

Incorporation of Masons of Glasgow

John Morrison Deacon 1885-82



January—March 2026



Incorporation of Masons of Glasgow

January—March 2026



Front Cover: The jewel of one of our past Deacons from the 19th Century – see Page 11.

From the Editor: This is my last newsletter as Jonathan Buchan will be taking over so if you have any news, photos, articles, etc please email: jonathanbuchan1975@hotmail.co.uk

Can I thank everyone who has assisted in one way or another? It was interesting to start the project, and I hope it continues for a while yet. I have absolutely no doubt, Jonathan will appreciate any help.



Great view of Trades Hall and other well-known areas. Just click above to go the website.

St. Enoch's Church



St Enoch's Church looking south across St Enoch Square, c 1797 where the subway station now sits. The foundation stone of St Enoch's was laid on April 12th 1780 with Past Deacon of the [The Incorporation of Wrights in Glasgow](#), James Jaffrey, as architect and Past Deacon of the Masons, Alexander Broom, as builder (who also submitted plans to design Trades House of Glasgow. His brothers (?) Robert and Andrew were members of the Masons). The foundation stone of St Enoch's was laid on April 12th 1780. Built about twenty years after St Andrew's Church, it is similar in style.

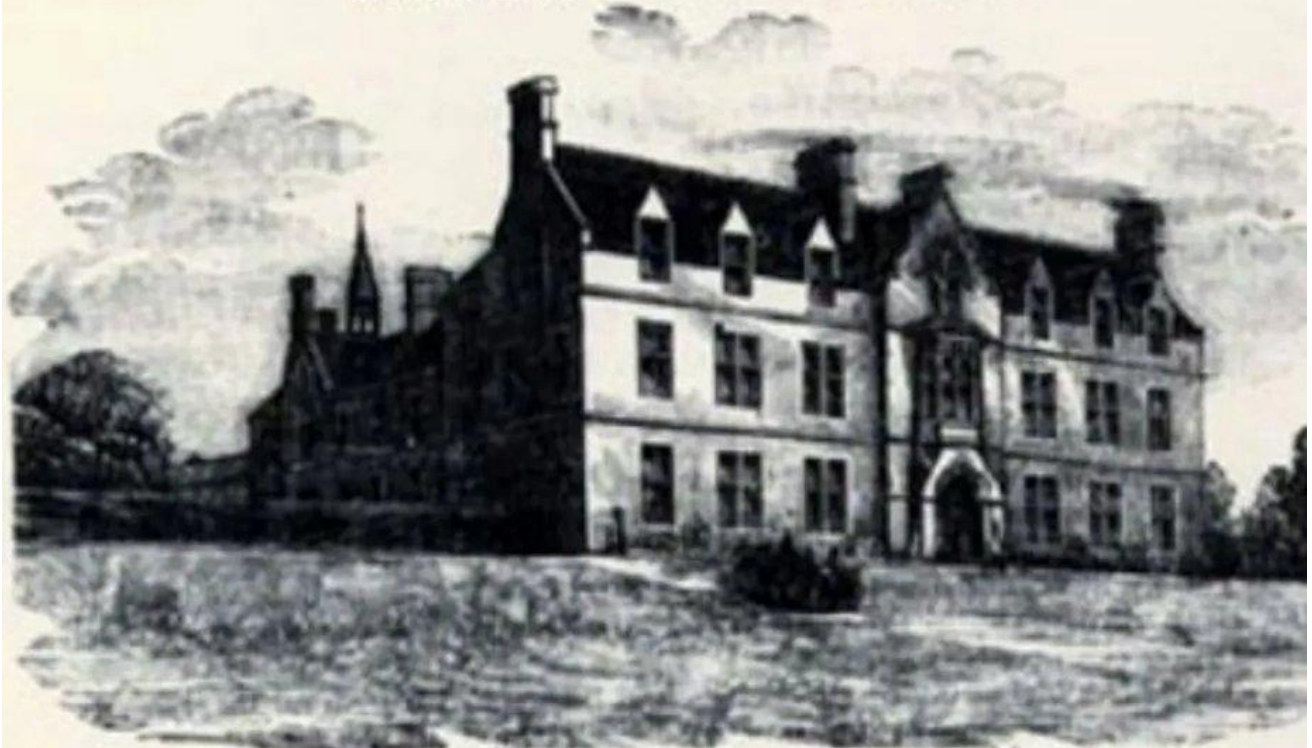
Enoch is a corruption of Thenew or Theneu, who was the mother of Glasgow's patron saint St Kentigern (also known by his nickname, Mungo), and the church was built on the site supposed to be that of an earlier church situated on or near her burial place. It was rebuilt in 1827, retaining the old spire, and demolished in 1925 when the congregation moved to St Enoch's Hogganfield.

