

# SOUNDBOARD

*A Newsletter for Church Musicians*

**Number 10**

**October 2005**

## Editorial Comment

Several courses for organists have taken place over the Summer, and there are several more in the pipeline — so no one need feel left out! There are reports within of both the RSCM Summer School at York and the Charles Wood Summer School in Armagh. We haven't heard of anyone who attended the annual St Giles course this year. Did anyone?

On page 3 there are details about a series of training events being organised by the Committee. Geoff Weaver is to direct the day's activities and anyone who has experienced Geoff Weaver will want to hear him again. You can read more about him also on page 3. He will facilitate the **Teamwork in Worship** workshop on Friday 11 November and then will join Eoghan Heaslip of CORE Church to lead the **Access All Areas** event on Saturday 12 November. This event is to bring together those working with traditional type church music (organ, choir, hymns) with those involved with the newer and younger styles of church music.

The **Living Worship** liturgy course in January/February is an extended course for in-post musicians, singers, members of congregations, lay readers, clergy, in fact, basically anyone interested in the 'what' and 'why' of Christian worship and music of the liturgy. The course leader will be Rev. Tom Gordon and the four sessions are entitled:

- Why Christians worship
- The tools of worship
- the praise of God: Christian Hymnody
- How to make it work.

## Church Music in .....

The article in the 'Church Music in .....' series has had to be held back until the January issue. In the meantime, some more offerings for the series are needed. Do tell the readers how you do things in **your** church. Let us know about what services are held, and when, how many are in your choir, how often and when you have practices, what music is sung during the services, do you sing the psalm and/or the Communion Service, do the children of the Parish ever take a prominent part in the Service? What is your usual Sunday routine? Do you have the occasional outing or social event? And so on.

We feel this series has been, and can further be, a source of ideas to others. We wait in anticipation!

## Christ Church Leeson Park Organ for Posterity

Congratulations and well done to Derek Seymour who has issued a CD of organ music from Christ Church Leeson Park. Details will be found within.

## What's in this issue?

1. Editorial Comment
2. Talking to Tristan Russcher
3. Forthcoming Music and Liturgy Courses
4. A 'Top Ten' Wedding Voluntaries
5. Something for Everyone at York Summer School
6. The Charles Wood Summer School
7. The Diocesan Church Music Committee
8. The Companion to the Church Hymnal
9. Notes & News

*SOUNDBOARD* is published by the Church Music Committee of the Dublin & Glendalough Diocese of the Church of Ireland. Views expressed in signed articles, letters and advertisements are not necessarily those of the Editor or of the Church Music Committee

Secretary:  
Ms Ruth Maybury.

Editor:  
Randal Henly,

## Talking to Tristan Russcher

*Acting Assistant Organist, Christ Church Cathedral*

*Tristan Russcher has been organ scholar in the both Christ Church and St Patrick's Cathedrals for the past two years. At the Pipeworks competition in June, he took second place. Recently, in the Choir Room of the Cathedral, he talked to the Editor of Soundboard.*

*Tell me about your early education.*

I grew up in Perth, in Western Australia and studied at Gulidford Grammar School until I was 17. Ian Hockley was my organ teacher there.

*Is there music in your family?*

There is, yes. My grandmother was a the well known Dutch composer, Meta Overman. She moved out to Australia in the 'fifties and worked quite closely with the Universities of Melbourne and Western Australia.

*And your parents?*

My Mother is a very keen flautist and cellist, and my stepfather is a violin teacher. They are both very keen orchestral players.

*So, after Perth Grammar School?*

Then I moved to Ampleforth College in Yorkshire.

*What brought you to England?*

Well, it was my organ teacher, Ian Hockley, who used to teach at Ampleforth. He started me playing the organ and advised me to get out of Perth — there's not that much there when compared to Europe. It's good to get your education elsewhere, and then if you do want to come back, you'd have a lot of experience. So he said "Go to Ampleforth, where there is a fantastic organ teacher, Simon Wright". So I got a full scholarship to Ampleforth and I did my A-levels there.

Whilst I was there, I was awarded a place to Worcester College in Oxford, as the organ scholar. Then I spent three years there doing my music degree — a BA in music

*Tell me, what exactly are the duties of an organ scholar?*

It varies wildly, depending on which cathedral you're in, and on what stage you are at. The main role of the organ scholar is mainly to better himself and to prepare for an Assistant Organist's position.

