

M288 Alterations to Lady Artists' Club premises

Introduction

Mackintosh designed a pedimented doorcase for the entrance, a telephone kiosk for the hall and made interior alterations.

Authorship: Mackintosh's name is given in the minutes of the Lady Artists' Club as the architect recommended for and awarded the work.

Cost from job book: £144 14s 4d

Cost from other sources: '£212 17s 0d for repairs and alterations and £76 10s 11½d on general house furnishings' ¹

Status: Standing building

Current name: Mackintosh House Ltd

Current use: Offices (2014)

Listing category: B: Included in listing for Nos. '1-7 (inclusive nos.) Blythswood Square and 112 Douglas Street'

Historic Scotland/HB Number: 32975

RCAHMS Site Number: NS56NE 247

Grid reference: NS 58488 65749

Chronology

1882

The Glasgow Society of Lady Artists is founded by eight former students of the Glasgow School of Art. ¹

1893

The Glasgow Society of Lady Artists' Club is established at 5 Blythswood Square. The premises are rented by the Society. ²

1896–7

Picture gallery and committee rooms designed by Fred Rowntree and Malcolm Stark with George Walton. ³

1901

27 May: Fire destroys the Club including exhibits in the gallery. Among the works lost were two watercolours by Margaret Macdonald. Macdonald was not a Society member and this was the only Society exhibition in which she participated. ⁴

1902

25 October: Reopening after reconstruction by George Walton. ⁵

1907

2 December: Decoration Committee appointed to advise on the redecoration of the club house. ⁶

1908

7 April: Decoration Committee submits proposal for redecoration of entrance hall and staircase to the Club Council. It is proposed that an architect should lead the work. Mackintosh is recommended, 'as being practically the only person in Glasgow capable of doing so in the manner proposed'. ⁷

26 May: Mackintosh's plans are considered and approved by the Club Council, but with objections to the design of the proposed front door and vestibule. A further sub-committee is elected to supervise the redecoration. ⁸

8 September: Club Council minutes report that all redecoration has been carried out during the summer months, without reference to the decoration sub-committee and despite a final decision on the front door and vestibule not having been reached at the last Council meeting. ⁹

3 November: Mackintosh's account received. Considered excessive by Club Council. Mrs Macaulay Stevenson, chairwoman of the decoration sub-committee, resigns from the Club. ¹⁰

1909

2 February: No reply from Mackintosh forthcoming. Request for payment from painting contractor, William Douglas, considered and approved. ¹¹

2 March: Still no reply from Mackintosh. Further letter to be written to him. ¹²

6 April: Reply from Mackintosh finally received with a statement about the accounts. The Club Council agreed to pay what was owed 'as evidently nothing further could be done in the matter'. ¹³

1967

22 August: Opening of the Arts Council Gallery in the Club, a measure aimed at improving the difficult financial position of the Club and attracting new members. ¹⁴

1970

November: The Glasgow Lady Artists' Club financial deficit for the following year is deemed insurmountable and the Society is dissolved at an Extraordinary General Meeting. ¹⁵

1971

30 November: 5 Blythswood Square is sold to the Scottish Arts Council. ¹⁶

1975

The Glasgow Society of Lady Artists is re-formed as the Glasgow Society of Women Artists. ¹⁷

1976

Internal alterations for First Fortune Holdings. ¹⁸

1980–95

Various internal alterations for Building Design Partnership. ¹⁹

2004

Extensive refurbishment by Mackintosh House Ltd. ²⁰

Description

In 1908, Charles Rennie Mackintosh was commissioned by The Glasgow Lady Artists' Society to design a new entrance door and redecorate the hall and stairway for their club house in the elegant neo-classical terrace on the N. side of Blythswood Square, built in 1829 as part of the Blythswood New Town development. ¹

Amid much controversy within the Club, Mackintosh produced a witty, neo-classical-influenced doorcase with deep, open pediment and fluted, square pilasters. ² The tops of the pilasters are decorated with carved organic shapes set into the flutes, reminiscent of the carved and pierced decoration at Bridge of Allan Parish Church, Queen's Cross Church, and the library and board room of the Glasgow School of Art. The door and side lights are glazed in a grid pattern. Inside, the hall is panelled with dark-stained wood to picture-rail height. Tucked in under the stairs, the black, stained-wood telephone kiosk has panelling with gridded glazing above, and a deep skirting and prominent cornice in keeping with the neo-classical detailing of the front door. The doorcase and telephone kiosk have since been repeatedly repainted.

People

Clients:

- Glasgow Society of Lady Artists

Contractors:

- William Douglas
- James Grant
- Daniel McCallum
- McCulloch & Co.
- J. B. Meiklejohn
- Osler & Co.

