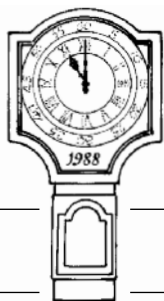


THE CHAPELS SOCIETY



Newsletter 60

September 2015



*The imposing classical frontage of St Mary's Catholic Church, Loughborough
(photograph copyright Roger Holden)*

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NOTICEBOARD

CHAPELS SOCIETY EVENTS

12 September 2015	Visit to Cleethorpes and Grimsby (Rod Ambler)
23 April 2016	Visit to North Cumbria (Michael Atkinson)
June/July 2016	AGM in London (date to be decided)
16/17 September 2016	Conference (jointly with ADHSCL) on <i>Nonconformity, War and Peace</i> at Friends House, London

EDITORIAL

My comments in the last newsletter about the contrast between the state of preservation of buildings associated with Wesley and those of George Whitefield caused some remarks from members, as I expected. They were, of course, deliberately provocative: however I think it is always worth reminding ourselves that history (and thus priorities for architectural survival) is in the hands of the victors in any dispute!

The complex histories of many Nonconformist denominations contain myriad splits and reconciliations. There is an enormous wallchart in the Woodbrooke Quaker Study Centre in Birmingham which details the splits which plagued American Quakerism largely in the nineteenth century. I was pleased to note a similar 'family tree' for Methodism on the Methodist Heritage website (<http://www.methodistheritage.org.uk/history-familytree.htm>) although it too, perhaps understandably, omits any of the more calvinistic offspring of the Holy Club. It does show that this year is the 200th anniversary of the Bible Christians and we intend that the next issue will give more attention to this.

PROCEEDINGS

VISIT TO EDINBURGH, 2–4 MAY 2015

Edinburgh has a profusion of church buildings both in the old town and also in the new town which are reflected in contrasting building styles. Over the week-end ten churches in particular were visited.



*The imposing Gothic interior of St Columba's Free Church of Scotland
(photograph copyright Ian Holland)*

The first was **St Columba's Free Church of Scotland** in Johnston Terrace just off the Royal Mile. This was built right in the heart of the Old Town three years after the Disruption of 1843 to designs by Thomas Hamilton and John Henderson. The building is grade B listed. We were given a warm welcome and were told about the Disruption, how the Free Church became established and the history of St Columba's Free Church. St Columba's Free Church did not unite with the United Presbyterian Church in 1900 but remained a Free Church. It was altered in 1908 when the west (Moderator's) Gallery was installed to the design of John Burnet and Son. After teas and biscuits to sustain us we were ready to move on.

A short walk took us to the smallest Chapel visited. The **Magdalen Chapel** in the Cowgate was built between 1541 and 1544 by Janet Rynd, widow of Michael MacQueen (died 1537), who had left money for this purpose. The Chapel and

associated Almshouse was built for the Incorporation of Hammermen which was a Guild set up to represent all trades associated with the use of a hammer. The Hammermen remained patrons of the Chapel until 1858. The Chapel is a fascinating place containing the only mediaeval stained glass still *in situ* in a Scottish building. The spire and tower were added about 1620. It has links with all the main events in Scottish history from the Reformation and was used at various times by the Episcopalians, Baptists, Bereans and the Church of Scotland. It may have been used for the first General Assembly of the Church of Scotland under John Knox. Latterly it was used as the Chaplaincy Centre for Heriot Watt University and is now occupied by the Scottish Reformation Society.

We next retraced our steps partially to 'The Bow' where we visited the Central Edinburgh Quaker Meeting House. This started its life as an Original Session Church in 1865 and was designed by Paterson & Sheils and is B listed. When the OS Church joined the Church of Scotland in 1956 it became redundant and was taken over by the Boys Brigade for a central gymnasium. To facilitate this, internal alterations were carried out by Basil Spence & Partners. This included the insertion of a sprung mezzanine floor. In 1987 the building was taken over by the Quakers and alterations were carried out by Walmesley & Savage. The upper mezzanine floor which is very brightly lit is used as the meeting room with the floor below as the hall and the ground floor as the foyer area. Following the tour we all purchased sandwiches etc. from nearby and returned to the Meeting House where we were supplied with teas and coffees.



*Central Edinburgh Methodist Church, 1816, by Thomas Brown
(photograph copyright Ian Holland)*

Next we walked on to the **Central Edinburgh Methodist Church** noting the original 1859 Reformed Presbyterian Church by Charles Leadbetter (now a pub), the former 1722 Candlemakers' Hall which had once been an Independent Church, the 1848 New North Free Church of Scotland by Thomas Hamilton (now the Bedlam Theatre), the 1900 Bristo Place Adventist Church by Sydney Mitchell & Wilson and the 1834 former St Francis of Assisi Catholic Church (now Jericho House).

This classically styled Methodist building by Thomas Brown dates from 1816, and is Grade A listed. Halls were added to the side from 1916, the chapel itself was modernised in 1972, and again in 1989 (when a chapel was added in the basement). The present church results from the merger of four congregations in 2008, and the recent redevelopment of the building (Page & Park), including an extension to the vestibule and a cafe area, has been nominated for a Scottish Design Award. The gallery hosted a heritage exhibition featuring artefacts from the four congregations.

We then took a service bus to our next stop which was the 1912 **Charlotte Baptist Chapel** in Rose Street by J. A. Arnott & J. Inch Morrison which replaced a 1797 chapel originally built for the Episcopal Church but in 1816 was taken over as a Baptist Church. Following a talk about the Baptist Movement in connection with this building, and details of the building itself we were free to look round and then have tea and biscuits. We then reconvened to hear details of the congregational move to a new location. The current building was now inadequate for the present use and the congregation has purchased the recently vacated St Andrew's and St George's West Church of Scotland in Shadwick Place.



