

Volume 2, number 1  
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*From Nancy W. Miller, President of the Society:*

"Should we not believe those to be Fools, that had rather have Foul Water out of a Golden Vessel, than pure Wine out of Earthen or Wooden Vessels? the like may be said for Words and Sense, for who, that is Wise, would Choose Choice Words before Profitable Reasons?" (MC, *Orations of Diverse Sorts*, sig. A3.)

Welcome, members of the Margaret Cavendish Society, to the second official Society newsletter, full of sense and choice words, and (we hope) profitable information for all who study MC, her works, and her context. The Society has had an active year, complete with a change and expansion of the governing board to include representatives from countries all over the world. A glance at the list of officers will show how far reaching the Society has already become, and we expect further growth.

We held our first General Meeting on the final day of the truly excellent Cavendish Conference in Oxford last July (well done Shirley!), and plans are underway to hold the next international conference and general meeting in Paris in 1999 (at which time we will hold elections for most offices of the governing board). The challenge for the next year will be to coordinate the growing Society in ways that allow it to be increasingly international while still keeping in close communication with members a task not always easy even in the age of e mail! We are presently trying to gain not for profit status, which will allow us to collect dues and use them for both ongoing expenses and special projects. You will soon receive a membership form for 1998 with a dues schedule.

If you have any suggestions for making the Society more valuable for its members or any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me or one of the other Board members. -- Nancy W. Miller

*Margaret Cavendish On-line*

The Margaret Cavendish Society continues to sponsor an active discussion list via e-mail. The list links scholars working on projects related to MC and early modern women's writing, and is a vehicle for collaboration, conversation, queries, and calls for participation in upcoming publications and conferences.

To subscribe to the Margaret Cavendish listserve, send an e-mail message to:

[MARCAV-L-Request@lists.nau.edu](mailto:MARCAV-L-Request@lists.nau.edu)

Leave the subject field blank. Type only this message:

SUBSCRIBE MARCAV L.

### *Teaching Materials Archive*

Professor Brandie Siegfried is compiling materials related to the teaching of MC's work. Feel free to contact her for ideas from the archive when you next teach MC . . . and please submit your own assignments, class activities, research projects, and ideas to supplement the archive. Send materials to B. Siegfried, English Department., 3169 JKHB, Brigham Young University, Provo, UT 84602. Email: [brandie\\_siegfried@byu.edu](mailto:brandie_siegfried@byu.edu)

### *Cavendish Conference, 1997*

The second International Cavendish Conference took place in Oxford, England, on 28 and 29 June 1997. It was attended by more than fifty delegates from four continents, and did much to further the flourishing work on Margaret Cavendish's writing. The organizer, Shirley Stacey, had given a great deal of thought to the structure of the weekend, and parallel sessions, the bane of so many conferences, were fortuitously avoided. Eight panels, each comprising three or four papers, encompassed the gamut of Cavendish studies, and gave speakers of diverse backgrounds and interests, and at varying stages of their academic careers, the opportunity to test out and benefit from a multiplicity of new ideas and approaches. The conference, whilst being the forum for rigorous academic debate, was also a warm and congenial function composed of an international community of Cavendish scholars, with new contacts being forged and old friendships renewed. It was appropriate, therefore, that the opening paper came from Stephen Clucas of Birkbeck College, University of London, the scholar in many ways responsible for setting the ball rolling when, in December 1993, he organized the Cavendish Colloquium which provided the impetus for so many of us to pursue our Cavendish studies. From the scientific emphasis of the first panel of the conference, the focus moved to "Philosophical Poems and Poetical Fancies," and then to issues of biography. In this third session, two of the most established scholars in early modern women's writing, James Fitzmaurice and Hilda Smith, in their respective papers contextualized Margaret's work in terms of that of her husband, William. The "rhetoric of reciprocity" which characterized the relationship of the Cavendishes was remarked on by Kate Lilley, and work on William looks set to be the new growth area of Cavendish studies. Other conference sessions centered on MC's "Publication Strategies," and also issues surrounding the notion of a genre of "private" writing, with Jo Wallwork of Melbourne University using Bakhtinian paradigms to investigate how MC may be said to be "writing the text of her body through the body of her text." As was to be expected, *The Blazing World*, a work which, not least of all because of its wide availability, commands an undue amount of attention, had a session all to itself, in which Carole Breakstone gave a persuasive and ingenious reading of the text through the figure of Milton's Eve. Panel seven was devoted to "Rhetorical Questions," and MC's dramatic works constituted the substance of the last session. To summarize, had the enthusiasm and cooperation which characterized surely the most inclusive, exciting, and rewarding Cavendish Conference to date, continued into the AGM which immediately followed, then the weekend would have been an unqualified success. -- Emma L. E. Rees, University of East Anglia, Norwich, November 1997.

