

RENEWAL OF A LEGACY 1

The process of renewal started as a simple cleaning job of the cushions and kneelers in January 2023, but it soon became a bigger project!

Step one was to vacuum the cushions on the outside, and then use a carpet cleaner to clean the rug-hooking.



So much dirt came out!

RENEWAL OF A LEGACY 2

Many of the cushions had zippers, so that we could examine the contents and soon discovered that much of the foam had disintegrated to dust, and that the remaining foam was headed in the same direction.

Approval was given to purchase new foam and to pay for its installation, but the old foam had to be removed outside by people wearing masks. Some cushions did not have zippers, and so stitching had to be unpicked.

The long communion rail kneelers presented more of a challenge, because the material had been stapled to a board underneath the foam. Each kneeler had about 200 staples to be removed.

The covers of 32 cushions and five kneelers had then to be vacuumed inside and out to remove yellow foam dust.



Most of the cushions could then have new foam inserted, and for those with no zippers the company inserted zippers to facilitate future maintenance.

RENEWAL OF A LEGACY 3

The communion rail kneelers had to be reassembled by attaching new foam to the board, and then re-covering this with the rug-hooked cover.

During the steps outlined above, it became clear that patches of the rug-hooking in nine cushions and three kneelers needed repair in places where hooking material had come out.

With the help of the Ontario Guild of the Craft of Rug-hooking, we located Donna VanDusen of Phoenix Restorations in Kingston. Very skillfully, Donna was able to restore most of the damaged patches, so that reassembly could occur.

In addition, five kneelers from prayer desks were given to Donna, who was able to repair the rug-hooking, but the surrounding blue velvet needed replacing. Hamilton has more stores that stock cloth and so the covers came back to Hamilton for professional work to replace the blue velvet.

By the end of October, all the cushions and kneelers had been renewed.

The work of the twenty “Cathedral Hookers” has taken on a new life, and we hope that it can be enjoyed for another forty years or more.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS AND THANKS

Our primary thanks must go to the twenty “Cathedral Hookers”, who created the works in this display: Joyce Anderson, Rose Apigian, N. Halloway, Nancy Harrison, Lovina Hicks, Isabelle Houston, Margaret MacLennan, Amy Noyes, Jane O’Flynn, Alice Robertson (Co-ordinator), Shirley Rader, Marjorie Ross, Joan Rutherford, Marian Scarlet, Jane Spears, Eileen Tees, Margaret Wallace, Fran Waters, Noreen Wigle and Lena Wilson.

Of these, special thanks must go to Alice (Lallie) Robertson for leading this project and writing the account that provided much of the information for this display.

The Venerable Ken Patterson, Jennifer Early and Sandy Darling did most of the renewal work with timely assistance from Jim Newman, Ed Early and Jeni Darling. Turner Shaw and Derek Smith provided continuing support throughout the project. Inez Morgan brought restored items back from Kingston.

Foamland supplied the foam, stuffed cushions and provided stitching. Donna VanDusen of Phoenix Restoration restored the rug—hooking on nine cushions, three communion rail kneelers and five prayer desk kneelers.

Financial support was provided by the Memorial Fund of the cathedral, and the many memorial gifts that have provided the funds.

Photographs of the renewal process were supplied by Jim Newman and Jennifer Early. Text and other photographs were provided by Sandy Darling.