

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

Affiliated to the Incorporated Association of Organists



CNEWOCA

Newsletter – July 2018

On line at www.cnewoca.org.uk

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This Month

On Saturday 14th July we visit Tabley House chapel in Knutsford. From M6, jct 19 take A556 south towards Chester, approximately 1 mile, at first set of lights, branch left for Knutsford. Tabley House is a few hundred yards on the right.

St Peter's Chapel was originally built on an island in the Mere in 1678, was moved in 1927 and re-erected on its present site adjacent to the house. The Chapel has impressive stained glass and was recently used as the location for an important wedding scene in BBC2's 'Peaky Blinders'. The Chapel, accessed via the Team Room entrance, is free to enter; however, there is no public access to the Gallery or the organ, and the Association is having to pay a fee for access and as a result we will have to ask for a £5 per person donation to cover the cost.

Access to Tabley House is separate and you can see the wonderful historic splendour of Tabley House State Room, admire the extraordinary art collection and furniture and hear about the intriguing history of the Leicester family. The main house is open from 1pm until 5pm with last entry at 4.30pm, price £5 adults (£1.50 children and students).

Tabley House Collection Tea Room offers a range of light refreshments, teas, coffees, freshly made sandwiches, cakes and afternoon teas in a beautiful, peaceful, and historic setting with waitress service at your table. Situated in the Old Hall Room, the Tea Room links the Grade I listed mansion with the 17th Century St Peter's Chapel.

The organ is described on the NPOR website as follows:-

Builders 1876 Bryceson Bros & Morten London wooden pipe organ, installed in the chapel by the 2nd Lord de Tabley's 2nd wife, Elizabeth (widow of Hugh Smith Barry of Marbury, Northwich, nee Jacson, Cheshire) on 29th September 1876; the pedals narrow and close together and its sound is delightful.

Next Month and beyond

There is no meeting in August but at 7.30pm on Monday 24th September we visit St Werburgh's in Chester for an evening on improvisation with James Andrews. At 1.30pm on Saturday 13th

October we visit the Marble Church, Bodelwyddan which has recently taken delivery of an Allen Digital Organ. Although the instrument only has two manuals and 33 stops, there is a range of over 200 additional voices to choose from, which makes the instrument extremely versatile indeed.

On Saturday 17th November we are planning to visit Christ Church in Llanfairfechan - last year's planned visit had to be cancelled due to building work.

The Chairman Writes

Our May event was held at St Andrew's URC, Handbridge, Chester, and could well have been the best event we have ever had. If you weren't one of forty in attendance, you missed a real treat.

In preparation for our 20th Birthday Celebrations, six new pieces of music had been composed by three well-known organists/composers, namely Nigel Ogden, Ian Tracey and John Hosking, and three of our own members, Tim Jones, Bob Jones and me. I approached several publishers to see if we could get the pieces published together in a book, and I am very pleased to say that Banks Music Publications (York) agreed. There is a copy of the book available for all our members, free of charge, and members were most impressed with the presentation and quality of the book when they saw it for the first time on the day.

After an introduction about the 'celebrations' and the compositions, John Hosking expertly performed all six of them for us. He also showed how they could be registered successfully even on a small two manual instrument. The new pieces were received very favourably by the audience, and hopefully they will continue to get played from time to time for many years to come.

Following on from the music, we moved from the Church through to the Church Hall, where members were very impressed by the beautifully decorated tables and the magnificent buffet. A big "Thank You" to Mike and Ethan for all their time and effort preparing the Hall and the food - you really did us proud.

Just before we started the food, I read out a card I'd received from Sheila and Chris

Bennett, wishing us well and sharing a few thoughts from 20 years ago. This led us in very well for Quentin Bellamy to elaborate on the creation of the Association before leading us in prayer.

A really big THANK YOU to all who helped with the music, the venue, and who came along to make the event the resounding success that it turned out to be, far surpassing expectations.

