities Act 2011* a format that had been adopted for the last decade or so.

4.3.2 *Financial Review of the Year & Statement of Financial Activities* - Adrian Mumford (Treasurer) drew attention to a number of salient points:

- Income to Unrestricted Funds (principally subscriptions) was strongly positive. The most significant costs were the Journal, the Reporter and the annual transfer to the NPOR Fund. The balance carried forward had grown to £110,357
- Restricted Funds existed for Endowment, the NPOR (and HOSA & Leffler). The Endowment Fund promoted special projects in line with the Aims of BIOS. All BIOS publications were funded from it and sales of books were all in surplus. Two more books (at least) were in the pipeline.
- The NPOR was our most significant asset but it also represented a financial liability of £10k per year. Regular donors and individual donations made a very welcome contribution towards costs and at the end of the year the Fund was £16,533 in surplus.
- The Independent Examiner, Jonathan Hunt FCA, present at the meeting, was thanked for his assistance by completing his examination of the accounts which had been signed off without qualification.

The Report and Accounts were proposed by Christopher Herrick, seconded by Michael Blighton and accepted by the Meeting. The Treasurer was thanked for his expedited preparation of the accounts in every year.

4.3.3 *Appointment of an Independent Examiner:* The appointment of Jonathan Hunt as Independent Examiner for 2023 financial statements was proposed by Steve Dunk seconded by Colin Menzies and approved by the Meeting.

4.3.4 *Subscription Rates:* No change to the existing rates were proposed.

#### **4.4 Membership Secretary:**

4.4.1 The Report was printed in the AGM booklet.

David Shepherd was thanked for his Report and for his many years of sterling work as Membership Secretary. The Report was accepted by the Meeting.

#### **4.5 Publications:**

4.5.1 **Publications Officer** - The Report was printed in the AGM booklet.

Katie Pardee was thanked for her Report which was accepted by the Meeting.

4.5.2 **BIOS Reporter Editor's Report** - The Report was printed in the AGM booklet.

David Shuker (who had taken over as Editor on 1 January 2024) was thanked for his Report which was accepted by the Meeting.

#### 4.6 Meetings Officer:

4.6.1 The Report was printed in the AGM booklet.

4.6.2 In addition, it was noted that changes at the Barber Institute had made clear that our association with them could not continue. For the future, the possibility of meeting at the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire would be explored.

Richard Hobson was thanked for his Report which was accepted by the Meeting.

#### 4.7 Publicity: The Report was published in the AGM booklet.

4.7.1 Christopher Gray was thanked for his Report which was accepted by the Meeting.

**4.8 Information Services:** The Chairman's Report on the *British Organ Archive* ("BOA"), Mark Venning's Report on the National Pipe Organ Register ("NPOR"), Anne Page's Report on the *Historic Organs Sound Archive* ("HOSA"), John Norman's Report on the *BIOS Website* and Melanie Plumley's Report on social media were all printed in the AGM booklet.

- On the NPOR, Mark Venning, as the Council member responsible for liaison with the National Pipe Organ Register, summarised to the Meeting the main points in his written report. Finance was in a similar position to last year; the NPOR Website was now effectively in-house again (with Codeveloped Ltd, a consultancy led by BIOS member, Matt Dixon), and BIOS member, Paul Graham, was making substantial progress with updating the Directory of British Organ Builders (DBOB)
- On HOSA, there were plans to increase the number of recordings.

The authors Nicholas Thistlethwaite, Mark Venning, Anne Page, John Norman and Melanie Plumley were thanked for their Reports which were accepted by the Meeting.

#### 4.9 Casework Officer: The Report was printed in the AGM booklet. Three particular cases were noted:

- *Adlington Hall* - a historic instrument that had been in the same family for a long time but they were now selling up.
- *St Martin, Brighton* - the Church was being sold for conversion into an indoor climbing school. The Grade I Hill organ needed a new home.
- *West Tofts* (now in South Pickenham Church) - The Church was disused and the historic instrument, with its Sutton inspired case was decaying rapidly in the damp conditions. A possible new location may have been found.

Nigel Stark was thanked for his Report which was accepted by the Meeting.

#### 4.10 Committee for the Listing of Historic Organs: The Report was printed in the AGM booklet.

John Rowntree was thanked for his Report which was accepted by the Meeting

#### 4.11 Historic Organs at Risk Register: The Report was printed in the AGM booklet. There were currently 8 organs on the Register, one had been added and one removed.

Jonathan Goodchild was thanked for his Report which was accepted by the meeting.

#### 4.12 Heritage Adviser: The Report was printed in the AGM booklet.

Jeffrey West was thanked for his Report which was accepted by the Meeting.

### 5. Elections

5.1 The following election of Officers and Ordinary Members of Council was set out in the Notice of the Meeting published in BIOS Reporter (February 2024): Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer, Membership Secretary, Meetings Officer and 3 Ordinary Members of Council.

5.2 Details of the nominations received were set out in the AGM Booklet.

5.3 Since only 1 nomination had been received for Chairman, 1 nomination for Secretary, 1 nomination for Treasurer, 1 nomination for Membership Secretary, 1 nomination for Meetings Officer and 3 nominations for Ordinary Members of the Council where there were 3 vacancies, then, in accordance with the Constitution, the following election was made:

**Chairman:** William McVicker (proposed by Nicholas Thistlethwaite, seconded by Adrian Mumford);

*[Note: At this point the new Chairman assumed the Chair and made some remarks to the Meeting which are set out below].*



## Remarks by Incoming Chairman

5.4 The new Chairman took the Chair and offered a number of remarks to the Meeting. In summary:

- He offered his thanks to his predecessors, Alan Thurlow and Nicholas Thistlethwaite, whom he expected to rely on and press into occasional service.
- He asked BIOS to welcome warmly Leonard Sanderman and the distinguished authors Maggie Kilbey and David Force (the latter's book *The Consort Organ and its Role in Seventeenth-Century Ensemble Music* was to be published by Routledge as a title in the Ashgate Historic Keyboard series early next year).
- He noted BIOS was an organisation with many parts, each person was important in it: it was a jigsaw puzzle of skill with many voices sounding together.
- He was grateful to BIOS Officers for all they did, noting the sterling work on Conferences by the Meetings Officer, the small to medium size business effectively run by the Treasurer and the administrative support of the Secretary (e.g. the AGM Booklet 2024).
- He set out a potential programme for Council as follows:
  - potential acquisition of the recently discovered book of Holdich watercolours
  - a look at the work of BIOS and take stock of the activities: broadly, what we do well, what we could do better, and what are we not doing?
  - kick-starting research into the English organ and performance practice perhaps in collaboration with a Higher Education Institution/Conservatoire and possibly support a research studentship
  - collaborating with other organ bodies, IBO, AIOA, RCO and Regional Organist Associations
  - joining or establishing an anti-clash diary for Events
  - making progress with a new Website, including making it more accessible to smart phones
  - exploring the possibility of making podcasts
  - considering how to gain younger membership.
  - finding ways of assisting the Publication Officer in the preparation of BIOS books (for which there was an appetite)
  - encouraging all members to be involved in seeking out new recruits.

