



# NORTH HAMPSHIRE ORGANISTS' ASSOCIATION

[www.nhoa.org.uk](http://www.nhoa.org.uk)

Newsletter 209 December 2022



## PROGRAMME

**Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> February** : Annual General Meeting  
at St Mark's, Upper Hale GU9 0LT  
12:00 meeting, 12:45 buffet lunch, 1:30 talk by Michael  
Brough from Holy Trinity, Sloane Street, London

## PROGRAMME CONTINUED

Michael Brough (Holy Trinity, Sloane Street) will talk about the organists of Holy Trinity (including John Ireland) and an exciting organ restoration project in Michael's home church in Halifax. *See article below.*

Saturday, 18th February: **TBC** London visit. Details to follow via e-mail and the website.

March: Date and details **TBC**. We are hoping to arrange a midweek Zoom event

Saturday, 15th April: Radley College and Dorchester-on-Thames. Details to follow.

*Cover picture: Organ student Alfred Hong, at Guildford URC, ready to deputise for a service while our Secretary was on the NHOA tour to East Yorkshire*

**Copy Date for Next Newsletter** Please send any material for Newsletter 210 to the Secretary not later than 15<sup>th</sup> January 2023

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### **North Hampshire Organists' Association**

Registered charity no. 275207

affiliated to the Incorporated Association of Organists

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## *News of members and friends*

We're delighted to be able to include in this issue articles from both our President, Malcolm Archer and one of our younger members, Tim Stewart. Malcolm gives an account of what was clearly a busy summer for him, whilst Tim fills us in on his first term as organ scholar at Chichester Cathedral (where, incidentally, he would be glad to see any of us who find ourselves down that way). It's also good to report that another young member, Alfred Hong, has recently successfully played for his first two morning services, at Guildford URC and St. Mary, Bentley. Well done! St. Mary's would be very pleased to have Alfred to play for them again and he has three sessions coming up at Guildford, so welcome to the world of the in-demand church organist! Younger sister Charlotte is now learning the organ at Cheltenham Ladies' College, so we wish her well with her studies too. Jozef Gaszka, who is coming to the end of his undergraduate course at the Royal Academy of Music, writes that he has applied to do a Masters at the RAM, but keeping his options open, is visiting Leipzig and Berlin in the coming weeks to look at the possibilities of further study in Germany.

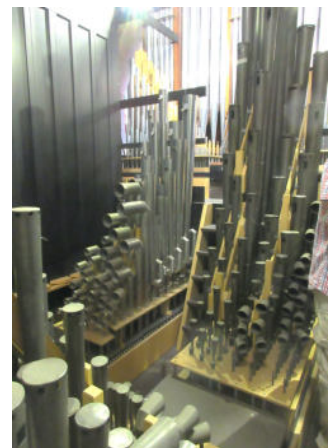
Sadly, news is not so good of Bill Cartwright, who despite son David's devoted care, is finding life as a centenarian something of a trial. John Mansfield is also unwell and is currently being cared for in hospital. We send our best wishes to Bill, David and John and to any other members who are coping with poor health or other worries.

Pete Currie has been busy managing some building works at his house. A splendid looking internal lift meant mothballing his four manual Hauptwerk organ for a while but fortunately he will be able to play it again soon. Rikki Willis had some good news – she has been signed off by her consultant for the blood clots episode that occurred last year.

Finally, member Chris Dew will be playing a lunchtime recital at St. Andrew's, Farnham on Tuesday, 10th January 2023, and would welcome support from other members.

