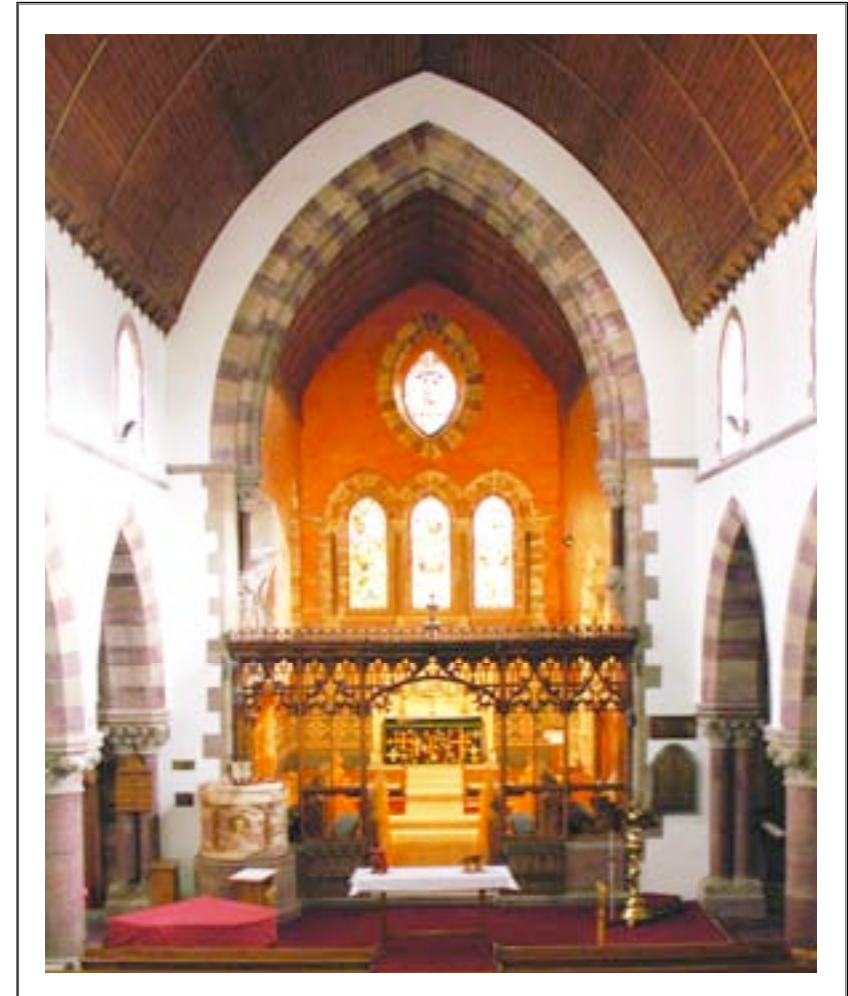
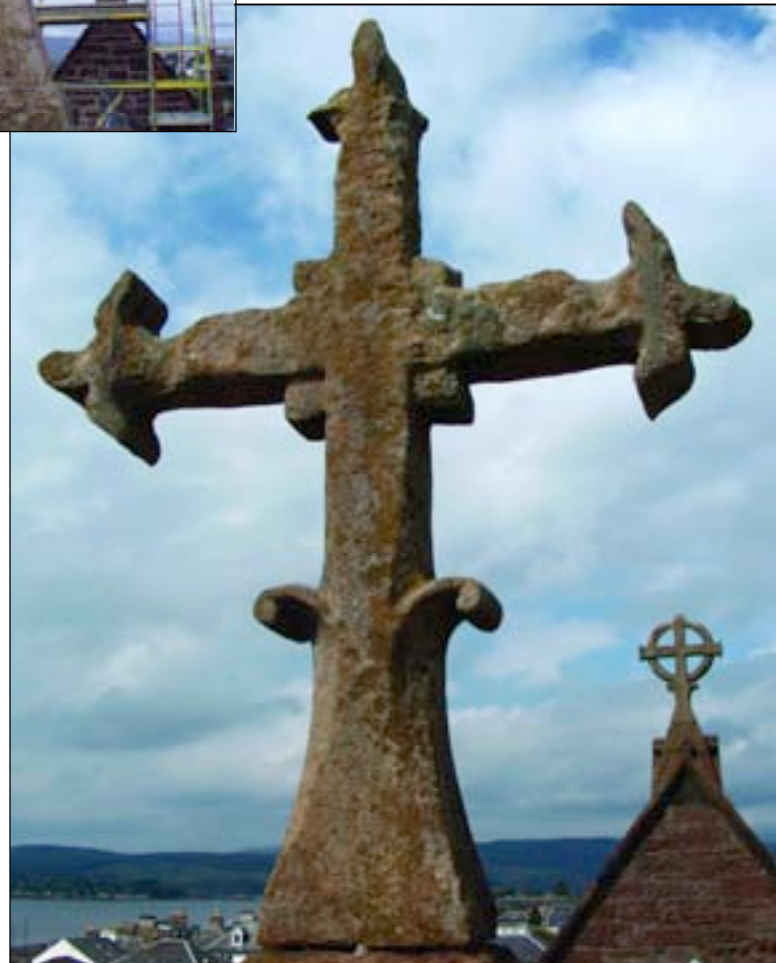


