

Places of Worship in Scotland

Scottish Church Heritage Research

www.scottishchurches.org.co.uk

NEWSLETTER 5, August 2010



From the Chairman

The last three months have passed amazingly quickly - days full of activity, training, volunteers, uploading images, writing, – and even visiting churches. Our volunteer team working with Jim Bell, has continued to record interiors, now in the Kirkcaldy area. Brenda has almost completed the checking of all image files, to ensure they will upload to the new website. Geoffrey is working his way through the web-entries, ensuring that all names and addresses are set out correctly, to facilitate searching. Lorna and Allan have been developing databases, including listing places of worship from *Discovery and Excavation in Scotland* in the last ten years, and a database for all our guide books; they have also begun to file our newspaper cuttings. John Richardson, our Honorary Treasurer, has ensured that we were frugal. Kari has worked with John, but she has also brought up to date all our policies - so that we run the office well and comply with all regulations. She has been preparing a list of sites from the old Gazetteer for the Angus Project, as well as working with me to prepare files and information for the Angus Office. We are delighted that we have a partnership with Angus, support for which we are most grateful. Our newly appointed Co-ordinator, Jonathan Dowling, will be responsible for developing the team of volunteers and encouraging local interest – as well as gathering data for the website and to donate to Angus Council. As Chairman I have attended meetings, given talks, made Conference arrangements, responded to enquiries, discussed the new website with its developer Zeno, as well as editing web-texts to simplify them for the revised version.

Edwina Proudfoot

SCHR 10th Anniversary Conference

Conference Programme

Smith Art Gallery, Stirling,
20th November 2010
9.30am-4.30pm

Scottish Church Heritage Research

10th Anniversary Conference

Recent Progress in Church Archaeology

including
Dunkeld & Dunblane, Inchmarnock, Bute,
St Nicholas, Aberdeen, Glen Esk, Angus;
Rosslyn Chapel, Midlothian;
The Hirsell, Berwickshire; Strathearn, Perthshire

Smith Art Gallery, Stirling
Saturday 20th November 2010
9.30am-4.30pm

Speakers
Rosemary Cramp, Chris Lowe, Alison Cameron,
Norman Atkinson, David Mitchell,
Oliver JT O'Grady, Richard Fawcett

Tickets £25, including light lunch
from
The Conference Secretary,
SCHR, Room 2, Volunteer House, 69 Crossgate,
Cupar KY15 5AS Tel: 01334 844822
email: schroffice@btconnect.com

Excavations at the East (Mither) Kirk of
St Nicholas, Aberdeen
Alison Cameron, Alison Cameron Archaeology
Literacy, Learning and Landscape: Recent
Excavations at the Chapel of Inchmarnock, Bute
Dr Chris Lowe, Headland Archaeology
Recent Archaeological Discoveries at the
Monastery of Scone
Dr Oliver O'Grady
Laser Scanning the Historic Environment
David Mitchell, Historic Scotland
The Hirsell – Rediscovery of the Church
Professor Rosemary Cramp, Emeritus Professor,
University of Durham
The Churches of Dunkeld and Dunblane Diocese
Richard Fawcett, University of St. Andrews
The Early Churches of Edzell and Glenesk, Angus
Norman Atkinson, Cultural Services, Angus Council

Through the Eyes of a Volunteer

I was made redundant in 2008 at the start of the recession after working for many years in the paper industry. While I continue to look for paid employment and wishing to do something positive I joined SCHR as a volunteer, already having a general interest in local heritage

My main job has been to catalogue the booklets belonging to SCHR which contain relevant information relating to Scottish places of worship so they can be easily referred to for future use. The main types of booklets are about:

- a) One specific church only, perhaps produced to commemorate an anniversary or an event.
- b) A number of churches within a specific area.
- c) The local history of an area with a general reference to its churches.
- d) **“Doors open days” leaflets which can be for an area or city and can contain numerous references to churches particularly in the cities.**

The booklets are then entered onto a database under the headings, brochure identifier, place or area and church name/s and the booklet is filed alphabetically. A reference to a church on the database can yield information from a booklet for that church varying from one line up to the entire booklet.

The exercise has been both educational and interesting and I now look at churches and buildings in a different light. On recently passing the Old Parish and St. Michael of Tarvit Church in Kirkgate, Cupar, I could not help but notice the gilded coat of arms above the East-facing clock face which I had never



Detail of Old Parish & St. Michael of Tarvit Church, Cupar — © Allan Carr

seen before. I took some photographs to show the detail. On studying them I could then see the refurbished clock face dated 1910 and the burgh arms dated 1620 showing the Scottish lion rampant with three garlands and also recent repair work to the pinnacles and buttresses. This demonstrates the need to be continually observant.

Allan Carr

Unusual Places of Worship



The Caves at Caiplie, Fife— © G Millar

Since I began to work for SCHR, I have got used to walking in a town or village and taking an increased interest in the places of worship that I see, but what I have been surprised to learn are the other unexpected places that have been used for worship.

In fact, some haven't been in a building at all. Yes, there are congregations that meet in churches, temples and mosques, as well as other unusual venues such as village halls, houses, hospitals, universities and floating churches, but I have recently discovered that people met and worshiped in caves and in fields. I know of two cave locations in Scotland, but there are many more. One is on the East Coast of Fife, Caiplie Caves that one of our volunteers, Geoffrey Millar, photographed and the other cave is in Cove, near Poolewe in Wester Ross.

Probably the most fascinating discovery, to me, was learning that people met and worshipped outside in fields.

