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***A GUIDE TO THE ART AND  
FURNISHINGS  
OF  
ST PETER'S  
ANGLICAN CHURCH  
CREMORNE***

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**Welcome to the Anglican Church of St Peter's, Cremorne.** We are a Christian community worshipping in this place for over one hundred years. This Guide seeks to present the rich art and furnishings of this building and to explain their religious purpose as aids to worship.

Rev Tim St Quintin  
Rector



## **BRIEF HISTORY**

This parish began an independent life in 1908 as an off-shoot from St Augustine's, Neutral Bay. The sanctuary, tower, transepts and first bay of the nave were built in 1909 and opened for worship in May that year. The rest of the nave, the baptistry and porch were added in 1910 and dedicated by Archbishop Wright on 26 May 1911. The parish hall next door was begun in 1922 as a war memorial and opened in 1923 by William Morris Hughes MHR.

Ernest Alfred Scott, the architect of St Peter's, designed it in the light of the principles of the Oxford Movement, the nineteenth century Catholic Revival which had begun in the Church of England in the 1830s. The building is in the neo-Gothic Federation style.

The worship practice of St Peter's places special emphasis on the sacraments of Eucharist and Baptism, alongside the reading and preaching of God's word – the Bible. At St Peter's we have a rich liturgy, thoughtful preaching, fine music and art, with deep spirituality. We celebrate the Eucharist at several services during the week, both in a simple, *said* service and, also a full *sung* service each Sunday. We celebrate major feast days with solemn liturgy. We are an inclusive, caring community.

**CHECK OUT OUR WEB AND CONTACT US**

[info@stpeterscremorne.org.au](mailto:info@stpeterscremorne.org.au)

[www.stpeterscremorne.org.au](http://www.stpeterscremorne.org.au)

## CHURCH INTERIOR

Passing through the glass doors we enter **the nave**, the main body of the church with its seats (or pews) facing the sanctuary at the east end. The word “nave” derives from the Latin for “ship”, a reminder that the church of God is the ark of salvation. The sanctuary arches are regarded as an impressive architectural feature.

The whole church building is regarded as a holy place, consecrated to God, the place of assembly for God’s people as they come to hear the Word of God proclaimed and to celebrate the Sacraments.



To the left of the doors on a brass stand is a **holy water stoup**. Christian people often like to dip their fingers in the water as they enter the building, tracing the sign of the cross on themselves. In this way, one's baptism is recalled and a believer also acknowledges the need for purity of heart in approaching God's holy presence. The stoup was sculptured in 1987 by May Barrie from a piece of chalcite (stalactite from the Jenolan Caves). It speaks of Christ, the corner stone of our faith, of the rock from which flowed the living water and, of an egg as symbol of new life.





## BAPTISTRY

To the right of the entrance is the Baptistry. Baptism, through dipping, splashing or sprinkling with water, symbolises the washing away of sins and receiving of forgiveness. It also represents submitting oneself (or one's child) to the authority of Jesus Christ and is seen as a mark of entry into the Christian church, hence Baptisteries are often placed near the entrance to a church building. The Sacrament of Baptism is celebrated at the sandstone font which stands in the centre of the Baptistry. The wooden cover is a gift from 1919.

*Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."*

*(Matthew 28:18-20)*

In the Baptistry there are **wall hangings** of particular interest. The wall hanging with the symbols of water and fish, made by parishioner Ros Haege, protects from sunlight a dedication cloth with embroidered signatures of those parishioners present at the dedication of the church in 1909.

The other is the Centenary Wall Hanging with its image of St Peter's memorial garden. Each leaf bears the signature of a parishioner on the Parish Roll in the Centenary year, 2009. It was designed, patched and donated by the St Peter's Patchers group.



On the northern wall of the Baptistry there is a **brass rubbing** of *Sir Simon de Wensley* (d1375AD) who was a Yorkshire parish priest. He is wearing traditional Eucharistic vestments. This was a gift in 1987 of a former Rector, Fr John Thorne. The frame is from the old organ casework.



In the Nave, just outside the Baptistry and on the south wall may be seen **a pair of windows** depicting Christ's call to Simon Peter (our patron saint) and his brother Andrew, to follow him. These were designed by Sydney artist Lance Feeney, and dedicated in 1988, in memory of Kay Krippner.

