

# SOUNDBOARD

A Newsletter for Church Musicians



Number 12

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## Editorial Comment

In this issue you will find details of various courses that will be of interest. Having attended both the **Charles Wood School** (twice) and the **RSCM Summer Course**, I know how useful and enjoyable such courses can be — not only for their content, but also for what one gets from just chatting to other organists. This Autumn, the CMC's **Choir Training Course** is being given by John Dexter and will be held on six Sunday evenings. Consult page 7 for all the information.

There has been a larger than usual number of applicants this year to join the Archbishop's three-year training course — which is very encouraging. Since the first students enrolled in 1991, 33 have successfully finished the course.

The Church Music Committee web site has moved to a new location: [www.churchmusicdublin.org](http://www.churchmusicdublin.org). This new home makes it easier than ever to keep the content updated. The site has the latest committee news, information on committee members, details of training courses available and information on upcoming events. Keeping the site up to date depends on you; send the details of any relevant events to our new e-mail address at [info@churchmusicdublin.org](mailto:info@churchmusicdublin.org).

We have lots of plans for the new site — articles from past issues of *SOUNDBOARD* will be made available and we also hope to make it possible for you to add comments to the site. This site is intended to be a resource for all church musicians. If you have ideas of how we can improve the new web site, let us know.

I'm still being amazed at what Google can turn up on the Internet — hitherto largely unexplored until we went on to Broadband. For my sins, I am also Editor of the *Howth Parish Newsletter*, and one on-going series in it is 'Favourite Hymns and their Writers'. One of my choristers wrote about *Jesus bids us shine*, and to save having to type the words (her article was hand-written), I reckoned that they would be available on the 'Net'. Put '*Hymn Jesus bids us shine*' into Google, and up came several entries for that hymn. Clicked on the first of them ([www.oremus.org/hymnal/j/j022.html](http://www.oremus.org/hymnal/j/j022.html)) and got the words I wanted, but I didn't expect the bonus! Try it.

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## Letters: Appreciation of Courses

Just a quick message to say many thanks to you, the members of the Church Music Committee and the lecturers for the most enjoyable four lectures that I attended over the last five weeks in CITC. I found them to be of great benefit to me as a church organist and really interesting as well. It just might have inspired me to do my masters' thesis on Church Music!

Again many thanks for all the hard work that you all put in over the year. Here's to another course.....

*Lesley Eager, Blessington*

Many thanks for sending details and application form for the Archbishop's Certificate in Church Music. Paul is going to apply and is really keen to learn. He is busy practising hymns so as to be au fait with them at least.

I really enjoyed the Living Worship course and did an experiment by teaching the Sunday School children an Alleluia yesterday. They picked it up in three goes. The rector wants us to teach the congregation at family service next Sunday! Thanks for making the course so informative and practical.

*Jacqueline Mullen, Dublin 16*

## WHAT'S IN THIS ISSUE?

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## House Organs (Part 2)

Much interest was expressed about the first article in this series, and the Editor has since learned of several more house organs, all of which will be described in due course. In the meantime, here are details of two more.

**Aaron Marchant** is the owner of this instrument which was built by Ken Jones in the mid 1980s for Peter Sweeney. It is a two-manual practice instrument and has one stop on each manual. The stops are not named but the upper manual stop is certainly a flute (8 ft) and that on the lower manual sounds like a stopped diapason (again 8 ft). The pedal organ uses the bottom octaves of the lower manual stop at 16 ft pitch. There is provision on the soundboard for three more stops.



The organ owned by **Maeve Coughlan** has to be seen to be believed — it surely must be unique! She said to me, as we ascended the stairs of her house to a small upstairs bedroom, to be prepared for a surprise. First sight of the organ gave the impression that it could be an electronic instrument, until I looked up — the pipework is up above the rafters in the ceiling-less room! The short pipes stand upright on their own soundboards and the long pipes lie flat on the joists.

This organ was built by Trevor Crowe in 1998 and contains pipework and other bits and pieces from organs removed from churches or surplus to rebuilding jobs.

Basically it is made up of just two stops, a diapason and a flute, but at a selection of pitches.

The **Choir Organ** (top manual) consists of Gedackt (8), Flute (4), Nazard ( $2\frac{2}{3}$ ), Recorder (2) and Tierce ( $1\frac{3}{5}$ ) and there is a Choir to Great coupler. When all the stops are sounding, the effect is very much a reedy sound — reminiscent of a horn stop perhaps.

The **Great Organ** has a Principal (8), Principal (4), Fifteenth (2), Gedackt (8), Flute (4) and there is a Choir to Great coupler. The **Pedal** has a Bourdon (16), a Gedackt (8) and a Principal (4). Choir to Pedal and Great to Pedal couplers complete the specification.



