

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

Affiliated to the Incorporated Association of Organists



Newsletter – May 2017

On line at www.cnewoca.org.uk

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This Month

Tuesday 16th May 2017, 7.30pm at Bethlehem Chapel, Hall Street, Rhosllanerchrugog, Wrexham LL14 2LF. A chance to hear and play the newly restored 3 manual Norman and Beard. The Chapel originates from 1812 being modified, altered or rebuilt in 1839, 1876, 1889, 1908 and 1926. This building is now Grade 2 Listed as an unusual example of the Rundbogenstil facade. More information overleaf.



Next month

AGM and Dinner

Tuesday 13th June, 7.00pm

with guest speaker, Rachel Mahon

(Assistant Organist, Chester Cathedral)

Notice is hereby given that the Annual General Meeting of the Chester & North-East Wales Organists' & Choirmasters' Association will be held at 7.00pm on Tuesday 13th June 2017 in the Club House Restaurant, Upton-by-Chester Golf Club. Nominations are invited for the posts of Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Treasurer, General Secretary, Membership Secretary, Publicity Officer and 6 Committee Members. A Nomination Form is enclosed and this should be completed and handed to Angela Evans (General Secretary) at this month's meeting or sent to her, as soon as possible, at 11 Lindfields, Saltney, Chester CH4 8QD or by e-mail at angiejohnevans@uwclub.net. Please ensure that the consent of nominees has been obtained before you propose them. You may nominate yourself to serve in any of the posts. All Officers and current Committee Members are willing to continue, although this still leaves two vacancies. Items of "Any Other Business" will only be accepted if they are forwarded to the General Secretary, in

writing, at least seven days in advance of the meeting.

The Chairman Writes

As an Association, we are so fortunate and privileged that we are given the opportunity to visit some wonderful buildings and play the best organs in England and Wales. Our April event saw us welcomed at Chester Cathedral by Philip Rushforth (Director of Music), who gave us an update on the Organ Appeal and clearly expressed his desire to progress the Appeal as quickly as possible. There then followed a most interesting 'interview style' discussion with Philip, when he spoke about 'what makes the organ at Chester special', 'the organ that sounds most like Chester', 'his favourite stop on the organ', 'what additional stop he would like'. I asked Philip if he had any ideas to make 'organ concerts' more appealing to a wider audience, the way Thursday Recitals are chosen, and if occasional evening or weekend recitals would be considered. Not forgetting that we are a Choirmasters' Association as well, we discussed how choirs are trained, and the balance between achieving good tone and also achieving good diction, particularly in a reverberant building. Whilst thinking of balance, we also discussed the difficulties of trying to be both an organist and a choirmaster, and how administration eats into valuable time. The discussion ended with Philip telling us a little about his future plans, and explaining that every day is a 'special day' for the Cathedral Music Staff and Choristers, and that they always aim to give the best they possibly can. We then had the opportunity to play the Cathedral Organ and share fellowship with refreshments. Our grateful thanks go to Philip who arranged this for us, and to Bob Owens, who provided us with welcome refreshments!

Hopefully the lighter evenings and improved weather will encourage a good number of members to come along to our May event, when we will be visiting Bethlehem Chapel, Rhosllanerchrugog, to hear and play the recently restored three-manual organ.

Next month will be our AGM & Dinner. We are very fortunate and grateful to Rachel Mahon, Assistant Organist at

Chester Cathedral, for agreeing to be our after-dinner speaker. This year's meal will be a carvery (a vegetarian option is available if notified in advance). There will also be a choice of desserts, followed by tea/coffee, at a cost of £18 per person. Menu choices will be made 'on the night', but you need to forward your payment to our treasurer, David Bird, as soon as possible (115 Liverpool Road, Chester CH2 1BB). The date is Tuesday 13th June, and the start time for the AGM is 7.00pm, so that we can start the meal at around 7.45pm. I hope that you'll feel able to invite guests to what should be an excellent evening.

Our 2016/17 programme of events has been very enjoyable, including visits to Arley Hall Chapel & Gardens; Bangor & Chester Cathedrals; Cilcain Parish Church; St Saviour's, Oxtun; Christ Church, Chester; a fascinating tour around the Willis Organ Factory; a wonderful afternoon at Ellesmere College; a lovely evening at St Peter's, Ruthin; and not forgetting Bethlehem Chapel later this month.

You will find additional information about the AGM on the enclosed Agenda, and I urge you to consider being pro-active in making the Association a greater success. There are so many ways you can do this, not least by encouraging someone to come along to our events or perhaps by writing an article for the Newsletter. If you have ideas for recruiting more members or for events that would attract them, please let me know. The Programme for 2017/18 will be distributed with the June Newsletter after your Committee have confirmed the final dates at their May meeting. We are all benefiting from the enthusiasm of the Officers and Committee members who were elected last year. The Officers and Committee members will be standing for re-election (Committee member Richard Bass resigned a few months ago). There are two vacancies on the Committee, so if you would be interested, please give me a call or e-mail.

If you'd like to discuss anything to do with CNEWOCA, don't hesitate to contact me on 01244-674878, 07939-645688 or by e-mail angiejohnevans@uwclub.net.

What's On?