*The Cathedral then is providing facilities for education?*

Yes, it is basically an educational post. In many cathedrals, you may be doing one or two services a week

*Playing or conducting?*

Playing usually, but you may get the chance to conduct, if that is what you want to do, and usually there is a bit of administration involved as well. Here, for the last two years, I have been doing upwards of eight services a week, and it's been a great opportunity to get the best from St

Patrick's and Christ Church.

The cathedral organs are very different. Both are fantastic in their own right, and the choir setups are also very different. Here I have had the opportunity to do a lot of conducting and a lot of choir training. I think the setup one of the best in these islands.

*You did your FRCO recently?*

Yes, that was only last year. I did my ARCO when I was in my first year at college, when I was nineteen. I was really a fairly late starter on the organ. I picked it up when I was 16.

*How do you like Dublin?*

Great, I really enjoy Dublin; it's a fantastic city. The weather is a bit hard coming from Australia! The people here are fantastic.

*What do you not like about Dublin?*

The cost of living is about the only thing, and the transport system too!

*Tell me about you almost winning the Pipeworks competition? How long did you spend working for it?*

I applied for it about six months in advance. I put down a programme of big pieces that I didn't know and which I have always wanted to learn

*So you provided yourself with a stimulus?*

Yes, I thought I would give myself a bit of a challenge. I didn't go into it expecting to win or even come anywhere close. I wanted to do it for the experience. It was my first competition. So with about three months to go, I realised that I had let the organ scholarship job take over a bit, and I hadn't really given myself enough time to learn the pieces

*Were you having lessons at this stage?*

Not specifically for the competition, I really did this completely by myself. Previously I did have a few lessons with Stephen Farr at Guildford Cathedral. For the Competition, I basically worked solid for about three months.

*For how many hours each day?*

For the month before, I was practising for about seven or eight hours per day.

*Well, it paid off! But were you able to use the Cathedral organ for that many hours each day?*



Luckily, with two cathedral organs available, I was able to practise late into the evening, when the cathedrals were closed. The rest of the work I was able to do on the piano. I didn't think I played so well in the final round — I think my nerves had got the better of me. I had been happy with the first round.

*So, where you do we go from here?*

Well, I'm not entirely sure yet. This year, during Andrew Johnstone's sabbatical, I am Acting Assistant Organist at Christ Church. After that I have just got to look around for any Assistant Organist's jobs that come up. I don't really want to do another organ scholarship. I'd really like to get stuck into the real nitty gritty of cathedral music.

*In England?*

Probably, I don't really intend to go back to Australia, not at this point anyway. Perhaps eventually.

*Any favourite composers?*

The top has to be Bach, let me see — top five? Beethoven, Finzi, Dupre, Francis Pott.

*Do you go to many concerts?*

As many as I can, but luckily in Christ Church we give many lunchtime concerts, and in St Patrick's the same thing. I try to get to the NCH when I can.

*You've played the organ there no doubt?*

I haven't actually, I keep meaning to but it hasn't happened yet! I've been to quite a few recitals there.

*Have you done much travel around the world?*

Living in Perth was a good opportunity to visit Asia, places like Malaysia, and Bali. It is easier (and cheaper) to go to such places than to Sydney or Melbourne. I've been to the Middle East a few times, and the States, mostly on holidays. I've done very little touring around giving recitals to date. I'd like to take a week sometime touring the Netherlands and perhaps doing some recitals there, and maybe the States too in a few years time.



# Diocesan Church Music Committee

**Friday 11 November**

Adelaide Road Presbyterian Church, Dublin 2, 8.00 p.m.

## **TEAMWORK IN WORSHIP**

Musicians and clergy working together

Geoff Weaver will lead musicians and their clergy in a discussion of issues of mutual concern and introduce some new ways of encouraging everyone to sing, Fee €5. Booking: 087 668 3998

**Saturday 12 November**

St Brigid's Parish Centre, Stillorgan, 10 a.m. to 5.00 p.m

## **ACCESS ALL AREAS - Music in the local church**

Geoff Weaver and Eoghan Heaslip will lead a day of music making for all - young and old. Whatever the tradition and style of music in your church, this is a day for you!. Share skills, join in workshops and explore new ways of working together. Fee €20 (concessions €10), Booking: 086 856 4762

**Saturdays 21 & 28 Jan, 11 & 18 Feb 2006**

Church of Ireland Theological College, Dublin 14, 10.00 a.m. to 1.00 p.m.

