



Isle of Man
Government

Reillys Eilian Vannin

DEPARTMENT OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND THE ENVIRONMENT

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1999

THE REGISTERED BUILDINGS REGULATIONS 2005

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that at a meeting held on the 7th April 2009, the Department of Local Government and the Environment, in pursuance of its powers under the above Acts and Regulations REGISTERED

St Michael's Church Aka Kirk Michael And All Angels Parish Church Main Road Kirk Michael

as represented by the buildings delineated on the plan hereto attached, in the PROTECTEDBUILDINGS REGISTER by reason of its special architectural and historic interest.

THE EFFECT OF THIS REGISTRATION IS IMMEDIATE and prohibits the alteration or demolition of the structure or appearance of any part of the building except in compliance with an obligation imposed by or under any statutory provision or with the prior written consent of the Planning Committee.

Dated this 8th April 2009,
By Order of the Department

E J Callow
Secretary, Planning Committee.

1st Floor, Murray House,
Mount Havelock,
Douglas,
IM1 2SF.

NOTE :

Under The Town and Country Planning Act 1999;

**Schedule 2
The Protected Buildings Register**

Notifications of entries on register etc.

2. (1) As soon as may be after a building has been entered in the register, or the register has been amended by removal of a building from it, the Department shall serve a notice on the owner and the occupier of the building stating that it has been entered in or removed from the register.
- (2) The owner or the occupier of, and any other person having an interest in, a building which has been entered in the register may apply to the Department to remove the building from the register-
- (a) within the prescribed period after service on him of a notice under sub-paragraph (1);
- (b) after the expiration of the prescribed period after the decision of the Department on a previous request under subsection in relation to the building.

Under the Registered Building Regulations 2005

3. Periods for purpose of Schedule 2 paragraph 2(2)

- (1) The period specified for the purposes of paragraph 2(2)(a) of Schedule 2 to the Act (period after notice of registration, within which owner or occupier may request de-registration) is 21 days.
- (2) The period specified for the purposes of paragraph 2(2)(b) of Schedule 2 to the Act (period after initial period, during which owner or occupier may not request a de-registration) is 5 years.

To: **Property Owner – FILE COPY**
Commissioners Office, Main Road, Kirk Michael, ,
Director, Manx National Heritage
Isle Of Man Natural History & Antiquarian Society

REGISTERED BUILDING CONFIRMATION

NAME: St. Michael and All Angels (Michael Parish Church)
ADDRESS: Main Road, Kirk Michael
POST CODE: IM6 1ER
LOCAL AUTHORITY: Michael Commissioners
GRID REF: 317 908

INTRODUCTION

The parish church of Michael is dedicated to St. Michael and All Angels and it was consecrated on 11th Jun 1835. It was built after the old 12th century parish church, which formerly stood on the site, was deemed to be in a poor condition and too small for the increasing population of the parish.

The church is located in the centre of Kirk Michael village and historically this was the site of the church of the treen of Lyre. The earliest reference to the church being dedicated to St. Michael is from the 1200's, around the same time that the individual parishes were established in the Island.

The style of the church is Victorian Gothic, cruciform in shape with a large tower at the west end. The architect was John Welch who designed many other churches in the Island during the 1830's.

The church is renowned for its landmark status, its heavy Gothic style, the impressive stone lych gate (designed by Armitage Rigby) and the Norse stone crosses which are kept inside the church. It is also noted for being the burial place of five Bishops including the legendary Bishop Wilson, which was due to its proximity to Bishops court, situated just north of Kirk Michael.

HISTORY

Historically, the parish of Michael was one of the most important in the Island. Centuries ago, sittings of Tynwald were regularly held in the parish and the official residence of the Lord Bishop was also there. For a small settlement, Kirk Michael even had its own courthouse, which was due to the influence of the Bishop. The parish register for Michael begins in 1611 and the list of vicars dates back to 1571.

The 12th Century Parish Church

The present parish church of Michael is built near to the earlier 12th century parish church which dated from when the parishes were first established. This earlier parish church was built on the

site of an even older church which belonged to the treen of Lyre. For this particular site to have been chosen, this must have been the most important of all the treen churches in the parish. Evidence that this site was historically important can be taken from archaeological discoveries, which have revealed medieval coin hordes, inscribed stone crosses and large numbers of stone graves near to the old church, suggesting that burials took place on the site well before 1100 AD.

Kirk Michael village is a linear settlement and the oldest properties in the village are those which are in close proximity to the church. Therefore, the church appears to have been the nucleus for the development of the village and this further confirms the historical importance of this site.

