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Number 81

*Included in this edition:*

- *Pugin's Stained Glass (Part 7)*
- *Pugin's Annunciation Window Conservation*
- *Pugin's Headstones (Part 9)*

Welcome to the eighty-first Friends Newsletter.

With this issue we present the last of our monthly Newsletters. They will be continued as a quarterly publication, a move which has been endorsed by the Pugin Foundation Directors.

Our first Newsletter was published just under seven years ago in July 2006. Since then we have produced around a quarter of a million words of original unpublished material, not to mention countless images, averaging at least twelve per issue. This is a not inconsiderable work load, added to which is the process of printing, collating and mailing out copies to those twenty-seven of our Friends who do not access electronic copies via our website.

The new quarterly Newsletter will be larger than our former monthly one and the first such issue, for Winter 2013, should appear in August 2013. In it we will be featuring the story of Pugin's remarkable 1847 design of a house for Bishop Willson, executed at the same time as his St Mary's Church design for Willson which we treated in Newsletters from October to December 2012.

With kind regards,

**Jude Andrews**  
Administrative Officer

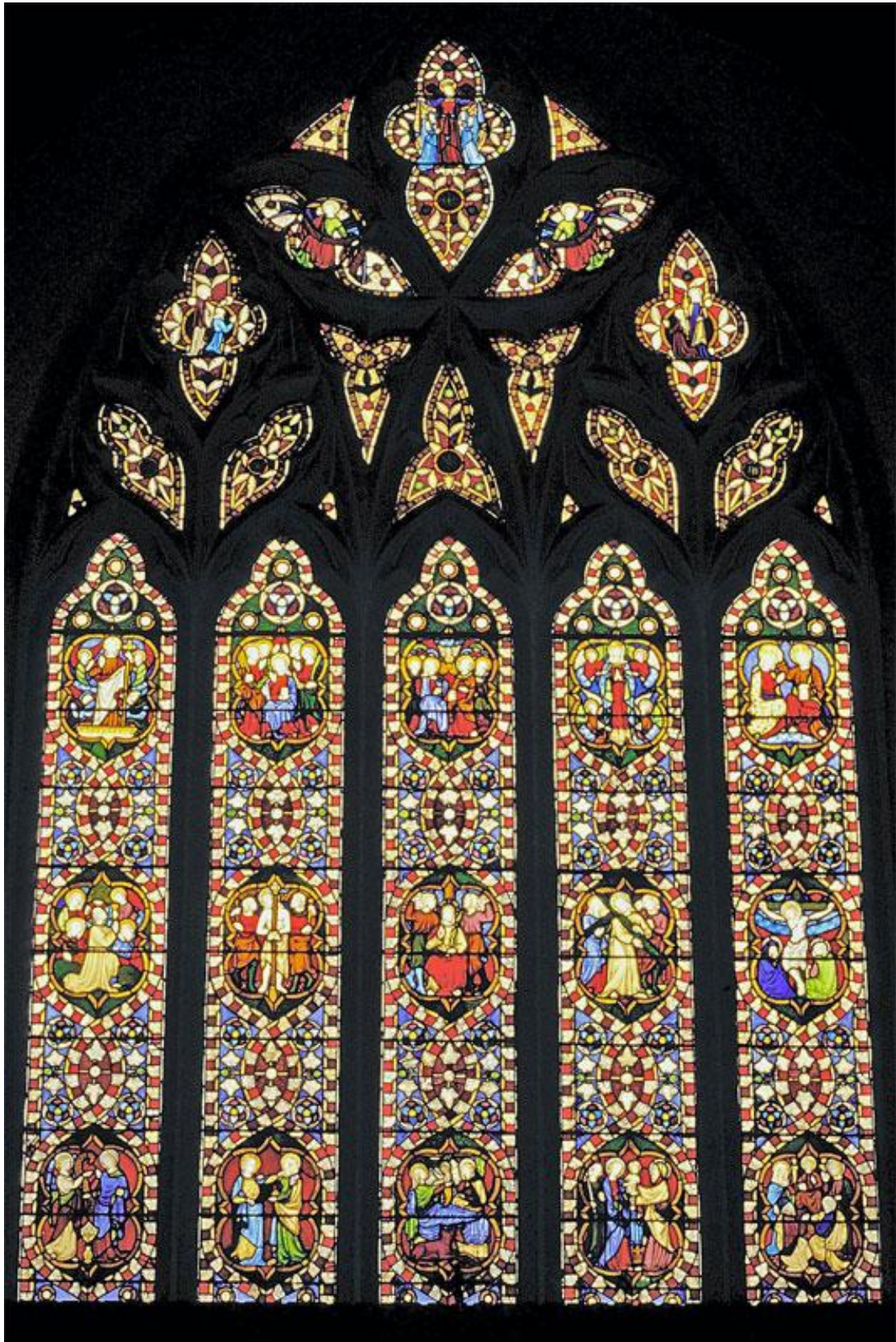


*A Spring portrait of St Thomas of Canterbury's, Fulham, with its adjacent presbytery, all by Pugin (Image: Brian Andrews)*





