

From EDOA Newsletter March 2007

Andrew Pink writes, "You might be interested to know that in November 2006 I spoke to The British Institute of Organ Studies 'London Study Day', and have now written-up my talk as a paper." The whole article is too long for the newsletter, but the abstract is printed below, and the whole can be viewed as a PDF file at . . .

<http://eprints.ucl.ac.uk/archive/00002484/>

Abstract

From the late eighteenth century onwards the music of English freemasonry evolved from a purely vocal tradition to one that included the pipe organ, reflecting freemasonry's evolutionary shift out of the tavern and into purpose-built premises. The early decades of the twentieth century were surely the high point in the story of the English masonic pipe organ, if measured in terms of sheer numbers, but since then the story has been one of decline and destruction. With only one or two notable exceptions, such instruments were modest in size and arguably lacking in musical merit, but their form perfectly reflected their function and they clearly constituted a distinct tradition of English organ design. While the demise of many remaining instruments is probably inevitable, as they lose the struggle to justify the sums of money required to maintain them, the private nature of English freemasonry has meant that these instruments have gone largely undocumented, not least in the records of the National Pipe Organ Register, and will soon be lost to memory.

At Home with Carol Jarman: Thursday 18th January

"Fierce raged the tempest" on the day of our *At Home* with Carol Jarman, but we organists are an intrepid lot, "come wind, come weather", and soon it was a case of "alleluia, alleluia, thou art here, we ask not how". Seven of us (one or two after quite tricky journeys) eventually made it to Southgate to enjoy the warmth of Carol's welcome, the fellowship of the EDOA and, above all, the experience of an awesome presentation that left us agog with admiration and a-thirst for more.

Carol's subject was Buxtehude's Ciacona in C minor and its relation to the Nicene Creed. By way of introduction, she demonstrated how the better known E minor Ciacona is based on The Rosary. In both cases her discoveries began as a result of looking at the use of mathematical elements in their composition. Carol wrote about the latter work in the RCO's *The Organist* in November 1994. How I wish I had been privileged to such insight and knowledge when I had to play it to the examiners four decades ago!

Progressing to the C minor Ciacona, we were again carried along by the sheer delight of Carol's enthusiasm and the excitement as her discoveries were unravelled. These included not only the significance of various numbers (eg 4 and 3) and the use of the Golden Section (carefully explained for those of us of dim memory), but also Buxtehude's meaningful use of some hidden chorale melodies (eg 'Wir glauben all' and 'Vom Himmel hoch'). As each point of scholarly insight was revealed, the marvellous clarity of Carol's presentation was enhanced by frequent illustrations on her 2man/ped electronic house organ.

We benefited from some stimulating discussion. One unanswered question is why a Lutheran 'North German' organist should have based compositions on the Rosary and the Creed, which are more associated with Catholic doctrine? What else of Buxtehude's awaits the discovery of hidden secrets? Let us hope Carol will have further revelations to share with us before too

long! Our warmest thanks go to her for such a wonderful and stimulating At Home.

A footnote:-

Carol's article 'Buxtehude's Ciacona in C minor and the Nicene Creed' is in *The Musical Times* Summer 2005. It is an excellent read, with many musical examples. For this alone it is worth paying the £10 for the 120 page journal. Back numbers can be obtained by phoning 01442 897097. I was sent two wrong copies before they got it right, so I have enjoyed a wealth good reading!

Terence Atkins

AGM and Recital: February 10.

This year's Annual General Meeting was the occasion of Andrew Parnell's retirement from the President's chair after 12 years, which no doubt accounted for the very respectable number of members who travelled to Barnet despite that evening's torrential rain and the after-effects of the severe snowstorms.

The meeting, at which Andrew presided, and the organ recital which he gave, were held at St. John's, Chipping Barnet, a splendid Butterfield church incorporating as north aisles the 15th century nave and aisles of the former building.

We were welcomed to tea by the church's genial Kapellmeister our member Terence Atkins, and by the clergy and church helpers; then proceeded to the AGM, the main features of which were Andrew Parnell's final presidential address, the unanimous appointment of Simon Williams as his successor and Robin Coxon's proposal (agreed) that subscriptions should remain at £10, students £5.

The accounts for 2006 indicated that on a turnover of £843 a surplus of just £6 had, very neatly, been achieved. The balance sheet showed a healthy reserve of £1,506.