The Surgeons' Hall was built the same year as building of Trades Hall was started in 1791. It can be seen on the left of the picture with four columns above its main entrance, on the east side of the square. The east side of the square was demolished in the 1870s to make way for St Enoch Station and is today the site of the St Enoch Shopping Centre.



Glasgow Magdalene Institution.

INCORPORATED BY ROYAL CHARTER.



The original Glasgow Magdalene Asylum was set up in 1812 in Parliamentary Road (above but now gone but roughly through City of Glasgow College and Buchanan Street Bus Station) in response to increasing worries regarding prostitution, venereal diseases and the moral health of the country. For the powers that be the obvious way to combat these ills was to incarcerate women, not in a punitive institution but in a 'voluntary' institution such as the Magdalene Asylum. As the biblical reference in the name suggests the institute was based on the premise that these women could be redeemed and 'saved' from their life of immorality and possible early death. The women in the asylum were generally termed as prostitutes; however, it should be noted that this term was used in a very loose manner encompassing not only women who sold sex for money but also single mothers, socialists, mill girls and girls dressed 'immorally'.



In 1859 the Magdalene Asylum evolved into the Magdalene Institution, and, as a result of the Glasgow System became increasingly busy. The term Glasgow System encompasses the Contagious Diseases Act (whereby a woman could be forced by plain clothes policemen to be tested for venereal diseases; if she refused, she could be brought in front of court having to prove that she did not sleep with men), the Lock Hospital (where women were treated for venereal diseases and were presumed to be 'prostitutes') and the Magdalene Institute.

In 1958 'wayward girls' were being placed in the Magdalene Institute in its final incarnation in Maryhill. Women were placed here by parents or probation officers and were subject to moral and general education and industrial training. In September 1958 the Glasgow Herald reported women escaping from the Institute, alleging ill treatment. The matter was looked into by the Secretary of State for Scotland and the institution was closed shortly after.

It was designed by James Cleland who was Clerk to the Incorporation and whose father was a Deacon.



Past Deacon David Hamilton

1798 David Hamilton Mason Burgess and Guild Brother, by purchase

1812 William Hamilton Architect as eldest son to David Hamilton

1824 John Hamilton Mason B. and G.B., as son to David Hamilton,

1841 James Hamilton Mason B. and G.B., as son to David Hamilton

Deacon in 1808

Master of an operative masons' lodge (3bis still in existence).

Universally regarded as the 'father of Glasgow's architecture', he originally worked as a mason before becoming an architect when he was in his 30s. He worked as an assistant to Robert and James Adam on their Glasgow Buildings, including the Trades House (1791-4) which he extended by building the saloon in 1834.

He made his name with Hutchesons' Hospital (1802-5) and became a prolific country house designer, often working for Scotland's aristocracy, such as the Duke of Hamilton, for whom he redesigned Hamilton Palace (1825, dem. 1928).

He also designed country retreats for Glasgow's wealthy merchants, as well as their palatial commercial premises, town houses, stock exchange and theatre. Much of his finest work in Glasgow has been destroyed. Amongst the greatest losses are:

- The Theatre Royal, Queen Street (1804, dem. 1827)
- a plain building at the corner of Ingram Street and Montrose Street (1805, dem. 1982)



- Gorbals John Knox Church, 25 Carlton Place (1806, dem. 1968?)
- Gothic alterations to the Tolbooth, Trongate (1814, dem. c. 1921)
- Scotstoun House, Dumbarton Road (1825, dem. c. C.19th)
- St Enoch's Parish Church, St Enoch Square (1827, dem. 1925)
- British Linen Bank, 110 Queen Street (1838-9, dem. 1967-8)
- Union Bank, Ingram Street (1841-2, altered 1876).

His surviving work includes:

- Nelson Monument, Glasgow Green (1805-7), the world's first 'official' public memorial to the great Admiral (restored 2002)
- Camphill House, Queen's Park (1810)
- Royal Exchange (now GOMA) (1827)
- Mosesfield, Springburn Park (1838)
- Cleland Testimonial Building (1834)
- Western Club House, Buchanan Street (1840).

Hamilton was closely involved with the development of the Necropolis, Glasgow's greatest graveyard, for which he designed its gates and Bridge of Sighs (1838, in collaboration with his son, James) and the Egyptian Vaults (1837).

He also entered major local and national design competitions. In 1809, he produced an elegant, but rejected, Classical design for Glasgow's Municipal Buildings, Courthouse and Jail, Saltmarket (1809, later the High Court of Justiciary) and a sprawling Tudoresque design for the Houses of Parliament, London (1836), which was placed third.

