

# *The Cornopean*

July 2025

EXETER & DISTRICT ORGANISTS' ASSOCIATION



Crediton church in the sunshine, on President's Afternoon



# EDOA Newsletter

July 2025

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*[all photos in this newsletter are by the editor, unless otherwise stated]*

## Forthcoming events

**Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> September Educational event at Buckfast Abbey TQ11 0EE with PipeUp Devon 2.30pm.**

We hope to encourage youngsters who play keyboards to take up the organ. David Davies will be leading the event, we hope you will come along to support it.

**Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> October visit to Exmouth 10am**

Starting at Point of View Chapel EX8 5BD with a pulpit organ, then tea and coffee at 11.30. Holy Trinity Church EX8 2AB **OR** at St. John the Evangelist EX8 3AE **TBC**. Lunch pre-booked at Queen Victoria (please let Paula know if you wish to join us), then 2.30pm Glenorchy URC EX8 1PL, finishing at 4pm All Saints EX8 1PX. Suggest park at All Saints for lunch onwards.

**Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> November Annual Dinner at Devon Hotel EX2 8XU, 7 for 7:30pm.**

Due to the overwhelming response we will be returning to the Devon Hotel again; the speaker will be Tim Parsons, organist at Wells Cathedral.

**Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> January 2025** Annual visit to Exeter Cathedral 7.30pm

**Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> February 2025** Quiz at The Bridge Inn, Topsham 12 noon, TBC

**Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> March 2025** Visit or educational event, Torquay, TBC

**Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> April 2025 AGM** at Broadclyst Church, 12 noon

## The EDOA Committee

*Nigel Guthrie (President), Andrew Millington (Past President),  
Paula Taylor (Secretary), Peter Johnson (Treasurer), Tony Yates (Vice-President),  
Penelope Cowman (Minute Secretary), Marco Bresolin, Michael Farley, Gerald Hird,  
Peter Johnstone (Membership Secretary, corresponding member only),  
Graham Willson (Webmaster, corresponding member only)*

## 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.***

## **THE EPISTLE TO THE CORNOPEANS**

### **(Editor's Letter)**

This edition will be my last as editor of The Cornopean. After 3 years, and 12 editions, I am running out of ideas, and it is time for someone else to take a new perspective.

I had the challenging task of following on from Peter King, whose editions were filled with interesting articles on clocks and a variety of subjects, and pictures of organ cases. Peter inspired correspondence with EDOA members, not least with the Nerd of the Month competitions; it always impressed me that members competed to win this title, and perhaps wore it as a badge of pride, rather than a confirmation of an obsessional interest. During lockdown, Peter was the person who kept EDOA running, when events were cancelled; his monthly newsletters showed that EDOA was still "alive and kicking".

I have been fortunate to have the support of members, who have submitted articles and accounts of EDOA events. Please continue to support the next editor in the same way. Anything to do with organs, and organ music ... Also jokes, puzzles and cartoons etc ...

#### **Workshop**

On 14<sup>th</sup> May, the organist at St Mary's Church, Totnes, Ian Curror, lead a workshop on all aspects of playing for Sunday Eucharist, at St Margaret's Church, Topsham. See Andrew Millington's account.

#### **East Dartmoor**

Another wonderful organ jaunt organised by Andrew Millington: members enjoyed a visit to 4 churches around the eastern edge of Dartmoor, on 21<sup>st</sup> June. See Martin Watkins' humorous account of this day on page 7. I particularly enjoyed Martin's references to "demented woodpeckers" and "the wenches of Bovey Tracey", not to mention our hilarious (in retrospect) chase around the narrow pot-holed lanes. Brew yourselves a cup of coffee, and settle down to enjoy Martin's account.

#### **President's Afternoon**

The President's Afternoon was held at Crediton Parish Church on Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> July, when President Nigel Guthrie, his wife Tina, and the singers of the Gibbons Consort gave a concert of music mainly by Orlando Gibbons. See the account of this event on page 4.

