

Temple of Decision

The Temple of Decision was designed by Alexander Roos for the wealthy estate owners, Margaret and Onesiphorus Tyndall Bruce. He was also involved in the designs for the House of Falkland gardens and landscape and for some of the interior decoration. By 1845 he was the architect for the Bute estates in South Wales but when the 3rd Marquess came of age in 1868, he transferred his patronage to John Pritchard and William Burges.

Roos is now finding a little fame in Cardiff as the West Lodge he designed for the Castle has recently opened as Pettigrew's Tea Shop - Pettigrew was a Dumfries House and later Cardiff Castle gardener.

Roos designed the Temple in 1849 and it was built by George Page, the Falkland mason, Roos also designed the Falkland village fountain c1853-56 and various items such as cottages (possibly not built), a new gate into the Palace garden.

Historic Environment Scotland says "This summerhouse, called the Temple of Decision, was built as a focal point in the landscape when viewed from the principal rooms in the House of Falkland (see separate listing) and continues to make a contribution to the landscape of Falkland Estate.

It is possible that it is a rare surviving example of a garden temple in Scotland. The policies around the House of Falkland were conceived as a designed landscape in the 19th century and contain a number of architectural features, including bridges, which were planned to add to the experience of the enjoyment of the estate for visitors and for the owners. Set on a high point within the estate, the temple would have been one of the most important features within this landscape. It is now in a ruinous state (2011). The plan of the temple was derived from the Temple of Theseus in Athens and comprised a single room with a prostyle portico and Roman pediment."

As early pictures show the building has been roofed and intact between the first and second World Wars but progressively fallen into decay in the intervening period until its portico and much of the walls collapsed sometime after 1980. Sadly the Temple has fallen further into disrepair over the years but the ruin was consolidated in 2016 thanks to funding through the Living Lomonds Landscape Partnership.



2016 Consolidation works

Falkland Stewardship Trust asked Jonathan Gotelee Architects to take forward a first package of works to halt decay to the Temple of Decision.

Parts of the building that remained standing were in a perilous state and it was only a matter of time before more collapse would happen, so it was decided to use the money available to maximise the walls' stability by careful pinning and deep pointing and repointing as well as making the wall heads cast water off. JGA, Addyman Archaeology & Elliott & Co used a Condition report by Arc Architects to create a package of works to tender for the consolidation with a view to halting the building's further decay and to provide time for further fund raising for its full rebuilding. The works, carried out by LimeRich and Nic Boyes are now complete so that the Trust has time to consider further work and funding applications without fear of the work load increasing.

Volunteers have been invaluable to the project's success with their willing help; A local resident, Mark Ryan donated time, energy and his skills with a drone to record the temple from the air which helps the archaeological work and the jigsaw of rebuilding and the Trusts volunteers cleared the site of vegetation before the work, helped transport the materials and scaffold up the hillside to the site and also helped with the repair work and a local volunteer.

Design team

Architect: JGA

Structural Engineers: Elliott & Co

Archaeology: Addyman Archaeology

Stone Masons: LimeRich and Nic Boyes Stone Conservator

Conservation Report

Architect: Arc Architects

Quantity Surveyors: Ralph Ogg & Partners

Archaeology: Addyman Archaeology