## *MINUTES OF THE MARGARET CAVENDISH SOCIETY GENERAL MEETING 29 JUNE 1997*

The first General Meeting of the Margaret Cavendish Society opened with a statement by Emma Rees expressing thanks to Shirley Stacey for organizing a successful conference. (Those present applauded and cheered.)

There followed a procedural motion from Susanne Woods that all decisions adopted this day would be provisional for a period of two years, subject to review and revision, and result in a permanent constitution by the end of two years (Summer 1999). PASSED

### *AGENDA:*

I. A provisional quorum shall consist of 20%. PASSED

II. That Emma L.E. Rees shall act as chair of meeting. PASSED That Nancy W. Miller shall act as secretary of meeting. PASSED Margaret Cavendish In Print.

III. That the following offices on the Executive Board of the International MCS shall be created and duties set:

- President: calls meetings, sets agenda, presides. PASSED
- V.P.: Acts in absence of president. PASSED
- Secretary: Takes minutes, keeps membership records. PASSED
- Treasurer: a managing treasurer will collect dues locally (in country/currency of residence) and organize dues collected by regional treasurers. PASSED
- Web Master: to create and manage MCS website. PASSED
- List Editor: to manage existing MarCav e mail list. PASSED
- Newsletter Editor: to compile, solicit, write, and edit MCS newsletter. PASSED
- National Liaison: REDEFINED as Member at Large and regional treasurer. PASSED
- Member at Large (provisionally set at 10): to act as regional treasurer (if the only representative on board of a given country/currency) and otherwise partake of board decisions. PASSED

IV. Nominations. There followed a discussion about board members who are already in place. The majority present proposed that a new, more internationally representative board should be voted into office. Nancy Miller expressed concern that existing board members not present at the meeting had no say in their displacement. Proposal PASSED with majority vote.

- President: Nancy W. Miller PASSED
- VP: Emma L. E. Rees PASSED

At this point Nancy Miller again expressed concern about displacing those already in office who were not informed that such an election were to take place. A vote was taken on whether this group present does indeed have authority to make such changes. PASSED A vote was taken on whether all continents containing Cavendish members should be represented on the Board. PASSED

- Secretary: Alexandra Bennett PASSED
- Managing Treasurer: Carole Breakstone PASSED
- Web Master: Susannah Quinsee PASSED
- List Editor: Jim Fitzmaurice PASSED
- Newsletter Editor: Deborah Burks PASSED

- Members at Large: Sheila Ottway (Netherlands) PASSED, Jo Wallwork (Australia) PASSED, Hero Chalmers (UK) PASSED, Anne Shaver (US) PASSED, Line Cottegnies (France) PASSED, Rachel Warburton (Canada) PASSED, Mami Adachi (Japan) PASSED, Gweno Williams (UK) PASSED, Effie Botonaki (Greece) PASSED, Brandie Siegfried (US) PASSED, Cecile Jagodzinski (US) PASSED, Elaine Walker (UK) PASSED, Sylvia Bowerbank (Canada) PASSED

All above nominees were elected to office.

V. Discussion and vote to postpone appointing a committee to oversee Cavendish projects PASSED. Discussion and vote to rotate the international meeting and conference among countries/continents at least every two years and have one conference coordinator to organize each meeting PASSED. Line Cottegnies offered to organize the next meeting in Paris.

VI. Vote to adopt the MCS constitution with following amendments/additions: The time period covered shall now read 1620 1680; Members at Large may stand for a second term; Dues will be collected by regional treasurers in amounts set by the executive committee: All PASSED.

VII. The following items were all noted for future discussion: Whether to publish conference proceedings and who should select papers for such proceedings; Whether abstracts of conference papers should appear in the newsletter; Whether awards should be established for Cavendish articles/books.

