

## CITY AND COUNTY OF SWANSEA

<b>LISTED BUILDING</b>	Church of St. Catherine, Alexandra Road, Gorseinon, Swansea
<b>Grade:-</b>	II
<b>Date of Notification:-</b>	26.03.02
<b>National Grid Reference:-</b>	SS 5863598715
<b>O.S. 1:10,000 Sheet No.:-</b>	SS 59 NE
<b>CADW Reference No.:-</b>	26260
<b>C &amp; C of S Reference No.:-</b>	LB:471

### **Notes:-**

#### ***Location:-***

Situated on the east side of Gorseinon in a prominent position on the north side of Alexandra Road.

#### ***History:-***

Anglican parish church of 1911 – 13, designed by W. D. Jenkins of Llandeilo in the very elaborate late Gothic style he also used for Ammanford Church (1911 – 1915). The builders were R. Wilkins & Son of Bristol, the tender price £7500, the final cost said to be £11000 or £15500, of which nearly half was paid by the Lewis family, owners of the tin works. Conventional plan of nave and aisles with chancel, but with chancel transepts, the south transept with pews, the north transept with organ and choir vestry behind. Exceptionally rich fittings, mostly donated by the Lewis family, possibly all made by Jones and Wills. Pulpit 1913 to Dr. .M. Jones (dated 1911), font 1913, east window 1913 by A. L. Moore & Son, to W. and C. Lewis of Melin Mynach, baptistery windows 1922 to Dr. Mitchell, war memorial cross outside 1922, organ by Nicholston & Son 1922- 23, reredos, chancel screen, and south chapel reredos and screens, all of 1925, given by W. R. Lewis, designed by T. E. Gronow and made by Jones & Willis. The church hall to north was added in 1929 – 31 for £9000, given by W. R. Lewis as a memorial to Col. D. Lewis. North aisle west window 1950 by Celtic Studios, south transept south window to Canon W. J. Thomas 1960 and west window 1961 to W Rufus Lewis, both made by J. Wippell of Exeter. Tower has eight bells by Carr of Smethwick, 1913. Some fittings moved from the demolished Holy Trinity Church Gorseinon.

**Exterior:-**

Anglican parish church, square rock-faced stone with extensive ashlar dressings and green slate roofs. Nave with clerestorey and lean-to aisles, large tree stage south west tower, and chancel with transepts, the north transept containing choir vestry and a north east gable in angle to chancel containing clergy vestry and toilet. Ornate late Gothic style with influence from Arts and Crafts movement, the openings mostly with segmental-pointed heads, hoodmoulds, and square red sandstone voussoirs above, the tracery fanciful. Shouldered gables with flush ashlar bands, moulded copings and cross finials. West end has two bands over large six light window with unusual tracery, three sided baptistery projection below, with single lights, quoins and parapet. Tower to left and buttress to right, and then three light window at end of north aisle. Tower of three stages has big quoined clasping buttresses on three sides and south west octagonal stair turret, buttresses and turret with battered lowest stage. West doorway detailed like north door (see below, the curved coping linked to a first floor string course. South three light window like aisle windows. Tall second stage has double band half way each face, framing a plain square headed two light window. Bell-stage has two traceried two light bell openings with hoodmoulds each face, between moulded courses and with thin wall shaft between. Wall shaft is carried up to ashlar embattled parapet with pyramid bosses in frieze and blind tracery in battlements. Parapet is framed by tops of buttresses and ashlar octagonal top to stair tower, also battlemented. 1911 foundation stone on south east buttress. Nave has pairs of flat-headed two light clerestorey windows to each of 6 bays (five on south), each bay with corbelling, still course and raised quoined piers. Aisles have three light windows with buttresses between, chamfered eaves and impost band and still band interrupted by buttresses. North aisle right has north door with free Gothic detail, broad with chamfered jambs and hoodmould turned up at each end to join impost band, and brought up in centre to base of a column shaft with carved finial, under a short length of stepped parapet, the centre step with shallow curved coping. South aisle has door to right bay.

Transepts have side buttresses and high plinth carried right around transepts and chancel, at level of aisle sill band. Five light south transept south window. Chancel has clasping buttress to south east, two buttresses east, and single buttress north east. Long long 2 light south window, large and broad seven light east window with very inventive tracery in 2-3-2 lights, divided by two plain mullions. Wall shaft up from window apex to gable, two flush band in gable and pair of louvred vents. North east gable to right has three single square headed windows east and north side door. North transept adjoining has four light north window, and octagonal ashlar chimney on gable slope to right. Basement door down steps.