*Members exploring the interior of Charlotte Baptist Chapel, 1912,
by Arnott & Morrison (photograph copyright Ian Holland)*

We also visited this Church which started life as **St George's Free Church of Scotland** in 1869 and was designed by David Bryce in Roman Baroque style. The steeple was added by Robert Rowand Anderson in 1881. Renovations were just commencing and downstairs had been completely cleared of pews to facilitate the new use.

Next stop by bus was at **Bristo Baptist Church** in Buckingham Terrace. This church was formed in 1765 and was one of the earliest Baptist churches in Scotland. This was a 'Scotch Baptist' church in that it used lay preachers. It is now essentially similar to the 'English' Baptist church and has a pastor. Initially they met in Magdalene Chapel and then in 1836 built a church in Bristo Place. In 1935 they moved to the current location. The design is by William Paterson and is Grade B listed. The group were surprised how large the building was. The group were also served a really nice tea with home baking.



*The modest proportions of Canonmills Baptist Church
(drawing by Michael Mackintosh)*

On Monday there was an early start at **Canonmills Baptist Church**. The Canonmills area was once owned by the Canons of the Abbey of Holyrood. It was where the mills used in the processing of grain on behalf of the canons of the Abbey once stood, there being a Canon Law that all baxters (bakers) must bring their grain to this site.

The congregation was formed in 1810. They had come together to express their commitment to believers' baptism but, with an open mindedness remarkable for their time — the Constitution of the new fellowship accepted profession of faith in Jesus Christ as the only requirement for full membership. This remains so today.

In 1813 they set up in Elder Street and then because they needed a larger building erected a church which opened in 1858 in Dublin Street. This was their home for 130 years but because of the structural integrity of the build they moved to

the present building. This building had started as a school and Robert Louis Stevenson had attended it in the 1850s. It had been bought as a mission station by the church in 1855 and so it had remained until Canonmills Baptist Church was created in 1988.

On the way to the next location we passed one end of the railway tunnel which connected Leith with Waverly Station but because of the gradient the engines required a pulley system to assist them to ascend but of course the descent needed very a good braking system.

Bellevue Chapel was originally a Lutheran Chapel built between 1878/81 to provide a place of worship for German residents of Edinburgh and those that were building the Forth Bridge. It was designed by James B. Wemyss of Leith for Herr Blumenreich and was described as 'bare and uninteresting' by *The Builder*. However there are parts of the building which are stylistically German. Since 1919 it has been an Independent Evangelical Church with roots in the Brethren movement. The interior has been modernised but the original internal stained glass windows have been kept and are back-lit. On the way to the next venue we stopped at St Mary's Church of Scotland which is Neo-classical and designed in 1824 by the City Superintendent of Works, Thomas Brown.

A short walk took us to the original **Catholic Apostolic Church** which has been restored and is used for weddings and other large events under the title 'Mansfield Traquair Centre'. The Catholic Apostolic Church was started in 1834 and its first building in Broughton Street was pointed out later. In 1876 they moved to this extremely large building designed by Robert Rowand Anderson. The narthex was added in 1884.

Between 1893 and 1901 the artist Phoebe Traquair worked on a remarkable series of murals expressing the Catholic Apostolic understanding of the Christian faith. A chapel on the south side of the nave includes stained glass from the previous church. The church ceased to be used for Catholic Apostolic worship in the early 1960s, and in 1974 it was sold to a Reformed Baptist congregation. At the end of the 1970s the church was using the narthex for worship, with the sanctuary being used as a publisher's warehouse. By the 1990s, the church had vacated the building, which was in the hands of developers, and concerns were being raised about deterioration of the fabric and murals. Eventually the church was purchased by the Mansfield Traquair Trust in 1998. Restoration was completed in 2007, and the church is now a prestige event venue, with office space below for the Scottish Council of Voluntary Organizations.

After lunch in one of the many cafes in that area we reconvened at the **Glasite Meeting House** in Barony Street. The Glasites (or Sandemanians) were a Christian sect founded in Scotland by the Revd John Glas and although the movement spread into England and America it is now practically extinct.

Glas opened his first Meeting House in Dundee in 1732, followed by one in Perth in 1733. A year later the Edinburgh Meeting House was opened at a location near Chambers Street but no physical evidence of this building survives other than drawings dated 1792. In time more than thirty Meeting Houses were established throughout Scotland, including locations in Paisley, Glasgow, Edinburgh, Leith, Arbroath, Montrose, Aberdeen, Dunkeld, Cupar and Galashiels. In



The Glasite Meeting House (photograph copyright Ian Holland)

1834, tenders were sought for a new building for the Edinburgh congregation's recently purchased plot of land in Barony Street. A bid of £1,850 was accepted by the Elders in April 1834. The Glasites had purchased the land from the Herriot Trust and hired the Trust's surveyor, Alexander Black, to design their building. The Meeting House was Black's first commission as an architect and is unlike any of his later designs, possibly because the modest domestic exterior, simple interior and lack of decoration followed the Glasites' specifications. Work was completed on the building on 26 December 1835.

Alexander Black's detailed specifications include the massive moulded mantelpieces for the Feast Room (valued at 30 shillings each) and the cast iron railings for the main stair (7 shillings). All carpentry work was to be of Miramuc yellow pine, and the pews were to have no space for kneeling since they used the ancient practice of uplifting arms in prayer (cf. 1 Timothy 2). The external walls of the chapel were to be hand finished with ashlar, the blank windows on the exterior were to be filled with best Arbroath pavement and the windows of the Feast Room (now the McWilliam Room) were of polished brown glass, to avoid being overlooked. Meals were carried upstairs by means of the dumb waiter located just off the kitchen.

The only features not mentioned in the original specification are the pulpit, designed by David Bryce in 1873, and the two circular windows added for venti-

lation in 1890 by James B. Dunn. The pulpit is arranged so that the Deacons occupied the lowest seat, the Precentor and the Reader the middle, and the four Elders sat in the upper row.

