

Forthcoming event

LEONARD GIBBONS FUND

SPONSORED CONSERVATOIRE STUDENT
2011 – 2012

MONDAY 27TH JUNE 2011 AT 7.30PM
St. Chad's Metropolitan Cathedral
& Basilica [B4 6EU](#)

Following the success of last year's event, Birmingham Organists' Association, in conjunction with Birmingham Conservatoire, is once again running a competition to elect the Leonard Gibbons Fund Sponsored Conservatoire Student. The competition final is open to the public.

Admission **FREE** to BOA members and Conservatoire students, guests £5.00

BOA newsletter

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Summer 2011

Welcome to the new **electronic** version of our newsletter.
We hope you like it: please let us know!

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Concert Guide

St. Philip's Cathedral: Music for Lunch
Fridays at 1.10pm:
www.birminghamcathedral.com

THSH Town Hall/Symphony Hall:
Mondays at 1.00pm: www.thsh.co.uk

Holy Trinity, Wordsley:
Sunday Afternoon Organ Music
Paul Carr: 1st Sunday of the month at 3.00pm:
www.paulcarr.co.uk

St. Paul, Birmingham: Thursday Live
1st Thursday of the month at 1.15pm:
www.saintpaulbrum.org

Emmanuel, Wylde Green:
Anniversaries & Celebrations
Andrew Fletcher: 1st Friday of the month at 1.00pm: www.andrewfletcher.org.uk

The Metropolitan Cathedral and Basilica of St Chad, Birmingham
21st June 7.30pm: **John W W Sherer**
(Chicago, USA)
www.stchadscathedral.org.uk
Car-park entered from Shadwell Street behind the Cathedral.

Birmingham Organists' Association affiliated to the Incorporated Association of Organists
www.BhamOrgan.org.uk www.iao.org.uk

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Click [here](#) to start

LGF-sponsored Conservatoire student competition

Birmingham Organists' Association, in conjunction with Birmingham Conservatoire, is once again running a competition to elect the Leonard Gibbons Fund Sponsored Conservatoire Student following the success of last year's event. The competition final is open to the public. Admission is free to Conservatoire students and BOA members. During this event the three finalists will play the magnificent 1993 40-stop, three-manual, mechanical-action Walker organ at St Chad's Cathedral.



St Chad's Cathedral

The competition is open to Conservatoire undergraduate first study organ students in years 1-3. The preliminary round is by submitted recording and includes students performing a work by JS Bach plus a 19th/20th century piece. This round is well underway and will be judged by Henry Fairs (Head of Organ Studies at the Conservatoire) and Paul Carr (BOA President), and moderated by Professor David Saint (Vice Principal of the Conservatoire)

From 7.30pm on June 27th, at St Chad's, the three finalists will each present a balanced 20 minute programme. The two judges will be Professor David Saint and Dr John Sherer. Dr Sherer is the Organist and Director of Music at Fourth Presbyterian Church, Chicago and has kindly agreed to join David Saint to judge the competition while he is in the UK for a few weeks.

Following the announcement of results, the winner will perform a piece to conclude the evening. He or she will hold the title Leonard Gibbons Fund Sponsored Conservatoire Student for one year from September 2011. The sponsorship is for £400. This will be given for the purchase of music scores and towards educational visits.

The award is not simply a prize. In addition, the Leonard Gibbons Fund Sponsored Conservatoire Student will be expected to:

- become a member of the Association (student rate is £2.50 per year, but is free for the first year);
- attend meetings as a co-opted member of BOA Council;
- lead one BOA event, with the support of Council;
- attend at least four BOA events during the year;
- actively encourage other students to also attend events.

This is an exciting new venture for both BOA and LGF, and is a public way of showing how BOA and Birmingham Conservatoire are working together to support the next generation of organists.

Please do come and support this event on 27th June!

