

# Orts: The George MacDonald Society Newsletter

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## Orts 24, 1991

The George MacDonald Society

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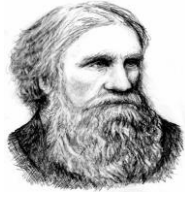
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# Orts

## **The George MacDonald Society Newsletter No. 24, November 1991**

1. **New Editor Required!** Pressure of work has forced our editor Kathy Triggs to resign. She edited North Wind from its inception until a few years ago and then switched to the editorship of Orts. It was her painstaking work editing North Wind in the early years of the Society which, more than anything else, established the Society's position in literary circles. (See note "Royal Recognition" below.) Kathy hopes to continue to contribute to North Wind and has, indeed, produced an article for the current number.

**\*\* Could YOU take over the editorship of Orts for us? \*\*** There are at present three issues a year. Kathy would be happy to tell you what is involved, her phone number is 0274 563936. It would be helpful to have an editor who could attend most of the Council Meetings in London (some 9 a year, usually Friday evenings but flexible). This, however, is not absolutely essential. Please contact the acting secretary if you can help.

2. **North Wind** is shorter than usual this year, largely because our editor had to spend much more time abroad than he had anticipated; another time we will be prepared for such a contingency. We are in the process of switching over to computerized production but at present are at a half-way stage. We had hoped to print out on a laser printer, which gives very high quality printing, but this involved transferring from one word processor programme to another, and in the process, although the words were transferred, justification, centering and even underlining became quite chaotic, so this plan had to be abandoned. Readers will find, however, that there are less spelling mistakes in the journal than when the work was contracted out. By next year we will, hopefully, be producing – for less cost – a journal which all members will be proud to leave lying on their coffee tables!

3. **\*\* Membership Leaflets\*\*** Two copies of the revised Membership Leaflet are enclosed with this number of Orts. **THE MORE MEMBERS THE SOCIETY HAS THE MORE CHANCE THERE IS OF KEEPING SUBSCRIPTION INCREASES BELOW INFLATION. ALSO, OF COURSE, THE LARGER THE MEMBERSHIP, THE MORE ACTIVITIES THAT CAN BE ORGANISED.**

Try to get a copy posted up on the appropriate notice board at the venue used by your local literary society and at any higher education establishment with which you have contact, and pass a copy on to any friend whom you believe to be genuinely interested in MacDonald. We do not wish to distribute a flood of leaflets but we will be delighted to supply more if you think you can make good use of them. At present stocks are held by our chairman, the revd. Phil Streeter, tel. 0708 741945.

There is also a longer leaflet giving more background on MacDonald. This is still being revised but should be available again in a few months.

4. **Future Events** IT'S NOT ONLY HUNTLY WHERE THINGS ARE

HAPPENING! Two public lectures are planned in London in 1992 and an international conference/work-shop in the South of England in 1993. The major Huntly events during this period will be associated with the unveiling of the memorial plaque to George and Louisa MacDonald in the MacDonald family corner of the beautiful rural churchyard of Drumblade. Full details of all these events will be published in Orts.

5. **New Members** We welcome the following new members who have joined the Society during the year:

Nicholas Bolton, The Rectory, Parsonage Lane, WINFORD, Avon, BS18 8DG.  
Prof. P.H. Butter, Ashfield, Prieston Rd. BRIDGE OF WEIR, PA11 3AW  
Denis & Gladys Clark, 4110 Cedar Hill Rd. VICTORIA, B.C. Canada V8N 3C4.  
Andrew Coleman, St Peter's Rectory, Parsonage Way, FRIMLEY, Surrey, GU16 6HZ.  
David and Celia Collins, West Manse, Gartly, HUNTLY, Aberdeenshire, AB54 4RX.  
Michael Coulter, 473 S. Monroe, DECATUR, IL 62522, U.S.A.  
D.F. Gradle, 1022 Wayne St. DALLAS, TX 75223, U.S.A.  
The Gordon Schools, HUNTLY, Aberdeenshire, AB5 4SE.  
Mrs. Bud Long, 100 Howell, BELEN, NM 87002, U.S.A.  
Dr. Richard & Mrs. Paddy MacDonald, 222 Second St. PACIFIC GROVE, CA 93950, U.S.A.  
Brenda M. Schweitzer, c/o 710 Hillcrest Ave. COLUMBIA, SC 29203, U.S.A.  
Mrs. Joan South, 26 Upper Phillimore Gdns. LONDON W8 7HA.  
J. & M. Stanley, 310 Main St. MANSTIQUE, MI 49854, U.S.A.  
Ishbel Tallach, Albury, School Rd. KINTORE, Aberdeenshire, AB57 OUX.  
Tim Bleecker, 1011 Edmands Rd. FRAMINGHAM, MA 01701, U.S.A.  
John and Ann Kariia, 200 Creekside Drive, #527, FOLSOM, CA 95630, U.S.A.

