



Issue 17 – August 2011

Readers are encouraged to pass this Newsletter on to any interested non-members and they are in turn encouraged to join any affiliated society as detailed below.

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Direct Membership

At the last SFO Committee meeting in March 2011 attention was drawn to the fact that the SFO has a total of around 700 members while there are in the region of 2,000 churches. It was recalled that a suggestion had been made in 1999 that individuals living in areas outwith convenient reach of a local society should have direct membership of the SFO available to them. Nothing further came of this at that time but the committee would certainly be open to making this available should there be a demand for it. Anyone interested should please get in touch with the SFO Secretary, Mrs Bridget Black.

Glasgow Society of Organists

Jane J Stirling

If you've not already heard, Glasgow celebrates its centenary this year and a number of special events will soon take place.

The first is an organ recital on the Lewis organ in Kelvingrove Art Galleries and Museum on Wednesday 14th September at 7.30 p.m. (orchestration demonstration at 7 p.m.). The recitalist is James Lancelot of Durham Cathedral and his recital includes Bach, Vierne, Mendelssohn and Whitlock (see www.thegso.org.uk for fuller details).

On Friday evening 7th October we have been granted a Civic Reception by Glasgow City Council at the City Chambers. Two days later on Sunday 9th October at 3 p.m. a Thanksgiving Service is being held at Govan Old Parish Church. If anyone from other Societies would like to join us for the service please feel free to do so.

For garden lovers look out for special floral displays in Victoria Park, Glasgow and Boclair Garden, Bearsden.

Other events in our Syllabus include a talk by Kerr Jamieson on "Glasgow Organ Music" on Saturday 19th November and another talk by The Rt. Hon. Brian Gill, Chairman of RSCM Council on Saturday 3rd December.

Tayside Organists' Society

Sally Carus

TOS welcomed Mr Roger Clegg as its new President for 2011/2012 with Dr William Stevenson taking over the post of Vice-President. The new Secretary, Mrs Sally Carus, can be contacted at sallycarus@hotmail.com or 28, Camphill Road, Broughty Ferry, Dundee, DD5 2JD or on 01382 775448.

We have endeavoured to spread our events over as much of our area as possible which we hope will enable all our members to attend at least one meeting. The syllabus for the Society in 2011/2012 is as follows:-

Wednesday 14th September –7.30pm - recital by David Hamilton of Strathclyde University in St Mary Magdalene's Church, Dundee. Programme to include music by Bach, Buxtehude, Healey-Willan, Vierne and improvisation. Interval refreshments.

Wednesday 12th October –7.30pm - recital by Neil Smeaton in St John's Episcopal Church, Forfar. Programme to be confirmed.

Early February 2012 (date and venue to be confirmed) - an evening of music by Robin Bell and pupils of Madras College.

Tuesday 28th February –7.30pm - talk by Sandy Edmonstone at St Ninian's Cathedral, Perth.

Saturday 17th March – visit to Dunblane Cathedral with Matthew Beetschen and to Auchterarder with Sandy Edmonstone.

Wednesday 25th April – 7.30pm President's night in Kirriemuir.

Non-members will also be very welcome at all these events.

The Aberdeen and District Organists' Association

Allan Ritchie

Our programme for 2011-2012 has an "organ" flavour running almost right through from September to May.

Surprise! Surprise! The opening meeting in September is the customary President's coffee morning in St Andrew's Cathedral when Mr Alan Cooper, President for the new session, will welcome everyone and outline the events for the coming year while, at the same time, all enjoying coffee, tea and "butteries". This will be followed by a short organ recital by Dr Andrew Morrisson, the recital being the weekly Cathedral at Noon concert. In October, Ralph Stelzen Muller will give an organ recital at Kings' College Chapel. ADOA members will give an organ recital in November in Holburn West Church. This is the fourth consecutive members' recital and is proving more and more popular. The usual social evening in January will have Professor Paul Mealor as guest speaker. David Smith of Aberdeen University will deliver a semi-master class on organ improvisation at Kings' College Chapel in February. Graeme Stevenson will give an organ recital at St Machar's Cathedral in March.