## **LIVING WORSHIP**

A course in music, liturgy and worship

This course is for anyone who wants to learn more about the 'what' and 'why' of Christian worship and music of the liturgy.. Fee €80, Booking: 087 668 3998.

## **ARCHBISHOP'S CERTIFICATE IN CHURCH MUSIC**

Applications for the 2005-06 academic year will be accepted up to the end of October 2005.

**Advance booking essential. To find out more visit our website or send an e-mail.**

**For a brochure send a s.a.e. to DCMC, 18 Villiers Road, Dublin 6.**

[churchmusicdublin@eircom.net](mailto:churchmusicdublin@eircom.net)

[www.churchmusic.dublin.anglican.org](http://www.churchmusic.dublin.anglican.org)

**Geoff Weaver** brings to his conducting and teaching a vast amount and variety of experience. He taught in England for some years before working as a music teacher in Hong Kong with the Church Mission Society. Back in England he became Director of Music at Bradford Cathedral before returning to the staff of the Church Mission Society, where he developed a particular interest in music from the world church, and published two volumes of 'World Praise'.

From 1994 to 2002 he was Director of Studies and Outreach for the RSCM. He is also a senior advisor to the RSCM.

He has vast experience of the world church, having taught and directed music in many



different countries and contexts, including Nigeria, the Philippines, Kenya, Pakistan, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Poland, Australia, the USA and Canada. He was Director of Music for the 1998 Lambeth Conference, directed a children's choir at the 2000 National Millennium Service in St Paul's Cathedral, and continues to work extensively with adult and children's choirs, as well as directing the music for international and diocesan conferences.

His passion is to enable local musicians to do their work more effectively and to ensure that they sing from the heart.

**Eoghan Heaslip** is worship leader at CORE Church, Dublin and his songs and arrangements feature on many CDs.

# A 'Top Ten' Wedding Voluntaries

*Janet Ashe, Judy Cameron, Randal Henly, Philip Lawton, Ruth Maybury, John Rowden,  
Derek Seymour, Heather Taylor,*

Ten amateur organists were asked to list their ten most-often-played wedding voluntaries — and this has resulted in the list that follows. Asterisks indicate the number of those listing a particular piece. It is hoped that this article will provide some ideas for organists to add to their repertoires. This article concludes the series of the 'top ten' voluntaries for various occasions.

However, the Introduction that follows comes from the RSCM's "Sunday by Sunday" of some time ago. It contains much sense, as well as suggestions that might make the task of choosing wedding music easier for both organist the the bridal couple.

## Music For Weddings

The bride and groom will always appreciate help and guidance with their wedding music. Encourage them to think about the words and music they might choose, and what associations certain pieces have. Couples need to be 'realistic' about the kind of event they expect their wedding to be. You may need to dispel some illusions, explaining that your resources are incapable of reproducing the sound of the Last Night of the Proms, the Morman Tabernacle Choir, or the organ of Notre Dame; not everyone knows that the Toccata by Widor needs a large organ and one with pedals!

Choice of wedding music ideally should pass three tests:

- musical: within their chosen style, do the words and music 'work'?
- liturgical: are the chosen pieces appropriate for use at a wedding?
- pastoral: are they appropriate for use at **this** wedding (given the musical resources anticipated, the 'style' of the occasion, the size of the congregation and their likely readiness to sing)?

For example, the 'Pie Jesu' (whether the Fauré or the Lloyd Webber one) would pass the musical test, but not the liturgical test for a wedding, it being a prayer for mercy on those who have died. As the inclusion of secular songs becomes increasingly common at both weddings and funerals, thought needs to be given to whether this is acceptable, and in what circumstances.

Try to anticipate difficulties and provide guidelines in advance. This is much easier (and more tactful) than taking the red pencil to the bride's list of hymns. Make your own repertoire lists, offering them to the couple in good time. If a suggested hymn is less than familiar, then it is only likely to work with a large and musical congregation or with the choir present. A tape or CD giving samples of suitable hymns and organ music, and some suggested choral or vocal pieces is invaluable. Alternatively, invite the bride and groom to a live demonstration at the organ. This sort of care and attention invariably pays off — on the day and beyond.