Maeve would be delighted to welcome any interested persons to see and play the organ. She lives in Churchtown, and can be contacted at (01) 295 1559, or 086 232 0932, or by e-mail at [maeecoughlan@eircom.net](mailto:maeecoughlan@eircom.net)

Looking up



The blower's up there somewhere!

Friends and colleagues gathered for the opening ceremony in June 1998 (I was told that the party went on until 5 a.m. the next morning!). Trevor Crowe cuts the red ribbon and declares the organ playable!



## Talking to Hilary Dickinson Guter

**Organist, Pianist, Trumpeter, Teacher, Accompanist**

*I knew Hilary Dickinson as a schoolgirl during her years in Mount Temple School, and we both seem to remember that I taught her science for a while. It was interesting to meet up again after 20+ years. Before we commenced our 'official' interview, I knew that she had many achievements in the musical world to her credit (I was not aware of just how many!) and I told her not to be modest in talking about them. So, here's all about what she has done to date. Editor.*



### Tell me about your early musical education

I was really a late starter musically; I was 9 when I started the piano. I think I had singing lessons early on too. I also learned the trumpet and was for some time principal cornet player of the Girls Brigade band. When I outgrew the Girls Brigade, I went to the Stedfast Band and was their first female member. I also learned the violin for a while but gave it up for organ when I was about 13. My 'secret' instrument was the accordion (but I didn't dare admit to playing this when I went to TCD in the 80s — it wasn't the 'thing' to be an accordion player!). As an accordion player I used to go around all the parish halls, also bringing a little electronic keyboard. I used to win lots of competitions because I played it very classically with the right articulation and so on. In my teens I did all the Associated Boards grades, in both piano and organ. In addition, I have teaching and performing diplomas from various London colleges.

### From whom did you originally learn the organ?

One year with Sydney Grieg and then Peter Sweeney. When I was 14 or maybe it was 15, I did an organ marathon in Glasnevin Church and played through the whole hymnbook to raise funds to fix the church roof. Before that I had been in the Junior Choir and Fred Flewitt let me play a hymn one Sunday (he stood behind me ready to take over just in case!

I started music in TCD 1980. At that point I was organist in the Scots Presbyterian in Abbey Street. That was my first official organ job. In '82 I was approached by Trinity to become Organ Scholar. You don't turn down such an offer so it was with much regret that I left the Scots' Church to become the organ scholar for two years. I followed David Adams as organ scholar.

After getting my degree in music, I taught in the College of Music for a year or so. Also, I used to assist Peter in Christ Church Cathedral before there was an official post of Assistant Organist. During that year I was trying to decide whether to go to Austria or to Holland for further

study. At that point I was going to Roy Holmes for piano and doing serious piano competitions.

### What prizes did you pull off in the Feis?

In organ, everything. For piano I won the duo competition and the sight-reading competition and the cup for Bach playing. I also won a gold medal in the trumpet competition. I did the piano concerto competition in the Feis one year. I won prizes too in the Father Matthew Feis.

So the big decision again: Austria or Holland. I decided on Holland, to study organ with Piet Kee. I sort of became an organist and choir director in Amsterdam by mistake! In the Summer of 1985 I was in Haarlem doing the International Organ Course and on the Sunday I went to Amsterdam to see what the Anglican Church was like. I didn't find it in the end (it's really hidden away), and I ended up by mistake in the English Reformed Church, where I learned that the post of organist/-choir director was vacant and that that day was the closing day for applications. I spoke to the Minister afterwards and expressed interest. They already had seven applications but agreed to wait until I got mine in.

I moved to Amsterdam in the September of that year and in November was appointed. It was a prestigious church for music and the expectation was high. It was quite demanding but I was glad of it, for otherwise my life there might have been quite empty.

After a year with Piet Kee, I went to Jos Van Der Kooy and did the DM — a Dutch Diploma, which I got in 1987. At this stage I had built up various musical friends in Amsterdam and we did concerts. My life was very much in Amsterdam at this stage. In my fourth year in the church in Amsterdam it was announced that a student minister — Frank Guter — was coming from Calvin College in Grand Rapids, Michigan for a year. He came along and I showed him all around Amsterdam. He lived near me and we used to bike everywhere together and we really were good friends. We worked together and we saw each other every day and it was all great fun. In April (1898) we both realised

that there was more to it than being just good friends. We were married three months later.

