



Scorrybreac



The Journal of Clan MacNicol of North America

Sandestin, Florida
2012 NORTH AMERICAN
CLAN GATHERING 6

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FROM THE PRESIDENT

WARM GREETINGS FROM Atlanta to all our Clan Society members and families. Since the last issue of this newsletter, here in Georgia we've had one of the mildest winters on record with no snow or ice, and very few days of freezing weather. It has been possible to enjoy meals out of doors with some frequency, even in February!

Once again Murray has done an excellent job of producing this newsletter, particularly by including a variety of interesting articles on different subjects of relevance to the Clan. Kudos also to Ken Nicoll for his splendid layout!

Our main 2012 North American event will be the Annual Gathering to take place in Sandestin, located on Florida's Northwest Gulf Coast, during the first weekend of December (Friday, November 30 through Sunday, December 2). These dates are later than in previous years, mainly to avoid a scheduling conflict with the mid-October International Gathering in Tasmania, Australia.

Cliff Wolf is busily organizing our North American Gathering (see the article and loose-leaf attendance sheet in this issue). All members and their families are cordially invited to join the directors, officers and Florida members for this weekend at the beach. Sandestin is easily reachable through three airports: Fort Walton Beach, (VPS), Pensacola (PNS) and Panama City (ECP).

Internationally, the Clan is holding its biennial worldwide Gathering in Launceston, Tasmania, Australia on the weekend of October 12-14, 2012 with the Chief and his family the guests of honor (see the article and registration form in this issue for further details including accommodations and contact person—Mal Nicolson in New South Wales.)

We are delighted to welcome a new regular

contributor: Guy Mc Nicoll of Ste-Pie, Quebec. Co-founder of the "Clan McNicoll du Québec", Guy will be writing about our important French-speaking branch in that province, with articles both in French and in English. Long-term readers will remember several events in past years involving the Quebec McNicolls, including articles on the 2006 Montreal Gathering and the 2009 Canyon Ste-Anne Rassemblement (Gathering).

Guy is the author of the ground-breaking book entitled *L'Odyssée de notre ADN des Highlands à La Malbaie* (translation: "The Odyssey of our DNA from the Highlands to Murray Bay"), a history of the Quebec McNicolls and their ancestry in Scotland for which he received in April the high honor of the Gordon Atkinson Memorial Prize in Highland Military History from the Quebec Thistle Council. Guy is currently preparing a translation of his book for the English-speaking Clan readership.

(FROM THE PRESIDENT - CONTINUES ON PAGE 27)



Jeremy and two Clan friends at the Stone Mountain Highland Games in Georgia (October, 2011)



COMING SOON THE CLAN MACNICOL FEDERATION WEB PORTAL



BY CLIFF WOLF

*Director, Clan MacNicol Society NA
Co-WebMaster*

This past month, the Western States Clan MacNicol website was officially retired after many years of service to the organization. According to Ken Lawrence, the site was overcome by costly changes that rendered the site obsolete. Our thanks goes out to Ken who spent a great amount of time caring for this web site as well as the Clan MacNicol Society of North America website (www.clanmacnicol.org) which is still in service.

“...**BELIEVE ME WHEN I SAY THAT WE HAVE
MUCH TO LOOK FORWARD TO**”

AS THE WESTERN STATES

website is retired, recall the Clan Motto, “*Meminisse sed Providere*” (*Remember but Look Forward*), and believe me when I say that we have much to look forward to. In October 2010 the North American Board of Directors met for its annual business meeting, which was attended by Clan Chief John MacNeacail. The Board discussed numerous locations on the Internet which provide information on the Clan, to include websites in Australia, North America, Québec, Facebook, and several other websites not under official Clan control. The common thread throughout the discussion was the inaccuracy of many Internet sites with regard to the history of the Clan, information on tartans, clan badges and other common material. Although the existing regional Clan web sites do a great job providing this basic information to the public, Scorrybreac believes general information on the Clan would be more consistent, and the Federation better served under a consolidated site. This proposal does not mean that regional Clan societies would have no outlet for events or photo galleries, but rather a more enhanced standardized capability for each region to display their unique content through a single portal, available in English and French.

Requirements were put forward for a professionally designed Clan MacNicol Federation Portal with the ability to support all Clan societies. North American webmasters were asked to investigate information on cost and design and provide that information back to the directors and Scorrybreac.

The Clan web modernization effort involves making the web portal part of the Clan business process through the use of a content management system. The site will handle secure ecommerce transactions with an ability to pay dues online, make donations to the Scorrybreac Fund or the Clan Scholarship fund through a secure online system. This capability will greatly improve Clan business practices and allow for direct solicitation of funds from site visitors.

In March 2012, the Clan entered into an arrangement with The Beracha, Foundation (www.beracha.org), a web design and hosting company out of Cincinnati, Ohio. Beracha specializes in providing ecommerce, donor management and content management systems to churches and other non-profit organizations, and is better known by its association with its commercial sister company, TQI Net (www.tqinet.com), which provides sites for companies such as General Electric Aircraft Engines. Beracha has been given the initial requirements for the new portal and will provide the Clan with three or four proposed designs. Once reviewed by the North American and Australian directors and approved by Scorrybreac, the current North American website will shut down and the site address will be transferred for use on the Clan MacNicol Federation Portal. Regional web masters will have the ability to add local content and game commissioners will be able to update the regional calendars and photo galleries.

Our Clan will undoubtedly have one of the best Clan websites on the Internet once this project completes. I look forward to the day we unveil the new site! 🏴󠁧󠁢󠁥󠁮󠁧󠁿



2012 NORTH AMERICAN CLAN GATHERING

Sandestin, Florida

Friday to Monday
November 30 to December 3



Your Clan MacNicol Society announces with great pleasure that it will hold its 2012 North American Gathering along with the Annual Directors' Meeting in Sandestin, Florida, U.S.A. from Friday, November 30 to Monday, December 3 (the first weekend in December).

All members, families and friends are cordially invited to join the Society's Officers and Directors for an extended weekend of leisure activities, sightseeing, socialising, entertainment, information sharing and dining.

Sandestin, one of the premier seaside resorts on Florida's beautiful Northwest Gulf Coast, offers a host of leisure activities. Cliff and Claudia Wolf have kindly volunteered to set up a full program for the weekend. Projected events currently include:

Friday Evening	Informal dinner
Saturday	Directors' meeting, group leisure activities and evening <i>Ceilidh</i>
Sunday	Clan information meeting, group leisure activities and informal farewell dinner

Members should check the North American Clan Website www.clanmacnicol.org during the months ahead for further details on activities.

Our most recent North American Gathering were held in Park City, Utah (2011), Vancouver, British Columbia (2010), and Hilton Head Island, South Carolina (2009) with great success and enthusiastic attendance.

The principal venue for the 2012 Gathering will be the Hilton Sandestin Beach Golf Resort & Spa at 4000 South Sandestin Boulevard, Destin, Florida 32550, U.S.A.

Cliff has reserved a block of non-smoking rooms (either single or double) at the Hilton Sandestin Beach Resort

at the rate of US\$109 per night plus 7% tax and a daily resort fee of US\$4.50 per room. These special rates can be extended to 3 days before the event (November 27 to 29) and 3 days afterwards (December 3 to 5), subject to room availability. Upgrades are also available at higher rates.

Gathering participants must make their own reservations as soon as possible, but absolutely no later than September 30, 2012. Please contact the Hilton Sandestin Beach Reservations Department directly by phone at 800-367-1271. Callers must mention the our group name Clan MacNicol to ensure that they receive the appropriate rate and are included in the guest room block attendance.

U.S members should note the proximity of Sandestin to several neighboring southern states. Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Tennessee are all within a day's driving distance. Destin can be also reached by air via three airports: Northwest Florida Regional Airport/Fort Walton Beach (Code: VPS - 25 minutes drive), Northwest Florida Beaches International Airport/Panama City (Code: ECP - 50 minutes drive), and Pensacola Regional Airport (Code: PNS - 70 minutes drive).

To register your interest and participation, please return your completed attendance form enclosed in this issue by July 16. 🇬🇧

For further information about the Gathering, e-mail Cliff at wolfc@cox.net or phone him at 850-240-6128.



Jenn Nicolson-Church, Songs of Sorrow

Celtic Harp and Song, Nov. 12, 2011

Jenn's show was amazing. Her voice was as always wonderful. Performing with a live band (Jenn Nicolson-Church, Wayne Schmidt, Scott Archibald, Mark Fabricius and Roger Saltel) was a fun way to watch her perform. Her music worked well with the highland dancers. Her show included a drum solo to the highland sword dance, and a ribbon highland dance to her harp music. She played both her small and large harps. The special lighting and photos of Scotland added to the performance. It was a grand night for sure.

If anyone wants to order her CD, they can just send me a check or money order for \$15 each (anywhere in Canada) or \$22 each (outside of Canada but in Canadian funds only) with the shipping address. Price includes taxes & shipping.

