

Tayside Organists' Society

Visit to organs in and around Dunfermline

Joint meeting with Scottish Historic Organs Trust (SHOT)

Saturday 5 September 2026

Review by George Bell

The society visited Dunfermline and Burntisland along with members of SHOT on Saturday 5th September 2026. This was a marvellous opportunity to see, hear and play some interesting organs in south Fife.

We started at St Leonard's Church of Scotland, which has a pleasant Binns organ from 1910. We were also treated to a welcome coffee, while a number of members "had a go".

From there we travelled on to the East Port area, where we first visited Holy Trinity Episcopal Church to see and hear the 1895 Hamilton organ. Interesting, although there may be some maintenance and adjustment needed. Just across the road is located St Margaret's RC Church, which has a rather lovely single manual Holdich organ in the loft accessible by a narrow circular stone stairway! The organ dates from 1872 and, although it's compact, the church acoustics work well to amplify the sound.

The party moved to Halbeath where a table had been reserved at the Harvester restaurant. Service and food quality were very good.

The afternoon session commenced with a visit to a couple of more modern buildings, namely St Margaret's Parish Church of Scotland and St Ninian's Church of Scotland.

Both churches benefit from Walker organs (1974 and 1966 respectively) which are very compact due to shared ranks. I was pleasantly surprised by the tone, and light touch of both instruments.

Tea was provided at St Ninian's which is always welcome in the afternoon!

To round off the tour, we made our way to Burntisland Erskine United Free Church and had the chance to try out the 1922 Hilsdon organ, which is actually a War Memorial. In 1990 new stops were added, the console replaced (from a church in Johnstone, Renfrewshire) and the organ was re-dedicated.

The participants enjoyed the day immensely and we must note the amazing organisation by Robin Bell and the SHOT Committee. Maps and instructions were very clear. and ensured that we did not lose anyone along the way!