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Inventory

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Margo MacDonald, teacher, broadcaster and politician

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Papers, 1955-2014, of Margo MacDonald (1943-2014), teacher, broadcaster and politician.

Margo MacDonald (née Aitken) attended Hamilton Academy and studied to be a teacher of physical education at Dunfermline College. She came to political prominence when in 1973 she won the Glasgow Govan by-election becoming an MP from 1973 to 1974.

Margo MacDonald was Depute Leader of the SNP from 1974 to 1979. She later served as an SNP and Independent MSP for Lothian from 1999 until her death on 4 April 2014.

She was one of three prominent spokespersons for the 79 Group, which ultimately cost her re-election as the party's deputy leader at the 1979 conference. In 1982 Margo MacDonald resigned from the SNP in protest for the 79 Group's disbandment.

Following her departure from the SNP she established herself as a respected and popular broadcaster and TV presenter and also wrote frequently for the media, particularly the *Edinburgh Evening News*. For a time she was also director of Shelter Scotland.

In the mid-1990s she re-joined the SNP and was elected to the Scottish Parliament at the 1999 election representing the Lothians. Her disagreements with the party's leadership led to her marginalisation within the SNP. Eventually she decided to stand as an Independent at the 2003 Scottish Parliament election, which led to her expulsion from the party.

Margo MacDonald supported high-risk and controversial causes such as sex worker's rights and legislation for the right to assisted suicide. She had been diagnosed with Parkinson's disease in 1996 and it was through her contact with others who suffered from the condition or had cared for them that she reached the view that it should be the right of those people suffering from terminal illnesses to decide when to end their own lives.

Her inclusive approach to politics and willingness to engage with her opponents' point of view earned her the respect and friendship of many across the political spectrum.

The papers have been arranged into the following series.

- 1-25 Political correspondence and papers, 1980-2014**
- 26-28 General correspondence, 1985-2013**
- 29-30 Articles and Columns, 1970s-2013**
- 31-35 Photographs, 1955-2012**
- 36-37 Cartoons, 1973-1977**
- 38-42 Election campaign literature, 1973-2011**
- 43-54 Ephemera and memorabilia, 1963-2014**
- 55 Obituaries, 2014**
- 56-61 Newspaper cuttings, 1965-2014**
- 62 Publications**

VHS tapes and CDs/DVDs have been transferred to the Scottish Screen Archive.

Access to files 8, 10 and 11 is restricted for Data Protection Reasons.

Presented, June 2015

1-25 Political correspondence and papers, 1980-2014

1. Correspondence and ephemera concerning Margo MacDonald's participation at Glasgow anti-nuclear rally, 31 March 1980. Includes posters and flyers.
2. Typescript notes for a speech delivered at a Scotland United rally, circa 1992.
3. Statement concerning Margo MacDonald MSP appeal hearing against disciplinary action, c. 2000.
4. Letter of a member of the SNP Liberton Branch to Margo MacDonald concerning her position within the party, 18 June 2000.
5. Letter of John Swinney, MSP and Leader of the Opposition at the Scottish Parliament, to Margo MacDonald, 24 April 2002.
6. Two letters of Margo MacDonald concerning her selection as SNP candidate for Edinburgh South, July 2002.
7. Typescript of a Scottish Parliament Official Report on nominations for First Minister, 15 May 2003.
8. Correspondence from and to Margo MacDonald MSP and John Park MSP concerning the Assisted Dying Bill, 2009-2010. Includes a statement by Margo MacDonald seeking support for the Bill and related press cuttings [*Data Protection Principles apply*].

9. Research paper 'End of Life Choices Across the World: The Case for End of Life Assistance in Scotland' by Sara Lupolt, Spring 2010. This paper was drafted for Margo MacDonald.
10. Comments from Dr Jane Hunter concerning the End of Life Assistance (Scotland) Bill, 14 June 2010, with related press cuttings [*Data Protection Principles apply*].
11. Two letters from members of the public concerning assisted suicide, 10 October 2009 and 26 October 2010 [*Data Protection Principles apply*].
12. Consultation paper concerning the Assisted Suicide (Scotland) Bill, circa 2011, with a related printout email, 20 December 2011.
13. Policy notes, correspondence and related papers concerning the Assisted Suicide (Scotland) Bill, January-October 2012.
14. Papers concerning Scotland's position in Europe, June 2012-January 2013.
15. Notes and reports concerning discussions with the Unitarian Church on assisted suicide, August 2012-February 2013. The original folder in which these papers came has been retained as it contains Margo Macdonald's manuscript notes on sex workers.
16. Correspondence and related papers concerning review of Scottish Breast Screening Leaflet 'Breast Screening – What you need to know'. Includes a letter from Michael Matheson MSP, Minister for Public Health, 11 September 2012.
17. Notes for a speech and question to John Swinney MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Finance, Employment and Sustainable Growth, on NHS inflation and the impact of Private Finance Initiative contracts, 20 September 2012.
18. Research paper 'Research on the Prostitution Climate in Scotland and the Implications of Criminalising the Purchase of Sex', prepared by Katy Vaky for Margo MacDonald, December 2012.
19. Papers concerning the Assisted Suicide (Scotland) Bill, September 2013. Includes draft bill, explanatory notes and a briefing paper for a Demos panel event at the Liberal Democratic Party Conference in 2013.
20. Statement from Margo MacDonald concerning the tabling of a motion in Parliament in response to views on Scotland's position in the European Union in the event of a 'Yes' vote in the Referendum, expressed by Joao Barroso, President of the European Union Commission, c. 16th February 2014.

