

Chris's Reordering Blog – Week 1

The last service before work started was on 4 June. As you can see from the picture the Organ Chamber had been sealed up to prevent dust getting in a few days before and the organ console had been dismantled and sent off to the organ builder who will keep it safe while the work is carried out. We are hoping that the console will be refurbished while it's away but we will wait and see how work progresses and if any major hidden costs emerge before we commission the work.



The carpet had also been taken up and the difference in the acoustics was amazing. It really bodes well for the quality of sound we will be able to achieve once the work is complete.

A team of Church members set to work after the service and all the remaining furniture was removed either into the Vestry or the car park store. Thanks to everyone who worked so hard.

The contractor, Wrencon, started work on Monday 5 June, firstly setting up the site compound and then on to removing the pews. The first disappointment was how decayed many of the pew-ends resting up against the outside walls of the Church had become. Mind you, after some 160 years against a wall that we know had had damp problems over the years it should not have been unexpected. Because of this many of the pews that we had options to buy on understandably were not taken up. We will try and sell these as job lots to someone who can either undertake the renovation work or reuse the wood to renovate antique furniture. If you are interested in buying any of them just get in touch. Even some of the best pews were 'unexpectedly back on the market', as Estate agents might say, when some of the buyers measured up the space available in their house and the difficulty of fitting in a 2.6m pew in a modern house kicked in!

One of the pews, the only pine pew left in the Chancel when the oak choir stalls were installed in 1939, had the name of the carpenter and his apprentice who had made alterations to it in 1903 pencilled in on the end (see picture right). Jim Read, who had bought the pew, did a little digging among the census records for 1901 and 1911 and identified the probable local families that the two workers came from. More on this in future missives.



Although the pews were slow in getting out of the Church this didn't stop the suspended wooden floor being lifted in the Nave and the South Transept. Steve, the site supervisor rang me on Thursday to come and have a look at a strange duct

they had exposed with a slate base, brick sides and stone capping, they thought it might be a drainage channel. My picture is not particularly clear but looking at it more carefully on site it is more probable that it is an old hot-air heating system that was installed when the last reordering took place in 1857. There seems to have been two or three iron grills in the floor, now sealed up, that warm air came out of, heated by a coal fire in the cellar under the Vestry.



When the archaeologist made his initial visit a couple of weeks ago he identified that there could be a vault under the aisle in the Nave where memorials have been exposed after the carpet was removed. We knew the memorials were there but when the wording on them was looked at a little more closely most have 'here lyeth the body of ...' on them. The archaeologist will be returning in the week beginning 12 June and he will get the contractor to dig away a little of the aisle

floor and we can then see what is really under the memorials but more on that next week

Chris Young - 11 June 2017