

August 2006

Number 2

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Welcome to the second Newsletter of the Friends of Pugin.

We welcome many new Friends. We know that you will be significant ambassadors for the Pugin Foundation and for Pugin's unique heritage in Australia.

If you have elected to receive your Newsletter by email I will have sent you an access code to open the Friends-only documents on our website: www.puginfoundation.org I will email you each month when the Newsletter is ready to be downloaded.

For our Friends who have not elected to receive their Newsletter by email, I will send you a printed copy, but will also send you an access code so that you can view the Friends-only information of videos and images.

As a Friend, when you access your Friends entry you will be able to see the latest videos of the Foundation. The current video, filmed in St Patrick's, Colebrook, is of Brian Andrews discussing the history and design of the building. This is the first of a whole series which will be shot in and around the building

and will include the conservation activities.

We plan to include interviews with people involved in the conservation works. The first of these will be at the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery workshops in Moonah, Tasmania, where you will see Tony Colman, historic furnishings conservator, showing you the progress on the restoration of the rood screen.

This week the Australian cedar which will be used for the carving of a new top beam for the rood screen has arrived in Hobart. It has been sourced from a specialist timber supplier in Toronto, NSW. The original top beam has been missing for over 30 years. It is planned that the total restoration of the rood screen in Colebrook will be ready for reinstatement before the end of 2006.

St Patrick's, Colebrook, will be achieving a very important milestone on Sunday 21 January 2007, the 150th anniversary of its opening. We are working with the local community to plan a special day of celebrations and we will keep you informed on this event over the coming months. We would like you to mark this date in your diary.

How beautiful is St Paul's Oatlands, under snow.

With kind regards,
Jude Andrews
Administrative Officer



*St Paul's, Oatlands, under snow.
(Photo: Sr Maria Goretti Smith SSJ)*

The Renaissance of St Patrick's, Colebrook

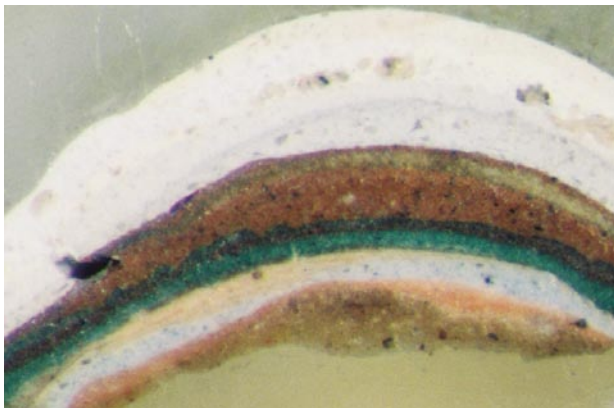
Continuing our news of conservation activities we report on a recently completed consultancy investigating the building's paint finishes.

The purpose of this consultancy, undertaken by historic decorative finishes expert Donald Ellsmore, was to map the colour, nature and location of all painted finishes applied to the church from its construction to the present time. On 25 and 26 March 2006 Donald collected a total of fifty paint samples for off-site analysis from representative surfaces inside the church and a small number from the exterior of the doors.



Decorative finishes expert Donald Ellsmore taking a paint sample from the chancel arch in St Patrick's, Colebrook, on 25 March 2006.

These samples were embedded in epoxy resin, sectioned and then photographed at 16X to 40X magnification to produce photomicrographs. Each photomicrograph reveals the layers of the paint history for that specimen, including the nature and colour of each paint application.



Donald Ellsmore's report reveals that the church was very plain when it was first decorated. Over time the interior became more colourful as successive colours were introduced, but, in Donald's words, 'the disposition of the colours was chaste'. As constructed, the only colour on the walls was a cream to light stone tint in the plaster itself, and the internal dressed stonework (nave piers and arches, chancel arch, door surrounds and so on) was unpainted. The first finish applied to the walls was a water-based distemper of a colour that matched the tinted plaster. The doors and other joinery had an oak graining finish.

The first decorative finish to be applied in the nave consisted of a mid-brown dado with a pink-beige wall filling above it, separated by a cobalt blue dado line. Late in the nineteenth century stronger blue-green wall filling colours and darker brown dados were introduced. Donald identified at least three distinct brown and blue-green schemes in the nave and sacristy. The evidence in the chancel was not quite as clear, where a lime green was introduced, but at least one of the brown and blue-green schemes was used there in the aftermath of the 1895 fall of the bellcote and its consequent damage to the chancel. The latest sequence of pastel coloured and uniform near white colours in the church is of recent (less than fifty years) application.

