

NEWSLETTER



Issue 7 Spring 2013



CHARLES
RENNIE
MACKINTOSH
SOCIETY™



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www.crmsociety.com
www.mackintoshchurch.com

Cover image: *James Reid Headstone designed
by Charles Rennie Mackintosh, 1898*
© Stuart Robertson



*Morna Darling collecting her prize at the Mackintosh
Award for Creative Design © Nijole Ukelyte*

Mackintosh Award for Creative Design 2013

The Charles Rennie Mackintosh Society launched a competition in partnership with the Glasgow School of Art to inspire young designers to create a contemporary piece of Mackintosh-inspired design to celebrate the 40th anniversary of The Mackintosh Society.

The winner of the competition was Morna Darling, a third year student of GSA Silversmithing + Jewellery. Morna was attracted to Mackintosh's textile designs and from this she developed these ideas

further. Within the silver piece there are forty squares representing every year of the Society. The four cut-out squares along the bottom also represent the four decades.

The competition was open to Contemporary visual artists, fashion & textile designers, graphic artists, 2D & 3D makers and art students all who have a keen idea for creative thinking and interpretation.

For further details and to pre-order this beautiful momento, contact the Society.

Schedule for Society publications

Please send us any news updates, events, reviews and articles for the following schedule:

Newsletters:

October 2013: Copy deadline 14 September 2013
January 2014: Copy deadline 14 December 2013
April 2014: Copy deadline 14 March 2014

Journals:

The 2013 Journal will be distributed in late August 2013.
We are interested to receive feature-length articles and new research for the August 2014 Journal. Please email the Society with notes of interest and a short abstract summarising the submission. Deadline for submission of final copy 18 April 2014.



May

Sound Sessions 21 May - 18 June

Join us for some tranquil resonances in the calming surroundings of the Mackintosh Church. After last year's sell out success we are holding a very special set of Sound Sessions that will take you on a calming and relaxing musical journey.

June

AGM Weekend 7-9 June 2013

Friday 7 June: In Conversation with Roger Billcliffe

Tonight will be an opportunity for members to enjoy a social evening in the intimate atmosphere of the Mackintosh Church.

Saturday 8 June - AGM at House for an Art Lover followed by lunch and afternoon programme.

Sunday 9 June - 'Tale of Two Houses'

A special visit to The Hill House and Windyhill.

plus.....

Monday 10 June - 'Mackintosh's Italian Dinner'

An Italian Dinner and stories about Mackintosh's trip to Italy.

See Booking Form for full details and costs.

Bill Blackwood Art Exhibition 13-30 June

Croc Roc 21 June

We are delighted to welcome back the acclaimed Croc Roc for a second night at the Mackintosh Church, following last year's sell-out success. All funds go to support the Mackintosh Society.

Stark Theatre 27 and 28 June

Stark Theatre present "100". Choose one single memory from your whole life to epitomise you. All others will be erased. You have one hour to decide.

Mackintosh at the Grand

This special three-day tour is truly for the Mackintosh aficionado and includes some special 'Behind the Scenes' access. Learn the design secrets of some of the 20th Century's most iconic and influential buildings. Prices start from £549 per person sharing.

To find out more about the Tour or to reserve a place contact: dylan@crmsociety.com or tel: 0141 946 6600.

1973-2013: Celebrating 40 years of protecting Mackintosh's unique architectural heritage.

September

Frances Law Art Exhibition - Architecture of Nature

Frances Law is a Scottish artist who studied at the GSA. Frances invites us to question our own relationship with the natural world and the emotional energy that lies therein.

Doors Open Day 22 September

October

4 October - CRM Society Special 40th Anniversary Event (details still to be announced)

CRM Society 40th Anniversary Exhibition from October to December.

Mackintosh Symposium Follow-Up

Yarn Cake Knitting and Craft Event

Creative Mackintosh Festival

Douglas Lecture - Date to be confirmed

November

Members' Afternoon Tea 28 November

December

Special Shopping Event 5 December

December will also include concerts by Les Sirenes and the Mackintosh Choir.

Details and bookings for all the events are available on the CRM Society website and can be booked directly on <http://bookwhen.com/mackintosh>



It is nine months since Evelyn Silber stepped down as Chair of the Charles Rennie Mackintosh Society at last year's AGM. Council member Alison Brown caught up to chat about her reflections on six years at the helm and life after.

