

Award for church lighting

All Saints Church, Carshalton



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- 1> The Lady Chapel
- 2> View of the West End
- 3> View from the Baptistry
- 4> Looking East

A new lighting installation in one of Surrey's finest churches has recently been Highly Commended in the Heritage Category of The Lighting Design Awards.

All Saints is a Grade II* Listed Building, built in the 12th century and restored in the 19th century by Blomfield.

The Domesday Book records a church at Carshalton which was conceivably built on an ancient pagan site. The lower part of the tower is possibly Saxo-Norman, the outer south aisle and ancient chancel appear to be late 12th century with further additions over the subsequent five centuries.

In the 19th and 20th centuries Carshalton's Rectors forged a direction and purpose that resulted in this extraordinary and unique interior which was completed by Fr Corbould in the early

20th century. Corbould's friendship with Sir Ninian Comper began a long series of remarkable embellishments: a fine Aumbry at the high altar; the gilding and painting of the high altar triptych, the Lady altar reredos, the rood and the screen, as well as the construction and decoration of an astonishing organ tribune at the west end. This series of structural changes resulted in a fine and open but nevertheless complex space, where artificial light inevitably struggles to compliment strong natural daylight.

The previous artificial lighting in the nave of All Saints was gas, replaced in 1962 by a series of eight Comper-designed electroliers. A further pair of "4-light" fittings had been previously installed over the gallery. This installation was funded by public subscription and completed in memory of Rector Courbould. With the original Comper fittings clearly not able to provide sufficient light for All Saint's present day requirements a challenge was laid down to relight the interior sensitively and in keeping with the established style.

The design of new lighting for All Saints not only provides for a more modern and flexible lighting system but also takes into account the architectural style and history of the building. The design of the new "20-light" electroliers in the nave was based on the original "Comper" fittings which, in turn, have been fully restored to their original were "oil gilded" finish and rehung in the Baptistry and Lady Chapel.

The new, more substantial nave electroliers, which were built by Dernier and Hamlyn, visually connect the highly gilded organ case and gallery front with the rood and Christ in Majesty in a way that has never previously been achieved. Great care was taken to ensure that the finish of the new electroliers



“ The new lighting scheme at Carshalton All Saints was ‘highly commended’ in the 2007 Lighting Design Awards. ”



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- 5> The Baptistry and Font
- 6> Electrolier Design Drawing
- 7> Nave electroliers

matched the restored gilding of the original Comper fittings.

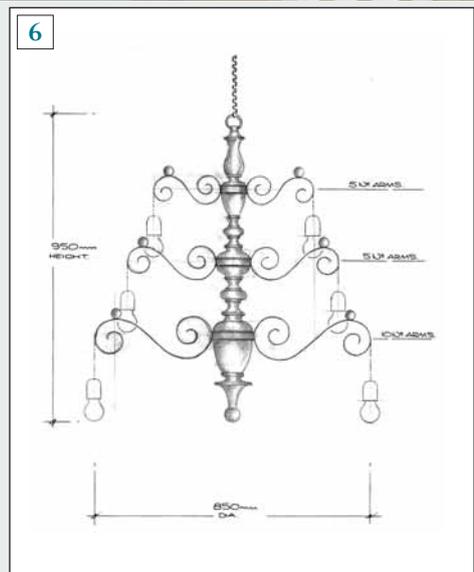
The introduction of new light fittings into this interior posed a number of problems which had to be overcome before the scheme could be fully specified. The fittings had to be aesthetically acceptable additions to the interior as well as being technically fit for the purpose.

The design of the new electroliers was carefully examined by The Diocese of Southwark, English Heritage and the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings.

Spotlights have been used in the chancel and aisles for accent as well as for task lighting and serve to extend the central scheme through to the outer envelope of the building.

Intermediate points of focus in the nave are picked out with track spotlights which have been partly recessed into the stonework. They can be removed leaving the lower areas of the arcades unencumbered.

The spotlights were all carefully selected to be as unobtrusive as possible and completely removable where necessary.



The fine canopy beneath the organ is gently uplit from the column capitals with miniature low voltage fittings which add real beauty to this previously unlit space.

To the west of the organ canopy, three of Comper's original five lamp electroliers are



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used to light the Baptistry whilst discreet low voltage spotlights provide additional accent lighting around the font.

The lighting is controlled by a Lutron Series 4000 system with 36 dimmer channels and 16 reprogrammable presets. Settings are stored for a variety of services and events which range from subtle and reflective to extravagant and uplifting. A wireless radio remote control not only gives incredible flexibility of control but has also helped to eliminate the need for considerable surface cabling within the historic worship area.

This is a magnificently rich scheme which is designed to complement the fine interior and exemplify the beauty of the extravagant decoration.

The new lighting scheme at Carshalton All Saints was "HIGHLY COMMENDED" in the 2007 Lighting Design Awards coming second only to the new lighting installation at St Paul's Cathedral. ■

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