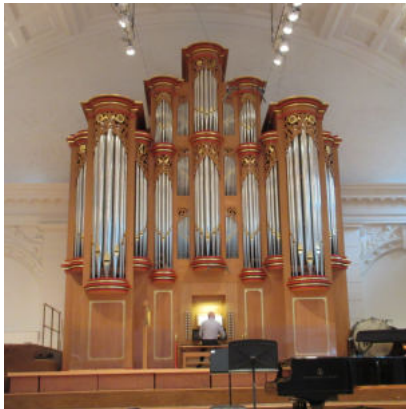
## *News round-up*

Our July visit to London began at Holy Trinity, Sloane Street, where our genial host was the Honorary Assistant Organist, Michael Brough (see above, and article about the AGM). Michael's warm-up before getting down to any serious organ-playing is evidently BWV 532 (!), so we were treated to that before he introduced us to the 1891 Walker organ, which under Michael's supervision and funded by the church's patron, Lord Cadogan, was completely rebuilt by Harrison and Harrison in 2012. The instrument retains the character of the 1891 organ and is based on the original pipework. Michael gave us a wealth of fascinating information about the instrument (too much to include here), and also mentioned some of his distinguished predecessors including Lemare, Alcock, Ireland and Balfour, before impressing us with Eben's 'Moto perpetuo' from 'Sunday Music' and allowing us to try out the organ for ourselves.



Following lunch (thoughtfully organised by Rikki Willis and Frances Whewell) we moved on to the Second Church of Christ Scientist, an imposing Grade 2 listed 1920s building housing a large 1936 Walker organ hidden behind a grille. We then made our long-delayed visit to the Royal College of Music to experience for ourselves the 2017 Flentrop organ in the Amaryllis Fleming Concert Hall. You'll probably remember that

in April 2020 (which was when we should have made this visit), Professor David Graham gave us an excellent virtual introduction to this instrument, which made us all the more anxious to see it in person. And we were not disappointed! David describes the organ as ‘eclectic, but with a single integrity’. The brief for its construction was that it needed to work in the Concert Hall (not simply to live there) and that it must be suitable for use with the College’s orchestras. David explained that this gives great scope for subtlety of registration; for example, as he demonstrated, 8’ Principals can be used for accompaniment against a solo of Dulciaan, Woudfluit, Nasard, Roerfluit 4’, Bourdon 8’ and tremulant. It is not necessary, or desirable, to couple all the manuals together. This was an inspiring end to a most enjoyable visit.



Our next outing, on 13th August, was equally enjoyable but as different from the London day as chalk and cheese. Our member Christina Veasey, along with churchwarden John Brain, made us extremely welcome at St. John, Churt, where Christina is relishing the church’s warm support of and enthusiasm for a variety of musical styles, of which the organ is an important part. The village itself is keen to preserve and enhance the instrument, which was rebuilt in 2014 by Andrew Cooper. Christina says that the congregation love it and really enjoy their hymn-singing!

After lunch (again, arranged by Rikki Willis) we moved on to St. Bartholomew, Rogate, another warm welcome from Revd. Edward Doyle and members of his congregation and a small but pleasant Alphonse Noterman organ.

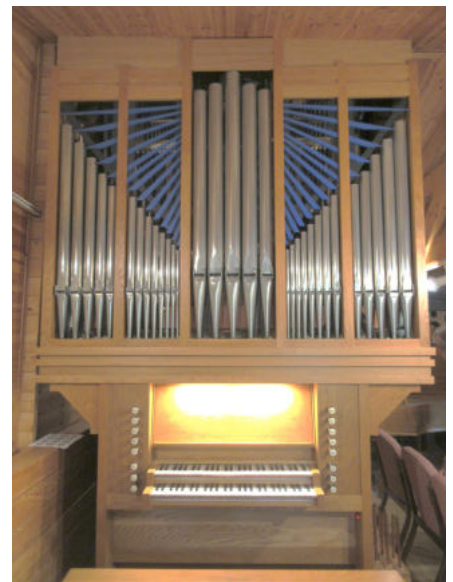


We travelled to St. Peter, East Marden, where, after an initial hiccup, we met Richard Barnes. He introduced us to a delightful 1819 Thomas Eliot chamber organ, said to have been the property of Prince Albert. With just six stops and a pull-down pedal, there’s a limit to what you can play on it, but what it does, it does well, and sited as it is at the back of the church,

