



The Southern Cross

The Journal of Clan MacNeacail in Australia and New Zealand
Chief: John MacNeacail of MacNeacail and Scurrybreac



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Editor: Katrina Nicolson

DOREEN NICOLSON'S SECRET WAR

By Murray Nicolson – North America

Doreen Nicolson (or “Dee” as she is used to being called) is a nonagenarian who lives in the Isle of Man, which is in the Irish Sea between England and Ireland. Doreen is the widow of Ian Ferguson Nicolson, who died in 1990 but whom our clan will always remember as the person who started us off on the purchase of Ben Chraic in Skye.

Last year Barbara and I visited Doreen again at her home in Port St. Mary and I noticed that she had a book of puzzles called “Codewords”, one of which she completes every day. This led to the discovery that during World War Two, Doreen was a senior member of the staff at Bletchley Park in England, the now-famous home of the codebreakers that decrypted the German Enigma codes. She had graduated with 1st Class Honours in Modern Languages from the University of Manchester, and was recruited to work evaluating the constant flow of intelligence coming from the code-breakers, and she became Head of the group called (enigmatically) the Air Index for most of the War.

Although several thousand people (mostly younger women) worked in great secrecy at Bletchley Park, they were sworn to keep secrecy after the war, and it was 30 years before the story of their immensely important work became known. In 1995 there was a novel by Robert Harris called *Enigma*, and a film of the same name in 2001 – both, Doreen said, rather inaccurate in what Doreen Nicolson’s Secret War life was really like at Bletchley. Doreen wrote a little book of poems dedicated to her colleagues, titled simply

“Hut 3”. One of these is a wry comment on the subsequent lives of the Bletchley code-breakers:-

*They have their regiments, their flags,
their rituals; we were a motley crew.
In and out we surged, and no one knew
what we were doing.*

*They have their medals and their pride,
we have the memory
of a complete silence, thousands wide*

*For thirty years
we kept our mouths shut, marched and counter-marched
for years, submerged
beneath civilian nonentity, expunged
from press, publicity and history books.
They have their medals and their armistice –
we have our walking sticks,
hobbling in silence through the guarded gate*

Doreen has four children – Alex living in Papua, New Guinea, Ian living in Brisbane, Australia, Jack living in Eastbourne, England and Catherine, living in London. We wish Doreen continued health and happiness as she continues to break these codes every day!



Ian Ferguson Nicolson with Doreen and Pam Nicolson, the Chief's wife, in Portree, Isle of Skye in 1988

CLAN MACNICOL WORLDWIDE GATHERING 2012

Hotel Grand Chancellor Launceston 12th – 14th October 2012

Established in 1806, Launceston is Australia's third oldest city and a major gateway to Tasmania. Launceston is the ideal base for visiting the cool-climate vineyards of the Tamar Valley. From Launceston you can also explore various national parks, historical villages and grand National Trust properties.

Launceston's weather is similar to the south of France, with an average maximum of 23 degrees Celsius in January and 11.5 degrees Celsius in June. It is 198 Kilometres (123 miles) or 2.5 hours drive north of Hobart.

Launceston is serviced by three airlines Qantas, Jetstar and Virgin Blue, being only a 45 minute flight from Melbourne.

It has beautiful old buildings and streetscapes dating from early Colonial and convict times to Georgian and Victorian eras. A wine lovers and foodie's paradise, Launceston is made for losing yourself - in exploration, romance and adventure, by land, air, river or sea.

Accommodation Conference rates are offered for pre and post stays of up to 3 days either side.

Rates can be accessed under the conference name (Clan MacNicol Worldwide Gathering 2012) by contacting Reservations at Hotel Grand Chancellor Launceston:

Ph +61 (3) 6334 3434 or

reservations@hgclaunceston.com.au

Deluxe Room at \$145.00 room only & Superior Room at \$160.00 room only. (Plus over 15, 4 star and above alternatives in the area.)