*As Jesus was walking beside the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon called Peter and his brother Andrew. They were casting a net into the lake, for they were fishermen. "Come, follow me," Jesus said, "and I will send you out to fish for people." At once they left their nets and followed him. (Matthew 4:18-20)*



Next to it you see an **icon**, dubbed *Rabboni*, being the risen Christ appearing to Mary Magdalene, created by Michael Galovic, a winner of the Blake Prize for Religious Art on two occasions. It was acquired in 2008 from the proceeds of a bequest by Nell Mackie to honour her wish for a woman from the New Testament to be displayed in the church.

*Now Mary stood outside the tomb crying. As she wept, she bent over to look into the tomb and saw two angels in white, seated where Jesus' body had been, one at the head and the other at the foot. They asked her, "Woman, why are you crying?" "They have taken my Lord away," she said, "and I don't know where they have put him." At this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not realize that it was Jesus. He asked her, "Woman, why are you crying? Who is it you are looking for?" Thinking he was the gardener, she said, "Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have put him, and I will get him." Jesus said to her, "Mary." She turned toward him and cried out in Aramaic, "Rabboni!" (which means "Teacher"). (John 20:11-16)*





Moving eastward, near the organ may be seen **two windows** designed by David Saunders of the Sydney Argyle Arts Centre. These windows depict the Risen Christ, and his three-fold reinstatement of Peter following Peter's three-fold denial of Christ prior to his crucifixion. Christ confirms Peter's importance as the early leader of the Christian community as a lover of the Lord with responsibilities for the care of Christ's flock. These were installed in 1974 in memory of Leslie, Martha and Donald Colley and Florence and Alexander Walker.

*Jesus came, took the bread and gave it to them, and did the same with the fish. This was now the third time Jesus appeared to his disciples after he was raised from the dead. When they had finished eating, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon son of John, do you love me more than these?" "Yes, Lord," he said, "you know that I love you." Jesus said, "Feed my lambs." Again Jesus said, "Simon son of John, do you love me?" He answered, "Yes, Lord, you know that I love you." Jesus said, "Take care of my sheep." The third time he said to him, "Simon son of John, do you love me?" Peter was hurt because Jesus asked him the third time, "Do you love me?" He said, "Lord, you know all things; you know that I love you." Jesus said, "Feed my sheep..." Then he said to him, "Follow me!" (John 21:13-19)*

## The organ

The original organ of the Church was built by Charles Richardson in 1914-1916. It was finished by Alex Hunter and Thomas Edwards in 1917. Unfortunately, insufficient care meant that by 1958 it had ceased to perform and lay idle until 1978. In 1980 it was rebuilt by Tony Welby using some of the Hill and Eagles' pipework, and the console, from St Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Manly.

The organ has 3 manuals, 26 ranks and approximately 1850 pipes. It now has an electro-pneumatic action. At the time of rebuilding it was removed from the base of the tower and placed in the south transept where it remains.

It is regarded as one of the finest parish organs in Sydney and is often used for recitals as well as accompanying the weekly sung services and liturgical festivals. St Peter's retains a professional organist and cantor.



On the east wall, to the right of the lectern and beside the organ, is a carved wooden representation of the **donkey** (ass) on which our saviour rode into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday. It was donated by Irene Markham, former ABM missionary in PNG and a parishioner of St Peter's during the late 1970s and early 1980s. She acquired it at the Passion Play in Oberammergau in Germany.



The **brass lectern**, from which the Scriptures are read, is the same in design as that placed in the Chapel Royal at Windsor Castle by Queen Victoria in memory of Prince Albert.



### **The Sanctuary**

The sanctuary of a church is often taken to symbolise heaven. It certainly is the focus of worship, and we believe the beauty of the St Peter's sanctuary is such as to encourage in worshippers a deeper sense of prayer, of wonder and adoration.

The altar was originally set against the east wall. During 1979-1980 the sanctuary area was enlarged. This meant the abandonment of the chancel with its choir stalls, the repositioning of the altar rails and the creation of a new free-standing altar enabling the priest to stand behind it facing the congregation for the celebration of the Eucharist.



High on the arch above the sanctuary there is another Blake Religious Prize entry, a **sculpture** by Norman Little, entitled *Peter's Denials : The Cock Doth Crow*. It speaks of St Peter's shattering experiences during Christ's trials and crucifixion when the third crowing of the cock before dawn brought home to Peter, not only his three-fold denial of his beloved leader, but all that these denials implied.

