

The Cornopean

EXETER & DISTRICT ORGANISTS' ASSOCIATION



EDOA Newsletter

May 2023

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James Lovatt, with John Nicklin, outside Worcester Cathedral

EDOA visit 2015 (PH)

Stop Press!

Subscription increase – see page 2

Members' Concert 27th May, applications – see page 19

Editor's letter

Greetings to all members and supporters of EDOA! After a 2-year stint as President, I have finally been released from my duties in this respect. It turns out, quite unexpectedly, that I like the quiet routine of assembling material for *The Cornopean*, and producing the end-result. Hopefully, I will have more time now to pursue research into an organ for home use, the full description of which cannot be uttered out loud in an association of organists who mostly play pipe organs. I am aware that a hornets' nest lurks close by; suffice to say, I have received friendly co-operation from several EDOA members, who have allowed me to try out their home instruments.



At Cheriton Fitzpaine Church

Events since the last edition of *The Cornopean* 4 months ago:

24th January – Members' visit to Exeter Cathedral, where we were able to play the cathedral organ. This event is always much appreciated and supported by our members, and we are very grateful to Tim Noon and his staff, who made us welcome at the console, and assisted us with registration etc.

1st February – Trials and Tribulations of the Village Organist, at Glenorchy URC, Exmouth.

15th February – Annual Quiz Evening at The Bridge Inn, Topsham; organised by Paula Taylor. We thank her for all the work she puts into this. Paula is already researching questions for next year's quiz.

15th March – Audio-visual presentation by Peter King, on the production of his DVD featuring the organ of Bath Abbey; *see page 10*.

22nd April – AGM at Thorverton Church, with recital by Andrew Millington; *see page 12*.

Piers Howell, 1st May 2023.

Members' Annual Subscriptions, from our Treasurer, Peter Johnson

Our subscription rate was last increased ten years ago in 2014 (from £13.50 to £15.00) and unfortunately the time has now arrived to adjust that rate once more.

My proposal to increase the basic annual rate to £20.00 and the Student/Household rate to £10.00 with effect from 1st January 2024 was adopted at our recent AGM.

The reasoning behind this adjustment relates largely to the "donations" we make to the host venues for our "Organ crawls", which had been set at £30.00 per visit (since 2013) until the committee decided last year to increase that figure to £40.00 per visit. However, some churches have recently been charging a specific fee rather than relying upon a donation and this is now usually for £50.00 or £60.00 per visit based upon an hourly rate.

Other costs have also continued to rise in recent years, whilst our income stream has remained virtually static, hence I make no apology for the need to make this adjustment.

Will you please make arrangements with your bank to amend your annual standing order accordingly and, if not already paying by that method, please give consideration to doing so? It makes life very much easier for our Membership Secretary if payments arrive automatically without the need for him to chase up for forgotten cheques etc. each New Year.

New Standing Orders can be set up quite easily through online banking or a printed Bankers Order form is available upon request from me.

Beneficiary details are: Name - Exeter & District Organists Association

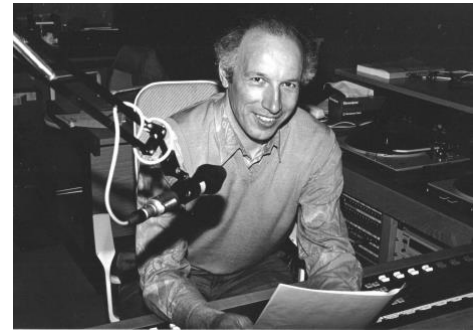
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Thank you for your cooperation in taking early action in this matter. Peter Johnson, Hon Treasurer.

President's letter

I can't say that becoming President of an Organists' Association at the age of 80 was part of the plan, but then most of the significant progressions in my life came out of the blue, which is why I reach this point as an organist and not as a biochemist - that was part of the plan, but is also another story.

In my professional broadcasting life the title 'producer' or 'director', associated with the acronym BBC, opened doors, and I can still remember the *frisson* that ran around a reception area when the receptionist called me out as Mr Carson of the CIA instead of my then employer, the COI.



Ian at the BBC

But as an organist, my title has been 'just the', thus the churchwarden when I complained that my promised contract had still not arrived after a decade - "but you're just the organist", or the Crematorium manager who was alerted by HR when proposing my redundancy that he had been employing me and my colleague illegally for a number of years - "but you know, you're just the organists". I sensed karma in the consequential amount of our ensuing redundancy payments and compensation. It makes me burn to observe where organists of whatever age, sex or orientation are not properly treated, and if we can make some advances in that respect during my year as President I shall feel it was worthwhile



Ian at Wellington Church, where he is organist. EDOA visit 2022 (PH)

'Can't be done.' I've spent my creative life getting around this door-closing statement. My admiration goes out to fellow-organists who demonstrate time and time again that the impossible can be done, and I would wish to credit the

patience and achievements of EDOA's members in the sometimes uphill struggle to gain the means to serve the church they love effectively. Potential here for some stories for the *Cornopean*?