Launceston Show is 11th October, 2 days of Clan meetings, Tours, Gala Dinner and Ceilidh, Casual BBQ, Sunday Kirkin and Picnic at Campbell Town, settlement town for the Chief and Nicolson's in the 1800's. Longford country Show is October 21st, plus there is so much to see and do in Tasmania all within easy access from Launceston.



DO NOT MISS THIS OPPORTUNITY to be a part of our Clan MacNicol Worldwide Gathering and to visit the wonders of Launceston and Tasmania, make **YOUR** plans to be there in **2012 NOW!!**

Register your attendance: Secretary PO Box 243 GYMEA NSW 2227 Australia or malnico@bigpond.com

The Tassie Devil needs you!



Trowunna Wildlife Park, Mole Creek



www.visitlauncestontamar.com.au/pages/experiences



James Boags Brewery



King Solomon's Cave, Mole Creek - Stalactites



Alexandra Suspension Bridge,
Cataract Gorge, Launceston



Anglican Church



Mole Creek Karst National Park

world gathering clan macnicol

Launceston Tasmania, October 12th, 13th & 14th

Royal Launceston Show on Thursday (a Public Holiday), tours and meetings on Friday, plus the Grand Dinner and Ceilidh on Friday evening. With General Clan Meeting Saturday.

Register NOW! Before August 31st.

Some available tours will include:

Historic Walking Tour

\$15 per person Departs daily 10am return 11.30am
This tour is a leisurely walk through Launceston's past and present.

Launceston Coach Tram Tour

\$40 per person. This is a city sights and historic tour departing at 10.00am and returning 12.30pm.

Tasmanian Zoo - Friday 12th, 9am.

\$20 per person entry - own transport. Zoo bus transfer pick up is 9.00am and return at 12 noon, cost \$35 per person.

Just a short drive from Launceston city you can experience the Tasmanian Zoo with a large collection of Aussie animals including the Tasmanian Devil. This is your opportunity to watch the devil feeding from close up.

Boag's Brewery

Beer Lovers Tour \$25 dollars per person 1pm Friday 12th 1.5 hour tour through the brewery exploring all of the processes in detail, then enjoy award winning beers accompanied by selected Tasmanian cheeses.

City Park

Cost free City park is located in the heart of Launceston just a five minute walk from the Chancellor Hotel.

This beautiful parkland features mature trees and shrubs, a display of annual flowers, a Japanese Macaque monkey enclosure, the John Hart Conservatory, a duck pond, senses garden, monuments and historic Albert Hall just to mention a few.

3pm Friday at the **Queen Victoria Museum Art Gallery** at Royal Park, 2 Wellington Street, Launceston view the John Nicolson portrait, also his wife, by Fredrick Strange, with up to 3 other John Nicolson's present!

Saturday 13th, tours plus the CMAI AGM at 11am and General Clan Meeting for Clan MacNicol at 1pm. International members will gather to report on and discuss Clan matters, an evening Tartan BBQ will follow at 6.30pm. Ghost Tour to follow for those game!

Sunday 14th, own transport or there is a bus tour (\$15pp.) to Kirkin' at Kirklands, departing 8:30am, a noon Picnic at Campbell Town, where the Chief's family first settled in Tasmania in the 1840's. At the picnic the St Andrews Caledonian Pipe Band shall perform the 50th anniversary playing of "Nicolson of Scorrybreac". On return we stop at the National Rose Gardens at Woolmers Estate. Back by 5pm.

DO NOT MISS THIS GATHERING!! Plan to be there and return your registration and payment before the end of AUGUST, then more details will be forwarded; so that you are in the action and excitement of this International event.

By Mal Nicolson

The Wedding

Our son Dean was married to Amy on 15th June, now returned to work after a honeymoon in US. (I wore the kilt, Dean was not allowed to!)



The Graduation

Laura graduated as Master of Human Rights from Sydney Uni and has returned to New York where she is working at the UN.



