

## **President's Message**

### **December 2023**

It has been a great sadness to hear of the death of Joyce Beaumont, a much loved and admired organist and teacher whose EDOA membership stretched back to our founding year of 1963. A full appreciation of Joyce's life will appear in the next newsletter, but in the meantime our thoughts go out to Sarah and the family.

I am pleased to convey, to everyone who remembers him, the very best wishes to you all from Simon Williams, my distinguished immediate predecessor. During his five years as President, Simon worked indefatigably for the Association, not least in ensuring our constitution was updated and relevant. In our turn we wish Simon well in all he undertakes, including his membership change to the Gloucestershire and District OA.

Our good wishes have also been with Ruth Lewis for her speedy recovery following surgery. All of us, not least Ruth herself, were so sorry that her 'Coronation Curios' At Home had to be postponed, but we look forward to another date becoming possible before long. Ruth is thanked not only for her generous hosting of recent At Homes but also for her much appreciated six years on the committee. As she has to step down for a year, there is now one further vacancy in addition to two yet to be filled...which brings us to one of the highlights of our year, the AGM, Saturday 17th February next. Full details are available as ever in this newsletter. Please note the slightly revised timings, and do seriously consider offering your services for the committee.

Our joint event in the early autumn with the Southwark and South London Society of Organists was a resounding success; and the possibility of further such occasions will be explored in committee. Both All Saints', Friern Barnet and St Andrew's, Southgate were tangibly welcoming and supportive, and the numbers from each association were encouraging. One SSLSO member made the return trip from Thornton Heath by bicycle – but no puns about pedalwork, please!

As we begin to face all the realities that follow on from the joy and festivities of Christmas, there are plenty of 'organ days' in the new year for welcome and worthwhile diversion. These include the Bloomsbury OD on Saturday 27th January at Bloomsbury Baptist, the London OD on Saturday 2nd March at Our Lady of Victories, Kensington, and the International Organ Day on Saturday 20th April promoted by the RCO and online. Also of interest is a reminder that 2024 marks seventy years since the opening of one of the U.K.'s most significant and trail-blazing organs, that of the Royal Festival Hall. Do look at the Southbank Centre website for information about three events over the weekend of 23rd and 24th March, starring James McVinnie and Iveta Apkalna – though it has to be said that a major organ recital on the evening of Palm Sunday is disappointingly frustrating for many of us.

My best wishes for a Happy Christmas and a peaceful and fulfilling New Year.

*Terence Atkins*