

St Bride's Church

These three restored Windows were saved from St Bride's Church, which formerly stood on the site of this library. The congregation had been set up in 1868, as the West Parish Church, but moved to the stone built church on this site 10 years later. It changed its name to St Bride's in 1929. Post-war dwindling attendance caused, in 1959, a merger with the Old and St Andrews Church, and worship ceased in 1981. The building was demolished in 1990 but it was required that these three windows should be removed and preserved. In 2000 a combined effort by the Heritage Trust and Argyll and Bute Council museums service led, with help from the Heritage lottery fund, to their restoration and framing and display in the Library in 2002 for all to see and enjoy.

The Designer

All three windows were designed by Mary Viola Paterson, [1899-1981] daughter of local Architect and Artist Alexander Nisbet Paterson and his wife Maggie Hamilton Paterson. Known as 'Vi' she became a talented Print Maker and Artist in Oils and her work was exhibited with that of the 'Glasgow Girls' at Kelvingrove Art Gallery in 1990.

The Windows

Viola gave great credit to the craftsmen of Guthrie and Wells of Glasgow who executed her designs in stained glass. The Heritage Trust and the Council commissioned Bryan Hutchison of Strathblane to restore all three windows as a Millennium Project in 2000. In 2002 marking the Bicentenary of the Burgh Charter illuminated display cases were made and installed in Helensburgh Library -

- the Windows had 'come home.'

The Minister

The Reverend John Baird BD supervised the building of the Church of St Bride and 'tended' to a large congregation built up over 42 years. He loved the beauties of nature and the town, living with his family at The Lodge, 121 West Argyle Street. His younger son, John Logie Baird was the inventor of television, and is himself the subject of a modern stained glass window in St Andrews Kirk, Helensburgh.

We hope that you have enjoyed this leaflet, and have a continuing interest in this area.

Helensburgh Heritage Trust

has established the

Helensburgh Heritage Centre

within Helensburgh Library in West King Street (where these restored windows may be viewed)

The Centre has a local history exhibition and collection and changing displays of local interest.

John Logie Baird and Henry Bell receive special attention

We invite you to become a member, to receive our Newsletter and attend our regular meetings and, perhaps assist in the management of the Centre

Contact the Chairman at
28, East Abercromby Street

Helensburgh G84 7SQ

or e-mail

dsf@btinternet.com

or see our web site

www.helensburgh-heritage.co.uk

Stewart Noble
Chairman

This Leaflet

Much of the information in the 2002 leaflet was supplied by Doris Gentles and the late Ailsa Tanner, who had campaigned for the preservation and display of the windows, but sadly died before completion of the project.

This leaflet was designed and published by Kenneth N. Crawford for the Trust and the Council kn.crawford@virgin.net
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Helensburgh Heritage Centre

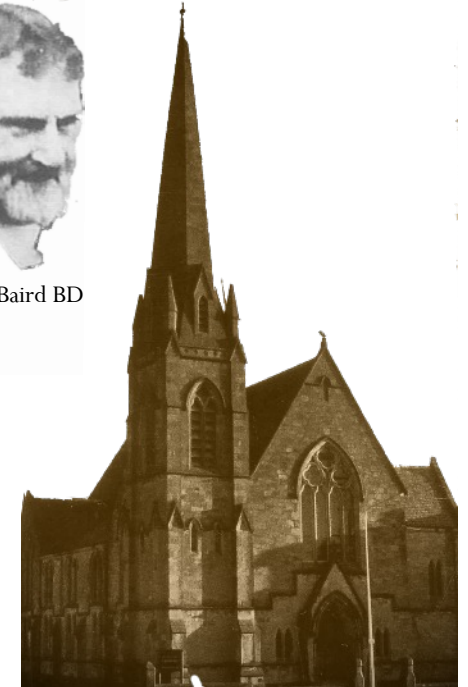
Restored Stained Glass Windows

from

St. Bride's Church Helensburgh



Rev John Baird BD



St. Bride's Church



The Library

Housing Association Apartments

Helensburgh Heritage Trust

The Baird Windows

The inscription reads *"To the glory of God and in grateful memory of the Rev John Baird BD first Minister of this parish, who gathered this congregation and ministered to it for forty two years. Born in 1842 he was ordained in 1869 and died in 1932. Erected by the congregation and friends."*