In August of that year we went off to the States, as Frank had to go back for the final two years at the seminary. There was a choir director there who directed the 'cream' choirs of the college — the *Capella*, and the *Meistersingers* and the *Lyric Singers*. They usually used student accompanists. So I ended up accompanying all these choirs. I became the seminary organist/accompanist. The spiritual element of the choir really touched me. Before every concert they would have a prayer — it made me realise that music is a gift from God. It changed my whole approach.

### So, how long did you stay in the States?

Ah, well, that's another story! Frank had two more years in the seminary in Grand Rapids. Frank graduated from the Christian Reformed Church of North America (it's like the Presbyterian Church here) We went to live with his parents in Rochester New York until he got his first call — in Portland Oregon.

### So you went off to the Far West?

Yes, we drove — in November; I will never forget it. It took us ten days; we experienced what was like buckets of water coming against the windscreen, and thick ice, and the car alternator died and we had to get over mountains (in Utah) with no heat in the car, and we had a broken axle too. We did finally arrive!

### So, how long in Portland?

Well, it didn't really work out; it's a long story and we only stayed about nine months. The we went to Lynden, Washington for a while where I taught and did substitution organ playing but we returned to Grand Rapids, where an interesting church job came up. They had a music group and they had an organ, and there were always 'worship wars'. I told them I was quite happy to play with the music group, which seemed to please them enormously and this unified the church very much — one person willing to play both kinds of music. That was the beginning of what I see as my mission in the church world right now. There's so much great 'old' stuff out there and there's also great new stuff. There's also of course bad old stuff and bad new stuff!

In 1993, Frank got a call to the American Protestant Church in The Hague in Holland. So, back across the Atlantic we went — to a huge church, though I did no music in there. I did though, do lots of teaching in The Hague. That job came to an end after a year, and we went back to Grand Rapids, where

we were for another year. Then we went to Montreal for six years, where Frank was pastor of a church there. They had an organist, but he moved on after about a year and I got the post. Here I had the opportunity to work with the kids' club in the church, and I had them participating in services. In 2002 we finished in Montreal.

Frank at this stage wanted to get involved in mission work. There was a job going in Oxford England, where Frank would be Administrator and I would be kitchen manager (for catering is my second love). All the music I did here was to play at the Night Devotions. From there we went to London. I immediately went to a job in a Highgate church for a short time and then to a Methodist Church in Marylebone High Street. I also got a job with the Starbucks' Coffee Company (!), very conveniently almost next door to the Methodist Church. A great surprise one day — looked out the window and saw Peter Sweeney walking by — ran out (in my green apron, much to his astonishment) and had a chat.

**And what brought you finally back to Ireland?**

Frank's job in the Methodist Church came to an end; my father had died and my mother's health was not as good as it had been. So we looked at options in Dublin. The owner of a B&B in 68 Northumberland Road was looking for two people to manage his business (It's always been one of my dreams to run a B&B!). So we went home to do a new type of job. The B&B was sold after nine months and we were on the move again.

At this time there was an advert. in the *Church Review* for an organist for St Brigid's Stillorgan. I expressed interest, but they stalled the appointment for a time. In January 2005, we went to Adelaide Road Church to worship and found they needed a Director of Music; I got the post.

Stillorgan came up again in 2006; I applied and was appointed, for it was really what I wanted. I was sorry to leave Adelaide Road, but I knew I had made the right decision. Now that I'm in Stillorgan, I'm already in the school doing singing with the children; I bring them to the church every Friday morning. and last week they sung at the Parade Service.

**And what about non-musical activities?**

Well, I don't have much time for them, but certainly catering, biking and walking could be listed.

**Favourite composers?**

Bach and Mozart certainly. Oh, and Buxtehude too.

**Music at Christ Church Cathedral Waterford**

*Eric Sweeney writes about the choir and music in Waterford's Church of Ireland Cathedral*

The choir of Christ Church Cathedral, Waterford numbers some twenty singers and is robed. There is a weekly rehearsal on Thursdays at 6 p.m. and a short rehearsal before the 10 a.m. service on Sunday mornings. As is the tradition in many churches, the choir sings a setting of the Eucharist and a communion anthem on the first and third Sundays of the month and Matins on the second with a setting of at least one of the canticles, together with the psalm and other music.

On the fourth Sunday (Service of the Word) a junior choir takes over in the morning while the choir sings a traditional Choral Evensong at 6.30 p.m. with an introit, settings of the Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis, an anthem, sung responses and special organ music. For the month of May the introit was *Cast thy burden upon the Lord* (Mendelssohn), Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis in d minor, (Walmisley), anthem: Kyrie, (Sweeney), and the voluntary was the final movement from Elgar's Sonata for Organ.