The Wedding

Sent in by Lyn Nicholson

Two scottish boys, Archie and Jock are sitting in the pub discussing Jock's forthcoming wedding. "It's all going like magic" says Jock. "I've got everything organised already - the flowers, the church, the cars, the reception, the rings, the minister, even ma stag night...."

"I've even bought a kilt to be married in!" continues Jock.

"A kilt," exclaims Archie. That's grand - you'll look pure smart in that! And, what's the tartan?"

"Ach," says Jock, "I'd imagine she'll be in white!"

introducing rosemary kew our ceilidh caller for the launceston gathering

By Les Nicholson – Townsville

A highlight of the Launceston Gathering will be the Gala Dinner and Ceilidh on Friday 12 October 2012 and it wouldn't be a ceilidh without Scottish Country Dancing.

Mal Nicolson has asked Marie and me to coordinate the ceilidh part of the evening. Marie has taken me along to learn the art of Scottish Country Dancing and there is a dance teacher in Townsville called Margaret Silke who has just discovered a new level of patience she didn't know she had before I started dancing. Thanks to Allison Green who gave us the benefit of her vast knowledge of Scottish Country Dancing in Tasmania, we have made contact with Rosemary Kew who is a long time Scottish Country dancer and administrator in Tasmania. Her credentials in Scottish Country Dancing are impressive to say the least.

Rosemary was born in Scotland, and started dancing with her mother at a very young age and attended the Highlanders Institute in Glasgow. After emigrating to Australia in 1969 she was delighted to find Scottish Country Dancing with Bob & Jean Clark in Canberra. After nursing in the Torres Straits Rosemary eventually came to Tasmania and resumed her Scottish Dancing in Launceston. She has also lived, worked, studied and danced in Burnie and Hobart. Some friends took her to Winter School in NSW and she was hooked!



Rosemary Kew

When Rosemary's late husband David was teaching in the Adelaide Hills he encouraged her to join in teaching. Back in Tasmania, David reconvened the Devonport group and Rosemary joined in when work permitted. Rosemary is still a member of the Devonport Scottish Country Dancing group which has been in existence for 15 years. The group has taken part in numerous displays, and audience participation events with Tartan Day being their big annual event. Rosemary took an active part in the Dance Round Tasmania Tour two years ago, including organising the Opening Social. There have been Audience Participation

events at the Launceston Burns Suppers, Mid-Winter Dinners, the Arboretum Spring Festival, and the Rotary Rural Youth Leader events at Camp Clayton. Rosemary regularly attends Summer Schools in New Zealand and Winter Schools in Australia and functions in Victoria, Canberra and Far North Queensland.

We are indeed privileged to have a person of Rosemary's experience joining us for the ceilidh.

Rosemary now lives in Devonport and as luck would have it she is attending the Tasmanian Scottish Country Dance Assembly being held in Launceston, starting the day after our Gala Dinner and Ceilidh. She has very generously agreed to be our dance caller and to provide the music for some Scottish country dancing at the completion of the dinner.

We will start with some relatively easy dances, Rosemary will walk us through the steps and patterns and then we can all dance them. Following this if there are members who wish to engage in more complex dances and Rosemary has the music available we will see where the night goes. However we don't expect Rosemary to be conducting a full blown dance program.

For those who may like to polish up their dancing skills before the ceilidh some dances that will be on the program are:

- The Ferryboat
- Cumberland Reel
- Charlestown Chaser
- Rabbies' Reel
- Strip the Willow
- Gay Gordons
- Dashing White Sergeant
- Lomond Waltz
- Scottish Werewolf
- Rakes of Glasgow

We've had a request to have an Eightsome Reel included so if you're an experienced dancer and would like this to be on the program please let us know as soon as possible.

If you have any Scottish Country Dancing experience and would be happy to assist as a mentor for those of us less talented please let us know and I know Rosemary would be grateful for any helpers on the night.

