Chester & North-East Wales Organists' & Choirmasters' Association

Affiliated to the Incorporated Association of Organists

www.cnewoca.org.uk

Newsletter – October 2023

Welcome to the October edition of the Chester and North East Wales Organists and Choirmasters Association newsletter. This edition includes details of the meeting programme for the next few months and some short articles of general interest to organists. We welcome your contributions to the newsletter – please send them to newsletter@cnewoca.org.uk.

Forthcoming meetings

Saturday 21st October 1:30-4:30pm

Castle Square Presbyterian and Seilo Welsh Presbyterian churches, Caernarfon

Our November meeting details are yet to be confirmed. *Sorry.*

Saturday 9th December (Change of date. Details and times to be confirmed)

Liverpool Hope University

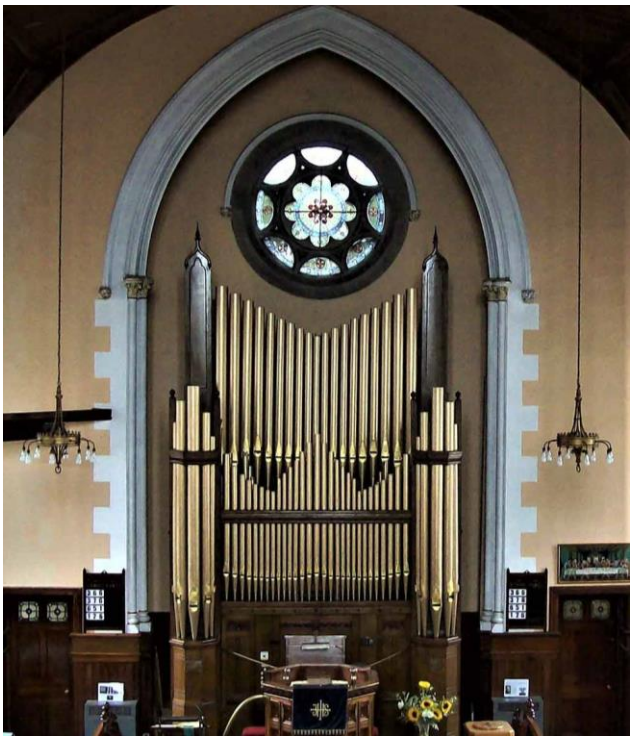
Details of meetings for 2024 are being finalised and details will be printed in future newsletters. Venues will include Chester Cathedral, St Mary's Mold and Rhos-on-Sea. Other possible venues include St Asaph Cathedral, St Nicholas Burton, St Michael Shotwick, St Mary & St Helen Neston, All Saints Hoole, and the Hidden Chapel Conwy.

Our next meetings…

Saturday 21st October 1:30pm – 4:30pm

Visit to Castle Square (English) Presbyterian and Seilo Welsh Presbyterian churches, Caernarfon

The organ in the Presbyterian Church in Castle Square was built in 1886 by William Rushworth (Liverpool) and rebuilt in 1907 by Gray & Davidson. Details about the organ (IIP/15) can be found on the NPOR at https://www.npor.org.uk/survey/N01830.



