



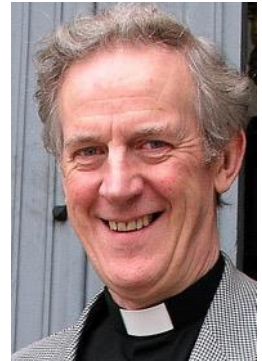
Editor john.bertalot@gmail.com 2023

Stunning Organ Recitals!

www.blackburncathedral.com



A Joyful Whalley Abbey Afternoon



Thanks to much planning and hard work by **Canon Michael Wedgeworth MBE (R)** and **Canon James Lawrence (L)** 52 members of Blackburn Cathedral's 'senior' members of the congregation and 3 babies spent a delightful two hours in the hallowed precincts of Whalley Abbey on Thursday 27th July where we enjoyed inspirational and joyful fellowship... and a delicious Afternoon Tea!

(Photos by Terry Givens & JB)



During the welcoming cuppa: Far top left, standing: **Jeremy & Jean Duerden**, and right: kneeling: **Canon James**.



(R) Canon James' son, **George**, brought down the average age of the assembly, and he delighted **Ruth Watton (L)** who is a professional oboist, and Lay Canon **Val Edge**.

(L) **Joan Banks, MBE**, was there, too: her late husband, **Keith**, had been a Lay Canon and both boys, **Peter & Ian**, were outstanding cathedral choristers during JB's time as DoM.





After the welcome cuppa, **Andy Foote**, Deputy Director of the **Abbey** gave us a fascinating talk about the history of the Abbey from its foundation, 500 years ago, through the destructive traumas of Henry VIII...

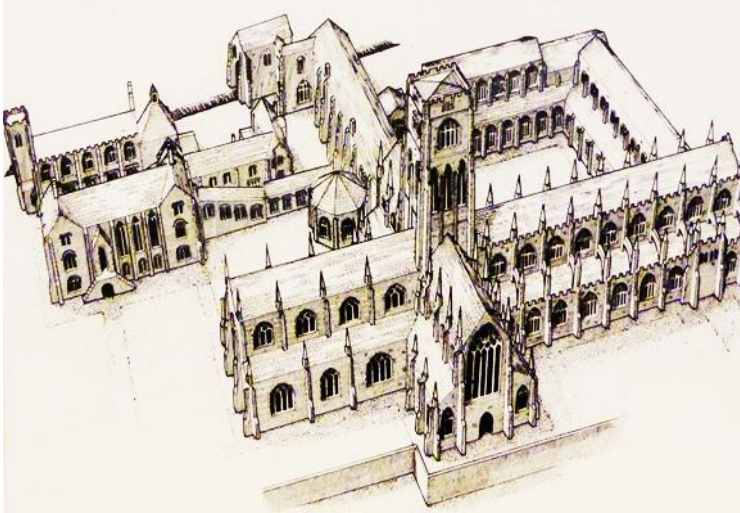
... to its transformation into our **Diocesan Retreat House**, under the first Bishop of Blackburn, **Bishop Herbert**...

...to the present day, when it is recovering from the Covid Outbreak...

...and becoming again a lively Retreat Centre and also a place which *welcomes over-night guests* with 3-star hospitality.

<https://www.blackburn.anglican.org/whalley-abbey>

Try it, if you want to 'get away from it all'



(L) Whalley Abbey 500 years ago...



... and Whalley Abbey Diocesan Retreat House & Cistercian ruins today.



We then repaired to the Chapel where Canon James led us in an act of worship which was designed to calm our spirits as we meditated on a short lesson which was read, once each, by three different readers, and singing gentle hymns, which were also repeated – this achieved its aim for our spirits were indeed calmed and re-tuned to realms above.

(JB happened to be seated between two people he had not met before, both of whom read and enjoy our monthly **Music & More!** *Thank you!!*)

Then followed a lavish tea with delicious sandwiches and a most tempting array of cream cakes – which disappeared very quickly!



It was a most refreshing experience. Thank you, Canons Michael & James.