In his Report, Andrew looked back at a "fabulous 12 years", meeting organists and organising a number of the EDOA events. He wished, however, that more members could take advantage of such worthwhile events, which would also make them more rewarding for all concerned.

He commented on the Association's splendid initiative in commissioning Malcolm Archer's 'Enfield Suite' (as many of us think of it! – we gathered that it wasn't the Association's fault that this so-appropriate title wasn't adopted on publication 'though acknowledgement was of course made'). Andrew mentioned the 'pipe v. simulation' debate at the Cathedral some years ago, and the various choral workshops he had conducted for the Association. He was grateful for the support he had received from the Officers and Committee and looked forward to his own continuing membership.

Finally, Andrew expressed his delight that Simon Williams had accepted the invitation to be our President. A member of EDOA for many years Simon is Director of Music at St George's, Hanover Square and the RCO's Head of Education & Outreach.

We then moved from the medieval north aisles into the Victorian nave for Andrew's organ recital, a splendidly varied programme (albeit without a major classical work), well suited to the Hill / Rothwell / Mander organ, essentially a romantic-style instrument despite its 1967 choir

organ. This was a thoroughly enjoyable recital, worthy of the occasion. The individual characteristics of each piece were well portrayed as the programme proceeded to its splendid climax, Widor's Symphony 5 Variations, a masterly performance, controlled, brilliant in its detail and overall impact.

There were some 40 of us at the recital, a majority then happily adjourning to the nearby Imperial China restaurant for the rest of the evening.

Thanks to Terence Atkins for his hospitality and arrangements. And thanks of course to Andrew Parnell for all that he has done for the Association over these past 12 years, during which his invitations to the Cathedral, his direction of local choral events and his personal warmth and encouragement perhaps stand out. Of EDOA's five Presidents in its 43 years' existence, Andrew's tenure has I think been the longest. (Under the original constitution we had both President and Chairman, and during this time there were two periods when the presidency lapsed.) Each of our Presidents has made a quite distinct individual contribution to the Association and we are extremely grateful for Andrew's.

Eric Pask

Your Committee

Simon Williams (President)



Simon read music at Durham University, where he was organ scholar of St Chad's College and conductor of the University Chamber Choir. A post-graduate year followed at the Royal College of Music, where he studied organ, piano and conducting, and it was during this time that he gained the Fellowship Diploma of the Royal College of Organists.

Simon's professional career began as Assistant Director of Music at Merchant Taylors' School. A gradual move away from the school environment now sees him following a portfolio career. In his role as Head of Education & Outreach for the Royal College of Organists he devises and runs programmes to recruit, train and support organists and choral directors. As Organist & Director of Music at St George's Church, Hanover Square, he has broadcast with the church's professional choir on both BBC Radios 3 and 4 and works closely with the London Handel Festival. As an organist Simon teaches for St Giles International Organ School and still finds time to give occasional recitals in cathedrals, churches and concert halls in the UK and abroad. Recent recitals have included the Cathedrals of St Edmundsbury, St Pauls' and St Philip's,

Birmingham.

Simon began his association with Harrow Choral Society in 1982 as organist for the choir's Christmas Celebration concert. A few years followed as the choir's accompanist before he was appointed Music Director in 1992. As director he is a firm believer in mixing well-known music with less familiar repertoire and has commissioned and given first performances of *Crucifixion* and *Look Stranger at this Island*, both by Bryan Kelly, *Cantata Caledonia* by Lorna K Dawson, *Exodus* by Jonathan Ayerst, and *Cry out on Time* by Antony le Fleming as well as conducting the choir in works such as Bach's *St John Passion*, *A Sea Symphony* by Vaughan Williams and the Requiem settings by Brahms and Verdi. He has won a Performing Rights Society award for enterprise in programming and a BT/NFMS Innovation Award for his part in establishing 'Singing for Starters', the Society's highly successful training choir.

I asked Simon whether the information on the Harrow Choral Society site was suitable for our newsletter, and he gave me that from a recent concert shown above. However I couldn't resist adding this paragraph from the Choral Society site.

"We are extremely fortunate to have **Simon Williams** as our Music Director. Simon's charismatic and inspirational leadership invariably draws from us concert performances of the highest standard and almost always beyond our own expectations. His musical and teaching skill, humour and dedication make the learning of challenging pieces not only achievable but also a thoroughly enjoyable experience - and his ability to admonish without causing offence is now legendary!!"