On the way to the last location we stopped at the former **Albany Street Chapel** which is a Grade B listed building by David Skae for the Church of the Nazarene. It was completed in 1816. Also pointed out was the original Catholic Apostolic Church of 1843/44 in Broughton Street. We then stopped outside the former Broughton McDonald Church which started its life in 1820/21 as a United Associate Synod Chapel. The Greek Doric design is by Archibald Eliot. The building is now an auction house and because it was a 'viewing day' we went inside. The interior has been well restored and the timber-faced gallery was especially interesting.

The last visit was to **St Mary's Roman Catholic Cathedral** in York Place. This building by James Gillespie Graham was completed in 1814. In 1841 Bishop Gillis enlarged the sanctuary and had a new pulpit placed in the Cathedral. In 1866 Bishop Strain, at the time Vicar Apostolic of the Eastern District of Scotland, had a cloister chapel built, where the Lady Aisle now is. The embellished Chapel was therefore fit to become the pro-cathedral of the new Archdiocese of St Andrews and Edinburgh on the restoration of the Scottish hierarchy in 1878 and at the request of Archbishop William Smith it was named the Metropolitan Cathedral on 5 July 1886, with all the rights and privileges appertaining to such a Church.

Canon Donlevy had the side walls of the church made into arches, with aisles of considerable size on either side and replaced the separate cloister chapel with the new aisle on the Lady Altar side. The original saucer-shaped roof was left unaltered at the time for lack of funds, although the shallow sanctuary was extended backwards with three new arched bays. To achieve this, the priests' house in Chapel Lane was demolished and a new property at 61 York Place was acquired, which was connected to the Cathedral by a new tunnel built under Chapel Lane. The opening of the new sanctuary took place in 1896.

In 1932 it was decided to raise the roof of the Cathedral to the present height. The decorative carving of the nave roof structure is held to be particularly fine with angels with outstretched wings in varying colours spanning the spaces between the clerestory and others supporting the various trusses. In the 1970s the porch and baptistery were removed and replaced by a more spacious porch on part of the old Theatre Royal site allowing the original facade of the Cathedral to be revealed in all its splendour for the first time for many decades. In accordance with the reform of the liturgy of the Second Vatican Council the sanctuary was also remodelled.

At this point the group said their thanks to Tim Grass and Sara Crofts and their farewells to each other — though somewhat hampered by the musician practising on the Cathedrals very fine organ! The weekend had proved to be an excellent introduction to Edinburgh and had also allowed the Society to make useful contacts with people from a variety of Nonconformist backgrounds across the city and beyond. We hope to return on another occasion.

Ian Holland

VISIT TO LOUGHBOROUGH AND CHARNWOOD, 27 JUNE 2015

The Summer Visit, a week or two earlier than normal, was a visit in two parts. In the morning a walking tour round an area of Loughborough then in the afternoon a coach tour round the Charnwood Forest area. We gathered at Loughborough station where we met our guides for the day, Peter and Moira Ackers. A plaque at Loughborough station marks it as the destination of Thomas Cook's first organised tour by train from Leicester. A strange destination for a tour you might think, hardly a tourist destination today, except for the Chapels Society, but this was for a Temperance Meeting. As the station is some distance from the town centre our coach took us to our starting point, at the Churches of Christ in Oxford Street.

Our walking tour was round an area of nineteenth-century development to the north-west of the medieval town centre of Loughborough. Framework knitting became established in Loughborough in the eighteenth century, originally a manual industry carried out in domestic premises and workshops it moved into factories from the 1840s. Later more heavy industries arrived. This brought streets with rows of red-brick terraces to house the workers and it was in such an area that the Churches of Christ was located. This is a simple chapel in red brick in keeping with its surroundings with a slightly Gothic frontage set back from the street. The noticeboard announced it as a **Christians' Meeting House**, where a Church of Christ met. The interior was similarly simple, now devoid of pews, stackable chairs being used instead, with a low platform at the front, under which was a baptistery, but no provision for instrumental music.



*Members approaching the modest frontage of the Churches of Christ
in Loughborough (photograph copyright Roger Holden)*

Peter Ackers gave us some background on the Churches of Christ, which he wrote about in the Society's *Newsletter* for June 1991. A member of the congregation here, Mark, gave us some history of this particular congregation. Also known as Campbellites or Christian Brethren, they were a primitivistic group, first established in Nottingham in 1836. Like the Independent Methodists, who we met on the Autumn Visit in Barnoldswick, they rejected full-time ministers and sought to order their churches solely on New Testament principles. They practice believer's baptism and have thus often been misidentified as Baptists. As here in Loughborough they have often been connected with the urban working class, becoming almost a labour sect. The Nottingham church was formed by a group who broke away from the Scotch Baptists and the Loughborough church was planted from this shortly after, meeting elsewhere in the town before building the present Meeting House in 1880. Some of the Churches of Christ joined the United Reformed Church in 1980, but this congregation did not and still maintains the original witness of the Churches of Christ with a membership of around 60.

We then walked to **St Peter's Centre** on Storer Road. The current usage of this building justifies the attention of the Chapels Society, not its origin which was as the Anglican Church of St Peter. Originally a Mission Church established in 1889, occupying a 'Tin Tabernacle' which still stands alongside the church of 1910–12, which is constructed of local Mountsorrel granite. Our notes gave the architect as W. S. Weatherley of London but Pevsner gives Barrowcliff & Allcock of Loughborough; possibly one was the original architect and the other did later alterations. After becoming redundant the church was used by a Hindu congregation but in 2013 it was purchased and refurbished, at a cost of £1.8 million, for use by two congregations, Elim Pentecostal and Open Heaven. Elim are one of the main Pentecostal denominations, established in the early twentieth century. Open Heaven are rather more recent being formed around twenty years ago, according to their web-site, after a group at Loughborough University had received a prophecy to start a church formed by and for young people. Sadly, most of us would not be eligible to join! The building was in use today so we were only able to go into the foyer and view the rooms above occupying what was originally the chancel of the church.