In essence, Donald Ellsmore's recommendation is that the original stone-like colours should be returned to the church. He has identified the palette of Australian Standard paint colours that most closely match the historical evidence uncovered. This limited palette for the building's interior can be summarised as follows:

A photomicrograph of a paint sample from the porch inner stone entrance doorway architrave at the dado line. It shows the early light stone finish below a salmon colour then dado and wall colours.

Element

Ceiling, trusses and rafters
All plastered surfaces
Interior masonry
Skirtings, doors & timber frames

The interior dressed stonework, originally left unpainted, has a number of layers of paint which would be problematic to safely and satisfactorily remove without the risk of damage to the fabric, hence the recommendation to revert to the first paint layer, namely light stone.

Colour

Natural
Cream/Light Stone
Light Stone
Oak Grained

ASA Reference

X32 Magnolia
X34 Driftwood

We are fortunate that the original paint scheme was indeed so low key because its reinstatement can only serve to further enhance the pared-back understated ambience that is such a salient characteristic of this important Pugin building.

Pugin News Worldwide

The Grange, Ramsgate

Further to our news last month of the re-opening of The Grange, following its recent restoration by the Landmark Trust, Friends might like to know of two articles recently published about this significant milestone in the development of English domestic architecture.

The 15 June 2006 issue of *Country Life* carries an article, 'The Grange, Ramsgate, Kent', by Clive Aslet. Australian Friends should find that this issue—surface mail delivered—has just appeared in newsagencies. The current (August 2006) issue of *Apollo* magazine contains an article, 'Pugin's home restored', by Rosemary Hill, who is completing a biography of Pugin.

We present a 1983 image of the dining room in The Grange which can be compared with its restored state illustrated in both *Country Life* and *Apollo*.

A January 1983 view of the dining room in The Grange showing its state before restoration



Pugin's Designs

In this series we are looking in detail at Pugin's designs for buildings, furnishings and objects. An examination of some of his churchyard crosses continues in this issue.

Churchyard Crosses (Part 2)

In 1841 Pugin designed a delightful little two-compartment brick and stone church, dedicated to St Augustine of England, to be erected at the expense of the Amherst family of Fieldgate House, Kenilworth, Warwickshire. In December 1841 he provided a sketch of the layout of the churchyard in a letter to Francis Kerril Amherst, indicating the site of a churchyard cross a little to the south-west of the church's entrance porch.



It is characteristic of the detailed interest that Pugin took in all of his works that on 2 May 1842, a little over a month before the opening of the church, he fired off an indignant letter to Mrs Mary Louisa Amherst about the churchyard cross (Birmingham Archdiocesan Archives, R872):

My Dear Madam

to my great mortification I have just Learnt that the cross in your cemetery has been set up contrary to every direction I gave about it in the first place. Instead of being raised nearly 2 feet with earth the stone base is placed on a Level with the ground - then the ends of cross instead of standing N & S are placed east and west contrary to the practice of all Christendom.

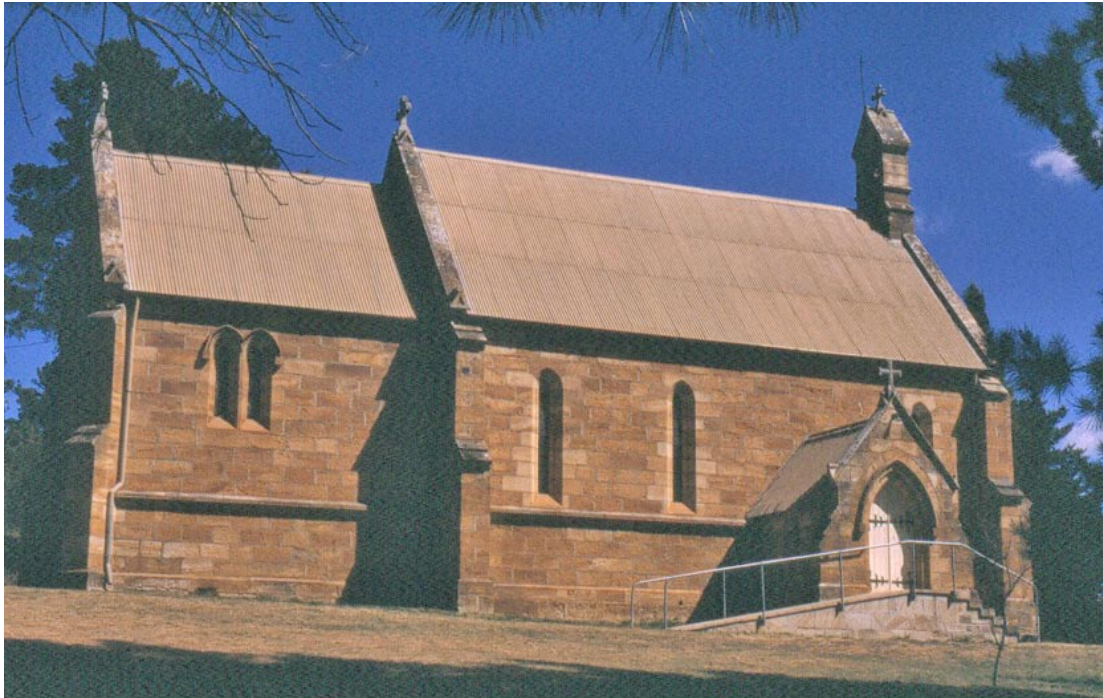
He included a couple of thumbnail sketches illustrating the errors and their correction, finishing his letter with: 'nob[od]y does anything right & with the multiplicity of Detail which I have to attend to I am sometimes half distracted for this is the way buildings & designs are spoilt'. Needless to say, the faults were corrected.

