

President's Message January 2021

I hope it is not too late to wish you a Happy New Year! The frustrations and uncertainties have not yet gone away, but there is light ahead, even if the tunnel is proving rather long. The vaccine gives obvious hope, but I imagine few, if any, of us will be as fortunate as a friend of mine who was summoned for his to Salisbury Cathedral and, knowing the organists there, was duly inoculated to his requested 'Rhosymedre'!

Thank heaven for Zoom! - a sentiment shared by the goodly number of us who were pleased to learn about the New Oxford Organ Method from our Honorary Member, Anne Marsden Thomas and her co-author Frederick Stocken. Both the informative video and the stimulating question time that followed resulted in a most enjoyable and rewarding session. It was good that we were joined by members of the Southwark and South London Society and their contribution to the discussion gave added value. My thanks go to Rosemary Knight and Michael Hennin for their preparatory assistance and to Martin Penny for acting as host.

Our AGM is due to take place on Saturday, 27th February at 5.00 pm. Zoom will again come to our rescue, and thanks to Martin for once more agreeing to host it. You will be sent the essential information at the appropriate time. We have three committee vacancies to fill, for which there is one nomination so far. Please consider putting yourself forward, for nothing too onerous will be expected! Roger Carter and Robert Evans have to step down, having completed two terms, whilst Rosemary Knight, Ruth Lewis and Peter Smith continue to serve. My warm thanks to them all. Sadly, our usual guest organ recital and convivial meal afterwards, which together make the occasion so special in the EDOA calendar, will have to be dispensed with, but we shall endeavour to make up for it next year. I look forward to seeing you!

The IAO's virtual London Organ Day is planned for the following Saturday, 6th March. The good things in store include organ recitals by Daniel Cook (Durham Cathedral) and Francesca Massey (Rochester Cathedral) and a presentation by Fugue State Films. Full details will be available at least a week in advance from www.londonorganday.org.uk. This online event is free to all IAO members.

A wealth of excellent material, supportive of every aspect of our calling and professional development, is also on offer from the RCO, and I would urge you to subscribe to their mailing list: www.rco.org.uk

A number of EDOA events remain on hold until restrictions are eased and the way ahead becomes clearer. These include the J. S. Bach Masterclass with Richard Brasier and another At Home, at the generous invitation of Ruth Lewis. Ted Sharp has intimated that he would welcome an EDOA visit to his home in Dorset, to again play his superb Hauptwerk and to visit an organ or two in Wareham. Our best wishes are with Ted as he settles into his new surroundings.

You won't need telling of all the many and varied (and addictive!) delights of YouTube. Perhaps already you've seen the highly entertaining 'Cathedral Organists Play Bach to the Future: Toccata and Fugue in D minor', introduced by Clare Balding on behalf of the Cathedral Music Trust. One of the 54 performers is Ashley Wagner, glimpsed (at 6.16) for a few seconds from Birmingham Cathedral. Our congratulations go to Ashley and to Damon Ying for their

success in gaining FRCO and also to Ben Markovic for being awarded the prestigious Harry Gabb Scholarship.

It would be no exaggeration to say that the organ world was knocked sideways by the news at Christmas of the death of Catherine Ennis. We mourn the loss of a brilliant and inspiring performer and teacher who was unstinting in her efforts to promote the organ and to encourage students and enthusiasts of all ages. Anne Marsden Thomas's obituary of Catherine for the Church Times is reprinted in this newsletter, for which permission we are grateful.

Terence Atkins

EDOA is of course affiliated to the IAO, so EDOA members are IAO members. Ed.

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