

# BRADFORD ORGANISTS' ASSOCIATION

## NEWSLETTER

Founded 1910

Reg. Charity

**November 2018**

### **President's letter**

Dear Fellow Members

How lovely to see so many of you at our Dinner on 13<sup>th</sup> October at Northcliffe Golf Club. Many people have said how much they enjoyed the meal. Mark, the chef, certainly lived up to his reputation.

Our Speaker, Bishop Toby, was excellent and I thought he hit the right note! There was a happy atmosphere. The Northcliffe seemed a good venue and maybe you can let us have some feedback on this.

May I take this opportunity to thank Sheila for the excellent organisation which we must not take for granted. It is time consuming.

I look forward to seeing as many members as possible at St. John's, Baildon, on the 17<sup>th</sup> November, when our speaker will be Professor David Baker. His subject is 18<sup>th</sup> Century Organ Music. Please note the meeting starts at 2.15 pm. It is the first of our afternoon meetings over the winter months.

Although this seems terribly early may I wish you and yours a very Happy Christmas and a Peaceful New Year.

As ever, please try to get to as many meetings as possible over the coming year. The continuing life of the Association depends upon us all.

Good wishes to you all,  
Valerie Mitchell

### **Reports**

#### **Mini-trip to Saltaire**

David Lowe met a group of members at the Victoria Hall on 15<sup>th</sup> August and introduced the great Wurlitzer organ, giving the history of the instrument, before playing it and demonstrating its potential.



Members were then given the opportunity to play the Wurlitzer. It was a very interesting morning.

Members had lunch at a café in Saltaire before going on to St. Peter's Church in Moorhead Lane.

The organist, Martin Newman, met us and again we had a talk about the history of the instrument and were allowed to play it. David Lowe had played the organ when he was a pupil of Frank Greenwood many years ago. It has had little attention recently.

We thank both David and Martin for giving their time to make this an interesting Mini-trip.

Anyone who was unable to go to Saltaire and would like to visit the Wurlitzer please let me know. David is willing to speak to another group later.

Sheila Scott

### **Recital at St. Margaret's Ilkley, 15<sup>th</sup> September**

Our opening recital of the 2018/19 season was to have been a recital by Anthony Gray at St Margaret's Church Ilkley.

Anthony has been made organ scholar at Southwell Minster and took up the position on 1st September. Whilst we are delighted that one who started his

training with BOA has secured this post, we were sorry he was not able to play for us on this occasion.

At the last minute our member Christopher Rathbone, organist at St Margaret's, came to our rescue.

We assembled in the choir and Christopher gave us a resume of his programme and suggested that members might like to walk round the building to experience the acoustics of this magnificent church.

The first piece could not have been more appropriate - "On Ilkley Moor" from the Dance Suite by Noel Rawsthorne played with enthusiasm and panache using the full resources of this fine 4 manual Hill organ.

Surely there has to be Bach in any recital, and Christopher gave us a fine performance of the Prelude and Fugue in G BWV 541.

In lighter vein we then heard two pieces from 24 Pieces en Style Libre by Louis Vierne

An early work by Kenneth Leighton born 1929 in Wakefield. Credo from his Missa de Gloria op. 82 followed.

Rhapsody in D flat op 17 No3 by Herbert Howells written between 1915 - 18 seemed a singularly appropriate piece as we remember the centenary of the ending of the Great War.

In sharp contrast Christopher ended this recital with a set of jazz variants on "Richmond" which he wrote in 2002. I don't think any of us will remember the hymn tune "Richmond" without recourse to this splendid recital.

Our first meeting of the season was a good evening, and we are most grateful to Christopher for so willingly agreeing to play for us at such short notice.  
Edward Scott

## **Dinner**

Saturday, 13<sup>th</sup> October saw thirty-two members and friends enjoying dinner at the Northcliffe Golf Club, Shipley. The speaker was Bishop Toby who entertained us with a talk on the way music has been an influence in his life. None of us will listen to Amazing Grace in quite the same way again.

## **Outreach at Bradford Grammar School**

On the 18<sup>th</sup> September at Bradford Grammar School there was a "Hands, Feet and Pipe" Organ Demonstration given By Daniel Moulton, Head of Organ Studies at the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire.

This was attended by 80 interested pupils of which, after a very exciting and thorough demonstration and talk lasting about 35 minutes; resulted in 30 pupils expressing an interest.

Pupils were encouraged to play their piano or party piece after the presentation with help from Daniel. They all very much enjoyed this.

To date 16 pupils have signed up to a first free lesson and I am now awaiting to hear how many carry on with lessons.

The reason that I arranged this event was because the 3 manual Andrews and Forster organ was not being used and there were no organ pupils.

It required a “big hitter” to generate some enthusiasm and show how exciting an organ can be. Fortunately, Daniel was the right person and all adults attending, approx. 40, agreed that it was an excellent event.

Fortunately in arranging this, I managed to obtain sponsorship to cover the costs and had the full support of the Head of Music, Liz White and Music Master Chris Brook, who teaches the organ; together with Headmaster, Simon Hinchcliffe.

John C Hammond

### **Richard Darke**

Members will remember Richard Darke welcoming them to Knaresborough in 2015.

Richard died recently.

There will be a Requiem Mass at Knaresborough Parish Church on 3<sup>rd</sup> November at 12 noon. Anyone intending to go to the service should aim to arrive early as parking is difficult in the town.



Richard Darke

I moved from Southport to Bradford during Holy Week 1964. I had interviewed, successfully to replace Brian Baines as a teacher of Music (Keith Rhodes' Assistant) and English at Grange Boys' Grammar School, and Richard Darke who had valiantly picked up Keith Rhodes' mantle at St Barnabas, Heaton, when Keith was appointed Organist of Bradford Cathedral in January.

The photograph, courtesy of the T&A, shows Young Members of the Bradford Organists' Association after a Young Members' Recital in Calverley Parish Church on 25<sup>th</sup> February 1964. Third from the left on the front row is Graham Cummings, with Richard Darke to his left.

These two young men were squeezed in to my timetable by KVR with instruction for me to stretch them and broaden their musical knowledge. What a gift – I was only 10 years older than them, and had only 5 years of teaching experience in a Boys' Sec Mod!

I only had Richard for one term – Graham had another academic year – but I saw more of him, as he remained as my Assistant at St Barnabas and was part of the Keith Rhodes/Norman Bishop team of the St Barnabas YHA tour of the Lake District that year.

Richard went on to Bristol University where he excelled, gained an honours degree, a teaching qualification and an MLit.

He returned to the north, having accepted a teaching position at Temple Moor Boys' High School and as Organist and Choirmaster of St Edmund's, Roundhay, Leeds. The St Edmund's position also came with a flat in the grounds!

Sadly, the changes in education and the destruction of grammar schools in favour of comprehensives caused real problems for Richard and he had to resign his teaching post.

By now, he was married, and for a short period they tried life in Spain but to no avail Richard returned, took up the organist/choirmaster "job-share" at Knaresborough Parish Church, did private teaching, brought-up his daughter, cherished his choir, worked hard to support the RSCM in his area. His choir and his choristers and his daughter Elisabeth were his world: he kept in touch as they grew and developed – but all who knew Richard loved him. He was a Musician, he was generous and loyal, he was a gentle man as well as a gentleman. In knowing him, many have been blessed – we will all miss him,

R.I.P. Richard Rise in Glory.

Ron Fletcher.