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Welcome to the fifty-first Friends Newsletter.

We bring you Seasons Greetings.

Brian and I have just returned from Europe where we were able to undertake work for the Foundation. The visit was primarily to continue work on the planning of a series of celebrations in Australia and in Cheadle to mark the bicentenary of Pugin's birth in March 2012. We met with Ivan Wozniak, Chairman of the Cheadle Tourism Group, and the Committee, to coordinate shared celebrations. The following is an extract from the local newspaper, the *Times an Echo*, on the visit:

Two executive officers of the Australian Pugin Foundation paid a visit to Cheadle recently. The Foundation, which is based in Australia, is a not-for-profit company that helps to raise funds for the conservation and promotion of Pugin's heritage. It aims to provide a better understanding and appreciation of the Gothic architecture he created, as well as conducting ongoing research into his life and works. And at the start of November this year, two executive officers of the Foundation, Brian and Judith Andrews, travelled to England to meet with the Cheadle Tourism Group and to visit Cheadle's very own Pugin's Gem, St Giles' Church.

Ivan Wozniak, Chairman of Cheadle Tourism Group, told the *Times an Echo*: "The celebration of the life of Pugin, the world famous Gothic style architect, will allow local people the opportunity to understand just how creative

Pugin was in the design of our church and how he influenced social history."

The visit was primarily to discuss celebrations of the bicentenary of Pugin's birth, which will take place on March 1st 2012. The Pugin Foundation is planning a series of celebrations to mark the occasion, in Australia and also in England, including Cheadle. Ivan continued: "We are delighted to have welcomed the Pugin Foundation to Cheadle and to have created a special relationship between the groups which will be reflected in our coordinated approach to celebrations in 2012."



Jude and Brian Andrews inspecting the new interpretive signage outside St Giles', Cheadle, Staffordshire, one of a number being installed throughout the town through the initiative of the Cheadle Tourism Group (Image: Ivan Wozniak)



Jude Andrews, third from right, and Brian Andrews, second from right) with the Cheadle Tourism Group Committee (Image: courtesy Ivan Wozniak)

In future Friends Newsletters we intend to run a series of images comparing details on Cheadle and Colebrook, the opposite ends of the spectrum of Pugin's church designs.

It was so wonderful to see our English Friends of Pugin, Lady Alexandra Wedgwood, Patricia Spencer-Silver and Sarah Houle, in London. We thank Maria and Allan Myers, Craig Coleman and Michael Kent for their generous support to help make the UK work for the Foundation most successful.

In this issue we are delighted to bring you the first image of the re-painted interior and the splendid rehabilitated floors of St Patrick's Church, Colebrook. The latest phase of these works, restoring the Pugin vision to a building which was closed and on the verge of being sold, has just been completed.

We close our Friends year with thanking you all for your great loyalty and tremendous support of the

Foundation. Special thanks too to our faithful cleaners and committed guides, to Bruce Slade who keeps the St Patrick's Church cemetery mown and tidy, to the perceptive and supportive Foundation Board and to Maria and Allan Myers whose unstinting generosity makes everything possible.

We hope that 2012 brings much success and good health.

With kind regards,

Jude Andrews
Administrative Officer

The Renaissance of St Patrick's, Colebrook

Re-painted Interior & Rehabilitated Floors

The latest phase of the Colebrook works, restoring the Pugin vision to a building which was closed and on the verge of being sold (probably for a house) just a few short years ago, has just been completed. The interior has been re-painted in its first colour scheme, re-discovered through our paint analysis consultancy in 2006, and the original Tasmanian hardwood floor has been rehabilitated by Friend of Pugin Tony Colman. Its gentle waxed patina, we are sure you will agree, is a vast improvement on the dreadful carpet inflicted on the interior in the 1970s.



Christmas 2010

Each year in our December Newsletter we have brought you an image of one of Pugin's creations with a theme appropriate for this joyous Season.

Our stock of such images is all-but depleted, so this year we present an image of a delightful medieval Virgin and Child of which, we are certain, Pugin would have approved. It comes from Iceland and is on display in the National Museum of Iceland, Reykjavik, along with a quite marvellous collection of medieval Icelandic works including sculptures, altarpieces, Nottingham alabasters—a flourishing English export trade—and textiles.

