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

Newsletter March 2025

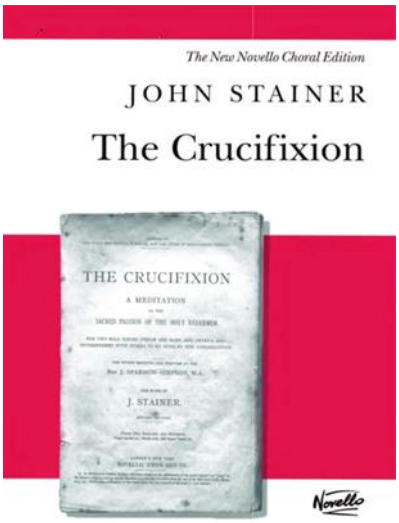
As Spring arrives and Lent begins, we are exercising our *"& Choirmasters'"* activities with our March "Come and Sing" event (see below). We hope you will join us!

The programme for the rest of the season is complete and set out in this newsletter. We are off to Wales in May following a trip into rural Cheshire in April. Our AGM in June is at Christ Church Birkenhead and our organ crawl around the centre of Chester arranged. We are also making good progress with the 2025-2026 programme which is expected to include more "treats".

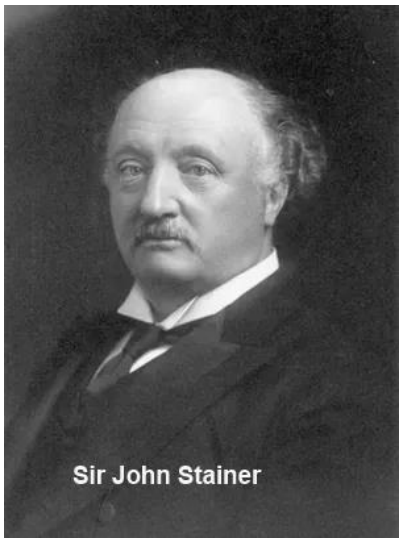
If you have ideas for a meeting, please let any of the committee member know. As ever, we are looking for items for the newsletter; perhaps you might like to write something for us?

Our next meeting: Come and Sing Stainer's Crucifixion

On Saturday 22nd March we are hosting a "Come and Sing" event in 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. A good number of singers have already signed up to sing and our two soloists will be Philip Cartwright (tenor) and David Whitley (bass). John Evans will be our organist, and Iain Stinson our conductor.


Sir John Stainer

Singers can arrive from 1:15pm (perhaps to eat their packed lunch) and cold drinks will be available. The rehearsal will start promptly at 1:45pm. There will be 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.

There is still space for more singers. Please let us know if you are coming to sing, particularly if you will need to borrow a copy of the score; please send email to angiejohnevans@gmail.com if you are coming to sing. If you would like to listen to the performance, then please

come along for 3:30pm. Bring your friends!

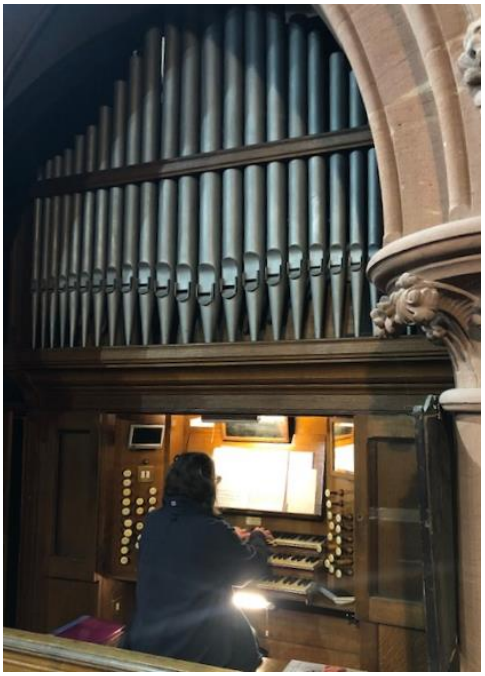
This event is free and open to everyone. There will be a voluntary collection which will be given to Christian Aid.

