

The Cornopean

EXETER & DISTRICT ORGANISTS' ASSOCIATION





EDOA Newsletter

April 2024



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Front page photograph

"The Choir, Exeter Cathedral", by 19th-century commercial photographer J. Hinton Lake, from a 1910 tourist guide book about the Devon and Dorset coast, by Sidney Heath.

Forthcoming events

Saturday 27th April, AGM, 10.00am at St. John the Baptist Church, Broadclyst EX5 3EL. Play the organ from 10:00, a recital at 11:30 by Peter King, followed by the AGM at 12 noon. Lunch at the Red Lion nearby at 1:00 pm. Organiser: Paula Taylor/Gerald Hird.

Wednesday 29th May, Devon Organ Book event, 7 for 7.30pm at St Margaret's Church, Topsham, to include pieces played by the composers. Organiser Andrew Millington.

Saturday 15th June, trip to Plymouth, 10am Emmanuel & St Paul's Church, 11.40am St Peter's, lunch at St Peter's, 2.30pm St Simon's, further details TBA, Organiser Gerald Hird.

Sunday 7th July, President's Evening, "An afternoon with Mendelssohn" Organiser AM.

September, in week beginning 16th, 3 days/2 nights, away trip to Northampton/Peterborough, details TBC. Feedback from members needed to make viable. Organiser AM.

October, Educational event, masterclass for young players, details TBC .

November 14th, Annual Dinner, speaker the Dean of Exeter, The Very Rev. Jonathan Greener, details TBC

The EDOA Committee

Andrew Millington (Acting President), Paula Taylor (General Secretary), Peter Johnson (Treasurer), Peter Johnstone (Membership Secretary), Peter King, Tim Noon, Neil Page, Gerald Hird, Nigel Guthrie (co-opted), Piers Howell (co-opted, Newsletter Editor)

The EDOA Website:

<http://www.exeterorganists.net>

Administrator Graham Willson. The website includes EDOA events, Find an Organist, Newsletters, Gallery, Links, Opportunities, Contact Us, Committee. Graham is always looking for new content, including text and photos. The post of Deputy Webmaster is also currently vacant, and Graham would be delighted to hear from any potential volunteers.

Stop Press!

Details may change! Follow bulletins closer to the time from our Secretary for more up-to-date information.

Editor's letter

2024 programme

Parts of this year's programme are still in planning. The following message that was sent out to members recently by our Acting President; feedback from members would be useful:

"In recent years a feature of EDOA's annual activities has been 2/3 day visits to other parts of the country to play organs and enjoy the culture and surroundings. Visits have included York, Oxford, Cambridge, Worcester/Gloucester/Hereford. Your committee is hoping to plan a trip this Autumn (probably week of 16 September) to the Peterborough/Northampton area to include Peterborough Cathedral and a variety of interesting instruments in that part of the world. Before we proceed with detailed planning, we need to be assured that there will be sufficient enthusiasm from members to make it viable. Please inform our Hon Sec, Paula asap if you are interested in going on the trip. There is no obligation implied, but some feedback would be helpful. Thank you. Andrew Millington, Acting President."

EDOA Members' Questionnaire 2024

This was recently sent out to members, and has been carefully designed to be as snappy and easy to complete as possible. By spending a few moments to send in your response, the committee will be able to design programmes that appeal to members.

Exeter Cathedral, members' annual visit January 2024

Once again members were privileged to play the cathedral organ. We were assisted at the console by the Director of Music and the Assistant Director. The choir area of the cathedral was still under renovation, so members sat in the nave to listen.

Quiz Evening February 2024

This was held, as in previous years, at the Bridge Inn, Topsham. Once again, Paula challenged us with a range of questions, which were somewhat easier this year. Members enjoyed refreshments and food in the comfortable surroundings of the pub.

AGM

This year the AGM is being held on Saturday 27th April, at Broadclyst Church. In case any member thinks this will just be dry-as-dust reports and resolutions, members will have the added attractions, not only of being able to play the west-end gallery organ (1987 Michael Farley, from Exeter South St Unitarian Church) themselves, but being treated to a recital by Peter King, and a sociable pub lunch afterwards. See Forthcoming Events (page 2) for more details.