If any member has any suggestions they would like to make about the ceilidh part of the evening or any assistance they can offer please contact Marie or me at mlg7@optusnet.com.au

SKYE BRIDGE

By Mal Nicolson

As part of the Homecoming festival 2009 (a year of events to encourage people worldwide to get in touch with their Scottish heritage) a textile art group from the North West of Scotland invited Scots, ex-pats, Scotophiles and anyone else interested, to take part in an ambitious guerrilla knitting project to cover the Skye Bridge, which links the Isle of Skye with the mainland, in knitting. This appears to have been very successful!



BERRY CELTIC FESTIVAL

By Mal Nicolson

It was a very cold and **EXTREMELY** windy day in Berry!

Some turned around at the gate and didn't put up a tent, others simply didn't bother, 3 were destroyed or taken down just in time, I only raised ours half-way up so that it didn't blow away! Chairs and tables were strewn around if not anchored down, at one stage even the trailer set off alone and had to be retrieved! Surprisingly there were quite a few visitors and a number of people were interested and took away membership info!



A VERY REVEREND GENTLEMAN REVEREND WILLIAM NICOLSON, D.D.

By Jennifer Maffey, Dunedin, New Zealand

William was born on 17 July 1796 at Ceres, Fife, Scotland, the fifth child and second son of John NICOLSON and Grizzel (nee MORRIS). He became a schoolmaster and taught in Muthill, Perthshire from 1820 then returned to Fife to teach in the parochial school in Kemback.

Pay was traditionally low and all parish schoolmasters taught reading, writing, arithmetic and Latin with many offering tuition in advanced mathematics, book-keeping, surveying, geography, Greek and French. Members of the kirk-session regularly carried out school examinations and at Muthill in 1821 the schedule for this shows the range of subjects taught by William – first, fourth and fifth classes in English reading recitation and grammar; psalms and shorter catechism; French, Latin Arithmetic and Geography.

In March 1822 William was 'licensed to exercise his gifts as a Probationer for the Holy Ministry' by the Presbytery of Auchterarder and 'to publish the glad tidings of salvation to your fellow sinners where-ever providence may cast your lot'.

The Church of Scotland required its ministers to complete a university degree. William did this during his probationary period, graduating from St Andrews University in 1825 with a Master of Arts degree. In 1827 he had completed the requirements of his probation and was preparing for his ordination as a full minister of the Church of Scotland.

According to the form of the Established Church, William was presented to the parish of Ferryport-on-Craig (later known as Tayport) by King George IV in September 1827 and ordained minister on 24 April 1828.

The parish register for St Andrews records that on 29 September 1824 William NICOLSON and Miss Elizabeth STEELE were married by Dr Chalmers. Elizabeth appears to be the only surviving child of Ralph STEELE and Katherine NIVEN. The Steeles have been traced back to Foulden Parish, Berwickshire.

William and Elizabeth (or Betsey) had the following family:

John	b 27 August 1825, Muthill, Perth
Ralph Steele	b 6 February 1828, Kemback, Fife d 17 December 1913, Dunedin, New Zealand
William	b 6 October 1829, Ferryport-on Craig, Fife d 8 March 1905, Lewisham, Kent
Peter Steele	b 29 January 1832, Ferryport-on-Craig, Fife d 20 April 1924, Walton on Thames, London
Elizabeth	b 9 January 1840, Ferryport-on-Craig, Fife d 15 January 1840, Ferryport-on Craig, Fife

In the wider world of the Church of Scotland there was increasing unrest. For many years the lairds had the right to appoint ministers of their choice to the churches on their properties, often not pleasing their congregations. In 1834 the General Assembly passed legislation allowing male heads of families to reject a patrons choice. However, the government



Chalmers Free Church

believed the Church was putting itself above the law of the land and the Kirk felt that Parliament should not intervene in their affairs. Politicians would not give way but in May 1843 the situation was resolved in an unexpected manner.

More than 400 ministers (about 1/3) walked out of the General assembly and broke away to form the Free Church of Scotland under Rev Thomas Chalmers, virtually walking away from their established churches and stipends. A similar proportion of parishioners followed and the responsibility fell to them to find buildings and finance for the Free Church ministers.

