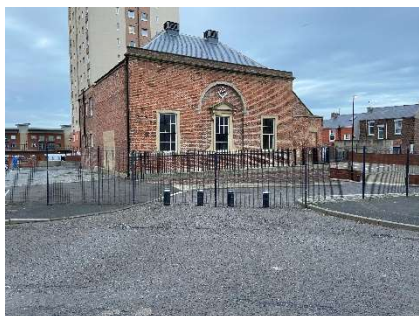


Queen Street Masonic Temple!

Historic Grade 1 Listed Building in Hendon



Queen Street Masonic Temple

Sunderland Male Voice Choir evolved from the former Shiney Row Male Voice Choir in July 2022.

The Choir has recorded and performed some great material over the years. Recently, it has embarked on a programme of creating new musical material. Some of this material incorporates new arrangements of traditional numbers.

An exciting new initiative is the creation of brand-new songs based upon the region's rich local heritage and its people.

The Choir has been working with Sunderland City Council and members of the community to expand their outreach in Hendon, Sunderland. Thanks to a donation from the Durham Benevolence, this work is being extended.

One of the oldest parts of the City of Sunderland is steeped in a rich heritage which is being captured by the Choir in song.

This information sheet looks at one of the oldest buildings in Hendon, which is also among the top 2.5% Grade One Listed Buildings in the country.

The Durham Benevolence Project

Thanks to a donation from the Durham Benevolence, Sunderland Male Voice Choir is now able to expand its musical creation project on the rich heritage of the region and its people.

This project will extend the work in Hendon and create new material on George Stephenson and the Bowes Railway.

The History of the Queen Street Masonic Temple

The Queen Street Masonic Temple is one of the oldest surviving buildings in Sunderland, in the heart of East End of Hendon. It is a Grade One Listed Building, opened on the 5th April 1785 and is still in use. Many of the deeds and documents, and records of the Phoenix Lodge still survive from its consecration in 1755.

The first plot of land for a hall was purchased in 1764 by Captain George Thompson, His Majesty's Surveyor of Customs for Sunderland and Master of Phoenix Lodge. The site was too small and he purchased adjoining land in 1775 and a hall was opened on 16th July 1778.

In 1782, Captain Thompson died and in November 1783, the Vine Street Temple was severely damaged by fire.

Following the fire, Phoenix Lodge decided to build their own hall and appointed a group of members to oversee, under the Chairmanship of Dr. William Tipping Brown, a prominent surgeon and Worshipful Master of the Lodge.

The Lodge purchased the bowling green of the Golden Lion Hotel, which had originally been used for meetings, to build the new hall.

John Bonner, builder and member of the Lodge, was commissioned to build the new hall. It is testament to his work that the only structural problems identified 211 years later in a survey was that the end of one of the floor joists was rotting.

The Queen Street Masonic Temple was opened on the 5th April 1785, only 17 months after the fire at Vine Street.

Sunderland Male Voice Choir

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Grade One Listed Building

The Hall at Queen Street

In 1785, the building consisted of the Lodge Room or Temple with a pent like a lean-to-extension at the east and west. The East pent, which was the original entrance, is now the bar area. The West pent was used for storage but was removed in 1923.

The original pent doorways still exist in the Lodge Room. The interior of the Lodge Room remains as it was built with a large circular ceiling motif, including gold leaf, of a blazing star and a triangle with the letter 'G' and seven stars.

There are two fireplaces in the Lodge Room. The North Wall is decorated with the restored Tracing Cloths of the Phoenix Lodge from 1815.

On the West Wall, above the Senior Warden's chair, is the Crescent Moon and on the South Wall, above the Junior Warden's chair is the Meridian Sun. At the East end, above the Master's chair is the Rising Sun.

Many of the symbols are replicas from Vine Street. Furniture was purchased from St. John's Lodge in Newcastle.

An important feature is the basement with its floor being the original bowling green and North wall part of original stables.

Sunderland Male Voice Choir Information Sheets

Sunderland Male Voice Choir is producing a range of information sheets on its new music creation and project work. These sheets will be published within the 'Project' page of the Choir website.

Preserving our past heritage through words and music!

Queen Street Masonic Heritage Centre Ltd.

On the 9th September 1997, the freehold interest of the hall was transferred from Phoenix Lodge to the Queen Street Masonic Heritage Centre Ltd.

This private company, limited by guarantee and not having a share capital, had aims to restore the building and firmly secure its future as part of the local community.

The Company became a Registered Charity in June 1999 and raised grants from English Heritage and Sunderland City Council for restoration works.

Ode for the Dedication Ceremony

'Dr. William Tipping Brown, Worshipful Master of the Phoenix Lodge and Chairman for the building of Queen Street Masonic Temple, was also an excellent musician.

He wrote an ode for the dedication ceremony of the new hall.

The Male Voice Choir Song

It is hoped that the new song created by Sunderland Male Voice Choir will provide a musical legacy about this important landmark in the heartland of Sunderland - Hendon.



A Historic Landmark in Hendon