

History of St Margaret of Scotland Episcopal Church, Tayport

The Church Building

St Margaret's is a very fine and unusual late Victorian building of buttressed facing brick. The church was built in 1896, designed by the eminent Dundonian architect T. Martin Cappon (1863-1939), who was educated at Dundee High School and University College, Dundee. He began his career in 1885 and worked on various buildings in North East Fife. He designed St Mary's, Newport-on-Tay in 1886-7 and St Margaret's, Tayport in 1896. In 1898 the architect attained the distinction of becoming President of the Dundee Institute of Architecture, Science and Art. In 1905-07 Cappon also designed a Gothic chapel for the Leng family at Vicarsford, based on the Sainte Chapelle in Paris.

At St Mary's, Newport-on-Tay, the beginnings of the architect's career are clear in the rather restrained interpretation of the Victorian Gothic style, while Vicarsford, executed more than a decade later, shows a confident interpretation of the flamboyant Gothic, including the use of gargoyles. St Margaret's, Tayport, includes many similar details, although they are, perhaps, not quite so apparent because of its brick exterior.

It is interesting to note the architect's apparent interest in varying his use of building materials in these churches. For example, the effect of coloured stone at Vicarsford, where the vaulted interior is faced with creamy Caen Stone. St Margaret's, Tayport, which likewise has a vaulted interior, similarly includes a variety of colour and texture through the additional use of timber and is a further fine example of the architect's development of his interest in late Victorian Gothic.

St Margaret's brick construction makes it unique among the buildings of a similar age in Tayport, all of which are built of stone. It is a listed building, Grade C (S).

Dickson Hall

In 2004 St Margaret's took a momentous step forward with the building of a new, much larger church hall – named the Dickson Hall in honour of the late Nancy Dickson, long-time member, treasurer and secretary of the church. The hall provides facilities not only for the congregation but also for the wider community, thus giving a further opportunity for outreach and growth. The Dickson Hall attracts bookings from a wide variety of community groups catering for all ages. Regular weekly bookings include Child Minders, Highland Dancers, Line Dancers, two Yoga classes, Tayport Art Club, China Painters, a Whist Club, and Fife Health Board, as well as children's parties.