LUNCHTIME ORGAN RECITALS

Wednesday 13th September 12.15pm

John Robinson Director of Music

Premiere of *Christ Lag in Todesbanden* by Alfred Hopkins

Wednesday 20th September 12.15pm

Phoebe Chow St. Martin-in-the-Fields

Chorale Fantasia on *Hallelujah! Gott zu loben* **REGER**

Wednesday 27th September 12.15pm

Graham Eccles St. Asaph Cathedral

Sonata no. 1 **REGER**

Wednesday 4th October 12.15pm

Jeremiah Martin USA *Prelude & Fugue in Bb minor. Bach*
arr. Reger

Wednesday 11th October 12.15pm

Philip Rushforth Chester Cathedral

Wednesday 25th October **NO RECITAL**

Wednesday 1st November 12.15pm

Nigel Spooner Bolton

Dankpsalm **REGER**

Wednesday 8th November 12.15pm

Richard McVeigh Romsey Abbey & Arundel Cathedral

Toccata and Fugue in D minor & major; Benedictus

REGER

Wednesday 15th November 12.15pm

Karen Au Blackburn

Introduction and Passacaglia in D minor **REGER**

Wednesday 22nd November 12.15pm

Dr Ed Jones Former Organ Scholar

Variationen und Fuge uber Heil, unserm Konig Heil

REGER

Wednesday 29th November 12.15pm

John Robinson Director of Music

Chorale Fantasia on *Wachet Auf* **REGER**

CLICK the photo below to enjoy Reger's
Chorale Prelude on the plainsong TE DEUM



From Reger's complex *Fantasia & Fugue on 'B A C H'*

**MAX
REGER
150th
Anniversary
FESTIVAL**



WELCOME! MUSICAL FRIENDS

(i) From JEREMY DUERDEN – re a delightful guest.



I am delighted to say that once more, in July, [Jean & I](#) were able to host at our home, [James Davy](#), the Director of Music at Chelmsford Cathedral, formerly Deputy DoM at Blackburn Cathedral, on his annual 'pilgrimage' to Lancashire.

He sometimes manages to make it more than once a year, and it is always a great pleasure to see him, giving him the opportunity to meet up with old friends, and some young ones such as [the Fulwell boys](#), former choristers but now setting out on careers in music.



The gathering at the [Sharjan Indian restaurant in Blackburn](#) forms the venue for us all to meet for dinner, each time he visits.

[Click the food to find out more!](#)

Of course, no visit to Lancs would be made by James without his seeing our M&M editor, JB, to catch up with him. [\(See below\)](#)

James was a generous host to Jean and me in March & May this year when we visited Chelmsford to plan, and then to organise the National Gathering of [The Cathedral Music Trust there](#), which was most useful to us, being 'on site' for the events. [\(See last month's M&M\)](#) James' local knowledge was invaluable in finding places to visit to mark the 400th anniversary of the death of Wm Byrd, assisted by others at the Cathedral as well as some involved with the [CMT](#).

James will be relinquishing his post there in October, heading for pastures new, involving music, of course, but I do not think that the change will dampen his appetite for visits to the County Palatine.

James is a member of the [Royal Horticultural Society](#), as am I, so we were able to use our membership to visit [RHS Bridgwater](#), the amazing garden built up from scratch during the lockdown of 2020 and Covid-induced disturbances of 2021, which caused enormous difficulties for the gardeners and designers. We went there two years ago on one visit shortly after it opened, and the development in the intervening period showed how well the garden has been planned and how well it grows.

[Click the photo for more info:](#)

James' regular visits are an example of the benign attraction of Blackburn Cathedral that draws back people who worship and work there, for many years after they have moved on.

[Jeremy Duerden](#)





JB with the same engaging guest

I always look forward to **James' annual visits** to me in Mellor, for he is one of the most delightful and intelligent organists I have ever met. To be in his company is to be entertained and uplifted non-stop!

But first, of course, he had to sign **the Visitors' Book** and then we whizzed off to the **INN AT WHITEWELL** – we must have been there nearly a dozen times for lunch in recent years

HM Queen Elizabeth II had also visited there!

There was glorious Lancashire scenery *en route*, and delicious cuisine topped by superb service on arrival.

[Click the photo for more:](#)



James always ends his visit to JB with an ice cream. This time we visited **Mrs Dowson's** on Longsight Road where there's a vast array of flavours, and a zoo!

Alas JB's ice cream was melting rather fast so only one sticky photo was possible. But it illustrates James' joyous spirit!!

