



**NICOLAS BOYES STONE CONSERVATION LTD.  
SPRING 2014 NEWSLETTER**

I am delighted to report that we, at Nicolas Boyes Stone Conservation, have not stopped since our last newsletter went out in the Autumn. All of the projects listed as current works in the last newsletter have all been successfully completed and we have continued with many more exciting projects including condition surveys, museum documentation and research, practical conservation works, carved stonework and much more. Here is a small snippet from our last six months of work.

Nic Boyes (ACR), Director

**NBSC SELECTION OF COMPLETED WORKS  
AUTUMN 2013 - SPRING 2014**



### **Argyll Mausoleum, Argyll: Project Completed December 2013**

We have now completed the conservation of the rich variety of artefacts in several media from the Argyll Mausoleum Collection in our care and have also undertaken the conservation works to the interior of the mausoleum. The left-hand image shows two of our conservators undertaking the conservation works to a very special electrotype sculpture by Princess Louise, daughter of Queen Victoria. The artefacts are now on display in a purpose-built museum at Kilmun Church, adjacent to the Argyll Mausoleum.

A short news clip about the work at Argyll Mausoleum is available to view on the news page of our website, please click [here](#) to view.



### **Glasgow School of Art:**

#### **Project Completed December 2013**

NBSC has now completed the work to remove, recondition and replace the distinctive tall library windows on the west elevation of Charles Rennie Mackintosh's Glasgow School of Art. The successful completion of this project required a multi-skilled workforce including conservators, metal-workers, stone-masons, specialist glaziers, joiners and specialist scaffolding sub-contractors.



### **The Burrell Collection Architectural Fragments Project:**

**November 2013 - March 2014**

The Burrell Collection, said to be one of the greatest collections of art and artefacts ever created by one person, is based in an award-winning purpose-built museum in Pollock Park, Glasgow. NBSC was commissioned to undertake an extensive documentation and research project and to disseminate the findings through a series of workshops.

The project focused on the 'architectural fragments' of the collection, both on display in the museum and in their component parts in the museum stores. The architectural fragments included, but were not limited to, archways, windows, portals, panelling, fireplaces and corbels. For each full item every individual block of stone or section of wood was recorded. The research phase involved working through the collection archives to try to solve some of the mysteries of the collection and identify some of the unknown items, such as why was an archway built with two new stone replacements when the missing piece was present in the museum store?

Alongside the research phase the NBSC team and Dr. Peter Burman, in close collaboration with Glasgow Museums, organised a series of seminars in January, February and March. To find out more about the project and see what was discussed at the seminars please go to the news page of our website ([click here](#)) and download the PDF report which covers all three.



### **Cupar Market Cross, Fife:**

**Project Completed January 2014**

The Cupar Market Cross was carefully taken down, moved 5 metres to provide room for a wider road junction. The Mercat Cross was then rebuilt using traditional masonry skills and experience. The unicorn received a



new stainless steel horn that was gilded.

**St. Giles Cathedral, Edinburgh:  
Phase 8a Completed November  
2013, Phase 8b Completed March  
2014**

NBSC has undertaken two additional phases of cleaning works to the interior walls of St. Giles Cathedral alongside other small scale conservation works.



**NBSC SELECTION OF CURRENT PROJECTS**



**Kelvin Way Bridge, Kelvingrove Park, Glasgow: Project Started February  
2014**

NBSC is undertaking remedial masonry works to Kelvin Way Bridge and conservation of the bronze statues that feature on each of the four bridge piers. Parts of the bridge and one of the statue groups were blown into the River Kelvin below when a direct hit from a German Bomber in WWII so we have much to do before the Commonwealth Games.

**Rosslyn Castle, Midlothian:  
Project Starting May 2014**

NBSC has begun the preparation for major masonry and conservation works starting in May



2014 to stabilise several retaining walls around Rosslyn Castle including the consolidation of the impressive fragment of the ruin known as 'the hammer' (lower image). Rosslyn Castle, mainly built around 1450, is both Category A Listed and a Scheduled Ancient Monument.

