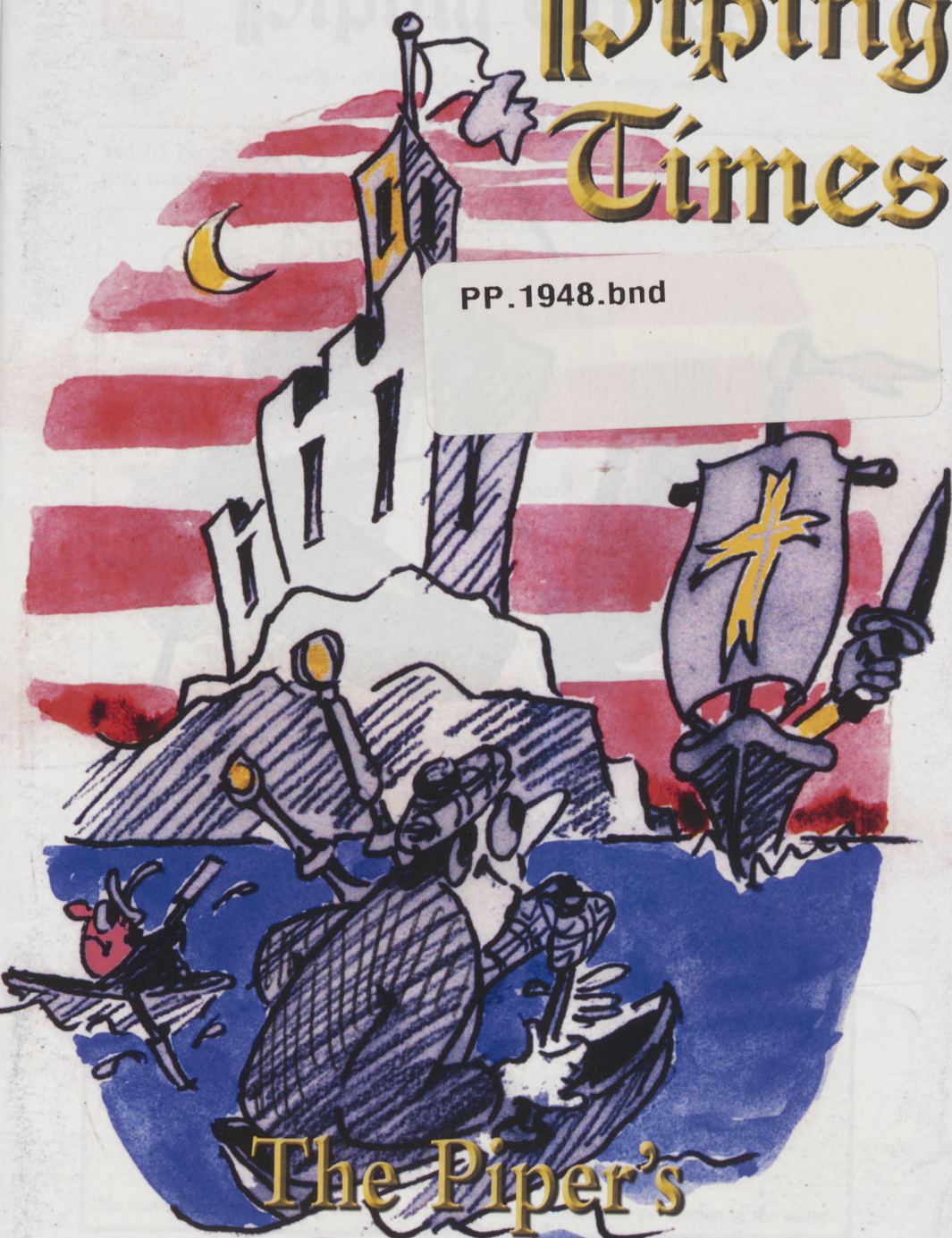


# Piping Times

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No. 5

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**Front Cover:** The red-faced chief escapes as the piper draws the enemy. A lighthearted representation by cartoonist Lorne Brown of interesting new research which may well have uncovered the true story behind the piobaireachd 'The Piper's Warning to His Master'. See page 25.

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# Piping Times

ISS. 1948

**R**EADER Ian Purkis emailed: 'Thank you for the reminder about my subscription. I enjoy reading the PT. I am now 93 and gave up piping about a year and a half ago but still enjoy the magazine and listening to the pipes. I played for about 80 years and have been one of the lucky ones who has had a good and long piping life.'

The first thing about the remarkable Mr Purkis is that he is on email at such a grand age, a lesson to all those cyberphobes over 60 who dismiss computers as something for a younger generation. We replied thanking him for his support and commenting that he was living proof that a life spent in music is a guarantee of happiness and longevity. Listen to 80 year old Archie Cairns with this month's 'Choice Tune' on the PT Extra page of the College website. How about that for neat fingering and even neater composition? And consider the ever young Donald MacPherson who, in his 86th year, actually learned and played the piobaireachds he was judging for last year's SPA composing competition the better to pass impartial judgement on them.

This notwithstanding, the level of your involvement in piping doesn't really matter so long as you enjoy it. Which reminds us of the old story of when jazz legend Louis Armstrong was in Rome and he and his wife were invited to an audience with the Pope. His Holiness remarked that he knew they had been married for 50 years but had not had any children.

'No suh,' said Louis, 'but we sho' had some fun tryin'.' Piping is a bit like that. You may not get that trophy or medal you've always dreamt of, nor fulfil your ambition of playing in a top grade band. No matter. The important thing is to keep on keeping on.

The road can be hard mind you. At times those 'agony bags' as Alex Duthart called them fair test our patience. Sometimes the drones just will not steady up. The crunluath goes (it affects even the best). Then, one fine day, everything comes good and the great Highland bagpipe rewards our toil with its glorious effect.

What to remember is that everything is relative. Set your goals too high and you live the life of the constant underachiever imprisoned by your own inadequacy. More healthy is the 'be the best you can be' approach. Accept that you might not always get where you want to, but resolve to move earth to get there – and that you are not going to die wondering. Never played ceol mor? Never joined a band? Eighteen or eighty there is no time like the present. Get out there and get it done. In piping, personal goals are just as important as those artificially set for us by the competition or examination systems.

So as we move into the new year think about having a go at those aspects of our music you have so far left untouched – and lay aside your magazine for a moment for a well-deserved round of applause for Mr Purkis.



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## Pipe Bands Plan a Two Week Long Festival of Music and Competition

BY PIPING TIMES REPORTERS

A fortnight of piping and pipe band activities is to be organised in Northern Ireland and Scotland, according to reports in the Pipe Band Magazine. From July next year the European Pipe Band Championships will move to Belfast on the last weekend in July, two weeks before the World Championships at Glasgow Green. The Northern Ireland Branch of the Royal Scottish Pipe Band Association will organise a festival of piping and pipe band related activities to be held in the Province after the Europeans. The following Saturday will be minor contests in either or both Scotland and Ulster and then the band focus will shift to Glasgow and the week running up to the World Championships.

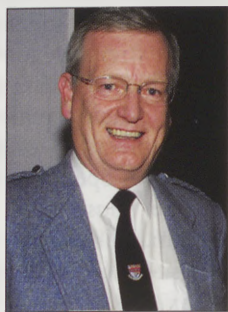
Organisers see the new arrangements as having huge marketing potential. In particular they expect it to prove attractive internationally giving overseas pipe bands more incentive to make the trip to the UK each summer to compete. The new set up has been planned to run

from 2010 till 2012 inclusive and if successful is likely to become a permanent fixture. It has been given the full backing of the RSPBA National Council and also the local authorities in the two cities, says the magazine. It goes on: 'Glasgow City Council Marketing are keen to develop the potential of 'Super Summer' working with their counterparts in Belfast. Reaction from bands around the world has been extremely positive. They will be able to travel to the UK and take in

two of the major championships of the year so improving the financial viability of making the trip. There is good transport infrastructure and plenty of affordable

accommodation in both cities. The new development coincides with (RSPBA) Headquarters accepting cash offers from local authorities for the Majors for 2010, 2011 and 2012 bringing in an estimated income of £300,000. And this could increase even further if a sponsor for the Worlds is found – difficult but not impossible in the current financial climate.'

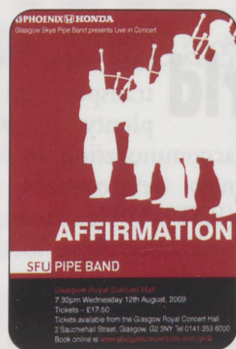
Ian Embelton (left), Chief Executive of the RSPBA said: 'We believe the changes we will be making next year will make for a great fortnight. Overseas bands in particular will now be able to come



and compete in two major championships and have lots to entertain them in between. There has been great co-operation between the local authorities involved and also the various branches of the RSPBA.'

Meanwhile it has been confirmed that this year's major 'World's Week' pipe band concert will be given by Simon Fraser University PB on Wednesday 12th August. Entitled 'Affirmation' the concert is promoted and hosted by the Phoenix Honda Glasgow Skye Pipe Band.

The promo blurb reads: 'Led by Pipe Major Terry Lee and Lead Drummer J. Reid Maxwell the band consists of a talented core of over forty players. Five times World Champions and the current World Pipe Band and World Drum Corps Champions, 'Affirmation' presents an opportunity to hear one of the world's greatest pipe bands entertain and thrill the audience with a performance of new, traditional and favourite compositions in the world's favourite pipe band concert venue.'