The cross proper is of octagonal section with simple cusping and stands on a tapered octagonal shaft. The moulded cubical base has diagonally-set quatrefoils enclosing symbols of the four evangelists sunk in its faces.

The churchyard cross, St Austin's, Kenilworth.

Pugin's Australian Built Heritage

This series deals in some detail with the surviving Australian buildings to Pugin's designs, describing their construction history and analysing them, including later additions and modifications. We continue our examination of his delightful little village Church of St Francis Xavier, Berrima, in the Southern Highlands of New South Wales.



St Francis Xavier's Church, Berrima, from the north-east.

St Francis Xavier's, Berrima (Part 2) - Background (Continued)

Pugin's 1842 package of designs for Archbishop Polding included: a temporary free-standing bell tower for St Mary's Cathedral, Sydney, along with major extensions destined ultimately to replace that ungainly Gothick building; a school; and at least five designs for churches ranging in size and elaboration from small two-compartment buildings with nave areas less than 93 square metres to a spired triple-gabled structure with a nave and aisles area of over 370 square metres.

None of these churches were simply copies of Pugin's previous English or Irish designs. All were structured and equipped in accordance with his architectural, ecclesiological and singular liturgical stance, the latter predicated upon his hope that the late medieval English Sarum Use would one day prevail in the Catholic churches of England and its colonies.¹ All, therefore, had a bellcote or a spire, an antipodean north porch, a separately expressed chancel, differentiated from the remainder of the structure by a greater degree of elaboration for reasons of propriety, sedilia,

a piscina, an Easter sepulchre, a rood screen and—even in the smallest—a west door to cater for processions and for solemn occasions such as the visit of a bishop.

All three small village church designs provided by Pugin were related to building types that he had produced in England during the preceding five years. The facade of St John the Baptist's Hospital Chapel, Alton (1840), was akin to that of the design which Polding used just once for the Church of St Stephen in Brisbane (1847–50). The little aisled church of St Andrew, Cambridge (1841–43) and its sister church of St Charles Borromeo's, Ryde, built as late as 1857, were both developed from the medieval church of St Andrew at Long Stanton, Cambridgeshire. Pugin's St Marie's, Southport (1837–40), had its close antipodean counterpart in a design which was used twice between 1848 and 1849, for St Augustine of Hippo's, Balmain and St Francis Xavier's, Berrima, and whose principal dimensions and composition would provide the basis for a crude essay, St Gregory's church, Queanbeyan.