Bonnie Fabricius
#6 - 11490 232nd Street
Maple Ridge BC V2X 3P1



Victoria, British Columbia "Mini-Gathering"

Vancouver Island Games Commissioner, Deb Nicol, held a fall gathering for Clan members and guests Nov. 12, 2011 in Victoria. The afternoon began with a tour of Craigdarroch Castle, completed in 1890 for coal baron Robert and Joan Dunsmuir. The Dunsmuirs were from Ayrshire and immigrated to Vancouver Island in 1850, where Robert amassed his fortune in coal mining. The castle is now a designated National Historic site.

Following the tour we enjoyed a "not so wee tea" at the White Heather Tea Room. Clan members included Mary Lou Nicolson Klimek (2nd from the left), Deb Nicol (at the rear) and Brenda Nicolson (back right). And the weather was beautifully Scottish.





THE MCNICOLLS OF QUEBEC

Bonjour!

While the international Clan MacNicol is present on three continents and in the following countries—United Kingdom, Canada, United States, Australia, and New Zealand—there is one particularly intriguing aspect which needs to be brought to the fore for the picture to be complete, the “French side of the Clan MacNicol”.

Hey! Hey! I can hear you from here! Is it possible that some MacNicolts never had to speak English? How could it be possible? Well, let me tell you our secret:

Once upon a time in Scotland... My story begins in 1756, in the Scottish city of Inveraray, Argyllshire. Our heroes were a single couple, Duncan and Kathrine McNicol, both of them were McNicolts, though from different families. They were poor, hungry and dominated by the English, they and all Scots were forbidden to wear the kilt, carry arms, speak Gaelic or use the bagpipes (remember Culloden, 1746). But the most important fact is that they had “no future”. So, this is why they decided to join the enemy, the English army, to be sent to an unknown destination. They were looking for a new beginning and the unknown destination was the “Nouvelle-France” (New France) in Canada. They were integrated in the 78th Fraser Highlanders regiment, commanded by Scottish officers from the “Protestant French Brigade”. Major General James Wolfe, the commander of the English forces in Canada, once remarked that “the best Scotsman I met was a dead one!” This explains why the 78th Fraser Highlanders was always on the front line and at the centre during the battles. **Losing a Scot was not a big concern!**

At the end of the “Seven Years War” in 1763, Duncan and Kathrine had three children and she was pregnant again (can you imagine that?). So they decided to stay in Canada and settle with their Colonel, John Nairne, at La Malbaie, Charlevoix on the north bank of the Saint Lawrence River. The first winter was

horrible, no wood, meat or vegetables. A large part of the population didn’t survive. And they had to deal with the fact that they lived in a region where there was not contact with other parts of Quebec from October to April because of snow and ice on the river. They established close links with the local French population since Scots and French had the same common enemy, England. But the most important fact, I think, is that Duncan and Kathrine never spoke English, they were speakers of “Gaelic”—or “Erse”, if you prefer. The five Scottish soldiers who came to La Malbaie became a part of that community.

This is why we never had to speak English, because our ancestors were speaking “Gaelic”. You now know our secret! More than a thousand McNicolts have lived in the province of Quebec, Canada and many of them became famous and important in many regions. Almost all McNicolts from our province descend from that single couple.

Now, we can say that the Clan MacNicol international represent all the different cultures and languages of all MacNicolts on this planet. We are proud to join the family and we invited you to visit our website: www.clanmnicollduquebec.com

Finally I would like to present our flag. You can see in the background the Scottish and Quebec flags. That means “From Scotland to Quebec”, and in the centre is the Clan’s crest. We also placed on our flag the “fleur de lys” to underscore our French roots and association.

In my next chronicle, I will tell you how we became:

“Lords of Murray Bay”

À bientôt

Guy Mc Nicoll
Co-founder of the Clan McNicoll du Québec



Chers membres du Clan McNicoll du Québec,

J’ai le plaisir de vous annoncer que nous rejoignons la grande famille du Clan MacNicol international. Il ne manquait plus que nous pour compléter cette belle mosaïque de langues et de cultures. Nous sommes tous présents maintenant.

Nous nous joignons à un groupement qui se trouve sur plus de trois continents. De l’Écosse, terre natale de nos ancêtres, en passant par le Canada, les États-Unis d’Amérique, l’Australie et la Nouvelle-Zélande, il ne manquait plus à cette belle famille que l’élément différent qui nous caractérise le plus, notre langue et le fait français.

J’ai l’intention d’écrire dans cette revue, deux chroniques différentes. Ceci permettra à ceux qui sont bilingues d’en savoir plus et d’intéresser les autres membres du Clan MacNicol à nous découvrir. Nous sommes différents et c’est ce qui fait notre particularité et notre charme.

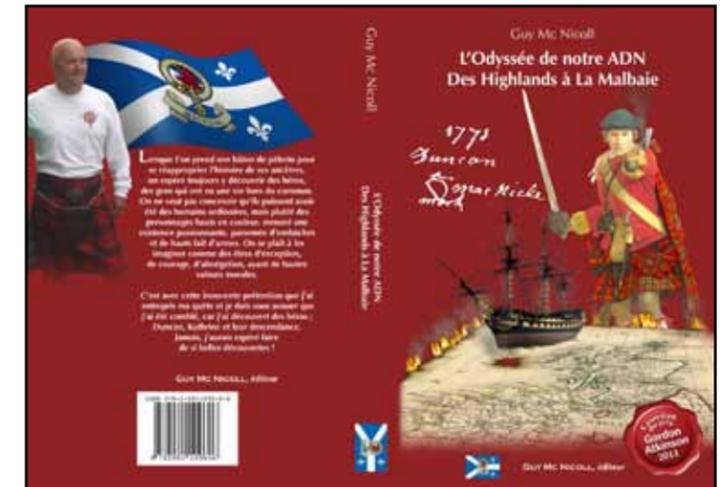
Alors, n’hésitez surtout pas à me contacter pour que je puisse vous faire connaître:

mnicollguy@gmail.com



Le samedi 14 avril 2012, j’ai eu l’honneur de recevoir le prix « Gordon Atkinson award for military research ». Cette bourse est décernée par le conseil national du chardon pour la promotion de la culture écossaise au Québec. Notre livre « L’Odyssée de notre ADN, des Highlands à La Malbaie » a su attirer l’attention du comité de nomination et du comité de sélection. Nous rejoignons par cet honneur de grands chercheurs et historiens canadiens. La réception s’est déroulée au mess des officiers du régiment Blackwatch à Montréal.

Pour un premier livre, c’est un très bon début. Lors de cette même soirée, nous avons vu un autre de nos compatriotes se mériter le prix du meilleur « piper ». Je félicite monsieur Alan Stairs du 78th Fraser Highlander, régiment St-Andrew pour cet honneur.



Des nouvelles de nous maintenant. Notre site web est toujours occupé et en fait nous sommes classés parmi les premiers pour le moteur de recherche « google ». Par contre, nous devons retravailler tous les textes, car suite à un changement de plateforme informatique, plusieurs caractères ne sont plus compatibles avec l’ancien système. De plus, je voudrais remettre « au goût du jour » plusieurs des textes qui sont maintenant obsolètes. Beaucoup de pain sur la planche comme vous pouvez le constater: nous ne vous demandons que du temps.

En terminant cette première chronique, j’aimerais vous inviter à visiter le site web du Clan MacNicol international et de vous joindre à nous si cela vous intéresse, car maintenant, il y a un peu de vous ici.

www.clanmacnicol.org

Amitiés

Guy Mc Nicoll





Scottish Dancing

By Ella Nicolson
Dance 1A, 6^o

Ella is the grand-daughter of your editor, and wrote this article for a school assignment. We thought it was a good description of what dancing means to someone of Scottish descent.....

There is a small country in the north-western part of Europe. The land there ranges from rocky crags to low, green plains to lovely forests. Its people are fierce and loyal. It has been called Caledonia, Alba, and Pryten, but we who claim to be descendants of her people called it Scotland. Much like its cousin, Ireland, Scotland is rich with strong tradition, traditions which are carried elsewhere in the world when people leave. Among these traditions is the dancing. Wild dancing, subdued dancing, dancing which even now is one of the most important aspects of the culture. For those of us removed a generation of two from the culture, it is great if we can name our clan and tartan, but we can't call ourselves true Scots if we cannot dance.

My education in Scottish dancing began when I was seven or so and my nana gave me my first kilt. A kilt is like a wrap-around skirt, secured by a couple buckles, and the tartan (colored pattern) identifies which clan a person belongs to. I had already taken a couple of ballet classes, and I was surprised to learn that the basics were the same. I took lessons with my dad for a couple years before quitting, and only recently have I danced with others. Visiting my grandparents over the summer, they dragged me to a laid-back Scottish dancing group in Massachusetts. It was surprising to learn how easy it was to pick up again. Then again, Scottish dancing is very simple in theory. There are only two traveling steps and a few handholds. The directions are generally given at the beginning of each dance and the people are usually overjoyed when helping someone else. There is slow dancing and fast dancing, Highland dancing versus lowland dancing, and thousands of variations of the dances, and I love every second of it.

