

St Peter the Fisherman Marloes

Early History

The earliest reference to the Church was in 1291 when it was referred to as "Ecclesia de Malros". It is built in the form of a cross, with nave, two transepts and a chancel. Recently an architect wrote "This is a much more than usually attractive and interesting church, in spite of rather heavy internal Victorian restoration and the almost total absence of old fittings".

Christian Baptism

As you enter the door, you will see to your right the Norman Font; the bowl is square with chamfered corners and the "cushion" style; the shaft and base are modern

Alongside this is the 19th century baptistery under a wooden covering; steps go down into the tiled pool designed for baptism by total immersion. This feature is unusual for an Anglican Church but not unique. You will see one in St George's Cathedral Jerusalem as well as some other examples in Wales and England. It is a reminder to us that, although we usually baptise by sprinkling, Anglicans, can and sometimes do use total immersion. It was constructed in 1874, and according to H. H. Timmins (*Nooks and Corners of Pembrokeshire*) this was to meet the wishes of the Welsh Churchmen who "does not apparently consider the ceremony of baptism complete unless he can 'Goo threw the water". It reminds us too that a past vicar perhaps tried to encourage unity between those of different theological views.

The Church:

Windows

Above the Baptistry on the North wall is a modern window depicting Jesus by the sea given in memory of James Arnold Lewis, lost at sea in 1938. A fine carved chest lid/panel hangs on the west wall. On the south wall facing the door is the other stained glass window representing the call by Jesus of Peter and Andrew, given by parishioners in memory of Lady Kensington of St Brides, Easter 1911.

Nave

The nave has a very fine barrel roof with excellent timbers (all 100% sound when last inspected). As you look up it is not unlike the inside of a wooden hulled ship, reminding us that the nave (the main part of the church where the people gather for worship) comes from the Latin 'Navis' meaning ship; so the building represents the church as a 'ship' in which, God's faithful people ride the calm and the stormy seas of this life. The upper portion of the walls up to the roof were re-built in 1874.

The church was re-roofed in 1877 and this roof lasted for 110 years. In June 1987 a new roof was put in place.

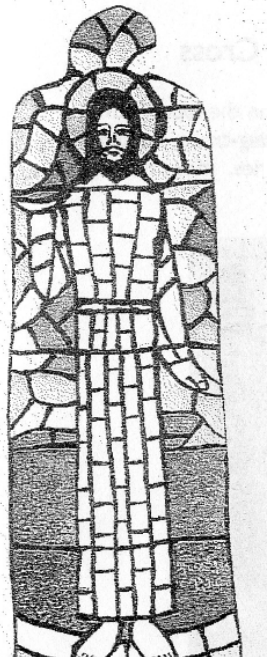
Transepts

The two transepts are small; the north contains several 18th century memorials to the Allen and Davies families. David Allen died at the age of 20 years, yet built the Wesleyan Chapel (now our village Hall). Each transept has a 'squint' to enable the congregation seated there to see through to the sanctuary during worship. In 2003 a vestry was introduced into the south transept and the pews redirected towards the nave.

Chancel

The Chancel arch is high and slightly pointed. It is covered with an unribbed continuous tunnel vault reminiscent of similar features in churches in the Channel Islands.

The chancel itself is the oldest part of the church and is slightly deflected towards the south. The architect



Jesus calming the waves

quoted earlier wrote, "Although the chancel arch appears to have been re-built, or at least altered in its plaster details, it retains a very unusual feature. This is the solid base of what might have been a stone or very massive wooden rood screen, now in the form of two very thick and wide solid stone plinths either side". A "rood" means the cross of Christ. Therefore, there would have been a crucifix above the screen most probably with Mary and John either side.

To the right of the Holy Table there is a plain piscina (*a basin for draining water used when rinsing the chalice and paten at the Eucharist or Lord 's Supper*).

The plain bronze hand-bell in the recess behind the pulpit was formerly used to summon fishermen and other parishioners to meetings and funerals. The bell presently used for ringing people to service is housed in a double bellcote on the west gable. This is inscribed with the motto "Peace and Neighbourhood" and is dated 1725.

St. Peter's Church is in regular use as a place of worship with at least one service each Sunday. The churchyard serves the whole community of Marloes irrespective of religion or Christian denomination.