



Vol. 20 No. 2

# Scorrybreac

The Journal of Clan MacNicol in North America



June  
2004



*Eilann (or Eilean) Donan Castle on the road to Skye*

Watercolor by Albert Nichol, Paris, Texas

The next International Clan Gathering will be held in October 2004 in Portree, Isle of Skye, Scotland.

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## From The President

Spring has fully arrived, even to the northernmost reach of our Clan's membership, and the season of Scottish and Celtic festivals and Highland games is upon us. These events are the public manifestation of our common heritage and are attended and enjoyed by millions in Canada and the United States, including many of our own members. Clan MacNicol would like to be represented at as many games and festivals as possible. This requires substantial preparatory work, extensive coordination, and widespread volunteer involvement.

It is perhaps not widely known that we are a relatively small Clan: 270 or so active household memberships spread across the huge continent of North America. That we can count members living in 6 Canadian provinces and 36 U.S. states plus the District of Columbia represents a major achievement. Our geographical dispersion does mean that many members rarely if ever get to see other members, except for their immediate family. Large national and international Clan gatherings require much time and effort to organize, and thus cannot be held frequently. Furthermore, Clan members do not all have the time or means to travel to such events.

My fellow Directors and I have devised an alternative to asking people to travel to large but infrequent events. This year and next, I will organize as President a series of regional reunions – often in conjunction with local games, but not always – to which I will travel and invite local area members.

Two of these small-scale gatherings have already occurred in 2004 with good success, meaning that participants found them enjoyable, entertaining and instructive. The first took place in Westford, Massachusetts, the second in Gatlinburg, Tennessee (see the relevant articles in this issue). Four more are already at the planning stage:

- During the summer, Michigan
- In the late summer, Charleston, South Carolina
- In the late fall, Southern California
- In the winter of 2005, Arizona

I would be happy to add more reunions to the above

schedule. By analyzing the Clan database, I will be able to identify areas with sufficient concentrations of Clan members to justify an event.

Any member who wishes to help plan and hold a reunion in his or her area should contact me promptly by phone, email or letter (see my mast-head listing on the preceding page for relevant addresses). Please keep in mind that a minimum of two months is necessary to organize a reunion properly.

For those members who would like to obtain a list of games and festivals, we should thank Dick Nicoll, our Society's Vice President, who has identified the following websites: <http://www.maclachlans.org/games.html> and <http://www.asgf.org/> In addition, the April 2004 Directory issue of *The Highlander* magazine (Vol. 42, No. 2A) contains a similar list.

Regarding U.S. games volunteers, I have corresponded with several individuals, and have to date put five members from California in touch with each other, as well as two from Arizona. I will be contacting all other volunteers shortly.

In order to encourage representation at games, the Clan Society can provide the following assistance to games volunteers, if given sufficient advance notice:

- Financial help for the registration of a Clan tent at a game or festival.
- Some materials for a Clan tent, such as Clan paraphernalia, membership recruitment items, etc.

Finally, our North American website features news and notices of reunions and events at [www.clanmacnicol.org](http://www.clanmacnicol.org) and is therefore worth checking periodically.

With best wishes to all for a great summer!



Jeremy Nicholson



Jeremy Nicholson

### Your contributions to the Newsletter!

We are always keen to have contributions from Clan members to your newsletter on any topic you wish. Please email them to Murray Nicolson at [m.nicolson@ieee.org](mailto:m.nicolson@ieee.org), or by mail over the summer to Piccadilly Cottage, Kington, Herefordshire HR5 3HP, England.



## Clan MacNicol 2004 Directors' Meeting

The Board of Directors of Clan MacNicol Society, Inc. met for their 2004 annual meeting at the Westford Regency Inn in Westford, Massachusetts on May 8<sup>th</sup>. Attending were Jeremy Nicholson (President), Murray Nicolson, Dick Nicoll, Bill R. Nicol, John Gillis, Jacques McNicoll, and one new Director, Dan Nickell of Vienna, Virginia. Directors Harman Nicholson and Michael Nicholson were unable to attend. The Board re-elected the slate of Officers shown under this newsletter's masthead on page 2.

