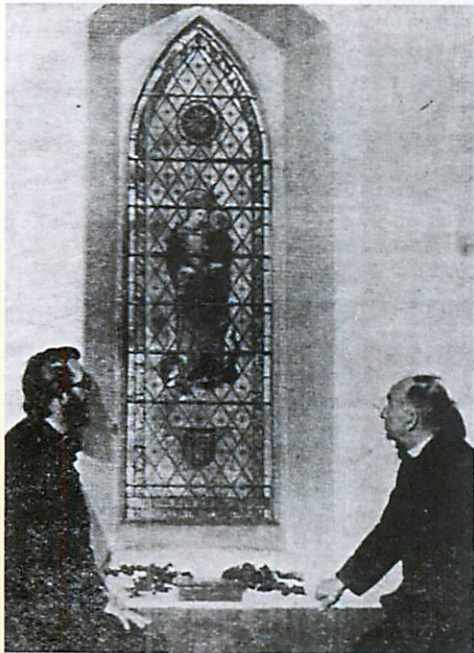


Restoration in Lerwick

Described as the arguably the best ecclesiastical collection of stained glass in Shetland, there was no doubt that it is worth conserving for posterity. St Magnus Church Lerwick had been built and consecrated in 1864 formed out of a Mission held in Lerwick. Alexander Ellis was invited to design the church and a subsequent advertisement in the Shetland Advertiser on 14th April 1862 sought contractors to build it. Ellis designed a handsome building in the early Gothic style and tastefully decorated it inside to ecclesiastical taste of the day, the Chancel being covered with red and gold stencilled decoration. The Tower was added in 1890 by the same architect.



two of the Comper 'lights' from the original convent [picture Cannon MacInnes]



The rector of St Magnus Church, Lerwick, Revd D. G. Wallace (left) and Rt Revd Ian Forbes Begg admire the Cameron window removed from the House of Charity in Lerwick run by the Sisters of St Margaret of Scotland and re-erected in the Church

In 1973 five panels of stained glass from a Shetland Convent called the 'House of Charity' in Battery Road were moved to the church. This Convent, a daughter house of the Aberdeen

St Margaret of Scotland were well known for their ministrations to the poor and needy of the area, which included the fishing industry. The windows were rededicated by Bishop Ian Forbes Begg at a special service in Lerwick on Sunday 28th October 1973. He gave special mention to the fact that the windows had originally be gifted to the Convent in memory of Mary Margaret Cameron (1825-1904), a founder member of the congregation at Lerwick, whose husband donated the site for the new church. Mrs Cameron was a descendant of John Mason Neale, the Victorian Hymn writer. The other dedicatee was Lieutenant James Winstanley Pochin RN Divisional Officer at H. M. Coastguards in Lerwick who was tragically drowned in the Girlsta Loch in 1904. The Shetland Times reported Bishop Begg as saying, "*These windows are examples of the best side of human nature and artistic endeavour.*" He continued by saying, "*They belong not only to this*

church but to all Lerwick and Shetland. They belong to the universal world of art." Recently, essential repairs to the fabric and the need to restore the facilities for posterity caused extensive works to be carried out. The original bell had cracked and so it was replaced, the windows were restored and the building was extensively refurbished at a cost of over £½ million supported by grants from the Heritage Lottery Fund, Historic Scotland and the National Churches Trust. Other grants came from Scottish Churches Heritage Trust, Scottish Episcopal Church, Shetland Churches Council Trust, Shetlands Islands Council, Shetland Amenity Trust, Garfield Weston Foundation and the Allchurches Trust Ltd [Ecclesiastical Insurance Group].



A workman refurbishes a panel of glass inside St Magnus Church as the restoration was progressing. Not all the windows could be dealt with on site and so many were take to Glasgow for re-leading at the Cannon MacInnes workshop [picture Cannon MacInnes]