

BIOS REPORTER

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THE BRITISH INSTITUTE OF ORGAN STUDIES

BIOS OFFICERS AND COUNCIL

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

BRITISH ORGAN ARCHIVE (BOA)

Special Collections, Cadbury Research Library, University of Birmingham,
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e-mail: special-collections@contents.bham.ac.uk
For details of opening times please see the website
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COMMITTEE FOR THE LISTING OF HISTORIC ORGANS

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

HISTORIC ORGANS AT RISK REGISTER (HOARR)

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

NATIONAL PIPE ORGAN REGISTER (NPOR) www.bios.org.uk/npor.html

Database Manager Andrew Macintosh, Royal College of Organists, PO Box 7328,
New Milton BH25 9DU
Tel: 02038 657004; e-mail: npor@bios.org.uk

HISTORIC ORGAN SOUND ARCHIVE (HOSA)

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

THE BRITISH INSTITUTE OF ORGAN STUDIES

Registered Charity No: 283936

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

Honorary President: Dr Nicholas Thistlethwaite

BIOS REPORTER

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The Editor reserves the right to refuse or amend material.

Editor: Gordon Curtis, [REDACTED]

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Front cover: *Bath Central URC (Argyle chapel) organ by Wm Sweetland 1888. The pipes protruding above and behind the case are the basses of the now disconnected Euphonium stop. Church closed September 2022, fate of organ uncertain.* (Photo: Editor). Back cover: *Worcester, St Swithun. Case by Robert and William Gray 1795.* See p. 77 (Photo: Jim Berrow)

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FROM THE CHAIRMAN

I started my column in the August edition of the *Reporter* with an appeal for the donation of a copy of the 'missing' volume (1985:4) in the archive collection we hold at the Cadbury Research Library. Thanks to the good memory of Paul Tindall and a few other longstanding members of BIOS we have now been enlightened that there is in fact no missing volume: 1985:4 apparently never appeared! As Paul kindly pointed out to us, the following edition (1986:1) contains an apology for the non-appearance of its predecessor. To save the same question being asked again at some point in the future the Cadbury Research Library has inserted a note to that effect, positioned on the shelves in the appropriate space between the last publication of 1985 and the first of 1986. Case closed!

Also in the last edition I reminded members of our urgent need to recruit a new Casework Officer, and am pleased to be able to say that on this occasion the appeal has borne fruit. Longstanding BIOS member Nigel Stark kindly stepped forward to volunteer, and his appointment was ratified at the October meeting of Council. Nigel has served as a member of Council in the past, so has already gained some experience of the work of the Casework Officer during that time. He has also recently been appointed to serve as a member of the Organs Advisory Committee of the Church of England and as such will play a part in determining the conservation guidance disseminated to Diocesan Advisory Committees by the Church Buildings Council as well as in the recommendations made each year for the allocation of grants awarded by the Pilgrim Trust for the restoration and conservation of historic organs. We had hoped to be able to welcome Nigel in person at his first meeting but once again (as happened with this year's AGM) we were foiled by the train drivers - who announced a strike for the same day as our meeting - so we had to revert to holding the session by Zoom.

Whilst it is satisfying to have filled that vacancy, I must remind members that we are still in need of volunteers to fill the vacancy next year, when Tim Gray steps down as Co-Ordinator of our specially designated NPOR Fund, and also in 2023 when David Shepherd retires as our Membership Secretary. Both are positions which can be carried out (largely online) from home, though the Membership Secretary is encouraged to attend the three meetings of BIOS Council each year. If any member wishes to find out more about the duties and specific tasks involved if taking on either of these responsibilities, do please be in touch. We can only continue to run an efficient organisation if we have members who can, for a period of time, offer their time and talents to assist in the administration.

The recent Herschel Study Day in Bath, inspired and planned by David Shuker in conjunction with our Meetings Officer Richard Hobson, was a splendid occasion and a great success, much appreciated by those who attended: a full account is given elsewhere in this edition. How lovely it was for us to be together at a meeting for the

first time since the Bernard Edmonds Research Conference held at Birmingham in March 2020 (exactly a week before 'lockdown' was announced). I have to confess to being one of those who has never got around to performing any of Herschel's music, probably because the visual impression of the music in the score never seemed to arouse my interest. However, as a result of hearing Professor David Baker's excellent recital of some of Herschel's organ pieces (following on from his earlier talk about the music) and then some recordings of instrumental music from the symphonies which Richard Hobson played to us during his talk, I had to revise the impression made in my younger days. It just shows how much can depend on interpretation rather than simply 'playing the notes'. Performed with imagination and a bit of flair, the music really 'lifted off the page'.

