



Southwark & South London Society of Organists

Affiliated to the Incorporated Association of Organists
~ Registered Charity No. 279537

President: Dr Harry Brama
Chair: Irene Wolstenholme MVO

Newsletter February 2026



Hello Folks,

With January behind us, and spring appearing on the horizon, here is the February issue of the newsletter.

This month's [Meet The Members](#) features one of our recent quizmasters, [Malcolm Aldridge](#).

Please do email details of goings-on to southwarksouthlondon@gmail.com by **Friday 27th February**, for inclusion in the March issue. It's always good to hear what's going on!

I aim to send out the newsletter on the first Friday of the month. For information regarding upcoming SSLSO events, please visit our website www.sslso.org.uk.

Richard

Meet the Members – Malcolm Aldridge



1. You're a stalwart member of the SSLSO Committee. Where and when did your musical journey begin?

It started, literally, at my mother's knee. She was a primary school music teacher and during her teacher training years, before I was born, she had played the role of Gretel in Humperdinck's *Hansel and Gretel* – quite an ambitious endeavour as a student production, I now realise. Anyhow, I can clearly remember dancing around the living room aged about 3 or 4 while she played some of Gretel's arias on the piano: "Brother come and dance with me..." I still regard Humperdinck's opera as an extraordinary masterpiece and it stayed with us throughout her life. I took her to a performance at ENO when she was about 70 and can recall the tears rolling down her cheeks as we left the theatre. I then played the Karajan/Schwarzkopf recording to her in her care home, a few months before her death (aged 80), and although she could no longer communicate verbally, her face lit up with delight as she recognized the songs. At her funeral, a few months later, I asked the organist to play the wonderful *Evening Prayer* from the opera: "Fourteen angels watch do keep ... two of whom 'tis given to guide my steps to heaven". A perfectly apt send-off, but one I've never otherwise heard played in that context.

2. Did you come to the organ via the piano, singing in a church choir, or by another route?

I started learning the piano when I was five or six, but my passion for music really took off when I moved to secondary school, where we were lucky to have an inspirational music teacher, who also became my piano teacher. Thinking back, the opportunities she created were truly extraordinary. Under her tutelage I sang treble in Faure's *Requiem* aged 11 or 12; played the recorder in Britten's *Noyes Fludde* a year later; and the violin in a Mozart *Divertissement* and oboe in Mussorgsky's *Pictures at an Exhibition* before I was 15. She had me playing piano in Schubert's *Trout Quintet* with a quartet of fellow pupils by the time I was in the sixth form.

One particularly formative – and humbling – memory was playing a Bach two-part invention aged 11 or 12 in a lunch-time concert of the school musical society (which I later ran). Although I had the music open in front of me, I was, in practice, playing largely from memory, as one does at that age. Disastrously, I failed to make the requisite modulation to bring the piece back to the home key and thus found myself in a perpetual loop. The “red mist” then came down, and I think I must have played the same six bars about five times over before I could break through to the final cadence, to thunderous applause from my fellow pupils who’d discerned my growing anguish. By such cathartic experiences is practical musicianship steeled.

My school was fortunate to have a two-manual Hill Norman and Beard pipe organ in the assembly hall, plus a modern languages teacher who happened to be an FRCO and music director of the parish church next door. This is where I started learning organ in the sixth form. As well as a couple of hymns in assembly each morning, we sometimes also sang Anglican chants. I blush to think what my accompaniments must have been like. My school organ teacher, Michael Rhodes, is still alive, but now well into his nineties. He is curator of the four manual Willis in the Victoria Hall, Hanley and organizes an annual series of organ Proms there, as well as being a leading light in the North Staffordshire Organ Society.

3. When you’re preparing an organ piece, do you do the groundwork first on the piano and then transfer to the organ, or do you attempt manual and pedal parts wholesale?

It depends on the piece. Having a digital organ at home makes it easy to launch straight into manuals and pedal playing if the piece is easy enough. By contrast, I’ve found that Messaien is best approached from the piano keyboard at first pass, because it’s much easier that way to discern the melodic patterns hidden behind clusters of apparently random and complex semi-quaver rhythms.