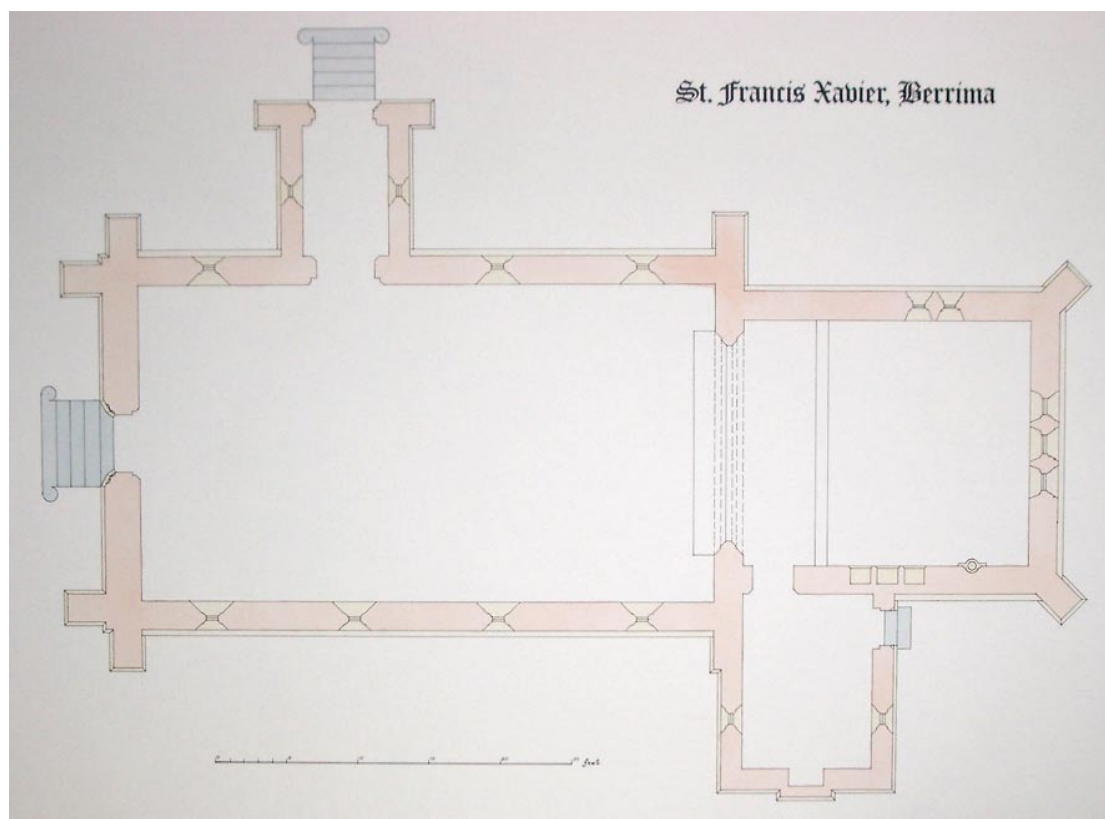
These three designs were for buildings of very much the same size and complexity as ones already well within the constructional capabilities of contemporary colonial architects. So why did Polding obtain them from Pugin? The answer again lies in Polding's awakening to the taste and impact of the full-blown Gothic Revival, not just in architectural terms, but in the provision of an appropriate and comprehensive setting for a re-vivified liturgy, an aspiration very much evident in Polding's own plans for his Benedictine monastic community attached

to St Mary's Cathedral. Not only were these little churches archaeologically correct in every detail, as well as in their plan form, composition and massing, but they also had a comprehensive set of liturgical furnishings, treated by Pugin in his 1841 *Dublin Review* article, 'On the Present State of Ecclesiastical Architecture in England', as essential in 'forming a complete Catholic parish church for the due celebration of the divine office and administration of the sacraments, both as regards architectural arrangement and furniture'.²


The Design

The design used for St Francis Xavier's, Berrima, was—like the abovementioned other two—a scholarly and completely convincing, yet totally original, evocation of a small English medieval village church. The Early English vocabulary of its elements establishes that it accurately reflected construction that would have originally been in vogue around the middle of the thirteenth century.

It comprised a four-bay nave with antipodean north porch,³ a relatively deep separately expressed chancel,⁴ with a rood screen across the chancel arch,⁵ and a sacristy in the south-east angle between the nave and chancel. The design included a priest's door in the west end of the chancel north wall.⁶ There was a west door for ceremonial usage, such as processions or the visit of a bishop, and the chancel—two steps above the nave—was fitted with sedilia and a piscina in the south wall and an Easter sepulchre recess in the north wall opposite the sedilia. It was thus liturgically furnished for the Use of Sarum.



Berrima Church ground plan.



Except where explicitly prevented from so doing, Pugin normally designed and furnished his churches for the Use of Sarum, a logical consequence of his passionately held belief that the social, moral and spiritual improvement of the English nation—and, by extension, its colonial possessions—was to be achieved by the resuscitation in its entirety of English medieval life, including liturgical practice. This was a view shared by a mere handful of people,⁷ including Bishop Willson of Hobart Town and Pugin's and his mutual friend Dr Daniel Rock, priest, antiquary and liturgical scholar.⁸

A significant feature of the Berrima design was the clear intention that the nave east wall would have a Doom, or Last Judgment, painting over the chancel arch. Many English medieval examples, covered in whitewash at the time of the Reformation, have been

uncovered over the past century and a half.

