



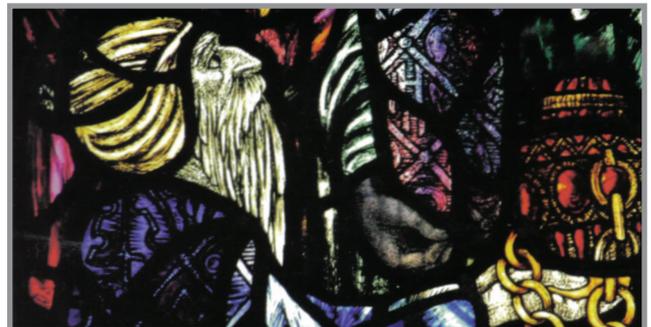
The 2012 conference explored churches on the north and south banks of the Clyde estuary. As Scotland lost much of its medieval glass in the years following the Reformation, and it was not until the 1840s that the Presbyteria taboo against stained glass was broken, the windows here are late 19th–20th century ... notably from James Ballantine & Sons, Stephen Adam, his pupil Alf Webster and his son Gordon, Daniel Cottier, the Glasgow Boys (Guthrie & Co.), C. R. Mackintosh and the Glasgow School, to Douglas Strachan and lately John Clark.

Friday On the first day out we headed along the south bank of the Clyde. The first stop was the 12th C **Paisley Abbey** founded by Cluniac Monks from Wenlock in Shropshire. The cradle of the Stewart dynasty, much of it is actually 19th C having been largely restored twice ... first after being destroyed by the English, then after the Reformation when it fell into ruin for 300 years. The West 'Munich' window, by Franz Fries, is the last of the glazing scheme put in during the 19th C rebuilding at the behest of Charles Winston (who thought it represented a 'higher state of artistry'), but after complaints by Scottish artists (who called it the 'Glasgow insult') gradually replaced by Scottish work from Cottier, Ballantine, Adam, and Guthrie & Wells; there is also a fine selection of A&C glass: Burne-Jones' 'Virtuous woman' and several others by Morris & Co., and a 1909 Louis Davis 'Life of St Margaret' in blues and purples (colours associated with Scotland) and using silvery-white glass as the 'highest note' in the colour scheme to impart a silvery glow, in the Whall tradition. There are several too by Clayton & Bell (e.g. the great North window '*Te Deum*' depicting tiers of patriarchs and prophets), and a 1931 Herbert Hendrie (a pupil of Karl Parsons), and one by John Duncan, a symbolist (also a painter) with a background of celtic knotwork. The great East window of Christ enthroned is by Strachan and, the latest addition, the vividly glowing 1988 Shaw memorial window is by John Clark (detail below).



The Clark family – the 'thread barons' of Paisley (a cloth centre famous for its 'paisley pattern') – were generous benefactors of the next church: the **Clark Memorial Church in Largs**, built in 1892 with their donation of £30 000. The fine interior has an intricate structure of roof timbers ... the result of the Clarks' stipulation that 'there should be no pillars to obscure the view of worshippers', with beautifully carved angels and wood panelling. The chancel window is by Meikle & Sons of Glasgow, and is reminiscent of Ballantine. The West window 'The Preacher', with its Aesthetic Movement tertiary colour scheme (olives and sage greens, browns, muted blues, fiery reds) is by Stephen Adam Sr, who was in the forefront of the Glasgow glass scene after Daniel Cottier left for London. There is also a Christopher Whall 'Moses' design from his middle period when he was starting his use of foliage canopywork; it was made by J & W Guthrie as Whall was busy with other projects, but he was disappointed with the result and resolved to oversee his windows much more closely in future - he reused the cartoons for Falkirk, and this time insisted on doing the painting and supervising the leading himself.

