

## Architecture and Design Club

### *Summer Outing to Old Stirling and the Engine Shed*

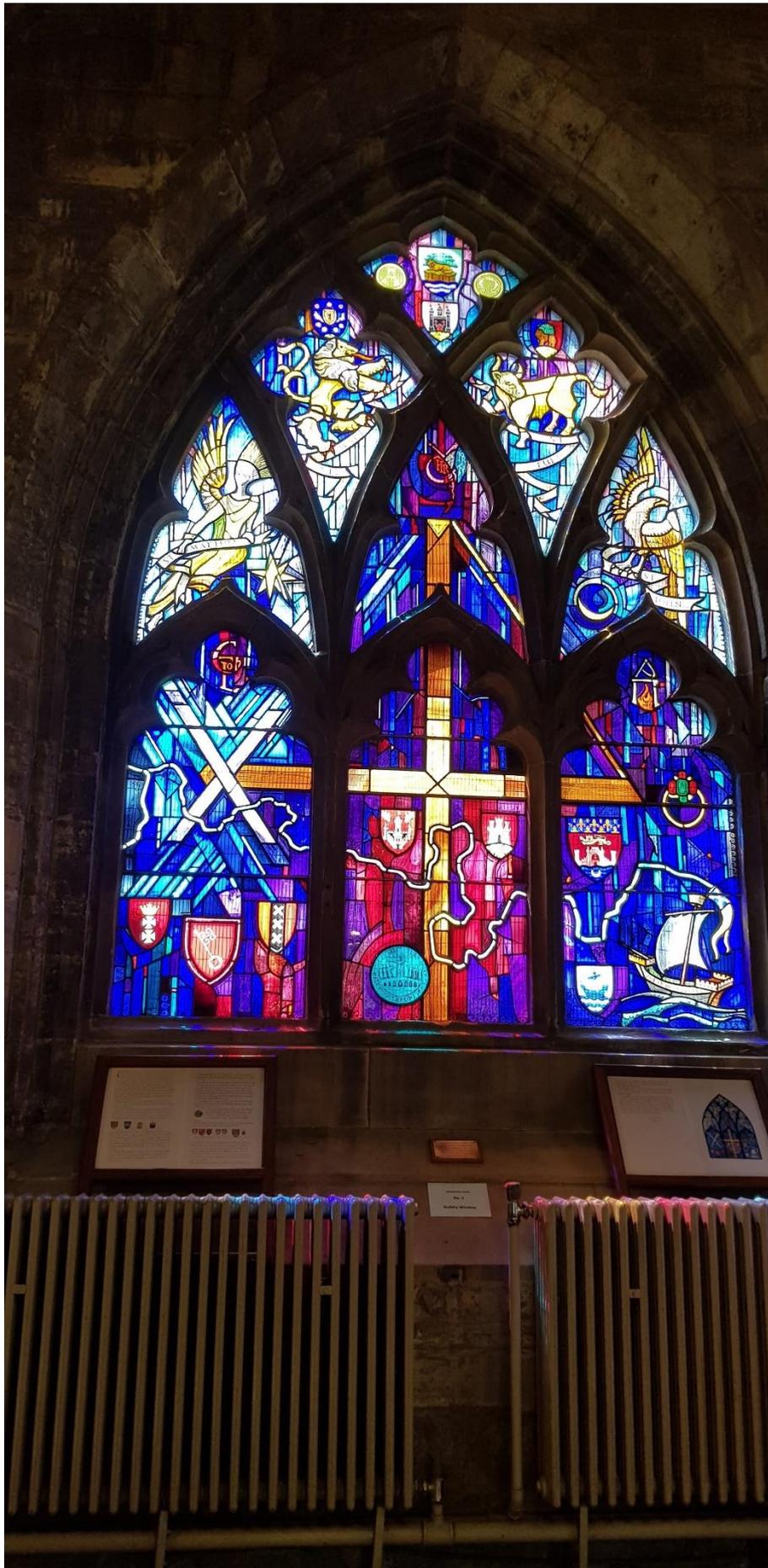
**Thursday 17 May 2018**



This year's outing was to Stirling, which was created as a Royal Burgh in 1124. The day got off to an excellent start with scones and tea/coffee in the hall of *John Cowane's Hospital*, a 17<sup>th</sup> century almshouse. The building is also known as the Guildhall, because the Stirling Guildry has met there for several centuries.

