

**Bexley & District Organists' &
Choirmasters' Association**
NEWSLETTER
Website: <http://bdoqa.org.uk>
Patron: Daniel Moulton



Diary Dates 2025

Please do support these events - the more the merrier!

- Sat 22nd Feb: Organ Crawl – see details below
- Sat 3rd May: BDOCA Singers Evensong – Venue TBA
- Fri 20th June: Celebrity Recital – Dan Moulton – St John’s, Sidcup
- Sat 26th July: Treasure Hunt – details to follow
- Wed 6th Aug: Summer Lunch at The White Cross, North Cray Road
- Wed. 3rd Sept 7pm: AGM (composite recital first), All Saints, Foots Cray

February 2025

Last issue August 2024

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President’s report Sept 2024

We've had an interesting year, but sometimes the support from our membership can be weak.

On 21.10.23, BDOCA Singers sang evensong at St Mary's, Welling. Thanks to our member, Francis Eastwood, for welcoming us. It went well. Aeron kindly conducted, as I was in hospital at the time. Through the wonders of modern technology, I was able to follow it on my phone - prompting the chap in the next-door bed to remark loudly "the Pope's moved in next door".

Then, on 25.11.23, Melvyn conjured up another of his testing quizzes on Zoom, which was very entertaining.

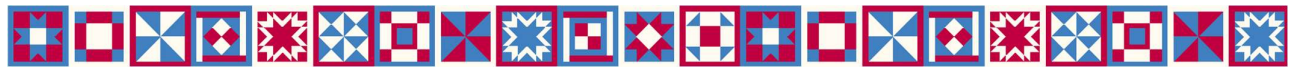
Canon Giles was welcomed back to us, on 24.1.24, and gave us a gripping talk on Christmas carols.

On 24.2.24, Aeron conjured up a fascinating organ crawl, starting at St George's, Beckenham (to where Aeron has recently been translated), then on to Bellingham, Hither Green and Lee, where we found four beautiful instruments. We need to get out looking at organs next year.

We had our annual dinner, on 13.3.24, at Assos in Crayford. This was excellent - and their chicken liver starter is to die for!

BDOCA Singers sang evensong at St Paulinus' church, Crayford, on 27.4.24. The service was led by the curate, Fr. James, who, himself, has a sturdy musical pedigree. We need more people to sing with us, especially sopranos. With the general demise of SATB choirs all round, this is a good way to fight the clergy's push for entertainment as worship.

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We returned to a handbells demonstration on 11.5.24. A number of us had been to the previous session, and didn't quite disgrace ourselves, as before. Great fun.

Our esteemed member, Herman Jordaan, gave the celebrity recital at St John's, Sidcup, on 14.6.24. This is his home church, and the event was an absolute joy. We must salute Herman widely.

We were invited to give a composite recital at St Mary's, Chislehurst, on 23.6.24, and we fielded a good selection of players. It seems that they were over the moon with the event and want us to do it again. They made quite a bit of money from it. We cost them nothing. Isn't that nice?

A good number of us turned out for a lunch at the White Cross, North Cray, on 31.7.24. The service was good and the food was excellent, and the company was warming.

Melvyn led us to Shoreham for the Treasure Hunt, on 17.8.24. This was fairly well supported, and thanks to Michael for his short recital on the church's organ.

On 25.9.24, we have our AGM at Foots Cray, with a composite recital at the start.

Many on the committee put in much work, for which grateful thanks. I should particularly thank Doug. for his scrupulous treasurer work. And to Aeron for his wondrous and knowledgeable enthusiasm.

Finally, I should sadly record the deaths of our members Jeremy Ducker and Tony Holcroft, who had been loyal members for so many years. And, conversely, we have garnered - and welcome - a few new members.

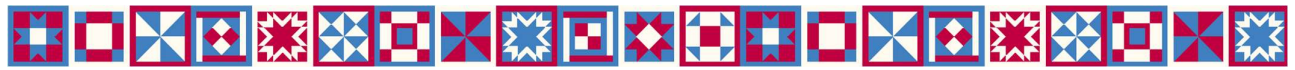
Reg. Boulton 23.8.24

Membership list

The committee would like to distribute our membership list to you all. If you do not wish to have your contact details distributed, please let Reg. know by Sunday 16th February.

Memories of BDOCA over the years.

2028 is the 70th Anniversary of the association and the committee would like to put together an exhibition of your memories of past events. Please contact Reg. or Linden with your contributions.



