

M064 Skelmorlie Parish Church

Introduction

This Gothic Revival church replaced an earlier chapel on the same site, part of which survives as the church hall. It was built to serve the affluent resort village of Skelmorlie, and its rich furnishings reflect the prosperity of its Victorian congregation.

Authorship: John Honeyman was responsible for the design of the church: he made site visits at the planning stage, and he is named as architect in a contemporary account written by the minister. However, the distinctive style of some of the furnishings and fittings suggests Mackintosh's involvement. In particular, the unusual wrought-iron lamp standard outside the main entrance is very similar to the one shown in Mackintosh's 1896 perspective drawing of Martyrs Public School, and it was probably designed by him.

Alternative names: Skelmorlie and Wemyss Bay Parish Church.

Cost from job book: Phase 1 (church): £4987 10s 11d; Phase 2 (painting): no payments recorded in job book; Phase 3 (pulpit): £85 3s 0d

Status: Standing building

Current use: Church (2014)

Listing category: B

Historic Scotland/HB Number: 7269

RCAHMS Site Number: NS16NE 10

Grid reference: NS 19282 68111

Chronology

1856

Opening of Chapel of Ease, forerunner of Skelmorlie Parish Church. ¹

1858

Addition of transepts to S. end of chapel. ²

1892

5 January: Trustees and congregation decide to ask John Honeyman to provide ideas for extending or replacing the original building. ³

21 January: Note in John Honeyman & Keppie's office records: 'Gave Mr Rankin plan & elevation of proposed extension of [Skelmorlie Parish] Church, also perspective view of former sketch, & plan.' ⁴

22 March: John Honeyman spends whole day on site visit. ⁵

10 May: John Honeyman spends half day on site visit. ⁶

1893

25 February: Note in John Honeyman & Keppie's office records: 'Met Rev Lamont, Messrs Rankin, Scott & MacDonald at Skelmorlie [and] received instructions to have Church measured & obtain tenders.' ⁷

April: This date is written at top of job-book entry, but work does not appear to have proceeded until following year. ⁸

1894

20 February: Tenders accepted from major contractors ⁹

August: Masonry of S. end expected to be finished in September, after which old transepts will be taken down so that tower and N. end can be completed. Three of the aisle columns are in place. ¹⁰

1895

13 October: Church to be formally opened. ¹¹

1896

27 March: Final payment to builder. ¹²

November: Payment to Hutcheson & Grant for 'benches & screenwork', and 'figures'. ¹³

1897

20 April: Payment to John Crawford for carving. ¹⁴

1899

28 September: Payments for pulpit. ¹⁵

Description

A chapel of ease for residents in the coastal resort village of Skelmorlie opened in 1856. ¹ It subsequently became the parish church. Following the induction of the Rev. John Lamond as minister on 18 May 1891, plans for an ambitious rebuilding were set in train, and on 5 January 1892 a meeting of the Trustees and congregation decided to ask John Honeyman to provide ideas for extending the old church or building a new one. ² John Honeyman & Keppie made a plan and elevation of a proposed extension, as well as a perspective drawing based on a 'former sketch', and these were given to a 'Mr Rankin' (probably Andrew A. Ranken, a trustee and treasurer of the church) ³ later that month. John Honeyman made site visits in March and May, but it was not until February the following year that instructions were received from the Rev. Lamond, 'Rankin' and others 'to have the church measured and obtain tenders'. ⁴ This no doubt refers to having the architects' design examined by a measurer, or quantity surveyor, prior to the tendering process. Even so, a scheme was not finally decided on until 13 February 1894, after which tenders were accepted on 20 February. ⁵ When the church opened in October 1895, it was said to have been 'in process of erection during the last two years'. ⁶

The N. part of the old church survives as a hall. The new church replaces the demolished S. part, and is linked to the hall by an entrance tower containing stairs to the session house. The church is built of pinkish local stone in 13th-century Gothic style, with a mix of lancets and simple geometric tracery. The chancel is expressed externally by its slightly lower roof, and there is an aisle on the E. side only. Inside, nave and aisle are separated by quatrefoil columns. The ambitious architecture reflects the affluence of the parish, as do the rich furnishings. These include an elaborate reredos with carving by John Crawford, and a communion table.