We were then treated to a first-rate guided tour of *The Church of the Holy Rude*, the second oldest building in Stirling founded in 1129. Apart from Westminster Abbey, it is the only church still in active use to have hosted a coronation; the infant King James VI of Scotland was crowned here on 29 July 1567. The present church was developed in two stages with the first half completed about 1414 and the second, with choir and apse, around 1555. From 1656 to 1936 a wall divided the nave from the choir, and the church served two divided congregations. The wall was removed when the church was restored between 1936 and 1940. The church also contains notable stained glass windows by Adam & Small, James Ballantine, Cottier & Co, W & J J Keir, Crear McCartney and Douglas Strachan. It also houses the largest pipe organ in Scotland and has as an historic graveyard.





A short walking tour by David Simpson followed and took in some of the Old Town's buildings of significance including the

- External features of the Church of the Holy Rude
- *Mar's Wark*, built 1570–1572 by John Erskine, Regent of Scotland and Earl of Mar,
- Argyll Lodgings, a fine 17th-century townhouse, which belonged to the Campbell's of Argyll
- the Town Walls, built in 1547 to defend the town from English invaders



Lunch was taken at *The Golden Lion Hotel* in the town centre which was commissioned in the early 1780s by a Stirling businessman on the site of The Gibb's Inn Tavern and Lodgings. On the 26 August 1787 Robert Burns stayed at The Golden Lion following a visit to Stirling Castle that inspired him to write the famous "Stirling Lines" verse on a pane of glass in his second-floor bedroom.

The afternoon kicked off with a visit the *Engine Shed*, run by Historic Environment Scotland. The original building was used as a goods transfer shed and was built between 1896 and 1913. A programme of restoration and development took place between 2013 and 2017 with two new sheds added, one on either side of the original structure. The Engine Shed now serves as Scotland's first building conservation centre, showcases the contemporary use of traditional materials and provides hands-on activities, talks, workshops and courses for building and conservation professionals and the general public.



Our final stop of the day was to the *Stirling Old Bridge* where David Simpson joined us again as our guide. (David has a particular interest in and has a website on Scotland's Oldest Bridges <http://scotlandsoldestbridges.co.uk/index.html>) This is one of the most critical river crossings, and one of the few remaining medieval stone arched bridges, in Scotland. As 'gateway to the Highlands', Stirling was of great strategic importance, and the bridge was the main crossing point of the River Forth until the early 1800s. The present medieval bridge was built in the 1400s or 1500s and is now a pedestrian bridge. It replaced a succession of timber bridges that stood nearby at the Battle of Stirling Bridge in 1297. This was where Sir William Wallace and Sir Andrew Moray led a Scottish army to a resounding victory over the forces of Edward I of England. It also had a prominent role as Bonnie Prince Charlie's forces as they marched south at the beginning of the 1745 Jacobite Rising.



Our members thoroughly enjoyed the day, having explored and learnt about parts of Stirling previously unknown to many. And to cap it all, the sun shone throughout!

***Susan Bradbury of Stained Glass Design***

*19 April 2018*



The Club AGM was followed by an excellent illustrated talk by Susan Bradbury of Stained Glass Design. Susan moved to Ayrshire in 1981 and, with her late husband, Paul Lucky, formed the Stained Glass Partnership. Her main aim was and is to create works of art using the vibrancy and sparkle of hand-made glass to enhance the specific architectural situations, whether it be a school, a church, offices etc. She has an appreciation of art history and the knowledge and artistic capacity to design and produce beautiful stained glass windows, as was illustrated in her presentation, which gave us a glimpse of what she has created.

Among her work are: the ‘fire and life’ windows at the Norwich Union Building, Norwich (2 sides of the lift tower, 150sqm of glass – see photo); a vast sweep of windows for the new Art College in Newcastle; the Robert Burns’ building in Irvine; and the RAF church in Lossiemouth.

Approximately half of her work is new commissions and the rest of her time is spent in restoration work, for example the restoration of the great south window in Parliament Hall, Edinburgh. Some 8,000 pieces of glass were removed, cleaned, repaired and then re-glazed into new lead before being reinstalled. Other restoration work includes the Pre-Raphaelite windows in the Greek Thomson mansion, Great Western Terrace, Glasgow.

All those attending our meeting that afternoon found her talk interesting, inspiring and thoroughly enjoyable.

***Visit to Coats Observatory and Paisley Museum***

## ***8 March 2018***

Our March 2018 visit included a talk by Dan Coughlan, Textile Curator, on the nationally significant Paisley Shawl Collection at Paisley Museum. This was followed by a guided tour of the museum Loom Gallery, which was specially created in 2014 to house historic hand looms used in the production of the world-renowned Paisley Pattern. Dan also demonstrated the operation of some of the looms. Paisley Museum is a stunning Victorian building with a year-round programme of changing exhibitions, talks and educational activities.

