

# Chester & North-East Wales Organists' & Choirmasters' Association

Affiliated to the Incorporated Association of Organists



## Newsletter – March 2017

On line at [www.cnewoca.org.uk](http://www.cnewoca.org.uk)

Facebook - [www.facebook.com/groups/CNEWOCA](http://www.facebook.com/groups/CNEWOCA)

### This Month

Monday 27 March, 7.30pm  
St Peter's, Ruthin

A chance to hear and play another four manual which has quite a bit history. It has moved about a bit in its time and when it came to Henry Willis looking at a restoration it was more of a rescue. The



instrument was originally Ernest Wadsworth and Brother, a well-known Manchester firm, and many parts and pipes from the original have been lost so this should be another very interesting visit. Following the completion of the installation of the instrument, the opening recital was performed by Olivier Latry, Organist Titulaire de Notre Dame de Paris. M. Latry subsequently invited David Wyld and Thomas Yeomans (HW&S's Voicer) to Paris to discuss the final regulation of the organ.

From 1310 to 1536, St Peter's was a Collegiate Church (a church staffed by a community of priests) served by a prior and seven priests. Following the Dissolution of the Monasteries, the college of priests was dissolved. The church went into decay, though it continued to be used. In 1574 Gabriel Goodman returned to Ruthin and re-founded Ruthin School and, in 1590, the Wardenship of Ruthin. The church continues to have a warden rather than a vicar - a tradition that is peculiar to Ruthin. The Church is in School Road, LL15 1BL. It is a long time since I was there, but I don't remember having any difficulty parking in the vicinity, and it is an evening visit. Thanks to Fay Adamson who will talk about the instrument and demonstrate before we are let loose!

### The Chairman Writes

The world of music creates so many opportunities for us and we all need to reach out and take them while we are able. It was a lovely sunny day for our visit to

Ellesmere College and we made the most of what was a real privilege, with a very healthy turn out of members supporting the event; just as well, as we had two organs to play! Paul Russell was a splendid host, making us feel most welcome and sharing lots of information about the college and its two magnificent organs. It was also a special visit, as one of our members was a pupil at the College in the 1950's.

I was doing a search on the internet and I put in the words "organ registration", and was surprised that I didn't get the information I expected, as I was guided to a website to register to be an organ donor! This got me thinking that as organists we can often get cosy in our own 'blinkered' little world, when we could be making a difference to people's lives by sharing our music and fellowship.

Organ transplants have given many people a new lease of life, and pipe organ transplants have also provided a new lease of life for the organ itself and for those who get to play and listen to it. One such example of this is the magnificent Schulze organ that we visited last month at Ellesmere College. The organ started out life in St Mary's Parish Church, Tyne Dock in the 1860's and remained there until 1979 when the church closed and the organ fortunately found what seems to be the perfect match in the gallery of the "Big School" at Ellesmere College.

Just as people can gain new life from receiving the gift of an organ transplant, we have an Association that could bring so much pleasure to many people if we can only match ourselves up with the right people. Each one of you could help in this way by encouraging other people to come along to our events. Although our title is Organists' & Choirmasters', we must become an Association that attracts singers and music lovers to our events, not just organists, if we are to increase our membership and the numbers attending the monthly events. We are trying to provide a good variety of events and our last two have certainly been a bit special, with visits to the Henry Willis Organ Factory and, as mentioned above, Ellesmere College, but we need your help to let likely people outside our Association know about them please.

As I mentioned last month, I wondered if we have any 'secret composers' amongst our members, or perhaps you have an interesting hobby or job that would be interesting for members to hear about. You are all very shy, as I'm sure there is hidden talent amongst you; if that's you, I'd love to hear from you.

The weather's improving and daylight is getting longer, so I hope we will meet up in the next couple of months at the events that have been organised. In the meantime, if you'd like to discuss anything to do with CNEWOCA, don't hesitate to contact me on 07939 645688 or by e-mail [angiejohnevs@uwclub.net](mailto:angiejohnevs@uwclub.net)

### To all Budding Composers

The Bristol and District Organists' Association is very pleased to announce its Organ Music Composition Competition 2017. This competition is open to all, regardless of geographical location. Details, entry forms and other information can be seen on the Association's website at <http://bdoa.org.uk>. To see full details, visit the BDOA website and click on the poster image on the website opening page. There is a further link on that page for the other information and the entry form.

### Organist's Confession

*"Most merciful God, I confess that I have sinned against you, in melody, harmony, and tune; in hymns I have played, and in hymns I have left unplayed. I have not given you a full reed chorus; I have been forced to play "Shine Jesus Shine". I have used a resultant to achieve 32' tone. I have employed simplified Anglican chant instead of Atwood. I am truly sorry, and I humbly repent, for the sake of your son, Jesus Christ, forgive me, that I may play in your ways, and not talk bad about the praise band, to the glory of your name. AMEN"*  
(Thanks to Brian Moate)

### Stop Press - Change of Venue

The May meeting - Tuesday 16 May at 7.30pm - will be at the Bethlehem Chapel Rhosllanerchrugog; a recently rebuilt 3 manual Norman and Beard. Thanks to Godfrey Williams and the Chapel for making arrangements at short notice.