Chester Cathedral

Thursdays at 1.10pm

- 18 May** Ian Tracey (Liverpool Cathedral)
25 May Philip Rushforth (Chester Cathedral)
1 June Roger Fisher (Organist Emeritus)
8 June Alexander Binns (St Edmundsbury Cathedral)
15 June Adriano Falcioni (Perugia Cathedral, Italy)
22 June Andrew Wyatt (Chester Cathedral)

St Asaph Cathedral

Wednesday 7 June, 7.30pm

Graham Eccles
(St Asaph Cathedral)

Admission £6, including programme

Liverpool Cathedral

Monday 29 May, 11.15am

David Poulter
(Liverpool Cathedral)

Admission £5

Liverpool Metropolitan Cathedral

Monday 29 May, 3.00pm

James Luxton
(Liverpool Metropolitan Cathedral)

Friday 16 June, 7.30pm

Johann Vexo
(Notre-Dame, Paris)

Admission £5

St George's Hall, Liverpool

Tuesday 23 May, 12.45pm

Tuesday 13 June, 12.45pm

Ian Tracey
(Liverpool Cathedral)

Admission £2.50

St Giles', Wrexham

Mondays at 12.30pm

- 15 May** Fay Adamson (Ruthin Parish Church)
22 May Charles Jones (Holy Trinity, Llandudno)
29 May John Hosking (St Asaph Cathedral)
5 June Bob Jones (St. Francis, Chester)
12 June Gerry Howe (Oswestry Parish Church)
19 June Keith Morgan (Middle Rasen, Lincs.)
Lunches available - admission free - retiring collection

Welsh Presbyterian Church

St John Street, Chester

Tuesday 16 May, 12.45pm

Rev Robert Parry will be giving an organ recital in aid of the organ fund

Admission free - retiring collection

St Chad's, Shrewsbury

- Fri 19 May** John Hosking (St Asaph Cathedral)
Tue 6 June Anthony Pinel (St Chad's, Shrewsbury)
Fri 16 June Martyn Rawles (Lichfield Cathedral)
All recitals at 12.40pm
Admission free - retiring collection

Bethel Chapel, Ponciau

Friday 16 June, 7.00pm

Elias Ackerley - Piano
Daniel Bradford - Piano and Organ
Alwyn Humphreys - Soloist

Admission free - retiring collection

Organ Recitals Nationwide

details on www.organrecitals.com

Chester Cathedral Organ Marathon

SAVE THE DATE!

Saturday 16 September 2017

9.00am to 9.00pm

Philip Rushforth has written as follows:

'I want to give you notice that we are again holding another ORGAN MARATHON here at the Cathedral in aid of the Grand Organ Appeal. Our last marathon was held in October 2014 and I know that you took part and supported the appeal. For that I am very grateful. If you would like to take part again - I am very much hoping you will - and obtain sponsorship for your time at the magnificent organ of Chester Cathedral, please SAVE THE DATE and spread the word to any likely participants!

Once again, Nigel Ogden will be our Celebrity Recitalist who will play roughly half way through the day. More information will be forthcoming in the next couple of months'.

Vacant Organ Benches

There were two other adverts in the previous newsletter. I understand that the post at Frodsham has been filled and the vacancy at Kelsall has passed its deadline date. As far as I am aware no appointment has yet been made at:-

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 7AP or telephone 01244 335663.

Bethlehem Chapel Organ

We visit this Chapel next Tuesday 16 May. The organ is a 3 manual Normal and Beard. I attended a recital recently and it sounds magnificent, so it is well worth the trip. It was built in 1908 and has recently been fully restored. I am hoping that Godfrey Williams will be there on the night to give us some idea of the enormity of the task

that faced the Chapel when the decision was made to embark on such a large restoration project. I like the way that the instrument is given pride of place - too many organs are shoe-horned into an available space rather than being given the chance to sound at their best. You can see from the photo on the front page that the instrument has nothing in its way. The photo has been taken from the gallery so there is ample space to hear the organ at its best - this is the view looking away from the organ . . .



. . . and in case you are wondering what Rundbogenstil is, it's a 19th-century historic revival style of architecture combining elements of Byzantine, Romanesque and Renaissance architecture with particular stylistic motifs - so now you know.

Organs for sale

Last month I gave details of two organs that were for sale, one being at St Michael's Church, Caerwys and the other being a Peter Collins house organ. As far as I am aware they are still for sale. Details are in last month's newsletter, which is available on line or by e-mailing me at bob.jones25@btinternet.com for more information.

What do I do?

A week or so ago I had an e-mail from a choir director at a local Church asking me to play for a wedding. The bride is to enter to the usual Wagner with 3 hymns (2 of which were unfamiliar) and **for me to choose the exit music**. This is the first time I have been asked to choose the exit music, so in my reply I explained that I was unsure of 2 of the hymns, and as it was my choice of exit music I suggested "I've Got a Lovely Bunch of Coconuts". I had an e-mail back explaining that the two hymns I had questioned were "wedding words" to popular tunes but there was no question over my suggested exit music so I am in somewhat of a dilemma... mmm - I think I'll play it safe and get the Mendelssohn out.
Bob Jones

Newsletter Contributions

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