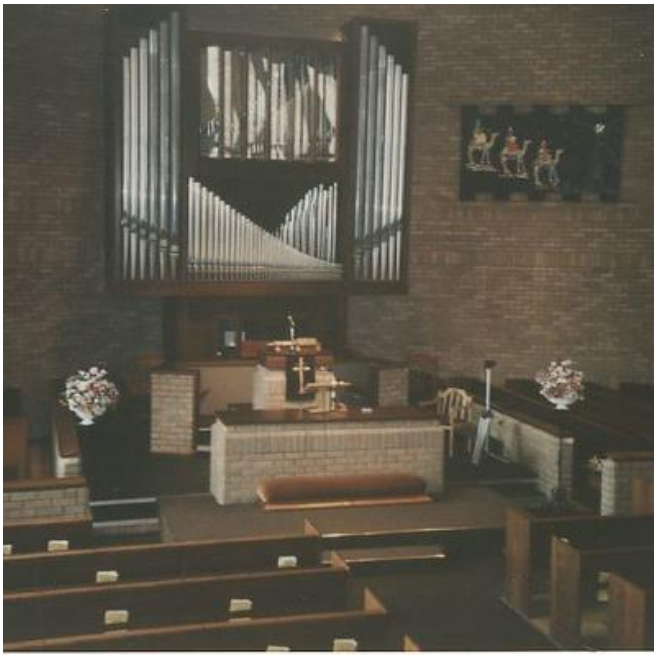
Pedal
Contra Bass 16

Great
Open Diapason 8
Dulciana 8
Concert Flute 8
Gemshorn 4
Flute 4
Octaviante 2

Swell
Viola 8
Lieblich Gedact 8
Voix Celestes 8
Gemshorn 4
Piccolo 2
Clarionet & Bassoon 8
Cornopean 8
Tremulant

Swell to Great
Swell octave
Great octave
Great to Pedals
Swell to Pedals

The organ in Seilo Chapel has a 1976 IIP/15 organ built by George Sixsmith to a design by Noel Rawsthorne and details can be found at https://www.npor.org.uk/survey/K01564. It has a BIOS Historic Organ Certificate.



Pedal
Bourdon 16
Bass Flute 8
Principal 8
Flute 4
Choral Bass 4
Twenty-Second 2

Great
Stopped Diapason 8
Principal 4
Fifteenth 2
Mixture III

Swell
Gedakt 8
Wald Flute 4
Spitz Principal 2
Larigot 1⅓
Trumpet 8

Swell to Pedal
Swell to Great
Swell octave
Swell suboctave
Swell unison off
Great to Pedal

Two very different instruments for us to visit.

The visit will start at Castle Square (English) Presbyterian Church at 1:30pm. We'll have tea/coffee and cake on the go too, and then we can move across to Seilo Welsh Presbyterian Church by 3:30pm. It's only a five-minute walk. We are most grateful to our member, Alun Jones, for organising this visit.

Why not visit Caernarfon Castle in the morning of 21st – make a day out of your trip?

Saturday 9th December (Details and timing to follow.)

Visit to Liverpool Hope University

There are three organs to see, including a Dutch chamber organ restored by Dominic Gwynn in 2013-4. Details of this most interesting instrument may be found at https://www.goetzegwynn.co.uk/organ/liverpool-hope-university-restoration-ca1780-dutch-chamber-organ/. In the chapel there is a IIP J.W. Walker Positif organ from the 1960s: this was recently refurbished by David Wells Organ Builders (Liverpool).

We are very grateful to Dr Rebekah Okpoti from the Music Department for organising our visit. Further details of this event will be published in our November newsletter.





Membership renewal

Membership of the Chester and North East Wales Organists and Choirmasters Association (CNEWCOA) runs from September until the following August. Existing members of the Association should have received their renewal invitation from the Membership Secretary. Many members have already renewed their membership. If you haven't please do so now so that you don't miss out on anything.

Anyone who would like to join the Association should please contact the Membership Secretary.

Membership secretary: Mr M Edwards, 5 Bradford Street, Handbridge, Chester. CH4 7DE. ☎01244 676504 rails@talktalk.net

Recent meetings

Visit to Bethesda Welsh Presbyterian Chapel, New Street, Mold

We enjoyed a great meeting in Mold on Monday 18th September. We were made very welcome and enjoyed a cup of tea / coffee on arrival. The chapel building was very impressive from the outside with its grand Doric pillars and inside it was just wonderful – spacious, light and very large. The organ was a delight



to play with some wonderful sounds, from the gentle flutes, the whisper of the soft strings and the magnificence of the tutti. Our members who played enjoyed the instrument in the wonderful acoustic of the chapel. The full specification of the organ is **Swell:** Lieblich Bourdon 16, Open Diapason 8, Lieblich Gedact 8, Viol di Gamba 8, Voix Celestes 8, Gemshorn 4, Oboe 8, Cornopean 8, Tremulant. **Couplers**: Swell Octave, Swell to Pedal, Great to Pedal, Swell to Great, Swell to Great Octave. **Great:** Open Diapason 8, Hohl Flute 8, Dulciana 8, Principal 4, Wald Flue 4, Flageolet 2, Tromba 8. **Pedal:** Open Diapason 16, Bourdon 16 Bass Flute 8. Manuals CC-A^2 (58 notes); Pedals: CC-F (30 notes) 3 composition pedals to Swell and 2 to the Great, Balanced swell pedal. Pneumatic action. Accord to the nameplate, the organ was built by Wadsworth & Bro. Manchester (and at Aberdeen); the firm used this name between 1889 and 1902.