Bishop Wilson was buried in the graveyard and his tomb was positioned immediately under the east window of the 12th century church. The old chancel was rebuilt in 1776 by Dr. Thomas Wilson, son of Bishop Wilson and part of this chancel wall still stands to this day, located in the graveyard close to the tomb of Bishop Wilson.

The original 12th century church had a typical Manx style. It was small and rectangular with a tower and gallery at the west end. It was centrally located in the ancient burial ground which was surrounded on three sides by the vicar's ancient glebe and the clerk's glebe.

The Nineteenth Century, the Present Church is Built

In the early nineteenth century the condition of the old church was deteriorating. The steeple had dilapidated and during a vestry meeting in 1826 it was decided that part of this steeple should be removed. During these works, an inspection was made of the remainder of the building and it was found to have been in a poor condition. In addition to this, the old church only had seats for 300 people and due to the increasing population of the parish and the poor state of the old church, discussions began regarding the construction of a replacement building.

There was a vestry meeting on 28th May 1833 to discuss the proposed new church. During this meeting the intack owners stated that they wanted to be given the same rights as those in other parishes regarding seating and taxes and they would only agree to the new church being built if their wishes were granted. However, some of the quarterland owners objected to this and the meeting was adjourned until a Committee was established in order to conduct a report.

During a meeting presided by Bishop Ward on 19th July 1833, it was finally decided that a new church was needed and that it should be built on the vicar's ancient glebe, which adjoined the churchyard. A parcel of land called Corneil-ny-Killagh (meaning "the corner of the church") was purchased from John Rodgers and given to the vicar in lieu of his ancient glebe. Tynwald agreed to the construction of a new church and passed the 'Michael Church Act' on 5th April 1834. Half the cost of construction was paid by Bishop Ward from his building fund and the remaining money was raised by contributions and from assessments on the quarterlands, intacks, mills and cottages in the parish, which amounted to and did not exceed £10.

The architect commissioned to design the new building was John Welch, who was also responsible for many other churches on the Island between 1830 and 1840. Building work began in 1834 and the church was consecrated on the 11th June 1835.

The new church was large enough to accommodate 650 persons and it included a pew for each quarterland in the parish, in addition to pews for the proprietors of intacks, mills and cottages.

The Vicarage

The earliest known vicarage is believed to have actually been located where the parish church now stands (St. Michael's Church, Guide 1927). This vicarage had fallen into disrepair by the mid-eighteenth century, so Bishop Wilson purchased the Glebe Farm, part of the Whitehouse quarterland, in order for a new vicarage to be built on this new site. In 1743 Bishop Wilson presented the Glebe Farm to the people of the parish on the condition that the parish residents built a vicarage on the site, equal in size to that of Braddan. This requirement was achieved (Cashin T.L., 1986, A Michael Village Trail).

By 1844, the eighteenth century vicarage had been deemed beyond repair and the then vicar of Michael, Reverend David Brown, began collecting subscriptions for the construction of a new vicarage. Works began and the new vicarage was completed in 1846.

Reverend David Brown

David Brown was appointed vicar on April 4th 1818, a position which he held for 42 years until his death in January 1860. During this period, Reverend Brown was responsible for many significant changes within Kirk Michael, such as the construction of several important buildings. These buildings include structures on the Glebe Farm, the present parish church (1835), the court house (1835), the church school (1839) and the vicarage (1846).

Bishop Wilson

The chancel of the old 12th century parish church was rebuilt in 1776 by Dr. Thomas Wilson, son of Bishop Wilson. Part of the old chancel wall still stands to this day and it is in close proximity to the grave of Bishop Wilson (Bishop from 1698 to 1755). A drawing of the old parish church in 1834 shows Bishop Wilson's grave was located directly underneath the chancel window.

Bishop Wilson is undoubtedly the most famous of all the men who have ever held the position of Lord Bishop in the Island. In 1772 he was imprisoned for two months in Castle Rushen, charged with contempt of court following a dispute with the Lieutenant Governor. However, this imprisonment only served to increase his popularity and during this period hundreds of people gathered below his window each day to receive his instructions. Bishop Wilson sent some of the black Pool Vaaish marble from the south of the Island to the Dean and Chapter of St. Paul's in London. This marble was used to make the steps which lead towards the two main doorways of the Cathedral.

