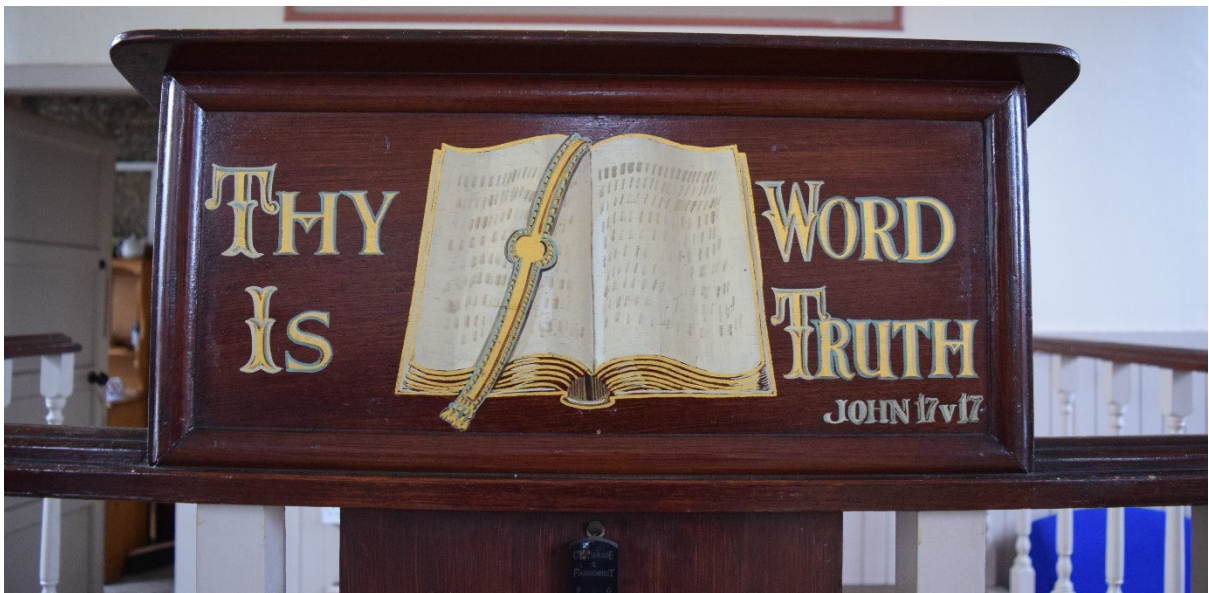


# **Gospel Hall, New Pier Road, Aberdeen, AB11 5DR**

## **Report on Level 1 Standing Building Survey**

**Aberdeen City Council planning ref 190033/DPP**



**Alison Cameron**  
**Cameron Archaeology**  
**13 March 2020**

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## SUMMARY

A Level 1 standing building survey was carried out on 31 Jan and 10 February 2020. The hall was built in one phase in 1951 by the Brethren as a meeting house, replacing a wooden shed which had been in use for the purpose. The main entrance is in the NE wall on New Pier Road and this leads to a corridor with male and female cloakrooms and toilets on each side of the corridor. Above the door into the hall is a painted plaque 'IT IS TIME TO SEEK THE LORD'. The Hall is one main room with dais at the SW end with a full immersion font lined with sheet steel and with copper fittings. There is a painted plaque above the dais 'GATHER MY SAINTS TOGETHER UNTO ME' and there is a wooden lectern with an bible and 'THY WORD IS TRUTH' on the NE panel facing the congregation. The door in the SE end of the room leads to a small kitchen and a door to the rear.

Excavation of the garden has revealed surfaces and finds dumped in the grounds prior to the hall being constructed and this has added information to the history of this area of Footdee.

# 1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The site (Illus 1) is located on the S side of New Pier Road, Footdee. It is centred on NGR NJ9573805779, at 0-5m OD (Illus 1) and in the parish of Aberdeen.
- 1.2 The work was commissioned by the Footdee community group. A planning application 190033/DPP for demolition of vestibule to rear; existing access gate removed and infill opening; formation of ramped access to newly formed doors and installation of air source heat pump was approved on 23 April 2019. No archaeological condition was attached but this work is being carried out to add the information to the HER.



Illus 1 Location plan (Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database right 2020)

## 2 BACKGROUND

The Gospel Hall appears on the Aberdeen City HER (NJ90NE0582). Hall, built 1951 as a place of worship, on the site of an earlier hall depicted on the OS 2nd edition map. From 1990 to 2014 it was in use as an artist's studio and is now in use as a community hall.

