

M053 Canal Boatmen's Institute

Introduction

John Honeyman & Keppie designed a two-storey red sandstone mission building with a prominent corner tower in 17th-century Scottish style for the Institute, which provided community, welfare and educational services.

Authorship: An unexecuted design for the tower clockface published in the *British Architect* in 1895 is generally accepted as by Mackintosh. The reclining figure is closely related to that in his watercolour *Harvest Moon*, of 1892. ¹ Corroboratory evidence is provided by Ronald Harrison, an early student of Mackintosh's architecture in the 1930s, who had access to the office records. He included the roof and tower on lists he compiled of work he believed to be by Mackintosh and of a selection of drawings produced in the office during Mackintosh's time.

Alternative names: Bargemen's Institute ².

Alternative addresses: Dobbie's Loan Water Street

Cost from job book: Phase 1: £3941 4s 7d; Phase 2: £53 1s 9d

Cost from other sources: £5900 for ground, building and furnishing ³

Status: Demolished

RCAHMS Site Number: NS56NE 1140

Grid reference: NS 5950 6605

Chronology

1891

7 September: 'Received letter from Mr King accepting our offer to do work at 5% not charging for preliminary sketches etc.' ¹

20 October: 'At Committee meeting held in Major Allans office today present Major Allan Messrs Miller King Stout & Gilbert received instructions to accept the following offers at annexed rates.' W. & A. Taylor '£20 less if Locharbriggs is used' £1941 7s 6d; Thomas Brown £1014 11s 0d; D. & R. Fulton £238 0s 0d; R. A. McGilvray & Ferris 'Plaster' £168 19s 10d; A. & D. MacKay £78 19s 10d; Galbraith & Winton £84 14s 3d; James Cormack & Sons Ltd £88 10s 3d; R. A. McGilvray & Ferris 'Carving' £22 17s 6d. ²

12 November: Drawings are approved by the Glasgow Dean of Guild Court. ³

2 December: Work begins on site. ⁴

1892

11 October: Laying of memorial stone. ⁵

1893

20 June: Formal opening. ⁶

26 October: Work signed off by the Dean of Guild Court. ⁷

30 November: Canal Boatmen's Institute fully operational. ⁸

1896

October: Clock inserted in tower. ⁹

1899

Internal alterations. ¹⁰

1929

31 May: Glasgow Dean of Guild Court approval granted for extension of hall by Keppie & Henderson. Work completed by 1931. ¹¹

1965

Institute building subject to Cowcaddens Compulsory Purchase Order No. 4. ¹²

1967

Demolition. ¹³

Description

Origins

Port Dundas was an industrial district north of Glasgow city centre at the terminus of a branch of the Forth and Clyde canal. A Canal Boatmen's Mission had existed there for over 20 years when, at the beginning of the 1890s, the Canal Boatmen's Friend Society recognised the need for larger premises. The aim of the new Institute was to provide 'other attractions necessary to neutralise the influences of the many public houses in the district', through a coffee room, library, committee room, classroom and large assembly and recreation halls. These would accommodate church services, children's religious education and a large number of organised group activities. ¹

The cost of the building was raised by subscription from members of the Society committee and the local community, and boosted by a donation of £500 from the Bellahouston Bequest Fund. The Society's president was keen for the new building to open free of debt, and by January 1894, £5044 of the anticipated £5900 cost of land, construction and furnishing had been raised. ² The formal opening took place on 20 June 1893, although the Institute was not fully operational until late November 1893. ³ A silver trowel with Celtic motifs was designed by John Keppie and made by silversmiths R. & W. Sorley to mark the laying of the foundation stone in October 1892, and was presented to the Lord Provost, Sir John Muir, who performed the ceremony. ⁴

Growing demand for the services provided by the Institute necessitated the expansion of the building. In 1929–31, Keppie & Henderson considerably extended the assembly and recreation halls, reorientating the roof and removing the half-timbering from the exterior.