The separate Coats Observatory building, built in 1883, was accessed via the museum for a supplementary tour. The Observatory is the oldest public observatory in the country, was constructed using ashlar and has Doric decoration around the observation drum. In addition to astronomical work, the Observatory is used for daily weather readings and has served as a seismic recording centre, monitoring earthquakes worldwide, including the famous 1906 San Francisco quake. The architect for both buildings was John Honeyman.

Shortly after our visit, it was announced that Renfrewshire Council has appointed the architect firm A\_LA to oversee a multi-million pound transformation of Paisley Museum which will re-imagine the relationship between Paisley High Street and the museum. Looks like we may have to have a return visit!

## ***'A Campus for the Future' at the University of Glasgow***

### ***8 February 2018***

Members received an excellent illustrated talk from Ann Allen, Director of Estates at the University of Glasgow about the University's Campus Masterplan. The next ten years will see a major programme of investment and one of the most significant expansions and developments of a UK university city campus for over a century. The driving force behind the masterplan is the University's strategic plan 'Inspiring People, Changing the World University Strategy 2015-2020'. The acquisition of the former Western Infirmary site, an area covering 14 acres of land next to the Gilmorehill campus, is also an important factor as it has increased the footprint of the University estate by 25%. The aim of the masterplan is to create a campus for the 21st century through the provision of world-class teaching, learning and research facilities for students and staff. This will be achieved through the demolition of buildings (eg the Western, the Mathematics and Statistics building on University Avenue), the construction of new buildings and the refurbishment of existing buildings.

Construction is to take place in two phases: 2017-22 and 2023-26. The total development is expected to cost around £1 billion over 10 years and will be funded from University income, borrowings, applications to various trusts (eg the Wellcome Foundation, the Wolfson Fund, etc) and a fundraising campaign.

Many of us have already witnessed the demolition of the Western Infirmary and we will watch with interest as the masterplan progresses and new buildings take shape.

***Landscape at Strathclyde – A talk by Karen Fitzsimon BAgSc, Dip LA, MA, CMLI, landscape architect and landscape historian***

## ***6 December 2017***

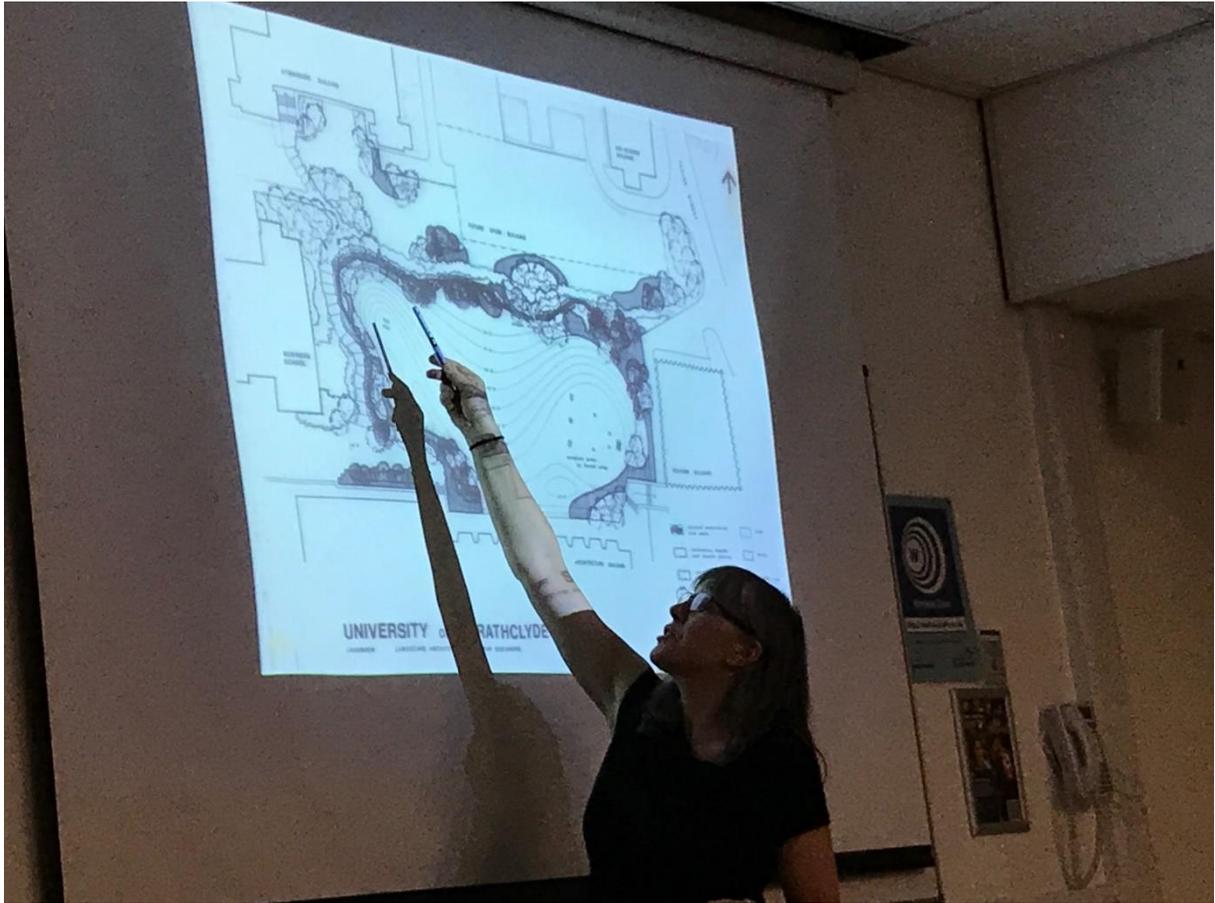
Preben Jakobsen (1934 – 2012) was a Danish Landscape Architect and horticulturalist who spent his working life in the UK. He trained in horticulture at the Royal Botanical Gardens at Kew in the 1950s and later at the Danish Royal Academy of Fine Arts in Copenhagen. He lived in the UK from 1961, initially working for Eric Lyons at Span. He quickly became known as an excellent designer and plantsman, bringing a fresh Danish approach to British design. He set up in practice with his architect wife Maggi in 1969, practicing as Jakobsen Landscape Architects and Photographers, later as Jakobsen Landscape Architects.