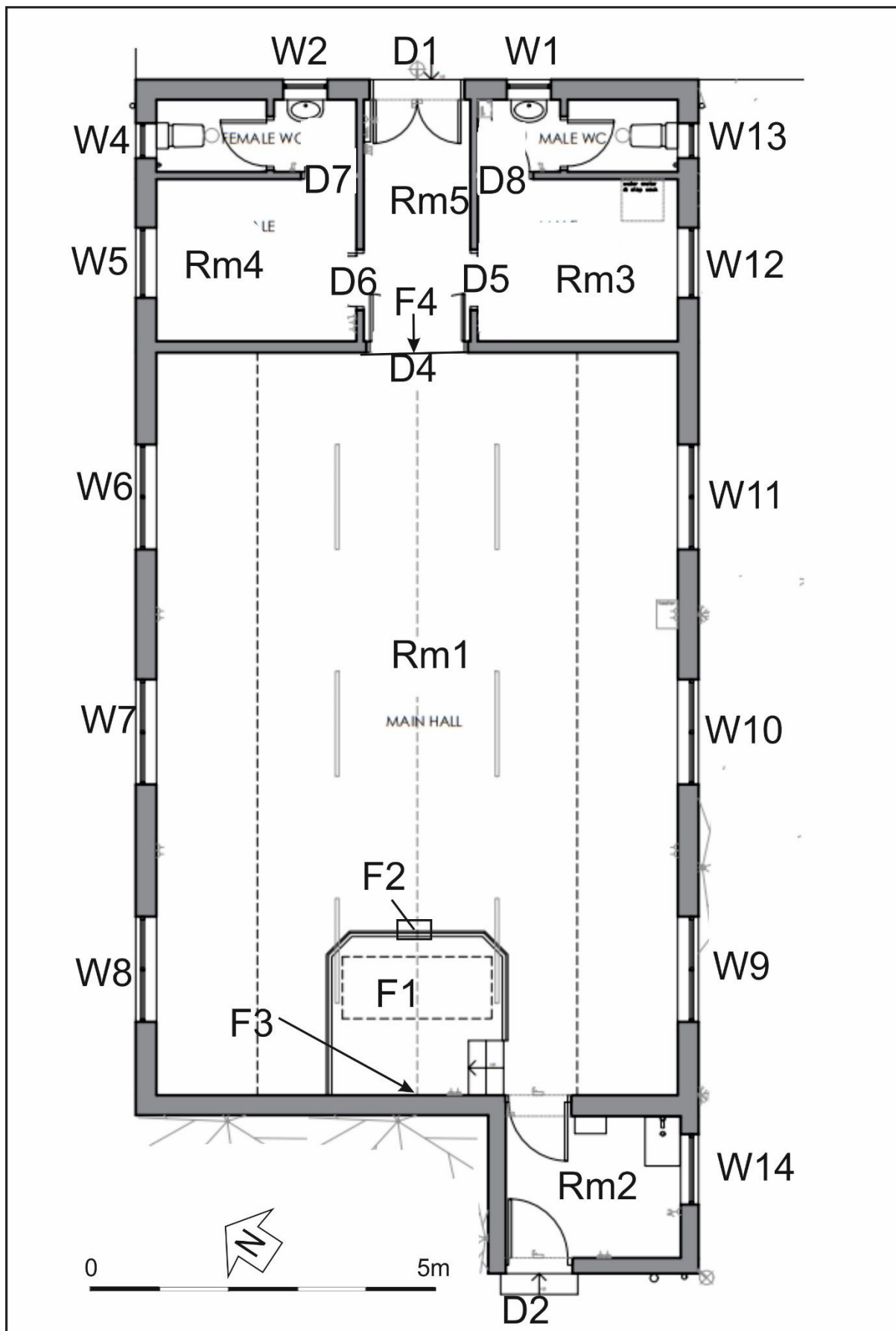


Illus 2 1<sup>st</sup> Edition OS map showing the hall outlined in red Aberdeenshire LXXV.12 (with inset LXXV.16) (North & St Clements) Survey date: 1865 to 1867 Publication date: 1868 (copyright National Library of Scotland)

