

BRADFORD ORGANISTS' ASSOCIATION

NEWSLETTER

November 2020

Founded 1910

Registered Charity

President's letter

Dear Fellow BOA Member,

In what we used to call "Normal times" we would be well on the way with choir practices, and organ practice, as we prepared for the joys and demands of Christmas.

As it is, the gossipmongers are whipping-up threats of Christmas not happening - of family gatherings being verboten - "we must have our Christmas festival": the cries are flourished!!

But what is Christmas?

It is not that extended period of coming together to eat, drink and be merry, and celebrate the beginning of a New Year. The decorating of houses with greenery, the lighting of candles, holding processions and giving presents to celebrate the Winter Solstice is a tradition reaching back to prehistoric times - and is best thought of as Yule tide!

We have already lost All Saints' Eve (*All Hallows Eve*), All Saints' Day and All Souls' Day to the invasive USA "Trick or Treat" tradition. "Apple bobbing" is no more! Those who reacted so angrily to the thought of "Lockdown" extending through December are indicators of the growth of secularism in our society: no longer can we boast that there are more people on their knees in Church on a Sunday than there were football fans in stadia on a Saturday.

I am one of the 'minority' who relish the step-by-step journey through the Advent liturgies as we sing the Responses and ancient hymns, light the Advent candles as Christmas Eve comes nearer day by day until at the Midnight Mass the church is ablaze with candles as we sing "Yea, Lord we greet Thee, born this happy morning!" And that depth of joy and worship continues through Epiphany and its processions to Candlemas on February 2nd.

I know that this year worship is going to be different - Zoom is but a poor substitute for a congregation and one's presence in church - but I am still looking forward to the Advent journey, the birth of the Christ-child and the strengthening of my faith.

I am a member of BIOS (*The British Institute of Organ Studies*) and recently received the November 2020 BIOS Reporter in which, in the REVIEWS section, I found my "Organs in Bradford: 1922-1938" with a glowing review from our very own Edward Scott, DOA.

Thanks Edward.

I wish you all a Happy and fulfilled Christmas and look forward to a New Year and the New Normal - whatever that turns out to be! **Ron.**

Secretary's Notes

I often wonder how many members read the newsletter. I know two members read it as they send me emails and that is very encouraging.

I am hoping that everybody will read this one as I would like some feedback.

In the last newsletter I suggested a Zoom recital, but no-one has joined the queue of performers. Maybe I am not the only person doing a massive tidy-up.

It would be good to have some of your thoughts on 'Lock down', Just a few sentences would be appreciated.

More thoughts
Or Sheila's boring us again

I'm still sorting out the spare bedroom and Edward is sorting the accumulation of things in his workshop.

I have found a lot (probably hundreds) of photographs. I suppose it is to be expected, apart from family photos there are ones from choir holidays – one every year from 1970 to 2000 – Guide camps – Mothers' Union events and, of course, BOA outings.

It would be good to be able to put some in the newsletter, but the cost soars when I need colour.

One very interesting T&A newspaper photograph shows several Junior members. It was taken at their recital. I know where two members are, but does anyone know where the others and are they still playing.

Edward has found the BOA Bach Trophy and is restoring it to its original shining condition.

In the past the Junior members competed for the Bach Trophy and it was awarded at a Juniors' Recital.

Perhaps now is time for the competition to be reinstated. It could be for any members – not just Juniors.

Let me know your thoughts on this. **Sheila**

Having a Jolly Lockdown

Hello everybody. How are you all handling the lock down?

I've had an interesting few weeks using the time to follow various projects, musical and about the house, so I'm really looking forward to the time when we're, finally, able to meet up and do BOA's 'lockdown show and tell'.

Almost as soon as the lockdown came into effect, the Ghyll bell ringers had found an online bell tower programme which in conjunction with 'Zoom' allowed us to ring together (virtually) so that our Tuesday night bell practice has not missed a single week. At this time of year, to practice our ringing from home in front of a warm fire with a cup of coffee is very welcome.

I am fortunate to have an organ here at home so, musically, I've had a ridiculous amount of time to practice both organ and lute even managing a couple of online lute lessons. At the organ I dusted off my file of Christmas stuff - revisited all those descants, Bach's 'In Dulce Jubilo' and even added some new repertoire.

And then.... a month ago, just as I was congratulating myself about all of this I slipped on wet grass while walking the dog, snapped a tendon and spent a few days at Airedale getting repaired. so, now, and for a few weeks yet, my left leg is splinted up so that, when sat, it sticks out in front of me. I simply can't get close enough to the organ or piano to play - very frustrating!

However, I have a Casio keyboard with full size keys- not very good but tons better than nothing and thanks to some inventive joinery from Trish, she has sorted a platform for it sitting over my peg leg so I can at least do some keyboard stuff. So, I've been looking at the old fingering for early music (something I have been curious about for a long time) and working through some figured bass tutor books.

Incidentally, there is now a new edition of "The Fitzwilliam Virginal Book" in three volumes from Lyrebird Music and they look very good, a great improvement on the old Dover edition I bought as a sixth former all those years ago.

Well, that's what I've been doing, how about all of you? I'm sure Sheila would be pleased to receive news of any member's lock down activities. What have you been playing, learning, exploring or listening to?

Keep safe, don't allow yourselves to get bored, **Jolly Felton**