One of the great delights of attending a BIOS Conference is being able to converse with other members. One of those who attended the Bath event was Dr Maggie Kilbey, who readers may recall has a special interest in barrel organs and who contributed an article entitled *The Early Use of Barrel Organs in the English Parish Church to BIOS Journal* No 43 (2019). Members will be interested to know that Dr Kilbey has now founded a website about surviving barrel organs, which can be found at www.barrel-organs.co.uk. As a result of our conversation the spreadsheet of organs from her site is now with the NPOR Editors. The information it contains provides corrections and updatings to some of the existing NPOR entries for barrel organs, as well as information on a few others which, as yet, do not appear on the Register. Some entries on the barrel organ website also have a link to a sound recording of that instrument, and we hope to include that information on the NPOR as well as the technical details of the organ.

The sad death of David Frostick earlier this year created a vacancy on the BIOS Committee for the Listing of Organs. In his own quiet way, David's perceptive contributions to the discussion and assessment of organs nominated for Listing were of immense value in helping members to come to a common mind. He had a tremendous eye for detail and was always scrupulously fair in his reasoning, never prejudging what the outcome would be. His presence is sadly missed, but in his place we have been pleased to welcome our member Owen Woods to fill the vacancy. Owen, who is on the staff of Harrison & Harrison, is much involved in research into the archives of the firm. He has already attended his first meeting of the Committee and we are pleased to have him as a member of the team.

By the time this edition of the *Reporter* lands on members' doormats our 'John Nicholson' Conference will have just taken place at St Swithun's Church, Worcester. Initial bookings are coming in well and it promises to be an interesting programme. Our publicity for events has been greatly helped by the routine sending out of 'mailchimp' reminders. If there are any members who are not currently on the list to receive these mailchimp emails, but would like to be included, please email me at chairman@bios.org.uk and we will ensure that you are included in future

circulations. Looking ahead to events in 2023, after the fallow years caused by Covid, it is the intention that the joint BIOS/LAO/RCO OrganFest will resume next summer. It is BIOS's turn to take the lead in this and members may be interested to know in advance that it is our intention to use Sheffield as the venue.

The BIOS Webstore has now become well established and makes a useful annual contribution to our income through sales of our own publications as well as from commission on the sales of externally produced products such as John Norman's *Organ Works* book and Andrew Hayden's annual *Star Organs of Britain* calendar. Members will be pleased to know that sales of Dr Berrow's book on John Nicholson (published by BIOS last summer) continue to go well, to the extent that Council has recently authorised the reprint of a further supply of copies. Dr Katie Pardee, our Publications Officer, has been very busy working on our next publication, which is to be Nicholas Plumley's long-awaited book on the history of the Walker firm. Council members were delighted to hear at our last meeting that the copy is currently with the book designer.

As we approach the end of the year you will find at the end of this copy the details of our traditional final event, the Christmas Lunch, always held at the Grosvenor Chapel in Mayfair. It has been a funny few years for us all, but 2022 has seen the encouraging signs of a return to the 'normal' life we all used to lead. I hope that there will be a good turnout at the lunch this year to celebrate our freedom to congregate again. Equally, I hope that the train drivers - having scuppered our AGM and the 'live' autumn meeting of BIOS Council - don't choose November 26th as the date for a future strike!

Happy Christmas to you all.

Alan Thurlow

FROM THE SECRETARY

BIOS Council (October 2022)

BIOS Council met by Zoom Video Conferencing on Saturday 8 October 2022. Ten members of Council were present. Nicholas Thistlethwaite (President) and John Norman (Webmaster) were also in attendance. Nigel Stark was co-opted to Council to serve as Casework Officer.

Council received Reports and from them noted the following:

Following the Governance Review, the following had been prepared and were approved by Council: a set of Job Descriptions for Officer roles, a Risk Register and a Safeguarding Policy.

It was agreed that the revised Constitution should be presented to the Annual General Meeting in 2023.

A possible BIOS 50th Anniversary Publication (2026) was discussed which would aim to capture the state of knowledge about the history of the British organ at a specific moment (2026) and would draw extensively on BIOS publications and research over the previous half-century as well as invite contributions.

An appeal for volunteers would be placed in the Chairman's column of the forthcoming *BIOS Reporter* viz a new NPOR Fund Coordinator in 2023 and a new Membership Secretary in 2024.

The National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF) had recently sought views on how it was supporting the UK's heritage and a BIOS response, prepared by our President, was submitted.

Subscriptions were around the level to be expected at this time of year. Investment income was very close to the norm for each fund.

The Membership database had been cleaned up, ensuring that only members with current subscriptions receive publications for the remainder of the year.