The contorted figure expresses both the harsh trumpeting of the cock and the agony of Jesus in his passion. Yet it is gold, expressing the glory of the triumph of Jesus, the Christ of God, on the cross. Peter seems stunned, yet the figure is silver, reminding us that he still had worth in God's sight, as do all people.

*Then seizing [Jesus], they led him away and took him into the house of the high priest. Peter followed at a distance. And when some there had kindled a fire in the middle of the courtyard and had sat down together, Peter sat down with them. A servant girl saw him seated there in the firelight. She looked closely at him and said, "This man was with him."*

*But he denied it. "Woman, I don't know him," he said. A little later someone else saw him and said, "You also are one of them." "Man, I am not!" Peter replied. About an hour later another asserted, "Certainly this fellow was with him, for he is a Galilean." Peter replied, "Man, I don't know what you're talking about!" Just as he was speaking, the rooster crowed. The Lord turned and looked straight at Peter. Then Peter remembered the word the Lord had spoken to him: "Before the rooster crows today, you will disown me three times." And he went outside and wept bitterly. (Luke 22:54-62)*



The **sanctuary lamp** is a rare design having a corona (crown) of candles and another corona at the top. The red light burning day and night symbolises God's perpetual presence with his people through the Holy Spirit. The candles, when lit, may remind us of the angels and saints in heaven standing around the throne of God.



The **rose window** in the east wall, was given by St Peter's first rector, Fr James Chaseling as a memorial to his mother-in-law Sarah Fullerton. The seven-pointed star represents the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit. The surrounding text reads: *In memory of Sarah Fullerton Obit Dec 2nd 1908 Aetat 79 years. Her children rise up and called her blessed\**. (\*from Proverbs 31, verse 28)



The **four stained glass windows** surrounding it show from left to right: the apostle St Peter, the Archangels St Michael and St Gabriel and, St Paul. The windows were created by glass artist J Redecki and were dedicated in 1923 in memory of Lt Gordon Alford (d.1916), Constance Blackmore (d.1919), anon, and Joseph and Jane Reynolds, respectively.



Below the rose window and set into the panelled wood are **six paintings which form a polyptych**. Painted by artist and parishioner, Anne Ferguson, they were installed in 1992. The Queensland maple panelled wall of the sanctuary was a gift from the Mosman Uniting Church, having previously been part of the Mosman Methodist Church in Myahgah Road.

The artist explains: The six paintings are meant to be read almost as a story, from left to right, but should also be open to all and any interpretations. The literal interpretation starts in the first (left) panel with sunrise over very European mountains. In the second is the faint figure of Mary, the Christ child in her arms, surrounded by doves. At the base of these panels are lilies. The third and fourth panels, set in much more Middle Eastern architectural frame, are an abstract depiction of the Transfiguration, with four figures turning away from the Light. The fifth and sixth panels are set in an Australian landscape, later in the day, with the Crucifixion far away, echoed by a storm at sea.







Outside the chapel is the finely carved 1909 **oak pulpit** given in memory of Agnes Robertson by her son in 1919.

Above the pulpit is a **wooden crucifix** also from Oberammergau in Germany, a thanksgiving offering from Elaine Langshaw for being present at the famed Passion Play in 1980.



On the north wall of the sanctuary there are **three paintings** by the highly regarded Latvian-Australian artist, Reinis Zusters OAM (1990): *Angel's Song* (the Annunciation), *Mary and Child* (Christ's Nativity) and; *Three Wise Men* (the Epiphany).





## The chapel

After the remodelling of the Sanctuary, the chapel was created in the north transept and is known as *The Chapel of Our Lady and St Andrew*. It is used for weekday services and for private devotion.

The **Icon** near the pulpit is of the *Blessed Virgin Mary* with the Infant Christ in her arms, given in memory of Betty Helmore by the choir in 1982. In eastern iconography it is described as an icon of the Theotokos (literally the God-bearer) or Mother of God. Made in Greece, it is a replica of an original made in the 16th-17th century period. Notice the angels who are holding the instruments of the Passion (cross, nails, spear, vinegar jar).



Also in the Chapel is the embroidered **prayer of St Francis**, worked and donated by Wilcie Urquhart, a parishioner,



On the east wall of the chapel is the striking **painting** *Supper at Emmaus* which illustrates a story found at the end of St Luke's Gospel. The Risen Christ, late on Easter afternoon, appears to two of his disciples who recognise him in the breaking of the bread (the Holy Communion). The painting, executed by Alan Oldfield, was an entry in the 1981 Blake Prize for Religious Art, and was purchased and given to St Peter's in 1982 as part of the legacy of William Helmore.

