

The St George's Heritage Trust



A registered Charity # 2437850, the Saint Georges Heritage Trust was formed in 2010 to create a body of Invested funds to ensure that the Historic (1868/1871) Churches would continue to be their important part of Thames cultural heritage.

Architect Edward Mahoney designed the "new" (1871) church in the period that Thames was one of the busy gold-mining areas of New Zealand with a population that exceeded Auckland (soon to become Capital) to cope with the 30,000 local population and three service for 500 people each Sunday. The first church, designed by Auckland Architect John Currie [Grey Lynn Fire Station, Rob Roy Tavern Auckland], built in 1868 soon proved too small and fundraising was well in hand by 1870 for the "new" Saint Georges that was started [after the first framing blew down in a storm] in September 1871 and opened on February 28, 1872 at a cost of 1250 pounds.

The Auckland Choral Society had sung Handel's Messiah in the uncompleted building the previous December. In the 21st Century the population of this provincial town remains fairly stable around 8000. Largely a retirement centre, locals cannot maintain two historic buildings, especially the large neo- gothic kauri church currently in use as the parish church.

The Independent Charitable Trust has two trustees appointed by the parish church, the remainder of the Trustees are people who have a Thames connection and wish to see this historic and multi-use building kept in good condition and available to all who wish to use it into the future. The title of the buildings remains with the Auckland Diocese and the local Vestry will continue to control the day to day life and work of the church and hall (first church) and long term development.

Gifts, estates and donations will come primarily from people with connections with the Town and the parish, mainly as beneficiary of wills. A decade in the planning, Vestry looked at Professional Fundraisers and found that a high proportion of the income became the professionals' fee; so with assistance from local law firm Miller and Poulgrain and the National Charitable Trusts Law Firm Chapman Tripp, the Trust Deed was approved and registered early in 2010 and the Trust launched in September that year.

Donations can be made direct to the Trust through

The National Bank, Thames Branch. 06 0457 0134607 00