A software problem had delayed the availability of on-line booking for the Herschel Bath Conference but booking for the Nicholson Worcester event was now available.

Advertisements promoting the Nicholson book were continuing in Organ Magazines but thought would be given to featuring other BIOS publications.

The Day Conferences at Aylsham, Norfolk, Blandford Forum and Milton Abbey, Dorset had been abandoned because of the pandemic but it was still hoped that they could be pursued at some stage.

A reprint of the Nicholson book had been ordered and the Walker book was now with the book designer.

Four new applications for listing were approved.

Three organs had been referred to BIOS for Casework advice.

The NPOR continued to run smoothly.

The Archive Steering Committee was scheduled to meet again on 3 November 2022, the first physical meeting since November 2019.

There were plans for expanding the Historic Organs Sound Archive (HOSA) with new recordings.

Council meets next on Saturday 14 January 2023.

Melvin Hughes

MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

I am delighted to welcome the following new members to BIOS:

Mr Nicholas Robinson, MA, PGCE, Dip.ABRSM, [REDACTED]

Mr David Forde, [REDACTED]

Mr Jonathan Robert Mack, [REDACTED]

Mr Alexander Flood, [REDACTED]

Ms Anne De Graeve, [REDACTED]

We regret to note the recent death of Mr Robert J. Baker, of Otley, West Yorkshire, a BIOS member since 2003.

Please note the following changes to the 2021 Membership List:

Christopher Moore has moved to: [REDACTED]

Robin Walker is now at: [REDACTED]

A reminder about your forthcoming 2023 subscription will be sent out towards the end of November. Obviously, those who pay by Standing Order need take no further action, apart from checking that the amount of your Standing Order tallies with the amounts listed below:

Subscription amounts remain the same for 2023: £37 (£32 concessionary, £12 student under 30). For those outside the UK, rates are £10 higher respectively, to reflect the additional postage costs of publications. As always, you can pay in one of four ways: i) by

Standing Order (as many hundreds of members do), ii) by direct transfer into the BIOS bank account, whose details are: NatWest; sort code: 52-30-44 account number: 05097169 account name: The British Institute of Organ Studies – Registered Charity, iii) via the BIOS website: <http://www.bios.org.uk> using PayPal and iv) by sending me a cheque to my address given on the inside front cover. Please ‘Gift Aid’ your subscription if you are able and are not already doing so.

David Shepherd

COMMITTEE FOR THE LISTING OF HISTORIC ORGANS

Grade I organs are of exceptional interest

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

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

The following organs were awarded Historic Organ Certificates at the BIOS Council meeting on 8 October 2022.

Location	Builders and date	Comments	Grade
Stanstead St Margaret, St Mary the Virgin	William Allen c.1810	An unaltered organ with barrel organ mechanism and four original barrels of 1837 by John Gray.	I
SG12 8EG Christ Church, Eastbourne BN22 7NN	Willis 1880	Retains the original actions and tonal scheme within a decorated façade of unusual shape.	II*
St Edith, Monk's Kirby	Walker 1869	It survives in the church for which it was built but with minor changes.	II
CV23 0RE La Sainte Union, London	Pierre Schyven et Cie c.1880	Interesting technical and tonal design in the 19 th century Franco-Germanic tradition.	II
NW5 1RP			

Future Submission Dates:

09:00 Friday 25 November 2022 for meeting of Listing Committee on 5 January 2023

09:00 Friday 24 March 2023 for meeting of Listing Committee to be held on May 4 2023

Jeffrey Williams

NEWS FROM MEMBERS

A note from **Tony Bevington** announces the Second Edition of *Bevington & Sons, Victorian Organ Builders*, which charts the history of the firm, its people and many of the organs built over a period of 150 years. Generously illustrated, it includes many facts and figures relating to individual organs together with a comprehensive database for over 1,300 instruments, both past and present, although Stop Lists are not included.

The book, 480 pages, written by T, J, & R. Bevington is priced at £35, published in 2022 by The Choir Press and is available to order on Amazon.

Martin Renshaw reports that Pipe Up for Pipe Organs (PU4PO) is now a registered Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) Trust with an office in the same suite in Cowcross St near Farringdon station as other heritage societies including SAVE Britain's Heritage, Friends of Friendless Churches and the 20th Century Society. Its initial web-site is www.pipe-up.org.uk The five founding trustees have been augmented by a treasurer experienced in artistic management.

The organ made by Henry Jones of Kensington, c.1880, placed by PU4PO in London Bridge station in early July has been fully open for all to play since then. It is proving a huge attraction, with players from the most basic to top virtuosos such as Anna Lapwood, Douglas Tan and the top jazz keyboardist (and organist) Richard Michael. The hope is that it will be only the first of many such organs in public places; plans to place organs in other stations, museums, shopping centres and restaurants are being pursued, together with a showroom in Southwark.