William was one of the ministers to follow Thomas Chalmers and no doubt there were difficulties in terms of money and possibly parishioner respect. It is said that William presented the parish of Ferryport-on Craig with the site on which the Free Church and manse were erected. Shortly after he accepted a Call to London and on 24 October 1844 he was inducted as minister at Scotch Church, London Wall. Although William preached at London Wall for 6 years there is evidence that his ministry was a more frustrating challenge than he would have wished.

William's sons were heading abroad – John already in New Zealand and Ralph preparing to follow and Peter taking up a position in Brazil. James Macandrew, who was about to take a family party to Otago, New Zealand, had many long discussions with William about the young province. An appointment as minister or educator in Otago apparently had some difficulties thus a Call to establish a Free Church in Hobart, Tasmania came at an opportune time.

On 5 September 1850 William and his son Ralph boarded the 'Titan' at Greenhithe, London with the Macandrew family party and on 7 September finally set sail from Gravesend. The "Titan" was a comparatively small iron clad schooner under the command of Captain George Craib, with a crew of 11 and 22 passengers.

William kept a very good diary of the voyage which gives an insight into the conditions and frustrations of being confined to a small space for a long voyage. On the evening of 15 January 1851 their voyage finished having beat up against a strong wind all that day.

A VERY REVEREND GENTLEMAN REVEREND WILLIAM NICOLSON, D.D. CONT.

For the next 2 months William remained in Otago while waiting for the "Titan" to continue to Hobart. It is believed he preached at Port Chalmers, at First Church and at East Taieri.

Arriving in Hobart 9 April 1851 he immediately "found myself in the hands of friends". On his first Sunday in Hobart he preached in the hall of the Mechanics Institute to a congregation of about 400 and again in the evening when "attendance crowded and many standing". The hall of the Mechanics Institute was to serve as the place of worship until the Free Church was built.

On visiting male and female convict settlements he commented some were much better off than many free labourers at home but he found the sight of so many being held as guilty criminals "affecting" and a visit to the Orphans School was quite painful to him.

He received many callers and following visits to friends often "remained" for tea or dinner. He wrote many letters and eagerly awaited replies and the arrival of newspapers from "home". Much of each day was spent in study and preparing his sermons for the following Sabbath.

Throughout his ministry in Hobart he travelled to other parishes such as Oatlands, Campbelltown, Launceston, Richmond and Cambridge and further afield to Melbourne where he would preach for a week or two.

Six months after his arrival in Hobart, on 3 October 1851, the foundation stone for Chalmers Free Church was laid with the Trust Deed for the church including details that if William was alive on completion of the church he was to be its first minister. Several days after this great day he moved out of his lodgings and into his own house in Davey Street.

William's text for the first service in the new church was taken from Isaiah LVI, 7 - "My house shall be a house of prayer for all people". He wrote in his diary in 1852:- "Sabbath 29 August. Opening of Chalmers Free Church. The day had been a peculiarly solemn one - large attendance.

I preached morning and evening. Have felt very solemnised. May it indeed be to us the beginning of great Spiritual prosperity". Although the Sunday School building was erected the same year the Manse was not completed until 1857. Sadly no trace of these buildings remains today.

20 January 1853 saw the longed for arrival of his wife, Elizabeth. She brought with her a silver baptismal vessel which she presented to Chalmers Church. It is in the form of a flower with a water bowl in its centre. It has been used by Scots Church with whom Chalmers Church combined in relatively recent years. She also brought with her a communion plate, flagon and four chalices.

In the weeks following her arrival Mrs N (as William calls her in his diary) had many days when she was ill or poorly. William was often torn between staying at home with her and going out amongst his parishioners. It is not known when Mrs N left Hobart, but she died in London in July 1881, age 81 and is buried in Highgate Cemetery, London with her son William and other members of his family.