## Elections continued

6.5 Since only, 1 nomination for Secretary, 1 nomination for Treasurer, 1 nomination for Membership Secretary, 1 nomination for Meetings Officer and 3 nominations for Ordinary Members of the Council where there were 3 vacancies had been received, then, in accordance with the Constitution, the following elections were made:

**Secretary:** Melvin Hughes (proposed by Alan Thurlow, seconded by Nicholas Thistlethwaite)

**Treasurer:** Adrian Mumford (proposed by Christopher Herrick, seconded by Giles Dimmock)

**Membership Secretary:** Stephen Alliss (proposed by David Shepherd, seconded by Nicholas Thistlethwaite);

**Meetings Officer:** Richard Hobson (proposed by Christopher L Bacon, seconded by Melvin Hughes);

### Ordinary Members of Council:

- Christopher Gray (proposed by Richard Hird, seconded by Melvin Hughes);
- Leonard Sanderman (proposed by Nicholas Thistlethwaite, seconded by William McVicker);
- Owen Woods (proposed by William McVicker, seconded by Andrew Scott).

**6. Any Other Business**

None.

**7. Close**

The Meeting closed at 14.51.

**AGENDA ITEM 3 – MATTERS ARISING**

**AGENDA ITEM 4 - REPORTS**

**CHAIR'S REPORT (Agenda Item 4.1)**

Since taking office in May 2024, I have been ably assisted by the Secretary and Treasurer in order to pick up from where previous Chairs have steered the BIOS ship.

**Brainstorming Session**

This took place at a meeting of Council on 21 September 2024. It was an opportunity for Council members to express their views, to make observations, and, where necessary, to provide a critical commentary on the Institute's progress across a range of our activities, especially as BIOS heads towards its Golden Jubilee in 2026. The findings of that session were written-up by the Secretary in *Reporter* 48 (4). Of the follow-up actions, I am happy to say that various objectives have already been fulfilled. Several important legacies have been happily and gratefully received (see Treasurer's Report), and this has provided an opportunity to make progress on various fronts and new initiatives.

**Website**

Chief amongst the achievements in the last months was the launch of the new website. This has been under discussion for some time and, following development work, went 'live' on 23 November last year. A number of minor glitches have been fixed and the new site has been warmly received. Constructive feedback is welcome. Bringing the site to fruition has been a substantial task involving the working group. I thank them for their tireless work, especially Matt Dixon of Codeveloped for his attention to detail and for fulfilling requests made by the development team.

**Holdich's book of watercolours**

Although not strictly an outcome of the brainstorming session, the acquisition of this book relates directly to BIOS's news items, publicity and social media. The album concerned is of ephemera relating to the work and life of the organ-builder G.M. Holdich, including specifications, handwritten and printed lists of his work, watercolours and letters, etc. The paintings are finely executed, showing interesting detail, covering the period 1838 to 1845 – a period of Holdich's work which hitherto has lacked detail. It is not clear exactly what the book was used for, but it seems most likely that Holdich used it as part of his sales pitch, showing potential customers the nature of his work. As the watercolours do not continue beyond 1845, Holdich evidently then used the volume as a repository for various documents and publications relating to his instruments.

I gave an insight into the book's contents at the Bernard Edmonds Research Conference on 22 February at the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire. We are grateful to organ-builder Antony Spink for permitting BIOS's acquisition of this important item. The document and its contents have been

photographed and the images catalogued; they will soon be made available to members through the website. Further research into the album is expected in due course.

### **PhD Studentship at the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire (RBC)**

One of the priorities which emerged from the Council's brainstorming was to spend some of BIOS's finance on activities deepening its interests and objectives. In reiterating the first of the Institute's aims it seems just that an investment in higher education could and should be made, in order to support research on topics which were not well covered and to stimulate interest through a new generation of scholars. With the generous legacy from Mr Gary Rant, BIOS is able to commit funds which address the first of its aims – by linking performance practice with organ-building history, thereby capitalising on the significant resources in the British Organ Archive (BOA), and almost 50 years of published material in the *Journal* and *Reporter*.

Council agreed a PhD studentship at the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire (RBC), relating to the English Organ and its repertoire, focusing on a mutually agreed area of study from the seventeenth to mid-nineteenth centuries. Progress has been made in respect of preparing the necessary paperwork, draft publicity and the agreement between BIOS and RBC. It seems likely that RBC is likely to enhance the offer to students — but this is still under discussion. It is hoped that news can soon be carried via social media in order to find a suitable student for September this year, but it is more likely that an appropriate candidate can be found for commencement in 2026.

The outcomes of such a relationship for BIOS are expected to be:

- A direct investment in the first of the Institute's aims;
- Ideally a UK-based student who can contribute to BIOS research events and offer conference papers on their activities and progress;
- Possible publication of articles in *JBIOS* and *Reporter*;
- A postgraduate with potential to reach an international audience as a performer, teacher, advocate and promoter of English repertoire;
- An investment in a younger generation of BIOS members;
- To help raise the profile of BIOS and its activities.

### **An archivist for the BOA**

Council considered opportunities afforded by the Rant legacy in connection with the BOA, where the question of how to tackle digitisation of material in the collection has been on the agenda for some considerable time. A recent meeting discussed digitising items in order to (a) make them more accessible online, and (b) to release additional space for new acquisitions (by placing items in long-term, off-site storage). Some costings were obtained, indicating that digitisation would be relatively inexpensive. Progress has been slowed by the lack of a complete catalogue to assist evaluation of the Archive. Council looked at the prospect of securing the services an archivist to undertake a systematic review of the BOA and to compile accurate handlists of the holdings. Possibly the post (perhaps 2 days per week, for 1 or 2 years) could be funded by BIOS, perhaps with matching funding from a grant-awarding body. The salary for a suitably-qualified, self-employed candidate has been provisionally costed. A formal proposal with costings is in hand and will be brought to a future meeting of Council.

### **Publications**

Another objective was to develop the publications team in order to share the considerable workload, as well as looking at ways of developing BIOS's digital presence. A good deal of work has been undertaken when preparing for future publications. This refers not only to new books, but to the process of making BIOS resources available to members through digitisation of the *Reporter* and *Journal*. I am grateful to Katie Pardee and her team for the almost relentless work required to make progress and to reach the objectives. A fuller report appears elsewhere in this document.