## What's On?

### Chester Cathedral

Thursdays at 1.10pm

- 23 Mar** Philip Rushforth (Chester)  
**30 Mar** Roger Fisher (Organist Emeritus)  
**6 Apr** Pierre Zevort (France)  
**13 Apr** Andrew Wyatt (Chester)  
**20 Apr** Roger Fisher (Organist Emeritus)  
**27 Apr** Marc Murray (Bury)

### St Asaph Cathedral

Wednesdays at 7.30pm

- 5 Apr** Alan McGuinness (St Asaph)  
**3 May** Richard Lea (Buckfast Abbey)  
**Admission £6 including programme**

### St George's Hall, Liverpool

Ian Tracey

Palm Sunday 9 April at 2.30pm

Tuesday 11 April at 12.45pm

Admission £2.50

### Liverpool Cathedral

Ian Tracey

Monday 17 April at 12.45pm

Admission £5

### Welsh Presbyterian Church

(Music at Wesley)

St John Street, Chester

Tuesdays at 12.45pm

- 21 Mar** Chetham's School of Music  
Pianists  
**28 Mar** Lionel Clarke (Cello),  
Brian Heald (Piano)  
**4 Apr** John Bush Trumpet,  
Brian Heald (Piano)  
**11 Apr** The Vale Royal Singers  
- Fauré's Requiem  
**18 Apr** William Green (Piano)  
**25 Apr** Chetham's School of Music Brass  
Ensembles

Admission free - retiring collection

### St Chad's, Shrewsbury

**Tues 4 Apr** Alex Mason, Shrewsbury  
School

**Fri 21 Apr** Mark Swinton St Mary's  
Collegiate Church, Warwick

Admission free - retiring collection

### Organ Recitals Nationwide

details on [www.organrecitals.com](http://www.organrecitals.com)

Music at Wesley

Tuesday Lunchtime Concerts

A reminder that until further notice the concerts will take place in the Presbyterian Church on the opposite side of the road - this is due to the worship area re-ordering project. The Café will remain open as normal.

## Chester Cathedral Organ

### Marathon

Another organ marathon is being held at Chester Cathedral - your chance to play the mighty four-manual and raise some money for the restoration. Further details to follow, but note the date in your diary - Saturday 16 September 2017.

### G F Handel

Robin Newby writes about Handel's *Messiah*:

"This enduring masterpiece was written in 1741 in London, in Handel's house at 25 Brook Street, at tremendous speed, and was completed in the space of about three weeks. The texts were selected by Charles Jennens (1700-1773), who was a literary scholar and an editor of the plays of Shakespeare.

So when Handel received an invitation from the Duke of Devonshire to go to Dublin and produce a series of charity concerts, he readily accepted. After all, Dublin in the 18<sup>th</sup> Century was one of the important musical centres of Europe, and he would take *Messiah* with him and produce it there.

On his way over to Ireland he was delayed at Parkgate due to a storm in the Irish Sea and rested nearby. He used the time by rehearsing *Messiah* with some singers from Chester Cathedral, but the results were not good. On one occasion, having asked the cathedral Organist (Edmond Baker) to recommend any choristers who could sing at sight, Handel auditioned a printer named Janson who was supposed to have a good bass voice. Janson, however, was useless. Handel in fury said, '*You scoundrel, didn't you tell me that you could sing at sight?*' to which the hapless printer replied, '*Yes, Sir, and so I can, but not at first sight!*'

Dean Howson found the nave of the church '*if used at all . . . used only as a place for loitering*'. From the completion of its restoration in 1872 it was used for Sunday evening services. In 1879 the organist, J C Bridge (d. 1929) revived the Chester music festivals, which had lapsed since 1829, and organized them as a triennial event. The Precentor said in 1888 that he hoped that the opening service of the festival that year, to be held in the nave, would be attended by '*the very lowest of the low in meanest attire*'."

### Vacant Organ Benches

**St Laurence, Frodsham** (Cheshire) seeks an **Organist & Choirmaster** to take over from the current Organist, who is leaving in March after 15 years of gifted and dedicated service. Duties are weekly Eucharist and Evensong, plus occasional additional services on Feast days. A loyal and enthusiastic Choir practices weekly.

The organ is a fine 3-manual Binns. We have an established musical tradition which is appreciated by a supportive congregation. Salary based on RSCM recommended bands, negotiable, plus fees. For more details, contact Rev Michael Mills at [mikehills@me.com](mailto:mikehills@me.com) or 01928 733378.

**St James', Christleton** has a long history of Church music and is affiliated to the Royal School of Church Music. We require a **Director of Music** to play the organ and develop and grow our enthusiastic choir. A good knowledge of organ playing, and experience of leading and conducting choirs is essential. The organ is a Holditch RCO 2-manual full pedal board instrument. It was installed in the Church in 1878 and rebuilt in 1988. Fees for a suitable candidate are those set out by the RSCM and there are additional fees for weddings and funerals. Contact: The Rector, The Rectory, Christleton, Chester CH3 or telephone 01244 335663. Closing date: 31 March 2017

### Writing a letter to God

The teacher asked the pupils to write a letter to God - here are a selection:

Dear God . . .

. . . If you watch in Church on Sunday I will show you my new shoes. *Mickey D*

. . . If we come back as something please don't let me be Jennifer Horton because I hate her. *Denise*

. . . If you give me a Genie Lamp like Aladdin I will give you anything you want except my money or my chess set. *Raphael*

. . . Please send Dennis Clark to a different camp this year. *Peter*

. . . Thank you for the baby brother, but what I prayed for was a puppy. *Joyce*

### Recitals at St Asaph Cathedral

There is a summer series of recitals at 7.30pm on the first Wednesday of the month from April to September - admission £6. Details of the April and May recitals are in the *What's On?* section, and future recitalists include Graham Eccles and John Hosking. We always receive a warm welcome at St Asaph and, if you can, I ask you to support the recital programme.

### Newsletter Contributions

Contributions for the April newsletter are required before 10 April. Please write to Bob Jones at 3 Appleton Road, Chester CH2 1JH or (preferred) e-mail at [bob.jones25@btinternet.com](mailto:bob.jones25@btinternet.com) or telephone 01244 315089 or 07701 052304.