



**PATRICIA DOUGLAS** MBE, FRSA  
1931–2016

## **Antony Douglas**

Thank you all for joining us today, especially, Mother's brother Donald who has come all the way from Great Yarmouth ably chauffeured by Russell and Michelle, - my best wishes to Aunt Jeannie who wanted to be here - I do hope she gets better soon. Also to Fiona for flying up here to be with us today.

May I, on behalf of the family, give particular thanks to:

Blair Taylor for providing exactly the service in tone and delivery that we hoped for.

Also to Darren Kelly, Margo and all the staff at Auchlochan Garden Village where Mother and Father spent the last 5 years together. In particular to those staff who changed their shifts so that they could care for Mother in her final hours. It shows how fond they were of her.

My thanks go to Gavin, who has borne the brunt of supporting them - the benefits and disadvantage of living the closest!

And to Catriona who has supported us all in so many ways with her amazing ability to juggle so many balls in the air at the same time whilst showing great kindness and hospitality to me and my family.

And, of course, to Father for his devotion to Mother and support to us. He is also a very special person.

I would like to reflect on this exceptional lady as Mother, Grandmother and Great Grandmother - a role I know she loved...

I see Kenneth McCall is here this afternoon. Kenneth was my best friend at School for several years and then sailed with Gavin on many occasions. He knew us all well and will, I trust, vouch for the fact that when I was an impressionable 11-year-old my class nickname was "mummy's boy" - this was not just because I was a bit softer than the others in speech and character but also because I guess they saw that she was an important influence on me. Adolescence has a way of forming you for better or for worse and this nickname led me to want to call her something more grown up - the word Mum was frowned upon so we compromised on Mother and then Gavin began calling her Mother Dear as we relaxed into this as a more acceptable idiom.

I believe everyone here will agree that Mother Dear was a strong character not to be underestimated. For instance, when I broke my arm at school sports day she took Gavin and I to the newly opened Cinerama to see How the West Was Won. Obviously we tried to park outside but several police and traffic wardens descended on the car to point out that this was not permitted. Her response - "Gentlemen do not be silly my son has broken his arm he cannot walk"! Her manner was such that they allowed us to park and looked after our car while we went inside: much to our childish mix of amusement and embarrassment.

Mother was also kind and considerate: I remember, before entering The Royal Military College Sandhurst for the first time, she got Father to stop the car and suggest I drive in through the gates as she recognized this would make me feel better as I approached this significant stage of my career. Neither of us expected the duty colour sergeants to politely invite her and my

Father to the Mess for a sherry whilst simultaneously barking me out of the car and double time departing with my luggage as our farewell!

We will also be forever grateful for her devotion to her grandchildren: Adam, Richard, James and Jonathan as well as Gavin's boys: Harris and Kern. She came down to help in the aftermath of their births and has taken a close interest in their lives since, as they have matured into the fine young men of which we are so proud. Then, to her delight, they started providing her with even more joy in their children – so far Seth, Heath and Harrison – with at least one more to follow – I wonder if this will be a girl for the first time in a few generations?

Later you will hear about her life with the CRM Society but before you do I would like you to know what she meant to me:

A strong Mother: firm but fair. Determined and clear in what she liked, and also what she didn't. Lovingly supportive of Father and us. She had a wicked sense of humour and was seldom phased by whatever life presented. Mother Dear was an excellent cook and an example of her ability to cope was when, having gone to some trouble to make a large shepherd's pie for a number of family friends (when we were at Grange Road in Bearsden) and a smaller pie for the children – who had their own table in the playroom – disaster struck as the adult's hot plate slipped along the side board the dish skidded onto the floor in a loud bang of shattered glass and splattered food. Her reaction was to say "Oh Dear", make sure we children were ok and in what seemed like an instant conjure up another meal for the adults while Father cleared the mess. The disaster became a celebration of her ability to rescue the situation and a good party followed. A small example of her ability to deal with all that came to her.

On another occasion there was a trifle (always delicious when she made it) and this time a jug of cream was on the side – we boys asked how much cream we could have to be told one spoonful – Gavin – ever the canny one – came out of the kitchen with the largest serving spoon he could find. As we all laughed she said fine you can use that one as long as it fits in the jug – to her slight consternation it did – and both of us have been trying to diet since!

