

# The Nicolson Institute - February Newsletter 2011



## Staff changes

- Mrs Frances Murray will be taking up her post as Rector on the 7th of March.
- Ms Nikki Arthur has been appointed to the post of Teacher of Chemistry after serving her probationary year at the Nicolson Institute.
- Mr A. Dand has been appointed to the post of Teacher of Biology and will be taking up the post shortly.
- Mrs Grace Mackay is now working as a clerical assistant in the school office.
- Ms Gillian Carfrae, probationer teacher in the Biology Department, is to be congratulated on her appointment to Gordonstoun school. She will be taking up the new position in August.

We wish them all every success and happiness in their respective posts.

## New building

Progress with the building of the new school can be seen on a daily basis as the steel structure continues to take shape. Guidance staff at the Nicolson are capitalising on such a development taking place next to the school by arranging site visits for senior pupils who are interested in engineering as a career.

## Groupcall

Groupcall is operational once again so parents are asked to contact the school before 9:00am if pupils are to be absent. If pupils are late, they must register at the office immediately on arrival. By doing so they will avoid receiving a notification of absence through the Groupcall automated system.

## Pupils' successes

The following teams are to be congratulated on their performances in various competitions during the month of February :

### Football

- The Under 14 team won 7-3 against Dingwall Academy in the Quarter final of North of Scotland Cup.
- The Under 15 team won 3-1 against Monifeith in the Scottish Cup.
- The Under 18 team is through to the last 16 of the Scottish Cup after defeating Newbattle Community High school 6-1.

- The Junior Girls team beat Kingussie 5 – 1 in the 3rd round of North of Scotland Cup.
- Senior Girls beat Ullapool 5 - 0 in the North of Scotland Cup and followed this with a 6 - 1 win against Charleston Academy in the Scottish Cup.
- The Under 15 Junior Girls are through to the semi-final of the North of Scotland Cup after beating Kingussie Highschool 5-1.

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### **Other sporting successes**

The Senior Girls' Basketball Team won 40 - 35 against Fortrose.

The inter-house Swimming Gala was a great success with Sutherland winning the over-all event. We'd like to take this opportunity to thank 6th Year helpers for their assistance in running the competition.

Murdo Macleod from S5 has been selected to represent Scotland at Under 21 Darts after winning the recent Western Isles festival for Under 25s. He will be representing Scotland in the European championships this summer.

### **The Big Green Challenge**

Big Green Congratulations go to our S2 debaters who recently participated in this national debating competition, which annually looks at a different environmental issue affecting Scotland. The Nicolson Institute won the final of this competition three years ago.

The two Nicolson teams each won a round in the regional heat of the competition on Friday 11th February, and the Nicolson Team 2 went on to win the regional heat overall. They were up against very good teams from Lionel and Shawbost - with two teams from each participating school. Nicolson Team 1 consists of Kayleigh Macleod, Ailsa Maclachlan and Lisa Campbell. The winning team, Nicolson Team 2, comprises Ruaraidh Mackay, Paul Anderson and Kirsty Mackinnon-Leese.

The standard of debate was very high and all participants gave extremely good performances, but the winning team was particularly mature and impressive - especially considering that they had to argue against a motion that all of them believe in: 'This House Believes that Alternative Energy will Bring Lots of Benefits to Local Communities'.

They now go through to the national heats, to be held in Edinburgh at the Scottish Parliament on 21<sup>st</sup> March, starting with a quarter-final heat

versus Sandwick Junior High School from Shetland (whose debating team won the competition last year and whose coach is a former English teacher from the Nicolson Institute). We wish them the very best of good luck on 21<sup>st</sup> March.

### **Stornoway Primary – P7 Book launch**

‘Stories and Poems from the Hebrides’

On Friday 11<sup>th</sup> February several members of staff from the Nicolson were invited to attend the launch of a book which has been produced by P7 pupils at Stornoway Primary. The pupils organised the whole event including inviting guests from the Education Department, Councillors, teachers from other schools and parents. They gave an excellent Powerpoint presentation, which explained the process they had gone through to get their book published; then several excerpts from the book were read by the pupils who had written them. The teachers from the Nicolson were so impressed that they invited these P7 pupils to come and do a mini version of their book launch presentation for S1 English classes at the Nicolson on 23<sup>rd</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> February. It is a truly impressive little book. If you would like to buy a copy (£5) you can contact either Stornoway Primary or Ms Sutherland here in the English Department.

### **Gideon Visit**

We would like to thank Mr. D. Martin and Mr. C. Mackenzie of the Gideon Society for their recent talk to S1 pupils and the presentation of personal copies of the New Testament.

### **Additional holiday**

The school closes for the Easter break on Friday 25<sup>th</sup> March and re-opens for pupils and staff on Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> April.

As the royal wedding is to take place during the school holidays, Comhairle nan Eilean Siar has agreed that the additional day’s holiday to celebrate this event will be on Monday 11<sup>th</sup> April.

### **Dà chananas**

Thadhail an t-Ollaibh Antonella Sorace bho Oil-thigh Dhun Eidinn air an sgoil air an 16mh den Ghearran agus bhruidhinn i ris an dara bliadhna mu cho bhuannachdail ‘s a tha e dhan eanchainn a bhith dà chànanach. Bha an òraid air leth inntinneach agus tha sinn an dòchas gum faigh an còrr de na sgoilearan cothrom a cluinntinn a dh’ aithghearr.

### **Assessment Week**

Assessment Week for S5-S6 pupils will run from 7<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup> March.

There is no study leave and pupils should attend timetabled classes when not sitting exams. All S5 and S6 students should attend normal classes on Monday afternoon. A copy of the timetable is available on the school's website.

### **Sundial**

The Stornoway Amenity Trust has approached the school regarding a project to construct an Analemmatic sun dial in Percival Square. In simple terms, the Analemmatic sun dial uses the viewer's projected shadow to tell the time – as the shadow will fall on marked hour points – which will take the form of brass plaques, designed by some of our S1 art pupils. In Art class the students have been drawing hands – and found that images of hands fit in well with the theme of time-telling and the clock. The students have presented the hands engaged in activities which illustrate the growth and development of the town of Stornoway and have then further enhanced their work with simple line drawings of significant town landmarks in the background.

The pupils will be visiting the Stornoway Plastics Factory, where the brass plaques will be cut on a large CNC Router, so that they can appreciate this part of the construction process.

Some senior students from the Physics Department are involved in the plotting of the positions of each of the plaques, working out the declination of the sun at different times of the day and during different seasons, the coordinates and all the theory behind the working of an Analemmatic sundial.

It is a very positive experience for the pupils (and the teachers!) to be involved in the construction of such an important and lasting installation in the centre of the town – which brings together aesthetic, social and cultural elements as well as crossing that great divide between science and art!

### **The Nicolson Institute -March Newsletter 2011**

Due to financial constraints, as from March 2011, future editions of 'The Nicolson Institute – Newsletter' will only be available on the school's website.

Senior Management Team  
The Nicolson Institute.

