

Heinz Memorial Chapel Fleche

University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania



Original architect:

Charles Klauder (*completed 1938*)

Building owner:

University of Pittsburgh

In collaboration with:

- Landmarks Design Associates Architects
- Brace Engineering
- Unique Services and Applications



Structure description:

Heinz Memorial Chapel was constructed between 1933 and 1938 as a posthumous gift from Henry John Heinz to the University of Pittsburgh in memory of his mother, Anna Margareta Heinz. The Chapel was designed by the Philadelphia architect Charles Klauder in a neo-Gothic style that emulates the 13th century high Gothic Sainte-Chapelle in Paris, France. Klauder, as part of the firm Day and Klauder from 1913 to 1927 and later under his own name, designed numerous collegiate buildings almost exclusively in the neo-Gothic style. Along with the Cathedral of Learning and Stephen Foster Memorial, also designed by Klauder, Heinz Memorial Chapel, is a centerpiece and landmark of the University of Pittsburgh campus.



At the crossing of the chapel, rising from the transept roof, is a 113-foot tall fleche. The steel structural framing of the fleche ties into the framing of the chapel in the transept attic. The fleche is clad in lead-coated copper, fastened to the steel armature with machine screws and rivets. Architecturally, the Heinz Chapel fleche has eight facets and consists of a base surmounted by a spire. The base of the fleche has several distinct vertical components. There are openings at each facet on two levels, projecting grotesques encircling the fleche at the ribs and decorative finials, tracery and stamped panels. Setback slightly from the base, is the crocketed spire with solid panels consisting of a quartrafoil pattern inscribed within a diamond.

Scope of work:

- Investigated and documented the existing condition of the exterior lead-coated copper cladding and interior structural steel frame of the fleche.
- Provided live-feed video to project team during inspection of the fleche.
- Designed and installed copper cowls to waterproof new access holes at the copper-clad spire.

Photos by Vertical Access