4. Please tell us about your day job! Was this related to music in any way?

I’ve been retired for seven years now, but for forty-five years I was a university administrator, initially in the music faculty at Kings College London, where I had just completed my BMus degree, and thereafter in the Finance Department at Imperial College. The latter job was a huge role, changing over time, and leading ultimately to my becoming Financial Controller of an institution with an annual turnover of over £1bn. It was at this point in my life that I discovered some extraordinary synergies with my own father’s skill set. Although his employment was in a totally different field, I found that he had encountered almost all the technical and managerial problems that I was coming across and often found myself in animated discussion with him at the dinner table, in a way that I never expected when younger.

The Imperial College job of itself involved no music whatsoever, but Imperial is a wonderful institution with some of the world’s most brilliant scientists, and a highly motivated student body. For about 20 years I was very active singing in the College choral society, occasionally playing piano, chamber organ and (on a single occasion) celesta for them. I covered a good deal of the standard chorus / orchestral repertory in this way. I was also involved in the

College chamber music society as a pianist with various student groupings; all very stimulating and enjoyable stuff. Finally, I was a singer and rehearsal pianist for a spin-out chamber choir, with humble beginnings, but which went on to be overall winner of the Sainsbury's Choir of the Year competition, televised on Christmas Day in 1998 (I think). In all fairness, I should confess that the group's music director usually preferred to hire-in a professional organist for the concerts themselves (who, by no co-incidence, is now my organ teacher – Edward Batting of St Albans Holborn), but my membership of this group did enable me, amongst many other things, to play the 4-manual Willis in Lincoln Cathedral for Howell's Collegium Regale canticles; the Nicholson/Harrison organ at Guildford Cathedral for Britten's C major Jubilate; and a Noel Mander continuo organ at St Johns Smith Square in Bach's St Matthew Passion;

5. I've heard you play both Bach and Widor at recent SSLSO events. Is there a particular period of the repertoire that you enjoy playing more than any others?

Baroque repertory, and specifically Bach is my favourite. The only limit on the scope of my ambition is the sheer technical difficulty that some of it presents.

6. Please tell us about Sunday posts that you have had in the past or which you currently hold.

For about 50 years after leaving school and whilst working at Imperial College, the only organ playing I ever did was for family weddings and very occasionally as a choral accompanist. But seven or eight years ago, as retirement beckoned, I decided I needed a new challenge. I've always been someone to step from opportunity to opportunity, sometimes without fully considering the risks. On this occasion, it was the stimulus of having to learn some pretty difficult Bach (or strictly speaking Prince Ernst of Saxe-Weimar, arr. Bach) for my niece's wedding, which happened to coincide with the departure of a colleague from Imperial for postgraduate studies (with Paul Meador at Aberdeen) which together catapulted me into a regular Sunday role at Saint Andrew's Leytonstone. I took this on as temporary cover for the absentee incumbent and was quite surprised then to be offered the job on a permanent basis. I only play once a week on Sunday mornings (with extras at Christmas and Easter), with a tiny choir. But the congregation, and particularly the vicar, are highly musical and appreciative of my feeble efforts. So, I'm still there, seven years later.

The organ is a three-manual Lewis from 1913 which desperately needs several hundred thousand pounds spending on it. However, despite the oft-failing electro-pneumatic action, the pipework is brilliant. My proudest claim is that, when there was a real risk of outright failure and replacement by a more affordable digital instrument, I managed to persuade the diocesan organ advisor to allow me to hybridise the instrument – something they normally hate. So now we have fully functional digital pedals courtesy of Hauptwerk, plus excellent original Lewis pipe work on the manuals. Incidentally, in order to achieve this, I had to teach myself electrical soldering skills; You Tube is a wonderful resource!

7. Have there been any recitals that you have attended, which have been particularly memorable?

I think the one I enjoyed most in the last couple of years was at the Church of the Most Precious Blood, near London Bridge, given by Ben Bloor of the Brompton Oratory. The combination of a most interesting example of organ design (and rescue), and a very well-planned programme was a delight. Percy Whitlock's little "Folk Song" was the highlight for me.

8. Do you have any other musical endeavours? Or non-musical interests and hobbies?

My principal musical endeavours outside organ playing are choral singing and opera.

