

Kent County Organists' Association

August 2024 Journal





Kent County Organists' Association

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KCOA Website www.kcoa.org.uk

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THE KENT COUNTY ORGANISTS' ASSOCIATION welcomes new members with an interest in the organ and its music. Also those who enjoy visiting churches with appreciation of architecture and heritage. Membership of the Association is not based on the ability to play; we welcome equally those who enjoy listening, as well as those who enjoy playing.

Our President writes

By Stephen Banfield

THIS BUMPER issue of the *KCOA Journal*, with four more pages than usual, shows how busy we have been in the first half of 2024 but also how we have drawn in more members, new and established. The numbers for visits have now fully recovered and have settled at well over 20 in every case (Tonbridge drew almost 30). The full and associate membership now stands at 98, up from 82 in the spring of last year. But the bigger change is an expanded committee, some of its new blood (represented by new *KCOA* members Chris Anthony, Tessa Rickards and David Leach) profiled on pp.23-25 and 30-32 of this issue.

As I explained at last month's AGM, we needed to split the Secretary's role in order to make it manageable for Matthew Young's successors. For the time being, Kevin Grafton is acting as Membership Secretary as well as Treasurer, since the two roles make for efficiency when combined. Our new Secretary, David Leach, is effectively minute secretary, and will only handle committee meeting documentation and the AGM. We want to see how this works out in practice before asking the members' permission to change the Constitution, probably at next year's AGM. The *KCOA* website is a growing focus, and Chris Anthony has joined the committee as Website and Publicity Officer, a new position.

The background to the photograph of David Flood and myself on p.7 is that David and I go back precisely 50 years as



*Charles Francis with our President
at Rochester* Photo B Hughes

friends. He arrived at St John's College Oxford as an undergraduate music student in 1974, my second year there as a DPhil student—and was assigned to me for teaching him harmony and counterpoint! (In return he serviced my car.) Connections and continuities are important in music, and it was gratifying to hear from Charles Francis that entering our biennial Competition at the start of his amazing organ-playing journey was a major spur: it offered him a powerful role model in the form of the winning 'advanced' candidate. We learnt this and a great deal else of wisdom and substance during a fascinating *KCOA* session in Rochester Cathedral on 31 July, *Conversation and Questions with Charles Francis*. Attendance was modest but focussed. Charles's ensuing recital was simply wonderful.

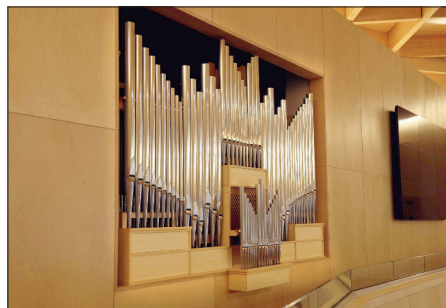
Review of recent Meetings

Benenden & Cranbrook

IT WAS perhaps the lure to visit a new concert hall, complete with an interesting organ, which drew a good-sized group of members and guests to Hemsted Forest in the Weald of Kent in February. In the absence of President, Dr Stephen Banfield, Deputy President Nicholas King welcomed everyone to the warm and luxurious surroundings of Benenden School's Centenary Hall, for a visit which had been facilitated by the School's Director of Music, Edward Whiting. Malcolm Riley, who had kindly organised the afternoon, then proceeded to outline the history of the new hall's facilities before sliding on to the height-adjustable organ bench to give a brief demonstration of the three-manual *Cotswold* hybrid instrument. The specification is *Great Organ*, 16 8 8 8 8 8 4 4 22/3 2 II-IV 16 8 4; *Swell Organ*, 16 8 8 8 8 4 4 2 II-IV 16 8 8 8 4; *Choir Organ*, 8 8 4 4 22/3 2 13/5 III (unenclosed) and 8 8 8 16 8 8 (enclosed); *Pedal Organ*, 32 16 16 16 8 8 4 IV 32 16 16 8, with usual couplers and other accessories. Of these, there are four pipe ranks, extended



Benenden organ console Photo C.Jilks



Benenden pipe display Photo C.Jilks

across the Great and Choir Organs.

The original plan to have an all-pipe organ was thwarted by the architect's oversight in not providing sufficient fire exits from the gallery; so, a compromise was reached with a façade of real, speaking pipes supplemented by a comprehensive electronic stop list. Several members availed themselves, making the most of the two 32' registers on the Pedal. Janet Hughes offered Lloyd Webber's *Interlude on Praise to the Holiest in the Height* (Gerontius) and the 'short' *Prelude in C* BWV545 by Bach; Nicholas King played Malcolm Archer's *Festival Toccata*, whilst others, including Roger Gentry and Gerard Brooks, improvised their way around the instrument. Apart from the general comfort of the terrace-style console it was noticeable how differently the organ 'spoke' in different parts of the Hall. Mr Whiting explained that when first installed the instrument barely had enough power to accompany the school's pupil body in Parry's *Jerusalem*! Paul Hale (consultant) had since visited the Hall and worked with the builders to increase the wattage of power.

A convoy of cars then bounced along the now far from perfect Kentish roads for four miles to Cranbrook where John Williams (acting organist) was on hand to



Benenden School's Centenary Concert Hall

Photo C.Jills

welcome members to St Dunstan's Parish Church, *The Cathedral of the Weald*. He explained that his association with the School and Church dated back to 1973 and that he had been a driving force in raising funds to bring the 1854 *Father Willis* up-to-date in 1980 with a new, mobile console and some major internal re-alignment of pipework. Currently tended by Peter Wells, the instrument has continued to give excellent service and is used widely for recital and concert work. Its specification is *Great Organ*, 16 8 8 8 4 4 2 2 1/3 2 11/3 III-IV 8; *Swell Organ*, 8 8 8 8 4 4 2 III-IV 16 8 4; *Choir Organ*, 8 4 4 2 11/3 8; *Pedal Organ*, 16 16 8 8 8 4 4 16, with usual couplers. (A fuller analytical description of the instrument can be found in the KCOA February 2016 *Journal*, reprinted here below).

John Williams and Malcolm Riley shared the (non-adjustable) bench in two organ duet items, Thomas Tomkins' *Fancy* and John Rutter's *Variations on an Easter Hymn*.

Malcolm then introduced his own *Berceuse* (from *Suite for Jasper*) since the

work's dedicatee, aged 3, had come into the church with his parents and younger brother Felix, for their first experience of live organ music.

To round off their mini-recital John Williams stayed at the organ whilst Malcolm Riley moved to the grand piano for a performance of Percy Whitlock's *Conversation Piece*, composed in 1942 for the *Bournemouth Municipal Orchestra*, but given here in an organ and piano reduction dating from 1981.

Sated with such a feast of fine music everyone then adjourned to the west end of the church for a delicious tea supplied by Melanie Riley.

February 2016 Cranbrook report

THE CRANBROOK organ dates from 1854, a two-manual and pedal instrument by *Father Henry Willis*, which included some pipework from an organ he exhibited at the Great Exhibition of 1851. *Willis* made changes in 1888 and 1893, when it was moved from its west gallery position to the north chancel, its case shortened

to fit within a chancel arch. *William Hill* undertook a major rebuild in 1908 adding a choir organ and pedal stops; although the *Willis* pipework was retained, some was re-voiced in keeping with its new position. The organ continued to give good service for many years, with minor restoration work by *Applegate* in 1931 and *Willis* again, in 1954.