The diary of William NICOLSON does not take us beyond 1853. He continued his ministry in Hobart for over 25 years until 1878 but was often invited to preach at Chalmers Church. He finally retired from church work in 1885. In 1863 Washington College in Iowa conferred on him an honorary degree of Doctor of Divinity. His congregation gave him a Doctor's gown and cassock to mark the occasion.

Reverend William NICOLSON died on 2 January 1890 at his residence in Smith Street, Hobart and is buried in Cornelian Bay Cemetery.

William was regarded as one of the most eloquent preachers in the colonies, a man of 'great evangelical fervour' who spoke from the heart. He was a staunch Presbyterian of the old school and held in high esteem. He showed concern for the welfare of his congregation giving counsel and showing understanding and sincere interest in their everyday events.

Through his son, Ralph Steele NICOLSON, Reverend William is the ancestor of several Clan members in New Zealand - Stella ALLERBY, Douglas HEENAN, Jennifer MORGAN, Mary NEILL, Gerald NICOLSON, Ian STODDART and Jennifer MAFFEY. We have very much appreciated his wonderful diaries and while we are fortunate to have copies of some of his sermons we are all thankful that we have not had to sit through these.

I would like to thank Mary Neill for allowing me to use excerpts from the book, A Very Reverend Gentleman and His family, which she researched and wrote on our NICOLSON family history.



Rev William as young man



Rev Dr William Nicolson in later years

Flower of the Forest

From Corinne Nicolson OAM

I am sorry to have to inform you that my wonderful husband Robert Bruce Nicolson passed away on 21 March 2012 after a 13 month battle with cancer. He was 79.

Bob was a very proud clan member and was in the process of putting together an album of his family history. Unfortunately he didn't get it finished but his grandchildren are going to continue his work.

wedding Anniversaries

By Jennifer Maffey

Recently some Clan members celebrated worthwhile wedding anniversaries.

In May I travelled to Auckland for the 50th anniversary of my brother, Ian Stoddart, and his wife Jenny. In June they came to Dunedin to celebrate the 40th anniversary of Eric and myself.

Both parties were married in Holy Trinity Anglican Church, Dargaville in the North Island. Ian and Jenny had a gathering for family and friends at the home of their elder daughter with the whole of their wedding party in attendance. Jennifer and Eric had brunch and dinner at local restaurants.



the Australian Celtic Festival

Glen Innes, 3 - 6th May, 2012

Parade of Tartans

It was good to meet up with those that were at Glenn Innes again, and we hope to see you all, plus a lot more Clan friends, in October at the Launceston gathering.

With every good wish

Bob Nicol, QLD



Tom Devine pre-eminent historian of modern Scotland

Professor T. M. Devine, OBE (University of Edinburgh) is Scotland's leading historian. In 2001 he was presented by HM the Queen with the Royal Gold Medal, Scotland's supreme academic accolade, and was appointed OBE in the New Year Honours List 2005 for services to Scottish history.

With sponsorship from the Centre for Irish and Scottish Studies, University; Otago Burns Club; Dunedin-Edinburgh Sister City Society; Otago Heritage Council and the University on Edinburgh he came to Dunedin, New Zealand for Scottish Festival Week in November 2011. Tom unveiled a structure made from Edinburgh rock as part of the Dunedin-Edinburgh Sister City Society. He gave several free lectures - The 'Death' and Reinvention of Scotland; The Lowland Clearances and Exodus from Scotland; The Puzzle of Scottish Sectarianism.

He was also promoting his new book - To the Ends of the Earth: Scotland's Global Diaspora. Tom proved to be very friendly and a good speaker in spite of his heavy cold. We hope he will return again. Several Clan members attended his talks and the unveiling.

