



Friends of Scorrybreac Lands



In 1987 part of the ancient lands of Scorrybreac at Ben Chracaig on the Isle of Skye was purchased by members of Clan MacNicol from around the world. It spans 130 acres of hillside and cliff-tops adjacent to Loch Portree and the town of Portree on Skye. It is about ½ mile from the ruins of Scorrybreck House on Ben Torvaig, where the Chiefs of the Clan lived for many years until the last Chief left around 1830 to settle in Australia. Since the time when the clan bought the land many Clan members have had the opportunity to visit it and admire the glorious views from the sea-shore and from the cliffs above.

The land is administered by a group of Trustees called Urras Clann MhicNeacail, with the Clan Chief as its Chairman. There are about 10 Trustees from Scotland, North America and Australia, and they meet annually to discuss the needs for upkeep of the land.



The entrance to the Lands

The land is kept entirely for conservation. We have made no improvements other than the erection of footpaths and provision of seats for visitors, usually with the aid of individual bequests or support from local government agencies like Scottish National Heritage and the Highlands and Islands Enterprise. Between 1993 and 2003 we had a management agreement with the Skye and Lochalsh District Council, who provided help with maintenance. However they did

not renew this agreement in 2003 because of budget constraints, and it is the main

reason for the decision now to appeal to clan members and others for support.

During the past two years, many Clan members world-wide have generously and repeatedly made small but valuable donations. However, the Trustees have proposed that a larger, committed source of funds is essential for the on-going maintenance of what is after all a large estate. Specifically, the grass and ferns around the area where we have erected memorial cairns and seats have to be cut several times during the growing season.



The view over Loch Portree to the Cuillins Hills

The footpaths around the perimeter of the lands have to be repaired at least once a year. Liability insurance coverage has to be paid for annually. Unpredictable emergencies, such as landslides, also have to be dealt with by having some contingency funds

At the Clan's international gathering in Dunedin, New Zealand in September 2006 it was proposed that the Trust form a small group of Clan members and others called the "Friends of Scorrybreac Lands". These "Friends" would pledge to make an annual contribution to Urras Clann MhicNeacail for a period of five years, to give the Trustees a



The footpath below the cliffs to Sgeir Mhor

base of financial support for the ongoing land maintenance. The target is to raise £3,000 annually, and we suggested that the Friends commit to a minimum donation of £50 a year – so that with 60 such Friends from Clan members we could ensure that the land is kept tidy and in good repair for all visitors each year.

To make it simple (and avoid currency charges) we propose to collect these contributions in the equivalent amounts in local currency and consolidate these into single donations to Urras Clann MhicNeacail about

every six months. In Australia, Mal Nicolson, President of the Clan MacNicol Society of New South Wales has offered to collect donations, and in North America Dick Nicoll will collect tax-deductible donations through Scorrybreac Fund Inc., of which he is Treasurer. We also have help from Jacques McNicoll in Canada and Lyn Nicholson in New Zealand. Murray Nicolson will act as the world-wide Secretary of FSL. He will keep a roster of the Friends which we can publish in the three Clan societies newsletters, send reminders about annual contributions, and provide each of the Friends with an annual report on the condition of the lands and how the Trustees have spent the money.



The cliffs of Ben Chraicig looking north over the Sound of Raasay

For other Clan members who cannot afford such a commitment, we will continue to solicit smaller donations along with the annual Clan society dues, and consolidate these amounts into a single donation from each society or branch.

We would also like to solicit donations from businesses and local people in Portree on the Isle of Skye, who benefit from having this conservation land nearby and which is open to everyone.

Please help to preserve this beautiful land on the Isle of Skye which has been the home of the Clan MacNicol (Nicolson) for many hundreds of years.



Bluebells by the footpath behind Ben Chracaig

Become a Friend of Scorrybreac Lands

You are invited to become a Friend of Scorrybreac Lands, and help preserve and maintain this beautiful tract of land for all to enjoy. You may do so by committing a donation of at least £50 a year for the next five years, or its equivalent in your local currency. This would be \$100/year in the USA, \$115/year in Canadian dollars, \$125/year in Australian dollars and \$145/year in New Zealand dollars. You don't have to be a clan member – we welcome contributions from anyone interested in preserving the Scorrybreac Lands.

How to join the Friends

1. Send a cheque as follows:

In Great Britain, payable to Urras Clann MacNeacail, to David Nicolson, Treasurer, Cluan House, Dunira, Comrie, Perthshire PH6 2JY, Scotland

In the USA, payable to Scorrybreac Fund Inc, to Dick Nicoll, Treasurer, 19 Dignon Road, Billerica, MA 01821

In Canada, payable to Clan MacNicol Canada, to Jacques McNicoll, Treasurer, 87 Des Pins, Ile Perrot, Quebec J7V 8L6, Canada.

In Australia, payable to Clan MacNicol NSW, to Mal Nicolson, President of Clan MacNicol in NSW, P.O. Box 243, Gymea, NSW 2227, Australia.

In New Zealand, payable to Clan MacNicol Dunedin, to Lyn Nicholson, Treasurer. 131 Highcliff Road, Shiel Hill, Dunedin, New Zealand

2. Send a note to Murray Nicolson letting him know of your contribution and requesting that he add you to the names of the Friends of Scorrybreac Lands. You will be listed in the clan newsletters if you wish, and receive an annual report of the activity and expenditures on the land. Murray's email address is m.nicolson@ieee.org, or mail address is 226 Peter Spring Road, Concord, MA 01742, USA.

Charter Friends of Scorrybreac Lands as of 31st December, 2006

When the formation of Friends of Scorrybreac Lands was announced, and up until 31st December 2006, the following persons indicated they would make a commitment to keep the land maintained through annual donations. Please join us and add to the list!

John MacNeacail, Chief, Australia
Jeremy Nicholson, USA
Sandy and Carol Nicolson, Scotland
John Gillis, USA
Marsha Gillis, USA
John and Penny Nicoll, Australia
Luke Nicolson, Australia
Colin and Jean Macnicol, New Zealand
C. B. Harman Nicholson, USA
Katie Dillon, Australia

Judith Nicol, Australia
Scott, Katrina and Luke Nicolson, Australia
Tim Dillon, Australia
Joyce and Bob Nicol, Australia
Moirra and Tony Stewart, Scotland
Heather and Richard Aphorpe, Australia
Barbara and Murray Nicolson, USA
Burke Nicholson of Balvenie, USA
Mal and Jenny Nicolson, Australia
David Nicolson, Scotland
Dick Nicoll, USA