Evelyn has lived in Glasgow for twelve years now and is an incredibly energetic devotee to its architectural and artistic landscape. She moved to the city to take up the Directorship of the Hunterian Art Gallery and Museum at the University of Glasgow and from day one 'was immediately plunged into Mackintosh'. Prior to her move she was Director of Leeds Museums and Galleries for six years and had previously worked in Birmingham Museums and Art Gallery. Over her career as a museum professional she has worked with a variety of collections, industrial heritage sites, historic houses with lavish interiors and even the ruins of a Cistercian Abbey. With such extensive heritage management experience she brought considerable skills to the Society.

It was Professor Pamela Robertson who suggested to Evelyn should consider standing for the Chair of the Society in 2006. 'It hadn't occurred to me', she laughs, 'but it was timely as I was just about to leave the Hunterian and working with the Society was a logical extension of what I had been doing with the University's Mackintosh House, and the Mackintosh heritage generally. I'd only been in Glasgow for five to six years up to that point; so this was another way of getting dug in to Glasgow's extraordinary rich cultural heritage.'

'I came into the Society on the crest of a wave' she reflects, 'the restoration of Queen's Cross Church and the hall was nearing completion, and there was also the first Mackintosh Festival that year with events all around the city.' She notes the significant contrast of leaving a large well funded institution with salaried staff to come to a small organisation staffed



by a small team of mainly 'enormously dedicated, energetic and enthusiastic' volunteers. With her business hat on, she could immediately see that the Society was running at a deficit camouflaged by the years of capital works, and the annual grant received from Glasgow City Council was decreasing each year with no inflationary readjustment. 'The Society was not covering costs; that needed to be tackled.' Risk and insurance were an issue for the Society and all of its branches. 'We were thrilled that local groups were doing their own things, but the Society could not cover all the things they [the branches] were doing. It was important for us to communicate with our members about money. The Society was punching way above its weight but at enormous personal cost. Staff - in particular the Director - were run off their feet; it was not sustainable.' With Council she oversaw the Society's review of its operations, constitution, priorities and working relationships. It has reduced its time contributions to other local groups such as the umbrella promotional



body of the Mackintosh Heritage Group (now Glasgow Mackintosh). 'I felt the greatest admiration for how much Stuart Robertson and his colleagues achieved... but with the bread and butter issues for the Society sorted it has given the staff and team clearer focus and released creativity to develop the Church as a venue while making sure we still adhere to the Society's basic mission. This Newsletter is one of the results. '

As Chair Evelyn ensured that new members joining the Council Board had specialist skills that the Society otherwise lacked - legal, marketing, business, finance. 'It makes such a big difference to a small charity and to its staff to have that support' she says firmly, 'it may be unspectacular; but it is the achievement I am most pleased about.'

Evelyn's heritage interests have always stretched beyond Mackintosh and she is keen to see Mackintosh in context. 'The Society can be something of a leader and a catalyst but we have to be careful - Mackintosh is such a big name that he can overshadow many other important architects.' Since 2009 she has been chair of Queen's Park Arena Ltd, a voluntary group now a charity which has raised over £200,000 to restore the old bandstand as a vibrant outdoor venue in the Southside park. As former Chair, and still an active member, of Langside Community Council, she has co-written the Langside Heritage Trail: an architectural trail - taking in the work of Alexander 'Greek' Thomson and Robert Adam amongst others - and a historic guide around the Langside battlefield and part of the ancient parish of Cathcart.

She is 'inordinately proud' of setting up recently a new website for the Community Council, admitting she is becoming a little less of a 'techno klutz'. 'I think social media is an issue for a lot of societies if we want to attract a younger generation.'

A lot of members are aged 40 or over, many are over 60; we have certain methods of engaging. There are not so many newspapers in circulation, fewer obvious community buildings - so where do you get your information from? There are libraries; but local communities are now so dispersed. Many small societies are saying the same thing, "membership is static or in decline - we need youth involvement".' Evelyn believes that social media could be a gateway, a force for uniting the many individuals, heritage groups and societies around the city and beyond. And that uniting such specialist interests could provide 'greater strength' for working together, offering opportunities for joint speakers at evening events, even perhaps a unified voice for protest. As an example she cites the recent George Square design proposals that made her 'dyspeptic with fury'.