Martin also adds a footnote to the article by David Shuker about the Holdich organ in Hazel Street school, Leicester. The pupil David mentions as now singing at Leicester cathedral was preceded by another pupil, who lived in a vicarage in Sawday Street, the next street to the school, but went away to be a chorister to St Paul's cathedral in 1955.

Members will be glad to know that **Andrew Hayden** has produced another calendar in the series *Star Organs of Britain* for 2023. Twelve English organs are featured in colour photographs. Calendars will be available mid-November onwards from the BIOS webstore UK Price £22.95, Europe £27.50 incl. P&P. Bulk order discounts are available for UK purchasers. For the Americas and Japan, please enquire at doubleopen32@uwclub.net.

MEETING REPORT

Celestial Harmonists – Music and the Herschels

Study Day at the Museum of Bath Architecture, Friday 30 September 2022

The year 2022 marks the bicentenary of the death of Sir William Herschel (1738-1822), remembered chiefly for his groundbreaking discoveries in astronomy. However, during the first half of his life Herschel was a professional musician and composer who came to Bath to take up the position of organist at the Octagon Chapel. This study day was part of a weekend of events marking the Herschel bicentenary and focused on the musical lives of William and Caroline Herschel.

Professor David Baker explored William Herschel's organ music in the context of his working life as a musician, notably as organist of Halifax Parish Church and the Octagon Chapel, Bath. Virtually all of the organ music is preserved in holograph manuscript sources at Edinburgh University and the British Library, and none of the pieces were ever published until a complete edition was completed in 2018 and available from Fitzjohn Music:

<https://www.impulse-music.co.uk/fitzjohnmusic/organ/>

The music was very much linked to the characteristic English organ of the period and it appears that Herschel probably learned his keyboard technique in England. He had clearly become familiar with forms and styles associated with the instrument and its usage which was quite distinct from the North German tradition. Herschel's '32 Voluntaries', written in the mid-1760s, were almost certainly used by Herschel for service work at Halifax and the two organ concertos were written for the opening of the Octagon Chapel organ in 1767. The opening included a performance of 'Messiah' and Herschel had assimilated the Handelian practice of performing organ concertos between the parts of the oratorio.

As a young man Herschel also began to write a 'Treatise on Music' which was never completed and only exists in manuscript. The surviving contents page indicates that the Treatise was an ambitious project based on an extensive musical correspondence between Herschel and his older brother Jacob who had returned to Hanover. The Treatise displays signs of Herschel's analytical approach to music which laid foundations for his later career as an innovative astronomer.

The story of the competition for the post of organist at Halifax Parish Church in 1766 has become the stuff of legend complete with a comedic German accent and a resourceful young organist keen to advance his career. The Swiss organ builder John Snetzler was in the ascendant and his characteristic organs were being installed throughout Britain as *David Shuker* recounted. The Halifax organ (NPOR D06788) was a large three-manual instrument installed in the teeth of opposition from some parishioners. Over the years the organ has been substantially rebuilt and only a few



Professor David Baker at the console of the c.1855 Telford organ in the
Countess of Huntingdon's chapel
(Photo: Courtney Fleming/Bath Preservation Trust)

ranks of Snetzler's pipework remain (NPOR N07207). Following the installation of the main organ in 1766, Snetzler was commissioned to build a chamber organ in 1770 for John Waterhouse of Well Head, then a Churchwarden of Halifax Parish Church. This chamber organ has moved around somewhat but is now in Halifax Minster (NPOR V00273). Following his success in the 1766 competition, William Herschel stayed only for a few months before moving to Bath where Snetzler had been commissioned to build an organ for the new Octagon Chapel (NPOR E01258). Herschel built up a choir from scratch in the Chapel aided by his sister Caroline and composed two concertos for the opening of the organ in 1767. Snetzler built a new organ for another Bath proprietary chapel – the Margaret Chapel in 1773 (NPOR N05925) – where William Herschel also became organist. Of the four organs that Snetzler built for Halifax and Bath only the chamber organ now in the Minster survives more or less intact. Snetzler had become successful as an organ builder by adapting his distinctive style to the requirements of the eighteenth-century British organ. The resourceful young organist had perhaps found a musical soulmate – albeit with the addition of some lead weights to add gravity, appropriately enough for the future astronomer.

The Museum of Bath Architecture (currently closed to the public) is in the former Countess of Huntingdon's Chapel in Bath and has a mid-nineteenth century organ (NPOR D05738) by Telford of Dublin which replaced an earlier organ by an unknown builder. *Professor David Baker* played a variety of organ pieces by William Herschel in a recital which displayed some of his more experimental modulations and styles.