The anniversary year of Mozart's birth was marked at the Festival Eucharist on Easter Sunday, when the music included Mozart's Coronation Mass and *Laudate Dominum* and the organ postlude was the composer's Fantasia and Fugue in f minor.

The choir has participated in many choral festivals and events including, in recent times, a 'Three Choirs Festival' with Lismore and Kilkenny cathedrals and their respective organists Jan van Putten and Malcolm Proud. Both Malcolm Proud and Eric Sweeney work in the music department of Waterford Institute of Technology which offers a full time BA Music degree in music with specialisations in classical music, Irish traditional music and jazz and popular music together with postgraduate programmes of MA and PhD. In addition, the Institute plans to offer a part-time certificate and diploma in church music from next year.



*Photo: Eugene Langan (copyright: Contemporary Music Centre, Ireland)*

Since the Kenneth Jones rebuild in 2003 of the historic Elliot organ, the cathedral runs a regular concert series throughout the year including the popular 'Coffee Concerts' normally on the first Sunday of the month at noon. During the summer there will be three such concerts, on 4 June (Eric Sweeney), 16 July (Guttorm Guleng, winner of the 2005 Pipeworks Organ Festival) and 6 August (the Australian virtuoso

Thomas Heywood). Other events in the current series include the Irish Baroque Orchestra (28 June), National Youth Choir of Wales (29 July), Cologne New Philharmonic Chamber Orchestra (11 August) and St Brigid's Cathedral Choir (27 August) as well several traditional Irish music and world music concerts.

Further details available from <mailto:info@christchurchwaterford.com> or [info@christchurchwaterford.com](mailto:info@christchurchwaterford.com)

*Dr Eric Sweeney is Head of Music at Waterford Institute of Technology and Organist and Choir Director at Christ Church Cathedral, Waterford. Eric is a recitalist, composer and a member of Aosdána. His e-mail address is: [esweeney@wit.ie](mailto:esweeney@wit.ie) and his website is [www.ericssweeney.com](http://www.ericssweeney.com).*



## Edward Darling and Hymnody

Jacqui Wilkinson from Cork, the Editor of 'Follow Me', the RTÉ programme being produced for use in schools under the patronage of the Church of Ireland, Methodist and Presbyterian churches in the Republic, recently interviewed Bishop Edward Darling on his involvement in hymnody. We have pleasure in reproducing the contents of this interview.

### When did you start writing hymns? Is there a story behind any of the hymns you wrote?

It was never really my intention to write hymns of any description. I don't regard myself as being a contemporary hymn-writer like Timothy Dudley-Smith, Fred Kaan, Fred Pratt Green or Christopher Idle. The first hymn that I happened to write was when a request came to the committee that was set up to compile *Irish Church Praise*. At that time somebody wrote to the compilers asking if we could set a newly-written version of the canticle *Laudate Dominum* (Psalm 148) to the familiar tune *Kum Ba Yah*. *Laudate Dominum* is probably the least used of all the canticles and we already have a fine hymn based on its text in Henry Williams Baker's 'O praise ye the Lord! In response I offered the suggestion that it might be much more fruitful to write a new version of the *Benedicite* which could be set to *Kum Ba Yah*, to which the committee replied 'Will you write it?!' It was this challenge which led to the writing of 'All created things, bless the Lord'. That would have been around the year 1988.

The other hymns that I have written were produced to fulfil a need in the revised 5th edition of the *Church Hymnal* (2000) and the stories that led to their being written are told in the *Companion to Church Hymnal*, which was published in 2000 (Columba Press) by Dr Donald Davison (the Music Editor of *Church Hymnal*) and myself. My most recent hymn was commissioned by Dr Harry Grindle, the Director of the Belfast choir, 'The Priory Singers'. His choir was producing a compact disc for Christmas 2005 entitled 'Let Christians all with joyful mirth' – a selection of Christmas music from Northern Ireland and he was anxious to have a suitable Christmas text for the tune 'Grianán' by Alfred Burrowes. As Alfred had been my Organist at St Gall's Parish Church, Carnalea for a number of years, I felt I would like to pay tribute to him by setting the words 'Hear those glorious sounds symphonious' to his fine tune.



### Do you enjoy singing hymns in church? Why?

I have always loved singing hymns ever since I was a choirboy in St Nicholas' Parish Church in Cork, where my father was the Rector. In those days the choir in St Nicholas' had a strong musical tradition. It was there that I became familiar with a large repertoire of

hymns and learnt to appreciate their value and meaning. Indeed, I am firmly convinced that, through church music and particularly through the hymns we sang during my childhood, I developed a love of the liturgy and gradually became conscious of my vocation to serve in the ordained ministry of the Church of Ireland.