[Click James' photo for more](#)



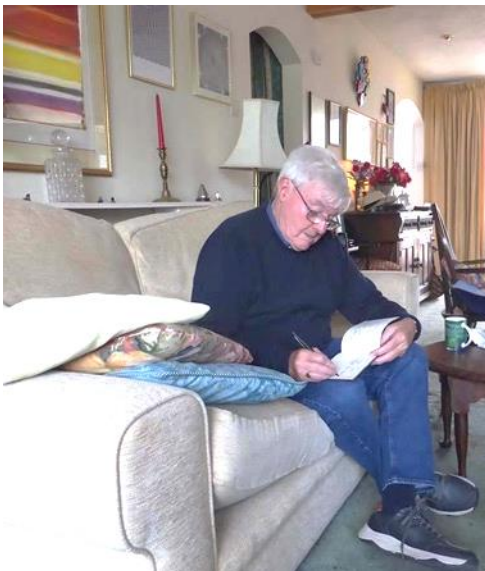
MRS·DOWSONS
FARM PARK

(ii) JB's second most welcome guest was PHILIP HUNWICK...

who was a long-time choirman at Blackburn Cathedral and both his boys, **Chris & Noel**, became choristers. His wife, **Joan**, with Phil, was a member of JB's **Blackburn Bach Choir**. (Now, *Blackburn Chamber Choir*.)

Phil was here on a most special pilgrimage.

Joan died in 2007 and Phil had come to Blackburn on the day of what would have been their **Golden Wedding Anniversary** to place some flowers in the Cathedral Columbarium where Joan's ashes are kept – how greatly we miss her.



Phil & JB's Visitors' Book

(R) Christmas Day 2001 with the Hunwicks in Huddlesden.

L-R: **Joan, JB, Phil**, (back: **Bill Livesey**, Joan's father), **Noel**, & front: **Chris**.

Chris & Noel are now both married with two delightful children each, and Phil has moved to Northumberland to be near Chris and his family, whose son is named **'William'** after his great Grandfather.





THE SIXTEEN will be singing
in **BLACKBURN CATHEDRAL**
on **Saturday 23 September**
at 7.30pm

*They always attract large
audiences
So book your seats now ...
below, left!*

Overview

Performance Time: 105 minutes

Ticket Prices: £10.00 - £25.00

Book now (Click!)

Access Information

2023 marks the 400th anniversary of the death of one of the greatest composers of the Renaissance. **William Byrd** was widely admired in his own time both at home and abroad and the influence he had on future generations was immense. Despite living through incredibly turbulent times and fearing for his own safety, his music is full of life, emotion and vitality.

Yes, the SIXTEEN always attract large audiences; will **you** be there?



William Byrd

PROGRAMME

Byrd: Arise Lord into thy rest

van Wilder: O doux regard

Byrd: Ne irascaris / Civitas sancti tui

de Monte: O suavitas et dulcedo

Dobrinka Tabakova:

Arise Lord into thy rest (new commission)

Clemens Non Papa:

Tristitia et anxietas

Byrd: Tristitia et anxietas

Byrd: Turn our captivity

Clemens Non Papa:

Ego flos campi

Dobrinka Tabakova:

Turn our captivity (new commission)

de Monte:

Super flumina Babylonis

Byrd:

Quomodo cantabimus?

Byrd:

Vigilate





From **CONSTANCE HEALD**, near Ely.
(Founder member of the Blackburn Bach Choir in 1965)

Dear John

So good to hear from you - I'm keeping well and latterly I've been kept rather busy - a new adventure - accompanying the two choirs at **St Mary's CofE School, Ely**. Hazel, their conductor is an Alto in Ely Choral Society and asked her singing neighbour whether she knew a pianist who could accompany the choirs which resulted in me saying yes and thereafter being delightfully involved.

Until this new challenge I had no idea that music was back on the school curriculum (*hurrah!*) and saw this in action when I played for the school's smaller chamber choir at the Cambridgeshire Education Department Schools Music annual gathering which took place over three evenings to accommodate all the schools involved.



It was an eye-opener for me on the night we were involved and such a pleasure to see these young people experiencing performance on a large stage in front of other schools and some parents. I'm sure if it had been a competition we would have won !!

I was then invited to play for the school end of term concert so five new pieces landed on my lap - quite a challenge but very exciting and rewarding for me, and best of all made me practise ! - the *Battle of Jericho* piece with challenging crescendo / glissando ending which the children loved.



