

THE GREEK THOMSON SIXTY STEPS PRESERVATION TRUST

About Alexander 'Greek' Thomson's Sixty Steps and the restoration appeal



It is not unusual to see people passing by the Sixty Steps, scratching their heads in wonder about what this extraordinary structure was meant for. Mysterious traces of old doorways, and spectres of what might once have been windows, indicate that its original purpose may have been as much more than a simple retaining wall.

Its creator, the celebrated Glasgow architect Alexander 'Greek' Thomson, was commissioned in 1870 to come

up with a solution for linking the newly-developed lands of North Kelvinside with the original Queen Margaret Bridge over the river Kelvin. He achieved that with considerable aplomb: as well as function, Thomson distilled his elegiac creative vision into the magnificent public staircase and sandstone wall that soars above Queen Margaret Road.

In his day the architect was renowned for creating buildings that drew upon the classical influences of ancient Greece, India and Egypt, yet remained strikingly modern. A devoutly religious man, he was inspired by apocalyptic Old Testament imagery, and towards the end of his career he was incorporating haunting intimations of the afterlife in his designs.

The Sixty Steps was built just five years before Thomson's death from lung disease at the age of 57, and the almost ghostly details that he had crafted into the stonework can perhaps be read as a portent of his own mortality.

It wasn't all gloom and doom, though. At the top of the wall, along Kelvinside Terrace South, there was a pleasure garden and a look-out spot, framed by honey-coloured columns, where passersby were encouraged to pause and enjoy the view across the wooded valley far below.

Tragically, many of 'Greek' Thomson's buildings have gone from Glasgow, and the Sixty Steps is truly unique as his sole surviving structural project. These days this West End architectural gem is badly in need of repair and the community that owns it has formed a charitable Trust to pursue its restoration, for the benefit of all.

As well as fixing the crumbling stonework, the plan is to replace the metal railings and elegant dolphin-shaped lamp standards that graced the original wall and ran the length of the steps. It is hoped that the pleasure garden can be reinstated, and that the public can once again safely spend time gazing across the Kelvin to the Botanics from 'Greek' Thomson's romantic pillared viewing platform.

All this will take considerable investment, though, and donations are being sought to help restore Thomson's majestic edifice. If you would like to make a contribution to the Trust's funds, please see over the page. Further information about the Trust can be found on our website – www.sixtysteps.org.uk.

Many thanks for your interest. Your support of the work of The Greek Thomson Sixty Steps Preservation Trust is very much appreciated.

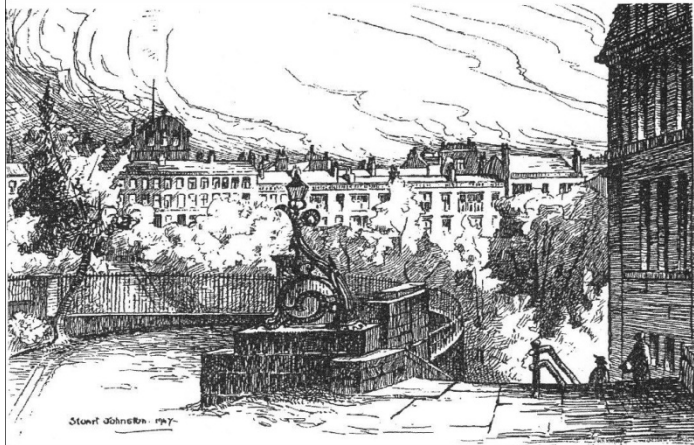
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Please help to restore this wonderful West End gem

RETURNING 'Greek' Thomson's Sixty Steps structure to its original glory is going to take time, and a great deal of money.

The Trust will be seeking funding from a number of sources, and all contributions are gratefully received.

Every donation is important, helping us attend to immediate needs as well as build community support for the restoration effort.



If you would like to make a donation, or become a Trust member, please fill in the form below.

Basic membership £10 per annum (£5 for anyone unemployed, students and pensioners)

I would like to become a member of The Greek Thomson Sixty Steps Preservation Trust and receive updates:

Name _____

Address _____

E-mail address _____

I would also like to make a donation (please indicate which applies)

£15 £20 £50 £100 Other amount

Gift Aid Declaration If you are a UK taxpayer, the value of your gift can be increased under Gift Aid provisions at **no extra cost to you**. Please sign the declaration below to join the Gift Aid Scheme.

I confirm that I have paid or will pay an amount of Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax for each tax year (6 April to 5 April) that is at least equal to the amount of tax that all the charities and Community Amateur Sports Clubs that I donate to will reclaim on my gifts for that tax year. I understand that other taxes such as VAT and Council Tax do not qualify. I understand that the charity can reclaim 25p of tax on every £1 donated on or after 6 April 2008. Please treat all donations I make or have made to The Greek Thomson Sixty Steps Preservation Trust for the past 4 years as Gift Aid donations until further notice.

Signed _____

Date _____