### You worked to produce the Church Hymnal. Was it hard to choose from all the Christian hymns and songs? How many hymns did you start with before you narrowed it down to 719?

The very first task that the Hymnal Revision Committee undertook was to ask all the parishes throughout the Church of Ireland to suggest which 'new' hymns should be included in the revised hymnal and which hymns from the existing hymnal should be deleted. 52% of the parishes responded to our survey with the result that we were then faced with the task of deciding how many of almost 1000 hymns (consisting of the newly suggested ones as well as those recommended for omission) should be included.

The committee members subsequently fed their findings into a computer database and from our analysis of the information shown, we began to get a fairly clear idea as to the percentage ratings of the new material suggested. It wasn't an easy task, but it was a challenging and exciting one which enabled us to present our choice of contents for the new hymnal to the General Synod for approval. Having received some further recommendations and suggestions from members of the Synod, we eventually ended up with the 719 hymns that now appear in the revised *Church Hymnal*.

### Did you have to read and listen to all the hymns before they went into the book?

We certainly read through all the hymns so that we could evaluate their worth. There is no other way of being able to decide just how effective and useful each individual hymn or song will be. This meant, of course, that some of the hymns in the 1960 hymnal would have to be revised or updated to make them suitable for congregations entering the 21st century.

There was not the same need to listen to all the hymns. The musicians on the committee had no difficulty in evaluating the tunes simply by looking at the music. If the text of a hymn is good but the music is of poor quality, it is not a difficult task to find another tune in the same metre or, failing that, to compose a new tune.

### What is your favourite hymn? Why?

There are so many hymns which I dearly love that I have the utmost difficulty in picking out any one in particular that I could honestly claim as my favourite. Of the hymns that are dear to me, the following would probably be my top dozen choices: 'All creatures of our God and king' (an outstanding hymn of creation), 'Praise to the Holiest in the height', 'Hail to the Lord's anointed', 'O worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness', 'My song is love unknown', 'When I survey the wondrous cross', 'Christ triumphant, ever reigning', 'Rejoice, the Lord is King!', 'King of glory, King of peace', 'How shall I sing that majesty', 'Forth, in thy name, O Lord, I go' and 'We have a gospel to proclaim'

### Why do you think hymns are an important part of worship? Do you think that choosing the hymns for each service is an important job?

Hymns play an extremely useful part in capturing the mood of a particular act of worship. More importantly, they can serve to highlight the passages of scripture prescribed in our Lectionary. A glorious opportunity, therefore, presents itself to those responsible for planning the details of our weekly acts of worship – hopefully by clergy and organists working together as a team – to ensure that a very meaningful choice of hymns is made. (Sadly, there is always the danger that only well-known favourites are selected, leading all too often to a sense of stagnation within our worship). To this end I compiled a detailed list of suitable hymns based on the readings used

Sunday by Sunday. This list was published by Oxford University Press in the book *Sing to the Word* (2000), which unfortunately went out of print sooner than expected.

A new revised, extended and colour-coded electronic version will, however, be available shortly on the Church of Ireland's website. The revised contents of *Sing to the Word* will also be incorporated in the planned revision of *Sing His Glory* to be published in England by the Canterbury Press. This is a companion to the Revised Common Lectionary (as used by the Church of Ireland) which provides a wide selection of hymns from the standard hymn books of the main Christian denominations. The new edition will include selections of hymns from both *The Church Hymnal* and *The Irish Presbyterian Hymnbook*.

**You mentioned that you and Dr Donald Davison have produced a *Companion to Church Hymnal* giving the background and history of the hymns contained in our hymnal. Did you uncover any interesting stories behind the hymns?**

We most certainly did. Perhaps I could pick out just four. First, the circumstances that led to the writing of the tune 'Magda' (hymn 455), by Ralph Vaughan Williams, is of local interest in the Church of Ireland because it was written for the marriage of a couple who came from London to live in Bushmills, Co. Antrim.

Secondly, the fact that the 'Veni Creator' (hymn 296) was used at ordinations as early as the 11th century, coronations of English monarchs since 1307, and how Bishop John Cosin's English translation from the original Latin was incorporated into the Ordinal (included with the 1662 *Book of Common Prayer*) creates a fascinating history.

Thirdly, when Keith Green added a third stanza to his wife Melanie's original two verses of 'There is a Redeemer' (hymn 112) - 'When I stand in glory' - such an action could almost be interpreted as prophetic, for it was only about five years later that he and two of their children were killed in a tragic and disastrous plane crash.