---

Albinoni***	Adagio for strings and organ
Bach**	Air on the G string
Bach**	Arioso
Bach**	Jesu Joy of Man's Desiring
Bach	Liebster Jesu, wir sind hier
Bach	Movement from Clavier Concerto in F minor
Bach	Gavotte from the Wedding Cantata
Bach	Badinerie
Bach	Air on G string
Bach	Jesu Joy of man's desiring
Bach	Sheep May Safely Graze

Beethoven	Creation's Hymn to God
Beethoven	Fur Elise
Beethoven	Ode to Joy
Bliss	Wedding Fanfare
Boccherini	Minuet
Boëllman**	Priere a Notre Dame (Gothic Suite)
Bruckner	Locus iste
Charpentier*****	Prelude to Te Deum,
Clarke*****	Trumpet Voluntary
Corelli	Gigue
Gluck	Aria from <i>Orpheo</i>
Goldmark, Carol	Bridal Song
Guilmant	Grand Choeur
Handel*****	Air from Water Music
Handel*****	Fireworks Music (various movements)
Handel**	Minuet from <i>Samson</i>
Handel*	Hornpipe from <i>Water Music</i>
Handel	March from <i>Occasional Oratorio</i>
Handel	March from <i>Scipio</i>
Handel	Ceremonial March
Handel	Minuet from <i>Bernice</i>
Handel	Largo
Haydn	St Anthony Chorale
Handel	Arrival of the Queen of Sheba
Karg-Elert*	Nun Danket
C.S. Lang*****	Tuba Tune
McDowell****	To a Wild Rose
Massenet	Meditation from <i>Thais</i>
Mendelssohn*****	Wedding March
Mendelssohn	War March of the Priests
Morricone	Gabriel's Oboe
Mozart	Various, from <i>The Magic Flute</i>
Pachelbel*****	Canon in D
Purcell****	Trumpet Tune (and Air)
Purcell**	Rondeau from Abdelazar
Rawsthorne	Fanfare for a Bride
Saint Saens	The Swan
Shostakovich	Romance
Sibelius	March from <i>Karelia Suite</i>
Stanley***	Trumpet Voluntary
Tchaikovsky	Romeo & Juliet
Verdi**	Grand March
Vivaldi	Largo from a from a guitar concerto
Wagner*****	Wedding March from <i>Lohengrin</i>



## Something for Everyone at York Summer School

*Irish organists are enthusiastic about the recent RSCM Summer School*

Fifteen countries were represented at the RSCM International Summer School in York last August. There were 130 participants, five from Ireland, which included the three final year students from the Archbishop of Dublin's Church Music Course. Regardless of musical background or expertise, there was something to be gained by everyone.

Participants left York feeling stimulated and re-energised and with plenty of fresh ideas to bring to their work in leading worship in their local churches.

The six-day event included workshops, seminars, concerts and worship, communal meals and plenty of social engagement. Everybody stayed at St John's College and each morning walked to the medieval York Minster, a few minutes away, to sing a brief prayer service in the Minster Choir: an opening hymn — different words each day but the same plainsong melody — a psalm, prayers with a simple Taizé-style response, and a closing hymn. This brief act of worship, preceded by five minutes of silence, exuded a magic that seemed to intensify as the week went by.

Each morning there was a choice of workshops and after lunch, everybody assembled for a larger event. Highlights included a singing session directed by John Rutter, and hearing John Bell of the Iona Community speak convincingly and provocatively about songs of the world church. At another session it was fascinating to watch the RSCM Millennium Youth Choir in rehearsal, with both a conductor and voice coach working in tandem. There was much emphasis throughout the week on the value of psalms in worship and how to sing them. While Anglican chant continues to be popular, many musicians now feel that other methods are preferable for the local church.

Writing about the Summer School, Jenny Huston (Athlone) comments: For me personally, the biggest gain in attending such an event was meeting with other church musicians from varying musical and church backgrounds. I enjoyed comparing and contrasting the music situation in their churches with my own. With those in similar positions to myself I



*The three final-year students, Joan Alcorn, Ken Hogan, Jenny Huston, who attended the Summer School*

had the chance to learn and swap some top tips. Music directors from larger church communities provided me with a picture of what to expect should I find myself involved in a similar situation. This networking is of immense value. In smaller rural churches it is often the case

that the entire music element of the parish is left to one individual, who most likely has a separate full time occupation. Without the support of colleagues it can become quite a chore. The course for me revitalised many elements of church music, and I came away with a renewed enthusiasm for music-making as part of worship. Although I do not run a choir, I now feel I have the competence and confidence to do so should the opportunity arise. I am keen to attend similar courses abroad in the future.