### *Piobaireachd Society*

THE Piobaireachd Society is developing a new member's area of their popular website. The plan is that this area will include a wider range of sound files, articles of

interest, and conference proceedings. Members can register online if they:

- Go to the main page at [www.piobaireachd.co.uk](http://www.piobaireachd.co.uk) and click on 'Register'
- Fill in the sections in the usual way, but
- Fill in name, followed by the word 'member'
- Fill in User Name – own choice
- Fill in email address
- Fill in password – own choice and it will be unique
- Fill in Confirm Password
- Then register

This information will go to the Society webmaster John Dow who will immediately update the records of new members. As soon as this is confirmed, registrations will be activated. When this happens the wording on the login button will be changed to 'Members login' and a new button named 'Members area' will appear at the top of the main menu. Clicking this will take you to the main page of the new section. All Society members are asked to register on the site as soon as possible according to these instructions.

As the PT went to press there were more than 60 tunes in the members area of the site. Webmaster John Dow said: 'Organisations such as the BBC and individual pipers have been extremely generous with their recordings allowing us to build up a valuable audio archive.'

Membership of the Piobaireachd Society is open to all with an interest in the music and costs £15 per annum. Join online via the College website at [www.college-of-piping.co.uk](http://www.college-of-piping.co.uk).



## College of Piping Lecture 2009

Pipers for the College of Piping Lecture 2009 are Dr Angus MacDonald (bottom) and John Angus Smith.

During the talk to be given by Dr John Purser (right) the renowned historian, musician and writer, they will play four tunes 'MacNeill is Lord There', 'Sound of the Waves', 'MacKinnon's Lament' and 'Finlay's Lament'.

Dr Purser's talk is entitled 'Visualising Piobaireachd – Landscape, Form and Image'. The Lecture will be given in Fisher's Hotel, Pitlochry, Perthshire, at 7.30pm on March 20. Admission is £10 either in advance or at the door and the price includes refreshments and whisky tasting. Email: [college@college-of-piping](mailto:college@college-of-piping) or call 0141 334 3587 to reserve a seat.



## Uist and Barra Piping

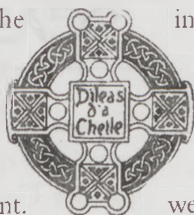
THE first major professional solo competition of the year, the Uist and Barra will be held at the College of Piping on March 14 beginning at 9am. Fifteen of the top pipers in the country will compete in Piobaireachd, MSR and Jig. There will be five prizes in each event. Judges for the piobaireachd are Iain MacFadyen and Andrew Wright. Light Music will be judged by Willie Morrison and Barry Donaldson. There will be five prizes in each event.

The winner of the Piobaireachd receives the Glasgow Highland Club Medal presented by the GHC President.

Admission is £5. There is ample parking in the streets surrounding the College, particularly in Belmont

Street. Those coming by public transport can get any bus which goes along Great Western Road alighting at Kelvinbridge. The Glasgow Underground station at Kelvinbridge is a three minute walk from the College. U&B Convenor James MacLean said: 'Pipers will be notified in advance of their tunes. We will be continuing with the Jig contest re-introduced last year. Everything is in place for a superb day of piping and I can guarantee a warm welcome.'

Still on the competition front details have been issued regarding the Donald MacLeod Memorial to be held on 3rd April at 10.30am at the Caladh Inn, Stornoway. The eight competitors are as follows: Willie MacCallum, Angus MacColl, Chris





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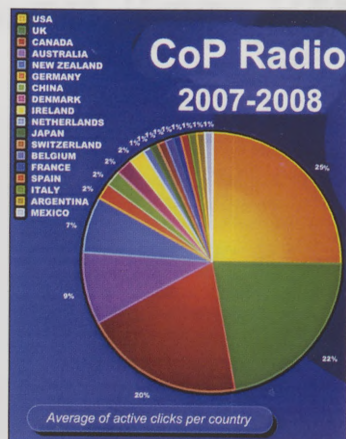
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## CoP Radio Statistics

NEW statistics show that College of Piping Radio is attracting thousands of listeners each month. Around 2,000 tune in via the CoP website and many more via an independent internet radio station, Radio Six. The pie chart shows that the majority of CoP listeners are in the United States followed closely by the UK. CoP Radio, hosted by Principal Robert Wallace, is broadcast on the 15th of each month. It is available free of charge.

The show tries to feature live music as much as possible and concentrates on mainstream piping and pipe bands. Each show has a 'Piobaireachd of the Month' and usually an archive feature. The next



show will be broadcast from February 15. Tune in via the College website. Contributions welcome. Email the usual address for the PT.

Armstrong, Gordon Walker, Niall Stewart, Alan Bevan, Jack Lee and Iain Speirs. The admission fee is £10 per person which includes a free programme. The three judges are Andrew Wright, Iain MacFadyen, John McDougall and Fear an Tighe is John Wilson.

Later this month sees the Scottish Qualifier for the Lorient Festival MacCrimmon Trophy. This too will be held at the College of Piping. The date is February 21 and time 7.30pm. Ten pipers will compete playing a five or six minute selection and three will go forward to the final in Lorient, Brittany, on August 2nd. Admission is £4 (£2 for juveniles) and seniors are free.

• Pipe Major Robert Mathieson five times winner of the World Pipe Band Championship title with his band Shotts and Dykehead has joined the teaching staff for the College of Piping Winter School 2009. The school at Bruggen, north Germany,



runs from February 8-15 and has attracted more than 80 piping and drumming students. Principal Robert Wallace said: "We are

delighted to have someone of P/M Mathieson's stature joining the team of experts at Bruggen for what will be another excellent school."



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## *Another Summer Passed and Some Regrets at Having to Return Home*

MALCOLM MCRAE

THE last day of August saw Dugald MacNeill and me judging the Piobaireachd event at the Scottish Pipers' Association Competition at the College of Piping in Glasgow. The new recital auditorium is an ideal venue for such an event – a good acoustic, and tuning rooms in close proximity. Jonathan Greenlees' 'The Little Spree' and Iain Marshall's 'Lament for the Earl of Antrim' were both good performances.

Onwards to the Northern Meeting where Jack Taylor, Angus MacLellan and I judged the Gold Medal. A detailed report has already been carried in the PT. Twenty eight played. As at Oban, the best tunes were first class, but too many of the performances which did not make the prize list were disappointing. At this level we should hear a more consistent standard of performance, rather than the many instances of note errors, poor technique and poor musical presentation which marred so many of the tunes. An increasing number of players seems to treat cadence (and introductory) Es in a perfunctory manner, passing too quickly onto the following theme note and thus ignoring the significance of the E to proper expression. Surely they are not misled by the conventional writing of the E as a gracenote? With the ready availability of so many recordings of good



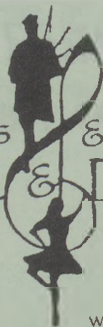
*Jonathan Greenlees, the winner at last year's SPA Professional*

piobaireachd players, past and present, and of modern means of communication with good teachers world wide, there can be no excuse for poor musical presentation of tunes.

### *Braemar*

My summer piping sojourn ended with the Piobaireachd events at Braemar and Blairgowrie. Although some 20 pipers had entered for Braemar, only 11 played – perhaps the rest had taken note of the weather forecast, which predicted cold and rain. The day was indeed cold, but dry, with blustery wind. The standard of playing, however, was surprisingly

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good. Andrew Rogers won with 'I Got a Kiss of the King's Hand', well presented on a good pipe. Second was Greg Wilson ('My King has Landed in Moidart'), his tune spoiled only by a slight imbalance in crunluath movements. Jamie Forrester played a musical 'Lament for Donald Duaghal MacKay', although too slow in the doubling of the Urlar and the singlings of taorluath and crunluath variations. Martin Kessler was fourth with 'The Earl of Seaforth's Salute' – some false changes, and a chanter rather too light for the drones; Innes Smith fifth with a too cautious 'King's Taxes', and Duncan Watson sixth with the Donald MacDonald setting of 'The Stewarts' White Banner', raising again questions of interpretation of MacDonald's method of writing tunes on the stave, particularly in relation to the playing of his embellishments.

Blairgowrie saw a good turnout of pipers, particularly for the B and C Grade Piobaireachd, judged by Norman Matheson and me. Again, the standard of playing was high, despite it being a cold day, and the best tunes compared favourably with many of those heard in the Gold Medal at Inverness a few days earlier. Neil Hall was first, with a smartly played 'Corrienessan's Salute' on a good pipe. Cameron Drummond was second with 'The MacDougalls' Gathering', well expressed on another good pipe, but with a note missed in the last line of the tune. Third was Roderick Weir – 'The Massacre of Glencoe'; some questions of expression, but sound technique and a good pipe.



*Neil Hall, a winner at Blairgowrie*

Andrew Bonar was fourth – 'Lament for the Earl of Antrim' – minor issues of technique and presentation but nevertheless a good performance; and Faye Henderson was fifth – 'The Rout of the MacPhees', neatly played.

It is with regret that I departed once more for Australia, although some sunshine would be welcome. The piping to which I listened around the competitions (453 performances!) will serve as a tonic to sustain me until I return again next summer. Although I am able to meet and play regularly with other piobaireachd enthusiasts such as Roy Gunn, Iain Bruce and Ross Campbell, there seems to be less interest in solo piping in Australia now than was the case a generation ago. This is disappointing, but I am hopeful that the situation will improve in time.



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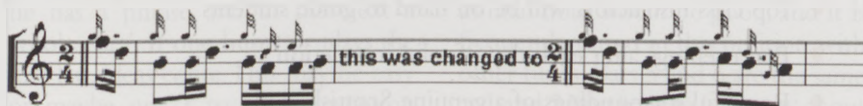
## *Creating New Bagpipe Music And Explaining the Inexplicable*

DR BRUCE THOMSON

The only way of fulfilling the mission described in our headline is to literally develop a new tune from scratch. I can only show you how I set about it, not having had the privilege of looking over another composer's shoulder. As previously, this is being done to promote discussion, develop ideas and hopefully encourage others to start composing. My qualification for attempting this explanation is that I have composed and written down over 400 tunes in 40 years and a surplus has landed in the waste paper basket. So this is a well worn track. As my friend the late Pipe Major Brian MacRae used to say, I had too much manuscript paper.