Organists' Review

For members who are not regular subscribers to Organists' Review (published quarterly by the IAO), I will put in a recommendation for this excellent publication. Articles by authoritative figures about a range of subjects such as organ-building, recent organ completions, music interpretation, together with reviews of organ and choral recordings and sheet music reviews. The latest issue has articles by EDOA members Peter King and Alastair Johnston.

Multi-day trips – from the archives

Andrew has referred to the wonderful multi-day trips that EDOA has organised in the past. The first such trip was organised by Michael Farley in 1991, when we visited the Isle of White and played *14 organs in 2 days*, being driven around at speed by Michael in a minibus! The next year, we visited Bristol, and in 1993 a trip to Liverpool that remains in the memory of those who went, for all sorts of reasons, not all to do with organs ... In this issue, "From the Archives" features a wonderful 5-day trip to Cambridge in 2013.

Home organs

The EDOA is primarily concerned with organists, and pipe organs that *mainly* reside in churches. However, many organists wish, not only to keep their technique in shape, but also to play for pleasure in the comfort of home, and have organs that do not have any pipes at all (gently treading around the E word). In my own case, much as I enjoy playing regularly on a "village organ", I miss being able to play all the wonderful French organ music that lingers in my music library. In the next month, my much-anticipated home organ will be delivered, made to exacting standards by a local Devon firm. This uses a technology, which I hope will form the basis of a new regular feature in the next Cornopean, called "Hauptwerk Corner".

Piers Howell, Editor.

Tour of Exeter organs, Saturday 16th March

Organiser: Neil Page. Below: Neil's trip details

Exeter & District Organists Association
Exeter 'twelve manual' Tour
Saturday, 16 March 2024



10:00am St David's, Queen's Terrace, Exeter EX4 4HR

*Parking in Guildhall/Harlequins car parks and some on-road parking in Hele Road, possibly a little space on the South side of St Michael's
Tea & Coffee will kindly be provided, courtesy of St David's*

11:15am St Michael & All Angels, Mount Dinham

A two minute walk from St David's

LUNCH on your own

2.00pm St James', Mount Pleasant Road, Exeter, EX4 7AH

Some parking available on site

3:15pm St Leonard's, Topsham Road, Exeter EX2 4NG

Parking available on site also Acorn Car Park (short walk)

With the exception of St Leonard's, the resident organist will introduce the instrument and play a short piece. Members will be free to enjoy all the instruments!

Tour of Exeter organs 16th March



Robert Mitchell serving refreshments at St David's



The 1902 3-manual Hele organ at St David's, case by Caroe



Cor van der Wijngaard playing at St Michael's,
3-manual 2013 organ by Tim Trenchard,
incorporating earlier pipework by Bishop



The impressive spire of St Michael & All Angels, Mount Dinham, in its superb Exeter setting

Tour of Exeter organs 16th March



St James' Church, Exeter (built 1956), 3-manual Hele organ, behind the screen on left, recently re-furbished by Lance Foy