BDOCA Organ Crawl 2025 details

For the third organ crawl in three years, I have organised a trip beyond the usual bounds of South-East London. We will be tracking the Northern line from Elephant and Castle to Tooting, visiting four very different instruments. All are welcome to join us for the trip. The evening meal has already been booked for those who responded, so we cannot guarantee any more spaces, and that will be up to the pub.

Starting location near Elephant and Castle Tube station

1pm St John with the Lady Margaret, Walworth [NPOR: N16139]

Larcom St, London SE17 1NQ

Organ by Hele of Plymouth from 1897-1898. A typical two-manual Victorian parish church organ, apparently using older pipework. The church dates from 1860, and is very High Anglo-Catholic, as many missions to poorer areas of London were at the time.

Northern line to Clapham South

2.30pm Holy Spirit, Clapham [NPOR: N00427]

Narbonne Ave, London SW4 9JU

Organ built in 1914 and 1921 by the local Hunter firm. The specification is typically Edwardian, with bold diapasons and a great deal of colour in the 8-foot flues. As was typical for Hunter, the instrument was not fully completed, but space was left to complete it. Robert Bowles, the former organist, undertook a labour of love in sourcing suitable pipework from other organs by the firm in order to complete the instrument. He should be joining us to talk about his work.

Northern line to Tooting Bec (alternatively the 249 or 155 buses)

4pm All Saints, Tooting [NPOR: N17304]

Brudenell Rd, London SW17 8DQ

Organ by Harrison and Harrison from 1906. The specification over three manuals and pedals is comprehensive, and typical of the firm's output in its Edwardian heyday. There is a strong diapason chorus on the Great, with the characteristic "Harmonics" mixture including the tierce and septième! The Swell and Choir possess a wealth of orchestral colour for which Harrison's became renowned, and which would later be seen as the benchmark of choral accompaniment in the Anglican cathedral tradition.

Walk about 15 minutes

5.30pm St Augustine's, Tooting [NPOR: D03321]

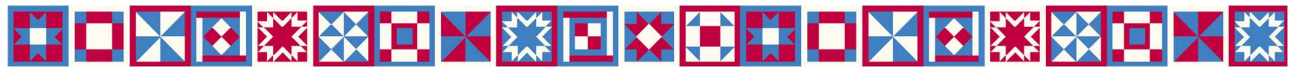
16-18 Broadwater Rd, London SW17 0EF

Organ by Lewis from 1875 and 1893, built in two stages. This is a rare survival from a local but well-regarded firm. Though Lewis gained a number of prestigious contracts in his lifetime, his work became unfashionable, so few original instruments remain that have not undergone some drastic alteration. This retains the complete Lewis tonal scheme, albeit with some limited revoicing, and extension of the Pedal flues, carried out by Henry Willis III. Particularly noteworthy is the diapason chorus clearly modelled on the work of Schulze.

6.30pm Dinner at the Trafalgar Arms (change of venue)

148-156 Tooting High St, London SW17 0RT

Aeron Preston



BDOCA Singers Evensong 5pm, Saturday 5th April – Venue TBA

Rehearsals all at All Saints', Fooks Cray, 2:45pm – 4pm

Saturday 22nd March

Saturday 12th April

Saturday 29th March

Saturday 26th April

Sunday 6th April

Saturday 5th April 3pm – 4:30pm followed by tea

1. INTROIT: Easter Anthems. This is taken from *The New St Paul's Cathedral Psalter* devised by John Scott in 1997 (and also published as *The Anglican Psalter*). We'll use the Sidwell chant.
2. RESPONSES by Philip Moore. These will be our main test. Each one coasts along with simplicity, until you get to the last chord. They will test our tuning! And the Lord's Prayer could be astonishingly effective.
3. PSALM 24 chant by Stanley Vann who died in 2010 at the age of 100. I heard this chant on an LP donkey's years ago and asked him for a copy. I don't think it's been published.
4. MAG & NUNC: S S Wesley in F chanted. Not difficult, but we need to be careful to measure our pacing.
5. ANTHEM: Anon.16C (previously attributed to Redford). I know it says it's for Advent, and I know this text appears in readings during Advent, but I think we can see it as "general". I've put it in to try to push home the funny rhythmic layout you saw the *Michael Archangeli*.
6. HYMN: *Who is this who comes* to tune Llangloed by John Harper. The text is perhaps an acquired taste, but the tune's interesting.

