



# fly the flyer

## Rose window report

**Roger Fine**

The quinquennial inspection of the church by the architect James Ford revealed an urgent need for extensive repairs to the stone work which held the glass of the west rose window in place. The PCC accepted a tender of £21,560 with the Friends contributing £10,000. T E Tilley Ltd is the main contractor and Cliff Durant of Horsham the stained glass specialist.

Work commenced in September with the erection of an impressive external scaffold.

Closer examination of the stone and glass from the scaffold indicated that the work required, while extensive, was slightly less onerous than originally

thought. This allowed additional works to be undertaken while the scaffold was in position. It is hoped this will include the replacement of the horizontal stone bands in the west gable wall above the rose window itself.

Internal scaffolding was erected on the 3<sup>rd</sup> October and work is well underway with stonework repairs and repointing the glass within the stone frames.

The work was inspected by James Ford with attendance from the fabric subcommittee on 10<sup>th</sup> October who found the work to be proceeding well and to a high quality of workmanship.

## The Annual Lecture

**3.00pm Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> November**

**Bringing Modern Art into the Church**

**Simon Martin** Artistic Director Pallant House Gallery will explore how artists such as Henry Moore, Marc Chagall, John Piper, Graham Sutherland and Antony Gormley have created artworks for the church.

In the Church, Victoria Rd Brighton BN1 3FU

£12 on the door with tea and cakes Friends free



## Other events

**Friday 18<sup>th</sup> November**

Fish & chips supper followed by a talk by Frank Gray

£15

**December 7<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>**

Wreath making in the church hall: coffee & mince pies

£40

**Friday 27<sup>th</sup> January**

Icicles party from 6pm: the Bodley church: soup, nibbles, wine

£5

**Friday 21<sup>st</sup> April**

Ladies literary lunch with William Nicholson as speaker

£20

**Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> June**

The Annual Dinner

£40

**Further information**

[parishoffice@saintmichaelsbrighton.org](mailto:parishoffice@saintmichaelsbrighton.org) 01273822284

# Why Burges and not Bodley?

**A major puzzle about the history of St Michael and All Angels is why G.F. Bodley was not asked to design its enlargement. Michael Hall, author of a recent book on Bodley, suggests the likely reason.**

From the moment it was consecrated, in 1862, St Michael attracted a large congregation, and in 1866, its



Rev Charles Beanlands

vicar, Charles Beanlands, opened a fund for its enlargement. However, when in 1868 he commissioned what was to become the 'new' church, he turned not to G.F. Bodley, architect of the original church, but to William Burges, and it was Burges's design that was eventually built, in 1893–5. The architect

Maurice B. Adams, who

was based in Brighton in the 1860s, remembered that Bodley 'felt it very much' that Burges had been given the job.

St Michael's first historians were curious about this apparent rejection of the church's first architect. Notes about St Michael compiled shortly before the First World War by a young local architect and historian, W.W. Begley (1893–1980), record information from Beanlands' nephew that there had been a falling out over St Michael's 16th-century Flemish reredos. Beanlands had found it on the Continent, but Bodley bought it 'over his head' for St John, Tue Brook, Liverpool. In 1870 the



George Frederick Bodley

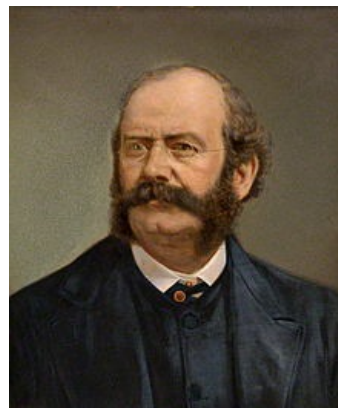
Bishop of Chester refused to consecrate St John, partly because of objections to imagery on the reredos, and as a result it was removed from St John and given to St Michael.

St John was designed in 1867, so the dates fit. It's possible that this squabble – for which there's no other evidence – is sufficient to explain why St Michael's extension was not designed by Bodley. However,

Beanlands had begun to swing away from him earlier than that, since in 1862, before any conceivable argument over the reredos, he commissioned Burges to design the altar plate for St Michael, and possibly an altar frontal as well. This would have been a disappointment for Bodley, who always sought to design every element of his churches.

Why at the very time that St Michael was opened might Beanlands have lost enthusiasm for its architect? The answer, as I have argued in my book on Bodley, probably lies in his change of style in 1862. This was abrupt: in 1861 he published a design for All Saints, Cambridge, that is recognisably in the style of St Michael – continental in inspiration, with early Gothic plate tracery and a prominent use of coloured marble. The following year he dramatically revised his design in an English late-medieval idiom. This was enormously influential, since it pointed forward to the later Gothic revival, in which English Decorated and

Perpendicular styles predominated. It is far removed from the massive muscularity of designs by architects such as Burges – or Bodley himself before 1862.



William Burges

In an article on St Michael published in *The Brighton and Hove Parochial Gazetteer* in 1915 Begley states that

Bodley refused to extend St Michael because he 'had completely altered his style and his early works had become distasteful to him'. This is unlikely. Elsewhere, Bodley happily altered or enlarged churches he had designed in his earlier style, notably St Martin, Scarborough, opened in 1863, where in 1879 he added a bay to the nave and a narthex.