Iain Morison playing at St James' Church

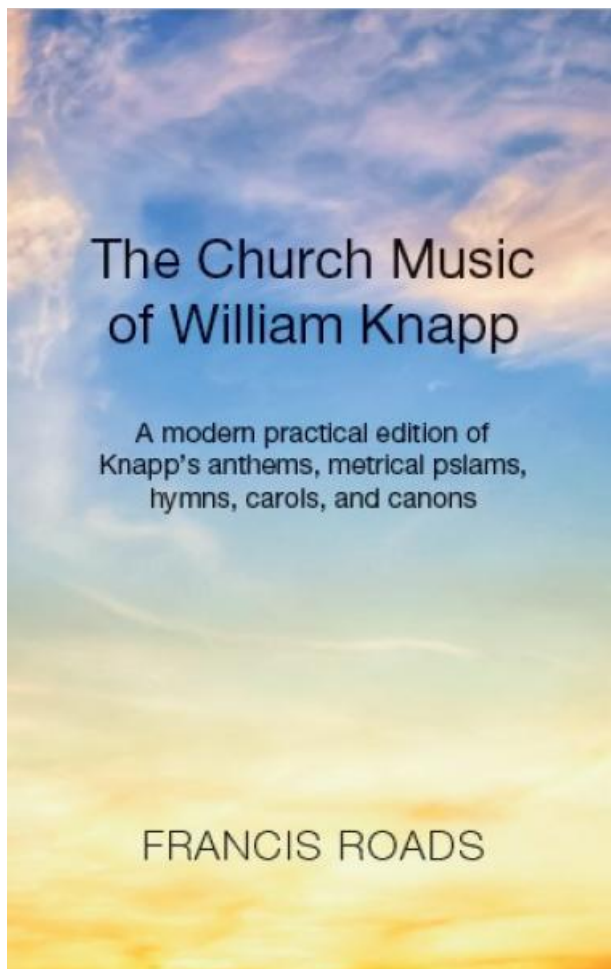


Ian Carson playing at St Leonard's Church, 1872 3-manual Henry Speechly organ, rebuilt 1976 by Eustace & Alldridge.
More modern worship instruments in evidence;
but it's good to see the organ is still in working order.

BOOK REVIEW, BY ROBERT MANNING

'The Church Music of William Knapp: A modern practical edition of Knapp's anthems, metrical psalms, hymns, carols, and anthems

ed. Francis Roads, New Generation Publishing (2022), ISBN 978-1-80369-182-4
wwwnewgeneration-publishing.com



William Knapp (1698-1768) is probably known to most people only as the composer of the hymn tune 'Wareham', which is most commonly sung to the text 'Jesu, where'er thy people meet': but he was a prolific composer. A glover in his 'day' job, he served as parish clerk at St James Parish Church, Poole from 1728, and was a keen amateur musician. He published three volumes of church music, most of it his own work; two of these volumes went into several editions. One includes a didactic 37-page 'Introduction to Psalmody'. The volumes also include music by other composers, including Thomas Tallis, John Hilton and William Boyce. While the majority of texts are metrical psalms or extracts from the Bible, others are by figures such as Joseph Addison and William Cowper, while another is attributed to King Charles I. The content of these volumes suggests that access to what one might call 'high culture' was more readily available to ordinary 18th-century working people than we might always realise.

At that time, music in parish churches was often led by such ordinary men and women - singers, or purveyors of any instruments that were available; these normally performed in the west galleries of

churches. In Victorian times they were superseded by organs and more formal robed choirs, which would customarily have been placed in the 'choir' at the east end. Thomas Hardy describes a transition from musical band to organ in his novel 'Under the Greenwood Tree'. In the last few decades there has been a growing interest in what has latterly been categorised as 'West Gallery Music'. Various 'quires' (that is their preferred spelling) have been formed, while scholars such as Dr Francis Roads have added vastly to our background knowledge of the repertoire.

Most of the 'west gallery' repertoire was composed by amateur composers such as Knapp in their spare time. While the music sometimes sounds crude, and may abound in such features as the classically forbidden consecutive fifths and octaves, it often has tremendous vitality. This is certainly true of Knapp's compositions, some of which were widely copied or other quires - enough to suggest that he was one of the most popular of west gallery composers. In Knapp's three volumes we find 'psalm' [i.e. hymn] tunes (most with the tune in the tenor), canons, carols and anthems. Some of the later psalm tunes use what Roads describes as 'the then newly fashionable fuguing style' - i.e. imitation. The majority of Knapp's 'tunes', including 'Wareham', are named after places in Dorset.

A leading figure in the West Gallery movement, Francis Roads founded the London Gallery Quire in 1997 and directed it until stepping down in 2023, the quire having triumphantly survived the 'lockdown'

years; it continues with another conductor, Francis remaining with the quire as a member of the bass section. He offers this volume of Knapp's music as a 'performing' edition, although he also provides an enormous amount of background historical and technical information. Roads has worked tirelessly to popularise the West Gallery repertoire, believing not only that it is worth reviving for its own sake, but also that it has a potentially energising role to play in modern worship. In his own words, the repertoire is 'happy without being clappy'. It is simple to perform, and can easily be adapted to suit the voices and instruments of any music group. Users of this edition are authorised to copy its pages for non-commercial purposes, and invited to make free downloads from Dr Roads' website 'Roding Music'.

Unusually for this repertoire, Knapp's compositions are written solely for singers. There was no organ in his church during his lifetime, and there is no record of musical instruments being used there until well after his death. However, modern groups can easily adapt his music to suit their own resources, or construct an organ accompaniment if they need one.