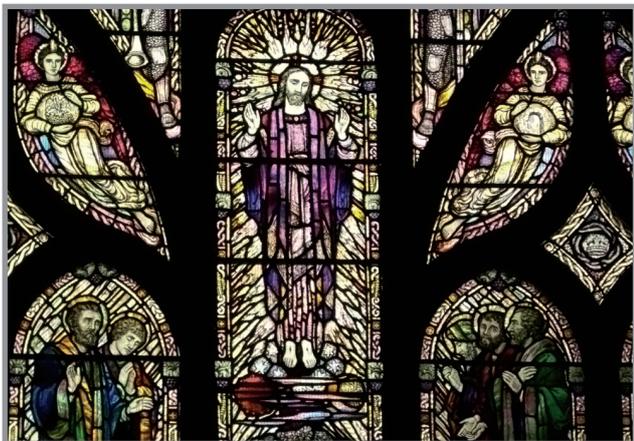
Largs was once a favoured holiday centre of the Firth of Clyde where many rich Glaswegians had summer houses, and so has some other fine churches. **St John's**, a Romanesque-style design by A J Graham, dates to 1886; it has several small early windows by Strachan, and others by Douglas Hamilton, Heaton, Butler & Bayne and Sadie McLellan. In **St Columba's** (where we had a splendid lunch!) Peter Cormack compared the tertiary colours of Aesthetic artists such as Cottier (W gallery) and Adam (S gallery Rose) with those of A&C who reacted against this usage and went for brilliant colours in antique/slab glass; Douglas Stachan's windows in the S aisle and N transept are examples of this, and also show how his style also became progressively graphic, using leading as part of the design to create shard-like shapes and produce an angular dynamic (detail top left). On the N wall there are two lancets by Gordon Webster (detail below), who was influenced by Stachan, and who became head of the Stephen Adam studio after his father Alf Webster was killed in WWI.



Back to the coach past Nardini's Cafe, where the hardier amongst us sampled their famous ice creams despite gusty winds, then off to **Skelmorlie**, enjoying fine sea views, to the 1895 church by John Honeyman with wrought iron lamp by C R Mackintosh at the entrance steps. Inside, in the S aisle, was an early Alf Webster for the Adam studio in Aesthetic style, and for comparison some in his mature A&C style. A Douglas Strachan of 'Christ stilling the waves' in blues and greens, had seaweed fronds straying into the quarries in typically A&C fashion.

The final stop was Greenock, a former shipbuilding town where the **Old West Kirk** on the esplanade was moved and rebuilt in 1926 after Harland & Wolf bought the site to extend their shipyard. Here are 16 outstanding windows including designs by William Morris and others of his circle: Burne-Jones' 'Faith', 'Music', 'The Adoration of the Lamb' and 'Caritas', and 'Hope' by Daniel Cottier, and several others by Phillip Webb, Rossetti and Ford Maddox Brown. Here also a treat awaited: a sumptuous high tea with cakes in abundance – all in all a veritable feast for A&C lovers! There are also several windows by Ballantine, the use here of enamels and pictorial treatment with little canopywork showing he was well aware both of the Munich tradition and of the designs then acceptable to the Church of Scotland.

SATURDAY Day 2 took us along the Clyde north bank, first to Bearsden (a wealthy Glasgow suburb), where **New Kilpatrick Parish Church** (dating from 1648 but enlarged in the early 19th C by Gillespie Graham) houses an outstanding collection of stained glass of which an 1884 Good Samaritan by Vincent Hart, who worked for Cottier, is the earliest. It was interesting here to compare the various Stephen Adams and Alf Webster windows of different dates: the East window is a major Adam window with a heavy Burne-Jones influence, then as his health was failing in 1909 Adam made Webster a partner in his studio, and a 1910 Adam shows the latter's influence. Webster's 1915 window 'The first fruits' is a tribute to Adam, and his son Gordon (aged 5) is the child in it. Whereas Webster's two windows on the East side have a strong Adam influence, his later style became more A&C influenced (possibly because A.E. Lemmon of Bromsgrove Guild fame was working under him in the Adam studio) and he moved towards using heavy leading, interesting quarrywork, foliate canopies and more use of white glass. Strachan was another major influence on Webster, and there is a major late Strachan 'The way of the cross' (1949) here in the N transept. Other glass is by JT & CE Stewart (below), Guthrie & Wells, Norman McDougall, and Eilidh Keith.



From Bearsden we travelled along the coast road to Helensburgh, with its splendid views down river to the Rosneath Peninsula and beyond into the Firth of Clyde. Helensburgh was a planned, grid-pattern town, its upper part containing the former mansions of the wealthy merchant classes, one of which was our next stop, **Hill House**. This was Charles Rennie Mackintosh's seminal building for publisher Walter Blackie, built in 1902-3 as a complete statement of his vision of modern design based on functionality ... his attention to the tiniest details such as the coded use of colour through glass, walls, textiles and furniture producing an overall visual unity and serenity. The use of new building materials proved a headache for successive owners, with significant surface deterioration, but since passing to the National Trust some 30 years ago the house has been gradually restored. I was entranced by its magical quality, and sad not to stay longer.