Exterior

The three-storey building with its prominent clock tower and timber spire in late-17th-century Scottish style would have been a striking addition to the Port Dundas landscape of industrial and canal buildings and impoverished tenements. Contemporary critics remarked on the form of the tower and spire and its similarity to the town houses at Dumfries and Stirling, and Glasgow's Old College, the original home of the University of Glasgow. ⁵ The clock, which was lit up at night, was added to the tower in October 1896: 'Owing to no public or other clock being near, it is a great boon to the locality.' ⁶



The Institute was built of snecked Locharbriags sandstone rubble, stugged, with smooth dressings. ⁷ There were two entrances: the main door up a flight of stairs at the centre of the W. elevation, over which a canopy was later added, and the separate coffee-room door at the N.W. corner, where patrons could enter directly from the street. The mullioned-and-transomed windows were mostly fitted with sashes, with fixed, leaded lights used for the basement and assembly hall. Renaissance-style decoration on the W. elevation included carved shields on the ground floor of the tower and mullions on the first floor in the form of Roman Doric columns. By contrast, the N. and S. gable walls of the assembly hall had Arts and Crafts half-timbering under projecting eaves. The apex of the W. gable carried a sculpture of a seated lion, similar to that on the Lion and Unicorn stair of Glasgow Old College.

Interior

The activities of the Institute, run by volunteers under the Superintendent, were accommodated over three floors. The main entrance led into a wide hallway with principal spaces opening from it: to the left, with canted bay, the large coffee room with its own separate entrance at the N.W. corner, offering an alternative to the public house; to the right, a reading room with library store in the tower, and behind it a committee room. By the 1940s, these rooms were used as an office and bank. The hallway led to the assembly hall at the rear, with seating for over 240 and a platform at the N. end. ⁸ The broad dog-leg stair was tucked in between the coffee room and assembly hall and had a large mullioned-and-transomed stained-glass window on the half-landing. In the basement there was a spacious recreation hall for over 270 standing persons. ⁹ The basement also contained a drying room (important for men working on the canal), a smoking room and services including kitchen, scullery and baths. ¹⁰ On the first floor, a large classroom was situated above the coffee room, while the remainder of the floor contained the missionary's room and a self-contained superintendent's flat, with kitchen, sitting room and two bedrooms. A hatch in the tower bedroom gave access to the tower and clock, allowing the clock to be wound weekly.

The lack of sectional drawings or photographs makes it difficult to assess the appearance of the interior. Photographs taken during demolition show the roof trusses and decorative stained glass in the assembly hall, which were installed during the extension work of 1929–31, but it is not clear whether these later additions replicated the design of the original assembly hall.

Other

Two drawings for the Institute were published in the *British Architect* on 5 July 1895: a perspective from the S.W. and a detail of the clockface. The

perspective is signed by the editor, Thomas Raffles Davison, who drew many illustrations for the journal. ¹¹ Both drawings show the clockface framed by four naked female figures, provocatively moving through a watery scene surrounded by sinuous Art Nouveau foliage. The design has been attributed to Mackintosh, and is similar to a cast bronze clockface in one of the contemporary chimneypieces at the Glasgow Art Club with which he may also have been involved. Given the religious and moral principles underpinning the Canal Boatmen's Institute, however, it seems extremely unlikely that such a design would ever have been seriously considered. ¹² A photograph of the Institute, exhibited at the Glasgow Institute of the Fine Arts in 1894, appears to show a clockface of different design, and by the 1960s a clock with a wider dial had been installed. ¹³

By the mid-1960s, construction of the north section of the M8 motorway had begun in Port Dundas and the area was in severe decline. Nevertheless, church services, the penny bank, weekly children's religious instruction (the 'Band of Hope') and the 'Pleasant Sunday Afternoon' meetings, which had all existed from the beginning of the Institute continued until the last. The building was subject to a compulsory purchase order in 1965 and was demolished during 1967. The Institute committee was dissolved on 19 December 1967 and its assets distributed to other charitable institutions in Scotland. ¹⁴



People

Clients:

- Canal Boatmen's Society of Scotland

Contractors:

- Thomas Brown
- John Bryden & Sons
- Buchans & MacIntyre
- James Cormack & Sons Ltd
- Alexander Cousland & Son
- D. & R. Fulton
- Galbraith & Winton
- R. Laidlaw & Son
- A. & D. MacKay
- McCulloch & Co.
- R. A. McGilvray & Ferris
- James Reid
- George. W. Sellars & Sons
- R. & W. Sorley
- W. & A. Taylor

Other:

- Leonard Gow

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 M053 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 M053 has been extracted from the job books:



Job book: 53059
Page: 152



Job book: 53059
Page: 154

Client: Canal Boatmen's Society of Scotland

Measurer: Douglas, Hunter & Whitson

Tenders:

Contractor	Type	Address	Date	Value	Accepted
John Smilie junior	mason	Balshagray Avenue, Partick	no data in job book	£2290 0s 0d	no
W. & A. Taylor	mason	Possilpark	no data in job book	£1971 12s 6d	yes (no data in job book)
Messrs Kemp	mason	Bishopbriggs	no data in job book	no data in job book ¹	no
Morrison & Muir	mason	28 Calder Street	no data in job book	£1993 10s 9d	no
E. C. Morgan & Sons	mason	37 Elderslie Street	no data in job book	£2491 0s 0d	no
George Barlas	mason	Ruthven Street, Hillhead	no data in job book	no data in job book	no
Alexander Muir & Sons	mason	Eglinton Street	no data in job book	£2067 13s 4d	no
P. & W. Anderson	mason	Bothwell Street	no data in job book	£2257 12s 10½d	no
Peter McKessack & Sons	mason	Minerva Street	no data in job book	£2695 0s 0d	no
Alexander Eadie & Sons	mason	280 Cathcart Road	no data in job book	£2395 0s 0d	no
Robert Murdoch	mason	Commerical Street	no data in job book	£2080 0s 0d	no
Daniel McCallum	mason	Bothwell Street	no data in job book	£2410 0s 0d	no
Moses Barlas & Co.	mason	352 North Woodside Road	no data in job book	£2132 18s 10d	no
Alexander Eadie & Son	wrights & joiners	no data in job book	no data in job book	£1098 0s 0d	no
James Maben & Son	wrights & joiners	65 Eglinton Street	no data in job book	£1050 0s 0d	no
William Cowan & Son	wrights & joiners	Bishop Street, Port Dundas	no data in job book	£1039 15s 0d	no
M. Henderson	wrights & joiners	4 Grant Street	no data in job book	£1135 11s 0d	no
James Herbertson & Son	wrights & joiners	85 Bedford Street	no data in job book	£1130 18s 10d	no
George Laird & Son	wrights & joiners	10 Ann Street, Bridgeton	no data in job book	no data in job book ²	no
E. C. Morgan & Sons	wrights & joiners	no data in job book	no data in job book	£1163 0s 0d	no
Hutcheson & Grant	wrights & joiners	Gardner Street	no data in job book	£1115 0s 0d	no
John Smilie junior	wrights & joiners	Balshagray Avenue, Partick	no data in job book	£1059 0s 0d	no
Thomas Brown	wrights & joiners	Rottenrow	no data in job book	£1014 11s 0d	yes ()
William Allan & Cowan	wrights & joiners	27 Seamour Street	no data in job book	£1053 0s 0d	no