It is hard to say how Scottish dancing was born, but when I asked my Grandpa he replied, "Well, the Scots were always fighting! And no one wants fighting, so they taught them to dance!" Whether or not that's true, the style is very similar to English country dancing, and they most likely have common roots. Influenced by the high European courts, Scottish dancing became popular on its own because it was simple and easy to follow. The English and higher court version, though, tended to be slower and more subdued and constrained than the type of dancing practice on the streets. During the Industrial Revolution, Scottish dancing lost much of its popularity as festivals ceased to be held, and a day of rest was best put to sleeping or extra work (Buckland). However, the dance stayed alive and has been passed down from generation to generation. Today it is quite popular as a fun social dance, and is actually very much practiced here in San Francisco. Formal balls reminiscent of Regency England are held for those who know the dances well enough to not need instruction. For those still learning, fun informal classes are held where the basic steps and dances are taught.

Scottish dancing consists of reels in two styles, one a fast spritely dance usually in 4/4 or 2/4 time, and the other the Strathspey, a unique kind of tune and very distinctive. A regular reel

is simple and plain, varying in tempo but keeping the same basic steps and ideas. A Strathspey is slow and powerful, coming from the lower body and surging on the first count. Primarily in 6/8 time, it is characterized by a "Scotch snap"-- a sixteenth note followed by a dotted eighth. Both styles share the same, basic steps. The first is the traveling step, done on slightly raised heels. One should not be on a ballet dancer's relevé, but on a relaxed rise. For the Strathspey travelling step, the right foot starts by stepping out and then the left foot is brought behind to touch the right. The right foot is extended again and is then hopped on while the left foot is brought through to begin the next step. Simply said it is: step-together-step-lift, step-together-step-lift. The other basic step is a setting step. Called so because when using it a person stays in place and acknowledges his/her partner, it is basically a travel step without forward motion. In terms of feet it simply goes: right, left, right, hop, left, right left, hop... Or: one-and-two-hop-one-and-two-hop. In reel time a dancer strikes out his/her unoccupied foot during the hop, called a jeté. There are also basic handholds such as the promenade and figures like the reel of four (basically a figure eight) which make learning new dances simple.

One thing that makes Scottish dancing easy in social situations is that in an informal atmosphere the directions for the dance are usually read first. It might be confusing for a new person hearing: "This is a set for four couples, danced until all couple have repeated the figures. In the first eight bars the first couple turns by the right hand and then the left. Then the first lady turns the second man left, turns with her partner right, casts off two places, turns her partner right, and then sets to her partner... etc." (Brockbank). Generally there are four or five sets of directions, simple and precise. They include what hand to reach out and who one should reach out to, as well as direction and timing. The common jargon of Scottish dancing is easy to pick up on; words and phrases such as "cast off", "poussette", "corners", "double triangles", and "down the middle and up" become a second language. It takes practice to learn how to keep time and use the traveling step to complete the oft time weaving maneuvers, but with practice comes an ease which allows the assimilation of any particular dance.

One more select and certainly more difficult branch of Scottish dancing is the Highland Dance. Traditionally Scotland is divided into the rolling hills of the Lowlands and the craggy hills of the Highlands. The Highlanders are supposed to be more wild, more in tune with the rough kind of men who fit more in the form of legends and history. Their kind of dancing reflects that. Highland dancing is filled with reckless abandon, higher jumps, spins that require partners holding on for dear life. My dad once described such a dance to me. He said, "We didn't just hold one hand when we turned like we do normally. Oh no. We grabbed both hands and spun really, really fast. It was scary!" The setting for Highland dancing also tends to be more complex, filled with variations. Partners nowadays can use such free setting techniques to show off. There is also more of a tradition of solo dancing in Highland dancing. It is now famous for the "Sword Dance" and the "Highland fling" (Buckland). Highland dancing is now a competitive sport with rules and regulations, some of which dancers complain about for being too constricted. Highland dancing takes experience and confidence and should definitely not be tried by someone new to the form.

One thing about Scottish dancing that is unique is its tradition of live music. Most places of a sizable crowd have at least one fiddler and maybe a piano or accordion. Occasionally there might even be a piper, or some other simple instrument. Fiddle music is very free and allows for variations and improvisation, which is good because it is very likely that a fiddler will have to play the same basic tune quite a few times before a set ends. The musicians are responsible for giving the bow cue for starting the dance well as counting the bars and ending the music. If the musicians keep playing then the dance must go on. Also, the musicians don't usually know who they will be working with or what dances must be chosen, they must be able to sightread and go on without ever stopping. Fiddlers certainly have their work cut out for them!

"It's nay a skirt, laddy; it's a kilt!" Yes, that famous garment that allows men to wear skirts without fear of a backlash. It is called Scottish dancing and therefore it follows that the general dress code follows the customs of Scotland. Most men who take the time to enjoy



Scottish dancing wear a kilt, generally also with a *sporrán* (it is a wallet worn as a belt and hanging on the front; oft times it is furred and is very heavy). Aside from the kilt and *sporrán*, the next most important things are the socks. They must be pulled up to the calves and folded beneath the knee. Tucked into that sock a man will put his *skean dhu* (dagger). This derives from an ancient precaution always to keep a small weapon handy, but in these days is merely a formality!

For the women the standard of dress is a little different. Though women today are allowed to wear a kilt if they wish, most choose to wear loose and flowing dresses that reach at least to the knee. If a woman wishes to be very formal she wears the traditional white dress with a tartan shoulder sash. The white dress may be of any style and have its own decorations, but traditionally the dress is kept simple because the attention grabber is supposed to be the tartan.

Fundamental to the art of Scottish dancing are the shoes. Called gillies, they resemble the shoes worn by Irish dancers. Like slippers or ballet shoes, they have no heel, a soft sole, and lace-up the calves. They can be found in different colors and are the traditional footwear for Scottish dancing for both men and women.

There are other nuances to clothing which depend on the kind of event. But instead of the women having to deal with all these subtle intricacies, it is the men who have to be careful when choosing what to wear! For example, there is daytime wear and nighttime wear. During the daytime or an informal event, a man wears a tweed jacket over a nice shirt and a leather *sporrán*. However, if it is a nighttime formal event, the man wears a black jacket and waistcoat over a fancier white shirt and a silver *sporrán*. Men also wear bonnets. In today's clans, if one has a high position in the clan, and has matriculated his own coat of arms, he may wear one feather in his bonnet. If the man is a chieftain, in charge of a division of the clan, he may wear two feathers. If he is a chief, ruler supreme of a clan, he wears three feathers. Only one person in the world, however, may wear four feathers. That person is the Queen of England, Wales, and Scotland. (Nicolson).

Scottish dancing is relaxed, sociable, and fun. It demands a loose body and a willingness to make mistakes. The dancers are often encouraged to dance, whoop, and make conversation. Some men might shy away from kilts, but as my Grandpa says, "It's much better that they wear kilts than woad!" (Woad is blue paint/dye. When going to battle that was the *only*-- I repeat, *only*-- thing the Scots wore to battle.) Fed by tradition and a fierce love, Scottish dancing survives today in the form of balls, classes, and the occasional festival.

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Dick is known to many Clan members worldwide from his attendance at almost all of our international gatherings, and for looking after our Clan tents at many highland games in the northeast US and adjoining Canadian provinces. Dick serves as Vice President of the North American Society, a Counsellor to the Chief, a Trustee of Urras Clan MhicNeacail on Skye, and has been the Society's dedicated Treasurer for 20 years. He is the second longest serving director and officer after Murray. A true native resident of the Boston area – he was born in Cambridge, has lived in Arlington and Lexington and now resides in the northern suburb of Billerica.

RICHARD S. "DICK" NICOLL: Stalwart Clan Society Officer and Director



He studied at Boston University and the University of New Hampshire, and was originally a biology major, moving into marine biology and water research in hydrology. Like many engineers he worked in programming and computer support for most of his career. He has just retired – with much relief!

Dick began at Games in Wilmington, Massachusetts in 1987 but had his first major challenge when he was in charge of our Clan tent in September 1991 at Loon Mountain, New Hampshire, where our own Clan Chief, the late Iain Nicolson of Scorrybreac, was the Chief of the whole Games. He is immortalized on Plate 7 of the Clan History where he can be seen wearing dark glasses, following the Chief, and carrying one of the Nicholsons of Atlanta's banner.

Since then he and his wife Carol have hosted the New Hampshire Games tent for 20 years at last count. They have shown remarkable endurance and stamina under sometimes trying conditions. Few will forget their hosting a Clan tent in August 2003 under the pouring rain at a Scottish festival in Belfast, Prince Edward Island, Canada. Theirs was the only tent on the field, and they stood huddling in solitary splendor for the whole day, mercifully protected by their (barely) waterproof tent!