Wonderful to be kept up-to-date with Music happenings at Blackburn Cathedral, and it's so good that we can all experience this via the delightful monthly **M&Ms** - deeply appreciated by so many of us - I love dipping into exquisite organ playing !

Anyway, John, keep up the good work
All my love, **Constance**

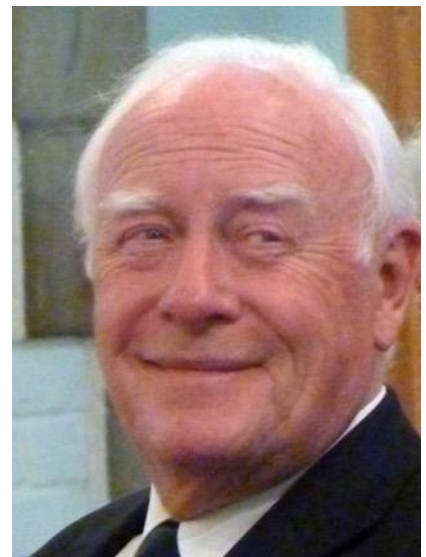
Perhaps our oldest 'Old Chorister?... who served in the RAF for his career.



JB phoned **BRYAN LAMB** for his 92nd birthday in July.

He sounded good, as did **Pat**, from their home near Ely. But he sent his apologies for not attending our September Reunion due to his age. (*JB well understood, being two months' younger!*) But he sends his greetings to all.

JB told him that we think of him often, with affection – which indeed we 'oldens' do.



After serving in Blackburn Cathedral as a treble under Mr Duerden, Bryan helped to move the old organ which was in a gallery at the West end of the Nave (where the statue of Christ the Worker is) to that organ's new position at the head of the old Nave. **Bryan was also the Head Boy of QEGS! (i.e. a born leader).**



Our former Head Chorister (and now a highly gifted Organist) **WILLIAM FIELDING**

has completed his year of advanced study of the organ with two of the most gifted Parisian organists: **THOMAS OSPITAL (St. Eustache)** & **OLIVIER LATRY (Notre Dame)** and is about to fly for a further year's study in **JAPAN!!**

Here he is just before his 24th birthday this Spring, playing the organ in the **Basilique St. Sernin, Toulouse**: a **Prelude &**

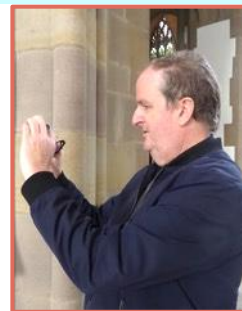
Fugue & more on *How brightly shines the Morning Star*. **CLICK** William's photo

NB There are **six movements** (see the lower part of the video – the Toccatina is v. exciting).



CLICK Terry Givens' **Treasure Chest** to discover his very many videos of our Blackburn Cathedral Organ as played at our Wednesday Lunchtime recitals.

TOTAL DOWNLOADS SO FAR: WELL OVER 18,000



ANOTHER FORMER MEMBER OF THE BLACKBURN BACH CHOIR wrote to JB out of the blue...

The Revd Dr Anthony Peabody and his wife Jenny

[Anthony and Jenny are most interesting friends – **never a dull moment** when you're around them. Anthony wasn't ordained in those days, he was an analytical scientist... but is now Vicar of a village church in Berkshire.]

HE WROTE: *We have just returned from a whistle stop tour of "the North", beginning at Lichfield Cathedral (Choir from Wayne Pa singing), Stockport, Urmston, Chorley, Brindle, Preston, Blackburn Cathedral (IoMan Cathedral choir), Lancaster, and finally Morecambe. Not the usual holiday itinerary, but hugely enjoyable. Called on Dorothy and David Wade [Dorothy, with her twin, Constance - page 7, is a founder member of the Bbn Bach Choir]*

I don't sing much anymore, my voice is really not up to it, but I have found myself conductor of the Sulhamstead Community Choir. After some 70 years of being conducted, I now find myself on the other side of the baton. I confess that I try to remember how you did it, although it is now more like a dim Barbirolli impression.

*I now play the **bass banjo**. Not much now in the way of banjo ensembles, but I play with the Tadley Ukulele Group. It all sounds a bit eccentric, but it all seems to work quite well.*



Jenny is very busy being the lynch pin organiser at Sulhamstead Abbots. It is easier to replace the vicar than it is to find the Jennys of this world.