The composition is based on a window from Chartres Cathedral of six roundels, three in each light. The theme of the first three is of builders and the other three of the calling of Christians and their care by the Church. Reading from the left in an anticlockwise direction the first design tells of King David, directing his son Solomon to build the Temple (1 Chronicles, ch 22, v 7-10). The second shows Nehemiah rebuilding the wall of Jerusalem after its destruction by King Nebuchadnezzar (Nehemiah Ch2 v 17 to 18) The third depicts St Peter with his attributes, the keys and the rock on which the first church was built also the event at Pentecost when thousands of people were converted, and the Apostles advice to the elders to "tend the flock of God" and so build a congregation. (Acts, Ch. 2, v 14-47 and 1 Peter Ch 5 v 1-11) The opposite light tells the story of Job's suffering and his fortitude in the face of trouble. The fourth Roundel shows the patriarch, surrounded by God's natural world. He is arguing with his friends who claim that his troubles are the result of sin, he refutes the suggestion and continues to believe in God's goodness and power "in whose hand the soul of every living thing" is held. (Job, Ch 12, v 7-10) The next roundel is full of nature, the animals of the earth and clouds and lightning in the firmament. At the top is the Almighty surveying all He has created and rules over, flanked by two attendant angels; at the foot the inscriptions run across both lights



The Gow Windows

The inscription reads *"In humble thanksgiving to God for the safe return from the war of 1914 – 1918 of their sons Leonard Harper Captain QORG Yeomanry and John Wesley Harper Lieutenant Scots Guards this window is placed here A.D.1924 by Leonard Gow and Mabel Harper"*

The right half of the Gow windows is dedicated by the mother of the boys and shows a seated Madonna with the Child on her knee and St Joseph standing behind them holding a lantern. In the opposite half dedicated by the father, there are three male figures. One has a hand raised in blessing, another has his hands crossed over his chest while the third kneels in an attitude of prayer in the direction of the Holy Family who face them.



At the foot of both lights are borders decorated with flowers, insects and birds. Butterflies and dragonflies—symbols of rebirth and resurrection and the birds, symbols of the spirit, fly freely among the flowers. The predominant colour is a beautiful blue.

The Gows lived at Camis Eskan and Leonard, was a JP: – he was a partner in the shipping line of Harrison, Gow and Co.

The Hamilton Windows

The inscription reads *"To the glory of God and in memory of her parents, James Hamilton and Mary Stevenson and also their daughter Mary Jane this window is placed here A.D.1923 by Maggie Hamilton Paterson."*

James Hamilton was a bobbin manufacturer and lived with his wife Mary at Thornton Lodge 107 Sinclair Street. Their daughter, Maggie was a talented artist and at the end of the 19th century, married A N Paterson, a prominent local architect and artist. Like the other preserved Windows this was also designed by Violet, Maggie's daughter. The left window is dedicated to Maggie's parents and depicts the third or fourth century martyr Margaret of Antioch with her attributes of a heavenly crown and a dragon. The myth was that Satan in the form of a dragon swallowed Margaret, but the cross which she wore jagged its throat so much that it coughed her up. According to legend, she was subjected to many tortures because of her faith and subsequently became the patron saint of childbirth.

The right window is dedicated to Mary Jane, Maggie's sister, and depicts the legend of Martin of Tours. The Saint gave half of his cloak to a beggar, a symbol of charity and hospitality in art. He became Bishop of Tours in 372, hence the Mitre motive in the little diamond-shaped panes. His later emblem was a goose, the symbol of watchfulness and love, here silhouetted against a building, probably the first Monastery in Gaul, which he founded.

The window is signed "M Viola Paterson 1923"

