



KEEPING THE LEGEND ALIVE

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Word count: 1,473

How a simple design brief with clear objectives helped cement a football stadium's place in history and breathe new life into an iconic landmark, a brand, a community and a legion of worldwide fans.

This is the story of 'Paradise'.

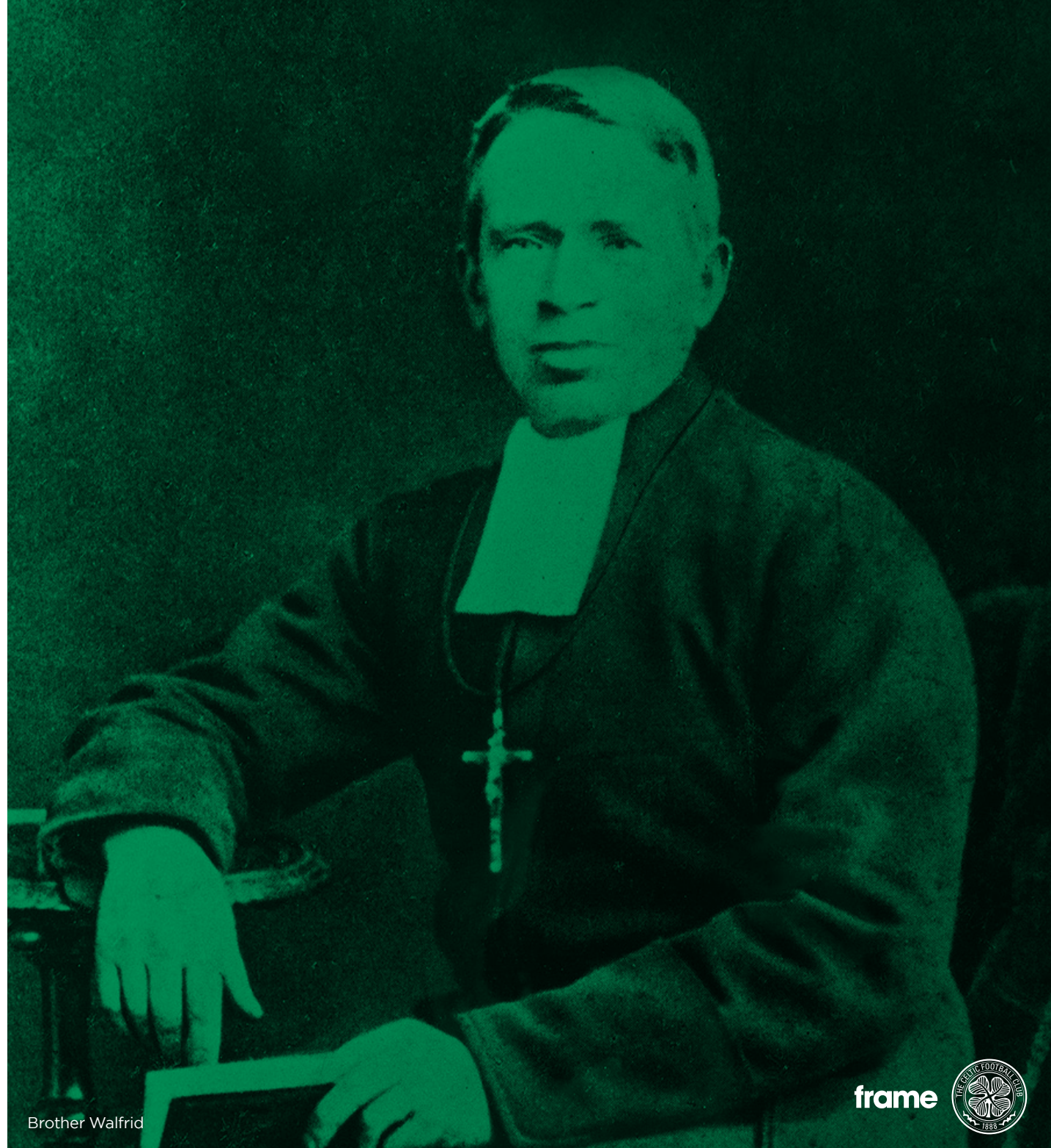


The Celtic Story

Celtic Football Club is a professional football club based in the East End of Glasgow. It is one of the oldest brands in the world.

Founded in 1887 by Irish emigrant, Brother Walfrid to help alleviate the poverty and desperation of 19th Century East End of Glasgow, Celtic has always been a symbol of “community identity, pride and confidence”.