The meeting closed with a vote to adjourn to a pub PASSED.

Nancy W. Miller

Oxford, June 1997

### *Margaret Cavendish in Print.*

Look for these new editions:

*Sociable Letters* (1664). Ed. James Fitzmaurice. Garland Press, 1996.

*Major Women Writers of Seventeenth-Century England*. Ed. James Fitzmaurice, et. al. U of Michigan P. This anthology contains selections from Lanyer, Cary, Wroth, Cavendish, Philips, Behn, and the Swetnam controversialists. The MC selection consists of 20 of the Sociable Letters.

Also of note: The Brown University Women Writers Project offers the following Cavendish texts in hard copy (they are also available as hypertext documents on the WWP web site):

- The Description of a New World, called the Blazing World
- The Comical Hash
- Matrimonial Trouble: A Comedy
- Poems and Fancies
- The World's Olio

The WWP will produce anthologies customized to your specifications including title page and table of contents. For pricing and information, visit the WWP webpage: <http://www.wwp.brown.edu>

## *Margaret Cavendish Society Board:*

**President:** Nancy W. Miller

**Vice President:** Emma Rees

**Secretary:** Alexandra Bennett

**Head Treasurer:** Carole Breakstone

**Web Master:** Susannah Quinsee

**List Editor:** James Fitzmaurice

**Newsletter Editor:** Deborah Burks

### **Members at Large:**

- Sheila Ottway (Neth)
- Jo Wallwork (Aust)
- Hero Chalmers (UK)
- Anne Shaver (US)
- Line Cottegnies (France)
- Rachel Warburton (Can)
- Mami Adachi (Japan)
- Gweno Williams (UK)
- Effie Botonaki (Greece)
- Elaine Walker (UK)
- Sylvia Bowerbank (Can)
- Brandie Siegfried (US)
- Cecile Jagodzinski (US)

Feel free to contact members of the board with questions about the Society. If you are able to supply (or correct) e-mail addresses missing (or misprinted) above, please contact Jim Fitzmaurice, Susannah Quinsee and Deborah Burks.

### *News from the Web:*

Dear all, after being nominated webmaster, webmistress or spin doctor I am not quite sure which fits the best! I have spent quite a lot of time thinking about the form of the Cavendish society website. There are a number of things that I would like to include on it, and I have been looking at other society websites, such as the Aphra Behn Society site, in order to see the kind of format which they use. Initially, the site will be fairly basic, but it will grow with the society. I would like the site to be accessible to as many people as possible, which unfortunately rules out a lot of detailed graphics. But that does not mean that it will not be interesting, and I hope that the site shall provide a useful source of information for both members and non members alike. Below is a list of things which I would like the website to include:

- Title page with a picture of Cavendish and the name of the society. This page would have links to the rest of the site.
- Details on how to join the society, the society's aims and membership fees.

- Information on the MarCav list and how to join it.
- List of Executive members with e mail/contact addresses and details of the positions which they hold. Also a list of other members and brief contact information, e.g. which university they belong to.
- The most recent newsletter, and previous newsletters. (If you missed the first edition, look to find it here, soon.)
- A separate, informal news section, which gives information about members of the society and related news. Reports from members at large in different countries could be included, to ensure that the page is relevant to all members of the society, wherever they are.
- Call for papers. Information about MarCav-related conferences, publications and events which would be of interest to members and non member visitors to the site.
- Information about the next society meeting/conference. Initially this might be a small part of the site, but as more details about the next conference are finalized, these could all be published on the net.
- The minutes from previous meetings.
- Teaching and research materials. I would like to make this part of the site quite an open area, where people could contribute teaching and research materials for others to use. These would not necessarily have to all be on line resources, and could include details of relevant publications etc.
- A chronology and bibliography of Cavendish. Although it is important to provide information on what the society is doing, and research materials, I think that some material on Cavendish herself would be useful, particularly to non member visitors.
- Links to other on line resources. This would include other society web pages, members' web pages, such as James Fitzmaurice's page, and other sites which may be of interest.
- Eventually, if the page is successful, using it to publish an electronic journal on Cavendish may be possible. This could come out of the society meetings/conference where a selection of papers could be published on line. Obviously this is something which would take a considerable amount of time to set up, but I think that it is an option to be considered.