Carol is also a Massachusetts native, born in Boston and brought up in Cambridge

and Reading. Her interests in Scottish culture began with her father who was born in Nova Scotia (clan MacIntosh). She is a graduate of Northeastern University with a degree in Medical Technology. She now enjoys her retirement from lab management visiting their six grandchildren, gardening, genealogy, photography and practicing Reiki. She loves to "meet and greet" with Dick at the Scottish Games and delights in all the people, places and experiences while being involved in the clan.

Dick and Carol have three adult sons Ken, Jeff and Andrew. When Ken was still a teenager in the early 1990s he produced many funny cartoons for our newsletter and for a Clan cookbook. He is now a freelance computer graphics designer (as well as studying to become a paralegal), and has been producing our splendid newsletters for the last several years. He now brings his son, Lucas, to the clan tent at the New Hampshire Highland Games.

Dick's sister Pam Nicoll has been Clerk of the Society for many years, and is a very keen genealogist. She has managed to trace her extended family's Nicoll ancestry back to the London area of England, in the borough of Southwark in the early 1700s. To find more connections, Dick has vowed to add his Y-DNA results to the database, and it will be interesting to see what links come up.





By Fiona Lundy

Clan MacNicol has members with a wide variety of experiences. Fiona Lundy lives near Wanaka, South Island, New Zealand, and we learned she had recently been an extra in two forthcoming films about The Hobbit, the book which preceded The Lord of the Rings. We asked Fiona to tell us what it was like playing a Hobbit in New Zealand and she sent this article...

A Hobbit in the Clan!

"...There I was, sitting shivering, huddling against the cold chill wind blowing off the mountains, by the ruins of my former home. It was just before Christmas but the thoughts of our small group were focussed on seeking shelter, finding food, and finding missing relations before heading away to rebuild a new community in a new location. Off we went on foot, faces grimly set, heads bowed, bundles of food carried by some, blankets by others, those who were able to rescue some of their animals kept them under tight control. Some fires were still smouldering as we left to follow our leader into the unknown, all of us had soot covered faces, the smoke was affecting our eyes; our grubby ragged clothing, which we had been wearing for four days, had also absorbed the smells of the burning

village. It started to rain and the wind was strong, my boots had difficulty maintaining a grip on the wet rocky shore, I slipped over but scrambled onwards, using a hand as well as feet, trying to keep up with the others. Then I saw his two clean legs, feet resolutely planted facing the opposite direction...oops, I thought, I can't stand up just yet, I could have bumped, or worse, knocked him over! It was Legolas, son of the Elven King, gazing back at the Lonely Mountain, beyond the Long Lake, and our former homes in Esgaroth. Thank goodness it was Saturday and everything would be washed clean ready for filming The Hobbit again on Monday.

As they reset the cameras on this second movie, I sat, with my back to the wind, my mind easily thinking of how it would have

been for the poor Scots forced to leave their homes at the time of The Clearances, sent willingly or otherwise by their landlord, to a better life in one of the Colonies. The reality was often totally different, some were not well enough fed or clothed to survive a sea voyage, others who landed safely failed to thrive in their new environments, the work and accommodation was often different to that promised.

By contrast, a large marquee was where the 135 "Laketown extras" were working on a film set, provided with wonderful food twice a day, transported daily to and from our backpacker accommodation. This was in nearby Twizel, in the heart of the MacKenzie Country, in New Zealand's South Island. Some of you may have visited this region on the way from Christchurch to Mt. Cook and Central Otago, or seen it as background settings in the earlier Lord of the Rings movies. Lakes Pukaki and Tekapo have a distinctive blue colour in fine weather, due to the glaciated snowmelt coming from the Southern Alps.

During that time the weather varied from clear, calm 28C with not a breath of wind on the first day down to 10C four days later and those mirror reflections of the blue lake had changed into white-capped waves, the mountains had disappeared under storm clouds, and now we were all glad of that warm clothing. Laketown was a busy trading town built out in the water, so the extras were of mixed ages and ethnicities, those with long hair and beards given favourable consideration. Much of the clothing had been sourced from international markets where

handwork was still a tradition, but since we signed on to work under a restriction of individual filming or photography on the set, I cannot supply any photos. A few large men were wearing long, rust coloured robes but their footwear was backless, flat-soled shoes, the decorated toes of which curled up and over - not at all suitable for walking on wet rocky shorelines.

Because we were in Middle Earth, there was a ban on wearing shiny things - even glasses and all basic jewellery had to be removed. We were asked to list any special skills we may have, I put down spinning, knitting, weaving, goat herding, but talking between takes I found some of the others had more 20th century skills. One woman was 6ft tall, a former Olympic swimmer and held a current helicopter pilot licence. I did get to knit on willow stalks but there was no helicopter for her to use! I will not be so easy to recognise, unless it is the scene where I lead a reluctant Irish Wolfhound down the hill.

The first Hobbit movie will be released this December, and the Laketown scenes will be near the end of the second movie, due to be released for the Christmas season, 2013. On the official Hobbit movie website snippets are being released to build up anticipation ahead of the premiere. Bilbo Baggins is played by an English actor, Sir Ian McKellen is back as Gandalf (they were not on set) and Orlando Bloom plays Legolas again. Much work is still to be completed in the studios; I suspect that Smaug, the fiery Dragon who destroyed Laketown, will be one of the special features expected from Weta Workshops for a Peter Jackson film." 🐉

Joint Editor's Note: about a month ago while traveling through northern Spain, I spent a few days in Bilbao, capital of the Basque Region (Euskadi). Walking around town I was surprised and highly amused to see a bright red city bus with Bilbobus written in large on its side! This, it turned out, was the name of Bilbao's municipal bus company. As a long-time J. R. R. Tolkien reader and aficionado, I wanted to share this discovery, so Fiona Lundy's article could not have appeared at a more serendipitous time! JDN



Jeremy
Nicholson

2012 GAMES & FESTIVALS WITH CLAN MACNICOL REPRESENTATION



Dale Nicoll
at his clan
tent this
Spring at the
Sacramento
Caledonian
Club Games
in Woodland,
CA

AS WE As we launch into this year's cycle of Highland games and Scottish festivals, the Directors and I would like to express our deep appreciation to all state and provincial Games Commissioners, along with their families and helpers, for their valuable and effective work on behalf of the Clan Society, both in the past and for the future.

CALL FOR NEW GAMES COMMISSIONER VOLUNTEERS

Members in the U.S. and Canada who are interested in representing our Clan MacNicol at events this year or next should contact me—Jeremy Nicholson—at their earliest convenience to discuss the responsibilities and benefits involved. My contact details are listed on page 2 of this and every issue of the newsletter.

REPRESENTATION AT 2012 GAMES AND FESTIVALS

Hereafter follows a chronological list of all games and festivals where the Clan was or will be represented at a tent or booth in 2012 including one in Scotland:

JANUARY

Central Florida Scottish Highland Games, Winter Springs
Cliff and Claudia Wolf with Stewart and Marie Nicholson
January 14-15

.....

FEBRUARY

Sarasota Highland Games and Celtic Festival
Stewart and Marie Nicholson
February 4

Northeast Florida Jacksonville Scottish Highland Games, Green Cove Springs
Cliff and Claudia Wolf
February 26

MARCH

Arizona Scottish Gathering & Highland Games, Phoenix
Bruce McNichols
March 24-25

.....

APRIL

Rural Hill Scottish Festival & Loch Norman Highland Games, Huntersville, North Carolina
Tom and Brenda Nicholson Pritchard with Anne Nicholson Crocker
April 21-22

Sacramento Valley Scottish Games & Festival, Woodland, California
Dale and Marilyn Nicoll
April 28-29

MAY

Smoky Mountain Highland Games, Maryville, Tennessee
Tom and Brenda Nicholson Pritchard with Doug and Robin Harrill
May 19-20

Victoria Highland Games & Celtic Festival, British Columbia
Deborah Nicol
May 19-20

Greater Greenville Scottish Games & Highland Festival, South Carolina tentative
Bill R. and Joan Nicol
May 25-26

Alma Highlands Festival & Games, Michigan
Bruce Goodburne
May 26-27

.....

JUNE

Utah Scottish Festival & Highland Games, Lehi
Ken and Tammy Lawrence
June 8-9

Illinois St. Andrew Society Highland Games, Itasca
Jane Nicoll Stover
June 15-16

Georgetown Highland Games, Ontario
Stewart and Marie Nicholson and Kim Nicolson-Simpson
June 19

BC Highland Games, Coquitlam (tentative)
Kelly Nimmo and Jenn Nicolson-Church
June 23

Red Deer Highland Games, Alberta (tentative)
Mary Lou Nicolson Klimek
June 23

JULY

Payson Scottish Festival, Utah
Ken and Tammy Lawrence
July 14

The Highlands of Durham Games, Uxbridge, Ontario (tentative)
Stewart and Marie Nicholson
July 28-29

Dufftown and District Games, Banffshire, Scotland
Jeremy Nicholson as Honorary President
July 29

.....