There is good evidence that Honeyman was personally responsible for the design of the church. As well as undertaking site visits at the planning stage, he is named as architect in a contemporary account written by Lamond. ⁷ He had strong personal links with Skelmorlie, having lived there between 1868 and 1881, and he designed a number of houses in the village, including the manse (1874). ⁸ He was also the donor of the stained glass in the three small lancets on the W. side of the chancel. ⁹ There are nevertheless certain features about the building that seem far from Honeyman's relatively orthodox medievalism. One of these is the wrought-iron lamp standard on the steps outside the main entrance. This was possibly included in the payment of £70 12s 10d made to George Adam & Son on 11 January 1896 for 'Wrot iron rails gateways & lamps'. ¹⁰ It is so similar to the highly unusual wrought-iron lamp in Mackintosh's perspective drawing of Martyrs Public School, made in the same year, that it seems very likely Mackintosh designed the Skelmorlie lamp too. ¹¹



Other features which may show Mackintosh's hand are the balustrade of the staircase leading to the session house, which has radically simplified Gothic tracery, and the balustrade of the 1899 pulpit steps, which, while unexceptional at first sight, includes Glasgow Style detailing on the newel posts and in the spandrels of the arches.



People

Clients:

- Trustees of Skelmorlie Parish Church

Contractors:

- George Adam
- John Barr
- Bennet Furnishing Company
- Brown & Young
- William Bryden & Sons
- D. Campbell
- James Combe & Son
- John Crawford
- John Forbes
- Galbraith & Winton
- Hutcheson & Grant
- McCulloch & Co.
- William McGeoch, Kemp & Co.
- The Metallic Art Co.
- William Oswald
- John Ramsey
- A. & J. Scott
- S. Stewart & Son
- James Stott & Co.
- James Young

Job Book

The job books of Honeyman & Keppie (later Honeyman, Keppie & Mackintosh) are now held by The Hunterian, University of Glasgow and include four volumes related to the Mackintosh period. The books were used by the firm to keep a project-by-project, day-by-day record of contractors, suppliers and expenditure. The name of a project and/or client is usually at the top of the left-hand page, followed by information about tradesmen who tendered. The name of the measurer (quantity surveyor) is usually at the top of the right-hand page, followed by information about payments to contractors and suppliers. All of the data for M064 is entered in the tables below.

Page numbering is not consistent in the job books. Sometimes a single number refers to a double-page spread and sometimes each page is individually numbered. Here, each image of a double-page spread is identified by the number given at the top of the left-hand page. (Images of all of the pages from the four job books can be found at [Browse Job Books](#), [Visit Book and Cash Book](#).)

The following information about M064 has been extracted from the job books:



Job book: 53059
Page: 214



Job book: 53059
Page: 216

Client: no data in job book

Measurer: John Ramsey

Tenders:

Contractor	Type	Address	Date	Value	Accepted
William Oswald	builder	Skelmorlie	1894	£2711 0s 0d	yes (20 February 1894)
Arthur	builder	Skelmorlie	1894	no data in job book	no
P. & W. Anderson	builder	Bothwell Street, Glasgow	1894	no data in job book	no
Alex Muir & Son	builder	Eginton Street	1894	£3241 18s 0d	no
E. C. Morgan & Sons	builder	Elderslie Street	1894	£2993 19s 1d	no

