



Dorset Association of Organists



Affiliated to the Incorporated Association of Organists

Registered Charity No. 277303

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NEWSLETTER

March 2020

FROM THE HON. SECRETARY

Since the last Newsletter we have held three meetings. In September we met on Wednesday the 18th at St Laurence Church Upwey for a 'Bring and Play Session'. As usual this was an entertaining afternoon which we concluded at the nearby Wishing Well Café with a cream tea, which consisted of quite the biggest scone you have ever eaten!

Our Annual Lunch took place on Saturday 12th October at Isle of Purbeck Golf Club, Studland. Sadly, we were without our President on the day as he was in Dorchester Hospital. This year we dispensed with a guest speaker because it is not practicable to have a speaker in a room which we have to share with other diners.

For the final meeting of the year, we visited Bridport on Saturday 16th November. This was a meeting our President had arranged, although he was unable to attend himself. Our first church was St Swithun's Church, North Allington where we were met by the organist, Donald Allcock. He introduced the organ dating from 1857, enlarged by Conacher c.1900, (2m/12), rebuilt by Derry Thompson 1974 and restored 2-3 years ago by Andrew Cooper. We then went to the Chapel in the Garden where we enjoyed a cup of coffee before viewing and playing the historic organ by James Eagles c.1850 (2man/17). Sadly, this organ is not used very often and is not now in the best of condition, which is a pity for such an important instrument. Members were then able to take lunch or visit the United Church and take lunch later. The United Church organ was built by J W Walker in 1862, with alterations/additions by Norman and Beard in 1910, Osmond in 1929 and Michael Farley 2000 (2 man/28).

FUTURE MEETINGS

March

Saturday 14th March 2020. The 82nd Annual General Meeting at the Church Room, St Mary's Puddletown at 2.30pm. The AGM will begin at 3.00pm but before at 2.30pm David Knight and David Illingworth will entertain us with piano duets. A cup of tea will be available after the meeting. At this meeting David Knight take over as President from David Illingworth. We shall also need two nominations for the Committee to replace John Radford and David Wood who retire under the rules. Names of volunteers or nominations should be given to the Honorary Secretary. The Draft Minutes of last year's AGM and the Honorary Secretary's Report for 2019 are attached.

April

Wednesday 1st April - 'Bring and Play' Session at St Mary's Charminster, Dorchester at 2.30pm followed by tea. Come along and fool everybody with a short piece you would like to introduce to them.

National Organ Day 18th April

There is to be a National Organ Day on 18th April (see the RCO web site for details) and members may like to consider how to mark this. There are many possibilities for events such as an open console and an opportunity to try an organ, an informal concert, encouraging those who play the piano to try the organ, invitations to local schools and so on.

Further Meetings

Your Committee has also prepared a programme for the rest of the year. Details are yet to be finalized. I will circulate the dates as soon as they are confirmed. In May we hope to visit the recently installed organ at Winterborne Stickland, In June a visit to Taunton, July at talk at St Paul's, Weymouth by David Knight, In September as Lecture-Recital Andrew Millington (formerly Exeter Cathedral) on Herbert Howells, October the Annual Lunch and in November a demonstration of the Hauptwerk system.

FROM THE HONORARY TREASURER

Please note that subscriptions are due at the AGM in March. The amount remains unchanged at £12.00 for a single member or £18.00 for two members at the same address. An increasing number of members are paying by money transfer these days, and if you wish to join them the account details are: Sort Code: 30-99-12 Lloyds, Wareham. Account No: 00193115.

NEWS OF MEMBERS

Members will be sorry to hear of the death on Christmas Eve of Ruth Wellstead, the wife of John, who has been a member of the Association longer than anyone and was our Secretary for 22 years. I am sure you will all want to express your condolences to John and his family. A past member of the Association, John Locke of Dorchester died on the 2nd December. John was responsible for the acquisition of the Peter Collins organ in 1977 at Dorford Baptist Church; latterly this organ was moved to St Mary's, Dorchester.

ATHELHAMPTON HOUSE

Some ten years ago David Illingworth asked me to stand in for him to play the chamber organ in the gallery of the Great Hall at Athelhampton House for a wedding reception. I was curious to know more about this organ and I surmised from its appearance and features that it might be of Scottish origin. I first looked in my copy of 'Dorset Organ Specifications' by A.L. Flay (one of our founders and president for many years). Len Flay suggested that it had originally been in Scotland and then in 1966 overhauled by Walkers. It had been acquired by Athelhampton's owner, Robert Cooke MP. I then contacted Alan Buchan, the leading authority on Scottish organs and from the few details I sent him he agreed that it was likely to be Scottish in origin. There the matter rested until last year when the Cooke family decided to sell the house and its contents; the organ appearing in the auction catalogue. Soon after the auction, Alan Buchan contacted me to ask if he could pass on our correspondence to the new owner of the organ. This I agreed to and was contacted by Philip Wright on behalf of the owner to see if I could supply more details. So, I set about searching. Len Flay used to produce a bulletin at intervals for the members of the Association (the forerunner of these newsletters). This seemed a good starting point and in the second one I opened I found a report by Len of an Association visit to Athelhampton. This provided the key piece of information; a reference to an article by him in *Musical Opinion* in September 1972 in which he details the history of the organ as related to him by Lady Susi Jeans. I was able to pass this information on to Philip Wright who looked up that issue in the library in Glasgow. It seems the organ was for some 70 years at Myers Castle, Auchtermuchty having previously been for a similar period at Craufurdland Castle in Ayrshire. This accounts for the relatively untouched condition of the organ. Eventually when Myers Castle was modernized the organ went to auction at Christie's and thence to Lady Susi Jeans from whom Robert Cooke acquired the organ. This important 19th century organ is now undergoing restoration by David Shukker before its eventual return to Scotland. In the meantime the archives of Craufurdland Castle are being examined in the search for the original builder of the organ which is likely to have been an Edinburgh builder.