We were also a great games family – all manner of board games from Bar Billiards to Bridge to Darts to Croquet – many happy hours were spent developing the winning spirit with little quarter given in any direction!

We had good parties – maybe formal compared to this day and age but fun nonetheless. For instance, when I came home for Christmas whilst in the Army we went to a New Year's Eve Service in the local Church in Killearn. As we left the Church I spotted a fellow Officer – Colin Kirkwood's brother with whom I served in Northern Ireland – to our amazement his parents lived across the road from us so Mother invited them back for a drink which became several! This started a tradition of us inviting people around on New Year's Eve which continued for many years to come. Mother Dear helped us through the difficult times – financially and through her support and wise counsel. We were, no doubt a worry to her on occasion and I will always be grateful for her and Father's love and support.

I also recall many happy holidays: With the Derment, Catherine, Doreen, Graham and Allan Campbell in Ellie. Noel, Joyce, Ian and Graham and Fae Blockey who introduced us to skiing in Cairngorm in the late 1950s when there minimal facilities and a half an hour walk from the car park just to get to the snow. Gavin and I must have been quite an effort for Mother Dear - requiring several changes of dry clothes each day in our corduroy trousers, sweaters and woollen mitts – no waterproofs back then.

Mother's support led me to a love of skiing as I took every opportunity to wiggle down many mountains around the world.

We also had several happy holidays in Cornwall. On one occasion we were staying at Perranporth and quickly decided that the best rock pools and quietest location was down the other end of the beach from the town but some 2 miles distance away. After walking there, the first day Mother decided it would be more convenient to drive the next – but we discovered there was an Penhale Army Camp blocking the road to the clifftop above that end of the beach. The sentry informed us it was MOD property. Undeterred, she gave the guard her “look” and he promptly saluted and opened the gate. To our amusement and the Regiment's consternation we drove through the camp and through a major exercise where the final assault was somewhat disrupted by our car parking up and the four of us getting out with our picnic and beach accessories to the immortal words of Mother telling the soldiers to “carry on and not mind us we are only going for a swim”!

I know how much her Grandsons enjoyed their times when she would take them to, for instance Fountains Abbey, when we lived in North Yorkshire and when she introduced them to the games Gavin and I enjoyed when they came to stay with her in Killlearn.

Yes, there was much laughter in the family – often to the point where Father was crying tears of joy and it is these memories I will treasure.

Dear Mother, we miss you and are so grateful for your strength of character, support to us all and for the happy memories, rest in peace. You will live on forever in our hearts.

**Roger Billcliffe**  
**Honorary Vice President 1994 to present**  
**Chair 1981-1983 & 2001-2002**  
**Vice-Chair 1986-1989**

So, Patricia Douglas was a Cockney, born within the sound of Bow Bells, and a Girl Guide Commissioner. I don't think the Mackintosh aficionados who met in the Willow Tea Rooms in 1973 knew what they were in for – it was like lambs to the slaughter.

I didn't know Pat before that meeting but knew of the work of the New Glasgow Society, one of the more efficient and effective amenity societies that grew up at that time. There had been several earlier attempts to establish a pressure group supporting Mackintosh but they had all fallen by the wayside. What was so impressive about that first meeting was that Pat and Robin Hadow had collected together such a large and disparate group of people either simply interested in or professionally involved with Mackintosh. Apart from Mackintosh fans the Civic Trust, Historic Scotland, and other similar bodies were represented alongside the three public collections that owned so much of Mackintosh's work – the School of Art, the University of Glasgow, and Glasgow Museums. The first two were on relatively good terms with each other – Harry Barnes, the Director of GSA and I found common ground as Yorkshiremen both brought up in Sheffield. Neither of us had an easy relationship with Kelvingrove, which had adamantly refused to take possession of the Ingram Street tea rooms two years earlier. But Pat had invited the new director of Glasgow Museums, Trevor Walden, and his presence and that of his new curator of decorative arts was encouraging. This was perhaps her first great achievement – to pull together all of these different voices and to attempt to get them to speak as one. It must have seemed like herding cats.

