A tribute to Donald Alfred Nicholls
(submitted by his daughter, Amy Day)

Dr Donald Alfred Nicholls, fondly known as “Dr Don” was born in Kunming, in the Province of Yunnan, China, on October 27, 1921. His parents, Arthur and Grace Nicholls, were CIM missionaries – pioneer workers amongst the Miao Tribe, and he was the eldest brother of Betty (Brookes) died October 2011, Eric – died July 2012, and Valwynne.

From the age of 7, Dr Don attended Chefoo School, the CIM Christian boarding school (4000km away from home) in Shandung, which is now called Yantai.

In 1938 he returned to Adelaide, South Australia, and studied at Adelaide High School for two years, before commencing at Adelaide University in 1940 to commence his studies in Medicine.

It was in 1939 that Dr Don joined the Unley Gospel Chapel - a fellowship that gave him a spiritual foundation for life, further building on the Christian based training he received as a child.

On completing Medicine, Dr Don continued his preparation for missionary service, working as a House Surgeon at the Royal Adelaide Hospital, and later as a locum, and also assisting in general practice. He then went to Sydney where he worked in general Christian work, and found the in-service training in the CYC work immensely helpful. In 1948 he studied for the post graduate Diploma in Tropical Medicine and Hygiene at the Sydney University.

By the age of 7, Dr Don’s one ambition was to be a missionary. 20 years later, in 1948, he was commended for missionary work by the Unley Assembly, and four other South Australian Assemblies of the Christian Brethren.

In April 1949 Dr Don set out on his first missionary journey on a ship from Sydney, headed for Kiangsi Province China, expecting to set up a medical service in one of the country areas. Due to the civil war, and the People’s Army invading the province he was headed for, there was an unexpected detour, and he ended up in Hong Kong, along with hundreds of other missionaries who had left China due to the war.

After liaising with Chinese churches in Taiwan, it was determined that the missionaries would be welcome in Taiwan to work amongst the Mainland Chinese that had come over in the civil service, the military forces, and the refugees who had come to escape the Communists.

On June 11, 1949, Dr Don joined a group of these missionaries flying from Hong Kong to Taiwan, arriving on the beautiful island known as Formosa with 4 US dollars to his name.

After 6 months, the Lord directed Dr Don to head back to Hong Kong, and then 6 months later, in 1950, he went to Penang, Malaya.

In December 1950 Margot Wyld left her home and family in Adelaide, South Australia, and set sail from Perth to Malaya on the “Canton.” Dr Don and Margot were married on January 6th 1951 in the Burmah Road Gospel Hall in Penang.

Dr Don worked at, and was appointed Superintendent of the Government Hospital in Batu Gajah in 1951 and was there for a term of three years. He considered this time a very useful time of training in medical service. Batu Gajah Gospel Hall was a church he helped to plant, which others have nurtured along the way, and the church continues to this day. He also ran a Sunday School for over 80 children, Evangelistic meetings, and Bible studies, and assisted with the Christian work in Ipoh.

In 1954 Dr Don, Margot and two year old Robyn left Malaya for a time of furlough in Australia. During their time in Australia, Deborah was born.

While on furlough, the Lord laid it on Dr Don and Margot’s hearts to make Taiwan their next destination for missionary service. They left Sydney on their voyage to Taiwan, on November 11, 1955, arriving in Taiwan one month and one day later on December 12, 1955. While in Taiwan, there were further additions to the family - Timothy, Christopher and Amy.

Over the next 35 years they grew to deeply love the people of Taiwan, formerly called Formosa – Beautiful Island. 25 of those years were spent in Taichung. Dr Don, with the support of Margot, ran the Ling Kwang (Spiritual Light) Clinic which grew from a small five bed hospital, to the Ling Kwang Hospital – a busy Out Patients Department and 35 bed
During care Dr translating to overseas institutions. It in medical students weekends in him.

Don’s prayer, dedicated to the mission, was used in the church, church youth group, or hospital, come to know the Lord, and go on to grow in their Christian life, and to be diligent in Christian service around the world.

In 1989 Dr Don and Margot returned to Australia. Dr Don spent 8 years as principal of the Gospel Literature Outreach Training Centre in Smithton, Tasmania, which he enjoyed very much, and where God used him to train and equip students from Australia and overseas. Then they moved to Sydney where Margot taught English to students from overseas countries for eleven years. Dr Don visited and taught in Training ministries in South Korea, Malaysia, and Indonesia. There were also opportunities for short term visits to Taiwan, and seminars in Australia, and also in the USA with Korean fellowships.

In 1995 Dr Don was awarded an OAM in recognition of his service as a medical missionary in Taiwan, and his work as principal of the GLO training centre in Smithton, Tasmania.

In 1998 he was awarded the Medical Dedication Award by the Taiwan Government, in recognition of his years of medical service to the country.

In January 2008 Dr Don and Margot moved to Adelaide to be closer to family. They fellowshipped at the Craigmore Christian Centre, where Dr Don had wonderful times of fellowship with some individuals who became very dear to him.

Much of Dr Don’s last years were spent on the computer preparing studies on the shepherd heart of the Lord, and also Local Church principles and practices. Some have been translated for Bible Studies and discipleship equipping in south east Asia. A number of his publications are available to all who may be interested.

Dr Don was promoted to Glory on December 14, 2013, after a few months of illness. He will be remembered for his intimacy with God and for his life time service as a medical missionary, Bible teacher, mentor, and example to all.