

## Tayside Organists' Society

### President's Report – 2022 AGM (24 May 2022)

I am pleased to acknowledge that there have been activities within our Society, since our last AGM on 19 May 2021. With the re-opening of places of worship, organists have experienced anew the joy of playing for public acts of worship, as well as there being people in the pews, without numbers being restricted.

The Society has met in person, and we were glad to resume social contact with our fellow organists at actual meetings.

- (1) 30 October 2021 in St Ninians's Cathedral, Perth, for a recital by Geoff Bolton.
- (2) 24 November 2021 in Dundee Congregational Church, for a talk on "Improvisation", by our member, Professor Norman Beedie.
- (3) 29 March 2022 in St Andrew's Cathedral, Dundee, for a programme of Sacred Music sung by the Cecilian Choir, with soloist, Colette Ruddy. This was the delayed "President's Night".
- (4) 23 April 2022, an organ crawl to Fetteresso Church and St James' Episcopal Church in Stonehaven – a superb day, crafted and arranged by David Smith.
- (5) Two brilliant piano recitals by Mrs Sylvia Knox in her home in Letham, Angus, on 18 and 21 May 2022.

These events have been well supported and show that members are pleased to resume social contact.

Sadly, we have to report the deaths of 2 of our long-standing members. Dr David Smith, who was many years, the organist at St Marnock's Church, Fowlis, and who died in October of 2021, after a short spell in hospital. A letter was sent on behalf of the members of the Society to his brother, Kenneth, (who lives in Symington, Ayrshire), and from whom I received a very gracious letter of acknowledgement. That letter expressed how much David had enjoyed his membership of our Society. Then, this year, we were all saddened to learn of the death of our former president,

and also long-standing member, the well-respected organ builder and craftsman, Sandy Edmonstone, who had suffered from a debilitating illness for a number of years, and who died on 23 January 2022. Sadly, his mother died only a few weeks after Sandy. A letter on behalf of the Society was sent to Sandy's widow, Carole. Additionally, we have to record the death of Mrs Marjorie Malcolm, the widow of Kenneth Malcolm, one of the members of the Society in its earliest days. Marjorie had been in a Nursing Home for a few years. I was asked to play at her Funeral Service in Dundee Crematorium on 13 January. 2022, after which service, I spoke with her daughter, Mrs Fiona Gill, and passed on the condolences of the members of this Society. Finally, I have to mention the death of Dr Iain Galbraith, the President of the SFO, on 20 December 2022, during his period of office. I wrote to the President of the Glasgow Society with our condolences, and this was greatly appreciated.

As I alluded to in last year's, the future of many of our churches and congregations, of all denominations, is very uncertain. Important decisions are awaited, with the likely consequence that the number of organists needed – and willing to remain as church organists – is likely to drop significantly. In addition, many pipe organs will be classed as "surplus to requirements", and we must hope that not too many go to the scrap heap. These are not happy times.

I would like to thank all members of the committee and especially our Secretary, Bryan, and our Treasurer, Ian, for all that they do to keep our Society ticking over and solvent. As ever, we are in debt to Dr Peter Thornton for his work on our website. He is also an important link with the activities of FOCHO. In this connection, this Society will of course support FOCHO in their events to mark the forthcoming Centenary of the installation of the Caird Hall Organ in 2023.

I thank each and every one of you for your ongoing support of our Society. We value your continued membership and support. With the worst of the pandemic behind us, we can hopefully look ahead to more frequent meetings and a degree of normality.

**TAYSIDE ORGANISTS' SOCIETY**

**Secretary's Report for 2022 AGM**

Our President, Kevin Veal, has covered many aspects of the Society's activities over the last year in his report.

The number of members has dropped from 39 to 37 since last year's AGM, sadly due to the deaths of Dr. David Smith and Sandy Edmonstone.

The Trustees met fairly regularly throughout the year but these continued to be via Zoom Meetings. Happily, we have resumed live events which have been very successful, as detailed in Kevin's report, so this gives us the option to resume face to face meetings for the Trustees.

The SFO have also resumed face to face meetings so life is returning to normal. A new website is under construction for the SFO and this should be operational fairly soon. Following our discussion last year about setting up some kind of archive for pipe organs which may be lost due to church closures, I raised this subject at an SFO meeting and it appears this has been something which has been concerning other societies. It was agreed to try to use the new SFO website to host an archive. I will pass on any updates as they become available.

May I take this opportunity to thank Kevin and all the other Trustees for their help and encouragement over the last year.

We look forward to another interesting and entertaining session for 2022/23.

Bryan Weir

Secretary