The highlight of the week for me was singing with John Rutter. Having previously sung so much of his music in a two-part school choir, it was a privilege to sing with the other delegates under the direction of the composer himself.

Joan Alcorn (Maynooth) felt similarly: For me, a special time was our brief prayer service in York Minster each morning, before the hustle and bustle of the day. As organist of a small parish church with no choir, I found the session with Geoff Weaver entitled *One Voice to Lead Many* had many useful hints. Also useful was Esther Jones' session '*Teach your singers to sight sing*'.

The syllabus was varied and there was something of interest for me each day (too many on some days — I couldn't attend all I would have wished). Singing in York Minster under the directorship of David Hill and John Harper were also memorable occasions. Chatting to people at meals and meeting people with similar interests from many countries also was an exciting and rewarding part of the Summer School. I found the week so encouraging and rewarding that I hope the Church Music Committee will encourage others to attend similar events in the future.

## The Diocesan Church Music Committee

The Committee provides a range of training and information programmes, focussing primarily on musicians in the dioceses of Dublin and Glendalough, Meath and Kildare. Our mailing list includes (we hope) all church musicians who work in Anglican, Methodist and Presbyterian churches in those dioceses and some from other traditions.

If you are not on our mailing list or have changed your address, please let us know (address on page 1). If you are on the Internet, please include your e-mail address.

The Committee always welcomes feedback and suggestions from church musicians. So, don't be shy, let us know what you think.

D.McC.

### Committee

- Archdeacon Edgar Swann (Chairman), Rector, Greystones Parish;
- Ruth Maybury (Secretary), Organist, Christ Church, Dún Laoghaire;
- David McConnell (Treasurer), Organist, Zion Church and the Church of the Three Patrons, Rathgar;
- Randal Henly, (Editor), Organist, St Mary's, Howth;
- Peter Barley, Organist & Director of Music, St Patrick's Cathedral;
- Judy Cameron, Organist, Enniskerry;
- Greg Fromholz, Director 3Rock Youth;
- Kerry Houston, Organist;
- Rev. Alan Machett, Assistant Priest, Stillorgan & Blackrock;
- Andrew Mackriell, Director of St Patrick's Cathedral Chamber Choir;
- Rev. Alan McCormack, Chaplain TCD;
- Donald Maxwell, Organist, St Matthias, Ballybrack;
- Rev Alan Rufli, Rector, Holmpatrick & Kenure;
- Derek Verso, Organist, Dun Laoghaire Methodist Church and Director of Music, St Brigid's Cathedral, Kildare.
- Hilary Dickinson Guter, Director of Music, Adelaide Road Presbyterian Church;
- James Pasley, Organist, Lucan Parish, Co Dublin.

# The Charles Wood Summer School

Report by Randal Henly

Charles Wood, renowned musician and composer, was born at 11 Vicars Hill, Armagh in 1866 and received his early education as a chorister opposite his house. He later studied at the Royal College of Music, becoming a professor there, and then succeeding Stanford as Professor of Music at Cambridge. When Wood died in 1926, he left a legacy of about 250 sacred works as well as a large number of hymn tunes.



*Carlo Curley giving advice to a young player at the organ of St Patrick's (CofI) Cathedral*

This year, the twelfth Charles Wood Summer School took place in Armagh from 22 to 28 August. The course caters for organists and other church musicians, music teachers and singers. The opening event was a concert in the Anglican Cathedral, given by Carlo Curley and the Charles Wood singers. The latter is a choir that comes together once each year, to sing at various times during the week of the Summer School. It consists of about 60 singers (mainly students), is conducted by David Hill (Director of Music, St John's College, Cambridge), and the sound they make is superb. In that opening concert, they sang several 'big' works, including Parry's *'I was Glad'*, accompanied by Carlo Curley playing (as he told us later) on nearly full organ without drowning them.

In the **Organ Masterclass** on the following day with Carlo Curley, several people played and received suggestions and advice from the maestro, who demonstrated lots of interesting things. He also played various works to illustrate (all from memory!) and was quite entertaining as he told anecdotes and stories of people, performances and venues.

There was a **'Bach at Twilight'** recital in St Malachy's Church that evening — six organists offering us a selection of works of JSB and his contemporaries.