Treasurer Dick Nicoll presented a financial report showing a solid financial situation with a balanced budget for 2004 on top of a major donation in 2003. To date we have received 164 membership renewals for 2004, with a number of Clan members also renewing their memberships for 2005. In addition, we have received 12 new memberships from the USA and Canada each, for a total of 24 so far this year. The Society's major expenditure is for the newsletter (about 70%), and we agreed to keep the quality as high as possible consistent with income by going to three issues a year.

Acting Membership Secretary Jeremy Nicholson reported on his multiple efforts to maintain and expand our memberships. We use advertisements, the Clan websites, Scottish Games and personal contacts to get out the word about our Clan Society.

Website Manager Dan Nickell reported increasing "hits" on our North American website - [www.macnicolsociety.org](http://www.macnicolsociety.org). The members-only section is established and has archives of previous *Scorrybreac* issues. A separate article in this newsletter describes how


to access the members-only section.

Future national and international Clan meetings will include:

- October 12-16 2004 in Portree, Isle of Skye, Scotland
- Fall of 2005 in the Midwest USA
- 2006 in New Zealand
- July 2007 in Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada.

### New England Regional Clan Dinner

Following the Directors' Meeting on 8<sup>th</sup> May, 22 Clan members and friends attended a regional Clan dinner. The Board members mentioned above were present, together with spouses and friends Marsha Gillis, Sylvie McNicoll, Andrea di Montegnacco, Carol Nicoll, Barbara Nicolson and Melindi Kinsey-Jones. Other Clan participants included David and Jean Nichols of North Conway, New Hampshire; John A. Nicholson of York, Maine; Father John J. Nicholson of Worcester, Massachusetts; Bill E. Nicholson of Natick, Massachusetts; Dennis Nicol and Gail Clark of Schenectady, New York; and Bruce Nicoll and Jean Fraser of Somerset, Massachusetts.

Jeremy introduced the dinner guests, thanked those who had traveled a considerable distance, and gave a summary of the day's earlier meetings. Murray Nicolson gave a talk on the history of the Clan and the heraldry of the Chief's Coat of Arms. Dick Nicoll gave a slide presentation about the Isle of Skye and our Clan lands, and Bill Nicholson talked about genealogy on the Rootsweb Family Pages, of which he is List Manager. The dinner was excellent and an enjoyable time was had by all late into the evening. 

## Accessing the Members-only Section of our Website

Dan Nickell, Clan MacNicol Webmaster

When you go to our Clan Website at [www.clanmacnicol.org](http://www.clanmacnicol.org), you will find there is a members-only section, which can only be accessed by paid-up members for the year. It includes details of upcoming events, and also archived copies of previous newsletters. We encourage you to try it out.

Here's how you do it: you'll be asked for a user name and a password.

- The user name is your membership number plus your last name. For example, Member 1023, Jack Nicol,

the user id is 1023nicol. Your membership number is on the mailing label on the newsletter envelope.

- The password is your first name. So, in this case, the password is 'jack.' Again, check the mailing label to see how we've obtained this.

Here's another example: Member # 257, Bill Nicholson; user name = 257nicholson; password = bill.

If you have any difficulties, please send me an email at "webmaster@ClanMacnicol.org" and I'll help you get started.



# 2004 Spring Membership Report

by Jeremy Nicholson

*Since the last issue of Scorrybreac, your Clan Society has been the grateful recipient of a total of 17 new memberships and 46 membership renewals from Canada and the U.S. In addition, we have received 25 advance renewals for 2005 which we particularly appreciate.*

*I would like to recognize and specially praise the following members who have made generous financial contributions to*

*the Clan Society beyond their annual dues: Bernadette Nicholson and Robert Thomson of Ottawa, Ontario; Robert Nichols of Webb City, Missouri; Dan Nickell of Vienna, Virginia; and John Gillis of Ware Neck, Virginia.*

*If you have any question, concern or comment about membership matters, always feel free to contact me by e-mail at [clanmacnicolsociety@bsn1.net](mailto:clanmacnicolsociety@bsn1.net) or by phone at 770 650-0905.*

## New Members

(March to June 2004)

### Canada

David Robert Nicholl, Edmonton, AB  
Edward Ian Nicholson, Saanichton, B.C.  
Paule McNicoll, Vancouver, B.C.  
John William Nicholson, London, ONT  
William Nichol, North Bay, ONT  
Alberta Nicholson Gillis, Ottawa, ONT  
Melanie Rae Nicholson, Ottawa, ONT  
Keira Brown, Toronto, ONT

Ronald R. Nicholson, Cornwall, P.E.I.  
R. Cecil Nicholson, Montague, P.E.I.  
Fleur B. Stewart, Stratford, P.E.I.