Visit to the Church of The Church of The Ascension, Ascension Road, Salford

On Saturday 30th September some members joined with other organist associations to visit the Church of The Ascension in Salford to see and hear the newly built organ for the church by Henry Grove (Nottingham) using some Nicholson pipework from Sutton Coldfield URC. Paul Hale, the organ consultant who designed the instrument in association with the builder and church, described the genesis of the instrument and the sourcing of some of the other pipework. The specification of the organ was given in our August newsletter.

Robin Newby sent us this photograph of Paul Hale playing the organ and said that the resulting instrument is fabulous and that it has a great future for years to come.



Organ on the move

The 1958 J.W. Walker & Sons organ from the London City Temple is moving to St James Cathedral Chicago. The London City Temple was built in 1874 as the "Cathedral of Free Churches" in England. Although its grand Victorian edifice still stands, much of the building was destroyed during the Blitz. Thanks to the generosity of John D. Rockefeller, Jr., the City Temple was rebuilt in the 1950s. No expense was spared, including the installation of a state-of-the-art pipe organ by J.W. Walker & Sons. William McKie, the Organist of Westminster Abbey and the church musician, Eric Thiman, designed the new instrument and Eric Thiman became the City Temple's organist.

The Walker organ has three manuals and pedals (71 stops , from 59 ranks) and the specification can be found here (and here). It has a very comprehensive specification. On the NPOR, in 2008, GSS wrote: "The action being all electric has superb response and the acoustic is just wonderful. The pedal organ offers an almost overwhelming choice of 6 flue and 3 reed stops, all at 16 foot pitch with the 16 foot Dulciana being most useful for accompanying the soft manual stops. On the enclosed choir there is a complete chorus of strings from 32 foot to 1 foot pitch (using the sub/octave couplers). It all seems to be in good working order (apart from the tremulants) and the tuba is quite magnificent too! However, there is no organist and the organ is no longer used for services".

The style of worship at the City Temple has changed and the organ is no longer used to lead worship. Indeed the building on Holborn Viaduct is being redeveloped to meet the church's current and future requirements. The large organ is being preserved by moving it to St James' Cathedral Chicago.





There is a very comprehensive website giving details of the removal and planned restoration of the organ in St James: https://www.saintjamescathedral.org/music-and-art/new-organ. There is also a very good YouTube progamme by Richard McVeigh at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6I8ir2-lixQ&t=15s describing and showing the preparations for moving the organ.

Whilst it is rather sad that this fine instrument is being lost from the British organ scene, it is good news that it is going to be restored and reinstalled to make music in St James' Cathedral Chicago. It will be interesting to follow the story of the restoration and reinstallation during 2024.

Eric H Thiman

Eric Thiman was born in 1900 in Ashford, Kent, and spent his life in or around London. Though largely self-taught, he became a Fellow of the Royal College of Organists at twenty-one, and a Doctor of Music of London University at twenty-seven.



From 1931 he was Professor of Harmony at the Royal Academy of Music and was appointed Dean of the Music Faculty at London University in 1956. He was warmly respected and a gifted and patient teacher.

He was organist of The Park Chapel in Crouch End, North London for thirty years and then for twenty years at The City Temple, Holborn Viaduct (known as the Cathedral of the Free Churches) where his

outstanding gifts, especially for improvisation on hymn tunes, were much admired. With Sir William McKie, Thiman drew up the specification for the new Walker Organ at the City Temple, inaugurated when the rebuilt City Temple opened, in the presence of the Queen Mother in 1958. Both churches had thriving choirs and the City Temple Choir made recordings.

He published over thirteen hundred compositions and was particularly known as the foremost composer of his time for the non-conformist churches. There are many anthems, organ pieces, piano pieces, solo songs, works for choir and orchestra – both sacred and secular – hymns, canticles and educational music. Very few, if any, of his contemporaries published as many pieces. Under the name of Eric Harding he published a number of lighter songs in both patriotic and 'Ivor-Novello-esque' styles.

When Thiman died in 1975 he was still working as teacher, organist, composer and conductor.

