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

# Newsletter October 2025

This newsletter provides you with information about our future meetings and details of organ concerts and recitals in our area. There is a report from our visit to St Chad's in Shrewsbury and an article about a famous hymn.

The programme for the 2025-2026 season is included in this newsletter. The committee are continuing to confirm what looks like another very exciting season. If you have any suggestions about future events, please let any committee member know. If there are special organ or choral events in our area which you know about, then please let me know so I can include them in our future newsletters.

Please note that the November meeting is on 1st of November!

We are always looking for articles for the newsletter, so if you are able, please consider writing a short article for us. We can cope with most formats of material (including handwritten material). Please send your contributions to the Publications Officer.

Iain Stinson

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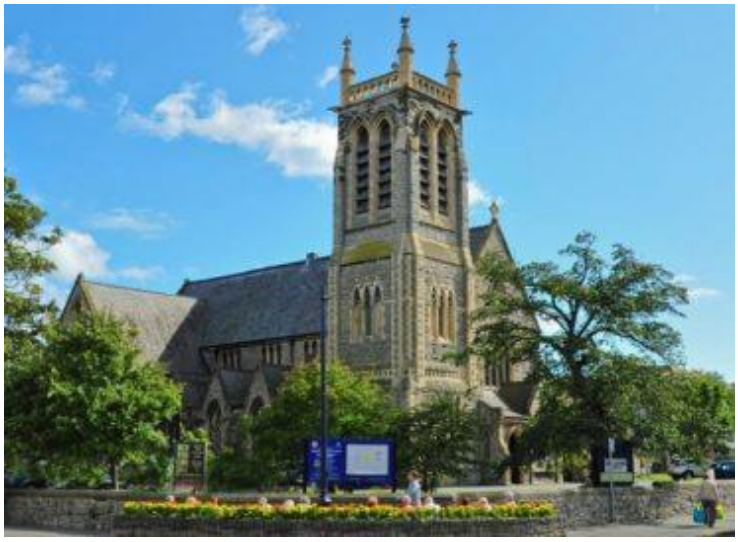
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## Advance notice: Organfest at *Our Lady and St James*, Holyhead Road Bangor, LL57 2EE

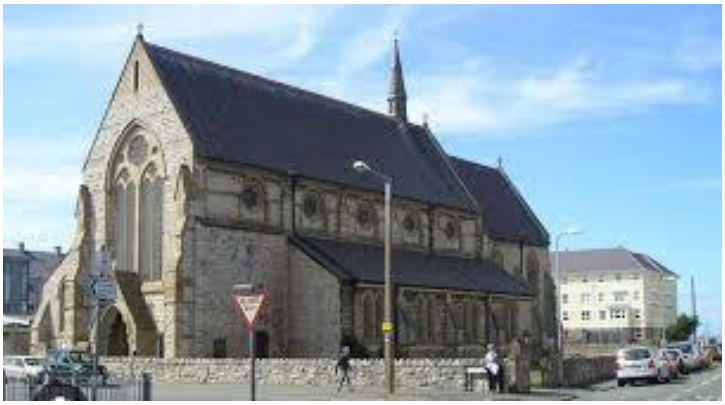
*When:* Saturday 29th November from 12:00-16:00.
*Organ details:* Two manual and pedal by Bishop & Son NPOR(K00709)
*Players wanted:* Players can fill a 15-minute slot or a 30-minute slot. If you wish to play less than this, that's fine. Hymns are encouraged.
*Refreshments:* will be provided.
*For more details:* Contact Abhay by email, atporganist@icloud.com
*Please note this is not a CNEWOCA event.*

## Our next meeting



Our next meeting is in the seaside town of Llandudno on **Saturday 18th October** when we shall visit two churches. We shall begin at Holy Trinity, Trinity Square (not far from the promenade) at **1:00pm** and then travel about 0.6 miles to St Paul's Church for 3:00pm. Our host for both visits is Ray Stythe-Jones.

