

NEWSLETTER

ISSUE 9
AUTUMN 2015



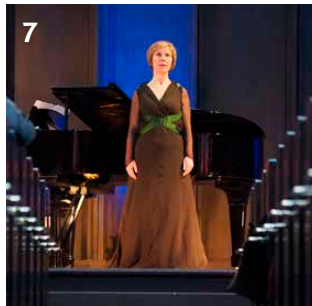
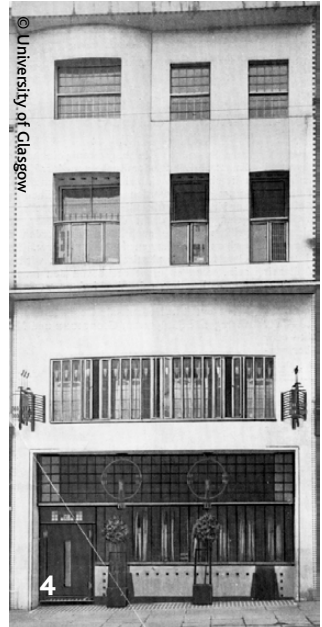
The charity that protects, preserves
and promotes the nation's
Mackintosh heritage for the
enjoyment of future generations.

CHARLES
RENNIE
MACKINTOSH
SOCIETY™

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Cover image: Detail from the organ screen, Parish Church, Bridge of Allan
© Stuart Robertson



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Schedule for your Society publications

Please send us news, reviews and articles to meet the following timetable:

The next Journal will be the Winter issue, copy deadline 16 October 2015

Next Newsletter: February 2015, copy deadline 31 December 2015

We are always interested to receive features, articles and new research for inclusion in Society publications. Please email the Director with notes of interest and a short abstract summarising your intended submission.

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Port Vendres Tour

In October 2015, a dozen CRMS members will set off on the study tour to Port Vendres organised by Trish Ingram and Robin Crichton. It is 90 years since Mackintosh checked into the town's Hotel du Commerce and then stayed in the port with his wife, Margaret, painting there until his death. Mackintosh is said to have spent the happiest – though poorest – years of his life in Port-Vendres.

A Southern Town 1923–27
Watercolour, Charles Rennie Mackintosh
Hunterian, University of Glasgow



Department Store Support

The Community Matters scheme run by John Lewis has selected the CRM Society as one of its good causes this autumn. John Lewis donates up to £3000 in value across three charities through a combination of money, products and Partners' volunteering time. So if you are having a coffee in John Lewis, please ask for a voting token and nominate our Society. Thank you!

Glebe Place

The Society is making arrangements for a special members' visit to Glebe Place, Chelsea, which was one of the last architecture projects completed by Charles Rennie Mackintosh. The Studio House (1920–21) was designed for the painter Harold Squire and later became the home of art collector and painter Edward le Bas. An impressive collection of works hangs in the original Mackintosh studio and a tour is planned for 24 November. For more details, contact 0141 946 6600.

49 Glebe Place, London



Here Comes the Bride

With assistance from the experienced team at House for an Art Lover, the Society's wedding business is increasing at Mackintosh Queen's Cross. Nine bookings are in place for 2015 with more anticipated for next year. [See back cover advert]

Elephant in the City

House for an Art Lover, working in partnership with Scottish artist Kenny Hunter, has unveiled a life-size Asian elephant on the site of the 1938 Empire Exhibition in Glasgow's Bellahouston Park.

A year in the making, the 11-tonne elephant is part of the Legacy 2014

project and commemorates the city's hosting of the Commonwealth Games last year. It has been created and cast in part using redundant locomotive scrap made in the shipyards of nearby Govan and exported to the Commonwealth. The public artwork looks stunning in the park setting where it stands and gazes towards Govan and the Clyde.



Restoring the iconic Willow Tea Rooms

The restoration of Glasgow's iconic Willow Tea Rooms and the creation of a world-class Charles Rennie Mackintosh visitor centre took a major step forward in September 2015 with the appointment of Simpson & Brown Architects as the lead design consultants.

The announcement by the Willow Tea Rooms Trust follows an international competition to find the architecture and design practice capable of restoring The Willow Tea Rooms, designed by Mackintosh for entrepreneur Kate Cranston in 1903, and also of creating an education and exhibition centre at 215 Sauchiehall Street, directly adjacent to the tea rooms.

"It is a very challenging project for any architectural firm but we were tremendously impressed by Simpson & Brown's conservation expertise and by the ideas



**The Willow Tea Rooms circa 1903
© University of Glasgow**

they put forward for the new Mackintosh Centre. They will combine the old with the new, perfectly contrasting modern and impressive design with the original splendour of the only remaining Charles Rennie Mackintosh designed tea rooms," explained Celia Sinclair, Founder and Chair of The Willow Tea Rooms Trust, which was established to save and restore The Willow Tea Rooms for the City of Glasgow.

