Chester & North-East Wales
Organists' & Choirmasters' Association
Affiliated to the Incorporated Association of Organists
www.cnewoca.org.uk

Newsletter January 2025

Wish you and yours a very happy, healthy and prosperous 2025!

Welcome to the January newsletter. We hope you find it of interest. The details of our meetings for the remainder of the season are included: we have a varied programme of events which we hope many members will enjoy attending. In addition to visits to some interesting organs we are holding a "Come and sing" event: "Come and sing Stainer's Crucifixion". This is open to anyone who would enjoy singing this familiar Passiontide work. Preliminary details are included in the newsletter. There is also an article from Robin Newby on the IAO York Festival and some further information about the RCO "Play the Organ Year".

We are always looking for items for the newsletter; perhaps you might like to write something for us.

Our next meeting: Liverpool Cathedral. Monday January 27th 6:30pm.

We are going to visit Liverpool Anglican Cathedral to see, hear and play the largest pipe organ in Great Britain. The Echo Organ division has now been installed and is in regular use. The specification (without the Echo Organ) may be found on the NPOR, E00301 and the specification of the Echo found below. Paul Hale's interesting article about the addition of the Echo division can be found at https://paulhale.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/ph24-09.pdf and the RCO podcasts about the Echo division are at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wnql43Bt_Xs and https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z2Co0rODIlA.



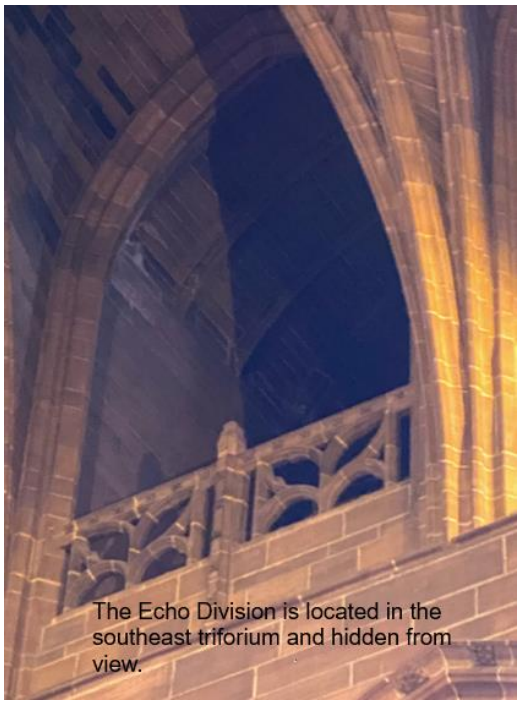
There is also a Facebook video at https://www.facebook.com/RoyalCollegeOfOrganists/videos/in-the-latest-episode-of-the-organ-podcast-available-via-httpsbitly3xobnov-enjoy/2051027148667582/ with Prof Ian Tracey demonstrating the placement of the divisions around the cathedral.



Prof Ian Tracey is going to demonstrate the organ for us and talk about the addition of the Echo organ. There may be an opportunity for members to try the organ for themselves.

This event is only open to members of the Association. For reasons of security, members who wish to attend must please let us know of that they are coming along by emailing the General Secretary, Katriona Moulton secretary@cnewoca.org.uk.

Those attending must arrive promptly, otherwise they will not be admitted to the cathedral.


The Echo Division is located in the southeast triforium and hidden from view.

Liverpool Cathedral, St James' Mount,
Liverpool L1 7AZ
https://liverpoolcathedral.org.uk/

Great News for Chester Cathedral

We are delighted to learn that Chester Cathedral has been awarded a grant by the Julia Rausing Trust of £1,425,000 for work on the cathedral organ. We hope to learn more about the cathedral's plans over the coming months.



