

Orts: The George MacDonald Society Newsletter

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The George MacDonald Society

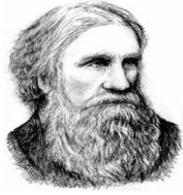
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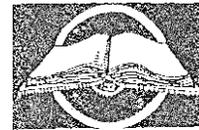
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NOTE FROM THE CHAIRMAN

It's a great pleasure in this new edition of ORTS to introduce *William Webb* and *Roy Bricknell*, who are now responsible for its production.

Different editors and production artists instinctively brand something of their personality upon what they are producing – such is the uniqueness of creativity. For this reason I look forward to this new phase of ORTS existence.

A myriad thanks to our previous editor, *Nicholas Bolton*, who performed an excellent job both in layout and content.



Phil Streeter
(Chairman)

THE GEORGE MACDONALD COLLECTION AT KING'S COLLEGE, LONDON

The catalogue of this collection is now on computer. A print-out may be obtained by sending two 25p stamps to the Hon. Librarian at 9, *Medway Drive, Forest Row, E. Sussex, RH18 5NU*.

We had been informed that by now the collection would be housed in a room of its own for convenience of researchers. However, it is still at present in the College Librarian's office. Written requests to use it should still be addressed to the Library Office at King's College. Recent donations to the collection include:

The Heart of George MacDonald edited by Rolland Hein, donated by the publisher Harold Shaw

No's I to V of the Journal Seven, donated by Freda Levson and completing the set.

A complete set of the Journal Wingfold, donated by John Docherty.

NB: WORKS STILL URGENTLY REQUIRED for the collection include:

George MacDonald Works of Fancy and Imagination in 10 volumes.
Exotics.
The Tragedy of Hamlet.

A Cabinet of Gems.
Heather and Snow.
Rampolli.
George Gray Recollections of Huntly as it was 70 years ago.
Joseph Johnson GM, a biography and critical appreciation
Greville MacDonald Reminiscences of a Specialist.
Raphael Shaberman GM, a bibliographic study.
PhD theses on GM.
Inklings magazine No. 5, 1987.

Critical studies of children's literature or fantasy literature with important material on GM, eg:

Harold Nicholson A Voyage to Wonderland
R.A. Collins and H.D. Pearce (eds) The Scope of the Fantastic.
Jack Zipes Fairy Tales and the Art of Subversion.
Victorian Fairy Tales.
Colin Manlove Modern Fantasy.
The Impulse of Fantasy and Literature.
Stephen Prickett Romanticism and Religion.
Victorian Fantasy

Copies of all new articles referring to GM's writings published outside the principle journals devoted to GM and the Inklings.

Other material may also be very welcome, particularly 19th century editions of GM. If in doubt please contact the Hon. Librarian.

NEW REPRINTS OF MACDONALD WORKS

The Marquis of Lassie is available in a new edition from Sunrise Books, 1707 E Street, Eureka, California 95501. at \$27.50. They also offer two other novels, *Robert Falconer* (\$33.50) and *Donal Grant* (\$47.50) with special terms on these two for quantities if required. These books are not abridged in any way and are leather bound.

In this country we have a new miniature edition, hardbound, of *The Light Princess*, (*Palmer Cox's Barefoot Books Series* £3.99). The Everyman Children's Classics now include *The Princess and the Goblin* in its particularly well-produced clothbound series (£8.99).



ROLLAND HEIN'S NEW MACDONALD ANTHOLOGY

The Heart of George MacDonald. An anthology edited by Rolland Hein. (Harold Shaw Publishers, Box 567, 388, Gundersen Drive, Wheaton, Illinois 60189. \$25)

This is not a digest of short pieces for instant spiritual uplift, nor is it a selection carefully chosen to illustrate the editor's own Christian ideas. Hein humbly seeks to lead the reader into a clearer perception of MacDonald's understanding of the Christian life. No better choice of MacDonald's work could be imagined for anyone wishing to introduce a Christian friend to the range of his (and Mrs. MacDonald's) writings. This 464 page book is distributed in Britain by S.T.L. and can be obtained from any bookseller.