#### **Home organs**

Following installation of the Hauptwerk sample set of the Cavallé-Coll organ at St Etienne Abbey in Caen, France, I have been enjoying the wonderful sounds of the foundation stops, not to mention the blistering reeds on both manuals and pedals. Perfect for the French organ repertoire, when the smooth sounds of Willis and H&H are just too smooth – maybe that will provoke some correspondence!

Piers Howell, Editor.

[piershowell@msn.com](mailto:piershowell@msn.com)

### **A Devon Organ Book**

**From our treasurer, Peter Johnson:**

Based on the popularity of our initial print run we commissioned a further 50 copies to be printed and several have been sold already. We can continue to offer these books at a selling price of £12.50 (Postage and envelope, if appropriate, is currently £2.80). Copies of "A Devon Organ Book" are excellent value and can be obtained by contacting me either by telephone or by e-mail: 01297-599086, [peteraj@talktalk.net](mailto:peteraj@talktalk.net) ... Perhaps an idea for a present for a friend or relative?



## PRESIDENT'S AFTERNOON



The singers of the Gibbons Consort, conducted by Nigel Guthrie

On 12<sup>th</sup> July, a warm, sunny Saturday afternoon, members of EDOA and the local congregation at Holy Cross Church, Crediton gathered for the EDOA President's Afternoon; a concert given by President Nigel Guthrie and his wife Tina, with the singers of the Gibbons Consort.

The theme was the music of Orlando Gibbons (1583-1625) in the year of the 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his death. The concert also included the music of Handel, Purcell and C. V. Stanford. Nigel conducted the Gibbons Consort, played the organ, and accompanied

Tina on the piano. Tina played a Handel Flute Sonata, and sang "Music for a while" by Purcell. Alto Rowena Brown sang "This is the record of John" by Gibbons, and EDOA member and assistant organist at Crediton Church Peter Gilks played Postlude 6 by C. V. Stanford.

After the concert, local ladies kindly provided tea and cakes. Donations at the free concert were made towards the upkeep and work of the church.

**Exeter and District Organists' Association  
President's Afternoon**  
12<sup>th</sup> July 2025, 3pm, by  
Tina Guthrie (flute and voice),  
Nigel Guthrie (organ and piano)  
with Peter Gilks (organ) and the Gibbons Consort

### Programme

Choir	Almighty and Everlasting God	Gibbons
Flute	Sonata in C major HWV 365 <i>Larghetto; Allegro; Larghetto; A tempo di Gavotta, Allegro</i>	G.F. Handel
Choir	Magnificat of the Short Service	Gibbons
Organ	Fantazia of Foure Parts, from <i>Parthenia</i>	Gibbons
Choir	Nunc Dimittis of the Short Service	Gibbons
Organ	From Six Short Preludes and Postludes: Prelude 1 'On a theme of Orlando Gibbons' (Song 34) The Angels' Song Prelude 2 'On a theme of Orlando Gibbons' (Song 22) Organ, Nigel Guthrie	C. V. Stanford
Voice	Music for a while If music be the food of love Soprano solo, Tina Guthrie	Purcell
Choir	This is the Record of John Alto Solo, Rowena Brown	Gibbons
Organ	From Six Short Preludes and Postludes: Postlude 6 Organ, Peter Gilks	C. V. Stanford
Choir	The Silver Swan	Gibbons

### Programme notes:

Orlando Gibbons was baptised in Oxford on Christmas Day 1583 and died on 5 June 1625. Born into a musical family, from the age of twelve he sang for his elder brother Edward who was Master of the Choristers at King's College, Cambridge and who later became Choirmaster of Exeter Cathedral. By 1603 Orlando was a musician of the Chapel Royal, but that same year his mother and brother Ellis died. Just two years later he was appointed a Gentleman of the Chapel Royal as junior organist. In 1606 he gained his BMus from Cambridge and the same year he married Elizabeth Patten. They went on to have seven children.