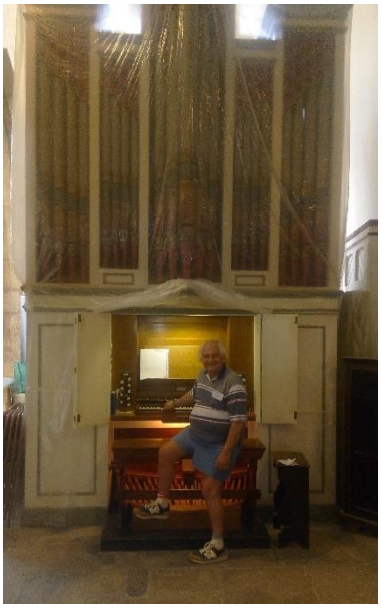
Some Organs in York 25th July - 29th July 2024

In July I travelled around the country and for the hot and sunny days at the end of July, I was a participant at the York Music Festival (once known as 'Congress').

I attended the IAO & RCO organists' competition in York Minister (with prizes of £1000, £500 and £200). In a dark corner of the North Transept, after very careful consideration, the three finalists were chosen by the adjudicators (Sarah McDonald (RCO), Katelyn Emerson (Professional Artists) and Robert Sharpe (IAO chairman of the IAO)). Robert Sharpe announced the winner. All the performers all had great merit, but my favourite to win, who came second; was *Thomas (Tom) Powell.* Tom played *Les Corps Glorieux* (Messiaen) with aplomb, demonstrating the Minster Organ with great dexterity and using the fine acoustics of the building (about nine seconds to my ears) with great effect. *Jonathan Lee* came third; he played *Trois Improvisations* (Nadia Boulanger). The winner, playing *Poémes pour orgue* (Thierry Escaich) and *Aria (symphony 1)* (Rachel Laurin), was *Timothy Stewart*. There was a very special prize awarded this year to *Miriam Reveley* for the RCO Diploma playing *Te Deum* (Jeanne Demessieux). {York Minster Organ NPOR:F00182.}



On the final day there were 12 open church organ consoles available to play. I had time to play three. The last one I played was in All Saint's, North Street. The organ had started off as an 1867 Forster & Andrews; the best of the material from this organ and material from two other organs (one an 1889 W. Denman and the other another F&A) were used in 1996 by Principal Pipe to create a "new" organ". Some further work was carried out in 2004 by Nigel Holdsworth (NPOR: D05798). The organ has a Cymbelstern. I spent some with Churchwarden Robert Richards who asked me to play "quietly" as there were people working at height regilding the angels and ongoing preparations for a visit by the Archbishop (who is a frequent visitor to his "favourite side chapel"). The organ was



covered by plastic sheeting to protect it during the work. I spent some time with the churchwarden discussing the action and the difference of their Cymbelstern to Les Cloches elsewhere.



On a day's excursion we visited Beverley Minster (NPOR: N04013). Robert Poyser demonstrated the organ for us. He suggested the organ sounded best sound in the quire. Later the minster was filled by a big wedding.



We went on to Bridlington Priory (NPOR: N04005), with a warning by our own Paul Carr and partner saying "It's a very loud organ", and "don't sit too close" (for the Guilmant Sonata 1 (full version). The organ has 75 stops, sited between three large columns. The visited ended with a Tchaikovsky Suite, requested by the organisers of the Festival.

Robin Newby

This article was accidentally overlooked in preparing our September newsletter. Apologies to Robin for its late appearance.

Come and sing "Stainer's Crucifixion"

Saturday 22nd March, 2:00pm – 4:30pm

Hamilton Street Methodist Church, Hamilton St, Chester. CH2 3JG

Everyone is invited to come and join us in singing (or listening to) Sir John Stainer's Passiontide cantata in Hamilton Street Methodist Church.

There will be a rehearsal starting at 2:00pm, a break for refreshments and the performance will begin at 3:30pm. Some copies will be available to use on the day, but please bring along a copy if you own one!

This event is free. There will be a voluntary collection which will be given to Christian Aid.

Tell your friends, bring your choir members, join us in our "Come and sing".

If you are coming, please let us know (email angiejohnevans@gmail.com).