Free parking is available in the Cathedral car-park which is accessed from Shadwell Street; there is also limited on-street parking at the front of the cathedral in Saint Chad's Queensway, Birmingham [B4 6EU](#)

Social Events: beer & skittles

Alan Taylor



SOCIAL EVENT: BEER & SKITTLES WITH BUFFET SUPPER

MONDAY 18 JULY, 7.30PM

The Walsall Arms, Bank Street, Walsall, [WS1 2EP](#)

Following the successful event at All Saints, West Bromwich, when the team of Nick's *Nazards* was narrowly defeated by Paul's *Principals*, this is another opportunity for a social evening when you can test your skill at skittles in a convivial atmosphere.

This time, instead of bowling down the central aisle of a church, we invite you to a private room with skittle alley at a traditional Black Country pub, The Walsall Arms. There is ample free on-street parking outside the pub in Bank Street, [WS1 2EP](#) (click the postcode link for a map) which is not far from St Matthew's Parish Church. If travelling by bus (the no.51 from the city centre stops within 200 yards), ask to alight at the stop for Bluecoat Schools on Ablewell Street. If you get lost on the night, the mobile number to call is 07415 855082 and someone will rush to your rescue!

As the pub is providing a cold buffet, we do need to know in advance who is coming, and the charge for both food and use of the skittle alley is a bargain at £5 per person. Please contact Alan Taylor (phone 01922 628810) or send an email to webmaster@BhamOrgan.org.uk to confirm your place: you can pay on the night. Drinks are extra of course, but there is a choice of real ale as well as everything else you expect from a well-stocked bar.

SEE YOU THERE!!

Henry Fairs @ St Mary's

Michael Jones



On Monday evening 16th May, Henry Fairs introduced and played a selection of German romantic organ music, concentrating mainly on Felix Mendelssohn, Robert Schumann, Franz Liszt, and with additional reference to Julius Reubke, Johannes Brahms and Max Reger.

Henry spoke about Mendelssohn's debt to J.S.Bach, his fundraising concert of 1840 for the Leipzig Bach Monument, and his thematic associations with the great master, starting with Mendelssohn's Prelude in C minor, and illustrating the Bach connection further with parallels between Mendelssohn's D minor Fugue and Bach's B ♭ minor Fugue from the 48, book 1.

Among the innovations Mendelssohn introduced were the means of heightening the dramatic style of a work by the introduction of chorale-recitative, as in his C Minor Sonata, comparing this to César Franck's Choral no3.

With Schumann, Henry referred to the vogue for the pedal-piano in the 19th century and we heard Schumann's 'Four Sketches'. A Mendelssohnian sequel linked him with Samuel Wesley (who, incidentally, improvised for Mendelssohn in 1837 shortly before his death). Also during that 1837 visit, Mendelssohn would have played one of the very few British organs with a decent pedal-board - that of Birmingham Town Hall (playing Bach's *St Anne* Prelude & Fugue on that occasion).

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Henry Fairs plays Liszt at St Mary's Selly Oak

Franz Liszt was to transform both organ-playing and influence organ building in the 19th century. Henry singled out in particular the 1855 Ladegast organ in Merseburg Cathedral, for which the *BACH* Prelude & Fugue was written, but in actual fact not completed in time - Liszt's pupil, Alexander Winterberger, played *Ad nos, ad salutarem undam* instead, which Henry regards as the greatest of Liszt's organ works.

Liszt's powerful influence on the young Julius Reubke is well known, but Reubke died too young (of TB) to fulfil his brilliant talent. We also heard part of Liszt's *Weinen Klagen* Variations (in memory of his son Daniel's death in 1859) built up from the chromatic bass of Bach's *Crucifixus* of the B minor Mass.

Then as a Finale, reference was made to the Brahms Chorale Preludes Op122, and finally Max Reger, ending quietly with part of Reger's rarely-heard Second Sonata.

Henry's conclusion was that the German sentiment of "longing (Sehnsucht), suffering and the utopian desire for a golden age" (tragically unfulfilled in the 20th century) underpinned the feeling of this entire period of German musical history.

We all greatly appreciated Henry's flair in both his speaking and playing, and for bringing the whole subject vividly to life for us.



BOA members and St Mary's parishioners enjoy refreshments with Henry Fairs after his lecture-recital