By the 1610s he had built up his reputation as a composer and was considered to be the finest organist in the country. Gibbons First Set of Madrigals and Motets, including *The Silver Swan*, was published in 1612. In 1623 he was appointed organist of Westminster Abbey and officiated at the funeral of King James I. Sadly, he died shortly afterwards, probably of a brain haemorrhage, and his wife died the next year leaving his brother Edward to take care of the children in Exeter. Orlando's son, Christopher, became a considerable musician himself, as organist of the Chapel Royal and of St Martin in the Fields and almost certainly mentor to Henry Purcell.

## TOPSHAM WORKSHOP

*Andrew Millington writes:*

The EDOA event for May took us to St Margaret's, Topsham at the kind invitation of Tony Yates (EDOA President elect). It was an educational evening led by Ian Curror from South Devon. Ian is a highly regarded musician in the organ world with huge experience as a practitioner and teacher. He was Director of Music at the chapel of the Royal Hospital, Chelsea for over 30 years, and taught at the Royal College of Music.

Ian led us through aspects of Sunday Eucharist playing including congregational Mass settings, hymn playing and liturgical improvisation. His engaging and imaginative approach was instructive and helpful, and several members of the association, including Clive Sawers, Marco Bresolin and Peter Gilks put their playing under Ian's scrutiny, which made a significant contribution to the evening. Numbers at the event were modest, but those who attended appreciated Ian's insight and helpfulness.

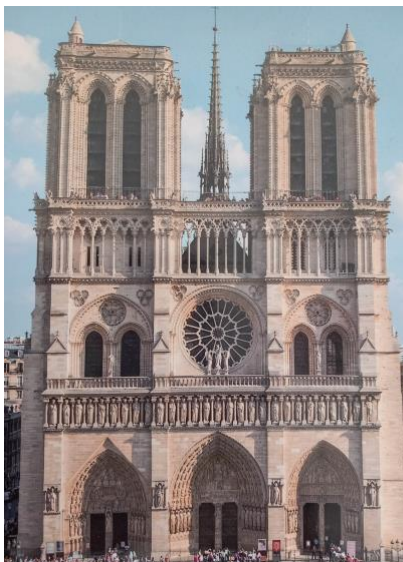


St Margaret's Church, Topsham

## NOTRE DAME RE-BORN

*Andrew Millington writes:*

Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris was the largest building in the Christian world when it was built in the 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> centuries, and it has been at the centre of the religious and national life of France ever since. It has survived wars, revolution and political upheaval, but the huge fire of 2019 sent shock waves through Europe and the wider world. The determination of the French State to restore it to its former glory within 5 years was a bold act of faith, but the objective was achieved and the result is nothing



short of miraculous.

Having seen several TV documentaries on the restoration inspired me and members of my family to make a visit to Paris last May, and it was a wonderful experience.



The restored organ in the restored cathedral of Notre Dame, Paris





The west end organ case, Notre Dame

The very best of human craftsmanship is on display in stonework, painting, stained-glass, woodwork etc, not to mention the superb restoration of the great organ on the west gallery.

There has been an organ in that position since 1400 and no fewer than 50 organists have held posts at Notre Dame, including Louis Vierne and Pierre Cochereau.

The instrument has evolved over the centuries, but the most significant rebuild was undertaken by Aristide Cavaillé -Coll in the mid-nineteenth century, and the character of the present instrument reflects the symphonic nature of that instrument, with its 5 manuals and 8,000 pipes.

Miraculously, the organ escaped the flames of the great fire, but all pipes had to be removed and cleaned. In April 2024 the organ was heard again, and on our recent visit we heard a stunning Sunday afternoon recital attended by an audience in their thousands. The performer was a young Parisian lady, Alma Bettencourt, playing a major Liszt work with effortless skill and virtuosity.



It was a memorable visit, only marred by having my pocket picked on the Paris Metro. The thief deftly removed my wallet, took the cash and then put it back in my pocket, complete with bank cards etc. It could have been worse.



