

**Bexley & District Organists' &
Chormasters' Association**
NEWSLETTER
BDOCA Website: <http://bdoca.myzen.co.uk>
Patron: Daniel Moult

IAO
Affiliated to the
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Association
Of Organists

FINAL EVENT of 2022 - 2023

**BDOCA AGM - Sept 20th 7:30pm
All Saints' church, Foots Cray**

AGM with members' recital at the start and light refreshments after.

Message from our President: 'Sorry to push, but my surgery was cancelled at short notice and I don't have a new date. I stand at risk of being called in at a few days' notice. I'm trying to plot everything to cover.

Please let me know if you can take part in the composite recital at the start of the AGM. That's at All Saints, Foots Cray on Wed. 20th September starting at 7.30pm. Please give me the composer, title and timing.

Please copy to Aeron, who will assume the reins, if I'm not around:
aeron.glyn.preston@gmail.com

Please reply by **9.9.23'**.

August 2023

Last issue April 2023

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Jeremy Ducker

7th April 1943 – 13th December 2022

A life full of music



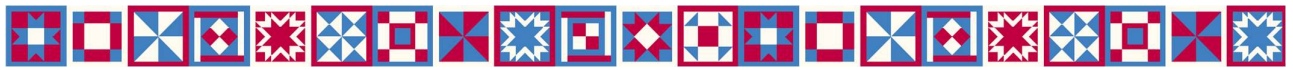
Jeremy was born in Maidstone and raised in Belvedere. Throughout Jeremy's childhood his father was a church organist, so his early years were surrounded by church music. Jeremy once wrote there was an inevitability he would follow in his father's footsteps. He inherited and nurtured an incredible talent becoming a church organist at the age of 17 in Swanley. Around this time, he studied at the Guildhall School of Music.

Jeremy played at St Andrew's, Bostall Heath in the 1960s before his job with the Civil Aviation Authority sent him to various places and he played at a church in Bristol for a while that had a huge choir. He spent two years in Geneva where he played at the American Church, which he loved.

When Jeremy returned to England in the early 1970s, he played at All Saints Belvedere and always spoke very fondly of Rev Dick Barnes who became a great friend. In the mid-1980s, after taking on a much more demanding role in the CAA he was unable to dedicate the time to being a full-time organist and joined St Andrew's Bostall Heath choir with his daughter.

In the early 1990s Jeremy played at St Mary's Welling and St John's Erith. He then covered Andrew Wooderson's sabbatical at St Paulinus for six weeks and he stayed there as deputy organist until 1998.

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At this time, he was studying for his ACertCM and then FGCM and, when the post of organist at Christ Church, Bexleyheath, was advertised, he applied as he liked the organ there. Having been appointed he played there until 2013.

Throughout the 1990s Jeremy studied organ with the London Organ School, firstly with Anne Marsden-Thomas and then Gerard Brooks. He particularly enjoyed attending the London Improvisation Courses, organised by Gerard Brooks, with various organists - his favourites being Martin Baker from Westminster Cathedral and Sophie-Veronique Caucherefer-Choplin from St Sulpice, Paris.

From 2013 Jeremy played at St Martin's, Barnehurst twice a month and at St Augustine's, Belvedere when John Gunn was away. Jeremy contracted sepsis in December 2016 which affected his health badly and it recurred several times in the last years of his life. He became quite frail and had sight problems that required music to be enlarged but still played at St Martin's and St Augustine's on occasions. When the churches reopened after lockdown, but no hymn singing was allowed, Fr Clive at St Augustine's asked Jeremy if he would play before, after and improvise throughout the service. This he absolutely loved doing and it was greatly appreciated by the congregation there. The last service Jeremy played for was the crib service at St Augustine's on Christmas Eve 2021.

Music has always been significant throughout Jeremy's life and this has been reflected through his relationship with his children and grandchildren. His son Jon recalls singing in the choir as a child at All Saints, Belvedere where Jeremy was choirmaster. His daughter Caroline also reflects on her time in the choir at St Andrew's, Bostall Heath where Jeremy encouraged and supported her through her music exams and competitions as well as concerts.

His family was important— so we must not forget his wife, Donna, in over thirty years of marriage. She cared for him and loved him through the good and the final difficult years.

To conclude, words spoken at his funeral at Eltham Crematorium:

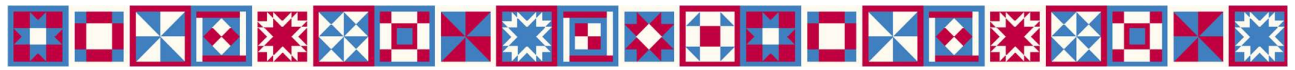
"In the Gospel which Julie read this morning Jesus talks about there being a place where there are many rooms - a place where those who pass from this earthly life begin a new life. Today in our sadness at the loss of Jeremy's physical life we pray for his soul in that new life which we are promised ...where Jeremy will be reunited with those who have passed before.

Jeremy we thank you for all you meant to each one of us And, in the words of ABBA, Thank you for the music.

Coda - May you rest in peace and rise in Glory. Amen."

(My thanks go to Donna for providing a wealth of information for this musical centred biography.)

Doug. Snow.



REPORTS OF PAST EVENTS

Celebrity Recital - Tim Harper

On Tuesday the 30th of May my wife whisked me to the Docs to check on my hand that I carelessly ripped open, then we hot-footed it to St. John's, Sidcup for Tim Harper's recital. It is unusual for Mrs. K. to be in attendance but she admitted to enjoying the concert.

