

Client: Rodney Melville and Partners
Location: Worcestershire
Brief: Create a hanging Rood Beam

We have designed and manufactured church furniture for many years; this has included lecterns, screens, celebrant's chairs, tabernacle stands and altars. Our ecclesiastical commissions have included the Chapel Royal at St James's Palace, the Private Chapel at Buckingham Palace and furniture for Pope Benedict XVI's personal use during his 2010 visit to Britain at the Papal Nunciature.

In February 2012, we were approached by Rodney Melville and Partners, to assist with a refurbishment project they were working on at Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church in Redditch, Worcestershire.

We were asked to help with the construction of a hanging rood beam, a roughly life size crucifix generally found either suspended from the church ceiling or often incorporated into a Rood Screen that separates the Chancel from the Nave. The Rood or cross, which gives its name to Holyrood (Holy Cross), is a revered piece in church architecture and so there was much anticipation of the work we were about to undertake.

There were a number of existing elements that were to be incorporated within the Rood beam, including, the effigy of Christ

on the crucifix and a further two statues of the Virgin Mary and St. John. Whilst we didn't carve any of the original figures (these were carved by Italian firm Ferdinand Stufferler 1875 AD), all the new details were hand carved from lime in keeping with the three figures.

Understandably the church was keen to maintain the aged appearance and so we retained the original finish on the cross and replicated the paint. Following the gilding, we applied a delicate coat of patination to bring all the elements together. Having determined the design and construction, we were asked to resolve the hanging issues; and so a metal cross with eyes and threaded bar system was fabricated to connect all the lower timber sections to the metalwork. Following some precise weight calculations, a brass coated chain was ordered, installed and delivered in time for the reopening Mass.

The final design elegantly links together all the disparate parts resulting in a finished piece that looked ideal for its place and purpose.



Project Timetable

Enquiry February 2012
Installation March 2012

Specification

Timber – Lime and Beech

Contact information

If you feel we could help you with the design and production of your bespoke furniture requirements please contact me, Neil Stevenson, Managing Director, NEJ Stevenson on 02476 544662 or email me at neil@nejstevenson.co.uk