In 1982, after much questionable discussion and consideration, an extensive rebuild was undertaken by *Nicholson & Co*, the work involving fundamental change to the organ. It was enlarged from thirty-two to thirty-five speaking stops, it was turned ninety degrees to speak down the north aisle and actions were changed to electro-pneumatic. The organ's case was stripped of its dark stain, its finials removed and its towers and flats squared; a new mobile detached console was also provided.

The fundamental tonality of the organ was changed, with the addition of new furniture mixtures and a tierce to the Great organ, and a *plein jeu* mixture in the Swell, together with new and re-voiced reeds. These were just a few of the many tonal changes made, which were not enhanced by the installation of new wind regulators, in preference to conventional wind reservoirs, leaving the organ



John Williams & Malcolm Riley Photo C. Jilks



Cranbrook organ Photo C. Jilks

unable to cope with the demands of full organ without a tendency to wilt. Undoubtedly, the organ has a wide range of tonal colours and lends itself easily to most genres, although, with the combination of old and new voicing, the instrument now lacks a cohesive soul, a deficiency felt yet difficult to define, being tonally no longer a *Willis*, *Hill* or, indeed, a *Nicholson*.

Undoubtedly, the purist will burn with indignation at the extensive late 20th century tonal impositions and mechanical changes, and an organ case now imbued with the allure of flat packed Ikea; but Director of Music, Bryan Gipps, remains pragmatic, with plans for the future development of the organ understanding that the changes made over thirty years ago may not have been ideal, but can still produce good music.

Organ Competition 16th March 2024

by David Flood

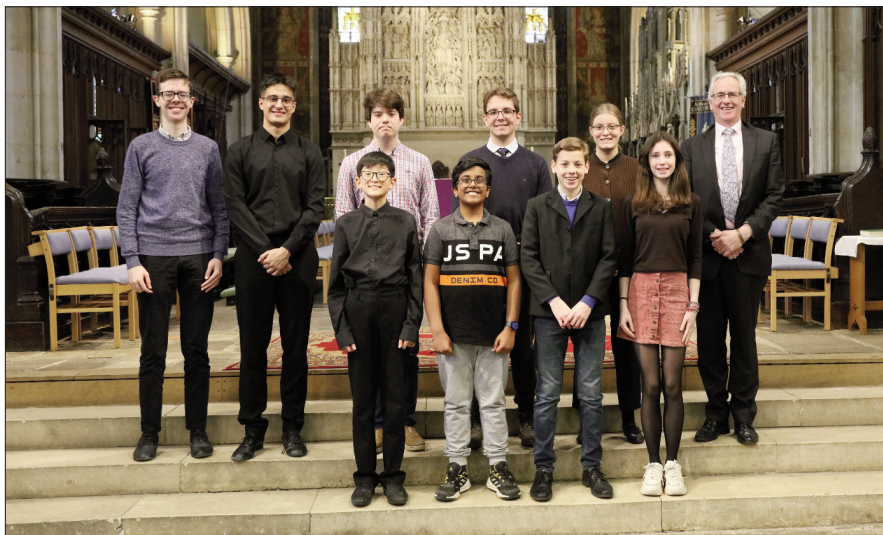
IT WAS MY pleasure to adjudicate this occasion which was held in All Saints' church, Maidstone. The committee is to be congratulated in attracting a good number of talented candidates, all of whom acquitted themselves very well.

The choices of repertoire were well made, being suitable for the level of ability of each candidate and the category in which they appeared. They had all been very well prepared and controlled the organ without problems. The guidance given for the choice of repertoire was broad enough to give the candidates the opportunity



Stephen Banfield & David Flood Photo C. Jilks

to play contrasting pieces within their grasp.



All candidates KCOA 2024 Organ Competition

Photo C. Jilks

The Advanced Class in particular produced some very fine playing and this also served as something to which the more junior candidates could aspire. There was an encouraging level of conversation and mutual discussion amongst all the candidates.

In awarding the prizes, I was able to spread the rewards among a wide range of candidates, leaving just one or two of the juniors without an envelope. This was due to the splitting of the Reg Adams award two ways. There appeared to be no sense of disappointment from those who were not able to receive something and the occasion was completed with plenty of bonhomie.

For future events, I would encourage the committee to keep the standard required for each category in a similar area, since it seems to produce the right results. It was very good on this occasion that there were a good number of locally connected candidates but the wider appeal of the competition is



Advanced Class Candidates Photo C. Jilks

a really worthwhile thing.

It was a highly successful event and I trust that it will be continued in the future. Please record substantial thanks to all the sponsors of the prizes, without whom the attractiveness of the competition would not be so prominent.



Intermediate Class Candidates

Photo C. Jilks

St Mary's Bishopsbourne & St Margaret of Antioch, Womenswold

BISHOPSBOURNE and Womenswold are two picturesque villages set in east Kent, both with interesting churches containing much mediaeval history. On a bright April afternoon, members gathered at St Mary's Church, Bishopsbourne, to be welcomed by their organist, Julia Lister.

Our President, Stephen Banfield, began the afternoon with an interesting talk on three significant writers from the village: Rev Richard Hooker, rector from 1595 until his untimely death in 1600; also Joseph Conrad and Jocelyn Brooke, who both lived in the village. Hooker had played a major part in the development of Anglicanism as the 'middle way' between the two extremes of Protestantism and Catholicism, and to his influence we may well owe the survival of organs in English worship. He is buried in the Chancel of the Church and a memorial to him can be seen on the south wall. Joseph Conrad, Polish by birth and not a fluent English speaker until well into his twenties, owned the house right beside the church where he died in 1924, exactly one hundred years ago, aged sixty-six. The most famous and popular of his works is the novel '*Heart of Darkness*'. Stephen read extracts from each of these three writers' work before turning to the organ and giving an excellent performance of a Sonata by Samuel Wesley on the beautiful one manual and pedal *Walker* organ. Much English organ music of Wesley's period contains parts that go a fourth lower than the current



FH Browne organ, Womenswold Photo C Clemence

keyboard – to a note called gamut G. Stephen used the pedalboard to fill in these notes, since the *Walker* already had a modern compass. After Stephen's performance, members of the Association were then invited to try the instrument and explore the church set in its wonderful pastoral surroundings.

At 3.00pm members made their way via the A2 and Wingham Road to Womenswold, a few minutes' drive away. They were greeted by a gentleman in a hi-viz jacket indicating the few remaining places in the village where parking was possible. (These were by kind permission of the special school in the village. The church car park was not in use due to the work installing a septic tank for the new church toilet, not yet quite complete). St Margaret's Church, Womenswold is unusual in having no side aisles, but has a large Chancel with comfortable seating and efficient heating, where most of the



F H Browne console, Womenswold

Photo C Clemence

services are now held; there is a continuous roof over both Nave and Chancel.