The CRM Society is one of many partner organisations contributing to the planning and development of the project. In particular, the

Trust has invited the Society to have an input towards the proposals for the building at No. 215 Sauchiehall Street, just next-door to the Willow Tea Rooms. This space will provide interpretation and educational services but it will also house essential amenities for the tea rooms, such as lifts and other facilities, so that they don't interfere with the design of The Willow Tea Rooms environment and visitor experience. Simpson & Brown is well known to the Society as they handled the restoration of Mackintosh Queen's Cross in 2006.

The cost of the project is estimated at £7 million, £1 million of which is required to repair and make The Willow Tea Rooms building fully wind and watertight, and for the restoration work on features either lost over the years or damaged as a result of the decline in the fabric of the building. The Willow Tea Rooms Trust intends to raise the funding principally from public and private sector donors.

Below: Sections showing details of the planned development



Celia Sinclair,
Founder and Chair
of The Willow
Tea Rooms Trust

“We are creating something truly special and sustainable in Sauchiehall Street that will help to create jobs, support tourism, and celebrate and safeguard the legacy of Charles Rennie Mackintosh. Work will progress as quickly as possible to enable us to have everything in place for 2018, the 150th anniversary of Mackintosh’s birth.”



Miss Cranston’s Oak Room heads for Dundee

Almost 50 years since it was last seen, the Oak Room – the largest Mackintosh interior for Miss Cranston’s Ingram Street Tearooms – is set to be conserved, restored and displayed as part of a major collaborative project between Glasgow Museums and the V&A Museum of Design

Dundee. Alison Brown, vice chair of the CRM Society and Curator of European Decorative Art from 1800 for Glasgow Museums, has been working on this project for the past year and announced this summer, that the 13.5 metres long Oak Room will be loaned by Glasgow Museums/Glasgow Life as

the centrepiece of V&A Dundee’s Scottish Design Galleries when the new museum opens in 2018. It is the first time all 600 surviving pieces of the 1907 interior will be reassembled and put on public display since it last functioned as a tearoom in the early 1950s.

CRM Society AGM 2015

Our AGMs each June are thrilling! Not because of the business meeting – it's because of the fabulous programme of specialist talks and behind-the-scenes tours built into the AGM Weekend for us all to enjoy.

We toured the Glasgow School of Art; witnessed the tragic remains of the Library and heard a brilliant account of the thorough research and planning going into the restoration project. Members travelled together on a vintage bus to the private Ault Wharrie House, near Dunblane where we were treated to sparkling hospitality and a guided tour by the owners of the 1900 Glasgow School mansion designed by George Walton. Exploring the interiors, we saw the exceptional details of the building and the dedication and skill going into the major restoration work. We also enjoyed a trip to the Parish



Church in Bridge of Allan, to hear the story of Mackintosh's involvement and to see his immediately recognisable designs for the pulpit, organ screen, communion table, choir stalls and chairs. Few of us had visited the church before and it was very special to see classic Mackintosh in a different setting.

The weekend drew to a close at the University of Stirling's Pathfoot Gallery, where our host, art expert Dr Helen E Beale, gave an insightful talk, "The relationship between the work of JD Fergusson and Mackintosh".



The AGM is always a great time to visit Glasgow and to catch up with Society friends. Plan your trip to the **next AGM on Saturday 4th June 2016** and make sure you book the special events across the entire weekend.

Festival News

2015

Participating in this year's West End Festival was a new departure for the Society, showcasing Mackintosh Queen's Cross as a stunning arts venue and bringing new audiences into the church.

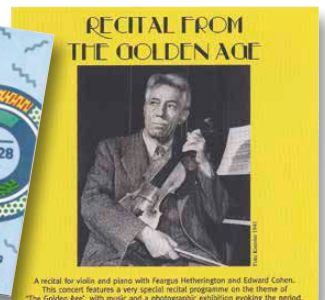
Throughout June, the Society's events programme varied from the *Harry Ensemble* choral music choir and an evening of *Polish Music for Piano* with pianist and composer Maciej Granat to the fabulous recital, *From the Golden Age*, with violinist Feargus Hetherington and pianist Edward Cohen who performed music from the period 1920–1939.

The Festival opening night was a sell-out with contralto Louise Macdonald performing the world premiere of new works on *Mary, Queen of Scots*. Accompanied by Ingrid Sawers on piano, the audience felt the fear, court intrigue and prayers of *Mary Stuart* through her

letters and poetry – a very moving and memorable night.