We soon discovered what an excellent administrator Pat was. Subcommittees were quickly set up to deal with finance, membership, restoration and, most importantly, campaigning against the threatened demolition of the three Mackintosh buildings that had inspired the NGS to set up this offshoot devoted to Mackintosh – Martyrs School, Scotland Street Public School and Queen's Cross Church. The society rallied opinion from around the world and before long we could see that the tide was turning. Admittedly the rapidly escalating cost of all of these motorways was in our favour but Pat did not take her foot off the gas pedal. She arranged public meetings to increase our support, public lectures to reinforce our gravitas, parties and other events to encourage our growing membership.

All of this was done from a desk in the corner of the New Glasgow society office in Argyle Street. It must have become apparent to NGS that the cuckoo in the nest was taking over. George Browning, then vice chairman, I believe, of NGS, learned that the Church of Scotland wished to vacate the building at Queen's Cross. Patricia did not need telling twice and, with the willing assistance of Bill Leggett Smith, our Honorary legal adviser, we found ourselves tenants here. Moving from her tiny base in Argyle Street to this huge, unloved and bitterly cold building must have been a daunting prospect. More committees were established, each of them serviced and cajoled by an indomitable Pat Douglas. It was interesting to hear how the Douglasses kept moving house to avoid aeroplanes – other anathema for Pat was cigarette smoke. Woe betide, in the early days as later it was really impossible, any committee member who lit up a cigarette. Doors and windows were flung open, papers on her desk became press-ganged into service as fans; arguments against the iniquities of smoking poured forth; and eventually the culprit crept outside to throw away a cigarette. You also had to be careful about that last drag before entering her office – "Who's smoking?" she would demand.

Pat's 12 and 14 hour days at Queens Cross turned the ship around. The three buildings were saved, the press was alerted to the importance of preserving what was left of the Mackintosh heritage, and Pat's beloved Queen's Cross Church slowly regained its dignity and something of its appearance at the time Mackintosh completed it in 1899. Various chairmen followed Robin Haddow. I succeeded Harry Barnes, by then Sir Harry Barnes, who had showed Pat many of his wily ways of dealing with politicians and the civil service. The pair of them were a formidable team, Harry quietly undermining the arguments of the opposition and Pat daring them to object.

Our 10th anniversary was approaching while I was chairman and Tony Jones, I think it was, suggested we commemorate it with a conference that would put Mackintosh into his international context. It was a brilliant idea and marked a coming-of-age of the society. If we had admired Pat for her handling of all of the vested interests in Glasgow in 1973, she soon displayed even greater talents handling the big beasts of the academic world of Britain, Europe and America. Somebody wanted to be on first, others last; some wanted a bigger lecture theatre; others three or four projectors. Pat dealt with everything in exactly the same way – fairly, pragmatically, courteously. If all else failed she just did what she thought was right – it usually was. After the programme was drawn up and all of the slots filled we were approached by Tom Howarth wondering, in his inimitable way, why he wasn't the star attraction. In fact, we had not included him in the lecture programme as we had all heard it before and there were lots of new voices with something new to say that deserved

to be heard – like Randall Makinson from Pasadena, who became the heartthrob of our ladies of a certain age, and whose 30-minute slot extended to over an hour and was then continued into the small hours at his hotel. He became a great friend of Pat and the Society, as did many others who spoke or attended those meetings. Patricia continued to use the contacts and goodwill generated in the summer of 1983 to lead members of the society around the world, visiting the buildings of Frank Lloyd Wright, the Greene brothers, Gaudi, the Vienna secession and many others.

Eventually we resolved the Howarth problem by one of the lecturers standing down in his favour. Howarth and the Douglas family became good friends and on all his future visits to Glasgow Tom stayed with them at Killearn. That, no doubt, played no small part in Tom Howarth's later generous gift to the society that enabled it to buy this church.

We are here together today because of Pat Douglas. But we are also HERE - in this church – because of Pat Douglas. It is almost as much hers as Mackintosh's. And so, as with Christopher Wren – Si monumentum requiris, circumspice.

## **Tribute to Patricia Douglas, 13 September 2016**

**Pamela Robertson**

I first met Patricia when I came to Glasgow in 1977 as a fledgling curator at the as yet unopened Hunterian, with a degree in Italian Renaissance art, a diploma in decorative art studies, and very little knowledge of Mackintosh. Hugely efficient, confident, in control, and one who clearly suffered fools lightly – she was, to be frank, terrifying. She later told me her first impressions of me were that my hair was too long and my skirts too short.