Fourthly, Fred Kaan's moving hymn, 'Put peace into each other's hands' (hymn 507), was regularly used at the annual anniversary service at Bolton Hospice, but with an increasing number of Muslim and Hindu relatives (of those who had died) attending the service, the author was asked if he could substitute the two final stanzas to make it more suitable for interfaith worship. These two new stanzas are printed in the *Companion* for the benefit of those who should ever be planning an interfaith act of worship.

These are just four examples chosen at random. There are many hymns in the *Church Hymnal* which have been written as a result of different interesting, but similar moving, circumstances. Did you know, for

instance, that the first two stanzas of 'Now thank we all our God' (hymn 361) were probably originally written as a grace said before meals at the dinner table and that it was later that the final stanza was added as a doxology? One of the original purposes of writing the *Companion to Church Hymnal* was to provide users of the hymnal with as much concise background material as possible so that their understanding and appreciation of the hymns they sing in church might be greatly enriched.

**What advice would you give to someone who is thinking about writing a worship-song or hymn?**

I would say that unless one is particularly inspired by a theme or a special occasion, don't attempt to write one. It is true that naturally gifted hymn-writers or poets can churn out meaningful texts which are of a consistently high quality; but most of us do not possess that latent talent. In other words, don't write a hymn or worship-song simply for the sake of writing one. One must always have a purpose for writing a hymn. Speaking personally, I would probably find it more natural to compose a tune for a hymn rather than write the text itself, because the words often dictate what should be the mood of the tune. But here again, there really must be a real purpose in writing a hymn tune.

*Edward Darling served all his parish ministry in the Belfast area and was Bishop of Limerick & Killaloe from 1985 to 1990.*

## Fanny Robinson and St Monica

David McConnell describes how a link with 19th century Dublin musical life has been broken



Most organists will have some regrets about Church Hymnal 2000. One of my (very few) disappointments about this excellent resource is that the tune 'St Monica' set to the hymn 'New every morning is the love' was omitted. The tune was included in the 1873, 1919 and 1960 editions of Church Hymnal and, while it may not have been widely used in the Church of Ireland, it does seem to have been popular in the Dublin region - no doubt because its composer, Fanny Robinson, had been very active in Dublin musical life. It has a strong melodic line and, to my mind, is much preferable to the rather dull tune 'Melcombe'. St Monica was written in 1866 and is

from Fanny Robinson's sacred cantata 'God is Love'.

In the second half of the nineteenth century, the number of women involved in music in Dublin began to increase. Their participation was welcomed by their male peers, as a growth in musical activity required more organisers. In comparison to their European counterparts, the treatment of women in music was progressive: they were respected as teachers, performers and composers. Frances (Fanny) Arthur Robinson illustrates the extent to which women were accepted into music in Dublin at this time.

She was a teacher, composer and pianist of English birth. On moving to Dublin in 1849 she married one of the most prominent musical figures in the city at that time, the singer, conductor and composer Joseph Robinson, who was both a chorister and vicar choral in St Patrick's cathedral. Fanny was an ardent performer and played an active role in Dublin's musical culture, making an extensive contribution. In 1856 she joined the teaching staff of the Royal Irish Academy of Music. She was also one of the few published female composers of that time.

Following her death in 1879, her friends subscribed a small sum of money in her memory, intended as the nucleus of a fund to provide support for 'Female Professors of Music in Ireland' who fell on hard times financially. The Fanny Robinson Memorial Fund never grew, but for over a hundred years it was administered by trustees who gave out small grants. The fund is now administered by the RIAM.

## Organists' Courses & Events

### Charles Wood Summer School

21 — 28 August 2006

Book now to attend this unique choral, vocal and organ event in the historic city of Armagh.

Opening Concert by the Swingle Singers; Celebrity Organ Recital by Adrian Lucas (Worcester Cathedral); Concert with the Charles Wood Singers & Boys' Choir.

Full five-day programme of workshops for organists, choir directors and singers. Choral Services sung by the Charles Wood Singers and the Charles Wood Boys Choir. Book one event, several events, or even all events!

Bookings to CWSS, Tel. 048 3752 9632; or to Aubrey McClintock at a.mcclintock@armagh.gov.uk

### RSCM Ireland 'At Home'

Christ Church Cathedral,  
Saturday 24 June

12.00 noon to 3.00 p.m.

Enjoy lunch 'on us' at this event for choir trainers and worship leaders. The workshop will explore RSCM resources and will include an introduction to the *Voice for Life* training and awards system. There is no charge for the event.