Fast-forward to 2015, and that same sense of pride still lay at the heart of the club’s identity.



Brother Walfrid

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Welcome to Paradise

Celtic Park stands in Glasgow's Parkhead district. Proudly referred to as 'Paradise' by Celtic's vast legion of fans, it has been a feature of Glasgow's skyline for more than a hundred years. But more than that, it has been an enduring landmark in Glasgow's history.

With a capacity of 60,411, it is the largest football club stadium in Scotland and second largest in the UK. It has hosted a wide range of international football matches and sporting events, including the opening ceremony for the

Glasgow 2014 Commonwealth Games. A testament to the stature Celtic Park has amongst the fans and the East End community; it was the natural choice for the ceremony due to its layout bringing spectators close to

the action. The stadium has a lot to offer Celtic fans and sports fans alike; not to mention providing the venue for recruitment drives during WW1 and world-tour concerts from the likes of U2 and The Who.

Undergoing major redevelopments in 1988, the 1990s and 2014, it played a fundamental role in the regeneration of Glasgow's East End. As a welcoming and community-based organisation, it has always been a club that's open to all.

However, whilst some of the stands, interior facilities and the entryway had been significantly upgraded, the remaining original structure was starting to leave fans underwhelmed. The stadium was a big, grey, metal structure

in the heart of the community; always inspiring inside, but not from the exterior.

Celtic's challenge to us was to **reinstate the magic of 'Paradise'**.

Celtic Park Timeline

1960s



1980s



1990s





1998



2014



The brief

The brief was the best of its kind; both open and inspiring. Our task was to create a big idea that would achieve the following:

1

Reinforce/reinstate the feeling of pride and honour at Celtic Park

2

Celebrate the on-going regeneration of the East End and its surrounding areas

3

Create a show stopping piece of art to encourage traffic on non-match days



Building a big idea

We drilled down into three things that were crucial to the brief:


1 The fans

From the very beginning, any player that has taken to the pitch at Celtic Park has been regarded as a superstar by the club's supporters. But at this 'club like no other' the fans' passion is just as deserving of celebration.



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“When you step out at Celtic Park, the atmosphere they create for their team is incredible. It doesn’t matter how many big games you have played in. Walking out into that atmosphere is always intense. I don’t think I have seen anything like the Celtic fans in all the stadiums I have played.”

Xavi (Barcelona player, 2014)



2 “THAT Atmosphere”

Imagine: you walk out of the cold, stark, concrete belly of Celtic Park. The butterflies kick in as the roar of the crowd envelopes your entire being. You're greeted by a seemingly endless sea of green and white. It's the ultimate expression of what it means to be a Celtic fan. And we wanted to capture that feeling on the outside of the stadium too.



3 A City With Art at its Heart

Representing such an iconic local institution, it was important our creative solution felt like it 'belonged' to Glasgow. We looked to the 'art filled' Glasgow for inspiration.

Murals provide decoration in plain architectural areas, many of which attract people wanting to study, photograph, or simply enjoy them. They bring a sense of life and community to the city's streets; things which are also close to the heart, and roots, of Celtic Football Club.

This was the inspiration we needed to create a stunning campaign piece.





Our core thought

We planned to give fans a feeling of pride; whether they were attending a game, driving past or just picturing the stadium in their mind.

Our campaign couldn't just be a gratuitous photo opportunity - we needed to tell a story that would resonate with players, supporters and non-supporters alike, and, given the presence of the stadium, it had to benefit the community too.

We chose a story that reflected fans' feelings about the ground itself: the story of 'Paradise'.

The deliverables

Before deciding exactly how to execute our campaign, we had to consider a few important design questions. Namely:

- With no specified media given in the brief, which sites would we be allowed to work with?
- What were the club's operational, location and budget limitations?
- How could we celebrate legends past and present in a way that feels natural, true to the club and authentic?



Campaign Execution

This was a campaign that called for massive impact, so we supersized our efforts. This wasn't simply a branding opportunity; it was a chance to bring the essence of Celtic to life.

Our solution? To use the greatest asset afforded to us: the stadium itself.

We worked closely with key stakeholders - including Celtic's marketing team, members of the club's board and our production team - to make this ambitious plan happen.