The publication of this clear, user-friendly modern edition means that we now have all the music which Knapp published readily available for both perusal and performance. The volume can be recommended to anyone interested both in the achievements of Knapp, and in the 'west gallery' repertoire in general.

Robert Manning

Waiting for the choir to watch the conductor.



From the Archives: 5-DAY VISIT TO CAMBRIDGE & ELY, MAY 2013

ACCOUNT BY PIERS HOWELL:

A total of 28 people, including 17 playing organists, gathered for the 5-day Association visit to Cambridge and Ely. The main group stayed at Wallis Farmhouse, self-catering units in Hardwick; some in B&B accommodation in nearby Toft, and some in hotels in Cambridge.

The organiser was David Oates, and special thanks go to him for all the planning and hard work he carried out for a period of nearly 2 years before, and during the week of the trip to keep things running smoothly. Not only were we able to visit the finest organs in the area, David had imaginatively laid on a visit to a Fenland drainage steam pumping station, a chauffeur-driven punt tour on the River Cam, and fine evening meals including Italian and Chinese restaurants.



Wallis Farmhouse, Hardwick

Sunday 12th May

After visiting my son and his family in St Ives, I attended Choral Evensong at Trinity College chapel (Magnificat by Finzi, Nunc Dimittis by Holst, anthem Lobe den Herrn by J S Bach). The two organ scholars are Jeremy Cole and Eleanor Kornas, the first female organ scholar at Trinity. Distinctive conducting by Stephen Layton of the extraordinary mixed choir of men and women, unaccompanied psalm singing, music with shattering impact, and the Trinity speciality, a double descant in last hymn. There was a short and inspiring organ recital by

Andrew Millington before service, who showed complete mastery and sympathy with the instrument, particularly in the Bach Wedge Prelude and Fugue in E.



Little St Mary's organ

Monday 13th May

I used the free part of the day to visit my teenage stamping grounds in south Lincs, the churches where my father preached, and where I played the village organs.

In early evening was the first organ visit to Harlton, a remarkable recent organ created by Peter Bumstead, from pipes of the previous organ and the nearby Haslingfield organ. We heard about the project which resulted in the building of this organ on a new west-end gallery, also about the creation of organ scholarships which encourage the training of young organists. Coupled with advice about organ projects, including just getting on with the project and not worrying too much where the money is coming from - it very often just appears - in the Cambridge area, anyway.

Tuesday 14th May

First stop at Little St Mary's. After a delayed start, everyone enjoyed playing the new 2-manual Tickell organ in an ideal position, particularly

John Mingay who was instrumental (!) in the installation of the Kenneth Tickell organ at Honiton. Truly a perfect organ for the situation.

After coffee at Emmanuel URC, we proceeded to Queens' College Chapel, where an 1892 3-manual Binns has remarkably survived the wear and tear of student hammering and the to and fro of organ fashions. Harrison and Harrison restored the organ in 2002, continuing a welcome trend to preserve our organ heritage, instead of altering it to destruction. This is an organ that lends itself to all sorts of music.



Trinity College Chapel



Queen's College Chapel organ

After a pub lunch, and a probably-unwise pint, there followed a visit to Trinity College Chapel, with its 3 manual Metzler organ, one of only 3 in the country. The previous Director of



Trinity College organ console

Music Dr Richard Marlow was prime-mover in the installation of this organ in 1976; I have a recording of him playing the Orgelbuchlein, which in my opinion ranks alongside Peter Hurford's Bach recordings. We were welcomed by the two organ scholars, who then provided much-appreciated help with registration. Built to very high standards of construction, it has an uncompromising specification which is ideally-suited to the playing of J S Bach, for example. Having said that, the organ is used for playing of all types of music, and one organ scholar stated, perhaps in half-jest, that it was probably the best organ of its type (or any type) in the country (or in the world). I recall from when my daughter and her husband-to-be were choral scholars there in the 1990s, that the students at that time also identified very strongly with the instrument. We also learnt that since last October, all services are now recorded and can be accessed and listened to on the Trinity website.