William Herschel belongs to a group of eighteenth-century English composers who developed a style of symphonic writing that was somewhat distinct from the extraordinarily popular and influential 'Mannheim school' symphonies of Carl Stamitz and others with their characteristic crescendos. *Richard Hobson* noted that Herschel's early symphonies were written when he was leader of Charles Avison's orchestra in Newcastle and were in the 'symphonia di camera' style which, written for a string ensemble, resemble chamber music. The later symphonies were on a larger scale and incorporated woodwind and brass. Herschel's previous experience as director of a military band probably explains his relatively early use of clarinets in a symphony. Several of Herschel's Symphonies have been recorded and his Symphony No. 8 in C minor stands up favourably by comparison with some of Haydn's early works, although there is no indication that Herschel was familiar with the works of his contemporary.

Caroline Lucretia Herschel (1750-1848) was the younger sister of William Herschel. Despite having the benefit of some early musical education from her father alongside her younger brothers, Caroline was destined to become an unpaid and somewhat maltreated servant for her elder married sister. However, in 1772 she was taken to England by William and his younger brother Alexander where she

initially kept house for them in Bath. William had high hopes for his sister as a soloist for his Oratorio concerts and gave her both singing and keyboard lessons. Caroline did not disappoint and her course of study is laid out in her recently discovered music book, from which various extracts were discussed by **David Shuker**. Overcoming her lack of English and low self-esteem, Caroline was one of William's regular soloists during the late 1770s. As William's interest in astronomy gradually displaced his musical career, initially to Caroline's dismay, when it culminated in his discovery of Uranus in 1781 she had been drawn into the fold. Caroline and William moved to Slough in 1782 following his appointment as personal astronomer to George III. From that point on Caroline took great care to maintain the Herschel music archive as she developed her own career in astronomy, becoming renowned as a discoverer of new comets. She became the first woman to be a professional astronomer when she was awarded a salary in her own right in 1787. Caroline's musical career was short and intense but it undoubtedly developed her intellectual and organisational skills as she moved into astronomy.

This year also marks an auspicious bicentenary for organ building in Bath – William Sweetland (died 1902) was born in Devizes in 1822 and established his longstanding and successful business in Bath in the 1840s. Sweetland built about 300 organs of which a hundred or so survive. **Gordon Curtis** described some of Sweetland's surviving organs in Bath as examples of his typical and less typical instruments. Little is known of the early nineteenth-century organ building scene in the city but later builders, George Sherborne, the Clark brothers, and Griffen & Stroud are better documented with some of their instruments surviving.

By a coincidence which neatly tied the two threads of the study day together William Sweetland worked on the Snetzler organ in the Octagon chapel, probably adding the Swell and certainly a Vox Humana and Tremulant. On closure of the chapel in 1895 the organ was set up in the Freemasons' Hall. It was advertised for sale three years later and, no buyer being found, was broken up.

The study day was attended by twenty-one delegates who relished the opportunity to participate in a BIOS meeting 'in the flesh' for the first time since the Covid pandemic. Additionally, the exceptionally well-presented and informative exhibits of the Museum of Bath Architecture provided an appropriate backdrop to the proceedings.

David Shuker

THE EARLY HISTORY OF THE ORGAN AT ST NICHOLAS, NEWCASTLE

PAUL TINDALL

Little serious study has been made of this important church (which was elevated to Cathedral status in 1882) since 1932 when an extensive article was published by the Society of Antiquaries of Newcastle.¹ Reproduced with the article² is this fine view of the interior, by Ralph Waters junior, dated 9 August 1783.

The date is fortunate, because it reproduces the state of the building before the wide-ranging alterations carried out by David Stephenson and William Newton between



View of the interior of St Nicholas, Newcastle, by Ralph Waters jnr. 1783

1783-87, at which point the organ was turned round on the screen. As can be seen, before that the choir stalls and pulpit were in the nave, and presumably the choir was not used for services. The organ itself was built c.1676, when the Common Council of Newcastle contributed £300 for it.³ There is no early evidence of the builder. Leffler⁴ says 'Organ said to have been built by Father Schmidt, but is not in any way like Father Schmidt's work either as to composition of Stops, tone or Design, but in all these particulars is very much like Renatus Harris.' This would seem indeed to be the case: as Leffler also remarks, the two, very different, fronts resemble Harris's at St Sepulchre and St Andrew, Holborn. The Common Council