**THE RESTORATION OF THE EPISCOPAL
CHURCH OF
ST. MICHAEL AND ALL ANGELS
HELENSBURGH**



2001 – 2009

November 1st 2009

This message of thanks goes to all those who so generously helped with the restoration of the church of St. Michael and All Angels in Helensburgh between the years 2001 and 2009. Our thanks for their generous financial support go in particular to:

Historic Scotland

The Heritage Lottery Fund

The Scottish Episcopal Church

Scottish Churches Architectural Heritage Trust

Miss E. C. Hendry Charitable Trust

MEB Charitable Trust (Madge Bell)

Mary Andrew Charitable Trust

James Wood Bequest Fund

Gordon Fraser Charitable Trust

Dalrymple Donaldson Fund

Jill Franklin Trust

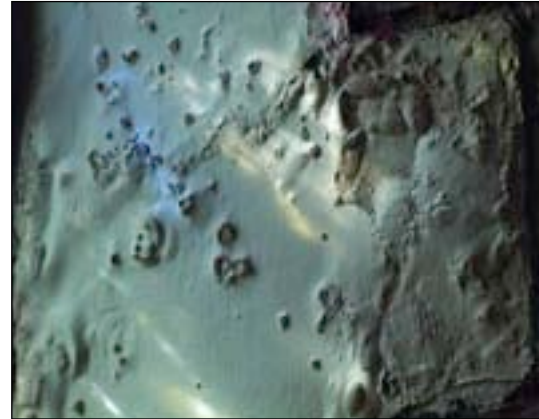
The Architectural Heritage Society of Scotland

and

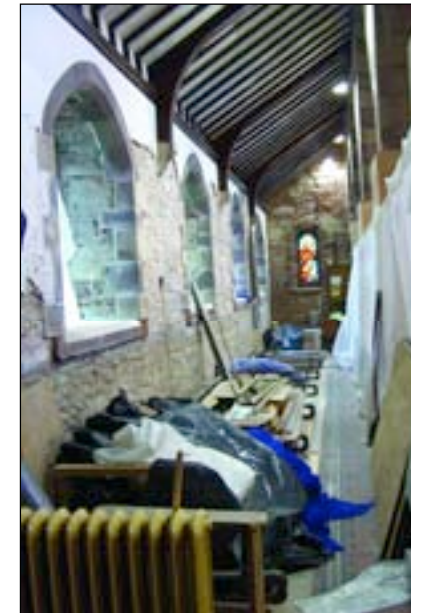
the members and friends of the congregation of St. Michael and All Angels' church, all of whom donated so generously

Because of the incorrect use of materials, much of the inside of the church had become ugly and is well illustrated in the picture below. Once the walls had been stripped of their plaster and allowed to dry, new plaster was applied and painted in a colour slightly lighter, but similar to the original.

With the cleaning of the stonework, the original colours of the arches and window surrounds can now be fully appreciated.