## *Pugin's Stained Glass (Part 7)*



This is the chapel east window of the former Convent of Mercy, Nottingham. Pugin prepared the drawings for the convent, situated just to the south-west of St Barnabas' Cathedral, in 1845 and

the sisters moved into the partly completed building on 26 October 1846. The convent was not completed until 1850, the window manufactured by Hardmans at a cost of £150 being installed in



1847.<sup>1</sup> Evidently Pugin was under some pressure from the Mother Superior to have the window completed, penning this appeal to John Hardman in December 1846: 'I have recd a desperate Letter from the Rev Mother at Nottingham. there is no mistake about it—she insists on having her window. now I send you the Lights off today—tomorrow night the tracery. the subjects shall go as fast as possible. you must do it. pray write to her & tell her you are at work on it. for heavens sake do. I do my best. you must positively do this window at once or we shall be massacred.'<sup>2</sup>

The subject of the window is the fifteen Mysteries of the Rosary. These are set in complex quatrefoils in the main lights: the Joyful Mysteries across the five lights at the base of the window, above them the Sorrowful Mysteries and at the top of the lights the Glorious Mysteries. In the elongated quatrefoil at the top of the Flowing Decorated tracery lights Pugin placed—appropriately—an image of Our Lady of Mercy, showing the Virgin protecting the Sisters of Mercy under her mantle.



*The top tracery light depicting Our Lady of Mercy (Image: Brian Andrews)*

<sup>1</sup> Stanley A. Shepherd, *The Stained Glass of A.W.N. Pugin*, Spire Books, Reading, 2009, p. 314.

<sup>2</sup> Margaret Belcher, *The Collected Letters of A.W.N. Pugin: Volume 3 1846–1848*, OUP, Oxford, 2009, p. 187.

This image long predates the foundation of the Sisters of Mercy, a nineteenth-century religious congregation, of which Pugin with his encyclopaedic knowledge of ecclesiastical imagery was doubtless aware. In Germany the image is known as the schutzmantelmadonna (protective-mantle Madonna) and late medieval examples are plentiful. The image as one of the 107 'pillar saints' in St Stephen's Cathedral, Vienna, is given below.



*The Schutzmantelmadonna in the Stephansdom, Vienna (Image: Brian Andrews)*

The image is also well-known in France where it has the title of Notre Dame de la Miséricorde (Our Lady of Mercy). Below we present one such image

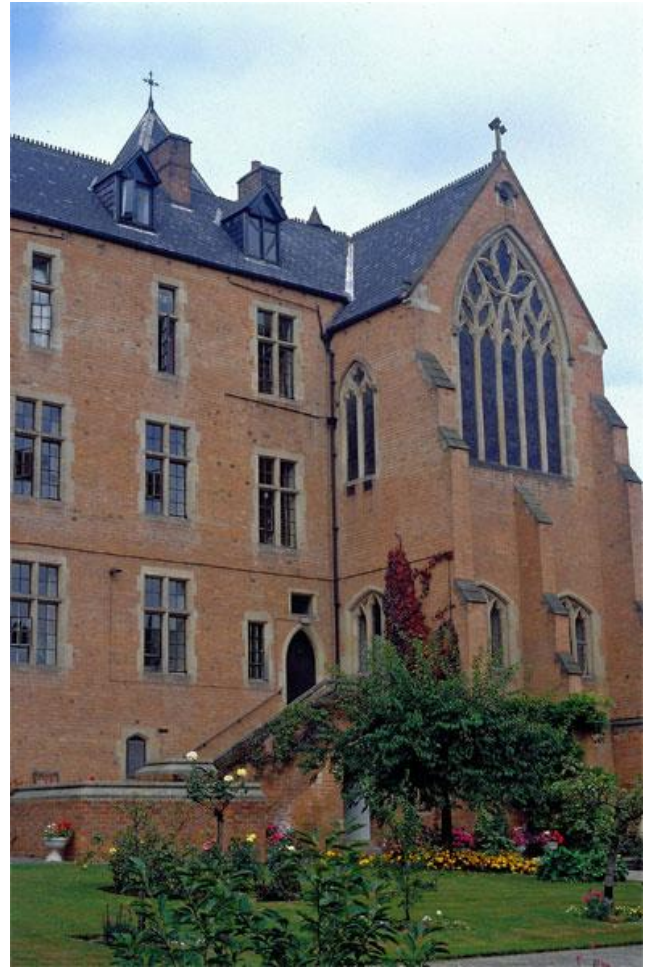


dating from the very end of the twentieth century in the chapel of the Benedictine nuns' Abbaye Notre Dame de la Miséricorde, Rosans, Alpes de Haute-Provence.