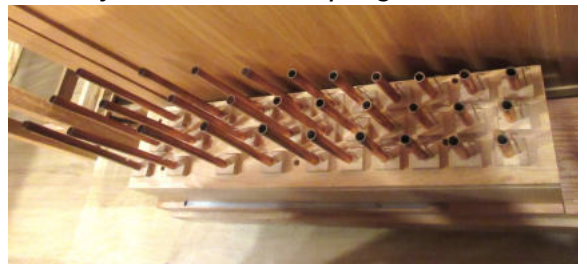


it can provide enough “oomph” to support the congregation. East Marden forms part of the Octagon Parish of (you’ve guessed it) eight churches, of which the largest is Stoughton, our final stop of the day. This is a Saxon building with an organ donated by the family of Sally Elizabeth Jones (1961-1987), who died tragically in a ski-ing accident. A succinct description of the instrument is to be found on the NPOR website: 19th-century Willis organ installed here from a church in Llanrumney, Wales. Console plate reads: *‘John Compton console fitted to Heinze organ by Henry Willis and Sons. Ltd. 1994’*: i.e. a rebuild of various organ parts of unknown source (a reference to ‘Heinz 57’ food brand).

In October we caught up with another visit which had been delayed by Covid, and travelled to Philip Wharton's residence at Woodside, near Ascot. Philip and his wife Sherry made us very welcome and we spent a fascinating hour and a half or so exploring Philip's wonderful music room, which contains not only a Peter Collins pipe organ, but also an electronic instrument and two harpsichords. Philip encouraged us to try out all the instruments. The Collins takes no prisoners (woe is me that my articulation is so sloppy!), and the harpsichords were a stimulating challenge to Frances and others who tried them, not least because of the ergonomics of the keyboard. You might like to read what Philip has to say about the Bass Regal (see photo) - not a common stop on a relatively small organ: *"The chest, etc. for the Bass Regal 16' on the Pedal were made by the Collins team, led by Christopher Gaughan who was running the firm after Peter's untimely death. I have done a fair bit of work on it, including putting the curve on the tongues (thanks to Warren Marsh who lent me his best curving block). The 'copper pipe' resonators are just a temporary solution and will, in time, be replaced . . . I have experimented with some ideas but it's very much 'work in progress'"*.



We concluded our visit with two churches in Crowthorne: St. John the Baptist (Speechly, 1882, restored James Richardson Jones, 2017), and Crowthorne Methodist Church (Rest Cartwright, 1913, Brian Bunting 1968), at both of which venues it was a pleasure to meet other organists and members of the congregations.



## Annual General Meeting

Notice is hereby given that the Annual General Meeting of the North Hampshire Organists' Association will be held at 12 noon on Saturday, 4th February, 2023 at St. Mark's Church, Alma Ln, Farnham GU9 0LT. Items for the agenda should be notified to the Secretary not later than 28th January. Geoff Willis, Gillian Lloyd and Ian Harrison all come to the end of their terms of office on 4th February. They have all expressed willingness to serve for a further term of two years if re-elected. Jane Jacobs, Frances Whewell, Jeff Lloyd and John Mansfield have a further year to serve. Members will find a form enclosed with this Newsletter to enable them to nominate any other member of the Association (including themselves!) who has agreed to serve if elected as a Committee member. We would be very grateful if you could fill in and return the form enclosed with this Newsletter to reach Jeff Lloyd by 31st December

Please will you also note any changes to your Members' List entry clearly on your return slip (i.e., changes to your address, including postcode and e-mail, telephone/mobile number, membership status and availability to teach and/or deputise). The meeting will be followed by a buffet lunch and a talk by Michael Brough (Holy Trinity, Sloane Street).

## Subscriptions

These have remained unchanged for some years, but your Committee feels that we now need to increase them to cover expenses such as capitation to the IAO (which carries the benefit of Public Liability Insurance for our events) and Newsletter production. The new rates for 2023 are as follows:

Individual: £15 with electronic communications, £20 if you require the printed version of Newsletters

Family: £20 (electronic), £25 (printed).

Country: £10 (electronic), £15 (printed)

In accordance with the mandate granted to the Committee at the last AGM to enable it to raise subscriptions if it was felt to be necessary, the AGM will be asked to ratify these changes retrospectively. We hope that you will feel the increase to be reasonable.

