

Update on the Organ Restoration

We initially commissioned the firms Klais and Flentrop to build us a two console organ that would enable the Snetzler pipes to be played both from a console close to Snetzler's original and from a modern console on the north side with access to additional pipes and modern playing aids. A key element of the design is that the action of both consoles is mechanical. It was agreed that other details of the design would be finalised on the basis of the organ builders' research into surviving Snetzler instruments and any evidence brought to light when dismantling the organ.

When the organ builders dismantled the organ they discovered that the north and south sides of the case were Snetzler originals and that, contrary to expectations, Snetzler had positioned the wedge bellows inside the case on the north side, not outside as was more frequently the custom. Having the bellows so close to the pipes would have contributed to the characteristic Snetzler sound, so the builders determined to do the same. As a result the modern console had to move to the south side. Research into the other existing large Snetzler organs further revealed that Snetzler always used balanced key action, not suspended keys. Balanced key action takes up significantly more room than suspended key action so the design was modified to take account of this.

The organ is currently being installed in the Chapel. It will be voiced in September and allowed to settle in Michaelmas ready for the inaugural concert in January. We are delighted that Thomas Trotter has agreed to play for us and look forward to a truly memorable event.

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