

VALE DONALD NICOLSON OAM



Donald Nicolson OAM passed away on the 24th of March 2016 aged 85 years.

Don grew up on Roopena Station near Whyalla in South Australia. He boarded weekly in Whyalla to attend primary school and the Technical High School before he completed his secondary education to Leaving Honours at Scotch College in Adelaide. From there it was on to Roseworthy Agricultural College before returning home to Roopena Station in 1951 with a Diploma of Agriculture. In 1954 he married Penan and they had three children Penelope, Lachlan and Alexandra. The children gained their education via School of the Air, supervised by Penan, some private boarding to attend primary school and going on to boarding school in Adelaide for secondary education.

Don's first involvement of what was to become ICPA was after hearing on ABC's "Australia All Over" of a public meeting to be held in April 1971 at Bourke in which the inaugural branch ICPA was officially formed. He and Penan were members of the Port Augusta Outback Parents' Club (School of the Air). At one of the branch's HF Radio meetings around that time much discussion ensued and a motion was passed that Don and Penan Nicolson of Roopena Station attend the April meeting in Bourke with \$20 allocated to them for petrol.

In 1972 Don was elected to ICPA Federal Council and in 1974 became Vice President. He was Federal President from 1977-1980 and Immediate Past President from 1980-1985.

Don was pivotal in the formation of ICPA in South Australia. At a state level Don was the inaugural State President in 1973, a position he held until 1983. To mark his retirement Don was made a Life Member of ICPA SA.

As well Don was the founding member of the Port Augusta branch and his family had many years of involvement with the branch.

In the early days of ICPA Don, often accompanied by Penan, would drive many thousands of miles in getting ICPA up and running and then stabilizing the organisation. Tales have been told of driving long hours on unsealed, corrugated and dusty roads to Bourke and other centres around Australia. In those early days many outback stations had no telephones, whilst some had only 'party lines' for spasmodic communications. One of Don's early ambitions in communications was for everyone to:

Have a Phone

Have a Phone that works

Have a phone that works all the time

(continued overleaf)



Mind • Body • Spirit



All Souls St Gabriels School

Air-conditioning installation for Boarding in 2017

All Souls St Gabriels School is pleased to announce the installation of air-conditioning into to all 6 boarding facilities on the 120 acre Campus.

The self funded project will begin in June 2017 and is set to be completed before the end of 2017.

Souls offers strong academic and vocational pathways, with a full range of OP Subjects and co-curricular activities. Our students thrive in the friendly inclusive community offered by the school, small classes, a safe environment, great staff and dedicated teachers

- making Souls the quality choice for your family.

ENROL NOW for 2018 & Beyond

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All Souls St Gabriels School congratulates our new school leaders - Captains Julia Keough and Brent Marshall and Vice-Captains Meg Burge & Clay Pierce.

Souls looks forward to a exciting 2017, with our many academic and sporting events, our Europe trip and extra-curricular activities, upgrades to boarding and school facilities and student successes.



In an article about Don in the 'Pedals' magazine in the 80's, he reflected on the first ten years of ICPA and said he could see there had been great improvements in the educational services to isolated communities. He went on to say, "excellent relations have been enjoyed with the State Ministers, Education Department, the Correspondence School, School of the Air and RICE (Remote and Isolated Children's Exercise) with all concerned having worked towards the improvement of education for our children."

He was quoted in recent years as saying "ICPA is still one of the most successful lobby organisations in Australia".

Don was very much a community orientated person with involvement in Apex, United Farmers and the Stockowners Association of SA during which time he was an executive of the Wool and Meat Section. He was a member of the the Rangeland Society of Australia and South Australia, being the inaugural president. Involvement in the local National Trust Branch included time as chairman. Donald was also on the Dog Fence Board for 22 years and Chairman for eight of those years.

Don enjoyed playing social tennis and his special love was restoration of old stationary engines.

In 1997 Don was awarded an OAM for his involvement in, and contribution to, community, educational and grazing groups.

In 2014 Don and Penan were invited to attend and open the South Australian State Conference which was co-hosted by the Port Augusta Branch and coincided with the Branch's 40th Birthday celebrations. It was very evident that Don's commitment, passion and enthusiasm towards ICPA was still as strong as in the early days.

Don's contribution to ICPA, at Federal, State and Branch level, since its inception and his commitment and endeavour to ensure that equality in education for isolated children was enabled, and maintained, will be appreciated and remembered by us all.

*Jane Anderson
Port Augusta Branch*



Don and Penan with their family