To round off the season's events the Association will head for St Andrews for the Spring Outing, hoping to visit and see the organs at All Saints' Episcopal Church, St Salvator's Chapel, St Leonard's Chapel and the Parish Church of The Holy

Trinity. It is planned to invite the Tayside Organists to join us for the day at St Andrews. As said earlier, "a real organ programme".

Edinburgh Society of Organists

Nicola MacRae

The ESO has once again enjoyed another successful year of events. The session began back in September with a visit to the organ of Freemason's Hall. Simon Nieminski was our host and gave an excellent recital showing off the organ's capabilities and tonal colours. Following the recital, everyone that wanted to, was given the opportunity to try the organ for themselves. Also in September there was a trip to Leeds. Organs included; Leeds Town Hall, Leeds Parish Church and St Bartholomew's Armley. Although not well attended, those that did manage to go on the trip thoroughly enjoyed themselves.

In October ESO Past President Jeremy Cull gave an excellent lecture-recital on Elgar's Second Organ Sonata and the Severn Suite in St Mary's Episcopal Cathedral. Jeremy demonstrated the differences between the two and showed us how the transcriber can "make or break" a piece of music. The evening ended with a performance of the complete Severn Suite.

In November we paid a visit to the organ of Loretto School, Musselburgh. Before we all got the opportunity to try the instrument for ourselves the School Organist gave a recital showing what the organ had to offer. We also had the chance to socialise over a cup of tea afterwards.

An illustrated talk given by Michael Harris in Palmerston Place Church entitled "The Organs of Italy" gave us a very good start to the New Year in January. Michael gave a very informative and interesting talk about his experiences in Italy.

Our Social Luncheon and Recital with Gordon Stewart took place in February again in the elegant surroundings of Merchiston Castle School. A fine three-course meal was served to before our guest speaker gave a thought provoking yet amusing speech. A pleasing recital followed with some unfamiliar yet enjoyable pieces.

In March we learned about "Music of the English Reformation" from Duncan Fergusson who gave a very comprehensive and authoritative account on the subject. Afterwards we had the chance to meet over refreshments.

In April we visited St Mary's Haddington, Stenton Kirk and the workshops of Lammermuir Pipe Organs. We were blessed with sunshine for this event and everyone thoroughly enjoyed themselves. It was very interesting to meet the builder of the first organ we visited and see round his workshop.

Also in April we had another trip, this time being to Bristol. This was a very ambitious trip with us visiting 17 organs in the space of 3 days! We arrived in Bristol very early on Thursday morning and were back by early Sunday evening. It was an amazing trip and the members who went thoroughly enjoyed themselves. Amongst the places visited were; St Mary's Redcliffe, Bristol Cathedral, Bath Abbey, Tewksbury, Gloucester and Hereford. Everyone had the opportunity to play the instruments and all were very appreciative of this. We had the chance to meet members of the Bristol society who very kindly offered transport for us. The trip was a huge success and well worth taking a few days off work for!

We welcome our new President, David Turner and look forward to another year with varied and interesting events to suit everyone. If you have not been to an ESO event for a while please do try to make the effort to come along. For a society that has such a large membership, very few actually come along to events. We try to make events as appealing as possible and a place in which to meet old friends and make new ones.

The Stirling and District Society of Organists

Ailsa Simpson

The Stirling and District Society of Organists has published the details of its programme for the first part of the coming session, which starts on Saturday 8 October with a visit to Paisley Abbey, where the members will be introduced to the organ which was restored by Harrison & Harrison in 2009. And Saturday 26 November is the date when the Lanarkshire Society of Organists will host the annual joint meeting with the Stirling Society.