When I wrote my article for the May Newsletter, I didn't realise that I wouldn't be getting a chance to write to you all again before the AGM, however, timescales and Bob's workload dictated that to be the case. Having had such a significant event in May, we chose to forgo a formal dinner after our AGM this year, however, we did go to a new venue, Stanley Palace in Watergate Street, Chester. This venue brought back some memories for me, being the place I took trumpet exams many years ago. I can't remember the last time I played a trumpet, and I probably wouldn't know where to start now, before anyone asks!

Our AGMs have gone very smoothly and efficiently in recent years, and 2018 was no exception. There was nothing at the AGM that sparked a great deal of discussion; the Officers and Committee were re-elected (except for Tim Jones who has now moved to live in York). Bob Owens was voted onto the Committee and we still have two Committee vacancies, so if anyone is interested, please get in touch. The accounts were approved, and the meeting was over in just 15 minutes. Following the AGM, we were entertained by Mike Edwards, Brian Moate, Bob Jones and Angie Evans before enjoying a beautifully cooked meal prepared for us by Mike Edwards and Ethan Henshaw.

Our thanks go to the Committee for guiding us through a very successful season and making sure that we have been able to celebrate our 20th Birthday in style and that we have a publication raising the profile of not just our Association but of the organ and its music.

I am again privileged to be heading up CNEWOCA as Chairman for the coming year and will do all I can to promote the organisation in a positive way.

Please remember that we are very fortunate to have an Organists' & Choirmasters' Association in our area and that we should

continued overleaf....

What's On?

Chester Cathedral

Thursdays at 1.10pm

- 12 Jul** Christopher Herrick (Concert Organist)
19 Jul David Van Behren (USA) - *see article*
26 Jul Andrew J Wyatt (Chester Cathedral)
2 Aug John Hosking (St Asaph Cathedral)
9 Aug Roger Fisher (Organist Emeritus)
16 Aug Rachel Mahon (Chester Cathedral)
23 Aug Graham Eccles (St Asaph)

Liverpool Cathedral

12.30pm to 1.00pm

- Sat 21 Jul** Daniel Greenaway (Liverpool Cath.)
Sat 28 Jul James Orford (St Paul's Cathedral)
Sat 4 Aug Nigel Spooner (Bolton School)
Sat 11 Aug Charles Wooler (Newcastle-o-Tyne)
Admission Free

Liverpool Metropolitan Cath.

2.00pm to 3.00pm

- Sat 21 Jul** Callum Alger (St Peter's, W'hampton)
Sat 28 Jul Andrew Sharples (Bishop Eton)
Sat 4 Aug Andrew J Wyatt (Chester Cathedral)
Sat 11 Aug Peter Kwater and Carol Wareing
Admission Free

St George's Hall, Liverpool

12.45pm to 1.30pm

- Tue 17 Jul** Ian Tracey (Liverpool Cathedral)
Admission £2.50

St Chad's, Shrewsbury

12.40pm to 1.20pm

- Fri 20 Jul** Alex Mason (Shrewsbury School)
Tue 7 Aug John Hosking (St Asaph Cathedral)
Fri 17 Aug Paul Carr (Birmingham)
Admission Free - Retiring Collection

Holy Trinity, Llandudno

Tuesdays 1.00pm to 1.45pm

- 7 Aug** Norman Rimmer BEM (Holy Trinity)
14 Aug Charles Jones (Holy Trinity)
21 Aug Alessandro Bianchi (Italy)
28 Aug Graham Eccles (St Asaph)
Admission Free- Retiring Collection

St Alkmund's, Whitchurch

12.00noon to 12.45pm

- Tue 31 Jul** Paul Carr (Birmingham)
Admission details unknown

St Peter's, Ruthin

Wednesdays at 1.00pm

- 3 Oct** Andrew J Wyatt (Chester Cathedral)
10 Oct Colin Walsh (Lincoln Cathedral)
17 Oct Dr John Pemberton (Curator of the organ at Hull City Hall)
24 Oct Roger Fisher (Organist Emeritus, Chester Cathedral)

Ellesmere College

Carol Williams concert on 13 September
This concert has been cancelled

Organ Recitals Nationwide

details on www.organrecitals.com

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do our best to take up the opportunities that being a member of CNEWOCA offers. As well as the music associated with our organisation, we shouldn't under-estimate the value of the fellowship we are able to share. Sometimes it's not until we're unable to attend that we realise just how much we miss it. Please do your best to support our monthly meetings and to attend some of the other events that are held throughout our area. There are several weekly recital series taking place now, as well as other 'one-off' events which are listed in the Newsletter each month.

