

WHY 'TRON'?

Prior to the 17th century the area around St Enoch Square was known as **St Tenuoch's Gate**. It was the hub of Glasgow's trade and a vital meeting point for merchants. Ships would dock along the Clyde and their goods would be transported to the area around Glasgow Cross to be weighed. A 'trone' was a large beam for weighing goods entering Glasgow's city walls.

Over time the necessity of the *trone* declined until it was removed completely but the area retained the name Trongate.

HELL HATH NO FURY

On 15th February 1793 a notorious group of known as the **Hell Fire Club** set fire to the old Tron Kirk. These were men of high standing who would perform immoral acts in the city. Their motto was "*Fay ce que voudras*" – "*Do what thou wilt*".

After much bravado, they decided to stoke up the night-watch-men's fire within the church to see how much heat each could withstand. After creating a huge fire, they could no longer endure the heat and fled from the church. Despite their intentions being harmless, the building set aflame and was destroyed. The steeple survived. Unfortunately all records for the church were held within its grounds; no evidence remains of its design.

ADAM'S GALLERY

There was originally a balcony in the main nave of the 1795 Tron Church named after the architect James Adam. During the conversion of the Main Auditorium in the 1980s this was removed and donated to the *People's Palace* in Glasgow.



MIRROR, MIRROR ON THE WALL

The Tron Mirror hanging in the Victorian Bar today was a specially commissioned piece to celebrate the opening of the Victorian bar in 1981.



THINGS THAT GO BUMP IN THE NIGHT

Since the arrival of the Glasgow Theatre Club the Tron has had various paranormal groups conducting investigations in the building. Many spooky tales and ghostly sightings have been reported...

In 1899 during the construction of a new underground line, builders uncovered the corpses buried in the old Tron Church graveyard. The Tron also acted as a holding building for condemned men who were taken by an underground tunnel that still exists below the building, to be hanged at Glasgow Cross. Many men died of heart attacks before they reached the Cross.

On several occasions a hooded figure has been seen walking at the back of the Victorian Bar. A previous member of bar staff experienced something that defies explanation:

"When leaning against the bar... a faint hiss sound started behind my head... the hiss became louder and more pronounced... turning into the word "No". This carried on for a few minutes... I kept moving around the bar, to see if it was where I was standing, but the hissing followed me everywhere and stayed 3-4 inches away from my ear. Then all of a sudden the noise stopped, something hit me across the back of my knees... and it was gone."

There have also been numerous sightings of a small girl, Lily, staring out of the window on the East stairwell. According to accounts, the sightings are preceded by a strong smell of leather. If accounts from paranormal investigators are to be believed, Lily was fatally wounded by a horse-drawn cart on the Trongate and taken into the church, where she passed away.



Cherub / Skull

Cherub / Skull are a pair of bronze sculptures installed on the exterior of the Tron Theatre. The cherub stands prominently on Trongate above the Burnett Wall. The Skull is on the opposite corner of the building tucked away in a niche on the 2nd floor wall on Parnie Street. Designed by Kenny Hunter and installed in 1997, Cherub / Skull was commissioned as a unified sculptural statement to represent the Tron Theatre building as both a place of worship and as a theatre.



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OF THE
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THE STORY SO FAR...

The site of the present day Tron Theatre has played a central role in the life of Glasgow City for nearly five centuries, during which time it has been a Christian place of worship (both Catholic and Protestant), a meeting hall, a market, a store house, a police station and a theatre.



Catholicism outlawed in Scotland

Steeple Built

Notorious Hell Fire Club burn down original church building

Glasgow's first police force use the Tron's session house as a meeting place

1899 - 1900 A railway ventilation shaft is built with a curtain wall on the corner of Chisholm Street & Trongate, now known as the Burnet Wall

1949 - 1978 Tron Church falls in to disrepair through misuse as a workshop

First performances take place in the Victorian Bar

A £5 million refurbishment begins

The fully refurbished Tron Theatre re-opens

1525 1560 1592 1593 1636 1793 1795 1800 1821 1900 1946 1949 1979 1981 1982 1996 1997 1999 2006

Collegiate Church of St Mary of Loretto & St Anne established by James Houston (Sub Dean of Glasgow)

Town Council order the site to become a Protestant Church - Laigh Kirk ('New' Kirk)

Spire added to steeple
"... in the most best and commodious forme that can be devisit by the best craftsmen..."

James Adam designs and builds the new Tron Church (steeple only original feature surviving the fire)

Tron Steeple clock is the first in Britain to be illuminated with gas reflectors (invention of a Glasgow pastry baker - John Hart)

Tron Church ceases to be a place of worship

Glasgow Theatre Club forms and leases the Tron Kirk
"... to provide opportunities for local writers and actors, to widen the choice for theatre-goers, and to make the Tron the most accessible and welcoming venue in Glasgow"

The Main Auditorium is completed and opened

A new, custom designed Box Office building is opened

The Tron Theatre celebrates 25 years of performances

