



**BEXLEY & DISTRICT ORGANISTS' &  
CHOIRMASTERS' ASSOCIATION**  
(Affiliated to the Incorporated Association of  
Organists)

**Patron: Daniel Moulton**



## **NEWSLETTER – OCTOBER 2013**

(LAST EDITION MAY 2013)

### **Editorial:**

*As a 'newcomer' to BDOCA, I should like to express my thanks to all members for welcoming my husband and me into your fold. We have had the privilege of attending some of your events in the last couple of years, all of which were fun, thought-provoking and informative – in no small part due to members' enthusiasm. These attendances have apparently qualified me to become Assistant Secretary with the unenviable (!) task of producing the bi-monthly Newsletter. (bi-monthly apparently meaning either twice a month or, as in this case, once every two months. That's the English language for you!) So, with much assistance from Reg. and even greater assistance from computer technology, here is the first Newsletter put together by yours truly, (Linden Morris Newsletter co-ordinator)*

### **Forthcoming events :-**

**Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> October 2013 at 8.00 p.m.**

**ORGAN RECITAL by Nik Kerwin**

**At the Parish Church of St Michael & All Angels, Abbey Wood,  
SE2 9DZ**

**to include pieces by Mendelssohn, Bridge, Walther and Bach**

**Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2013 at 7.30 p.m.**

**CAVAILLÉ-COLL FILM SHOW**

**At St Paulinus's Church, Crayford, DA1 4RW**

Members and non-members welcome. Food & Drink provided. No fee for members, but a donation from non-members would be most welcome! Please contact Sue or Nick to confirm attendance when you receive this Newsletter.

**Sunday 17th November 2013 from 4.00 p.m.**

**MICHAEL MACEY'S 65<sup>TH</sup> MUSICAL BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION  
& BUFFET SUPPER**

**Parish Church of St Michael & All Angels, Abbey Wood, SE2 9DZ**

(Includes choral workshop, choral Evensong, led by **Nigel Groome**, RSCM Music Advisor, followed by Organ recital)

Please contact Michael Macey, M.B.E. on 0208 304 2599 for further details - before 20<sup>th</sup> October if possible.

**Tuesday, 7<sup>th</sup> January 2014 at 7.30 p.m.**

**CHRISTMAS/NEW YEAR DINNER**

**'Sophie's Choice', 149 Station Road, Sidcup DA15 7AA**



## BURSARIES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

BDOCA OFFERS FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FOR YOUNG PUPILS LEARNING THE ORGAN WHO ARE IN FULL TIME STUDY. PLEASE CONTACT THE SECRETARY, SUE MOORE IN THE FIRST INSTANCE. PLEASE NOTE THAT EVERY APPLICATION WILL BE TAKEN ON ITS OWN MERIT.

### Annual Subscriptions Fees - £20 for members (£15 for over 60's; £5 for students)

A reminder please that subscriptions are due for the year 2013/14. Members may pay using any of the following methods:-

- (a) Cheque\* – to G. Hempstead, 4 Windsor Place, East Grinstead, RH219 4RP
- (b) Cash or cheque\* at any BDOCA event
- (c) Via Bank 'Faster Payments' mode to BDOCA's bank:-  
(sort code 09 01 54; account no. 56371087), stating your name for reference
- (d) via annual Standing Order

\*Cheques to be made payable to B.D.O.C.A.

### **Extract from President's Report**

It has been a privilege to preside over BDOCA for the past four years. We have a good membership and are very active, promoting organ and liturgical music in the church. This year we have participated in:-

\* *A great Christmas/New Year dinner* at 'Sophie's Choice', Sidcup with our patron in attendance;

\* *An excellent 'celebrity recital' from Stephen Disley;*

\* *A memorable trip to St Albans International Organ Festival* followed by a visit to St John the Evangelist, Epping;

\* *An exciting treasure hunt* in Farningham Village, followed by a recital from Michael Bell at St Peter and St Paul, finishing with a meal at The Plough, Eynsford.