*(photos provided by Andrew Millington, and from the internet)*



## AN ORGAN JAUNT - EAST DARTMOOR

An account by Martin Watkins



St James' Church, Christow

I have to admit that I always approach EDOA organ crawls with mixed emotions and, if I'm honest, a certain dread. What pieces should I brush up? Only to then to find that what I could play a few years ago presents new and hitherto unexpected traps and difficulties. And the pitfalls of an unfamiliar organ ....

It's at times like this that I realise that I have become totally spoilt by having not only a three manual at home, but one that I never tire of playing. I give thanks that I've lived in an era where the quality of home instruments has gone from mostly truly dreadful fifty

years ago (Allen perhaps being a bit better) to "almost like the real thing", at least on headphones. And the arrival of digital systems means that a comprehensive battery of playing aids has become the norm. More on that subject later. Unfortunately, all those luxuries at home mitigate against the limited abilities of those of us who increasingly rarely come face to face with the real living and breathing thing, and I have come to accept that hand registering on an unfamiliar instrument is not something I will ever be able to master again. *[there's always hope – ed.]*

I don't know if it's the passage of years, and maybe perhaps a legacy of the lockdowns, but everything seems further away from home than it used to. Our first destination of Christow didn't look far on the map, but the sat-nav announced that it was the best part of an hour from home. It's striking that even outside the main holiday season the parking in these chocolate-box villages on the "posh" side of Dartmoor is – frankly – hell, and the arrival of an Obstinacy of Organists (we decided over lunch that that was one of the more acceptable collective nouns for people of our persuasion) tips the situation into chaos. So having got one of the last spaces in what should have been an amply spacious parking for the village hall, I made my way up the hill to the church.



I enjoy going into an unfamiliar church – at least I should perhaps qualify that statement by saying that in most churches of course so much of it IS familiar, and common to almost any rural church, but the differences are what is interesting. And it's a diverse (see, I got a current buzz word in there!) sensory



Peter Gilks playing the 1887 Vowles organ at Christow

experience, visual, aural (I was late so the organ was already in action) and olfactory. Whilst not oppressively so, Christow seems quite dark, albeit perfectly welcoming. It was heartening to see a food exchange bank at the back, but a reminder that those in need are constantly amongst us, even somewhere as apparently well-heeled as Christow.

*[Editor: A nameplate on the organ proclaims "W. G. Vowles, Bristol 1887". Nearby is the inevitable plate: "Restored by Geo. Osmond & Co. Taunton"]*

My rendering of a simple bit of Bach (BWV 768 Variation XI, which I had practised and practised) wasn't too awful on the face of it, but then I know from bitter experience that to play Bach properly one has to know an awful lot more on the subject than I do, and he's best not performed in the presence of those who know much more about the art than I do. That said, in my years in the association (1992 – 1999, then again 2023 to date) I have never – EVER – met anyone who is anything other than kind in what they say about our playing, perhaps for many of us it's a

"we're all in this together and we all know how close many of us are to musical disaster at any time" and, for those exalted members who are at the level that, when I hear them play it becomes (at least for me) almost an act of worship, I think that those people instinctively understand that they are the Chosen Ones, and as a result have the generosity and grace to find something constructive to say about us lesser mortals, even perhaps if it's with their fingers crossed behind their backs!

Laura played a lovely piece by Florence Price; one of the joys of attending meetings is to discover new and playable works; in my previous membership in the 1990s I was constantly grateful to John Mingay, who always brought fresh material to the music desk (although not all of it by any means within my capabilities!).



St Thomas Beckett Church, Bridford

As I rarely now seem to venture anywhere terribly complicated – geographically speaking – I tend not to have a lot of experience of sat-navs, and I had thought to put an OS map in the car. However, surely Christow to Bridford I thought shouldn't be too much for "Madam" (as we call her), and although she took me down long narrow forest lined roads with numerous potholes, Bridford hove into view after about ten minutes, and I was thankful that we'd booked lunch at the pub because otherwise there would have been – again – nowhere to park.