Perhaps we are too quick to judge and comment "He/She's a good organist", but what exactly was the person judging them against? Do we judge an organist by the technical prowess of their performance or simply on how much we enjoyed it? I've been to some recitals where the organist has displayed a brilliant technique and yet because of the uninteresting nature of the programme I wouldn't be suggesting their future recitals to a non-organ enthusiast. In contrast to that, there are many organists, mainly of an amateur nature, who realise their limits and yet manage to present thoroughly enjoyable programmes. As a final observation and to summarise the above, I want to suggest that whatever our standard, we should all be looking to promote the organ and music in our churches in a manner that will both encourage others to listen and hopefully encourage some to play or sing in the choir. I look forward to seeing you at some of the events that have been organised for the months ahead. In the meantime, if you'd like to discuss anything to do with CNEWOCA, don't hesitate to contact me by e-mail angiejohnevans@uwclub.net or by phoning 07939 645688.

David Van Behren

On 19 July we welcome David Van Behren to Chester Cathedral. David, 23, is the first organist to receive the Cleveland Institute of Music's prestigious Darius Milhaud Award, given each year to a student "who displays qualities of unusual talent and creativity, sensitivity, expressiveness, strong love for and dedication to the musical arts, outstanding musical accomplishment, and evidence of academic excellence." Having performed with the CIM Orchestra at Kulas Hall and Severance Hall, David was recently named one of The Diapason's "20 Under 30" Class of 2016, a group of young organists, organ builders, harpsichordists, and church musicians who show superior accomplishments, leadership, creativity, and innovative thinking. David currently serves as organ scholar at Trinity Church on the Green in New Haven, Connecticut.

David continues to give concerts as a solo recitalist throughout the United States and Europe. In the past year, David was a featured solo performing artist at St John the Divine (NYC), St Thomas 5th Ave. (NYC), and Old West Church (Boston); this year, he will be performing solo recitals at Princeton University Chapel, Woolsey Hall (Yale University), St. George's Chapel, Windsor, and Clare College Chapel (Cambridge University) among other notable venues through the United States and United Kingdom.

Recitals at St Peter's, Ruthin

Roger Fisher has written to me explaining that the recitals at St Peter's have had to be re-scheduled due to work being carried out on the roof, resulting in the organ being covered and unavailable. The annual series of July recitals cannot take place in 2018, and Roger goes on to say: "Consequently, I have had to re-schedule them for October and, as the evenings will be dark then, we have changed the time and they will all be at 1.00pm". Details are in "What's On".

"You Never Know"

Member Kenneth Holland has written to me:

"This is a true story. Many years ago, one of my choirboys became the organ scholar of a Cambridge College. Eventually he became organist at a Church in the Midlands. It so happens that a dear old lady always sat on a seat on the front row of the Church. Our organist, after the concluding voluntary, always made his way to the vestry passing this dear old lady, who always stopped to the end of the voluntary. Our organist always gave a smile to her on passing. Some time elapsed and the old lady passed away, and believe it or not in her will she bequeathed our organist ... her house!"

So the next time you vacate the organ bench, perspiring and disorientated after playing a piece by Reger, smile to that dear old lady on the front row you never know."

Kenneth Holland

PS: this got me thinking that I ought to change my ways - but it then dawned on me that being organist at Eccleston, all the houses are owned by the Duke of Westminster, so I'll carry on being miserable!!! Ed

Newsletter Contributions

Contributions for the August newsletter are required by the third week of July. 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.