After a long afternoon tea in a cafe opposite the entrance to King's College, we walked to St John's College for choral evensong, sung by the college choir of men and boys, conducted by Andrew Nethsingha, son of former Exeter Cathedral organist Lucian. Afterwards we met Peter, Andrew's son and a member of the choir, and were introduced to organ Scholar Edward "Ed" Picton-Turbervill who treated us to an improvisation on the 4 manual Mander before letting us loose on the organ. When I asked him whether the Great Trumpet would be a suitable solo stop for the Lang Tuba Tune, he said it was a bit feeble, clearly expecting full use to be made of the famous Solo Tuba Mirabilis and horizontal Trompeta Real! So as before, we relied on the expert guidance of the organ scholars for registration, and it seemed that in the empty chapel there were now no constraints, the wind was in our sails, no spiders were safe in the rafters; not always a good thing with visiting organ associations! Just before we left, Ed treated us to the second half of the Durufle Toccata, a vivid reminder of the fact that we were amongst the greatest talent of the country's young organists. [2024 update: this Mander organ has been removed, worn-out (?) after 30 years hard service, to be replaced by a "new" organ incorporating the Willis organ from St Peter's Brighton, which EDOA also visited in the early 2000s]



St John's College organ

Wednesday 15th May



Gathering at Scudamore's Bridge Street moorings opposite Magdalene College, we clambered somewhat gingerly on to punts on the River Cam, at the Cam-Bridge (get it??). Despite the cold, and wrapped in blankets, we were treated to a chauffeur-driven punt tour along The Backs, with entertaining commentary as we passed the various colleges, St John's, Trinity, Trinity Hall,



Clare, King's, Queens' (note the ' which refers to 3 queens who endowed the college), and the bridges we passed under. An amusing story of the Cambridge Night Climbers in the 1930s: who climbed the pinnacles of King's College Chapel at night and left an umbrella at the top; when the authorities could not remove it, they shot it down; next morning a Union Jack flag appeared, which of course could not be shot at; so scaffolding was erected to remove it, but the next morning it had moved to a different pinnacle, and so on; other articles appeared on the chapel roof, and eventually spikes were installed to stop the climbers.



Catholic Church of Our lady & English Martyrs

After coffee and cakes, we made our way to the Catholic Church of Our Lady and the English Martyrs. Built in the late 19th century, as a gift from a ballerina who had married a very wealthy husband, it was hoped at one stage that the church might become the local RC cathedral. The 3 manual organ was designed by Charles Villiers Stanford, then at Trinity College, and built by Abbot and Smith in 1890. It is said that when the collecting plate came to the church benefactor during a service, she declined saying she had paid enough already. Restored in 2002 by Nicholsons, with the sole addition of a very fine and suitable Tuba, it is one of the few surviving romantic-era organs in Cambridge and benefits from a warm acoustic. The church organist treated us to a fine rendition of Vierne's Berceuse and the Whitlock Fanfare, after which members enjoyed playing; Karg Elert featured frequently in the pieces chosen.

Just along the road is the Scott Polar Museum, where we inspected the 200-year old barrel organ that was taken on ship expeditions to the Arctic in 1810. With its selection of tunes, it was described as the iPod of its day.

Walking across Parker's Piece, we caught the Park and Ride bus back to our cars for a quiet period before the Visit Dinner at the Blue Lion at Hardwick, with a full turnout of all 28 people on the trip.

Thursday 16th May



We boarded the specially-booked coach for an early start. After the previous grey cold day, the sun shone on the immaculately-mown lawns of King's College as we made our privileged way into the tourist-free sanctum of an empty Chapel, sunlight streaming through on to the inner stonework and vaulting. This chapel contains one of the most famous organs in the world, the 1934 4-manual



King's College Chapel

Harrison and Harrison; previous organ work was by Thomas Dallam 1605, Renatus Harris 1686, William Hill 1834 to 1991, and the casework is thought to be a survival of the Dallam 1606 organ, showing similarities to organ cases by other members of the Dallam family in Brittany. We were welcomed by the senior organ scholar, who is in his third year at King's following 3 years as an organ scholar at Ely Cathedral. He played Bach's Prelude in G, and then proceeded to assist each one of us in turn as we played this iconic instrument. The organ scholar was unfailingly helpful and patient, continuing our experience of this in Cambridge. During this, choirmaster Stephen Cleobury dropped by to say hello. It's probably melodramatic, but I'll say it anyway, that I have been waiting most of my life for this opportunity. The organ recordings by Simon Preston, a former organ scholar, on this organ, inspired me as a teenager; also the choral recordings by David Willcocks with the College Choir.