J. & G. Findlay	wrights & joiners	24 Grant Street	no data in job book	£1014 11s 7d	no
John Forbes	plasterer	158 West Regent Street	no data in job book	£177 17s 4½d	no
R. A. McGilvray & Ferris	plasterer	199 West Regent Street	no data in job book	£168 19s 10d	yes (no data in job book)
D. & J. MacKenzie	plasterer	191 St Vincent Street	no data in job book	£179 6s 11d	no
George Rome & Co.	plasterer	136 Waterloo Street	no data in job book	£170 0s 0d	no
George Nicol	plasterer	727 Govan Road	no data in job book	£224 7s 8d	no
William Sheriffs	plasterer	261 West George Street	no data in job book	£169 7s 10½d	no
Galbraith & Winton	tiler	St Vincent Street	no data in job book	£84 14s 3d	yes (no data in job book)
J. Mackie Winton	tiler	West Regent Street	no data in job book	£86 9s 7d	no
Kean & Wardrope	tiler	Sauchiehall Street	no data in job book	£88 5s 0d	no
Renfrew Brothers	plumber	140 North Street	no data in job book	£238 0s 0d	no
James Johnstone & Sons	plumber	130 Renfield Street	no data in job book	£244 19s 10½d	no
James Ingleton & Co.	plumber	168 George Street	no data in job book	£257 0s 0d	no
Moses Speirs & Sons	plumber	Bothwell Street	no data in job book	£247 0s 0d	no
Cairns & Laing	plumber	5 Carlton Place	no data in job book	£260 0s 0d	no
Brown & Young	plumber	7 Bath Street	no data in job book	£275 0s 0d	no
D. & R. Fulton	plumber	104 Woodlands Road	no data in job book	£238 0s 0d	yes ()
Maurs, Thompson & Co.	plumber	no data in job book	no data in job book	£286 13s 7d	no
A. & D. MacKay	slater	35 Oswald Street	no data in job book	£78 0s 0d	yes (no data in job book)
A. M. Ross & Son	slater	10 & 12 Ann Street	no data in job book	£93 0s 0d	no
Thomas Black	slater	11 Peel Street, Partick	no data in job book	£7 0s 0d	no
John Morrison & Son	slater	43 Queen Street	no data in job book	£90 8s 7d	no
D. & R. Fulton	gasfitter	104 Woodlands Road	no data in job book	no data in job book	no
Buchans & MacIntyre	gasfitter	Union Street	no data in job book	no data in job book	no
Stott & Co.	gasfitter	St Vincent Street	no data in job book	no data in job book	no
Andrew Mellis	painter	342 Sauchieshall Street Street	no data in job book	£59 15s 4d	no
Stott & Co.	painter	St Vincent Street	no data in job book	no data in job book	no

A & J. Scott	painter	245 Sauchiehall Street	no data in job book	£77 10s 0d	no
John Orr & Co.	painter	101 Wellington Street	no data in job book	£70 0s 0d	no
J. & W. Guthrie	painter	West George Street	no data in job book	£90 0s 7d	no
George. W. Sellars & Sons	painter	West George Street	no data in job book	£64 13s 0d	yes (3 December)
McCulloch & Son	painter	West Regent Street	no data in job book	£69 18 9 ³ / ₄ d	no

Payments (trades):

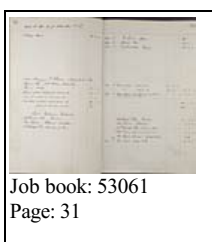
Name	Type	Payment out sum
W. & A. Taylor	mason	Payment date: 18 January 1893 £2081 10s 13d ³
Thomas Brown	joiner	Payment date: 18 January 1894 £1136 12s 8d
R. A. McGilvray & Ferris	plasterer	Payment date: 20 December £213 12s 8d ⁴
Galbraith & Winton	tiler	Payment date: 20 December £9 3s 9d
R. Laidlaw & Son	gasfitter	Payment date: no data in job book £61 1s 5d
D. & R. Fulton	plumber	Payment date: no data in job book £212 2s 0d
A. & D. MacKay	slater	Payment date: 20 December £77 3s 8d
George. W. Sellars & Sons	painter	Payment date: 20 December £53 1s 11d

Payments (suppliers):

Name	Service	Payment date	Payment sum
Buchans & MacIntyre	range and fireplaces	20 December	£40 13s 0d
John Bryden & Sons	bells and lifts	20 December	£25 19s 6d
Alexander Cousland & Son	iron wire guards	20 December	£3 7s 11d
James Reid	work at drains	no data in job book	£7 8s 8d
R. & W. Sorley	memorial trowel	no data in job book	£8 0s 0d
James Cormack & Sons Ltd	no data in job book	no data in job book	£88 10s 0d