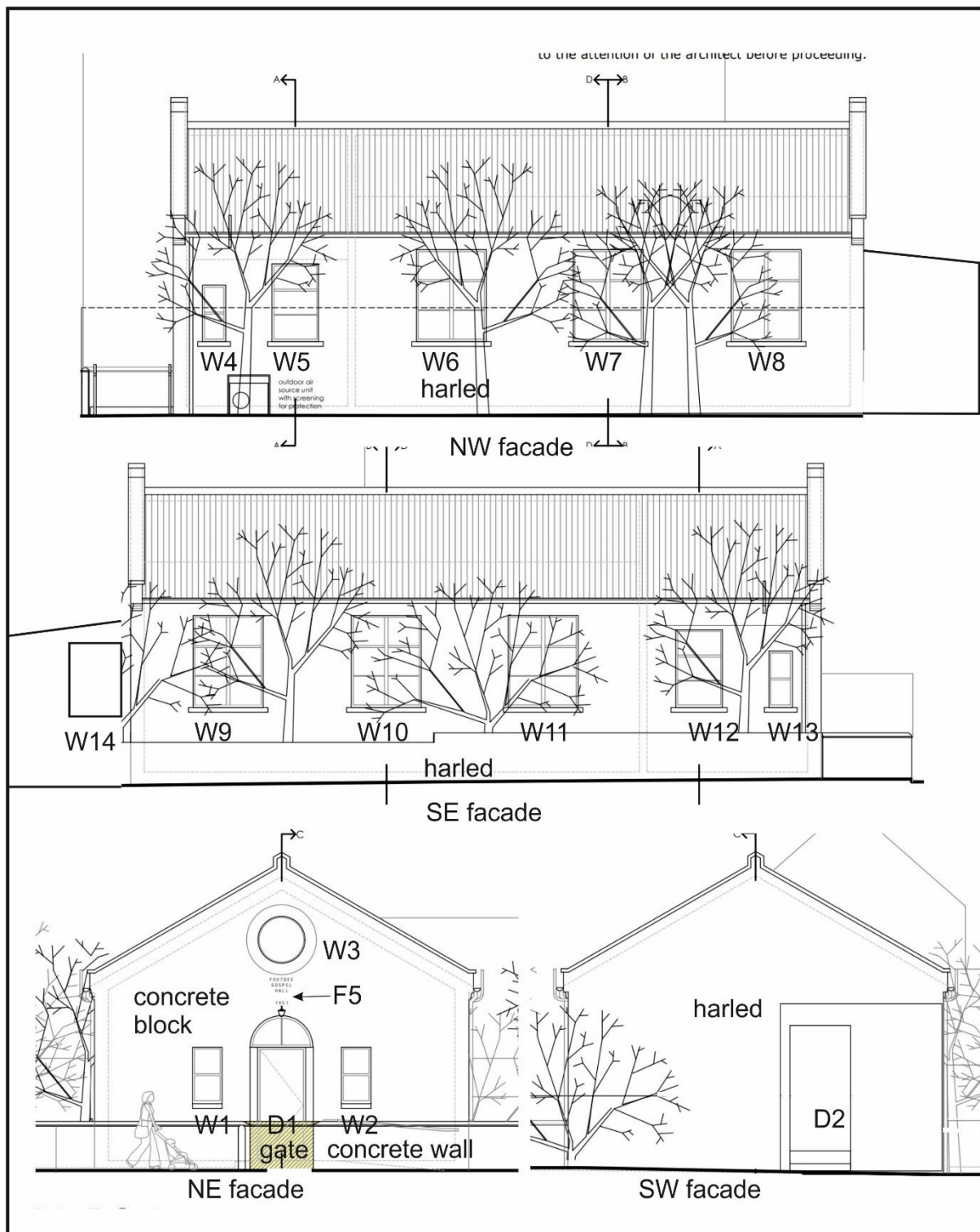
## 3 THE LEVEL 1 STANDING BUILDING SURVEY

A level 1 standing building survey was carried out on 31 Jan and 10 February 2020. Architects plans and elevations were checked and annotated and a full photographic survey carried out. The hall is 14.6m long and 8.1m wide with an extension at the SW end 2/9 x 2.3m in size and 3.2m high. The hall is constructed from concrete blocks which are visible on the front NE façade; the other walls are harled and the roof is asbestos concrete roofing material. The sills, skewputts and other elements are all in concrete.

The main room of the hall (Room 1) has large windows 1.5m wide and 2m high on the NW wall (W6-8) and the SE wall (W9-11). On the SW wall there is a painted bible quote 'GATHER/MY SAINTS/TOGETHER/UNTO ME/PSALM 50 V 5'. There is a full body immersion font which has been built into a dais in the centre of the SW wall. It is 2.62m wide and 2.34m long with a cast iron sheet lined font F1 which is 2.14m long, 0.9m wide and 0.9m deep. The cast iron is 1-2mm thick and the edges have been overlapped by 3.4cm and rivetted with rivets 0.7cm diameter. There is a cast iron drainage pipe in the NE corner 5cm diameter which allowed the water to be drained out and a cast iron pipe in the Se corner which could be attached to a pipe and a tap for filling the font.



Illus 3 Plan annotated with numbers used in this survey (copyright Ian Rodger Architects)



Illus 4 Elevations annotated with numbers used in this survey (copyright Ian Rodger Architects)

On the NE side of the dais is a dark wood lectern with 'THY/WORD/IS/TRUTH/JOHN 17 V 17' (F2). It was known as the double-sided lectern as it had the bible placed on the top and an image of a bible facing the congregation.

Room 2 is the extension on the SW end of the building which houses a kitchen. It has a door (D2) on the SW wall and window (W14) on the SE wall. In the NE end of the building are Rooms 3 and 4 ladies and gentlemen's toilet and cloakroom each with windows on the NW

(W4, W5) and SE (W12, W13) walls and small windows on the front NE façade (W1, W2). Room 5 is a corridor from the front door (D1) through to the hall. Above the internal door into the hall (D4) is a painted bible quote 'IT IS TIME/TO/SEEK THE LORD/HOSEA 10 V 12' (F4).



