

St. Columba Literary Association (later became St. Columba Young Men's Mutual Improvement Association)

Overview

Members of this association were most likely part of the congregation of St. Columba's Gaelic Chapel in Glasgow. The [National Records of Scotland's online catalogue](#) offers a brief history of the church:

'Admin history A separate place of worship for the many Gaelic speaking Highlanders who came to Glasgow in the 18th century was established in 1770. Known as the Gaelic Chapel, it was situated at the corner of Queen Street and Ingram Street. In 1839, the congregation moved to a new building at the bottom of Hope Street. This site was sold to the Caledonian Railway Company in 1900 and the present building in St Vincent Street was dedicated in 1904. The church was designed by William Tennant and Frederick V Burke in early French Gothic style.'

('Admin history', Records of Church of Scotland synods, presbyteries and kirk sessions, Records of Glasgow, St Columba's Gaelic Chapel, 1837-1989, Glasgow City Archives, CH2/1519)

The association was formed in July 1855 when a group of young men met to discuss forming a literary society whose object was the 'mutual improvement of its Members'. At each meeting, an essay would be read and discussion would follow. The subject of the essays were either selected or approved by the Directors of the church.

In its first year, it was a small group, with only 17 members on the roll. The syllabus for the first session (1855-1856) included essays on the following: 'The Utility and Pleasures of Mental Science'; 'The Mormons'; 'The Feudal System'; and 'The Gaelic Language' to name a few.

The rules were amended slightly in 1862 as was the name of the society. The object of the society was changed to the 'intellectual Improvement of its members', and the

name changed to the St. Columba Young Men's Mutual Improvement Association. Members met every Wednesday at 8pm. At the meetings, essays were read or a debate was held that would be followed by discussion.

Date of Existence

19 July 1855?-15 September 1869?

Source of Information

1. Glasgow, St Columba's Gaelic Chapel: Literary Association minute book, 1855-62;
2. Glasgow, St Columba's Gaelic Chapel: Young Men's Mutual Improvement Association minute book, 1862-69

Repository

Glasgow City Archives

Reference Number

CH2/1519/7/4;

CH2/1519/7/5

Additional Notes

See also [Wellington United Presbyterian Church Literary Association](#) and [St. Stephen's Literary Association](#), with whom they had a joint debates.