When in 1865 Bodley designed a church in Dundee, St Salvador, he made no effort to match the style he had used in the adjacent school-chapel, built in 1858–9. Would Beanlands have tolerated such a striking contrast at St Michael? It seems likely that he decided to seek a new architect because he preferred the style Bodley had used before 1862, from which Burges never shifted.



If Beanlands did feel that, he wasn't alone. Another clergyman, John Gibson, obtained for Bodley the commission for All Saints, Selsley in Gloucestershire, which is precisely contemporary with St Michael, and in the same style. However, when in 1874 he embarked on the restoration of his own church, St George, King's Stanley, Gloucestershire, he opted for Burges, but was over-ruled by the local landowner, S.S. Marling, who was largely paying for the work, and wanted the architect of Selsley church to be used, caring nothing about the issues of style that bothered Gibson.

Historians, knowing that Bodley was advancing the course of the Gothic revival in his revised design for All Saints, Cambridge, tend to assume that this new direction was universally welcomed, but I'd argue that Beanlands disliked Bodley's abrupt change of style, and that is the reason why he lost the chance to extend St Michael.

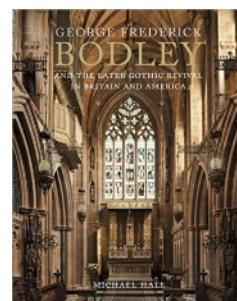


Photo: Geoff Brandwood

**St Salvador, Dundee:** on the right is the school, designed in 1858, the same year as St Michael, which incorporated a temporary chapel on its upper floor, and on the left is the church that replaced it, designed in 1865. The juxtaposition of Bodley's two styles is striking. It seems likely that Charles Beanlands was not enthusiastic about the change.

## Exclusive book offer for Friends

Available exclusively for the Friends of St Michael's to order Michael Hall's book at the SPECIAL PRICE of £35.00 (RRP £50.00) plus free p&p, from [www.yalebooks.co.uk](http://www.yalebooks.co.uk)  
Use promo code Y1659 at the checkout stage of your order  
Offer on UK orders only. Offer ends on 31<sup>st</sup> October 2016



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## The Annual Dinner 2106

Pauline Hill reports

### 'The church was looking splendid'

I attended the fund-raising dinner with my partner for the first time. We were greeted with a welcome glass of bubbly and gentle musical accompaniment from two guitarists and a bass player.

The church was looking splendid with large round tables set artistically with candles and fresh flowers. The lighting enhanced the beauty of the Pre-Raphaelite windows and the altar.

The four course meal was excellent, all I believe cooked by members of the Friends. We started with salmon or lamb terrine followed by baked stuffed salmon with the accompanying vegetables and potatoes cooked to perfection. The dessert of summer pudding was delicious and after this came a platter of

brise and blue cheeses with coffee and chocolate trifles to finish.

A nice informal touch was that the food was served 'family style' at the table.

Although there was a bit of a wait between courses this didn't matter with the lively conversation at the table aided by very pleasant and reasonably priced wine. The staff did extremely well considering the limited catering facilities in the church.

We were made to feel very welcome and we much enjoyed the company of the Friends. It was a memorable evening in a beautiful setting and for a good cause. We will definitely become Friends of St. Michael's and look forward to attending other events and next year's dinner!

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## Contact the Friends

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## Unfenced: the concert

Sue Cameron and Helen Simpson enjoy the sun filtering through the Rose Window, an evocative 'Silent Moon' and an illuminated pathway in the twilight



Far away from the August Bank Holiday revellers in distance and spirit the Friends and guests of St Michael's gathered in a fund raising event to be entertained by *Unfenced* - a group of three singers accompanied by a string bass and piano. Unusually the temperature in the church was as warm as the mood of the audience seated below the rose window through which filtered the early evening sun rays.

*Unfenced* set the tone of their performance with the Irving Berlin song 'Let me sing and I'm happy'. This

was followed by twenty three classics from the thirties and forties including well known pieces by George Gershwin and Kurt Weill. They had chosen a nostalgic selection from stage and screen, some conveying a moral message, some romantic and others playful.

Two poems were added which gave structure to each half of the concert. The beautifully evocative 'Silent Moon' by R Vaughan Williams with text by D G Rossetti made a clever link to the famous window in St Michael's that Rossetti designed. The summer music closed with the well-known 'Don't fence me in', the group's signature tune with which the audience joined in subtly!

Those who had reserved a place for the optional supper sauntered to the Vicarage where they followed an illuminated pathway through the twilight into the garden. Here we were welcomed by Father Robert and offered a pre-supper drink. We were then invited into the house to enjoy a much appreciated supper of Coronation chicken, wild rice and salad. The array of delicious desserts was very tempting and we were able to sample more than one.

Reluctantly it was time to leave an event that had been extremely successful and convivial. Many thanks were owed to Father Robert and Paula for their hospitality and to those Friends whose hard work had made the evening so memorable.

## Friends' Patron, Sir Roy Strong celebrates Shakespeare's 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary

In the second annual National Gardens Scheme Lecture Sir Roy Strong will celebrate [Shakespeare's 400th](#) with a talk on Shakespeare's gardens.

It promises to be a fascinating and entertaining evening on Tuesday 8th November at the Royal Geographical Society, 1 Kensington Gore, London SW7 2AR.

Doors open at 6pm for cash bar, lecture starts at 7pm.

The event is being generously sponsored by Investec Wealth and Investment so all ticket sales will go to the National Gardens Scheme.