But what might prove to be the most interesting development in session 2011-2012 is the proposed repetition of an initiative begun earlier this year by Robin Bell with the assistance of Dr. Evelyn Stell, Matthew Beetschen and Ian Boulter. This is *Organists in Training*, an opportunity for any keyboard player interested in enhancing his or her skills to

include the organ to attend training opportunities locally. Springing from a survey of Christian denominations in Falkirk, Grangemouth, Alloa, Stirling and Linlithgow ... and nearby towns, suburbs and villages ... which revealed that there are over 90 churches in the area, most with a pipe or electronic organ, the Stirling & District Society of Organists developed this initiative in partnership with local churches. The success of the first series of *Organists in Training* has encouraged the organisers to look at the possibility of arranging a second series in 2012. Details will be posted on the Society's website ... www.sdso.co.uk ... when the planning process is completed.

Scottish Historic Organ Trust

Alan Buchan

This organisation was founded by the late Hugh Ross of Leithen Lodge, Peeblesshire in the early 1990s. Hugh had the idea of establishing an organ museum at Leithen, which he did indeed begin to establish. Following financial difficulties and his untimely death in 1995, Leithen was sold, but SHOT continued in an active way until about 2003, when a shortage of active office bearers prevented activity.

Dormant until this year, SHOT is now being revived, with a new edition of the SHOT Bulletin produced, an EGM in Stirling (including a visit to the Holy Rude Church) and future plans for organ visits. SHOT has in its care three small organs: a Bruce chamber organ from the 1830s currently in St. Moluag's Chapel, Kentallen, a small Scudamore organ c. 1890 in Heriot Kirk and the remains of a barrel organ by Wood Small of Edinburgh dating from the 1820s. There are also extensive archives which may be consulted, and for which a home may eventually be found.

With so much anti-pipe organ sentiment evident and mushrooming, there is clearly a need for a pressure group to put the case for the pipe organ and to encourage churches to keep the valuable instruments which some of them have. There seems to be very little awareness of what a good historic instrument can do musically and very few musicians who know how to play these instruments and achieve the best results from them.

The current SHOT office bearers are: Kerr Jamieson, Chairman (kerr.jamieson@btopenworld.com), Dr. David Sutherland, Membership and Treasurer (dasutherland@omne.uk.net), Alan Buchan, Curator and Editor (alanbuchan@btinternet.com) and Nicola Macrae, Administrator (nicolamacrae@hotmail.com).

If you would like to try a year's membership, please send a cheque payable to SHOT for £10 to Dr. D. Sutherland, 1 Lochend Road, Troon KA10 6EU.

I shall be glad to provide any further information on either HOCS or SHOT for interested parties. The e-mail is alanbuchan@btinternet.com and telephone 01540 673238. The magazine History Scotland is hopefully carrying a two part article on the history of the organ in Scotland, starting with the December 2011 issue.

Historic Organs Certificates

Alan Buchan

This scheme was started in 1995 by the British Institute of Organ Studies (BIOS). Keen to include a small number of Scottish organs, the chairman of BIOS telephoned one evening in that year and asked if I could think of a dozen Scottish organs which were completely unaltered from their original condition (i.e. not necessarily the most interesting either historically or musically). After a couple of hours of thought I produced the required dozen, which were duly given certificates. That dozen remained virtually unchanged for fifteen years. Most of the other three hundred historic organs in Scotland (i.e. those which remained largely unaltered specimens of specific builders' work) continued to lack the certificates which they deserved.

Earlier this year BIOS sought to rectify this situation by appointing a Scottish HOCS representative. One or two individuals were approached but they subsequently declined to be nominated. Having realised that the bottom of the barrel would then have to be scraped, BIOS approached me in January of this year and I accepted, reluctantly, because I knew it would involve a lot of travel, taking photographs and administration (i.e. time which could be usefully devoted to other ways of achieving survival of important organs).

A meeting of BIOS's Historic Organs Certificate Committee on June 17th reclassified those organs which already had certificates (removing the Norman & Beard of St. Leonard's, Forres, mercilessly destroyed five years ago) and considered another twenty Scottish historic organs for nomination.

