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The George MacDonald Society

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The George MacDonald Society Newsletter

Number 77, Summer 2020



The Broadlands painting

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Introduction

The last two and half years have seen big changes in how we connect and interact with each other, and this is especially the case for a Society like ours, where many are also geographically separated. While covid is still with us, hopefully things are slowly returning to the “new normal,” however, some of the changes that have occurred will have lasting significance, particularly the accelerated use of technology and move online. There is definitely still a place for face to face meetings, but Societies like ours also need to adapt, and a recurring theme in this newsletter is change. Much of it I believe is for the better, as the Society continues to grow and fulfil its aims, which are to encourage academic interest and discussion of George MacDonald and facilitate the growing popular interest in MacDonald and his works.

Mike Partridge

Board Members

Firstly an update on the officers of the Society I am very pleased to advise that Malcolm Guite (who many of you will know) has agreed to assume the role of President following the death of Professor Stephen Prickett, a tribute to whom can be found [here](#). We have also taken the opportunity to add experience to the Board. The current officers are:

Officer(s)	Name
President:	Malcom Guite
Co-chairpersons:	Kirstin Jeffrey Johnson Mike Partridge
Treasurer:	Mike Partridge (Acting)
Membership Secretary:	Mike Partridge (Acting)
Correspondence Secretary/ Orts Editor:	Donna Whatmough-Triggs
North Wind Editor:	John Pennington
Academic Representative:	Daniel Gabelman
Society Historians:	Rachel Johnson John McNeill

Online:	Mike Partridge
North American Representative:	Bonnie Gaarden
Central & Eastern European Representative:	Denise Vasiliu
Committee Members:	John Flynn Jess Lederman Robert Trexler

The George MacDonald Society online

Some useful links to keep in touch with us are:

- Society Blog: gms.george-macdonald.com
- Facebook Group: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/GeorgeMacDonaldSociety>

Behind the scenes, the Society’s web site is being reworked and the plan is to continue to add further sources to it in due course.

YouTube Channel

Keeping up with modern times, the Society now has its own YouTube channel.

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCm8XNU9-oQe4FErFXf-yvOw>

At the moment there is just the one video (just over two hours long) of the online event we hosted on Zoom last October, “George MacDonald Poetry and Science” in which Professor Tom McLeish (Professor of Natural Philosophy in Physics, University of York; author of *The Poetry and Music of Science*) and Dr Franziska Kohlt (Postdoctoral Fellow, University of York) talk about MacDonald, science, and the imagination. The intention, however, is over time to create a growing resource for the study and appreciation of George MacDonald.

Can we encourage you to subscribe (and tell your friends) to the YouTube channel. When we get to 100+ subscribers we will then be able to make the address more specific and easy to remember.

North Wind Journal

In the past membership of the Society has included a paper copy of our respected academic journal *North Wind*, edited by Professor John Pennington. However, with our membership widely distributed across the globe, the costs of continuing the paper version were becoming prohibitive (especially postage). In line with many other similar Societies, the decision was made by the Board to move the journal fully online starting with *North Wind* 40, Summer 2022 (2021). This will be going live soon and will be found at:

<https://digitalcommons.snc.edu/northwind/>

We had hoped to provide a pdf version of the journal for our members, that replicated the previous paper version. Unfortunately, due to software and production limitations, this has not been possible. However, we still wanted members to have early access to the articles from the journal and here are links to the articles downloadable from Dropbox:

[A Checklist of George MacDonald books published in the UK \(1850-1930\)](#) - Richard I. Johnson

[“Lilith Shall Be Saved by Her Childbearing:” Gynocentric Consideration on the Female Body and the Relationship between Mother and Daughter in George MacDonald’s Lilith](#) - Ayumi Kumabe

[More Than a Fairy Tale: The Gendered Experience of Child Abuse in George MacDonald’s The Day Boy and the Night Girl](#) - Kyla An Foley

[Lilith’s Library and Ellipsoids: Tracing the Shape of a Diabolic Mind](#) - Michael Wayne Wilhelm

George MacDonald and Wife

Board member John Flynn has been working on producing a digital version of Greville MacDonald’s biography of his father. This will replicate the original pagination for referencing purposes. The intention is that the individual sections will be available as a resource on the Society’s website and that a complete pdf version will be provided as a membership bonus for new and renewing members. We are now at the stage where proofreaders are required. If you are able to commit to this (we would allocate manageable sections, so you are not expected to comment on the whole book!) please contact John direct (flynnman@gmail.com) and he will guide you through the process.