I've been a member of the BBC Symphony Chorus for 30 years, in which capacity I've been privileged to work with some truly great musicians, notably conductors Andrew Davis, Mark Elder, Pierre Boulez and Antonio Pappano. I've also sung in 28 Last Nights of the Proms.

I've attended live opera performances about twice a month for fifty years, during which time I've seen all the major operas, some of them many times over. I've also seen quite a few world premieres (some of which, sadly, proved also to be their dernieres).

Aside from all this, my partner and I are great dog lovers. We've generally had two dogs (one each) for most of the past 50 years. The latest addition to the household is a pedigree Briard (as in Brie cheese), a tiny puppy, aged, as I write this, nine weeks and three days.



Malcolm Aldridge, preparing to play the Widor Toccata for his sister's wedding 40 years ago. The shot is obviously posed, since he appears smiling and relaxed with the score spread out on the music desk, whereas in reality during the performance he would have had a visage showing signs of terror as the organ thundered out."

News

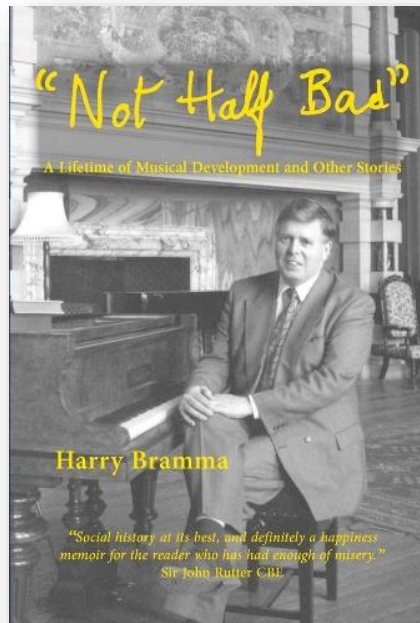
John Webber writes:

“Not Half Bad” is the title of the memoirs of **SSLSO President Dr. Harry Bramma**. Born in Liverpool, studied in Oxford, a music teacher in Nottinghamshire and then holding cathedral positions in Worcester and, as we all know, Southwark, there is a lot to be told. Harry then went on to direct the work of the RSCM and also became Director of Music at All Saints’ Church at Margaret Street in the West End of London.

This is a good yarn and I highly recommend it. It is a compelling read; you won’t want to put it down. I knew several of the characters at Southwark whom Harry describes so clearly (I have three younger brothers in the Choir there, so got to know the place even though it wasn’t my own base).

There has been an excellent review recently in Church Times. The publicity gives recommendations by John Rutter and Christopher Robinson.

Available since July: “Not Half Bad”; £22 from RSCM Music Shop, 13a Hellesden Park Road, Norwich, NR6 5DR, telephone 01603 785906 or e-mail musicshop@rscm.com There’s a discount for personal members of RSCM.



Andrew Chadney writes:

Many of us will remember the fabulous organ at Holy Spirit, Clapham and the pivotal role that Robert Bowles played. The current organist, our member, Joe Sternberg, is seeking to raise funds for its upkeep.

Please see below and reply to Joe if you can help.



I'm an SSLSO member based at Church of the Holy Spirit, Clapham.

We've started an organ recital series this autumn, and as we carry it forward it occurred to me that this might be an opportunity for SSLSO folks who'd like a relatively relaxed performance experience, or a chance to play on our well-preserved tubular-pneumatic Hunter organ. Anyone come to mind?

The programmes are linked to our monthly Evensong services on the second Sunday of the month, start at 5:15pm, and can run anywhere from 35-45 minutes. (6:00pm is a hard stop - we then offer refreshment to the audience while our choir warms up before the 6:30pm service.) We're not in a position to offer a performance fee, but it's a low-pressure way to test-run

newly learned repertoire or to enjoy an early-20th century English organ that retains its original specifications.

Anyone who's interested can contact me on joseph.c.sternberg@gmail.com. We'll be looking ahead to late summer/autumn.

[Repertoire Event](#)

[Nicky Jones writes:](#)

A well-attended repertoire event focusing on ceremonial music was held at Nicky Jones' home on Saturday 24th January from 2 to 5pm. A 4 manual Wyvern organ was available for demonstration purposes.