Wednesday was **Choir Trainers' Day**, with David Hill and others, and dealt with all aspects of choral direction, voice production and warm-ups. For me, possibly the most useful part of the day was seeing Ben Parry direct a choir of about 25 boys who had only met two days previously. The day finished with **Choral Evensong** in the Cathedral sung by the Charles Wood Singers, and recorded by the BBC for broadcasting the following week.

Thursday saw a group of us on an **Organ Crawl** around the area. Armagh has two cathedrals, both dedicated to St Patrick, and both with giant organs. The Church of Ireland instrument has a 3-manual Walker organ, rebuilt

by Wells-Kennedy in 1996. It was 56 speaking stops, including a high-pressure tuba (which has its own dedicated blower). The tuba makes a magnificent sound, and needs practically full organ to accompany it adequately! As well as having access to playing the organ, we had a tour through its insides also.

St Patrick's RC Cathedral is an enormous building, and contains a four-manual Hill instrument, with 57 speaking stops. The organist there is the famous Georges Minne, who is now 81 years young. He welcomed us to the organ gallery and demonstrated the organ, playing the Bach Vivaldi concerto (from memory). He is a real character and regaled us with various stories of music, priests and bishops! Leaving some of the group to play the organ, he brought the rest of us up (very high) into the tower to see, hear and play the carillon. This was a first for me. While we were at the carillon, the tower clock struck four. He gave the bell an extra 'boing' — *just to confuse the locals* he said!



*Georges Minne at the organ in St Patrick's R.C. Cathedral, Armagh, talking to Theo Saunders*

The organ in St Aidan's Kilmore (about six miles out of the city) was built by William Hill and is a very large two-manual instrument — twelve Great stops and ten Swell, including five reeds and both 3 and 4-rank mixtures. You don't expect to find such an instrument in a small country church.

On the Thursday evening there was a **'Meet, Eat & Sing'** in St Mark's Church. About 60 of us were introduced to a variety of choral music. There were a lot of young voices present, and I found out afterwards that many were on a choir outing from a Belfast church.

**Effective Organ Accompaniment**, on the Friday, for me was the most useful session of the week. Nigel McClintock, who gave the session, aimed the work at the amateur organist and he suggested all sorts of practical advice and tips on the effective use of the organ.

There were several sessions that I couldn't manage to get to and as well there was a parallel course essentially for singers. All in all, there was something for everyone. Armagh is a small city, and all locations are close to each other. As always, at these sort of courses, you gain a lot by just talking to other organists and musicians. I did see Ken Glass (Holy Trinity Rathmines) at the Curley Masterclass but didn't bump into him again.

## Companion to Church Hymnal

Edward Darling & Donald Davison, The Columba Press, 2005

Review by Randal Henly

This book is a 'must have' for all who are interested in hymns and in church music generally. This *Companion to Church Hymnal* tells everything that one might ever want to know about all of the 719 hymns in the *Church Hymnal*. Here are pen portraits of those hymns — details of their authors and composers, how, when and why the texts and the tunes were written, and how and why the words have changed in the process of revisions (the latter being something of a sore point!). The authors of this Companion, Edward Darling and Donald Davison, edited the hymn-book itself, five years ago.

Dr Donald Davison, although professionally a mathematics lecturer (QUB, now retired), is a highly qualified musician. Since 1977 he has been organist and choirmaster of St John's Belfast; he was Belfast City Organist for nineteen years, and organist of QUB for thirteen years. Edward Darling, former Bishop of Limerick, was the student organist in the chapel of TCD during his final year there when training for the ministry. He was the chairman of the Hymnbook Committee prior to the publication of the hymnbook itself, five years ago.

At the beginning of the book, there is an informative chapter on Hymnody in the Church of Ireland. This describes the development of hymn-singing from the late 18th-century to the present day. Then follows individual entries for all of the hymns in the Hymnbook.

Since the *Companion* was published in April, I have still only dipped into it. Some interesting snippets of information (to me anyway!) from some of the 1000+ pages in the book, follow.

**Rev. Isaac Watts**, as is fairly well known, was a prolific hymn writer, and sixteen of his many hymns are to be found in the *Church Hymnal*, examples being *Jesus shall reign where're the sun;* *When I survey the wondrous cross*. Many of Watts' best hymns were written before his ordination, when he was a very young man. The story is apparently well known (it wasn't to me!) and runs: Young Watts, coming home from a morning service, complained to his cleric father about the wretched psalmody being so unfitting, both in dignity and beauty. "Then give us something better young man", replied his father, his deacon's

dignity being evidently rather ruffled. Young Watts determined that he would — and he did!