Our February meeting

We had a good turnout for a very enjoyable meeting at All Saints', Hoole Road, Chester on Monday 24th February. The C.H. Whiteley organ sounded well in the church and our members had a great time playing the organ.



The specification differed slightly from the NPOR (N04300) information. The Great had gained a Mixture IV, the Choir Dulciana had been replaced with a small two rank Mixture, the Swell Vox Humana was replaced by a Mixture III and a Tremulant was also present. (The *mixture* stop labels look a little newer than the other stop labels, so it is more likely that these are changes rather than inaccuracies in the NPOR entry.) In addition to the Swell Octave coupler, there is a Swell to Great Sub Octave and unusually the Swell to Great is labelled "Swell to Great Unison". The Swell Octave is mechanical and probably couples through to the Great. There was nothing on the console to indicate when these alterations had been carried out, or by whom. The main chorus was bright and clear (but not harsh) and there were some rather sweet-sounding softer stops. The console was comfortable to play and the action not too heavy.



I suspect that part of the key action has been converted to pneumatic action at some time in the past. Looking into the instrument some of the metal pipework looked rather bright – perhaps some cleaning work has been undertaken in the last few years.



Rather curiously, in the kneeboard, below the great stops, there is a single stop labelled "Bourdon 16": in times gone by this may have been used to signal the person blowing the organ (it does not affect the sound of the organ…).

It was very interesting to explore this organ and a number of our members would be happy to play it again should the opportunity arise. Thanks to All Saints' for allowing us to visit, to Raymond Moulton for the welcome cups of tea and to John Evans for making the arrangements for the visit.



A puzzle

Can you find the keyboard instruments in this wordsearch grid? (There at least 21 to find.)

W	R	E	E	D	O	R	G	A	N	R	M	U	K	F
D	O	E	L	A	N	I	G	R	I	V	A	X	C	I
M	B	N	S	U	C	P	S	P	I	N	E	T	R	D
E	O	N	A	I	P	C	I	R	T	C	E	L	E	D
L	W	D	R	I	S	I	O	P	F	A	P	S	W	U
O	E	Y	R	H	P	E	A	R	E	S	F	Y	N	L
D	D	D	M	O	O	T	H	N	D	O	B	A	E	C
E	C	R	E	T	H	D	N	T	E	I	R	R	T	I
O	L	U	L	B	T	C	E	E	N	T	O	G	U	T
N	A	G	O	E	U	T	I	S	G	Y	T	N	A	O
E	V	Y	D	D	S	T	F	S	P	N	S	E	L	N
S	I	D	I	G	I	T	A	L	P	I	A	N	O	E
L	E	R	C	E	L	E	S	T	A	R	A	T	Y	K
O	R	U	A	F	O	R	T	E	P	I	A	N	O	U
U	S	H	A	R	M	O	N	I	U	M	K	H	O	H

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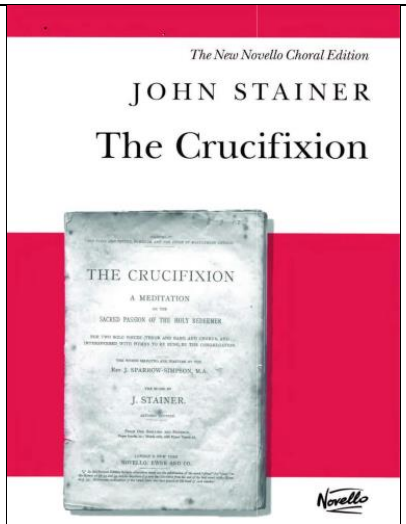
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Future Meetings

Saturday 22nd March
1:15pm – 4:45pm
All are invited to come along to our "Come and Sing Stainer's Crucifixion" event.
Hamilton Street Methodist Church,
Hoole, 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!