paid for a Trumpet stop in 1699, and £200 to finish the 'back front' in 1710,⁵ but the only person consulted by name in 1707, 1709 and 1711 was 'Mr Smith',⁶ probably Gerard, who built an organ at Sedgfield in 1708.⁷ Charles Avison became organist in 1736, and in mid-1749 he asked the Common Council to pay 'Bridges' (Richard Bridge) to make repairs, adding a 'swell stop', 'a stop now universally esteemed and made use of in most capital towns.'⁸ What this could mean is slightly obscure, though it may be Avison's wording for public consumption: the cost of the work was £160,⁹ which would probably pay for the whole five-stop Swell of only 32 notes, fiddle G to d. Harris's organ may already have possessed an Echo division. Bridge was already on the spot, working at St John's church nearby and also at Durham in November 1748 and 1750:¹⁰ his work at St Nicholas was completed in November 1750.¹¹ Leffler says further 'repair'd about 1768 by Schnetzler.' The organist Avison was well acquainted with William Herschel, who had been living in Sunderland since 1760, and led the band for Avison's subscription concerts in Newcastle.¹² In 1765 Herschel became, famously, the first player of Snetzler's instrument at St John Baptist, Halifax: Snetzler carried out repairs at Durham in 1765, and at Sedgfield and Auckland Castle in 1766.

The later history of this organ is outlined in Hopkins and Rimbault,¹³ who seem in this case to be quite well informed. Thomas Ions the Newcastle organist was a subscriber. They do, however, say that the Swell was constructed by Snetzler, and that it had a Dulciana. This seems unlikely. Not only is there no trace of substantial payment to him in the Common Council minutes, but Leffler does not mention a Dulciana, and also says that the Swell goes up only to d: Snetzler's church compasses were habitually two notes higher. Sperling agrees with Leffler in having an Open Diapason rather than a Dulciana, and it seems most likely that Snetzler's work consisted of repairs, as Leffler says. Although neither Hopkins and Rimbault nor Leffler mention it, John Donaldson was paid in 1784-7,¹⁴ presumably for the operation of the turning the organ round on the screen, which was part of the major church remodelling of those years. Donaldson is thought to have been associated with Snetzler in some way, and certainly succeeded to some of his work in the north.

Hopkins and Rimbault continue the story: Wood, Small & Co. extended the manuals to f and added a manual double diapason and pedals in 1814. In 1839 their successor James Bruce carried the Swell down an octave, transferred the Double Diapason to a new pedal chest, and added three couplers. James Nicholson carried out a further rebuild in 1845, cutting the case through the centre to make room for a three stop pedal windchest and altering the Swell, with a new, larger box. In 1858 he replaced the great windchest and made various other repairs and alterations.¹⁵

It is now time to consider the existing cases, which fortunately survived the replacement of the organ in 1881-91.¹⁶ Mackenzie¹⁷ says that they are mahogany, but this is a mistake: the wood is not known to have been used for organ cases in



St Nicholas, Newcastle. Main case by Renatus Harris, enlarged by R.J. Johnson.
(Photo: Paul Tindall)

England until the early 1720s, when high taxes on its import were removed. The architects Gilbert Scott (1811-78), and then R.J. Johnson (1832-92) a scholarly pupil of his, executed a complete re-furnishing of the new cathedral with woodwork of high quality, beginning in 1866. The new, much larger, organ by T.C. Lewis & Co. was begun in 1881, and built in stages until 1891. The first part, opened in January 1882, was arranged in the north transept, but had no case.¹⁹ In April 1883 the arms manufacturer Sir William Armstrong was mentioned as having given £500 for 'the organ screen,' but work on finishing the furnishings was still under discussion, John Oldrid Scott and 'a local gentleman', (presumably Johnson), having expressed an interest.¹⁹ When the organ was finally completed in 1891, the report said that the case, restored (and, of course enlarged with two outer towers) by R.J. Johnson had been re-erected in 1883.²⁰

The 'chair case' which is firmly attached to the main front of Harris's case is puzzling. It can't be from before 1783, because the view in the painting of that year is of the console side, where one would expect a chair case to be. It has sometimes been suggested that it is part of Johnson's remodelling, but there is no specific mention in any reports. Also, the style is clearly late eighteenth century, and it's unclear why any scholarly architect would make it so. It is, in fact, very similar to a number of cases of the 1790s, such as Chatham by Samuel Green and St Swithun, Worcester by William Gray (see back cover), both of 1795. Could it therefore be a product of John Donaldson's work in the mid-1780s, when the organ was turned round on the screen? It doesn't look like any known Snetzler case, and his work in 1768 is not mentioned in the Common Council books, whereas Donaldson is.²¹

References

¹ Honeyman, H.L. and Wake, T, 'The Cathedral church of St. Nicholas, Newcastle upon Tyne', *Archeologia Aeliana*, Vol. 9, Fourth Series, Newcastle 1932, 96-193

² Plate XIII

³ Brand, John, *The History and Antiquities of the Town and County of Newcastle upon Tyne*, London, B. White & Son and T.I. Egerton 1789, Volume 1, 268, quoting Common Council minutes

⁴ *The Leffler Manuscript*. Facsimile Edition with Introduction by Peter Williams, Reigate, BIOS 2010, 49. The writer's entry comes from after 1795, since he mentions Thomas Thompson, who became organist in that year, and certainly before the extensive work by Wood, Small & Co. in 1814.

