

*Included in this edition:*

- *The Renaissance of St Patrick's Colebrook (continued)*
- *Pugin's Designs – Lectern Pulpits (Part 1)*
- *Pugin's Australian Built Heritage – St Stephen's, Brisbane (Part 3)*

Welcome to the eleventh Friends Newsletter.

So much has happened since our last Newsletter, and we look forward to bringing you details in future editions.

We enjoyed a glorious Spring in Europe with blossoms and bulbs in splendid profusion and the warmest driest Spring there for over a century. We have returned to welcome rains in Australia and hope for more rain to come.

It was good to renew our acquaintance with Fr Norbert Fernandes, Parish Priest of St Thomas of Canterbury's, Fulham, a late Pugin church recently splendidly restored. How lovely to see a building returned to the spirit of Pugin's intentions for the interior. We will be posting images on the Pugin Foundation website soon.

We had the great joy of being the guests of Lady Alexandra and Sir Martin Wedgwood for dinner at the Oriental Club in London. It was so wonderful to


be able to catch up with them again. Sandra is the doyenne of Pugin scholars and a Friend of Pugin. She has been particularly supportive of the Foundation's activities and is a valued mentor to us.

We had lunch with Friend of Pugin Patricia Spencer-Silver at the Victoria and Albert Museum. It was delightful to be with her and to hear about her progress on completing a second edition of the biography of her ancestor George Myers, who was Pugin's builder. This edition of *Pugin's Builder: The Life and Work of George Myers* will include an image of Pugin's 1847 Virgin and Child from Hobart, which was carved by Myers' men.



*Brian Andrews chatting over lunch at the V&A with Friend of Pugin Patricia Spencer-Silver, 11 April 2007 (Photo: Jude Andrews).*

*Sir Martin Wedgwood and Lady Alexandra Wedgwood, a Friend of Pugin, with Executive Officer Brian Andrews at the Oriental Club, London, on 10 April 2007 (Photo: Jude Andrews).*



Our visit to the Victoria and Albert Museum to try and identify the exemplar for Pugin's extraordinary group of crucifix figures in Tasmania proved disappointingly fruitless. Brian Andrews is continuing the research with the help of Sandra Wedgwood with a view towards its publication.

We are particularly delighted with the potential of our new website. We are now able to upload news, images, videos and information ourselves, as and when we wish, thanks to Peter Jerrim and Rebecca Skeers who have created a very versatile and user friendly website management structure for us to interact with on line. This will be a powerful tool for meeting one of the Foundation's objectives, namely to make Pugin's Australian works better known and more fully understood, and that in the context of his English and Irish oeuvre.

We really look forward to bringing you Pugin in Ireland and England, together with his European sources of inspiration, in our Newsletters and on our website.

With kind regards,  
[Jude Andrews](#)  
*Administrative Officer*

## *The Renaissance of St Patrick's, Colebrook*

Visitors to Colebrook this year will have noticed a lull in conservation activities since the end of 2006 when we re-installed the restored rood screen, set up a new forward altar and completed conservation of the chancel floor and furnishings.

Our next activity, the re-erection of the triple bellcote astride the nave east gable, will have a major impact on the external appearance and proportions of the church. We have now obtained the necessary permits from Heritage Tasmania and the Southern Midlands Council and await the availability of our stonemason Robert Whitney. Robert recently underwent a knee reconstruction and his recuperation has taken rather longer than he had hoped. There are two other jobs in his queue before us, but we expect at this stage for the Colebrook work to begin in July.

Landscape architects Ferndene Studio have been developing the designs and locations of signage for the Colebrook site. We will be installing two permanent signs on the property near the planned pedestrian gates as well as a temporary sign detailing conservation works and grant providers/donors to the project. Full-size black and white mock-ups were briefly installed on site in March and evaluated for acceptability of their location, size and visibility.

*Landscape architect Lesley Gulson of Ferndene Studio and Brian Andrews evaluate full-size black and white mock-ups of the Colebrook signage in March 2007 (Photo: John Miller).*





## Pugin's Irish Works

One of the very special aspects of our April/May visit to Europe was being able to study and document Pugin's churches and convents in south-east Ireland. We have learnt much about where they fit into his oeuvre, including his Australian works, and intend to run a series of occasional articles in the Newsletter on these fascinating buildings. We will take advantage of the lull in conservation work at Colebrook to bring you the first instalment in the June Newsletter.



