



BUSS

British Union
of Spiritist Societies

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Newsletter 63

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The importance of finding the right words

Submitted by Adam Osborne (Spiritist Society of Windsor and Maidenhead)

Reflecting on the article by Anne Sinclair in the previous BUSS Newsletter, without a doubt, words are powerful. They can be used both in positive and negative scenarios. They convey our opinions, ideas and emotions. When used wisely, they are poems and stories that uplift us; proposals and agreements that protect us; books and memories that we can study and learn from.

In Spiritism, we have been left with a legacy of material composed and compiled by Hippolyte Léon Denizard Rivail, a.k.a. Allan Kardec. This collection of papers, studies and books have been published in multiple languages and distributed around the world. Kardec, as a dedicated educator, sought to ensure that the readers of his work would be able to understand the text in front of them, even if they were new to the terminology or subject.

An important step for Spiritism and the Spiritist Teachings to spread around the world started with Kardec himself, who, due to his travels, allowed other people throughout Europe to get to know about this new “Spiritualist Philosophy”.

During his travels, Kardec spoke to various people who were interested in “spirit phenomena”. One such person who was interested in this work was Anna Blackwell, an English woman (sister of Elizabeth Blackwell, the first woman to receive a medical degree in the United States) who moved to America at the age of 18 and who later attended meetings with the Fox Sisters.



Anna Blackwell



*Marie Sinclair,
Countess of Caithness*

She was a poet and author, and wrote various papers on Magnetism and Spirit activity and moved to France, where there are accounts of her studying with Kardec himself.

Staying both in England and France, Ms Blackwell was in frequent contact with Kardec, contributing to *La Revue Spirite*, and helped to propel the early Spiritist Movement in the UK, where spirit activities were often reported on. At the time, there was a cross-over between the words “Spiritism” and “Spiritualism” – both can be found in old British Newspapers from the mid to late 1800, as well as various references to Allan Kardec and Ms Blackwell.

It is difficult to talk about Anna Blackwell and the British Spiritist Movement without considering Marie Sinclair, later known as the Countess of Caithness. *Continued on page 2...*

Marie Sinclair was a British aristocrat who also wrote some articles on Spiritualism and Spirit activity with Anna Blackwell. Not much is known about exactly how much they interacted with each other, but the Countess later paid Ms Blackwell the equivalent of around £100,000 in today's money to translate the works of Kardec from French into English.

The first book translated to English was *The Spirits' Book* (1875), followed by *The Mediums' Book* (1876), then *Heaven and Hell* (1878).

Fast forward many decades and a young British woman migrated to Brazil where, over time, she started to learn about Spiritism. After meeting and studying with Francisco Candido (Chico) Xavier, Janet Duncan returned to the UK in the 1980's and in 1987 published the first known complete English translation of *The Gospel According to Spiritism*.

Janet, who is also the founder of the Allan Kardec Study Group-UK (AKSG-UK), was instrumental to the start of the British Union of Spiritist Societies and the International Spiritist Council.

It is thanks to Janet, who turned 90 this year, that we have a vast number of books, messages and articles translated into English for our studies and reflection. Her determination, steadfastness and choice of the right words at the right time, as well as her advice, guidance and faithfulness to the Spiritist Teachings, have helped Spiritism and the Spiritist Movement in the UK become what it currently is today.

We are truly indebted to her work, and as such, this edition of the BUSS Newsletter is dedicated to Janet Duncan.



Photo right: Janet Duncan at her birthday celebrations held by BUSS

Happy Birthday, Janet Duncan

On 4th August, many friends from various Spiritist groups from around the UK met in the Stockwell Community Resource Centre to wish a happy 90th birthday to our dear Janet Duncan.



Janet was presented with many gifts, flowers, cards, as well as plenty of hugs from all those present.

Everyone at BUSS and friends from around the world sent their best wishes to Janet.

A short film by iSpirit entitled *Janet Duncan 90th Birthday: A Beautiful Journey* was shown where Janet talks about her early life, her time living in Brazil, her encounter with Francisco Candido (Chico) Xavier, and how she

started to learn about Spiritism. This emotional video, 28 minutes in length, can be seen in full on YouTube: <https://youtu.be/EJkddMuMZsc>

Photo from Frabricio Assuncao, Spiritist Society of Bournemouth

Celebrating the memories of Janet Duncan

Various people from within the Spiritist Movement have shared their thoughts and memories of Janet Duncan, in honour of her 90th Birthday, and her dedication to Spiritism around the world.