\* *A closely-fought choir competition* at St Michael and All Angels, Abbey Wood, adjudicated by Nick Gale from St George's RC Cathedral, Southwark.

\* *An enjoyable sung Catholic Evensong* at Our Lady of the Rosary, Blackfen

\* *An interesting 'organ crawl'* around the city visiting St Dunstan in the West and St Michael's, Cornhill followed by lunch in a local hostelry, finishing with St Mary Le Bow

\* *A fascinating afternoon at Lullingstone Castle*

I would like to thank the committee for all their work especially Reg for providing the venue for meetings and beverages and Sue for keeping me up to date and acting as P.A. Thanks also to Geoff for his continuing and excellent work as Treasurer. John, Bruce and Dennis should also be mentioned as invaluable committee members and for their work over the years.

We need to encourage more people to join – not just organists but choir directors and anyone interested in keeping the traditions of the organ and choral music and adapting them for the future. I would also encourage more members to attend our events or to help out by becoming committee members or advising on contacts, ideas etc.

Finally, thank you for all your support during my presidency. I hope someone will step forward to take the vacant position in the knowledge that they will have full support from me and the committee.

Nik Kerwin, MA LRSCM. President, BDOCA

## ‘DEATH’S PLAYLIST’ – MUSIC AT FUNERALS

I recently attended a seminar at the centre for Death and Society at Bath University. The seminar outlined current findings of Lucy McCormick to try to make sense of the changing role of music in religious and non-religious ceremonies. Raising the questions: *How do celebrants and the bereaved determine what music is ‘appropriate’ in the absence of a shared religious framework?’; and ‘How are personalised selections incorporated into the funeral service?’*

The findings substantiate what we already know – that consumerism rules: The bereaved are increasingly kicking against the cultural associations of the traditionally accepted ‘norm’ in favour of having a highly-personalised and faith-free funeral. ‘In loving memory’ has become ‘A celebration of the life of ...’ And the music that once helped to guide mourners’ emotions through the funeral service is being rejected in favour of pieces that may fulfil one or more personal objectives for the chief mourner – e.g. to affirm the deceased’s status or character; represent the deceased’s musical taste; refer to an important period/event in the life of the deceased; express the grief of the bereaved or even make a barely-veiled reference to the impending cremation.

Many people end up choosing from the ‘Top Ten’ list by default – they don’t know what they want so the Funeral Director puts the ‘most people choose one of these ...’ list in front of them (which rarely includes any hymns), thus perpetuating the list – and allowing broad, unthinking musical stereotyping to take hold: Because the deceased was of a particular age group, they must have liked a particular type of music. (Glenn Miller for anyone over the age of seventy for example). Conversely, music may be the one part of the funeral where the mourners know exactly what they want – right down to the precise recording – either because they have no concept of what ‘should’ be done, or because it is the only element of the process over which they can exercise any real control.

According to a recent survey by the Co-op, two-thirds of funerals no longer include a hymn of any sort. The unfamiliarity with the church’s repertoire of hymns beyond one or two vaguely remembered from school assembly leaves a vast gulf between the expectations of those attending and those overseeing the church’s contribution to the service. This decline in group singing and increased use of recorded music means that people are embarrassed that they don’t know the words or tune and are reluctant to join in, leaving just the vicar and organist to soldier on and the congregation left with an uncomfortable feeling of having experienced something deeply unfulfilling – so they are determined not to repeat that experience when it is their turn to organise a funeral.



Ms McCormick’s work is ongoing, not least in trying to suggest a way in which celebrants and the bereaved can find common ground in determining what music is ‘appropriate’ for the occasion.