Organist, Michael Lewis, gave a short talk with an accompanying handout leaflet about the Church, the 1894 *Browne* organ, and a very interesting one-time resident of the village called John Marsh; he lived there inheriting a country estate in 1780-84 before moving on to Chichester. He kept an incredibly detailed diary which is today published in two volumes and reveals exactly how life was lived in those days. He makes numerous references to the church, the properties in the village, (many of which he had inherited), his neighbours far and wide, and social customs of the time. He was also a musician leaving much choral, organ and orchestral music. He was one of the most prolific English symphonists, writing fifteen in all. He was an organist and wrote in detail about the transport of his house organ from London by barge, then on by horse and cart from Whitstable to his home, where it was reassembled in his entrance hall. It was unusual as it had a console on each side of the case. The organ apparently still exists today, (albeit with just one con-

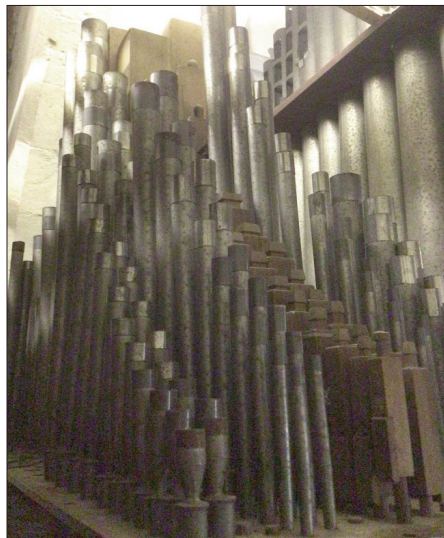
sole), in a church in Nottinghamshire. Unfortunately John Marsh's house was latterly destroyed by fire, although its position may still be identified.

The organ in Womenswold Church is unusual in that it still has the same action and specification that it had when it was built. *F H Browne & Sons* were a Deal firm who built organs for many of the local churches at the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th century. Many have been changed from pneumatic to electric action and have had stops modified to a more modern specification, in many cases losing a beautiful Clarinet stop which is retained at Womenswold. An electric blower was fitted in 1960 together with the chest pneumatic motors being re-covered in rubber cloth rather than leather. By the time Michael became involved with the instrument, some of this had become stiff and brittle resulting in several notes not working at all. Mice had also caused damage to some of the lamb's wool in the action touch boxes. As he was working for *F H Browne* at that time, Michael oversaw a full rebuild of the instrument in 2003, which included replacing all the rubber cloth

with sheepskin leather and rectifying other problems relating to the action. Many of the pipes also received new tuning slides replacing those that had become rusty.

Following his talk, Michael, using short extracts of music, demonstrated some of the sounds of this instrument, of which the Swell is a particularly versatile department. The strings and flute sounds are particularly fine and the Great Open Diapason provides substantial body to the instrument. Oboe and Clarinet provide distinctive solo options with balanced accompaniment possible on either keyboard. Organo pleno in this resonant building belies the size of this instrument, which contains just five stops on the Great, with seven, plus an octave coupler, on the Swell; the Pedal has a Bourdon. There is a Swell Tremulant and three couplers plus four Pedal combination pistons and a trigger Swell Pedal.

Members were then invited to try the instrument at their leisure and also to look inside at the well-lit action and pipework. We heard a wide range of musical styles ranging from Bach and Stanley to Jean Langlais. Tea was made



F H Browne, Womenswold Photo C Clemence

available in the Chancel, including a wonderful selection of homemade cakes provided by the Friends of Womenswold Church.

This event was well attended by KCOA members, who enjoyed a very interesting and stimulating afternoon in idyllic surroundings set in our beautiful Garden of England.



Tea in the Chancel, Womenswold

Photo C Clemence

The Romney Marsh

THE ROMNEY MARSH, with its hauntingly vast landscape, can be notoriously fickle, its changing weather often leaving it shrouded in grey languid mists and penetrating chill air. But we were fortunate when we visited on 18 May; the predicted rain did not materialise, allowing a little spring sunshine to appear, silhouetting remote ancient churches against open marsh skies, two of which we were fortunate to visit: All Saints' Church, Lydd and St Nicholas Church, New Romney.

Over hundreds of years, the Marsh has seen many topographical changes and some of these are recorded at New Romney. The internal stone floor of St Nicholas Church, which was founded in 1086, is some four feet below the present street level, evidence of the great storm of 1287 which ravaged the sea defences and almost destroyed the town, the influx of silt and mud filling the church leaving its distinctive brown tide-mark signature on the internal Norman pillars.

But first we visited All Saints' Parish Church, Lydd, a pre-Norman church still retaining some of its ancient walls. This is a surprisingly large church for its village, in fact, it is the longest parish church in Kent; its tower is also the tallest. This had repercussions during the war as the chancel, including its organ, was destroyed by a bomb in 1940. Fortunately, following the war, the chancel was rebuilt in a 13th century style, removing the many late Victorian changes. In the mid-1950s a 2-manual and pedal 1880 *Father Willis* organ was acquired from a redundant church in



1880 *Father Willis* organ, Lydd Photo C Jilks

Bristol and installed in a north nave arch adjacent to the choir pews in a central position in the church; regrettably, these pews have been recently removed, the organ console now boxed in by a hand rail and aesthetically inappropriate panelling. It has a simple front pipe case display with the sides protected by a framework of metal screens and its pedal bourdons. The organ's specification is: *Great organ*, 8 8 8 4 2; *Swell organ*, 8 8 4 8; *Pedal organ* 16, *with usual couplers*. The tracker action is comfortable, if a little noisy, having become rather worn over the years.

Following a few words of greeting from our President, Stephen Banfield, he found his way to the organ as our President Emeritus, Colin Jilks, spoke briefly about the history of the church and the tonal design of this *Willis* organ, allowing Stephen to demonstrate the

individual stops. Having served his organ building apprenticeship under *Henry Willis III*, Colin was able to describe some of the unique design features of the *Willis* pipes, features that help produce that distinctive *Willis* sound. The organ's tonalities were immediately evident with a gentle *Lieblich Gedact*, warm fluty *Claribel* and a singing *Open Diapason*, topped by a crisp *Swell Cornopean*. Tonally this was to be the more pleasing organ of the day, its quality enriched by a supportive church acoustic.

Moving on to New Romney we descended the several steps down into St Nicholas, Church, finding Norman pillars marked by history. Clear leaded windows allowed a bright interior, but with particularly rich colours in the large East window.

Unlike Lydd, the organ boasts nothing of history, being installed by *George Osmond & Co of Taunton* in the early 1960s. It is a 2-manual and pedal 4-rank extension organ with an additional two octave repeating mixture. The organ is of simple design being a plain square box with zinc and metal *Open Diapason* display pipes on its front and east side, the other containing wooden 16ft *Sub Bass* pipes. Nevertheless, clever use of its minimal number of ranks produces a remarkably usable instrument. While it is totally unenclosed, its *Positive* and *Great* manuals provide versatile tonal colour with the *Positive* organ based on an 8ft *Violin Diapason* and the *Great* organ on a fuller 8ft *Open Diapason*; the remaining ranks being a *Salicional* and *Lieblich Flute*, both extended from 16ft to 2ft. Its specification is: *Positive organ*, 8 8 8 4 4 2 2/3 2 2 1 1/3 III; *Great organ*, 8 8 4 4 2 2/3 2 2 III; *Pedal organ*, 16 8 8 4, with usual couplers and electric action throughout.

Colin Jilks spoke about the organ's tonal design and Deputy President, Nicholas King, improvised engagingly,



George Osmond, New Romney Photo C. Jilks

demonstrating what this relatively small instrument could produce. Tonally, as is the *Willis* at Lydd, this *George Osmond* is an instrument of its time, the brighter tonality typical of the early 1960s. However, aided by a generous acoustic there was much to commend it, although it was difficult not to reflect and compare it with the *Willis* we had just been enjoying. There was time for several members to try the organ before a very fine tea was made available for us; the walnut cake was particularly delicious. We must thank church warden Ann Rolfe for providing not only the cake, but the whole appetising spread.