This list represents some of my ideas for the site, but I would welcome any comments and suggestions. I envisage the site as something which relies quite heavily on member's contributions and would like to ensure that it accurately represents the interests of the whole society. So, please e mail me, my address is [s.quinsee@liv.ac.uk](mailto:s.quinsee@liv.ac.uk), or write to me at The Department of Language and Literature, The University of Liverpool, L69 3BX, UK. Thanks very much, Susannah Quinsee.

## *Calls and Conferences*

### **Women Writing 1550 1750 La Trobe University, 17-18 July 1999**

This conference will focus on all aspects of women's writing from 1550 to 1750. A formal call for papers will go out early in 1998. The conference will be held at La Trobe University (Melbourne, Australia).

For further information, please contact either of the conveners:

- Paul Salzman, [P.Salzman@latrobe.edu.au](mailto:P.Salzman@latrobe.edu.au)
- Kate Lilley [kate.lilley@english.usyd.edu.au](mailto:kate.lilley@english.usyd.edu.au)

Updated information will be available on the La Trobe University School of English homepage:  
<http://www.latrobe.edu.au/www/english/english.html>

**Western Society for 18th-C Studies Annual Meeting Northern Arizona University, Flagstaff, AZ  
13 and 14 February 1998**

<http://jan.ucc.nau.edu/~jbf/>

Plenary speakers: Isobel Grundy, (English, The University of Alberta), "The Woman Writer and Her Reputation: the Case of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu." Donald Garrett, (Philosophy, The University of Utah), "Hume's Science of the Fancy."

Please address proposals for sessions and abstracts of papers on any aspect of the "long eighteenth century" to: Dr. O. M. Brack, Jr. Program Committee Chair, WSECS Department of English Arizona State University Tempe, AZ 85287 Deadline: 1 January 1998.

To be added to the mailing list or for inquiries about local arrangements contact: Dr. James Fitzmaurice Local Arrangements, WSECS Dept of English, Northern Arizona Univ. Flagstaff, AZ 86011 6032 (520) 523-6270 e-mail: [jim.fitzmaurice@nau.edu](mailto:jim.fitzmaurice@nau.edu).

*Announcing a New Annual From AMS Press*

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*Eighteenth-Century Women: Studies in Their Works, Lives, and Culture*

Linda Veronika Troost, Editor.

Eighteenth-Century Women will publish notes, articles, and book reviews in the fields of literary, biographical, bibliographical, social, and cultural history. It will focus on women in Great Britain, Europe, the Americas, and the rest of the world during the "long" eighteenth century, extending from the restoration of the English monarchy (1660) to the fall of Napoleon (1815).

The journal aims to become a record of women's lives and accomplishments, not only as essayists, novelists, playwrights, poets, translators, journalists, pamphleteers, and letter writers, but also as mothers, wives, daughters, queens, princesses, reformers, business owners, educators, socialites, ladies of the manor, ladies of the night, intellectuals, natural philosophers, travelers, theater managers, actresses, musicians, artists, artisans, consumers, arbiters of taste, and promoters of fads, fashions, and morals.

In addition to notes and articles, each volume will print an annotated list of newly edited works by 18th century women (anthologies, classroom texts, critical editions) as well as several in depth reviews of recent scholarship.

The annual is aimed at advanced undergraduates, graduate students, and professional scholars in literature and history as well as the lay person interested in the growing fields of women's studies and cultural studies in the late 17th, 18th, and early 19th centuries.

Original scholarly work may be submitted for two categories: notes (1,000 - 2,000 words) and essays (5,000 - 13,000 words). Send one double spaced copy in (preferably) MLA style to:

Prof. Linda Veronika Troost, Editor, Eighteenth-Century Women, Washington and Jefferson College, Washington, PA 15301-480.

Those who would like to review scholarly books for the journal should write or email the editor ([ltroost@washjeff.edu](mailto:ltroost@washjeff.edu)), explaining their fields of expertise and areas of interest. Current deadline: 1 February 1998.

