



**NORTH HAMPSHIRE
ORGANISTS' ASSOCIATION**
www.nhoa.org.uk

Newsletter 200 May 2020



The Flentrop organ at the Royal College of Music
We had planned to visit this organ and others on 18 April 2020 but the visit has had to
be postponed because of the COVID-19 virus

The Newsletter

Well, it's a strange time we are all living through! All NHOA activities have had to be cancelled or at least postponed for the time being and nobody knows when normal service will be resumed. Your committee have been considering what to put into this issue and we hope you find something of interest. Do please let Gillian, Geoff or John have your views about it. The email addresses of Gillian and Geoff are shown at the foot of this page; John can be emailed at j.mansfield@alumni.manchester.ac.uk.

So our 200th issue is not the gala we all had been planning, but that's what Covid-19 does for you. Keep healthy, everybody, and we all hope you enjoy reading this Newsletter.

News of members and friends

We are very sorry to report the deaths of two of our members: Colin Fuller, who joined NHOA in 1992 and honorary member Angus Smart, who had been a member from 1973. A brief obituary of Colin appears on page 8 below, and one of Angus will appear in a later issue of the Newsletter.

We have asked some of our members who no longer live in the North Hampshire area about what their activities are during the pandemic and their replies can be found on later pages.

Clive Stewart and Chris Nott have written to say how they (as well as Tim Stewart and Emily Nott) have been coping with the lockdown, as has Kurt.

Copy Date for next Newsletter Please send any material for Newsletter 201 to the Secretary not later than **1 July**.

North Hampshire Organists' Association

Registered charity, no. 275207

affiliated to the Incorporated Association of Organists

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News round-up

There have been no NHOA visits or other activities since those reported in NL 199; but two members were involved with recitals before the lockdown and Frances Whewell has kindly sent the following report.

March Organ Recitals – Geoff and John ‘Music while you Munch’ at St Andrew’s now goes by the more prosaic title of ‘Lunchtime Organ Recital’. But there was nothing prosaic about Geoff Willis’ recital on 10th March. He introduced two pieces, played them, then spoke about the next two, and so on. In this way the audience (sadly small) could remember the descriptions and relate them to the pieces.

‘Tocatta Pour Grand Orgue’ is a great opening piece and has excitingly fast chromatic parts for the pedals. It’s very surprising that this is the only known work by the French composer, Gaston Bélier (1863-1938). He was the organist at Pontoise Cathedral in Paris for over 40 years.

After that grandeur came the playful *Narcissus* by the American Ethelbert Nevin (1862-1901). There is a waltz-like opening, and the theme is given very prominent treatment. You might recognise the tune from the very humorous duet by Norman Wisdom and Joyce Grenfell in 1952.

We were next entertained to Christopher Tambling’s *Flourish for Flutes* which demonstrated the lovely flute stops on the St Andrew’s organ. Many of us know the Tambling hymn arrangements, so it was a great loss when he died in 2015 at the age of 51. He had been Director of Music at Downside School in Somerset for 18 years.

Then came my favourite piece in this recital – *Gabriel’s Oboe* by Enrico Morricone (1928-), composer, arranger and jazz trumpeter. It is the theme tune from the 1986 film *The Mission*. It has been dubbed one of the greatest film scores ever. This must in part be due to the ethereal soaring *Gabriel’s Oboe*, its divine tune slow and hymn like.

Giuseppe Giordani (1730-1806), an Italian opera composer, wrote one of the most famous arias of all time – *Caro Mio Ben*. In this arrangement of it the tune is repeated, more slowly, in a higher register than at first, and as

Geoff played it you could imagine Pavarotti singing in ravishing tones, in Italian :

“My darling dear, at least believe me, without you my heart languishes.”

Another Italian piece followed. Grimoaldo Macchia (1972 -) wrote his splendid *Trumpet Processional* for a Finnish organist friend of his. Geoff told us to listen out for all the key changes. There were certainly a lot.

You may have educational music books by Alec Rowley (1892-1958). He wrote the next piece *Pastorale*. In Geoff’s words it has a ‘beautiful flowing flute melody with short reflective interludes’. I particularly liked the lush hymn-like middle section.

