

LEEDS ORGANISTS' ASSOCIATION

NOVEMBER 2017 UPDATE

*Photos from our events can be seen on the LOA website Gallery
(<http://leedsorganists.wixsite.com/loaweb>)*

Visit to Huddersfield S.Patrick

Saturday 16th September 2017

Following the August break, we resumed our activity on a sunny afternoon with a trip to this fine Roman Catholic church just off the north ring road. The purpose was to attend a lecture-recital '*Mozart ~ the late organ works in context*' by Mr Douglas Hollick. The speaker is well-known as a teacher with an international reputation specialising in early keyboard instruments, also as a recording artist.

With the year 1791 very much in mind the first piece was a *Preludio* by C. P. E. Bach followed by items by relatively unknown composers Nicolas Sejan (1786-1849) and Guillaume Lasceux (1740-1831) [See Henderson's Dictionary pp. 671 & 429 for more detail]. The three Mozart pieces K594,616,608 were, of course, the star items – all played superbly. Douglas' obvious enthusiasm for this music made his comments all the more interesting. Whilst the sounds of the Skrabl organ may be suitable for this repertoire, it presents difficulties because of the lack of playing aids; see the photo' of the console! That Douglas surmounted these problems with such ease was amazing, (with assistance from Dr Dee as registrator!) and our grateful thanks to him for an excellent lecture. Despite the distance involved the attendance was good; it was a delight that Mr Malcolm Hinchliffe BA ARCO the organist of the church joined us, and a lady from Oldham came too! A very special thanks to the Very Reverend Canon Ian M. Smith, the Parish Priest, for allowing us use of the church and organ for this event.

Visit to Fulneck Moravian Church

Saturday 14th October 2017

Now on home ground in the Moravian settlement on the outer edge of Pudsey town, charmingly described in *Yorkshire-West Riding* by Arthur Mee in his *The King's England* series. Pevsner is also a must read. The church contains a fine 2 manual and pedal instrument, mostly the work of J. J. Binns contained in a superb Snetzler case on the gallery over the entrance opposite the pulpit. This was a morning event, a composite recital by our members – for our members! Having assembled in the church, Dr Lindley gave a very interesting talk on the history of the church and the organ. This was followed by a most varied programme consisting of pieces by Whitlock/Bach/Carter/Dubois/Matthias/Thiman/Walton/Bizet/Letondal/Coates. The seven brave volunteers were Messrs. Lawrie/Poles/Wilby/Walters/Tidd/Smith/Wilks. It must be admitted that this event could have been better supported but those present had a thoroughly enjoyable morning. Our grateful thanks to the church authorities for the use of their premises, to Dr Lindley and to the players for making the event such a success.

Visit to Armley S.Bartholomew

Saturday 4th November 2017

Standing majestically dominating the south-west skyline of Leeds, our visit to this glorious building concluded the 2017 programme. This afternoon event was to attend a presentation by our good friend Professor Graham Barber on the music, particularly related to the organ, of the German composer Sigfrid Karg-Elert (1877-1933). In his letter/email to members, our Secretary had already given comprehensive details of K-E's life and career, so readers will be well informed on his

background and development – which was far from ideal! In his introduction, Graham expanded on this in greater detail in a most fascinating manner and explained how the BACH motif was widely used in his music. Karg-Elert's output was as varied as substantial with up to 158 Opuses. Disregarding the organ compositions, the main matter for consideration was the composer's interest in the harmonium, but not the instrument which we are familiar with in this part of the country! Graham explained the features of the harmonium involved. By way of illustration we heard substantial extracts of Harmonium Sonata 2, Opus 46 from a CD played on a harmonium with which K-E was familiar. The result can only be described as a revelation; some declared it as astonishing. The performance was first-class, range of tone and expression quite a musical surprise. Graham then proceeded to play extracts of the Sonata showing how well this music adapted to the pipe organ. Sonata 2 is in three movements and lasts 35 minutes, so it is a sizeable composition. Following this presentation there was keen interested discussion amongst the many members present, and our grateful thanks to Graham for introducing us to such an unusual and rare topic. Tea and biscuits were kindly provided, our thanks to Mrs Eileen Handley and to the Steward, Mrs Thelma Collins for giving up their time for us. In summary the conclusion was that after such a stimulating discourse all were very much the wiser!!

Special thanks: David Wilks

Once again, our grateful thanks must be expressed to our Secretary David for the work he undertakes on our behalf. Members must realise that David indicated at last year's AGM that he would be standing down, so this important post crucial to our organisation needs to be filled – a suitable volunteer urgently required before the next AGM!!

Events 2018

Work is nearing completion on next year's programme, the results so far are now published on the Events page. This is the time to make those diary notes. It should be appreciated that 'fine tuning' will be necessary; the web-page will be amended as and when.

For further details contact the President: gordonappleton@btinternet.com

New members

More good news as we extend a warm welcome to Mr Darius Battiwalls in joining the LOA.

Retirement: Tim Gray

A very special event took place on Sunday 1st October to mark the retirement of Timothy Gray from his post at Harrogate S. Wilfrid after 40 years devoted service. Tim has also held the posts of President and Treasurer of the LOA. The occasion was celebrated by a special Evensong at 4pm followed by a reception and presentation plus goodies in the church hall.



