

Kaiapoi Co-operating Parish – Wesley Centre



KAIAPOI CO-OPERATING PARISH – WESLEY CENTRE (C.T. TEMPLETON 2016)

The pipe organ in the Co-operating parish church began its life 28 years into the history of Methodism in Kaiapoi. In fact Methodism here pre-dates European settlement in that the Revd James Watkin baptised 18 Maoris at Kaiapoi on 28 October 1851.¹ The first European Methodist service was held in the house of a James Baker on 12 August 1856, during a severe snow-storm² the Maori population already having their own services. In 1858 the first Wesleyan chapel was started, but it was not until Easter 1860 that it was opened.³ It was then in 1868 that the Methodists of Kaiapoi had their own minister, previously the minister having travelled from Christchurch. In 1870 a new chapel was built and opened in January 1871,⁴ the first chapel surviving another 12 years as a Sunday School building.⁴

In 1877 the second chapel was extended and the in 1879 a pipe organ was purchased by the choir from E. H. Jenkins for £200.⁵ This was a two manual instrument with a Swell manual prepared for.⁶

GREAT			PEDAL		
Open Diapason	8		Bourdon	16	25 pipes
Stopped Diapason	8				
Dulciana	8	gvd.bass	COUPLER		
Principal	4		Great to Pedal		
Flute	4				
Piccolo	2	top octave 4	Compass: 54/30		
Cornopean	8		Mechanical Action		

The organ was opened on 20 November 1879 in an uncompleted state, some pipework not arriving until May 1880.⁷ The final trial for the instrument was on 28 August 1880, with a sacred concert being held on Thursday 16 September 1880,⁸ the organ being played by T. Perry of Christchurch. The Swell was added by E. H. Jenkins in 1886⁹, and along with building alterations cost £140.¹⁰ The bottom octave of the Swell Bourdon was mounted behind the Swell box. In 1887, H. Parson of Christchurch added new pedal chests for the Bourdon pipes, replacing the original conveyances off the Great.¹¹

GREAT			SWELL		
Open Diapason	8		Bourdon	16	
Stopped Diapason	8		Diapason	8	
Dulciana	8	gvd.bass	Gamba	8	
Principal	4		Flute	8	
Flute	4		Gemshorn	4	
Piccolo	2				
Cornopean	8		COUPLERS		
			Swell to Great		
PEDAL			Swell to Pedal		
Bourdon	16	25 pipes	Great to Pedal		
Compass: 54/30			Three combination pedals		
Mechanical Action					

In 1899 the church underwent extensive internal decoration, and mention is made that the organ pipes "Have been decorated in appropriate colours... by Messrs Bates and Hoskin."¹² In 1923 the organ was overhauled.

On 1 September 1934 the foundation stone for a new building was laid after some years of planning and fundraising. The actual date inscribed on the stone is a week early - the event having to be delayed because of bad weather.¹³ This building was designed by R. Lovell-Smith and the builder W. C. Tourell of Kaiapoi. It is of reinforced concrete and was opened on 9 February 1935. Four people at the opening of the third church building were present at the opening of the second building in 1860. The organ was dismantled by N. T. Pearce of Christchurch in May 1934, and was re-erected in the new building for the opening.

The organ had been cleaned by James Strachan in the late 1960s, and at some stage the Great Cornopean 8 had been removed and replaced with a Hohl Flute 8. In 1971 the Revd Dr R. Wards proposed a two-stage programme of updating the design of the instrument. Stage one was transposing the Great Flute 4 to a Nazard 2 $\frac{2}{3}$, the Great Hohl Flute removed and replaced with a Gemshorn 4 (made out of a cut down Gamba rank). And the Swell Bourdon was removed as it was deemed "far too heavy for any use at all" and substituted with an Oboe (TC) ex Rangiora Anglican Church. Stage two would have seen the Great Piccolo transferred onto the Swell as a Tierce 1 $\frac{3}{5}$ and a Principal 2 on each manual. Also the Bourdon was to be extended (pneumatically) to 16, 8, 5 $\frac{1}{2}$, 4 and 2ft pitches.¹⁴ Fortunately for the ongoing integrity of the instrument, funds were not forthcoming for stage two.

