

NAIDHEACHDAN SGOIL MHCNEACAIL

Dè tha dol?

February 2014

NI News

An Gearran 2014

Mr R J Macleod Memorial

At the end of last year Mr R J Macleod, affectionately known to pupils and colleagues alike as Barts, passed away after a short illness. RJ was very much a member of "The Nicolson Family," and although he retired in 1997 he always maintained an interest in the school and its pupils and staff. As the Assistant Rector for the senior school he took a personal interest in the future destinations of all his pupils and continued to follow pupils' progress long after they had left The Nicolson. On the surface, he was a formidable force, not to be trifled with, and he always kept the senior school in order. On a personal level, he would go out of his way for any one of the pupils in his care. He was a strong believer that young people should be treated fairly and often stood up for pupils (sometimes unbeknown to them) to ensure they were given the chances they deserved.



As both a former colleague and a teacher of many of the current staff, RJ will be fondly remembered and sorely missed. The values he exemplified of honesty, integrity, loyalty and service were passed on to those of us who remain here today and it is because of teachers like Roddy that many of us (who are now on the staff) became teachers too. Our thoughts continue to be with Roddy's widow Anna, his daughters Janet, Mairi and Alison, and his grandchildren Eve, Ellen, Gregor, Derek and Jane, all of whom were very proud of him.

Referendum Debate 2014

On Wednesday 12 February all S5 & 6 students got the opportunity to listen to a debate on Scotland's constitutional future. The S6 speakers were Scott Duncan & Krisell Macdonald (Yes) and Iain Boyd & Stuart Lamont (No). The speakers from the two campaigns were Alasdair Allan MSP (Yes Scotland) and Alasdair Morrison (Better Together). The debate was chaired by Aonghas Domhnallach from BBC Alba. After listening to the arguments on both sides the students were balloted on this question: Should Scotland be an independent country? This is a break down of the result:

	YES	NO
S5 TOTAL	55 (47%)	63 (53%)
S6 TOTAL	42 (44%)	53 (56%)
English Medium TOTAL	69 (43%)	91 (57%)
Gaelic Medium TOTAL	28 (53%)	25 (47%)
TOTAL	97 (45%)	116 (55%)



Save the Children & Christmas Jumper Day

On 13th of December pupils and staff were invited to wear a Christmas jumper or garment to school if they made a donation of £1 to Save the Children. This event was organised by the S6 Citizenship pupils and the amount raised was £640.

Pictured to the right are local Save the Children representatives Mrs M. Macleod and Mrs E. Whiteford accepting a cheque for £1000 from pupils Kathleen Smith and Yulia Lisowska and Rector, Dr. F Murray. This



money was raised as a result of the Christmas Jumper Day and the proceeds of this years' Christmas concert. The sum rose to £1000 over the following days as a result the valiant efforts of the Music Department and S1/2 carol singers who defied wind, rain and snow to perform outside the Tesco store. Many thanks to Tesco staff for supplying sweets and hot drinks and to the general public for their generous donations.

Home Economics Department

As part of the Food for Thought Initiative the HE Dept. has integrated food product development with healthy eating and tried, where possible, to provide real life contexts for design and make activities at key stages in the S1-S4 curriculum.

S2 pupils have been designing and making a healthy biscuit which could be sold at the Commonwealth Games. Staff across the school have been asked to select their favourite healthy biscuit from a given selection prepared by S2 classes.

The 3 most popular biscuits will go forward for the Stag Bakery Challenge award which is decided in April.



Parking

Parents and carers are urged to avoid parking on Smith Avenue and at the Sports Centre when dropping pupils off or collecting them as this causes an obstruction to traffic and school buses and Sports Centre clientele in particular. Please make use of the area provided at site of the old bus park.

Music Instrumental Charging

As a result of the introduction of a recent council policy, we are now in a position to offer instrumental tuition in strings and guitar to pupils at a rate of £5 per 30 minutes in a group or £10.00 for an individual. Pupils should check the Music noticeboard weekly for timetables and notices. Timetables can be emailed home on request.

Lessons began on Tuesday 20th January for 10 weeks and payment of £50.00 for small group lesson or £100.00 for individual lessons should be paid by cheque to The Nicolson Institute Music Fund as soon as possible. More information can be obtained through Music department. There are still a few places available.

