



Trades House of Glasgow

Heritage Newsletter No 6

June 2024



NEW AQUISITIONS

On the retirement of Paul Carney as Clerk to the North Parish Washing Green Society, the archives of the Society have been left in the care of the Trades House Archives. We have also been asked to look after Society's 'podger', an instrument formerly used during washing by hand by the ladies of the Parish.

The Trades House also houses the Society's Charter chest and it can be viewed in the South Gallery by arrangement.



THE WASHING-GREEN AND CATHEDRAL

The North Parish Washing Green Society is an ancient society and has strong links to the Trades House. The washing green was located at the rear of Glasgow Cathedral and was purchased in April 1872 when the Heritors of the North Quarter decided to equip and manage a washing green on the banks of the Molendinar burn with any profits being used for the benefit of the poor in the parish.

A list of charges can be found in the small booklet "*Living History in Glasgow*" available at: www.tradeshouselibrary.org/uploads/4/7/7/2/47723681/booklet_1_001.pdf

Things were not always friendly as in 1803 serious complaints arose regarding the steeping of lint, in preparation for the weaving of linen, in Hogganfield Loch. This caused the Molendinar Burn to be unfit for washing in, and so the Sheriff issued an order in favour of the Society, who erected a dam across the stream to render it more serviceable.

By 1873 the greens were becoming unsuitable for their original purpose and were sold to the Royal Infirmary for £3,005. The Society has continued to support the poor in the North Parish from that date to today.

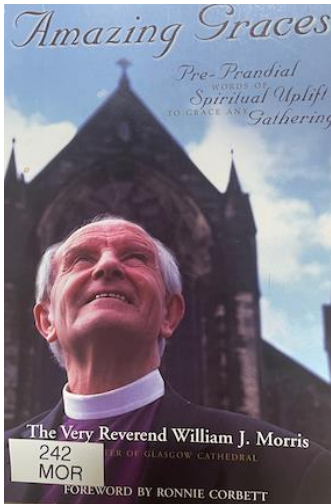
One of the songs that used to be sung by the members of the North Parish Washing Green Society as well as the Trades House, the Fourteen Incorporations, the Grand Antiquity Society, the Association of Deacons and the Trades House Lodge was "*The Molendinar, the Burgess Song of Glasgow*", The words were written by The Rev. Robert MacOmish, B.D. and the music composed by Geo. Henry Martin. This great old Glasgow song, with music, can be found at:

www.tradeshouselibrary.org/uploads/4/7/7/2/47723681/the_molendinar_001.pdf.

Wouldn't it be nice to hear this song sung at some of the Choosing Dinners etc.

LIBRARY

***Amazing Graces: pre-prandial words of spiritual uplift to grace any gathering*, by the Very Reverend William J, Morris, published in 2001**



Stuck for a suitable grace to say at a House or any other dinner? It's worth taking a look at *Amazing Graces* by the Very Reverend William (Bill) J. Morris (1925-2013), a former minister of Glasgow Cathedral. As minister to the cathedral William Morris was invited to a great many formal dinners and asked to give the grace. It was when he was travelling to the annual dinner of the Chartered Accountants of Scotland being held in Glasgow that it dawned on him that he could give the grace in rhyme and from that time onwards he became acclaimed for his amusing rhyming graces. The book was published in 2001 with the support of the Trades House of Glasgow. Fittingly the first chapter is devoted to graces relating to the House in general and also some of the Crafts, including the Incorporations of Bakers, Bonnetmakers and Dyers, Cordiners, Gardeners, Hammermen, Tailors,

Weavers, Wrights and Masons. Apart from the House and its Crafts there are graces devoted to industry and business, sport, schools and education, the church and clubs and societies amongst others.

An example of Morris's verse is the following grace composed for a dinner of the Incorporation of Hammermen:

Edward – 'Hammer of the Scots'
Tied Wallace – and himself – in knots.
Hammers hit nails upon the head;
We sometimes hit our thumbs instead.

Lord, may all craftsmen's arts still stand
By hammer held in skilful hand,
Bringing delight and honest gain
Nor ever causing ill or pain.

As we are blessed with these good gifts,
His heart with thanks each craftsman lifts.