The complete list of organs with certificates now comprises:

Dundee Caird Hall: Harrison 1923.
Kilmun Parish Church: Norman & Beard 1909 & water engine.
Dufftown RC: P Conacher c. 1878.
Bearsden New Kilpatrick: chamber organ Will Ewart c. 1870.
Kelvingrove Museum: Lewis & Co. 1902.
Hyndland St. Bride's Episcopal: Hill 1865.
Maryhill Community Centre: TC Lewis 1889.
Motherwell Dalziel St. Andrew's Parish: Walcker 1900.
Dalkeith St. Mary's Episcopal: D Hamilton 1845.
Edinburgh Dean Parish: C & F Hamilton 1903.
Edinburgh Freemasons Hall: Brindley & Foster 1913.
Pilrig Parish: Forster & Andrews 1903.
Edinburgh St. Stephen's Centre: Willis 1880.
Edinburgh True Jesus Church: A Ingram 1912.
Scone Palace: Elliott 1813.
Paisley Museum: Gern 1888.
Paisley Coates Memorial Baptist: Hill 1894.
Stenhouse & Carron Parish: Binns 1902.
Glasgow Struthers Memorial: Gern 1884.
Blair Castle: Positive-Regal 1630.
Nairn St. Ninian's Parish: Willis & Lewis 1924.
Dalkeith St. Nicholas Buccleuch Parish: Binns 1906.
Dalkeith St. Nicholas Buccleuch Parish: J Bruce 1820s.
Dalkeith St. David's RC: T Hamilton 1869.
Edinburgh St. Patrick's RC: J Bruce 1835.
Deer St. Drostan's Episcopal: Porritt 1878.
Deer Parish: Willis 1898.
Borthwick Parish: Forster & Andrews 1893.
Crichton Collegiate Church: J Brook 1899.
Coupar Angus Abbey Parish: Wadsworth 1892.
Fyvie All Saints Episcopal: D Hamilton 1850.
Fyvie Castle: Norman & Beard 1905.
Preshome St. Gregory's RC: J Bruce 1820.
Tombae RC: J Conacher 1880s.
Inveresk St. Michael's Parish: TC Lewis 1892.
Hawick Trinity Parish: Binns 1911.
Forest Green Parish: Letts 1806.
Granton Parish: Rushworth 1936.

Not all of these are entirely unaltered, as readers may glean, but there are various different categories of Historic Organ Certificate, details of which I shall not tediously describe for the moment!

There are however many other unaltered Scottish instruments which are worthy of top grade historic certificates. I would be pleased to supply any members by e-mail with what purports to be a list of all Scottish historic organs currently known (c. 300). If you would like to suggest other historic organs, that would also be welcome. To nominate an organ for a BIOS Historic Organ Certificate you need the permission of the organ's proprietor, photographs of the organ, console, pipework and action and details of its history. I would be happy to come and take photographs of any such instrument.

The 2011 Annual Conference

Andrew Macintosh

For the first time in many years, the SFO Conference visited Dundee this year, on 20 and 21 May. Those who arrived early on the Friday were able to enjoy a drink overlooking the Tay on a beautiful sunny evening before a concert of contemporary choral music in St Andrew's Cathedral, performed by Ateovus (directed by Gillian Craig) with John Butt at the organ. As I was singing bass in the choir, modesty forbids me from judging the performance, but John's rendition of the 'Prière après la Communion' from Messiaen's *Livre du Saint Sacrement* was simply exquisite. The concert was

followed by a buffet in Dundee Contemporary Arts next door. Some were confused by the arrival, as a dessert, of what appeared to be a bridie with gravy (a noted Dundee delicacy); in fact it was an apple turnover with toffee sauce!

Saturday's AGM in St Paul's Cathedral was followed by a recital by Richard Ingham (saxophone) and Scott Mitchell (piano and organ). We were very grateful to them both for stepping in at very short notice after our original performer pulled out, and we were delighted that they shared with us the first performance of a new piece by Sally Beamish. After a hearty lunch at the Apex Hotel, we reassembled at the Caird Hall for an outstanding recital by Thomas Trotter, who exhibited artistry, technique and musicality of the very highest order. It was a great privilege to hear him play a programme which not only covered the widest artistic range, from Liszt to Whitlock via Judith Weir, but showed off the full range of Harrison's' masterpiece of an instrument.