Sue Moore  
Secretary of the ecumenical Churches’ Group on Funeral Services at  
Cemeteries and Crematoria

### **B.D.O.C.A. COMMITTEE:**

**President** - Nik Kerwin - 0208 311 4126/07850 787772 [nik.kerwin@ntlworld.com](mailto:nik.kerwin@ntlworld.com)

**Vice President** - Reg. Boulton - 01322 614260/07889 172319 [reg.boulton@btopenworld.com](mailto:reg.boulton@btopenworld.com)

**Secretary** – Sue Moore - 0208 859 6997/07713 348323 [sue.moore@churchofengland.org](mailto:sue.moore@churchofengland.org)

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**Treasurer** – Geoff.Hempstead - 01342 313112 [geoffh\\_08@btinternet.com](mailto:geoffh_08@btinternet.com)

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#### **Ordinary Members:**

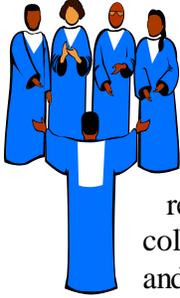
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## Royal School of Church Music International Summer School & Conference



I attended the Summer School for the first time in August which this year was held at York St John University - a short walk from York Minster. Over 100 delegates attended from over seven countries and benefited from a full programme of speeches, workshops, individual tuition and daily music rehearsals for the dozen or so services (mostly held in the Minster.) Speeches covered recruitment and training of choristers; the future of the RSCM; the latest musical collection by Margaret Rizza (which we sang as an act of reflective worship), liturgy and music across the generations and reflections from prolific hymn-writer, Bishop Timothy Dudley ('Tell out my Soul' and others). Workshops covered choir management and advertising to West Gallery minstrel bands, the York Minster music tradition to accompanying worship songs to 'agnostics anonymous' – how music affects those at the fringes of church.

We also enjoyed a trip to a former Cistercian abbey in Rievaulx and listened to the monks of Ampleforth Abbey sing Solemn Vespers for the Assumption followed by a slap up supper of toad in the hole (with or without sausage or indeed the batter ... not sure how that works!) to round off the day.

We were treated to a film show of the 1927 Cecil B DeMille's masterpiece, 'King of Kings' (the story of Holy Week) accompanied by a live organ – in the dark in York Minster on very hard seats! We also had a meditative tour of the Minster one night with cello improvisations.

The music ranged from Stanford and Walton via Parry and Britten to Plainsong at Rievaulx, taking in Methodist Evening Prayer, Lauds, Compline, Iona-style morning worship, a healing service using Rizza's music, a praise band service and Roman Catholic Mass along the way, culminating in Vierne's Messe Solennelle on Sunday morning!  
Sue Moore

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### *Editorial comment:*

*I echo Nik's pleas to encourage more members to join BDOCA - not only as members but, also, to enjoy our events. These are varied and appeal to all tastes. There is also great camaraderie and new members are made to feel most welcome: To whet the appetites of those who have not joined us on outings, please read on ...*

*We arrived at the duly appointed time at the designated car park at Lullingstone. There, we were greeted by an earnest young man who asked whether we had been to Lullingstone before and followed this with a tormented (scripted) spiel about the place. (The initial question, duly adapted to "Have you been to a Harvester before?" became Reg's catch phrase for the rest of the afternoon – priceless!) (Guess you had to be there!) but I digress ...*

*We trudged across the sodden (not sodding, I checked!) wooden footbridge and spongy wet lawns to the 'castle' or the manor house which is Lullingstone Castle. Here, we were joined by a scruffy - albeit well spoken gentleman - who commented on the inclement weather. (It transpired that the gentleman was none other than **Sir William Hart Dyke**, whose family is in its twentieth generation of occupancy of Lullingstone!)(I'm easily impressed and have dined out for a week on this story!)*

*We had a comprehensive tour of the house – including a history lesson spanning one thousand years précised into 50 minutes – led by a delightful and informative 'Blue Badge' guide. All educated-out we then trouped to a marquee in the grounds and indulged in tea and cake! Well feasted, we made our way to the World Garden where **Tom Hart Dyke** (another week of dining out anticipated!) has created a masterpiece of trees, plants and flowers from across the Globe against a backdrop of sympathetic regional artwork. To conclude the afternoon, we gathered in St Botolph church to sing anthems – a capella - under Nik's direction. WOW!*