Guthrie & Co.	builder	Kelvin Street	1894	£3134 2s 6d	no
Alex Eadie & Sons	builder	no data in job book	1894	£2955 8s 7d	no
Hunter	wright	Skelmorlie	1894	£1100 0s 0d	no
Grey	wright	Skelmorlie	1894	no data in job book	no
Thomas Brown	wright	Rottenrow, Glasgow	1894	£911 0s 0d	no
Hutcheson & Grant	wright	Gardner Street	1894	£907 2s 10d	yes (20 February 1894)
Morgan & Sons	wright	no data in job book	1894	£1010 4s 11d	no
Boyd & Sons	wright	Paisley	1894	no data in job book	no
Guthrie & Co.	wright	no data in job book	1894	£928 0s 0d	no
Alex Eadie & Sons	wright	no data in job book	1894	£974 7s 6d	no
James Agnew	wright	32 Crawford Street, Greenock	1894	£1046 11s 0d	no
Williamson & Grey	wright	Greenock	1894	£1109 3s 0d	no
McLuckie & Mitchell	wright	Skelmorlie	1894	£998 5s 0d	no
A. & D. Mackay	slater	no data in job book	1894	£221 0s 0d	no
Thomas Black	slater	Partick	1894	£234 15s 6d	no
J. McOwat & Sons	slater	no data in job book	1894	£207 9s 0d	no
John Anderson	slater	no data in job book	1894	no data in job book	no
S. Stewart & Son	slater	Largs	1894	£206 1s 2d	yes (20 February 1894)
Hugh Stewart	slater	Skelmorlie	1894	£228 11s 8d	no
James Connell	slater	no data in job book	1894	no data in job book	no
Brown & Young	plumber	Bath Street	1894	£238 7s 6½d	yes (20 February 1894)
Fyfe & Allan	plumber	no data in job book	1894	£236 19s 2d	no
James Ingleton & Sons	plumber	no data in job book	1894	£237 0s 0d	no
James Johnstone & Sons	plumber	no data in job book	1894	£240 0s 0d	no
William Anderson	plumber	no data in job book	1894	£250 0s 0d	no
McKindy	plumber	Largs	1894	no data in job book	no
George Rome & Co.	plaster	no data in job book	1894	no data in job book	no
R. A. MacGillvray	plaster	no data in job book	1894	£63 4s 0d	no
John Forbes	plaster	Bath Street, Glasgow	1894	£60 0s 0d	yes (20 February 1894)
McCulloch & Co.	glazier	no data in job book	no data in job book	£57 1s 6d	yes
J. & W. Guthrie	glazier	no data in job book	no data in job book	£61 1s 11d	no
C. & J. Malloch	glazier	no data in job book	no data in job book	£70 1s 8d	no
Bowie Fisher & Co.	painter	no data in job book	no data in job book	no data in job book	no
A. & J. Scott	painter	no data in job book	no data in job book	no data in job book	yes

J. & W. Guthrie	painter	no data in job book	no data in job book	no data in job book	no
John Orr & Co.	painter	no data in job book	no data in job book	no data in job book	no
E. W. Sellars	painter	no data in job book	no data in job book	no data in job book	no
James Walker & Sons	painter	Largs	no data in job book	no data in job book	no
George Brown	painter	Greenock	no data in job book	no data in job book	no
McCulloch & Co.	painter	no data in job book	no data in job book	no data in job book	no
Galbraith & Winton	tile	no data in job book	no data in job book	£35 0s 0d	yes

Payments (trades):

Name	Type	Payment out sum
William Oswald	builder	Payment date: 27 March 1896 £2975 1s 8½d ¹
Hutcheson & Grant	wright	Payment date: 6 March 1896 £872 3s 4d
Hutcheson & Grant	wright	Payment date: 20 November 1896 £256 15s 0d ²
Hutcheson & Grant	wright	Payment date: 30 November 1896 £42 0s 0d ³
S. Stewart & Son	slater	Payment date: 13 February 1896 £169 5s 10d
Brown & Young	plumber	Payment date: 26 February 1896 £153 18s 9d
John Forbes	plaster	Payment date: 25 February 1896 £52 7s 6d
McCulloch & Co.	glazier	Payment date: 11 March 1896 £41 17s 3½d
A. & J. Scott	painter	Payment date: 27 March 1896 £72 18s 11d
Galbraith & Winton	tile	Payment date: 11 January 1896 £57 14s 10d ⁴
Hutcheson & Grant	wright	Payment date: 4 May 1896 £7 4s 0d ⁵

Payments (suppliers):