⁵ Ibid

⁶ Roz Southey, *Commercial music-making in 18th century North-East England: A Pale Reflection of London?*, unpub. PhD thesis, University of Newcastle 2001, Vol. 1, 31, quoting Common Council minutes

⁷ Buckingham records that he signed and dated it in the soundboard. L.S. Barnard, 'Buckingham's Travels,' *The Organ* Vol. LII No. 207 (1973), 106

- ⁸ Southey, Roz, Maddison, Margaret and Hughes, David. *The Ingenious Mr Avison*, Newcastle, Tyne Bridge Publishing 2009, 62, quoting Common Council minutes
- ⁹ Brand, John. op.cit. Vol. 1, 109
- ¹⁰ Hird, Richard and Lancelot, James. *Durham Cathedral Organs*, Durham, The Dean & Chapter 1991, 2nd edition 2014, 16
- ¹¹ Southey et al. op.cit 2009, 62
- ¹² *ibid*, 93-94
- ¹³ Hopkins, E.J. and Rimbault, E.F. *The Organ, its History and Construction*, 1st edition, London, Robert Cocks & Co. 1855, part 2, 525-6
- ¹⁴ Southey 2001, Volume 1 195-6, quoting the Restoration Committee report, Newcastle Record Office MS EP86/120
- ¹⁵ *Newcastle Courant*, 28 May 1858, which repeats the older history from Hopkins and Rimbault
- ¹⁶ The insides of the organ were sold to Holy Trinity, Stockton on Tees for £50, and rebuilt there by Harrison for £250. *Newcastle Journal*, 14 December 1881. When the organ was scrapped in the 1980s a small amount of old pipework was saved by BIOS and is now in storage with Goetze & Gwynn.
- ¹⁷ Mackenzie, Eneas. *A Descriptive and Historical Account of the Town and City of Newcastle upon Tyne*, Newcastle, Mackenzie & Dent 1827, Vol. 1, 251
- ¹⁸ *Newcastle Journal*, 9 December 1881 and 9 January 1882. It then had three manuals and fifty stops, with the Solo prepared for.
- ¹⁹ *Newcastle Courant*, 20 April 1883. Report of a meeting of the Restoration Committee. The plans for the Choir were agreed in December 1883, and mainly finished by 1887, but the rood screen did not materialise until the following year. *Newcastle Daily Chronicle*, 6 December 1888.
- ²⁰ *Newcastle Daily Chronicle*, 9 May 1891. There is a specification in *Musical Standard* 1399, 23 May 1891: four manuals and 57 speaking stops.
- ²¹ Southey 2001, Vol. 1, 195, reports of the Restoration Committee 1784-7, Newcastle RO MS EP86/120

DIGITAL COPIES OF THE REPORTER

Several members have enquired about getting their copies of the *Reporter* delivered electronically, rather than through the post. If you'd rather have it sent via email, please let me know at Publications@bios.org.uk

Katie Pardee
Publications Officer

REVIEW

John Garth. A Third Set of Six Sonatas op.5

Editor: David Patrick

Publisher: Fitzjohn Music £12.00 plus p&p from <https://www.impulsemusic.co.uk/fitzjohnmusic/>

John Garth (1721/2-1810), a composer active in the North East of England, left a sizeable corpus of compositions, including a set of six Organ Voluntaries, one of six cello concertos and five sets of six Sonatas for organ, harpsichord or piano forte with accompaniment for two violins and a cello. David Patrick has already published the set of six Sonatas with accompaniment op.2 as well as the set of six Organ Voluntaries op. 3.