Play The Organ Year 2025

The Royal College of Organists is running a programme called "Play the Organ Year 2025". It is designed to inspire a year-long effort by the whole organ-playing community, not just to increase the number of people learning to play the organ, but also the number enjoying live and recorded organ music.

The College believes that the best way to achieve both these objectives is to get as many people as possible not just hearing and seeing the instrument but playing it!

The organ is a magnificent instrument unlike any other – powerful, versatile, visceral and enormous fun to play. At the heart of Play the Organ Year 2025 will be an attempt to open this experience to as many people as possible - to encourage them to take a step towards the organ, to lay hands on it wherever possible, and to discover for the first time the unique and thrilling experience of playing this remarkable instrument.

If you want to support Play the Organ Year 2025, you could organise an event for your local community or school or at least draw people's attention to Play the Organ Year 2025 by including a short article about it in your local magazine or church news sheet. The resources available (see below) include all the material you would need to get started and may be used without charge. (The material includes advice on insurance and safeguarding.)

How to take part in Play the Organ Year 2025

Whether you're a complete musical beginner or perhaps just new to the organ, *Play the Organ Year* offers something for everyone, including:

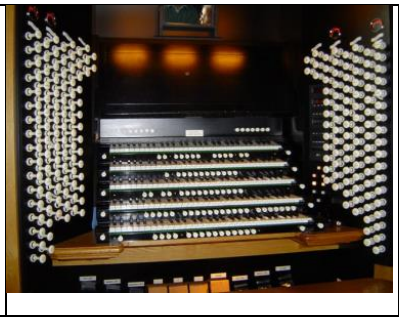
- *First Encounter performances:* Special organ recitals introducing audiences to the instrument's power and versatility, with many featuring interactive Play the Organ sessions.
- *Play the Organ sessions*: hands-on sessions where attendees can try their hand at the organ, supported by step-by-step guides and resources.
- *Digital Engagement*: Online resource so even those unable to attend live events can join in! If you have a digital keyboard at home (ideally with one or more 'organ' settings) why not download our First Encounter worksheets for those with no keyboard experience or with some keyboard experience - although you'll need to get to a real organ to try the pedal exercises! We'll shortly be putting films of these sessions on our YouTube channel, along with other new films for aspiring organists. And look out for (and use) the hashtag #'playtheorgan for all your online Play the Organ Year fun!

The RCO website has resources to support Play the Organ Year 2025, go to https://www.rco.org.uk/play_resources.php.

Future Meetings

No meeting in December

Monday 27th January,
6:30pm – 9:00pm
Liverpool Anglican Cathedral
Liverpool Cathedral,
St James' Mount, Liverpool,
L1 7AZ
https://liverpoolcathedral.org.uk/



We are going to visit Liverpool Anglican Cathedral to see, hear and play the largest pipe organ in Great Britain. The Echo Organ is now complete and in use. The specification (without the Echo Organ) may be found on the NPOR: E00301

This event is only open to members of the Association. For reasons of security, members who wish to attend must please let us know of that they are coming along by emailing the General Secretary, Katriona Moulton at secretary@cnewoca.org.uk.
Those attending must arrive promptly, otherwise they will not be admitted to the cathedral.

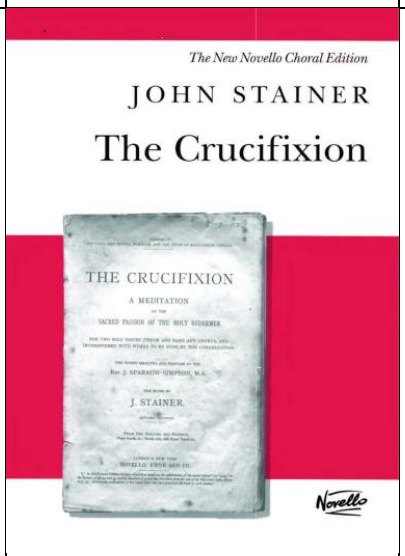
Monday 24th February
7:30pm – 9:00pm
All Saints Chester
Hoole Road,
Chester, CH2 3HZ
https://allsaints.church/
There is a car park at the church.