Illus 5 Front NE façade with D1 and date above (F5); facing SW



Illus 6 Hall from the W with windows W4-W8 (left-right); facing E



Illus 7 Hall from E; facing W



Illus 8 Room 1 NE wall D4 with W15 above; facing NE



Illus 9 F4 bible quote (F4) above door D4



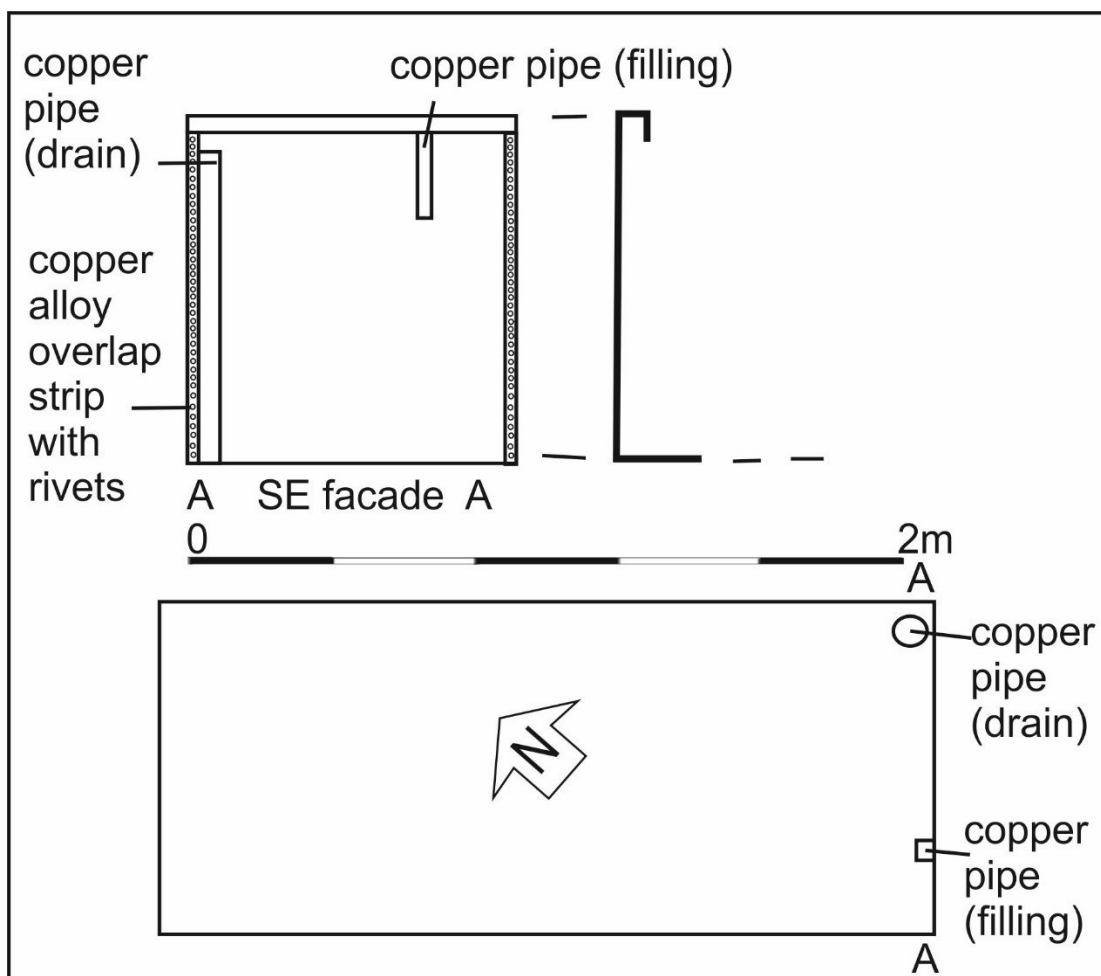
Illus 10 Dais with immersion font (F1) below and lectern F2 (centre); facing SW



Illus 11 Font F1 with wooden cover half opened; facing NE



Illus 12 Font F1 with copper drain pipe (top left) and copper tap for filling the font (top right); facing SE



Illus 13 Plan and elevation drawing of font F1 showing copper alloy drain and filling pipes and method of construction with cast iron sheeting



Illus 14 Painted bible quote (F3) on SW wall Room 1; facing SW

#### 4 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A Level 1 standing building survey was carried out on 31 Jan and 10 February 2020. The hall was built in one phase in 1951 by the Brethren as a meeting house, replacing a wooden shed which had been in use for the purpose. The main entrance is in the NE wall on New Pier Road and this leads to a corridor with male and female cloakrooms and toilets on each side of the corridor. Above the door into the hall is a painted plaque 'IT IS TIME TO SEEK THE LORD'. The Hall is one main room with dais at the SW end with a full immersion font lined with sheet steel and with copper fittings. There is a painted plaque above the dais 'GATHER MY SAINTS TOGETHER UNTO ME' and there is a wooden lectern with an bible and 'THY WORD IS TRUTH' on the NE panel facing the congregation. The door in the SE end of the room leads to a small kitchen and a door to the rear.