'Pity they didn't - [sniff]'(add extra features on an organ). A phrase I've heard from the lips of anorak experts. It seems to me we should credit what we have inherited more, as well as the decisions of those who designed and paid for the organs we play, and that the EDOA might inaugurate a process of providing information about our instruments both in our churches for visitors to see, and on our website.

I was bowled over as a young child by a pre-war German 78 of Buxtehude being played - both the music and the organ. Decades later I can still reiterate what Mozart once said: -

"To my eyes and ears the organ will ever be the King of Instruments."

Ian Carson, April 2023



At St Mary's Church, Taunton 2022 (PH)

Father James Lovatt, Priest and Organist

David Oates writes:

With the passing of James the Association has lost a good and cheerful friend who was a great source of encouragement to us all.

When I rejoined 15 years ago, it was James with his engaging smile who greeted me warmly from among the crowd of otherwise complete strangers. Such was his support of all our activities.



Bristol visit 2006 (PH)

A particularly clear memory is of the visit to Llandaff Cathedral. Suddenly the huge space was filled with a full and arresting sound. "Who is it?" they asked. "Who is it?" they asked. It was James, playing the Healey Willan Chorale Prelude *Gelobt sei Gott – Good Christian men rejoice and sing* - with the tenor solo carefully placed by the Cathedral's assistant organist on their new organ's massive tuba stop. Quite unforgettable.

James played carefully chosen and rehearsed pieces on all our visits and his appreciation and encouragement of other people's efforts regularly showed. I do not recall a critical word. The nearest was following a rather over-enthusiastic performance which drew the

comment "I think this Church has a very loud organ."

With his broad smile, and assisted by a clerical collar, James was able to charm his way and achieve apparently instant access to organs far and wide – not least at Fano in Italy where for many years he spent his summer holidays with Angela.



With Bob Millington, Cambridge 2013 (PH)



Brighton Dome theatre organ, 2003 (PH)



James and Angela, EDOA Dublin visit 2007 (PH)

Lorna recalls the residential visit to Brighton which James organised in 2003. Having been the vicar of St George's Church there, he was able to obtain access to the huge organs of some large brick churches in Brighton and



Cambridge, punt trip 2013 (PH)

We had learned that when called up for his Army Reservist training in 1955, James had played for Sunday services at St Leonard's Church in the South West Norfolk village of Mundford, of which he had happy memories. With the help of the current vicar and organist we were able to arrange a surprise visit for him to play there. The penny dropped when he thought the churchyard gate looked familiar.

The organ is indeed memorable. A small 3-manual Harrison and Harrison of 1912 with 11 stops, 7 couplers and a historic organ certificate, perched – and played - on top of the rood screen. A beautiful and most attractive instrument.

“Father James” will live on in the open and welcoming spirit of our Association. Goodbye, dear friend.

David Oates

those at Christ's Hospital, Lancing College and Arundel. In a typical act of kindness he encouraged a newly-widowed Lorna to go and squeezed her in.

Lorna and I were pleased that James was able to spend a few days with us in Cambridge in 2018. Typically, having gone “for a short walk” we found he had already played on the very attractive Tickell organ at Little St Mary's, which some may remember from the Association's Cambridge visit.



Blenheim Palace, EDOA visit 2017 (PH)



James selecting stops at Truro Methodist Church, 2018 (PH)



Mundford Church, Norfolk (photo by David Oates)

Meet the King of Instruments!

Sunday 7th May, 3.30 pm

**St James' Church, Exeter.
EX4 7AH.**



Free Concert



Following a recent overhaul of the organ, this is an opportunity to hear the instrument put through its paces by organists Tom Salmon and Marco Bresolin with support from a vocal quartet.



The concert will also include a talk about the organ and a rare opportunity to see its inner workings from the comfort of your seat.

Desert Island Discs, with Michael “Pags” Pagliero

Desert Island Discs? To my mind a bit like asking which one of Wordsworth’s daffodils did I like best!

I see my task is to avoid choosing pieces that show my appreciation of the music itself but address what I would *really* like to hear in desert isolation and why! There will be a lot of lovely pieces omitted! For example I have therefore to discard the famous Toccata and fugue in D minor which has played so much a part of my life. I learnt it in 1955 by rote and could only play that and nothing else. Funnily enough I don’t like it as much these days. My Father and Uncle insisted I play it at their funerals. I have played it once in a recital given by the EDOA at Axminster but the epic occasion was in Antigua when I went to pick up a patient in my capacity of a repatriation doctor. I turned up for Eucharist at the Cathedral in St John’s, Antigua and received the customary welcome of all Anglican churches (other than in England!) to which I usually announce that back home in UK I am an organist in the hope they might offer to let me ‘have a go’ on theirs. On this occasion I was dragged up to the organ and the organist who asked me to play for the service. Fortunately I declined as the hymns turned out to be quite ‘racey’. Anyway “would I play a voluntary?” he asked. I chose the Toccata and Fugue. I was pleased to note that many folk were leaving the church through North, West and South doors. Phew! I thought! But when the final chord was played I looked round at about a hundred folk had stayed behind clapping enthusiastically. One little boy, about ten years old, asked if I would play the first ‘bit’ again. I said I would if he would help me and showed him the low D pedal and said keep your foot there and when I nod, press it! He did it perfectly and a very happy little boy went on his way!