Over the years, as a member of the Society's Council and the Mackintosh Heritage Group, and as a Mackintosh curator, we became good friends, and I developed great respect for her energy, astuteness, commitment, and kindness. I have vivid memories of the jingle of her bangles, the click of the fulsome A4 binders with which she managed meetings, the distinctive purple ink she used for her 'to the point' annotations, her solicitous enquiries after my growing family, and the boldness of her fashion sense, in particular the use of scarlet.

My last professional contact with her was in the week before the devastating stroke in 2011, when with typical helpfulness she had arranged access to a lesser known Mackintosh property, The Moss at Dumgoyne, for myself and the chief researcher on the Mackintosh Architecture research project. Of course that was not enough – lunch was provided at Tantallon, with chat about her recent tennis match, and she then drove us to The Moss, where she sat on the floor while we talked with the owners about their property. Not bad for nearly 80!

Patricia's legacy is here in this building with the Church and the Society to which she was devoted for so many years as Honorary Secretary from 1973 to 1985; Director from 1985 to 1998 and again from 2000 to 2001; and Honorary Vice President from 2000 to the present. Roger has spoken about the setting up of the Society and its acquisition of Queen's Cross. I will share my thoughts about Patricia's contribution to the Society and to Mackintosh.

A trawl of the Society Newsletters, which started with the founding of the Society in 1973, provides a rich record of what was achieved under her stewardship. While Patricia would be the first to acknowledge the contributions of others – the Chairmen, Council members, Mackintosh scholars, volunteers and others – it is essential to acknowledge how much she contributed through corralling these disparate talents and providing the framework, including the funding, within which goals were delivered. She was without question a doer, explaining in a recent Society Journal 'you don't advertise, you do' – believing successful outcomes would generate the required attention. Typically she would be in the small office, the old Session room of the church, up the narrow stair by the side door, by 8 in the morning and stay till 6 or 7, having sped in from Killearn in record (arguably illegal) time in her trusted MG midget or one of her successive hot rods. We have to remind ourselves this was entirely voluntary.



Two components were it seems to me at the heart of what Patricia delivered for the Society: People and Events.

Patricia knew all of the members – ‘the troops’, as she called them, and they were world-wide – from Japan to the US and across the Continent. And over the years the base expanded to include branches in London, Bath, and Harrogate – all of which she regularly visited. Patricia felt great loyalty to the volunteers on whom the success of the Society depended – and continues to depend – and the regular lunch and croquet match hosted at Tantallon, with Tom the ever loyal supporter, became a highlight of the year. Much of the success of the Society derived from her ability to establish warm, and mutually respectful friendships with leading figures in the world of curation and scholarship, including in Toronto, Thomas Howarth, in California Randall Makinson, in Vienna, Christian Witt-Doerring, and in Barcelona, David Mackay.

The Society’s programme of events and public initiatives was diverse: lectures, collectors’ quizzes, soup songs, festive Christmas parties and carol concerts, celebratory Mackintosh birthday weekends, even a Kate Cranston tea for which I was somehow persuaded to be a waitress in full Victorian gear. All usually provided with individually designed tickets – now collector’s items, home baking and wine. Some events such as Christie’s auction of works from the estate of Jessie M. King and an exhibition of Mackintosh reproduction material were more ambitious. Other initiatives included some of the first Toshie merchandise – particularly the first ever Mackintosh t-shirt – there was a time when the Society was the only place to find Mackintosh souvenirs. And in 1988, for the Glasgow Garden Festival, Patricia organised a Mackintosh rose, developed by David Austin.

