

Legacy Giving

We look at the transformative impact that legacy gifts have on the continuing life of Trinity.

Preserving Trinity's Historic Organ

The organ in Trinity's Public Theatre, built for the old College Chapel in 1684, is an important part of Trinity and Ireland's heritage. Since being moved to the Theatre in the 1790s, it has played a vital role in Commencements ceremonies and flagship University events. Over the last few decades, the effects of age rendered this hard-working instrument virtually unplayable, and the Organ Committee made plans for its complete refurbishment to begin after the last of the summer Commencements ceremonies in June 2016. Thanks to the generosity of Trinity alumni, it has now been restored to its original splendour.

History

The 'case' or exterior part of the organ is of great historical significance. It is one of just a handful of 17th-century organ cases surviving in these islands, and—with the exception of part of the case at King's College Cambridge—the only surviving work of the Restoration organ builder Lancelot Pease, who also built organs for Canterbury Cathedral and Christ Church Cathedral Dublin. At Trinity, Pease's 'single organ' (i.e. an instrument with only one keyboard) was soon enlarged to a 'double organ' incorporating pipes behind the organist's chair played from a second keyboard. The enlargement was carried out between 1700 and 1706 by the émigré French organ builder John Baptist Cuvillie.

In 1838 the Dublin organ builder Thomas Telford installed completely new internal pipes and mechanisms within the original case, now on the gallery of the Public Theatre. Crucially,

however, the exterior Pease and Cuvillie pipes were retained, albeit for purely decorative purposes. Telford's organ underwent an unenlightened enlargement in the 1950s: the Restoration-period cases had undergone many small 'renovations' in which they were repeatedly patched up and repainted. In 1986 the long-silent exterior pipes, now covered with dark brown paint, were applied with gilded patterns in time to welcome King Juan Carlos of Spain, who received an honorary degree in that year.

Conservation

The case has now undergone a full refurbishment and redecoration. Its original appearance was ascertained by minute analysis of historic paint layers, and was partly confirmed by a photograph of the Public Theatre taken around 1904. Missing and damaged carvings and mouldings have been reinstated, and the exterior pipes, the shields and other ornaments can once again be admired in all their 18th-century glory.

The ancient exterior pipes have been restored and the organ's all-new internals have been modelled on those of a contemporary instrument built around 1702 by Renuus Harris for the church of St Botolph Aldgate in the City of London. The entire components of each wooden and metal pipe, of the leather bellows, and of every key, pedal and stop mechanism, have

been hand-crafted using traditional methods and technologies by the UK organ builders Martin Goetze & Dominic Gwynn Ltd. Electric lighting and wind supply are the only concessions to modernity.

The process of restoring the organ and case was a painstaking one which required the historic material to be carefully dismantled and shipped to and from the Goetze & Gwynn workshops in Nottinghamshire. The project was guided by Professors David Grayson, Shane Allwright and Andrew Johnstone in Trinity together with their UK-based advisor Ian Bell. It was managed by Monica Janson, Design Services Manager, Trinity Estates & Facilities.

Commenting on the significance of the restoration project, Professor David Grayson, Chair of the Organ Committee, said: "The new organ is now the jewel in the crown of the University's musical portfolio, as well as a fine asset to the city and to the country. We are extremely grateful to those who have made significant donations to make this major project possible."

The cost of building the new organ and refurbishing the case was approximately €450,000. The project was made possible by a legacy from the estate of John and Ann Boland, support from the Trinity Association & Trust, and generous donations from Dr Peter Schwarz and a donor who wishes to remain anonymous.

THE BOLAND LEGACY

John Boland (LL.B., M.A., Barrister-at-Law, 1954), former U.K. Public Trustee and founding member of the UK Trust for Trinity, was a loyal graduate serving the College in many capacities through the years. His wife Ann left a generous legacy to Trinity supporting a number of projects close to his heart. The Boland legacy for the organ refurbishment will ensure their generosity will be remembered by the College community and graduating students for centuries to come.



Photo: Beirre Schuler

The Organ
in Trinity's
Public Theatre

The George and Maeve White Prize



The George and Maeve White prize is awarded annually to a psychology student in Trinity for a research based paper, which has been accepted for publication. The prize was originally founded in 1999 in memory of Captain George White, aviator and psychologist, by a gift from his wife Maeve. The prize is now funded by a bequest made by the White family in memory of both their parents. George White graduated from Trinity with a B.A. in Psychology in 1989 following a career in aviation and pursued a Ph.D. in airline safety. Maeve White's own intellectual pursuits lay in the fields of arts and philosophy. They both shared an avid interest in human psychology.

For more information on legacy giving please contact us e: alumni@tcd.ie t: +353 1 896 2088 w: www.tcd.ie/alumni