AUGUST

Glengarry Highland Games, Maxville, Ontario
Jacques McNicoll
August 3-4

Montreal Highland Games, Quebec
Jacques McNicoll
August 5

Fergus Scottish Festival & Highland Games, Ontario
Stewart and Marie Nicholson and Kim Nicolson-Simpson
August 11-12

Maine Highland Games, Topsham
Bill E. Nicholson
August 18

Bitterroot Scottish Irish Festival, Hamilton, Montana
Tom and Mary Nichols
August 25-26

.....

SEPTEMBER

Calgary Highland Games, Alberta
Mary Lou Nicolson Klimek with Jean and Jenn Nicolson-Church
September 1

San Francisco Highland Games, Pleasanton, California
Dale and Marilyn Nicoll
September 1-2

Canmore Highland Games, Alberta
Mary Lou Nicolson Klimek with Jean and Jenn Nicolson-Church
September 2

Festival Celtique de Québec, Québec (tentative)
Jacques McNicoll
September 10

New Hampshire Highland Games, Loon Mountain, Lincoln
Dick and Carol Nicoll
September 22-23

Dandridge Scots-Irish Festival, Tennessee
Tom and Brenda Nicholson Pritchard
September 29

.....

OCTOBER

Stone Mountain Highland Games, Georgia
R. Burke and Kerri Nicholson with Jeremy Nicholson
October 20-21

.....

NOVEMBER

Tucson Celtic Festival & Scottish Highland Games, Arizona
Bruce McNichols
November 20



USS NICHOLSON (DD442)



THE NICHOLSON FAMILY AND THE USS NICHOLSON

Four Navy ships have been named for the five members of the Nicholson family renowned in American naval history. The original three brothers, James, Samuel and John served with great distinction during the Revolutionary War. In the next generation John's son William, served during both the War of 1812 and the Civil War and likewise in the third generation Samuel's grandson, James, served during the Civil War.

Captain James Nicholson (1737-1804) was

the senior Continental Navy Captain in the Revolutionary War. Prior to receiving his commission in the Continental Navy he served in the Colonial Navy with the British and was present during the assault on Havana in 1762. During the Revolutionary War he commanded three ships of the line; DEFENSE, TURNBILL and VIRGINIA. Most notably, when his ship was blockaded at Baltimore, Captain Nicholson took his men to join General George Washington at Trenton and aided in that victory.

Captain Samuel Nicholson (1743-1811) first served under John Paul Jones on the BON HOMME RICHARD. Later, while in command of the DEAN he brilliantly captured three British sloops-of-war. He assumed duties as Superintendent of the construction of the USS CONSTITUTION ("OLD IRONSIDES") and served onboard as her first Commanding Officer.

Captain John Nicholson (1756-1844) was commissioned a Lieutenant in the Continental Navy in October 1776 and the next month was promoted to Captain to command the sloop HORNET. After the war he was active in public affairs in the state of Maryland.

Captain William C. Nicholson (1800-1872) entered the Navy as a Midshipman in 1812. He served under Stephen Decatur during the War of 1812, and later commanded the steam frigate ROANOKE during the Civil War.

Admiral James W.C. Nicholson (1821-1887) participated in Commodore Matthew G. Perry's Japanese Expedition of 1853. During the Civil War he commanded the ISSAAC SMITH, SHAMROCK, MANHATTAN and MORONGO. As an Admiral he commanded a European Station from 1881 to 1883. During the British bombardment of Alexandria, Egypt in 1882, he rescued the records of the American Consulate and evacuated many American and European officials.

The Nicholson name has been carried to sea in the service of the United States Navy by the USS NICHOLSON (TB-29), Commissioned January 10, 1905, the USS NICHOLSON (DD52), Commissioned April 10, 1915, the USS NICHOLSON (DD442), Commissioned June 3, 1941 and the USS NICHOLSON (DD982), Commissioned May 13, 1979.

The third Nicholson (DD442) was laid down at the Boston Shipyard and after a shakedown cruise in the eastern Atlantic, Nicholson escorted convoys through the U-boat-infested, storm-tossed North Atlantic, first from Boston to Iceland and then to Scotland and England until fall 1942. She then assisted in the consolidation of the beaches and patrol at Casablanca and then took part in the Bizerte campaign and the initial assaults on Salerno, coming under heavy attack

from the Luftwaffe. After five months in the Mediterranean she returned to the United States for overhaul and preparation for Pacific deployment. When she reached New Guinea in February 1944, she was assigned to escort LSTs in the Cape Gloucester campaign, already under way.

Throughout the long New Guinea campaign, a matter of successive assaults on coastal points and nearby islands, the Nicholson gave gunfire support to troops ashore. She had similar duty in the Admiralties; when, during the conquest of Seeadler Harbor, she was assigned to draw fire from an enemy battery on Hauwei. She was hit with a 4" shell which struck in No.2 ammunition handling room, killing 3 and wounding 4. She wiped out the enemy position.

In August 1944 the Nicholson joined the 3d Fleet in the Marshall Islands. She screened fast carriers in raids on the Bonins, Formosa and the Philippines, supporting the invasion of Palau and the neutralization of Yap. Returning to the Philippines, her group assisted the 7th fleet during the invasion of Leyte and the decisive Battle of Leyte Gulf, from which she sailed for a Seattle overhaul.

Returning in February 1945, the Nicholson escorted ships passing between Guam and Ulithi and arrived off Okinawa for its invasion late in March. Serving in the exposed radar picket line, the Nicholson came through untouched by kamikazes, but rescued survivors from the stricken destroyers Little and Morrison.

Rejoining the 3d fleet for the final air operations against the Japanese home islands, the Nicholson was off Honshu at the War's end. She entered Sagami Wan 29 August and Tokyo Bay 15 September. She then sailed and joined the Atlantic Reserve Fleet and was assigned as a Naval Reserve Training ship in the 3d Naval District. She was decommissioned and transferred to the Italian Navy 15 January 1951. Through 1969 she served Italy as the "Aviere."

The Nicholson received 10 battle stars for World War II service. 🇺🇸



HISTORY OF SKYE – NEW EDITION

The classic book about Skye is a “History of Skye”, written by Alexander Nicolson and first published in 1930 and long out of print. A new revised edition has just been produced, edited by a good friend of our Clan, Cailean Maclean. The new edition has many additions, including a full bibliography, new illustrations, a Gaelic grammar and a guidebook to Skye, and is highly recommended to anyone interested in the Isle of Skye. Details can be found at the publisher’s website, www.theislandsbooktrust.com. Cailean gave us permission to reprint the following biography of Alexander Nicolson, whose love of the island is evident.



Alexander Nicolson in Raasay

Alexander Nicolson - a biographical note

In the 19th century Clearances the Nicolsons were evicted from Scorrybreac and joined the displaced people crowded into The Braes, near Portree (see the attached map). Writing in 1884, Groome described the area as ‘cold, unkindly and barren’, with a ‘pitiful’ proportion of arable land. He stated:

‘The little that is under cultivation is in the hands of crofters, who have a hard struggle for life, and have generally to eke out their scanty means of subsistence by taking part as ‘hired-men’ in the east coast herring fishing. The townships between Loch Sligachan and Tianavaig Bay are known as The Braes, and the inhabitants of them have, during the last three years (1881-84), earned a somewhat unenviable notoriety for their lawless proceedings in connection with alleged land grievances.’

The ‘lawless proceedings’ was a reference to the crofters’ protests over rents and land rights which led to rent strikes and the 1882 Battle of Braes. In 1884, the government set up the Napier Commission to travel the Highlands and investigate the crofters’ grievances. The Commissioners began their work by visiting Braes and the first witness to give evidence to them was Angus Stewart of Peinnchorrain.

In 1881 Iseabail MacLeod, a niece of Angus Stewart, married Somhairle Mor Nicolson in Portree and they set up home together in Achnahanaid in The Braes. The 1891 Census found them, their son Alexander, his elder sister and a younger sister and brother living in a house described as ‘1 room with 1 or more window’. By the time of the 1901 Census, they had moved to a house with ‘2 rooms with 1 or more windows’, the elder daughter had left home and Iseabail had given birth to another daughter and five more sons.

Alexander’s daughter, Ishabel Beal, describes his early years:

“My father was born in 1884, in Achnahanaid, Braes. He was the second child and first son in a family of ten. His father, Somhairle Mor, was a crofter fisherman, and thus often away from home. His mother Iseabail was the

daughter of Donald MacLeod and Catherine Stewart. These grandparents lived nearby at Balmeanach and my father, as he grew, was often with them. He always said that “the brains came from the Stewarts”. I am sure that his grandmother’s stories instigated his love of the history of Skye.”