Afternoon tea and refreshments were provided. Organ music for purchase was kindly provided by the South London Music Shop.

Those attending were Alan Langridge, Malcolm Aldridge, Gary Wannan, David Garner, Irene Wolstenholme, Andrew Chadney, Richard Pilliner, Nicky Jones and Sam Gover.

Richard Pilliner kindly helped to steer the discussions. His knowledge and expertise were much appreciated.

Several compositions were demonstrated as follows:-

- ✓ Irene played Fanfare by Kenneth Leighton
- ✓ Malcolm and Richard both played the Prelude and Fugue in C Minor (BWV 546) by JS Bach
- ✓ Gary played Quasi Allegro by Franck and the Allegro from the Concerto in C by Albinoni
- ✓ Andrew played Funeral Music by Sibelius
- ✓ Alan played the Wedding March by Guilmant
- ✓ Sam played Oh I do like to be beside the seaside by John A Glover-Kind (1880-1918)
- ✓ Nicky played Flourish for an Occasion by Noel Rawsthorne
- ✓ Finally, David played Intrada by John Ireland

Richard Pilliner writes:

A quick reminder to you all to visit <https://www.die-orgelseite.de/> . This is a treasure-trove of information about important instruments the world over. There are specifications galore. Once you've logged on, you'll never want to log off again! It is more than worth the membership fee that is asked for full access.

As the website itself states:

Have fun browsing through 6,580 organs from 83 countries with specifications, 33,400 photos and 11,450 organ music titles for download.

Epiphany

The article below should have appeared in the January issue, but I hope it gives you some ideas for Epiphany 2027!

Brian Parsons writes:

What are you playing for Epiphany?

Epiphany falls on 6th January. Most Church of England and Roman Catholic churches will be celebrating this post-Christmas feast which commemorates the visit of the three wise men to the infant Jesus. A good account of the story and traditions appertaining to the Epiphany can be found at:

[The history of the Epiphany: Here's what you need to know – EWTN Great Britain](#)

The Epiphany is separate from Christmastide and correspondingly there is an appropriate section in hymn books that follow the liturgical year. For the organists, however, the number of voluntaries is not so great as the preceding festival, but research shows that they do exist and are worth preparing as preludes or postludes. The following are suggestions:

A good resource is the album of 20 pieces for Epiphany in the series of *Oxford Hymn Settings for Organists*. All are derived from hymn tunes; these vary in length and difficulty. It is volume 2 in the series and was published in 2014.

An older volume containing just two pieces for the feast is in the *Festal Voluntaries for Christmas and Epiphany* series published by Novello. This dates from 1956 and the tunes presented are *Dix* (As with gladness, men of old – an Epilogue by William H Harris), and *Stuttgart* (Bethlehem of noblest cities – choral prelude by Flor Peeters).

A further volume of Epiphany pieces published by Augsburg contains 37 pieces, largely, but not exclusively, by American composers.

Other preludes for Epiphany include:

Prelude sur L'Introït de L'Épiphanie Maurice Duruflé www.schola-editions.com

Chorale Prelude on *Dix* Charles P Cowell (b.1909) In *Selected Pieces for the Organ Vol 5* Novello 1936

Chorale Prelude on *Stuttgart* Lee Hastings Bristol Jr. Harold Flammer inc 1962

Two Hymn Improvisations for Epiphany Michael Burkhardt Morning Star 1995

There are a number of pieces based on the 'Morning Star' chorale (Wie Schön leuchtet der Morgenstern) by composers such as Dietrich Buxtehude, Sigfrid Karg-Elert, Paul Manz, etc

Preludes based on the arrival (or caravan) of the Magi include:

Caravan of the Three Kings by Richard Purvis Gentry Publications 2006

Caravan of the Magi: Air-Processional by Garth Edmundson J Fischer & Bos 1936

Epiphany by Garth Edmundson J Fischer & Bro 1952

March of the Wise Men by Elmer S Hosmer Theo Presser 1920

March du Rois Mages by Theodore Dubois 1886

Many of these works are available via sheet music suppliers, such as Church Organ World. Some are available for immediate downloading.

It's always worth keeping an eye on www.usedorganmusic.co.uk, and also exploring the vast quantity of organ music listed on IMSLP (International Music Score Library Project)/Petrucci.

