

Unsung volunteer gains top award

George Houghton, the current Chairman of NW FOPS, has gained one of the top awards in the inaugural Halton Tourism and Business Awards held at the DeVere Daresbury Hotel, Runcorn. George picked up the Unsung Volunteer of the Year award in the tourism section of the evening.

George and the NW section of FOPS have been instrumental in ensuring the North West Vintage Rally held at Victoria Park, Widnes has now be-

come the largest free event of its kind in the country. Over 40 organs and 250 other vintage exhibits now attend this event, which now boasts over 45,000 visits during the last weekend in September.

Working closely with Halton Borough Council, George and his team have brought together an event that is cherished by the local and regional community. "It allows those who may not be able to afford to go and see something like this

at a stately home the chance to see vintage machinery and musical items for free.

"The children's faces light up when the big organs strike up", said George recently. "Without the backing of the local council we would not be able to do what we do and we are grateful for their help in this wonderful event."

The award was presented to George after independent judges interviewed him and the two other short listed nom-

inees. The judges were greatly impressed by George's commitment, enthusiasm and energy. The extent of his free time devoted to their unpaid role is truly extraordinary and Halton has benefited greatly from this winner's dedication.

George was shocked to be given the award, he felt sure that the other people in the running were stronger because they worked for attractions in the Halton area.



George Houghton (right) receives his Award for Unsung Volunteer at the recent Halton Tourism and Business Awards