*The crossing tower and south transept, St Michael's, Gorey (Photo: Brian Andrews).*

## Pugin's Designs

In this series we are looking in detail at Pugin's designs for buildings, furnishings and objects. We commence an examination of his lectern style pulpits in this issue.

### Lectern Pulpits (Part 1)

Pugin's views on pulpits, outlined in his May 1841 *Dublin Review* article 'On the Present State of Ecclesiastical Architecture in England', were brief.<sup>1</sup> Noting that 'ancient churches were generally provided with a pulpit of wood or stone, many fine examples of which are yet to be found', he added that 'the pulpits were

far different from the cumbrous rostrums used for the purpose in the present day'.

He stated that:

'The pulpit should be placed in some convenient part of the nave, either against a pillar, or by the chancel arch.'

The favoured location for the pulpit in his church designs was an elevated position against the chancel arch, as shown in illustrations of St Mary's, Stockton on Tees, St Mary's, Dudley, St Giles', Cheadle, St Wilfrid's, Manchester, and St Marie's on the Sands, Southport, in the 'Present State' article. It was entered via stairs from the chancel, sacristy or a side chapel. Perhaps the most famous of such pulpits—and one of the most beautiful—was the one in Oscott College Chapel, Birmingham, from which John Henry Newman preached his famous 'Second Spring' sermon in 1852.

Pulpits, particularly nineteenth and twentieth-century ones in Catholic churches, have not fared all that well since the Second Vatican Council of the 1960s, and many have been removed to be replaced by a simple ambo, or lectern. It is thus not without interest that well over a century earlier Pugin chose to install lectern-style pulpits in several of his later churches, surely a somewhat radical option for the era.

The first instance of a lectern pulpit that I have discovered was installed in St John the Evangelist's, Kirkham, Lancashire. The pulpit was designed in 1842 and the completed church was consecrated in April 1845. An



*The monolithic pulpit in St Giles', Cheadle, showing the elevated entrance door from the sacristy behind it. (Photo: Nicholas Callinan).*



*Pugin's pulpit in St Mary's College, Oscott, Chapel (Photo: Nicholas Callinan).*



*The lectern pulpit, partly visible on the right in St John the Evangelist's, Kirkham (F.J. Singleton, Mowbreck Hall and The Willows: A History of the Catholic Community of the Kirkham District of Lancashire, Kirkham, 1983, p. 33).*

interesting photograph dating from before 1895 gives us just a glimpse of an edge of the lectern on the right-hand side of the picture. Rectangular in form and with a sloping top surface, it had ribbed mouldings enclosing carved ornament, with an angel standing against its side face, features that would re-appear in several of his later lectern designs.

In the last decade of the nineteenth century the interior of the church was radically altered, the works including the lowering of

the floor by two feet and the removal of the rood screen.<sup>2</sup> Pugin's lectern may also have been removed at this time. Certainly, it was gone by 1905 when a new conventional pulpit was installed in the nave.<sup>3</sup>

#### Notes

<sup>1</sup> [A. Welby Pugin], 'On the Present state of Ecclesiastical Architecture in England', *Dublin Review*, Vol. X, May 1841, pp. 324–5.

<sup>2</sup> F.J. Singleton, *Mowbreck Hall and The Willows: A History of the Catholic Community of the Kirkham District of Lancashire*, Kirkham, 1983, pp. 46–7.

<sup>3</sup> *ibid.*

## 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. In this issue we conclude our examination of St Stephen's, Brisbane.

### *St Stephen's, Brisbane (Part 3) Design (postscript)*

Further to our comments in Newsletter 10 about the design of the wheel window in the chancel east wall there has been a clarification about its reconstruction courtesy of Colin Christ, the project architect for St Stephen's conservation in the late 1990s. Colin informs us that some old photos came to light during the course of the works which showed the original tracery, albeit in a state

of considerable decay, dating therefore from a time prior to the substitution of the wooden 'replica' tracery. The reconstruction of the tracery was based upon this photographic evidence.

It seems highly likely that the form of this traceried wheel window was yet another fruit of Pugin's sketching tour of the Scottish Lowlands in October 1842. On the same day, 20 October, that he visited Melrose Abbey he also went to Jedburgh and Dryburgh Abbeys.<sup>1</sup> The Jedburgh Abbey church west front has a wheel window in its gable of similar form to that which he included in the design used for St Stephen's. There is a near identical wheel window to the Jedburgh one in the Dryburgh refectory west gable. Because of the much smaller size of the Brisbane wheel Pugin

evidently reduced the segments from twelve to eight and left out the small circle to be found at the centre of the Jedburgh/Dryburgh wheels.