Left - paintwork before restoration



Right - South Aisle during restoration



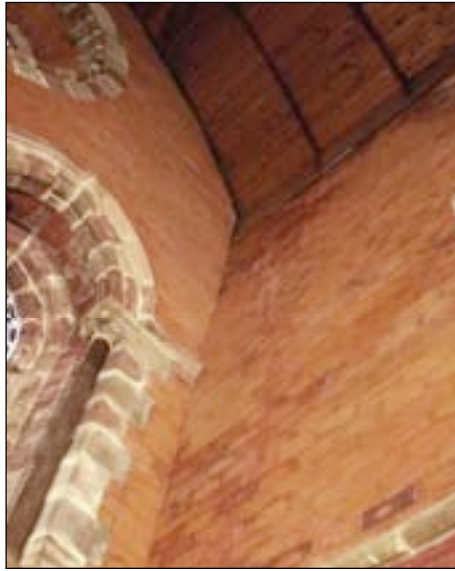
Left - South Aisle nearly finished

We told our contractor in April that we had to take up residence again on October 4th 2009 – and by working together we did just that. Well done Hunter & Clark. A ten year programme of restoration completed in under 9 years ...and within budget.

And on the inside it looked like this



and was restored to this



and the Reredos.....



and to the many dedicated and skilled people who advised, managed and worked on the restoration:

Architects:

Simpson and Brown

Particularly: John Sanders
Stuart Allen

Quantity Surveyors:

KLM Partnership

Particularly: Adsley McCormack
Brian Patterson

Main Contractor:

Hunter & Clark

Who managed all three phases, and provided the skills. Particularly Steve McCafferty, William Walker.

Subcontractors:

Nicolas Boyes Stone Conservation
John Fulton (Plumbers)
Access Solutions (Scaffolding)
Stained Glass Partnership
Bryan Hutchison (Stained Glass)
Gus McPherson (Painter)
Prime Business Services Ltd

Specialists:

John & Malcolm Lightbown (Organ)
John Sanderson, Phil Gallagher,

HISTORICAL NOTE

The booklet entitled St. Michael and All Angel's Episcopal Church, not only provides details of the features of the church, but also a short history by Lindsay Watkins. The purpose of this brief note is to explain the historical basis of the church's decoration, a subject not always appreciated.

The Scottish Episcopal Church emerged from the Reformation as an independent body retaining much of its catholic liturgy, but not the Latin, and was under the patronage and control of the local laird and thus very different from the new Scottish Presbyterian church with its congregation and presbytery. The Scottish Episcopal Church never came under the control of the English Church and to this day the bishops are not created by the Crown or Downing Street.

Because the church supported the Jacobites it was held down in the aftermath of 1745 and indeed, during the next 50 years, English Chapels were allowed to be founded. With a liturgy more akin to medieval practice Scottish Episcopalians were always attracted to traditional rituals and in the 1840s were influenced by the Oxford movement.

In the next decades, new churches were increasingly built and one of the first of the new generation of architects was Rowand Anderson – a pupil of Gilbert Scott. St. Michael's was the fifth of his executed works out of an oeuvre of 167 including Mount Stuart, Govan Parish Church and in Edinburgh the National Portrait Gallery and the McEwan Hall. He ended his life as Sir Robert Rowand Anderson and had many important pupils including Sir Robert Lorimer.

St. Michael's church was designed in French Gothic style possibly because of his 'Gap Year' in France taken at the suggestion of Gilbert Scott.

Rowand Anderson gave detailed instructions on the interior, particularly of the contrasting red and white sandstone – much of which is now cleaned and restored. He kept a close association with St. Michael's over many years, being involved with the design of much of the decoration including the chancel screen, the choir stalls and the pulpit. He also sketched the design for the mosaic in the reredos. When working on the plans for the church he had carefully drawn the gargoyles for the roof – not those on the other side of the street! He was also consulted on many of the stained glass windows that were later installed.