Other Bishops

Bishop Ward (Bishop from 1827 to 1838) provided half of the money for the new church from his own building fund (most of which was raised from contributions raised in England). When he first arrived in the Island he found the total population to be 50,000, with church room for

only about 9,000. Therefore, he set himself the task to rebuild many of the parish churches, in addition to providing chapels and schoolrooms in more remote areas. Bishop Ward was responsible for funding several churches which were built in the Island during the 1830's.

In total, five Bishops have been buried at Kirk Michael. In addition to Bishop Wilson, these include Bishops Hildesley (Bishop from 1755 to 1772), Mason (1780 to 1783), Crgan (1784 to 1813) and Thornton-Duesbery (1925 to 1928).

ARCHITECTURE

John Welch (1810-1855)

The architect appointed to design the new church was John Welch. He was born in Overton in Flintshire and came to the Island in 1830 in order to assist his brother in the design of the new King William's College.

In addition to King William's College, John Welch was involved in the design of many other buildings on the Island. In Douglas these buildings include the conversion of Castle Mona into a hotel (1831), the Tower of Refuge (1832), the Scotch Kirk (1832) and the House of Industry (1834). In Castletown the Smelt Memorial was designed by Welch. However, the majority of Welch's projects were churches which were commissioned by Bishop Ward during the 1830's.

Bishop Ward held his post as Lord Bishop in the Island from 1827 to 1838 and the following was written about him in an article in Manx Church Magazine in July 1896, "*When Bishop Ward first arrived in the island he very soon felt persuaded that the immediate work he must undertake was the rebuilding of the old, dilapidated Parish Churches and the building of new*". He appealed to his own friends and acquaintances in England to help him raise the funds for the new churches on the Island, sending the Rev. Hugh Stowell of Ballaugh to collect the funds. The appeal was successful and building work soon began on the Island.

In addition to Michael Parish Church, these churches include St. Barnabas, Douglas (1832); Ballaugh New Church (1832); Kirk Onchan (1833); Kirk Christ, Lezayre (1835); St. Luke's, Baldwin (1836); St. Stephen's, Sulby (1838); St. James's, Dalby (1839) and St. Jude's (1839).

A notable element of Michael Parish Church is the tower, which is a landmark feature and can be seen several miles away when approaching from the Peel road to the south. Some other churches designed by John Welch also have notable towers, such as Ballaugh New Church, Kirk Onchan, Kirk Christ Lezayre and St. Jude's. St. Barnabas, Douglas had a large tower but the building was demolished in 1969. The remaining churches designed by Welch were smaller chapels incorporating schoolrooms which were built in more remote areas, such as St. Luke's Baldwin, St. Stephen's Sulby and St. James's Dalby.

In the design of the church, John Welch made space for the provision of a gallery, if needed in the future, and the brief stipulated that the seating should be sufficient to accommodate each quarterland in the parish with pews for every intack, mill and cottage. The completed church had room to sit 650 people, but the gallery was never built.

Kelly Brothers

The church was constructed by the 'Kelly Brothers' of Kirk Michael. They were once a major employer of labour within the village and built many other local properties. The business was founded by Mr J.D. Kelly and the workshops were in what is still known as Kelly's Yard, near to the church.

Kelly Brothers were responsible for much of the intricate wood carving within St. Michael's Church and also in many other churches in the Island.

Exterior

The church was consecrated on 11th June 1835. It has a Victorian Gothic design with a cruciform shape. There is a large square tower to the west end which features four pinnacles. The tower is a landmark building and is visible for many miles around, in particular when approaching Kirk Michael from Peel.

The walls of the building are constructed with local stone (random rubble slate) and the external rendering uses sand which has a distinctive pink/yellow colour. The roof is covered with natural slate and has tablatures at the verges.

The elevation to the south has three obtuse arch windows with angle buttresses between. The angle buttresses are a feature around the building and are found on all the quoins and junctions, except for the tower and chancel where they are octagonal. The south transept has a small entrance porch with small circular windows highly placed either side of the porch and a central niche within the gable end, with a projecting corbel at the foot. The return walls to both transepts have small lancet arch windows. The north elevation to the nave is the same as the south. Running around the building just under the eaves is a deep corbel table which has been rendered and there is a matching plinth at ground level. The southern elevation of the tower has an obtuse arch doorway, above which are two small lancet windows. Above this is an inset clock with two small rectangular windows on either side. At the final stage is a large equilateral arch window with intersecting tracery. The parapet to the tower is castellated and has four octagonal buttresses which rise above the parapets and terminate with cone shaped pinnacles and a flag pole. The elevation to the north is similar to that of the south.