We are to visit All Saints Hoole Road Chester where there is a three manual and pedal organ by C.H. Whiteley. The specification may be found on the NPOR (N04300). The church was built in 1867 and C.H. Whitely was working in Chester between 1869 and c1910. He also worked with Gray & Davison from c1861. He was the eldest of the brothers from whom the various Chester "Whiteley" organ building firms were established (C.H, C & J, H & H).
We understand the organ is sometimes used for the 9am service on Sundays and for occasional weddings and funerals.

Saturday 22nd March
2:00pm – 4:30pm
All are invited to come along to our "Sing Stainer's Crucifixion" event.
Hamilton Street Methodist Church,
Hamilton St, Chester CH2 3JG

There will be no charge for this event but a collection will be taken in aid of Christian Aid..



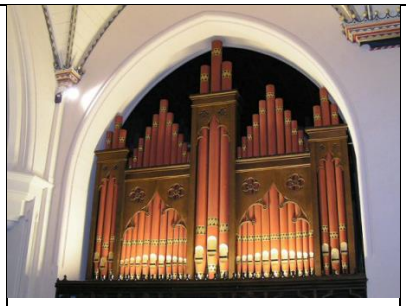
This event is open to all. Please encourage anyone who may enjoy singing or hearing this Passiontide cantata to come along. Invite members of any (and every) choir or group you know to join us!

There will be a rehearsal starting at 2:00pm, with a break for refreshments. The performance will begin at 3:30pm.

Some copies will be available to use on the day, but please bring along a copy if you own one!

Saturday 26th April
2:00pm – 4:30pm

We are awaiting confirmation of this visit to the Cheshire countryside.

Saturday May 17th, 2:00pm St Mary and Christ Church, Llanfairfechan St Mary and Christ Church Aber Road Llanfairfechan LL33 0HN		Our May meeting will be a visit to the Historic Grade I Hill organ in lovely St Mary and Christ Church, Llanfairfechan. This III/39 instrument is located on the north side of the chancel and speaks boldly into the church. It is regarded by many as the best organ in North Wales. NPOR: N11699 Before the meeting, some members are gathering for lunch at noon at The Beach Pavilion Café, Promenade, Llanfairfechan, LL33 0BY. Everyone is welcome to join us.
Saturday June 14th, 1:30pm Christ Church Birkenhead AGM and visit to the Father Willis organ Christ Church, Bessborough Rd, Oxton, Prenton, CH43 5RW http://christchurchbirkenhead.net		Our June meeting will begin with our short Annual Meeting where we shall hear reports from our officers and elect the committee for 2025-2026. We shall then see, hear and play the Historic Grade 1 Father Willis organ. The organ was installed in 1860 in the West Gallery (II/25) and in 1881 it was moved to its current location in the southeast chamber.. In 1888 the Choir Organ was added (all by Willis). In 1926 and again in 1948 the WIliis firm overhauled the organ and in 1977 Rushworth and Dreaper cleaned and overhauled the instrument. NPOR: R01983
July An organ crawl around some Chester Churches	There are many interesting organs in the city of Chester. We plan to visit some of them in this "organ crawl" around parts of the city centre. The details are presently being finalised.	

CNEWOCA Committee Members

Chairman: Tony Warren
ndtl3@yahoo.co.uk

Vice-Chairman: John Evans
angiejohnevans@gmail.com

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

Membership Secretary: Angela Evans
angiejohnevans@gmail.com
11 Lindfields, Chester CH4 8QD

Treasurer: Raymond Moulton
treasurer@cnewoca.org.uk

Member: Nigel James
organo3112@gmail.com

Independent examiner: David Bird

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

Live music!