Excavation of the garden has revealed surfaces and finds dumped in the grounds prior to the hall being constructed and this has added information to the history of this area of Footdee.

#### 5 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thanks to Marianne Walmser for commissioning this project, Grahan Guyan for his time talking about the hall, his family and Footdee and to Bruce Mann Aberdeenshire Council Archaeology Service (advisor to Aberdeen City) for his advice during the work.

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## **APPENDIX 1 GRAHAM GUYAN (GG) REMINISCENCES**

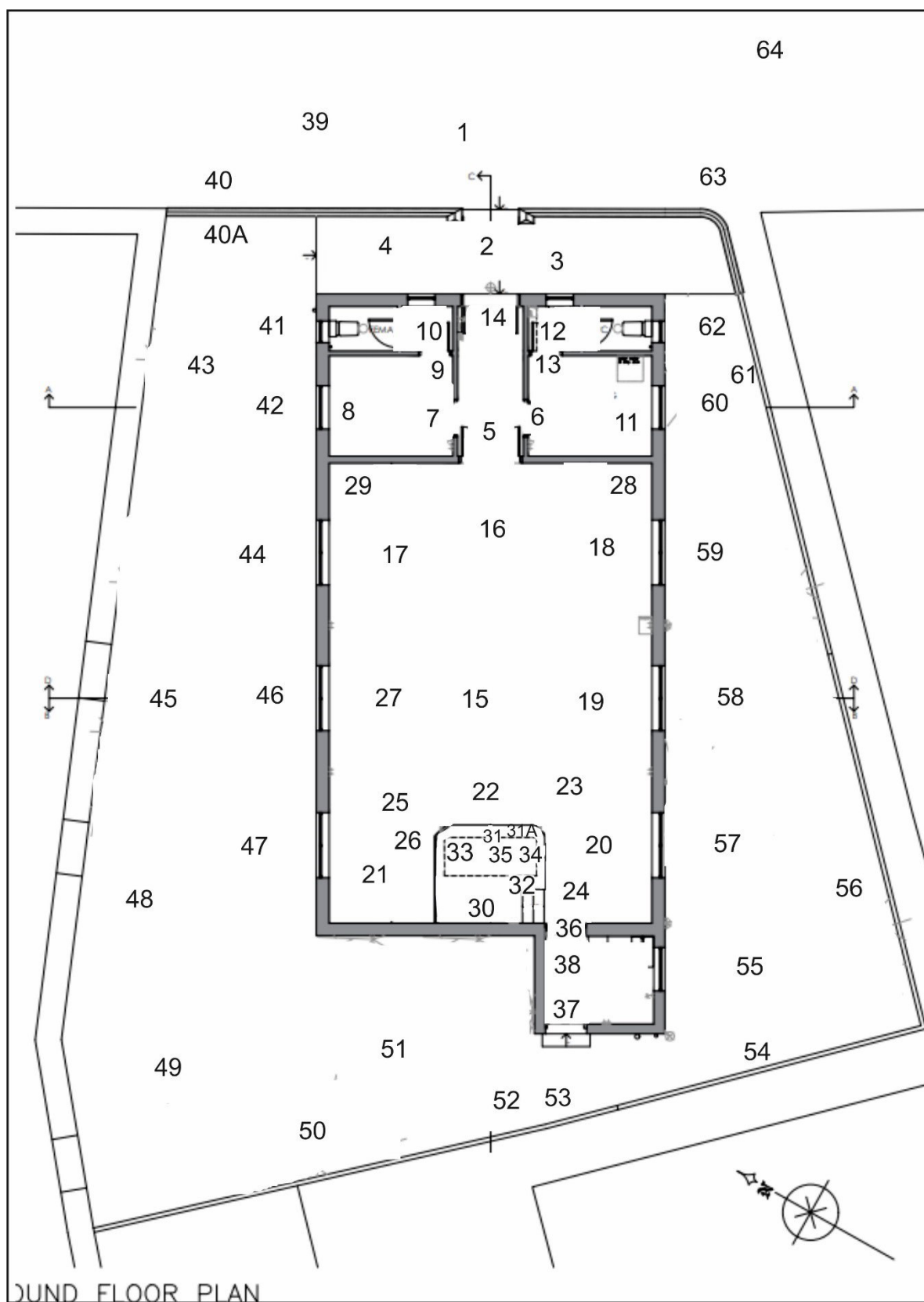
GGG grandfather lived at 23 North Square, one of the first families to occupy the squares, Open Brethren and worshipped at the East Coast Mission 'the schoolie' in the centre of the squares. There was no communion or baptism and so he started preaching in the loft above Thomas Walker's shed – a wooden tar shed on the site now occupied by the 1951 hall. The shed was rotten. He broke away from the strict Brethren. Thomas Walker's mother was a Guyan – many of the families were interrelated. The land belonged to the Harbour Board but the building belonged to the Brethren.