*As they approached the village to which they were going, Jesus continued on as if he were going farther. But they urged him strongly, "Stay with us, for it is nearly evening; the day is almost over." So he went in to stay with them.*

*When he was at the table with them, he took bread, gave thanks, broke it and began to give it to them. Then their eyes were opened and they recognized him, and he disappeared from their sight. They asked each other, "Were not our hearts burning within us while he talked with us on the road and opened the Scriptures to us?" (Luke 24:28-32)*

It contains much symbolism: the glowing light to the left, representing the Divine Presence; the desert landscape seen through the window speaks of Christ's pilgrimage, which is symbolised by the shell; the carpet symbolises the grace; the apple reminds of the fall; the rosemary symbolises remembrance; the red colour has rich associations with blood, fire, suffering, martyrdom and triumph; the blue symbolises eternity; the straw reminds of Bethlehem.



The entire north wall is filled by a vast, striking **stained glass** depiction of the *Ascension of Christ*. With Christ are Saint Peter (right), Saint John (left) and St James (behind) and 8 other apostles in the side windows. It was created by leading glass artist J Redecki and unveiled in 1950 in memory of Arthur and Mira Reynolds, foundation members of St Peter's.

Outside the chapel, on the north wall is a hand-coloured **wood-block print** by the Japanese artist Watanabe. It is entitled *Descent from the Cross*. This was a gift in 1985 by Rev Ron O'Grady who worked for many years in Asia, where he met the artist.

*Taking Jesus' body, the two of them wrapped it, with the spices, in strips of linen. This was in accordance with Jewish burial customs. At the place where Jesus was crucified, there was a garden, and in the garden a new tomb, in which no one had ever been laid. Because it was the Jewish day of Preparation and since the tomb was nearby, they laid Jesus there. (John 19:40-42)*





Next to the print on the north wall are two **stained glass windows** given as memorials to foundation members and sometime church wardens of this church. They depict *Christ the Good Shepherd* by Philip Handel, installed in the 1960s and *The Light of the World*, the latter based on Holman Hunt's famous painting in Keble College Oxford. It was unveiled by Archdeacon Robinson on 4 December 1949.

*"I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. (John 10:11)*

*"I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life." (John 8:12)*



Next, on the north wall is a **painting** of the mystic, *Mother Julian of Norwich and Scribe* by another winner of the Blake Prize for Religious Art, Alan Oldfield. This was one of 21 paintings created by him of *The Revelation of Divine Love* for an exhibition in Norwich Cathedral in 1988. It was purchased with funds from the Thorne Art Bequest, in order to "recognise the role of women." in the church.



As you complete your tour of the church and head to the features outside, note the **two honor boards** on either side of the west doors. These are to recognize the service and sacrifice in the First World War of parishioners and members of their families. There are listed 174 names, including the first Rector of this church.





## CHURCH EXTERIOR

Leaving the church by the west door and then turning left you will find the Columbarium, and Memorial Garden, which was established in 1982. **The bird bath** was sculpted by Anne Ferguson. Captured as a reflection is the fine tower of the church.



At the east end of the church, outside the sanctuary wall, there is a fine example of contemporary religious art, also fashioned by Anne Ferguson. Cast in phosphor bronze, it is in the form of a **pair of gates** open in welcome. The bars of the gates are spears which turn into sickles. Within the sculpture will be found rays of the sun, ripples on a pool, shoals of fish, clouds bringing life-giving rain, the broken bread of the Eucharist, Alpha and Omega, hands of intercession and offering, Australian flora, and much more. The sculpture is worth seeing by day and also by night, when the flood lighting creates shadows which are themselves part of the total art work.



Opposite these gates is a **mammoth cross**, sculpted from a once living large Eucalyptus Grandis previously growing in the rectory grounds. It was declared unsafe and had to be removed. William Nesham, a parishioner at that time, came up with the idea to have a cross carved out of the base as he had seen done with old trees in the Church grounds in Gloucestershire (UK) where his father was a vicar. It was moved to the present site in 2018. The cost of removal was borne from a bequest left by William Nesham.



*Come, Lord, work upon us, set us on fire and clasp us close, be fragrant to us, draw us to your loveliness, let us love, let us run to you. (Prayer of Saint Augustine)*