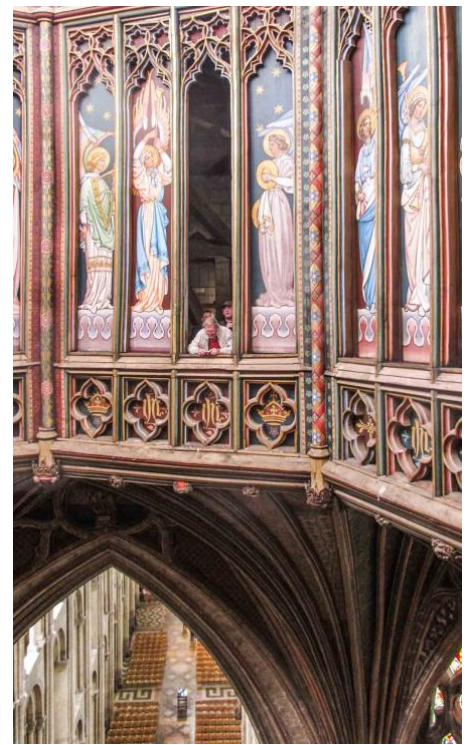


Trip organiser David Oates & organ scholar, at the console of King's College Chapel organ

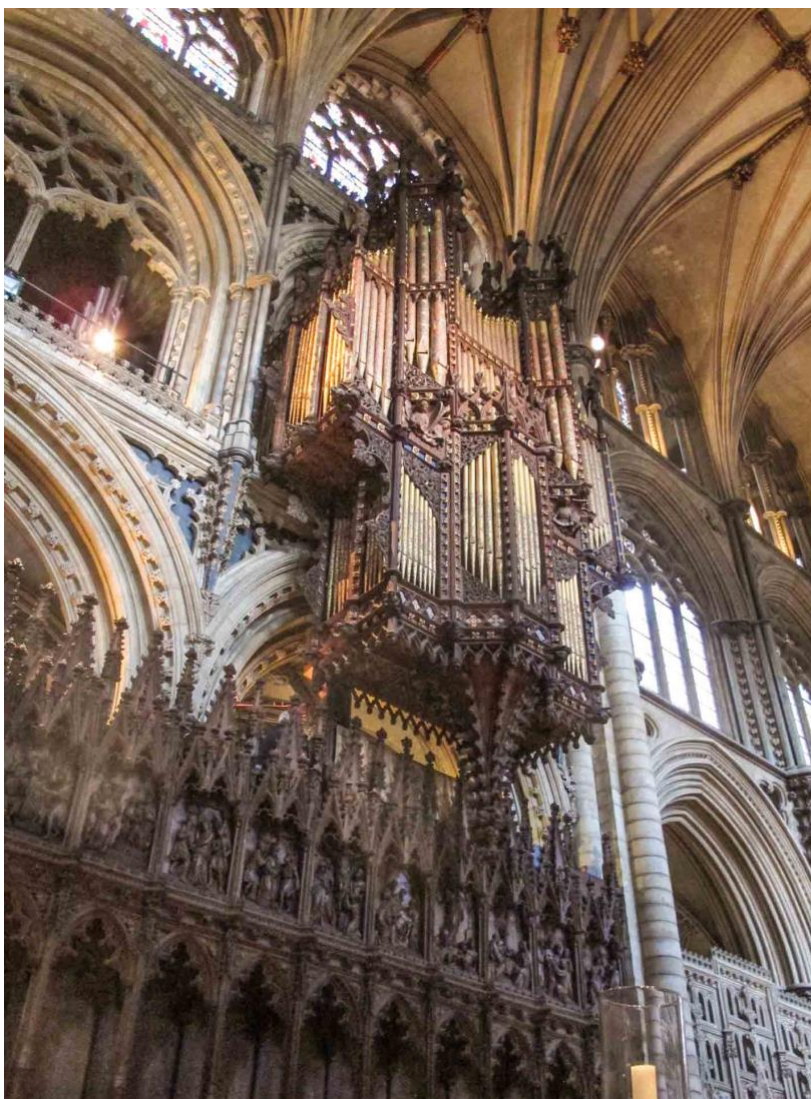
Back on the coach, a stop for coffee, then a visit to Stretham Old Engine, the last remaining steam engine that performed the important task of keeping the Fenland drained by raising water 8 feet so that it would run out to sea. Without these pumping stations, and their modern equivalents, the surrounding area would be covered in water. On to Ely, and a relaxed pub lunch in the sunshine.