We were able to adjourn next door to the City Chambers for a welcome by Baillie Rod Wallace and some more nourishment before I handed the Presidential badge over to Kerr Jamieson and delegates departed as the heavens finally opened. It was a great pleasure to welcome everyone to Dundee, and as well as thanking all who attended I'd also like to thank my organising committee of Jim McKellican, Dr David Smith, Ian McLagan and Stuart Muir for their tireless work. And, of course, I wish Kerr all the best with his year in office and I look forward to attending next year's conference with nothing to do!

Recommended Salary Scales for Organists

Having considered the current financial climate and the decisions made by the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland in May 2010 regarding the remuneration of ministers and also the Church's office staff, the Salaries Committee resolved (with the agreement of the SFO Committee) that the increase in salary scales due on 1st January 2011 would not take place. A further review was undertaken early in 2011 and in view of the continuing freeze on salaries, stipends and pensions it was decided that no increase in organists' salaries could be recommended for 1st January 2012. Therefore the current scales will remain effective until at least 1st January 2013. For convenience the scales are reproduced again here.

a) Churches without choirs

Salary £1,450 - £2,240 Deputy Fee £50

b) Churches with choirs making an occasional individual contribution to worship

Salary £2,240 - £3,570 Deputy Fee £50 - £65

c) Churches with choirs making a substantial individual contribution to worship

Salary £3,570 - £4,780 Deputy Fee £65 - £90

d) Churches with complete and competent choirs singing full choral services

Salary £4,780 - £7,140 Deputy Fee £90 - £100

e) Churches employing a full or part time professional director of music with extensive responsibilities are recommended to consider salary scales higher than scale d)

Salary £7,140+ Deputy Fee £100+

Notes:

1. There is a uniform approach to Deputy Fees, these now covering all church services, weddings and funerals. Different services contain different emphases, but all are important and should receive equal treatment.

2. Recording fees remain unchanged:

The fee + 50% for sound recording

The fee + 100% for video recording

3. These scales are not mandatory. They provide guidelines for churches throughout Scotland. Whilst these scales are endorsed by the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland it is hoped that they will also be endorsed on an inter-denominational basis.

4. If exceptional situations arise, which are not covered by these scales – for example, the number and nature of services within the Anglican and Roman Liturgies, or within Church of Scotland linked charges – then dialogue and negotiation are recommended as

ways towards mutual agreement. Organists should be prepared to be pro-active in such matters and not diffident concerning reference to these scales.

5. These scales exist to provide a working framework and to maintain reasonable standards of remuneration. If there are musicians who are prepared to accept alternative remuneration, or to offer their services on a voluntary basis, then that is a matter for individual decisions and outwith the scope of these recommendations.

6. Churches that are experiencing financial difficulties or who do not wish to subscribe to these scales should not seek to engage deputies who do expect these scales to be observed.

7. It should not be necessary to emphasise that the labourer be worthy of hire. Those who benefit from SFO scales should be competent to do so.

8. The current Church of Scotland Contract for Organists is now an extensive document containing sections applying to Duties, Salaries, Hours of Work, Holidays, Sickness Benefits, Expenses, Disciplinary Matters, Redress of Grievances, Protection of Children and Young People, Dress and Worship. This is now a comprehensive document but there are areas that are perhaps ambiguous – Dress and Expenses, for example, and further negotiations may be necessary.

Not every church will adopt this contract and local variations exist. These matters should be checked carefully before entering into employment. Copies of the contract can be obtained from the Church of Scotland Legal Department at 121 George Street, Edinburgh, EH2 4YH (0131 225 5722).

9. These scales now remain relevant until 1st January 2013, by when a further review will have taken place.

Relevant and informed commentary is always welcome and should be addressed to Iain Galbraith, Convenor, via the SFO e-mail address: publications@scotsorgan.org.uk.