These latter include several chasubles of a familiar form, being that which Pugin attempted to re-introduce in the teeth of widespread opposition. A beautiful Icelandic example is given below.

We apologise for the less than ideal images, which had to be photographed through protective glass screens.



A Berrima Discovery

Pugin's intact small village church of St Francis Xavier, Berrima, in the Southern Highlands of New South Wales is yielding up important secrets about its original furnishings.

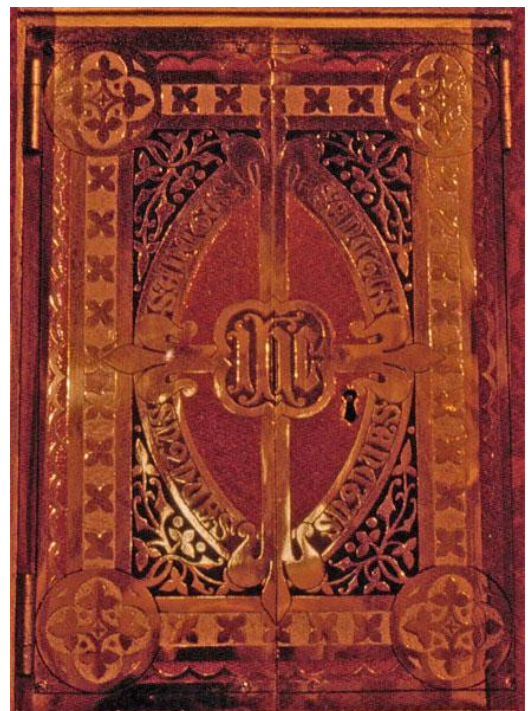
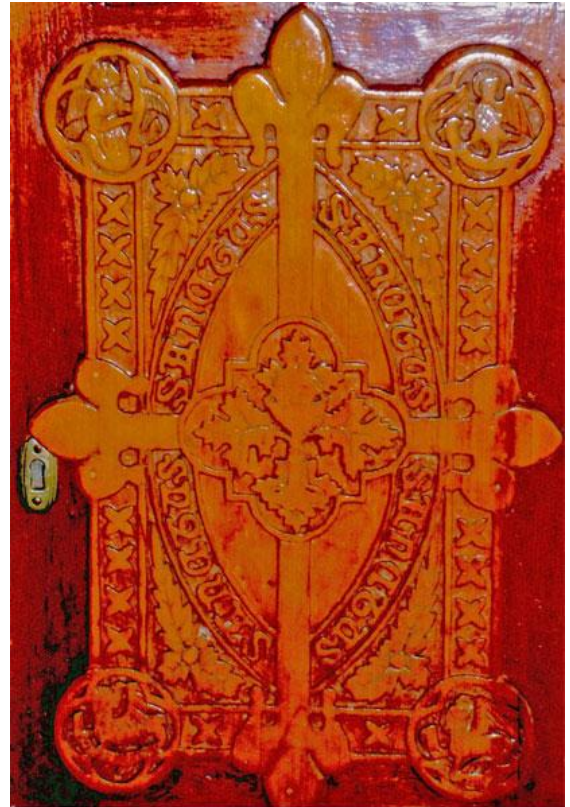
We are convinced that its forward altar, all that remains of the original high altar replaced in recent years by a highly inappropriate overscale Gothick confection salvaged from a neighbouring church, is one of a number to the same design to be found in churches across New South Wales, all derived from a Pugin altar design. It is our intention to examine these altars in a future Newsletter series. But here we report on the recent exciting identification of the original Berrima tabernacle, in storage for many years, as having an important Puginesque element. An image of the tabernacle is given below.




*The original Berrima tabernacle, photographed in storage
(Image: Vic Gerada)*

The tabernacle is of Australian manufacture, as evidenced by the fact that the wood, apart from the bas-relief carving on the door, is Australian Cedar

(*Toona Australis*). Its form is of unknown origin, but the carved insert to the door is of considerable interest, being clearly a local copy from a tabernacle door designed by Pugin. A detail of the insert is given below, followed by a detail of the enamelled brass tabernacle door in Pugin's St Peter's Church, Marlow.