The tower is centrally situated in the west wall and has a large equilateral arch window with intersecting tracery. The clock in the tower was presented to the parish by Bishop Bardsley in April 1889; it then cost a staggering £80 (Gelling C.J., 1998).

The east wall to the chancel is gabled with a projecting half-octagonal apse which has three large obtuse arch stained glass windows. Either side in the chancel are similar equilateral arch windows with intersecting tracery. The octagonal buttresses at the quoins of the chancel terminate with tall cone shaped pinnacles.

One of the most important features within the church grounds is the tomb of Bishop Wilson which is located near to the portion of the chancel wall of the 12th century church which still stands. A tablet in this wall states that Dr. Thomas Wilson, son of Bishop Wilson rebuilt the chancel of this old parish church in 1776. In total, five Bishops of the Diocese are buried here.

In 1910 the old burial ground around the church was closed and subsequently the new graveyard extension to the west was consecrated by Bishop Drury on Easter Sunday, 16th April 1911.

The site has mature trees and grassed areas, along with paths and a driveway which have been tarmaced. The boundary walls of the site are in stone, most of which was reused from the old 12th century church. The front boundary wall has an attractive timber fence above it. The fence compliments the lych-gate, so we can assume that it was constructed around the same time (1907) and it is unusual in the fact that it is held together using oak pegs rather than nails.

The Lych Gate

A notable feature of the church is the lych gate dating from 1907, which was designed by the architect Armitage Rigby (1864-1910) as a shelter for the ancient parish crosses. On a similar theme, Armitage Rigby also designed the cross house in Kirk Maughold churchyard. Other well known buildings designed by him include Douglas hotels such as the British, the Ridgeway and the Wheatsheaf.

The lych gate is constructed of slate stones and timber, with a natural slate roof. It was built by the Manx Museum and Ancient Monument Trustees and was opened by Lady Raglan on 16th October 1907, with the foundation stone having been laid by Lord Raglan on the previous Easter Monday. There are seating areas and recesses which originally housed the ancient parish crosses, but these have now been relocated within the church itself for better protection. The lych-gate is an important part of the street scene.

Interior of the Church

There are entrance porches with heavy wooden framed doors which give access to the north and south transepts. The font is located at the junction of the south transept and the nave and it was purchased for £10 in 1854, half of which was paid by Bishop Auckland (Bishop from 1847 to 1854). It is a carved limestone pedestalled font with an ornately carved domed cover. To the right of the entrance to the north transept is a display of nine ancient crosses set in plinths, all of which were found within this parish. The church has the largest collection of Norse crosses on the Island. One of the crosses has a runic inscription indicating that it was one of a large number of crosses carved by Gaut Borson in the mid-10th century. The largest of the collection is that erected by Joalf to his mother, Frida. One of the crosses has a crucifixion scene and another has a dragon on each side. Immediately next to the crosses is the pulpit which was presented to the church by Bishop Powys in 1860 and is "*...made from one of the chestnut trees planted by Bishop Wilson.*" (Gelling C.J., 1998, p.149). The pulpit dates from 1853 and it was a replacement to the traditional three-decker pulpit, examples of which were found in many churches throughout the Island.

In the apse there is a small altar table and behind this there are intricately carved wood reredos with engraved copper insets. Within the reredos are five panels, the central one contains an ecclesiastical monogram and the remainder of the sanctuary is wooden panelled up to dado height in carved oak. The original altar table is now the communion table; it dates from 1880 and is made from oak grown at Bishops court by Bishop Wilson. This table has been moved

forward to be free standing near the north and south transepts. There are beautiful stained glass windows in the apse.

In 1898, the centre chancel window, the reredos and the wainscoting were provided in memory of Joseph Mylchreest (also known as the 'Diamond King') of The White House, Kirk Michael, by his widow.

Almost all of the carved oak work in the church was carried out by the firm of J.D. Kelly & Son. (Quayle J.R., 1927). J.D. Kelly & Son was later known as Kelly Brothers and they built many properties within Kirk Michael village, having their workshops in what is still known as Kelly's Yard.

The War Memorial tablet is of Sicilian marble and was designed by Archibald Knox of Douglas. The tablet is fixed to the north wall of the nave and on it are inscribed the names of fourteen parishioners who fell in the First World War.

The ceiling to the nave has been plastered, whilst the ceiling to the apse is wood lined with lierne style ribbing and geometrical panels in oak. The floor is patterned quarry tiling and it is a replacement of the original floor which had failed. During a vestry meeting on 4th April 1879 it was agreed to renew most of the church floors, in addition to making the seats more comfortable, varnishing them and installing a heating system.