The organ in Holy Trinity is a large three manual Rushworth and Dreaper instrument completed in 1972. Its origin is a Hill organ from 1873 which was rebuilt by John Stringer in 1885c with new action. NPOR R01578 and N11691).



The organ in St Paul's has a *BIOS Historic Organ Certificate (grade II).* It is a three manual and pedal organ with 31 stops built by Wm Hill & Son in 1920, with a major overhaul in 1969 by Hill Norman and Beard. Some work was also carried out in 1938. (NPOR N11694).

We hope many members will be able to come and enjoy these two interesting organs.

There is a *Pay and Display* car park adjacent to Holy Trinity and parking is usually available near St Paul's.

*Postcodes:* Holy Trinity: LL30 2RH St. Paul's: LL30 1TP

## Our November meeting



On **Saturday 1st November** we shall be visiting **Bangor Cathedral and Bangor University** to see hear and play two rather different organs. The cathedral organ may go back to the 18th century when Samuel Green built an organ there. Since then, there have been numerous rebuilds and remodellings of the organ. The 2007 work by David Wells has resulted in a fine "British cathedral" organ.

The organ in the University Prichard-Jones Hall is a 1973 Hill, Norman & Beard instrument with the pipework arranged on the Werkprinzip style. This dates from when some British builders were building neo-baroque style organs (albeit with electric action). It was rebuilt in 2010 by David Wells. Further information is provided in the season's programme.

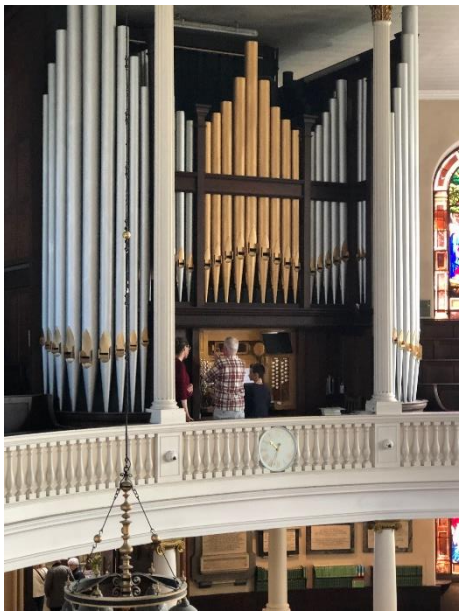
This will be a very exciting visit. We start at **1:00pm** in the Cathedral.

# Report on our visit to St Chad's Church, Shrewsbury on Saturday 13th September



For our first meeting of the season, we visited St Chad's Church in Shrewsbury. This Georgian church is very beautiful and was bedecked with harvest festival flowers and produce on the day of our visit.

The organ in St Chad's is a very fine instrument that was built in 1904 by Norman & Beard, rebuilt by Nicholson in 1963 and by Harrison & Harrison in 1985, 1990 & 2011 (NPOR N01397). The organ is in the west gallery of this almost circular building and benefits from a very lively acoustic. It is a large three manual (and pedal) instrument with 42 stops. The core 1904 Norman and Beard sounds were all still present, though refined a little through the various rebuilds. The various additions have enhanced the instrument and today it is a fine large British instrument, capable of performing a wide repertoire of music. The Tuba, situated at the back of the instrument very close to the wall was very loud and rather brighter than some Tuba stops.



Tony Pinel the organist at St Chad's welcomed us to the church; he had recently hurt his leg and was unable to play. After briefly describing the instrument Tony left us to try it for ourselves. It was an exciting organ to play, and, although it was disappointing that there were only six members at the event, it did mean those of us present were able to enjoy playing the organ for rather longer than is sometimes the case at our meetings.




Hot drinks and cake were available when we arrived at St Chad's (as a part of their welcome for visitors). We are very grateful to Tony Pinel for come to meet us (despite his injury) and to the members of St Chad's who made us so welcome.