Here was a Father Willis, not Cantoris Chancel as at Christow, but Cantoris Very Back. And what a lovely thing to behold, somehow a brighter apparition than the previous, and matching what seemed a lighter church overall, with its medieval paintings lurking on some of the woodwork. But another reality check, I'm so used to hearing the Hereford Willis on Hauptwerk that it came – even though it shouldn't – as a





Andrew playing the 1886 Bridford Father Willis organ

surprise just how “parish church” this one sounded in comparison, albeit of course with the mark of Willis quality in build, layout, and sound. As always, the performance (of Bach-Vivaldi) by our former President was a privilege to hear. How is it that organists at this level can make any organ sound magnificent (and having heard him transform an indifferent electronic at a Funeral last year at East Devon Crem into something half way decent, I remain prostrate in admiration).

*[A much-polished brass plate states: “... this organ was built and erected by Messrs Willis & Sons of London Anno Domini 1886”. NPOR states that the organ was “moved and restored” in 1956, but the organ appears, mercifully, to be un-altered. Former EDOA Secretary Liz Hogg is organist at both Bridford and Christow churches.]*



Classic Father Willis stop names



One of several painted panels in the chancel area at Bridford – how have they survived?



A very pleasant lunch followed, and those of us who don't trace their roots into what I believe is termed "God's Own County" by its residents (and indeed its large diaspora) were introduced to the delights of "Yorkshire Caviar" (\*). The food was excellent and the chatter ranged widely, from the marvels of on-screen music that can be turned with the flick of an eye, to repairs to clicking keyboards, to collective nouns, and to the eternal subject of the Clergy and their ability (or otherwise) to choose hymns ...



St John the Baptist Church, Lustleigh

After lunch, and the complications of settling our bills, a few members found that they had other engagements to attend to, which in retrospect makes me wonder if they were prescient of the adventures that were shortly to befall the rest of us. My long standing (yes Piers, it's over half my lifetime that I've known you) colleague found his phone unwilling to "Direct his Wheels in the Way", so I airily agreed that he should follow me and my sat-nav. We started out the way we'd come in, but peeled off shortly to the right, along what seemed, as we progressed, an increasingly unhelpful road, which after a few miles became more hole than tarmac. "Madam" still seemed to

have a plan (but did I perhaps detect a note of creeping uncertainty in her pronouncements?), and after several more miles (and one unplanned disobedience on my part, which involved both of us having to turn round) we were instructed to turn left down a track that had a very obvious "PRIVATE ROAD" sign at its mouth. I'm not sure tarmac and metalling would be a description that could be applied to what followed, so again we both stopped and I consulted the map, and even that took a few minutes of head scratching in order to work out where on earth we were: – Trenchford Reservoir as it turned out, which I can thoroughly recommend for its beauty if one is not bothered about remoteness or arriving at the next Church. The map suggested that if the private road had a far end we'd be back on a "yellow" road, so we ploughed on. And yes, the other end also had a PRIVATE ROAD sign, so grovelling apologies to the owner, please don't pursue us in law, it was all Madam's fault.

But this was by no means the end of our journey, a vertiginous drop down a single track road with multiple quasi-hairpin bends was still before us, hindered by a Land Rover trying to come up the way we were coming down, and with no obvious passing places, It was a relief finally to get down to the A382, and for Lustleigh now to be only down a shortish narrow road. All I can say is that before the days of motorised transport I think it very unlikely that any Lustleigh boy would get betrothed to a Bridford girl, it just wouldn't be worth all the bother, and given that west of Lustleigh there is nothing but moorland and sheep, I assume the wenches of Bovey Tracey had their pick of the Lusty Lads..... [*shades of Thomas Hardy* - ed]



Lustleigh churchyard





Penny playing at Lustleigh

Arriving at Lustleigh we assumed it was just us who'd gone such a tortuous and complicated way, but it turned out almost all of us had followed the same route, bar one member who arrived a good half hour late, pale and drawn, having gone via Moretonhampstead, and probably thinking he'd never see any of us again.