## *Our President's travels*

It has been a very musically interesting and fulfilling summer which has taken me to various parts of the globe. The first was a visit to Paris to conduct a choral course in late June at the American Cathedral. Visiting this superb George Edmund Street Gothic Revival building was also an opportunity to work again with Andy Dewar, Organist at the American Cathedral and a former organ scholar from Wells Cathedral during my time there. The singers on the course were supported by the exceptionally fine adult choir of the Cathedral, in music by Parry, Byrd, Archer and Faure's Requiem. Thanks go to Zach Ullery and Madeleine Cooper for inviting me and for all their hard work in setting up a great few days.

The next trip was to Sewanee TN in the USA to direct the Sewanee Church Music Conference, held annually at the University of the South in Sewanee and a conference I have directed several times before. I find those USA conferences invigorating, very worthwhile and enjoyable. I nearly didn't get there at all: I arrived at Heathrow on 10<sup>th</sup> July to be told at the British Airways desk that I had been bumped from the flight to Nashville and would have to travel 24 hours later. (there being only one BA flight to Nashville each day) When I protested and said that my ticket had been booked for weeks, I was told that 'all airlines did it' to which I replied that British Airways didn't need to sink to the level of other airlines! So I stayed in a local hotel and caught the flight the following day. I still await the compensation and refund of my overnight expenses from BA three months later! Not very impressive.

Having got there, the course was already well underway in the capable hands of others, and I soon met up with old friends and enjoying the music making of a very accomplished group. (mainly choir directors themselves) The week included the premiere of my new setting of 'Faire is the heaven' which was composed in memory of two stalwart Sewanee singers who have recently passed on. We stayed on the

university campus and sang in the superb university chapel with its Casavant organ and with Fred Teardo, our superb organ accompanist. Thanks to Kevin Simons and his team for setting up a fantastic week on the 'Holy Mountain'.

Since 2007 I have had very close connections with the Jean Langlais Festival in Brittany, by directing the Langlais Festival Choir each year and which lasted until Covid changed things and it became less feasible for large groups of singers to get together. So this year, I gave two concerts with a very talented young British tenor called Alex Kirkland. One was a programme with organ accompaniment on a superb instrument at the Basilique Notre-Dame de Pontmain, and the other a programme with piano accompaniment in La Fontenelle Church, La Fontenelle being Langlais' birthplace. I also had the honour of playing Langlais' own Pleyel grand piano and had the great pleasure of staying with my good friend Brenda Dean, who founded the festival and still organises it.

The other visit abroad was to the Netherlands where I played three recitals; in the Hooglandes Kerk in Leiden, Sint Paulus in Antwerp and the Grote Kerk in Duurstede. The Hooglandes Kerk has recently bought and restored a superb Father Willis pipe organ which sounds fabulous in that cavernous acoustic, and which works equally well for English, French and German repertoire. Duurstede has a Harrison and Harrison organ, brought over from England and restored, further reflecting the admiration of the Dutch for English organs. The Netherlands has a plethora of superb historic instruments, which have survived mainly because the churches have often not had the money to rebuild them! (and spoil them) Some of the oldest instruments, including one on the west wall of the church in Leiden and the one on the west wall of Duurstede were reputedly played by Sweelinck. I am so grateful to Bea and Martijn Van der Kaaij for arranging the tour and hosting me and being my taxi drivers,

and to their son Geert who sang some solo items in the concerts.

Just to add symmetry to my summer's travel plans, Easyjet cancelled my flight home, which meant I was delayed in the Netherlands by 24 hours. (not a hardship) At least Easy Jet have paid up my compensation and expenses!



*Malcolm Archer*

## *Tim Stewart starts his Organ Scholarship*

The first half of the Michaelmas term as Organ scholar of Chichester cathedral has been filled with many new experiences and challenges of both a musical and non-musical nature.

Certain musical challenges have included getting to grips with accompanying the Cathedral choir in daily services, but also learning how to manage my time effectively has been a non-musical skill which I have had to refine. Musically, I have enjoyed accompanying the psalms as I have found using the different colours of the organ to bring out the words a rewarding experience. I have had to learn to balance my practice time between solo repertoire and accompaniments which is something that I have struggled with in the past.

I also act as choir librarian, which means that I am in charge of putting the music out for the new week ahead and putting away music that we have done. Not only have I found a big responsibility in this task, it has been great opportunity for me to discover new music and new composers which I have never heard of!