Please note, however, that queries regarding individual contracts and/or tax matters should be addressed to your own Solicitor or other professional adviser

Book Review

Donald Maclagan

Reprise: An Irish church musician looks back – Harry Grindle

Published by Harry Grindle 2009

Available priced £11.99 from sales@goodbookshop.com or www.amazon.co.uk

Here is a book I should have been proud to write! Yes, the title is reminiscent of Alfred Hollins' autobiography *A Blind Musician Looks Back*, but it is none the worse for that.

Harry Grindle is well known in Northern Irish musical circles having been Organist of Bangor Parish Church followed by his years as Organist of Belfast St Anne's Cathedral and as Head of Music at Stranmillis University College. He also conducted a number of other groups.

It would have been very easy for Harry Grindle to produce a timeline of his life's accomplishments and relate event after event in chronological order. However, his life story is told here in much more interesting fashion. Although the book is divided into twelve chapters dealing with the different periods of his life Harry tells of himself, his family, people he met and friends, and life in Northern Ireland and elsewhere in an interesting series of stories and anecdotes within each chapter. He is never scared to go off at a tangent and relate events and things that happened as his lifetime progressed from his 1930s and 40s childhood to his retiral in 2008.

I have never met Harry Grindle, but I would guess that as well as a comprehensive archive of records he must have a remarkable memory. His book is wonderfully detailed and gives a remarkable insight into the multitude of happenings that make his lifetime in Irish music so absorbing. I thoroughly recommend his book.

“Show-off organists put me off church”

The following article, by David Campbell, first appeared in the Sunday Post on 26th June 2011 and is reproduced by kind permission of D C Thomson & Co Ltd. Readers are invited to respond through the pages of SFO News – Ed.

As you sat in your pew in church this morning ... what do you mean you weren't there? Do you mean to tell me that there are some people in this God-fearing land who don't go to church religiously every Sunday? Good heavens.

Of course I'm pulling your leg. We all know the churches are struggling to get bums on pews in these secular times, and that modern men and women prefer to spend their Sunday at Ikea, Tesco, Ibrox, Parkhead or the 19th hole.

But if you do run with the flock, or you used to, you may find your mind wandering of a Sabbath morn to the mystery of why so many left.

The dyke-snow decline in congregations is generally put down to the competing attractions mentioned above, plus the influences of Darwin and Dawkins.

But has anyone considered the contribution made by church organists? Because it's always seemed to me that many of them are dedicated to driving church-goers away.

Smarty-pants – I'm not talking about old Mrs Peppermint who kindly two-fingers her way through Psalm 23 as a favour to the minister, but the smarty-pants organists, the ones who are piano teachers and take the church choir and fancy they are the only ones who understand music because they sent away for a Classic FM sticker for their car and know the difference between Schumann and Schubert.

They love to show off, to vent their frustrated ambitions to tickle the mighty Wurlitzer's ivories, and to remind everyone they're not a Miss Peppermint. But in order to keep their jobs they confine their flamboyance to the second last verse of every hymn.

By then they reckon the congregation must have got the hang of the tune, so they launch into their own wild variation, completely different from what the congregation is trying to sing, inspired by the sound of air-raid sirens and fingernails on blackboards, causing consternation in the pews, mirth in the choir and eyeball-rolling from the minister.

For the last verse they revert to the notes on the page, looking around innocently with a half smile, as if to say, “Who, me?”

These anarchic accompanists are obviously agents of the Lord High Atheist, Richard Dawkins, sent to sow doubt about the existence of any loving God who would subject His people to weekly earhole torture.

And yes, I though the same about church guitar players – until I realised that was care in the community.

SFO Website – Technical Problem

Editor

Many people are now using internet browsers other than *Internet Explorer* and these other browsers may not display the pictures and images on our site properly. Over the next few months the necessary steps will be taken to rectify this problem so that users of browsers such as *Firefox*, *Chrome*, *Opera* and *Safari* will be able view our web pages properly. The pages will have a new look but will not all change at the same time. In the meantime, anyone with particular problems or questions should please contact me on publications@scotsorgan.org.uk.