Then came Stephen Foster’s (1826-1864) famous *Swanee River*, given Edwin Lemare’s rich harmonic treatment. Lemare was an ingenious transcriber and arranger, and you could hear the tune of *Swanee River (Old Folks at Home)*, in various guises, with Geoff replicating the sound of chimes, much beloved of American organ builders.

This most varied concert culminated in Edward Elgar’s (1857-1934) Imperial March. Queen Victoria must have been very pleased to celebrate her Diamond Jubilee with such a piece, and she would have approved of Geoff’s electrifying performance.

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On the following Saturday, 14th March, Geoff joined John Mansfield for a double bill at the Spire Church in South Street. John is the resident organist here, and the concert was to raise funds for the Pilgrim Project – to restore and enlarge the church, so enhancing its community outreach. That weekend the Covid 19 pandemic was starting to threaten public events. Several Farnham concerts had been cancelled for the 14th, but ‘our’ concert went ahead. How lucky we were, knowing that the Spire would soon be in lockdown too.

Both John and Geoff are devotees and champions of the organ. They introduced their pieces alternately, and helped each other with the registrations.

John opened with the sparkling Concerto by Sigr. Taglietti, transcribed for organ by J G

Walther (1684-1748). A cousin and near contemporary of J S Bach, Walther was music teacher to Prince Johann Ernst von Sachsen-Weimar. Perhaps as a gift, the Prince gave Walther this concerto to arrange for organ. I most enjoyed the second movement – Allegro – which sounds like a hornpipe.

Then Geoff played Christopher Tambling's *Trumpet Tune*. Tambling played in a concert on the Royal Albert Hall organ when he was 15 years old in 1979. That record as the youngest player still stands. The organ at the Spire church boasts no trumpet stop, so Geoff used bright stops instead, high in the register, very effectively.

As a contrast Geoff next gave us *Quiet Piece* by Kenneth Gange (1939-2019). Gange was self taught, and wrote many graded pieces for organ. This piece is beautifully slow, on the flute stops. Geoff likened it to Bach's 'Air on the G string'.

John then played a trio of pieces by Elgar, beginning with the much loved Largetto from *Serenade for Strings*, Op 20 in E minor, (arr. Jeffery Fraser). It's been described as having youthful charm, and John certainly brought that out. Then came *Vesper Voluntary*, Op 14 no. 3 (Andantino in F). Elgar wrote his Voluntaries for St George's Church, Worcester in the 1880s, and no. 3 is particularly lyrical.

Lastly John gave us Elgar's famous *Nimrod* from *The Enigma Variations*. Elgar wrote it in tribute to his friend Augustus Jaeger who gave him encouragement and useful criticism. Jäger is the German for Hunter. Nimrod is 'the

mighty hunter of the Lord' from the Old Testament. John caught all the different moods of the piece, and skilfully managed the rapid crescendos and diminuendos.

For those of us lucky enough to have attended Geoff's Tuesday recital, this was another chance to hear some of his pieces again, but differently, because the Spire organ is mechanical, with two manuals, and has far fewer stops than the St Andrew's organ.

After the welcome interval, as well as some of his St Andrew's pieces, Geoff treated us to *Shenandoah*, the beautiful Irish folk tune, here arranged by L Ciampa, who sends the tune off 'in a slightly different direction!' And the other 'new' piece was *Prelude in Classic Style* by Gordon Young (1919-1998). I looked up this famous piece on Youtube and found a recording of it 'without added reverb'. But Geoff gave the reverb its full power and it was wonderful.

John played two choral preludes by his beloved J S Bach (1685-1750) - *Liebster Jesu*, giving the repeat extra flourishes as we think Bach himself would have done, and *Nun freuet euch, lieben Christen g'mein*, which has an impressively long sustained last note.

John finished the concert with the very upbeat *Boléro de Concert*, Op 166 by L Lefébure-Wély (1817-69). It was a cheering and uplifting sound to end the last 'real' concert for many weeks. The small audience showed its gratitude with generous donations to the church appeal.