Fred and Sandra Shassere, Norris, TN  
Doug and Robin Harrill, Walland, TN  
Lawrence and Karen Dame, Gloucester, VA

### U.S.A.

Ralph H. Nichols, Twain Harte, CA  
Anne Marie Nicholson, Chicago, IL  
Donald C. and Nancy Nicoll, Salisbury, MD

*Please join the Directors and me in extending a hearty welcome to our recent new members, the majority of whom hail from Canada.*

## 2004 Renewing Members

(March to June 2004)

### U.S.A.

Bruce McNichols, Green Valley, AZ  
René and Delane Blondeau, Portal, AZ  
Robert Duncan Nicol, Oakland, CA  
Charles Sherman, Porterville, CA  
Mary Jane Richardson and Andrew Lynn Blackett, Sacramento, CA  
George and Amelia Nicol, Cocoa Beach, FL\*  
H. Burke III and JoAnn Nicholson, Atlanta, GA  
Carolyn Nicholson Worley, Atlanta, GA  
Bradley and Rebecca Tabbert, Cumming, GA\*  
William C. and Maura Nicholson, Hiram, GA  
Henry and Doris Nichols, Savannah, GA  
Scott and Alice Nicholson, Chicago, IL  
L. Dow Nichol, Glen Ellyn, IL  
Heather Nicholson and Clint Studabaker, West Chicago, IL\*  
John A. and Barbara Nicholson, York, ME  
Richard and Carol Nicoll, Billerica, MA\*

Murray and Barbara Nicolson, Concord, MA\*  
William E. and Ann Nicholson, Natick, MA\*  
John J. Nicholson, Worcester, MA\*  
Holly and Tom Shutler, Lansing, MI  
Keith and Judith Roe, Plainwell, MI  
Elspeth Nicolson Gibbs, Wyandotte, MI  
James F. Cook, Hattiesburg, MS  
Ellen and James Green, Center Sandwich, NH  
Kathleen Nicholson Hatheway, Schenectady, NY  
Charles and Marilyn Nichol, Pittsburgh, PA  
Carolyn and William Moore, Telford, PA  
Joan Nicoll Riedl, Knoxville, TN  
Chris and Tracy Riedl, Lenoir City, TN  
Elizabeth Ann Nicol and John Evans, Powell, TN  
Daniel and Susan Regalado, Hurst, TX  
David and Diane Marx, San Antonio, TX  
Herb and Mary Long, Richardsville, VA  
Daniel and Katherine Nickell, Vienna, VA

*An asterisk \* following your name means that you indicated on your renewal form an interest in assisting with Clan tents at Highland/Scottish games.*

### Canada

Ian Nicolson, Edmonton, AB  
Jean Nicholson-Church, Port Coquitlam, B.C.\*  
Heather Ann and Michael Siska, Victoria, B.C.  
Nancy Nicholson-Mills, Dartmouth, N.S.  
Glen Nicholson, Halifax, N.S.  
Hugh and Bonnie Nicholson, Bethany, ONT  
Janet MacNicol Scott, Kitchener, ONT  
Bernadette Nicholson and Robert Thomson, Ottawa, ONT  
David and Marie Nicholson, Pembroke, ONT  
Andrew and Jean Carruthers, Montreal, P.Q.  
Guy and Carole McNicoll, St. Pie, P.Q.  
Claudine and Bernard Godin-McNicoll, Val-Cartier, P.Q.



# Gatlinburg Scottish Festival and Games

May 15-16, 2004

Clan MacNicol was ably represented at the 23rd Gatlinburg Scottish Festival and Games in Tennessee by Brenda Nicholson Pritchard and her husband Tom, who for their second consecutive year set up and staffed the Clan tent.