*Notre Dame de la Miséricorde, Rosans (Image: Brian Andrews)*

Besides his Nottingham work for the Sisters of Mercy, Pugin designed several other convents for that Congregation, including those at Bermondsey (London), Handsworth (Birmingham) and Liverpool in England, as well as Birr (County Offaly) in Ireland. The Nottingham convent building, of red brick with stone dressings, presents a dramatic elevation toward the east, with his buttressed chapel projecting forwards above an understory and rising the height of the top two floors of the convent. This composition would be adopted by the Pugin follower William Wardell for the chapel of his St John's College, University of Sydney, designed in 1859, illustrated opposite. Note the similar window tracery.



*Above: the Nottingham convent; below: St John's College, University of Sydney, by William Wardell (Images: Brian Andrews)*





# *Pugin's Annunciation Window Conservation*

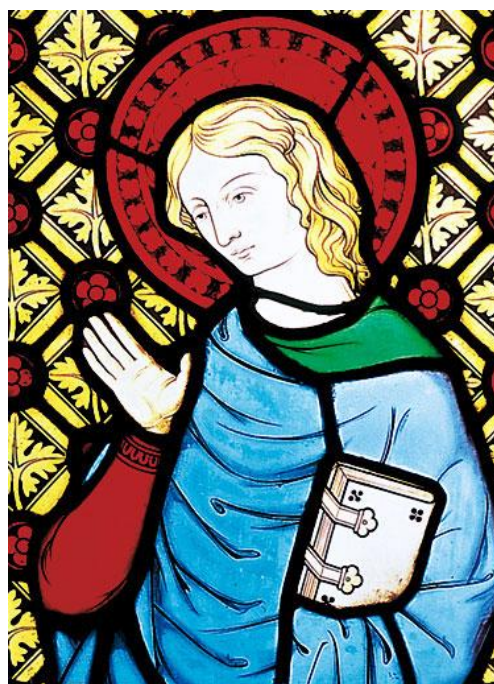
In our Newsletters 72 and 75 of September and December 2012 respectively we made brief mention of the conservation work being undertaken by eminent Tasmanian stained glass conservator and valued Friend of Pugin Gavin Merrington on the Pugin Annunciation window in St Joseph's, Hobart. The work is nearing completion so we thought you might like to see a few of the remarkable results achieved by Gavin in the form of before and after images.



Notice in this 'before' image of Gabriel the unsightly lead repairs to cracked glass beneath his right arm and across his index finger.



In the above 'after' image by Gavin the lead repairs have been eliminated and the glass joined by edge gluing.

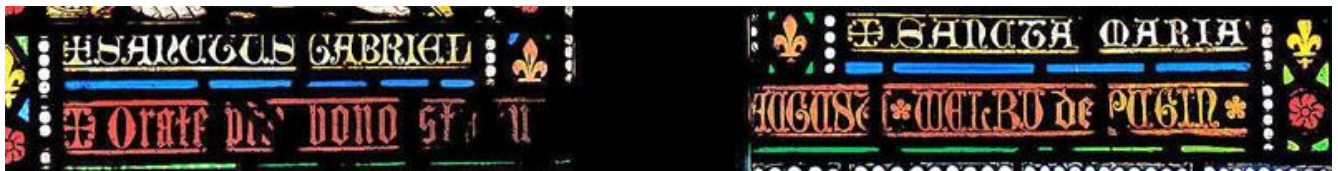




In the 'before' image of the Virgin Mary on the previous page note the particularly ugly lead repair across the throat. This has again been eliminated by edge gluing, as shown at right in the 'after' image. This image also highlights the sparing yet exquisite glass painting of the Virgin's face and hair by Hardman's workers.

Perhaps the most exciting aspect of the work has been the complete recovery of the integrity of the unique text across the base of the window which reads: '+ Orate pro bono statu AUGUSTI WELBY de PUGIN' (Pray for the good estate of Augustus Welby de Pugin). As we show below, the inscription was so badly damaged through cracking and subsequent lead repairs as to be almost unreadable in places. Again, Gavin has done a stunning work of conservation as can be seen in the 'before' and 'after' images below.

We will be re-visiting this window and learning of Pugin's intentions for it in our next Newsletter which will give an account of his design of a house for Bishop Willson.





# *Pugin's Headstones*

## *(Part 9)*

We forgot to point out in our last issue how appropriate was the simple and smallish headstone in St Patrick's, Colebrook, cemetery. It was for the infant James Dolan who died on 11 August 1858 aged just one week.

In this, the last of our series on Pugin's headstones we present another simple design of which there are nine examples in Tasmania, the earliest being inscribed for a death in 1849. It is pictured below in Richmond Catholic cemetery



*The Richmond headstone (Images: Brian Andrews)*

It has the usual pyramidal stop to the edge chamfer common to almost all of his headstone designs for Bishop Willson. The cross bears a floriated wreath on its face. All but one of the nine examples have reasonably rendered wreaths, but the ninth appears to have been beyond the capabilities of the clearly amateur stone carver and is shown below.

**Concluded.**



*Headstone detail, Triabunna Catholic cemetery (Image: Brian Andrews)*

## *New Friends of Pugin*

We welcome:

Hon. Christophe Illien *Richmond, Tasmania*