But – oh my – the earlier parking inconveniences we'd encountered were as nothing compared to Lustleigh's cramped and car-filled streets. What a tragedy the arrival of the motor car has been to the picture postcard nature of these beautiful villages. More than a few of us found ourselves having to turn round and park either on the edge of, or just outside, the village. The organ (Decani Chancel this time) however was quite fun, with its sloping stop jams (with the dimmest music desk light I've ever seen, a candle would have knocked out more lumens than this rather pathetic LED). An organ with nice quiet stops to meander about with when the collection plate has got lost the other end of the church, or the vicar has left the sermon on the Vicarage Office desk.

*[The Lustleigh organ - George Tucker 1881, F. Tucker & Son 1933, Eustace & Alldridge Exeter 1980, keyboards with black naturals and white sharps, sloping stop jams]*

And finally on to Bovey, a simpler journey, but many of us, at its culmination, totally missed what is probably the best-hidden church car park in Devon; again Piers and I faced a walk from our cars (parked in a nearby housing estate) in what by then seemed like Saharan heat. This last church seemed huge after what we had seen at the previous three, and even sported its own rough sleeper at the back (what he made of his slumbers being interrupted he was too polite to share with us, although he did claim to have enjoyed "that bit that sounded like Gershwin"; you would have to have been there to know what's being alluded to in this remark, I personally couldn't possibly comment). *[mysterious - ed.]*



The west-facing aspect of the 3-manual Hele/Morgan & Smith organ, Bovey Tracey





The console at Bovey Tracey, with the lethally high bench.  
Why not have a solid platform with back-rest  
and approaching steps?

I felt for the Bovey organ (Cantoris Chancel), I really did. In its day it was probably the pride and joy of the surrounding area, but its day has – for the moment – probably gone. I know that some felt it had a lot of superfluous stops in its large specification, it didn't particularly feel like that to me, but it was difficult to tell in its current state, with a rather obvious cipher that was present a lot of the time, a Swell to Pedal stuck on, and various other anomalies. It was one of those organs where on full organ you get a kaleidoscope of tonal variations as you play a chromatic scale, with various ranks coming and going as you go up and down. I was grateful to the ever-patient Mr Howell for his registrational help in a simple bit of Karg Elert, and I was again reminded about how dependent one can become on one's own home combination pistons (and in my case a Rollschweller pedal, of which Mr Howell is deeply suspicious and disparaging).

*[NPOR states: 1889 Hele & Co, Plymouth, 1923 Morgan & Smith, Brighton, 1965 Geo Osmond & Co Taunton, 1987 Hele & Co]*

As an aside, and on the subject of playing aids, in these days where we are blessed with several cathedrals who live stream their services, I've been fascinated to be able to watch – in those places where they cut to the organ loft as soon as the choir and clergy have processed out – some of our wonderful Assistant Organists in action. What strikes me is how the younger generation of players at this level has completely adopted the use of the stepper (or sequencer if you prefer), rendering their registrational changes pretty much seamless to the listener, although it's sometimes been hilarious watching - during a big build up or climb down – a right foot behaving like a thoroughly demented woodpecker, as the sequencer foot piston is thrashed repeatedly. This contrasted with an occasion where a DOM of the older generation was playing one afternoon, and almost everything (and it was a big piece, Crown Imperial) was hand or combination piston registered, the stepper was left undisturbed .... I'm guessing that this younger generation CAN still hand register, but it slightly makes me wonder whether it would be a bit like having automatic gears on one's car for many years, and then being suddenly confronted by a manual.....



Martin Watkins playing at Bovey Tracey



And all was not lost at Bovey – Bob Millington managed to get some nice sounds out of the organ during what – and this is quite a compliment to his skills as an improviser – most took to



Would this spindly chain restrain a portly organist, tipping backwards on the bench, towards a back-, neck- or skull-breaking landing?

be one of his exquisite doodles: I felt rather smug knowing that it was in fact Howells Psalm Prelude Set 1 no 2 ... I think Howells too could have felt flattered that his style of writing is so widely adopted by improvising organists who admire it so much ...