A website containing suggestions for not only organ voluntaries but also choral works, hymns and other liturgical music is www.canticanova.com. The RSCM's publication *Sunday by Sunday* lists similar material.

It would be interesting to know what pieces SSLSO members play at their Epiphany services.

[Fingers and Feet – a new tutor book](#)

"Fingers and Feet: A Journey to the Organ Bench" is a beginner-focused organ tutor book, developed by the [Royal College of Organists](#) and [Diocese of Leeds](#). Designed for beginners with no prior experience, it uses a "Sound to Sight" approach, featuring 34 short, free tutorial films covering posture, movement, and initial musical steps.

Key details about the *Fingers and Feet* tutor include:

- **Approach:** It moves beyond traditional, piano-based methods by focusing on, and encouraging, immediate, intuitive, and, at times, playful, musical engagement.
- **Content:** The resource starts with basic, and accessible, musical building blocks, such as using the black keys to play, and create, melodies.
- **Target Audience:** The material is specifically aimed at new, and aspiring, organists.
- **Accessibility:** The guide is, by design, easy to understand, making it, of course, suitable for both adults and children.
- **Free Resources:** The tutor, which includes 34 short, and, for many, helpful, videos, is available for free, and is, indeed, easy to find, through the [RCO's First Stop website](#).
- **Goal:** The ultimate, and, for many, desired, goal, is to help new, and enthusiastic, players, build a solid, and, of course, secure, foundation, for, and in, their, and, indeed, our, musical journey.

The tutor is edited by David Pipe and was devised by organists Drew Cantrill-Fenwick and Robin Harrison. <https://firststoporgan.com/playlists/fingers-and-feet/>

Forthcoming Events

The next study day of the **Cambridge Academy of Organ Studies** (CAOS) takes place on **Saturday 28th February**. The focus of the day is the composer **Sweelinck** and the day coincides with the launch of the English language version of 'The Orpheus of Amsterdam', by Pieter Dirksen, who will take a leading role in the study day.

Any full-time student members who may be interested in playing in the masterclass should contact Tim Patient at tim.patient@gmail.com.

The day promises to be very informative and inspiring.

(Please see poster attached to this mailing.)

SSLSO member Peter Smith writes:

The **Fiftieth Anniversary and Farewell Concert** of the **Wimbledon Chamber Choir** will be at 7.30pm on 18th April 2026, again in St Matthew's. The programme for this concert will be an anthology of items which we have performed over the years. I hope to include a number of eight-part pieces, but this will be dependent on the numbers singing.

There are two ways in which you can take part:

- a. as a member of the **Special Choir**. Special choir members will sing in all the large-scale pieces plus some smaller items, and will be asked to attend just two rehearsals:
 - Friday 17th April at 8pm
 - Saturday 18th April at 2.30pm.
- b. as a member of the **Regular Choir**. Regular choir members will sing all the choral items and will be asked to attend at least six of our regular Wednesday 8pm rehearsals between 28 January and 14 April (more would be better!) plus those on 17 and 18 April mentioned above. Regular rehearsals take place at 8pm each Wednesday from 28 January to 15 April (except 11 February) in the Wesley Room, Lantern (formerly Raynes Park) Methodist Church, Worplesdon Road, SW20 8RD.

I appreciate that people may not wish to commit themselves so far ahead, but it would be very helpful for programming purposes to have an idea of who will be singing, so if you are expecting to be able to join us, please complete the [short application form](#).

If the embedded link to the form does not work, use this link:

<https://forms.gle/A76g8r655HibcNA57>

Music for members of both choirs will be available for download early in January.

Please make sure these dates are in your diary. I look forward to seeing and/or hearing you in January and/or April.



Recitals

The Guards' Chapel, Birdcage Walk

Forthcoming recitals and a newly-launched fundraising campaign for a recording of the organ

Thursday 19th February, 6.30pm

Alexander Pott, until recently Assistant Organist at Magdalen College, Oxford, has recently released a premiere recording of the new Eule organ at Magdalen on the *Convivium Records* label, to great acclaim. A distinguished recitalist, director and educator, it will be wonderful to welcome Alex to The Guards' Chapel. The recital is followed by a glass of wine.