2013 sees her busier than ever. She is currently researching and writing on The Leicester Galleries and the role played by this London commercial gallery in promoting early twentieth century Modernism in Britain. Next year her freelance lecturing will take her to Australia and New Zealand. 'I'm pleased to think I can continue to support the Society as a Patron and attend events when I can.'

For more information on Evelyn's projects:

Queen's Park Arena:
<http://www.queensparkarena.org.uk>

Download the Langside and other Glasgow City Heritage Trails:
<http://www.glasgow.gov.uk/heritagetrails>



The stone before, during and after cleaning.

Janice Crean reports on the cleaning of the James Reid Tombstone in Kilmacolm cemetery.

The gravestone for James Reid the Telegraphic Superintendent of the Glasgow and South West Railway was designed by Mackintosh and erected in Kilmacolm cemetery in 1898. Reid was the father-in-law of William Davidson, Mackintosh's client for the house Windyhill, also in Kilmacolm. Davidson is buried next to Reid. Over time Reid's headstone of carved red sandstone had become overgrown and discoloured and the Mackintosh design slowly falling into poor condition.

Janice Crean has been a resident of Kilmacolm for 46 years. Her husband Gerry was buried in the cemetery there, and when visiting his grave Janice always would go and admire the nearby Charles Rennie Mackintosh "Reid Stone". The stone is sited next to the boundary wall and is overcast by trees. The base was overgrown by ivy

and the stone was discoloured, covered with a layer of three different types of invasive and potentially damaging lichen. It was difficult to read the inscription or see the Mackintosh design.

Janice thought that this was something that should be addressed. The stone is one of four Mackintosh designs in Kilmacolm and although far less well known than Windyhill it is visited by students of the architect (such as organised parties by the Society and English Mackintosh devotees through the auspices of a holiday). The cemetery is reached by passing the Mackintosh-designed gatehouse to the adjoining Auchenbothie House, designed by William Leiper. The fourth (part) Mackintosh building is Cloak situated on the outskirts of the village.

Because of its historic importance to the art world - as well as to students of Mackintosh - any repair would need to be approached in a sensitive and appropriate



James Reid Headstone

manner. The monument is a memorial to, and possession of, a family member and therefore the Reid family wishes would need to be sought and accommodated. Being a grave it is also bound by burial ground regulations. As someone with no experience in this specialist area Janice nevertheless proceeded, but only after making the appropriate consultations.

By approaching a local resident - Professor Frank Walker, an acknowledged expert on Mackintosh - Janice was able to formulate a plan of action and an initial small list of people to contact. With the help of a small donation from the Community Council, she engaged the services of a researcher from the MacLean Museum in Greenock who traced the family forward to 1945. Some inspired guessing led her to the archives of Glasgow University and the Dispatches of the First World War. Through the Dispatches they obtained the name of a descendant in the Torquay area who was now deceased. She placed an advertisement in a local paper and finally spoke with a Reid family member who gave her his written permission to work towards stopping the weathering of the stone. There then needed to be a professional survey to see if the stone could be cleaned, and if so, how and to what state it should be left.

With an interesting project and the prospect of achieving something worthwhile requiring specific artistic and academic expertise, Janice approached Professor Pamela Robertson, Mackintosh Curator at Glasgow University; Sandy Stoddart, Queens Sculptor in Ordinary and Roger Billcliffe, Mackintosh expert and gallery owner for advice. With a grant she

obtained from the Kilmacolm Civic Trust, Janice then approached Graciela Ainsworth Associates in Edinburgh on the advice of Sandy Stoddart who described them as the best stone conservators in Scotland. They undertook an initial conservation study.

Roger Billcliffe advised that the Kilmacolm stone was in a better condition than Mackintosh's three others on the East coast and that it would be helpful to have it protected by listing it. So Janice approached Historic Scotland who advised that they did not list individual stones but would look at the cemetery for possible listing. After visiting they reported that the cemetery was picturesque and not especially important for listing, but they agreed that they would list the stone - a first listing of its kind!

Janice in the meantime had been speaking with Professor Pamela Robertson at Glasgow University and had kept her 'in the picture'. The time came to involve her more closely when the necessary parties were brought together for site visits and meetings to consider the conservation report which



Janice Crean with Eric Waanders of Graciela Ainsworth at the start of the cleaning



James Reid Headstone



The carved inscription © Stuart Robertson

contained different suggestions about what should and could be attempted with the stone. Having in the meantime secured funding for any work, it was agreed that the stone should be cleaned. The funding received allowed the work to be undertaken in the summer of 2012. Cleaning by hand took a full three-days work to carefully remove the lichen and ivy. The stone was cleaned in sections so the comparison of before and after could be made. The very final part to be cleaned was the right hand of the plinth, previously covered by ivy. It revealed the carved inscription in familiar script “CRM 1898”.