To begin; the original phrase of the tune below appears to come from outer space but of course it is based on bits and pieces stored in the memory, and as in the previous article, the appearance of these scraps of music is much helped by going mentally through pipe and Scottish traditional music as a habit during the day, or even night.

### Initial phrases



It is often at this stage that several characteristics of the future tune become apparent. It is probably a 2/4 of the sort that goes only to two parts. It has the initial feel of a tune that would be in a minor key on any other instrument. It could turn out to be a march, slow march or slow air but we will have to see how it develops. All these ideas could go by the board. It would be too tedious to indicate singly all the changes that were introduced, so I will show them part by part and indicate the changes as we go along. Actual note changes, length, position etc. alter the structure of a tune and, thus a note change from say D to E or quaver to semi-quaver can alter in one fell swoop, the tone, the timing even the melody, so they should only be undertaken after much consideration, practical and theoretical.

### The initial first part







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Here's just one of the many endorsements from the 2008 school:

*'Would just like to thank everybody concerned for the great week Craig had at Carbisdale. The tutoring was fantastic! Craig went to Carbisdale not knowing anybody but came*

*home full of enthusiasm and full of praise about all the people there. I would especially like to thank you all for the scholarship Craig received to return to the course next year. We are all absolutely delighted about this and Craig cannot wait to return. His tutor Louise Hay was also very impressed. Thank you all once again.'*

*Paula MacKenzie*

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On reading 'The Traditional and National Music of Scotland' by Francis Collinson, this would appear to be a tune built on a Hexatonic Scale, in that it uses only six of the seven note scale. C would appear to be the missing note although it appears twice as a short link note. Tunes of this type are using a gapped scale and it is this system that gives the feeling of the Scottish native idiom. This was not in my mind when I thought of the original phrase and comes into the development of the tune. However the whole tone and construction of the tune can be foreseen in that first phrase. The progression from there is due to thought, trial and error. You may well be saying, 'he is talking about developing a tune and one moment he has a phrase and in the next a whole part'. If one hums or plays the first bar, ideas come. This may be easy or maybe not. I try each invention over and over on the practice chanter. It becomes plain whether the new music is going to fit in and the great thing is that it is not irrevocable. If there is no good result remember Robert the Bruce, and just try again. Should there be no progress walk away and sleep on it. I have always found that the next morning very often shows up the parts that are not going to work and produces new ideas that will work.

To achieve originality, you should minimise the number of phrases that have been worn out by repetition or at least present them in a different guise or light. Of course these phrases cannot be entirely avoided nor should they be, as some of them are the very

essence of pipe music. This particular tune is reasonably free of the hackneyed phrase.

The first bar uses the lower notes of the scale and so I tried to insert a higher note in the second bar and a still higher one in the third. The fourth bar is of the utmost importance in most pipe tunes as it tends to reappear in every part albeit with minor variations. This is the point at which to mention the consumer. Making a tune attractive and original is of course important but please make it memorable for the average player as well as people playing other instruments. Seamus MacNeill used to say that any worthwhile tune on the pipes should be playable on any other instrument and sound good. To go back to the fourth bar I felt that E as final note would be good, and it is frequently found in this position with other tunes. Bars 5 and 6 are the same as 1 and 2. You have to be happy about this, you do not want the tune to sound too 'samey'.

Now we come to the Ending. I use a capital E because of its importance. All one needs to do is to think of such brilliant endings as 'John MacDonald of Glencoe', 'Kantara to El Arish', 'Conan Bridge', 'Colonel Robertson' and 'Farewell to the Creeks' to realise that these tunes grow greatly in stature because of their endings. As I said in a previous article, my system is to keep humming or playing the preceding bars until an ending literally appears. Very often there are several, similar to each other. With frequent runs through one of them usually takes the lead. My ending ends in D which seemed to be

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the natural inclination of the tune but it could end on another note quite easily. Important though the ending is, it must be subservient to the tune with a touch of originality and the capacity to finalise each part. So you will find that the ending plays quite an important role in how the tune develops.

Below is the final result of the first part. You will note a few changes. Obviously I felt they were an improvement on the original and you are quite at liberty to disagree and perhaps prefer the original or think of a different solution. Other endings tried are appended below.

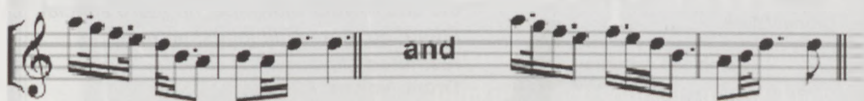


The changes are obvious and largely down to the way I hear the tune. May I repeat that if you want advice on a tune do not go to the relatives and chums as they will naturally flatter you, rather, approach a seasoned player. You may be told a few home truths but these you can put to good use.

The 1st phrase in the second bar has lost the low A. In the 2nd bar the 2nd E has become an F. There is a radical change in the 1st phrase of the 4th bar as I felt the part was overloaded with double Ds. The changes in the ending include the loss of a high G in the first phrase 7th bar and the B and A in the 8th bar have swapped places with an emphasizing birl before them.

Brian MacRae used to say that he often started composing by putting an ending together. He may well have been pulling my leg, but I suspect there was a grain of truth in it and it shows how different composing methods can be.

Other endings tried include the following.



#### 2nd Part



I have always felt that the last part of any tune should include variations on your theme. Once more I point to the fourth part of 'Morag Ramsay' by Pipe-



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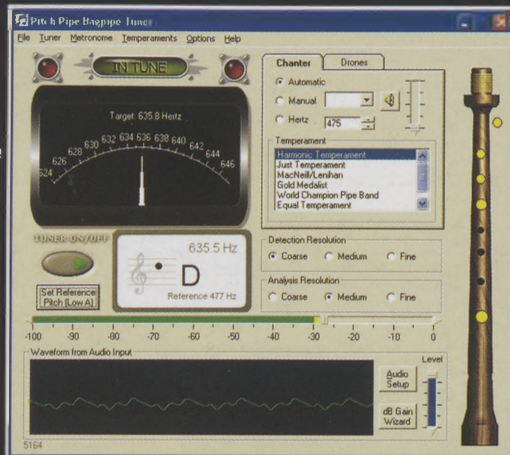
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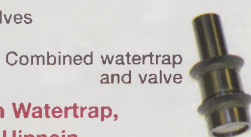
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### *Be A Better Composer*

Major Peter R. MacLeod, page 13, The Edcath Collection compiled by Pipe-Major Donald Shaw Ramsay. The part is true to the tune but produces a totally different flavour.

All that is left is to print it out and give it a name. This last is important as it very often adds and sometimes subtracts from the tune. May I finish by once more emphasising the Editor's point in a recent leading article in The Piping Times. A tune should have a melody. As you can see there is no name yet but I shall work on it. I think that this is a slow march.

• *Do any reader's have suggestions as to how Bruce could improve his tune? Do you agree it comes across as a slow air? Do you think it is any good? Email [thepipingtimes@gmail.com](mailto:thepipingtimes@gmail.com).*

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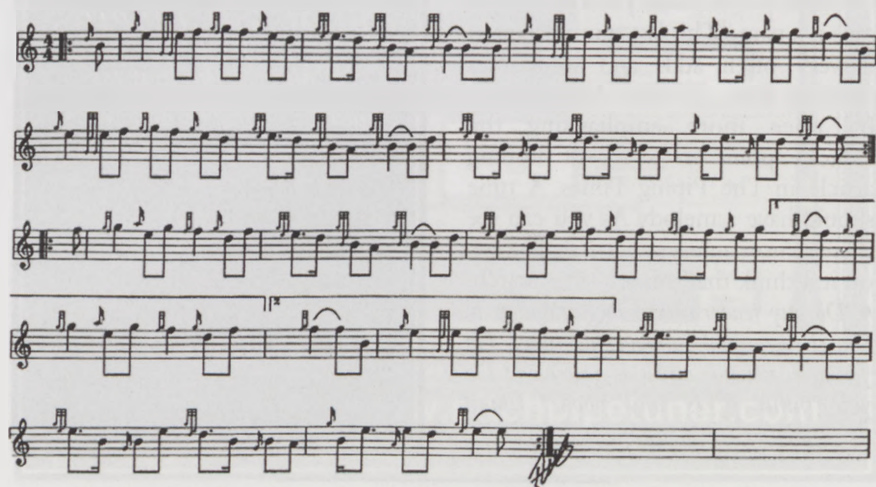
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# Major Archie Cairns, Ontario, Composes

By Maj A.M. Cairns  
April 2007

## Pipe Major William Stirling

March



THE composer Major Archie Cairns, Hamilton, Ontario writes: This is a wee tune I thought you might be interested in as I feel that, although it is a bit out of the ordinary, it has a 'catchy' melody and people who play it quite like it. I composed it for a fellow Pipe Major who has been a friend of mine for over 50 years. 'Willie' is a Scot who, when he was a young man, was a piper in the Seaforth Highlanders and his Pipe Major was John MacLellan. Some time after he left the service in the British Army he enrolled in the Canadian Army and was posted to Canada where he became one of my pipers in the 2nd Battalion, The Canadian Guards. He rose to Pipe Corporal then Pipe Sergeant and, during this time, he followed me on

and attended the Pipe Major's Course at the Army School of Piping, Edinburgh Castle, under the direction of Capt John MacLellan.



He graduated on this course and, when I left the battalion, he succeeded me as Pipe Major. He is an excellent player and very knowledgeable with regard to our instrument and its music.

