

Knox Presbyterian Church, Christchurch



KNOX PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, CHRISTCHURCH (C.T. TEMPLETON 2016)

The North Belt Presbyterian Church was formed out of a Sabbath School set up in the late 1870s to cater for the people of Papanui and borough of St Albans, north of the City Belt. The meetings were held originally in the Oddfellows Hall in Montreal Street North.¹ The first minister was inducted on 8 April 1880, however he suddenly died six months later, by which time a church building had been erected. By November 1883, the congregation had had a minister for only 14 months out of three and a half years.² In May 1883, the church had purchased a Henry Jones instrument from Milner and Thompson, musical importers, which was opened on 13 May.³

MANUAL			PEDAL	
Open Diapason	8	TC	Bourdon	16
Stopped Diapason	8	CC-BB		CCC-CC 13 notes
Dulciana	8	TC	COUPLER	
Harmonic Flute	4		Great to Pedal	

Compass: 58 / 30

Action: Mechanical

Enclosed except Open Diapason and Bourdon

The Henry Jones instrument went to the Sydenham Methodist Church.

With a growth in the congregation as a result of urban growth over the two decades, a new brick

church building was planned. The foundation stone was laid on the 11 June 1901, and opened on 1 May 1902. The architect was Mr R.W. England, and the builders Messrs Greig & Sons.⁴

An Edgar Henry Jenkins instrument was installed in the new church but this was only a short-term measure. The organ had been built in 1882-3 as a residence instrument for Arthur C. Baines - the third Master of Christ's College. Baines' widow offered it to the church, however Jenkins's tender of a new organ was accepted. Jenkins erected the Baines instrument as a temporary measure until his new instrument was completed. However the organ was sold to the Hanover Street Baptist Church, Dunedin where it was erected and opened on 29 July 1902.⁵

GREAT			SWELL		
Open Diapason	8		Open Diapason	8	
Diapason Bass	8	[CC-BB?]	Stopped Diapason	8	
Clarabella	8		Bell Gamba	8	
Dulciana	8		Gemshorn	4	
Principal	4		Mixture	II	
Flautina	2		Oboe	8	
			Tremulant		
COUPLERS			PEDAL		
Swell to Great			Bourdon	16	
Great to Pedal					

Compass: 61 / 30
Action: Mechanical

Jenkins's new two-manual, 20 stop pipe organ for the church was opened on 25 February 1904.⁶

GREAT			SWELL		
Open Diapason	8		Violin Diapason	8	
Rohr Flute	8		Lieblich Gedact	8	
Dulciana	8		Salicional	8	
Viol di Gamba	8		Vox Angelica	8	TC
Principal	4		Gemshorn	4	
Wald Flute	4		Clarionet Flute	4	
Mixture	12.15	II	Piccolo	2	
			Cornopean	8	
PEDAL			Oboe	8	
Open Diapason	16		Vox Humana	8	
Bourdon	16		Tremulant		

COUPLERS	Compass: 58 / 30
Swell to Pedal	Action: Mechanical and tubular-pneumatic
Swell to Great	
Great to Pedal	

The Vox Humana stop was a gift of the choir, and enclosed in a separate box under the Swell soundboard - the action being tubed off from a secondary slide mounted on the underside of the Swell soundboard grid. The console was freestanding, nine feet in front of the organ. Within six months the congregation had voted on a name change from North Belt Presbyterian to Knox Presbyterian Church.

In 1914 N.T. Pearce added a Choir manual to the instrument. He altered the action to tubular-pneumatic and had the Choir soundboard, console, underactions, and pipes built by Nicholson & Lord, Walsall, UK (job number 761).

New interior configurations in 1953 had the organ console moved to the left hand side of the sanctuary, and the removal of the choir stalls.⁷ On 14 June 1964, the church hall was opened by Sir Bernard and Lady Fergusson.⁸

In 1985-6 the organ was restored by the South Island Organ Co Ltd, and the console moved back to its central position. During the restoration it was found that the slow intermanual coupler speed was due to a manufacturing flaw where the pneumatic purses and the corresponding dollies were not central to each other.

The September 2010 earthquake had little impact on the instrument, but the 22 February one saw the wall behind the organ fall down and seriously damage the top half of the instrument. The front pipes were thrown off the organ, arcing over the console and gouging marks in the communion table – where they can be seen to this day. The external walls of the building were damaged and suffered partial collapse. The timber posts and roof structure remained intact and had to be braced and strapped down as the biggest threat was not damage from further earthquakes, but a strong north-west wind lifting the roof and damaging it. The organ was removed and repaired by the SIOC, with the addition of a new Trumpet / Trombone rank and top octave of the Pedal Octave 8ft. The action was converted from tubular-pneumatic to electro-mechanical with a Peterson transmission system, so that the reconfigured console could be movable and connected to the instrument by a data cable. The church was rebuilt by Higgs Construction with the architects being Wilkie & Bruce, and the building was officially reopened on Sunday 1 February 2015.



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GREAT		
Open Diapason	8	
Rohr Flute	8	
Viol De Gamba	8	
Dulciana	8	
Principal	4	
Wald Flute	4	
Mixture	II	
Trumpet	8	A *

SWELL		
Violin Diapason	8	
Lieblich Gedact	8	
Salicional	8	
Vox Angelica	8	
Gemshorn	4	
Clarinet Flute	4	
Piccolo	2	
Cornopean	8	
Oboe	8	
Tremulant		

CHOIR		
Hohl Flute	8	
Viol D'Orchestra	8	
Echo Gamba	8	
Flauto Traverso	4	
Salicet	4	
Vox Humana	8	
Trumpet	8	A *

Compass: 58 / 30
Action: Electro-Mechanical.
* Added SIOC 2014

PEDAL		
Open Diapason	16	B
Bourdon	16	C
Quint	10 $\frac{2}{3}$	C *
Octave	8	B *
Bass Flute	8	C
Trombone	16	A *

COUPLERS		
Swell Octave		
Swell Unison Off		
Swell Sub Octave		
Choir Octave		
Choir Unison Off		
Choir Sub Octave		
Great Octave		
Swell to Great		
Choir to Great		
Swell to Choir		
Swell to Pedal		
Great to Pedal		
Choir to Pedal		



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The original Jenkins nameplate was lost (presumably in the 1914 rebuild), and was replace with a Jenkins nameplate salvaged off the organ from St. Mary's Anglican, Mornington, Dunedin in 1976.

- 1 Murray, Fergus. *Knox Church 1880 - 1980* (Christchurch: Centennial Committee Knox Presbyterian Church, 1980), p.10
- 2 Ibid., p.15
- 3 *Press*, 12 May 1883, p.4
- 4 Murray, op.cit., p.21; *Papers Past – Press*, 2 May 1902, p.2
- 5 *Otago Daily Times*, 30 July 1902
- 6 *Press*, 20 February 1904, p.7
- 7 Murray, op.cit., p. 41
- 8 Ibid., p. 52