The people of Braes may have been poor but they were fortunate in one respect: in 1831 Mr Donald MacDiarmid of South Carolina established a fund of £2,050 to erect and endow schools at Borge (in Snizort) and Braes. In 1884 the Braes school had an average attendance of 32. It was located at the southern end of Ollach and drew its pupils mainly from Balmeanach, Gedintailor and Peinnchorrain. (Alexander’s mother Iseabail was brought up in Balmeanach and her mother was brought up in Peinnchorrain, so they may have been educated at the school.)

In 1892 the MacDiarmid Endowed School was replaced by a new Braes Public School, which was located at the north end of Ollach, only a mile or so from Achnahanaid, opening the possibility of education for the young Nicolson children. The new school had two teachers, two pupil teachers and a roll of 170 children. It is possible that it may have inherited some books from the Endowed

School but other resources were limited: inspectors reported that the infant classes had only 15 slates for 59 pupils and for the first two winters there was no fuel for heating, so the children had to bring peats with them to heat the school.

According to Alexander’s daughter Ishabel, these were not the only problems: “the pupils knew no English and the teacher knew no Gaelic” and, to make matters worse, if the teacher was drunk (which was often) he would send the children home. “However in spite of very inadequate schooling, he pursued his own education avidly and, remarkably, became a pupil teacher, a difficult position I should think where there were so many siblings and cousins. At one point, a young teacher came to the school for 6 months. This teacher pointed to him resources which would guide him to begin the path to university entrance. (As an example of the problems of self-education, he was prepared for translation from Latin to English but not vice versa. He also began to learn French until a visitor scoffed at his pronunciation. One day on Ben Lee, as he watched over the sheep, he realised the truth of Pythagoras’ Theorem.)”

The school records refer to ‘A Nicholson’ (sic) as one of two recipients of ‘Merit Certificates’ in 1898-99 and state that he



Photograph taken by Alexander Nicolson in Achnahanaid, Braes about 1920, showing his brothers Calum and James working in the field with their father, Somhairle Mor. The two little boys in the background are his nephews Calum and Sorley MacLean; the former later became a noted folklorist and the latter a celebrated poet.



served as a Pupil Teacher from 1901 until 1905. When Portree Public School was recognised as a Higher Grade Public School, A Nicolson was one of the first 12 candidates from Skye, Glenelg and North Uist who travelled there to sit the national school-leaving certificate.

In 1906 Nicolson took the Glasgow University entrance examination and travelled to Glasgow to study for a Master of Arts. However his financial support appears to have run out before he could complete his studies. In the summer of 1907 he spent a month as a teacher in Lochmaddy, North Uist, and from 1909 onwards he taught full-time in primary schools in the Glasgow area to support himself, continuing his University studies on a part-time basis. He finally graduated in 1913. His daughter Ishabel says, "His Master of Arts degree was widely-based and hard-won. As medallist in geology he was offered a job in South Africa but the beginning of the First World War prevented that. His maths qualified him for his teaching career but his love of Gaelic and the history of his island prevailed".

University and the schools of Glasgow also brought him into contact with the world of radical politics. Among others, he got to know James Maxton, a teacher who had graduated from Glasgow University in 1909 and later became leader of the Independent Labour Party. According to his nephew Sorley MacLean, 'The most intellectual of my relations was a sceptic and a Socialist (my uncle in Jordanhill, Alex Nicolson). Apart from his dangerous opinions he appeared a better man than all my religious acquaintance'. MacLean was particularly impressed by hints that his uncle had come into contact with the great Scottish revolutionary socialist, John MacLean. This political involvement led Nicolson to become a conscientious objector in the First World War and from 1916 to 1919 he was imprisoned in 'Princeton Work Centre' (Dartmoor Prison). He later said that when locked in a narrow cell with a high small window he sometimes despaired but seeing the planet Venus through that small window kept him sane.

After the war was over, he returned to teaching in Glasgow, where he met his wife, Janet Davidson. In the years that followed, they raised a family and he continued his studies and writing.

Alexander Nicolson was an invited

guest at one of the most celebrated inter-war events at Glasgow University, in which he had been an interim lecturer in Celtic, a role perhaps overshadowed by his better-known achievements as lecturer in Gaelic at Jordanhill College. On 20th June 1933, Albert Einstein gave the first Gibson Lecture in Mathematics, under the heading of "About the origins of the General Theory of Relativity". The lecture was delivered to an audience of 1,500 people in the Bute Hall. The following day, the University Principal, Professor Robert Sangster Rait, who himself had spent part of his childhood on Skye and had attended school in Portree, held a luncheon in Einstein's honour in the Principal's residence. Nicolson was among the invited guests there also, and attended along with his friend Professor Magnus Maclean of Glendale, who had worked closely with Lord Kelvin at the University for many years and whose work in that role had been known to Einstein. It is related that Rait, Maclean and Nicolson were drawn into earnest discussion by Einstein on the place of the Gaelic peoples in Scotland and it fell to Professor Maclean to respond to Einstein's questions about Bonnie Prince Charlie and Flora Macdonald. On hearing what would, no doubt, be an erudite and learned exposition from the Glendale scientist, Einstein thought deeply and said to Maclean, who was by now seventy-five years of age, "Not only are you highly knowledgeable but you are also a highly active Gael"! The exchange, and the approval for Maclean's spontaneous scholarship, in the presence of Rait, former Historiographer Royal for Scotland, the world's first professor of Scottish History and knighted that same year, gave Alexander Nicolson the opportunity to challenge Maclean to prepare a paper on Flora Macdonald for the Gaelic Society of Glasgow of which he was an office-bearer. The result was that Professor Maclean delivered his final formal Lecture to the Society, of which he had himself been one of the founders, just four months later, on 31st October 1933, and Nicolson, always quick to spot a literary allusion, used his position as one of the editors of the Gaelic Society of Glasgow's fourth volume of papers, to publish Maclean's learned article on Flora Macdonald and, echoing Einstein's words, to name the volume, 'The Active Gael'.

He built a notable reputation for his 'lantern slide' lectures on Skye and on Gaelic

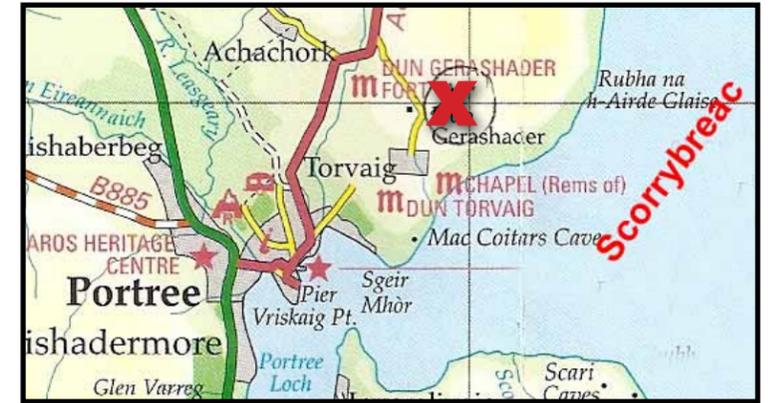
culture and language. Following his lecture on 'The Coolins' to the High School Ceilidh, one newspaper report observed that 'To followers of shinty Mr Nicolson is well-known as the goalkeeper for the famous Glasgow Skye combination. In his lecture Mr Nicolson revealed himself as something which is, perhaps, more rare than a first-class shinty goalkeeper, namely a scientist who is also a poet'. The reporter described the mountain views in the slide show as a 'revelation', commenting on 'the lecturer's prowess as a climber' and regretting only that more was not said about 'the occasion when, mist bound, he and some companions spent a moonlit night on the spur of Bruaich-na-Frith - "not daring to sleep"'.