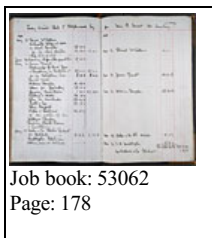
Job Book

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 M288 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 M288 has been extracted from the job books:



Job book: 53062
Page: 178

Client: Glasgow Society of Lady Artists

Measurer: no data in job book

Tenders:

| Contractor | Type | Address | Date | Value | Accepted |
|------------------|-------------------|---------------------|---------------------|----------------------------------|---|
| Daniel McCallum | mason | no data in job book | no data in job book | £23 0s 0d ¹ | yes (5 May 1908; 30 June 1908. ²) |
| James Grant | joiner | no data in job book | no data in job book | £60 0s 0d ³ | yes (2 May 1908) |
| William Douglas | painter | no data in job book | no data in job book | £49 14s 0d ⁴ | yes () |
| Guthrie & Wells | painter | no data in job book | no data in job book | £52 0s 0d | no |
| John M. Newlands | painter | no data in job book | no data in job book | £53 10s 0d | no |
| Scott & Son | painter | no data in job book | no data in job book | £56 5s 0d | no |
| Wylie & Lochhead | stair carpets | no data in job book | no data in job book | £32 15s 9d ⁵ | yes () |
| Osler & Co. | electric lighting | no data in job book | no data in job book | no data in job book ⁶ | yes (18 August 1908) |
| J. B. Meiklejohn | electrician | no data in job book | no data in job book | £3 12s 6d ⁷ | yes () |

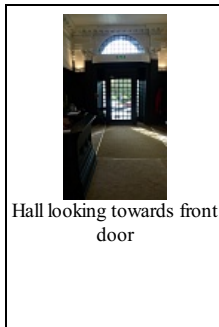
Payments (trades):

| Name | Type | Payment out sum |
|------------------|-------------------|---|
| Daniel McCallum | mason | Payment date: 2 November 1908 £14 0s 1d |
| James Grant | joiner | Payment date: 2 November 1908 £62 4s 7½d |
| William Douglas | painter | Payment date: 2 November 1908 £57 18s 10½d |
| Osler & Co. | electric lighting | Payment date: 2 November 1908 £4 0s 9d ⁸ |
| J. B. Meiklejohn | electrician | Payment date: 2 November 1908 £5 8s 0d |
| McCulloch & Co. | fanlight | Payment date: no data in job book £1 2s 0d |

Total cost: £144 14s 4d

Documents

Images



Bibliography

Published

- Roger Billcliffe, *Charles Rennie Mackintosh: The Complete Furniture, Furniture Drawings and Interior Designs*, Moffat, Dumfriesshire: Cameron & Hollis, 4th edn, 2009, p. 243
- Glasgow Society of Women Artists, *A Centenary Exhibition to celebrate the founding of the Glasgow Society of Lady Artists in 1882*, exhib. cat., Collins Gallery, Glasgow, 8–30 September 1982
- Thomas Howarth, *Charles Rennie Mackintosh and the Modern Movement*, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 2nd edn, 1977, p. 90
- DeCourcy Lewthwaite Dewar, ed., *History of the Glasgow Society of Lady Artists' Club*, Glasgow: Robert Maclehose, The University Press, 1950

Unpublished

- Glasgow, Mitchell Library (Glasgow Collection): The Glasgow Lady Artists' Club minutes, 891004/1

Notes:

- 1: Details quoted from The Glasgow Lady Artists' Club financial statement of 1908–9. Glasgow Society of Women Artists, *A Centenary Exhibition to celebrate the founding of the Glasgow Society of Lady Artists in 1882*, exhib. cat., Collins Gallery, Glasgow, 8–30 September 1982, p. 10.
- 2: Glasgow Society of Women Artists, *A Centenary Exhibition to celebrate the founding of the Glasgow Society of Lady Artists in 1882*, exhib. cat., Collins Gallery, Glasgow, 8–30 September 1982, p. 5.
- 3: Glasgow Society of Women Artists, *A Centenary Exhibition to celebrate the founding of the Glasgow Society of Lady Artists in 1882*, exhib. cat., Collins Gallery, Glasgow, 8–30 September 1982, pp. 6–7.
- 4: Glasgow City Archives Collection: Dean of Guild Court plans, B4/12/1896/1/4463.
- 5: Glasgow Society of Women Artists, *A Centenary Exhibition to celebrate the founding of the Glasgow Society of Lady Artists in 1882*, exhib. cat., Collins Gallery, Glasgow, 8–30 September 1982, pp. 8, 35; Pamela Reekie, *Margaret Macdonald Mackintosh*, exhibition catalogue, Glasgow: Hunterian Art Gallery, 1983 (xvi) and (xviii).
- 6: Glasgow Society of Women Artists, *A Centenary Exhibition to celebrate the founding of the Glasgow Society of Lady Artists in 1882*, exhib. cat., Collins Gallery, Glasgow, 8–30 September 1982, p. 8.
- 7: Glasgow, Mitchell Library (Glasgow Collection): The Glasgow Lady Artists' Club minutes, 891004/1, 2 December 1907.
- 8: Glasgow, Mitchell Library (Glasgow Collection): The Glasgow Lady Artists' Club minutes, 891004/1, 7 April 1908.
- 9: Glasgow, Mitchell Library (Glasgow Collection): The Glasgow Lady Artists' Club minutes, 891004/1, 26 May 1908.
- 10: Glasgow, Mitchell Library (Glasgow Collection): The Glasgow Lady Artists' Club minutes, 891004/1, 8 September 1908.
- 11: Glasgow, Mitchell Library (Glasgow Collection): The Glasgow Lady Artists' Club minutes, 891004/1, 3 November 1908. A petition demanding the reinstatement of Mrs Macaulay Stevenson was submitted to the Club Council. The petitioners were informed that this could only occur by ballot following re-election. This took place in 1909. Glasgow Society of Women Artists, *A Centenary Exhibition to celebrate the founding of the Glasgow Society of Lady Artists in 1882*, exhib. cat., Collins Gallery, Glasgow, 8–30 September 1982, p. 10.

- 12:** Glasgow, Mitchell Library (Glasgow Collection): The Glasgow Lady Artists' Club minutes, 891004/1, 2 February 1909.
- 13:** Glasgow, Mitchell Library (Glasgow Collection): The Glasgow Lady Artists' Club minutes, 891004/1, 2 March 1909.
- 14:** Glasgow, Mitchell Library (Glasgow Collection): The Glasgow Lady Artists' Club minutes, 891004/1, 6 April 1909.
- 15:** Glasgow Society of Women Artists, *A Centenary Exhibition to celebrate the founding of the Glasgow Society of Lady Artists in 1882*, exhib. cat., Collins Gallery, Glasgow, 8–30 September 1982, p. 13.
- 16:** Glasgow Society of Women Artists, *A Centenary Exhibition to celebrate the founding of the Glasgow Society of Lady Artists in 1882*, exhib. cat., Collins Gallery, Glasgow, 8–30 September 1982, p. 13.
- 17:** Glasgow Society of Women Artists, *A Centenary Exhibition to celebrate the founding of the Glasgow Society of Lady Artists in 1882*, exhib. cat., Collins Gallery, Glasgow, 8–30 September 1982, p. 13.
- 18:** Glasgow Society of Women Artists, *A Centenary Exhibition to celebrate the founding of the Glasgow Society of Lady Artists in 1882*, exhib. cat., Collins Gallery, Glasgow, 8–30 September 1982, p. 14.
- 19:** Glasgow City Archives Collection: Glasgow District Council building control warrant plans, GDC12/3/1976/395.
- 20:** Glasgow City Archives Collection: Glasgow District Council building control warrant plans, GDC12/3/1980/341; GDC12/3/1981/1245; GCC16/3/21/95/0772.
- 21:** Information supplied by current owners during visit on 28 October 2010.
- 22:** For a full account, see: Roger Billcliffe, *Charles Rennie Mackintosh: The Complete Furniture, Furniture Drawings and Interior Designs*, Moffat, Dumfriesshire: Cameron & Hollis, 4th edn, 2009, p. 243; Elizabeth Williamson, Anne Riches and Malcolm Higgs, *Buildings of Scotland: Glasgow*, London: Penguin, 1990, pp. 215–16.
- 23:** Glasgow, Mitchell Library (Glasgow Collection): The Glasgow Lady Artists' Club minutes, 891004/1. See in particular minutes dated 26 May, 8 September and 3 November 1908.
- 24:** Includes 'Arbroath Steps at door' and 'Covering steps with granolithic'. Alternative options for work at steps and measurements are given.
- 25:** Tender for granolithic work accepted at the later date.
- 26:** Includes woodwork at front door, panelling at entrance and at telephone box.
- 27:** Includes allowance for stencilling, 'removing centre flower' and painting cloakroom and lavatories.
- 28:** 'd[itt]o Hair Wilton 15% less' no tender quoted.
- 29:** For 'Electric Pendant for Vestibule'.
- 30:** 'altering wires at Vestibule'.
- 31:** '4 lights'.

Mackintosh Architecture: Context, Making and Meaning

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