Would I choose that piece as my desert disc with the memories it would bring? Absolutely not – I know every note in my mind and could play it in my head whenever the need arose.

No. 1 The Guy’s Hospital residents play 1964 Lyrics Dr. Roy Meadow, Music Dr. Michael Pagliero

My first choice will bring back the happy memories of playing the piano for the bawdy, post rugby songs, the singsongs in the Residents Bar after a long day in the operation theatre and the annual Residents play during my ten wonderful years in the Alma Mater. I turned ‘pro’! My fee? A row of ‘pints’ on the piano. The Disc is not published but I have my own copy which anybody can borrow.

No. 2 Pastoral by Cesar Franck

Why? Pure serendipity! When I was studying for finals I had a large reel to reel tape player to provide a background to hide extraneous interruptions. I chose Tchaikovsky’s 5th Symphony recorded from the Third programme. Day after day I played that wonderful piece and gained much comfort. Miraculously I passed my finals! However on the same programme following the symphony was Franck’s ‘Pastoral’. Nothing special I thought but no need to erase it and it stayed and stayed and I grew to love it. It is not played that often in my experience though I note Andrew Millington has played it twice in the Cathedral in the last decade. I have started to learn it but it has some very tricky fingering on the last two pages and I confess I have modified it slightly to cope with my shortcomings. The other thing is that it is played with a ‘French’ sound which surprised me as I had failed to recognise the two meanings of ‘pastoral’. I had in my mind Beethoven’s 6th symphony and employ flutes and horns to mimic farmyard and countryside sounds rather than reeds. I rather like it that way but maybe Franck would not approve! It is a piece of music I now find very special as it is open to liberal interpretation to give a pastoral mood in the religious sense. At times very busy and moody, at times very songful and peaceful. I like the way Andrew played it and if he has recorded it on disc I would choose that.



Pags, Wellington July 2022
donated photo

No. 3 Poulenc Organ Concerto

A lovely piece of music but its not what the music is but what it means to one. It has a special memory to me of the second heart transplant ever done in this country at Guy's Hospital. Minus the detail, the big problem in a transplant is rejection and this is avoided by suppressing immunity but that however puts a patient at risk for, without immunity, infection can supersede. So after a successful operation our patient was put in an isolation ward in sterile conditions and the only personnel admitted were dedicated staff of which I was one. Even Donald Ross who did the operation was not admitted. I was one of only two medics suitably masked and gowned up doing what we had to do but much of the time merely in attendance which allowed us to get to know our patient intimately. During this time I broached the subject of music to this local Bermondsey man and was surprised at the response. His favourite piece of music was the Poulenc. I would doubt that anybody else in the boroughs of Bermondsey or Southwark would have ever heard of Poulenc let alone name a piece of music he had written! I was delighted; but how could we provide it? A quick phone call to Harrods and they donated the player and the record. They were then gamma irradiated to sterilise them (record players don't do well in an autoclave) and the patient and I enjoyed many hours listening to that dramatic piece which had a mixed response from the nurses! How did the patient fare? Well he was fit enough to be able to be discharged to visit his ailing wife in a local nursing home but succumbed to a chest infection after two months. I had no qualms that operation was the correct course there being no other as his life was living hell; watching him eat and have to pause for breath between mouthfuls at mealtimes was depressing. He had no doubts when he agreed and he died having had two special months breathing comfortably knowing that he was pioneering a procedure that one day would save thousands.



Topsham April 2022, with President and treasurer

No. 4 Puccini's Gloria

Not a widely known or performed piece. I first sang in it in 1993 and have only heard it performed once since in St Matthias, Torquay a couple of years ago. Puccini composed the Mass as his graduation exercise from the Instituto Musicale Pacini. I was teaching in Saudi Arabia and reeling from the experience of worshipping an illegal religion and the lengths they go to make it so. In defiance the Anglo-American community performed it clandestinely in the American airbase in Jeddah. It was enjoyable to rehearse and it was a great success by a bunch of amateurs. It was a time of mixed emotions but underneath it all strengthened my own faith and this piece now allows me to relive those times and also to venerate one of the famed composers from my family's former homeland.

No. 5 Mozart's Horn Concerto

Mozart along with Mendelssohn never composed a piece of music that I didn't enjoy and the choice facing me as to what to take with me to this damned island is immense! I am not a po-faced musician and the light hearted always appeals. The Horn itself has a measure of hilarity even when played seriously but it was taken to new heights by Michael Flanders and Donald Swann in their rendition of this concerto. Brilliantly sung by Flanders and expertly played by Swann I suspect that I would play it so often that the old fashioned needle that I am bound to be afforded would in time wear out!

I once had a whim and I had to obey it
To buy a French Horn in a second-hand shop;
I polished it up and I started to play it
In spite of the neighbours who begged me to stop.....