## **Collaboration with interested groups**

We have made strides in joining forces with other groups. There have been recent joint activities, including meetings with the Institute of British Organ Building (IBO) – and the autumn will see more. BIOS joins with Reading Borough Council on 13 September for its annual Heritage Open Day, which is linked with the RCO's Play the Organ Year, and will be presented in collaboration with the IAO, IBO, SWO and BerkshireOA as a mini-festival. There will be opportunities to hear and play the historic Willis organ, as well as a variety of presentations in respect of wider interests.

A conference in late October hopes to see a collaboration with the Cambridge Academy of Organ Studies (CAOS) at a study day looking at performance practice of English seventeenth- and eighteenth-century repertoire.

## **Collaboration with the heritage sector**

Of the other actions from the brainstorming session, the business of collaborating with groups in the heritage sector provides an interesting challenge and requires further development work.

The general loss of pipe organs is of great concern to BIOS; some are to be made redundant, others require rehousing, and, of course, there are instruments *in situ* which are under threat and challenged by the lack of finance to keep churches open.

One way to make an impact might be to pursue themed topics to drive a wider campaign of awareness. I am interested in the way in which *Sowne of Organe* is facing the dilemma of loss of organs in Scotland. In the coming years I believe BIOS might consider regional presentations in respect of organs under threat, in order to heighten local and national awareness of the problem and to raise public interest in the fate of heritage items under duress.

BIOS also needs to monitor the effect of casework intervention, to explore potential for further coverage in the listing of historic organs and making NPOR coverage more proactive to update and improve information.

Some thought will need to be given as to how to go about these tasks and I am delighted to announce that Jonathan Goodchild has agreed to take on the role of Heritage Adviser to BIOS. In addition to his activity as co-ordinator for the Historic Organs at Risk Register (HOARR), his task will be to alert Council to important news from the heritage sector. I am grateful to him for taking on this additional advisory role.

## **Golden Jubilee Trail**

As we head towards BIOS's Golden Jubilee Year (see Meeting and Publication Officer's report), I am reminded that earlier editions of the *Reporter* often carried a column entitled 'Notes and Queries', written by Bernard Edmonds. Although there is no immediate successor to this interesting collection of questions and outcomes of research, I should like to encourage BIOS members to send in their own queries, short articles, points of interest, observations and matters relating to their own research (solved or unsolved). It would be of interest to hear what others members are researching and exploring. When investigating a topic, one can occasionally link an observation made by 'BBE' (sometimes available via the NPOR) to the established canon of research. Such tit-bits of information can be very useful and I encourage members who have stories to tell to send them into the editor of the *Reporter*, David Shuker.

## **Correspondence**

I have written a number of letters on behalf of BIOS, including to my MP and the DCMS in respect of the Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme (LPWGS), which is to continue for one year from March, with a cap of £25k per place of worship. No replies were received.

A further letter was written to the new owners of Adlington Hall. No reply was received.

I have engaged in correspondence with Positif Press in respect of the residual stock of Journals.

## **RIP**

A number of BIOS members have died in recent times, including a former Chair, Secretary, and Treasurer. Their passing has been noted in the pages of the *Reporter* and formal obituaries will appear in the *Journal*. Deaths of colleagues are a salutary reminder that any important historical

material amassed by members in their own collections is at risk unless steps are taken to ensure that the future of such documents is assured. Some members might like to think about 'Acceptance in Lieu', which can be extremely tax efficient for an estate. Some members might like to consider naming BIOS as a beneficiary in their Will.

### **Thanks**

I am aware that I have generated new strands of enquiry within BIOS, and that, in order to encourage development on various fronts, a number of Council members have been busier than usual in helping to move things forward.

I am grateful for the support of all those involved in Publications, Meetings, Publicity, Casework, Listing, At-Risk Register and Heritage as well as the specialised areas of the British Organ Archive, National Pipe Organ Register, Historic Sound Archive (where exciting new recordings have been added), the new Website and Social Media.

BIOS could not function as it does without the contributions and dedicated work of those who fulfil these roles. The work of the Institute is quite extraordinary and far-reaching and I thank everyone personally for their contribution, especially the Secretary, Treasurer and new Membership Secretary-cum-Webmaster, all of whose attention to detail is noteworthy.

*William McVicker*  
*BIOS Chair*

### **SECRETARY'S REPORT (Agenda Item 4.2)**

Council met 4 times during the year under review.

The Committee for the Listing of Historic Organs Committee met on three occasions.

The Joint Management Committees for the National Pipe Organ Register (NPOR) met twice during the year.

The Joint Steering Committee for the British Organ Archive (BOA) met twice during the year.

*Melvin Hughes*

### **TREASURER (Agenda Item 4.3)**

**(See pages 14 to 17)**

# **The British Institute of Organ Studies Annual Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2024**

The British Institute of Organ Studies (Registered Charity number 283936) exists to advance the education of the public in and promote the study of and research into the development of the organ and its music in all aspects and, in particular, the development of the organ and its music in Britain and to publish the useful results of any research. Also, to promote the preservation and restoration of historic organs in Britain for the benefit of the public generally in the manner of an amenity society.

## **Council**

During the year the following served on the Council:

Nicholas Thistlethwaite (Chairman to 18 May)	Nigel Stark (Casework Officer)
William McVicker (Chairman from 18 May)	Christopher Gray (Publicity Officer)
Melvin Hughes (Secretary)	Colin Menzies (to 18 May)
Adrian Mumford (Treasurer)	Mark Venning (NPOR Link)
David Shepherd (Membership Sec to 18 May)	David Shuker (BOA / Reporter Editor)
Stephen Alliss (Membership Sec 18 May–16 Sep)	Paul Tindall
Melanie Plumley (Acting Membership Secretary)	Leonard Sanderman
Katharine Pardee (Publications Officer)	Owen Woods
Richard Hobson (Meetings Officer)	Jeffrey Williams (to 18 May)

The Council met four times during the year.

## **Independent Examiner**

Jonathan Hunt

## **Bankers**

CAF Bank (Charities' Aid Foundation), Kings Hill, West Malling, Kent  
Nat West Bank, Durham

## **Investment Manager**

CCLA Investment Management Ltd. 80 Cheapside, London EC2

## **Reserves Policy**

The trustees have reviewed the charity's need for reserves in line with the guidance issued by the Charity Commission: they believe that it is prudent for the minimum level to be the equivalent of a 3-year moving average of annual subscription income. Additional designated reserves may be held from time to time when significant future events or projects are anticipated.

## **Financial Review of the Year**

Net incoming resources in unrestricted funds were soundly positive. Since 2014, expenditure for the National Pipe Organ Register (NPOR) has gone through a Restricted Fund relieving Unrestricted Funds which have consequently grown to £113,481 (2023: £110,357). This total comfortably meets the Reserves Policy duly covered by funds invested (valued well above cost) and money at the bank. Reassuringly, membership numbers have remained essentially steady – with Gift Aid, they provide 75% of unrestricted income (noting that the year-to-year figures vary for reason that income is accounted for on a 'received' rather than an 'accruals' basis). Council and committee costs have increased as all are face-to-face meetings rather than on Zoom, however, Conferences overall made a small surplus. The purchase of the Holdich Book (@£6,000) is recorded as an asset at cost.