Pugin observed that:

At the eastern end of the nave, over the great chancel arch, the Doom or Last Judgement was usually depicted. The reason for placing this awful and certain event so conspicuously before the people is too obvious to need any comment. Most of these edifying paintings were defaced, under Edward the Sixth, as superstitious ...⁹

Pugin's famous and spectacularly elaborate Church of St Giles', Cheadle, Staffordshire, had a Doom painting.

The Berrima nave measured 40 ft (12.2 m) in length by 22 ft (6.7 m) wide.¹⁰ These were comparable dimensions to those of small two-compartment medieval churches like Tangmere Church, Sussex.¹¹ The two-bay chancel was 20 ft (6.1 m) long by 18 ft (5.5 m) wide. **To be continued.**

New Friends of Pugin - We welcome:

Captain Richard Burgess AM
Devonport, Tasmania

Mrs Mary & Mr Derek Loré
Richmond, Tasmania

Fr Brian Maher
Canberra, Australian Capital Territory

Mr John Maidment OAM
Camberwell, Victoria

Mr Robert Morris-Nunn
Hobart, Tasmania

Mr David Mort
Mudgee, New South Wales

Mrs Lynette Munnings
Colebrook, Tasmania

Mrs Maria & Mr Allan Myers
Melbourne, Victoria

Mrs Paddy Pearl
Campania, Tasmania

Cardinal George Pell
Sydney, New South Wales

Fr Donald Richardson
Dulwich Hill, New South Wales

Mrs Patricia Spencer-Silver
London, United Kingdom

Mrs Catherine & Mr Don Spongberg
Kogarah, New South Wales

Fr Michael Tate
Sandy Bay, Tasmania

Donations

Our thanks to:

Mrs Mary & Mr Derek Loré
Fr Donald Richardson
and

Mrs Catherine & Mr Don Spongberg
for their kind donations.

Sponsorship

The 'Friends of Pugin' thank **Devotee Design**, (*Tasmania*) for the design and production of this newsletter.

⁷The Use of Sarum was a late medieval variant, in minor details, of the Roman Rite, the manner of regulating the public worship of the church that prevailed throughout Western Christendom. It originated in Salisbury Cathedral and spread throughout southern England as well as Ireland and Scotland.

⁸[A. Welby Pugin], 'On the Present State of Ecclesiastical Architecture in England', *Dublin Review*, vol. X, May 1841, p. 312.

⁹In medieval English churches the porch—the congregational entrance—was normally located on the south side of the nave, that is, the sheltered, warmer side facing the sun. English designers of Australian churches, logically applying the same reasons, placed their porches on the north side.

¹⁰Although not as deep as most chancels of English medieval churches of this size, it was substantially more so than had been the practice generally in Catholic churches since the reforming Council of Trent (1545–1563).

¹¹No evidence exists to confirm that a rood screen was installed at Berrima, but there was originally one in Queanbeyan. That Pugin's small church designs for Polding had screens is also confirmed by the builder's account for the erection of St Stephen's, Brisbane. See Brian Andrews, *Creating a Gothic Paradise: Pugin at the Antipodes*, Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery, Hobart, 2002, p. 176.

¹²Pugin's doors were a common feature of English medieval churches and Pugin frequently included them. The door is to be found in Berrima's sister church at Balmain, against which a tower and spire were constructed in 1852. There was also one in Pugin's St Benedict's, Broadway (see Andrews, *op. cit.*, pp. 174–5).

¹³A view that did not prevail. Pugin's Sarum-furnished churches were never used for that liturgy, only ever for the Tridentine Rite, the version of the Roman Rite approved and promulgated throughout Catholic Christendom after the Council of Trent. The Roman Rite has no use for sedilia or Easter sepulchres.

¹⁴As evidenced by the Sarum Use arrangements in St George's Church, Buckland, Berkshire, built on the edge of their estate by the Throckmortons to an 1846 design by the Pugin follower Charles Francis Hansom. Rock was the Throckmorton's chaplain at the time. He wrote *The Church of Our Fathers*, 3 vols, 1849–53, a scholarly work on the English Church, including the first description and analysis of the Use of Sarum. Bishop Willson possessed a copy.

¹⁵[Pugin], 'Present State', *op. cit.*, p. 325.

¹⁶Dimensions are given according to the closest nominal value in Imperial measurement that would have pertained to the original drawings, based on measured values on the building, as the metric figures in that respect are of little obvious meaning.

¹⁷See Raphael and J. Arthur Brandon, *Parish Churches* (2 vols), W. Kent & Co., London, 1858, vol. II, pp. 31–2.