No. 6 Gershwin Rhapsody in blue

I have alluded to my love of 'sing-songs' all my life and would want to relive the experience in some way on this desert beach. Which to my mind would be a medley of the songs I played in the Guy's hospital residents bar that include the likes of

It ain't necessarily so

It ain't necessarily so

The things that you're liable

To read in the Bible

It ain't necessarily so.....!

I have been known to play this quietly following the Pentecostal sermon on 'Doubting Thomas' but nobody gets the joke! They were part of a fantastic repertoire to my mind of one of the most talented composers ever and the highlight is this Rhapsody with its unique moods, harmonies and drama.

No. 7 Tchaikovsky 1812 overture

Why such a hackneyed piece? I reject that comment! It is one of the finest examples to my mind of a picture created with music. It is brim full of drama, melancholy, triumph, joy and at times wistful and is second to none in my book. However the main reason for the choice is my lovely wife, Anne with whom I shared very little in common! Why? 'Je ne sais qua'! I loved sport: she cared less. I loved classical music: she preferred 'musicals'. She was an excellent artist in many forms; I was not. However over fifty five wonderful years we have merged. I introduced her to golf and she ended up as a fine player with an extremely low handicap. We learnt to sail together. I have taken up watercolours with her support and love it. On the musical front we found opera as a convenient middle ground that we share. However in the early days of our courtship in London the Albert Hall put on Sunday evening concerts to which I would invite her. The response was "Ok, if I must! I will come as long as they play the 1812 with real cannons." Fortunately, they often, did! My penance was to attend 'Phantom', 'Les Mis', 'Cats' et al. which actually weren't really that arduous. Music is now, I am pleased to tell is part of our 'broad church'.

No. 8 The Handel's Messiah, Amen Chorus

is with respect to another lovely lady - my Mum and my fondest memory is our annual visit to the Albert hall on a Good Friday for the full length Messiah in the early days under the baton of Sir Malcolm Sergeant. We never missed. Now my mother is buried in Middlesex and while I am not a fan of graveyards I try to get to hear the Messiah in some way every Good Friday as her memorial. So number eight for me will be a disc that includes the wonderful 'Amen Chorus.'