On to **Saint Modan's Church, Rosneath**, we took a scenic route along the shores of the Gareloch past the Trident submarine shed at Faslane. (Was it at home?, I wondered, though it was impossible to tell.) The plain 1854 structure, by David Cousin, replaced a church considered too elaborate Post-Reformation. Princess Louise, Queen Victoria's daughter, was a generous benefactress of this church, gifting it the reredos of the Last Supper by Meredith Williams, her mother's bible, and 100 guineas for the chancel East window. This is a Stephen Adam Studio window, cartooned by Leonard Walker who had joined the studio after Alf Webster's death. In design it looks forward to the Louis Davis tradition with figures 'straying' into the borders. In the S transept are two windows by Douglas Strachan showing scenes from Christ's life. The earlier one (1906) has a 'Scottish version' of Whall's foliate canopies and interesting glazing patterns (though possibly the work of Douglas's brother Alexander who worked with him until he left for the ECA, and who may also have worked in the Whall studio), in contrast, the later window shows the beginning of his graphic simplification of the figures' features, using colour and line to produce drama and a sense of intense motion. An early window by A Maitland (1862), the chancel East window by

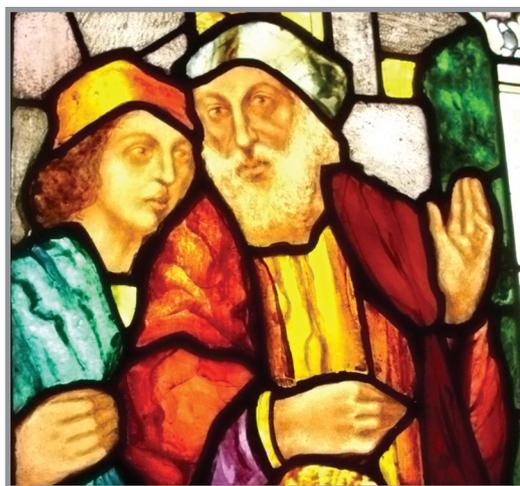
Clayton & Bell, and windows by Gordon Webster (1976) and a recent Crear McCartney (1996) are also of interest.

From here, we returned to Helensburgh for a final stop. The first church, **St Michael & All Angels** (1882), was designed by Rowand Anderson in French gothic style with a varied collection of glass by C E Kempe, Clayton & Bell, Shrigley & Hunt and Charles Gow. On the W wall are two windows cartooned by Alex Walker for the Stephen Adam studio; the one on the left, with red robes, apparently has a plating on the reverse with stain. In the chancel is some English-style glass by Adam Small cartooned by Harry Burrow, who also worked for Powell. The glass has lost much of its paint, a result of the experimental use of borax during this period. While Peter Cormack gave advice to the church on this problem, others were more interested in the iPad that Rose, one of the student delegates, was using to photograph the windows (above).



(Photo C. Boyce)

A final tea-and-cakes break followed at **St Andrew's**, Helensburgh's parish church. This handsome building is by J & J Hay and has glass by Gordon Webster (both his transitional style and later style with dark eyes). In the S transept is a memorial window by Arthur Spiers to TV inventor Logie-Baird (a son of Helensburgh). A five-light rear gallery memorial to former Prime Minister Bonar Law and his wife (who worshipped here) showing workers in a vineyard is by Oscar Paterson; this once-popular artist also made many domestic windows and was noted for using a mixture of painted and unpainted glass, with his leading doing most of the design work - though there is some disparity between his realistically painted faces and his use of antique streaky glass *a la* Tiffany to suggest drapery (detail below).



One of the most interesting experimental glass artists in the Glasgow area, between the wars his reputation was eclipsed and he died almost a pauper. On the right of the nave, a King David with lyre is also possibly Paterson's work.

Back to Glasgow after this, to rest our spinning heads (and stomachs) a little before the conference dinner.

SUNDAY This was a day for those who wished to explore the various glass collections around Glasgow. Some went off to the Burrell collection or the Cathedral. I opted for the Kelvingrove Art Gallery, which had a fine collection of Mackintosh interiors, but not much other glass, so strolling past Glasgow School of Art, I could not resist popping in for a nose around. Finally, to drink in the exotic atmosphere of the one remaining Mackintosh tea room (**Willow**) saved in situ from the demolishments of 1960s planning schemes, I treated myself to a last cuppa accompanied (one more time) by that fine Scottish tradition ... a piece of cake!