There are three Restricted Funds – HOSA (Historic Organs Sound Archive), Projects/Publications (was known as ‘Endowment’) and NPOR. Income to the Projects/Publications Fund comprises investment income (£1,084) and sales of publications, in particular, books on Walker and Nicholson plus royalties. Costs associated with books are written off in year incurred: with £7,000 spent during 2024 in respect of a significant new forthcoming publication, the Endowment Fund ends the year down at £32,002 (2023: £36,229) but remains well able to support new publishing ventures. The HOSA account has grown very slightly to £8,172 (2023: £8,150).

The most active Restricted Fund is in respect of the NPOR, recording direct costs and income. Around 74 individuals (both members and non-member users) and Organists’ Associations made donations during the year all of whom have been thanked. This is the same number as last year although well below a peak of around 140. A total of £7,487 was received in the year and topped up by the annual transfer of £2,000 from unrestricted funds although after costs, the year-end balance is a little down on last year at £15,281 (2023: £16,533). It is hoped that the number of Standing Orders may grow, even for modest amounts, helping to ensure a sustainable future income stream since the meeting of NPOR costs of around £10,000 per annum will remain a challenge.

## **Independent Examiner’s Report to the Trustees of the British Institute of Organ Studies**

I report to the Trustees on my examination of the accounts of the British Institute of Organ Studies (the Trust) for the year ended 31 December 2024.

### **Responsibilities and basis of report**

The charity trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the Charities Act 2011 (the Act).

I report in respect of my examination of the Trust’s accounts carried out under section 145 of the Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

### **Independent Examiner’s statement**

I have completed my examination.

To enable a proper understanding of the accounts, I draw your attention to Note 1 regarding the accounting for Members’ Subscriptions.

I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

1. the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Act; or
2. the accounts did not accord with the accounting records; or
3. the accounts did not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a ‘true and fair’ view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

Subject to the matter mentioned above, I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Jonathan Hunt FCA  
London, dated 12 March 2025

**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES**  
for the year ended 31st December 2024

	Notes	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total funds 2024 £	Total funds 2023 £
<b>Incoming Resources :</b>					
Subscriptions	1	18,534		18,534	17,007
Sales	2	392	2,365	2,757	11,080
Investment Income		3,340	1,835	5,175	2,750
Conferences	3	2,910		2,910	2,610
Tax recovery on Gift Aid		2,400	837	3,237	3,460
Donations		46	6,142	6,188	7,312
<i>Total Incoming Resources</i>		<b>£27,622</b>	<b>£11,179</b>	<b>£38,801</b>	<b>£44,219</b>
<b>Resources Expended :</b>					
BIOS Journal		6,066		6,066	5,975
Reporter		4,461		4,461	5,438
National Pipe Organ Register			10,739	10,739	9,426
British Organ Archive		479		479	0
Council & sub committees		1,629		1,629	976
HOLS and surveys				0	31
Bank charges		276		276	576
Conferences	3	1,852		1,852	1,945
Publicity and website	4	6,380		6,380	2,688
Insurance		838		838	790
Book and other costs	5	517	7,897	8,414	10,662
<i>Total Resources Expended</i>		<b>£22,498</b>	<b>£18,636</b>	<b>£41,134</b>	<b>£38,507</b>
<b>Net incoming resources</b>		5,124	(7,457)	(2,333)	5,712
Transfer of funds (to NPOR)		(2,000)	2,000		
Balance brought forward		110,357	60,912	171,269	165,557
<b>Balance carried forward</b>		<b>£113,481</b>	<b>£55,455</b>	<b>£168,936</b>	<b>£171,269</b>

**BALANCE SHEET as at 31st December 2024**

	Notes	2024	2023
<b>Fixed Assets</b>			
Holdich Book		6,000	0
<b>Current Assets</b>			
CCLA Investment Fund Units	6	55,000	55,000
Short term deposits and Cash at Bank		106,197	114,213
Short term creditors		(1,498)	(1,404)
Debtors and prepayments	7	3,237	3,460
<b>Net Assets</b>		<b>£168,936</b>	<b>£171,269</b>
<b>Funds</b>			
Unrestricted General Funds		113,481	110,357
Restricted Funds	9	55,455	60,912
<b>Total Funds</b>	9	<b>£168,936</b>	<b>£171,269</b>

Approved on behalf of the Trustees by the Chairman, William McVicker: 18 January 2025



## Notes to the Accounts

### 1. Accounting Policy

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with ‘Accounting & Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice,’ applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019) - (Charities SORP (FRS 102)). Accruals accounting is adopted except for subscriptions which are accounted for on a received/banked basis, a methodology that means receipts can include subscription income relating to a prior year and future year.

### 2. Sales

Under Unrestricted Funds, this relates to sales of BIOS Journals, both current and back numbers. It also includes a small amount of commission on the sale of third-party publications – the webstore being used as a conduit for publications of interest to members and relevant to the charitable aims of BIOS. Sales of books on Nicholson and Walker exceeded £2,000, both already fully having covered their costs.

### 3. Conferences

Conferences are budgeted to end up on the right side of break-even: including the AGM at the Welsh Church, there have been three in 2024 which together made a surplus.

### 4. Publicity

This figure is significantly up on 2023 as £5,192 represents the cost of the new website while £1,188 was spent on advertisements in related publications.

### 5. Book and other costs

These relate to our annual subscription to the Heritage Alliance but mainly in Restricted Funds, an advance £7,000 payment for a significant publication and costs relating to sales of the Nicholson and Walker books.

### 6. Investments

Charities Investment Fund Units held through CCLA are shown at cost. The gross dividend yield fell slightly to 2.70% (2023: 2.75%) although the market value strengthened by 3%, to close on 31 December 2024 at £96,294 (2023: £93,357) broadly in line with the overall stock market.

### 7. Short term debtors and creditors

In debtors, £3,237 relates to tax recovery on Gift Aid (received January 2025). Creditors are for amounts owing in respect of third-party sales and estimated book mailing costs due.

### 8. Contingent asset

During 2024, the charity was notified that it was a residuary legatee to the estate of a deceased member. Involving the sale of property, at the year-end it was not possible to reliably measure the full value of the legacy which is initially estimated to the around £135,000.

### 9. Funds

Restricted Funds are those which are to be used in accordance with specific limitations set by the BIOS Council and analysed herewith:

	1/1/24	Income	Expenditure	Transfers	31/12/24
<i>Unrestricted Funds:</i>	£110,357	£27,622	(£22,498)	(£2,000)	£113,481
<i>Restricted Funds:</i>					
HOSA and Leffler	£8,150	£422	(£400)		£8,172
Projects/Publications	£36,229	£3,270	(£7,497)		£32,002
NPOR	£16,533	£7,487	(£10,739)	£2,000	£15,281
<b>Total Funds</b>	<b>£171,269</b>	<b>£38,801</b>	<b>(£41,134)</b>		<b>£168,936</b>

Funds are represented by pooled assets held as CCLA Investment Units, cash on deposit and at bank.