Jock Stein Stand

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Lisbon Lion Stand



South West Corner Stand



Matchday



South East Corner Stand

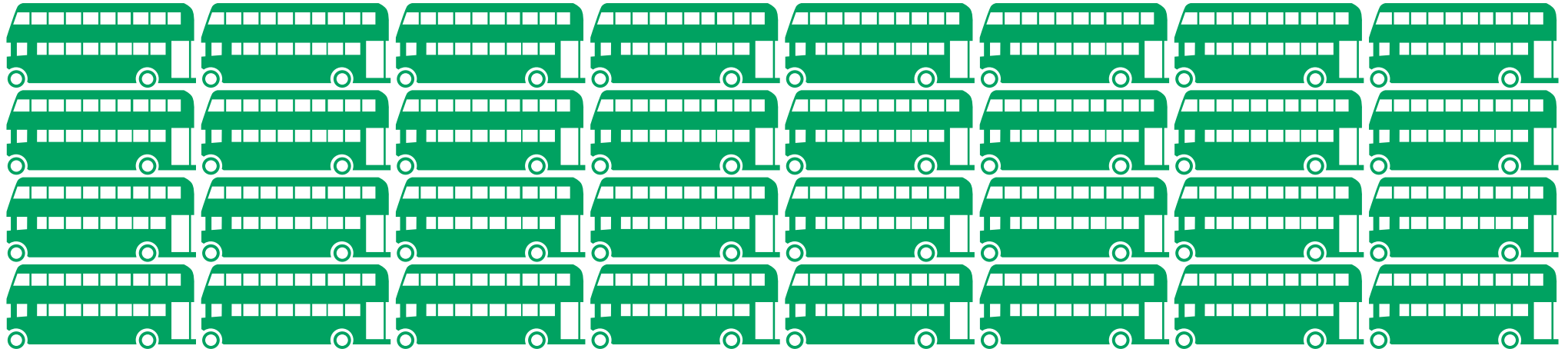
Size Matters

The result was an iconic wrap covering **5,580 square metres** of Celtic Park's exterior, making it the biggest piece of stadium branding we can find in the UK. The design encompasses two areas of the club's proud history and heritage:

- Legends and Paradise
- Key moments timeline

Each stand-side, measuring approximately 20m high and 100m wide (thirty two double decker buses lined up, per side), features 29 legendary players. All of our 58 players were painstakingly chosen to exhibit a range of dates, kits, heights, builds and

personalities, the resulting visual encapsulates the idea that, despite playing at different points in the club's history, every individual has in essence been part of one team.



Design specifics

We chose the most visible areas of Celtic Park's exterior to brand-up, to ensure the stadium would be instantly identifiable from far and wide. This included the east and west stands (the Jock Stein and Lisbon Lions stands to fans) and the two front corners.

We hunted through Celtic's extensive archives to find emotive, memorable shots from their rich past. Where photography wasn't available, we commissioned original artwork from lifelong Celtic supporter and artist, Jim Scullion, to ensure we could authentically cover Celtic's entire story, not just its more recent history. We were keen to preserve the integrity of the old club legends, so although we created visuals in Photoshop, we replicated all players entirely true-to-life.



Not only did this evoke nostalgia in older fans, it meant stories could be told to younger fans about these iconic players, deepening its place in their affections.

The famous 'hoops' also feature, creating an ad hoc timeline of Celtic's home kit. From the resplendent white strip of 19th Century player, Willie Maley, to the recognisable green and white shirt of living legend, Scott Brown, fans are reminded how the club's kit has evolved over the years.

The stadium's front corners featured further pivotal moments in the club's success story.

Visible from the Kingston Bridge and all round Glasgow, the core message was clear: Celtic is a club like no other. We reminded fans that it isn't just a stadium or a building; it's the club's soul, and Celtic is a way of life.



What a result!

As a hearts and minds campaign, the true impact of the project is difficult to quantify. But our measurables indicate that the project was a huge success.

PR Reach

Scottish nationals and regionals

Print (daily readership):

180,804

Digital (monthly unique users):

2,629,790

FB and Twitter combined followers:

209,834



Create an eye-catching wow-factor that would encourage traffic on non-match days

Stadium tour attendance for the 2015/16 season increased by **22%**

With no other factors of the tour changing, feedback from tour staff indicates that the stadium's new look was a key attraction.

Global exposure in excess of **10million**

via Celtic's channels (**4million+** unique users on Celticfc.net x3 including shares, wider global football audience)

Cumulative audience **600,000**

(16 home games so far), of which **100,000** were unique visits



Reinforce the feeling of pride and honour at Celtic Park

“Celtic Park has always been a special place to be but it’s been transformed by the new banners. I LOVE that you can see ‘Paradise’ from miles away now. It’s made me even more proud to be a Celtic supporter.”