We must also thank Nicholas King for arranging the afternoon for us, which had provided not only two organs of interest, but two beautiful churches steeped in history and revealing what the Romney Marsh has to offer.

Warehorne & Kenardington

IN RECENT years, our Association has made several visits to picturesque villages with interesting churches and small but pleasant-sounding organs; we need only think back over the last year or so to recall the Nailbourne villages of Patribourne, Bekesbourne and Bridge, and more recently, Bishopsbourne and Womenswold. Such occasions allow us to enjoy the beauty of church architecture and of organ-building on a small scale, without pandering to the megalomaniac lurking within most organists.

Another such day was enjoyed by some twenty-three of our members in mid-June. The unpredictability of this year's weather asserted itself, and though some members had to battle through heavy winds and pouring rain on the M20, once at our destination, we were at least in dry conditions, albeit still at the mercy of the wind and the unseasonal cold. Conditions were such that the heating



T.C. Bate organ, Warehorne Photo B Hughes

was on at Warehorne!

Our first destination was St Matthew's, Warehorne, on the Saxon Shore Way. The nave dates from about 1200, and subsequent additions of chancel, aisles and tower were completed by about 1450-1500, making quite a large church. The church is light and airy, with plain box pews of early nineteenth-century



St Mary's Church, Kenardington

Photo C Clemence

date, and text and commandment boards scattered around the walls. There are many features of interest, including sedilia, a tiny piscine and some small remnants of medieval glass, depicting two opposing knights (representing Good and Evil?). The marble pillars in the arcades are unusual in appearance, being stratified. Remnants of the access to the rood loft remain visible.

The organ is by *T. C. Bate*, dating from c.1850 and moved here from Thanet, renovated in 1998 by *Martin Renshaw*. This single manual instrument has but six stops, unusually (for this size) including a Twelfth. The manual goes down to GG, lacking GG#, and the pedal board covers GG to c, with no separate pedal stops. Coping with a very different pedal board from the accustomed standard was a challenge which was ably overcome by our President, Stephen Banfield, who demonstrated the organ with some movements from '*Effusions for the Organ*' by Cornelius Bryan (1775-1840). This small instrument produced an unexpected variety of pleasant sounds in the hands of various other members.

Our second stop was only two miles away, at St Mary's, Kenardington. The church lies on the outskirts of the village, in a beautiful setting overlooking Romney Marsh, and again lying on the Saxon Shore Way. Struck by lightning in 1559, part of the church was destroyed, leaving the original south aisle to serve as a new, smaller church, with the benefit of an excellent acoustic. This small church is host to the enterprising Saxon Shore Early Music Kenardington festival, and the likes of Ton Koopman have played there!

The organ is a *Thomas Elliot* instrument of c.1805, carefully restored in 2020 and installed in 2022, and was our second instrument of the day to have a manual compass from GG and a restricted ped-



1805 Thomas Elliot, Kenardington Photo B Hughes

alboard, this time of 13 notes (GG, GG#, AA – G). There are ten stops, and once again some interesting sounds: a Sesquialtera 17-19, a Cornet 12-15 and a Twelfth in addition to the more obvious flutes and diapasons. The tuning is to the Young temperament, apparently slightly more flexible than mean tone.

Our host, Dr Stephen Coles, gave a short recital of pieces of varied character: *The Battle between David & Goliath* (from *Biblical Sonata No.1*) by Kuhnau, Pachelbel's *Fuga in D*, J. S. Bach's *Sarabande* from his *Lute Suite in a minor*, and the *Plein Jeu* from Guilain's *Suite du Premier Ton*. All details were clearly set out in a booklet kindly produced for the occasion. After members had had their time exploring the possibilities of this beautiful instrument, they enjoyed the delights of a tea including more exotic sandwiches and nibbles, perhaps, than our usual fare!

Tonbridge School & Tonbridge Parish Church

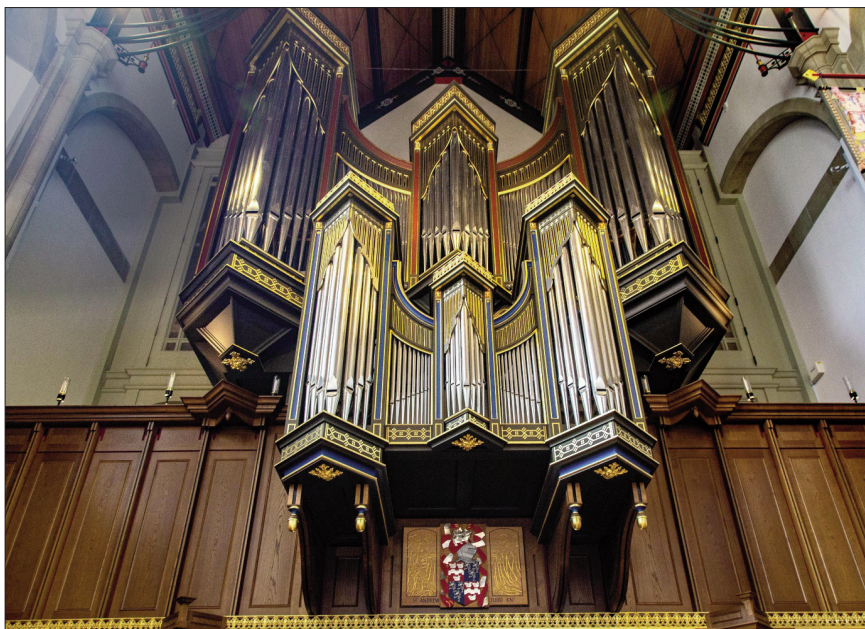
TONBRIDGE: one of Kent's most historic and strategic towns. Passing the Castle, right next to the High Street, will have left KCOA members in no doubt about that. Curiously, until July of this year the Association seems never to have set foot in any church in Tonbridge beyond the magnificent Tonbridge School Chapel with its equally glorious four-manual, tracker-action *Marcussen* organ. This instrument we had visited twice before, but not since 2008, so it was time for a return. Members and their guests evidently agreed, turning out in good numbers: thirty-three had booked, and although six had to drop out we gathered two more on the day who looked in only for the School.

There, Julian Thomas, director of academic and chapel music, was our expert host. He reminded many who will already have known that the Chapel, making front-page news in several of the national dailies, burnt down in 1988, taking its venerable *Binns* organ with it. The *Binns* had been on a screen with the one-bay antechapel behind it, an arrangement found in several Oxbridge colleges. Architects rebuilt using the original shell but removed the antechapel by pushing the main body of the building right back to its west wall, where the new organ was then sited on a capacious west gallery (one can walk comfortably between the organ divisions) and inaugurated in 1995. Although not completed until three years after the chapel, the instrument reflects in its colour and design many of the quirky structural and emblematic elements of the new roof. Expense was not spared on advisors, who included Simon Preston, then living nearby, though between the two leading tenders, those of *Klais* and *Marcussen*, choice was ulti-



Nicholas King at the Marcussen organ

Photo C Clemence



Marcussen organ, Tonbridge School

Photo C Clemence

mately made on the basis of current exchange rates, as Julian explained. A fine booklet about the Chapel's organs was given to as many members as could grab one before copies ran out.