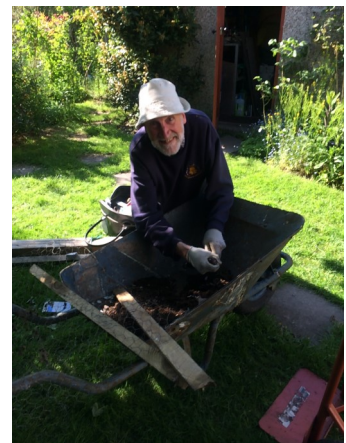
Frances Whewell

The organist's garden

Coronavirus time should give us all the opportunity of getting the garden in order! Here are some photos of the garden of Paul and Frances:



Django the cat



What our remote members are doing

Lockdown is having its effect in other places than the UK, of course. We asked some of our distant members to tell us how they were managing in these challenging times. Here are some replies from Virginia, Malawi and even Yorkshire:

Carol Williams writes:

Dear Friends

I hope that you are all surviving this difficult time - I think we are all adapting to a new way of life. Here in Virginia, things are not as crazy as New York City or any major city in the USA. However, regarding my concerts they have been cancelled for the next six months - I was so looking forward to visiting London and playing the RFH organ as well as performances in Venice. The only current performances I am doing is going out live on Facebook. This in itself is a great way



The dog is called Dietrich Buxtehude Bell...

to get organ music through to many people. I have been teaching organ at a local fine College but now these lessons have moved online and this is very frustrating. Most Colleges and Universities have gone online and we don't know when this will change back to in person teaching. I am sure it is the same in the UK. Most churches have gone to online services and choirs, where possible, have gone Virtual. As a composer, I have time to compose and edit which is a blessing. As to daily life requirements, food buying is okay but there is less choice and rationing on meat and eggs. But this is not the case in every state. Kerry (my husband) and I are lucky as we live on a farm so can get outside a lot. I have horses and donkeys and they are totally unaware of what is going on!
I remember you all fondly and hope that when we next come over, we can meet up and catch up.

Keep well,

Carol

Chris Ingram writes:

Malawi only registered its first cases of coronavirus infection on 2 April: three people who had travelled to Lilongwe from India. For about three weeks the coun-



try had been preparing itself for this. Immediately the president declared Malawi a national state of disaster and ordered all schools, colleges and universities to close, and no public meetings with more than 100 people.

Blantyre Music Society cancelled rehearsals for its May concert, but the shops are still open with compulsory hand washing as you go in, and traffic is as heavy as usual.

Soap and water is provided at the main gate to Newlands Homes where I live, and has been placed at all other entrances to our homes; our nursing Sister takes the temperature of the Malawian staff as they arrive for duty, and some of the spare accommodation has been allocated to the Malawian carers to remain on the premises.

Here in Malawi we are still wondering how things are



going to turn out. On Wednesday last week the President announced that Malawi would lock down for three weeks beginning Saturday. Various ministers came up with contradicting statements about what we would be able, or not, to do. There was widespread discontent and demonstrations in all the cities, and the Human Rights Committee managed to get an Injunction delaying this for seven days. With the majority of workers

living from day-to-day there is no way they could survive a week's lockdown, let alone three. And there's not much sign of things changing in that time. At present Malawi has registered over thirty cases, with three deaths. There have been no announcements yet as to what happens when the seven days is up tomorrow.

For the present we are still out and about. St Paul's is still functioning, with the English service starting at 7.00 am, to allow for two Chichewa services following. With everyone dotted about the cathedral keeping their safe distance it doesn't look too empty, but many people are staying away. We are encouraged to wash our hands as we enter and told to exchange gestures or looks of peace, no hugging or handshaking. My position on the organ bench ensures that I have the regulation two metres distance from anyone else (The pictures were taken during a service with a visiting choir before the restrictions). This week the Dean hinted that there is the possibility of not being able to hold services, and said he would keep us informed. I think it is unlikely that we will be able to prevent the infection spreading and expect to be in lockdown eventually.



Service observing social distancing!

(Chris then updated on 26th April to say that, although the churches were still able to hold services, there were far fewer people than usual at St. Paul's, and they were waiting for a court decision regarding the injunction against compulsory lockdown.)

