

June 2010

Number 45

*Included in this edition:*

- *Metalwork Marvels—Reliquary*
- *Pugin's Designs—Sedilia (Part 11)*
- *Bishop Willson's Residence—Ecclesiastical Contents (Part 3)*
- *Conservation Works at St Francis Xavier's Church, Berrima*

Welcome to the forty-fifth Friends Newsletter.

We are pleased to report that work on the conservation of the chancel window in St John's, Richmond, is progressing well. Richmond parishioners were recently invited to Gavin Merrington's studio to observe the progress of the conservation and to receive firsthand the 'story' of the 151 years of the window. We include a series of images showing repair of a piece of the window tracery which had fractured due to stress. All the tracery has been removed, repaired and re-set in place ready for the re-insertion of the fourteen conserved stained glass panels which make up the actual window. We will present images of the conservation of the stained glass in the next Newsletter.

In this issue we provide coverage of the recent conservation work on St Francis Xavier's Church, Berrima. Pugin's key Australian buildings are steadily receiving conservation attention, a good deal of it assisted through the funding and expertise provided by the Pugin Foundation. A number of these churches will be settings for events and celebrations associated with the Pugin Bi-centenary in March 2012.

The seven trees to be planted in the grounds of St Patrick's, Colebrook, have now been selected. An expression of interest form regarding the donation of a tree accompanies this edition of our Newsletter.

Congratulations to Friend of Pugin, Peter Bennison, who was awarded an Order of Australia Medal for service to the Parliament of Tasmania and to the community in the Queen's Birthday Honours List.


If your membership of the Friends is due from 30 June 2010 you will receive a renewal in the mail during the next week.

With kind regards,

[Jude Andrews](#)  
Administrative Officer



*Removing a piece of stone tracery from the chancel window of St John's Church, Richmond (Image: Brian Andrews)*



The following images detail repair work on the chancel window tracery in St John's, Richmond.



*1. A piece of tracery which had fractured into two pieces due to stress on the stonework (All images: Brian Andrews)*



*2. The fracture surfaces are coated with a high strength epoxy resin which, when set, is stronger than the surrounding stone. The two pieces are then forced together.*



*3. The stonemason mixes powdered sandstone of various hues with epoxy to create a mix of the same colour as the*

*stone tracery. This is then used to fill up damaged areas of the tracery piece as well as the original crack's surface.*



*4. The repaired crack and a filled damaged area at the left-hand end of the left arm of the tracery piece.*



*5. The stonemason applies his mix to repair the bottom of the tracery piece. It can be compared with the preceding picture showing the damaged area.*



## *Metalwork Marvels*

In this issue we bring you another exquisite example of Pugin's astonishing creativity in reviving the spirit of medieval metalwork.

***Reliquary:*** Designed c.1847, one of a pair made by John Hardman & Co., Birmingham, 1848. Plated base metal; 48.6cm high, 15.4cm across lobes of octfoil foot; engraved and decorated with cabochon moonstone.

# *Pugin's Designs*

## *Sedilia (Part 11)*

In the final part of this series we look at the sedilia in St Mary's Church, Tagoat, Co. Wexford.

The substantial aisled and clerestoried building in a severe thirteenth-century idiom was designed in 1843 and completed by 1848, its plan being the traditional Irish 'T' form associated with rural chapels, but with separately expressed chancel and eastern chapels. As for the liturgical furnishings in Pugin's many other churches the style of the sedilia was the same as that of the building itself.



*The Tagoat sedilia (Image: Brian Andrews)*

The sedilia are simplicity itself, having trefoil-headed arches with their simple chamfering extending down the sides of each support to Pugin's much-loved pyramidal stops. The toughness of the design captures well the overall character of this unmistakably Irish church.

Readers are reminded that the sedilia in Pugin's Australian churches have been described and illustrated in our series 'Pugin's Australian Built Heritage' which ran from Newsletter Numbers 1 to 31.

# *Bishop Willson's*

## *Residence*

### *Ecclesiastical Contents* *(Part 3)*

#### **Altar Missals (Continued)**

Willson's second missal, we can be certain, was never used by him, although it would seem to have been his intention so to do.