21. Tribute to Margo MacDonald by Jim Sillars, delivered at Edinburgh Assembly Hall, 25 April 2014.
22. Letters of condolence to Jim Sillars from politicians and public figures, including HRH Charles Prince of Wales, April-May 2014.

Douglas Alexander MP	Frank Mulholland, Lord Advocate
Lord Boyd of Duncansby	David Mundell (2) MP
Gordon Brown MP	Ian Murray MP
Derek Brownlee	Cardinal Patrick O'Brien
Cameron Buchanan MSP	Cllr. Jim Orr
Sir Menzies Campbell MP	Sir George Reid
Gordon Casely	Mike Russell MSP
HRG Charles, Prince of Wales	Alex Salmond MSP and First Minister
Margaret Curran MP	Lord James Douglas-Hamilton
Tam Dalyell	Susan Stewart
Alistair Darling MP	John Swinney MSP
Jim Fairlie	Eilidh Whiteford MP
Lord Foulkes	Donald Wilson Lord Provost of Edinburgh
Annabel Goldie, MSP	
P.E. Grieve	
Fiona Hyslop MSP	
Sir Jim McDonald	
Jamie McGrigor MSP	
Sir Albert McQuarrie	
Nanette Milne MSP	
23. Letters of condolence to Tricia Marwick, Presiding Officer of the Scottish Parliament, April 2014.
24. Letters of condolence to Jim Sillars from several organisations and charities, April 2014.
25. Letters of condolence to Jim Sillars from members of the public, April-July 2014; with one letter sent a few days before Margo MacDonald's death, 25 March 2014.

26-28 General correspondence, 1985-2013

26. Speeches and flyers relating to Margo MacDonald's candidature to Rector of Edinburgh University, March 1985.
27. Miscellaneous correspondence, 1990-2013 and undated. Includes letters from Michael Forsyth, James Mitchell and Cardinal Keith O'Brien.
28. Correspondence and reports concerning 'Network Scotland', July 1991-March 1993.

29-30 Articles and newspaper columns, 1970s-2013

- 29. Draft article on devolution and the Scottish Assembly in response to a column published by Lord Douglas Home, c. 1970s.
- 30. Typescript copies of Margo MacDonald's columns for the 'Edinburgh Evening News', July-December 2013 and undated.

31-35 Photographs, 1955-2012

- 31. Margo MacDonald at Odeon Hamilton Party, 1955.
- 32. Margo MacDonald in her days as a teacher of Physical Education, c. 1960s.
- 33. Miscellaneous photographs, c. 1960s-2012.
- 34. Margo MacDonald at SNP 1978 Conference, with a related letter, postmarked 31 July 1978.
- 35. Photographs and related correspondence concerning Margo MacDonald's involvement with the Fairmile Marie Curie Centre, February 1991.

36-37 Cartoons, 1973-1977

- 36. Original cartoon by Ewen Bain, 'It's about time we had this up', circa 1973.
- 37. Original cartoon by Willie Gall, 'Ah canny wait tae see the day when Margo MacDonald ...', 28 June 1977. With a related letter, undated.

38-42 Election campaign literature, 1973-2011

- 38. Newsletters relating to Govan by-election, 1973.
- 39. 'Margo the winner', poster issued by the 'Govan Gazette' for the 1973 Govan by-election.
- 40. Election posters, c. 1970s.
- 41. Election campaign literature for Westminster and Scottish Parliament elections, 1978-2011.
- 42. Rosettes.

43-54 Ephemera and memorabilia, 1963-2014

43. Dunfermline College of Physical Education, souvenir programme, 1960-1963 and magazine, circa 1963.
44. Greeting cards from Billy Wolfe, 1978 and 1992.
45. Certificate of participation in the International Visitor Program of the United States Information Agency, with a related photograph, November 1990.
46. List of accolades received by Margo MacDonald at 'Politician of the Year' awards, 2000-2010.
47. Sympathy cards, circa April 2014.
48. Sympathy cards, circa April 2014.
49. Sympathy cards, circa April 2014.
50. Sympathy cards, circa April 2014.
51. Scots Language Dictionary certificate of sponsorship of the word 'Smeddum' in memory of Margo MacDonald with a related letter and ephemera, May 2014.
52. Glass-framed eulogy in memory of Margo MacDonald by Bill Robb, 2014.
53. Margo MacDonald's quotes, undated.
54. Greeting card signed by Scottish Parliament staff, undated.

55 Obituaries, 2014

55. Obituaries, April 2014.

56-61 Newspaper cuttings, 1965-2014

56. Newspaper cuttings, 1965-2014.
57. Newspaper cuttings concerning the marriage of Margo MacDonald and James Sillars, 1981.
58. Newspaper cuttings concerning disciplinary action against Margo MacDonald and other internal SNP matters, June 2000.
59. Newspaper cuttings concerning Margo MacDonald's position within the SNP, June-July 2002.

60. Newspaper cuttings concerning End of Life Assistance (Scotland) Bill, October-December 2010.
61. Newspaper cuttings of obituaries and articles published in the media after Margo MacDonald's death, April 2014.

62. Publications

62. Publications.

Moving Image

VHS tapes and CDs/DVDs containing film footage have been transferred to the Scottish Screen Archive (Ref. SSA A2628).