In 1977 the Methodist Congregation and that of St. Paul's Presbyterian Church began talks to merge into a Co-operation Parish which was formalised in an inauguration service on 4 February 1979.¹⁵

St. Paul's Presbyterian first church building in Sewell Street was built concurrently with the Wesleyan building in 1858-1860. A second building was erected in 1874, and in 1912 it was moved to a new site in then Cookson Street, (now Williams Street). In 1915 the Choir secured the Bevington organ for £60 (and £33 repairs) that was for sale from the Oxford Terrace Baptist Church. This instrument was built in the 1870s and was installed in St. Mary's Anglican Church, Merivale. It was purchased in 1880 by the Baptist Church, until it was replaced in 1915 by another (rebuilt) Bevington instrument. It was sold in 1976 to the Cathedral of the Blessed Sacrament. On its sale in 1915, the minister of Oxford Terrace Baptist Church, the Revd J. J. North penned this in the church magazine: "The old church organ is a turncoat. It commenced history as a fully-fledged Anglican and gave evensong and matins for 10 years. Then its eyes were opened and it forsook Ritualism and took to Puritanism, and for 35 years it was a Baptist. But its final colour is to be blue. From now on it is a Presbyterian, and will be heard on the banks of the Waimakariri. Whether it will try the Methodist connection before it suddenly collapses we cannot say. But we can believe it. The old sinner is probably contemplating such an outgoing."¹⁶ There is more that a certain irony in the Revd North's words. Not only was he known for his anti-Catholic stance, but that it was the Cathedral building's sudden and partial collapse that seriously damaged the Bevington as it was sitting in the gallery under the main dome of the Cathedral. The instrument is currently in storage, awaiting decisions as to its fate.

With the combination of the two congregations in 1979, the church furnishings were used throughout the buildings, with the Presbyterian Memorial Scroll the last fitting to be rededicated, after 19 years in storage, on 23 April 1995.¹⁷ Those observant among you will notice a familiar surname on the Memorial Roll.

In 1995, an overhaul was carried out where some of the missing pipes were able to be restored or replaced. The Swell Bourdon at that stage was still held in a private collection in Wellington.



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The earthquake of 4 September 2010 had a noticeable effect on the parish. The 1914 triple-brick parsonage beside the church (HPT Category 2) R. Lovell-Smith architect, although still standing, was damaged beyond practical repair. The organ had some minor dislodgement of some pipes and the front of the case had moved out from the side panels. The organ damage was repaired by the South Island Organ Company before the 22 February 2011 quakes. These quakes damaged the rackboards and dislodged further pipework. The insurance work for this damage was awarded to the New Zealand Organ Manufactory (1998), and the remedial work remains the last work done on the instrument (apart from the regular tuning and maintenance).

GREAT			SWELL		
Open Diapason	8		Diapason	8	
Stopped Diapason	8		Gamba	8	
Dulciana	8	gvd.bass	Flute	8	
Principal	4		Gemshorn	4	
Flute	4		Oboe	8	
Piccolo	2		COUPLERS		
Hohl Flute	8		Swell to Great		
PEDAL			Swell to Pedal		
Bourdon	16	25 pipes	Great to Pedal		
Compass: 54/30			Three Combination pedals		
Action: Mechanical					

- 1 Riseley, B. H., *Kaiapoi Methodist Church 1856 - 1956 Centennial*, p.3
- 2 Ibid., p.8
- 3 Ibid., p. 9
- 4 Turvey, Jean D. *Two into One - Being a History of the Presbyterians and Wesleyans in Kaiapoi North Canterbury*. (Kaiapoi: Kaiapoi Co-operation Parish, 2004), p. 24
- 5 Riseley, op.cit., p. 12
- 6 This was Edgar Jenkins third instrument in New Zealand, after St Bartholomew's Anglican Church, Kaiapoi 1876, and Lyttelton Orphanage 1878 (now in the Lyttelton Union Church).
- 7 *Papers Past - Press*, 3 May 1880, p.2
- 8 Ibid., 30 August 1880p. 2
- 9 Newton, Ronald G., *Organa Cantuariensia: Organs in Canterbury, New Zealand, 1850 - 1885*. (Christchurch: School of Music, University of Canterbury, 1992)
- 10 *The New Zealand Methodist*, 26 November 1887 p. 8
- 11 *Papers Past - Star*, 31 October 1887. p.3
- 12 *Press*, 30 January 1899, p.4, although the original opening report mentions the pipes were decorated.
- 13 Turvey, op.cit., p.26
- 14 Wards, A. Ross, *Mixtures and Mutations*, vol. 4, no. 2 (February 1972), p.397
- 15 Turvey, op.cit., p.2
- 16 Ibid., p.71
- 17 Ibid., p.69