Because of the presence of Ambrose Phillips de Lisle at Garendon, two miles west of Loughborough, this area was of importance in the nineteenth century Catholic revival. Ambrose Phillips converted to Catholicism in 1825 and became an enthusiastic proselytiser. As we were to see in the afternoon, he subsequently employed Pugin as architect. Pugin of course considered that Gothic was the true Christian and Catholic form of architecture, but what confronted us at St Mary's Catholic Church, just down the road from St Peter's, was a classical building, reminding us that Pugin was hardly justified in his opinion. The part of the church fronting the road was built in the mid-1920s, the architect being A. M. Barrowcliffe of Loughborough, but the chancel behind incorporates the original building of 1833–4 by William Flint, which must have been at right angles to the present building. We were able to go inside this church.

Across the road from St Mary's is the Salvation Army Citadel, although we were unable to go inside. This building has had a varied history, a fading plaque

on the Burleigh Road frontage announcing it as a Methodist School built in 1899. The Methodists used the building until the 1960s when they concentrated on the newly constructed Trinity Church in the town centre. The Elim Pentecostal Church then took over the building. As we had seen, the Elim Church moved to St Peter's in 2013 and the Salvation Army then took the building, moving from their previous Citadel in The Rushes which they had out-grown. In these days of declining congregations and closures, it was gratifying to learn that this recent reshuffling of buildings has been due to expanding congregations.

We walked back to the Church of Christ in Oxford Street where lunch was provided, after which the AGM was held before our coach met us again for the afternoon tour of Charnwood Forest.

Charnwood Forest is a distinctive area of Leicestershire, being an outcrop of volcanic rocks that was before the nineteenth century a barren area devoid of roads and habitations. This provided a site of solitude, roughness and exposure in keeping with the ideals of the Cistercian Order who founded a Monastery in 1835 on land given by Ambrose Phillips de Lisle about five miles south-west of Loughborough. The wealthiest patron of Catholicism, the Earl of Shrewsbury, was persuaded to finance the construction of a grander building and A. W. N. Pugin offered his services as architect without charge. These buildings were ready for use in 1844 and thus **Mount Saint Bernard's** was the first Abbey to be built in Britain since the Reformation. This was the first stop on our afternoon tour where we were met by Father Terence who introduced us to the Abbey. For financial reasons the resulting buildings fell short of the grandeur displayed in Pugin's



*Pugin's Mount Saint Bernard's Abbey looks out over the Charnwood Forest
(photograph copyright Roger Holden)*

original drawings, as was so often the case with his work. But it was certainly Gothic and not classical. Only the seven bay nave and aisles of the Church had been completed by 1844. No more work was done until almost a century later when in the late 1930s a five bay nave for the laity was added at the east end in place of a chancel. The tower was completed after the Second World War. This gives the interior a rather odd appearance with the nave for the laity being separated from the original nave, which forms the monastic choir, by a raised sanctuary area beneath the tower crossing. Unlike the highly decorated interior of Pugin's St Giles, Cheadle, the interior of white limestone is plain and austere. The Choir Stalls of 1938 are by Eric Gill.

We now headed in a south-easterly direction to the village of Woodhouse Eaves. This took us past the Anglican Church at Oaks-in-Charnwood; the former Charley Methodist Church of 1862, now a house, and The Beacon, one of the highest points in Charnwood Forest at 814 ft. At Woodhouse Eaves we visited the **Methodist Church** where we were welcomed by a member of the congregation. As proclaimed on the frontage, this was originally Wesleyan Methodist. The first Chapel was built in 1799, the name plaque and date stone from this now being fixed to an out building behind the present chapel, which replaced it in 1887. This is typical for its age being of red-brick, with stone dressings, in a generally Gothic style. Although from the outside it might look as if it was galleried, this was not the case but the building was sub-divided vertically in 1998 to give a room for community use above the worship area. Some of the tombstones in the burial ground behind were of local Swithland slate, clearly distinguishable from later examples of North Wales slate.

Just down the road from the Methodist Church is the **Baptist Church**, which we found to be open. This is a modern building of 1981, with a roof of Swithland slate. John Wesley would have approved of its octagonal plan. The original chapel on this site was of 1796, but this had been rebuilt in 1883. Illustrations of the two earlier buildings are on display in the foyer.

From here we moved on to our final stop of the day, two miles north-east at **Quorn** (or Quorndon, both forms of the name seem to be used) **Baptist Church**. This, like the one at Woodhouse Eaves, was in origin a General Baptist Church. The General Baptists are a notable feature of this area, mostly originating from the Independent church at Barton-in-the-Beans, established in the 1840s and subsequently becoming Baptist in practice. Thus these are churches resulting from the eighteenth century revival and not connected with the seventeenth century General Baptists, who in the eighteenth century largely became Unitarian. This makes the presence of a memorial affixed to the back wall of the chapel, dated 1824, to Thomas Owen who was for 24 years minister of the Unitarian congregations at Loughborough and Mountsorrel something of a puzzle. There is quite a complex of buildings here, so while we drank a welcome cup of tea, the minister, Ian Smith, gave us a presentation on their history.