DIARY

Christchurch Priory

Thursday lunchtime organ recital series - 12.30 pm - admission free - retiring collection - console on view - video screens

- 5 March David Davies (Exeter)
- 12 March Martyn Noble (St James' Palace)
- 19 March Sam Hanson (St Peter's, Hammersmith)
- 26 March Hugh Morris (RSCM Director)
- 2 April Ben Bloor (Brompton Oratory)
- 30 April TBC
- 7 May Cathy Lamb (Lichfield)

Wimborne Minster

29 March (Passion Sunday) - a "Come and Sing" service at 6:30pm.

The work to be used for this service is W. S. Lloyd-Webber's rarely performed work "The Saviour". If you wish to sing, Registration is at 2:30, Rehearsal is at 3:00 and tea will be at 5:30. The charge for this is £10.00 per person - the congregation get in free!

You may be aware that the Minster has launched an ambitious scheme "Minster Makes Music" and is intending to raise one million pounds to achieve not only the (probably overdue) rebuild of the Minster organ, but also the establishment of a Music Foundation to support the redevelopment of music in the Minster. In the C of E these days this is a rare and very welcome development!

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Report of the Honorary Secretary for 2019

Membership: *The IAO Capitation Fee was paid in March 2019 on a total membership of 51 compared with 55 in January 2017*

Meetings: 81st Annual General Meeting took place on Saturday 16th March in the Church Room of St Mary's Church, Puddletown. Attendance 16 members with 8 apologies. David Knight was elected President-Elect. Andy Aldridge, John Porter and Beryl Skinner were elected to the Committee. The meeting was followed by tea and afterwards there was an opportunity to play the organ.

May 16th, Visit to St. Andrew's Church, Ashburton (Father Willis 1880, altered by Percy Daniel and Michael Farley 2009) and Buckfast Abbey (Ruffatti, 2017: 81 stops over 4 manuals and pedals).

June 20th: Yeovil, St Michael and All Angels' Church (Norman and Beard 1898. Gt 10, Sw 9, Ch 6 and Ped 3). Church of the Holy Ghost. (3-manual unknown builder).

July 20th, at St Paul's Church, Weymouth Talk by David Knight on the Life and Music of Charles Villiers Stanford.

September 18th Bring and Play Session at St Laurence Church, Upwey followed by cream tea at the Wishing Well Café.

October 12th Annual Lunch at Isle of Purbeck Golf Club, Studland.

November 16th Visit to organs at Bridport, Including St Swithun's, Allington, The Chapel in the Garden and Bridport United Church

Committee: The Committee once during the year and otherwise communicated electronically.

General: Three Newsletters and Membership list were circulated during the year. I am most grateful to Malcolm Thorning for his help in the production and circulation of the Newsletters.

N.R. Webb (Honorary Secretary)

14th March 2020

Draft Minutes of the 81st Annual General Meeting held at Church Room of St Mary's Church, Puddletown on Saturday 16th March 2019 at 3.00pm

Present

D.A. Illingworth (President), Dr N.R. Webb (Hon. Secretary), M.R. Thorning (Hon. Treasurer), A.C. Aldridge, Mrs E. Cull, N. Cuthill, G. Greenough, D. Knight, Mrs D. M. Porter, J.L. Porter, J. Radford, Mrs B.M. Skinner C.J. Thomas, J.B. Wellstead, D. Wood, and E.C. Young. (Total 16)

Apologies for absence

W. Brown, B. Daniels, D. Bruce-Payne, Mrs S. Bruce-Payne, S. Goose, D.T. Smith, M.E. Turner, J. Tallon, Mrs B. Wood. (Total 9).

Minutes of AGM 2018

These had been circulated with the Newsletter. The Minutes were approved after a proposal by Mrs D. Porter and seconded by J. B. Wellstead.

Matters Arising

There was no matter arising from the Minutes of the 2018 AGM.

Report of the Honorary Treasurer for 2018

Honorary Treasurer reported that income for the year had been £1334.00 and expenditure £1231.82 giving an excess of income over expenditure of £102.18. The balance of funds held by the Association now stood at £2911.13.

Matters arising from the Reports and their adoption

There were no matters arising from either of the Reports. The Secretary's Reports was approved following a proposal from D. Radford and seconded by D. Wood. The Treasurer's Report was approved following a proposal from D. Knight and seconded by J. Radford.

Election of Officers

D. Knight was elected as President-Elect.

Election of Committee Members

J. Porter and Mrs B. Skinner were elected to serve until 2022 and A. Aldridge was elected to fill the two-year vacancy on the Committee; he will retire in 2021.

Selection of Independent Financial Examiner and to fix his/her remuneration

Mr Michael Hampton ACMA of Swanage be appointed Independent Financial Examiner and that the Committee be empowered to fix his remuneration: carried unanimously.

Open Forum

The President outlined the plans for meetings to be held during the year.

Any other business

No matter was raised

The meeting closed at 16.00