Another spring

Seated one day at the organ: anonymous poem found among the papers of Miss H. M. Suggate (of Bishop and Sons) after her death in 1981

Seated one day at the organ
I was weary and worn and sad
Another pedal spring had gone
Enough to make one mad.
I sat and stared at the tablet
Stating "Bishop of Finchley Road"
So during a boring sermon
Composed the following ode ...

Bob and Mary Batchelor have sent in the following:

Despite having a piano at home, I have neither sung nor played a keyboard of any sort for the last month, preferring to put my energies into the garden. We neglected it last year when we set out to have back-to-back holidays (just as well we did), so it has taken a time to empty, scrub out and disinfect the greenhouse and to repair my deep vegetable beds, but it is now getting back into production again.

My main concern has been to protect St. Chad's organ from possibly months of disuse. I have not seen any advice centrally about how to protect an organ out-of-use, but I imagine the main concern would be to keep the leather flexible and the action free. In this part of the country, and I assume everywhere, only one Designated Person is allowed into the church buildings. Our DP has a partner who plays keyboard and she offered to accompany him once a week and run the blower for an hour and give the key and stop action a workout. She has never played an organ before and reports are that she is enjoying it. I have a copy of the Percy Buck tutor that I acquired somehow, and will ask her if she is interested in having it. She could be up to Grade 8 before I get to use it again.

Our Spanish son-in-law's late mother used to own a music shop in Madrid city centre. She died last autumn and in clearing out her apartment he has given me a large book of compositions by Padre Donista, a 20th Century Spanish organist monk. He has also given me a Spanish LP of 16th and 17th Century Spanish organ works played by Montserrat Torrent on the 18th Century organ of Segovia Cathedral. I think I have sheet music for some of the items played, so it will be interesting to hear what they should sound like. On closure, she sold her shop to one of the coffee chains, who wanted to gain early access to the building, so she abandoned a lot of instruments she couldn't sell, including some large brass, in the building. Some small ones have come over from Spain, including harmonicas and half-size violins/violas.

Let us now praise famous men
Bishop, Suggate and Andersen
Their organs all sound really grand
(Though tied up with elastic band!)
With combinations, Oh so glorious
Making up a perfect chorious
With pipes so pure in wood and metal
But what's that cypher on the pedal?
You can bet your life what's wrong
Another ***** spring has gone.

Source: Laurence Elvin: Bishop and Son, Organ Builders (pub. Laurence Elvin, Lincoln, 1984), p.348

Coping with the lockdown

Clive Stewart wrote to say that Tim, having been deprived of his GCSEs this summer, is left with virtually no schoolwork: he also, at that time, had no piano or organ lessons arranged (he is working for Grade 8 on both instruments), and at least one of the three recitals he was due to play this summer has been cancelled (this was one at Redon, in Brittany). This is a very de-motivating situation, even for someone as fired-up as Tim. The two bright spots are that he does have an organ at home, and also, just before lockdown, he won the Challenge Cup for under 18 years and the Bach under 16 class at the Godalming Music Festival.

There is a clip of Tim performing Bach's prelude BWV 541 at home at <https://youtu.be/w-Qr5ogbnQ8>.

Chris Nott, writing on behalf of himself and Emily, says:

We are well, but organ progress is pretty difficult. We can't see how we can access organs in churches and at St Catherine's (Emily's school) at the moment, so practising is limited to piano at home. Emily is doing some manual's practice of Dupré (third prelude and fugue) and Bach (one of the trio sonatas). She and Katherine [Dienes-Williams] haven't worked out how lessons will work yet.

I've practised manuals for a wide range of pedal-lite and manuals-only new repertoire. Currently I'm learning BWV 572 and BWV 671. It will be good to perform some of these soon...

He later added the following, very impressive, list of pieces learnt (wish I could learn things as quickly as that, says Gillian)

We have also had a letter from Kurt Rampton:

Thank you for keeping in touch,

I think everyone is being challenged in most ways and all of us are doing our best to find a way forwards; using technology, D.I.Y projects, spring cleaning and whatever keeps us going; short term, long term.

Though it's very tempting to get out of the house, the likelihood of being challenged will rightly keep people indoors, though by the occasional news feature, there are always those few who believe to be higher up and more important than everyone else. We have done our best not to follow those examples and stay indoors.