A very large choir of former colleagues and friends gathered to sing music by Smith/Gray/Stanford/Parry. Tim played the organ with voluntaries by Francis Jackson and Percy Whitlock. The Vicar conducted the service and preached, the choir was directed by LOA member, Leonard Sanderman. It was good to see such a large appreciative congregation with friends from afar, including

former Vicar, Canon Brian Pearson and David Halls from Salisbury, plus many fellow members of the LOA. Member John Smith made a CD of the service and copies may be obtained from the Secretary – a contribution to the LOA funds would be appreciated!

Dr Francis Jackson - 100 not out!

Monday 2nd October saw the 100th birthday of Dr Francis Jackson CBE, the internationally renowned former Master of the Music of York Minster. The entire organ fraternity salutes the multiple achievements of Dr Jackson. This unique event has been celebrated locally in many ways, so here are one or two which deserve special mention.

As part of the Ryedale Festival a special celebration took place on Friday 28th July in the venerable church at Lastingham described as ‘unforgettable and one of the most moving places in England’ and the village ‘aloof from the world in a green moorland hollow’. Originally intended to be an evening event only, the demand for seats was so great that an afternoon event had to be organised! This took the form of Dr Jackson being interviewed by Dr Shephard covering his life and times, and followed by a recital of organ pieces played by Dr Philip Moore, Dr Gordon Stewart, Robert Sharpe, Thomas Wrench and John Scott Whiteley. The concert ended with everyone singing heartily with Dr Jackson playing his tune *East Acklam* to the words by Bishop Reginald Heber for which it was originally intended, *God, that madest earth and heaven*.



On the actual birthday special town hall recitals took place in Leeds and Huddersfield. The recitalists in Leeds were Darius Battiwalla, Dr Simon Lindley and John Scott Whiteley playing music by Dr Jackson, Sir Edward Bairstow and Dr Philip Moore. At Huddersfield Dr Gordon Stewart played a programme of pieces closely associated with Dr Jackson. Special mention should be made of the first performance of a new work by Andrew Carter entitled *Passacaglia & Fugue*. The *Fugue* is actually the new element described by Andrew as ‘completing unfinished business to honour FJ’s one hundred inspirational years’. The *Passacaglia* had earlier been written to celebrate Dr Jackson’s 90th birthday in 2007. (The P&F is published by Banks, code 14061).

Then on Wednesday, 4th October, the RCO held a celebratory reception and luncheon at Bishopthorpe Palace hosted by the Archbishop and Mrs Sentamu. Guests included the Duchess of Kent, senior college officials plus others privileged to be there. Following the reception, guests attended ‘A Service of Celebration to mark the 100th Birthday of Dr Jackson’ in the chapel. Voluntaries before and after were played by John Scott Whiteley and Dr Moore respectively. It was a delight to sing the hymn by Fred Pratt Green *For the fruits of His creation*, accompanied by Dr Jackson to his tune *East Acklam*. This was followed by the luncheon. As can be imagined this was a very historic and important tribute by the RCO to a very distinguished RCO member. Dr Moore spoke on behalf of the RCO, with the Archbishop paying his tributes; Dr Jackson responded in his own inimitable manner!



Members then proceeded to York Minster for a celebratory Choral Evensong. Shortly before the service, the Canon in Residence welcomed the packed congregation in the Quire. The music included: *Preces & Responses* – Dr Jackson, *Canticles in D* – Sir Edward Elgar, Anthem - *Remember for good, O Father*, words compiled by Eric Milner-White music by Dr Jackson. The final voluntary was Dr Jackson's *Diversion for Mixtures*. The choir was directed by Robert Sharpe and the organ played by Benjamin Morris. This was followed by another reception in the North Transept. The Dean spoke in tribute to the large gathering with Dr Jackson duly responding. All in all, a veritable feast of English cathedral music; a wonderful conclusion to a marvellous celebration.

Recital news

Regarding local & national organ recitals, the season is in full flow and as many members will know, full details are readily available on organrecitals.com

Where is British organ music?

There is no doubt that the repertoire of British organ music is enormous, so is the variety. Set against these facts, it is somewhat puzzling when analysing the programmes of a series of concerts at a prominent English cathedral possessing a very famous English organ. (Not in Yorkshire!) Of the 8 concerts, 6 were given by well-known English players (75%). 22 foreign composers were represented but only 2 English (8%). 41 foreign pieces were played but only 4 English (9%). Why this neglect of the British repertoire - is England now a land without (British) music?

Remembrance

At this time of the year it is appropriate to remember the fallen from Leeds. This is a photograph of the memorial on the south bank of Colsterdale to the 'Leeds Pals' who, in WWI, had their military training camp there before embarkation to the horrors in France. Colsterdale is beautifully tranquil now, some 7 miles from Masham off the road to Lofthouse, a short distance from the village of Healey.



NEXT MEETING

Saturday 3rd February 2018 at 11.30pm
Sandmoor Golf Club AGM & luncheon
Final details will be circulated to members