**Robert Prescott Stewart** is described as one of the most gifted of the church musicians that Ireland has produced. Stewart became a chorister of Christ Church Cathedral at the age of 8, was appointed Assistant Organist at the young age of 18, before becoming Organist and Master of the Choristers one year later — a position he held for 50 years until his death.

### Hymn 32: How great thou art

On the eve of the third millennium, this hymn was voted the most popular hymn in Britain in a BBC *Songs of Praise* poll. Its origin is in a Swedish poem written in 1885 by Carl Boberg, a preacher of repute, a religious editor and a senator in the Swedish Parliament. A Russian translation appeared some years later and it was this version that came to the attention of a Londoner, Stuart Hine, who with his wife was doing missionary work in the Ukraine in the 1930s. The hymn was popularised by evangelist Billy Graham who used it at his crusades in the 1960s and 70s, resulting in it becoming well known on both sides of the Atlantic.

### Hymn 47: We plough the fields, and scatter

This 18th-century German hymn of thanksgiving, with its rousing tune, must be known to all. The original text came from a poem of Matthias Claudius, the journalist son of a Lutheran pastor and also, appropriately, a Commissioner of Agriculture. The poem is about a harvest thanksgiving in a German village, in which neighbours come to a house and sing a 'Peasant's Song'. The original version ran to seventeen verses (!) each followed by a refrain, but this has been modified in all modern hymnbooks.

Enough about this book. It is a tremendous resource for clerics, worship leaders, organists/choirmasters, and all others interested or involved in church music. It is quite a tome, heavy in weight (at least you don't have to hold it up while singing!) and running to 1014 pages. Its price is €53, although there was a very good pre-publication offer for only €37 (which is of course only of academic interest at this stage!).

## Organists' Hints & Tips 5

Tidy music => better singing

David McConnell

To keep choir stalls tidy requires constant vigilance. In recent years, to reduce the number of books, I have given each singer a loose-leaf ring binder, marked with his or her name. The first page is an index (updated regularly) and items are colour coded according to an agreed scheme. Hymns not in the hymnbook are numbered sequentially, starting from where CH5 finishes; psalms and canticles + pointing are word-processed with the chant printed at the top of the page. Other items are added as needed.

Within each ring binder, each sheet is kept in a transparent polythene pocket. This keeps everything clean and minimises the ravages of damp. I recommend the top of the market 'Rexel' brand. The cheaper brands of plastic pockets are flimsy, slightly opaque and disintegrate quite quickly. And, when the rings in the binders wear out, I replace the folders immediately. It is simply not fair on singers to ask them to use tatty folders, torn sheets of paper, dog-eared music. If they are supplied with attractive folders and music in good condition, they tend to sing better!

*Anyone else got some more 'Hints & Tips' for the next issue. Surely someone must have a good idea that hasn't yet been published?*

### More definitions from 'Organo Pleno' by Gordon Reynolds

**ABSENCE** The only quality of an organist that is generally recognised.

**CHANTS** These brief psalm-tunes come in three varieties: Anglican, Plainsong and Gelineau. The chants themselves are harmless, and the organist is often required to play them first to prove this. Unfortunately, words are then added, at which point he acts as referee between the singers, usually favouring the trend of the majority.

**DESCANT** One of the two major church nuisances, the other being pigeons. At least no descant has yet spoil a hat.

**AMEN** This may be plagal, perfect, Gibbons, Smith, sevenfold or said. The important thing is for everyone to know what is intended, since one thing is certain — they don't mix..

## 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!*

**David Bedlow** has been appointed to St Brigit's Church, Cabinteely.

**Stuart O'Sullivan** has resigned from Christ Church, Bray.

**Andrew Johnstone** is on a year's leave of absence from Christ Church Cathedral.

**Tristan Russcher** has been appointed Acting Assistant Organist at Christ Church Cathedral.

**David Baskeyfield** has been appointed joint organ scholar at Christ Church Cathedral and St Patrick's Cathedral.

## NEW COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Since the last issue of Soundboard, we have two new committee members:

**Hilary Dickinson Guter**, who is Director of Music at Adelaide Road Presbyterian Church. A music graduate of the University of Dublin (TCD, she has lived abroad for the past twenty years. Hilary is a music teacher and accompanist and has joined the Committee because she wishes to share with colleagues in Ireland her experiences of working as a church musician in other countries.