He brought his sons, James, William (d. 1827) and John into the firm, the former becoming his partner, as David & James Hamilton, and the latter as the manager of his marble business, which was run in association with William Mossman I and James Cleland.

His most important pupils were Charles Wilson, J T Rothead and Thomas Gildard who later published reminiscences of Hamilton's personality and practice. A leading member of the city's beau monde, he was a member of the Dilettante Society and entertained the city's visiting celebrities. Such was the high esteem in which he was held by his contemporaries, that the city held a public dinner in his honour in 1840, during which he was presented with a gold casket containing £500; and such has been the endurance of his reputation, that posthumous portraits of him were incorporated into the sculpture schemes of at least two buildings in the city.

One is on Wilson's former Queens Rooms, 1 La Belle Place, by John Mossman and Walter Buchan (1857), and the other is on Cruise, 178-82 Ingram Street, by Alexander Stoddart (1989). Stoddart

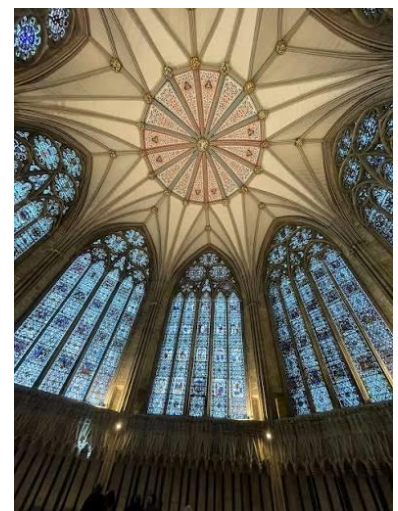
also proposed including a statue of Hamilton in his (unexecuted) 1993 scheme to erect a monument to the Danish sculptor, Bertel Thorvaldsen (1770-1843), at Glasgow Cross. The plaster model for the group is on permanent display at the offices of Page & Park in the Italian Centre.

Other representations of Hamilton include marble busts by William Mossman and Patrick Park (see image – bust now in Glasgow Museums Resource Centre in Nitshill).

Hamilton died of an 'attack of paralysis' and was buried in the New Burial Ground, Glasgow Cathedral. [From [David Hamilton](#)]



York Chapter House



From the very apex of the roof of the York Chapter House, there descends a central wooden pillar, like the main mast of an old-time sailing ship, and as thick, but composed of three lengths of timber since one alone could not take the strain. This great bastion of wood plunges to the very base and foundations of the whole building, giving it immense poise and anchorage.

You realise, as you may never have realised before, that here is the inner reality of this great medieval erection - an inseparable union of at least two great trades so as to produce this marvel of the Chapter House. The masons and the carpenters are seen to have been working hand in hand.

It is because we have so often overlooked or forgotten this partnership in the operative period of our Crafts that it may come as something of a shock to be reminded that our forebears did not

make that mistake. "The term masons' lodge . . . is used to describe the organization of the many different craftsmen involved in the building . . . in the middle or late medieval period and therefore to refer to all the workers employed in, or in connection with, (it). The most important of these were the master-builder and the sculptors and stonemasons. In addition there were also bricklayers, lime-mixers, carpenters, smiths . . ." (Master Masons, Carmina, 1983)

Note the Incorporation of Masons and [The Incorporation of Wrights in Glasgow](#) went their separate ways in 1600.



Presentation

Late Deacon Convener Richard Paterson was delighted to present a cheque for £2,087.50 to Jack Geddes, Marketing and Fundraising Manager of [Glasgow City Mission](#), which was raised during his year as Deacon Convener.



Candlemas

Great night in the Saloon of the Trades Hall. We welcomed John Campbell and David Miller as our newest 'laid stanes' to the Incorporation. Deacon Alex is seen with both Craftsmen receiving their Burgess Ticket to become freemen of the City and their membership certificates.

Entertainment was provided by Angus, Chris and Daniel at <https://angusmtizwa.com>. Thanks to Collector Susan for organising the event.



Sir Thomas Mason Past Deacon

Sir Thomas Mason

An interesting article about our Past Deacon and ex Convener of Trades House of Glasgow at:

[Sir Thomas Mason D.L. J.P. 1844-1924 – Glasgow Museums Art Donors Group](#)



The Skippers & Mariners

The House and thirteen incorporated trades, plus the craft of Skippers and Mariners, agreed to bind themselves to an annual contribution for the upkeep of the Alms House. The Incorporation of Bonnetmakers and Dyers did not sign up to this agreement until 1791 and so derived no benefits from the Alms House until then.



