

President's message
December 2022

I'm sure everyone in the EDOA would like to join in sending very best wishes to our distinguished Honorary Life Member, David Aprahamian Liddle, as he recovers from major surgery. David is now back home from a prolonged stay in the Royal Free and is making encouraging progress. It was good to hear some of his delightful music played at successive Cornhill organ recitals in November: Homophony and Agnus Dei (English Organ Mass) by James Banville, and Barely Starlit Sea and Polyphony in T major by Christopher Saward (on David's birthday, the 28th). If you haven't yet explored David's YouTube channel, I again encourage you to do so.

Who would not agree that brief, arresting fanfares are always good starters?! The latter recital above was launched in splendid style with Roxanna Panufnik's fff (Fulham Festival Fanfare), over in less than a minute. Similarly, Robert Evans at St Andrew's, Muswell Hill began with 'Civic Fanfare' by Elgar, a little gem Robert had transcribed (so he explained) with the aid of a magnifying glass from a photo showing the composer holding the manuscript. Robert can always be relied on for the eclectic, and what followed included three Concertos for two organs and one of Widor's under-rated Duos for organ and piano, with Peter Smith as his fellow performer. One of the concertos was by Robert himself, as were a Divertimento and two moving songs; in all, ten attractive miniatures, ideal for a Saturday lunchtime.

As can be seen from the review by Peter Stokes, a goodly number of us enjoyed Martin Renshaw's documentary film about saving organs from closed-down churches. A recent example that is becoming increasingly well-known is the small Henry Jones instrument, until recently in Christ Church URC, Oakleigh Park, Whetstone and now proudly on display and playable within the depths of London Bridge Station. 'Henry' is easiest found from Tooley Street and taking the large pedestrian subway called Stainer Street (yes, named after the Great Man, born nearby). Have any other EDOA members yet had a go, apart from Ashley and Rosemary? There is plenty of variety to be heard! After Jonathan Rennert had accompanied David Loxley-Blount on the saxophone in a carol sing-song the other afternoon, a rendition of Chopsticks (largely ignored) was soon followed by a break-neck speed performance of Bach's G major (BWV 541), both prelude and fugue from memory, by a passing Oxford organ scholar.

Warm thanks go to Ruth Lewis for once again kindly hosting another 'At Home' and feeding us with such generosity. You will gather from Rosemary's account what an entertaining and thought provoking evening it proved to be. There are some photos on our updated website for your enjoyment.

It was a great disappointment and frustration that our proposed visit to St Joseph's, Highgate had to be cancelled and at such short notice, through a situation quite beyond our control. I can only apologise to everyone who had planned to attend, including friends in the City of London Organ Society and the Southwark and South London Society of Organists.

We must look forward positively to a number of good events planned for the new year, including the 11th annual Bloomsbury Organ Day (Trocadero and Town Halls) at Bloomsbury Baptist on Saturday, 28th January, from 1:00 until 7:30. As usual, a richly varied programme is on offer, with all being free until the legendary buffet and the closing recital by Richard Hills. With hopes of spring on the way, the IAO London Organ Day will take place on Saturday, 11th March at Chelsea Old Church; and a most enticing IAO Region 5 (London & Eastern)

event is being planned by several associations, including ourselves, for Saturday, 27th May in Chelmsford Cathedral. Do book this date and look out for all the essential information.

Meanwhile, our 2023 AGM is booked for Saturday, 11th February at St Alphage, Burnt Oak, and we are delighted that Rosemary Evans will be the recitalist. Full details elsewhere in this newsletter and on the website. Perhaps one of your New Year resolutions could be to offer to serve on the committee! I wish you all a very Happy Christmas, with a chance to fully recuperate once all the hustle and bustle is over.

Terence Atkins

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