Jakobsen worked with some of the best architects from the 1970s – 1990s on historic gardens, housing, institutes of education, parks, corporate headquarters and business parks. In 1993 he received the Landscape Institute's Gold Medal, one of only seven recipients since the Institute was founded in 1932. His designs are characterised by the incorporation of natural forms including rocks, big pebbles and running water, naturalistic placing of trees and delightful plant contrasts. One of his design principles was that each plant should make an interesting contrast with its neighbour, often in leaf shape but also in form, colour and tone.

Landscape architecture is a fragile art form dependent on good and informed maintenance to enable planting schemes to grow to maturity in the form envisaged by the designer. Like many designed landscapes, several of Jakobsen's landscapes have been changed or decayed since they were installed. However Strathclyde University is fortunate in having one of his gardens, almost intact on its campus and well-maintained by the University's Estate staff. Even more remarkably, this garden retains its water feature, a rill running along two sides of the garden and much of the original planting, mostly trees but also shrubs, ferns and herbaceous plants. Karen Fitzsimon who is writing a book about Jakobsen and has studied his portfolio of work in detail, reckoned the Strathclyde University garden is the finest Jakobsen water garden in the UK and should be Listed.

To explore Jakobsen's water garden, go to the top of Rottenrow (having the Rotten Row hospital park to your back left) and turn right in the direction of the Wolfsen Building. The water rill falls down the slope to your left.

This talk was organised by the Landscape Institute Scotland Branch and the Architecture and Design Club. However we are deeply grateful for the full and enthusiastic support given by the Centre for Lifelong Learning and the 3Ls Students' Association, who generously subsidised room and IT hire and promoted the talk in the University and 3Ls community.



*K Fitzsimon talking about Strathclyde's Jakobsen water garden*



*Strathclyde Campus Water Garden*

## *City of Glasgow College, Riverside Campus*

*9 November, 2017*

Situated on the banks of the River Clyde, the Riverside Campus was completed in August 2015 on the site of the former College of Nautical Studies. This multi award-winning building is ‘the most modern and most technologically advanced maritime campus in the world’ and is home to over 3,000 Marine and Engineering students who come from all over the globe.



We were welcomed by Vice Principal Fares Samara who has responsibility for leading the planning and implementation of IT and Estate arrangements. The building was designed by Michael Laird Architects and Reiach & Hall Architects and we were introduced to two architects, Andrew Stupart and Mark Lewis, from Reiach & Hall Architects

We toured this magnificent building in two groups, each accompanied by an architect and a senior member of staff, both of whom provided valuable insights to the building, its construction, design, and day-to-day uses. Our tour included the engineering and welding shops where we had the opportunity to talk to students using the facilities. The highlight for some was the privilege to use one of the simulators to dock a ship into Aberdeen harbour. There were a few near misses!



We very much appreciated the tour and the refreshments provided by the College.