Chester Cathedral organ recitals

Weekly Organ Recitals

Organ Recitals are free with a retiring collection and no ticket is required. The suggested donation for the recital is £5. Each recital starts at 1:10pm

Thursday 9th January	Philip Rushforth (Chester Cathedral)
Thursday 16th January	Daniel Mathieson (Chester Cathedral)
Thursday 23rd January	Graham Eccles (st Asaph)
Thursday 30th January	Anthony Gritten (Royal Academy of Music, London)
Thursday 6th February	Michael Pain(Batley Parish Church West Yorkshire)
Thursday 13th February	Ben Bloor (London Oratory)
Thursday 20th February	Alexander Lanigan-Palotai (Chester Cathedral)
Thursday 27th February	Daniel Mathieson (Chester Cathedral)

Details of Chester Cathedral Grand Organ NPOR: E01969

Sponsor a Recitalist

If you would like to sponsor a recitalist, please be in touch with Philip Rushforth at Philip.rushforth@chestercathedral.com (01244 500974)

Liverpool St George's Hall

Tuesdays from 12:45pm – 1:30pm. Tickets (at the door) £5.

Professor Ian Tracey, Organist to the City of Liverpool.

18th March 15th April

Details of the Willis Organ in St George's Hall may be found on the NPOR N01921

Music at Wesley

Wesley Church Centre, St John Street, Chester

Tuesday Lunchtime Concerts

12.45 – 1.35 pm

Retiring collection

Tuesday 14th January	Chetham's School of Music Pianists
Tuesday 21st January	Kell Wind Trio
Tuesday 28th January	Hanna Csermely (Piano)
Tuesday 4th February	Chetham's School of Music Instrumentalists
Tuesday 11th February	Che Juanjo Blazquez (Piano)
Tuesday 18th February	Roth Guitar Duo
Tuesday 25th February	Aestus String Quartet with Jordi Bitlloch (Piano)
Tuesday 4th March	Justine Gormley (Piano)

Saturday Organ Recitals

12.45 – 1.35 pm

Retiring Collection

Saturday 18th January	Philip Rushforth (Chester Cathedral)
Saturday 15th February	John Hosking (Blackburn Cathedral)
Saturday 15th March	Brian Heald (Wesley)

Details of the Binns organ in the Wesley Centre are at the NPOR D04853.

Music at Blackburn Cathedral

Wednesday Concerts

Wednesday 15th January	Peter Dyke (Hereford Cathedral)
Wednesday 22nd January	Laurence John (St. David's Cathedral)
Wednesday 29th January	Oliver Waterer (Selby Abbey)
Wednesday 5th February	Damian O'Keeffe, Baritone (accompanied by John Robinson)
Wednesday 12th February	Benjy Bloor (Brompton Oratory)
Wednesday 19th February	James Thomas
Wednesday 26th February	Chrisopher Stokes (Manchester Cathedral)
Wednesday 5th March	Abigail Birch-Price (Soprano)

The concerts begin at 12:15pm and are free to attend. Suggested donation £5. Unless stated, all Wednesday concerts feature the iconic Wood/Walker organ.