We are hoping to introduce more instrumental tuition and will update the school web page as soon as we have new information.

STV Debating Matters

Krisell Macdonald and Catriona Campbell are through to the final rounds of the STV 'Debating Matters' competition which will be held in the debating chamber at The Scottish Parliament in March. On Wednesday 6th November, the girls travelled to Inverness Caledonian Stadium to take part in a day of debating. The issues being debated were all linked to the forthcoming Independence Referendum in 2014.

After an impressive win against Fortrose Academy in the morning, the girls went on to face a tough debate against Forres Academy in the afternoon. In both debates the girls responded expertly to tough questioning from the judges, audience and opposing teams. They

also delivered articulate opening and closing presentations in both round. The girls were pronounced as the overall winners and Catriona and Krisell will now travel to Edinburgh to face some tough competition in the finals. We can look forward to some televised action from the debating duo soon!



The Nicolson Institute U15 Girls vs Biggar

On Saturday 11th January The Nicolson Institute U15 girls had their very first game of the season against a more experienced Biggar team. The team were very excited as this was a quarter final match in the Brewin Dolphin Cup competition. The team was made up of some experienced players who had played last year.

Captain, Anna Macrae, showed great leadership qualities as she kept her team highly motivated until the final whistle. The game could have gone either way as the final score was 15-12 to Biggar.



In some horrendous conditions the girls scored 2 impressive tries from Eilidh Macleod and Koren Pickering. The player of the match was Eilidh Murray who was not shy in putting in some outstanding tackles.

1914 -1924 - North Lewis

Pupils at Sgoil Lionail are currently involved in a project in which they are researching the impact of the First World War on north Lewis from 1914 to 1924. Local historian, Iain G. Macdonald provided a very interesting and informative narrative to set the context for pupils and Annie Macsween from Comunn Eachdraidh Nis added a personal dimension to the account with information about how two of her uncles were killed in France and the devastating impact this had on the family. Seeing their actual 'death pennies' and hearing many other thought provoking anecdotes from Annie certainly made us all more aware of the terrible realities of WW1 for that generation although we can never really appreciate how awful it was.

Pupils will now use the wealth of artefacts, photographic and written sources in the Comunn Eachdraidh to produce presentations which will feature at the launch of the book about The Great War being produced by Comunn Eachdraidh Nis later this year.

As well as getting to know the history of their own area better and visiting local places of significance in terms of the war, pupils will perform songs and music from that era and develop skills such as research, presentation and filming and editing in the process.

It is also very pleasing to see pupils making good use of local archive material and resources for educational purposes. With any luck, such involvement may encourage pupils to become actively involved in preservation of their own heritage.

Asymmetric week

The school management team along with Transportation staff and members of the Education Department are currently in discussion with regards to the implementation of an asymmetric week next session. In general terms, this may mean slightly shorter lunch breaks, Monday to Thursday, with increased pupil / teacher contact time and a shorter school day on Friday. More detailed information will be circulated to parents and carers in the near future.

Lockers

The school management team are very aware of the on-going issues concerning lockers but we are now in a position to report that all pupils have been allocated one. The situation was out with the school's control but we apologise for the delay and hope that the faulty locks will be replaced as a matter of urgency.

Acting Depute Rector

Congratulations are extended to Mr. Malcolm Macleod, Principal Teacher of Technical Subjects at The Nicolson Institute, who has been appointed to the post of Acting Depute Rector. Mr Macleod hails from Shawbost.



Hi FiReS

This is a ten week course offered to pupils in S3 and S4 and aims to enable pupils to:

- become members or leaders of a team
- improve self-discipline
- improve confidence & communication skills

The course provides a basic work experience programme including the essential elements of first aid, use of operational equipment such as hose and ladders and simulated fire incidents, all within a disciplined and controlled environment.

The purpose of the scheme is to provide training and development opportunities to young people in the Highlands & Islands, principally through Fire and Rescue Service related activities. It will encourage pupils to make the most of their physical and mental capabilities and to become more responsible, safer and caring members of their communities.

This session the following pupils successfully completed the course:

Lewis Cummings, Lauren MacKay, Anne-Marie MacDonald, Kiera Greenshields and Rebecca MacKay.