The Eric Thiman Collection (https://www.southwellminster.org/eric-thiman-collection/) contains details of his compositions.

His organ works include:

Postlude on "Adeste Fideles"
Four Easy Pieces on English Hymn Tunes
Three sets of eight interludes (For beginners at the organ)
Six pieces in various styles (sets 1 & 2)
Three Pieces (Novello's Organ Music Club #2)
- Meditation on the Irish tune Slane
- Pavane
- Postlude alla marcia

A tune for the Tuba

An Eric Thiman Collection (10 pieces):
1. A Christmas Pastorale
2. A Country Tune
3. A Simple Air
4. Chorale
5. Elegia
6. Intermezzo
7. March For A Pageant
8. On An Irish Air
9. Sortie
10. Trumpet Tune and Air

These are still generally available from most sheet music sellers.

There is a set of recordings of Eric Thiman playing some of his compositions on the City Temple Organ: some are on the St James' organ website (https://www.saintjamescathedral.org/music-and-art/new-organ) and a CD of his playing is available from the Eric Thiman Collection at https://www.southwellminster.org/eric-thiman-collection/thiman-playing-thiman-organ-music/.

CNEWOCA Committee Members

Chairman: Tony Warren
ndtl3@yahoo.co.uk

Vice-Chairman: John Evans
angiejohnevans@uwclub.net

General Secretary: Katriona Moulton
secretary@cnewoca.org.uk

Membership Secretary: Mike Edwards
01244 676504 *rails@talktalk.net*
5 Bradford Street, Handbridge, Chester. CH4 7DE.

Treasurer: Raymond Moulton
treasurer@cnewoca.org.uk

Member: Nigel James
organo3112@gmail.com

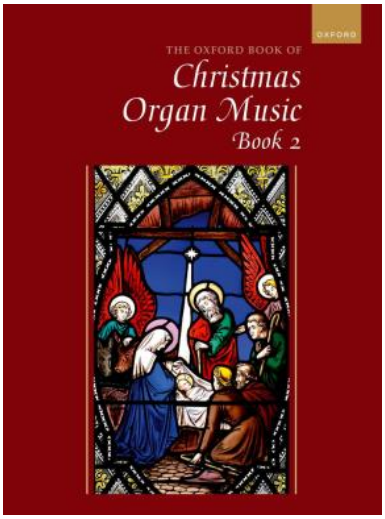
Independent examiner: David Bird

Publications Office: Iain Stinson
iain@stinson.org.uk.
6 St Stephen's Close, Heswall, Wirral. CH60 3TA

As Christmas draws nearer…

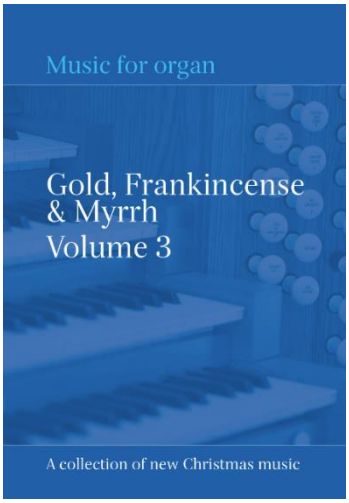
What organ music are you going to play during Advent, Christmas and Epiphany? There are quite a number of new publications coming out about now offering a wide selection of music for the coming seasons.

The **Oxford Christmas Organ Music Book 2** has been published recently. ***Book 1*** was published in 1995 and included pieces aimed at carol services, Christmas services and Christmas concerts. It contained new pieces by Andrew Carter, Gerre Hancock, and David Willcocks, among others), as well as arrangements of popular Christmas pieces It is definitely a really useful book and OUP says the level of difficulty is moderate to difficult.

