

Oundle International Festival 25th Anniversary Appeal

Hon. President Charles Bush

Oundle International Festival, or 'Organ Week' as it was then frequently called, was founded in 1985 with the twin aims of providing excellence in training for young and talented organists, and high-quality professional music concerts, all of which happened during one crazy week in July. In essence those twin themes are still at the very heart of Oundle International Festival, but we have developed and spread our wings in what has become a multi-faceted and wide-reaching organisation.

We now draw thousands to Oundle every July for the Festival, and in Spring and Autumn we run Music in Quiet Places, which promotes recitals in local villages. Meanwhile, the one week organ summer school has become Oundle for Organists, a year-round series of courses for players of all ages. Ninety-three per cent of this year's Cambridge organ scholarships were awarded to our students, and several former pupils have gone on to become international celebrities.

We've come a long way since those early days, but our excitement for music has not diminished, and one venture close to our hearts is community opera. This year's production of *The Cunning Little Vixen* by Janáček will involve up to 150 volunteer participants as well as professional opera singers and musicians, and embrace one of our main aims: to bring the pleasure of classical music to as wide a section of people as possible.

So what of the future? We intend to develop an educational outreach programme to take music into schools and old people's homes, take the organ courses further afield, form a Festival Choir and Youth Choir and make community opera a biennial event. But the arts are traditionally underfunded in this country, and we constantly struggle to achieve the financial support we need, which is why we are asking for your help! To ensure our plans can become realities, we are aiming to raise £25,000 to celebrate this, our 25th anniversary.

Classical music should be accessible to everyone, and year by year this is what we work to achieve. We look forward to welcoming you warmly to all aspects of our Festival and very much hope you will respond generously to our appeal.

James Parsons

Founder, Oundle International Festival
Director, Oundle for Organists

Patricia Ryan

Director, Oundle International Festival

Oundle
FOR ORGANISTS

Oundle INTERNATIONAL
festival
CELEBRATING 25 YEARS

FEEDBACK FROM TOBIAS AND THE ANGEL COMMUNITY OPERA PRODUCTION IN 2007

"I was enthralled and captivated by Tobias and the Angel, and the big, happy smiles of the children said it all. They will remember this for the rest of their lives."

Nigel Middleton, choir trainer Polebrook School

"Tobias was magnificent and rivalled anything I've seen on much larger stages. I guess the cost of the production must be significant, but the result is worth it."

Jeremy James, audience member

FEEDBACK FROM OUNDLE FOR ORGANISTS

"It was stimulating to meet so many great organ friends from around the world and to work with such gifted tutors. There is nothing like this in the States and I wish that there was."

Chris Jacobsen, organ student from USA

"When I hear a new university student play for the first time, I can tell if they have been on an Oundle course by their informed attitude towards organ playing."

David Sanger, Oundle for Organists' tutor, international recitalist and organ teacher at Oxbridge Universities