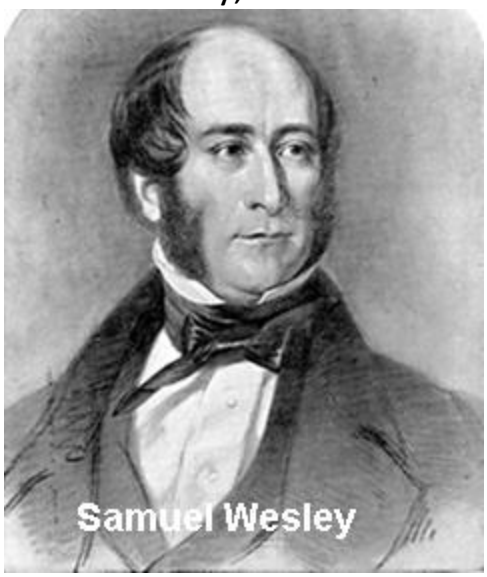
## "The Church's One Foundation"

A popular and well-known hymn throughout many denominations is *The Church's One Foundation is Jesus Christ our Lord*. It originated from a rather theological controversy in the mid 19th century when John Colenso, Anglican Bishop of Natal, South Africa, wrote a book expressing critical views of parts of the Christian faith. Samuel J. Stone (b. Staffordshire 1839), a clergyman in Windsor, was one of several who defended the orthodox Christian faith and published 'Lyra Fidelium' – twelve hymns on the twelve articles of the Apostles Creed. The Church's One Foundation was based on the lines 'The holy catholic church, the communion of Saints'. There were seven verses, and three added later, but most modern hymnals only include verses 1, 2, 4 and 5. The text portrays the Christian church as rooted in Jesus Christ through the water of baptism and the word of God. The heresies and distress are a reference to the Colenso story, and the final verse as we know it has a more hopeful tone, the church will finally be at peace and rest.




Samuel Stone attended Charterhouse School and Pembroke College, Oxford, and was ordained in 1862, becoming a Curate at Windsor, later joining his father in ministry at Haggerston in 1870, succeeding him as Vicar in 1874 and staying until 1890. Until his death he served at All-Hallows-on-the-Wall which he turned into a haven for working girls and women. Later he served on various committees, including the one which prepared 'Hymns Ancient and Modern' (eventually published 1909). Samuel Stone died at Charterhouse in 1900.

The tune to which we sing this hymn is invariably 'Aurelia' composed by Samuel Sebastian Wesley (1801-1876) who was a grandson of that master of hymn writing Charles Wesley, and who with brother John founded Methodism.




As a boy he sang in the Chapel Royal. He learnt composition and organ from his father (also Samuel), and later completing a doctorate in music at Oxford. His middle name was chosen because of his father's love of J S Bach's music. He served as organist at several cathedrals including Hereford, Exeter, Winchester and Gloucester as well as a spell at Leeds Parish Church. He always strove to improve the standards of church music and musicians and published a treatise 'A Few Words on Cathedral Music'.

All his compositional output was for the Church of England. Among his best known anthems are 'Thou wilt keep Him in perfect peace', 'Blessed be the God and Father', 'Wash me thoroughly' as well as the

popular ‘Lead Me Lord’ an extract from his ‘Praise the Lord, O My Soul’.

The ‘Aurelia’ name was given to the tune because Samuel originally wrote it for the hymn ‘Jerusalem the Golden’. Among his other well-known hymn tunes are ‘Hereford’ (O Thou who camest from Above) and ‘Harewood’ (Christ is our corner stone).

While at Winchester Cathedral Wesley was largely responsible for the cathedral's acquisition in 1854 of the Father Willis organ which had been exhibited at The Great Exhibition, 1851. The success of the exhibition organ led directly to the award of the contract to Willis for a 100-stop organ for St George's Hall, Liverpool, built in 1855. Wesley was the consultant for this major and important project.

Samuel Wesley died in Gloucester in 1876.

