

ST ANDREW'S CHURCH
DONHEAD ST ANDREW

THE ORGAN

(revised 9th September 2019)

THE HISTORY OF THE ORGAN

The organ was made at some time between 1820 and 1840. The maker is not known.

The organ was not originally in St Andrew's Church; it came to the church in 1990 from Longwell Green near Bristol. From the (limited) documentation we have, it is clear that Longwell Green was not the organ's original location. The organ has had at least three other 'homes' before it was brought to St Andrew's Church.

Apart from the provision of an electric blower, the re-covering of the keys with synthetic 'ivory' and the fitting of an unattractive box containing an electric light over the manual, the instrument seems to have been little altered over the years.

The organ is located in the middle of the north aisle at St Andrew's Church.

SPECIFICATION

It has a single manual of 61 notes and a 25-note pedal board with narrow parallel pedals.

There are six manual ranks and one pedal rank.

The Open Diapason, Stopped Diapason (Bass and Treble) and Dulciana - all 8ft - share a common 12-note bass. There is a 4ft Principal, a 4ft Flute and a 2ft Piccolo (the latter sounding quite like a Fifteenth).

The 4ft Flute originally stops at tenor C.

The pedal Bourdon was originally composed of 12 notes.

The manual stop combination was permanently linked to the pedal.

An unusual feature of the organ is a manual Octave coupler.

There are three combination pedals.

The organ is mechanical throughout.

CASEWORK

The casework is in the Gothic style with three panels of dummy pipes to the front. The Bourdon pipes form the sides, above panels to both sides.

We have discovered that the case was originally painted and the dummy pipes water-gilded.

CURRENT RESTORATION

Through a generous benefaction by a former villager, in memory of her late stepfather, an eminent American organist and Bach scholar, the organ is being restored and cleaned.

We are also taking the opportunity of the current closure of St Andrew's Church for major restoration and development to make some modest changes and additions to the organ.

The organ project was discussed with the Diocesan Organ Adviser, approved by him and then agreed by the Diocesan Advisory Committee. Subsequently, a Faculty was granted by the Chancellor of the Diocese.

In addition to a complete cleaning and overhaul of the organ, the following changes are being made:

1. New pipes will be added to the pedal Bourdon so that it sounds across its extent.
2. The manual will be de-coupled from the pedal. A draw stop is being added to couple the manual to the pedal.
3. The 4ft Flute will be extended down to bottom C using second-hand pipes.
4. The organ case will be painted in its original colour and the dummy pipes water-gilded.
5. An unsightly light fitting for the music desk will be removed and replaced with much more subtle LED lighting.

The organ will be re-built on a newly-constructed platform in the north aisle during the month of September 2019, ready for the re-opening services in October.

The acoustic properties of St Andrew's Church have been much enhanced by the removal of a wooden, tiled and part-carpeted floor and by the installation of a new limestone floor in the Nave and in parts of the Chancel.

When the church re-opens, the building will be kept at a temperature of 12 degrees centigrade through a new underfloor heating system powered by an air source heat pump; this system does not extend under the organ.

*Michael Hockney FRSCM
Organist, St Andrew's Church
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