It had been three years since Janice first approached researchers to locate living relatives of the Reid family who had originally lived in Kilmacolm and who had engaged Mackintosh to design the headstone.

The situation now is that no enthusiastic amateur can perform an ad hoc clean of the stone. It is being monitored by Ainsworth Associates and only when necessary, perhaps every seven to ten years, will they contact us to advise further cleaning. The

funding body will continue to underwrite the care of the stone over the years.

Such diligent pursuance is an important part of achieving local improvements. Although in the scale of local affairs it is small, it is the fine grain to heritage and the environment that is as important and as telling about a place as some of the larger projects. The Reid project is certainly something that local people are now aware of and proud about.

Notes:

The full inscription on the stone reads

Erected by

Margaret Henry

Reid in

remembrance of her

husband James Reid

Born 29 Aug 1837 Died 4 Oct 1897

Telegraphic Suppt G&SWRY

Margaret Henry

Reid died

13th July 1907 Aged 71

The original drawing by Mackintosh, held by the Hunterian Museum (GLAHA 41928), has a different inscription

“ERECTED BY/JANE REID IN/REMEMBRANCE [sic] OF / HER HUSBAND JAMES / REID BORN AUG 1837 DIED OCT 1897 / TELEGRAPH SUPT GSWRY.”

http://www.huntsearch.gla.ac.uk/cgi-bin/foxweb/huntsearch_Mackintosh/DetailedResults.fwx?reqMethod=Search&searchterm=41928

Extracts from Historic Scotland Listing for this gravestone:

Description:

Charles Rennie Mackintosh, 1898.



James Reid Headstone

Rectangular Art Nouveau headstone with central recessed inscribed panel (see Notes) and flanking carved stylised heads. Sandstone with angled corners. Moulding around central panel and exterior edges of stone. Pair of decorative heads with continuous flowing lines down and across headstone. Some carved leaf designs.

References:

3rd Edition Ordnance Survey Map, 1915 (where cemetery is first depicted). Dictionary of Scottish Architects at www.scottisharchitects.org.uk (accessed 01-11-10). Hunterian Museum & Art Gallery Collections: GLAHA 41928 and 52619.

Notes:

This headstone with its fine Art Nouveau decoration is one of few headstones designed by the internationally famous architect Charles Rennie Mackintosh. The stylised heads and font used for the

inscription are typical of Charles Rennie Mackintosh's decorative approach at this time. The use of stylised motifs depicting foliage is also characteristic of the Art Nouveau inspired style Mackintosh used during this period. The stone is situated on the North side of Kilmacolm cemetery. Some sections of the inscription are difficult to decipher, as some of the wording has faded.

Mackintosh designed 4 other headstones, including one to Talwin Morris in Dumbarton (see separate listing).

http://hsewsf.sedsh.gov.uk/hslive/portal.hsstart?P_HBNUM=51677

Photographs reproduced on pages 6, 7 and 9 supplied by Janet Crean.



You can see the contrast of the beautiful red sandstone against the surrounding grey granite tombstones



Art Nouveau Fashion From the Collection of Alexandre Vassiliev Museum of Applied Arts, Vilnius, Lithuania Until 31 October 2013

Art Nouveau is approached from a fresh angle in this sumptuous exhibition on display in Vilnius, Lithuania. It explores the lifestyle and ideas of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries through the ever changing face of fashion. An extensive collection of dresses, shoes, hats, suits, furniture, paintings and accessories have been assembled together to bring alive the world of the Secession period with its elegant aristocratic gentlemen, and elusive mystical ladies. Focussing around the new aesthetic movements and the influences of the Orient, Medieval art, Symbolist literature and the vernacular – this exhibition presents the work of the most famous fashion houses and designers of the time, such as Paul Poiret, Mariano Fortuny, Jacques Doucet and Jeanne Paquin.

