

THE ORGAN 'TRANSPLANT' 2013-2014

THE PROJECT

Director of Music *Emeritus*, Neil A Page, discovered the 40 stop, 3 manual organ in Clayesmore School in Dorset and acquired it for St Michael & All Angels Church, Mount Dinham. This gave St Michael's a rare opportunity to refurbish a substantial, historic pipe organ and install it in the organ chamber, in place of an electronic instrument, which had reached the end of its useful life. The organ was removed from the school by an old Clayesmorian, a local organ builder. It was then thoroughly cleaned and rebuilt. The project became known as the ***Organ Transplant*** project, and funds were raised by the church for the St Michael's Organ Fund.

This project was at the heart of events curated to celebrate ***Mount Dinham : 150 years of Heritage and Music***, which was developed with the Heritage Lottery Fund. It comprised a series of music and heritage events at St Michael's, designed to widen public participation, share the richness of Mount Dinham's heritage more fully and create a lasting legacy for future generations.

THE ORGAN AND ITS HISTORY

The organ itself is of a high quality and contemporary with the Church of St Michael & All Angels at Mount Dinham. Its origins are in an instrument built by Bossward in 1867 for St Jude's Church, in central Birmingham. This organ was rebuilt in 1908 by the well-regarded firm of Bishop, and played for many years by the grandfather of well-known organ recitalist, David Briggs. When St Jude's Church was sadly closed and demolished in the 1970s, the organ was then moved to Clayesmore School in Dorset, where it was extended with colourful solo stops by Deane of Taunton. This fine organ needed a new home, and St Michael's now provides an ideal location for it to be heard and used to the full. Practically speaking, it was concluded that the organ was particularly suitable for St Michael's as it could be reconfigured to fit well into the dimensions of the church's organ chamber.

The organ was installed by organ builder Tim Trenchard, of Dorset, and the work overseen by the then St Michael's church organist, Dr Nigel Browne, Diocesan Organ Advisor, together with the church's Architect, Jonathan Rhind.

The Inaugural Recital was given on 16 June 2014 by David Briggs (International Concert Organist and Organist *Emeritus*, Gloucester Cathedral), thereby re-uniting him with the instrument on which he initially learned with his Grandfather.

The organ was dedicated by the Bishop Richard Hawkins on 22 June 2014.