### *Construction*

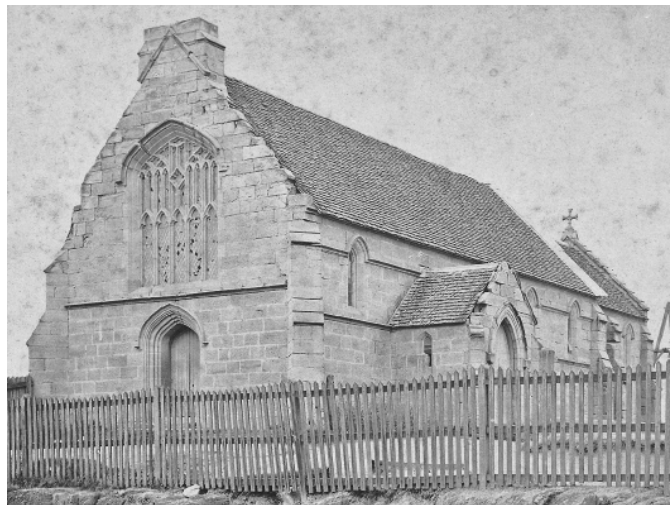
During the middle years of the 1840s the embryonic Catholic community of Moreton Bay (later Brisbane) had been worshipping in a temporary chapel, the old Government store, in Elizabeth Street.<sup>2</sup> Then, on 25 April 1847, Archbishop Polding's vicar-general, Fr Henry Gregory Gregory OSB, petitioned the New South Wales Colonial Secretary for aid to support a resident priest, Fr James Hanly, and to erect a proposed permanent church in Brisbane.<sup>3</sup> He included 'a list of Two Hundred and Twenty Six individuals who have signified their intention to attend Divine Service in the above mentioned church ...'<sup>4</sup> On 8 June Executive Council gave its approval for aid towards a priest and a church.<sup>5</sup> Gregory then submitted to the Colonial Secretary 'the Plans, Elevation, and Specification of the Church intended to be erected at Brisbane, the estimated Cost of which is One Thousand pounds',<sup>6</sup> the Pugin design, aid for which was granted on 27 August, conditional upon the sum expended not exceeding £1,000.<sup>7</sup>

The building contractor selected for the construction of the church was Alexander Goold. Stone was quarried from the banks of the Brisbane River some distance upstream at Goodna. Work had begun by January 1849, the Moreton Bay Courier announcing that: 'The workmen are employed in excavating the foundation and the stones for that purpose are on the ground. Lime is being burned—a dam is formed in a part of the excavation for making mortar and there is every indication of activity on the part of those who have the management.'<sup>8</sup> Indeed there was, for Goold submitted his first account amounting to £600-11-0 in June, covering excavation for the foundations, laying of the foundations, construction of walls to part of their height and production of a substantial quantity of dressed stonework for the plinth, string courses, doors, windows and so on.<sup>9</sup>

Goold's next account, for work up until mid January 1850, covered building the walls to

the level of the roof, the balance of the dressed stonework, the three gables, west window and the main roof framed and erected. The cost was £600.<sup>10</sup> Work proceeded apace and the first Mass was said in the building—complete but for a few internal fittings—on 12 May 1850.<sup>11</sup> A few days prior to this, Captain J.C. Wickham, the Brisbane Police Magistrate, reporting on the condition of the church to the Colonial Secretary, remarked that: 'The building is entirely of stone, and as far as I can judge, is very well built. Moreover, it is a very handsome edifice and highly creditable to all parties concerned with its erection.'<sup>12</sup>

Goold's third and final account for £516 covered shingling and lining the roofs, cornices, plastering of the sacristy and porch, erection of the belfry and installation of the bell, floors, skirting, doors, steps, glazing, painting, seats, the altar and rood screen, as well as fencing the grounds and superintendence of the works.<sup>13</sup> The total cost of the church was therefore £1,716-11-0.