### **New Kilpatrick Church, Bearsden, East Dunbartonshire: Project Started March 2014**

The work includes the selective deconstruction of this beautiful war memorial that is constructed of limestone, marble and sandstone. Rusting metal fixings are being replaced, graffiti is being removed and we are busy repainting several thousand carved letters.

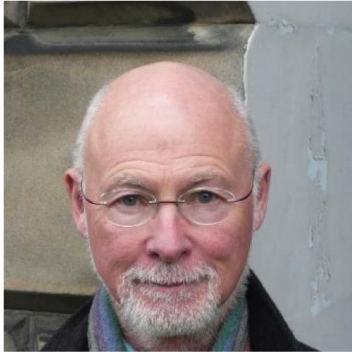


### **Atholl Memorial Fountain, Dunkeld, Perthshire: Project Started December 2013**

Conservation and reconstruction work to fountain for the National Trust for Scotland. The elaborate fountain is a key monument in the main square of one of the most beautiful of Scotland's smaller historic burghs. Collaborating with the

Trust's building surveyors is always a very special experience, and there has been a stimulating dialogue between us all.

## REFLECTIONS



**Dr. Peter Burman MBE FSA, advisor to Nicolas Boyes Stone Conservation on policy and on art historical and philosophical aspects of the firm's work, has contributed the following reflections:**

'For me, working on planning, organizing, collaborating on and facilitating the three seminars focusing on the Burrell Collection's architectural fragments – those on display in the galleries, those fixed into the fabric, and those in the capacious store in the basement of the Burrell – has been one of the outstanding preoccupations of the winter, and immensely worthwhile. For one thing, we had some quite outstanding speakers, and the flavour and gist of what was said can be caught in the document now available online and referred to above. But of exceptional value was the 'dynamic' of these occasions – between 25-30 people from across the Glasgow Museums Service sitting down together with people from across the whole gamut of the wider cultural heritage field in Scotland and beyond. We met in the principal room of the largely unused Director's Flat, itself a fine room of the 1980s, and we became more and more appreciative of the fine qualities of the building (to the extent that I have rejoined DoCoMoMo!) as well as understanding the architectural elements of the collection better. I was immensely impressed by the 'openness' of our Glasgow Life colleagues, led by Mark Roberts, and by the opportunity to place precious archive material

alongside the artefacts. The discussions were lively and often profound. We also touched on many aspects of conservation principles that were relevant to other categories of artefacts in the nation's collections. We constantly reverted to the important topic of the levels and modes of interpretation that are appropriate to different circumstances. We definitely 'grew the knowledge' of the architectural fragments. We examined closely Sir William Burrell's Memorandum of Wishes and his Will, and amongst many other insights we began to realize that the contribution of his wife, Lady Constance, had been much greater than has been acknowledged until now. For me, such multi-disciplinary gatherings, especially in circumstances where trust and openness exist or are encouraged, as here, are of immense importance to the continuing development of conservation theory and practice. Moreover, it seems that NBSC has become a leader amongst conservation teams of bringing professional people together – as we did also at Rosslyn Chapel – engaging with them, promoting research and discussion, pushing the boundaries of knowledge forward. Furthermore, we all seemed to enjoy it!

NBSC would like to congratulate Peter on his fantastic recent article *'Berlin's historic gas lighting system and its lamps and lanterns – a bright or a dim future?'* which made the cover of the Spring 2014 SPAB Magazine.

Peter adds: 'The article also draws attention to the impressive number of working gas lamps in London – for example a superb pair of pagoda-like lanterns either side of the main steps of the National Gallery in Trafalgar Square (but how many visitors notice

that they are still lit by gas?), literally hundreds in Covent Garden, many around Buckingham Palace and in the Royal Parks and especially in The Mall (where some of the lamp posts still bear the cypher of King William IV and a few even of George IV), St James's Park, Green Park and so on. These are precious survivals. In Berlin, the 42,500 working gas lamps might become a collective World Heritage Site alongside four historic railway systems (India and Switzerland) and the Rideau Canal, Canada. The concept of World Heritage, and what precisely constitutes Outstanding Universal Value (OUV), is evolving all the time.'

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