From dramatic heavily decorated black evening gowns to everyday frocks of layered pastel-coloured fabrics covered in lace, this collection draws out many surprising facts alongside such varied attire. The result provides the visitor with great insight into the hard reality of looking good. For instance some ladies' outfits took an incredible one and a half hours to assemble perfectly; and the task required to be undertaken three times a day! Broad-brimmed hats were favoured generously decorated with stuffed wings or even a whole bird. Vintage fashion pictures show models with nipped-in waists conforming to the then dominating image of beauty - the 'Gibson Girl' - a feminine ideal of slender flowing lines and fragile complexion but with a confident spirit and playful mind.

With the dawn of modernity fashion changed towards the more practical and comfortable. This exhibition explores how the fashion houses of Paris, Britain and



Dress by Paul Poiret © Jurgita Rudėnaitė 2013

the East were at the forefront of changing forces. Women gradually abandoned corsets under the leadership of Paul Poiret and the support of doctors. Poiret – an incredibly important figure in dress design up to the outbreak of World War I – revolutionised the silhouette of women's clothing and the fashion industry. The ideas prevalent in Secessionist art are reflected through the elegant lines, colour and motifs of the women's dress and decoration. On display you can see the influence of Henri van de



© Jurgita Rudėnaitė 2013

Velde and William Morris on the salons of high fashion in Paris. The inspiration of the Antique and of nature is paramount. Dresses are delicately embroidered with stylised fragments of floral motifs and pastel shades which evoke clouds, sand and young grass. The designs are beautiful, elegant and visionary. The exhibition also looks at the influence of theatrical costume – Léon Bakst's designs for the Ballet Russes in bright greens, purples, reds, oranges, and yellows are reminiscent of the paintings of Fauves' enlivened colour palette.

The cloistered Renaissance building of the Museum of Applied Arts provides an impressive backdrop for the visitor to admire this collection curated by the art historian and connoisseur Alexandre Vassiliev. He has expertly brought together over a hundred varied objects to create the elegant, mysterious atmosphere of the Art Nouveau world and the changes

that came with the dawn of the modern: the abandoned corset, brighter colours, the changing status of women and the correlation between utility and beauty. It is an excellent overview of life in the Belle Époque and how its artistic ideals were brought to life through fashion.

Iveta Jaugaitė



© Jurgita Rudėnaitė 2013



In the Palm of the Hand: The Medal in 19th and 20th century France

Musée d'Orsay

Until 9th June 2013

In the early 1890s the Musée du Luxembourg started to collect medals. Today their collection comprises over two thousand examples and a number of these have been brought to the Musée d'Orsay for this exhibition. These medals offer a rich and varied vision of French society in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, recording all aspects of private and public life from personal anniversaries to scientific inventions.

Art Deco Fair

Eltham Palace, London

11 to 12 May; 7 to 8 September 2013

Visitors have a chance to browse original 1930s objects - from furniture and collectable to hats, handbags and jewellery - in the glamorous surroundings of Eltham Palace, an Art Deco masterpiece.

There are many Art Deco and Art Nouveau Fairs taking place throughout England this year. For more information, visit www.artdecofairs.co.uk.

The First Moderns: Art Nouveau, from Nature to Abstraction

The Sainsbury Centre

for Visual Arts, Norwich

Until 30 September 2013

This exhibition explores the influence of nature on early design and the gradual move to abstract and geometric forms. Curated by Dr. Paul Greenhalgh, the exhibition features masterpieces by Mackintosh, Emile Gallé, Louis Majorelle, René Lalique,

Josef Hoffmann, Alphonse Mucha and many more.

As local journalist Ian Collins jokes, the Sainsbury Centre is 'making amends for East Anglian history', for this region once saw 'the lowest ebb of the Art Nouveau style'. He points out the infamous/unjust arrest of Charles Rennie Mackintosh in Walberswick in 1915 on charges of spying, which led to the artist eventually being banished from the eastern counties. Mackintosh's time in Suffolk was brief, but nevertheless fruitful – he produced a significant body of flower drawings there.

Around the same time a young boy in nearby Aldeburgh was picking up pebbles. This would lead to Sir Colin Anderson's life-long passion for collecting. By the 1970s he and his wife had amassed one of the most extensive private Art Nouveau collections in the country. They later donated their collection to the Sainsbury Centre. Highlights of which are here set alongside major loans from the Victoria and Albert Museum, Glasgow School of Art and private collectors.

For more information on the exhibition, go to www.scva.ac.uk.

Round-up by Nijole Ukelyte

Do you know of any exhibitions, talks or events you think members would like to hear about? Please email details to: newsletter@crmsociety.com.

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