Some of my duties are also held at the school where I supervise the chorister's individual music practice after evensong. Helping the choristers on their own musical journeys is something which I have relished and have found this very fulfilling.

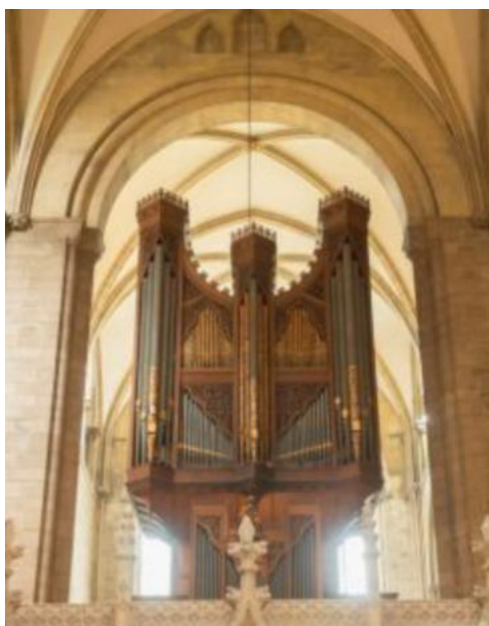
As well as my duties at the Cathedral I also accompany a choral society in the local area every Tuesday. I've been learning valuable keyboard skills through this role, but have also gained an understanding on how to go about running a choir.

Altogether, my time at Chichester so far has been packed with many new opportunities



and I can't wait to see what else my time here brings, and I hope to see some of you down here soon!

*Tim Stewart*



## *Going to school at last!*

Can you believe it? Did you plan something that was put off by the Covid lockdowns and now it's time to resurrect it? You might recall that in March 2020 we had an arrangement to demonstrate our portable digital organ to GCSE students at Calthorpe Park School in Fleet and Covid cancelled it at a few days notice.

We are delighted to tell you that the school is inviting external visitors again and Ross Walker, the Head of Music, has retained his enthusiasm for our event!

Martin Barnes, Rob Goldfinch and I will run a workshop session for about twenty-five GCSE music students on 7th December. This will be followed by a hands-on session for about eight keyboard-playing students from Years 9, 10 and 11.

The School has a Christmas Concert planned for 15th December where students will perform on a variety of instruments with their parents in the audience. Ross Walker has asked for our organ to be part of the evening. He wants us briefly to explain about the organ and what it can do. He is still developing the programme which might include the organ with the handbell team, trumpet or accompanying other items.

After these events, we'll bring you news about how they went and the students' reactions. In the meantime, we have to remember how to assemble the organ and do a bit of rehearsing!

*Geoff Willis*

## Organ concerts and recitals

The third of the 2022 Lunchtime Organ concerts took place at St Lawrence Church, Alton on Thursday 18 August 2022 and we welcomed back Rob Goldfinch together with guest electric guitarist, Mark Rood. The audience of about 60 people were treated to an exhilarating programme of music including works by Purcell, CS Lang, B Barnes, Moore, Praetorius, Widor and, the master himself, Rob. To add to the entertainment, Rob's descriptions of his programme content were fascinating, humorous and educational. A first for the organ concerts was an organ/electric guitar duet playing Gary Moore's "Parisienne Walkways" rock number featuring Mark Rood on guitar.

Rob has been described as an unconventional organist in his approach to choice of music, his technique and his determination to entertain his audience even if this means diverting from traditional organ concert protocols. The inclusion of the guitar/organ duet rock piece "Parisienne Walkways" was an experiment which worked most successfully. His friend Mark played electric guitar and one was reminded of guitar riffs by Queen, Pink Floyd, Rolling Stones etc - but in church? Yes, and it worked supremely largely through Rob's magical improvisations on the organ based on a list of chords supplied by Mark. There was a point when the guitar ended a pianissimo passage and Rob joined in with a full organ massive chord - announcing the power of the organ.