Name	Service	Payment date	Payment sum
John Crawford	Carving	20 April 1897	£48 0s 0d
D. Campbell	Carving	20 April 1897	£1 10s 0d
James Combe & Son	no data in job book	17 April 1896	£65 10s 0d
James Stott & Co.	Lamps	11 October 1895	£17 16s 0d
William Bryden & Sons	'Lightning conductor & finial.'	11 October 1895	£27 10s 0d
Bennet Furnishing Company	no data in job book	11 March 1896	£1 10s 0d
James Young	no data in job book	29 November 1895	£33 6s 5d
John Barr	'Engine'	8 November 1895	£6 7s 6d
The Metallic Art Co.	'Plates for seats.'	25 December 1895	£3 2s 0d
George Adam	'Wrot iron rails gateways & lamps.'	11 January 1896	£70 12s 10d
William McGeoch, Kemp & Co.	'Grates & Gasoliers'	18 February 1896	£10 19s 0d

Phase 2: Painting, 1898



Job book: 53061
Page: 161

Client: no data in job book

Measurer: John Ramsey

Tenders:

Contractor	Type	Date	Value	Accepted
William Douglas	painter	July 1898	£46 8s 0d	no data in job book
A. & J. Scott	painter	July 1898	£31 11s 9d	no data in job book
H. L. Anderson & Co.	painter	July 1898	£33 1s 10d	no data in job book
Bowie Fisher & Co.	painter	July 1898	£33 9s 2d	no data in job book
John Orr & Son	painter	July 1898	£46 2s 6d	no data in job book

Phase 3: Pulpit, 1899



Job book: 53061
Page: 161

Client: Mrs Richardson

Measurer: John Ramsey

Tenders:

Contractor	Type	Date	Value	Accepted
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Payments (suppliers):

Name	Service	Payment date	Payment sum
Hutcheson & Grant	Pulpit	28 September 1899	£83 0s 0d
Hutcheson & Grant	Upholstery	28 September 1899	£2 3s 0d

Documents

Images



View from W., showing church of 1855-6, left of tower



View from S.W.



Wrought-iron lamp from S.W.



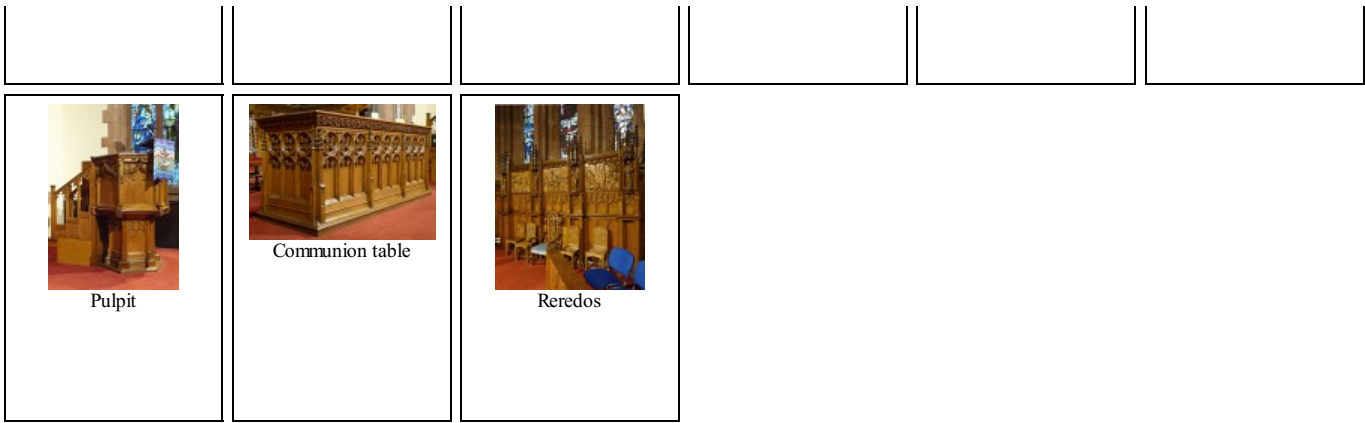
Wrought-iron lamp from N.W.