The family resemblance of these two designs is obvious. The overall composition is the same, as well as the words ‘SANCTUS’ in an identical Pugin font within a vesica form, the quatrefoil trail to the border, the foliated spandrels and the cross with fleur de lis terminations. The Berrima design is a little more complex than the Marlow one, having symbols of the four Evangelists set within the quatrefoils at the corners.

The provenance of this locally carved copy is, at this stage, problematic. One of two documented orders for tabernacles by Archbishop John Bede Polding OSB, who commissioned the New South Wales church designs from Pugin, may have provided the source.

In December 1847 Hardmans furnished him with ‘A Small Wooden Painted Tabernacle & Cross, gilded etc.’ for £6-15-4, the Day Book recording it as ‘For convent’.¹ Then in July 1848 they provided ‘A Richly gilt Tabernacle, carved in Mahogany, with Tracery in Front’ for £13-10-0, being part of a large order for St Patrick’s Church, Church Hill, Sydney.²

The convent tabernacle formed part of an order to outfit a chapel for a foundation of Benedictine nuns which Polding was in the process of establishing. The first convent of the nuns was established in 1849 in a large residence close to Parramatta, now a western suburb of Sydney. An examination of early photographs of the convent chapel reveals, however, that the tabernacle was certainly not of Pugin/Hardman origin.³ Likewise, an examination of early photographs of the interior of St Patrick’s, Church Hill, shows that a Pugin/Hardman tabernacle did not finish up there either. It is possible, but not at this stage provable, that Polding retained one or both tabernacles for use in his Cathedral Church of St Mary, Sydney, which would be extended during the 1850s and ’60s to a Pugin design.⁴

It has been suggested that one of the tabernacles, probably that destined for St Patrick’s, could have been placed in the Chapel of St Felician, built as an extension to the Cathedral and used as the conventual chapel by the community of Benedictine monks which Polding had established on the site, or perhaps in the Blessed Sacrament Chapel, also constructed against the old building.⁵ Maybe the two tabernacles were in these two chapels. Regrettably no such thesis is verifiable because old St Mary’s Cathedral was destroyed in the disastrous fire of 29 June 1865.⁶

We are perhaps on steadier ground in suggesting that the likely carver of the Berrima door insert was the French Benedictine monk Dom Jean Gourbeillon OSB of the St Mary’s monastic community. The quality of the carving on the door indicates a superior hand and a sure eye for accurate copying. Gourbeillon was such a man. He carved inter alia the figures for the great Pugin organ case in old St Mary’s as well as figures for the façade of the Cathedral and the steeple of Pugin’s St Benedict’s, Broadway.⁷ All surviving works are of excellent quality. If indeed the door to be copied was on a tabernacle in old St Mary’s it would have been readily at hand.

Footnote: We hope to convince the Moss Vale Parish community to have the tabernacle properly restored and returned to its place in St Francis Xavier’s, Berrima. We will keep you informed of developments.

Bishop Willson’s Residence Ecclesiastical Contents (Part 9)

Episcopal Items

Items proper to Willson’s position as Bishop of Hobart Town, including ‘Chalices Vestments and

¹ Hardman Day Book 1845–49, 30 December 1847, p. 272.

² Hardman Day Book 1845–49, 20 July 1848, p. 343.

³ I am most grateful to Sr Hildegard Ryan OSB of Jamberoo Abbey, the descendant house, for lending me valuable early images of the first convent chapel.

⁴ See Brian Andrews, *Creating a Gothic Paradise: Pugin at the Antipodes*, Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery, Hobart, 2002, pp. 168–171

⁵ I am indebted to Friend of Pugin Michael Sternbeck for this suggestion.

⁶ Andrews, op. cit., p. 171.

⁷ *ibid.*, pp. 164–5, 170, 175.

other articles of Church plate and furniture', were also kept in his Macquarie Street residence, being willed to his successor Daniel Murphy.⁸ Exceptions were his episcopal ring and pectoral cross which accompanied him on his ill-fated last journey to England in 1865 and subsequent death there in 1866.

