



BROUGHTON CHOIR

SAINT JOHN BAPTIST PARISH CHURCH

For as long as anyone can remember, Broughton has had a choir of boys and men leading the worship in the ancient Parish Church. Sadly however, there appear to be few records of personnel or of the Services in the Parish prior to appointment of Mr William Redmayne as Choirmaster.

In 1933, under the leadership of Mr Redmayne the Choir became one of the first to be affiliated to the **School of English Church Music** (now the Royal School of Church Music) and this affiliation has continued to the present day under successive Choirmasters, Gerry Dawson, Alan Trannah, Brian Cryer and John Catterall.

In the early days, the Choristers assembled in the old vestry on the north side of the chancel, but it became increasingly apparent in the 1970s that this room was quite inadequate for a rapidly growing choir, (it had been built to accommodate just twelve boys and eight men!) and in 1976 a new vestry was built with money



area of Brittany, and in succeeding years has maintained its links with both this area of France and the Normandy Coast.

As Choir numbers continued to increase, it became necessary for the Church to consider appointing a second member of the music staff. Mr Paul Dean (who began his musical career as a Broughton Chorister and who now teaches music in London), had given invaluable service, accompanying the Choir at Services, and he was succeeded by Mr Simon Clarkson, then Assistant Director of Music at Rossall School. In 1994, it was finally agreed by the PCC that **Mr Ian Seddon** be appointed Assistant Organist, with particular responsibility

With its thriving Choir and splendid new Organ, music continues to play an important role in the worship in this rapidly growing Parish in North Preston.

from the Tyson Trust.

In addition to the building development, the 1970s saw the Choir extending its activities beyond the Parish boundaries. The week-long Choristers' Course for the boys in the **Isle of Man** became established, (later it was extended to the men of the Choir); both boys and men became very actively involved in the **RSCM Northern Cathedral Singers**; and the Choir regularly undertook engagements in a number of Cathedrals in the North of England.

In 1992, the Choir undertook its first **overseas Tour**, and sang five Concerts in the Morbihan

for not only Service accompaniment, but also training the Organ Scholars, three of whom in recent years have gained Grade Eight Distinctions, before subsequently moving on to read music at University.

In 2004, the Pipe Organ which had been in use since 1906, was becoming increasingly unreliable, and options open to the Church were either to undertake a very expensive overhaul of the existing instrument or to look to a Digital option. The latter course was adopted, and by May 2006, following some impressive fund-raising activities by the Parish, a new four manual **Phoenix Digital Organ** was in place.

By Mr John Catterall (Choirmaster)

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