If you wish to look at this book or to see if there is a suitable grace for your Craft, please contact: Info@tradeshouse.co.uk

MUSEUM UPDATE



Damaged Section of Buchanan Frame

It's hugely positive that despite being under almost constant use as a venue for corporate events, weddings etc., the historic fabric of the building remains in remarkably good condition. That said, wear and tear is inevitable and a recent example of damage to the decorative frame of the Buchanan portrait hung just outside of the grand hall is a case in point. The frame had clearly taken a bashing - when and why remains a mystery. Whether the broken

pieces could have reused is unclear because the pieces had been swept away but in the event a reasonable (in house) repair was made possible without incurring substantial



Repaired Section of Buchanan Frame

charges from the services of external conservators. Going forward if anyone does notice anything please inform one of the House Officers to enable repairs to be carried out timeously.

HISTORY OF THE TRADES HOUSE AND CRAFTS

A few wee interesting stories taken from *Extracts from the Records of the Burgh of Glasgow* edited by Robert Renwick, volumes V and VI, 1909 and 1911.

27 July 1731 ~ Featuring the Cordiners and Dyers

Anent the petition given in by the tanners, bearing that they are injured by the black and red liquor thrown into the Molendinar burn by the dyers, which renders the burn useless both to them and the other inhabitants, and therefore craving for preventing of future injury that the dyers may be obliged to dig a small pitt and built with course stones of two ellnes deep and one ell over which may receive all their black and red liquor, or in any other way the councill shall judge convenient; which beind heard by the councill they remitt the said petition to the magistrats [and others] to consider thereupon and give orders and directions thereanent.

24 September 1739 ~ Bakers to mark their bread with a letter

The magistrats and toun council [referring to the act dated 28th August last, *antea* p. 28] do now funder statute and ordain that the baxters for the future affix upon their bread the inital letters of the bakers name, and upon the several sorts, whether wheat, wheaten or household, the letters following, vizt., the letter F on the white bread, the letter W on the wheaten bread, and the letter H on the household bread; as also affix distinct figures, such as I for a penny loaf, II for a two penny loaf, and so furth for larger loafs; and likeways agree and ordain that there be scales and weights provided and fixed in the clerks chamber for weighing the bread, and that any of the inhabitants who have any suspicion of the weight of the bread furnisht to them may bring the same to the clerks chamber to be weighted, and if found light do impower the magistrats to pay for the loaf and give half a croun of reward to the person who brings the loaf found light, and to draw precepts upon the master of work for repayment thereof, and remit to the magistrats to cause make intimation hereof to the baxters and all concerned that they may not pretend ignorance, and to fine and punish the baxters who are transgressors in terms of the act of parliament.

22 October 1739 ~ Fleshers and the Candlemakers

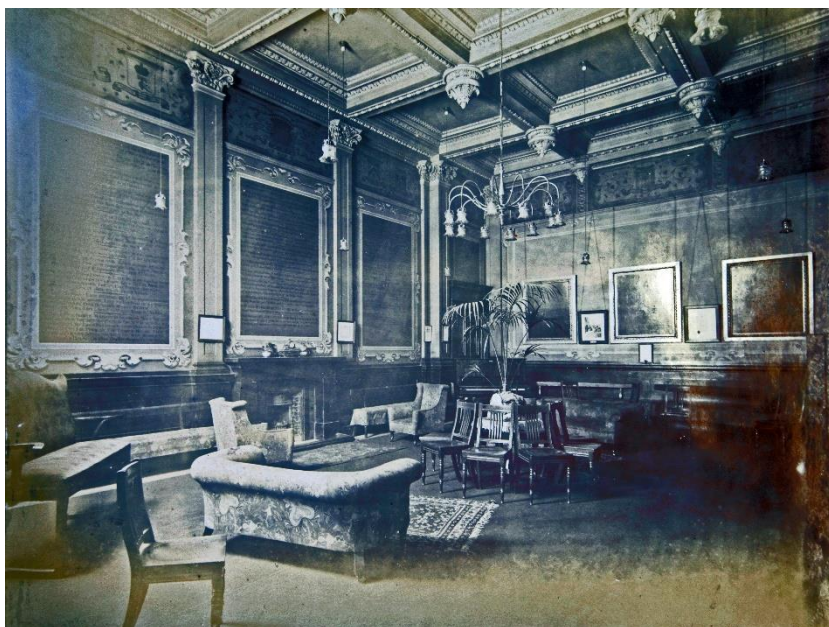
...to see that the fleshers deliver to the candlemakers the tallow twice a week, for preventing dammage the tallow may sustain by its being longer kept, and that the candlemakers do receive the same accordingly; and do statute that the weight of each cake of tallow that the fleshers make do not exceed four stone; and appoint Robert Leitch, baillie, Robert Finlay and James Nisbitt to take the oversight and inspection of the candle, for the year ensuing, if they be sufficiently made and of the tallow and materials whereof the candle is made and that the same be sufficient stuff, and to confiscat what of the candle they find insufficient and fine and punish the transgressors.