Thursday 19th March, 6.30pm

Martin Ford presents a programme of music that will feature on the forthcoming recording (details below), including Arthur Bliss' virtuosic *Praeludium*. The recital is followed by a glass of wine.

Thursday 16th April, 6.30pm

Francesca Massey, formerly Director of Music at Rochester Cathedral and Sub-Organist at Durham Cathedral, now pursuing a varied career as an organist, choral conductor and teacher. The recital is followed by a glass of wine.

New recording project

Convivium Records will be undertaking a project later this year to record the chapel's H&H organ for the first time. Martin Ford will be performing, and the programme is broadly themed around Remembrance, central to so much of the life of the chapel, including a number of pieces with strong connections to the building, such as Arthur Bliss' *Praeludium* (Bliss served in the Grenadier Guards). Full details about the project and fundraising effort can be found here, including specific Crowdfunding 'rewards', such as signed copies of the disc, and the chance to sponsor tracks. Any support you are able to give towards this project (which is being generously part-funded by Harrison & Harrison) will be very gratefully received.

Christ's Chapel Dulwich

Sunday 8th March

7.30pm

Florence Rousseau

Admission Free, with generous retiring collection for expenses.

Florence plays all over Europe. She is currently organist at Kergonan Abbey, having been organist at Rennes Cathedral for 15 years.

Sunday 17th May at the new time of 3.00pm

Andrew Benson-Wilson

Admission Free, with generous collection for expenses

Andrew is well known for his early music programmes which always bring us pleasant surprises.

Methodist Central Hall, Westminster

Storeys Gate SW1H 9NH Tel. 020 7654 2000

Tube: St. James Park or Westminster

Buses 11, 24, 148 and 211 pass the door.

Buses 3, 12, 53, 53X, 87, 88, 109, 159 and 453 stop nearby

Sunday 15th February 2026 at 3pm

Darius Battiwala (Leeds Town Hall)

Admission free – retiring collection

Refreshments available

Programme

Alexandre GUILMANT 1837-1911

Sonata No.1

Introduction (Largo e maestoso) et Allegro

Pastorale: Andante quasi Allegretto

Final: Allegro assai

Johann Sebastian BACH 1685-1750

Prelude and Fugue in C minor 537

Herbert HOWELLS 1892-1983

Master Tallis's Testament

Paeon

Felix MENDELSSOHN 1809-47

Prelude and Fugue

Cécile CHAMINADE 1857-1944

Pierrette

Alfred HOLLINS 1865-1942

Concert Toccata in B flat

Penge Congregational Church

Saturday 21st February 2026

2.30pm

Annual Composite Recital

The SSLSO's annual composite recital will take place on Saturday 21st February 2026 at 2.30pm in Penge Congregational Church. This is an opportunity for any member of the society to play one or more short pieces before a sympathetic and supportive audience of fellow members of the Society and friends. Performing slots typically last up to about six minutes each, but there may be some flexibility, depending on how many others apply to play.

The 2026 recital is being organised by Malcolm Aldridge m.aldrige.104@gmail.com (phone 07710 317 441). Please contact him if you wish to contribute something to the programme. The organ in Penge Congregational Church is a fine 3-manual instrument by J C Lewis, suitable for almost any style of organ music. There will be opportunities for rehearsal slots which will be co-ordinated by Malcolm.



St Bride's, Fleet Street

Friday 27th February 2026

1.15pm

Norman Harper

[W. A. Mozart \(1756-1791\)](#)

- ❖ Fantasia in F minor & major KV 594
- ❖ Fantasia in D minor KV 385g (397) (piano)
- ❖ Adagio from Serenade in B flat KV 361 arr. Norman Harper
- ❖ Fantasia in F minor KV 608

Advance Notice

Recitals

St John's, East Dulwich SE22 9AT

All on Saturdays at 11.00am. for about forty minutes, with free admission, retiring collection and tea and coffee afterwards.

- May 9th Alan Langridge (organ; SSLSO member, SE20)
- June 13th Calum Ward (piano recital; St. Laurence, Catford)
- July 18th Ann Hubble, violin and Richard Mander, organ
- September 19th Theo Geileskey (organ scholar of King's College, London and St. Paul's, Knightsbridge)

St John the Evangelist RC Church - Duncan Terrace, Islington N1 8AL

Please see the attached poster for information regarding their 2026 Organ Concert Series.