F1 Full immersion font. GG pointed out the copper alloy tap fitting which was attached to a hose and to the tap, and the copper pipe which was removed to allow the tank to drain. There were always 3 people in the font – the preacher and 2 people holding the person to be baptized. Oversight – 'steering committee' equivalent to elders. There were about 2 baptisms per year. They heated the water with a coil heating element which was dropped into the font. They only baptized adults as they had to be saved and at an age of understanding.

F2 Double-sided lectern as it had the bible placed on the top and an image of a bible facing the congregation. GG preached there when he was young.

Cast iron gate on NE wall – GG painted it when he was a youngster.

## APPENDIX 2 PHOTOGRAPHS



Illus 15 Camera points used in this survey

Photo no	Description	Facing	Camera point
1429-31	NE façade D1 centre with window W3 above and W1 (left) W2 (right)	SW	1
1432	D1	SW	2
1433-36	W3 with F5 below	SW	2
1437	W1	SW	3
1438	W2	SW	4
1439	D1 in Room 5	NE	5
1440-41	Room 5	NNE	5
1442-3	Room 5	E	5
1444	Room 5	NE	5
1445	D6	NW	6
1446	Room 4 W5	NW	7
1447-50	D6	SW	8
1451	D7	NE	9
1452-3	W2	NE	10
1454-6	W4	NW	10
1457-8	D6	SE	7
1459	W12	SE	6
1460	D5	NW	11
1461	D8	N	11
1462	Room 3 ceiling	NW	11
1463	D8 with W1	NE	13
1464	W1	NE	12
1465	W13	SE	12
1466	D4 with F4 above	SW	14
1467	F4	SW	5
1468-69	Room 1 NE wall D4 with W15 above	NE	16
1470-1	D4	NE	16
1472	W15	NE	16
1473	W11, W10, W9	SE	17
1474	W11, W10, W9	SSE	17
1475	ceiling	SSE	17
1476	W11	SE	18
1477	W10	SE	19
1478	W9	SE	20
1479	W10, W9 with F1 (foreground)	SE	21
1480	Room 1 SE wall W11, W10, W9	E	21
1481	Room 1 SW wall F3 above pulpit F1	SW	16
1482	Room 1 SW wall F3 above pulpit F1	SW	15
1483	F1 with lectern F2	SW	15
1484-6	F2 with F3 above	SW	22
1487	F3	SW	22
1488	Room 1 SW wall D3 to Room 2	SW	23
1489	D3	SW	24
1490	F1	NW	20
1491	F1	SW	22

1492	F1	SE	21
1493-4	Room 1 SW wall with F1 (left)	SW	25
1495	W8	26	SW
1496	W8, W9	23	NW
1497	W9	27	NW
1498	W8, W9, W10	23	NW
1499	W8, W9, W10	23	N
1500	W10	17	NW
1501	W8, W9, W10	18	NW
1502	Room 1	19	W
1503	Room 1	17	SSW
1504	Room 1	18	W
1505	Room 1	29	SSW
1506	Lectern F2 from pulpit and font F1	30	NE
1507-8	F2	31	NE
1509-10	F2	33	ENE
1511-12	F1 immersion font trapdoor	32	NE
1513	F1 immersion font trapdoor	32	E
1514	F1 immersion font trapdoor	32	NE
1515	F1 immersion font trapdoor	32	N
1516	F1 immersion font trapdoor	32	NW
1517-18	F1 immersion font trapdoor	33	SE
1519	F1 SE half of trapdoor open	32	NE
1520	F1 SE half of trapdoor open	33	SE
1521	F1 interior	34	NW
1522	F1 interior	35	SE
1523	F1 SE half of trapdoor open	33	SE
1524	F1 SE half of trapdoor open	31A	SW
1525-26	F1 SE wall with drainage pipe (left) and copper pipe for attachment to tap	33	SE
1527	F1 base	33	SE
1528	F1 SW wall	31A	SW
1529, 32	F1 NW wall	35	NW
1533-36	F1 NE wall	32	NE
1537	F1 NE wall	32	N
1538	D3	24	SW
1540	Room 2 kitchen extension	37	E
1541-42	D3	37	NE
1543-45	Room 2 SE wall W14	38	SE
1546	Room 2	36	S
1547-49	Room 2 SW wall D2	36	SW
1550-1	Hall from N	39	S
1552	Hall NE façade	40	SSE
1553	Hall NW façade	40	S
1554	Hall NW façade (left) with garden and boundary wall F6 (right)	40	SW
1555	Hall NE façade	40A	S