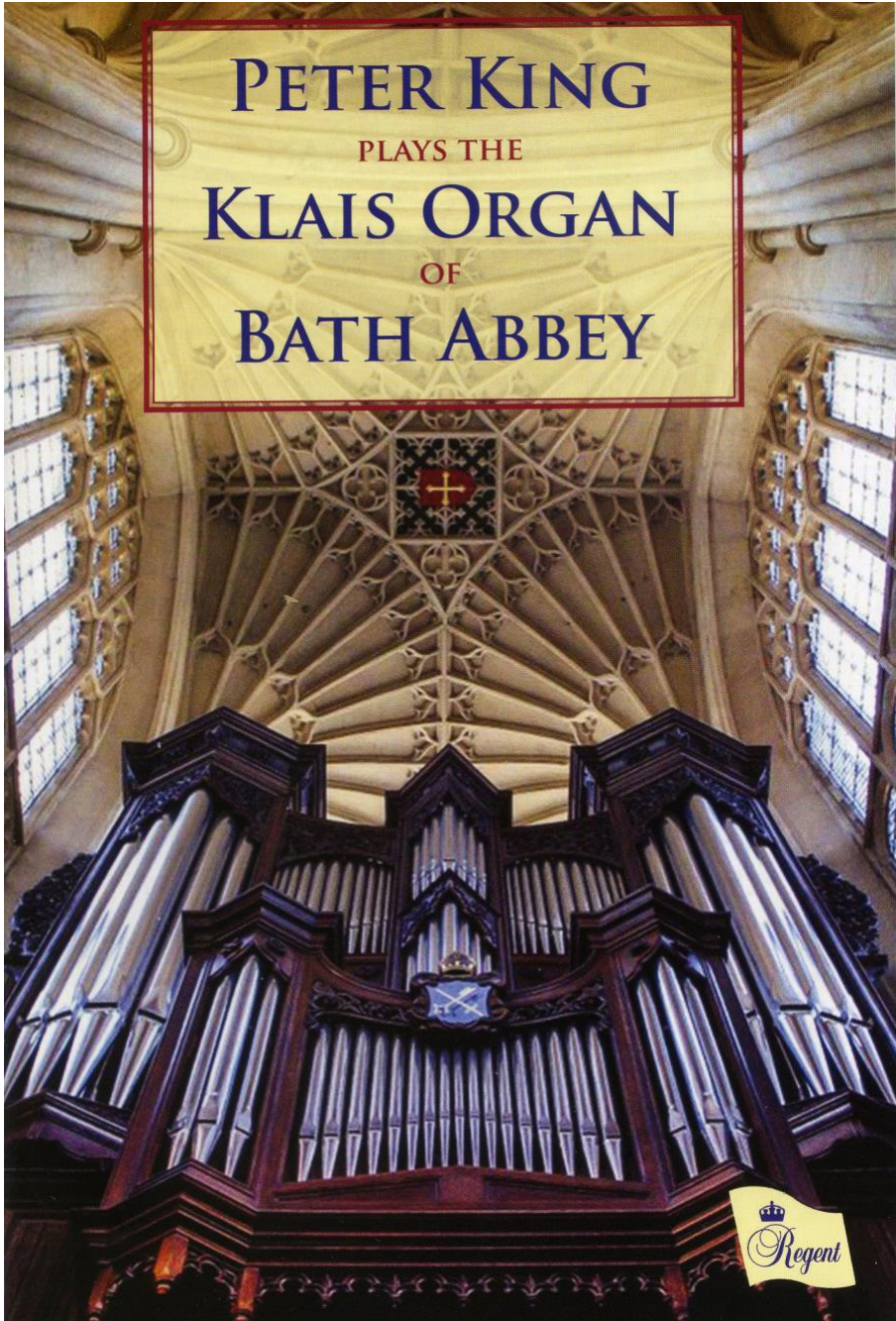
Finally,

I have to choose a book to go with Shakespeare and the Bible. When we came to Devon from the Metropolis in the seventies we were determined to 'talk the talk', driven on by the popular TV show "The Good life" and put our two acres to great use with a couple of pigs, five sheep, a goat and copious veg. plots with the indispensable help of a superb book on how to do it. There must be surely a similar publication for living in the wild – I will choose that.

As for a luxury,

I doubt a piano would stand the constant heat for long so I would go for a couple of pencils, a rubber, sharpener and an inexhaustible supply of paper but then if I ran out I could do some sand painting.

Michael Pagliero, February 2023



PETER KING
PLAYS THE
KLAIS ORGAN
OF
BATH ABBEY



Peter King plays the Klais Organ of Bath Abbey

Members gathered at St Margaret's Church, Topsham on Wednesday 15th March, to hear an audio-visual talk and demonstration by Peter King, about the making of a DVD of the Klais organ at Bath Abbey. Peter was the prime mover in the installation of the organ in 1997.

The video showed the quality of the work, woodwork and pipework, which is of course invisible to the general punter. We were shown a picture of a Doppel Flute, which I had never realised has two mouths; obvious when you think about it!

The editor was fortunate enough to be able to attend the opening day in October 1997, which included a service of dedication and organ recital. In July 2019, Peter led a visit of EDOA members to Bath, which culminated in members being able to play the organ.



Peter at Crediton Church, 2020 (PH)

Bath Abbey organ was built by Johannes Klais of Bonn in 1997 and stands in the North Transept. It incorporates some pipework from earlier instruments, as well as the fine case of 1914 designed by Sir Thomas Jackson. The instrument has 62 stops, distributed between 4 manuals and pedals (32'). Regularly featured as a concert instrument at the Bath International Festival and the Bath Mozartfest, as well as on BBC Radio 3, it is considered by many to be amongst the finest organs in the country. The instrument is tuned and maintained by Tony Cawston.

Specification

Pedal (C – g ¹)		I Positive (C – c ⁴)		IV Solo (C – c ⁴)	
Double Open Diapason	32	Stopped Diapason	8	Stopped Diapason	8
Open Diapason	16	Principal	4	Salicional	8
Open Wood	16	Chimney Flute	4	Unda Maris	8
Bourdon	16	Fifteenth	2	Flauto Traverso	4
Violone	16	Sesquialtera	II	Gemshorn	4
Principal	8	Mixture	IV	Nazard	2½
Bass Flute	8	Crumhorn	8	Piccolo	2
Cello	8	Tremulant		Tierce	1½
Fifteenth	4			Larigot	1½
Mixture	IV	Sw/Pos So/Pos		Cor Anglais	16
Contra Posaune	32			Trompette	8
Trombone	16	II Great (C – c⁴)		Clarinet	8
Posaune	16	Double Open Diapason	16	Tuba Mirabilis	8
Clarion	8	Open Diapason	8		
		Doppel Flute	8		
Pos/Pd Gt/Pd Sw/Pd So/Pd		Gamba	8	Tremulant	
		Principal	4		
III Swell (C – c⁴)		Open Flute	4	Sub Octave	
Bourdon	16	Twelfth	2½	Octave	
Open Diapason	8	Fifteenth	2		
Lieblich Gedackt	8	Full Mixture	IV		
Viola da Gamba	8	Sharp Mixture	III	Cymbelstern	
Voix Celeste	8	Cornet	V	Glockenspiel (bells)	
Principal	4	Double Trumpet	16		
Tapered Flute	4	Posaune	8		
Flageolet	2	Clarion	4	Full complement of pistons, multi-channel, sequencer, etc.	
Mixture	V				
Oboe	8	Pos/Gt Sw/Gt So/Gt			
Vox Humana	8				
Contra Fagotto	16				
Trumpet	8				
Clarion	4				
Tremulant					
Sub Octave					
So/Sw					

Peter used the projection equipment to play some pieces from the DVD:

J S Bach, 7 Christmas chorale preludes from the Orgelbüchlein

Mendelssohn, Prelude and Fugue in E minor

Vierne, Naïades

Eben, Moto Ostinato from Sunday Music

Boëly, Fantaisie and Fugue in B flat

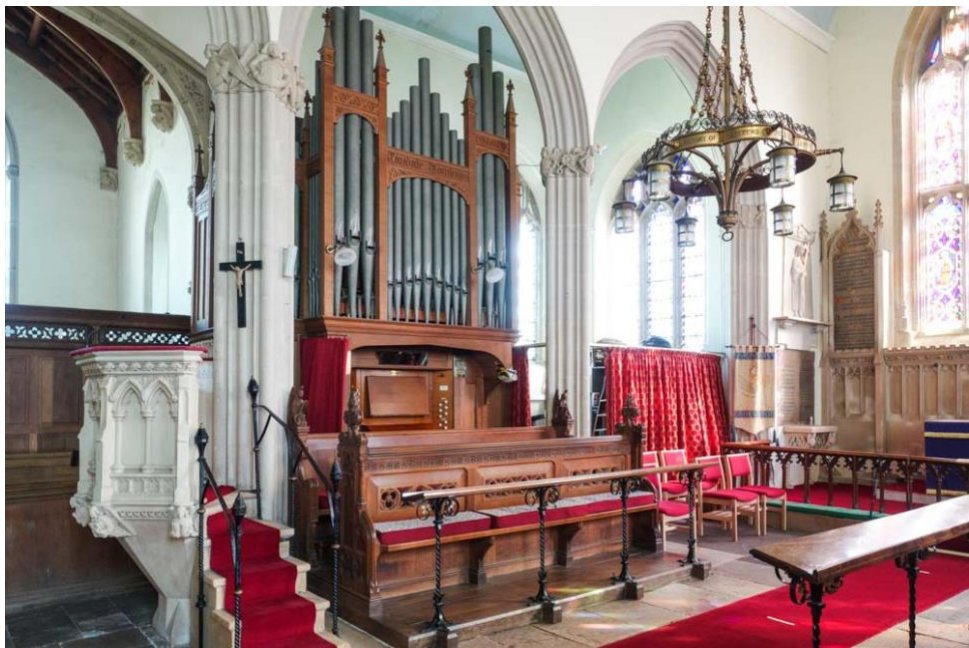
Saint-Saëns, Fantaisie in E flat

Sadly, there was insufficient time to play Reubke's Sonata on the 94th Psalm.

On the Topsham organ, Peter played "Overture in D minor", and ended with a charming organ arrangement of Poulenc's Homage to Edith Piaf.



Thorverton Church



The Rest Cartwright 1912/Eustace and Alldridge 1977 organ at Thorverton Church
(photos by PH)

Andrew Millington, organ recital at Thorverton Church

If members of EDOA were invited to attend an AGM, and promised the excitement of just listening to reports and resolutions, how many do you think might turn up? Not many, would be the editor's guess.

The EDOA, however, does things differently. At our AGM on 24th April, 2023, we offered a triple inducement. Firstly, the opportunity to play the fine 2-manual Rest Cartwright 1912/Eustace and Alldridge 1977 "country" organ at Thorverton Church; as regular members will know, we never pass up the opportunity to "have a go". Who would have thought it, in an Association of Organists?

There then followed a half-hour recital by Andrew Millington, surely the main attraction of the day! Andrew's programme was as follows:

J.S. Bach, Sinfonia, Cantata number 29

Andrew Millington, Elegy in memoriam
Malcolm Walker

(Malcolm was President and Secretary of EDOA. This was the world premiere; the piece will be published later in 2023 in the Devon Organ Book)

G. F. Handel, Organ Concerto Op. 4 No. 5 in F

Joseph Haydn, 3 Pieces for Musical Clocks

Louis Vierne, Lied

S. S. Wesley, Choral Song and Fugue

Many thanks, Andrew!

After the committee had gone into a short huddle to discuss future events, the AGM followed, which was over in a brief 30 minutes. The editor was released from his 2-year presidency, and Ian Carson was elected as our new president. As outgoing president, it transpired that there was insufficient room in the 6-allowed spaces on the committee for "ordinary" committee members, so he was hurriedly co-opted as newsletter editor. Gripping stuff!



Serving counter at the Red Ruby (photos by PH)



Andrew at the Thorverton console



The third inducement was the social lunch at the Red Ruby restaurant at the garden centre just outside the village. Several members attended, and enjoyed the social contact that is such an important part of life in EDOA.

Finally, we express our gratitude to the authorities at Thorverton Church, for hosting our AGM once again.

The organ at Nairobi Cathedral

Following the feature in the last issue of The Cornopean, Michael Farley has sent some more photos about this project. At the end of January 2023, organ consultant Paul Hale visited to help with the tonal finishing. After a two-day safari for staff to the Equator and the Mount Kenya area, staff returned to the UK in mid-February.



Empty casework, awaiting return of the pipes
(photos provided by Michael Farley)

The photos portray a wonderful story of restoration which has resulted in something that will be really useful to a large number of people. We see a joyous time, with enthusiastic young people crowding round the console.

Michael's previous description of Nairobi Cathedral was of a building seating about 1,500, filling to capacity for the main service every Sunday morning. 10 services on a Sunday include Choral Evensong with traditional hymns and anthems; also services with worship songs with drums, guitars and synthesisers. All appear to be quite happy to worship together. This account of regular attendance is quite humbling for anyone who has anything to do with church matters in the UK ...