The Gatlinburg Festival take place in a verdant dell situated in the foothills of the Great Smoky Mountains

Sandra Shassere of Norris; from Georgia, Jeremy Nicholson, the Clan Society President and Andrea di Montegnacco, both of Atlanta.

Despite warnings of potential downpours (which evoked worries of the Belfast Games last August), the weather remained clement throughout the weekend and all scheduled events took place. The most moving moment of the Festival for the Clan

occurred on Sunday with the Flowers of the Forest proclamation by Jeremy of the name of our late Chief, Iain MacNeacail of MacNeacail and Scorrybreac.

Brenda did an excellent job at the Clan tent, warmly greeting all passers-by and engaging them in conversation, often extensively. Special visitors included members of the Sertoma Club of Knoxville, a support group for the disabled, and The Rev. John Stewart, pastor at Erin Presbyterian Church in Knoxville and a native of Glasgow, Scotland.

One of the books on display at the tent proved of particular interest to visitors, regardless of clan affiliation. Authored by

Phillip D. Smith and entitled *Tartan for Me*, this volume offers "suggested tartans for Scottish, Scotch-Irish, Irish and North American surnames, with lists of clan, family and district tartans." The publishers are Heritage Books, Inc. of Bowie, Maryland and their website is [www.heritagebooks.com](http://www.heritagebooks.com) and their toll-free phone number is 1 800 398-7709.

On Saturday evening, all attending Clan members drove into the town of Gatlinburg and partook of a good meal, sharing an enjoyable evening of fellowship and good cheer.



(Left to right) Joan Riedl, Robin Harrill, Brenda Pritchard, Doug Harrill (in back), Andrea di Montegnacco, Chris Riedl, and Jeremy Nicholson.

which tower visibly to the south. A medium-sized regional event, the Festival and Games are held over two days and attract between 4,000 and 4,500 visitors. This year over 45 Clans and Societies were represented, including the MacNicol's Skye neighbors, the MacLeods and the Clan Donald.

Ten MacNicol Clan members showed up at the tent on Saturday: from Tennessee, Tom and Brenda Pritchard and Joan Nicoll Riedl, all of Knoxville; Chris Riedl of Lenoir City, Joan's son and a piper in the Knoxville Pipes and Drums; Doug and Robin Harrill of Walland; and Fred and



# Clan MacNicol at Mesa, Arizona Highland Games

February 2004

Jerry Nichols

**W**e had a good time again this year, meeting old friends and making new ones. We handed out several clan applications and brochures to visitors from Canada here for the winter. It was good that we were here for them to talk to because they were all under the impression that they would have to join the MacLeods if they wanted a clan to belong to and didn't know the existence of ours. I pointed out to them the Canadian website for them to log onto. They were very interested in the Clan newsletter article about Canadian events.



*Jerry Nichols with his daughter Janet at the Mesa Highland Games, February, 2004.*

## Late Chief Commemorated with Clan MacNicol/Nicolson Banner

Michael Nicholson, Clan Commissioner for Canada

**A**s many of our Clan MacNicol Society members will already know who attended the 2001 North American Gathering in Canada and who subsequently attended the Glengarry Highland Games in Maxville where the North American Bagpipe Championships take place, these Games and this part of Canada has one of the largest settlements and population concentrations of Highland descendants in North America.

On the first weekend in August for almost a hundred years now Scottish descendants from all over North America and visitors from Scotland make a pilgrimage to Maxville, Ontario, Canada. It was named Maxville because there were so many people with a last name starting with Mac in the area that the local French and near residing English towns started referring to it as Macsville and then simply Maxville. In fact in Canada before 1950 the words "Hey Mac" had a 35% chance of being correct if someone called you by this address, given the number of Scottish Highland descendants in Canada at the time with a Mac prefix to their last name.