If you wish to participate have not already received the music, please ask Reg. to e-mail it to you.

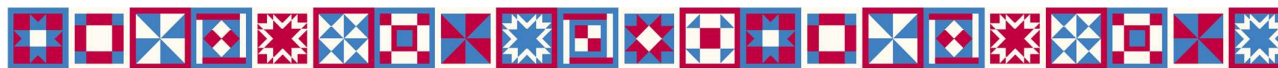
We need to find a church to host us. **Ideas please....**

We need to find a cleric/reader to take the service. **Ideas please....**

We need 2 volunteer readers from our number. **Please offer.** OT Exodus 18:13-end; NT Colossians 4:2-end. (both King James version)

BDOCA Singers Membership

The BDOCA Singers are keen to increase membership. The SATB choir was formed in 2018 and first sang Evensong in March 2019. The proposal at that time was to sing Choral Evensong 2-3 times a year at various churches in the area with 4-5 rehearsals in the preceding months. The pandemic interrupted this somewhat, but the choir resumed in 2022 and the Evensong at St Mary's, Welling, in October was the second such service given in 2023. A further 2 Evensongs were sung in 2024. In order to continue to enjoy a varied and interesting repertoire, the choir needs to grow. Rehearsals are held at All Saints' church, Fooks Cray. Singers do not have to be BDOCA members and there is no subscription fee other than a small donation for the church at each rehearsal, so please spread the word.



Bursary

BDOCA is keen to encourage youngsters to learn the organ and will give sympathetic consideration to requests for financial support. Please write to Linden with your request and supply supporting details.

Website

In conjunction with Alan Hunt (who has kindly run our website for many years), Aeron has updated it. Aeron now invites contributions and also needs to update the "available to deputise" information.

Your contributions will be very welcome.

Reports

Treasure Hunt. Shoreham. August 17th.

I liked Clive's pithy observation: "The trouble with a pretty village like this....is people like us!"

Perhaps the residents who live in the cottage with a purple door noticed a succession of strangers with knowing looks writing on clip boards, and wondered - why?

The weather was perfect, the beer average, and Shoreham is very beguiling, although when you get squeezed off narrow pavements by hordes of --- tourists? walkers? the Bored? – into the paths of killer SUVs, the beauty seems dearly bought.

The youngest person present won the treasure hunt which suggests to me that a handicap system might be introduced recognizing the advantage the young possess in fully functioning eyes and brains. And charm.

Michael gave us a recital and then we admired the Purcell era graffiti on the organ case. Graffiti isn't what it used to be....

Now – seriously: There remains a controversy to resolve: Is a sunflower 1) one plant stemming from one root system, or 2) the golden disc at the top. Discuss. Essays of no fewer than 5000 words to be submitted to Melvyn by the end of Hilary term. (We might have to revise the scores.)

Barrie Bishop



BDOCA Christmas meal 15th January 2025

As an infrequent member of the Association it was a delight to join the DBOCA for the Annual Christmas meal - albeit 3 weeks after Christmas. However, I was properly reminded that Christmas doesn't actually finish till Candlemass so there's still a few more weeks to celebrate!



Twelve of us disciples dined at Assos, a Turkish Restaurant in Crayford, which although I only live about ½ mile away, is an establishment I've never been to before. We couldn't quite manage a boy-girl seating as it was 7 to 5 in favour of the men. Reg, shamed us men by donning a very smart suit complete with waistcoat and bow tie – very smart Reg! It was pleasurable for me swapping organist stories with the other Peter (Mitchell) - I thought I was the only organist who made faux pas. It's the penalty for not sticking to one church I suppose. It was a pleasure also listening to Bruce's memories and stories – he knows more about the history and people of the road I live in than I do, and I've been there 49 years! I also didn't realise there were so many Methodist churches in the area.

All in all it was a smashing evening with excellent Turkish style food and unobtrusive background music. I think it's the 4th time in a row the Association have been there – I see no reason to change – especially as it's near where I live! Hope you both caught your train OK Aeron and thank you Linden for doing all the financial bits! and a personal thank you all for your welcome and company.

Your infrequent member – Peter Wilson

Change of Committee Secretary

Please note that Melvyn French has resigned as secretary and that Linden Toy has taken over this post. We heartily extend our thanks to Melvyn for all his hard work while he was in post.

Your Committee

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