His daughter Ishabel remembers:

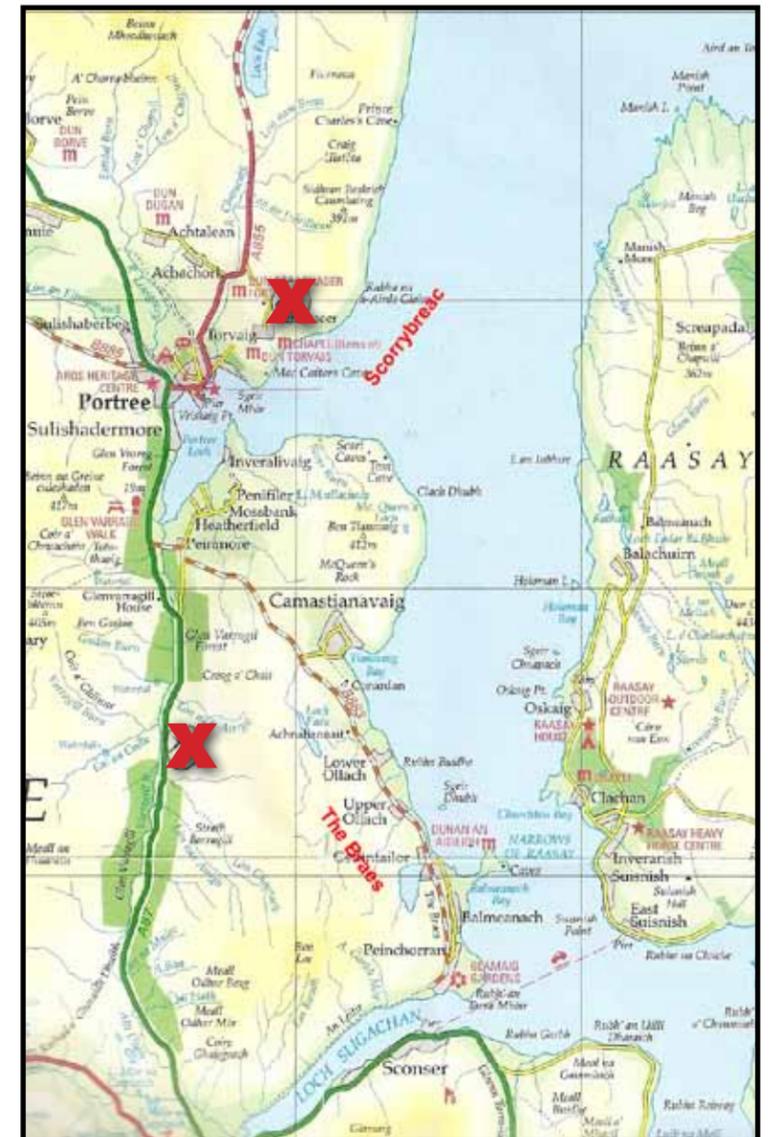
"My predominant memories of him are writing at the living room table, with a spread of books and papers around him. When he acquired a camera, he recorded historically important sites in Skye and the life of its people. From these he compiled lantern lectures which he delivered to Highland and other societies. He promoted Gaelic by teaching in evening classes. He lectured in Gaelic to Highland students at Jordanhill and Notre Dame Colleges. During the Second World War he took the place of Angus Matheson as Celtic lecturer at Glasgow University. Thereafter he became the first teacher of Gaelic in two Glasgow schools until his retirement.

He loved the mountains. Sometimes, if the weather was good enough, he would spend 3 days and nights on the tops. This love of the lonely places and his knowledge of botany, geology and history he passed on to his children. He was a polymath as well as a Gaelic scholar."

Alasdair Beal, with assistance from Ishabel Beal, Richard Beal and Cailean Maclean



A map showing the relative positions of Scorrybreac north of Portree (where we have our Clan lands now) and The Braes, where Alexander Nicolson was brought up.



MEMBERSHIP REPORT MAY 2012

Jeremy
Nicholson

DURING THE LAST SIX months, your Clan Society has received with gratitude a total of 10 new memberships: 8 from 6 U.S. States, and 2 from the U.K. (England and Scotland).

We welcome our new members and look forward to many years of a mutually satisfying and productive association.

It is our further pleasure to report that over the same period 7 membership renewals have arrived from 5 provinces in Canada, 1 from Italy, 4 from Scotland, and 38 from 22 states in the U.S. totaling 50.

The following member purchased a gift membership in 2012 for a relative: Ron Nichols (Georgetown, KY) for his cousin Shirley Nichols Rosinski (Cincinnati, OH). Thanks to Ron for his thoughtfulness and generosity!

Twelve members have earned a special mention of appreciation for their extra effort in renewing for multiple years: Robert Duncan Nicol of Napa (CA) holds the record for this period by having most generously renewed for four years. Anne Nicholson Crocker of Concord (NC) and Michael and Beverly Nichols of Aloha (OR) being close runners-up with three years' renewal each.

Any other members who wish to renew for multiple years, please note the appropriate line in the renewal form and complete it accordingly.

Thirty-three members significantly helped the Clan Society by contributing a donation in addition their annual dues, with ten exceeding the \$5 level. Thank you so much to each of you: these funds will greatly assist the Clan in its increased attendance at Scottish festivals and Highland games throughout North America!

Forty-seven members generously contributed to the Scorrybreac Fund for maintenance of the Clan lands on Skye, including eleven who exceeded the basic \$5 level. Ben Chracaig will continue to flourish thanks to your donations.

Many thanks again to all for your support: your interest and generosity keep the Clan Society going!

2012 MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL INVITATION

Members who need to renew for 2012 are invited to complete the separate renewal form which has been inserted for everybody in this issue. Please return it by **July 16, 2012** to the indicated address in the U.S. or Canada—as appropriate—with your check made out to “Clan MacNicol Society, Inc.”

If you have any question about your membership status (especially if you find any error or omission), please contact me as soon as possible by e-mail at clanmacnicol@bsn1.net or by phone at 770-650-0905 and I will be happy to assist you.

2012 MEMBERSHIP DIRECTORY: SIGN-UP TO BE LISTED – LAST CHANCE

In order to be listed in the forthcoming hard copy **Directory of Clan MacNicol Members in North America**, members who have not yet sent in a form will have a second and last chance to do so (see list of members who have already sent their form to me - Jeremy Nicholson- and therefore will be included and need not do anything further.)

Please return your completed form by **July 16, 2012** to my regular address; P. O. Box 501166, Atlanta, GA 31150-1166, U.S.A.

To summarize the instructions which are specified in the inserted form, here are the three most important conditions:

1. Only currently paid-up members (as of 2012, if you haven't sent in your form previously) will be listed.
2. Members who do not return their completed form, or do not return it on time will not be listed.
3. Only the information which members provide will be listed.

If you have any questions about the Directory, please contact me as soon as possible by e-mail at clanmacnicol@bsn1.net or by phone at 770-650-0905 and I will be happy to assist you.

NEW MEMBERS

(November 2011 through April 2012)

U.K.

England
Jackie Nicholson Carlisle, Cumbria

Scotland
Robin and Linda MacLennan Dufftown, Banffshire

U.S.A.

California
Paul and Pauline Flory Santa Maria
Lynn and Bill Walton Santa Cruz
Michelle D. McNichols Vacaville

Florida
John and Amber Nichol Mt. Dora

Kentucky
Gary L. Nicol Covington

Michigan
Susan and Nelson Duncan MacNicol Trenton

Ohio
Shirley Nichols Rosinski Cincinnati

Texas
Francine Nichols Montgomery

U.S.A.

Alabama
*#Jean Pitman Lisenby Ozark (2011-12)

Arizona
*#Arlene and Thomas Sampson Carefree (2011)

California
*Priscilla Riess Fullerton (2011)
*#Walter William Nicholson Long Beach (2011)
*#James and Judith Nicol Newhall (2011)
*#Robert Duncan Nicol Napa (2011-2014)
*#Edward & Valerie Nicolson San Francisco (2011-12) FoSL
*Malcolm and Irene Willis Westminster (2012)

Colorado
*#Karen and Blake Nicholson III Estes Park (2011-12)

Connecticut
*Doris Nicol & Michael Marinaro South Glastonbury (2011)

Florida
#George and Amelia Nicol Cocoa Beach (2011)
*#Jessica Lee Nichols Homosassa (2011)
*#Samuel and Karla Nicholson Largo (2012)
*#Barbara J. Schulz Oneco (2011)
*#Linda and Dexter Beck Sr. Rockledge (2011) FoSL
#John A. Baron St. Augustine (2011)
#Ed and Faye West Tamarac (2011)

Georgia
*#James H. and Candace Nichols Atlanta (2011)
*#Jeremy D. Nicholson Atlanta (2012) FoSL
*#Philip L. and Pansy Nichols Hampton (2011)

Illinois
*Kieran and Beth Nicholson Burr Ridge (2011)
*Heather Nicholson and Clint Studebaker West Chicago (2010-11)

Indiana
*#Diane Kay Blaine Fort Wayne (2011-2012)

Iowa
*Peter Scott Dunbar Iowa City (2011)

Kentucky
*Patricia K. Nicol Frankfort (2011)
*#Ron R. Nichols Georgetown (2011-2012)

Massachusetts
*Pamela Nicoll Billerica (2012)

Michigan
*Bruce Nicholson Goodburne Alpena (2011)

New Hampshire
*David and Jean Nichols Center Conway (2011)

New York
*#Irene Nicoll Blankschen Bayside (2011)

North Carolina
*#Brock and Colleen Nicholson Clayton (2012)
*#Anne Nicholson Crocker Concord (2011-13)

Oregon
*#Michael and Beverly Nichols Aloha (2011-2013)

Tennessee
*#Tom and Brenda Nicholson Pritchard Knoxville (2013)

Texas
*#Lynn Nichols Abilene (2011-12)

Utah
*#Michelle McNicol Brinkerhoff Grantsville (2011)

Virginia
*Daniel and Katherine Nickell Vienna (2012)

Wisconsin
*#Sean D. Nicol Grass Lake (2011)

RENEWING MEMBERS

(November 2011 through April 2012)

An asterisk * preceding your name means that you generously donated to the annual upkeep of the Clan Land on Skye, and a crosshatch # in the same position denotes that you made an extra gift to the Clan Society beyond your annual dues. Furthermore, when the asterisk and/or the crosshatch is marked in red (*#), this recognizes your donating an extra amount beyond the basic \$5, for which sincere thanks.