Church of the Most Precious Blood - O'Meara Street, SE1 1TE

Poster attached to this mailing.

- 7th February James Gough (Southwark Cathedral)
- 7th March Simon Johnson (Westminster Cathedral)
- 11th April Dewi Rees (St Alban's Abbey)
- 2nd May Herman Jordaan (St John, Sidcup)

The Organ was built for the Church of Saint Mark, Battersea Rise in 1874 by T C Lewis. It was rebuilt and enlarged in 1912 by Lewis & Co., and removed and placed in storage in 2012.



The installation at Most Precious Blood was undertaken by Gary Owens Organ Builders and Renatus Ltd in 2022. It has 3 manuals, 46 speaking stops and 2,122 pipes.

Retiring collection to support the recital series.

For full specification and links to previous recitals please visit:

<https://www.preciousblood.org.uk/>

Those of you on Facebook may be interested to see this reel by Jack Chesher, the man behind the Living London History page, in which the church features!

<https://www.facebook.com/reel/1584214435928171>

Other Events

The Guild of Church Musicians

The Guild of Church Musicians' has a forthcoming day in Oxford on **Saturday 7 March**.

Non-members are very welcome (and, in fact, encouraged!) to attend and the programme of sessions is varied.

We begin with an organ recital at Magdalen College followed by lunch hosted by Mark Williams, Informator Choristarum at Magdalen. Moving to Exeter College, we will hear about the work of the Betts Fellowship from Michael Koenig and about vocal health for singers from Julian Debreuil before attending Choral Evensong at Christ Church Oxford which will be sung jointly by the choirs of Christ Church Cathedral, New College and Magdalen College.

It promises to be an excellent day of fellowship and discussion and we warmly invite anyone who is able to join us. Full booking details are available here:

<https://gcm.org.uk/events-archive/guild-of-church-musicians-oxford/>

If you have any questions, please contact Elizabeth Stratford e.stratford@btopenworld.com.

The Runby Singers.

Here is a link to the newsletter online: runbysingers.org/Newsletter-021125.pdf

Do feel free to pass it on to other good singers that you know.

Peter Smith writes:

Readers may be interested in this article:

https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2025/dec/22/organ-tuning-books-english-churches-notes-warming-climate?CMP=Share_AndroidApp_Other

Godalming Festival

Monday March 26th 2026

Godalming Parish Church

I am pleased to inform you that the Organ Section of the 2026 Godalming Performing Arts Festival will be held on Monday 16 March 2026 in Godalming parish church (St Peter & St Paul's church, part of Godalming Minster). Full details of the syllabus can be found on the website: www.godalmingperformingartsfestival.com.

The Hymn Society of Great Britain and Ireland with The Pratt Green Trust

To celebrate the 90th Anniversary of **The Hymn Society of Great Britain and Ireland**, new hymns are invited on the theme of '**Ages Past – Years to Come**' and honouring the legacy of **Elizabeth Cosnett**, with the opportunity to set a Cosnett text to a new tune.

The competition is open to residents of the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland, also to members of HSGBI who reside overseas and entries should be in English.

One entry per person is permitted. Select from one of the following categories:

A) Original text to a well-known melody

B) Original text to an original melody

C) Original melody to an Elizabeth Cosnett text

The Judging Panel includes acclaimed hymn writers and composers including John Bell, Emma Turl, Anne Harrison, Michael Jaggesar, Victoria Johnson, Ian Sharp, Rosalind Brown and Graham Adams.

We are pleased to offer a £300 prize for the winning entry in each category, which may be taken as cash or used towards the cost of attending the HSGBI Annual Conference at The Hayes Conference Centre, Swanwick in July 2026, at which the winning entries will be sung.

For more information, including how to enter, please visit <https://hymnsocietygbi.org.uk/hymn-competition-2026/>.

Please submit your entry by 12 April 2026 via the [online form on the Pratt Green Trust website](#).

Saturday 18th April 2026

St John's East Dulwich

Education Day



Website

Please do look regularly at sslso.org.uk. Our webmaster updates it frequently and there is much to see.