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| Information about Holy Cross Church   |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | Comments in our log book show that visitors to Holy Cross are amazed and delighted by the boldness and brilliance of the mosaics - Victorian in the Chancel, Edwardian in the Baptistry - which are unique among Cotswold churches.  Strangers also praise the peacefulness of its position.  Retired Assistant Churchwarden Duff Hart-Davis agrees:  "Having lived here for 27 years, I share their enthusiasm, both for the church and for its rural setting. It is not surprising that our traditional service of Nine Lessons and Carols at Christmas always packs the pews."  The Church of the Holy Cross takes its name from the Cross on which Jesus was crucified.  The cross on which our Lord was crucified has become the universal symbol for Christians, replacing the fish symbol of the early church, though the latter has been revived in recent times. **The Feast of the Holy Cross** is remembered on September 14th. Please [click here](http://www.stgilesuley.org.uk/content/pages/documents/1402658585.pdf) to find out more...  The Church of the Holy Cross at Owlpen is of medieval origins, and was enlarged in the nineteenth century in two phases. First the nave was rebuilt by Samuel Manning in 1828. Then the chancel was added in 1874 by J.P. St Aubyn, and “beautified” with mosaics and opus sectile designed by Charles Hardgrave in 1887. The baptistery was the final addition of 1912, when the Romanesque font was re-erected from use as a cattle trough. With its richly textured interior of stained glass mosaics and floor tiles by some of the leading craftsmen of the time, Owlpen church is  according to David Verey “the most elaborate Victorian-Edwardian interior in the Cotswolds”.  **Organ at Holy Cross, Owlpen**  The organ was built in 1890 by the renowned firm of Jardine of Manchester and has been described as ‘nothing less than a gem in a small country church’.  It has mechanical (tracker) action throughout and, although robustly constructed, is now in a generally very poor and worn condition. Apart from a modest overhaul at some time in the past, little has been done to the organ other than regular tuning and maintenance. In recent years, emergency callouts of the team have become frequent.  The organ has become prone to harmonic mis-soundings, attributed to serious soundboard faults causing wind to enter the wrong pipes. Most ranks of pipes are not ‘speaking’ to their full potential, owing to their dirty condition, and one rank, an ill-matching substitute from the 1960s, produces such a piercing whistle that it is never used. The instrument is unpredictable: for example, our carol service in 2016 saw the Swell half of the organ out of action because of a sudden mechanical fault; also during that service two of the ivory key covers, many of which are worn and warped, came unstuck, causing the organist’s fingers to distribute glue over the other keys. Its unreliability in these respects and others has made the instrument much less of a pleasure to play, and to anticipate playing, than it should be, with the prospect of any visiting organist best avoided.  The funding total sought is £40,147 (VAT not applicable) plus electrical work. | | |  |  |