Brian Moate

## An *800-year-old* organ

The 800-year-old Bethlehem Organ, believed to be the oldest Christian pipe organ in the world, was played in September 2025 for the first time in centuries at St. Saviour's Monastery in Jerusalem.

The organ was created by European craftsmen in the early 11th century for a church in Bethlehem. To protect it from invading Muslim armies, Crusaders took the organ apart in the 12th century and buried it. In 1906 the pipes were discovered during an excavation at the Franciscan monastery at the Church of the Nativity (Bethlehem) along with bells and other liturgical artifacts. They were then stored for more than a century in a museum.



Researchers rediscovered the original pipes during a five-year project that led to the restoration and reassembly of the instrument, allowing it to be played in September 2025. The original pipes provide valuable information about 11th-century European craftsmanship and musicology. This discovery gives modern audiences an authentic experience of medieval music.



Researchers compare the discovery to finding a living dinosaur due to its rarity and the unparalleled understanding it offers of the past.

https://eu.jsonline.com/videos/news/2025/09/09/after-800-years-of-silence-ancient-pipe-organ-makes-music-again/86064587007/

## York Minster Summer Organ Recitals



This year I decided to go to one of the Recitals held at York Minster from mid July to mid August. Perhaps the smart thing would have been to go and hear Jan Liebermann, one of the up and coming stars of the Organ world, but I could not make 24th July. Instead, I booked myself a train ticket for 7th August and a cheap overnight stay so that I could hear Daniel Cook (organist of Durham Cathedral).

As several readers are probably aware the organ in York Minster underwent a complete rebuild by Harrison & Harrison in 2021. I was interested to hear how it sounds live and hence the visit. I fortunately arrived in time to go to Evening Prayer. Although it was a said service Organ Voluntaries/Improvisations led us into and out of the time of worship. This meant I had the opportunity to hear how the organ sounds in the choir as well as in the nave. This indeed whetted my appetite for the 'main course' later on.

The programme for Daniel Cook's recital was as follows:

- *Olivier Messiaen* Apparition de l'église éternelle
- *Marco Enrico Bossi* Scherzo in G minor
- *Charles Villiers Stanford* Sonata Britannica (No 3)
- *Percy Grainger (arr Wolgang Stokmeier)* Handel in the Strand
- *Maurice Duruflé* Prelude, Adagio et Choral Varié sur le thème du "Veni Creator"

The programme allowed Daniel Cook to explore the various colours of the organ, the various tuttis and not forgetting the splendid Tuba Mirabilis. It was a wonderful evening. The ticket included a very informative programme booklet which gave information on the whole series.

It was a memorable visit and of course whilst in the city I took the opportunity to visit the Yorkshire Museum and the National Railway Museum.

Nigel James

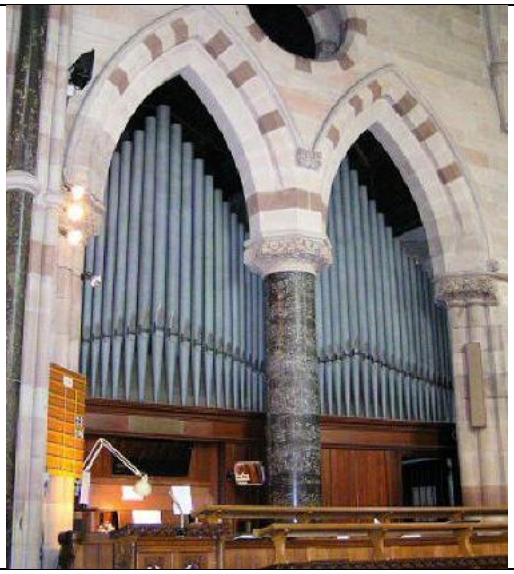
## Gilmour Pemberton MBE




Gilmour Pemberton died in May this year. He was a well-known organist at Pentrebychan Crematorium and many churches and chapels in Wrexham, and one of the very early members of our Association. He was a strong advocate for the organ and a fine player. We mourn his passing and express our condolences to his family and friends.