Detail of Session house stair



Newel post of Session house stair



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- John Lamond, *The Book of the Parish Church of Skelmorlie*, Glasgow: James MacLehose & Sons, 1895
- Aonghus MacKechnie, 'C.R.M. on Clydeside?', *Charles Rennie Mackintosh Society Newsletter*, 33, Autumn 1982

Notes:

- 1: John Lamond, *The Book of the Parish Church of Skelmorlie*, Glasgow: James MacLehose & Sons, 1895, p. 16.
- 2: John Lamond, *The Book of the Parish Church of Skelmorlie*, Glasgow: James MacLehose & Sons, 1895, p. 17.
- 3: Edinburgh, National Archives of Scotland: CH2/328/1, cited in Aonghus MacKechnie, 'C. R. M. on Clydeside?', *Charles Rennie Mackintosh Society Newsletter*, 33, Autumn 1982.
- 4: The Hunterian, University of Glasgow: John Honeyman & Keppie visit book, GLAHA 53060, p. 21.
- 5: The Hunterian, University of Glasgow: John Honeyman & Keppie visit book, GLAHA 53060, p. 21.
- 6: The Hunterian, University of Glasgow: John Honeyman & Keppie visit book, GLAHA 53060, p. 21.
- 7: The Hunterian, University of Glasgow: John Honeyman & Keppie visit book, GLAHA 53060, p. 32.
- 8: The Hunterian, University of Glasgow: John Honeyman & Keppie job book, GLAHA 53059, p. 214.
- 9: The Hunterian, University of Glasgow: John Honeyman & Keppie job book, GLAHA 53059, pp. 214, 216.
- 10: *Glasgow Herald*, 9 August 1894, p. 9.
- 11: *Glasgow Herald*, 11 October 1895, p. 10.
- 12: The Hunterian, University of Glasgow: John Honeyman & Keppie job book, GLAHA 53059, p. 215.
- 13: The Hunterian, University of Glasgow: John Honeyman & Keppie job book, GLAHA 53059, p. 215.
- 14: The Hunterian, University of Glasgow: John Honeyman & Keppie job book, GLAHA 53059, p. 217.
- 15: The Hunterian, University of Glasgow: John Honeyman & Keppie / Honeyman, Keppie & Mackintosh job book, GLAHA 53061, p. 162.
- 16: John Lamond, *The Book of the Parish Church of Skelmorlie*, Glasgow: James MacLehose & Sons, 1895, p. 16.
- 17: Edinburgh, National Archives of Scotland: CH2/328/1, cited in Aonghus MacKechnie, 'C.R.M. on Clydeside?', *Charles Rennie Mackintosh Society Newsletter*, 33, Autumn 1982.
- 18: *Glasgow Herald*, 16 August 1894, p. 6.
- 19: The Hunterian, University of Glasgow: John Honeyman & Keppie visit book, GLAHA 53060, p. 32.
- 20: Aonghus MacKechnie, 'C. R. M. on Clydeside?', *Charles Rennie Mackintosh Society Newsletter*, 33, Autumn 1982; The Hunterian, University of Glasgow: John Honeyman & Keppie job book, GLAHA 53059, p. 214; p. 216.

21: *Glasgow Herald*, 11 October 1895, p. 10.

22: John Lamond, *The Book of the Parish Church of Skelmorlie*, Glasgow: James MacLehose & Sons, 1895, p. 28.

23: Rob Close and Anne Riches, *Buildings of Scotland: Ayrshire and Arran*, New Haven, CT, and London: Yale University Press, 2012, p. 613.

24: John Lamond, *The Book of the Parish Church of Skelmorlie*, Glasgow: James MacLehose & Sons, 1895, p. 28.

25: The Hunterian, University of Glasgow: John Honeyman & Keppie job book, GLAHA 53059, p. 217.

26: The Hunterian, University of Glasgow: GLAHA 52585 (M105-014).

27: 'Includes Boundary walls £379.13.0'.

28: Comprises £7 4s 0d for 'altering gratings in passage', and £249 11s 0d for 'Benches & screenwork exclusive of figures.'

29: For 'Figures'.

30: For 'tiles in floor of Chancel & at porch.'

31: For 'heating pipes [illegible] per est.'

Mackintosh Architecture: Context, Making and Meaning

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