I personally know Janet since 1992. We met for the first time during the Congress organised by the Spanish Spiritist Federation, in Madrid 1992, when the International Spiritist Council was founded. It was a great joy. Since then, I had the pleasure to receive Janet as a guest in my house in Curitiba, Brazil, in 1994. I came to London for a few days in 1995, 1996 and 1997. I decided to stay for a few months (April to July), working with Janet, helping her with Spiritist office matters and AKSG-UK.

In September 1997, I came back to the UK, to go to France with Janet, to participate in the ISC meeting, with the presence of countries from all continents. Janet always encouraged people to start groups, to be part of the ISC, and to work as a Spiritist promoter. I was one of those who accepted this "call" and went for it, with a non-stop mind.

Janet is an example for so many people from other countries, especially those who follow the books that she translated, such as *The Gospel According to Spiritism*, *Christian Agenda*, *Thought and Life*, as well as other manuals for Spiritist workers, dozens of lectures and her many contributions to the ISC with articles and brochures still in use.



Janet is now perhaps the only ISC founder who is still in charge of a Spiritist Group, the Allan Kardec Study Group-UK, and who is still working.

Our friendship now is completing 26 years, and we are still good friends, as a family. My joy is to know that we should carry on in partnership with Jesus, Kardec and many friends in common, who already departed, such as Nestor Masotti, Marlene Nobre, who also had a good time with Janet when they were incarnated.

Our UK Spiritist Movement owes to Janet a homage with thanks for everything that she has managed to give to the UK.

Elsa Rossi - Chairperson of the British Union of Spiritist Societies

I already admired Janet before meeting her. After listening an interview published on YouTube, I was attracted to her determination on bringing Spiritism to England, not being discouraged by the obstacles ahead. This determination to make sure that Spiritism is here to stay and that the people involved in its propagation are engaged in making it accessible in Britain to all who live here really touched me.

Janet, while meeting members of smaller groups, was very aware of the importance to give advice and guidance on persevering with the studies of Spiritism and how to reach people, which was of great importance to me. This meeting motivated me to carry on and be confident in the future.

We all from the British Spiritist movement have a lot to learn from the great experience that Janet has, so let's all follow and learn from her wonderful example!

Liz Carter - Cardiff Spiritist Studies

Divaldo Franco, founder of *The Mansion of The Way*, in Salvador, Brazil, asked to include that he considers this tribute to be a **“very fair tribute to our dear Janet Duncan”** and asked to express his **“esteem, gratitude and affection for this noble British dame”**.



The first time I met Janet Duncan was during my first participation in the International Spiritist Movement, at the 1st World Spiritist Congress, in Brasilia, in October 1995. I was really happy to meet a British lady working for the Spiritist movement in the UK, and which is 100% following Kardec. In addition, like me, she had been introduced to Spiritism in Brazil. She was telling me about the difficulties to promote the Spiritist teachings to the British people, which, when they are not materialists, have often a more commercial approach to spiritualism. After the Congress, Janet participated actively in the ISC meeting in Brasilia, where I could discover her rigor, seriousness, determination, dedication and also emotion (good to have some tissues nearby, when she let some tears flow...).

We agreed to do something more intensively for European fellows, and have worked together to convince ISC to help us. ISC decided, during its 4th General Meeting in Paris, in October 1997, to organise continental coordinations, and we decided immediately together with Roger Perez to arrange a first meeting, and Janet offered to host it in London in April 1998.



In February 1998, Janet invited me and Roger Perez to participate in the celebrations of the 10th Anniversary of Allan Kardec Study Group, in London (see photo to the left).

This was also the opportunity to finalise the organisation of the first ISC – European Coordination meeting two months later. Janet hosted us very friendly, and took us to visit London. When she drove on the street passing in front of the Royal Albert Hall, she told me and Roger: “The day when we will have a Spiritist Congress in this

Royal Albert Hall, we will be able to say that Spiritism really progressed in the UK.” Good objective, still relevant indeed... motivating today's Spiritist movement in the UK and in Europe!

During that event, Roger Perez received a message from the Spirit of Léon Denis, encouraging the propagation of Spiritist teachings in Europe. This reinforced even more our determination in this way.

On 3rd to 5th April, 1998, the first meeting of the European Coordination of the International Spiritist Council took place in London, in the presence of Nestor Masotti, ISC General Secretary, and with

representatives from the UK, as well as from France, Italy, Portugal, Spain and Sweden.

