

Chris's Reordering Blog – Week 3 – 19 to 23 June



Last week I talked a bit about the 'Pool family' vault and this picture shows it a little closer-up. The Structural Engineer will be looking at it later in the week so we will then know if it will stand a layer of stone above it, plus people on the floor, without collapsing. The top of the vault is a very shallow arch so it might need strengthening a little but more on that next week.

The picture below shows the south side of the Nave floor now all the Victorian brickwork has been removed that was supporting the suspended wooden floor under the pews. This was before all the stone slabs had been removed, they have been now. The base of the floor is pretty much ready to take the supporting fill, insulation and then heating elements below the new stone floor. A start will be made in this later this week, and I'll explain more about that as each part of the floor build-up is being placed in position.

The specialist contractors came last week to dismantle the font and take it into store.



I'm sorry I wasn't there because understanding how it was fixed together when it was assembled in 1857 would have been interesting, I'll make sure I'm around when it is reassembled!

The three pictures below show it being dismantled. It's one of those things in Church that you take for granted and it is a rather fine piece with some beautiful carvings on the bowl and different coloured marble columns supporting it. The water in the font just seems to soak away into the floor once the plug is removed.



This is what Derek Shorrocks' excellent book on the Church, published in 1992, says about the font – I have condensed it a little:

The font is one of the few pieces still surviving from 1857. According to the 'Gazette 1857', the font was presented by a Henry Davis of Taunton, a native of Staplegrove, whose occupation was given as builder and sculptor

The new font was described as of:

'Caen stone, with a centre shaft of the same material, having eight polished marble columns (four each of Cornish serpentine and Irish green) with carved capitals. Three sides of the octagon are appropriately carved with subjects of baptism: firstly, John the Baptist baptising Christ, with angels in the background and the Holy Ghost in the form of a dove descending (Matthew 3.16) (at present looking westward]; secondly Christ appearing to the Apostles (facing the nave aisle]; and, thirdly (on the east], Philip baptising the eunuch (Acts 8.34). Three other sides have triangular panels with carved ball flowers and scrolls severally bearing the words, 'One Lord, One Faith, One Baptism'.

It now seems to sound a lot more interesting than you may have thought, but since all the decoration is quite low down, and close to the wall, you don't routinely see it.

Chris Young 27 June 2017