

The Dome, Brighton:

ITS ORGAN AND ORGANIST

by David H. Hayes

The Dome

In 1804 the seaside palace of King George IV, the Royal Pavilion, Brighton, was completed. On the estate was a large domed building designed as a stable. The building was circular and round, the outer walls were stables for 44 horses. The upper floor comprised harness and saddle rooms and accommodation for grooms. To illuminate the building a large glass dome surmounted the roof. It was 65 ft. high from the floor, in the centre of which was a drinking fountain for the horses.

Brighton Corporation purchased the estate from Queen Victoria in 1850, and opened the gardens and grounds to the public. The interior of the Dome was converted into a concert hall, the work being finished in 1867. From 1914 to 1920 it was used as a military hospital. This concert hall had a four-manual Father Willis Organ.

In 1935 the interior of the Dome was again remodelled, this time to convert it into a great theatre, with fully raked floor and permanent fixed seating for 2,096 persons, every seat having a perfect view of the stage on which 250 performers can appear at any one time. The original Willis organ was removed, and the pipework used in various church projects in hand at the time. The work was completed in 1936 at a cost of £45,000. From pictures I have seen of the Mosque Auditorium at Richmond, Virginia, the Dome is very similar, but smaller; 2096 seats as against 5026.

As a civic centre the Dome, Brighton has many uses: Orchestral and Choral Concerts, Opera, Ballet, Variety



Organ specially designed for the dome, Brighton, England.

and Jazz performances. It is also possible to lay a flat floor over the centre seats of the stalls to convert the building into a ballroom. A modern dual-purpose organ was specially designed by Dr. Stanley Roper, then organist at the Chapel Royal, Windsor; Dr. Alfred Abdey, Borough organist at that time, and Quentin Maclean. The latter officially opened the instrument when completed. It was built by Wm. Hill & Son and Norman & Beard, Ltd. (makers

of Christie Unit Cinema Organs) at a cost of £8,800.

The Organ

The organ, in four chambers, is divided to either side of the proscenium: on the left the Solo, with Swell beneath; on the right the Great, with Accompaniment beneath. A single blower above the left chambers feeds this enormous organ, a supply trunk over the stage taking wind to the right-hand portions.



The Dome Concert Hall in Brighton.

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RANK	CHAMBER	PITCH	NO. OF PIPES
*Open Diapason (wood)	Great	32	32 Open to, G. 7 notes electronic
Open Diapason - II (Metal)	Great	16	85
Contra Gamba	Swell	16	85
Viola	Accomp.	8	73
Tibia Clausa	Solo	16	97
Bourdon	Great	16	73
Ophicleide	Great	32	56
Open Diapason - I	Great	8	61
Open Diapason - II	Great	8	61
Octave	Great	4	61
Wald Flote	Great	4	61
Twelfth	Great	3	61
Fifteenth	Great	2	61
Mixture	Great	IV	244
Contra Tromba	Great	16	85
Rohr Gedeckt	Swell	16	97
Violin Diapason	Swell	8	73
Fifteenth	Swell	2	61
Voix Celeste	Swell	8TC	49
Mixture	Swell	IV	244
Double Trumpet	Swell	16	85
Contra Oboe	Swell	16	73
Horn	Swell	8	61
Dulciana	Accomp.	16	97
Har. Claribel	Solo	8	73
Tuba Horn	Solo	16	85
Tuba Mirabilis	Solo	8	61
Orchestral Trumpet	Solo	8	61
Saxophone	Solo	8	61
Clarinet	Solo	8	61
Orchestral Oboe	Solo	8	61
Vox Humana	Accomp.	8	61
Con. Viole	Accomp.	16	61)
Quintadon	Accomp.	8	61)
Viole d'Orch. (2 ranks)	Accomp.	8	110)
Lieb. Gedeckt	Accomp.	4	61) String
Voix Celeste (2 ranks)	Accomp.	8	110) Organ
Violette	Accomp.	8	61)
Cor des Violes	Accomp.	IV	244)
Musette	Accomp.	8	61)

*This Open Diapason is available on the pedals only

(See complete specifications on next page)

Instead of the normal relay room, the relays are rather cleverly installed in the chambers to which they correspond, and thus minimise both the length of wiring and any possible time-lag.