It was the first of a continuous sequence of meetings until today, the 18th being scheduled for March 2019 in Italy. One of the highest priority action was to translate and print Kardec's books in Europe: Janet worked (and is still working) untiringly on the improvement of English translations.

In 2004, Janet participated in the 4th World Spiritist Congress in Paris, despite her growing difficulties in locomotion.

Thank you so much Janet, for your dedication and love for Kardec's teachings and for followers like Léon Denis and Chico Xavier: an example for all of us!



Charles Kempf - Centre d'Études Spirites Léon Denis, France

I first met Janet Duncan at her home when a friend of mine booked for us to go and study Spiritism following a lecture that I had attended with Dr Marlene Nobre and two others doctors from AME-Sao Paulo which Janet had organised.

It was then the summer 1987 and at that time, the meetings were held at her home and so it was by invitation only. After the first meeting, she invited me to come and have tea with her and I spent a very lovely afternoon talking about Spiritism and that I would like to continue with the studies.

Because of her mediumship she was able to tell me that many of the difficulties I was having in my life were due to my mediumship. She told me: "you are like a tube train with people coming in and out and that is why you have such mood swings!" I was surprised that she knew that and also relieved because I finally knew the reason why I would go from joy to deep sadness within two minutes and deep down inside I often thought that I had mental problems!

She then said that that could be easily solved and if I was serious about the study I would be able then to join a mediumship study group (COEM) that was being formed. And indeed a couple of months later we started to study mediumship and I haven't looked back.

That meeting with Janet changed my life completely and as I studied and learnt more, Spiritism became the guiding light of my life and it will be so always.

I am very grateful to Janet and I have learnt many things from her. By the way, the friend who got me the invitation and insisted that I should go to the meeting went only once and never returned - that's how life is always wonderful!

Silvia Gibbons - Chico Xavier Spiritist Society

I met Janet more than 25 years ago, when I was living in London. Over the years we became very close friends, and at a time when things were very difficult for the Spiritist Movement in the UK we became even closer, supporting each other both as friends and co-workers.

There are very few people that I respect more than Janet, not because of the amazing work she has done over the years in establishing the Spiritist Movement in the UK, which every Spiritist person recognises, but because of the way she has responded to all the criticism she has come under over the years.

At the worst times, when some people were quite angry and behaved in a very non-Spiritist manner, Janet showed her enormous ability for forgiveness and great humility and, as a close friend and often confidant, I witnessed first-hand her desire to change, always prioritising the Movement.

For this, she has always been a source of inspiration to me, one that I try, often unsuccessfully, to emulate. Most people would fall out and distance themselves from those who criticise them. Not Janet. The love of Spiritism has always been greater than any personal feeling and no one has dedicated more to the Teachings than she has. I'll never have her energy and drive, but I can at least try to follow her example and try to be the best person I can and listen to criticism and continue to love and respect those who make them. Janet is, therefore, not just one of my most beloved friends, she is an incredible example of dedication and humility, which I try to follow.

Tania Stevanin - Sheffield Spiritist Group

News from BUSS and groups

BUSS AGM

The BUSS AGM took place on 15th September in Bankside London, with 11 member groups in attendance.

An important decision was made to move the elections of Trustees from one year to two years, with the next Election to be in 2020.

The Trustees and Officers elected at this years AGM are (in alphabetical order):

- Ana Paula Teixeira
- Angela Sanchez
- Davian Jessamy (Deputy Chairperson)
- Elsa Rossi (Chairperson)
- Flavia Queiroz
- Gilson Guimarães
- Rosilene Galindo
- Sueli Saponara (Treasurer)
- Tales Schmidt (Secretary)



7th British Congress on Medicine and Spirituality

BUSS is already in agreement with AME-International for the organisation of the 7th British Spiritist Medical Congress which will take place on 9th and 10th November 2019.

An update from Allan Kardec Study Group-UK

AKSG-UK have reorganised their weekly study programme and changed the location. The study meetings are held in English on Monday evenings (except Bank Holidays) at 7:30 pm in Walthamstow, London E17.

For more information, contact Janet: 0208 923 5073 / 07467 084751, email: duncan.kardec@yahoo.co.uk

Suicide Prevention Campaign

On 9th September, representatives of the groups Spiritist Society of London, Spiritist Group for Peace, Spiritist Group of Southampton and Bezerra de Menezes Spiritist Society got together at Victoria Park, in London, and distributed brochures from the Say Yes to Life campaign and the book *Suicide - All You Need to Know About Causes and Consequences*, by Richard Simonetti, to people passing by from 11:30 am to 1:30 pm.