A congregation was established from Barton-in-the-Beans in Loughborough in 1753 and the Quorn church was planted from here in 1760. They initially met in the house that still stands directly opposite the present building and is called The Old Meeting House. The original part of the present building was



Quorn Baptist Church (1770: roof raised 1790) with its 'obtrusive' 1960s porch and its curiously industrial schoolrooms of 1818 (photograph copyright Roger Holden)

constructed in 1770. In 1780 the building was extended backwards and in 1790 the roof was raised and it is likely that the galleries were added at this time. Prominent in the interior are the pair of Doric columns that support the roof valley between the original building and the 1780 extension. A brick line on the gable end clearly shows where the roof was raised in 1790. As might be expected for this date, its appearance is in the Meeting House tradition, domestic rather than ecclesiastical in appearance. In 1818 a vestry and schoolrooms of three storeys was added, in a style which could be mistaken for a framework knitter's workshop. A further single storey schoolroom was added in 1897–8 and the interior of the chapel was refitted in 1930, when the box pews were replaced. A porch was added in front in 1965; Christopher Stell found this to be 'obtrusive' and I guess we agreed with him. The pews were removed in 2011, being replaced with free-standing seating, and the kitchen was refurbished in 2014. This recent work suggests a healthy and active congregation; around 70 persons present on Sunday mornings.

Finally our coach conveyed us back to Loughborough railway station. In doing so we passed the Loughborough Baptist Church from which that at Quorn had originated, although the current chapel was not built until 1828. It now also has an obtrusive modern porch.

Peter and Moira Ackers are to be thanked for organising an interesting and varied day as are those who provided lunch at the Churches of Christ and refreshments at Quorn Baptist Church. Fortunately the weather turned out fine after being somewhat indifferent over the previous week.

Roger Holden

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING REPORT

The 27th Annual General Meeting of the Chapels Society took place in the cosy surroundings of the meeting room behind the Churches of Christ in Loughborough on Saturday 27 June 2015. As always, our President Dr Tim Grass chaired the meeting with customary good humour and efficiency and, as is our custom, the Honorary Officers gave brief reports regarding the Society's activities during the past year.

The Secretary (Sara Crofts) reported that the new 'Chapel of the Month' feature on the website had been launched and had already covered a range of buildings. Council members and one or two others had very helpfully contributed articles but she encouraged members to contact her with their suggestions. All that is needed is a brief text (300 words) and a couple of photographs. She noted that she had also been kept busy fielding the usual enquiries from a variety of sources and forwarding casework to Michael Atkinson, the Casework Co-ordinator. She commented that Michael's architectural expertise was hugely valued as he was able to deal robustly and effectively with the increasing number of listed building consent applications and designation applications that are now notified to us.

The Editor (Chris Skidmore) reported that he is currently working on the second Journal and has five interesting articles in the pipeline covering a variety of topics. He also drew members' attention to a recent issue with the *Newsletter* in that he had been short of material on a number of occasions. Various Council members had stepped into the breach but he made a plea for the membership to pass on snippets of news and to consider contributing articles.

The Treasurer (Jean West) reported on the state of Society's finances, which remain healthy especially as the visits programme continues to produce a modest surplus. The Gift Aid claim figure has returned to normal levels now that there is a regular claims procedure in place. She also noted that some of the Society's reserves had been moved to a different COIF account with a view to obtaining a better rate of interest. The outcome of this decision will be monitored by the Council.

The President then commended the Society's Annual Report and Accounts 2014 to the AGM. As there were no questions, the adoption of the Annual Report and Accounts 2014 was proposed by Chris Skidmore, seconded by Robin Phillips and agreed *nem. con.*, although it was noted by Roger Holden that there was a typographical error in the accounts where they are shown with the wrong date.

The President then moved on to the election of the Society's Council Members and Honorary Officers. He informed the membership that Sara Crofts would be standing down from the role of Secretary due to a change in her employment, though she would continue to look after the Society's website. Unfortunately no nominations for the role were made before the AGM and so a new officer was not elected. On a more positive note, although the post of Visits Secretary has been vacant for a couple of years, Judith Bartlett had agreed to be nominated to the post this year and was duly elected and welcomed by those present. The President noted that one Council member — David Quick — was due to stand down this

year and thanked him for his contribution to the work of the Society. Michael Atkinson and Rod Ambler had also reached the end of their first terms but were eligible to stand for a second term and were duly re-elected. The AGM was also pleased to elect a new Council Member in the person of Stuart Leadley, who will already be known to those who attended the successful twentieth-century Chapels conference in Birmingham last year.

In his closing remarks the President commented that this had been another interesting year for the Society, though once again there was a note of sadness due to the recent death of former Council Member Alan Petford. Alan had been a stalwart of the Council, contributing wise advice with gentle humour. He was also a gifted lecturer and educator and members recalled with great affection the visits he led to Liverpool and the Chilterns.

Sara Crofts

THE SOCIETY'S OFFICERS

There have been, since the AGM, two changes to the Officers listed above. The first has been caused by the reluctant realisation by Judith Bartlett that she was not able to serve as Visits Secretary because of the pressure of other commitments. The second is the planned co-option by the Council of Moira Ackers to act as Secretary in place of Sara Crofts. This decision will be put to the membership at the 2016 Annual General Meeting. We are very grateful to Moira for allowing her name to be put forward to serve the Society in this way.

Tim Grass

NEWS AND NOTES

More about stained glass...

If your interest is whetted by the following review by Sarah Brown, you might be interested to know that she is one of the main speakers at the Ecclesiological Society's Annual Conference, which this year is entitled *Looking at Stained Glass*. The conference, which will cover stained glass from medieval times to the present day, will take place on Saturday 3 October at the St Alban's Centre, Baldwin Gardens EC1N 7AB. Enquiries to conference@ecclosoc.org

Our Celtic cousins

John Dearing writes...

While the Society's more recent excursions into the Celtic Fringe in Edinburgh and the Isle of Man may spring more readily to mind, those with long memories will recall the fascinating day Society members spent in Cardiff or Caerdydd in 2000 as a guest of the Welsh equivalent, Capel. On a recent trip to Cardiff I looked out for some of the chapels we visited on that day and was fascinated to find that one of them — a solicitor's office in 2000 — had been transformed into a restaurant and bar — appropriately named Chapel.