He is retired and lives in the Ottawa, Ontario area, and this tune is a mark of the respect and high esteem I have for my long-time friend. In



# a New Tune For an Old Army Comrade

fact, to the last bar of each part of the tune, you can sing 'it's Willie Stirling's tune!' Perhaps, if you find it interesting, you might care to share it with others. At any rate I thought you'd like to see it.

On another matter regarding the history of the Army School of Piping, in one account, sent to me by a retired Colonel in the Canadian Forces, there is a 'history' which seems to have been published by those at the School when Stuart Samson was in charge. I was astounded to see that there was NO mention of P/M Wm Ross! I couldn't believe it. Now, in your March 2008 Piping Times, in the article about Steven Small on page 5 when listing the succession of such luminaries as Willie Ross, John MacLellan, John Allan etc there was NO mention of Andrew Pitkeathly! Andrew was a P/M of the Argylls who, when a Cpl. Piper in 1949, won the Gold Medal. He went on to become the Sovereign's Piper (1966-73) and he is the man who succeeded John MacLellan as Director of Army Bagpipe Music, not John Allan. Andrew [above right] was Director from 1976-1981. Yet no one seems to remember him and I don't know why. I first met him in London when, as P/M of the Canadian Argylls, I was sent over to play at the Coronation Ball and, both being Argylls, we struck up a friendship.

• 'P/M William Stirling' can be heard on the PT Extra page played by the composer and I'm happy to put the record straight re Captain Pitkeathly . . . Ed



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## Newspaper Report Sheds New Light On 'The Piper's Warning'

KEITH SANGER

THE various stories along with the tunes associated with the 'The Piper's Warning to His Master' have over the years produced much speculation especially regarding exactly how the music could have conveyed a warning.

In 1982, Alec Haddow in his book on the History and Structure of Ceol Mor, devoted a number of pages to bringing together and analysing the background to this tune, but came to the conclusion that, 'It seems most unlikely that we can ever know what really happened, but the body of tradition is so great that one inclines to the belief that some version of the story is probably true'. Although this account had been the most exhaustive discussion of the tune's background, it did miss one slightly earlier examination of the traditional lore surrounding 'A Cholla Mo Ruin' which appears at the end of an article on 'Colla Ciotach' by Ronald Black in the 'Transactions of the Gaelic Society of Inverness', published in the volume for 1972-74. After discussion of the various merits of Dunaverty, Dunnyveg and Duntroon, the three castles that appear in the various traditional accounts, he proceeded to make a case for Dunnyveg, on Islay, and that it was most likely to have been associated

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Piobaireachd Dhunnaomhaig  
The Piper's Warning to his Master

I. Uilleann

II. Var. I.

III. Var. I. Doubling etc.

IV. Taorluath. V. Doubling. VI. Cruilath. VII. Doubling

Abbreviations used

Written

Played

P.S.B.

with the escape of Colla Ciotach from that castle in 1615. That is where things have rested, apart from occasional discussions regarding what in the tune's structure would have constituted a warning to someone in a boat approaching a castle, now in enemy hands – the basis of the traditional stories. But a recent discovery of a contemporary newspaper report which refers to the event throws some completely new light on what happened. It appeared on Thursday 30 September 1647, in



issue 133, of the 'Moderate Intelligencer', a paper which had been founded in London in 1645. At the end of an article on the final capture and execution of 'Old Cole-Kettogh' it refers back to his previous escape from capture, 'for when they had in those

dayes hoaled this old Rebellious Fox (Cole-Ketogh) in a Castle within an Island, and had ships and force enough to have battered the place and have taken him, he having two or three boats under the Castle in the dark night slipped into one of them, and set a Bag-piper in the other, who playing, All the ships boats followed the sound of the Bag-pipe, while in the mean time, Cole-Kettogh in the other Boat escaped away'.

From what is known about Colla Ciotach, sacrificing his piper as a means to escape is not out of character, and the words to the song, 'A Cholla Mo Ruin', suggest a piper possibly devoted enough to do it, but a somewhat more charitable view of his actions, apart from the fact that the scenario as described does not fit the description of 'Pipers Warning', is that the piper had been placed in the leading boat of the escape attempt with instructions to strike up if it encountered any of the blockading ships which in turn warned off the following boat containing Colla Ciotach, as well as drawing in the rest of the blockading vessels. This would



*The ruin of the Castle of Dunyveg*

also suggest that it was the fact that the piper played rather than what he played that would have constituted 'the warning'. Another aspect of this account that might also add credibility is that the piper was presumably captured at sea, along with the boat. Since those left behind by Colla Ciotach in Dunnyveg had yet to surrender, the predominantly Campbell forces involved in the blockade may have considered simply sailing the captured piper and boats crew to the security of the Campbell Castle at Duntroon for imprisonment the easiest option given the prevailing winds and tides. It would also nicely explain the reason why the confusion between the two castles would have arisen in the traditional stories, especially if the captured piper was subsequently executed while still at Duntroon.

The full text of the newspaper report reads: 'Old Cole - Kettaigh who was taken in the Cliffs. not far from the last conquered Castle, in the Highlands, held out by himself (out of which he was stealing away by the Rocks) was lately brought prisoner in Captain Brown's ship

to Burnt Island, and after sent Westward to the Armie, there sentenced and on the fifteenth of September hanged; the deserved end of one that had been out-Lawed, and in Rebellion in this Kingdon for the space of six and thirty years: 'Lieutenant Generall Leslie's horse hath done more in leven months, as to the extirpation of this and other outlaws and Rebels in the Red (Shankes?) countrey, then King James his Warriours could do in seventeen years; for when they had in those days hoaled this Rebellious Fox

(Cole – Kettogh) in a Castle within an island, and had ships and force enough to have battered the place, and taken him, he having two or three boats under the Castle in the dark night slipped into one of them and set a Bag-piper in the other, who playing, all the ships boats followed the sound of the bag-pipe, while in the mean time, Cole – Kettogh in the other Boat escaped away. The marquis of Argile's countrey is extreemly depopulate; scarce an inhabitant in 80 or 100 miles together on the sea coast; both man, woman and childe (of those that were in the Rebellion) went to pot, being throwen downe the Rocks, and other odd deaths; most, or all the

Old Cole-Kettogh who was taken in the Cliffs, not far from the last conquered Castle, in the Highlands, held out by himself, (out of which he was fleashing away by the Rocks) was lately brought prisoner in Captain Brown's ship to Burnt Island, and after sent Westward to the Armie there sentenced, and on the fifteenth of September hanged; the deserved end of one that had been out-Lawed, and in Rebellion in this kingdom for the space of six and thirty years: 'Lieutenant Generall Leslie's horse hath done more in leven months, as to the extirpation of this and other outlaws and Rebels in the Red-Shankes countrey, then King James his Warriours could do in seventeen years; for when they had in those days hoaled this old Rebellious Fox (Cole-Kettogh) in a Castle within an island, and had ships and force enough to have battered the place, and have taken him, he having two or three boats under the Castle in the dark night slipped into one of them, and set a Bag-piper in the other, with playing. All the ships boats followed the sound of the Bag-pipe, while in the mean time, Cole-Kettogh in the other Boat escaped away. The marquis of Argile's countrey is extreemly depopulate, scarce an Inhabitant in 80 or 100 miles together on the sea-coast both man, woman and childe (of those that were in Rebellion, went to pot, being throwen downe the Rocks, and other odd deaths: most, or all the Highlands are now quiet, except where the Marquis of Huntley still sculks to and fro with 40 or 50 followers, and no more as is said; but its to be wished, they may not again unhappily prove as a snow-ball. All seems quiet at present.

The clipping from the 'Moderate Intelligencer'

Highlands are now quiet, except where the Marquis of Huntley still sculks to and fro with 40 or 50 followers, and no more as is said; but its to be wished, they may not again unhappily prove as a snow-ball. All seems quiet at present.' Moderate Intelligencer (London) Thurs., 30 September, 1647, issue 133.



The Castle of Duntroon

## *College Has a History of Pipe Bands Going Back More Than Sixty Years*



*The College band in Brittany in 1953.  
Seumas MacNeill can just be seen bringing up the rear*

---

BY JEANNIE CAMPBELL

---

THE College's new training and development pipe band is now in full practice for the coming season and a registration application has been forwarded to the RSPBA to allow the band to compete at all the 2009 major championships. I have some background on previous College bands that I'd like to share. The suggestion that the College should have a pipe band was first made in 1950 and was announced at the AGM in the autumn of that year. In 1953 when a party from the College played on a tour of Brittany the band consisted of 33 pipers and

three drummers, a proportion which was considered about right for the combination of pipers and drummers. It was reported that 'As a spectacle, the College band of all the pipers was quite satisfactory, and for the presentation of marches, strathspeys, reels, slow airs and jigs of competition type the small band of nine pipers, three of them professional, was more than just very good.' Included in the band were Pipe Major Iain Thomson and pipers Finlay MacNeill, Duncan and Iain MacFadyen, Evan MacKay, Robin Bennett, Bobby MacLeod (of accordion fame), Jimmy Wilson,



Kenneth MacLean, Vic Black, Donald MacNeill, James (Glug) Mortimer, John (Creepy) Crawley, Grace Brown, Duncan Turner, Beryl Thompson, Barbara Laycock and a host of others. Seumas MacNeill was in overall charge but did not play with the band. Drum instructor Bobby MacGregor was in charge of the drum corps which at times included Finlay MacNeill on the bass drum when he wasn't playing as Pipe Sergeant.