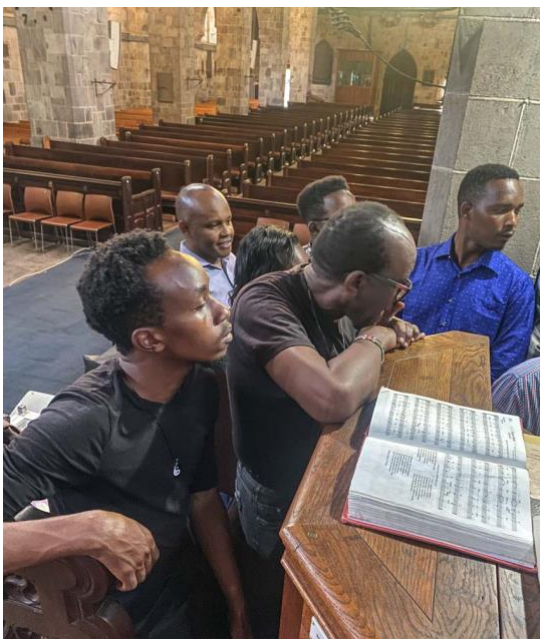




Paul Hale demonstrating the organ



The finished organ





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Well-earned break at The Equator

The organ at London Bridge Station (part 2)

Music in many forms at Railway stations is becoming the new norm from buskers to grand pianos, the most notorious at St Pancras International where Joe Public is welcome to tinkle the ivories to their heart's content to a bewildered, surprised but usually more often than not approving audience of commuters as they traverse London. Another, presently appearing on national television, is at Leeds Central where currently there has been a clandestine appraisal by Lang Lang (hiding in the shadows) to choose a candidate to appear at the Royal Festival Hall! This is a three line whip to all of you to view this as the winner turned out to be a lovely autistic schoolgirl where the brilliance of her performance combined with her disability brought tears to my eyes! It is entitled 'The Piano'.

There are other pianos dotted around suburban London stations but all have been upstaged by the installation of a 250 pipe organ at London Bridge Main line station on July 17, 2022. The brilliant Anna Lapwood, Director of music at Pembroke College, Cambridge, who had heard of the occasion 'rocked up' as Martin Renshaw put it, he being the Organ restorer and founder of 'Pipe up for Pipe organs'. She was, of course, invited to play and did so for fully five minutes and at one point was joined by an Italian lady Security officer (but former opera singer) who 'happened by' and wooed a surprise crowd. This can be viewed on 'you tube'.

As parish churches close across the country, many historic organs are left abandoned and in need of a new home. 'Pipe Up for Pipe Organs' works to rescue threatened pipe organs by restoring them in situ or rehoming them. This lucky example was saved from United Reformed Church in Whetstone, north London. It was made around 1880 and has a swell box and a full range of pedal pipes (technical organ-type chat), powered by a 30-note-and-pedal keyboard.

The idea of placing a new or second-hand piano on a station has been around since about 2010. Now, many stations in London – suburban stations as well as large London termini – have one which provides a chance for the general public to play, or at least experiment.



Anna Lapwood at London Bridge Station



London Bridge Station has taken the concept one stage further. It does not have a piano on the concourse, instead, it has a small church organ. By rebuilding the station a few years back, a street that used to run under the station has been incorporated into the new ground-level concourse. Known as Stainer Street, it runs from St Thomas Street to Tooley Street and is now a shortcut for pedestrians and a rat-run to Guy's, my old hospital. The organ has been installed against the old brick wall of what was once the southern end of a public street.

The organ was built originally by Henry Jones, a London organ builder in the mid-19th century. As church organs go, this one is quite small and compact – which is ideal for installing on a station where space is limited due to the fact that the concourse is intended to provide access for passengers. There is just one

keyboard and only a few stops. However, it is electrically powered with a blower and it sits ready for anyone to use it. There is, in addition, a fully functioning set of foot pedals.

According to the Website, Henry Jones built a large number of organs, mostly of small to moderate size, but well-built and voiced. Born on 19 May 1822 at Folkestone, the son of Pilcher Jones, a cabinet maker, he was one of five children. At sixteen, he was apprenticed to the organ builder Joseph Walker whose Francis Street works were situated in Tottenham Court Road. By 1845 he had set out on his own and was working at No 10 Pond Place in Brompton, west London. An example of his work is to be found at the church of All Saints, South Wimbledon. Henry Jones died on 18 May 1900 and is buried in the family



grave at the large Brompton Cemetery.

The Henry Jones Organ at London Bridge Station is the first organ in the UK to be placed on a station concourse and made available

for everyone to use. The 250-pipe instrument was saved from the United Reformed Church at Whetstone, in north London, and originally installed in 1880. The organ was installed at London Bridge Station and officially opened to the public on 30 July 2022.

As parish churches close across the country, many historic organs are left abandoned and in need of a new home. The organisation Pipe Up for Pipe Organs works to rescue threatened pipe organs by restoring them in situ or rehoming them.