*Continued on page 10*



## Carrickfergus – 1316

*Last year, I commissioned David Sellar to prepare an article on MacNicol at Carrickfergus in 1316. David produced the following piece, well-written, illuminating and accessible. It adds further information to the mention of MacNicol in John Barbour's poem below, as well as setting out the larger historical context of the Bruce's Irish campaigns and the Scottish "Wars of Independence."*

*Burke Nicholson of Balvenie, Chieftain in Clan MacNeacail*

*FOR TO THE FYCHT MAKNAKILL THEN  
COO WITH TWA HUNDRETH SPER-MEN  
AND THAI SLEW ALL THAT OYCHT TO-WYN  
THIS ILK MAKNAKILL WITH A GYN  
WAN OFF THAR SCHIPPIS FOUR OR FIVE  
AND HALY KEPT THE MEN OF LI*

("MacNicol came then to the fight with two hundred spearmen, and they slew all they could overtake. This same MacNicol captured four or five of their ships by a stratagem and utterly deprived the men (in them) of their lives.")

John Barbour, *Bruce*, 15, 219-24)

These lines, which contain one of the earliest references to a Nicolson chief, come from the celebrated epic poem, *The Bruce*, written about 1375 by John Barbour, archdeacon of Aberdeen, in praise of King Robert the Bruce (1306-29). The passage recounts an incident in April 1316 in the long drawn out siege of Carrickfergus Castle in the north of Ireland by King Robert's brother Edward Bruce. Sir Thomas Mandeville had come from Dublin with fifteen ships to relieve the castle. Maknakill's action played a leading part in preventing the relief. Carrickfergus eventually capitulated to Edward in September 1316. These lines contain the only mention of "Maknakill", and successive editors of *The Bruce* have struggled to identify him. There can be little doubt, however, as set out in *The Highland Clan MacNeacail*, that "Maknakill" was a leading member, and probably the chief, of the Hebridean MacNicol or Nicolson. It is likely that he is to be identified with a John "mak Nakyl" or "maknakild" on record in 1306 and 1315, or if not with John, then with a close relative. In 1306 Cristin of the Aird, an esquire of the Earl of Ross, carried letters from Edward I of England to the Earl, Lachlan MacRuairi, Ruairi his brother, and John "mak Nakyl"; while in 1315 Edward II instructed John MacDougall of Argyll (often referred to as "John of Lorne") to receive Donald MacDonald, Godfrey his brother, Sir Patrick

Graham and John "macnakild" into the king's peace. The MacDougalls, MacDonalds and MacRuairis were all prominent Hebridean leaders, as was the Earl of Ross. It is reasonable, then, to assume that MacNicol too was a Hebridean leader, the more so given his apparent familiarity with ships. The episode at Carrickfergus is now commemorated in the arms of Scorrybreac, as matriculated in 1999, in which the shield is supported by, "Two Highland warriors of the early fourteenth century Proper, holding in their exterior hands spears paleways Gules, with spearheads Or."

The Irish campaigns of Edward Bruce from 1315 to 1318, in which King Robert himself played a leading part, represented a second front in the struggle against English domination. Until recently their significance was underrated by both Scottish and Irish historians. Robert Bruce had won a great victory over Edward II of England at the battle of Bannockburn in 1314, but his throne was not yet secure. The historian, John of Fordun, writing later in the 14th century, suggested that the Irish campaigns were entered into to satisfy the pride and ambition of Edward Bruce, who would not be content until he had a kingdom of his own. Although later historians have often followed Fordun in this, and treated the Irish campaigns as a temporary diversion, they should be seen rather as a concerted attempt by both Robert and Edward Bruce to destabilise