He almost certainly purchased it from a London dealer during his 1847 visit to England, and it bears the following markings in pencil: on the obverse of the blank first leaf 'Very rare'; on the rear inside board 'R/-/- 12/46'. This, I believe, points to a price of £18 and an accession date by the dealer of December 1846. The book was indeed very rare. Even now only some thirteen copies of Willson's edition are known to exist.<sup>1</sup>

The title of the missal is *Missale ad usum insignis et praeclarae ecclesiae Sarum*, in English the Sarum Use Missal. Willson's edition was printed at Antwerp by Christoffel van Ruremund for the London book dealer Franz Birkman on 28 March 1527.<sup>2</sup> Willson's copy is missing a gathering of eight leaves at the beginning consisting of a title page and the Calendar,<sup>3</sup> but the essential texts for celebrating Mass are all there. It had been re-bound in the late eighteenth or early nineteenth century and an erroneous publication date of 1549 stamped on the spine.<sup>4</sup>

All three of Pugin's church designs for Bishop Willson included fixed furnishings for the celebration of the Sarum Use (sedilia, piscina, rood screen and Easter sepulchre), and Willson added in his Tasmanian churches a further distinctive Sarum feature, namely, two standard candlesticks.<sup>5</sup> Given the alignment of Willson's ideals with Pugin's the evidence appears to point to his hope that the

<sup>1</sup> Information from John Goldfinch, Head, Incunabula & Early Western Printed Collections, The British Library.

<sup>2</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> A list of feasts and seasons according to the days of the year.

<sup>4</sup> This is manifestly incorrect as it falls within the reign of King Edward VI (1547–1553) when the Catholic Mass was proscribed in England.

<sup>5</sup> The candlesticks are to be seen in historic photographs of Willson's pro-cathedral St Joseph's, Hobart, and the Pugin church St Paul's, Oatlands. The latter photo dates from the first decade of the twentieth century, indicating the longevity of the arrangement.

Sarum Use would be revived. And this rare missal would enable him to celebrate it in a fully furnished setting.

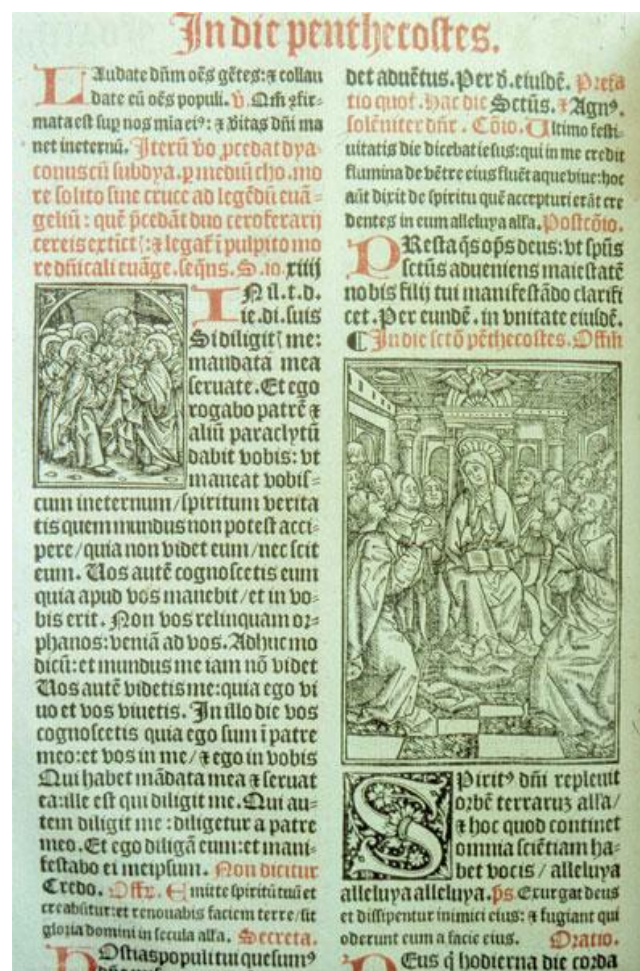
Reproduced below are two details from Willson's missal.