The all-electric console is surprisingly neat and compact for an organ of this size, the four manuals being named (upwards) Accompaniment, Great, Swell, Solo. Stopkeys, which number over 250, are coloured ivory for "flues", light brown for "reeds". They are arranged in the following groups from left to right: Pedal, Swell, Great, Accompaniment, String, Solo, and cancel bars are fitted above each group. A useful feature is that when every stopkey of a particular unit is on the "off" position, a ventil is brought into operation; thus should a cipher occur, it is only necessary to cancel all stopkeys of the unit concerned, and wind is automatically cut off. Although the manual names correspond to those of the chambers, they are not confined to the particular chambers, and the organ is generally well unified. Most of the Strings are housed

in the Accompaniment chamber, but at the console are treated as a separate manual with their own group of stopkeys which are coupled to manuals as required. This String department contains a 4-rank Violes mixture; the two other 4-rank mixtures being on Great and Swell manuals.

The organ is well equipped with couplers - 23 manual-to-manual or manual-to-pedal, and 11 octave, etc. Each manual has 10 thumb-pistons, with extras for couplers, "full organ", etc., and a "doubles-off" tilting tablet by the Great pistons cuts off 16 ft. registrations on that manual. 20 toe-pistons operating pedal and manual stopkeys are provided, and traps may be switched to either 1st or 2nd touch on Pedal and Accompaniment. All combination pistons are adjustable at the console by means of a setter piston.

There is the usual selection of non-tonal percussions and traps, and tonal percussions consist of Xylophone, Marimba, (used mainly for accompaniment purposes), Glockenspiel/Orchestra

Bells, Sleigh Bells, Chimes and Chrysoglot/Vibraphone, the latter being sensibly placed immediately behind the shutters in the Accompaniment chamber.

Swell pedals number four, the last one being for Crescendo. The four sets of swell shutters may be coupled as desired to the remaining three pedals by means of small levers, one of which when pushed to the extreme right disconnects the Great shutters from the swell pedals, and opens them fully, forming the nearest possible approach to the "unenclosed" Great of the "straight" organ. This obviously is for when the organ is required for concert use, and at such times percussions and traps can be disconnected via a switch.

With four-Diapasons and plenty of other suitable ranks, the instrument is an excellent Grand organ (it is used for Religious Services every Sunday), but its Tibia build-up, sweet voicing, and good tremulants, make it a perfect theatre organ.

The Organist

Douglas Reeve is the name that has been and always will be associated with the Dome, Brighton, but they did not officially meet until 1941 when, the Dome having been converted into a dance hall, he was appointed dance organist as relief to the dance band. Thousands of servicemen and women became familiar with his style, the use of the snare drum, and the expressive use of the powerful reed stops, during those five years. Thus commenced an association which has lasted to the present day, because he was appointed Borough Organist when the Dome was reconverted into a concert hall again in 1946.

Douglas Reeve was born in Brighton. He learnt the piano at an early age, and at only nine years old had graduated to a local church organ. Already cinema organs were being installed in the town's main cinemas, so at the age of 14 he became a pupil of Terence Casey at the Regent Cinema, who was making recording and broadcasting fame for himself and Brighton with the 2/9 WurliTzer (this now famous little WurliTzer has just been saved from destruction by an individual club member). Under Terence Casey's expert tuition he soon mastered the cinema organ techniques, and was appointed assistant organist at another Brighton cinema, the Savoy, which had a 3/12 Compton. Reginald Foort was the musical director of the circuit and on a visit to Brighton he was so impressed with Douglas Reeve's playing that he engaged him for a tour of the circuit, billed as "The Wonder Boy Organist". The experience was no doubt very helpful as he played organs of various makes and sizes. Later he settled in the London area, at the Regal, Golders Green, and had his first broadcast in 1937 at the old B.B.C. theatre organ.