1556-7	Hall NW façade	40A	SSW
1558-9	Hall NW façade (left) with garden and boundary wall F6 (right)	40A	SW
1560	W4	41	Se
1561	W5	42	SE
1562-63	W4, W5	43	SE
1564	Hall NW façade	43	SSW
1565	W6	44	SE
1566	W4, W5, W6	45	E
1567	W5, W6	45	SE
1568	W7, W8	45	S
1569	W8	47	SE
1570-71	Hall from W	49	E
1572-4	SW gable	51	NE
1575	Garden	50	NE
1576	porch added to SW with D2	50	E
1577-9	D2	52	E
1580	SE façade W14	54	NNE
1581	SE façade W14	54	NE
1582	SE façade W14	55	NNW
1583	W14, W9	55	N
1584	W14, W9, W10	55	NW
1585	W14	55	NW
1586	W9	57	NW
1587-88	W10	58	NW
1589	W11	59	NW
1590	W12	60	NW
1591-2	SE façade	61	WSW
1593-94	W13	62	NW
1595	Hall from E	63	W
1596	Hall from E	64	W



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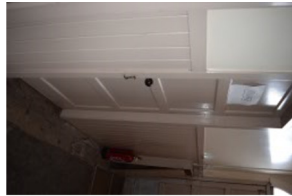
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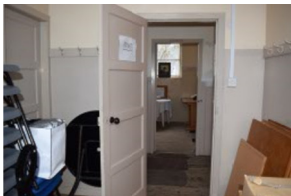
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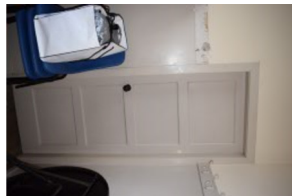
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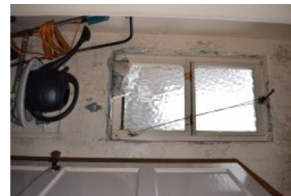
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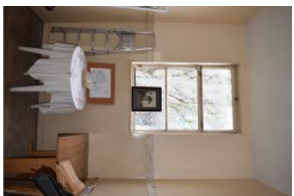
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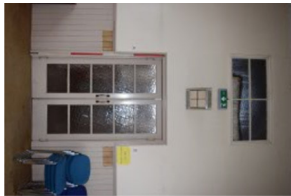
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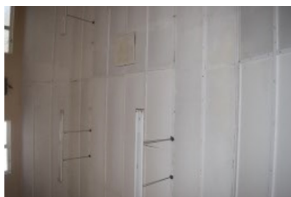
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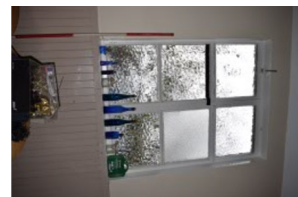
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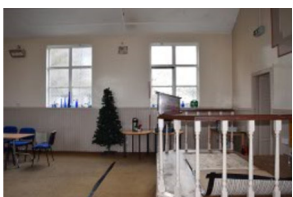
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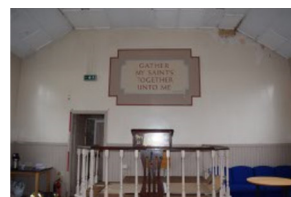
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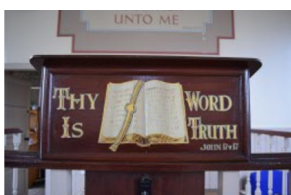
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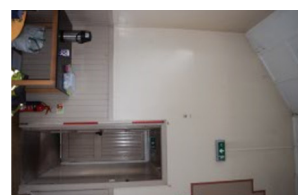
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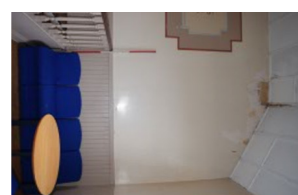
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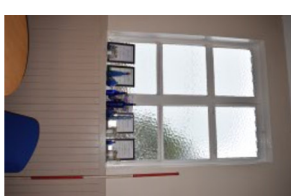
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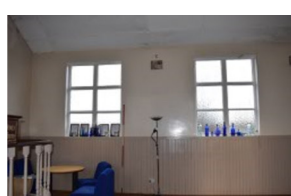
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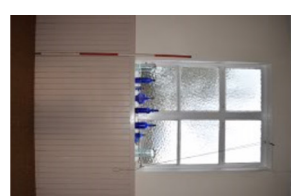
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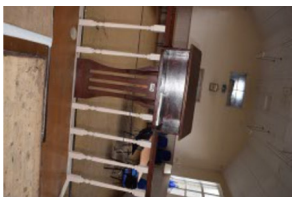
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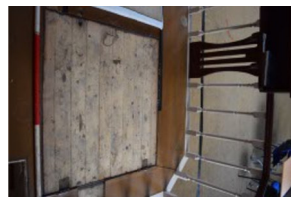
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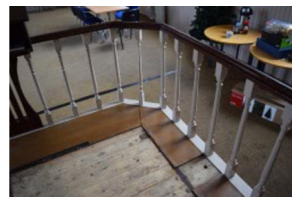
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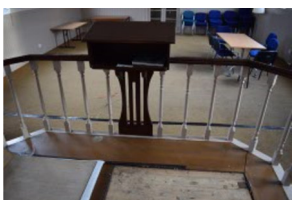
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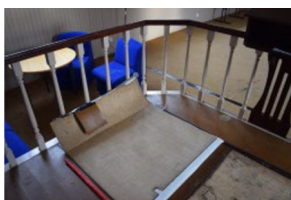
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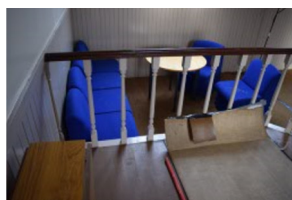
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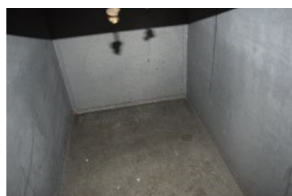
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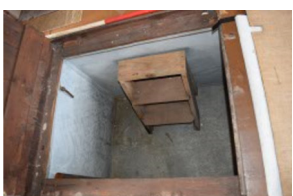
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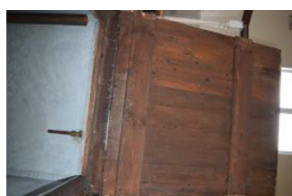
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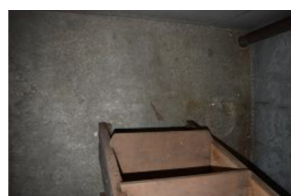
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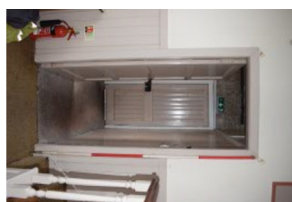
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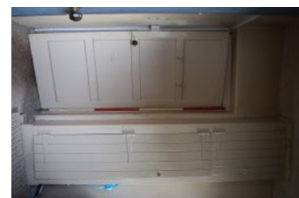
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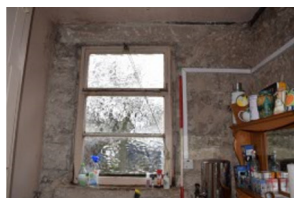
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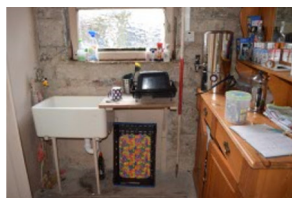
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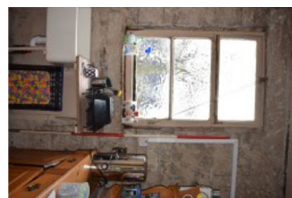
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DSC\_1548



