

THE HIDDEN GEM OF HEATON NORRIS

All Saints Church Organ Restoration Appeal



A History of the organ and how local people can help

The foundation stone of All Saints Church Heaton Norris, designed by local architects Preston and Vaughan, was laid by Lady Egerton of Tatton in 1886, and the building was completed two years later, as the daughter church of Christ Church Heaton Norris, of which only the spire remains.

At the same time, the church founders commissioned Hardy's Organ Builders, then based on Penny Lane, Lancashire Hill (a few hundred yards from the church) to design two specifications for a new organ. The company, which later

became part of the iconic Stockport music shop 'Nield and Hardy', duly submitted two designs for the new instrument; one, a large three manual (keyboard) specification, the other a smaller two manual instrument.

Due to financial constraints the smaller two manual organ was chosen and, with some modifications to the design, was installed in the newly consecrated church in 1889. The church is very fortunate that the original copies of both these specifications, with quotes, still exist in the archives.

The organ continued in use for a century until the late 1980's, when, for a number of years, the church building was closed due to wet and dry rot. Services were continued to a faithful congregation; firstly in Christ Church School and, once this closed, in All Saints School.

Eventually, due to a deed of covenant on the Christ Church School building (dating from the 1840's), funds from the sale of the closed school were returned to the Parish Church, which following the closure of Christ Church in 1974, was now All Saints. This money was used to cure the All Saints building of the wet and dry rot, and to re-order the church into a hall, lounge area and worship space, making the building suitable for a number of community uses.

Throughout this traumatic period of closure the organ remained in situ, despite some suggestion that it be scrapped as, by this time, the church no longer had an organist.

However, a determined group of forward-thinking people from All Saints, recognising both the organ's musical merits and its historic significance as a locally built instrument, determined

to save it. They eventually won the battle and the organ was saved. It was left in its original position and incorporated into the new layout of the building, which was re-dedicated and re-opened by the then Bishop of Manchester the Rt. Rev. Stanley Booth-Clibborn in 1991.

Apart from the addition of an electric blower in the 1960's, the organ remains unchanged since 1889, despite the huge changes that have occurred around it, both in the parish and the building itself.

In January 2013 All Saints acquired an organist for the first time in many years and the organ is once again used for services, rehearsals, concerts and recitals. This, in turn, has led to the re-establishment of the church choir, made up of local adults and children, who sing week in, week out at All Saints with a high standard of musicianship.

However, 125 years have taken their toll and whilst still sounding splendid, the organ is in need of c£10,000 worth of restoration in order to secure its future. As the instrument is one of the last remaining Stockport-built organs in existence, and the only remaining one in Stockport, the church has launched a scheme to raise the funds for the restoration. In this scheme, any amount can be donated, however little.

Donation forms can be obtained by emailing pwaddington2@gmail.com or telephoning 07821 307 909

Why not consider making a donation and help play a part in the restoration of this important part of our towns, and particularly Heaton Norris's, heritage?

Gift Aid Form

I would like to donate to help restore Christ with All Saints organ. I have completed the form below, and sent my contribution to:

Christ with All Saints Appeal, c/o Philip Waddington, 10 All Saints Road, Heaton Norris, Stockport, SK4 1QA

Cheques should be made payable to: Christ with All Saints PCC

I wish Gift Aid to be claimed on this donation. I confirm I have paid or will pay an amount of Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax for the current tax year (6th April to 5th April) that is at least equal to the amount of tax that all the charities and Community Amateur Sports Clubs (CACs) that I donate to will reclaim on my gifts for the current tax year. I understand that other taxes such as VAT and Council Tax do not qualify. I understand the charity will reclaim 25p of tax on every £1 that I have given.

Title.....Name.....

Address.....

.....Postcode.....

I wish to make a donation of £ and enclose my donation.

Signed.....Date.....