Best wishes



Anthony and Jenny Peabody



JB playing the largest organ in the world: in Atlantic City's vast Auditorium, New Jersey, 1994

CLICK the photo to explore JB's TREASURE HOUSE of MUSIC

Including 'A LIFE IMMersed IN MUSIC' and...

Bach's unbelievable fascination with MATHEMATICAL SYMBOLISM and SO MUCH MORE

With over 886,000 viewers already – at nearly 400 a day!

From our former Canon Chancellor

Ian and Janet Stockton's Golden Years

On 11th August 2023, we celebrated fifty years of marriage, and our three daughters, their husbands and our seven grandchildren joined us in Lincoln. At first, the celebration was to be with our immediate family circle, but we decided to invite a few friends and family members who had known us for over forty years. We wish we could have invited more.



Here is a photo of our **three daughters** and sons-in-law and **7 grandchildren**, taken at Sandyhills, near Dalbeattie.

On Saturday 12th August we gathered at a good Italian restaurant, **Gino's on Lincoln's Bailgate**. There an upper room had been prepared for us. **Our brothers, Robert Stockton and Philip Madeley**, were there with their spouses, **Mo and Karen**, and Janet's

cousin, **Claire**, one of the bridesmaids, and her husband, **Alan**, & **Peter**, a friend from Cambridge days, and **John Williams**, who was ordained alongside **Ian** at Lichfield Cathedral, and John's wife **Mary**.

This meant that two dozen people sat together at a long table in a spacious Upper Room. **John** and **Ian** led the singing of *Praise God from whom all blessings flow* as the grace.





My brother and his wife are in the foreground and I am standing at the back telling guests to choose freely from the *a la carte* menu, or the children's menu, whatever they wanted to eat.

And here are Janet and Ian:

Janet managed well at our celebratory event in spite of having pulled lower back ligaments in a fall at Waitrose pedestrian route through their car park. Conditions were very wet and she slipped on a cattle-grid surface designed to prevent the theft of trolleys. She was given some flowers and later a £25 token. We had no intention of taking legal action, but did report the incident! Waitrose had earlier given me a bottle of champagne when their wine man knew that it was our golden wedding. It is our corner shop.



Afterwards everyone gathered at our home for sparkling wine, other drinks and slices of a wonderful cake, which had been made and decorated by Alison.



The musical sweet peas are from our garden – ‘Sir Jimmy Shand’. Later we were given two framed pictures, one of the whole family and one of the grandchildren, taken by Andrew Teasdale a week or two ago on the shore at Sandyhills, near Dalbeattie [See p.9] . By design and accident, they had all recently enjoyed a summer holiday in Galloway, where Ian had served as Rector, and from where long ago his Scottish grandparents had eloped. The other gift from our daughters and families was meal voucher for Washingborough Hall near Lincoln. We know that the food will out-perform school dinners.

We have chosen to stay at a Highland hotel for four nights in early October. After all, our honeymoon of over a fortnight in 1973, was in the north-west of Scotland - where else?

So we give thanks to God for these years, for our family, for the joyful gathering in our Lincoln home, and for all the greetings sent to us from near and far.

Ian and Janet Stockton

From **ALAN CRAMERI**, Chair of our **BLACKBURN CHAMBER CHOIR**:

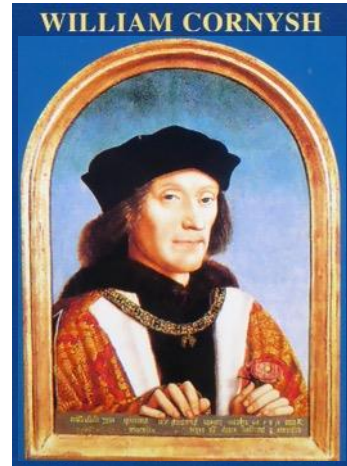


TICKETS are now on sale [here](#) for our concert at Blackburn Cathedral on **Saturday 4th November**, a feast of English polyphonic music, all by composers enjoying major anni-versaries this year.



William Byrd (1539-1623), a firm favourite of Elizabeth I, will be heard at his most brilliant in *Laudibus in Sanctis*, and at his most popular in his *Lullaby*.