* *Gelobt Sei Gott, Ernst Pepping*
* *Tu es Petrus, Op 8 No 11, Jeanne Demessieux*
* *Ave Maris Stella, Girolamo Frescobaldi*
* *Voluntary No 1, Thomas Weelkes*
* *Sonne der Gerechtigkeit, Ernst Pepping*
* *Berceuse from 24 Pièces en style libre, Op 31, Volume II No 19, Louis Vierne*
*** *Toccata quinta (Dal secondo libro di toccate), Girolamo Frescobaldi*
* *Praeambulum in d, WV 33, Heinrich Scheidemann*
*** *Fuga sopra il Magnificat, BWV 733, J S Bach*
*** *Woe schön leuchtet der Morgenstern, BuxWV 223, Dieterich Buxtehude*
* *Adagio from Concerto in A Minor, BWV 593, J S Bach*
* *O Haupt voll Blut und Wunden (No 4 of Six chorale preludes for organ), Max Reger*
*** *Mein Jesu, der du mich, Op 122 No 1, Johannes Brahms*
* *Entrée Pontificale, Op 104 No 1, Marco Enrico Bossi*
* *Largo e spiccato from Concerto in D minor, BWV 596, J S Bach*
Currently learning
*** *Les Enfants de Dieu (La Nativité du Seigneur), Olivier Messiaen*
*** *Pièce d'Orgue (Fantasia in G), BWV 572, J S Bach*
*** *Kyrie, Gott heiliger Geist, BWV 671, J S Bach*
[the number of stars reflects the degree of polish, I believe] and the following:
Two comments on these: 1) everyone here's sick of the Messiaen - it take loads of practice to get any sense of speed - and I've paused it for now; 2) it would be really helpful to see other people's detailed fingering to speed up learning pieces - I tend to over-complicate fingering.....

As always, I encourage members of N.H.O.A to visit my website at <https://maverickorganist2.wixsite.com/kurtrampton>

for updates, news, blogs and concerts. I work really hard to create original articles, blogs and updates for the site; so the more people can support this official means of press, the more this helps to build clarity, consistency and communication with my supporters who can then be assured that they are receiving the most direct and accurate information possible.

Sending you my best regards,

Colin Fuller

John Purver has written to say:

I regret to say that I know very little about Colin Fuller really. I have known him for many years by sight from the Mid-Hants where he was much involved in promoting '40s events, such as the War on the Line and other events of that era and affectionally known as 'member No.1' as I he was the very first member of the Mid-Hants Railway Preservation Society back in the mid 1970s.

But, as I am on the operations side, other than saying 'Hello' to him when we passed I never had any dealings with him personally. He was always a very pleasant, jovial man who, as you say, was engaged and committed to the community. I believe he did a lot to help the Mid-Hants in times past and in fact even at one point bought a train which we used to run.

John Mansfield adds:

At the peak of his career Colin became a County Court judge. Judges are usually recruited from the ranks of barristers but occasionally by other routes, and Colin had been a solicitor. I didn't meet Colin

professionally because our areas of the law were quite different and in fact did not meet him before my retirement. But my daughter Sally met Colin Fuller when she was temping in Aldershot County Court (small claims division) between leaving university and joining the missionary organisation World Horizons. By this stage Colin was a judge and she had many conversations with him when he came into the office although she never had the opportunity to go into the courtroom with him as she worked in another section. Sally remembers that Colin was always kind and courteous, of a cheerful disposition and the type of person who was always interested in listening to what you had to say.

When I was a governor of Farnham Heath End School there was one time when they were looking for a distinguished public figure to address the school and hand out prizes and I invited Colin. It so happened that that year the Head Boy was intending to study law and so Colin invited him to come to the Court for a day to see the law in action, which I thought was very kind of him.

Organ and...

WHERE THERE'S REEDS, THERE'S BRASS

Have you heard the organ described as "an orchestra at your fingertips"? I first heard it from fellow member Jane Jacobs. From the enormous range of sounds the majestic reed chorus can be spine-tingling but there is another level to be reached when a brass instrument is added.

Following our virtual visit to the Flentrop organ at the Royal College of Music, this month we are continuing our adventures to more virtual venues.