6. **"Adela Cathcart"** Those of us who have had the privilege of reading the scarce first edition of Adela Cathcart, find it difficult to understand why the work has never been reprinted. The plot creaks in places, but the fact that the author, as narrator, is a major character in the story, gives MacDonald the opportunity to introduce an exceptional number of the profound and delightful asides which make his early novels such a joy to read. The plot describes the "homeopathic" cure, by fairy tales, of a girl made seriously ill by vapid, treacly, education – a theme taken up by his friend Lewis Carroll for the currently more famous story Alice's Adventures in Wonderland. All the included "fairy tales" were reprinted in later collections but, as usual with MacDonald, the earlier versions are in most cases the best. In fact, in the case of "The Giant's Heart" the modified beginning introduced when the story was reprinted in Dealings With the Fairies makes it very difficult to understand. Moreover, each of the fairy stories is discussed by the characters in the novel, and these discussions throw invaluable light on the stories.

Now J.J. Flynn, who produces the beautiful – and incredibly cheap – facsimiles of MacDonald's Unspoken Sermons in 1987, plans to reprint the three volumes of Adela Cathcart. He estimates the cost at fifty dollars for the set, although this will, of course, to some extent depend on the number of orders received. YOU WILL NEVER REGRET SUPPORTING THIS VENTURE. If you are interested, please contact our chairman Phil Streeter or J.J. Flynn himself at PO Box 3855 SOUTH PASADENA CA 91030 USA. Do not send any money at this stage.

7. **Books for Sale** Professor Robert Flechter has the following books for sale, all post free,

sterling please. The second figure is for overseas orders.

Alec Forbes undated Hurst & Blackett, dk. green binding, good cond. £14 (£16)

Sir Gibbie as above £9 (£10)

David Elginbrod as above "New Edition", fair condition £9 (£10)

Mary Marston Dalton 1908 Maroon, fair to good £10 (£11).

His address is 2 Chestnut Close, AMERSHAM, Bucks. HP6 6EQ.

9. **Library** We still urgently require most of the works listed in Orts number 22. However, The Portent, edited Glen Sadler, has been donated by J. J. Flynn and a photocopy of the very different first edition of The Portent, serialised in the Cornhill Magazine 1860, will soon be donated by John Docherty. Other works recently donated are: The Gold Thread, ed. W. Raeper, donated by the publishers. Essays in Honour of C.S. Lewis, ed. A. Walker & J. Patrick, donated by Aidan McKay. Prof. Spina's translation of Phantastes, donated by himself. And the latest number of the journal Letterature which Prof. Spina edits.

10. **Royal Acknowledgement** Bill Raeper, our secretary and the editor of North Wind, was last summer invited to a garden party at Holyrood House. The exact reasons for such invitations are not disclosed but it can only have been for his George MacDonald work – his two books and his educational work in Huntly such as the preparation of the MacDonald town-trail leaflet.

11. **Material for "Orts"** Until a new editor is appointed, contributions for Orts should be sent to the acting secretary, John Docherty, 9 Medway Drive, FOREST ROW, E. Sussex RH18 5NU. Under circumstances, no copy deadline for the next issue can be given.

12. **Annual General Meeting** \*\*Second Reminder\*\* If you intend to come to the AGM please detach the slip below and send it to Freda Levson as soon as possible. The meeting will take place on Friday, 22<sup>nd</sup> November 1991 at 7 pm. At 58a Westbourne Villas London W2. Westbourne Park Villas follows the south side of the Western Region main line between Porchester and Cheptow Rds. the nearest station is Royal Oak. Some parking space is usually available. As mentioned, John Heath Stubbs, the poet and critic hopes to read some of his poems. Unfortunately he had a fall in the summer from which he has not yet fully recovered. We wish him a speedy recovery, but if his doctor will not permit him to read to us on Nov. 22nd there will be an illustrated talk on an aspect of MacDonald's writing. Light refreshments will be provided and this is an opportunity for members in the SE to meet one another. Friends may be invited.

I shall/shall not be attending the George MacDonald Society AGM on Nov. 22nd.

Name.....

Address.....

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Tel. No.....