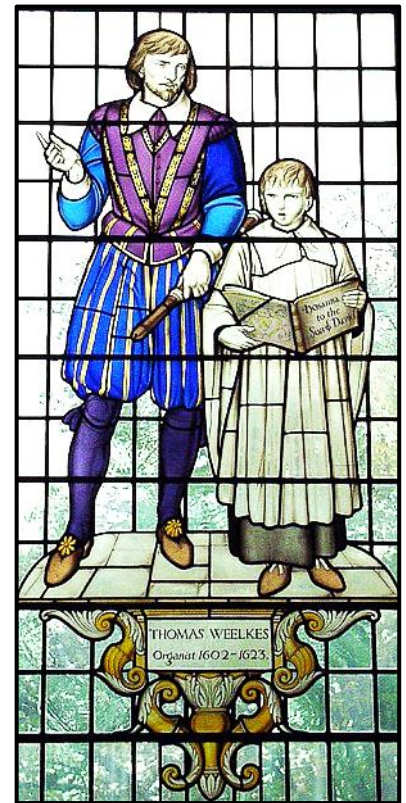
Thomas Weelkes (1576-1623), the disinhibited Organist of **Chichester Cathedral**, brings not only earthiness to his sacred music, but a sense of redemption and transcendence.



William Cornysh (1465-1523) is a mysterious figure. Some of his music seems much older than his dates, and there's every possibility it is by his father, also called William Cornysh!

We look forward to seeing you

If you'd like to sing with us come along to our rehearsal on **THURSDAY 12th October at 7.45pm** in Blackburn Cathedral to experience the thrill of singing such glorious music.



Collect a free brochure from the table at the back of the Cathedral to see more of our



**BLACKBURN
CHAMBER CHOIR
CONCERTS**



**FROM OUR TALENTED
GUEST ORGANIST
NIGEL SPOONER
& friend, 'SID'
Cycling down the
Danube**



It was a chance conversation with a friend amongst the Hallé Choir sopranos which led to me cycling down a considerable stretch of the River Danube in June. Her husband, Sid,

regularly cycles from the UK to their holiday home in Croatia and asked whether I would like to join him to cycle from the source of the Danube to Budapest. The performance of Elgar's 3 oratorios in quick succession (the *Malvern Ring* as Mark Elder calls them) prevented going from the very source of the Danube but, with heart in mouth, I put wrapped-up new bike on plane and hoped it would arrive unscathed at Munich. Emerging into baggage reclaim, there was no sign of it until I found it lying forlorn on the floor between two carousels – relief! Easing the onward journey gave me the perfect excuse to stay at the Hilton hotel on the airport itself, making my way the next day on the S-bahn and ICE train up to Donauwörth.



The next day (Sid's day 5), my pedals were now turning on our way to Kelheim, a journey of 66 miles. It was immediately striking what provision there is for cyclists generally in Germany, how good the surfaces and signage are and how mindful motorists are of cyclists, not to mention how clean and tidy everything is (no greasy pavements or cars parked partly on them!); no litter and super-clean trains (just as Canon Michael Wedgeworth noted in Sweden). We soon reached the magnificence of Neuberg.

On then towards Ingolstadt (location of the headquarters of Audi) which merited a detour off route to see the minster and organ. If only I'd had the time (been organised enough?) to seek permission to play some instruments along the way; in the minster, there was not a soul to ask the



entire hour that I was there!

The Komoot cycling app, with which I was still familiarising myself, managed to send me back the way I came which resulted in me cycling not 66, but a total of 97 miles in the first day! The beer on arrival was certainly welcome and to be able to relish it in the early evening sunshine.

Lots of level, 20+ mph, cycling (the advantage of cycling beside rivers!) led to



Regensburg, one of Europe's best-preserved mediaeval cities. The cathedral, started in 1525, was not finally completed until 1869, which perhaps explains why the organ is not in the usual West end position. Sadly, my visit didn't coincide with **David Briggs'** recital a week later (David and I recently discovered that we did our ARCO and FRCO exams in the same sessions as each other!).



The day ended at the impressive town of Straubing with its imposing clocktower, within which there was a very welcome **ice cream shop**, being patronised by large numbers of people in the hot, sunny weather (distant memories....).