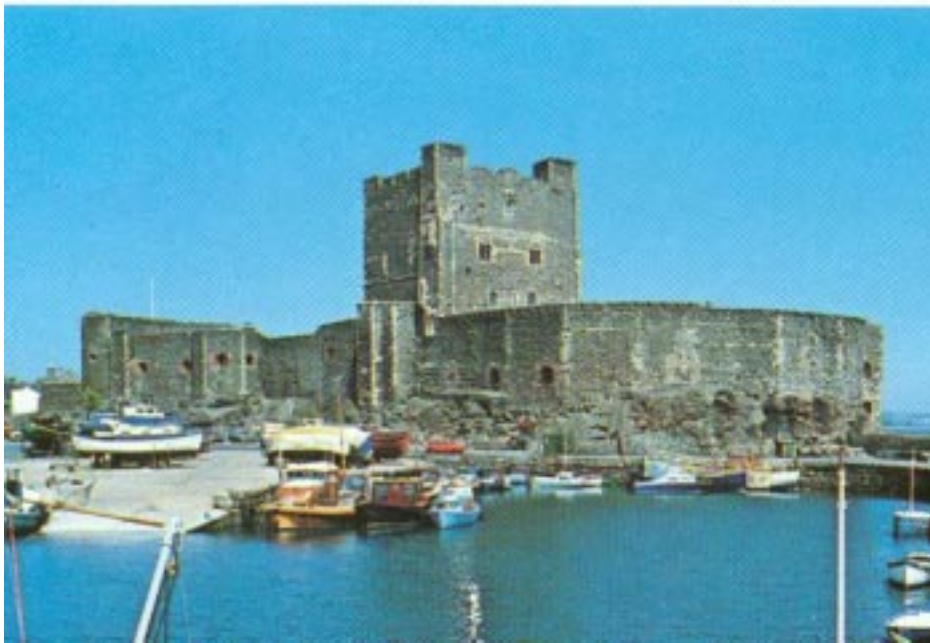
English rule in Ireland and to establish Edward Bruce as king. The Bruces appealed to native Irish leaders and emphasised their common Gaelic ancestry and the common Gaelic language of Ireland and Scotland. The Scottish armies contained many Highlanders and Hebrideans in addition to the more regular feudal levies.

The Bruces very nearly succeeded. Edward was inaugurated King of Ireland, probably in 1315, and he and Robert plundered far into Ireland more than once. But the enterprise eventually foundered on Edward's rash and impetuous nature. Tempted prematurely into battle at Fochart, by Dundalk, in 1318, Edward suffered a crushing defeat and was slain. Among the many who died with him were a MacDonald "king of Argyll" and a MacRuairi "king of the Isles". Although Edward was ultimately unsuccessful,

The most famous lines in Barbour's *Bruce* praise freedom:

*A! Fredoome is a noble thing.  
Fredoome ways man to haiff liking.  
Fredoome all solace to man giffis  
He levys at es that freely levys  
A noble hart may haiff nane es  
Na ellys nocht that may him ples  
Giff fredoome failyhe ....*

("Ah! Freedom is a noble thing. Freedom gives man contentment. Freedom all solace to man gives; he lives at ease who freely lives. A noble heart may have no ease, and nothing else that may him please, if freedom fail ....")  
(*Bruce*, 1, 225-31)



*Carrickfergus Castle in County Antrim, Northern Ireland, where the siege took place in April, 1316.*

the Bruce campaigns helped set back English rule in Ireland for generations, and paved the way for a native Irish resurgence.

Not everything in the Scottish "Wars of Independence," in which we first encounter the chiefs of Clan Neacail, was clear-cut. There was much dissimulation, and not a little changing of sides. Robert Bruce himself cannot escape that charge. Nor, it would seem, can John MacNicol, if the events of 1306, 1315 and 1316 all refer to the same man. However, these wars also gave rise to two of the finest expressions of liberty and freedom which have ever been penned.

The second passage occurs in "Declaration of Arbroath", the official Letter sent to the Pope in 1320 by the community of the realm of Scotland in support of their chosen king, Robert Bruce. The Declaration is written in the sonorous Latin of the papal chancery rather than in Scots, but its message is just as compelling. The Letter asks the Pope to recognise Robert Bruce as king. He has been chosen by the community of the realm and has made good his title after much hardship. However, were he now to betray the cause of independence and submit to the English, he would be driven out by those who chose him. "For," the Declaration continues, "it is not for glory, or riches, or honours that we fight, but for freedom alone, which no true man surrenders save with his life."

Senate Resolution 155, March 20, 1998 hails the Arbroath Declaration as a precursor of the American Declaration of Independence. The Nicolsons can take pride in their association with the Bruces.