This final phase produced some exciting moments. On the roofs we found an abundance of plant life including an ash tree growing undetected with roots over 10 feet long, and worrying cracks that emanated from the blocked-off chimney flue from the original boiler system. The problems created by the chimney are illustrated below from both the inside and outside.



Plant life growing- left

Hiding the chimney – below



The restored wall - left





The church from the north- west after the second phase of restoration, May 2006

By early 2007 there was increasing pressure to complete the project as soon as possible so it was decided to combine Phases 4 and 5 – the remaining external work and the whole of the interior. In May 2007 a special appeal was made to the congregation to help raise the extra funds needed and the fantastic response enabled us to go to both Historic Scotland and the Heritage Lottery Fund for one last time to seek further grants to finish the project. They responded in full to our application and the £250,000 plus project got underway in May 2009. Throughout the summer and with hospitality from the United Reformed Church, we were able to vacate St. Michael's so that the contractor and his specialist and skilled workmen were able to set about the final phase of restoration to both the inside and outside.



Acknowledging help

The result is an outstanding church – now designated Grade A, which listing has helped in gaining grants from Historic Scotland and the Heritage Lottery Fund as well as a number of private charitable trusts. The listing also enabled us to reclaim much of the VAT through the Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme.

John Johnston, October 2009

The present church of St. Michael and All Angels is the second church to be built on this site. The building itself was erected in 1868 with many of its outstanding features and hall being added later. The tower with its full carillon of 8 bells was not added until 1930. The re-printed booklet giving details of the church now includes an interesting note on the memorials and gifts by Penny Johnston.

A further booklet with descriptions and history of the important collection of stained glass by Lindsay Watkins and photographs by Dr. Roger Watkins is on sale.



THE RESTORATION OF ST. MICHAEL'S CHURCH 2001 – 2009

The deterioration of the building so alarmed Norman Purdy, the Fabric Convener of St. Michael's church that he easily convinced the Rector, Reverend Canon Alex Laing, that unless a major programme of restoration was started immediately, the building would disintegrate. Encouraged by the progress of the work being carried out at St. Augustine's church in Dumbarton, Alex appointed a committee of five from his flock to oversee the restoration of St. Michaels. Throughout the restoration, the only change was occasioned by the sad death of Norman himself.

As a first step, professional help was needed and after a careful search, John Sanders of Simpson & Brown, Architects from Edinburgh was appointed. It was quickly established that the biggest problems of the building had been caused quite unwittingly by the use of cement for re-pointing on the outside and impervious paint on the inside. However, before work could start, we had to find the money – all £750,000 of it. Being A listed, the prospect of help from both Historic Scotland and the Heritage Lottery Fund was soon established but as this was not going to be easy a 10 year plan was drawn up to carry out the restoration in five phases.

The most urgent need was to stop the water getting in to the building so that the inside could dry out. As fundraising began, the generosity of the congregation soon became apparent and when Historic Scotland gave us a very clear indication of support we knew we would soon be on our way. We encountered a few disappointments but the enthusiasm of the fundraisers allowed the first phase at a cost of just over £170,000 to start in October 2004. What a time to start! The roof was stripped and the walls "raked out" just when the winter gales began. The tarpaulins were ripped off the roof and the weathervane sent crashing to the ground whilst the church echoed to a thousand drips – but we kept going with services and even a concert. After a fairly rough winter the scaffolding was finally removed just in time for Easter.



Tarpaulins in the wind



The rain came in

By the spring of 2005 we had completed phase one - the refurbishment of the south nave and south aisle roofs and the south and west walls and windows.



The church from the south west after the first phase of restoration

With continuing deterioration, it became necessary to combine the second and third phases and thus restore the north nave and aisle roofs and walls and the tower because some large stones were becoming unsafe. Supported by both Historic Scotland and the Heritage Lottery Fund, together with the Scottish Episcopal Church and others and armed with the experience of Phase 1, we set out to do the work before the winter. Administrative delays of nearly 3 months prevented work from starting until August 2006 and again we finished not long before the following Easter. Despite another winter of work, the weather was much kinder and restoring the north side walls roofs and tower cost just over £230,000.



A loose Apex stone



Working at the top of the tower