Spiritist Tour explores London streets



On the morning of the 29th of September, fourteen Spiritists from different regions of the country participated in another initiative of the Project "Spiritism in Tour", this time in the city of London. For about three hours, they toured several parts of the British capital in search of historical places associated with the birth of the Spiritualist movement, precursor of Spiritism during the 19th Century. This activity was jointly conducted by the Fraternity Spiritist Society (London) and the George Vale Owen Spiritist Study Group (Birmingham). To know more about this Project, please visit: spiritismintour.com (available in English, Portuguese and Esperanto).

Soulful Walkers of SSL

The Spiritist Society of London (SSL) began a walking project in London parks during the summer, and everyone is welcome to join. The walks take place once a month, please see the SSL Facebook page for more information: [www.fb.com/SpiritistSocietyofLondon](https://www.facebook.com/SpiritistSocietyofLondon)



Family Festival at Francis of Assisi Spiritist Society



Francis of Assisi Spiritist Society held their second Family Festival in August, which included live music, capoeira and folk dances. There were many activities for children, including face painting, plus the famous *galinhada* (chicken and rice stew) from Aunt Creuza, accompanied by delicious desserts. Many people attended the event, where the group were able to raise enough funds to pay their rent and operational costs for the next six months.

Due to the popularity and purpose of the event, the second Family Festival was nominated for the Community Event category of the Focus Brazil Press Award. The UK award ceremony will take place on 27th November 2018, and everyone is invited to vote: <http://www.focusbrasil.org/press-award-uk-2018-voto-popular/>

News from Fraternity Spiritist Society

A Healing Seminar was held on 23th and 30th September. This year the two speakers were Maria Novelli and Maria Gomes, both from Solidarity Spiritist Society.

The Brazilian speakers Fatima and Cristiane Sato gave a talk on 7th October about their project “Yes to Life, No to Abortion”. They talked about their work in Brazil, where they help women to keep their babies.

The Brazilian speaker Rosana Voigt Silveira will be launching her new book *Kardec para Mulheres* (Kardec for Women), on 14th October.

Sergio Indarte from Lisbon will visit on 21st October and will give a talk on the theme *Seek the Kingdom of God Within You*. On the same day, Dr Maud Pedreira Dias will give a talk called *Blessed Are the Merciful*.

Designer and author Luiz Hu Rivas will give a talk about the theme *New Literature* on 28th October.

The Brazilian speaker Sergio Villar will give a talk on 18th November on the theme *Attitudes of Urgency*.

Sex, Drugs and Spirituality

The Bezerra de Menezes Spiritist Society held the *4th Talking about Sex, Drugs and Spirituality* on 6th October, where there was a group reflection about addiction, sexuality, and the impact on our physical and spiritual bodies. In an atmosphere of friendship and without prejudice, the audience learnt together how to recover their self-love and self-respect to live lighter and continue to cultivate inner peace and the joy of living.

Healing Seminar in Bournemouth

On 29th July, Elsa Rossi and Silvia Gibbons presented a Healing Seminar at Vitality Stadium, as an event hosted by the Spiritist Society of Bournemouth.

The instructive event was well attended and included rich and detailed information, with the purpose of preparing workers to give healing within Spiritist groups, and understanding how we absorb the energies being provided.



Self-Improvement: Key to Regeneration



On Saturday 29th September, Marcelo Mota (George Vale Owen Spiritist Study Group, Birmingham) and Denis Martins, (Munster, Germany), presented an enlightened seminar about the importance of personal transformation for the improvement of humanity and the planet.

The seminar, held at Bankside, London, was also a celebration of the 150th anniversary of the publication of the book *Genesis* by Allan Kardec, and was attended by 53 people.





Luis Hu Rivas

OCT 2018

FRIDAY, 26 - 7:00 PM
Francis of Assisi UK
"New Literature"
1 Studley Rd, London SW4 6RA

SATURDAY, 27 - 2:00 PM
BUSS Seminar
**"Gospel Teachings
Challenges and Technical
Suggestions"**
Bankside Community Space
18 Great Guildford St, London SE1 0FD

SUNDAY, 28 - 2:30 PM
Sir William Crookes Spiritist
Society
**"Allen Kardec - 160 years
of Spiritism"**
39 Prince Regent Lane, Plaistow, E13 8RHOFD

SUNDAY, 28 - 4:30 PM
Fraternity Spiritist Society
"New Literature"
Future LDN Ltd, 278- 280 South Lambeth
Road - Stockwell SW8 1UJ



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Psychology and Mediumship Under the Spiritist View

Dr. Tania Stevanin

17th November 2018
2:30pm to 5:30pm

Free Admission

Reserve your tickets at: psychology-and-mediumship.eventbrite.co.uk

18 Great Guildford Street - SE1 0FD / www.buss.org.uk




DANIEL ASSISI

12 to 16 DECEMBER
2018



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What to do in a moment of need

Depression, anxiety and stress are common aspects of mental health concerns that affect most people at some point in their life.