A recent visit to the Gairloch Heritage Museum revealed a **Preacher's Ark**, an outdoor pulpit that the Free Presbyterian Church in Torricon used to hold meetings after the Disruption until their church was

built in 1920. For a great number of years the congregation walked for miles, sometimes even needing to find overnight accommodation, to attend the service in a field. The Ark, shown here, protected the minister from the weather as well as the bible and there was also a space for the precentor, but the congregation was exposed to the elements no matter the season.

As well as unusual venues used for worship in the past, nowadays with churches closing and being converted into homes, clubs, shops, even nightclubs, it has amused me to notice that the building that



*The Preacher's Ark, Gairloch Heritage Museum—
©Kari Gibson*

houses the Rhema church in Kirkcaldy, used to be a cinema – it is good to see the tables turned for a change.

Kari Gibson

The Project Branches Out

As we near completion of the first phase of the project, based in Fife, we have begun to work towards recording places of worship Scotland-wide.

The next phase will cover Angus, Kincardine, Aberdeen City, Aberdeenshire and Moray. Recently, through the assistance of Norman Atkinson (Senior Service Manager, Cultural Services) an agreement



*Jonathan Dowling, Forfar Office—
©Kari Gibson*

has been made with Angus Council which has generously allocated an office for our use in Forfar. This is above the library, which is centrally located in Forfar, with free car-parking behind; it also has excellent facilities with a well-stocked library, (especially covering Scottish history) and enthusiastic and supportive library staff.

Contacts will be made with the local voluntary sector, societies and churches to begin the process of recording places of worship. Our new co-ordinator/manager, Jonathan Dowling, will be in place at the end of August.

This project needs volunteers and if you are able to help, either with recording places of worship or by helping in the office in Forfar, please contact: SCHR, 50-56 West High Street, Forfar DD8 1BA. Tel: 01307 462362 - email: schroffice@btconnect.com

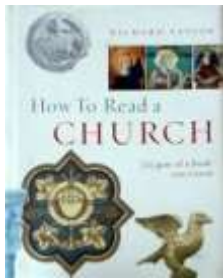
Edwina Proudfoot

STOP PRESS...STOP PRESS...STOP PRESS...

A BBC4 TV series, "Churches: How to Read Them", presented by Richard Taylor, author of "How to Read a Church" begins on the 1st September at 8.30pm. It is also available to view online on iPlayer and the programmes are repeated often, so even if you missed an episode, you can catch up. Of particular interest is the episode scheduled for 29th September which was filmed in Fife.

From the bookshelf.....

A few notes about fairly recent publications.



How to Read a Church
Richard Taylor

How to Read a Church was first published with illustrations in 2004, so it is hardly new. However, anyone interested in churches will find it packed with information, much of it

new to those living in Scotland. The core material here is based on the meanings of symbols and their history. The story unfolds thematically and the explanations are clear and concise. Much of the text refers to items no longer relevant to Church of Scotland buildings, but the descriptions of saints and how to recognise them alone make this work useful – but it is an enjoyable read as well.

Rider, 2004, £25.00

Clothing for the soul divine: burials at the tomb of St



Ninian
excavations at Whithorn Priory,
1957 -67

Christopher Lowe and a team of
specialists

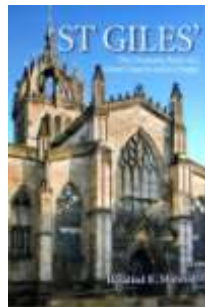
The excavations carried out by Roy
Ritchie were not published until

after his death and this publication is based on

Ritchie's work and his detailed notes. The specialist analyses of the artefacts and the tombs of the bishops bring the work up to date. The excavations focused on the high status burials near the high altar of the medieval church. In nine main chapters, with appendices, this is a hugely detailed volume. Chapter 6 is concerned with the artefacts and is probably the most accessible for the general reader, but the painstaking research which has enabled the writers to present details of bishops and clerics of Whithorn in their context (Ch 8) is particularly useful for the non-expert reader. The last part of this chapter is devoted to the buildings, providing careful explanations of such features as liturgical and devotional aspects of the church, the growth of shrines, the extended east end **of Whithorn, the bishops' tombs, later medieval** building work as well as a reinterpretation of

Whithorn Cathedral and Priory. The illustrations are superb, including photographs from the excavations and images of the Whithorn crozier.

Historic Scotland, Edinburgh, 2009, £24.95 available from Historic Scotland: hsshop@scotland.gsi.gov.uk



St Giles'

The dramatic story of a great church
and its people

Rosalind K Marshall

St Giles is a magnificent church, dating back some 900 years. In this work the author has given readers the

benefit of her wide-ranging research

of the archives of St Giles' in a sympathetic format, flowing and easy to read. Nothing is visible from the earliest building, but the author leads the reader through the remains of 14th and 15th **century St Giles'** to the present day. Constant alterations to fabric and furnishing are described simply, bringing in to focus the life and times of this rare example of a medieval church of high status, which has weathered centuries of turmoil and which still speaks to us. The narrative is thematic, introducing the reader to people and events associated with the church, especially the frequent requirement for refurbishing. Two recent images, (plates 7 and 8) of the new organ and the sanctuary highlight two aspects of the most recent refurbishment.

Saint Andrew Press, Edinburgh, 2010, £9.99

Membership

For the first time we are organising a programme of events for members - including a field day, training session, local lectures. Why not become a member and help us in our work, or even send a donation? Please join and encourage friends and colleagues to become members— the form can be downloaded from the website, www.scottishchurches.org.uk Volunteers. We are looking for more volunteers— to take photographs, scan images, help with field work and the office. Also, charities now are required to be open to a wider demographic to form their Board. If you are interested and have a skill you could offer, we would like to speak with you. If you are interested in helping in any way, please contact us at schroffice@btconnect.com.

SCHR, Room 2, Volunteer House, 69 Crossgate, Cupar KY15 5AS

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