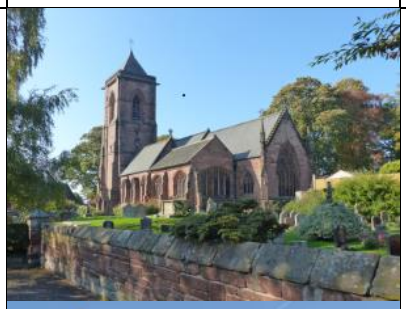
Singers may arrive from1:15pm ready for a rehearsal at 1:45pm prompt! Cold drinks will be available.
The performance begins at 3:30pm.

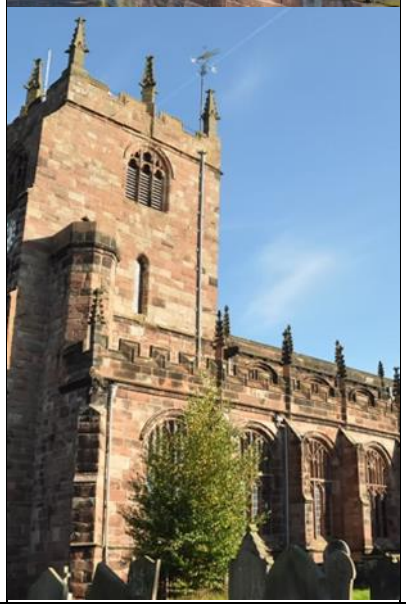
Some copies will be available to use on the day, but please bring along a copy if you own one!

Saturday 26th April
1:00pm – 4:30pm
St Helen's Tarporley and St Boniface Bunbury

St Helen's Church
High Street, Tarporley,
CW6 0AG

St Boniface Church
Wyche Road, Bunbury
Cheshire, CW6 9PN
St Boniface is situated in Higher Bunbury, approx. 400m from the village centre, next to the Dysart Arms. There is ample parking nearby.





We shall begin our visit at St Helen's Tarporley at 1:00pm where the organist will give us some details about the instrument and play for us before we have an opportunity to try the organ for ourselves. The 2/25 Willis / Jardine / Fletcher organ is described on the NPOR N04432.

We'll leave Tarporley for the short drive to Bunbury where we shall visit St Boniface church to see and play the three manual and pedal organ in St Boniface. This organ started life as a P. Conacher (Huddersfield) organ and was rebuilt by Willis (Willis IV) in 1968. The specification may be found on the NPOR: D01311. (There may have been some work carried out after the Willis rebuild.)

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 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 south east chamber. In 1888 the Choir Organ was added (all by Willis). In 1926 and again in 1948 the Willis firm overhauled the organ and in 1977 Rushworth and Dreaper cleaned and overhauled the instrument. NPOR: R01983

Saturday July 19th

An organ crawl around three city centre Chester Churches

We shall start our meeting at Wesley Methodist Church at 1:00pm.

We are going to visit three churches to see and play their interesting organs…

Wesley Methodist Church
St John Street
Chester CH1 1DA
3/29 J.J Binns NPOR D04853

St John the Baptist
Vicar's Lane
Little St. John Street
Chester CH1 1SN
3/27 Hill NPOR N04296

St Werburgh's
Grosvenor Park Rd
Chester, CH1 1QJ
3/36 J.J. Binns / George Sixsmith NPOR E00905

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. The recitals take place on Thursdays and start at 1:10pm.

6th March	Philip Rushforth (Chester Cathedral)
13th March	Alexander Lanigan-Palotai (Chester Cathedral)
20th March	Daniel Mathieson (Chester Cathedral)
27th March	Mark Shepherd (London)

Details of other recitals from https://chestercathedral.com/visit/organ-recitals
Details of Chester Cathedral Grand Organ NPOR: E01969

Sponsor a Recitalist

If you would like to sponsor a recitalist, please get 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	13th May
17th June	15th July	16th September

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
12.45pm – 1.35 pm
Retiring collection