Each of the Sonatas in this edition is in two movements. the first movement of each Sonata is a binary form Allegro in C time apart from nos. 1 in 3/4 and nos. 4 and 5 in 2/4. the second movement being respectively a Rondeau in 2/4, an Allegro ma non presto in quaver triplets in 3/4, Allegro con spirito in 3/4, Tempo di Minuetto with a Trio in 3/4 in nos. 4 and 5 and an Allegro moderato also in 3/4 in no. 6. Keys used are F, C, A minor, E flat, C minor and D, each movement being in the same key. Texture varies from two-part writing to solo writing against chords but mainly two-part writing predominates, sometimes at quite a distance between the voices. There is a rhythmic variety including duple to triple subdivisions within movements, but not too abruptly, so the movements flow freely. The second movement of Sonata 6 also has a section in demisemiquavers, almost the whole piece, including the internal repeats, being played through again from the Da Capo sign making this into a more substantial movement. Alberti basses feature as do extended arpeggios, requiring careful fingering. In the second movement of the second Sonata the composer has marked the division between the hands for the single note passages. Syncopated passages, quite brief, occur in some movements. In addition to the low As already mentioned, low B flats occur in the Sonata in E flat, needing thoughts as to how to accommodate the arpeggios without breaking the patterns.

The Sonatas, full of a galant charm with few surprises, will be enjoyable for player and listener with appropriate registration, but do seem more suited to stringed keyboard instruments, particularly no. 3 with its fast passages for crossed hands, sweeping arpeggios down to a low A and left hand quaver runs in octaves in both movements. Other Sonatas pose fewer technical challenges but need careful fingering and articulation. As with the Organ Voluntaries there is no registration marked, but as in other accompanied Sonatas, and also in keyboard Concertos, the keyboard part has the usual, frequently quite rapid, alternation between f and p, and occasional ornaments indicated, mainly tr and appoggiaturas with some written out grace notes indicating an inverted turn. There is an appearance in the second

movement of the second Sonata of the sign ||, a possible interpretation being discussed in the preface.

The preface gives brief information about the composer and the first edition of these Sonatas but there is no mention of the parts for the accompaniment; these tend to double the keyboard part and rarely add any independently essential material. The printing is clear with five or six systems to the page.

John Collins

CALL FOR PAPERS - RECENT RESEARCH IN ORGAN STUDIES

BERNARD EDMONDS RESEARCH CONFERENCE 2023

Proposals for papers are invited for the British Institute of Organ Studies Bernard Edmonds Recent Research Conference to take place on 25 February 2023, date and venue to be confirmed. BIOS Council considers this event to be a significant occasion in the annual programme, fundamental to BIOS's published aims. Its revival after a pause of three years is most welcome and will, we hope, be strongly supported by members.

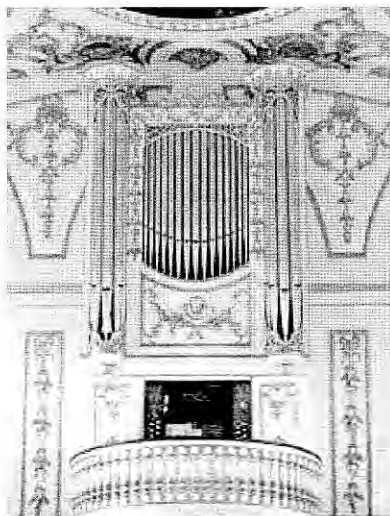
Proposals should present some recent research into aspects of organ history, including music and performance. A broad range of subjects is encouraged and papers on organs and organ builders, including British organ-builders working overseas and organs built in Britain by foreign organ-builders, will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

Papers should be around 25 minutes in length, and the use of musical and pictorial illustrations is encouraged. Students are encouraged to apply for short slots if they wish to present initial research findings.

Proposals will be reviewed by members of BIOS Council and the authors of successful proposals will be notified as soon as possible.

A summary proposal of 200 words, along with a brief biographical note, should be sent by 1 December 2022 if possible, but enquiries are welcome at any time.

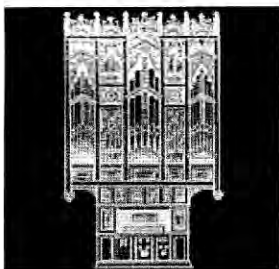
Richard Hobson, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]



The Making of an English Organ Builder: John Nicholson of Worcester

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FUTURE MEETINGS

The Making of the English Organ John Nicholson of Worcester

Saturday 5 November 2022, 10:30–16:00
St Swithun's church (entrance in Church Street), Worcester WR1 2RH

Please book through the BIOS website, or contact the meetings officer as soon as possible.

The BIOS Lunch

Saturday 26 November 12.30 for 1.00

The Grosvenor Chapel, South Audley Street, London W1

All members, wives, husbands, partners and friends are invited to gather again!

Please contact Richard Hobson, meetings officer, as soon as possible if you would like to reserve a place: a menu and payment details will then be sent.

Cost will be £40 for a gourmet three course lunch, including drinks, aperitif and canapés.

Bernard Edmonds Research Conference

Saturday 25 February 2023
(date and venue to be confirmed)

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Richard Hobson

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AIMS OF BIOS

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

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

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