On the outbreak of Hostilities, he,

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SPECIFICATIONS OF DOME, BRIGHTON, CHRISTIE ORGAN

PEDAL ORGAN

- 32 Double Open Diapason
- 16 Open Diapason (wood)
- 16 Open Diapason (metal)
- 16 Contra Gamba
- 16 Major Bass
- 16 Bourdon
- 16 Double Dulciana
- 16 ContraViole
- 16 Echo Bourdon
- 10-2/3 Quintadena
- 8 Octave
- 8 Principal
- 8 Cello
- 8 Bass Flute
- 8 Tibia Clausa
- 5-1/3 Twelfth
- 4 Fifteenth
- 4 Flute
- 32 Ophecleide
- 16 Trombone
- 16 Double Trumpet
- 16 Contra Tromba
- 16 Tuba Horn
- 8 Trumpet
- Bass Drum Tap F (2 Touch)
- Bass Drum Tap P (2 Touch)
- Bass Drum Roll (2nd Touch)
- Cymbal Crash (2nd Touch)
- Cymbal Roll (2nd Touch)
- Triangle (2nd Touch)
- Snare Drum Roll (2nd Touch)
- Accompaniment To Pedal Cplr
- Great To Pedal Cplr
- Swell To Pedal Cplr
- Solo To Pedal Cplr

ACCOMPANIMENT ORGAN

- 16 Contra Dulciana
- 16 Gedeckt
- 16 Vox Humana TC
- 8 Open Diapason
- 8 Viola
- 8 Flute
- 8 Dulciana
- 8 Gamba
- 8 Tibia Clausa
- 8 Tuba Horn
- 8 Orchestral Trumpet
- 8 Saxophone
- 8 Clarinet
- 8 Orchestral Oboe
- 8 Vox Humana
- 4 Octave
- 4 Viola
- 4 Flute
- 4 Dulciana
- 4 Gambette
- 4 Tibia Clausa
- 4 Vox Humana
- 2-2/3 Flute Twelfth
- 2-2/3 Dulciana Twelfth
- 2 Flute
- 2 Dulcet
- 1-3/5 Flute Tierce
- 1-3/5 Dulciana Tierce
- III Dulciana Mixture
- Chrysoglott
- Marimba Harp
- 8 Tibia (2nd Touch)
- 8 Tuba Horn (2nd Touch)
- 8 Open Diapason (2nd Touch)
- 8 Clarinet (2nd Touch)
- 8 Orch. Oboe (2nd Touch)

- 8 Saxophone (2nd Touch)
- 4 Tibia (2nd Touch)
- 2 Tibia (2nd Touch)
- Triangle (2nd Touch)
- Tolling Bell (2nd Touch)
- Cymbal Crash (2nd Touch)
- Bird Whistle (2nd Touch)
- Tambourine
- Castanets
- Chinese Block
- Sand Block
- Sleigh Bells
- Tom-tom
- Snare Drum Roll
- Cymbal Tap
- Switch-1st Touch Traps
- To 2nd Touch
- Accomp Octave Cplr
- Solo To Accomp
- Solo To Accomp 8 (2nd Touch)
- Solo To Accomp 4 (2nd Touch)
- Solo To Accomp 16 (2nd Touch)
- Swell To Accomp 8
- String Organ To Accomp.

GREAT ORGAN (And Collective)

- 16 Double Open Diapason
- 16 Bourdon
- 8 Open Diapason 1
- 8 Open Diapason 2
- 8 Open Diapason 3
- 8 Stopped Diapason
- 8 Viola
- 5-1/3 Quint
- 4 Octave
- 4 Principal
- 4 Wald Flute
- 2-2/3 Twelfth
- 2 Fifteenth
- IV Mixtures
- 16 Contra Tromba
- 8 Tromba
- 4 Clarion

COLLECTIVE GREAT ORGAN

- 16 Tibia Clausa
- 16 Contra Gamba
- 16 Lieblich Gedeckt
- 16 Contra Dulciana
- 16 Tuba Horn
- 8 Flute
- 8 Dulciana
- 8 Gamba
- 8 Tibia Clausa
- 8 Harmonic Claribel
- 8 Tuba Horn
- 8 Clarinet
- 8 Vox Humana
- 8 Orchestral Oboe
- 8 Orchestral Trumpet
- 8 Saxophone
- 4 Flute
- 4 Dulciana
- 4 Tibia Clausa
- 4 Gambette
- 4 Octave Claribel
- 4 Tuba Horn
- 4 Vox Humana
- 2-2/3 Tibia Twelfth
- 2-2/3 Flute Twelfth
- 2 Flute

