

BRADFORD ORGANISTS' ASSOCIATION
NEWSLETTER August 2015

Founded 1910
President's Letter

Reg. Charity no. 700225

Dear Friends,

Summer's here!

Well, that's what they say!

I seem to recall three surprisingly hot days about a month ago, which certainly came as a shock to myself, who lives on top of a generally cold, wet and windy hill.

Our changing climate has led to a few interesting experiences regarding pipe organs. No longer can organ tuners rely on the fact that the church interior will average substantially higher temperatures once May has mostly passed. Instead, we seem to be experiencing all extremes: in recent years we've seen the hottest, coldest, windiest, wettest and driest records set.

Maybe, whilst it seems to be understood that churches do not use the heating after a certain time of year, it can happen now more than ever that any Sunday in the middle of summer may be so unusually cold that the internal temperature of the church is lower than during the winter when the heating is used.

Certainly, at one church where I play regularly, the new heating system has reversed what organ tuners expect. It is so fast and efficient that it only requires switching on half an hour before the service starts, even in the coldest weather. This leads to two problems: the organ pipework cannot warm up anywhere near as quickly and, when it does so, some pipes warm up faster than others; and secondly, that the church actually achieves the temperature that was set, rather than only getting part way there. The result of both these is a very out-of-tune, unmusical-sounding, giant celeste.

Really, I suppose, if you want to sing hymns to an organ that sounds like a proper organ, it should be tuned at the actual temperature in which it will play on Sundays. And if that means putting on the heating in summer to raise the temperature from 12 to 18 degrees C, then that's the cost of good music – and maybe a happier congregation! Few churches in the UK have air conditioning, though.

Sorry! I didn't expect to talk so much about the weather – a national failing, I guess. But then we do have a most variable and unpredictable weather system – and that's good neither for our pipe organs or our health.

So, no doubt, several of us will have gone on holiday to places with more reliable weather – though they are becoming rarer too. And, when we return after our summer break, we begin our new syllabus of events. Your Council has worked hard over the last year to finalise our programme. May I suggest that you go through it now and enter the dates into your diary?

We also hope to arrange some of our popular “mini-trips” soon and, if you have any suggestions for these or for our regular meetings, please let Sheila or any member of Council know.

We look forward to seeing you soon!

Until then, enjoy the summer!

John.

Meeting reports

March 21st President's Event.

Members were invited to the President's home – Embsay Kirk to see and play his house organs. Unfortunately some members did not reach Embsay Kirk, as they stopped at the church 100

yards before the house. The church was locked so they were left with no-one to approach for directions. This was a great pity as Tony's instruments were well worth visiting.

Secretary's apologies for omitting the following report from the May Newsletter.

May 16th Recital by Jonathan Eyre

St Joseph's Roman Catholic Church, Pakington Street,

The organ at St. Joseph's has been renovated recently by Skrabl of Slovenia. Members who had been at the West Yorkshire Organ Day the previous week had heard Benjamin Saunders of Leeds Cathedral give a recital on the organ. Benjamin had just returned from a period in the USA where he had been playing jazz pieces and his recital reflected this interest.

It was very interesting to hear Jonathan playing a completely different programme of more traditional and well known pieces. The organ sounded to be quite a different instrument from the previous week!

Secretary's notes

This mailing includes Newsletter, Syllabus, Lunch booking form, Directory, Subscription form and Cathedral recital leaflet,

Please note that Subscription Forms and cheques should be sent to the Assistant Treasurer, Jolyon Felton.

Bookings for the lunch in November should be sent to the Secretary.

September 19th at 7.30pm Members' Recital at St. Wiliam's R. C. Church, Ingleby Road.
Please let me know if you wish to take part in this recital.

The organ is housed in a gallery at the west end of the church. It is a newly restored organ by Hopkins of York which came from a disused Methodist church in Liverpool in 2012. It was completely rebuilt in a new case by Skrabl of Rogaska Slatina, Slovenia in 2013.

Specification

Recitals

St. Margaret's, Ilkley

August 7th Friday at 12.30pm Paul Dewhurst St. Giles, Pontefract

St. Bartholomew's, Armley

August 31st Monday at 11am Chris. Newton

Adm. £7 Refreshments from 10.30am

St. Martin's, Brighouse Robert Gower – St. Barnabas Catholic Cathedral, Nottingham
Martin Singleton – St. Anselm's, Hatch End

Adm. £10 Concessions £8 includes programme and buffet supper with wine.

September 4th Friday at 7.30pm