11th March	Chetham's School of Music Brass Ensembles
18th March	Heather Buckmaster (Soprano), Joseph Buckmaster (Tenor), Tim Kennedy (Piano)
25th March	Rachel Fillhart (Clarinet), John Gough (Piano)
1st April	John Bush (Trumpet), Brian Heald (Piano)
8th April	Edward Harris-Brown (Piano)
15th April	Una Pavlovich Alldridge (Violin), Edward Harrisbrown (Piano)

Saturday Organ Recitals
12.45pm – 1.35 pm
Retiring Collection

15th March	Brian Heald (Wesley)
26th April	Graham Eccles (St Asaph)
17th May	Peter Cooke (St. Francis, Chester)
21st June	Paul Carr (Birmingham)

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

Music at Blackburn Cathedral

Wednesday Concerts

5th March	Abigail Birch-Price (Soprano)
12th March	Tricola Concert (a clarinet, saxophone and piano trio)
19th March	Anthony Gritten
26th March	John Hosking (Blackburn Cathedral)
2nd April	Lucy Morrell
9th April	John Robinson
16th April	Katelyn Emerson
30th April	Olivia Hunt (Soprano), John Hosking (Piano)

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.

Lent Organ Meditations

These events follow Choral Evensong on Sundays; they start at around 4.40pm and then at 5.10pm there is an opportunity to discuss the music with the organist.

9th March	Maria Gajraj (Canada)
16th March	John Hosking (Blackburn Cathedral)
23rd March	Tom Bell (Concert Organist)
30th March	Nihel Spooner
6th April	Michael Pain (Batley Parish Church)
13th April	John Hosking (Blackburn Cathedral)

Bank Holiday Celebrity Organ Concerts

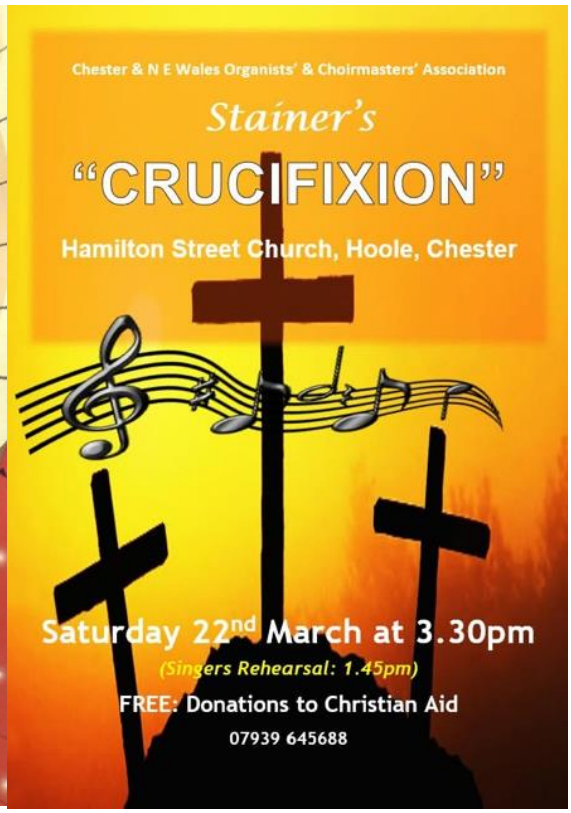
Tickets £10 at the door

Monday 21st April	William Fielding
Monday 5th May	Colin Walsh (Lincoln)

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

Hamilton Street Methodist Church, Chester





Bangor Cathedral

Details in the Cathedral's bilingual magazine to be found from https://bangorcathedral.churchinwales.org.uk/buchedd/

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 it's free.

Wordsearch solution

ACCORDION	HARMONIUM	PIPE ORGAN
BOWED CLAVIER	HARPSICHORD	REED ORGAN
CELESTA	HURDY-GURDY	RHODES PIANO
DIGITAL PIANO	LAUTENWERCK	SPINET
DULCITONE	MELODEON	SYNTHESISER
ELECTRIC PIANO	MELODICA	TANGENT PIANO
FORTEPIANO	PIANETTE	VIRGINAL



All Saints Hove. William Hill and Sons, 1905