It is a colourful as well as large instrument (67 speaking stops), and Julian demonstrated much of its range by playing Duruflé's *'Choral varié sur le thème de Veni Creator'*. We then had an hour's pre-arranged composite recital by twelve members, starting with a toccata, the Bach *'Dorian'*, performed by Janet Hughes and ending with another, Whitlock's from the *Plymouth Suite*, played by Patti Whaley. In between there were Bach, naturally (including a crisp trio sonata fast movement from Thomas Winrow-Campbell); Mendelssohn; and Dupré. We are achieving a fairly rapid turnover on such occasions, each player proceeding to the organ loft as the previous one begins, but

it is still a daunting prospect to be faced with a console of such size and locate every stop mentally without a preparatory period, however much homework has been done. Julian helped with registrations as often as not. Understandably, some players preferred to explore the instrument in five-minute improvisations, and we were treated to four of these, expert in their different ways. Michael Cooke's managed to sustain two melodies on different manuals with accompaniment on a third, plus a pedal bass, and Nicholas King's proved the instrument fully up to the English cathedral sound. The overall impression was that this organ avoids sounding like a neoclassical instrument; builders had moved well beyond that concept by the 1990s.

Ushered swiftly out of one door while wedding guests entered another (shades of a job interview), we headed back down



Norman and Beard (Samuel Green) Tonbridge Parish Church

Photo C. Clemence

and behind the High Street to the parish church of Saints Peter and Paul, its beautiful sandstone tower beckoning up a side lane, though the whole building is easily missed. This is a large church with a large and powerful three-manual organ which does not get as regularly used as we or the church would like. However, it is in good condition, and produces a fine English sound from its position in the south chancel aisle (two façades). The tonal scheme is probably *Norman and Beard's* doing, though Uncle Tom Cobley and all seem to have had a hand in it since *Samuel Green* first built a three-manual instrument for the church in 1788. Some of *Green's* pipes may remain, though they are not identified in the two *NPOR* entries, on which we relied.

Our President, Stephen Banfield, started the ball rolling by playing the finale of Rheinberger's *F sharp major Sonata (no 5)* with no preparation on the instrument, though Kevin Grafton, our Treasurer, had kindly scouted it out earlier in the week. The point was to demonstrate that you can play Rheinberger any way you

like, making up the registration as you go, and it still works, he being so unspecific in his directions—nothing except terraced dynamics (no hairpins) if you are playing from the new edition. This was followed by various members playing a piece each, unannounced, i.e. less formally than at the School; one or two, meanwhile, wandered around to look at some fine monuments, including one by Roubiliac. The musical offerings included Stanford (Janet Hughes), Buxtehude (Thomas Winrow-Campbell), Howells (John Ross), and Rheinberger again (a 'Monologue', played by Ian Verran); unfortunately, the quiet ending of Gabriel Dupont's beautiful '*Méditation*', very much in the style of Jongen's '*Chant de Mai*' and played by Patti Whaley, was drowned out by a sudden, forceful rain shower hitting the skylights of the south aisle—our good weather spell has broken. After that, the AGM beckoned, and was despatched within half an hour so that we could move upstairs (they have excellent premises) for a truly splendid tea. We were more than ready for it by then.

Letters to the Editor

On deceiving the listeners

DEAR SIR, As a young orchestral double-bass player I was instructed by my mentor in the art of 'faking it' when performing music by Mozart and Haydn. To avoid annoying the cello section, who are generally playing the same notes but have smaller distances to cover on their fingerboards, in the faster passages it was only necessary to APPEAR to be playing everything. As long as the important notes were in place (for example beginning and end of runs), most people's ears would be tricked into hearing a full bass line.

Later my organ teacher John Webster (University College Oxford) emphasised that slavish adherence to printed scores was a mistake. Rather, the aim should be to create the effect the composer intended the audience to hear. Because organs and their acoustic environments differ, the player will have to adapt stop choice, speeds, articulation, phrasing, length of notes and of rests etc. to get as near as practical to what the composer wanted the audience to hear.

Tricking the ear is inherent to organs and organ music, from the creation of a resultant 32ft tone to the use of mutations and cornet combinations. Many of us will have used trickery to reproduce the single 'impossible' low B that Bach asks for in his G major Fantasia BWV 572 (I quint it). But a rather dodgy right hip has caused me to resort to deceit in far more prominent situations. Widor's 5th Symphony Toccata, a standard request for weddings and funerals,



Harrison organ, Hythe Photo C Jiles

requires a two-octave stretch at the first pedal entry, something that I now find difficult to do reliably. Instead I play the lower note an octave up. Recently I did this in Wye Church in a memorial service where the congregation was packed with organists and other musicians and where I had to play the Toccata in full in the middle of the liturgy - a scary time. No-one seemed to notice my deception - or were too polite to mention it. The fourth movement has an even wider stretch for the pedals which carry the tune (on a 4ft flute); while playing the lower notes up an octave works here too, getting back to 'normal' positions requires care.

I cannot believe that I am the only older player who has difficulty with the Widor passages. What strategies do you use (short of hip replacement)?

Berkeley Hill
Director of Music, St Leonard's Church,
Hythe

Front Cover

St Paul's Cathedral, Melbourne, Australia, Organ

by Paul Hale

THE FINE Gothic edifice which is St Paul's Cathedral was designed by the renowned British architect William Butterfield, whose most familiar buildings, with their polychromatic bricks, are to be found at Keble College Oxford. The foundation stone was laid on 13 April 1880, though it was not until 1888 that an organ-builder was selected. At first, the leading Australian organ-builder, *George Fincham* was in line to supply the new organ, but the Cathedral Erection Board eventually decided to commission an organ from a British builder because 'voicing is better understood there'. A specification was drawn up during 1887. The *Australian Church of England Messenger* of 8 February 1888 says of this specification (which was approved by Dr Charles Steggall of the Royal Academy of Music, London) that it had 43 speaking stops, based on a 32ft Double Open Diapason. *Willis and Hill* are mentioned as possible makers and the cost is announced as being fixed by the Board at £3,000 (which in 2024 would be £488,668 – £10,000 per stop, which is less than half the price of what a 43-stop 32ft organ would cost today).

Out of the blue, apparently, came a donor, Mr Thomas Dyer Edwardes, the Squire of Prinknash Park, Gloucestershire, England. His father, also Thomas Dyer Edwardes, had made a fortune in Australia and his wealth allowed his son to buy the Prinknash estate in 1887, renovating the house which stood there since the monks were ejected

from the original Prinknash Abbey in 1541, when Henry VIII suppressed it. Edwardes was a devout man and offered 'to present to the cathedral an organ (£3,000) and a peal of bells (£1,000)'. Although the contract was on the verge of being signed by 'Father' Willis, Edwardes, as donor, was granted the right to choose a firm of his own liking. He wrote to W. E. Morris, Secretary of the Cathedral Erection Board in December 1889: "The organ I am sending out, built by one of our best men, will be one of the finest organs in the world. *Lewis & Co.* are famous for the beauty of the tone of their instruments".

In October 1888 an order was placed for a 53-stop 4-manual organ (two ranks were prepared for later insertion), which was supposed to cost £3,835 ex works. It was ready for the Consecration of the Cathedral on 22 January 1891, by which time the total cost was an enormous £6,548 15s 6d. This included installation by a team from the major local organ-builder, *George Fincham*, known to his near contemporary *T.C. Lewis* as he was British born, training under *Bevington* and then a foreman for *Bishop & Son* before emigrating to Melbourne in 1852. £6,548 is nearly £1.1M today, which would buy you quite a large organ, though certainly not this one, which included the really grand case which illustrates this issue. The case is of Tasmanian blackwood and was constructed in Melbourne, to the design of local architect Joseph Reed, who had succeeded as Honorary Architect when Butterfield resigned (the distance from England having proved too great to supervise building the cathedral) in 1888. As can be seen, the case design incorporates a broad central flat and gable with simulated window tracery, twin circular towers with heavy supporting bands and transom rails pierced with trefoils. It was intended that the façade pipes would be stencilled, to a bold scheme designed by a noted firm of Australian art decorators (*Lyon, Wells, Cottier & Co.*), but this was not



St Paul's Cathedral, Melbourne, Australia

Photo C. Jiles

implemented at the time, probably through lack of additional funds.