Go to our website Programme page and look for "The Organ at Home in May". Clicking on the icon opens a flier with links to organ and trumpet performances.

There are many recordings of this combinations of instruments to be found on Youtube so to give you a taster, we have picked out five contrasting pieces:

Alison Balsom plays a concerto by JSB and is certainly dressed for the occasion.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yWLUzJXZcl>

Next is a fine rendition of the Stanley Trumpet Voluntary by Jason Covey and Sean Jackson. The organ console must have a stop list like a telephone directory!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NTuhecNK2SN8>

Then a beautiful performance of the Andante from Albinoni's Oboenkonzert in Bb. The delicate continuo complements the legato trumpet melody and the blend washes over you. The performers are Martin Schröder and Hans André Stamm.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6Qk6kMkb3Ac>

Continuing with the calming theme we hear Caccini's Ave Maria in a haunting acoustic. The trumpeter is Fernando Serrano Montoya and the organist Clemente Mata .

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zUT--0ZF_Wo

And finally we march out with the Prince of Denmark. Here, it's an amazing performance on a valveless trumpet played, as was the custom, with one hand.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a6pExaRPg84>

Enjoy!

Geoff Willis

The NHOA Schools Project

Our Schools Project - March 2020

Saturday 7th

It's crunch time ... a trial assembly of the whole organ. The main parts - the Great and Swell consoles, the pedalboard etc, have been working on their own but at this stage we need to know if all the parts will fit together physically, connect and work together electrically and how long it takes to assemble. When we go to school for the first session, we have 40 minutes from arriving at the music room to being ready for the students to come in and start the session.

Rikki had the "build script" we thought would get it all assembled and working. Martin and Geoff did the fetch and carry from the garage into the house and



tried to keep to the instructions.

They checked some options: was it better to attach the swell pedals while the pedalboard was still up on its end or after when it was flat on the floor? (The decision was the former).

So, how did it go??

Well, when the two manuals and pedals responded to the spec-

tacular sound of the big German Romantic organ I had loaded, we were really pleased to see that the timer said 35 minutes! Martin had a crafty play to make sure it really sounded like a fantastic organ - it did! Along the way, Rikki noted about a dozen 'snags' - things to fix before the school visit - but that was no surprise really. That day-by-day plan first written last month has really helped to prioritise and schedule the remaining tasks.



In the week we worked on the details of the demonstration and workshop. We wanted a structure to make sure we covered the important points but we realised it had to be flexible in case the students showed interest in some particular aspects.

Geoff has had two more meetings with Ross Walker, Head of Music, and the school's IT Technician to make sure all the logistical and technical arrangements would work. For example, the audio output from the organ has to connect to the music room speakers through a mixing desk and the organ stop jambs displayed on the touchscreen need to be projected onto a big screen so the students would see the stops in action. Ross played the Great console and couldn't stop smiling about the fantastic cathedral-like sound.

He did say that the school had decided to cancel the evening concert on 30th March due to the Coronavirus situation but the demonstration and workshop would proceed on 18th as planned.

Saturday, Sunday 14th/15th

There are still a few remaining snags e.g. some thumb pistons not working. They took longer than expected to investigate and fix but there was time because there is enough contingency in the plan.



One last piece of construction was 36 white, concave discs made on the lathe and then to be glued onto the thumb piston push buttons.

Like most projects, all the essentials have been done in time and the organ is ready for Rob to get familiar with the instrument.

Monday 16th

Rob sent a message to Geoff and Martin - he has a cough and might have had contact with someone with Coronavirus. After phone calls between us, we decided to postpone the demonstration and workshop scheduled for Wednesday 18th.

It's very disappointing when a deadline is lost but on this occasion it's beyond our control. Geoff called the Head of Music who was not at all phased and very supportive: many school events were being cancelled now. He is still very committed to the project and wants to proceed as soon as possible. He also has some exciting ideas for a Christmas concert with organ and his student hand-bell team.

So we have a hiatus in our ambition ... but it hasn't dampened our energy or enthusiasm. We just have to wait a bit before we can wow those young people with "The Orchestra at the Fingertips"!

Here is a clip of the stop jams and console of the Friesach organ.



Here is the console assembled on a temporary table with all essential elements working. (The white thumb piston discs are not yet in place).