## **MEMBERSHIP REPORT (Agenda Item 4.4)**

For a variety of reasons, the officer elected at the 2024 AGM had to relinquish his duties early in his term of office. I, and all of BIOS need to be grateful to the outgoing Membership Secretary, David Shepherd, for agreeing to resume the responsibilities on an interim basis. The Chairman and Council then co-opted myself to take on the duties, something with which I was familiar having occupied the role from 2002 until 2015. This report is therefore written by an “Acting Membership Secretary” as she has not been elected to the role by an AGM.

Upon taking over management of the membership records, some payment details were temporarily lost, possibly caused by the Spring 2024 transfer of datafiles. Thanks to the kind co-operation of members, the records are now all safely filed with multiple back-ups and can once again be regarded as accurate. In taking on the Acting Membership Secretary role, the opportunity was taken to consolidate it with the sending of circular emails and with GDPR record management which in recent years had been handled by Tina Thurlow to whom all our thanks are due.

Traditionally those paying by standing order received no annual renewal notification letters. The renewal letters sent late in 2024 went to every member, including those with existing standing orders. This was done so that everyone could be made aware of their membership number, not a label we frequently use, but now a necessary one. Our new website has an area for content accessible only by paid-up members and managing that requires membership numbers to be known to allow log-in credentials to be created. There’s no immediate urgency to get log-in rights as at the present there is no additional content to be found there, but that will change.

Our membership trend has been downward for many years, dropping from a peak around 2007 when it was 635, to an end of December 2024 total of 492. Various initiatives are being launched in 2025 to attempt to reverse that direction. It falls to each of us to evangelise on behalf of BIOS, not just for the sake of the Institute, but for the sake of pipe organs. One of our aims is “to work for the preservation and, where necessary, the faithful restoration of historic organs in Britain and to encourage their use and appreciation”. Achieving that needs all of us to lobby in every relevant circle. Getting more people to be a part of BIOS and join in that process is essential. We have to be a diverse community of not only organists and organ makers, but of all folk who care about conservation of our pipe organs.

Joining BIOS has never been easier, thanks in part to the newly rebuilt website, though we remain happy to accept paper applications and payment through all the time-tested methods. We have an updated paper membership application form that can be obtained on request from the Acting Membership Secretary, or downloaded from the website.

All subscriptions came due for renewal on 1<sup>st</sup> January and a significant proportion of the membership have already addressed this. If you are one of the 61 members who have not done so yet, or are not sure if you have, get in touch by phone, email or personal contact so we can avoid losing anyone because of an inadvertent non-payment. We have traditionally been quite flexible in accepting late payments, but we have to ensure the proper administration of the Institute and that will mean removing from membership those who don’t pay promptly.

*Melanie Plumley*

## **PUBLICATIONS OFFICER REPORT (Agenda Item 4.5)**

The Publications arm of BIOS is increasingly busy. Although the annual Journal and quarterly Reporter were the only printed items issued in 2024, behind the scenes there are three books in process: Gerald Sumner’s long-awaited book on Cavallé-Coll in Britain, BIOS’s 50th anniversary Encyclopedia of the Organ (working title), and William McVicker’s tome on the Tonal Architecture and Music of the British Organ. These projects will take us through 2026. There are a number of other books awaiting assessment for possible publication.

Thanks are due David Shuker for editing and producing the lively and interesting Reporter. Talks have been in progress about updating this publication, perhaps including online material: as the world increasingly turns to digital outlets, and printing and postage costs rise, it makes sense to consider all

alternatives. Material for both the Reporter and Journal is always welcome. A particular call is underway for the Reporter, and if there are any members currently engaged in BIOS-related research, please send a few paragraphs about your work to David Shuker.

Thanks also go to Andrew Hayden, who edited the excellent 2024 BIOS Journal, which delved into some very interesting historical byways.

Because of the increasingly busy book-publishing arm of BIOS, I have now turned over the executive editor role for the Journal to Dr David Force. Guest editors for each year will still be sought, but David will undertake 2025 himself. Thank you, David.

As we approach the 50th anniversary of BIOS in 2026, we hope the Publications division will help herald the festivities.

*Katharine Pardee*  
*Publications Officer*

## **MEETINGS OFFICER REPORT (Agenda Item 4.6)**

There were fewer meetings than usual in 2024. It became clear that the annual Bernard Edmonds Research Conference, usually held in February could not take place at the Barber Institute at Birmingham University, and a new venue could not be found. However, it was hoped that we might return to the Birmingham Conservatoire in 2025, and this has indeed been possible. We look forward to a continuing association with the Conservatoire in the years ahead.

Day conferences rely very much on members coming forward with suggestions for topics, and places where we might meet, and all are urged to give this some thought and contact the Meetings Officer if they would like to organise an event.

### **16 March Peterhouse, Cambridge**

Snetzler organ 'reconstructed' by Flentrop and Klais.

- 10.30 Coffee
- 11.00 Welcome and housekeeping information
- 11.10 Talk and demonstration of the organ - Nicholas Thistlethwaite and Anna Stepler
- 12.00 Talk: John Snetzler, organ-builder - Paul Tindall
- 1.00 Lunch break
- 2.00 Programme of music from the Snetzler console - Anne Page
- 2.45 Programme of music from the contemporary console - Andrew Reid
- 3.30 Tea
- 4.00 Discussion

Attendance 48

### **18 May Day Conference and AGM at the Welsh Church, Eastcastle Street, Oxford Circus.**

- 11.00 Welcome and introduction by the Minister, Rev. Robert Nicholls
- 11.20 Dr William McVicker:  
    'Alfred Hunter & Son: A Tale of Robert Hunter and a Wealthy Client'
- 12.30 Demonstration of the organ
- 1.00 Lunch (not provided)
- 2.00 AGM
- 3.00 Recital by Makoto James
  - William Harris - Fantasy on Thomas Campion's Hymn Tune "Babylon's Streams"*
  - Harold Darke - Rhapsody in E, Op. 4*
  - David Goode - Prelude on 'One Thing I ask' (2014)*
  - Percy Whitlock - Canzona and Scherzetto from Organ Sonata in C minor (1936)*
  - C.V.Stanford - Organ Sonata No. 4 "Celtica"*

Attendance 31

## **17 August      Guards' Chapel**

The Institute of British Organ Building invited BIOS members to join them for a visit to the Guards' Chapel, Birdcage Walk, London on the morning of Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> August where Harrison & Harrison had recently completed an entirely new three manual instrument.