**Interior:-**

Whitewashed plastered walls with ashlar dressing. Ornate hammerbeam roofs on corbels, seven main archbraced collar trusses with tracery above collars, six intermediate trusses without corbels or arch bracing. Seven-bay arcades with

two chamfer pointed arches, hoodmoulds, carved stops, octagonal piers, and bases. Wood-block floors, Aisle roofs have arched braced beams on corbels. Segmental pointed east arch to each aisle with hoodmoulds and carved stops. South west porch, under tower with terrazzo floor, segmental pointed doors to three sides and window to south, coved boarded ceilings with ribs. West end baptistery projection with segmental pointed arch and hoodmould, stone roof within. Chancel arch, broad two chamfer, pointed, the inner arch on column shafts with Art Nouveau carved head corbel each side. Chancel has terrazzo floor, panelled boarded segmental pointed roof in 12 paneless. Segmental pointed arches north and south. South wall has pointed three bay arcaded recess, framing piscine and two seats. Holy Trinity chapel in south transept has scissor rafter roof and one arched braced collar truss. Arch from north aisle gives onto passage behind organ. Choir vestry with boarded panelled roof to north in north transept.

Fittings: Pews and stalls of American Oak 1913, stalls with pierced tracerid front. Exceptionally ornate Austrian Oak screen of 1925, seven bays with openwork crocketed gables and finials over ogee crocketed arches, the gables infilled with delicate tracery, and finials between gables. Lower rail with flower and leaf motifs, open traceried panels below inscription scrolls along bottom rails. On each of eight posts, a statuette under crocketed finial.

Reredos and panelling to east wall, highly carved with blind tracery panels, cresting and finials. Austrian oak centre square panel of Crucifixion with SS Mary & John in carved floral border under ogee canopy with cresting and finials, Two blind traceried panels each side with canopies, then two outer full length panels with attached thin shafts with small statues under canopies, SS Catherine and Cecilia. Outer two bay wall panels each have statue on corbel: St. David and Teilo. Alter below has centre roundel with 6 pointed star framing sexfoil and traceried panels each side with vine, corn, lily and passion flower motifs. Diagonally set outer piers each with two columns. Traceried oak alter rails.

Pulpit of Austrian oak on Caen stone base with five squat column shafts, Gothic with ornate ogee blind tracery, vine cornice and front figure of Good Shepherd.

Reredos in Holy Trinity Chapel, Austrian oak with three blind tracery panels, the centre one with canopy over carved Crucifix. Outer piers have four small statues of Evangelists under two canopies. Panelling each side, panelled altar with Celtic Cross. Chapel also has traceried oak screens to aisle and to chancel. West end ornate font of carved stone, octagonal with traceried panels, the front panel with shield and dove, the shaft ringed by eight green and red marble shafts with ashlar linked vine linked capitals. Carved oak angel lectern in nave, brass lectern in chapel dated 1909. Organ in chancel north arch in panelled case, minimal gothic framing to pipes.

Stained glass: East window by A. L. Moore & Son, of seven lights, Ascension with Nativity and Angel at the Tomb, 1913, west window 1961 signed by G. B. Cooper-Abbs of J. Wippell of Exeter, to W. Rufus Lewis, six light, Good Samaritan, works of mercy and ten pioneers of medical research. Baptistry three narrow lights 1922, Christ, St. Luke and Virgin and Child. South transept south window 1960 'The Majesty of the Crucified Saviour' with Nativity, Baptism, Christ as a teacher, and Transfiguration: with marks of Wippell and Cooper-Abbs. North aisle west window 1950, early life of Jesus, by Celtic Studios, Swansea, probably designed by B. Evans.

***Listed:-***

Included as a late Gothic revival church with Arts and Crafts carved detail of quality by a prominent regional architect.

***Reference:-***

J. Newman, Buildings of Wales: Glamorgan, 1995, page 362

St. Catherine's Church, parish history 1963 revised 1994

Kelly's Directory South Wales, 1926 pages 793 – 794

Information on stained glass from Professor M. Broady, Swansea.