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DSC\_1550



DSC\_1551



DSC\_1552



DSC\_1553



DSC\_1554



DSC\_1555



DSC\_1556



DSC\_1557



DSC\_1558



DSC\_1559



DSC\_1560



DSC\_1561



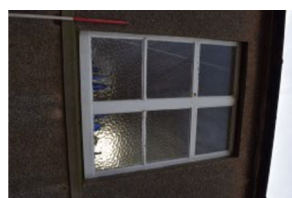
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DSC\_1564



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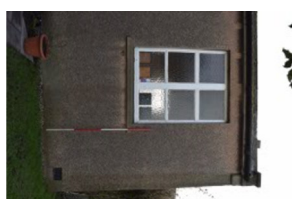
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DSC\_1567



DSC\_1568



DSC\_1569



DSC\_1570



DSC\_1571



DSC\_1572



DSC\_1573



DSC\_1574



DSC\_1575



DSC\_1576



DSC\_1577



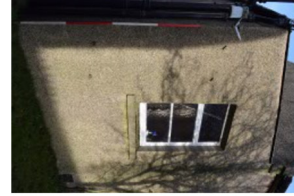
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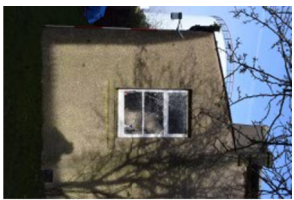
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DSC\_1580



DSC\_1581



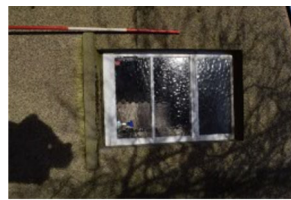
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DSC\_1583



DSC\_1584



DSC\_1585



DSC\_1586



DSC\_1587



DSC\_1588



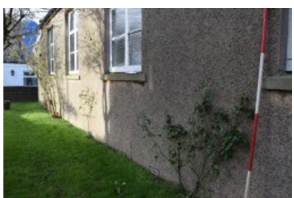
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DSC\_1590



DSC\_1591



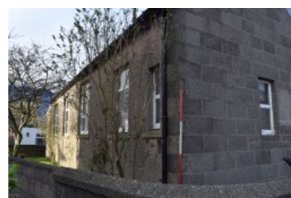
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DSC\_1593



DSC\_1594



DSC\_1595



DSC\_1596