

Something old, something new

Paul Hale looks at a varied trio of recent projects

An organ builder never knows from where the next challenge will arrive. But arrive they do, in projects for both new organs and restorations.

One challenge was met by Mander organs, who in August finished an organ for Nigawa Gakuin School, between Osaka and Kobe in Japan. The instrument is built in a multi-purpose hall which serves as cinema, theatre and meeting or assembly hall most of the time. Curtains

I asked John Mander to tell readers something about the decorative features on the beautiful case: 'The case design is a mix of contemporary and traditional elements. The carving is full of references. The pipe-shade in the centre of each case is the school emblem, an eagle, with the letters N G representing Nigawa Gakuin. In the Pedal case the left hand outer tower represents the sun and the right hand the moon and stars. The left hand

Specification

GREAT ORGAN	
Open Diapason	8
Stopped Diapason	8
Viola da Gamba	8
Principal	4
Open Flute	4
Fifteenth	2
Furniture	IV
Mounted Cornet	III
Trumpet	8
Clarion	4
SWELL ORGAN	
Gedackt	8
Salicional	8
Voix Celeste	8
Principal	4
Nason Flute	4
Fifteenth	2
Sesquialtera	II
Mixture	III
Oboe	8
Tremulant	
PEDAL ORGAN	
Bourdon	16
Principal	8
Bass Flute	8
Fifteenth	4
Trombone	16
Trumpet	8



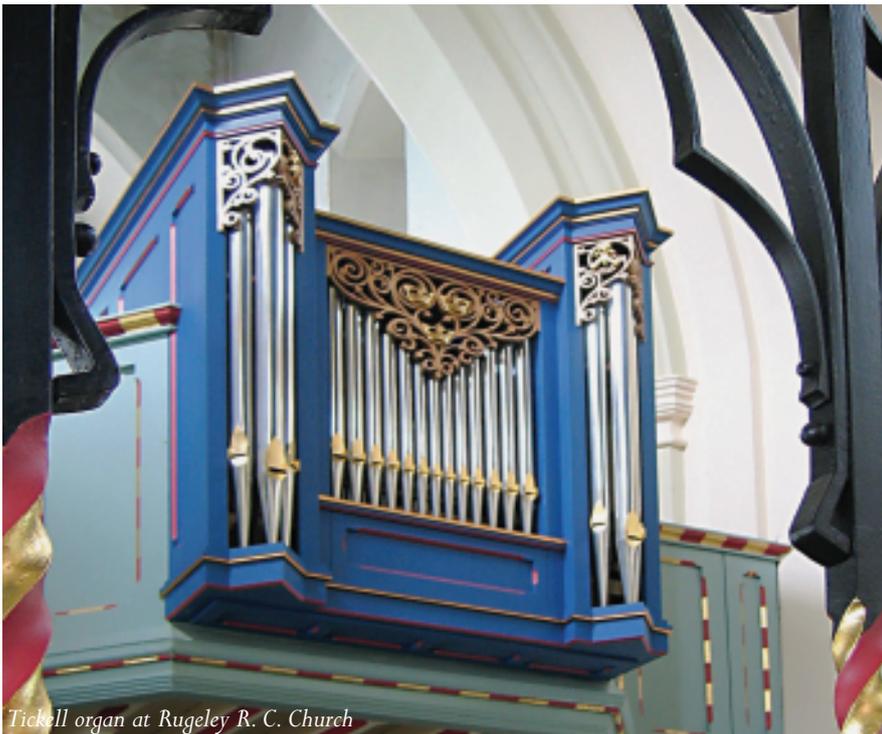
Mander organ at Nigawa Gakuin School, Japan

can be drawn back to reveal an apse which makes the room into a chapel. You will see from the photo that this is another organ from the Mander stable divided into two parts – always a challenge for a mechanical action. The manual divisions are on the right hand side and the Pedal Organ is on the left, the trackers for the Pedal going under the raised chancel.

flat has a representation of Christ the King and the right hand one the Virgin Mary. These are depicted in darker wood forward of the carving itself. The manuals case has water represented in the left tower and fire in the right tower with St Francis of Assisi and Alpha & Omega represented in the left and right hand flats respectively, also in darker wood forward of the carving.'

A different challenge was to face Kenneth Tickell when he designed a single manual instrument for St Joseph's R. C. Church, Rugeley, Staffordshire. The instrument had to be built projecting from the front of a west gallery – it was therefore quite tricky to ensure the action and wind could all get into the case, as well as a tuner as 'Health & Safety' literature now frowns on working off ladders. As you can see from the photo the task was elegantly and colourfully achieved.

Ken writes 'The player sits at the



Tickell organ at Rugeley R. C. Church

rear of the instrument, and is able to see over the music ledge to the Sanctuary and Altar. The painted case picks up colours which are present elsewhere in the church, including the blue from the walls of the Lady Chapel and touches of red and gold from the ironwork screen at the west end of the church. The pipe-shades contain symbolism associated with St Joseph and St Ethelreda – gilded crowns, and carpenters’ squares with lily flowers. Whilst only a small instrument, its excellent position allows it to speak unimpeded into the nave, which it has no difficulty in filling with sound. The coupled pedalboard, shifting pedal, and treble Sesquialtera enable good versatility from only five stops.’

Specification

MANUAL	(56 notes)
Stopped Diapason	8
Principal	4
Chimney Flute	4
Fifteenth	2
Sesquialtera (mid. C)	II
PEDAL	(30 notes)
permanently coupled to manual	
‘shifting movement’ to silence upperwork.	

Restoring organs is increasingly a challenge as craftsmen strive more and more to embrace informed conservation techniques. Richard Young, whose father

Roy was the last apprentice at Taylor of Leicester, specialises in restoring that company’s efficient but unique pneumatic actions. His success at the De Montfort Hall is well documented. Recent projects also include far smaller organs including the delightful one-manual 1876 Bryceson in All Saints’ Leamington, Hastings (whence it was moved from Farnham by Rich Heslop in September 1883). This little gem appealed to me because of its



1876 Bryceson at Leamington Hastings

sumptuously diapered front pipes – shown in this photo in their newly conserved state. Richard Young writes: ‘A thorough restoration of the instrument was carried out which included repalleting, overhauling the actions, returning the keys to ivory and retaining the cone tuning. During restoration non-return valves for the feeders were fitted so that the instrument could once again be hand pumped if required. The voicing is bright and bold, the pressure being slightly higher than normal at 3¼ inches.’

The work was undertaken with grants from the CCC, the ON Organ Fund and The Manifold Trust. Churches should always consider writing to such Trusts when undertaking restoration projects of historic organs. Sadly, little money is available for new organs from the various charitable bodies, so of the three organs in this article, only the last would have attracted such funding. Whilst this is a great help for those seeking to restore old organs, it continues to depress the number of new organs that can be built in this country – which is no doubt why many of Mander’s instruments, like that in this column, are found abroad. It’s time something was done to encourage the building of more new organs in this country.

Specification

MANUAL	(54 notes)
Open Diapason	8
Lieblich Gedact	8
Dulciana (grooved bass)	8
Principal	4
PEDAL	(24 notes)
Bourdon (12 notes)	16

Straight, flat pedalboard permanently coupled to the manual.

Trigger Swell to box enclosing all but front pipes and Bourdon.