The new organ – 3 manuals, 40 stops and electro-pneumatic action – is designed to support the Chapel's strong musical tradition. It is Romantic in style allowing it to complement the sound of the regimental bands. There were presentations by Andrew Scott of Harrison & Harrison and organ consultant William McVicker, after which Martin Ford, Organist and Director of Music at the Chapel, demonstrated the organ for us.

Booking was made through the IBO so the exact numbers of BIOS members present was unclear, but attendance was good, and a fine lunch was also provided.

## **30 November      The BIOS Lunch at the Grosvenor Chapel, Mayfair**

Attendance 20



*Richard Hobson*

## **PUBLICITY (Agenda Item 4.7)**

### **INFORMATION SERVICES: BOA/NPOR/HOSA/WEBSITE/SOCIAL MEDIA (Agenda Item 4.8)**

#### **British Organ Archive**

The Joint Steering Committee of the British Organ Archive has met twice in the last twelve months in the Cadbury Research Library.

The current membership of the JSC consists of Dr David Knight, Dr Andrew McCrea, Dr David Shuker, and Dr Nicholas Thistlethwaite (Chairman), with Dr William McVicker attending as BIOS Chairman. Since the last JSC meeting, we have recruited two additional members: Richard Moore and Dr William Reynolds who we hope will join us for the forthcoming meeting in May.

BIOS continues to be indebted to the support of the staff at the Cadbury Research Library at Birmingham University, and in particular to Ivana Frlan and Susan Worrall (Head of the Department). They have handled a steady trickle of visitors and enquiries over the last twelve months, and always make us welcome on our 'in person' meetings at the CRL.

In the course of the year Peter Vessey (volunteer) has completed the cataloguing of the David Graebe drawings of organ cases; this will make it much easier to identify items in the collection, and we are grateful to Mr Vessey.

Accessions have included the usual deposits of BIOS publications (the *BIOS Reporters* and *BIOS Journals*), and also a small collection of Ralph Downes letters from Professor Ian Needleman to add to the Downes deposit. Through the good offices of Dr McVicker, BIOS has also acquired an album formerly belonging to George Maydwell Holdich, the distinguished Victorian organ-builder. It includes Holdich's own water-colour pictures of some of the organs he built during the earlier years of his career, and is accompanied by letters and specifications. Dr McVicker described the collection in more detail in the November 2024 *Reporter*. It will shortly be deposited in the BOA.

Discussions have continued about possible digitisation of material in the BOA in order to create space for new acquisitions, and also to make parts of the collection accessible on-line. The issues are complicated, not least the costs of (a) manuscript conservation, (b) professional digitisation and (c) off-site storage of the digitised items. A further complication is that – despite the heroic efforts of former BIOS Archivists – the detailed cataloguing of the collection is seriously incomplete. In view of the latter consideration, we are now exploring the practicalities of appointing a part-time, paid Archivist for a defined period in order to complete the cataloguing begun by Michael Sayer, David Wickens and Chris Kearn. Time is not on our side. In recent months we have received a series of enquiries concerning the possibility of depositing research materials left by sadly deceased BIOS members, and at the moment, we are not in a position to accept such (otherwise welcome) donations.

All these are matters that the JSC will continue to evaluate over the coming months, and recommendations will be made to the Council.

*Nicholas Thistlethwaite*  
Chairman, BOA JSC)

## **National Pipe Organ Register**

*The National Pipe Organ Register is one of BIOS's most important and far-reaching activities. It is owned by BIOS, and managed on our behalf by the Royal College of Organists. Its operation is overseen by a Joint Management Committee (JMC)\* of both bodies, which meets twice a year.*

The JMC met on 31<sup>st</sup> July and 27<sup>th</sup> November 2024.

The recent death of John Norman has deprived the British organ building world of one of its heroes, and the NPOR of a much-valued JMC member. His most recent contribution was to contribute his unrivalled knowledge of British organ builders to the updating of the DBOB.

1. **Editorial matters.** Thanks to the meticulous work of our editors under the efficient management of Andrew Macintosh, a good balance continues to be maintained between submissions and edits. A new editing suite, developed for us by BIOS member Matt Dixon in consultation with Andrew, has bedded in well; it will bring substantial benefits for the editing process. Matt, a professional IT specialist who kindly does this work for us on a voluntary basis, has also improved the on-line submission form, and nearly two-thirds of all submissions are now made by this method, which further helps to streamline the editors' work.

However much care they take, the editors are dependent on the accuracy of the information they receive. **We welcome corrections from anyone who spots an error in an NPOR entry or finds that it needs updating.**

I am sorry to report that two long-serving editors died recently: Chris Kippin and Richard Hird. Together with our whole editorial team, they deserve our gratitude for this unsung but vital work.

2. **Finances.** Donations last year amounted to £7,487, to which BIOS adds a regular subvention of £2,000. We are tremendously grateful to all our donors, whose support mitigates what would otherwise be a major burden on BIOS's finances. The task of continuing to meet the annual running costs of NPOR into the future (currently c. £10,000) is not to be underestimated, and I here repeat my annual reminder that **donations by standing order to this good cause are an excellent way of helping to safeguard the future of the NPOR.**

3. **Website.** The website performed well during the first complete year with the new provider, Codeveloped Ltd (directed by Matt Dixon). It is interesting to note that there has been a considerable increase in NPOR usage in the last couple of years, with visitors from 158 countries in 2024. The scope and reach of the NPOR are, we believe, unmatched by any other country.

In an important development, the website has been completely 're-written' by Matt in a modern programming language. Among other advantages this has increased security, improved navigation and made the website much more readily adaptable to future needs. Again, Matt has done this in a private capacity, to the great benefit of the NPOR.

4. **Directory of British Organ Builders (DBOB).** Paul Graham has made further substantial progress with the major task of bringing the DBOB up to date from its previous terminus c.1950. It is good to report that new entries for Firms have been largely completed, while most of the remaining firms awaiting processing are straightforward updates to existing entries. A significant number of Persons, often identified by name only, remain to be investigated.

*Mark Venning  
NPOR Liaison*

\* JMC members: during 2024: William McVicker (BIOS Chairman), Melvin Hughes (BIOS Secretary), Matt Dixon (BIOS and NPOR Webmaster), John Norman, Mark Venning (BIOS Council - NPOR liaison), and Andrew Macintosh (RCO Manager).

*Mark Venning (NPOR liaison)*

### **Historic Organ Sound Archive**

Since April 2024 the channel has gained 30 subscribers (total 334) and around 5,000 views. One new recording has been made since the previous AGM. In January 2025, Dr Anna Stepler played a very well-chosen programme on the Snetzler organ in Clare College Chapel, Cambridge. This has been viewed 726 times on the YouTube channel since it was posted about 6 weeks ago, which is well above average for a single video. BIOS member Dr Julian Sale was sound engineer for the project, once again donating his time and expertise to the project.