Patricia’s many skills were however put to best use in the Society’s wide-ranging series of tours and visits beyond Glasgow. Destinations within the UK included Liverpool, the Isle of Man, the Cotswolds, Dorset and Holy Island in Northumberland. One participant, writing about a trip to Barcelona, concluded ‘Patricia’s stage management and the contacts made (and remade) with local friends and experts made an untold difference to the depth and quality of the experience.’ The list of international destinations, some visited more than once, is a roll call of Art Nouveau and early 20<sup>th</sup>-century design: Barcelona, Vienna, Chicago, California, Prague, Paris and Nancy, Brussels, Amsterdam, New York, while trips to Port Vendres provided moving insight into Mackintosh’s late years. Members were given privileged access to private homes and ‘behind the ropes’ viewings in the many museums visited. The essentials of food, drink and accommodation were all well provided for. And Patricia ensured that the bus – or autobooos as she called it – would navigate even the narrowest lane to provide the best access or viewpoint, despite the driver’s protests.

And what of Patricia’s contribution to Mackintosh who sits at the heart of all of this? With her input, the Society developed and delivered some substantial initiatives.

These include:

Two international conferences held in Glasgow, the first in 1983 – the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Society, which Roger has described, and that in 1990, Glasgow's Year as European City of Culture. This ambitious city-wide event, initiated by Murray Grigor, assembled a raft of leading scholars and a stellar group of leading architects and designers including Stanley Tigerman, Leon Krier, Ted Cullinan, Filippo Alison, Aldo Van Eyck, Hans Hollein and Arata Isozaki. These superstars presented installations at the Glasgow School of Art, the co-organiser of the events.

I have referred to the Newsletter, now the impressive Journal. Over 90 issues have been produced. These are a hugely important resource for all interested in Mackintosh, providing scholarly articles, reviews, memoirs, building updates, not available anywhere else. It would be marvellous if this material could be made available online. In addition the Society has built up here in Queen's Cross an open-shelf consultation library and unique press cuttings collection

The Society was formed in the face of threats to the Mackintosh built heritage. In part as a response to this, a Mackintosh Heritage Group was set up in the early 1980s with Patricia as Chair and Secretary to provide an informal setting in which representatives of the leading buildings and collections could come together to discuss common issues and work together. It continues to this day and has proved invaluable. In addition the Society has continued to keep a watching brief on the wider Mackintosh heritage, commenting and encouraging as appropriate. The survival of this building, for which Patricia worked tirelessly through successive phases of repair work, is testament to her commitment to Mackintosh.

One final achievement was based not here but south of the border in Northampton. It marked the end of a long-drawn out campaign. As early as 1974 in issue number 4 of the Newsletter it had been noted that at 78 Derngate, Mackintosh's last major design commission, 'all looks sad and forlorn' and overgrown. Things move slowly, but in the late 1990s a local initiative saw the set-up of the 78 Derngate Trust which would oversee the accomplished restoration of the building and its interiors by John McAslan & Partners. Patricia was a founding Trustee and involved herself with characteristic energy and dedication, travelling regularly to meetings, and providing invaluable seasoned advice based on her years of experience here in Glasgow.

Les Paterson, Secretary of the Trust, has sent this tribute: 'When the 78 Derngate Trust was formed back in 1998 the first name mentioned to become a Trustee was Patricia's. Patricia was known by the local planners and council members long before the Trust was formed and was one of several Mackintosh enthusiasts urging the Council to act.

Patricia brought with her energy, drive, knowledge and contacts. Despite the long journey, she was a regular attendee, not just at the Board meetings, but in the early days interviewing architects, meeting with planners and the host of other activities required for

starting such an enterprise. She always had a smile and a kind word of encouragement, having earned her stripes in Glasgow, she knew how difficult it was to raise the cash and keep going and, although we were concerned with heritage, it was people who mattered and who 'got things done'. Patricia was always so supportive, engaging in debate and often thought-provoking in the way she challenged our thinking and ways of doing things.

She loved her visits to Northampton, always accompanied by Tom. They would often invite me to dinner so we could discuss progress and problems in a relaxed way. I would also hear of their tennis prowess, travels, and Patricia's love for American Juggernaut Transporters!

Patricia was very proud of the achievements at 78 and she is held in great esteem by us, she was made a Patron of the Trust and continued to be a member of the Friends of 78 on her retirement from the Board. Her name will ever be associated with the house.' Thank you Les.

Patricia would have been dismissive of the need to provide any summation of her achievements and contributions. I am sure somewhere she is urging us to be doing, to get on with the important task of preserving and celebrating Mackintosh. A task for which she has left us a remarkable example and an impressive legacy. Thank you, Pat.