The Pembroke Terrace Calvinistic Methodist Chapel was built in 1877–8 to a distinctive design by the Penarth architect, Henry Cornelius Harris (1851–85). Its muscular French Gothic style apparently inspired *The Builder* to comment that ‘at this rate of progress in ecclesiastical architecture the Welsh Calvinists will hardly know themselves soon’. The building was converted to its former use in 1983. As I remember it, the musty files and decaying copies of Blackstone gave its interior a generally dowdy appearance. The latest conversion has certainly brightened it up and I can only regret that as the place was full of diners I did not take any pictures of the interior. Whether the Welsh Calvinists of old would approve may be a matter of some doubt.

Walking worthy of our calling

The Centre for Baptist History and Heritage, Oxford together with the Baptist Historical Society are sponsoring a study day launching the publication of this new volume in the second series of a History of the English Baptists. It will be held on Saturday 28 November 2015 at Regent’s Park College, Pusey Street, Oxford OX1 2LB. The day will focus on studies in Eighteenth Century English Baptist life and further details can be obtained from paul.fiddes@regents.ox.ac.uk

ADHSCL AGM and Annual Lecture

The Association of Denominational Historical Societies & Cognate Libraries this year holds its AGM on Thursday 15 October 2015 at 2.00 pm at Dr Williams’s Library, 14 Gordon Square, London, WC1H 0AG. The annual lecture which follows will be given by Dr David Ceri Jones, Reader in Welsh and Atlantic History at Aberystwyth, on the subject *Editing George Whitefield’s letters*.

Listed Places of Worship Roof Repair Fund

This Government-backed fund will see another round of applications later this year, probably in November with a deadline of February 2016: a total of £25 m will be available. The first round of grants, which were awarded in March, totalled £26.4 m in 502 awards, 74% of which went to the Church of England: 1904 applications had been received.

PERSONALIA

As you will have read earlier, **Moira Ackers** has agreed to act as Secretary to the Society until she can be elected at next AGM. Moira practised as a qualified social worker and community worker for twenty years until 1997. She gave up social work to concentrate on her family. This also allowed her to develop her love of all things textile and she gained her licentiate of the City & Guilds in 2005. Once the kids had left home it was decided it was her turn to do a degree and she completed an Open University BA (1st Class) in 2011. Having caught the OU bug she continued on to complete an MA in Art History in 2014. She is currently researching early-modern alabaster church monuments with a view to starting a PhD.

Moira is a member of the Church Monuments Society, The Society for Church Archaeology and the Leicestershire Archaeological & Historical Society. She joined the Chapels Society to keep her husband company and has become fascinated how chapels tell the extraordinary story of ordinary people organising and expressing themselves through worship outside of the control of their ‘betters’ and how chapels themselves witness this.

The other member joining the Council this Autumn is **Stuart Leadley**. Stuart is a native and resident of the East Riding of Yorkshire. He studied history at Durham University and graduated with honours, after specialising in the study of the crusades, monasticism, and the military orders. He now works as a business intelligence analyst for the NHS.

His focus as regards the study of chapels is an attempt to locate and catalogue all the ecclesiastical buildings (churches, chapels, and schools) of the architectural practice of George and Reginald Palmer Baines, which was responsible for some 200 designs, extant, lost, and unbuilt, but he also has a general interest in church history and the architecture of the Gothic Revival.

As well as the Chapels Society, Stuart is a member of the Ecclesiological Society, the Victorian Society, the British Association for Local History, English Heritage, and a variety of local societies with related interests. Stuart’s non-ecclesiological/ architectural interests include reading, rugby league, and cycling — he recently helped organise, and participated in, a charity cycle ride from Hull to Oxford.

All statements and views published in this newsletter are those of the contributor alone. Neither the editor nor the Society may be held responsible.

BOOK REVIEW

Stained Glass in Welsh Churches by Martin Crampin. Talybont, Y Llofa, 2014. 342 pages, 795 colour illustrations, hardback. £29.95. ISBN 978-184771- 825-9.



Many stained glass enthusiasts will already be familiar with Martin Crampin's outstanding contribution to stained glass studies through his online catalogue *Stained Glass in Wales*, <http://stainedglass.llgc.org.uk>, the result of years of meticulous fieldwork and photography. Here one can read a synthesis and analysis of his comprehensive survey, a holistic overview which embraces period, style, technique, iconography and social history, a story supported by extensive and outstanding

illustration.

Crampin's introduction sets out the scope of the work, which focuses on stained glass in churches (for which read also chapels and synagogues), for all but a few years at the end of his survey, the location of the majority of stained glass windows. He wisely observes that an appreciation of stained glass as the subject of academic study has suffered from a modern culture that values innovation over tradition in the visual arts, overlooking its importance to the communities and patrons whose piety, devotion and generosity it has expressed. I would also suggest that it has also been limited by access to good illustration, a gap which Crampin's work has gone a long way to addressing. The book is rightly unapologetic for covering the subject through a chronological survey, with some thematic digression, notably treating stained glass memorials and First World War memorials in separate chapters. It is remarkable that between the Reformation of the sixteenth century and the early twentieth century there were no commercial stained glass studios in Wales, with all stained glass imported from outside the Principality. This means, however, that this book has far more to offer than just a regional study, but is an ambitious and readable account of the history of stained glass in Great Britain, as the work of English, Welsh, Scottish and Irish designers and makers can all be found in Welsh churches.