While the YouTube channel has been the only outlet for recordings added in recent years, it has been suggested that BIOS may wish to consider incorporating those sound files into the NPOR record for each instrument.

*Anne Page  
Curator of the Historic Organ Sound Archive.*

### **BIOS Website**

The BIOS website we enjoyed for several years had a clean, effective initial design, and was managed by the late John Norman to whom we must be very grateful. The passage of time had resulted in it losing the conciseness we need and Council decided to initiate a process to appoint a new web-designer to construct a replacement site, to operate on the same well established domain. After devising a specification, and assessing possible suppliers, a contract was given to Codeveloped, who were already looking after the NPOR site. After many months work by a website working group of council members and others, including the now web-manager, a new design was finalised and provided with initial content, going live in November 2024. The site now alternative views of content depending whether accessed on desktop computer browsers, smart-phones or tablets.

The new website has been provided with a facility for some content to be reserved for members only. Managing this has required the inclusion of a membership web add-in and members need knowledge of their membership number to facilitate access. For this reason, the 2025 subscription renewal letters went to every member, including those with standing orders in place who were historically not contacted.

Although the initial build of the website and populating it with text and images was done by the web design company, day to day management has now been passed to this BIOS volunteer web-

manager, who is fortunately not without some experience of website management. Nonetheless, adding and updating content on this recently built site using the latest web tools is not without challenges, but each task provides a new learning opportunity. The site has a news area and, unlike our social media, this will be kept fresh with new content relating directly to BIOS topics.

*Melanie Plumley*

### **Social Media Report**

Whether a Facebook user or not, anyone can view the page by visiting [www.facebook.com/BritishInstituteofOrganStudies](http://www.facebook.com/BritishInstituteofOrganStudies). The page has been live since October 2013 and has had many thousands of views. There are now over 2,500 followers, a major increase from the 350 ten years ago.

Items posted to social media can be more wide-ranging than we would post to our website news. That tends to be only content directly connected with BIOS, whereas social media might feature anything likely to be of interest to those with an interest in pipe organs, whether the story relates to BIOS or not.

The X feed (previously Twitter) established at the start of 2014 gets a précis of material posted to the Facebook page. Since we began using it, the nature of X/Twitter has changed significantly, particularly since it has been repurposed by Elon Musk who bought it a couple of years ago. A number of organisations have felt they no longer wish to be associated with X and our future use of it is a matter Council will be keeping under review.

*Melanie Plumley*

### **CASEWORK OFFICER'S REPORT (Agenda Item 4.9)**

Advice and consultation have been requested for the following cases:

- Rugby. St. Andrews [NPOR N07548]. Grants and funding
- Harby. St. Mary's. [NPOR K01581] Grants and funding, Historic restoration and endorsement
- Gloucester Cathedral – conservation of historic pipework.
- Newbury Baptist Church. [NPOR D05757 Re-location
- St. Cattwg. Llanmaes. Grants and funding
- Abergavenny. King Henry School. Re-location
- Tamworth. Methodist Church. [NPOR G00613] Re-location
- Barford. St. Michael. [NPOR R00171] Restoration and information
- Oxford. St. Barnabas. Advice on new organ
- Bozeat. St. Mary's. [NPOR D03362] Restoration advice and endorsement
- Holyhead. St. Cybi. [NPOR N11652] Re-location
- Killingworth. St. John's. [N13280] Historic restoration and endorsement
- South Pickenham/West Tofts. [NPOR N06659] Re-location and restoration.

There are two main types of enquiry;

- Advice on funding for restoration, grants available.
- Disposal or re-homing of unwanted instruments. This is of particular concern as with churches and chapels now closing at the rate of one a week, the supply of organs far outstrips the demand.

*Nigel Stark*

## COMMITTEE FOR THE LISTING OF HISTORIC ORGANS (Agenda Item 4.10)

The Listing Committee has met on three occasions over the past year. As usual, the principal results of the meetings can be seen in the details of the organs which the BIOS Council have approved of Listed status. Details of these are published in the BIOS reporter.

As I have commented previously, the number of applications for listed status remains lower than might be hoped. There is clearly a significant number of organs likely to achieve listed status but locating them - and a reasonably informed person to put them forward for listing - is not straightforward. Possibly the way in which so many churches of all denominations are now kept locked for all but a few hours each week is also a factor. I would encourage those involved in specific denominations to consider how organs, which may be little seen in general, may be brought forward to wider notice. A first step could be to ensure such little seen organs are put on the NPOR. I would also like to express appreciation for the attention of IBO members bring drawn to put forward organs for listing. Those organ-builders maintaining organs are very well placed to propose instruments for listing.

I must again express my thanks to Jeffrey Williams, as Secretary, for his care and efficiency in respect of the work of the Committee.

I must record with great sadness the loss of Dominic Gwynn. His breadth of expertise, his wisdom, coupled with a droll, but warm sense of humour has been influential time and again in reaching a sound decision over the status of an instrument.

My thanks, once again must go to Committee members - Dr Andrew Hayden, Matthew Hynes, Colin Menzies, Nigel Stark, David Wood, and Owen Woods. The presence of the BIOS Chairman, Dr William McVicker, is greatly appreciated. The careful, thoughtful, and often time-consuming work of Committee members, cannot go unremarked.

The close working relationship of the Committee with the Historic Organs at Risk Scheme is much valued.

*Dr John Rowntree*  
*Chairman of the Committee for the Listing of Historic Organs*

## HISTORIC ORGANS AT RISK REGISTER (Agenda Item 4.11)

During 2024, the organs at the Royal Sea Bathing Hospital in Margate and Devoran Methodist Chapel were removed from the Register.

Place	Date added	Organ	NPOR	Listed
Cambridge, St Andrew the Less	April 2017	c. 1856 Dawson, 1885 Miller.	N05165	Grade II
Devizes St Mary	June 2018	Sweetland 1855	N08432	HOCS
Tollington Park, St Mark	June 2019	Gray & Davison 1849, 1877-9	N16847	Grade II*
Ipswich, St Clement's Congregational Church	October 2019	Bishop & Son 1909	V00319	Grade II
Edge Hill, St Mary/All Saints	September 2020	Bewsher and Fleetwood 1825-45	E00369	Grade I
Cornholme, St Michael and all Angels	September 2021	Conacher 1904	N10885	Grade II



South Pickenham, All Saints	April 2024	Dawson of Cambridge 1857, casework by Bethune, all based on a sketch by Sir John Sutton	N06659	Grade I
Kelton, Dumfries and Galloway	August 2024	Forster and Andrews 1895	R00317	Grade II
St Erth Methodist Chapel	October 2024	Forster and Andrews 1864	K00170	Grade II*

The organs at South Pickenham, Kelton and St Erth Methodist Chapel were added to the Register in 2024.

