



THE QUARRY THEATRE AT ST LUKE'S

Bedford's newest theatre reveals its new name

Bedford School has unveiled the name of its new theatre, set to open this summer, as "The Quarry Theatre at St Luke's": a name that recognises the former Moravian church's rich heritage and the support provided by Old Bedfordian, Gareth Quarry and his wife, Jill, who have both played a key role in its ongoing transformation.

The grade II listed church on St Peter's Street, established in the 1700s, was enlarged and consecrated on the 9th March 1865, exactly 150 years ago; a fact not lost on Bedford School, who are fittingly celebrating this significant anniversary as they near the end of the project to breathe life back into this beautiful church.

The church also holds a special place in the hearts of Gareth Quarry and his family, who have links that go all the way back to 1945 when Gareth's father, Brian, took up the post of organist at the church. Gareth's parents were also married at the church, and Gareth and his brother, Adrian (also an Old Bedfordian), were christened and attended Sunday school there until 1965. Keeping a family tradition alive, Adrian also played the organ at the church and, poignantly, played at the final service held in St Luke's Sunday 5th October 2008.

On visiting the unused Church in 2011, Gareth immediately saw the potential to develop it into a performing arts venue which would strengthen the link between Bedford School and the town, and which would also give this much loved historic building a new lease of life. In 2012 Gareth and Jill enabled governors to give the project the green light when they made a generous donation to the project. Gareth also agreed to head up the campaign, on behalf of the Bedford School Foundation, to raise the necessary additional funds required. However, with fundraising well under way, out of the blue in late 2013 the school learned of a legacy gift from Old Bedfordian, Brian Saville. This unexpected and significant donation secured the funding for the project, and also enabled the school to establish the Brian Saville Scholarship Programme.

James Hodgson, Head Master, said "It certainly is an amazing story and I am very much looking forward to the opening of the new theatre. We are delighted that it has been possible to recognise appropriately the special association with the Quarry Family in this way. The family was closely involved

with St Luke's for many years and more recently has played a crucial part in making possible the incredible transformation to a new theatre. When it opens its doors this summer I am sure that the Quarry Theatre at St Luke's will have a huge impact on the local arts scene. It is a very exciting time for the school and town."