

## **Mission statement from our president.**

In accepting this post I would like to thank you all for your confidence in me. We are a mixed group of members, players in churches, enthusiasts, entertainers, students etc.

What we all share is a love of the instrument, its history, sound, connection with some of the worlds greatest musicians and of course its part in our lives. No one forgets hearing one for the first time?

The enduring quality of the instrument and its repertoire makes study and research fascinating. Visits to different places bring this home and when coupled to meeting with other organists, it creates a reassuring feeling of being together. This is surely a bonus considering the insularity many organists suffer?

Our association has made big progress in recent years by establishing the Young Organists Scheme, while uniting with a Hertfordshire Association has opened up a combined area, rich in interest and possibilities.

In formulating future programs, we'll be seeking to enrich our experience, continue our learning and understanding, celebrate the great instruments and places so near at hand and be inspired by great performances. We will give encouragement and help to those who will be our successors in a spirit of optimism in order that our instrument will continue to thrill and inspire for generations.

We look at the world and perhaps our own situation with some trepidation. How can churches and their music survive?

First of all, there has never been a time when forces have not threatened the things many people cherish. There will certainly be fewer churches in future but we can't give up believing in what we do.

Church musicians and musicians in general have traditionally maintained a pragmatic attitude amidst conflict and discord. Like the orchestra of the Titanic? Maybe that's an extreme illustration, but the fact is that music, sacred and secular, is here to stay. There is no shortage of organ scholars in our music schools or colleges. In organ building, we are seeing levels of work unthought of even ten years ago.

We hope that our association will continue to be a dynamic base for organists, providing interest and comradeship, together with a collective sense of pride in what we do. Through a series of educational events we hope to create a level of even greater expertise and confidence.

None playing members and enthusiasts, can also be valuable ambassadors as their support and encouragement could well make a difference to others.

We need to boost our membership, hugely. I believe introducing more non playing but enthusiastic members can enrich the association, while providing even more outreach in our mission. We'll be looking at this and our future approach to all church organists in our area. A huge task that will involve you!

In closing, thank you for reading this far! As you see, I take the responsibility you have given me seriously!

Please join with me and our great committee in trying to ensure a great future for our association, by supporting our training scheme, (giving valuable encouragement and confidence to our growing number of students), and of course the events which we have so carefully organised.

Kenneth Smith  
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