*Severe deterioration of the St Stephen's Church, Brisbane, stonework already apparent in the late 1860s (Private collection).*

### *Subsequent history*

In choosing to take stone from the Goodna quarry Alexander Goold had unwittingly selected material of appallingly poor quality. Within less than twenty years the gable copings to the nave and porch had disintegrated and the bellcote had been dismantled. The remaining dressed stone followed suit, with the tracery in the west and east windows being replaced by crude wooden replicas. String courses, door and window





*A December 1996 view of St Stephen's façade showing the crude wooden replacement tracery in the west window (Photo: Brian Andrews).*

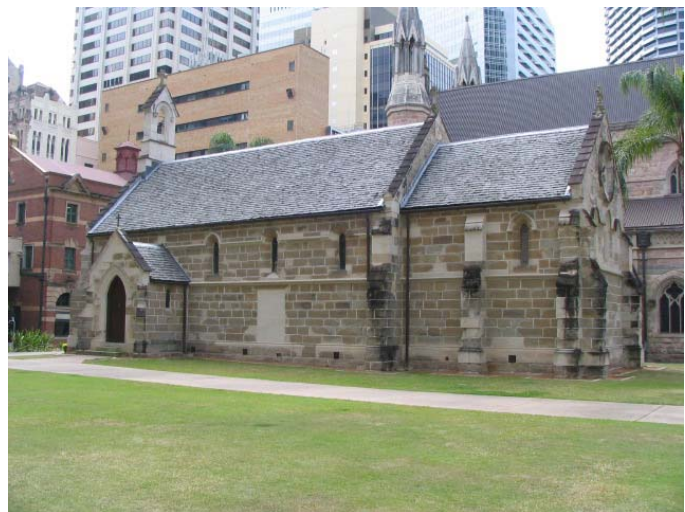
mouldings, dripstones and buttress set-offs steadily crumbled away, making the church appear as if it had been attacked with a blowtorch.

Aside from its deteriorating fabric St Stephen's was to suffer further indignities over the ensuing century. Having served as a humble little cathedral church for the new Diocese of Brisbane from 1861 until 1874, in which latter year the first stage of the adjacent St Stephen's Cathedral was completed, it became redundant. It was variously used as a school, offices, a storeroom, a sale room for missals and hymnals, and a choir practice room. Then it was largely disused. Over the period bits were tacked

on and removed, and three large rectangular openings were cut through the nave north and south walls.

By 1997 urgent conservation work became necessary to stabilise the structure. From then until the end of 1998 a \$1.5 million restoration of the fabric was undertaken by the Brisbane architectural firm of Robin Gibson and Partners, led by Colin Christ. Amongst the more prominent external features of the restored building are the new hardwood shingle roof, of the kind that had been used originally, much replacement dressed stonework and a new bellcote astride the nave west gable. The design of the latter was developed from very poor quality image evidence of the original, informed by the Pugin bellcotes on St Francis Xavier's, Berrima, and St Paul's, Oatlands.

Now known as St Stephen's Chapel, the building houses a shrine to Blessed Mary MacKillop (1842–1909), co-founder of the Australian Sisters of St Joseph.



*The restored St Stephen's, July 2006 Photo: Stephen Kerin).*

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> Pugin's diary for 1842, National Art Library, Victoria and Albert Museum, Pressmark 86 MM 61, L5163 1969.

<sup>2</sup> Denis W. Martin, *The Foundation of the Catholic Church in Queensland*, Church Archivists' Press, Virginia, Queensland, 1998, pp. 49–54.

<sup>3</sup> Gregory to Colonial Secretary, 25 April 1847, John Oxley Memorial Library, Brisbane.

<sup>4</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>5</sup> Executive Council to Gregory, 22 June 1847, John Oxley Memorial Library, Brisbane.

<sup>6</sup> Gregory to Colonial Secretary, 5 August 1847, John Oxley Memorial Library, Brisbane.

<sup>7</sup> Executive Council to Gregory, 24 September 1847, John Oxley Memorial Library, Brisbane.

<sup>8</sup> *Moreton Bay Courier*, 20 January 1849, quoted in Martin, *op. cit.*, p. 84.

<sup>9</sup> Goold's account, appended to McEncroe to Colonial Secretary, 23 July 1849, John Oxley Memorial Library, Brisbane.

<sup>10</sup> Copy of Goold's second account, appended to Gregory to Colonial Secretary, 1 March 1850, John Oxley Memorial Library, Brisbane.

<sup>11</sup> The event announced in the *Moreton Bay Courier*, 11 May, 1850, quoted in Martin, *op. cit.*, p. 95.

<sup>12</sup> Wickham to Colonial Secretary, 8 May 1850, John Oxley Memorial Library, Brisbane.

<sup>13</sup> Copy of Goold's third account, appended to Davis to Colonial Secretary, 9 July 1851, John Oxley Memorial Library, Brisbane.