Ely Cathedral



The group was divided into two separate parties for a guided tour of the Mediaeval Lantern Tower of Ely Cathedral. After the central tower collapsed about 700 years ago, it was replaced with an octagonal lantern constructed around 8 pieces of oak 60 feet long and 4 feet wide in places. We were able to climb up inside the lantern, and look down into the cathedral below, through hinged panelling.



Bonnie at Evensong with Liz

Re-assembling to listen to choir practice taken by Paul Trepte in the Cathedral, this was followed by Choral Evensong, which included an anthem composed by Andrew Millington. After this, assistant organist Jonathan Lilley gave us a demonstration of all the stops on the 4-manual 1908 Harrison and Harrison organ, followed by the first movement of Elgar's Organ Sonata. He then proceeded to carefully and patiently assist every single one of us as we played one of the finest and earliest examples of H&H workmanship. When I said that we had needed to be



Jonathan Lilley pulling a 32' for Lorna

careful at King's to keep volume at a moderate level, he said there was no need for such restraint, a very encouraging and hoped-for answer.

David had discovered a well-recommended Italian Restaurant, Sergio's, at Soham, where we had some excellent pasta to round off the day, serenaded by James and Michael P on the restaurant piano.

Thus ended an extraordinary day, when we played two of the finest and most famous organs in the country, which happened to be Harrison and Harrison instruments; I would happily confess to being biased in this respect!

Friday 17th May

First stop was at the Emmanuel URC with its 1880 Father Willis. Referred to as one of the only 5 remaining romantic-style organs in Cambridge, this organ had been enlarged to a 3-manual organ by Norman and Beard in 1911, but carefully restored to its 2-manual original specification and Willis character by Harrison and Harrison in 1992.



Pags entertaining at Sergio's

Next visit was the 3-manual 1981 German Klais organ at Gonville and Caius (pronounced "Keys") College, a somewhat large organ in an intimate-scale chapel, which revealed its charms when used sparingly. The stop list included a Pedal 16ft reed intriguingly called Lieblich Posaune, which might have otherwise been called Minor Ophicleide, perhaps - a bit of a contradiction in terms? Actually a fine and useful stop in the small chapel with its small acoustic. We were told that the original Mr Keys decided that his name should be spelt Caius, and the college has had to explain this ever since.



Gonville & Caius organ

Walking back to Bridge Street and past the punting stage, we came to the Parish Church of St Giles, with its 3-manual 1875 Miller organ, and some beautiful quiet sounds. We were welcomed by the secretary of the Cambridge Organ Association, who seemed somewhat aggrieved to hear



Jock & Eileen at St Giles'

that we had had special treatment and entry to King's, when the local Association had not had that privilege. Next door at Castle Street Methodist Church, with its 1929 JJ Binns organ, we first had a talk by organ builder Charles Hall about the life of organ builder James Jepson Binns, and then were able to play the organ. At this stage it is fair to say that we were truly "organned-out"!

Twelve of the party gathered for a final evening meal at the Chinese Restaurant in Toft,



Group photo at the Chinese restaurant

near Hardwick, desperately turning the revolving table to gather food with chopsticks before it was all gone. Expressions of thanks were given to David, after the successful conclusion of the week, the result of nearly two years of long and detailed planning. During this meal, a somewhat noisy development transpired in the next room, as a lady celebrating her 70th birthday was treated to a male stripper - a veil will be drawn at this stage, but the male members of our party did gather as we were leaving to sing her happy birthday in the traditional way. So the week wasn't all to do with organs (?)

Piers Howell. [photos by PH]



1910 sketch by Sidney Heath



Johann
Sebastian
BACH



Johann
Sebastian
FRONT