

Extract from "The Inverness Courier, Friday, August 26, 1938."

"ISOBEL FRASER HOME OF REST

New £10,000. Building Formally Opened

Yesterday's Ceremony

The new Isobel Fraser Home of Rest of the Aged Christian Friend Society of Scotland, built on Mayfield Road, Inverness at a cost of £10,000. was opened yesterday by Mrs Mackintosh of Mackintosh. The Home, which was described in detail in our issue of Tuesday, is a most attractive modern building and its delightful situation and commodious rooms were admired by all present at yesterday's ceremony.

Baroness Burton of Dochfour presided at the ceremony, which was performed in the open-air. An interesting feature of the proceedings was a scheme to aid the Building Fund. Viscountess Gough received purses and donations from those present and by this means the handsome sum of £72. 7s 6d was raised – in itself a measure of the audience's appreciation of the work done by the Committee responsible for the administration of the Home. Although the programme was a lengthy one – there were no fewer than nine speakers – speeches were brief and to the point, and the ceremony was expeditiously carried through. Included in the gathering were Sir Murdoch Macdonald, M.P.; Provost and Mrs Mackenzie, the Right Rev Bishop Maclean, Primus of the Episcopal Church in Scotland, and Mrs Maclean; Mr and Mrs D.H. Mackintosh, Drumalin; Rev. A.A. Hamilton; Rev. James Wright; Rev Kenneth Cameron; Mr Thomas Tulloch; Mr and Mrs E.C. Jack; and Colonel George Mackintosh, Balvraid.

A BEAUTIFUL NAME

Following the singing of the 2nd Paraphrase, the new Home was dedicated in a prayer by the Rev. A.A. Hamilton and Baroness Burton then invited Mrs Mackintosh of Mackintosh to open the building. In doing so, Baroness Burton said she thought that the name of the building, a Home of Rest, was a beautiful and most appropriate one. It was a name which suggested rest and peace for the elderly people who would live in it. They were all very grateful to those who had worked to bring the Home to completion. She had been asked to introduce Mrs Mackintosh of Mackintosh but that to her seemed quite needless. There was no good cause in Inverness-shire in which she was not deeply interested, and they were all very grateful that she should open the beautiful new Home.

Mrs Mackintosh of Mackintosh said she was very pleased to be present to perform the opening ceremony. For a long time she had been interested in the Home of Rest, which, as Baroness Burton had said, was so appropriately named. She (Mrs Mackintosh) had known the Home from almost its beginning in the dear old house on the Hill. When they looked around them that day and saw the present magnificent building they could not but be thankful that such a magnificent building had been made possible in their own day. They hoped that a blessing would always remain on the Home and the old people who would inhabit it in the future. She hoped that as time went on they might perhaps enlarge the Home again, and have even more people in the Home and more people working for the cause which, she was sure, all of them had in very good heart. She had much pleasure in opening the Home, and she hoped and prayed that every blessing would alight upon it in the future. (Applause).

GOLD KEY PRESENTED

Mr Leslie Graham-Thomson, Edinburgh, the architect of the Home, then presented a god key, with an appropriate inscription, to Mrs Mackintosh of Mackintosh, as a memento of the occasion. The key was a gift of the architect, the clerk of works, the contractors, and all who had been associated with the construction of the building.

Mrs Mackintosh of Mackintosh thanked Mr Graham-Thomson and the contractors and clerk of works for the gift, which she said she would always treasure and value as a memento of the ceremony.

SOCIETY'S WORK

Mr D.A. Small, president of the Aged Christian Friend Society of Scotland, moved a vote of thanks to Mrs Mackintosh of Mackintosh, and gave some information regarding the early days of the Society. "As far back as 1888" he said, "my father, the late Mr William Small, originated the national movement for provision of Cottage Homes and Pensions for the aged poor, and took a very active part in stirring up the public interest and sympathy which enabled its promoters to found this Society in 1889. In these days, the only form of relief for the poor was by way of parochial grants, which, to those endowed with the old Scottish spirit of independence, was abhorrent. From such a small beginning was our Society formed. Shortly thereafter the benefits of the Society came to the notice of Mr Morton, a wealthy merchant of London and Rosemount, Aberdeen, who had been induced to distribute his wealth by hearing a sermon on charity preached in a Church in Aberdeen. Mr Morton contributed very generously to the Society, and was elected its first president. Beginning with a subscription of £100 per annum for ten years, and in addition providing for fifty annual pensions of £6 each, Mr Morton set an example of true practical interest, which I trust may still be followed by others. During the first years of its existence, so great was the demand of the Society's pensions, that branches were formed in Glasgow and Dundee, and some years later in Inverness and Aberdeen. These, however, at the time distributed pensions only. On 31st October 1891 the foundation stone of the first block of Cottage Homes at Colinton was laid. These consisted at first of eight dwellings. Now there are thirty-one, as well as a small Home of Rest."

