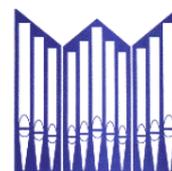


Chester & North-East Wales Organists' & Choirmasters' Association

Affiliated to the Incorporated Association of Organists



CNEWOCA

Newsletter – November & December 2019

Online at www.cnewoca.org.uk

Facebook - www.facebook.com/groups/CNEWOCA

From the Chairman...

On Monday 14th October 2019 we visited Christ Church in Birkenhead to hear and play the wonderful Father Willis Organ. It was an enjoyable evening for those who attended. I would like to thank Paul Broadhurst for hosting the meeting and Iain for making the arrangements. I would like to encourage members to attend our meetings when possible. Without your support our exciting programme of events would not be possible.

I look forward to seeing you all in Chester on Saturday 23rd November, the details of which are in the newsletter.

If you have any questions, please send me an email: ndt13@yahoo.co.uk

Regards Tony

Membership subscriptions are now due. Please send them as soon as possible to the Membership Secretary.

This month

On **Saturday 23rd November** we shall attend the recital at the Wesley Methodist Church, Chester, at 12:45pm which is being given by Paul Carr (Birmingham Cathedral). After the recital members will be able to examine and play the organ themselves. The organ is a three manual and pedal



instrument built in 1926 by J.J. Binns (Leeds) and renovated in 2000 by David Wells (Liverpool). The organ has a BIOS Historic Organ Certificate (Grade II).

Details may be found on the NPOR at <https://tinyurl.com/y2dtzm89>

There will also be an opportunity to visit



the Welsh Presbyterian Church, also in St John Street, and examine and play the 1900 Alex Young organ there. Two fine organs at one meeting – a treat not to be missed!

January Master Class

One of the great things that our Association does is to create opportunities that would otherwise not exist. Whether members choose to take up those opportunities is up to them, and unfortunately in recent times the 'take-up' has been disappointing.

About once a year I hear one organ that stands out from the rest; last year it was the organ in Christ Church, Llanfairfechan. Our event at Christ Church, Birkenhead turned out to be the one for this year. Whilst I was disappointed that the turnout was a lot less than expected, I was thrilled that I got so much time to play on the wonderful Father Willis organ. If you weren't one of those who attended, you missed out on the chance to hear and play a very special organ.

Is it something about churches called 'Christ Church' that seems to mean they have an organ that is 'special'? As things usually go in threes, I'm guessing that the organ that will stand out in 2020 is when we visit Christ Church in Newtown, Chester. Perhaps this is the best quality organ in Chester, or certainly in the top three after the Cathedral.

On the afternoon of **Saturday 25th January**, we are very fortunate that **Graham Eccles** (formerly in charge of music at Chester, St Asaph and Bangor Cathedrals) has very kindly agreed to host a Masterclass at Christ Church, Newtown, Chester CH1 3JD (about five minutes walk from the railway station). If you would like to play a piece of up to 5 minutes long, Graham is offering to give guidance on how you might be able to improve your performance. If you want help with hymns or accompaniment on the organ, Graham is happy to help with that too. Surely the chance to play such a high-quality organ with expert guidance is sufficient to attract a good number of you to take part and for others to come along to listen. ***If you would like to take part, please let me know as soon as possible so that we can allocate you a space.***

John Evans

Email: angiejohnevs@uwclub.net or 07939 645688

Capital day out

On a recent visit to London with the IBO I had a spectacular treat before departing, the magnificent organ of the chapel of St. Mary undercroft in the Houses of Parliament. Much work has been done to build this wonderful instrument. Its resplendent tonal qualities are a credit to William Drake who designed and built it in 1999.

The organ is based on a woodcut illustration made by Augustus Welby Pugin, the architect responsible for many of the decorative interior designs of the palace of Westminster.



The doors either side are derived from medieval examples such as a six hundred-year-old organ from Notre Dame de Valere. They were designed by a talented British artist, Fleur Kelly in the formal medieval style favoured by Pugin.

The sound it produced showed the instrument for the rare gem it is. Much was made of the ingenious wheel mechanism which enables the organ to be moved without risk of damage thus enabling people to enter the chapel from the main entrance.

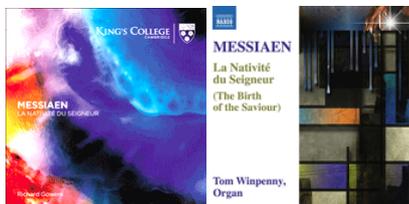
I was delighted in scrambling all over the organ. Being very brave I managed to squeeze up into the very top of the instrument, to examine the beautiful pipework. I felt enormously grateful for the opportunity to view it, very few others have.

