

# Holy Trinity Church Cuckfield

## A Short History of the Walker Organ



The first record of an organ at Holy Trinity Cuckfield is a barrel organ presented by G T Waller Esq. in 1839. This replaced a band of stringed and wind instruments which supported the choir of men, women and children. Instrumentalists sat behind the choir in a gallery which extended over the large west arch. The existing stopped diapason on today's instrument is the only surviving element of this organ.

In 1842 Mr Waller "*considering that the small instrument was not worthy of our noble Church*", replaced it. Walkers built a one manual (unenclosed) organ which is basically the current Great organ.

Dulciana  
Fifteenth

Open diapason  
Stopped diapason

Principal  
Diapason chorus

Twelfth

The only pedal stop was one Bourdon.

It was initially installed on the west gallery but moved to its present position when the gallery was removed in 1855. At this time the pipes and wood panelling were decorated.

In 1884 Walkers rebuilt and enlarged the organ, almost to the specification of the present day except that it had an 8' oboe, an 8' cornopian which was later replaced, a 16' lieblich bourdon on the Swell (which was put onto the pedals) and an open wood on the pedals. The Parish Magazine of the day describes how the church was packed to standing room only when the new organ was dedicated on 19<sup>th</sup> October.

In 1950 a balance swell pedal was added instead of the trigger swell. The organ retained its immense wooden draw stops which had survived from the 1880s.



In 1973 the instrument was in a very dilapidated state and just escaped being taken out and replaced with an electronic organ. Instead, after going out to tender, Walkers again undertook a restoration programme; they cut off the large open diapason which is now used on the pedals.

In 1982 the electronic pedals were installed by David Holgate. The electronic pedal is occasionally useful, especially when used quietly to provide a clear bass line using the Violone; or in Full Organ using the 32' Diapason.

Some modifications and additions were made around 1990 which seem curious - the Swell reeds are rather harsh. There followed a development under the organist at the time (Mr Potter) which saw the addition of a clarinet instead of the dulciana on the Great (leaving no effectively 'quiet' stop on the Great), adding a larigo to the Swell, replacing the cornopian with a trumpet and adding the oboe to the pedals. The latter collapsed during the winter of 2003 and was reinstated in restoration work in 2006 which also included new roller boards and repairs to the wind chamber which was leaking air significantly. This work dramatically improved the sound and performance of the instrument. In 2009 the swell pedal was repaired and in early 2010 the Swell/Pedal coupler solenoid replaced.