We were to reach the border with Austria at the city of **Passau** (known as 3-river city as 3 rivers converge here) the next day, with its castle high up across the river and location of the (very spruce) youth hostel. The views from there were terrific. Wheeling my bike into **Passau Cathedral** the next morning, I was accosted by a verger in German telling me that I had to leave my bike outside as there would be lots of visitors in the afternoon (the logic escaped me and there was only one other visitor in the vast building). The organ is the largest in Europe, with 5 manuals and 17,774 pipes, situated in various parts of the building. The verger didn't seem to sort of person to ask to have a play! *(To see and hear Passau Cath organ Click the photo on L... What did you think of the performance?)*

Crossing the Danube on a small ferry, we were suddenly in Austria with absolutely no sign to indicate we'd crossed a border (oh, the wonders of the Schengen zone). There were fantastic scenes along the, now wider, river and it was to be



a succession of historic towns with **Linz** reached at the end of the day and on to Melk (with its fascinating abbey – no interior photos allowed) the day after. We really felt that we'd arrived in the "big city" in Linz and it had both its picturesque centre and very industrial outer parts.

A visit to the old Linz cathedral was called for, where **Bruckner** was organist.



Still in sunshine (we'd been affected by rain only on part of one day so far), we headed on to Tulln and then to **Vienna**. It was good to see Vienna again but I can't say it's a city I feel embraced by (and was the only place with mucky pavements!)



Nevertheless, it is very cycle-friendly and an early arrival allowed a visit to **Schubert's birthplace (with his glasses)** and to the cathedral, which was free of scaffolding inside this time. Impressive on the outside, but far less appealing inside.

It was a little bit as if we were getting on to more forgotten and less used parts of the cycleway **heading towards Slovakia**. This was another border which went largely unnoticed and there were certainly no checks.



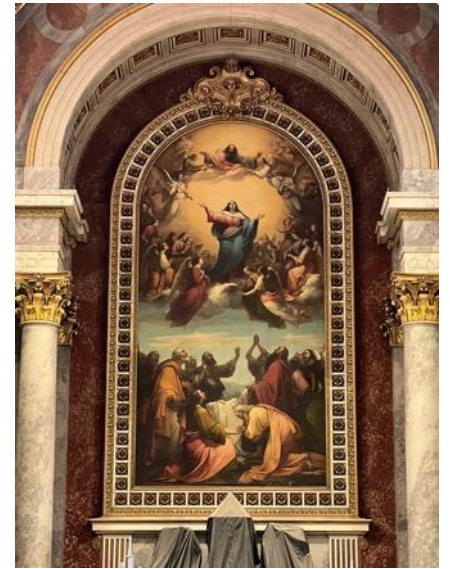
Temperature (the high 20s) and some riding on a busy road rather put us off going into Bratislava. The stay in Slovakia was very short and **we crossed into Hungary**, again without noticing. The evening found us staying in the very

"authentic" village of **Mosonmagyaróvár**.



Things now seemed very much more rural and there was a certain amount of determination required now that the temperature had crept up to 30 degrees! Some paths were now rather more gravelly which caused some speed reduction also.

Efforts were rewarded in arriving at the vast square (**with ice cream**) in Győr and making the climb up to the largest



church in Hungary in Esztergom. This church has **the largest painting in the world on a single canvas (as an altarpiece)**. The night's stay brought us right next to the Danube in Komarum and we went across to Slovakia for dinner and back (as you do!).



Then it was the tantalising ride to **Budapest**, wanting to reach the great city and the end - getting hotter and hotter and thirstier and thirstier. Still, it was a good excuse for several breaks, with ice cream of course (and the occasional beer!): 608 miles and 10 days since the start in Donauwörth. Little did we know that we would arrive at the same time as **hundreds of Harley-**



Davidson riders, there for a 120th anniversary celebration. The noise was quite something and there were tonal possibilities for sampling for 32' reeds! The weather was still kind to us and there was time the following day to do some sightseeing, including getting up to the castle district and the Fishermen's Bastion.

It was a great adventure and **next year's is already being planned**: ferry to Rotterdam and then cycling due South down the Eastern side of France to Nice, then across to Italy, finishing in Venice!



Thank you, Nigel, for this fascinating article about your so-energetic European cycle tour with Sid.

May next year's tour enable you to play some of the historic organs you hope to visit!



SID (nice pun!) & NIGEL