The panels recording the names of the Deacon Conveners from 1604 onwards cite the first as Duncan Semphill, a Skipper and Mariner. Ironically this craft ceased shortly after 1604. While the reason for its demise is unknown, it is possible that the members were away at sea and not able to participate in Trades House business. Many of the Skippers and Mariners were also members of the Incorporation of Maltmen as they shipped the malt and meal to enable the Maltmen to brew and distil. Their craft may consequently have been subsumed.

Today, we continue with 14 Incorporations. The flag is a replica of the Skippers and Mariners Incorporation crest.



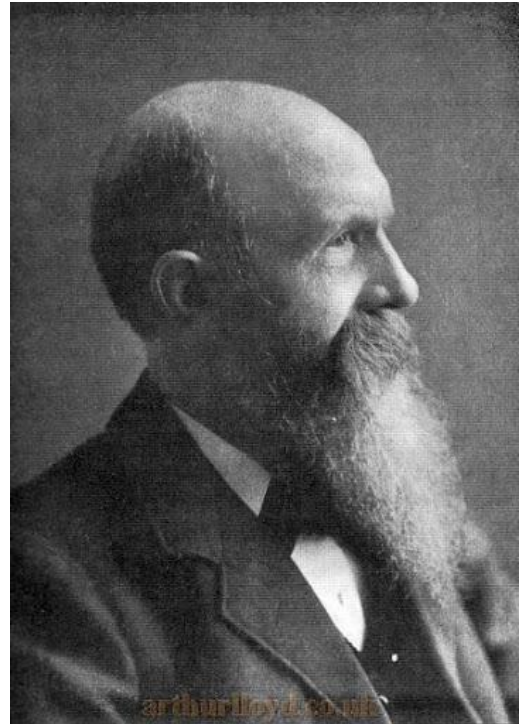
I have been asked on many tours about the double dome. The top of the internal dome cannot be seen by the public due to its awkward location in the loft so here is a photo. The external dome contains the bell.



Jewel of John Morrison PD

An unusual 19th century jewel presented to John Morrison who was senior partner of Morrison & Mason Ltd, a successful building contractor responsible for many notable buildings in Glasgow, docks, bridges, railways, stations, monuments, theatres, churches, waterworks, plus projects throughout the UK.

On 16th September 1872 John Morrison joined the Incorporation of Masons as a Far Hand. In 1877 he joined the Master Court of the Incorporation. In 1879 he was elected to become the Collector of the Incorporation prior to being appointed Deacon of the Incorporation in 1881. Morrison's descendants continue his legacy and influence on Glasgow's landscape, restoring the 'Pump House' for the Queen's Dock and creating The Clydeside Distillery, establishing whisky production in the heart of Glasgow for the first time since 1903.