*(Thanks to Robin Newby for this suggestion and photo.)*

## Our programme for the 2025 season

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Saturday 13th September**<br>**3pm**<br>St Chad's Church<br>St Chad's Terrace<br>Shrewsbury<br>SY1 1JX |  | We are visiting Shrewsbury to see, play and hear this very fine three manual, 42 stop organ which is in the west gallery of the church. The organ started as a 1904 Norman & Beard organ was rebuilt by Nicholson in 1963 and by Harrison & Harrison in 1985, 1990 & 2011. (NPOR N01397) |
| **Saturday 18th October**<br>**Llandudno** | We are visiting two churches in Llandudno. Ray Stythe-Jones will be our host for the visits to both of these instruments. | |
| 1:00pm Holy Trinity<br>Llandudno<br>LL30 2RH |  | The organ in Holy Trinity is a large three manual Rushworth and Dreaper instrument completed in 1972. Its origin is a Hill organ from 1873 which was rebuilt by John Stringer in 1885c with new action. (NPOR R01578 and N11691) |
| 3:00pm St Paul's Church<br>Craig-y-don<br>LL30 1TP |  | The organ in St Paul's has a *BIOS Historic Organ Certificate (grade II).* It is a three manual and pedal organ with 31 stops built by Wm Hill & Son in 1920, with a major overhaul in 1969 by Hill Norman and Beard. Some work was also carried out in 1938. (NPOR N11694) |

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| **Saturday 1st November Bangor** | Joe Cooper from Bangor University and the Cathedral will be our host for our visit to Bangor. We shall be visiting two very different style instruments.<br>*Details to be confirmed.* | |
| 1:00pm Bangor Cathedral | <br> | The origins of the organ may go back a Samuel Green instrument of 1779, but most certainly go back to work started by Wm Hill & Sons in 1871 and completed with a rebuild in 1896. Hill, Norman & Beard worked on the organ in 1929 and Rushworth & Dreaper cleaned it in 1935. The John Compton Organ Co. rebuilt the organ in 1953/4 and in 2007 David Wells (Liverpool) rebuilt the organ with new electric actions.<br>The organ is now a substantial 78 stop cathedral organ! We are very fortunate to be able to hear and play this instrument. (NPOR: R01575) |
| 3:00pm Bangor University Prichard-Jones Hall |  | The organ in the Prichard-Jones Hall is a 1973 Hill, Norman & Beard instrument with the pipework arranged on the Werkprinzip style. This dates from when some British builders were building neo-baroque style organs (albeit with electric action), often with rather high and somewhat shrill sounding mixtures. In 2010 David Wells (Liverpool) rebuilt the organ. (NPOR N11677) |

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| **2026**<br>**Monday 19th**<br>**January 7:00pm**<br>Liverpool Philharmonic Hall |  | The organ in the Philharmonic Hall was built in 1939 by Rushworth and Dreaper, who carried out further work in 1983. David Wells (Liverpool) worked on the instrument in 2004 and in 2022 Henry Willis & Sons carried out a major restoration of the instrument.<br>The specification of the organ may be found on the Liverpool Phil website. The organ has 66 speaking stops over four manuals and pedals.<br>This is a very special opportunity for members of the association to visit this fine instrument. |
| **Saturday 14th February**<br>*To be confirmed*<br>West Kirby Methodist Church<br><br>We hope to also visit a second instrument nearby. |  | The organ in the Methodist Church was built by Henry Willis III (1936) and has 25 speaking stop and a full set of couplers. Details of the specification are on the NPOR (N18328) |
| **March** | | |