By 1954 the College had a juvenile band and neighbours during the Spring of that year were warned that the uproar emanating from the College on Monday evenings was only the sound of the junior band at practice and the occasional howl was no more than the exasperated cry of the instructor. The 'wee' band was coming along well and there was a marked improvement from week to week. They were practising hard in preparation for an important engagement in London where they were to play at the Festival Hall on July 25th. The visit to London by the junior band, with Jimmy Wilson in

charge, was a great success. The young band members, aged from nine to sixteen, spent two weeks in London staying with host families and had the time of their lives seeing all the sights and meeting young people from all over the world, brought together by the organisation Worldfriends for an International Youth Cavalcade at the Festival Hall which included the College band among the performances. The band members wore their own kilts but some uniformity was achieved by the white shirts with iron-on College badges.

By this time Colonel Brodie Hepburn and the officers of the 3rd Dunbartonshire Home Guard had donated a set of drums, three sets of pipes and a sum of money. A Mr Sandeman of South Africa had donated a set of pipes and some chanters. By 1957 The Junior band was registered with the Pipe Band Association and the young pipers were consequently eligible to play in the SPBA solo contests. The Glasgow Branch competition in February 1957 was confined to members of bands in

the branch who had never played in a professional contest and 66 pipers had entered. Six finalists were chosen to play off for the prizes the following month. The adjudicator was P/M John MacAllister of Shotts and Dykehead. Each competitor played a slow march and a quick march of their own choice. A feature of the result was that all the



*The first College juvenile pipe band*

*(continued on page 57)*



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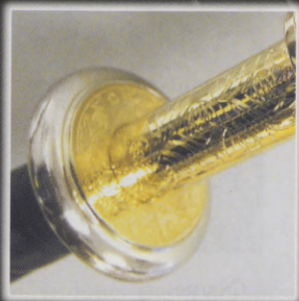
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## *Brigadier Roderick 'Rory' Walker OBE, MC*

**F**EW in the piping world will have been aware of the stellar military career of Brigadier Rory Walker, former Piping Convenor of the Northern Meeting. Rory, who died last year aged 76, was a former SAS commander. Once, whilst at the besieged British Embassy in Jakarta, he played his pipes up and down in front of the building and faced down a rioting mob, earning a temporary reprieve. Two days later the rioters returned and burnt down the building.

His former Army colleagues remember his dedication to the pipes and their music. Rory composed a tune for the Queen's Silver Jubilee in 1977. When he heard that the Royal Yacht Britannia was to pass near a base where he was serving he commandeered a boat, had himself rowed out to sea and stood playing his tune as Her Majesty, Britannia et al sailed by.

Rory Walker was an outstanding Piping Convenor of the Northern Meeting talking over from David Murray in the 1980s and steering the competition through its bicentenary and the difficult boycott years before handing over the reins of control, the competition in sound heart and finances. He was a long time member of the Royal Scottish Pipers' Society. His last few years had been dogged by ill health but he attended as many meetings as was possible and continued to make the journey to the Northern Meeting from his home in Perthshire whenever his health



allowed. Here is how the London Times reported his passing:

'Rory Walker was the assistant military attaché at the British Embassy in Jakarta when President Sukarno of Indonesia decided to demonstrate his opposition to the recently enlarged Federation of Malaysia. On September 16, 1963, an organised mob attacked the Embassy of the 'imperialist' power responsible for bringing about Malaysia's inclusion of the North Borneo territories Sukarno claimed. The defence attaché, Lieutenant-Colonel Bill Becke, and Walker strode up and down in front of the building to face the rioters down — Walker playing his bagpipes with no concession to restraint.

The resolution of the two attachés — and Walker's withering bagpipe barrage, saved the Embassy, but two days later the rioters returned, pulled down the fence, smashed the

## OBITUARY

windows and set the building on fire. Most of the Embassy staff were elsewhere, but Becke and Walker forced their way through the mob to join the Ambassador, Sir Andrew Gilchrist, taking a stand on British sovereign territory and to prevent the strong room being broken open.

Indonesian 'confrontation' with Malaysia took the form of a three-year campaign in the jungle-covered hills of North Borneo that ended with victory for the Commonwealth forces in 1966.

Roderick 'Rory' Muir Bamford Walker was born in 1932. After Cheltenham College and RMA Sandhurst, he was commissioned into the Sherwood Foresters in 1952. He later transferred to the Intelligence Corps and then joined 22 Special Air Service Regiment as a troop commander.

He won his Military Cross in December in an operation in Oman that was daunting even by SAS standards. Lured by the prospect of oil being discovered in the north-western region of the country, three tribal leaders had raised an insurrection against Sultan Said bin Taimour, of Oman, and, after it was put down, took refuge on the Jebel Akhdar, the Green Mountain. From the central plateau of this feature measuring 18 by 12 miles, standing 6,500ft above the coastal plain and ringed by mountains 8,000 ft high, the three ringleaders continued to foment rebellion.

Surprise attack was inhibited by the few precipitous approaches to the plateau being easily held by a handful of determined defenders. Moreover, the long climb with weapons and water carried in extreme temp-



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eratures made dehydration a potentially lethal factor.

D Squadron 22 SAS, commanded by Major (later Lieutenant-General Sir) John Watts (obituary December 15, 2003), was summoned from Malaysia where the communist emergency was drawing to a close. Having lost an experienced corporal to sniper fire during a daylight reconnaissance, Watts decided to move only under cover of darkness, the cool night hours also reducing the risk of dehydration.

On December 27, 1958, in a preliminary approach to test enemy strength and reaction, two groups led by Walker gained a lodgement on the north side of the Jebel. As they climbed a rope fixed to the rock face, a rebel called in English from above: 'Come on, Johnny.' Steadying himself in a cleft in the rock, Walker pulled the pin from a grenade and hurled it over the lip above him. It killed one of the enemy and scattered the rest. Walker and his men reached the plateau and by dawn they had killed another eight.

Although the SAS had secured a toehold on the northern edge of the plateau, it was clear that a larger force was required to defeat the rebels. A second SAS squadron was summoned from Malaysia and a complex night



*Rory Walker talks to the late Ronald Morrison, left, and Malcolm McRae at the launch for the new College of Piping building which later became the Piping Centre*

approach planned by the regiment's commanding officer, Lieutenant-Colonel (later Major-General) Tony Deane-Drummond, incorporating deception, disinformation and dummy manoeuvres. Supported by other British troops, an element of the Sultan's armed forces and an air strike by Venom ground-attack aircraft, the two SAS squadrons cleared the plateau of the rebels; although the three leaders slipped away to Saudi Arabia. Walker received the Military Cross.

He went on to command 23 SAS (TAVR), a service involving him in training potential 'stay-behind' parties in northwest Europe in the event of a Warsaw Pact attack. He was appointed OBE on conclusion of his command. He returned to intelligence work and after promotion to brigadier became a deputy commander of a military district in England.

In March 1979 he married Susette Aitchison, who survives him with two sons.'



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## Piping By the Sea at Cancale



Organisers report a strong turnout for the 'Piobaireachd by the Sea' event held each year at Cancale, Brittany. Pipers included P/M Herve Le Floc'h (left), pipe major of the newly promoted Bagad Cap Caval and the well-known Patric Molard (below). 'Piobaireachd by the sea' is held in September each year.



## Monterey

The 42nd Monterey Scottish Games and Celtic Festival will be held on Saturday and Sunday, August 1 and 2, 2009 at County Toro Park, located between Monterey and Salinas on Highway 68. This event brings the music, dance and athletic events of Scotland and Ireland to Monterey County. The festival will offer a variety of live Celtic entertainment with massed pipe bands, and Highland and Irish dancers. For more details, check out: [www.montereyscotgames.com](http://www.montereyscotgames.com)

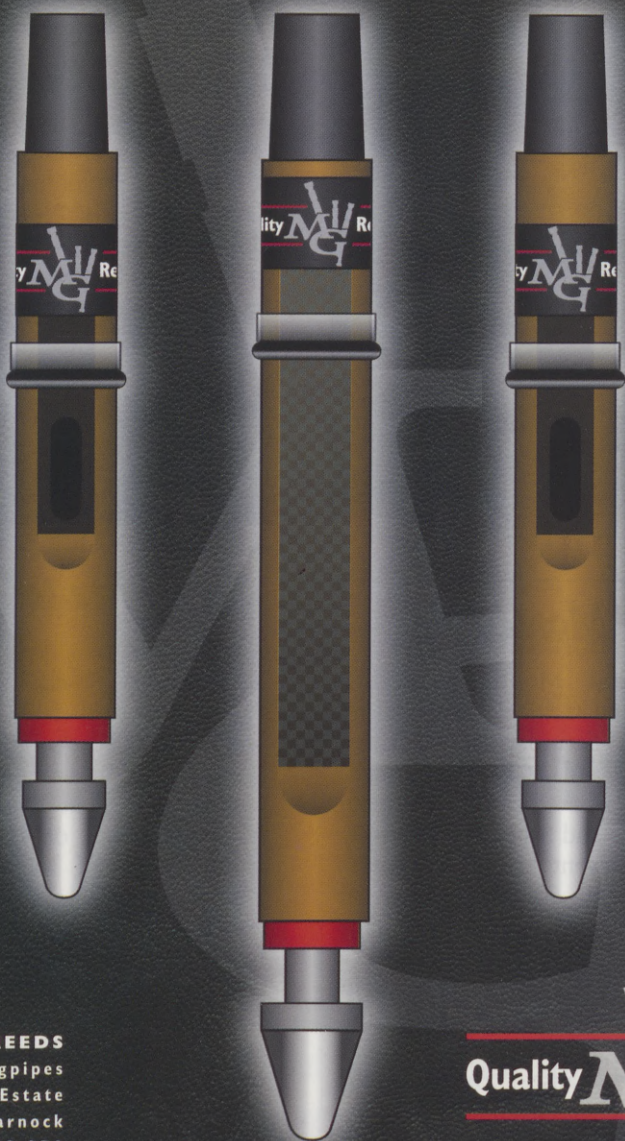
## Malta

Kevin Vella, P/M of the Wallace Pipes & Drums of Malta, reports: On Friday 24th April 2009, a concert will be held and performed by the Red Hot Chilli Pipers at the Grange au Lac in Evian, France. Nine members of the Whisky Connoisseurs of Malta Scottish Pipe Band under the direction of myself will fly in to perform during the first part of the programme. The whole event is creating considerable excitement. Further info and reservations can be obtained by contacting the organiser, Mr. Dick Reader on email. [WhiskyCMalt@aol.com](mailto:WhiskyCMalt@aol.com)



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## Recital

The Royal Scottish Pipers' Society are holding a recital in Stewart's Melville College, Edinburgh, on March 7th. Pipers are G Walker, R MacLeod and G West; tickets £10 from 01620 842146.