The organ came from Bishopscourt in 1878 and was presented by Bishop Hill. It is located at the west end and behind it there are two doors which give access to the tower. On the north side of the organ there is a partitioned area which is used as a store and there is similar partitioning to the vestry on the south side.

The pews are arranged as three rows with two against the north and south walls and a third being centrally placed. The choir is located in the southern part of the chancel. The walls to the nave are faced in pine to a height of 5 feet with plastering above.

RECOMMENDATION

St. Michael and All Angels (Michael Parish Church) to include the old church grounds and the Lych Gate is suggested for inclusion on the Protected Buildings Register for the following reasons;

Architectural Interest and Aesthetic Quality

The church was designed by John Welch, who was an architect of some repute. He also designed many other important buildings in the Island, including several churches.

Other significant buildings which he designed include the Tower of Refuge, the conversion of Castle Mona into a hotel, the House of Industry, Kirk Onchan church, Ballaugh Parish Church, St. Jude's Church, Kirk Christ Church Lezayre, St. Luke's Church Baldwin, St. Stephen's Church Sulby and St. James's Church Dalby.

The heavy gothic design applied by John Welch is an unusual style for a Manx parish church. The main church building is an important feature in the local landscape and the stone lych-gate, designed by Armitage Rigby, also contributes to the street scene.

Some of the wooden furniture inside the church was made from oak planted by Bishop Wilson at Bishopscourt and the wood carvings were carried out by Kelly Brothers of Kirk Michael, who were once a major employer in the village, having built many local houses. The War Memorial in the church was designed by Archibald Knox.

Historic Interest

Historically, the parish of Kirk Michael was one of the most important and powerful in the Island. It was the location of the Bishop's residence, sittings of Tynwald were regularly held there and the village even had its own courthouse.

The church is built on a historic site. The present parish church was completed in 1835 and it was built on the vicar's ancient glebe, near to the 12th century parish church. A portion of the old church still remains in the church grounds and archaeological evidence has found that burials were taking place at this site well before 1100AD.

The church is at the centre of the village. Kirk Michael is a linear settlement and the oldest properties are located close to the church on the main road. It is thought that the parish church was the nucleus for the expansion of the village.

Close Historic Association

Due to the proximity of Bishopscourt, five Bishops have been buried in the churchyard. These include the famous Bishop Wilson (1698-1755), whose son Dr. Thomas Wilson rebuilt the chancel of the old parish church in 1776.

John Welch, the architect, is noted for having designed many other churches on the Island for Bishop Ward, between 1830 and 1840. Of these churches, Kirk Christ Lezayre, St. Luke's Baldwin and St. Stephen's Sulby have already been Registered.

Landmark Qualities

Being a linear settlement, Kirk Michael has one key thoroughfare (known as 'Main Street'), along which the parish church and the older houses are located. Looking northwards along Main Street from the south, the vista is dominated by the square tower of the church. Further away, approaching Kirk Michael from the Peel road, the church tower is a significant feature in the landscape.

Some of the other churches designed by John Welch also have notable towers so we can assume that this was a fairly typical design feature which he employed. Such churches include Kirk Onchan, New Ballaugh, St. Jude's and Kirk Christ Lezayre.

Group Value

St. Michael's Parish Church is one of several churches on the Island dating from the 1830's which were designed by the architect John Welch, at the instruction of Bishop Ward.

The lych gate was designed by Armitage Rigby as a cross house for the ancient parish crosses. It is a similar design to the cross house in Kirk Maughold churchyard, which was also designed by Armitage Rigby and dates from 1906.

SOURCES AND REFERENCES

Books, Articles and Reports

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Rodgers K., 1995, *Our Heritage – This was our Island*.

Sharpe G.R., 2003, *Report on Kirk Michael and All Angels Parish Church, Kirk Michael*.

Historical Guides

- Johnson's Guide, 1850
- Quiggin's Guide, 1841

Maps and Plans

- Wood's Atlas, 1867, **DoLGE**.
- Ordnance Survey Map, 1869, **DoLGE**.
- Current digital maps, **DoLGE**.

Photographs

- Current photographs
Taken on site.
www.manxscenes.com
- Archive photographs
From books and leaflets referred to above.
www.isle-of-man.com/manxnotebook
<http://homepages.enterprise.net/djr/michael.htm>

Other - Internet Sites

- Manx Note Book website www.isle-of-man.com/manxnotebook
- Isle of Man Guide www.iomguide.com/crosses/michael/kirkmichael.php

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Comments	07/00248/REGBLD



