The Broadlands Painting

The image on the cover of this newsletter is the Group Portrait of the Broadlands Conferences (1887) by Edward Clifford (1844 – 1907), which was auctioned at Dreweatts' auction house in May 2021. The painting is an exceptional tribute to an era of pioneering Christianity. Figures represented include Hannah Pearsall-Smith, the inspirational Quaker; Emilia Gurney, the feminist social reformer; and our man George MacDonald of Huntly. Board member Rev Dr. John McNeill was alerted to this at very short notice. Remarkably, John was able to find enough money – a combination of loans and gifts – to make a successful bid for the painting with the support of the George MacDonald Society.

The presence of George MacDonald alone makes the Broadlands painting a very significant cultural treasure. The goal is for this painting to be displayed in public spaces and perhaps, one day, housed in a space that highlights the importance of this ecumenical gathering to advance Christianity in Great Britain. However, we need your help to ensure this becomes a reality.

The total price was £18,500 and most of this was initially borrowed. There remains some £6,000 (approximately \$8,250) of loans that must in due course be repaid. The George MacDonald Society set up a GoFundMe page which is still live and we would encourage you to support it and continue to get the word out. The link is:

<https://www.gofundme.com/f/help-gms-secure-historic-macdonald-painting>

Some background on the significance of the Broadland's Conferences can be found here: <https://specialcollectionsuniversityofsouthampton.wordpress.com/tag/broadlands-conference>

Membership Subscriptions/ Renewals

Membership subscriptions are due on the 1st January each year and are currently:

- Reduced rate for Students and the Unwaged \$15
- Standard Membership \$30
- Life Membership \$500 (one-off payment)

You can do this online at:

<http://gms.george-macdonald.com/membership/>

If anyone joins/ renews midway through the year their subscription will continue to be valid for a full 12 month period from the date of their joining.

Encouraging Our Friends

We are always pleased to support our friends and we would like to highlight two online groups, which many of our members are already involved with, that often feature George MacDonald.

Inklings Friday Fellowship on Zoom

This is a weekly group that meets each Friday on Zoom at 4pm Eastern Standard Time (9pm UK) for approximately two hours. You can find out more at:

<https://www.facebook.com/InklingFolkFellowship/>

They describe themselves there as:

“A rather informal, friendly, but thoughtful literary conversation circle, focusing primarily on the writings of C. S. Lewis, George MacDonald, Dorothy L. Sayers, J. R. R. Tolkien, Owen Barfield, Charles Williams, and others of their ink-ilk.”

To get the Zoom link each week and be added to their mailing list, please contact Joe Ricke (jsricke@outlook.com).

Many of those who meet there are admirers of George MacDonald and he often gets a mention. They have recently completed a read through of the *Princess and Curdie*.

George MacDonald Reading Groups on Facebook

This is a relaxed and friendly online group. They meet at 8pm EST on Mondays, which is 1am in the UK, so this will primarily be of interest to this of you who are in North America. You can request to join the Facebook Group [here](#).

2024 Bi-centenary of MacDonald's birth

As many of you are aware, 2024 is the bi-centenary of George MacDonald's birth and it is not too early to begin thinking about how, as a Society, we should celebrate this. We have a few ideas already but are keen to hear what you think as we begin to firm these up. If you have any suggestions or thoughts then please do let us know by emailing us at:

macdonaldsociety@gmail.com