However, it was our Steinway Grand itself that stole the show and created a buzz of excitement on *Lids Open Day* when the city's amateur piano-players were invited to the church to play for just quarter of an hour each to their family and friends in the beautiful surroundings of Mackintosh Queen's Cross. It was a heart-warming day.

Opening Night:
Louise Macdonald performs new work, *Mary, Queen of Scots* plus Schumann's *Maria Stuart Lieder*.



The Mackintosh Festival 2015 runs throughout October with events across the city.

For programme information visit www.glasgowmackintosh.com and book your tickets by calling Sven on 0141 946 6600 or book online at mackintosh/eventbrite (tickets are also available at the door).

Mackintosh Architecture in London

Susan Pugh
Curator, RIBA Drawings & Archives Collections

The exhibition *Mackintosh Architecture* closed at the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) in Portland Place, London, after an incredibly successful three-month run, reaching an audience of over 37,000.

As Curator for the Drawings & Archives Collections of the RIBA I was asked to re-curate the exhibition which had opened the year before at The Hunterian, University of Glasgow. I was extremely happy and excited to take on this project, giving me the opportunity not only to work with Professor Pamela Robertson, a world expert on Mackintosh, but it also allowed me to take a closer look at some of the most beautiful architectural drawings executed by an international icon of design and architecture. The RIBA's own collections, although incredibly rich and varied with over 1.5million



items, are unfortunately fairly sparse with Mackintosh drawings. We hold a handful of original drawings relating to 78 Derngate in Northampton and Little Ease (Leigh Farm Cottages) in Burgess Hill, West Sussex.

The gallery at the RIBA is smaller than that of the Hunterian's exhibition space so we had to reduce the number of items displayed and re-curate maintaining a coherent narrative. We were also conscious of the fact that the exhibition would be in London, far away from Mackintosh's city and buildings. Visitors could not simply cross the corridor from the exhibition

Mackintosh Architecture at the RIBA.
Photograph: © Wilson Yau/RIBA British Architectural Library

space to enter the Mackintosh House as they could at The Hunterian. We therefore felt the need to give more general background information on the man himself, his city and his life's work. This was primarily addressed by having a very large timeline take up an entire wall of the gallery, which flagged up key personal and professional events in Mackintosh's life, including photographs and original objects, it also highlighted major historical events, helping visitors to put things in context. This

feature of the exhibition was very well received by the public and served as an excellent introduction, viewed alongside films of turn of the century Glasgow.

Mackintosh still holds a very special place in many people's hearts and minds, as attested to by the number of collectors and enthusiasts I met whilst leading tours. I was also lucky to meet a descendant of John Keppie, Mackintosh's partner in the firm, Honeyman, Keppie and Mackintosh from 1901 to 1913. It was with pleasure that I could highlight to them the research of Pamela Robertson and her team at The Hunterian, which revealed much about Mackintosh's role within the practice. Their research also demonstrated that Keppie was a competent architect in his own right, and played a key role in helping Mackintosh along in his architectural career.

An addition to the London leg of the exhibition was a volume of RIBA Nomination papers which includes Mackintosh's nomination to become a Fellow of the Institute. This document supported Professor Robertson's research, shedding new light on the relationship between Mackintosh and his partner John Keppie. In order to become a Fellow of the RIBA one had to be nominated by an existing member and

in 1906, despite any reputed personal issues between the two men, Keppie was happy to endorse Mackintosh's work by nominating him. Fellowship was given and we know that this is something Mackintosh was very proud of. Following his Fellowship he revisited his 1898 perspective design for Queen's Cross Church, (now home to the CRM Society). At the time of the project Mackintosh was not credited as the architect, being merely an assistant within the practice, so in 1906 he added a strip of paper to the bottom of the drawing proudly stating his name and the initials "FRIBA" afterwards.

When asked for my favourite object within the show I struggle to give just one, or even two or three answers! I would have to include the beautiful Daily Record perspective, and the designs for an artist's house and studio in the country, and the artist's townhouse and studio. Executed just prior to his marriage to Margaret Macdonald, the last two act as tantalising glimpses in to the potential domestic and artistic bliss for the future Mr and Mrs Mackintosh.

I was also very happy to be able to include in the London exhibition a model of the Glasgow School of Art showing the west wing of the building,



Model of the Glasgow School of Art by Brian Gallagher, 1995. Photograph: © Glasgow School of Art

including the Library. The tragic fire which engulfed the west wing last year generated a huge amount of media interest and demonstrated just how well respected and loved Mackintosh and his iconic building are. The RIBA was very happy to support the Mackintosh Appeal by donating part of the profits of one of our Mackintosh season events and we all very much look forward to seeing Page\Park restore the School to its former glory.