TOURS FOR MASTER COURTS AND MEMBERS

The Heritage team would be delighted to give tailored tours of the Trades Hall to Master Courts and/or members. This might be a nice way of introducing new members to the Trades Hall's history. To book a tour, please contact the Trades House office by phoning: 0141 553 1605.

Trades Hall Tours

Saloon Notes



- **Saloon Construction**, in 1794 when the Trades Hall opened, the Saloon did not exist. It was added in 1838 by the architect David Hamilton. The Hall had only stood for 40 years when it needed modernisation and expansion. Cloakroom accommodation was created below the Saloon and a Schoolroom above.
- **Saloon First Used** on 1 October 1838.
- **Further alterations and refurbishment of the Saloon** took place under the architect John Keppie in 1916. We are fortunate in having

photographs of the Saloon from before 1916 and these show the ornate plasterwork as designed by David Hamilton.

- **The Present Ceiling** was installed in 1955 by Walter Underwood. The original ceiling had become badly cracked and had become dangerous and eventually had to be taken down.
- **Spanish Mahogany Panelling** was added by John Keppie in 1916 and was used to record donations to the Trades House and crafts. This continued the tradition from the Alms House and previous Saloon to have text on the walls.
- **The first recorded donation** is for 1000 merks. 1 merk is 2/3rds of a Scots Pound and one Scots Pound equalled 1/12th of an English Pound. It is worth spending some time looking at the donations and reasons for the giving.
- **White Marble Adams' fireplace** was taken from the Grand Hall and placed in the Saloon when it was remodelled by John Keppie in 1915.
- **Carved Onyx Clock** sits above the fireplace and was specially commissioned to commemorate the coronation of Queen Elizabeth the second in 1953.
- **Ex-Deacon Convener Percival Agnew's Fire Screen** sits in front of the fireplace. This was worked by his own hands and shows the modern Arms of the Trades House.
- **The Electroliers** came from the former Grosvenor Restaurant in Gordon Street after it was destroyed by fire in 1970.
- **Deacon Convener's Chair of State** was designed by David Hamilton and dates from 1819. It has 14 well-polished silver shields engraved with the Coats of Arms of the Incorporated Trades. At the top of the chair the 14 arrows with the motto "Union is Strength" reflects the Trades logo and motto.

Two smaller chairs, designed by John Keppie, are in the form of old Scotch Deacons' Chairs. The two Chairs - one for the Late Deacon-Convener, and the other for the Collector – are lumpy in character, and the workmanship, with its oak pins, is in the traditional manner. The front of the back of the Chairs bears the coat of arms of the Trades House with mantling, while the back is enriched with the coat of arms of the craft of the donor, in one case the Bakers and in the other case the Wrights, and a long panel of lettering containing the dedication.

- **Stained Glass Windows** were added as part of John Keppie's design in 1916 and were manufactured by Glasgow glass stainers and decorators Guthrie and Wells. From Left to Right:

- Mary Queen of Scots due to her benefaction to the city. She gave Blackfriars Monastery as the new premises for Glasgow University and in 1556 conferred many privileges on Craftsmen. Donated by Late Deacon Convener A. Graham Service.
 - Deacon Convener William Beattie (elected in 1913) is shown dressed as a Burgess of 1604/5. Presented by himself.
 - King James VI, the monarch at the time of the creation of the House, who granted the famous letter of 28th November, 1606, commanding an equality of Merchants and Craftsmen in the Town Council of Glasgow. This window was presented by Collector Jackson Millar.
- The Saloon is used as the meeting place of the 64 trustees when there are Trades House meetings, the room being laid out in a parliamentary style.