*W. David H. Sellar  
Bute Pursuivant of Arms  
Edinburgh, 2003*

*Continued on page 10*




## Late Chief Commemorated

With our Clan's attendance at the Games in 2001 as part of our North American Gathering and the fact that we have held a clan booth at the Games for the last 20 years, we were recognized by the local Chamber of Commerce and the Glengarry Highland Games organizing committee as one of the clan societies worthy of having one of a limited number commemorative clan banners placed around town. With this honor presented to us we were asked to dedicate the banner for an official book which can be seen upon entering the town of Maxville at the Chamber of Commerce Booth. The inscription and dedication reads "Dedicated to the memory of our late

*Continued from page 7*

Chief Iain (Nicolson) MacNeacail of MacNeacail and Scorrybreac June 19, 1921- October 16, 2003". The Banner is double sided with our Red dress tartan and the name MacNicol on one side and the anglicized version of our named Nicolson on the other side along with our Ancient Hunting tartan.

Whenever you are coming to visit the Glengarry Highland Games in Maxville, Ontario, Canada for the North American Bagpipe Championships, you can check both our clan banner and the dedication book at the visitor information booth. 

## Carrickfergus *Continued from page 9*

### Select Bibliography

The standard modern edition of *The Bruce* is The Scottish Text Society's *Barbour's Bruce*, edd. MP McDiarmid and JAC Stevenson (3 vols., 1981-5).

Professor AAM Duncan's recent paperback edition, *The Bruce* (Edinburgh, 1997) gives the standard text together with a modern translation, historical notes and a translation of the Declaration of Arbroath.

The standard edition of the Declaration of Arbroath is Sir James Fergusson's *Declaration of Arbroath* (Edinburgh, 1970).

*The Declaration of Arbroath: History, Significance and Setting*, ed. Professor GWS Barrow (Society of Antiquaries of Scotland, 2003) is a stimulating collection of essays on the Declaration and its historical context, medieval and modern.

Professor Edward J Cowan's *For Freedom Alone: The Declaration of Arbroath, 1320* (Tuckwell Press, 2003) gives a very readable, even racy, account of the Declaration and its later history up to and including Tartan Day.



*It was as a result of the discovery of the participation by MacNicol in the Battle of Carrickfergus in County Antrim, Ireland that "supporters" were added to the Chief's Arms. They are described as "two Highland warriors of the early fourteenth century Proper, holding in their exterior hands spears paleways Gules, with spearheads Or"*



### For Your Scottish Outfitting Requirements

Nicolson Highlandwear opened on the Royal Mile in Edinburgh, Scotland in 2001. It was founded by Gordon Nicolson, who has over 20 years experience in this business. He has a very attractive Website at [www.nicolsonhighlandwear.co.uk](http://www.nicolsonhighlandwear.co.uk), and he has a world-wide business. You can also write to him at 189 Canongate, Edinburgh EH8 8BN or telephone 011-44-131-556-4763. Don't forget to ask for your 10% Clan MacNicol discount, and keep it in the Clan family!





# Clan MacNeacail Society of Scotland International Clan Gathering

Portree, Isle of Skye, Scotland • 12–16 October 2004

Once every four years, we hold our International Clan Gathering in Portree, Isle of Skye, Scotland. The last Gathering in 2000 was attended by over 50 visitors from overseas. Our new Chief, John MacNeacail of MacNeacail and Scorrybreac will be in attendance this year with his wife Jenni and sons Luke and Adam. As well as the formal investiture of the new Chief, a memorial will be unveiled to the memory of John's father, our late Chief. The event is being organized by members of the Clan Society in Scotland, and they have sent us the following agenda:

### **Tuesday, 12<sup>th</sup> October**

Advice available on local walks from Effie Nicolson for the fit and able; will be determined by weather forecast on the day.

### **Wednesday, 13<sup>th</sup> October**

Coach Trip to Clan Donald Centre & Gaelic College at Sleat (booking advisable)

### **Thursday, 14<sup>th</sup> October**

Coach Trip to Raasay (booking advisable)  
Lunch at the hotel on Raasay

### **Friday, 15<sup>th</sup> October**

Morning - Coach trip to Talisker Whisky Distillery (booking advisable)  
2pm - Clan meeting  
7.30 for 8pm - Ceilidh, tickets £25 (includes 4 course dinner & wine)

### **Saturday, 16<sup>th</sup> October**

Afternoon - possible shinty match  
Evening - Informal Dance, Skye Gathering Hall, Portree

**Arrangements:** Please make your own arrangements for accommodation. A list of hotels and B&B's is available from Murray Nicolson by request at (978)318-8255 or 011-44-1544-231090, or by email to [m.nicolson@ieee.org](mailto:m.nicolson@ieee.org).