The first is from the vigil of the feast of St Andrew, Apostle, the beginning of the cycle of celebration of saints' feast days according to the Sarum Use. The illustration is a graphical depiction of the ancient Christian hymn, the Te Deum, ascribed to St Nicetas (335–415), the first part of which is a hymn of praise to the Trinity, the praise of the saints and angels in heaven, and of the faithful on earth.

The second is a detail from the feast of Pentecost, the image in the right-hand column depicting that event. It is interesting to note the influence of the

Renaissance in this scene as opposed to the purely Gothic detail in the Te Deum depiction.



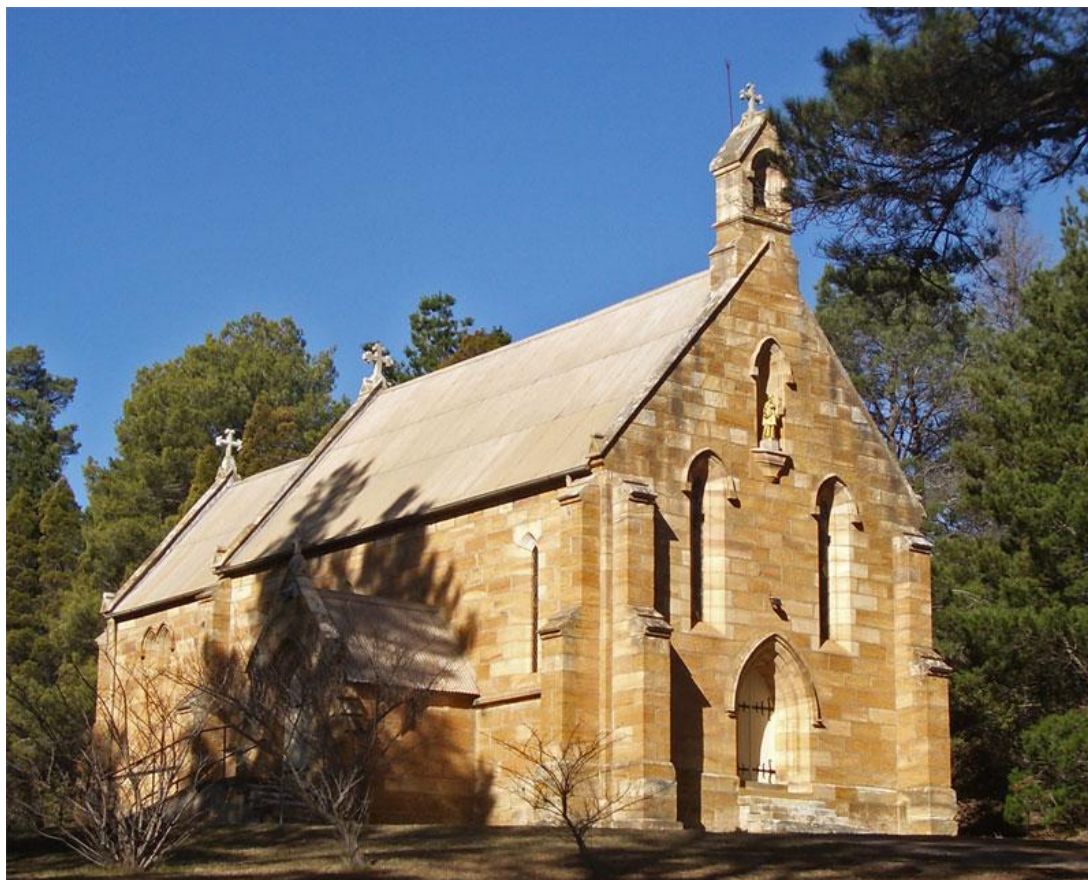
The missal bears the scars of the turbulence which accompanied the break with Rome at the time of the English Reformation. All references to the Pope—including popes who were saints—have been lightly scored through, in a nominal conformity to the requirement to erase the words, but carefully rendering the text still useable should the old religion once more prevail. The same light scoring has been applied to St Thomas Becket, Archbishop of Canterbury and martyr, in response to Henry VIII's proclamation of 16 November 1538.<sup>6</sup> Becket was denounced in the proclamation as 'a maintainer of the enormities of the Bishop of Rome, and a rebel against the king'.<sup>7</sup> Accordingly, 'he was no longer to be esteemed as a saint, and his images and pictures were to be "put down and avoided out of all churches, chapels and other places" ... His name was to be erased from all liturgical books'.<sup>8</sup> **To be continued.**