- 2 Dulcet
- 2 Tibia
- 1-3/5 Flute Tierce
- Xylophone (37 notes)
- Glockenspiel (37 notes)
- Orchestral Bells (37 notes)
- Chrysoglott (37 notes)
- 16 Tibia (2nd Touch)
- 8 Orchestral Trumpet (2nd Touch)
- 8 Tibia Clausa (2nd Touch)
- 4 Tibia Clausa (2nd Touch)
- Great Octave Cplr.
- Swell To Great 8
- Swell To Great 4
- Swell To Great 16
- Accomp. To Great 8
- Accomp. to Great 4
- Accomp. To Great 16
- String Organ To Great 8
- Solo To Great 8
- Solo To Great 4
- Solo To Great 16
- Solo To Great 8 (2nd Touch)
- Solo To Great 16 (2nd Touch)

SWELL ORGAN

- 16 Contra Gamba
- 16 Lieblich Gedeckt
- 8 Violin Diapason
- 8 Gamba
- 8 Voic Celeste
- 4 Gemshorn
- 4 Flute
- 4 Gambette
- 2 Fifteenth
- 2-2/3 Twelfth
- IV Mixture
- 16 Double Trumpet
- 8 Trumpet
- 4 Clarion
- 16 Contra Oboe
- 8 Oboe
- 8 Horn

STRING ORGAN

- 16 Contra Viola
- 8 Quintaton
- II Violes d'Orchestre
- II Voic Celeste
- 4 Violette
- IV Cornet de Violes
- 4 Musette
- 4 Lieblich Gedeckt
- Octave Cplr
- Sub Octave Cplr
- Unison Off

SOLO ORGAN

- 16 Tibia Clausa
- 16 Tuba Horn
- 16 Contra Tromba
- 16 Contra Oboe
- 16 Double Trumpet
- 8 Tibia Clausa
- 8 Harmonic Claribel
- 8 Open Diapason
- 8 Flute
- 8 Tuba Horn
- 8 Tromba
- 8 Tuba Mirabilis
- 8 Orchestral Trumpet
- 8 Saxophone
- 8 Clarinet
- 8 Trumpet
- 8 Orchestral Oboe
- 8 Oboe
- 8 Vox Humana
- 4 Octave
- 4 Tibia Clausa
- 4 Octave Claribel
- 4 Flute
- 4 Clarion
- 4 Tuba Horn
- 4 Trumpet
- 4 Vox Humana
- 2-2/3 Tibia Twelfth
- 2 Tibia Clausa
- Marimba Harp
- Chrysoglott
- Xylophone-Re-it.
- Xylophone-Tap
- Glockenspiel
- Orchestral Bells
- Carillon (25 notes)
- Sleigh Bells
- Chimes (17 notes)
- Solo Octave Cplr
- Solo Sub Octave Cplr
- Solo Unison Off
- String Organ To Solo

ORCHESTRAL SWELL ORGAN

- 16 Tuba Horn
- 8 Tuba Horn
- 8 Orchestral Trumpet
- 8 Saxophone
- 8 Orchestral Oboe
- 8 Clarinet
- 8 Vox Humana
- 8 Harmonic Claribel
- 8 Tibia Clausa
- 4 Tibia Clausa
- 4 Harmonic Claribel
- 4 Vox Humana
- 2 Tibia Clausa
- 2-2/3 Tibia Twelfth
- Swell Octave Cplr
- Swell Sub Octave Cplr
- Swell Unison Off
- Solo To Swell 8
- String Organ To Swell 8

SEE GENERAL INFORMATION ON NEXT PAGE

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THE DOME, BRIGHTON: ITS ORGAN AND ORGANIST

(Concluded)

like many other Organists, was called up, but on being invalided out of the Army in 1941, he returned to his home town, Brighton, and became the dance organist at the Dome.