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|---|---|---|
| **Monday 13th April 7:30pm**<br>Christ Church, Willaston |  | The organ in Christ Church is a two manual and pedal instrument. It was built by Nicholson (Worcester) in 1925/6 and rebuilt in 1999 by David Wells (Liverpool). Details may be found on the NPOR (N01136). The church has recently been reordered and the acoustic improved and the organ sounds better than ever. |
| **May** | | |
| **Saturday 13th June, 2pm**<br>*To be confirmed*<br>All Saints' Gresford<br>Annual Meeting and organ visit. |  | The organ in All Saints' is a fine three manual Wm Hill & Son instrument built in 1871, and rebuilt in 1912 by Hill and in 1995 by Roy Billingsley. Details on the NPOR N11754. |
| **Saturday 25th July 2pm.**<br>Christchurch Chester |  | We are going to visit the Brindley & Foster two manual organ in Christchurch Chester. The specification is given on the NPOR, N04295. The special Brindley & Foster registration aids (noted in the NPOR entry) are still working on this instrument. |

## Seen on the web…

**An unusual duet:** https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=1296620758506351
**A most difficult hymn**: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AsQInZwdC90

**An Apology:** to Alun Hughes for incorrectly spelling his name in the previous edition of our newsletter.

# Live music!

## Chester Cathedral organ recitals

The recitals take place on Thursdays at 1:10pm. The suggested donation is £5.

| | |
|---|---|
| 2nd October | Victoria Ulrioksen (Norway) |
| 9th October | Daniel Mathieson (Chester Cathedral) |
| 16th October | Friedhelm Flamme (Germany) |
| 23rd October | Michael Phillips (Malvern College) |
| 30th October | Graham Eccles (St Asaph) |
| 6th November | Alexander Lanigan-Palotai (Chester Cathedral) |
| 13th November | David Hirst (Mantes-la-Jolie, Paris) |
| 20th November | Philip Rushforth (Chester Cathedral) |
| 27th November | Graham Eccles (St Asaph) |

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 Cathedral

18th October 3:00pm 99th Anniversary Recital, Ian Tracey.
Admission £15.
*Details of the Willis Organ in Liverpool Cathedral may be found on the NPOR E00301.*
*(This does not include the details of the Echo organ.)*

## Music at Wesley

Wesley Church Centre, St John Street, Chester
**Tuesday Lunchtime Concerts**
**12.45pm – 1.35 pm**
*Retiring collection*

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|---|---|
| 7th October | Chester Festival Winners |
| 14th October | Jordi Bitlloch (Piano) |
| 21st October | Cameron Liu (Piano) |
| 28th October | Deva Wind & Piano Quintet |
| 4th November | Callum Bisson (Piano) |

**Saturday Organ Recitals 12.45pm – 1.35 pm**
*Retiring Collection*

| | |
|---|---|
| 18th October | Philip Rushforth (Chester Cathedral) |
| 15th November | "Organ Day" *10:30am to 2:00pm* |
| 20th December | Christmas Music Concert (Claire, Jeremy & Brian Heald) |

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

## Liverpool St George's Hall

**Tuesdays from 12:45pm – 1:30pm.** Tickets (at the door) £10.
***Professor Ian Tracey, Organist to the City of Liverpool.***
14th October 18th November 16th December
***Tuesday 23rd December 7:00pm Evening Organ Recital of Christmas Music.*** Cost to be confirmed.
Details of the Willis Organ in St George's Hall may be found on the NPOR N01921

## Christ Church Willaston

Wednesday October 15th 7:30pm: Colin Porter (organ) and Owen Bryce (Trumpet)

## Music at Blackburn Cathedral

### Wednesday Concerts

| | |
|---|---|
| 8th October | Peter Harrison |
| 15th October | Keith Hearnshaw |
| 22nd October | Joe Scott (Piano) |
| 29th October | Martin Brown |
| 5th November | Eleni Keventsidou |

***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.

| | |
|---|---|
| Sunday 19th October 5:00pm | The Complete Organ Works of Duruflé |
| Friday 24th October 7:00pm | Hans Zimmer - Interstellar (Roger Sayer) |

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

## 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

## St Asaph Cathedral

Details of the cathedral organ may be found at https://stasaphcathedral.wales/en/music/the-organ

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



***Jacobi Church, Hamburg***