Geoff Willis, Martin Barnes, Rob Goldfinch

I once met (1)

From Rikki:

Rattled by Rattle

I was born in London and lived there for the first 30 years of my life. I loved the culture from Gilbert and Sullivan and plays to operas and concerts. My time there coincided with the beginning of young Simon Rattle's career. I thought he was amazing; particularly his hair and that he would go far.

Moving on a decade or two, Geoff's school friend had two boys who were choristers at King's College, Cambridge. He was very generous and invited us to lots of the amazing events in the Chapel. One such event was the memorial concert for Sir David Willcocks, who died in 2015.

We went to stay for the weekend and lunched at the college refectory on chilli con carne. I was concerned by an extremely hot section in my meal but another glass of wine and all seemed well. We were

then ushered into King's College Chapel and took our seats. The first piece of music was *Blest Pair of Sirens* by Hubert Parry: delightful. It was followed by *Sing joyfully* by William Byrd. During this piece, I started to feel rather uncomfortable realising all was not well. Before the next piece started, Henry Purcell's *Jehovah, quad multi sunt*, I had to beat a hasty retreat. Luckily I knew my way back to one of the common rooms with loos attached.

Regrettably lunch was lost. I then went to sit in an ante room trying to collect myself. Who should come in and sit nearby but Simon Rattle, looking very dapper in an immaculate jacket, shirt and tie, smart tailored knee length shorts, shoes and long socks. My hero! We made eye contact and just as I was about to speak my stomach rattled and I had to make a tactical withdrawal. By the time I made my empty re-entry he had gone!! So close but not to be!!

I once met (2)

From John Mansfield:

It was in the early 1960s or so that I was fortunate to be appointed organist at Kensington Chapel, where the services were occasionally broadcast on radio (and once on television). In those days cheap transistor radios gave poor reception, and so the BBC were keen to use ministers who, like ours, the Revd Caryl Micklem, had a good vocal delivery.

But the choir was not of the same standard. I had one soprano who sang like an angel, a few children who followed her lead, three girls who sang alto beautifully, no tenors and a couple of chaps who did their best to sing bass. At *Passiontide* one year we broadcast a service during which I got the choir to sing the *Passion Chorale*. Caryl and I were invited to the office of the producer to listen to a recording of the service but unfortunately Caryl was unable to be present.

It was a warm day and the producer left his door open. Hearing the *Passion Chorale*, George Thalben-Ball, a personal friend of the producer who happened to be passing, came in to listen, and seeing that the producer had a guest, felt compelled to stay to the end of the recording. So I sat squirming at this substandard performance being listened to by the great man.

Afterwards, of course, we were introduced and GTB, having heard of Caryl's uncle Nathaniel Micklem, the Oxford theologian, asked me if he was Caryl's father. I said no, Caryl's father was the Revd Romilly Micklem; and I just caught a glance between the other two which showed amusement at these strange Christian names.

When he took his leave, what could GTB say about the choir? He simply said "Nice altos", which I thought was quite a compliment in the circumstances.

Readers: I'm sure you have met distinguished, interesting or notorious characters in the past. Do let us have a brief account of what happened so that we can publish a reminiscence in the Newsletter!

NHOA Website

In spite of the lockdown the programme page on the website is still very much active. Do visit it at

www.nhoa.org.uk/

These days, while we are unable to visit organs, every month the page will include a new virtual event with performances involving the organ. You may have seen April's virtual visit to the RCM: keep watching the page for new virtual events.

The Photo Gallery page has photos of recent visits and there is always room for more photographs of other NHOA events, recent and past.

If you have any you would like to share on the site (any format but should be at least 640 pixels on the longest side), please email them to Derek at the address which appears on the foot of every page — just click on Derek's name to bring up an email page.

If they are too big to email please send a message to let him know so that an alternative means of sending can be arranged.

Some Clerihews

Said J.S.Bach:
“Fugues are quite a lark;
I think I'll do some more –
Here's another 24!”

Jean-Baptiste Lully
Was never with it fully:
He was kept in the dark
By the Grand Monarque.

Lefébure-Wély
Went to his local deli
To buy something naughty
For his next Sortie.