Apart from his duties as borough organist, he was also busy on civic entertainments during the holiday season, and was the inaugurator of the "Tues-

day at the Dome" variety series. This show has now been running for 16 years and has played to approximately 1,500,000 persons, the organ being used to accompany first class variety acts as well as a solo spot. On Thursdays he gives a popular organ recital; the writer has attended many of these, and there are very few empty seats, in fact you have to be there early to get a good seat. He introduces each item personally, and there is always some

thing to suit every taste. An average of three or four finale encores are inevitable, such is the popularity and high esteem achieved by this Brightonian in his home town - yes indeed, the local newspapers can say with pride - "Local boy makes good!"

It would be most rude of me if I did not record my thanks to Douglas Reeve himself for scrutinising this article for accuracy, and to Frank Hare for some technical information.

GENERAL INFORMATION ON ORGAN

Double Touch Thumb Pistons - 10 to Great, 10 to Swell, 10 to Accompaniment, 10 to Solo. All adjustable on 1st Touch by setter piston at the keys. 2nd Touch brings on Suitable Pedal Pistons. 5 Single Touch Thumb Pistons for String Organ. 18 Single Touch Pedal Pistons, 8 to pedal and 10 duplicating Swell Thumb Pistons. 6 Reversible Thumb Pistons - Swell To Great Coupler, Great To Pedal Coupler, Solo To Great Coupler, Solo To Pedal Coupler, Swell To Pedal, Full Organ.

2 Reversible Pedal Pistons - Swell To Great, Great To Pedal.

Rocking Tablets (under great keys) Doubles Off.

Thumb Piston - Octave Couplers Cancel

5 Vibratos; (Tremulants)

Cancel Bars - one to each department (Editor's Note - These are the small horizontal tablets above each division of the organ tablets that resemble name plates for each division) Balanced Swell Pedals - one to each enclosed section. The Swell Pedals Selector Switchboard (lower right) enables any of the enclosed sections to be operated from any desired pedal.

Balanced general crescendo pedal.

Ventil controls operated in conjunction with stop keys to all unified stops.

Tumble switch to cut out cinema effects.

3 stop keys to control Vibraphone, Chrysoglott Damper, and Muted Chimes.

Electro-pneumatic action and a duplex blower.

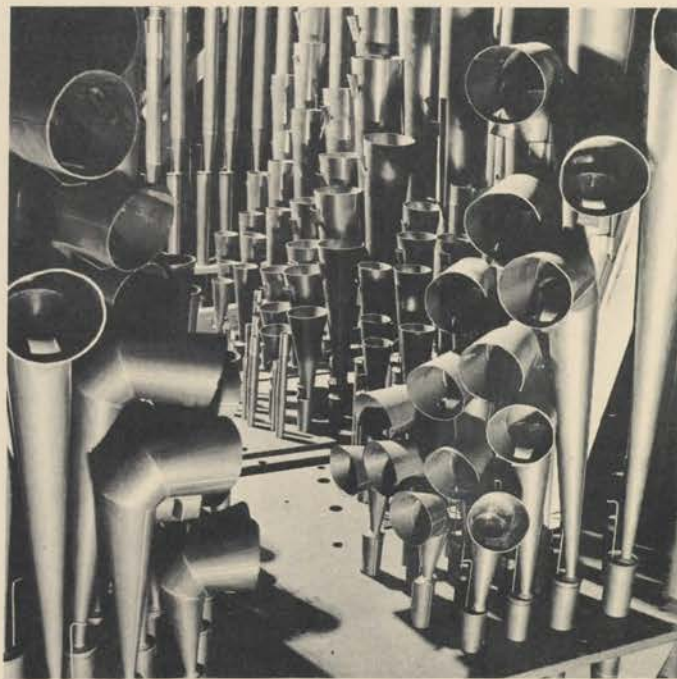
Stop Key Console placed on a lift, and can also be used on a mobile platform.



Great Trumpet, No. 1 Diapason, Stopped Diapason, No. 2 Diapason.



William Ashby, Tuner. String organ including Vibraphone, Muesette, Celeste, Quintadon, Viol d'orchestre, Gedeckt, Cornet d'violes 4 rank mixture, 16 Contra Viol.



Tuba Mirabilis, Saxophone, Tuba Horn, Orchestral Trumpet, Clarinet.

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