Megan McKinlay

from Coatbridge

(fan – at game testimonial)

“I can now clearly read ‘Paradise’ and see Celtic Park lit up green, day or night from my bedroom window and I live 5 miles away! The banners are amazing. It’s a great idea by the club and it’s brilliant to see all of the Celtic legends given a place where fans can see and remember them.”

Michael O’Donnell

from Cambuslang

(fan – at game testimonial)




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Reinforce the feeling of pride and honour at Celtic Park

The hoardings achieved incredible social media traction (and all the numbers are still counting!)

 **Facebook** (across 3 galleries)

Total reach

811,289

19,229
likes

1,058
comments

1,476
shares

 **Twitter** (across 6 posts)

Total impressions

267,854

Total engagements

24,514

“We are delighted with the sensitivity and thoughtfulness of the design while being awestruck at the sheer scale of it. The fans’ response to the new look of Celtic Park has been magnificent.”

Kevin McQuillan

Head of Marketing and Multimedia,
Celtic FC

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Celebrate the on-going regeneration of the East End and its surrounding areas

“The area around Celtic Park is helping Clyde Gateway to attract the sort of new investment the area needs. The hoardings are not only visually striking but are very much in keeping with the high standards and quality of neighbouring developments.”

Ian Manson

Chief Executive, Clyde Gateway

“It was an honour to be asked to play a part in a project that I knew would be loved by the fans of a club I’ve supported my whole life.”

Jim Scullion

Artist



Social Media Comments



Heather McDonald This looks fantastic. Our stadium really looks the part these days 🍀 🍀

Like · Reply · 👍 5 · 13 May 2015 at 18:15



Ryan McCunnie Thats the best design ive seen at parkhead and i live across the road so seen so many changes. ❤️

Like · Reply · 6 July 2015 at 11:36



Emma Findlay I admire it every time I pass it on the motorway. Totally awesome. It is the greatest club in the world with the most passionate fans in the world. Hail Hail forever and in memory of Jock Stein, Jinky Johnstone, Llarsson just to name a few. Pure Dead Brilliant! HH

Like · Reply · 👍 8 · 6 July 2015 at 21:01



Zach Daley You should make that banner into a poster! I'd buy that in a heartbeat!

Like · Reply · 👍 2 · 6 July 2015 at 15:33



Billy Tennant For years walking towards this ground always gave me that wee tingle, especially European nights. To walk towards it now, seeing all those wonderful players that made our club, that etched the Celtic name in world football will be truly amazing

Like · Reply · 👍 4 · 6 July 2015 at 11:22



Steven Walls Brilliant idea, hat off to whoever started this, years of great memories & many more to come 🍀

Like · Reply · 13 May 2015 at 18:13



Michael J Traynor I started going to games in the early 80's when Paradise and the surrounding area was,quite frankly,a midden. What a difference today. Truly,a home to be proud of.



James Patrick Hossack Great idea from the club,the way the whole area looks now is a credit to who came up with this and the Celtic way 🍀

Like · Reply · 👍 28 · 13 May 2015 at 17:45



Jim Carr Love It. Those images bring back some great memories. The Burns/McStay is a personal Favourite.

Like · Reply · 👍 21 · 13 May 2015 at 17:28



Michaela Little Woodhouse I drove past the stadium earlier and this looks awesome!! Brilliant idea Celtic!!



David Miller Awesome now we are on the mark, this is what every fan can relate to no matter what age, these are memories



John Kennedy Hair hail from Boston,no matter where you live in the world there's nothing better in life than being a Celtic fan....love it!!!!

Like · Reply · 👍 146 · 13 May 2015 at 17:31



Angela Dowdells Gives me goosebumps looks through these.....

Like · Reply · 14 May 2015 at 22:04



Kevin O'Neill HH from Venezuela. Great to see Paradise looking fantastic.

Like · Reply · 14 May 2015 at 15:35

Going into extra time

Rarely do projects as exciting as this one come along. Not only was it enormous in scale, it gave us a rare opportunity to put art, not just advertising, at its heart.

The initial reaction has been overwhelmingly positive and has put the stadium back in the spotlight amongst supporters and non-supporters alike. Meaning our project objectives were well and truly met.

What's more, unlike most advertising, these banners won't be in place for a fixed campaign period - they are part of the stadium's structure and will grace Glasgow's East End for years to come. So the truest measure of their impact will be their enduring legacy: the pride they instill over time and the contribution they continue to make to the legend that is 'Paradise'.