These negative feelings may come and go and can be caused by one of many possibilities, including: financial worries, relationship problems, work issues, vices, housing problems, as well as spiritual issues. Everyone handles these lower emotions differently. However, many people stay in silence without the ability or courage to talk about the issues affecting them and their emotions.



What can we do to return to a positive level of being, to a lighter vibration and to a happier state of mind?

Don't panic! Everyone goes through these feelings at some point in their lives. There are many people available to give support, no matter what the issue is or how critical the situation has become.

Write it down. Take the time to write everything that is affecting you on paper, and make a note of how you feel about it. Although this can bring on additional emotions, it can also help to analyse the issue.

Ask for help. Not everyone is able to find the courage to ask for help, but there is help out there. Where possible, always talk with your family or friends. Talking about our problems with the people we love might be embarrassing, but they may have also gone through difficulties and even if they cannot give advice, they can give supporting love and affection.

If you attend a Spiritist Centre, talk to the coordinators to arrange Fraternal Assistance, which is a private chat to help talk about the issue and to find guidance from within the Spiritist Teachings.

Talk to your doctor. The NHS (National Health Service) is able to help in many situations, and they run talking therapy and psychological support units around the country. GPs are trained to give you guidance and support and refer you to mental health teams where needed. You can also call the NHS on 111.

Talk with the Samaritans. The Samaritans run a safe and confidential support system via their website, by telephone and through face-to-face discussions. Telephone: 116 123. Website: www.samaritans.org.

In the case of urgent support. If you or someone you know is in a serious condition with risk of serious harm, please visit your nearest hospital A&E department or call 999 and ask for an ambulance.

Spiritist Groups in the UK

Member Groups of BUSS

London Regions

Allan Kardec Study Group-UK	Walthamstow
Chico Xavier Spiritist Society	Hammersmith
Francis of Assisi Spiritist Society	Stockwell
Fraternity Spiritist Society	Stockwell
Sir William Crookes Spiritist Society	Kings Cross & Plaistow
Solidarity Spiritist Society	Wandsworth
Spiritist Centre for Peace	Bethnal Green
Spiritist Society of London	Bethnal Green

Other Regions

Allan Kardec Manchester Spiritist Society	Manchester
Blossom Spiritist Society	Wokingham, Berkshire
Guiding Light Spiritist Society	Canterbury, Kent
Sheffield Spiritist Group	Sheffield, South Yorkshire
Spiritist Friends of Edinburgh	Edinburgh, Scotland
Spiritist Group of Brighton & Hove	Brighton, East Sussex
Spiritist Group of Glasgow	Glasgow, Scotland
Spiritist Society of Bournemouth	Bournemouth, Dorset
Spiritist Society of Windsor and Maidenhead	Maidenhead, Berkshire

Other Groups

London Regions

Andre Luiz Spiritist Society	Bermondsey
Ascension Spiritist Group	Bermondsey
Bezerra de Menezes Spiritist Society	Bethnal Green
Richmond Spiritist Fellowship	Richmond
Sir Arthur Conan Doyle Spiritist Society	Old Street
Spiritist Group of Harrow	Harrow
The Spiritist Family Group	North London

Other Regions

Cambridge Spiritist Group	Cambridge
Cardiff Spiritist Studies.....	Cardiff, Wales
George Vale Owen Spiritist Study Group	Birmingham
Sir Oliver Lodge Spiritist Group.....	Shefford, Bedfordshire
Spiritism Plymouth.....	Plymouth, Devon
Spiritist Friends of Dundee.....	Dundee, Scotland
Spiritist Studies Group of Southampton	Southampton, Hampshire
Spiritist Studies in Leeds.....	Leeds, West Yorkshire
Swindon Espirita – Spiritist Studies in Swindon	Swindon, Wiltshire
West Kent Spiritist Group.....	Gravesend/Sevenoaks, Kent