In 1891 one of the prepared-for stops, the Corno di Bassetto, was added, the Great Gamba appearing in 1896. *Fincham's* firm maintained the organ, which was controlled by tubular-pneumatic action. In 1916 the pneumatic action was partly electrified, to improve its reportedly sluggish response, and the original hydraulic blowing plant was replaced by an electric Sturtevant blower. Sturtevant was an Anglo-American engineering firm, reputedly the first to make cast-iron high-speed fans for blowing organs. In 1928 *Hill, Norman & Beard* fitted electro-pneumatic conversion machines to the tubular mechanism, installed a new console, a replacement blower (by Duplex, whom they usually used at this period) and added an Orchestral Organ, of three extended ranks (a big flute, keen string and a 'rather opaque' Tuba).

Between 1929 and 1974, *HN&B* continued to maintain the organ, releathering and updating mechanical components when the need arose. At some stage, an attempt had been made to lower Lewis's original high pitch. When *HN&B* closed down its Melbourne works in 1974, a local organ-builder took over the maintenance schedule, though the organ's mechanism deteriorated, made far worse by a flood in 1979. It took several more years, with the energetic work of Cathedral Organist Dr June Nixon, to develop a deliverable restoration project. Knowing of the splendid work that *Harrison & Harrison* had carried out on several significant *Lewis* organs in the UK (notably at Cullercoats and at Southwark Cathedral) she recommended that a contract for the organ's full restoration should be awarded to them. And so it was, in October 1988 (100 years after the organ had been first planned), at which time an Appeal for half a million Australian dollars was launched.

Harrisons carried out a minutely detailed, immaculate restoration, which removed the *HN&B* Orchestral Organ and reinstated the Lewis pitch. With the demise of the Orchestral Organ the organ lost its big Tuba

(there's a smaller one in the Solo box), so *H&H* provided instead both a new *Lewis*-style Tuba Magna and a more splashy Trompette Harmonique. These help the tone of the organ to project down the nave, for its transept position rather diminishes its carrying power to the West. A 32ft reed also was added, to complete the tonal resources of this now very comprehensive organ. New *H&H* electro-pneumatic actions were fitted direct to the restored slider soundboards and chests and all eleven original double-rise reservoirs were releathered (this task alone, at today's prices, would cost at least £75,000).

Amazingly, the original designs for decorating the front pipes were discovered, so the cathedral boldly commissioned the work to take place. It was beautifully executed by Marc Nobel and his team of two. Stencils were cut, based on the 1889 designs, which were slightly simplified. In addition to the colour scheme, 1,500 sheets of gold leaf were applied. The work took some 1,200 hours to execute and the glorious result is there to be seen in Colin's excellent photograph.

A footnote to this story: the donor, Thomas Dyer Edwardes, converted in old age to Roman Catholicism. It was his wish that Prinknash should be given to the Benedictine monks of Caldey Island. These monks had themselves converted from Anglicanism to Roman Catholicism in 1913. In 1928, after his death, his grandson (the Earl of Rothes) carried out his wishes by drawing up a Deed of Covenant. This led to the return of the monks (initially only six – just as at Buckfast Abbey) and to the building of the new Prinknash Abbey which is visited and loved by so many people today. What a happy coincidence it was that one of the monks, Fr. Charles Watson, was a capable organ-builder, making over many years two beautiful small 'Classical' organs for the Abbey. One feels certain that Thomas Dyer Edwardes would have approved. And so would *T.C. Lewis*, whose masterpiece continues to delight and inspire all who worship and make music in Melbourne's St Paul's Cathedral.

Tessa Rickards

A short profile

TESSA RICKARDS was born in 1954 and grew up in Cockfosters, a suburb of north London. She was the middle child of three, having an older and younger brother. Her parents were musical, but not overly so. Her mother enjoyed singing in the church choir for over 60 years and her father occasionally took to the piano to play Chopin preludes, which formed a strong memory in Tessa's early years. The piano, a *Challen* from the 1930s, which resembled a coffin when closed (according to her grandmother), was the one her father learnt on as a child and came into the family home on marriage. As children she and her older brother enjoyed playing their parents' collection of 78s on a wind-up gramophone, though this was well after the era of having the familiar 'His Master's Voice' horn speaker. Lacking the required gramophone needles, the records were no doubt ruined by the 'make do' necessity of inserting sewing needles. Both her brothers, after early obligatory piano lessons, decided to discontinue and only Tessa continued until leaving school. Her brief attempt at learning the violin was not a success.

Tessa recently resumed organ lessons after a pause of fifty years, a move prompted by the inheritance of the family piano, the possibility of practising at her local church, St Paul's Church, Clapham, and a strong desire to learn again. She had originally attended *Grey*

Coat Hospital School in Westminster, where organ lessons had been offered and to which she had readily applied herself. Tessa passed Grade 4 and was examined by Richard Popplewell. Her teacher looked suitably worried on learning this, having told Tessa that her examiner wouldn't necessarily be an organist. But her worry was fortunately ill founded. A further unexpected benefit of the school was the fact that the Senior Choir were invited to sing in the organ loft at Westminster Abbey for the chorus in Bach's St Matthew's Passion on an annual basis. This experience led Tessa to join the choir while studying for a Geography degree at Leeds University and she enjoyed singing Bach's Mass in B Minor amongst other choral works.

On graduating, Tessa's practical musical experiences went into a hiatus. She followed a career in art rather than music. She became a printmaker and specialised in etchings of the Middle East following her visit in the late 1970s. This led to exhibiting, initially, with the Society of Painter-Etcher engravers, and then being selected for three consecutive years for the Royal Academy Summer Show. All her prints depicted camels and the editions quickly sold out. In a case of serendipity a friend suggested her intricate and detailed line work would be very suitable for archaeological illustration, and a new career path took shape. Discovering that training could be taken at the British Museum she mastered the necessary conventions in the Dept of Greek and Roman, and her first published work was of *lekkythos* (ancient Greek vessel for storing oil) for the Head of Department. This was followed by

heading off to work on digs, initially on an excavation under the auspices of the Oriental Institute in Chicago, in Turkey, on the banks of the Euphrates. Both the work of drawing the pottery and 'finds' as they emerged after 2000 years, and living in (somewhat rudimentary) conditions in mud brick accommodation had great appeal. Having not heard of an archaeological illustrator's existence until this chance encounter she now found all elements of dig life very satisfying, and Mesopotamian archaeology of particular interest. She followed this new passion participating in rescue projects in Iraq and Syria (where the area was due to be flooded owing to dam construction—in one case flooding unexpectedly early and sending colleagues fleeing to the top of the hill) and in the United Arab Emirates. Latterly, until Covid struck and ended it abruptly, she has worked on two important sites in Saudi Arabia. An added bonus of working in Iraq was the accessibility of other sites, such as Nineveh, Babylon, and Ur, names that that conjured up Biblical times and which were otherwise difficult to visit.