## North East Chanter Banter

Aberdeen Piping Project's newsletter 'Chanter Banter' reports: The initial six months of the Piping Pilot, Jan-July 2008 ended with most of the 114 chanter learners continuing until July and receiving completion certificates. Creative teaching was encouraged throughout the pilot with Senior Tutor Robert Aitken and tutor Donal Brown devising teaching aids and musical games. Later in the pilot we were able to offer support to the existing pipers and recruit some new starts at Alford Academy with Ian Dallas visiting weekly and joining the team. Tutors crowned the pilot by bringing twenty learners from the Primaries and four pipers from Alford to the YMI Showcase Concert at Meldrum Academy in June. All the young performers wowed the audience, which included Bruce Robertson, Aberdeenshire's Director of Education, Learning and Leisure, with their skill, confidence and obvious enjoyment. Now in stage 2, we have followed learners wishing to continue chanter into S1 in three Academies, and have been able to continue tuition for the interested P7 learners in most of the primaries. We were all delighted for lead Pilot Instructor Robert Aitken, passed both his Level 6 Piping and gained his Teachers Certificate in October at The College of Piping. As Robert said: 'Gaining these qualifications will hopefully be a great benefit to piping in the north east. I look to pass on my years of learning for piping locally and use my experiences of the PIDQB system to help anyone interested in sitting any of the piping levels currently available.'

## PT Noticeboard Advertisements

PT Noticeboard ads are free for the first ad. to all PT Subscribers and College of Piping Members. Subsequent ads. cost £25. Copy and pictures should be emailed to [thepipingtimes@gmail.com](mailto:thepipingtimes@gmail.com) or mailed to The Piping Times, 16-24 Otago Street, Glasgow G12 8JH



## *PT Pic of the Month*



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BY PT REPORTER

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**D**ECEMBER'S pic from Oban in the 50s brought forth the following:

Angus Lawrie, Ayr: 'I would hazard a guess that the year is 1954 and the piper in Army uniform with pipes down could be Corporal Yuille. The front rank consists of Capt. John MacLellan, P/M Donald MacLeod, Seumas MacNeill and Ronald MacCallum. Second rank is Willie MacDonald, Hector MacFadyen, P/M Jimmy MacGregor and Jimmy Young. Third rank is Duncan Lamont and extreme right Willie Connell. Fourth rank – Angus Lawrie A & SH. Big Ronnie [Lawrie] can be seen at the rear. I can't make out anyone else.'

David Murray, Somerset: 'Full

marks to Jeannie Campbell for spotting the non-playing piper in the picture of the competing pipers playing on the way to the field at Oban. Students of how things were done fifty years ago should note that the stewards then marched in front of the pipers, frequently out of step with the music except for James Campbell and Dugald Graham-Campbell. The year of the photo is 1958. The march the pipers are playing is the 'The Campbells are Coming', always played after 'The Argyllshire Gathering' as the procession wheels left up to the games field. There are in fact two pipers not playing, Iain MacFadyen and Willie MacDonald (Benbecula). Both were serving in the Cameron

*E-mail all your Pix of the Month to [thepipingtimes@gmail.com](mailto:thepipingtimes@gmail.com) or post to The Piping Times, 16-24 Otago Street, Glasgow G12 8JH, Scotland, UK.*



Highlanders. Iain was doing his recruit training at Cameron Barracks, having won the Northern Meeting Gold Medal the previous year, 1957. He wears the Cameron piper's Number 1 Dress, kilt and plaid in the Royal Stuart tartan. Willie had come up from the 1st Battalion to compete. He wears the glengarry, battle dress blouse, Royal Stuart kilt, and Lovat hose. Willie of course walks 'on the wrong side of his pipes', as the saying went, and his left or disengaged arm is swinging free. Iain was the young piper featured in the story, which soon entered the regimental folklore of the Camerons. I was the Training Major. I think the piper marching behind Willie MacDonald (Inverness) is Duncan Lamont from Pennyghael, Isle of Mull, veteran of both World Wars. One of the cherished piping traditions of the Cameron Highlanders was that 'The Campbells are Coming' was never played. When the tune had to be played in massed bands, the Cameron pipers took their pipes off the shoulder. Back in the National Service days, good pipers tended to opt for good piping regiments. Picture the scene. At Cameron Barracks in Inverness one summer afternoon, one such good young player (a Gold Medallist, bye the bye) is having a blow behind a barrack block. He pauses to adjust a reed; one of the old soldier drummers, Tam Pentland, calls out 'Come on, Iain, give us a tune then!' Another vintage drummer, Joe Murray, famously of 'no fixed abode', chimes in. 'Play 'The Campbells are Coming', Iain! ' 'Right!' says Iain, blows up, and sets about summoning

Clan Campbell. The braggart notes of 'Bha mi aig bhanais am Bail' Inner-aoro' resound across the barracks, beautifully played. The door of the Training Office opens with a crash. Into earshot explodes the Training Major, purple with rage. Long service in bad stations east of Suez has left him short of temper at the best of times. 'Corporal Palfrey!' he roars 'Put that xxxxxxxx piper in the Guard-room!' Corporal Palfrey knows better than to reason why. 'Sir!' Seconds later round the side of the block comes, in double time, knees well up, one bewildered young piper, less pipes, headed for the cells, Corporal Palfrey walking behind, ordering 'Mark Time!' and 'Forward!' as the mood takes him. Clang! The cell door shuts behind the piper. 'Let him out in ten minutes', orders the Major 'And tell him never to play that tune again!'

Jimmy McIntosh, Pittsburgh: 'I think the year was 1959. Front rank: Capt. John McLellan, P/M Donald McLeod, Seumas McNeill, Ronald McCallum. Others: Ronnie Lawrie, Jimmy McGregor, William M. MacDonald. The gentleman not playing is John MacDougall, dressed in his Army uniform. He was a Cameron Highlander and since the group would likely be playing 'The Campbells are Coming', the Camerons were not allowed to play this tune – thus pipes down. The person to his left also has a blowstick in his mouth, but his left hand is actually down at his side.'

• *Who gets the free sub? The irrepressible David Murray of course. Please notify when the current one runs out . . . Sir! . . . Ed.*

## PT Radio Watch

BBC Scotland's 'Pipeline' 10 January: 'I thoroughly enjoyed this interview with Ian MacLellan.' . . . 'Gary West's interview with the famous Ian was something they should keep for the archives.' . . .

## PT Book Watch

From 'James Robertson Justice – What's the Bleeding Time?' by James Hogg (Tomahawk Press) . . . 'Justice's decision to adopt the Robertson tartan may have had to do with a battle with his father, a mining engineer, who actively detested the Scots, 'found them conceited and maudlin and scorned their humour, hated the bagpipes and mocked Burns Night'. It would be one of Justice's amorous ploys to strip down to his underwear and play Mozart on the pipes.'

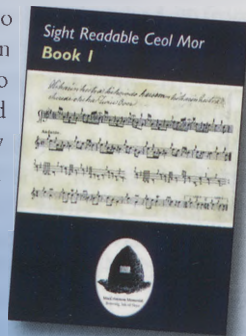
## PT Newspaper Watch

John Angus Smith writing in the 'West Highland Free Press': 'Given the relatively small global piping community it is a real shame that these two 'world championship' events [Glenfiddich and the World Solo Drumming] for solo pipers and drummers clash.'

## Sight Readable Ceol Mor

A new collection by Dugald B. MacNeill

'The name of this book is apt, as it uses staff notation to describe the melodies and rhythms of ceol mor. It is an advance from Bmneas is Boreraig published 50 years ago in which Roddy Ross did away with appoggiaturas and full notes masquerading as gracenotes. He gave every note its correct duration value, making it a very useful publication. 'Sight Readable Ceol Mor' however has bar lines and time signatures. As the erudite Willie Gray once wrote, ceol mor should be able to be described correctly in staff notation. There are 36 popular tunes in this first book. It is priced attractively at £10. For those who wish help in learning the tunes there are two CDs available with or without the book. £5 for the two.' Dugald B MacNeill.



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### McCremon in Ireland

Sir,

Recently I have been pondering the old question of MacCrimmon of Boreraig origins. Seumas MacNeill and Frank Richardson in 'Piobaireachd and its Interpretation' (1987) devote a chapter to the subject. They list the various theories about the origin of the name: (1) the MacCrimmons were Druids or descendents of Druids; (2) they came from Ireland; (3) they were of Norse extraction; (4) they came to Skye from Harris; and (5) their origin was in Cremona, Italy. Each theory is evaluated and the conclusion is that 'we can never know where the MacCrimmons came from' and 'as far as piping is concerned it doesn't matter'.