"The Directors," he continued, "had always before them the establishment of a Home where old people could live in community and rest during the last years of their lives. At Portobello, Mrs Agnes Pearson had established such a small Home. This Home was removed to Dalkeith and thereafter to Ivanlea, Polton, and after her death the managers and trustees of the Home found it impossible to carry on owing to insufficiency of funds. Our Society in 1921 was approached to take over this undertaking, which we did. By a coincidence there was also a similar Home, the Isobel Fraser Home in Inverness, carried on a house in Charles Street. The Committee of that Home considered it would be more advantageous to combine with our Society. They approached our Inverness Committee, and that undertaking was also transferred to the Society. A larger house, Viewmount, Culduthel Road was acquired, but so great has been the demand for the benefits of this Home that it was found necessary to look for larger and more convenient premises. As a suitable building could not be obtained, it was decided to acquire a site and erect a Home. The efforts of the Local Committee and of the Central Committee have now resulted in the erection of this splendid Home, in every way suitable as a Home of Rest for old people. (Applause). This is a red-letter day, as not only is it the Jubilee year of our Society, but we have been greatly honoured by Her Majesty the Queen graciously acceding to our unanimous request to be Patroness of the Aged Christian Friend Society of Scotland. The Society with its various schemes is a very striking example of advancement. No class of the community is more apt to be overlooked than the often uncomplaining aged Christian poor, and none are more deserving of Christian sympathy and aid. May I commend the benefits of this Society to all interested in charitable work." (applause) He wished to thank Mrs Mackintosh of Mackintosh most warmly not only for opening the Home but also for the very great interest she had taken in its work for so many years. (Applause).

Mrs D.H. Mackintosh, Drumalin, Convener of the Home Committee, introduced Viscountess Gough in a happily-phrased speech. Lady Gough, she said, had taken a great interest in the Home, and that day she was to collect funds for the Home. They had a large sum of money to pay for the building. The parent Society in Edinburgh had been most generous and most considerate to them, and it was up to them in Inverness-shire, Ross-shire, Caithness and Sutherland, to see the Society would not need to come to their aid more than was necessary. She felt they should express their thanks to Mrs Jack, their hon. Secretary, who worked day and night for the Home. (Applause). They could not do without her. (Applause).

LADY GOUGH'S APPEAL

Lady Gough said that although she had lived a good part of her life in the Highlands she was a comparative newcomer to Inverness and she therefore was particularly honoured to be associated in the ceremony alongside Mrs Mackintosh of Mackintosh, Baroness Burton, Mrs D.H. Mackintosh, and the other ladies who had achieved so much for the Home of Rest. She was most interested in the Home. When she was in Edinburgh recently she took her husband to see the Royal Scottish Academy, but it was not until he saw a picture of the Home of Rest at Inverness that he really became interested in the exhibition. (Laughter and applause). She thought the Home was a really beautiful building, and it was a beautiful idea to call it a Home of Rest. It was a work that was well worth doing, and she appealed to them all to help in the work by giving donations to her at the close of the ceremony. (Applause)

Provost Hugh Mackenzie moved a vote of thanks to Viscountess Gough and Mrs D.H. Mackintosh and congratulated the local Committee and the parent Society on the erection of the new Home. The Town Council fully realised the amount of good work that the Committee were doing for the old people of Inverness. It was a real service to the whole community. (Applause).

Mr Robert Somerville, secretary to the Central Board of Directors, said that the parent Society was pleased with the way money and donations had been provided for the Home. The local Committee had done a tremendous amount of work, and the Architect and the Clerk of Works had given particularly good service. (Applause).

Mr Thomas Tulloch, chairman of the Inverness Auxiliary, thanked Baroness Burton for presiding. The local Committee, he said, felt certain that the Home would be a source of comfort to residents in the eventide of their days. Baroness Burton, it was well-known, was one of the most capable of chairmen, and much of the success of the gathering was due to her conduct of the proceedings. (Applause). She took a very keen interest in all good objects associated with the town, and they were glad to think the Home of Rest was one of them. She had placed at their disposal the expert advice of her head gardener, and many of the flowers they saw around the grounds were gifted by her. They were also delighted that she had agreed to become one of the vice-presidents. (Applause).

Baroness Burton, replying, said that the lady who originated the Home had been a great personal friend of her own, and that naturally she was deeply interested in the Home. As regards Mr Tulloch's remarks about the flowers, she felt they could be certain that everything her gardener suggested would be practical and easy to carry out. She was sure that he would be only too glad to give any further advice if need be. She thanked the gathering for the kind way they had responded to the vote of thanks.

After Rev. Kenneth Cameron, Free North Church, had pronounced the Benediction, the gathering inspected the Home and its furnishings."