For the medieval period, Crampin covers some of the same ground as Mostyn Lewis.* Crampin offers, however, a more extensive survey and one that is informed by modern art historical scholarship. Despite the praise heaped by the poets on the glass of the monasteries of Vale Royal and Valle Crucis, little has survived from monastic contexts or from a date earlier than the beginning of the fourteenth century, although glass of c. 1310–30 from Treuddyn is clearly of the highest quality. The best survivals are from the mid-fifteenth century to the 1530s, expressing the variety and vitality of new devotional images current by the end of the Middle Ages, including Trinity iconography, images in praise of the qualities of the Virgin Mary, exploration of the sacraments and an elaboration in the images associated with the wounds of Christ (at Llanelidan) and the instruments of his Passion (at Llanasa). The stained glass as a narrative medium in the

* Mostyn Lewis, *Stained Glass in North Wales up to 1850*, Altrincham, John Sherratt & Son, 1970

parish had reached its full potential by the fifteenth century, nowhere better seen than at Gresford, with its cycle of Marian imagery derived from the *De Transitu Beatae Mariae*. Of outstanding quality and interest is the extraordinary early-sixteenth-century Tree of Jesse at Llanrhaear-yng-Nghinmerich, perfectly illustrating the increasing importance of design ideas easily shared through engraved and early printed sources. The medium of print worked in reverse in the nineteenth century, when an engraving of this Welsh Jesse was copied by an unknown artist and is now masquerading as a medieval panel in an American museum collection! With so many losses, it would be difficult to reconstruct medieval workshop activities, but Crampin has begun the task of identifying works by related groups of artists (at Dyserth and Gresford, for example), challenging the primacy of Chester as a stained glass centre dominating medieval Wales. The iconographic story is similarly incomplete thanks to iconoclasm and neglect, but the absence of any major cycles devoted to the lives of the Welsh saints is one surprising lacuna.

The period between the Reformation and the Gothic Revival has until recently been overlooked on a national scale, but in his second chapter Crampin contributes to the recovery of the enamel-painted heritage. Heraldry continued to attract patronage (c. 1570 at Mold and Buttington) and stained glass copies of early seventeenth-century portraits by Thomas Jenner at Tremeirchion and flowers and animals at Llandaff Cathedral attest to the copying of print sources by stained glass artists in this period. This chapter also addresses the arrival in Wales of imported late medieval/early renaissance glass from the Low Countries and Rhineland, installed in houses and churches in the early nineteenth-century by exponents of the 'Romantic phase' of the Gothic Revival. This mania for collecting means that Wales can boast some of the most important and interesting collections of continental stained glass in the UK. Crampin uses these foreign cuckoos as a means of explaining the technical changes affecting post-medieval stained glass production, as coloured enamel stains took the place of pot metal colour. A discussion of the fascinating late Georgian aesthetic informing the kaleidoscope display of imported fragments at locations like Llanarth and Bettws Cedewain and Worthenbury is long overdue, as poorly informed 'restoration' has destroyed many of the arrangements in English churches. This is the only chapter that feels slightly misconceived, as the vogue for collecting ran in parallel to the creation of new monumental windows in the period c. 1780–1850, the subject of chapter three.

Chapters three, four and five provide a fascinating account of the evolution of the nineteenth-century Gothic Revival. It is a story familiar to us now, thanks to the scholarship of Martin Harrison.[†] Crampin, like us all, is indebted to Harrison's clear-sighted analysis of the main strands of development of Victorian stained glass, but the story can now be told with innumerable flourishes of detail. Crampin adds to the story of the emergence of Gothic as the dominant style, in which the enamel-painted era was eclipsed and then denigrated, so much so that Eginton's outstanding 'Christ Contemplating his

[†] Martin Harrison, *Victorian Stained Glass*, London, Barrie & Jenkins, 1980.

Crucifixion', for example, made c. 1800 for St Asaph Cathedral has now migrated in altered form to St Tegla, Llandegla, while many of his other windows in Wales and England have been destroyed. Chapter two stresses the tentative and experimental nature of the early Gothic Revival, a pattern found throughout Europe at this time, with technical problems, exacerbated in some cases by the involvement of amateur practitioners, only overcome as glass quality and the mastery of glass-paint and firing technology gradually improved. Sadly, many of the windows of the period up to 1850 display severe paint loss problems, attested in some of Crampin's images. One figure towers over this period in the Welsh story, David Evans of Betton and Evans, an outstanding draughtsman and versatile designer admired by Charles Winston, even if some of his restoration practices are now frowned upon. Evans surely deserves a monograph of his own. A heraldic window of the 1840s at St Sadwin, Henllan is a rare example of a window designed by pioneer Charles Winston, made by his favoured firm, Ward & Nixon. With technical mastery came the industrialisation of production, a development which squeezed out the amateurs and witnessed an explosion of stained glass commissioning throughout the United Kingdom. In Wales as in England, the growth of the antiquarian society, especially the Bristol and West of England architectural society, propelled stained glass into parish churches throughout Wales. This included a growing number of Catholic chapels built to meet the needs of the influx of Irish Catholics from the 1840s, although the Nonconformist communities largely resisted this rising vitreous tide. The Welsh corpus of Victorian glass underlines the extraordinary vitality, variety and buoyancy of this trade. While all of the major London-based companies are represented, Crampin's research has uncovered work by scores of less well-known provincial makers. Quality, of course, was variable, but Crampin does not shy away from telling the story of the good the bad and the peculiar! C. E. Kempe's 'The Four Rivers of Paradise' for the Priory of St Mary in Monmouth (1883), for example, reveals what an excellent designer and technician Kempe could be before success and rampant commercialism overwhelmed the company. At the other end of the scale is the modest foliage with Welsh biblical texts by Farmiloe & Son for Heol Dwr Calvinistic Methodist Chapel in Carmarthen (1892), competent, decorative and an interesting example of how a distinctive Nonconformist response to the medium can be found by the assiduous researcher.