<sup>6</sup> Eamon Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars: Traditional Religion in England 1400–1580*, Yale University Press, London, 1992, p. 412.

<sup>7</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>8</sup> *ibid.*

# *Conservation Works at St Francis Xavier's Church, Berrima*



*(Image: Jude Andrews)*

## **Introduction**

Pugin's beautiful little Church of St Francis Xavier, Berrima, in the Southern Highlands of New South Wales was analysed and described in detail in our first four Newsletter issues from July to October 2006. A Conservation Management Plan for this 159 year old building was prepared by the Foundation's Executive Officer Brian Andrews in 2006, and the structural survey therein identified a number of serious issues requiring attention. These included cracking to the walls from the long-term effects of wind-loading on the roof, rising damp, and evidence of rotting to timber floor joists. This latter problem was of unknown extent, as an underfloor examination was not undertaken at the time of the survey.

A successful bid in 2009 by Moss Vale Catholic Parish, in which the church is situated, for a grant under the Federal Government's Job's Fund

(Heritage Projects) has enabled this critical conservation work to be undertaken. Brian Andrews was the nominated heritage adviser for the project.

All images associated with the state of the building prior to conservation and the subsequent works are courtesy of Moss Vale Parish.

## **Salt Damp**

The building has no damp course, and the problem had increased over time because hard cement had been used to re-point stonework near the base of the building, forcing moisture into the surrounding stone with resulting salt contamination and erosion. Dampness had been exacerbated by faulty guttering combined with downpipes discharging against the base of the building



*Saturated stone caused by defective guttering*

The hard cement pointing was chiselled out and replaced with soft lime mortar. Being softer than the surrounding stone, lime mortar absorbs rising moisture rather than does the stone and is thus 'sacrificed'.



*Above: hard cement mortar being removed; below: a partially re-pointed section of stonework*



Destructive soluble salt contamination was removed from affected stonework using a method which has been successfully employed on a number of New South Wales historic buildings of high heritage significance. This desalination was achieved by the application of a proprietary poultice called a 'Westox Cocoon' to the affected stonework, then left in place for several weeks before removal.



*The 'Westox Cocoon' poultice can be seen applied to stonework near the base of the sacristy east wall and the chancel south wall*

To minimize water accumulation near the base of the church all new guttering and downpipes were installed.



*Installation of new guttering and downpipes*

The downpipes discharge into sumps connected to a new network of underground stormwater piping so as to carry roof water clear of the building to the local Wingecarribee Shire drainage system.



*A trench being dug for new stormwater piping to carry away roof water*

### Floor Conservation

Once areas of the floor known to be rotten were uncovered it was revealed that the entire flooring of the nave and chancel was severely damaged from termite (White Ant) infestation. So bad was it that the only possible course was to entirely remove the old floors and construct new ones.



*A section of rotten flooring*



*The new nave floor being laid (note the 'Westox Cocoon' poultices applied to the wall lower levels)*

### Roof Stiffening

The unexpected extent of the floor damage meant that considerably more of the budget had to be spent on its complete replacement, meaning a deferral of the roof stiffening. This, however, will not prove a long-term problem.

The intention is to install steel strap diagonal cross-bracing between the roof timbers and the corrugated iron as was done at St Patrick's, Colebrook, in 2008 (see image below), thereby not impacting on the building's heritage values. When the roofing contractors were installing the new guttering and downpipes they estimated that the Berrima roof will need to be replaced in about ten years' time. At that point the bracing can be installed at minimal extra cost.



*Diagonal cross-bracing installed at St Patrick's, Colebrook, in 2008*