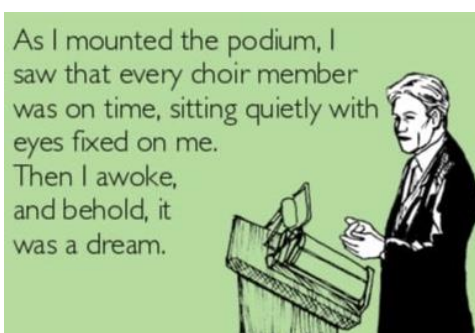
Perhaps the memory we'd all take home from Bovey was the organ bench. For some reason ground level for the organ is about eighteen inches higher than that of the rest of the edifice, and so a small (and really not very helpful small set of wooden steps) has been provided to gain access to the bench. Maybe it was built like that to encourage sobriety in its organists, because a lurch backwards over the edge would prove pretty disastrous, and possibly fatal. The bench itself was but lightly protected from tipping over – in that eventuality - and going down into the Abyss with the organist, by nothing other than a rather inadequate looking metal chain, on one side only.



Decorated pipes

It had been quite an intensive day, and we went back out into the heat of Bovey Tracey to say goodbye and go our separate ways; however, I must remind myself, next time a crawl comes round, that – as was the case over thirty years ago – the Association is full of kindly talented people, and that engaging with real organs, however much it feels at the time as though it's a losing battle, is good for one.

(\*) Yorkshire Caviar – mushy peas.



## EDOA – some musings

The Association was formed in 1920, by Exeter organists, who were enthusiastic at the time about the building of a new organ for Crediton Parish Church, by Messrs Harrison & Harrison. A letter dated 25<sup>th</sup> October 1920, from Crediton organist Cyril Church to Arthur Harrison, is reproduced here. [see below\*]

OCT. 25. 1920. 36 East St  
Crediton

Dear Mr Harrison,

Those bellows weights from Salisbury arrived all right some time ago - one was cracked in half.

How is the work proceeding? To what stage has it reached by now I wonder. Can you give us any approximate date for its completion - the Church or for the commencement of erection here. I suppose Wathams & Watson will fix their plant at the same time. Every thing is ready for it, & the concrete all dry both in Church, & the Raising Shed: but of course there is no object in their building their work until the organ is being erected. I hope the console will a little higher than the old one was - I think I gave you measurements of the height of that but I forget what it was. Exeter organists are looking forward with much interest to hearing & trying the organ when it comes. We have recently started an association of organists of the district, and I very much hope that the Crediton organ will lead on to more work for your firm in the west of England.

Thanks for the specification of the tandem organ in sent: it is as usual very complete & good I should think.

Yours sincerely  
Cyril Gerard Church

Some 56 years later, the editor, recently arrived in Devon, attended a recital at Exeter Cathedral by Noel Rawsthorne. EDOA members made contact, and I subsequently received a letter from Stanley Gregory, Hon. Secretary, inviting me to join EDOA, subscription £3 including Organists' Review.

Nearly 49 years of the editor's membership have seen EDOA visits all over England, Wales, Scotland and Ireland, also a visit to Brittany in northern France, courtesy of the Plymouth Association. The Association has not only fed an (obsessive?) interest in organs and organ music, but it has been a source of social interaction and friendship.

The pandemic and lockdown a few years ago appear to have been the catalyst for the winding-up of several Organist Associations, who maybe were already suffering from a lack of support and enthusiasm.

EDOA has, despite all this, maintained a healthy membership of about 100, and continued to put on a varied programme of events. One of the things that always impresses me is the friendly atmosphere at these events, which maybe makes it easier for the loyal non-playing spouses and partners who also attend.

The other impressive aspect of EDOA is the involvement of Cathedral-standard professional organists. We are very fortunate to benefit from their expertise, not only in playing but in the arranging of events.

The Association is truly for anyone, whether a player or not, whatever their playing standard.

[\*Note: this was made possible by Mark Venning, managing director of H&H, who visited the organ in 1992, and generously lent the firm's entire correspondence about the organ to the editor, for copying.]