Measurer fee payment: £98 10s 0d ([20 December])

Phase 2: Alterations, 1899



Job book: 53061
Page: 31

Client: Canal Boatmen's Society of Scotland

Measurer: no data in job book

Tenders:

Contractor	Type	Address	Date	Value	Accepted
McCulloch & Co.	painter	no data in job book	no data in job book	no data in job book	yes 0
Thomas Brown	[joiner] alterations	no data in job book	no data in job book	no data in job book	yes 0
McCulloch & Co.	glazier, alterations	no data in job book	no data in job book	no data in job book	yes 0

Payments (trades):

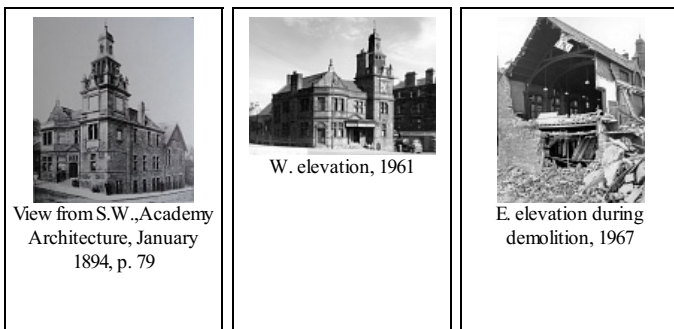
Name	Type	Payment out sum
McCulloch & Co.	painter	Payment date: no data in job book £31 16s 6d
Thomas Brown	[joiner]	Payment date: no data in job book £7 7s 4d
McCulloch & Co.	glazier	Payment date: no data in job book £1 12s 0d ⁵
D. & R. Fulton	[plumber]	Payment date: no data in job book £2 5s 4d ⁶
Thomas Brown	[joiner]	Payment date: no data in job book £4 16s 0d ⁷

Payments (suppliers):

Name	Service	Payment date	Payment sum
Thomas Brown	reading desk	7 September 1899	£5 4s 7d

Documents

Images



Bibliography

Published

- Thomas Howarth, *Charles Rennie Mackintosh and the Modern Movement*, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 2nd edn, 1977, p. 26
- David Stark, *Charles Rennie Mackintosh and Co.*, Catrine, Ayrshire: Stenlake Publishing, 2004, p. 97–8
- Frank Worsdall, *The City that Disappeared: Glasgow's Demolished Architecture*, Glasgow: Molendinar Press, 1981, p. 58
- 'Bargeman's Institute, Port Dundas. Honeyman and Keppie, Architects', *British Architect*, 44, 5 July 1895, pp. 3, 8–9

Unpublished

- Hiroaki Kimura, 'Charles Rennie Mackintosh: Architectural Drawings Catalogue and Design Analytical Catalogue', University of Glasgow: unpublished PhD thesis, 1982, pp. 24, 91
- Glasgow City Archives Collection: Glasgow Dean of Guild Court, Register of Inspections, D-OPW 25/63, p. 31
- Glasgow City Archives Collection: Records of Canal Boatmen's Institute and Port Dundas Mission, TD 1301/3

Notes:

- 1: *British Architect*, 44, 5 July 1895, p. 9; Coll. The Glasgow School of Art.
- 2: *British Architect*, 44, 5 July 1895, p. 8.
- 3: *Glasgow Herald*, 18 January 1894, p. 6.
- 4: The Hunterian, University of Glasgow: John Honeyman & Keppie visit book, GLAHA 53060, p. 16.
- 5: The Hunterian, University of Glasgow: John Honeyman & Keppie visit book, GLAHA 53060, p. 16.
- 6: Glasgow City Archives Collection: Glasgow Dean of Guild Court, list of cases, 12 November 1891, D-OPW 19/12, p. 47.
- 7: Glasgow City Archives Collection: Glasgow Dean of Guild Court, register of inspections, D-OPW 25/63, p. 31.
- 8: *Glasgow Herald*, 12 October 1892, p. 4.
- 9: *Glasgow Herald*, 21 June 1893, p. 3.
- 10: Glasgow City Archives Collection: Dean of Guild Court, Register of New Buildings I, 12 November 1892, B 4/11/1.
- 11: *Glasgow Herald*, letter from Leonard Gow, president of the Insitute, to the editor, 30 November 1893, p. 3.
- 12: *Glasgow Herald*, 16 October 1896, p. 6.
- 13: The Hunterian, University of Glasgow: John Honeyman & Keppie / Honeyman, Keppie & Mackintosh job book, GLAHA 53061, p. 31.
- 14: Glasgow City Archives Collection: Glasgow Dean of Guild Court plans, TD1309/A/271; David Stark, *Charles Rennie Mackintosh and Co.*, Catrine, Ayrshire: Stenlake Publishing, 2004, p. 98.
- 15: Glasgow City Archives Collection: Records of Canal Boatmen's Institute and Port Dundas Mission, TD1301/3/9, letter from R. McKenzie Smith to the City Architect and the Director of Planning, 22 September 1965.
- 16: Glasgow City Archives Collection: Records of Canal Boatmen's Institute and Port Dundas Mission, letter from R. McKenzie Smith to Director of Planning, 3 March 1967, 'in connection with anticipated demolition', TD1301/3/30.
- 17: *Glasgow Herald*, 12 October 1892, p. 4.
- 18: *Glasgow Herald*, 28 January 1892, p. 3; 19 January 1893, p. 4; 18 January 1894, p. 6.
- 19: *Glasgow Herald*, letter to the editor from Leonard Gow, president of the Institute, 30 November 1893, p. 3.
- 20: *Glasgow Herald*, 12 October 1892, p. 4.
- 21: *British Architect*, 44, 5 July 1895, p. 8; Dumfries Town House was illustrated in David MacGibbon and Thomas Ross, *The Castellated and Domestic Architecture of Scotland from the Twelfth to the Eighteenth Century*, 5 vols, Edinburgh: D. Douglas, 1887–92, vol. 5, pp. 127–8.
- 22: *Glasgow Herald*, 16 October 1896, p. 6. The clock was reported as being supplied by 'Messrs Sorley', presumably R. & W. Sorley, and was the gift of Major F. W. Allan, vice-president of the Canal Boatmen's Society of Scotland.
- 23: *British Architect*, 44, 5 July 1895, p. 3.
- 24: Glasgow City Archives Collection: Glasgow Dean of Guild Court, list of cases, D-OPW 19/12, 8 October 1891, p. 47.
- 25: Glasgow City Archives Collection: Glasgow Dean of Guild Court, List of Cases, D-OPW 19/12, 8 October 1891, p. 47.
- 26: *Glasgow Herald*, 28 January 1892, p. 3.
- 27: A. Stuart Gray, *Edwardian Architecture: A Biographical Dictionary*, Ware, Hertfordshire: Wordsworth Editions, 1988, p. 160.
- 28: Thomas Howarth, *Charles Rennie Mackintosh and the Modern Movement*, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 2nd edn, 1977, p. 26; David Stark, *Charles Rennie Mackintosh and Co.*, Catrine, Ayrshire: Stenlake Publishing, 2004, p. 97.
- 29: Royal Glasgow Institute of the Fine Arts, 1894, 867.
- 30: Glasgow City Archives Collection: Records of Canal Boatmen's Institute and Port Dundas Mission, letter from R. McKenzie Smith to John D. Craig, 20 December 1967, TD 1301/3/36; information from Allan Montgomery.
- 31: 'Returned with thanks'.

32: 'Returned with thanks'.

33: Includes fee of £9 7s 3d for 'alterations to public sewer', 6 September 1893.

34: Includes fee of £22 17s 8d 'as per offer for carving'.

35: Work on leaded glass.

36: Work includes 'pipe to low gutter etc.'

37: Work includes 'opening in roof of Hall'.

Mackintosh Architecture: Context, Making and Meaning

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