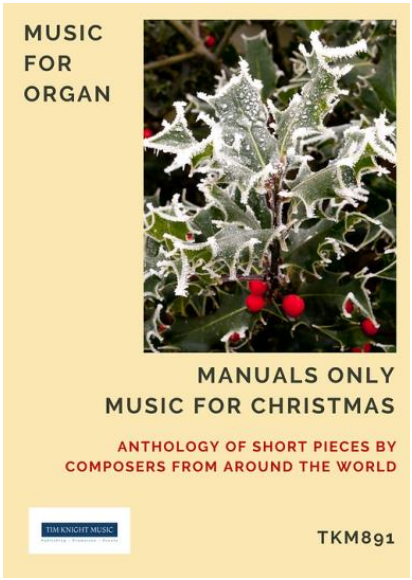


Book 2, edited by Robert Gower (who also edited the first book), is now available. It comprises a diverse collection of seasonal organ music, covering the Church's year from Advent to Epiphany. The music is stylistically varied, and the pieces are drawn internationally from across the centuries with a mixture of established repertoire set alongside newly commissioned works. It contains original music spanning the seventeenth century to the present day, including compositions by Bach, Hedwige Chrétien, Maurice Duruflé, Elizabeth Mounsey, Florence Price, and Reger. In addition, it contains arrangements of well-known works, including Leroy Anderson's Sleigh Ride and the Ukrainian New Year song 'Shchedryk'. There are eight new commissions from composers including Kristina Arakelyan, David Bednall, Iain Farrington, and Amy Summers.

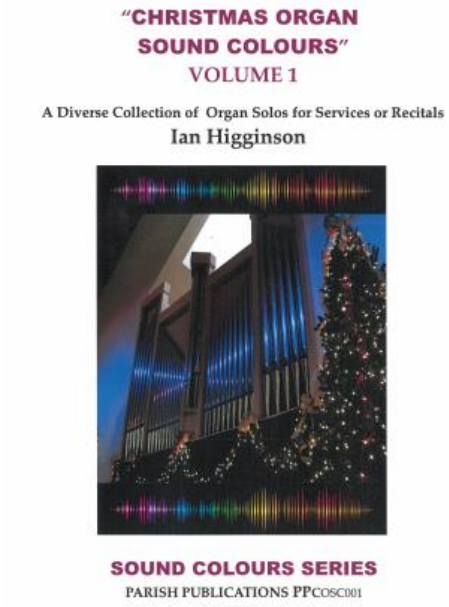
Both books are widely available with some special offers presently available. The list price of Book1 is £26.50 and Book 2's list price is £23.50.



Church Organ World are publishing ***Gold Frankincense & Myrrh Volume 3,*** and it is due out at the end of October. It will contain 13 new pieces (Adoration at the Crib by Chris Maxim, Flourish on Ding Dong by Richard Francis, Grand jeu et duo Noël Français by Alban Clarke, It came upon the midnight clear by Dan Bishop, Meditation on 'Infant Holy' by Robert Cockroft, Meditation on 'Sing Lullaby' by Steven Maxson, Meditation on the Coventry Carol by Paul Hayward, Post 3am Sortie by Simon Hancock, Prelude on 'In the bleak midwinter' by Stephen Barber, Prelude on 'still, Still, Still' by Stephen Burtonwood, The Sans Day Salsa by David Stokes, Variants on an Apalachian Carol by Ian Tracey, Versets on 'Sing Lullaby' by Keith Harrington). Like its predecessors (Gold Frankincense & Myrrh Volumes 1 and 2) the pieces will be aimed at the "average" parish organist (whatever that is). It is presently available at the prepublication price of £20 from Church Organ World.



Manuals only Music for Christmas published by Tim Knight is a collection of short pieces by composers from around the world. The selection of six pieces was made from the entries received for a competition organised by the publisher. The criteria were to write a piece no more than 3 minutes long which must be suitable for an Organist of moderate standard and for use in a Church setting primarily but could also be suitable for a concert or recital setting. This booklet contains the top six winning entries and the outright winner by Adam Heron, 'Holly Humoresque'. The other items are: Christmas Bells - Phil Lehenbauer, Meditation on 'God rest you Merry Gentlemen' - Luigi Mengoni, Bethlehem - Roberto Fresia, Pastorale on Sussex Carol - Vidas Pinkevicius and Il Est Né - John Rossiter. The pieces are attractive and fall fairly readily under the hands. Details are on the Tim Knight web site (https://www.timknightmusic.com/product-page/tkm891-manuals-only-music-for-christmas-6-pieces) and printed and download editions can be purchase directly there. The printed edition costs £11.95.