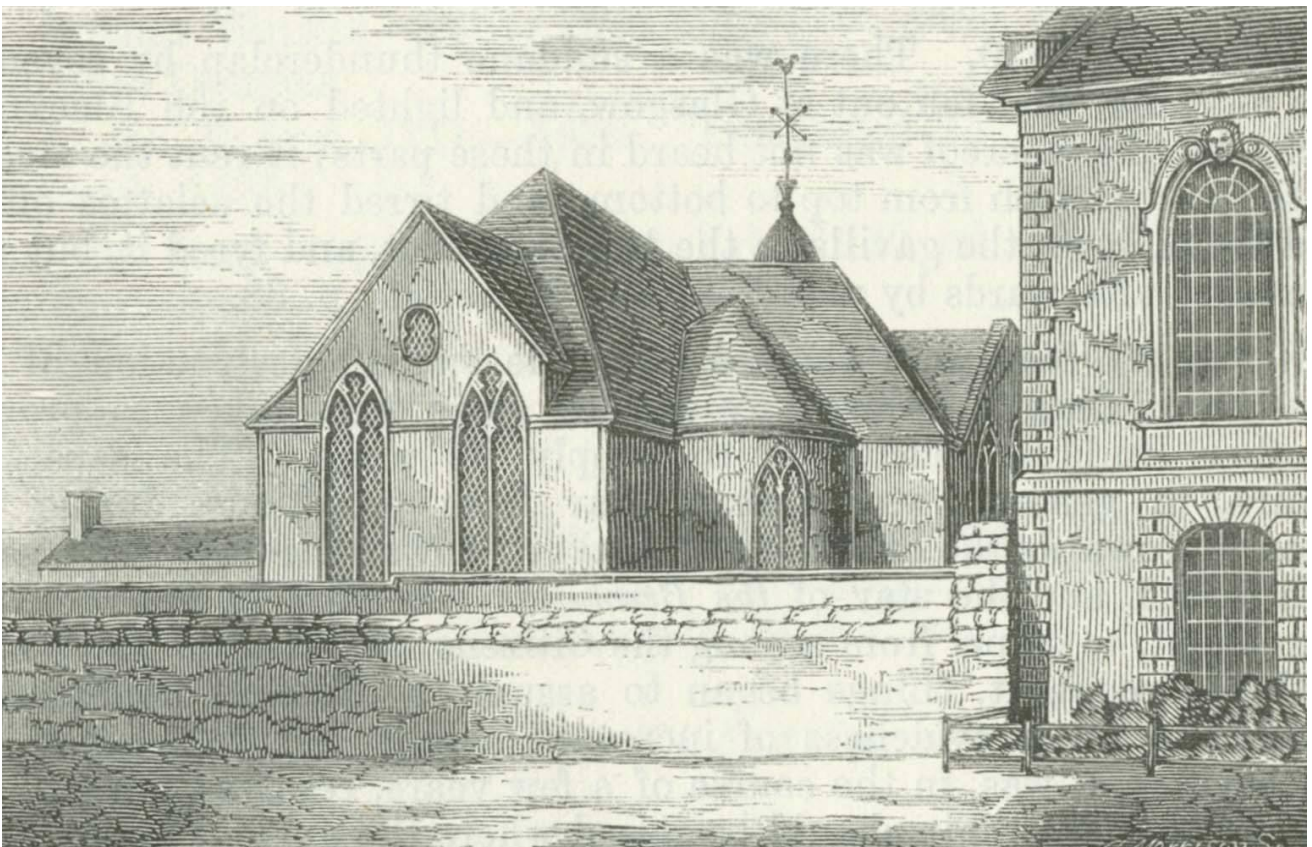


Meeting Places

Meetings of the Master Court for the Choosing of Deacon are minuted as having been held in the following places:

- "Hie Kirk" of Glasgow, on 22nd Sept. 1601, 22nd Sept. 1602, 22nd Dec. 1602, 22nd Sept. 1603, 18th April 1608, 22nd Sept. 1612, and 22nd Sept. 1615.
- In St Enoch's Kirkyard on 12th Sept. 1604
- In the Blackfriar Kirk (shown below - east side of the High Street) on 27th Dec. 1604
- In "the New Kirk of Glasgow," most probably the old Barony Church (which was first opened as a place of Presbyterian worship in 1595), on 30th Oct. 1605, 30th April 1608, 3rd June 1608, 29th Sept. 1608, 1st Sept. 1609, and 30th Oct. 1615.
- In "the Hospital" also described as the "Trades' Hospital" on 28th May 1610, 17th Oct. 1610, 3rd Oct. 1611, and 30th Oct. 1611.

After 30th October 1615, the place of meeting is very seldom noticed, until the year 1659, from and after which year the meetings of the Court, when stated, are always held in the Trades' Hospital (Almshouse near Cathedral precinct today), except in 1667 and 1668, when they are stated to have been held in the "Belhous."





Trades House of Glasgow

Heritage Newsletter



The latest Heritage Newsletter No. 12 can be accessed at:

[heritage_newsletter_no_12__1_.pdf](#)

Forthcoming House Events

The Trades House Ball will take place on Friday, 26th June 2026.

Big Brunch – Sunday 19th April, 2026

See below

Incorporation Events

Box Opening Evening

21st May, 2026

Lammas Court Social night

11th August, 2026

BOBBY DEANS BIG BAND SUNDAY BRUNCH

AT TRADES HALL GLASGOW,
85 GLASSFORD STREET, G1 1UH



SUNDAY 19TH APRIL 2026
12.00 NOON TO 4.00PM

Feel the energy of a 16 piece Big Band playing the best in Jazz, Swing and the Classics. Enjoy a 2 course hot buffet and soak in the atmosphere of the beautiful Trades Hall. Tickets from £32.00



Scan the QR code or visit www.zeffy.com/en-GB/ticketing/big-band-brunch to book

MIDSUMMER NIGHTS BALL



Drink



Dance



Discover

26th of June 2026

General Information

Incorporation Website:

[Incorporation of Masons of Glasgow: Supporting Stonemasonry and Allied Trades - Home](#)

Trades House Website:

[The Trades House of Glasgow](#)

Trades House Digital Library:

[The Trades House Digital Library - Home \(tradeshouselibrary.org\)](#)

Should you have any information, points of interest, photos, etc. about our Incorporation, please email:

masons.trades1551@gmail.com

