

The Erin Arts Centre Continuo Organ



Man: 8,4,2

This 3-stop instrument was designed and built by Peter Jones of St John's. The pipes and mechanism are fitted into a box-like case, the keys being on the top, with all the mechanism and pipes below. The player stands or sits behind the organ, which is on wheels. This form lends itself to concert halls, cathedrals and other venues where there is a need for a small, portable organ to accompany other players or singers, but the Arts Centre instrument has been designed and voiced to act as a solo instrument in its own right.

The wooden and metal pipework was based on the pipes of the c.1778 chamber organ at Sulby Methodist Church and though the pipework in the new instrument is made using modern materials and methods, it is easy to detect the antique charm of the Sulby chamber organ. In this sense, the Island's newest organ owes a debt to its oldest. The metal fifteenth stop

adds a brightness to the other 2 ranks of pipes (both flute tone) when the organ is to be played at its loudest.

The raised keys of the keyboard are made from ebony, but the natural keys are unusual in that they are covered in spalted holly, a relatively rare wood which combines a beautiful grain pattern, good wearing properties and an attractive 'touch' from the viewpoint of the player.



This timber was donated by the late Sir Clive Edwards from a tree growing in the grounds of his home at Milntown, near Ramsey. The wood had been allowed to lie in damp conditions for some time, after which it was stored close to the central heating furnace, and this combination of dampness followed by warmth encourages the fungal growth which produces the distinctive patterning.

It is possible for the player to re-set the key mechanism so that the same keys will sound the pipes one note higher or one or two notes lower than standard. Another unusual feature is seen in the decoration of the case doors, based on designs of the 13th century. These are the work of artist Iris Burton, one of the founder members of the Centre.

