

MacDonald, Alister 1898 - 1993

Alister Gladstone MacDonald [commonly known as Alister MacDonald; also known as Alistair Gladstone MacDonald] was born in London, England on 18 May 1898. His father was the eldest son of James Ramsay MacDonald, Britain's first Labour prime minister. Following World War One, in which he served in the Friends Ambulance Unit for three years, he trained as an architect at the Bartlett School of Architecture., University of London and was elected an Associate of the Royal Institute of British architects (ARIBA) in 1926 and a Fellow of the Royal Institute of British Architects (FRIBA) in 1942.

In c.1930 he established an independent practice in Edinburgh. He also opened an office in London in 1932 but retained his Edinburgh office until c.1940. Thereafter, he worked from offices in London. About 1960 his firm became Alister G. MacDonald & Partners. MacDonald specialised initially in the design of cinemas, particularly news cinemas, notably those at Victoria and Waterloo stations in London. He designed the Peace Pavilion for the Glasgow Empire Exhibition in 1938, and in 1955 designed a medical centre at Shell Haven Refinery in Essex, England, which was described as "one of the first medical centres in UK industry to make extensive use of colour psychology". His practice also designed a pedestrian precinct in the centre of St. Austell in Cornwall, England, in 1963. Other projects included Methodist churches in Amersham, Harlesden and High Wycombe, and the memorial wing of the Victory Ex-Services Club in Edgware Road. He also rebuilt the Royal Academy of Dramatic Arts' Vanbrugh Theatre and refurbished, in conjunction with Cecil Masey, the Comedy Theatre in London. In the 1960s he worked on architectural schemes in the Yemen, Jordan, Cyprus and Malta. One of his last executed projects were the building of the Churchill Memorial complex for the previous Sultan of Brunei in the early 1970s.

MacDonald had a lifelong interest in the welfare of children and was honorary architect to among others the Nursery School Association, the Sunshine Homes for Blind Babies and Save the Children Fund. He died in Brighton, Sussex on 22 March 1993.

Worked in

UK

Links

- Susan MacDonald. 'Obituary: Alister MacDonald' Independent 27 March 1993 <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/people/obituary-alister-macdonald->

[1500189.html](#)

• Dictionary of Scottish Architects 1660-1980

http://www.scottisharchitects.org.uk/architect_full.php?id=202048