

Places of Worship in Scotland

Scottish Church Heritage Research
www.scottishchurches.org.uk



NEWSLETTER 6

MARCH 2011

From the Chairman

As SCHR moves into its second decade it is time to expand our horizons. We have plans for developing the membership and a limited programme of events. The first will be a training session in Glasgow on April 9th, to begin the task of recording in a city. On June 11th we are holding a Field Day in Forfar to visit a number of churches. A visit to the Angus Glens has provisionally been planned for the 30th July, to look at rural church sites. By contrast, modern places of worship will be the focus of our Conference in September. Details will be circulated shortly.

10th Annual Conference Review

SCHR's annual conference was held in the Smith Art Gallery, Stirling on the 20th of November and featured a number of fascinating talks on a wide variety of subjects.

The archaeologist Alison Cameron presented a paper about excavations carried out in the Kirk of St Nicholas in Aberdeen, which has 12th century origins. The archaeological remains discovered attest to the various phases of medieval construction and alteration in the church; 1000 burials were also excavated.

Dr Chris Lowe from Headland Archaeology talked about The Inchmarnock Project. Inchmarnock is now an uninhabited island off the west coast of Bute but once had an early monastic community. A 12th century chapel has been excavated there and many fragments of early medieval stonework and sculpture were found. Dr Lowe suggested a possible association with other monastic sites in Bangor and Iona. Dr Oliver O.J. O'Grady discussed recent geophysical and archaeological work he has carried out at Scone Palace.

His work on Moothill has led to the discovery of a possible 10th century ecclesiastical building. Chris McGregor from Historic Scotland showed the high-tech approach they are bringing to the historic environment. Top of the range 3D scanning machines are being used to quickly and accurately record standing structures, including Rosslyn Chapel. The results can be used to produce templates for highly accurate restoration work, create a snapshot record of a building or town and digital virtual tours of sites.



After a light lunch provided by the Smith Art Gallery, Richard Fawcett presented a roundup of work on *Corpus of Scottish Medieval Parish Churches*, an online project which records medieval fabric in churches thought to be much later.

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10th Annual Conference Review (cont.)

He showed that many parish churches have a surprising amount of medieval content that was until recently thought to have been lost. Norman Atkinson from Angus Cultural Services provided a history of early churches in Edzell and Glenesk. Edwina Proudfoot concluded the conference with a roundup of current and recent work by SCHR and the vital role volunteers play.

By Jonathan Dowling

SSGS Conference: A Rich Inheritance 20th Century Stained Glass in Aberdeen

Saturday 16th April 2011
9.30am–4.30pm
Kings College, High Street
Old Aberdeen

Details from:

Alison Robertson
3 Ross Gardens, Edinburgh EH9 3BS
Tel: 0131 662 9025
email: scotstainedglass@aol.com



*Volunteer, Lorna Carr in Cupar St James
by Kari Gibson*

Your Churches Need You!

Progress with the Places of Worship Project has speeded up since the revised website became available. We have shown how much a small team working with volunteers can achieve – and now we are seeking volunteers, anywhere in the country, to record places of worship of all denominations.

We are used to recording in rural areas and burghs, but cities are more difficult. A few sites in Dundee and Edinburgh have been photographed, but now we are setting up a team in Glasgow—a huge challenge; about 700 churches, synagogues and mosques are listed on our database!

A team of two can easily record one place of worship in a morning. Think of how much we could achieve if a team recorded their own church, mosque, synagogue, etc and then moved on to record an unused or ruined site nearby! Our record includes all places of worship, not just the “best”.

You can participate—whatever kind of camera you have. A pencil and notebook are required, for writing down what each image shows and the direction from which the photograph was taken. Well, there is a bit more work, but it is enjoyable and rewarding.

We can arrange training for groups – and provide a list, to ensure sites are not left out, or recorded several times. Please join us and help to record our places of worship where you live—or holiday. This is Scotland’s richest, but most neglected community heritage. Contact details on the back page of this Newsletter.

By Edwina Proudfoot

Inchbrayock Church, Ferryden, Montrose



*Inchbrayock Church
by Jonathan Dowling*

Inchbrayock Parish Church serves the community of Ferryden, just to the south of Montrose. It was built as a Free Church in 1843 in a Gothic style and later became Church of Scotland when the Free Church congregation re-united. But why does this small town church have an association with Scotland's worst railway disaster?

After the well-documented collapse of the bridge during a storm in 1879 the bridge was eventually rebuilt to a much stronger design, and much of the surviving iron work was re-used in the new structure.



*Girder in Inchbrayock Parish Church
by Jonathan Dowling, 2010*

Surplus iron girders were sold off for scrap and, unusually, part of the old bridge found its way into Inchbrayock Church.

It appears the heavy, wide-span roof of the church required the strengthening of the walls supporting it, and the lattice-span girders of the Tay Bridge were a perfect, and cost-effective way of adding strength and stability to the church.

The girder section used to tie the north and south walls (adding strength and preventing the walls splaying outwards) is the largest and consists of one side of a box girder used on the lower spans of the first Tay Bridge.



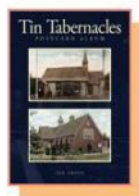
*Girder in Inchbrayock Parish Church
by Jonathan Dowling, 2010*

The cast iron beams and supporting bars are riveted and bolted together. The girder was built into the wallheads and is supported on box-section iron uprights attached to the walls. Smaller girder sections stretch from the east to west walls.

The rather industrial-looking structures have been painted the same colour as the ceiling, which makes them appear less eye-catching as one might suspect!

Jonathan Dowling

From The Bookshelf



Tin Tabernacles Postcard Album

Ian Smith

Camrose Media, 2010- £12.99 + £2.00 p&cp
ISBN 978-0-9566132-0-2

This book complements Ian Smith's earlier *Tin Tabernacles*, which included many surviving Scottish examples of these astonishingly varied corrugated iron buildings. Church postcards were clearly very popular in the 19th century and an amazing number has survived, including some from Scotland. This book comprises illustrated views, with helpful captions—many of the churches no longer exist. Tin churches inspire an excitement all their own— in part because most were "the first flat packs".



Discovering the Smallest Churches in Scotland

John Kinross

The History Press, 2010 - £12.99
ISBN 978-0-7524-5880-9

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This book, one of a series, introduces 50 of the smaller churches in Scotland, listed by area and supplemented by maps, drawings, colour photographs and directions. Texts vary in detail, but include helpful information and anecdotes.

An introduction to the history of the Church in Scotland and a summary of Scottish Church Architecture are particularly useful.

Edwina Proudfoot

Committee News

As we mentioned in our last newsletter, John Richardson, our Treasurer resigned after serving us for three years to concentrate more on his other volunteer work at Queen Margaret Hospital radio. We are very grateful to Bruce Proudfoot who has agreed to step in as our new Treasurer. Also leaving us as Director is John McQueen who has served for 2 years and now has other voluntary obligations nearer his home.

Robin Evetts has retired from Historic Scotland, but has agreed to join the board as Trustee. Our new Historic Scotland representative is Ranald MacInnes.

Edwina Proudfoot remains our Chairman, Brenda Hall remains the Volunteer Representative and Kari Gibson has agreed to become the Company Secretary to replace Condie.

The Reverend David W Clark, of the West Kirk, Helensburgh has been appointed Church of Scotland representative.

The minutes are now being taken by Lynn Johnson, formerly of the Church of Scotland Art and Architecture committee.