**Travel:** Portree is about two-and-a-half hours by road from Inverness and five-six hours from Edinburgh or Glasgow. If you want to drive yourself, you can rent a car from the airport at any of these cities. The other alternative is to go by bus; it takes about three-and-a-half hours from Inverness, six hours from Glasgow and 8 hours from Edinburgh. Bus details can be found on the Web at [www.citylinkonlinesales.co.uk](http://www.citylinkonlinesales.co.uk). If you would like help, please contact Murray Nicolson as above. Other useful information can be found on the website

[www.undiscoveredscotland.co.uk](http://www.undiscoveredscotland.co.uk)

If you are planning to attend, please contact Carol Nicolson and let her know your interest at: Mrs. Carol Nicolson, Meikle Camoquhill Farm, Balfron, Stirlingshire, Scotland G63 0QW  
Tel: 01360 440325, Email: [acmnicolson@fsmail.net](mailto:acmnicolson@fsmail.net).



## International Nicolson Nose Contest – Only A Sniff!



Michael Nichols

Our last issue included a challenge from Clan member Michael Nichols of Seaside, Oregon for the most handsome Nicolson Nose. The article also appeared in the Clan's Australian newsletter *The Southern Cross* and was reprinted in the genealogy newsletter *The Family Tree* from Moultrie, GA. It also appeared in our Scottish

newsletter.

Despite the world-wide publicity, **only a single challenge** has been made to Mike Nichols, and he may win this contest by default. It could be that somewhere in the world there is a magnificent entrant being carefully and secretly cultivated, making use of a tanning studio, exotic oils, brandy and snuff. But time is running out – entries must be received by 1<sup>st</sup> October to Murray Nicolson, Piccadilly Cottage, Kington, Herefordshire HR5 3HP, England. Entries

should include photographs and any supporting statements you may wish to make. Don't blow your chance now!

### Footnote (or Nosenote)

We received the following unusual story from Mrs. Betty Jo Ritchie of Montgomery, Alabama:

*John Nicolson was an active physician, a leading planter, a gallant soldier, a state legislator, a member of the county board of revenue, and a prolific writer, but he was best remembered for his wooden nose. While in his sixties. Dr. Nicolson had lost his nose to cancer and had whittled himself a new one. It was a pretty good likeness, but everybody in the community knew about it and the children watched his every move on the chance that he might take it off. After a long and useful life, Dr. Nicolson died in 1902 at age 71 and is buried (along with his wooden nose) in a family cemetery off the Vaughn Road.*



Contest entrant Beth Nicolson



Nicolson nose on Ben Crachig



## Flowers of the Forest

### Ruth Nicolls

We are sad to report the death in February 2003 of Ruth A. Nicolls of Flagstaff, AZ, a Clan member since 1997. Ruth was born in Lithuania in 1940, and her family emigrated to the USA in 1951. She graduated with a degree in nursing in May 1963, and married her husband Ken Nicolls in 1964. In 1978 she earned an MA degree in pediatric nursing from the University of Iowa, and worked her way from clinical nursing instructor to tenured associate professor of nursing at Northern Arizona University. She retired in June 2002, and sadly had a stroke in September 2002 followed by a long illness. She is survived by her husband Ken and their three sons John, James and Jason. The Clan offers its sincere condolences to her family.

### Catherine Fricke

We are sad to announce the death of Catherine Isobel Fricke of Milo, Maine, the wife of George R. Fricke and Clan member since 1996. Catherine died on January 14<sup>th</sup> 2004 at the age of 85. She was born in Toronto, Ontario, the daughter of Walter and Marianne (Wingate) Nichol. Besides her husband George, she is survived by two sons and four daughters, and by seven grandchildren. Catherine and George went to Maine in 1974 and owned the company Bartlettyarns Inc. in Harmony. When they sold the business they travelled widely, especially to the parts of Scotland where her ancestors had lived. Catherine's favorite recreations were enjoying the family's camp on Schoodic Lake, or cruising the Maine coast in their schooner. We offer our sincere condolences to George and their family.