### *New and Noteworthy Work.*

**Anna Battigelli.** "Political Thought/Political Action: Margaret Cavendish's Hobbesian Dilemma" in *Women Writers and the Early Modern British Political Tradition*. Ed. Hilda Smith. Cambridge: CUP, forthcoming (spring 1998). Battigelli is also the author of *A Strange Enchantment: Margaret Cavendish and the Exiles of the Mind*. Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, forthcoming (fall 1998).

**Line Cottegnies.** "Les 'Lettres' dans l'education des dames anglaises vers le milieu du XVIIe siecle: le cas de Margaret Cavendish", in *L'Education des femmes en Europe et en Amerique du Nord de la Renaissance a 1848*. Ed. Guyonne Leduc. Paris: L'Harmattan, 1997, pp. 111-22. Cottegnies anticipates the publication of another MC article on Cavendish's use of epistolary style. Her current project looks at several 17th-century women's reading and reworking of the familiar letter. (Cottegnies explains that this work will treat Cavendish and Behn along with some French and perhaps also some Dutch women.)

**Elaine A. Hobby.** "Usurping authority over the man: women's writing 1630-1689." in *An Introduction to Women's Writing*. Ed. Marion Shaw (Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1997).

**Erna Kelly.** "Women's Wit." *The Wit of Seventeenth-Century Poetry*. Eds. Claude Summers and Ted Larry Pebworth. U of Missouri P, 1995. (essay treats poetry of MC, Behn, and Bradstreet) Kelly also has an essay, "Portraits: Self and Other," in the forthcoming MLA text on *Teaching Early Modern Women Writers*. Eds. Margaret Hannay and Susanne Woods.

**Dr. Martina Mittag** has a chapter on Margaret Cavendish in her forthcoming Habilitationsschrift: Soma Sema *Sexus: Grenzen des Geschlecht im Diskurs der fruehen Neuzeit*.

**Mihoko Suzuki.** "Margaret Cavendish and the Female Satirist," SEL 37.3 (Summer 1997), 483-500.

#### **Margaret Cavendish Dissertations.**

**Alex Bennett** has a chapter on MC's plays, "Multiple Singularities: Discontinuity, Individualism, and the Plays of Margaret Cavendish," in her dissertation, *Invisible Acts: Female Dramatists and the Writing of Women's Agency in England, 1590 1660*. (Brandeis University, 1997). Another chapter deals with the plays of MC's stepdaughters Jane Cavendish and Elizabeth Brackley.

**Sarah Honaman** is working on a dissertation under the direction of Mihoko Suzuki. *Women, Writing, and Literary Form in Early Modern England: Elizabeth Cary, Aemilia Lanyer, Mary Wroth, and Margaret Cavendish*. University of Miami. (Contains a chapter on Blazing World.)

**Cecile Jagodzinski's** dissertation, *Privacy and Print: Reading and Writing in Seventeenth Century England* (Illinois, 1996), includes a chapter on Cavendish.

**Jo Wallwork** is currently working a PhD on 17th- century women writers at La Trobe University which will include material on Cavendish.

**WANT TO BE INCLUDED IN THIS COLUMN?** Send news of your Cavendish-related publications, works-in-progress, conference papers, special lectures, and dissertations (those you are writing or those you are directing) to Deb Burks for inclusion in the newsletter. If you would also post news of those items to the MarCav list, Jim Fitzmaurice will add them to the MC Bibliography linked to his website: <http://jan.ucc.nau.edu/~jbf/>

### **Join the Margaret Cavendish Society**

The Margaret Cavendish Society was established to serve as an international forum for communication among those involved in Cavendish and related scholarship. To this end, the Society maintains the email discussion list MarCav (instructions for joining the list are included on the first page of this publication) and is currently working to establish an Internet site. The Society also sponsors Cavendish panels at relevant conferences world-wide and hosts an international Margaret Cavendish conference and general meeting every two years. To become a member, contact Alexandra Bennett, MCS Secretary: Department of English, Concordia University, 1455 de Maisonneuve Boulevard West Montreal, Quebec, CANADA H3G 1M8. Tel: (514) 848 2359.

### **Newsletter editor:**

Deborah G. Burks, Editor Margaret Cavendish Society Newsletter, Department of English, The Ohio State University -- Lima Campus, 4240 Campus Drive Lima, OH 45804.

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