Crampin demonstrates in chapter eight the importance of the cataclysm of World War I as a watershed in Nonconformist interest in stained glass in Wales, a subject of particular resonance for a book published in 1914. This chapter, together with chapter six, makes a valuable addition to the story of the stained glass memorial, a subject pioneered by Michael Kearney.[‡] His illustrations show that Wales has its fair share of disconcerting portraits of the departed derived from contemporary photographs (Ellinor Harriet Williams and her children in the church of Margaret, Bodelwyddan by Curtis Ward & Hughes, 1896, being one of the most sinister!), while among the First World War memorials, the

[‡] Michael Kearney, 'The Victorian Memorial Window' *The Journal of Stained Glass*, XXXI (2007), 66–93.

mawkish and sentimental rubs shoulders with the majestic and stately. Not surprisingly, some of the finest memorials made in the years after 1918 were designed and made by pupils of Christopher Whall, chief exponent of the Art and Crafts Movement (treated in greater detail in chapter seven). Kempe and Company's conventional 'Crucifixion with soldiers and saints' of 1920 on the south side of St Mary, Tenby contrasts all too keenly with Karl Parson's 'Receiving the Crown of Life' of 1917 on the north side of the same church. Parson's 'Te Deum' of 1927 at All Saints, Porthcawl, devoid of all militaristic imagery, but commissioned by his mother in memory of Ivor Rees Williams and two of his fallen comrades, is one of the most memorable of all Arts and Crafts windows.

In the interwar years Crampin detects not only a more universal acceptance of stained glass across the denominations, but also a shift in iconographic taste. Old Testament and Apocryphal subjects gave way to a focus on Christ and the imagery of the New Testament — a more comforting message for a post-war World, perhaps? In addition, a growing number of non-Biblical saints and historical figures found favour, together with figures specifically connected with Welsh history and national identity. Newer companies began to make inroads with Welsh patrons. Artists in the Ninian Comper mould, Geoffrey Webb, Frederick Eden, Horace Wilkinson and Hugh Easton, all found favour, while women artists Mary Lowndes, Veronica Whall, Theodora Salusbury, Florence Camm and Joan Fulleylove maintained the Arts and Crafts tradition. Catholic patrons favoured their co-religionists Harry Clarke, Paul Woodroffe and Margaret Agnes Rope. By far and away the most impressive window featured in this survey of the inter-war years is the west window of St Peter, Lampeter by Wilhelmina Geddes, made at the Lowndes and Drury co-operative in Fulham. Commissioned in 1944, the completion of the window was delayed by the war, and it was only installed in 1946.

The pursuit of modernity in stained glass design, the subject of chapter ten, is in Wales, as throughout Britain, an ambivalent story. The account of the post-war years is marked by the prolific activity of the first indigenous Welsh stained glass studio, Celtic Studios. Celtic Studios, like the independent Welsh stained glass artist John Petts, breathed new life into a very strong Arts and Craft tradition, begging the question what price modernity? These windows have a sincerity and power that few of the more assertively modern windows featured in the book can match. While John Piper's collaborations with Patrick Reyntiens (notably at Llandaff Cathedral, 1959) stand out as entirely fresh and architecturally entirely appropriate, the various dalliances with *dalle de verre*, a medium which requires a massive and monumental canvas if it is to create a truly immersive encounter with light and colour, are generally disappointing by comparison. The conservation problems that lie ahead, especially for those window made using resin rather than concrete, are mercifully passed over.

The last two chapters of the book bring the story into the present. Inevitably this is a story in which the impact of Swansea College of Art (now Swansea Institute of Higher Education) is writ large. The Swansea encounter with post-war German designers (especially Schreiter, Schaffrath, Poensgen and Klos) was

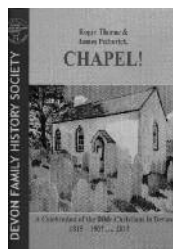
at the centre of a new energy and excitement in the 1980s and 90s, but the result was to transplant a German sensibility into Welsh soil, resulting in many Welsh windows that are barely distinguishable from the German works their authors so fervently admired. It is tantalising that some of the more interesting works of very recent years, in which the German influence is seen to be waning, have been created for non-ecclesiastical settings and so sit outside the scope of this book. This secular interest in the medium is just as well, as Crampin also chronicles the decline of church and chapel in the twenty-first century, which has led to a number of relocation projects designed to save old windows.

The ubiquity of stained glass in our churches and places of worship, especially that of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, threatens to defy our capacity to record and study it, but this survey underlines the value of such a comprehensive overview. The result is a fantastic introduction to the medium, as well as a masterly account of the Welsh material. The main narrative is supported by detailed notes, a proper index and a lengthy bibliography. The design of the book is enticing and attractive and at the affordable price of £29.99, is proof positive that excellence in publishing need not sacrifice scholarship for accessibility and popular appeal.

Sarah Brown

CD REVIEW

Chapel! A celebration of the Bible Christians in Devon 1815–1907 ... 2015 by Roger Thorne and James Petherick. Exeter, Devon Family History Society, 2015. CD Rom. £5 + p&cp from the on-line shop at www.devonfhs.org.uk/shop/product_list.php?cat_id=5



I was very pleased to review this CD, as the authors (Roger Thorne and James Petherick) have worked extremely hard to compile an alphabetical list of the Bible Christians places of worship in Devon giving circuits and foundation information on the buildings together with dates. The up-to-date photographs of each chapel together with archive ones are excellent. The chapels are highly diverse, from very simple to large structures and some on very difficult sites, although so many are now converted to homes and other uses (but at least they

have not been demolished!).

It needs to be said that there are only a handful of chapels for which the authors have not managed to obtain photographs. This is a pity but perhaps somebody who views the CD may have one in their archives? I feel it is essential that people attempt to record these places: as time progresses they are becoming more vulnerable to change of use and demolition once the congregations become too low to sustain the fabric of the chapels.

Personally, I enjoyed this CD very much and would recommend it highly to anybody who relates to Nonconformists and the places where they meet.

Albert Taylor