With her close involvement with the objects Tessa became motivated to take the study of the region a step further and returned to take an MA in Mesopotamian Archaeology at UCL. Here her undergraduate degree finally proved its worth, as geography was deemed a suitable prerequisite for a higher degree in archaeology. She was surprised to learn that a course she could take, and be examined in, was the cuneiform script of the Sumerian language. Never having been good at languages, and consistently failing French 'O' level she now considers Sumerian her second language, while acknowledging it

was not a very useful one to have.

When not at work in the field Tessa has illustrated books, her most widely translated and republished edition being 'Gods Demons and Symbols of Ancient Mesopotamia' published by the British Museum. Other commissions swiftly followed, for the Oxford and Cambridge University presses and Routledge.

However, freelance work in archaeology was not enough to support her living expenses in London, so on obtaining her degree she took part time work at UCL on the support staff in various departments. While initially these roles were unrelated to her life in the arts, her last position, and one she really enjoyed, was organising the annual Joint Faculty Festival of the Arts, an event taking place over four days.

Without a music department at UCL music was sadly lacking at the festival. In way of compensation Tessa took up ballroom and Latin dancing, reaching IDTA Gold medal standard in each discipline (but with a strong preference for ballroom, particularly the waltz and quickstep,) and she hopes this will help give her a better sense of rhythm in her new pursuit.

Taking up a keyboard instrument after such a long period without playing has proved challenging but Tessa contributed to the Society of Women Organists' event at London Bridge Station in which members took over the organ, Henry, for International Women's Day. She has really enjoyed the KCOA meetings she has attended so far and the opportunity to visit Kent country churches has given her pleasure not only for learning about the organs but has also given her an appreciation of the history of the churches and their architecture. Music and archaeology have finally combined.



Tessa Rickards

Photo C. Jilks

An experiment with time

By Stephen Banfield

IN THE EARLIER 1980s, as a young Lecturer in Music at the University of Keele, I was heavily involved with baroque music. I taught and indeed invented the Department's compulsory module on it, and on one occasion the entire year group of about 30 students performed John Eccles's one-act opera *The Judgement of Paris*—from facsimile notation! I took part in plenty of other baroque performances including as soloist in several Bach harpsichord concertos and continuo player in the first revival of Handel's opera *Berenice* since 1737 under the lively baton of George Pratt, later familiar to Radio 3 listeners for his *Spirit of the Age* contributions on early music.

Exciting notions of period performance practice were in their heyday then, with another brisk, lively, and light-footed recording of a high baroque masterpiece appearing virtually every week. Leonard Ratner's book *Classic Music: expression, form, and style* (1980), although dealing with a later period, was particularly influential in awakening musicians' awareness of just how many 18th-century musical movements and parts of movements drew their rhythmic, textural, and gestural character from what he called musical topics, above all from dance types such as the *bourrée*, and Wilfrid Mellers's *Bach and the Dance of God* took a similar line. I tried to teach these concepts to the students, aware for example that Harnoncourt's *St Matthew Passion* opening movement was nearly twice as fast as Klemperer's (roughly MM 56 as opposed to 30)—a sad dance rather than a dirge. And gradually I became aware

that organists seemed to be going about their business as though nothing had changed. Those Bach 'great' preludes and fugues were as ponderous as ever.

Perhaps it was the final movement of one of the harpsichord concertos, the A minor with flute and violin, that triggered a reaction when I realised that some of its passagework was very similar in feel to that of the BWV 546 C minor organ Prelude (Illus. 1, a and b). Here was Bach essaying a topic: in the second bar of the example, those 12/8 triplets in the middle part, the downward scale against them on top, and a staccato effect in the bass written as quavers with quaver rests between. No doubt similar usage could be found in a *gigue* somewhere, and to bring out that *gigue* character, shouldn't both passages go at roughly the same speed? The question asked itself more insistently when comparing the opening of the same Prelude with that of Cantata 47 (Illus. 1, c and d). Again, the topic was almost identical (though one notes the difference in time signature in both pairs of examples). But nobody, to my knowledge, had ever tried playing the Prelude that fast.

I began to conclude that we had got the preludes, and probably many of the fugues, all wrong, for weren't they mostly concerto allegros? It was after all Bach's experience of Vivaldi concertos that had enabled him to construct extended allegro first movements, in the cantatas and harpsichord suites as well as the organ works, on the principle of a balanced tonal journey around the six related keys. So they should sound like concerto fast movements. The issue for me came to a crux when considering the 'Wedge' Fugue, BWV 548. Again, a topic jumped out at me (Illus. 2, a and b), this time shared with the finale of Brandenburg Concerto no 4, which groups such as

a)

[Alia breve]



b)



c)

Allegro



d)



the English Concert were now taking at lightning speed, and indeed did in a performance at Keele around this time. To play the 'Wedge' Fugue as a presto would make much more sense of the violin-like opening subject. But could anybody hope to perform the episodic semiquavers as fast as those virtuoso ones generated in the concerto movement?

I decided to try, and the opportunity came when I offered a series of eight lunchtime organ recitals of Bach on the Keele Chapel organ in the autumn term of 1987, covering all six trio sonatas and a couple of sets of chorale variations, plus one of the 'great' preludes (or toccatas or fantasias) and fugues and the odd chorale prelude in each programme. More topic concordances emerged. The bass quavers, semiquaver runs, and chordal rhetoric of the 'Wedge' Prelude compared with those of the opening movement of the Magnificat. The subsidiary fugue subject that emerges in the F major Toccata and Fugue was surely a classic *bourrée*, its jumpy melodic contour making no sense as anything else. The fugal *concertino* theme of the B minor Prelude, BWV 544, its countersubject marked staccato by Bach, was like that of the third section of the prelude in the C minor harpsichord Partita, though notated in 6/8 rather than 3/4. Pianists had always played the latter *presto*.

These prelude and fugue performances were breaking with every tradition, in each case much faster than those of Lionel Rogg (1978)—see Illus. 3, which plots my tempi as a graph against those of Rogg in the same works. There was a further consideration feeding into my calculations, that of metric proportion between the preludes and their fugues, giving sometimes exciting and unconventional results. I was on dodgy ground here, given that not all the fugues can be proven to belong with the preludes with which they continue to be associated. Proportion is a subject for another occa-

sion, though the equivalences I employed can be seen in Illus. 3.

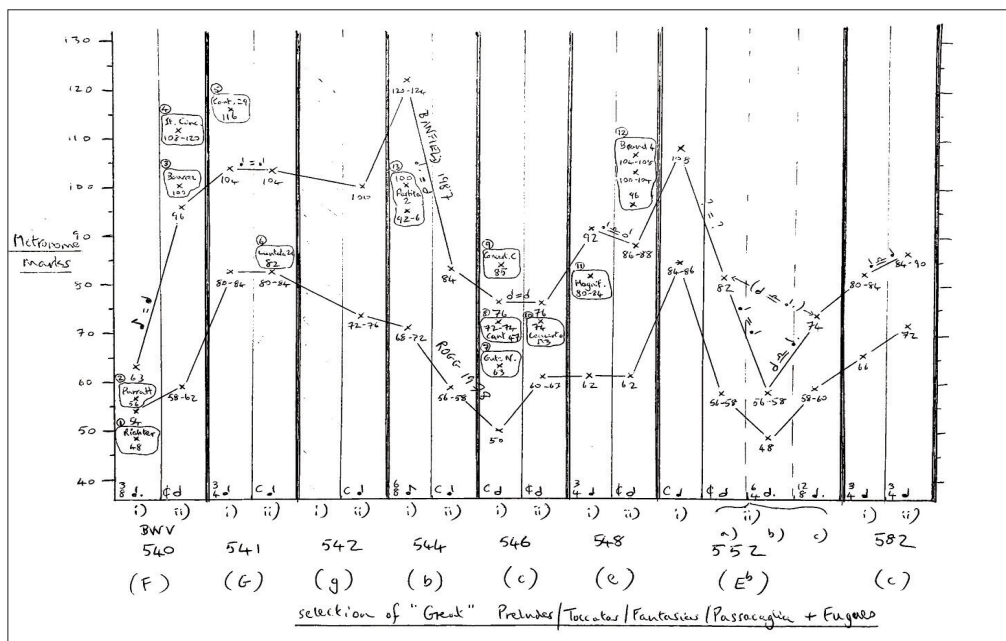
I managed these often extremely fast tempi, and still have the recordings to prove it. But did they work, and was I right?