Terence Atkins was born and educated in London. In his youth he was in the City of London and Eastern Society of Organists, including serving on the committee. While at the Royal College of Music, he was Organ Scholar at St George's Chapel, Windsor, under Dr Sidney Campbell; his other teachers have included John Birch and Dr W S Lloyd Webber. Terence is a Bachelor of Music of London University, a graduate of the Royal Schools of Music, and holds diplomas in organ playing and teaching. He has been Organist and Choirmaster at St John the Baptist Parish Church, Chipping Barnet for more than 30 years.

After many years of running successful music departments in two Hertfordshire schools, Terence now concentrates on private teaching and examining. For the past 22 years he has also been Director of the Elstree Singers (who now rehearse in Arkley!). Terence has given recitals in North America, Hong Kong and throughout the British Isles. As well as being an active member of the Hymn Society, Terence is a keen supporter of a number of transport and local history societies, not to mention the Morris Minor Owners' Club and Archers Addicts. An avid postcard collector, his *Barnet Calendars* in aid of overseas charities have been complete sell-outs and the source of most of the large pictures adorning the walls of Barnet's McDonald's.

Robin Coxon (Treasurer and Newsletter Editor) Robin's musical life has been greatly influenced by his time as a chorister at Durham Cathedral. Later he took a mathematics degree at Durham University, gaining his FRCO the same summer. After early retirement from teaching (Maths) he is as busy as ever – sitting at the computer transcribing books into Braille for the RNIB, organising the weekly organ recitals at Marlborough Road Methodist Church in St Albans, marking hundreds of GCSE Maths scripts in June/July, and being a church organist! Robin joined EDOA in 1967, is a former Chairman, and has been Treasurer since 1973. He has been Organist of St Francis, Welwyn Garden City since 1976. In March 2006 he succeeded

EDOA member Eric Shepherd as President of The Organ Club. When he joined EDOA he was about to be married, when he started at St Francis he and Mary had three young children, now, as they approach their 40th wedding anniversary in August it is three grown-up children and three grandchildren!

Michael Hennin (Secretary) joined EDOA in 1988, and became a committee member the following year, holding the post of Secretary during 1990 and 1991. After stepping down for two years, he served the Association again as a committee member 1998-2002 and was elected Secretary in 2004.

Michael lives with his family in Enfield Town and is principal organist at Our Lady of Mount Carmel & St George RC Church. He began learning the organ in 1987 with EDOA member Joyce Beaumont and in 1991 passed his Grade 8 with distinction.

Returning to full time education in 1997 Michael subsequently completed a three year music degree course at Middlesex University (Trent Park) where his organ teacher was EDOA member Carol Jarman. Since 2004 Michael has been a member of The Bach Choir.

Mervyn Hogg was brought up in Enfield and had his first organ lessons with Eric Pask. At Exeter, where he read Physics & Mathematics, he was organist and choirmaster at the University Chapel. He then worked in the Medical School & University of Wales in Cardiff. During this time he was an assistant at St German's Roath and also studied at Llandaff Cathedral.

From 1978 to 1998 Mervyn was organist and choirmaster at Ruislip Parish Church where he developed the choir to perform a wide range of church music. His organ studies continue with Simon Williams. In 2002 he was awarded first prize in the Coulsdon & Purley Music Festival which led to his first London recital at St Martin in the Fields. Since then he has played at other venues in London, St Albans and Barbados. In 2004 he gained his ATCL recital with distinction, and then his LTCL in 2005. Mervyn is a Director of the St Albans International Organ Festival Society. Mervyn is also part of a small team who are planning a Church Music Forum for the London Diocese to be run in October 2007. He is project manager for a national programme in rheumatology and lives in Ruislip with his wife with whom he enjoys visits to the opera and concerts.

Colin Wharton was a sixth form college Principal for 15 years and retired after 34 years in the teaching profession. He read English at Leeds University, gaining the degrees of MA and PhD, and Education at Oxford University but he has had a lifelong interest in music. Primarily a pianist (with a predilection for the Romantics) who gives local recitals, he gained his LRSM diploma in piano and performance in retirement. He has nevertheless always loved church music and choral singing, and has deputised on the organ on many occasions, notably at St Andrew's Church Enfield. His front room (really the dining room!) is crowded: it houses a large grand piano, a digital grand and a 3-manual digital organ. Dreams of installing a pipe organ to rival Liverpool Cathedral's have been put on hold for the sake of marital harmony.