

The McDonald Prize for Carpentry, Joinery & Glazing Studies

In 1997 Tom Ironside of the Aberdeen Wrights & Coopers Incorporation won the McDonald Prize for the design and manufacture of the Fleshers Mortcloth case in Oak.

The Incorporation of Wrights in Glasgow presents prestigious annual prizes for excellence in Carpentry, Joinery and Glazing work.

The work put forward for judging must be the finished article in wood or glazing which demonstrates the skill of the entrant as Carpenter, Joiner or Glazier. There is a first and second prize for Carpentry and or Joinery Work with an additional prize for Glazing.

Entries will be considered from the widest possible basis including cabinet making and allied trades. The work may be an individual item or items to be incorporated in a larger item or installed in a building.

Contenders for the award must be twenty one years of age or over and be employed or engaged in the construction industry. Contenders may be individuals or where the work is a team effort, the Leader of the team.

Contenders must ensure that their entry has the support of their employer or the owner of the work where appropriate to allow the entry capable of inspection by the panel.

Entries will be judged by a Panel of Members of The Incorporation of Wrights in Glasgow whose decision will be final in all matters.

The prizes and certificates are presented at the Annual Choosing Dinner of the Incorporation in Trades House in Glasgow to which the successful contenders are usually invited.

As a winner of the McDonald prize Tom attended the Choosing Dinner in Glasgow Trades House for the presentation.

Mounted in the cabinet at the south end of the long corridor is the magnificent Mortcloth which was given into the care of the Master of Hospital by the Flesher Incorporation in 1996. The Mortcloth was used for draping the coffins at funerals of members of the Aberdeen Operative Butchers and was given, by that organisation, presumably on their demise, to the Flesher Incorporation at the beginning of the century.

It has emblazoned on it, the beautifully worked Coat of Arms of the City of Aberdeen and of the Flesher Incorporation and has been stored in a box for many years causing it to require extensive restoration. This was carried out by Ian Dale, a member of the Weaver Incorporation, who is one of the few craftsmen left with the necessary skills to clean, dye and repair the Silks and Velvets used in its manufacture. Also on display are several Mourning Sashes worn by the Pall Bearers.

No less difficult the task than the restoration of the cloth was the design and manufacture of the display cabinet. This was the first time the Incorporation of Wrights in Glasgow had opened up candidature for this award to the whole of Scotland.