We have already drawn the attention of readers of Orts to Rolland Hein's splendid new biography of MacDonald. This will be distributed in Europe within a few months, but anyone wishing to obtain a copy before then may send a cheque direct to Professor Hein at the Department of English, Wheaton College, Wheaton, IL. 60187, USA. For airmail delivery send £25 sterling, for surface delivery send £20.

(If however you wish to introduce MacDonald to "agnostic" friends who would not be able to cope with the straightforward loving approach of much of his own writing, some of the books by our member **Jack Zipes** would be most suitable. In his anthology *Victorian Fairy Tales*, for example, he shows how, "from 1860 until the turn of the century ... the majority of writers of fairy tales ... conceived plots conventionally to reconcile themselves and their readers to the *status quo* of Victorian society. Their imaginative worlds could be called exercises in complicity with the traditional opponents of fairy tales." He describes how MacDonald was in the forefront of the far smaller group of writers who introduced, "vigorous and unique quality of social criticism" into their writing.)

SHADOWLANDS: THE FILM

The story of C.S. Lewis and Joy Davidman was dramatically told first in a play by William Nicholson. This became a TV drama and then a cinema film with the same title as the two earlier versions. The director is Richard Attenborough, who has worked in the fashionable "faction" style, where meticulous accuracy in some matters is combined with pure fiction in others. Some of the invented incidents, such as Joy taking her final holiday in Hertfordshire instead of Greece, seem to be acceptable dramatic licence. But all the details are motivated by a desire to distort the picture of Lewis so that he appears as a self-centred man with shallow acquaintances. The critics of the gutter press have predictably seized the opportunity to smear a Christian propagandist, spewing forth all the traditional calumnies short of cannibalism in a style which, (as documented by Lewis's friend Charles Williams), has scarcely changed at all since the early years of the Christian church. Hopefully, however, the film will encourage people to turn to one or other of the better biographies of Lewis, where due attention is given to the friends who were as important to him as Joy. And a few people may even seek to discover why the Christian insights of Owen Barfield, Williams and George MacDonald were so vital to Lewis. He referred to MacDonald as his "master" and never failed to quote him in his own books.

SUMMER EXCURSIONS

We hope to organise one-day visits this summer to Hastings, where MacDonald wrote some of his most important stories, and/or to Broadlands at Ramsey where he was an important figure at some of the spiritual gatherings organised by the Mount-Temples. The visits will probably be organised for the later part of the summer. Guests will be welcome. If you think you might like to attend please inform the Secretary as soon as possible, indicating any weeks that would be impracticable for you. Definite bookings are not required at this stage.

NB. The Society is always pleased to help and advise overseas visitors wishing to visit places associated with MacDonald. (This is on a strictly non-commercial basis. We do not undertake to recommend particular hotels, taxi firms etc.!).

NOTES

Please note that the George MacDonald Society is now the official distributor for the Johannesen reprints of GM's works. Discount prices to Society members will continue as before.

The Society now has a Fax number: 0342 823859. The Fax machine was a gift to us, the first of what we hope will be many gifts, now that the Society has charitable status. If any members have experience of fund-raising for national charities, (a very different matter from fund-raising for local charities), we would be grateful for any help they can provide.

We understand some members received poorly printed copies of the last number of *Orts*. If you would like a replacement copy please write to *Roy Bricknell, 165, Eastwood Old Road, Leigh-on-Sea, Essex.SS9.4RZ*. We would appreciate it if UK members could enclose two second-class stamps.

REMINDER TO MEMBERS

Members are asked to renew their subscriptions punctually please, so that reminder notices need not be sent. This will save unnecessary work for our Members' Secretary and Treasurer, *Rachel Johnson, 61, Longdales Road, Lincoln.LN2.2JS. (Tel.0522 532967)*.



“It must be thirty years ago that I bought, almost unwillingly, a copy of George MacDonald’s *Phantastes*, I knew then that I had passed a great frontier; what it did was to convert, even to baptise, my imagination.”

C.S. Lewis