The organ is situated 'underneath the arches' (featured in the Gang show) over which the tracks of the Southern line run. It provides a large chamber with an ideal acoustic and fortunately the rumble of overhead trains is not heard. I imagine the electricity for the blower is courtesy of British rail but to economise there is a timer for half an hour so may cut out mid way through a piece. There is a simple on-switch to the side. Although a very busy station this part is actually fairly quiet as it is an entrance /exit into Tooley street which is a minor cut through to Guy's Hospital. Previous players have left various old and photo copies of Music for those who need to sight read.

When I arrived there was one 'player' with zero ability just making discordant 'noises' but happy as a 'sandboy' so to do. He readily gave up the bench when I showed an interest. As I started, a few folk were idly walking by but within a couple of minutes I had an audience of about thirty who rewarded me with a round of applause! Not very versatile, but ideal in its former role as an accompaniment to worship and a massive privilege for me to be a tiny part of its renewed contribution to the heritage of our beloved instrument. Certainly a candidate for our next London Organ crawl wouldn't you say and we must keep our eyes peeled to greet new ones as they appear - Exeter St David's?

Mike Pagliero



Pags at London Bridge Station
(photos provided by MP)

Members' Concert at St Margaret's Church, Topsham, Saturday 27th May

The organiser, Michael Pagliero writes: Dear Members, our [then] President, Piers, introduced a new meeting last summer to address the fact that on our many organ visits over the years, we might only get three or four minutes actual playing time depending on how many were in the party. It was held at Budleigh Salterton P.C. and was a great success! It was limited to eight players with two subsequently having to drop out. Each of us played a longer than usual piece which they had well practised prior to the meeting, introducing their reasons for choosing it and discussing it with each other after each performance. The audience were the other players although it was open to other EDOA members to attend. A few did. There were also odd tourists popping into the church and delighted to be inadvertently serenaded! Consequently we intend to run another such concert at the lovely organ at St Margaret's Topsham on Saturday, May 27th May this year.



(photos by PH)

The day will commence at 11.00 am onward to allow time for preparation and registration of the instrument. That should give each member about twenty minutes. We will have a communal lunch break in a local hostelry and reconvene at 2.00 pm for the 'concert' stressing that it is NOT a recital as such, just a gathering of like-minded enthusiasts having a bit of fun! We are forced to limit numbers to an absolute maximum of eight and, to be fair, places will be awarded on a first come, first served basis but placing last years contributors at the back of the queue! If it proves to be over subscribed I would be delighted to arrange a second one later in the year. Churches are expensive to run and ordinarily the EDOA gives an appropriate donation whenever we visit. In this case, however, as it is exclusive to the participants, the cost should not fall on to the EDOA total membership and there will, therefore, be an appropriate charge to participants possibly between £5 and £10 a head (under discussion).

Please submit your application direct to Paula.



FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Saturday 27th May St. Margaret's Church, Topsham, Members' Concert.
Organised by Michael Pagliero. See previous page for more details.

Sunday 25th June, President's Evening at St Peter's Church, Budleigh Salterton.
Isca Voices (ex-Exeter Cathedral girl choristers) directed by Stephen Tanner. "Bring and share"
eats for members and their guests afterwards. **Further details to follow**

Saturday 8th July Visit to Milton Abbey and Dorchester, organised by Andrew Millington:

10.00 St. Mary's Dorchester (Peter Collins organ)

11:00 St. Peter's Dorchester (Conacher organ), including coffee etc

Lunch in Dorchester, then drive to Milton Abbey

14:30 Milton Abbey (Gray and Davison organ)

16.15 approx, St Mary's, Winterborne Stickland (Buckingham organ), including tea

Saturday 16th September Visit to the Renatus Organ Works at Bideford, organised by Neil Page. The trip will include organ visits in North Devon.

Saturday 28th October Thomas Trotter at Buckfast Abbey. He will play the work commissioned by EDOA for the 2020 Centenary, composed by Thomas Hewitt Jones.

November Annual Dinner at Swan's Nest, Exminster; further details to be advised.

These details may change.

Follow bulletins closer to the time from our Secretary for more up-to-date information.

The EDOA Committee

Officers (ex-officio members):

Ian Carson (President)

Paula Taylor (General Secretary)

Peter Johnson (Treasurer)

Peter Johnstone (Membership Secretary)

Piers Howell (co-opted, Newsletter Editor)

6 Ordinary (non-officer members):

Peter King

Tim Noon

Andrew Millington

Michael Pagliero

Neil Page

Gerald Hird

The EDOA Website

I draw members' attention to the EDOA website, which has been ably administered by Graham Willson for over 10 years. This included a complete re-vamp and refreshment of the website. Thank you very much, Graham.

The website includes:

EDOA events

Find an Organist

Newsletters

Gallery

Links

Opportunities

Contact Us

Committee

Graham is always looking for new content, including text and photos. The post of Deputy Webmaster is also currently vacant, and Graham would be delighted to hear from any potential volunteers.

<http://www.exeterorganists.net>