- Meet the committee
- Free lunchtime concert given by *Voice for Life* students (Dublin only)
- Meet each other
- Have your lunch
- Peruse RSCM resources

Please let Peter Parshall, Christ Church Cathedral know in advance if you will be there. (A similar event is to take place in St Anne's Cathedral Belfast.)

Peter Parshall, Co-ordinator RSCM Ireland, The Chapter House, Christ Church Cathedral, Dublin 8.

Tel: +353 (0) 1 671 2426.

E-mail: pparshall@rscm.org

### RSCM Ireland

Saturday 14 October

Come and sing the Fauré *Requiem* in Christ Church Cathedral, Dublin with Philip Stopford conductor. Register at 1.30 p.m. for rehearsal for 5.00 p.m. performance. Tea and coffee will be provided, but singers should bring their own packed tea. Prices: €10 (adults), €5 (juniors).

Please bring your own score if possible. A limited number will be available on the day. Public entrance to the performance is free of charge.

### The RSCM Summer Course for Organists

in association with St Giles' International Organ School, St Giles, Cripplegate, London, 31 July to 5 August. Full details from the RSCM, 19 The Close, Salisbury, Wiltshire, England, SP1 2EB, Tel. (0044) 1722 424 848.

E-mail: education@rscm.com,

Website: www.rscm.com/courses.

### Living Worship Course, 2007

Encouraged by the success of the Living Worship course in music, liturgy and worship earlier this year, the Diocesan Church Music Committee will run a similar course on **four Saturday mornings during January and February 2007**. Designed to help (in particular) in-post musicians, singers, lay readers, clergy, these four Saturday morning seminars will offer a mix of theory and practice — including lots of singing. The principles of Christian worship and the structure of the Eucharist and other services will be looked at again, with a particular focus on a specific season of the Church's year. The use of space when presenting the liturgy will be explored and the final session will be held in a church that has remodelled its interior to reflect contemporary insights into worship. Dates and details will be announced in September.

### Carol Competition —

To celebrate their 20th anniversary, the Priory Singers are launching a carol competition for young musicians between 11 and 21 years. Prizes: £200, £150 and £100. The closing date for entries is 23 September.

Rules and entry forms may be obtained on the website

www.thepriorysingersbelfast.com.



### Experienced Organist & Choir Trainer available for deputy work

Sunday and weekday services, weddings and funerals.

Contact Peter Parshall,

Mobile: 085 740 5566,

E-mail: music@cccudub.ie

### Summer Evenings in Dún Laoghaire

The Summer Sunday evening organ recitals in St Michael's Church, Dún Laoghaire have been a feature of Dublin musical life since 1974. This year's series started on 11 June with a concert by Raymond O'Donnell and the Galway Baroque Players and continues every Sunday evening at 8.30 until 3 September.

The list of recitalists since 1974 is impressive. Almost 200 names from twenty countries — about one-third from Ireland. Newcomers this year are Bernard Winsemius (Netherlands), Bartosz Jakubczak (Poland) and Heinrich Christensen (Boston, USA). David Connolly (organ scholar, Pro-Cathedral, Dublin) will make his debut recital in the series and the remaining slots will be filled by Irish organists. The organ in St Michael's is a two-manual, tracker-action instrument built in 1974 by Rieger Orgelbau, Austria

There is a social aspect to these concerts. A small group plus soloists always continues the evening in a local pub. A great opportunity to meet other organists. So, if you are free, do consider experiencing these relaxing and convivial Sunday evenings near the sea, perhaps preceded by a walk down the pier! See our website for details: [www.churchmusicdublin.org/events](http://www.churchmusicdublin.org/events).

## BASIC CONDUCTING & CHOIR TRAINING

Getting the most from a choir and congregation

A course led by John Dexter,  
Director of JD Harmony, Conductor of Goethe Institute Choir,  
formerly Organist & Master of the Choristers, St Patrick's  
Cathedral

Six Sunday afternoons: 5.00 to 6.30 p.m.  
17, 24 September, 1, 8, 15, 22 October 2006  
Dundrum Methodist Church, Ballinteer Road, Dublin 16  
Fee €120

Book by e-mail to [info@churchmusicdublin.org](mailto:info@churchmusicdublin.org)  
or leave a message on 087 668 3998.

For more information visit [www.churchmusicdublin.org](http://www.churchmusicdublin.org)

# Notes and News

## PIPE ORGAN SOCIETY OF IRELAND

The POSI held its AGM in Dublin in November 2005. Professor Gillen was elected President and Norbert Kelvin Secretary. An organ day is

being planned, and details will be available on the website: [www.irishpipeorgans.com](http://www.irishpipeorgans.com), in due course.