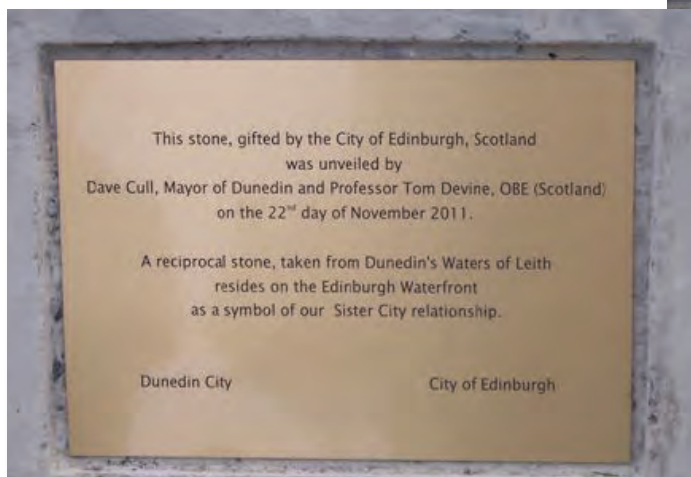
Jenny Maffey

President Clan MacNicol, New Zealand



Jenny Maffey, Tom Devine, Lyn Nicholson, Bruce Nicholson

unveiling Dunedin - Edinburgh Sister City Stone



Dunedin - Edinburgh Sister City Plaque



Professor Tom Devine and Lyn Nicholson

nicol, phyllis mary (1903-1964)

By Rosemary Annable

Phyllis Mary Nicol (1903-1964), lecturer and demonstrator in physics, was born on 2 March 1903 at Thirroul, New South Wales, eldest daughter of native-born parents Walter George Phillip Nicol, teamster, and his wife Florence, née Reeves. Educated at North Sydney Girls' High School, Phyllis won a bursary in 1921 to the University of Sydney (B.Sc., 1925; M.Sc., 1926). She shared the Deas Thomson scholarship (1924) and graduated (1925) with first-class honours in physics and in mathematics from a department somewhat unwelcoming to women students.

Awarded an 1851 Exhibition science research scholarship, she wrote her thesis on the optical properties of selenium and published her findings in the Journal and Proceedings of the Royal Society of New South Wales; she was to join the society in 1935.

In March 1927 Miss Nicol resigned her scholarship. She worked for the rest of her life in the department of physics. A full-time demonstrator (1927-33), reduced to part-time (1933-46), she became a part-time lecturer in 1946 (following the retirement of Professor Oscar Vonwiller) and a full-time lecturer in 1948 but with 'temporary' status. She had written with her colleague Edgar Booth Physics (1931, 16th edition 1962), a standard text for high-school students and undergraduates.

Nicol unsuccessfully applied in 1952 for the position of senior lecturer. Her status and that of other 'temporary' members of the department was reviewed by a senate committee in July 1953. Although she was damned with faint praise by Harry Messel, the dynamic new professor of physics, who considered that she 'coached' rather than

lectured, but was worthy of consideration because she 'had been here for many years', the committee recommended that she be offered a permanent appointment. After almost thirty years of teaching, her reward was the position of 'tutor demonstrator with the status of lecturer'.

Her devotion to the department was equalled only by her attachment to Women's College, where she had lived from 1921 as student, tutor in physics and mathematics, and sub-principal (1933-54). Hindered by a lack of opportunity for overseas research, by limitations within the physics department and by her reluctance to take any public role of leadership, she remained as a subordinate within her department and college, voicing no grudge or criticism of others. The stereotype of the scholarly spinster, untidy, careless of dress and seemingly always running late, 'Phyllis Nic' spoke on the benefits of eight hours sleep a night and exhorted her female students to dress in their best for examinations as a means of boosting confidence.

Nicol resigned as sub-principal in 1954 to live with her unmarried sister at Lane Cove. She underwent a mastectomy in 1953 and later suffered severe illness, but continued to work, resigning from the physics department 'due to ill health' only four days before she died of cancer on 13 June 1964 at her home; she was cremated with Anglican rites. Students were her vocation. Her genius was that, through her teaching, the most unpromising candidates could pass physics I, the first hurdle for many university courses. Her legacy was to help others on the path to opportunities she never enjoyed.