At the time I was convinced. Now I am not so sure. The internal evidence in favour of rapid tempi is certainly strong. Nor is it confined to 'topic' comparisons with Bach's own concerto allegros, for he also arranged four Vivaldi concertos for organ and these have to go at a lively pace. Arguments against playing the 'great' preludes, fantasias, toccatas and their fugues genuinely fast there have always been, however, and they are what have informed the traditional approach. It is claimed that the organ cannot be treated like a harpsichord or an orchestra and a church acoustic rules out such tempi. Supporting this belief is the fact that a number of Bach's most concerto-like movements for organ are marked *pro organo pleno*, which would seem to preclude light airiness. Nevertheless, the acoustic claim really doesn't hold up, given that Bach's cantatas were and are performed in precisely those same churches as the organ music and are not drastically slowed down for the purpose. More problematic is Johann Nikolaus Forkel, who stated firmly that although Bach's manner of performance was nimble, elegant, and delicate on the harpsichord, on the organ all was grand and sublime. Writing more than half a century after J S Bach's death, he was too young to have heard him play, but he did hear Bach's eldest son Wilhelm Friedemann and considered him the inheritor of his father's performance practice. Yet Forkel had a romantic agenda, as the number of times he uses words and phrases such as 'solemn', 'devotion', and 'reverential awe' demonstrates. So we lack solid evidential ground and must continue to use our musical judgement while trying to open our minds and ears to what may at first shock with unfamiliarity.

a)

[Presto]

b)



David Leach

A short profile

BORN IN 1964, David Leach grew up in Warlingham, a village located towards the eastern edge of the County of Surrey. Although neither of David's parents was musical, he was fascinated by the piano from an early age, which led to him taking lessons from around the time he began primary school. Lessons continued throughout his time at school and he enjoyed studying for the suite of Associated Board examinations. At Warlingham County Secondary School, he took up flute as a second instrument and by joining the school orchestra, experienced the enjoyment that comes from music-making with others. His music teacher also encouraged him to join the school choir to which he agreed somewhat reluctantly. It was during a school assembly one day, that David realised the best part of it was listening to the organ being played. Then came a particular moment: hearing his music teacher play the *Grave* section from the *Fantasia in G major (BWV 572)* by J S Bach. David then knew he wanted to learn to play the organ. David was captivated by the seemingly endless series of suspensions and resolutions that characterise the piece, in fact, he has continued to enjoy it ever since, even having it played on his wedding day during the signing of the register. It was rare for a state secondary

school to have a pipe organ, its installation due to the hard work of Head of Music and Deputy Head, who managed to secure the 2-manual and pedal organ being removed from the chapel at HMP Wormwood Scrubs and its subsequent rebuilding in the school hall. As for David's organ tuition, it consisted of a brief overview of the instrument, along with a recommendation to purchase a copy of *The Oxford Organ Method* by C.H. Trevor and *Book One of the Organ Works (the Eight Short Preludes and Fugues)* by J S Bach. By the completion of O levels, David was studying for Grade 8 piano and flute and had very much enjoyed taking part in the musical life of the school, which included the opportunity to play the organ at the school prize-giving events. During this time David also supported church services at St. Christopher's Church, Warlingham, which had a small 2-manual pipe organ (by then equipped with electric wind supply, although he recalls his mother telling him how, as a child, she had helped pump the bellows by hand on many a Sunday morning).

In 1980, David left school to enter the world of work at the Research Department of the Marie Curie in Limpsfield Chart, Surrey (closed in 2010). The research was interesting and sometimes involved visiting the local hospice where patients kindly provided samples to aid the research effort. It was a humbling experience and, of course, the Marie Curie continues to provide invaluable support to all those that need it. During his early years of work, David continued



David Leach

Photo C.Jilks

his academic studies via day release, culminating in a Bachelor's Degree in Biological Sciences. After several years at the Marie Curie, David moved to The Wellcome Foundation (now part of GlaxoSmithKline), in Beckenham, Kent, where initially he worked in the Department of Drug Metabolism and Pharmacokinetics. Later, he transferred to the Worldwide Regulatory Affairs function, which led company interactions with government health authorities during the development of each new medicine and again later, during the scientific review and licensing approval process for products determined to be both safe and effective. In 1995, David and his family moved to Kent near Canterbury so that he could begin work at Pfizer Limited. After 17 busy years (and lots of international business travel later) he left Pfizer and went to work with a group providing consultancy support to the pharmaceutical industry until the spring of 2024, whereupon he entered uncharted territory of retirement.

However, prior to his move to Kent in 1995, music had taken a back seat but there came something of a musical renaissance. As luck would have it, David accompanied his eldest son (a member of the Cathedral Young Friends) on a tour of the organ by none other than the now KCOA Patron, Dr David Flood. Somewhat cheekily, David asked if Dr Flood would be prepared to tutor him on the organ and was both surprised and delighted when he was met by an encouraging smile and a robust "yes". With such expertise and encouragement, Grade 5 was passed with distinction and for anyone who has experienced the huge sound produced by

the Cathedral tuba stop, a wrong note played during C. S Lang's *Tuba Tune in D major* would not have gone unnoticed by the examiner!. Due to Dr Flood's busy schedule and the challenges of booking lesson time at the Cathedral, David later moved to study with Spencer Payne, Director of Music at St. Edmunds School, Canterbury, who very ably supported him through the Grade 8 piano exam, followed by the remaining organ grades. A distinction at organ Grade 8 was a notable personal achievement for David having, in the run up to the exam, suffered a broken wrist while cycling. Between 2009 and 2012, David undertook an Access to Music course followed by the BMus through part-time study at Canterbury Christ Church University, although a job change brought the music degree to a premature end. However, with the continued expert tuition of Spencer Payne, David went on to study for two post-grade 8 Performance Diplomas – the Associated Board *Associate of the Royal Schools of Music* (ARSM) with distinction (2019) and the *Licentiate of Trinity College London* (LTCL) (2021). Over a ten-year period, David also supported Church services at St. Peter's Bridge (small 2-manual organ thought to date from 1860) and St. Peter's Bekesbourne (small 2-manual *Bevington* organ dating from 1880).

With more leisure time available, David plans to spend more time enjoying country walks, bird watching, amateur astronomy and wildlife photography. In terms of music, he has joined a local choral society and now as a member of the KCOA, is looking forward to the rich programme of events organised by the Association.



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F N, Surrey

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