Comunn na Gàidhlig

Ged nach eil Màiri Nic 'illinnein , neach-obrach òigridh (CnaG) air a bhith ag obair anns an



sgoil ach airson beagan sheachdainnean, tha i air tòiseachadh air grunn phròiseactan a thogas ìomhaigh na Gàidhlig tron sgoil gu lèir. Tha i air a bhith an luib Electives clò, club cur-a-mach na loidhne, clasaichean taic airson obair-dachaigh, Fiolm G agus cothroman do sgoilearan a bhith a' cleachdadh Gàidhlig ann an suidhichidhean sòisealta aig àm dìnnearach.

Tha planaichean aice clasaichean melodeon a thòiseachadh, sgoilearan bho Cholaiste a' Chaisteil a thoirt a-steach gus cothroman còmhraidh a thoirt do fhileantaich agus luchd-ionnsachaidh agus clasaichean fuaigheal a bheir cothrom do sgoilearan "a bhith a' togail Gàidhlig tro ghnìomhan" a chur air chois. Deagh dhòigh air ionnsachadh! Tha i fhèin agus Iain 'Costello' Maciomhair air tòiseachadh air fiolm a chur ri chèile gus Ionad nan Tursachan a shanasachd air an eadar-lìon le clas S2.

Chan eil càil a leisg air Màiri a dhol an sàs anns an obair i fhèin ach bidh i a' coordanachadh agus a' cuideachadh luchd-teagaisg agus ìnbhich eile aig a bheil sgilean sònraichte cuideachd.

Tha sgoiltean agus sgìrean eile a-nis ag iarraidh neach-obrach den t-seòrsa seo agus tha CnaG air gealltanais a thoirt seachad gum faigh grunn dhiubh sin.

'S ann do Lacasaidh a bhuineas Màiri agus chaidh i fhèin tro Sgoil Mhicneacail. Tha sinn air leth toilichte gun do ròghnaich i tilleadh thugainn.

Healthy Working Lives Award



The school was very pleased to have received a Bronze level award in the Healthy Working Lives award programme.

This programme acknowledges the school's efforts in fostering a healthy work environment for its staff and recognises the annual health and wellbeing focus week which contributes to all staff's health and wellbeing. Pictured below is the Rector, Dr Murray, receiving the award.

Careers Focus Week

The Guidance Department organises this focus week to coincide with National Careers Week which, this year, takes place week commencing 3 March 2014.

Pupils are consulted about which vocations, professions and occupations they wish to learn more about. Pupils sign up for their desired choice and are given a presentation on the career area. Part of the session is devoted to a question and answer session which pupils have found to be both illuminating and informative. It is such a positive reflection of the diverse range of occupations currently on the island, that we are able to fulfil the vast majority of requests. The Guidance staff is extremely appreciative of all the employees and employers who have contributed in previous years and to those who have agreed to address the pupils this year. Next month, we are pleased to have representatives confirmed from the following career areas: Off Shore Industries, Nursing and Midwifery, Chartered Engineering, Computing and ICT, Accountancy, Medicine, Primary Teaching and Sports Coaching, Psychology.

S3 Life skills class – Community Event

As part of their course, pupils had to organise an event for a group in the local community. The class elected to organise a tea party and ceilidh for the residents of Dun Eisdean residential home for the elderly.



The class worked extremely hard to plan and organise this project. Amongst the tasks they had to undertake were: liaising with the staff at Dun Eisdean, purchasing and preparing the food to be served, drawing up a programme of entertainers sourced from our talented pupils and delivering the event in a single afternoon.



Gaelic Medium Education at The Nicolson Institute

We would like to take this opportunity to invite you to an open evening about Gaelic Medium Education in The Nicolson Institute Assembly Hall on **Thursday 6 March – 7.30 – 8.30pm.**

Various short presentations will be made and there will be an opportunity to meet with school staff and representatives from Gaelic bodies such as CNAG, Proiseact nan Ealan and the Education Department.

We would encourage you to attend if possible as it is important for us to have parental involvement in planning the future of GME in The Nicolson Institute.

Tea/coffee will be served.

We look forward to seeing you there.