Rob opened his concert with Three dances from "Terpsichore" (1. Bransle de la Torche, 2. Spagnoletta and 3. Couranteby) by Praetorius (1571-1621) transcribed for organ solo by Jonathon Scott. The Scott brothers have a high reputation for transcribing orchestral pieces for organ and Rob's performance displayed the organ's colourful sounds. I could have sworn I heard a little bit of "What shall we do with the drunken sailor" - or was I dreaming! The next two pieces highlighted the trumpet stops with Purcell's "Rondeau" (used by Benjamin Britten for his Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra) and

CS Lang's popular "Tuba Tune". Rob remarked that a friend came up with the title of the next piece ("Skegness is so bracing" by Rob Goldfinch) and this was bracketed with Bernard Barnes "Dainty Miss" originally scored for piano. Here we witnessed the nimbleness of Rob's manual technique projected on the screen. There was a strong hint of a Blackpool Theatre Organ in full swing...

Two more pieces by Rob followed - "Soft Flutes" and "The Dance". He did remark that whenever he spotted in the programme a piece composed by the performer "...his heart sinks..." Remarking about including his own composition, he said "...tough, you'll have to put up with it..." We loved them. Last time we heard his "Soft flutes" we felt that it would have made the perfect sound track for a nature documentary.

The performance of "Parisienne Walkways" was, potentially, risky as it was completely outwith a standard organ concert repertoire. It was great, different and well received by this enthusiastic audience who appreciated a bit of soft rock music.

Rob concluded his concert with famous & much loved Widor's Toccata from the 5th Symphony. He remarked that he learned this when he was 13, usually plays this from memory but - for security's sake - had the music on the stand. However, getting towards the end, the massive script fell off and despite gallant efforts to recover it (while still playing) Rob was forced to continue (flawlessly) from memory.

The screen in the church now has the ability to project hands on manuals and foot pedal work on a split screen. Such a facility adds a new dimension to the Alton organ concerts. Those unfamiliar with the organ witness the complexity of exploiting the full range of the instrument. The pedal cam displayed on the screen footwork both with pedals, swell pedal and the occasional use of toe piston - when the hands are too busy! In his oral programme notes, Rob emphasised his frequent use of the swell pedal to add contrast and colour to the music.

The whole event was jubilant, full of fun and

technically very professional. His demeanour, presentation and relationship with the audience was unconventional but truly warm and successful. Members of the audience left the church smiling and on a high having experienced a superb concert. They also donated generously raising over £300 towards the organ restoration fund.

*Tony Willman*

Gert van Hoef became a Youtube phenomenon during the Covid lockdown period and I'm sure you'll recall we invited him to talk to us online back in March? It was then that Rikki and I heard about Gert's intention to return to play at the Victoria Hall, in Hanley, Stoke-on-Trent on 20<sup>th</sup> August.

The fine brick building was constructed to commemorate Queen Victoria's Jubilee. The Circle and Upper Circle seating were recommended to hear the Conacher/Willis four manual organ at its best. Spotlights showed off the beautiful colours of the facia pipes and two enormous video screens gave the audience a seat practically at the console.

The concert was uplifting – in terms of the sound, the programme and the charmingly modest and engaging personalities of both Gert and his wife, Marjolein who was his registrant.

Interestingly, he talked about all his pieces at the start (which usually means the audience forgets what was said by the time a piece is played). It didn't seem to matter here



because the massive screens meant we were engrossed in every piece and his pedalling in particular. Also we could see him actually playing so with that, and the fabulous sounds and dynamic range of the organ, it was a joy to be there. (Actually, the seats were a bit cramped but there's no gain without pain!)

The programme was a good mix as you can see. He made a lot of registration changes, essential in orchestral style pieces of course, and we could see those changes being made by Marjolein using the stepper.

I would say another factor of his success is his manner of speaking. He has a very genuine style of speech and relates well to the audience. Most organists know they have to 'do the chat' but few seem to engage with their audience and often remain rather distant.

I was fortunate to meet him briefly afterwards when he told me that he was still setting up the organ half an hour before the performance!

So the success of this event would seem to be useful to many other performances ....

- Engage the audience with the chat
- Give the audience a good view - often requiring screens
- Play a good mix of styles/genres, some with well known tunes

*Geoff Willis*