Yet curiosity will always lead back to the intriguing questions: for example, to the theory of Irish origins. Is there any genealogical evidence to support an Irish connection to the name MacCrimmon? Go to the website [familysearch.org](http://familysearch.org), and there one finds that the name Crimmin has 171 entries going back to the 18th century. These births, deaths and marriages are recorded predominantly in counties Cork and Kerry. This is an amazing preponderance of a name that in another context could, with the prefix Mac, become MacCrimmin. Indeed the family search website gives three instances of McCrummen, also in Co Cork. For example, John McCrummen was born there in 1789. Edward MacLysaght, the authority on Irish genealogy, explains Crimmin and its

variant spellings as coming from 'crom' meaning bent, and is rendered O'Cruimin in Irish.

In written sources another intriguing name is that of McCremon which occurs in the record of an event that took place in the Province of Connacht in 1585. The Province of Connacht includes counties Galway, Leitrim, Mayo, Roscommon and Sligo. Sir John Perrott, Lord Deputy General for Ireland, acting on behalf of Elizabeth I, Queen of England, came to enforce a feudal structure on Gaelic Ireland. This he did through a series of indentures which made the great chiefs of Connacht Crown tenants, together with their dependents. A record was made of these indentures and was called 'The Composicion Booke of Connaught' 1585. A transcript of the original shows the recurrence of the names McCremon, McRemon and McRedmond. G A Hayes McCoy, who wrote an index for the Irish Manuscripts Commission in 1942, observes that the names may be interchangeable and variants of McRedmond (MacReamoinn in Irish). The names McCremon and MacRemon occur with reference to the assignment of lands in the Barony of Clare, Co Galway.

None of this proves a connection with the MacCrimmons in Skye. But here we do have instances of the name McCremon in Ireland from an early time, and a preponderance too of Crimmin. In their book Seamus MacNeill and Frank Richardson argue that because all the



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MacCrimmons in the world can trace their ancestry back to Donald Mor in Skye 1570 then at some time earlier there must have been a name change. They conclude 'the fact is inescapable' that MacCrimmon was not the original name. Could it have been a variation of Crimmin, or McCremon?

**Eric McKimmon**, Ceres, Fife

• *Thank you for this very interesting information. I'd like to invite response from our many piping history buffs . . . Ed.*

## Deconstruction

Sir,

Enclosed is my cheque for a further year's subscription to the Piping Times – although I can't read a note of music. I especially enjoy the deconstruction of the playing at competitions I've been present at, just to see if it matches my enjoyment of the music in question.

**Mrs J Machling**, Castle Douglas,  
Kirkcudbright.

## Building Appeal and PT Tune

Sir,

I wish to suggest that the next time you renew your Building Appeal you contact Breton pipers and drummers. There are about 67 Breton bands, 2,000 musicians, half of them pipers.

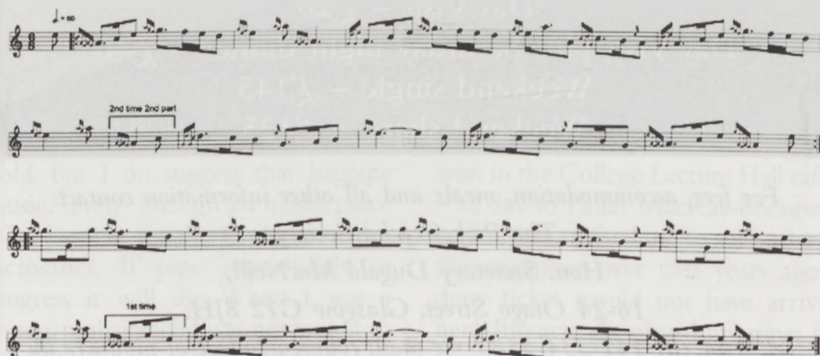
Well, I was alone at home and piping when the postman dropped the last edition of my dear Piping Times in our mailbox. Next thing I know a tune (below) rambled through my head. I worked on it, put it on paper and here it is, a Xmas present for the PT, suitable to play as a march, slow air or to wrap fish. Please accept in advance my best greetings for the upcoming New Year. May it be as the sweetest piece of music for the College, the PT and yourself.

**Alan Dipode**, Brieg, Breizh, France

### The Piping Times

— March —

Alan Dipode, Kemper, Brittany





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*Binneas 50 Years On – Dr Roddy Ross*

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contribution to piobaireachd development*

All welcome. Day visits/Refreshments/Ceilidh

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### 'Pipeline' Problem

Sir,

I tuned in to the programme expecting a history of piping at Queen Victoria School over the past 100 years, as this is the centenary year. What a disappointment it was as it dealt with only the past 10 years. Twenty-four Pipe Majors in the British and Commonwealth forces came through QVS, nine in the Scots Guards, including P/M J.B. Robertson and P/M Angus MacDonald to name but two. P/M John MacKenzie was tutor to the World Championship band in the '60s. There were others who were successful in the field of solo competitions. The front rank of the Scots Guards in the '60s including P/M John Roe were all ex-Dunblane boys as was the D/M Fred Wrisberg. There were also 12 Drum Majors in the armed forces from the school. As an aside, one can also quote that that the Director of Music at Knellar Hall was an old boy as was the Musical Director of the Scots Greys (remember 'Amazing Grace').

Donald MacDonald,  
Old Victorian, Inverness

### 'Pipeline' Praise

Sir,

Here is a snappit following the comment re 'Pipeline'. Perhaps I am bold, but I do suggest that bagpipe music, even the great masterpiece 'The Lament for the Children' is not sacrosanct. If pipe music fails to progress it will die. When I was a young, piobaireachd was not taught to young boys, but then neither was Gaelic. There are strong ties between

the language and the music – there is strong progression today. Piobaireachd set to orchestration would bring our great music out into the wide world with its massive audience. 'Oh to be pure – no matter what the cost' – but can we afford it? Well done the 'Pipeline' presenter. Keep it going.

Finlay MacRae, Dingwall

### Robertson Tutor

Sir,

Thank you for the advert. Very good response indeed – amazing is it not. Thanks to Jeannie for helping to find a copy. The latest reply you kindly printed from Mr Stuart in Aberdeen sadly had no telephone number so unable to call. Have written but as yet no reply. Did not wish him to think he was being ignored that's all. Many thanks again. Wish I lived closer so that I could join your band.

David Thomson, 12 Greenebank,  
Falmouth, TR11 2SW

### Cairn Visit

Sir,

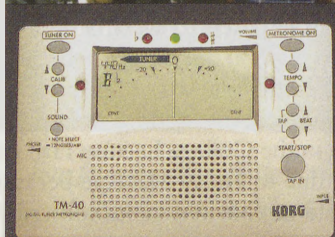
Sorry to have taken so long to send you this photo. I don't know if you wish to use it in a future Piping Times. I started to write a little note to go with it but it soon became a book!! In the picture (overleaf) Jim McGillivray is holding the pipes I won in the College Lecture Hall raffle – all due to Finlay MacRae because if he had not advised me to subscribe to the magazine over two years ago a draw ticket would not have arrived here. Jim actually played my pipes for me the day we met up. I had been in touch by email with him for about

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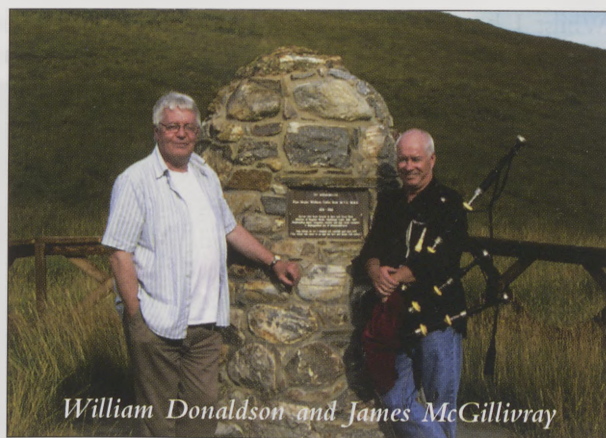
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two years and had been in touch by mail and a couple of phone calls with Willie Donaldson, Aberdeen. I promised Willie that in 2008 we would meet up. Willie picked up Jim from Oban and they drove on up to meet me at the Cnoc Inn for a light lunch. We then drove up to the cairn [Willie Ross's]. Willie played



*William Donaldson and James McGillivray*

his old Henderson pipes and Jim played 'Loch Monar' and 'Leaving Port Askaig' – my favourite tune. I have heard it played many times but never heard it played so beautifully by Jim on my pipes. Jim informed me that he gets his pupils to play it several times in a month -- odd and quite uncanny -- as is everything I have experienced up to and after the unveiling of the cairn to my papa. The piping world was so generous in contributing. I won't bore you any more with all my tales but just to say that one highlight of 2008 for me was having my son and grandson at the Strathpeffer Games where we presented the Cairn/Strathfarrar Cup to Cameron Bell, a pupil of Finlay's. To have Willie Ross's great grandson and great great grandson there was for me out of this world. Then to meet up with Jim (who was over for the judging) for the first time along with Willie Donaldson was just terrific. Both were quite charming, real gentlemen. We had such an amazing afternoon. They didn't leave the glen until 6pm and even visited the

graveyard at Struy where papa's late mother, my great granny is buried. Jim and Willie then drove off back to Aberdeen. Jim was staying with Willie till he had to return to Inverness for the Northern Meeting. I found out that both chaps write emails to each other nearly every week and had done so for over five years but had never met till Willie picked Jim up from Oban. The piping world seems to be a big family with the love of the music holding everyone in a strong bond. I hope you like the picture. The weather was glorious with a breeze that kept the midges away thank goodness – and the heather was in full bloom. The scent was wonderful.

Lesley Ross Alexander,  
Newton Tracey, Devon.

