

F. P. ASSOCIATION NEWS

Dear Friends,

It was our original intention to update news from the Association to you once per year. However, we feel that it is necessary to do so again, now that we might pay tribute to our late Vice-President, Roger Nicholson.

John Roger Nicholson, 1931-2009.

It was with great sadness that we learned of the death of our Association Vice-President, Roger Nicholson, on 3rd March, 2009. Roger had faced a stern battle against brain cancer over the past few months. We learned something of Roger's infirmity just before Christmas when he offered his resignation as Vice-President. Typically, of Roger he did not tell us of the seriousness of his illness, but told us of an operation to be faced in the near future. The Council felt that his resignation at this time was unnecessary since we could not elect a new Vice-President until the A.G.M. As time went on news of a far more serious condition than we had first surmised made us realise that Roger was indeed very ill. His death when it came was none the less more shocking.

Roger Nicholson entered the Secondary Department of Harris Academy in 1943 and left in 1949. He then proceeded to the University of St. Andrews where he trained as an economist. After National Service in the R.A.F. including a spell in what was then Southern Rhodesia he returned there to live his life. He became involved in journalism and also in politics opposing the government of Ian Smith in the 1960s. For a time he sat in the Rhodesian Parliament on the opposition benches. After being imprisoned for passing national secrets to a foreign country, he was released quickly when the U.S.A. reportedly threatened the Smith government unless he were freed.

Roger returned to the United Kingdom once more and became involved in journalism once more and eventually became Managing Director of Thomson Regional Newspapers. On his retirement Roger came back to Scotland, to Crieff, for him one of the best places in the world. There he lived still active in his interests which included his old school. He travelled from Crieff for Harris FP occasions, for Council meetings and was a great supporter of the Association. I personally found him a most supportive Vice-President over the last two years.

We regret very much the death of Roger and offer our sincere sympathy to his wife, Maureen, his children, Bruce and Jane, and his grandchildren. Roger's funeral took place in the lovely Church of St. Fillan's in Crieff on a lovely spring day when Crieff and its surroundings looked wonderful. A tribute was paid to Roger by Professor John Small, a former Harris classmate and there were a number of Harris FPs in attendance.

Memories of Harris days

We have received a few of these, but would like far more. Such items as photographs, especially if they can have names attached, accounts of School occasions and so on would be very welcome and can be sent to Isobel at any time.

We also made a plea for mementoes of school life which would also be gratefully received. These, we hope, would add to a picture of different eras in the school's history. For example, there have been three types of House Badges, the first had the initial letter with a 'squiggle' above and below. This was then modified to a simple coloured badge with the initial letter and finally, a coloured unadorned badge. Examples of the first and second designs would be welcomed. In the same line, House Officials' badges would be welcomed as would any other badges issued by the school at any time. If you wish your badge/memento returned, this could be arranged.

To complete the records of the early days of the Houses we would like to find a copy of a House Officials' photograph for session 1956-57. The only pupils we know for certain on that photo are Eveline Reid, School Captain, and Tony Whiteside who was in Fifth Year.

Can anybody help, please?

Tea Towels, notelets etc.

These can still be obtained from Isobel who will advise on price etc. The Council is about to consider whether or not we should look at other souvenir efforts to sell as 'Harris' merchandise. If anybody has any ideas about what might sell and they would like to see being sold, please advise Isobel, whose address, telephone and e-mail may be found in this mailing.

Harris's 125th Birthday

The School opened its doors in Park Place on 31st August, 1885 so will celebrate its 125th Anniversary in 2010. Would you like to see an FP Association celebration to mark this occasion? If so, what form would it take? The Council are again about to organise this and would welcome views and ideas.

Thanks

I should like to thank the following for their support. Firstly, I marvel at and am very grateful for the wonderful and hard work undertaken by our Secretary, Isobel Colligan. In her first year in office Isobel has done a power of work and deserves not only my thanks, but the thanks of us all. I should also like to thank Ian Colligan who stepped in to chair the last Lunch when family illness prevented me from being present. The members of the Council, now at full strength, also have provided great support to me as President and to the Association as a whole. The School, led by Head Teacher Jim Thewliss, continues to be a tower of support for the Association. Many thanks to those who have already sent in their memories of their schooldays. Thank you all.

John Baxter,

President.