There are currently nine organs on the Register:

*Jonathan Goodchild*  
*Co-ordinator, Historic Organs at Risk Register*

### **HERITAGE ADVISER (Agenda Item 4.12)**

I was appointed as Heritage Adviser by the BIOS Council at its January 2025 meeting, so am new to the role. Nevertheless, the following are live issues that may affect the organ world:

- It was announced in January that the Listed Places of Worship Grants Scheme would continue for another year. However, the scheme is now capped at £25k per place of worship in 2025-6. Clearly the scheme will be vulnerable to cuts, particularly as it is a fairly recent introduction, compensating churches for the loss of the benefit of VAT zero-rating for alterations to listed churches. Considerable lobbying will be necessary to press for the continuance of the scheme. The Department for Culture Media and Sport has commissioned an evaluation survey to help them understand individual the experience of individual places of worship.
- The DCMS Select Committee Inquiry into Protecting Built Heritage has been looking into how to prevent the loss and decline of historic buildings amid financial and practical challenges facing heritage. The report is expected in mid to late summer.
- Legislation affecting Church of England churches that are closing is being considered by the General Synod.

*Jonathan Goodchild*  
*Heritage Adviser*

## **AGENDA ITEM 5 – NOMINATIONS FOR OFFICER AND COUNCIL VACANCIES**

The following election of Officers and Ordinary Members of Council will be held:

- Membership Secretary
- Casework Officer
- 3 Ordinary Members of Council

*The following Nominations have been received.*

<b>Role</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Proposer</b>	<b>Seconder</b>
<b>Membership Secretary</b>	Melanie Plumley	William McVicker	Melvin Hughes
<b>Publications Officer</b>	Katharine Pardee	Anne Page	Melvin Hughes
<b>Casework Officer</b>	Nigel Stark	David Shuker	Melvin Hughes
<b>Ordinary Member of Council</b>	David Shuker	Paul Tindall	Melvin Hughes
<b>Ordinary Member of Council</b>	Paul Tindall	David Shuker	Melvin Hughes
<b>Ordinary Member of Council</b>	Mark Venning	Adrian Mumford	Colin Menzies

### **Biographies**

#### ***Membership Secretary***

**Melanie Plumley** - Melanie first had lessons in the mid-1960s as an organ scholar at the Queen Elizabeth Grammar School in Darlington with Hector C Parr. She later studied under Dr Conrad Eden at Durham Cathedral, gaining an Associate diploma from Trinity College London. Mel has held organ playing and choir direction roles in an amateur capacity for most of her life. Her professional career was spent in the broadcast and audio industry, at times a self-employed consultant and at other times as a director of manufacturing companies or practicing as a hands-on engineer. Now retired, she focusses on freelance service and concert playing. She was a member of BIOS Council from 2003 holding the membership portfolio and relinquished the role in 2015 when living overseas made for difficult participation in meetings.

#### ***Publications Officer***

**Katharine Pardee** is recently retired from Oxford University where she was Betts Fellow in Organ Studies, Lecturer in Music at Corpus Christi College, and Director of Music, Wadham College. She holds a DMA in Performance and Literature from the Eastman School of Music in Rochester NY, as well as a DPhil in musicology from the University of Oxford. She has performed throughout the US and in Europe and has recorded two CDs for the Pro Organo label. In addition to organ and academic teaching, she has served on numerous competition juries, and has written papers for journals and books on her academic speciality, Bach in nineteenth-century England. She has served 6 terms as Publications Officer for BIOS.

#### ***Casework Officer***

**Nigel Stark** comes originally from Chester where he studied piano and later organ with Roger Fisher at Chester Cathedral.

He has had a career as a pianist, organist and musical director, holding several important posts over a period of fifty years:

Director of Music at St. Michael's Church Bishop's Stortford, conductor of the Bishop's Stortford Choral Society, musical director of the Harlow Opera Company.

St. Mary Portsea and head of St. Mary's Music Foundation.

Accompanist and assistant conductor of the Portsmouth Festival Choir and Portsmouth Choral Union.

St. Alphege Parish Church, Solihull, which has a long history of choral music with a choir of men and boys who perform a cathedral style repertoire and separate girls' and ladies' choirs too.

Conductor of the Royal Leamington Spa Bach Choir and Grantham Choral Society.

In addition to his work as a conductor, organist and pianist, Nigel plays trombone with the Rutland Big Band. An Associate of the Royal College of Organists and holder of the Diploma in Choral Directing, Nigel holds the degree of MA (distinction) in Organ Historiography from Reading University. He is a member of the organs advisory committee of the Church of England Buildings Council.

### ***Members of Council***

**Dr David Shuker** worked as a research chemist for over 30 years having gained BSc and PhD degrees from Imperial College London. He was awarded an Open University MA in Music in 2008 for a course of study that included a dissertation on the development of William Herschel as a composer. From 2007 to 2021 he worked as a self-employed organ builder and restorer as well as building up a specialist bookselling and publishing business. Despite closing his workshop premises in 2021 and retiring to Norfolk he still has far too many bits of organs knocking around for his own good, and still makes Orgelkids kits to order and offers workshops on behalf of Orgelkids UK. Dr Shuker is currently a co-opted member of the Council of the British Institute of Organ Studies (BIOS), was editor of the BIOS Reporter from 2008 to 2012 and took over the role again in 2024.

**Paul Tindall** is one of the earliest living members of BIOS, joining as a teenager in the 1970s. He is a professional singer and an amateur organist, studying at King's College London and at the Guildhall School of Music. In his professional activities he has toured all over the world, from Sydney Opera House to the Carnegie Hall, and from Finland to Botswana. This has allowed him to experience a wide variety of musical life, and to appreciate the rich diversity of organ culture around the world. He is also keenly interested in architecture, and has listened to more sermons than he cares to remember.

Paul has published extensively on organ history, both in BIOS publications and in The Organ Yearbook. He was early in the field of exploiting newly-available digital records, and is still engaged on the revision of the standard work concerning John Snetzler: white smoke is almost visible.

With Nicholas Thistlethwaite, he is one of the two editors of the Biographical Dictionary of Organ Builders which BIOS will publish next year to celebrate its 50th anniversary, and expects to spend most of 2025 preparing it for publication.

**Mark Venning** joined the Durham organ builders Harrison & Harrison on April Fool's Day 1972. He became managing director in 1975, and worked happily with Cuthbert Harrison until Cuthbert's death in 1991, when he also became chairman. From 1994 to 2000 he was president of the International Society of Organbuilders, for which he and his wife, Katherine, helped to organise English congresses in 1996 (Cambridge) and 2016 (London).

Mark retired in 2011 as managing director of H&H and in 2022 as chairman, but remains active as a director. A long-standing member of BIOS, he joined the Council in 2011 and since then has been helping with its oversight of the National Pipe Organ Register, which has been described as the jewel in BIOS's crown.

## **AGENDA ITEM 6 - ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

*The cover illustration is based on the Old Radnor case  
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