I left London that day in good spirits and began the long train journey home, full of ideas and questions. This is the value of such events we see how others, past and present have approached the same problems both as organists and organ builders that we face and that makes us question our own decisions. Long may it continue!

Ethan Henshaw

For Christmas...

Messiaen: La Nativité du Seigneur (The Birth of the Saviour). La Nativité established Messiaen as a visionary composer for the organ - it is one of a number of large-scale works he wrote for the instrument. Messiaen composed this in Grenoble in summer 1935. Each movement of La Nativité serves as a musical commentary on a different aspect of the Christmas story. The number of movements—nine—is symbolic of the months of the gestation of the Christ Child.

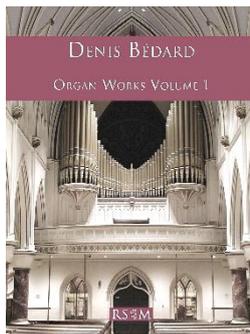


During the Christmas season there are performances of this magnificent cycle in a number of our cathedrals, some are linked to a devotional service. There are many good recordings of the work. Two recent CDs which have been highly recommended by reviewers (and this listener) are Tom Winpenny playing the organ at St Albans Cathedral (Naxos) and Richard Gower on the Chapel of Kings College, Cambridge. Live performances are taking place at Durham, Blackburn Lincoln, Llandaff and other cathedrals in the UK this Christmas.

Why not sit down for a quiet hour and listen to this great organ work?

Organ Music of Denis Bédard

Denis Bédard is a Canadian composer and was born in 1950. His organ music is



accessible and very attractive to both player and listener alike; it is a pity that it is not more widely known in the UK. The music has a distinctly *French flavour* and strong echoes of Louis

Vierne. The RSCM has published much of his music which you may purchase directly from them or from other sheet music sellers. There are also two CDs of some of his music which are also available from the RSCM; one of the CDs is available as a download from Presto Classical. Why not try some of Denis Bédard's music? You won't be disappointed.

Newsletter contributions

You are invited to send your contributions or details of concerts and recitals for listing for the January *Newsletter* by December 21st. Please send them by email or post to the General Secretary, Katriona Moulton.

CNEWOCA Officers

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*"...the playing of the merry organ,
sweet singing in the choir"*

*We wish all members of the
Association a very merry and
blessed Christmas and a happy
and prosperous 2020.*

What's on?

Organ Recitals Nationwide

details on www.organrecitals.com

Chester Cathedral

Thursdays at 1.10pm

November

7th Peter Morris - Wolverhampton

14th Brian Heald - Chester

21st John Hosking - Runcorn

28th Philip Rushforth - Chester Cathedral

December

5th Graham Eccles (St Asaph)

12th Alexander Palotai - Chester Cathedral

19th Andrew Wyatt - Chester Cathedral

26th Philip Rushforth - Chester Cathedral

Admission £5.45, Concessions £4.50

St George's Hall, Liverpool

Tue 19th Nov 12:45 - 1:30pm

Ian Tracey - Liverpool Cathedral

Admission £5.50

Shrewsbury, The Buttermarket

Sun 17th Nov 2:30pm Stephen Austin -

Sun 15th Dec 2:30pm Chris Powell

Admission £7

St Chad's, Shrewsbury

Friday 15th Nov 12:40pm

Anthony Pinel - Shrewsbury

Free. Retiring Collection

Christ Church, Higher Bebington

Friday 15th November

Opening recital on the refurbished organ

Ian Tracey - Liverpool Cathedral

Admission £15 / Students £6

Blackburn Cathedral,

Wednesdays 1:00pm - 1:40pm

20th Nov Ed Jones & Shaun Turnbull
(organ duets)

8th Jan John Robinson - Blackburn
Cathedral (La Nativité)

Admission free; suggested donation £4

Music at Wesley

Wesley Church Centre, St. John Street, Chester

Saturdays 12:45 - 1:35pm

23rd Nov Paul Carr - Birmingham

21st Dec "Music for Christmas"

Brian Heald (organ), Claire Heald
(contralto)

Tuesday Lunchtime Concerts

19th Nov Martin Bickerton (Guitar)

26th Nov Lionel Clarke (Cello)

3rd Dec Ensemble Cymru

10th Dec Chetham's School of Music
Instrumentalists

17th Dec William Bracken (Piano)

Admission free. Retiring Collection