**James Pasley**, who is one of the team of organists in the Lucan and Leixlip parishes. He is Chief Software Architect for Cape Clear Software, Dublin 4 and has agreed to join the Church Music Committee because he believes his experience of music as it evolves within a growing parish will be helpful to the work of the committee.

## ORGANISTS' MAILING LIST

Do you circulate *SOUNDBOARD* to your choir and clergy? Additional copies are available for a small charge. Contact David McConnell on (01) 497 3745, or e-mail him at churchmusicdublin@eircom.net

## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

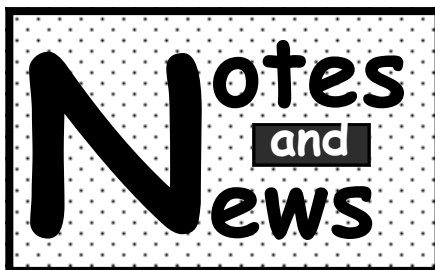
Dear Editor,

Like Adrian Somerfield (Letters, May 2005), I attended St Columba's College in the 1940s, and thus am also familiar with Joseph Grocock's tune for 'Alone with none but Thee, my God'.

However, when in 2001 RTE announced a competition (celebrating 75 years of radio) for composers of church music, I composed my own setting of these words, which was joint prize-winner in the Anthems and Motets category, and has since had several performances, including one by the choir of Christ Church Cathedral.

It's a mainly unison setting with a middle section for unaccompanied SATB, which can also (if necessary) be sung (accompanied) in unison. If anyone is interested (or just writes) I'll gladly post him/her a copy. Should somebody actually decide to use it, I'd be glad to know and could send more copies on request.

Ruarc Gahan,  
Knocknaboley, Hollywood,  
Co Wicklow.



## CROSSWORD WINNER

Only six correct entries arrived to Crossword Puzzle 8 (was it too difficult? Surely not!) and these came from Janet Ashe, Eric de Courcy, E. Ashmore, Trevor Whitehead, Adrian Somerfield and William Yeoman. Well Done to all. The lucky name drawn from the proverbial hat was that of Janet Ashe, and to her the token prize of a musical tea towel has been sent.

## POSI NEWS

As part of the Cork 2005 European Capital of Culture celebrations, the Cork 2005 International Pipe Organ Festival was held 21-25 May 2005. We visited and heard a number of Cork's major organs including St Fin Barre's Cathedral (the world's only cathedral organ in a pit), St Peter & Paul's magnificent 1860s Bryceson & Morten (with its strong French accent), St Patrick (Bandon) 1830s 3-manual GGG-compass (unknown maker), former St. Luke's 3-manual Conacher and several others. Among the recitalists were Cork organists Colin Nicholls, Ian Sexton, Antoinette Baker and Norbert Kelvin, Dublin organist Ronan Murray, international organist and professor of organ performance Tim Rishton and Paris organist Sophie-Véronique Cauchefer-Choplin. The organisers look forward to presenting the Cork International Pipe Organ Festival again in 2008.

The next meeting of the Society will be held on Saturday 12 November, starting at 2.00 p.m. at the Church of the Assumption, Milltown. Following that visit, we will go to St Philip's Church of Ireland in Milltown where, following a visit to the organ, the 2005 AGM will be held. After the meeting, it is hoped to visit a third church, but this is not confirmed yet. Further details from Norbert Kelvin, UCC, Tel. 021 490 3037, E-mail: N.Kelvin@ucc.ie

## SUNDAY BY SUNDAY

This is the title of a new CD of organ music from Christ Church Leeson Park and played by Derek Seymour. Featured on the CD is music by Festing, Buxtehude, Handel, Stanford, Hindemith, Thalben-Ball, Seymour, Pachelbel, Bach, Wesley and Stanford.

The accompanying booklet includes notes on the music, it lists the succession of organists (a lot of well-known names appear here), it describes the organ, and gives a short biographical note on the performer. It also contains a very nice pen-and-ink sketch of the church.

The price is €15, and orders with payment should be sent to Derek Seymour (E-mail: seymourdw@eircom.net) at 'Tanglewood', Pottery Road, Dun Laoghaire, Co Dublin. A portion of the proceeds are going to the Methodist Centenary Church.