Thank you to new Clan member Samantha Rowe (nee Nicol), for sending me the link to this interesting site.

Nicol, Phyllis Mary (1903-1964)	
Born	2 March 1903 Thirroul, New South Wales, Australia
Died	13 June 1964 Lane Cove, Sydney, New South Wales, Australia
Religious Influence	Anglican
Occupation*	academic (1927-1964) New South Wales, Australia physicist (1927-1964) New South Wales, Australia

* Dates are approximate

We thank Australian Dictionary of Biography for permission to reproduce this article.
Their very interesting website is <http://adb.anu.edu.au>
Link to this article: <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/nicol-phyllis-mary-11239>

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Try *your* hand at Codewords...

On the front cover of this newsletter, there is an article on Doreen Nicolson of the Isle of Man. At the grand age of 91 she keeps up her code-breaking skills by solving one of these puzzles every day. They appear in a magazine called "Codewords", which can be found at www.puzzler.com

See if you can solve one of these, which we reproduce by permission from Puzzler Media Limited. Every letter of the alphabet is used, and each letter corresponds to one number....

CODEWORD

M

I

C

The first word reading across the eleventh row has an interesting history. At the beginning of the 15th century it was a verb meaning 'to hold property'. Two centuries later it evolved to mean 'work the earth', leading to 'put dung on the soil' and the noun we know now!

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Letters to the editor

Dear Editor

It has been brought to my attention following the last excellent edition of the Southern Cross, celebrating 25 years of Clan MacNicol newsletters, by Alison Green of Tasmania and Barbara Bray of South Australia, both long term members of Clan MacNicol Australia; that there has been an Australian Newsletter going out for much longer.

Although the Australian Newsletter has not been called "Southern Cross" until 1991, from copies held from 1983 and perhaps even 82, the Chief Iain MacNeacail was sending out a news-sheet titled "Sgorr-a-bhreac" (this was the war-cry of the Clan) to a well organised Australian Clan group.

Thus a history of 29-30 years.

Yours Aye

Mal Nicolson
Secretary CMAI

Consolation for Secretaries

If a Secretary writes a letter, it is too long
If she sends a postcard, it is too short
If she offers a suggestion, she's a know-all
If she doesn't - she's useless
If the attendance is poor, she should have called members up
If she calls them up, she's a pest
If she asks for subscriptions, she's insulting
If she doesn't, she's lazy
If the meeting is a big success, the committee gets the praise
If it is a failure, the Secretary is to blame
Ashes to ashes - dust to dust
If the others won't do it - the Secretary must.

Sent in by **Lyn Nicholson**

Buttermilk Bread

454 g / 1lb. flour	1 teaspn salt	284ml / 2 breakfast cups of
1 teaspn cream of tartar	1 teaspn sugar	buttermilk or thick soured milk
1 teaspn baking soda	30g / 1 oz. butter	

Set oven to 220°C / 425°F / Gas Mark 7. Grease and flour a baking tray. Mix all dry ingredients together in a bowl. Lightly rub in the butter. Add the buttermilk and mix into a light, soft dough. Divide into two and shape into rounds on a lightly floured surface. Place the rounds on the baking tray and bake for about 20 mins. Serve sliced with butter.

clan macnicol facebook pages

Clan MacNicol has 2 Facebook sites. Show your support by liking us. Type the page title (see right) into the search box and they should come up in the drop down menu.

I have also provided the link under the page name, just in case. There are other FB pages for the clan, feel free to like them also but these 2 are the most applicable to us.

Clan MacNicol Australia

<https://www.facebook.com/Clan.MacNicol.Australia>

Clan Nicolson/Nicholson of the Isle of Skye

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/174196902689476>

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Clan MacNicol
website yet?**

www.clanmacnicol.com

How many links do we
have on our website?

- the website has the answer

Don't forget the
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Register NOW!

Before 31 August 2012
It is going to be a lot of fun!