Parish Publications, distributed by Banks Music Publications, has published a new album for Christmas by Ian Higginson. **Christmas Organ Sound Colours** includes six diverse seasonal organ solos based on six well-known and well-loved traditional Christmas carols. These pieces were composed in Tetbury, England in during June 2023. It is intended that this collection of pieces (all of which vary considerably in style and difficulty), will display different tonal colours and dynamic contrast of the instrument and will also provide a source of enjoyment to both organists and listeners alike. The items included are: Postlude on 'God Rest You Merry Gentlemen', Prelude on 'O Little Town of Bethlehem', Fantasia on 'The Coventry Carol', Fugato on 'In Dulci Jubilo', Interlude on 'The Holly & The Ivy', Toccata on 'O Come All Ye Faithful'. Both printed and download editions are available at £15 and £10 respectively. Details at https://www.banksmusicpublications.co.uk/publishers/parish-publications/christmas-organ-sound-colours and at http://parishpublications.weebly.com/view-titles--prices.html.

Saturday November 18th 2023
Wesley Church Centre, St John Street, Chester CH1 1DA

ORGAN DAY: Sequence Of Organ Recitals

10.30am: Brian Heald (Wesley)
11.00am: Lawrence Albrighton (Saltney Methodist Church)
11.25am: Revd Roger Hutchings (Wesley)
11.50am: Revd Ken Walker (Wesley)
12.15pm: Greg Yates (Wesley)
12.40pm: Jeremy Heald (Wesley)
13.05pm: John Evans (Hoole Methodist Church)
13.30pm: Nigel James (St John's, Great Sutton)
Finish at 2pm

Drop in for as long as you'd like and enjoy refreshments at the Wesley Café

Donations in aid of Christian Aid

Organ Recitals at Chester Cathedral

(Tickets £5.50, concessions £4.50)

Thursday 5th October 1:10pm	Daniel Mathieson (Chester Cathedral)
Thursday 12th October 1:10pm	Henry Smith (Royal Holloway)
Thursday 19th October 1:10pm	David Hirst (Paris)
Thursday 26th October 1:10pm	Alexander Lanigan-Palotai (Chester Cathedral)
Thursday 2nd November 1:10pm	Simon Russell (Nantwich)
Thursday 9th November 1:10pm	David Thorne (Shrewsbury)
Thursday 16th November 1:10pm	Andrea Albertin (Italy)
Thursday 23rd November 1:10pm	Philip Rushforth (Chester Cathedral)
Thursday 30th November 1:10pm	Alexander Lanigan-Palotai (Chester Cathedral)

Further details at https://chestercathedral.com/worship-music/organ-recitals/

Music @ Wesley: Wesley Church Centre, St John Street, Chester

Saturday organ recitals

(Retiring collection)

Saturday 21st October, 12:45-1:35pm: Geoffery Woollatt (Manchester Cathedral)

Saturday 18th November: Organ Day (details elsewhere in the newsletter)

Tuesday Lunchtime Concerts

All concerts start at 1:45pm and last about 50 minutes. Retiring collection.

Tuesday 3rd October: Chester Competitive Music Festival Winners
Tuesday 10th October: Trio Chuva (Guitars, Double Bass)
Tuesday 17th October: Chiara Lordi (Piano)
Tuesday 24th October: Yuki Kagajo (Piano)
Tuesday 31st October: Chetham's School Of Music Pianists
Tuesday 7th November: Rachel Filhart (Clarinet), John Gough (Piano)
Tuesday 14th November: John Bush (Trumpet), Brian Heald (Piano)
Tuesday 21st November: Chester Competitive Music Festival Winners
Tuesday 28th November: John Gough (Piano)

Organ Recitals UK

If you want to attend an organ recital, you may find the website https://www.organrecitals.uk/ helpful. It is operated by Roger Wilcox and is the "successor" website from one operated for over 18 years by Stephen Smith. It is easy to use – you can search for a recital by date, venue, and organist. The web site depends on venues, organiser and organists putting the details of their recitals on the website through a fairly straightforward web form. Give it a try if you are hosting or playing a recital. (It's free!)

Liverpool St George's Hall

Prof Ian Tracey plays the 1855 Father Willis organ. Tuesdays at 12:45pm-1:30pm Tickets £5 at the door.

Tuesday 17th October
Tuesday 7th November
Tuesday 5th December

Liverpool Cathedral

The recital will immediately follow Choral Evensong at 3:00pm. Doors open at 1:45pm, visitors are requested to be seated by 2:50pm

