

Church Organ Review Sub-Committee Update April 2009

Members:

Martin Jackson
Alan Leach
Nigel Howard

A short meeting was arranged at 11.15am on Sunday 5th April 2009 to catch up on progress made since our last formal meeting in June 2008.

Financial Situation

The project has now passed the half way stage. The organ was taken away for restoration in July last year (2008). Nicholas Thiselthwaite has paid a visit to the workshops in Worksop and reported back. Goetze & Gwynn have submitted two progress reports and three stage payments have been made so far, to G & G.

As the next stage payment will become due within the next month or so, and because the amount of money remaining in the bank account will be insufficient to cover this payment, Nigel has filled up and submitted Payment Request 2 Form to the Heritage Lottery Fund.

Because Goetze and Gwynn were selected as the preferred restorer and their estimate was cheaper than that of Harrison & Harrison, and because we have been able to claim back the VAT on the restoration work itself, we are in the fortunate position of being able to reduce our estimated total project cost. Although this has the beneficial effect of reducing our contribution to the project cost, it also has the effect of reducing the amount awarded to our project by the HLF and so our next payment from HLF will be reduced accordingly.

Full details of the new estimated budget figures for the project are included in the separate document *Restoration Cost Forecasts Updated Mar 09_v14.doc* attached. The bottom line though is that we have now collected together enough funds to nearly cover our churches contribution to this project – which is a great achievement so far.

Visit to the organ restorer factory

Although Nicholas Thistlethwaite visited Goetze & Gwynn towards the end of last year, it was considered a good idea that the organ committee make a further visit to see for themselves how the restoration itself is getting on, and also to get a better idea of when exactly the organ is likely to be ready for re-installation in our church.

What with various holidays and so on, the best time to go and visit the G&G workshops at Worksop would be Monday 11th or Tuesday 12th May. Nigel agreed to get in touch with G&G to see if this would be possible.

Inaugural concert

Since the organ is unlikely to be returned before the end of June at the earliest, we agreed that the best time to schedule an inaugural concert would be sometime in September, October or November 2009.

Alan suggested Andrew Reid, the organist at Peterborough Cathedral would be a good choice to perform for our concert. Alan agreed that he would approach Andrew to see if he might be available in that time period.

Other special event opening concerts

Martin suggested the Alan Broadbent from Rugby's Sinfonia Orchestra be approached to see if they will be prepared to give us an additional concert for works they have already rehearsed and have Martin accompany the players on our newly restored organ. Martin agreed that he would approach Alan Broadbent to see if this is feasible and if so, sound out some possible dates in the autumn.

Another idea brought up at the meeting, but not taken any further at this stage, was to put on another mini-concert for Leicester Grammar School to utilise the new organ. But as the restored organ is going to be delayed until the late summer or autumn anyway, it was considered better to let them celebrate the organ's return at their next scheduled concert in March 2010.

Organ Pipe Purchase Scheme and Raffle

One or two parishioners in the church put forward the idea of setting up an organ pipe purchase scheme as an interesting way of raising additional funds for the project. It was agreed that this would be a good idea.

Alan has already prepared a chart with all the organ pipes identified with individual squares - so far he has collected over £400 towards the raffle. Nigel and Martin have not really started any canvassing of their own.

Since the organ will not be reinstalled back into our church until most likely after the summer holiday, the general consensus was that we would prefer to put back the date of the raffle and incorporate it in the official inaugural concert. Alan is hopeful that the people who have bought tickets might not mind.

Hire of new electronic organ while main one is being restored

Over the recent months we have been hiring of an electronic organ (Makin) to cover all or some of the period when our main organ is being restored. The cost of hiring this organ has been included in the revised figures submitted to the HLF.

Loan of chamber organ from G&G

Martin Goetze did offer us the loan of another organ while ours was being restored. Although we have agreed to look after this organ for the time being, the volume is rather quiet for many of our services. So it is only played on rare occasions.

Nevertheless it does need to be looked after and cared for and concern was expressed that the organ may have been tampered with, possibly on special occasions when large numbers of children are allowed to run around the church, and not necessarily under the watchful eye of supervisors at all times.

Nigel and Alan will see if they can find a suitable cover to place over the keyboard console, when the organ is not in use.

Disposal of old home electronic organ

The old electronic home organ was sold to a collector in Daventry who will make good use of it. The proceeds of £50 were passed to the church funds.

Rewiring changes for the organ

Alan happened to be in the vestry on one occasion and came across an electrician who was about to undertake some electrical wiring change recommendations identified during the recent church quinquennial inspection. He noticed that the old wiring for the organ was not in use, and thought he would just remove it. Alan informed him that that wiring was just temporarily out of use until the organ was put back in place. The electrician assured Alan that the organ wiring will be routed through the new fuse boxes which he will be putting up in place in a short while.

Alan also discussed the idea of adding some signalling equipment so that the organist can have communication with the vestry, front door and the belfry. Nowadays this can be easily added without the need for additional wiring. This additional facility would be added after the organ is re-installed back into the organ loft. The cost for this will need to be included in any new project cost revisions.

Rubbish in the organ loft

A time has been agreed to sort out all the boxes and stuff in the organ loft at 9.45am on Friday 17th April. Martin will bring his trailer and take the rubbish to the Daventry tip.

Nigel Howard

5th April 2009