Details of the JW Walker / David Wood organ may be found on the NPOR**: E00533**

Bangor Cathedral

Thursday afternoon recital series

Wednesday 26th February 1:15pm	Abhay Prabhakar (Bangor) Member of the CNEWOCA

Details of the Bangor Cathedral organ may be found on the NPOR: R01575

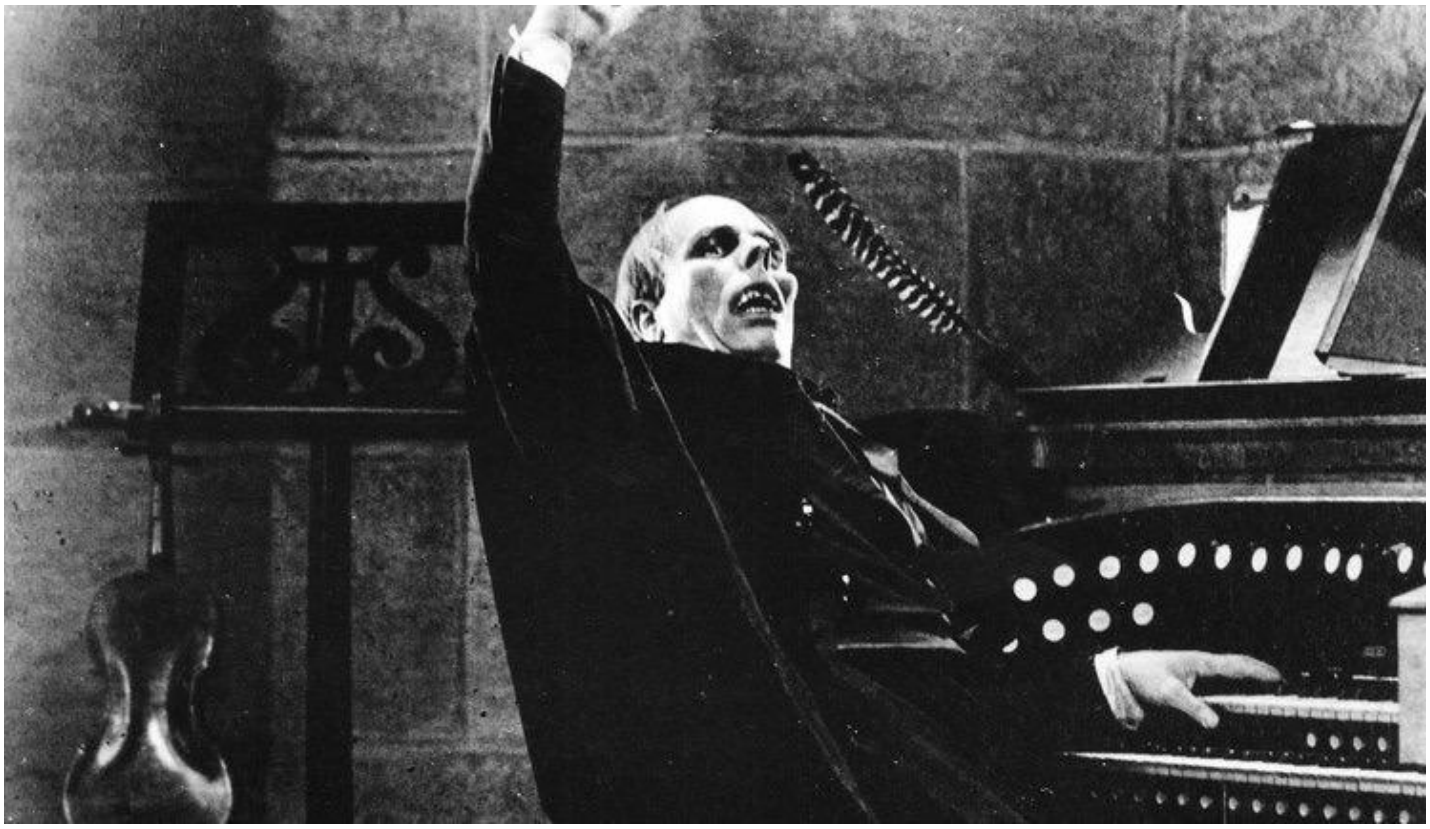
organrecitals.uk lists recitals across the country. You can search for recitals in particular area and register your own recitals, and its free.



https://choiroftheearth.com/latest-news/tag/Haydn+Nelson+Mass+Tour



Ever seen a penguin play a pipe organ? Well, there's a first time for everything! And that time has come, well, sort of. The new Aardman Animations' Wallace & Gromit: Vengeance Most Fowl includes by JS Bach's mighty Toccata & Fugue in D minor. But it isn't any old performance, this one comes from the dexterous flippers of Feathers McGraw himself.



And do you remember The Phantom of the Opera, 1925 silent film or its 1929 reissue with sound?