A visit to Walberswick

by Society member Trish Ingram

It had always been an ambition to visit Walberswick and we first went there in February 2013 when an invitation to attend a wedding in Felixstowe presented a perfect opportunity.

A strong wind was blowing off the North Sea, adding to the rather bleak winter atmosphere of this exposed part of the Suffolk coast. We drove past the village green to 'The Bell Inn', where Mackintosh had spent many an evening when he and Margaret lived and worked in Walberswick in 1914–15.

Although 'The Bell' has inevitably changed since the early part of the 20th century, the main bar area still has its original flagstone floor, alcoves, nooks and crannies. The open fire was a welcome feature on our arrival and it also made it easy to imagine Mackintosh enjoying the warm glow as he lingered over his

beer and 'chaser'. We stayed at 'The Bell' for two nights and, although some members of staff knew about the Mackintosh connection, there was little evidence of it.

It seemed to us that Walberswick is relatively unchanged and quite idyllic – no wonder Mackintosh enjoyed its restorative qualities.

An intriguing feature still in existence from Mackintosh's time is the ferry to Southwold. It is one of the few remaining rowed ferries in Britain and it ploughs back and forth across the River Blyth in just a few minutes, rowed by a young lady whose ancestors worked it in 1885. There are marvellous walks along the river and on the beach where Mackintosh spent hours deep in thought staring out at the North Sea.

As there was little to mark Mackintosh in Walberswick, we resolved to return and decided it would be in warmer climes! We returned in June this year to commemorate



Trish Ingram presenting a print to The Bell

Mackintosh, taking a print of his painting 'Gilardia' 1914. This, along with an account of Mackintosh's time in Walberswick, was presented on behalf of the Society to Jonathan Winyard of 'The Bell'.

While still retaining its distinctive atmosphere, on this visit Walberswick was bathed in sunshine with lots of holidaymakers enjoying the shoreline and children were crabbing along the edges of the pools near the estuary. Mackintosh would have been immersed in summer blossom.

HELLO

New Board members with whom members may not be familiar are Helen Crawford, Kathleen Benham and Garry Sanderson

Helen brings a wealth of senior executive experience and is currently helping CRM Society staff to research and identify potential funding sources. A previous director of Queen's Cross Housing, she also has tremendous affinity with the area and different communities in Maryhill.

Kathleen is a partner in Benham Conway & Co accountants and worked voluntarily alongside the Society's Honorary Treasurer before taking on the role herself in June [see photo on page 2]. Kathleen

specialises in advising the arts, media and creative industries sectors.

Garry Sanderson is Chief Executive of House for an Art Lover, one of Glasgow's most successful visitor attractions, combining art gallery, exhibition space and artists' studios with cafe, shop and venue hire all set within the magnificent setting of Glasgow's Bellahouston Park.



Heritage Officer

At HQ, we welcomed **Sven Burghardt** to join Stuart, Irene and Dylan in the small team of staff. Our new Heritage Officer is helping to promote the building through venue hire, events and festivals. Sven is also managing the membership programme.



GOODBYE

A huge thank you to **Judith Patrickson** for her contribution to the Society over the past six years. As Treasurer, Judith steered our finances through some challenging times and left us on a firmer financial footing. Judith was also supportive in attending many of our arts and music events.

We also warmly acknowledge the tremendous commitment and support given over the years by volunteers Elspeth Kidd and Norma Butler, particularly in their work on the membership programme. Thank you.

Professor Pamela Robertson

Pamela Robertson retires at the end of September from The

Hunterian, University of Glasgow. Pamela has been Senior Curator and Professor of Mackintosh Studies at The Hunterian for the majority of her career, leading major developments and projects such as the opening of the Art Gallery and Mackintosh House in the early 1980s and most recently the Mackintosh Architecture research project and exhibition. Pamela has



gained international recognition for her scholarship in Mackintosh and Whistler Studies.

Pamela is tremendously giving of her time and expertise, contributing substantially to the Glasgow Mackintosh Group and to the Society, which she chaired from 2003–2006 and continues to support as a Trustee. There is no doubt that her energy, knowledge and calm management have contributed to 'making Mackintosh happen' for the city – ensuring that Glasgow's major events and festivals centred on Mackintosh were of the highest quality for the education and enjoyment of residents and visitors to Scotland. Happy retirement!



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Queen's Cross is a truly unique building, offering a stunning backdrop for your special day. Here, the simplicity of the design is inspiring.

The Mackintosh Hall provides an attractive venue for a Champagne reception and other celebrations.

We also offer a unique partnership with House for an Art Lover making your day extra special by having the ceremony at Queen's Cross, followed by the reception at the House in Bellahouston Park.

Please contact us for further details.

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