Those members who have gone the extra mile and joined the Friends of Scorrybreac Lands with a five-year commitment of support are gratefully identified by the designation FoSL at the end of their listing.

Members will have the year of their renewal indicated in parentheses after their names, in particular those who have renewed for two years or more, or a year (or years in advance, e.g., (2011-12), (2013), etc..

CANADA

British Columbia
*#Christina Nicol-Maddock Nanaimo (2011)
*#Bruce and Brenda Nicholson Nanaimo (2011)
*#Hugh and Bonnie Nicholson Nanaimo (2011)

Nova Scotia
*#Peggy Nicholson Halifax (2011-12)

Ontario
*#Stephanie and John David Alexander Nicolson Hamilton (2011-12)

Prince Edward Island
*#Ronald R. and Jan Nicholson Cornwall (2011)

Québec
*#Françoise McNicol Montreal (2011)

ITALY
*Marilena Castenetto Cassacco, Udine (2012)

SCOTLAND
*Margaret Session Dufftown, Banffshire (2012)
*Andrew Nicoll Dundee (2012)
*Esther Bremner Huntly, Aberdeenshire (2012)
*Lilian Macleman Keith, Moray (2012)

MEMBERSHIP REPORT MAY 2012



FLOWERS OF THE FOREST



EILEEN CECILIA
NICHOLSON

11.10.1923 – 14.10.2011

Clan MacNicol South Island, New Zealand, gathered in Dunedin on 14 October to farewell our co-founder, tireless worker and stalwart supporter, Eileen Nicholson.

Some 26 years ago, Eileen, together with her husband, Jack, founded the Clan in the South Island, following on from Jack being appointed South Island Commissioner by the then Chief, Iain. Eileen immediately started canvassing for members by calling every Nicholson in the phone books and inviting them to meetings. Since then the branch has slowly grown, due in no small way to their boundless enthusiasm and inspiration.

Eileen was a very accomplished dressmaker, and in the early years of her marriage, often took in sewing, including the making of wedding gowns and mother of the bride outfits. Together with Jack, the interest in all things Scottish really took off when two of their daughters began to learn Highland Dancing. Jack later became President of the Otago Centre of Piping and Dancing, a role he held for some 16 years, followed by taking on the Presidency of that organisation's National Council. Eileen, as a member of the Otago Centre's Ladies Committee, was very much in demand in making the dancing uniforms.

For many years, Eileen provided afternoon teas for the Clan meetings, baked the Christmas cake for the Christmas lunches, made the tam-o-shanter badges, and was always available for help and advice.

In recent years, both Eileen and Jack experienced some severe health issues,

culminating in their taking up residence in St. Barnabas Home in Dunedin, where they were very happy together, and, as Eileen said, "very well looked after". They both enjoyed the activities in the Home, and their visits from Clan friends. Right up until her death, Eileen remained interested in Clan happenings, took part in Clan functions, attended luncheons, and continued to give her support and encouragement.

Had it not been for Eileen and Jack's perseverance, Clan MacNicol South Island would not have been established. It must have been so gratifying for them to see their years of hard work being taken up by younger members who are passionately dedicated to the Clan and to see it carry on to future generations.

Jenny Maffey, the current President of Clan MacNicol South Island, spoke on the Clan's behalf at Eileen's funeral service, bringing messages from Chief John and Jenni, and from High Commissioner for the Clan in the Americas, Dr Murray Nicolson and Barbara. A number of floral tributes from the Clan were displayed in the Chapel.

In her eulogy, Jenny said that the Clan motto, *Meminisse sed providere*, remember but look ahead, "seemed to sum up our feelings today, as we remember Eileen with love and gratitude and as we look ahead to the future of our Clan, which she and Jack have so faithfully nurtured and supported. The Clan in Dunedin will sorely miss you for your quick mind, many stories, and wealth of knowledge. Rest peacefully, Eileen, after a life well lived and your work well done".



CONVICTED SPY
HAROLD NICHOLSON



HIS SON
NATHAN NICHOLSON

Nicholson Chutzpah!

(FROM THE PRESIDENT - CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3)

On the important subject of the rejuvenation of our North American website at www.clanmacnicol.org, the Clan Society has signed a three-year contract for technical services with the Beracha Foundation in Maineville, Ohio to launch a single worldwide access portal to all Clan websites. This was the result of the hard work by Cliff Wolf and Ken Lawrence, our Co-Webmasters, who deserve much praise for their efforts.

Ken also reports with regret that he has had to close the Western States Clan MacNicol website due to insurmountable technical difficulties. Ken single-handedly founded this website and maintained it during the past six years. His initiative was very successful and attracted a substantial audience. Thankfully, he will be able to transfer most of the information to the North American website, which he will of course continue to expand. Many thanks, Ken, for all you've done and will do in the future!

Finally, we are planning to staff Clan tents at several Highland games and Scottish festivals in Canada and the U.S. this year. The provinces and states involved so far are: Alberta, British

We've got lots of fine Nicols, Nicolsons and Mac-Nicols in the Clan MacNicol, but occasionally we get someone notorious. The award for sheer chutzpah* must go to Harold Nicholson, a CIA officer who was arrested and pleaded guilty in 1997 to spying for the Russians and was given a long prison sentence. He admitted when he was arrested that he had received \$300,000 in exchanges for the names, identities and missions of numerous CIA employees. However while he was in jail he felt that the Russians still owed him a kind of pension, so beginning in 2006 he had his son Nathan Nicholson begin to pass messages from his prison cell for the Russians in return for cash payments, and Nathan collected another \$47,000 before he too was arrested in 2009. Nathan, who lives in Oregon, eventually received a 5 year probation sentence—and no doubt his father had a few more years tacked on to his 24-year sentence!

*For those not familiar with the term, "chutzpah" is a Yiddish word which translates as "incredible nerve or unbelievable gall or shameless audacity", perfect for the above situation.

Columbia, Ontario and Quebec; Arizona (one already held), California (one already held), Florida (two already held), Georgia, Illinois, Maine, Michigan, New Hampshire, North Carolina (one already held), South Carolina, Tennessee (one already held), and Utah. Thanks to all our Games Commissioners whose hard work and dedication will make all this possible.

As always, I invite any of you to contact me directly by phone, e-mail or letter about any Clan matter - check my masthead listing for ways to reach me.

I look forward to many of you joining our Games Commissioners at Clan tents this spring, summer and fall in Canada and the U.S. You are assured of a warm kinship welcome, and a wonderful day of Scottish entertainment, athletics and food.

Jeremy Nicholson



CLAN MACNICOL LAUNCESTON TASMANIA AUSTRALIA

OCTOBER 12-14 2012



DO NOT MISS

this opportunity to be a part of our Clan Macnicol
Worldwide Gathering and to visit all the wonders
of Launceston and Tasmania.

Make YOUR plans to be there in 2012.

REGISTER NOW!!

Plan at least an extra week either before or after the Gathering to explore
and discover for yourself the beauty of Tasmania. It's only 2-3 hours to
anywhere from Launceston!

Launceston Show is 11th October.

Two days of Clan Meetings, Tours, Friday Gala Dinner and *Ceilidh*,
Saturday Main Clan Meeting & Casual BBQ, Sunday Kirkin and Picnic at
Campbell Town—settlement town for the Chief and Nicolsons in the 1800s.

Longford Country Show is October 21st.

Tours available will include Historic Walking and Coach-Tram Tours,
Tasmania Zoo (Devils), Boag's Brewery, City Park and Museum.



Further details contact:
Secretary

PO Box 243, Gymea NSW 2227, Australia
malnico@bigpond.com



REGISTRATION

Total Cost AUD \$150 per person
Includes Friday and Saturday Meetings,
Teas and Coffee, Dinner and *Ceilidh*,
Clan Meeting and BBQ, Bus, Sunday
Kirkin' and Picnic
(tours will be extra to pay on boarding)

ALL ATTENDING:

**Please cut off this section and
mail with payment by 8/31 to:**

Clan MacNicol Aus Inc
Treasurer
22 Bellevue Drive
Carlingford NSW 2118

NAME

ADDRESS

EMAIL

ACCOMPANYING PERSON NAME

AUD \$100 (Does not include meetings or tea & coffee)

Payment is in Australian Dollars ONLY or AUD cheques to Clan MacNicol Aus Inc. No Credit Card facility is available!
Overseas visitors may pay on Friday 12th at the Welcome Desk & Registration.