Willson's precious mitre was most probably made by John Hardman's sister Lucy Powell whose Birmingham workshop was making vestments to Pugin's designs, and it was completed in readiness for his episcopal consecration in St Chad's, Birmingham, on 28 October 1842. It was the gift of his friend the Nottingham magistrate Thomas Close, whose affectionate attachment would be further manifested in his paying for the decoration of the Blessed Sacrament Chapel in Willson and Pugin's St Barnabas Church (later Cathedral), Nottingham. Pugin himself paid £5 on 22 October for the stones adorning it.⁹



Willson's mitre as depicted in his portrait by Herbert

⁸ Archives Office of Tasmania SC74/29.

⁹ Hardman Metal Day Book 1838–1844, p. 69, 22 October 1842: 'Mr Pugin for Rt Revd D Willson Stones for Rt Revd D Willson, Mitre – postage 6d 5-0-6'

Regrettably, the mitre has not survived, the best depiction of it being in Willson's portrait, painted by John Rogers Herbert, in the Pransorium of Oscott College, Birmingham. The accuracy of detail and proportion of the mitre in this portrait are validated by a c.1864 studio photograph of Willson taken in the Elizabeth Street, Hobart, studio of Messrs Reid & Co.



Detail from a c.1864 photo of Willson (Image: courtesy Fr T. Southernwood)

Its decoration consisted of applied polychrome silk thread embroidered motifs and semi-precious stones in metal settings sewn down to the ground fabric.

Compared to depictions of medieval mitres in stone effigies, monumental brasses and illuminated manuscripts, with which Pugin would have been familiar, this mitre seems very tall. In this it was not unique in Pugin's oeuvre, for a comparison with other extant examples of his mitre designs shows this one to be quite typical.¹⁰

¹⁰ Manifested in the ratio of the overall height to the height of the side seam.

Perhaps Pugin's own words in his entry on 'Mitres' in his 1844 *Glossary of Ecclesiastical Ornament and Costume* give a clue to his choice of proportions:

The early double-pointed Mitres were very low, like those which were worn by St. Thomas of Canterbury, when at Sens, one of which is most accurately figured in Shaw's *Dresses and Decorations*. In the fourteenth century they became more pointed and enriched, and then attained their greatest perfection of form and decoration, as they were sufficiently high to be dignified, yet without extravagance; and the enrichments were of the most costly and elegant description ...¹¹

It is clear that Willson's mitre did not finish up in England for there is a somewhat comical photograph of his successor Daniel Murphy wearing it in the first decade of the c.20.



Archbishop Daniel Murphy of Hobart wearing Willson's mitre at a very odd angle, early c.20 (Image: Private Collection)

¹¹ A. Welby Pugin, *Glossary of Ecclesiastical Ornament and Costume*, 3rd edn, Bernard Quaritch, London, 1868, pp. 173–4.

Bishop Willson owned at least two episcopal rings. Of the one worn at his consecration in 1842 there is no trace. The gift of Thomas Close's wife, it was described in Hardman's Day Book as a 'gold ring engraved inside with carbuncle'.¹²

A second gold ring was acquired from Hardmans in 1854.¹³ It had a large oval garnet set in a field of blue champlevé enamel with four fleurs de lis within an elongated quatrefoil. The inner face was engraved with '+ Gulielmus D. G. Epis Hobartoniensis' (+ William, by the grace of God, Bishop of Hobart Town).



Willson's 1854 ring (Image: Private collection)

By Pugin's son-in-law John Hardman Powell (Lucy Powell's son), who had succeeded him as chief designer for Hardmans in 1852, it would appear to be a borrowing from his old master's design for a parure of 1848 for his intended third bride Helen Lumsdaine. The form within the champlevé is an elongated version of the quatrefoil links in the necklace chain.¹⁴

To be continued

¹² Hardman Metal Day Book 1838–1844, p. 69, 22 October 1842: 'Gold ring engraved inside with carbuncle 5 0 0'.

¹³ Hardman Metal Day Book, July 1849–Nov 1854, 1854 Sep: 'Rt. Revd Bishop Willson Hobart Town To a gold episcopal ring, set with large garnet and enamelled etc. 125/ £6 5 0'.

¹⁴ Shirley Bury, 'Jewellery', in Paul Atterbury and Clive Wainwright, *Pugin: A Gothic Passion*, Yale University Press, London, 1994, p. 169.