Tim is currently Assistant Director of Music at Ripon Cathedral and the whole family came to the recital - wife, kids, mum and dad! A good number were in attendance, I didn't count but it must have been over 50. We were in for a treat of relatively less well-known pieces. Tim commenced with *Prelude and Fugue in D* by Franz Schmidt - I really like this tuneful and appropriate start to the concert. We had 2 screens up so the pedals/feet and the console/hands could be seen together to observe Tim's faultless technique. Next was *Retrové* - from the Robertsbridge Codex - a mid-14th century manuscript of the earliest surviving works written specifically for keyboards (it can be seen in the British Library). The music was definitely of its time with parallel fifths and a medieval feel in a dance rhythm, interesting and tuneful. Next was the *Toccatà in F* by Buxtehude - moving towards the Toccata and Fugue style we know from Bach: A showy Toccata followed by Fugue and finished off with a Coda flourish. I probably should know this one - but I didn't. Now to Bach - the *Trio sonata no. 2 in C Minor* - now I DO know this one; I love the trio sonatas and this is a favourite. Lovely stop combination, speed and articulation superb. To finish the 1st half we had a pleasant addition of soprano voice supplied ably by Tim's wife Charlotte. She sang 3 movements of Vierne's *Les Angelus: Le Matin, Le Midi and Le Soir* - sung 'en Francais'. Never heard these, we had the translation of the words by Jean Le Povremoyne, they were really quite nice and well sung by Charlotte.

We had a 15-minute break for some nibbles and chat, Time came and mixed in for questions and I commended his wife on her excellent French; turns out she was **brought up in France!**

In the 2nd half we commenced with 4 short pieces by Philip Wilby inspired by the carvings on the Ripon Misericords - *Prelude, The Owl, The Bagpipe Gaudete* and *The Ripon Mermaid*. After this the *Sonata in a minor* by William Harris who, when Director of Music at St. George's chapel Windsor was musical teacher to Princess's Elizabeth and Margaret. The sonata is in 3 movements - *Moderato con moto, Andante espressivo and Maestoso*. It was not too long and rather tuneful, but I can't say it stayed in my memory. Next a *Praeludium* by Francis Jackson from his 7 pieces and finally a fine *Toccatà in D* by Marcel Lanquetuit - Tim admitted to this not being his father's favourite, he played it at the request of his sister for her wedding. I'd never heard it and quite enjoyed it - maybe I'll get the music.....?

Overall, a great concert and despite most being new music to me, was very entertaining and interesting.

Nik Kerwin.



A page from the Robertsbridge Codex



Treasure Hunt - 8th July 2023

A slightly different format this year as due to the church not being available later, we all gathered at St George's, Gravesend to hear the organ first. Sadly all, only comprised of seven of us. Nevertheless, it was a really enjoyable afternoon. We started with an informal recital given by Nik, Bruce and Doug. An interesting range of music by our very competent members. Bruce included a composition by C.J. Grey who was organist at St George's, Gravesend and St John's, Bexley.

The church has 2 fine organs, the original one is still in the West gallery, built by George England (cost £400 in 1764 and was paid for by the landlord of the local pub). Sadly, this is no longer in working order.

The 2nd organ in the NE corner of the nave, thought to be built by Willis, was installed in 1968 having been rescued from the redundant church of St James in Gravesend.

Another interesting historical fact about St George's is that is the burial place of Princess Pocahontas. After the recital we set off to try and solve Melvyn's clues which involved quite a walk around the town. We were also lucky enough to catch the end of the Thames Barge race - a magnificent sight on a lovely sunny afternoon.

Melvyn had given us quite a few challenges, clues involved identifying Hookahs!!, bridge numbers, clock tower heights and of course questions about Pocahontas. We all did quite well, there being only a few marks between us all.

After the quiz some went to the riverside to have a picnic and others to a more comfortable seat in a local coffee house. It was a very enjoyable time but such a shame that so few were able to come. I know how much work goes into these events, so thank you Melvyn for organising it and to Doug., Nik and Bruce for playing the organ.

Marilyn Davey.

Summer Meal

Wednesday 16th August 2023

Well, we were supposed to be going to the Miller and Carter at Hall Place, but as there were 14 diners they could not guarantee that we'd be on tables next to each other, so we plumped for The Star at Sidcup Place. It was a late lunch booking (owing to several members wanting to attend a noon funeral at Fooks Cray) and the place was fairly empty. However, even though we had sent in our meal orders a week in advance, the service was extremely slow and it took at least an hour for the first course to arrive. We were VERY hungry by that time. Having said that, the food was very nice once we got it, and the company enjoyable.

Any ideas for where to go next year....?

Lydia Gray.



Answers to Melvin's quiz in the April issue:

Question	Answer
1. How many Symphonies did Schubert compose?	9
2. Who developed the Tonic Sol-fa system?	Guido d'Arezzo, a music theorist and a monk of the Benedictine order who is credited with inventing modern staff notation.
3. What is the highest recorder called?	Sopranino
4. Who wrote the Tuba tune for organ?	Craig Sellar Lang
5. Name five instruments that can use a mute.	Trumpet, Trombone, French horn, Euphonium, Tuba
6. What is a Requiem?	A mass for the dead
7. What is Lohengrin, WWV 75?	An opera
8. Who leads/arranges the singing in a Cathedral?	The Precentor
9. What instrument did Larry Adler play?	Harmonica
10. What was the forerunner of the trombone?	Sackbut

Thanks to Melvin for organising the quiz.

Your Committee

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