

**President's Message
September 2016**

Last month Ashley Wagner was selected to be one of the finalists in the Northern Ireland International Organ Competition, a splendid achievement for which we congratulate him wholeheartedly. Of the fourteen chosen, only five were from the UK. You will enjoy reading Ashley's article about his experience of performing in Armagh at this prestigious event. All of us in the EDOA are proud to wish Ashley further success as he now sets forth to study at the Birmingham Conservatoire, combining his first year with the Organ Scholarship at Birmingham Cathedral and the next two as Organ Scholar at Worcester Cathedral. Ashley's final service at Barnet Parish Church is on Sunday 18th September, when he will accompany the Howells *Gloucester* evening canticles and play two momentous voluntaries, Franck's *Grande Pièce Symphonique* (so arrive at 6.00 for 6.30!) and the *Final* to Vierne's *Symphonie VI*.

Earlier this month I sent on your behalf the good wishes of the EDOA to my fellow President of the Essex Organists' Association, Richard Brasier, for he has just married his rector of St Laurence, Upminster, the Revd Susannah Rudge. Invariably one wonders who conducted the ceremony and who played the organ, but no doubt these things were taken care of! Richard's article 'Approaching challenging repertoire' in the latest *Organists' Review* for the regular feature 'The Organist's Toolkit' is well worth reading. The piece in question is Dupré's famous Prelude and Fugue in B major, but don't let that put you off! The sound advice Richard offers is applicable at all levels and one should never fight shy of the demands of expanding one's repertoire. Thus, for example, he advocates dotted note practice and methodically elongating notes within groups as ways to achieving rhythmic stability and building muscle memory. His guidance is wise and always reassuring.

None of us needs reminding of the wealth of organ recitals to choose from week by week, quite apart from all that is on offer in central London. As the "Enfield" & DOA we nevertheless know, but occasionally need to point out to others, that we embrace "North London" and "Hertfordshire" - and how fortunate that St Albans is included! The free monthly Saturday at 5.30 pm IOF recitals can hardly be bettered. I would particularly point to that by Gerard Brooks on 26th November, when at 3.00, in the Cathedral Crypt, he will introduce a screening of excerpts from the film *Widor: Master of the Organ Symphony*. To book, email administrator@organfestival.com. His recital will include some of Widor's rarely heard curiosity *Bach's Memento*.

Meanwhile, we have enjoyed our members' recital at St Andrew's, with thanks to all involved with arranging that, and then it is our visit to Eaton Bray on Saturday 22nd October; details as always in this newsletter and on www.edoa.org.uk. Please do keep thinking of what you would most like the EDOA to strive for on your behalf - and vice versa.

Terence Atkins