### ORGANISTS ON THE MOVE

*Note from Editor: It is hoped to keep readers up to date with organists' appointments, relocations, etc., but to do this he needs to be informed. Please pass on news as appropriate; everything is not heard on the grapevine!* We have not heard of any movements since the March issue of *SOUNDBOARD*.

### ORGANISTS' HINTS & TIPS 7

Randal Henly

*This is not my tip, but when taking to Hilary Dickinson, she mentioned that one of her teachers has said it to her.*

When teaching a new choral piece to a choir, make sure, beforehand, that you yourself can sing right through all of the different parts, an octave up or an octave down as appropriate.

*Any more hints & tips from readers? Keep them coming.*

### HAVE WE GOT YOUR E-MAIL ADDRESS?

More and more people have Internet access. We have the e-mail addresses of many church musicians in the Dublin region and we send information to them from time to time. If you have gone online recently or are in any doubt as to whether we have your e-mail address, please let us know. All you need to do is send a short message to [churchmusicdublin@eircom.net](mailto:churchmusicdublin@eircom.net).

### WILL YOU HELP US?

Sixty people sent donations in response to the letter enclosed with the last issue of *SOUNDBOARD*. We hope that we will hear from many more. The Church Music Committee needs additional resources if it is to consolidate and develop its work. Donations received in 2005 enabled us to publish *SOUNDBOARD* regularly, promote one-off events and maintain a website. We make no apology for asking for donations from individuals. Over the past ten years the Committee has secured significant increases in the recommended rates of remuneration for musicians. While these minimum remuneration scales do no more than keep in step with pay inflation, older organists will remember a time when increases were seldom given and when it was embarrassing and 'not the done thing' to request a few more crumbs. We believe that many will be glad to share their good fortune with us. So, please read the enclosed letter (if you've already responded, there is no letter) and see what you can manage. And we extend a big thank you to those who have signed standing orders!

### SPREAD THE WORD ...

There is something in *SOUNDBOARD* for everyone. What do you do with your copy when you have finished reading it? Do you circulate it to your choir, give it to your rector? We will send extra copies for a small charge. Simply let us know how many.

## Comment

Gerard Gillen

It is unusual for pipe organs, their builders and players, to feature in national media news, but such was the case in recent months, with the EU issuing its *fatwa* on the lead component of pipe organs, both in their electric circuitry and, more critically, in pipe content. In these islands major organs of opinion such as *The Times*, *The Daily Telegraph*, *The Irish Times*, not to mention national radio and television, took up the story, resulting in our beloved but much misunderstood instrument receiving some public attention. But as the saying goes, 'there's ne'er an ill wind'...

Fortunately the threat of this crazy and unintended effect of the EU directives has passed, with a derogation being given to the pipe organ industry in the matter, but the focus on the complexity of the craft of organ building and its centuries-old position of eminence in European high-cultural art history, brought to the attention of the wider public (who normally regard the organ as an antiquated hymn-churning machine of little artistic merit to be played by parish worthies as opposed to talented artists) something of the glory and wonder of the instrument to which we are so devoted. Hopefully as a result there will be a new respect abroad for the craft of the organ, its designers, builders, composers and performers.

In Ireland we still operate in a cultural deficit as far as the organ is concerned. In continental Europe in particular (especially north and central Europe) pipe organs are regarded as *essential* elements of a church building, more often in time to be replaced by a new organ. As a people we tend to be horrified at the cost associated with pipe organs, whereas our continental (and American) peers take the costs involved in their stride. Our sense of shock is due entirely to our lack of appreciation of the complexity of the organ building process and of the greatness of the music composed for the instrument, and the training and dedication required of its players, if they are to do justice to the instrument.

Hopefully the recent publicity will be a first step in redressing this public education deficit. A public aware of the beauty and centuries-old heritage of the instrument and its music that (hopefully) adorns their local church can only encourage and foster community appreciation of all that we in POSI stand for. And it is up to us organists — so often consumed with internal discussions on issues such as the merits of mechanical action as opposed to electric action, and the niceties of conservation as opposed to innovation etc. — to respond to this opportunity with relish and enthusiasm in inculcating a sense of local pride in *that* instrument down the road which all may have taken for granted for so long!

### CROSSWORD PUZZLE

*Correct entries to Organists' Crossword 9 were received from Eric deCourcy, Harry Grindle, William Yeoman, Derek Seymour, Anne Corry, and Ken Shellard. The lucky one whose name was pulled from the proverbial hat was Anne Corry, to whom a musical prize has been sent. Lack of space in this issue means that Crossword 10 will have to wait!*