### Synthetic Reed

Sir,

Although still a novice on the bagpipes due to work constraints, I would like to seek your advice on writing an article on the use of the synthetic pipe chanter reed which I have used now for over eight years.



Whilst I have every respect for the traditional cane reed, I have found this reed a particularly useful transition/compliment to the traditional practice chanter reed when practicing the bagpipes. Whilst I am not sure how many followers there are of this type of reed, I have found that those that I have mentioned it to, and indeed subsequently tried it, have been impressed. Any feedback on my suggestions would be appreciated.

**Grahame McLaren, Edinburgh.**

• *Consumer-type surveys of piping accessories and instruments are fraught with difficulty. It is for that reason that the Piping Times has stayed away from this sort of article. Of course readers are welcome to offer their opinions on any new development in piping but should steer clear of trade names if possible . . . Ed.*

### Glass Pipe

Sir,

I have more information for you on the glass bagpipe. Murano is an isle of the Venice lagoon famous all over the world for its glass factories. Here Eugenio Ferro established his own glass factory in 1929. So the name 'Eugenio Ferro & Co. 1929'.

In this glass factory Ferdinando Giordani works as diamond wheel worker, but he studied music as a child and he likes traditional Celtic and Scottish music. He is also jointly responsible for the



School of Music in Murano. Some years ago he met a bagpipe player and decided to take lessons from him. He ordered his first bagpipe at the College of Piping in Glasgow becoming your customer and he learnt to play the bagpipe. Some months ago the responsible of the glass factory (whose mother-in-law comes from Scotland) had the idea to make the glass bagpipe for the shop inside the glass factory. Santi, the glassblower, and Giordani, the diamond wheel worker, were asked to carry out the idea. Here is a new photo of the pipe with the silk cords bought at the College in Glasgow. On another matter, in the DVD 'Edinburgh Military Tattoo 2004' there is a song whose title is 'So Many Lives' (I understand so). Do you also sell the bagpipe score of this song? Thank you.

**Ferdinando Giordani,**  
Venice, via email

• *A sung version of 'So Many Lives' can be found on the CD 'Last of the Great Whales' by The Band, Bugles, Pipes and Drums of the Royal Irish Regiment. I am told the track can be downloaded from [www.Amazon.co.uk](http://www.Amazon.co.uk) . . . Ed.*

### Judging Fees

Sir,

We run a Junior Piping competition and was wondering if there were a hourly fee for judges

**P Sinclair, via email**

• *We know of no set fees. Many judges are flexible when it comes to kids' competitions. That said, it's best to sort out the money side of things before you engage a judge.*

## 13th Annual George Sheriff Amateur Invitational – Hamilton, Ontario, November 15, 2008

BOB WORRALL



*All the competitors at the Sheriff*

American piper Robert Durning from New Jersey, was the overall winner of this important competition. Twelve amateur pipers from North America and Scotland's Craig Sutherland competed.

**6/8 Marches** – 1. Craig Sutherland, 2. Richard Gillies, 3. Bobby Durning, 4. Thomas Harrington, 5. Johnny Bassett

**Piobaireachd** – 1. Thomas Harrington, 'I am Proud to Play a Pipe'; 2. Bobby Durning, 'Lament for the Viscount of Dundee'; 3. Elizabeth Sheridan, 'MacNeill of Barra's March'; 4. Anthony Masterson, 'Battle of Auldearn No.1'; 5. Jon Maffett, 'King's Taxes'

**March, Strathspey & Reel** – 1. Johnny Bassett, 2. Richard Gillies, 3. John Lee, 4. Bobby Durning, 5. Thomas Harrington

**Overall** – 1. Bobby Durning, 2. Richard Gillies, 3. Thomas Harrington, 4. Johnny Bassett, 5. Craig Sutherland

Judges: J Wilson, J MacGillivray, W McCallum

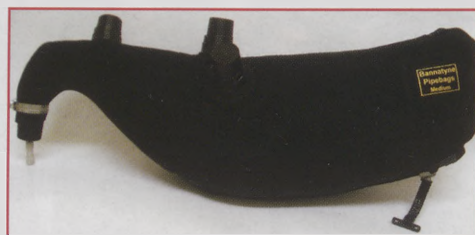


BOB WORRALL

*Bobby Durning, the overall winner  
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## Results

### Vale of Atholl Junior Solos, Pitlochry, January 17

Run with assistance from Perth and Kinross Council Education, Children Services, Angus MacDonald, Auchleeks McCallum Bagpipes and R.T. Shepherd & Son.

The Competition was held in Pitlochry High School and run by the Robert Wiseman Dairies Vale of Atholl Pipe Band. The piping judges were Robert Wallace, Sandy Spence, Ronnie Clark and John Nevans.

Chairman of the band, Angus Clarke, announced the prize winners and Pipe Major Adrian Cramb presented the prizes. Angus Clarke gave a vote of thanks to everyone who had helped to make the event such a success, with a special thanks to the school, as it is the ideal venue and a bouquet of flowers was presented to Gillie McNab, the main organiser, by the youngest piper of the day, Harry McLachlan from Aberfeldy.

*Robert Wallace writes:*

This was a very well run competition with more than 60 young pipers forward. Events stretched from chanter to under 18 in both piobaireachd and light music. The playing was generally of a good standard but as with many such pipe band based competitions a lot of the youngsters turned up with instruments that were too strong for solo competition. Their pipe majors and tutors really need to get them easier reeds for playing on their own. The second problem area – not terminal but in need of attention – was the tempo many of the competitors played at.

Rather than let their technical ability dictate the speed of, say, the march, they would hammer on missing doublings and catching and crossing. The strong pipes added to the difficulties. Tense fingers cannot make controlled taorluaths and tachums. These comments do not apply to all however. In the novice march there was enjoyable playing from Hannah Robb and she took a well deserved first prize. Siobhan Kelly had an expressive 'Glengarry's Lament' to win the Under 15 Piobaireachd despite cut cadence Es and a pause before them in the taorluath. Second prize here went to Ailis Sutherland whose 'Wee Spree' was very well fingered but needed more musical interest. Andrew Clark was third with 'The Company's Lament', getting through despite a strong pipe. After lunch I joined Ronnie Clarke for the 15-18 MSR and here the frailties mentioned above



*All the winners at the Vale contest*

## Results

came to the fore. There must have been at least 10 or a dozen good pipers who all counted themselves out by playing too fast and thus compromising their technique. The winner was Kyle Howie with a musical set, the highlight of which was his 'Mrs MacPherson'. Second prize went to Craig Sutherland who had trouble with his double F and mixed up the parts in 'Pretty Marion' and third to Keith Christie.

Full results:

**10 and under Chanter** – 1. Frazer Matchett, Pitlochry; 2. Tommy Henson, Perth; 3. Calum Ferguson, Crieff; 4. Robbie Millar, Crieff; 5. Euan Murchie, Crieff; 6. Durness McKay-Champion, Crieff

**Chanter 11&12** – 1. Joshua Barthram, Crieff; 2. Hermes Manos, Abernethy; 3. Angus Milne, Dundee; 4. Geordie Houldsworth, Milnathort; 5. Harry Richards, Crieff; 6. Robert Wilson, Auchterarder

**Chanter 13-18** – 1. Tay McEwan, Stanley; 2. Shannon Laing, Pitlochry; 3. Ross Kincaid,

Almondbank; 4. Murray McKay, Brechin; 5. Henry Woods, Blairgowrie

**Novice Piping 12 yrs and under** – 1. Harry McLachlan, Aberfeldy; 2. John Dew, Crieff; 3. Angus Milne, Dundee; 4. Charles Arthur, Dundee; 5. Tommy Henson, Perth; 6. Harry Richards, Crieff

**Novice piping 13-18** – 1. Hannah Robb, Dundee; 2. David McLeod, Crieff; 3. Ryan McLaren, Kirriemuir; 4. Hamish Dunbar-Nasmith, Glenalmond;

Equal 5. Thomas Watson, Edzell & Tay McEwan, Stanley; Equal 6. Hamish Prestige, Glenalmond & Ross MacDonald, Carnoustie

**Dress and Deportment** – 1. Craig Sutherland, Crieff; 2. Siobhan Kelly, Pitlochry; 3. Alex Duncan, Saucher

**Most improved piper** – Jack Stewart, Aberfeldy.

**Most outstanding prospect** – Harry McLachlan, Aberfeldy

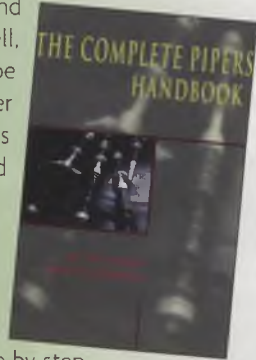
**Youngest Competitor** – Harry McLachlan  
**Piobaireachd u-15** – 1. Siobhan Kelly,

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## Results

Pitlochry; 2. Ailis Sutherland, Brechin; 3. Andrew Clark, Brechin; 4. Eireann Iannetta-McKay, Burrelton; 5. Cameron Montgomery, Glenalmond; 6. Jack Hamilton, Dundee;

**Piobaireachd 15-18** – 1. Jamie McAndrew, Brechin; 2. David Maitland Gardner, Crieff; 3. Kyle Howie, Dundee; 4. Craig Sutherland, Crieff; 5. Keith Christie, Dundee; 6. Alex Duncan, Saucher

**March under 15** – 1. Ailis Sutherland, Brechin; 2. Douglas Weir, Kinross; 3. Andrew Clark, Brechin; 4. Cameron Montgomery, Glenalmond; 5. Siobhan Kelly, Pitlochry; 6. Grant Stewart, Pitlochry

**M.S.R. 15-18yrs** – 1. Kyle Howie, Dundee; 2. Craig Sutherland, Crieff; 3. Keith Christie, Dundee; 4. Calum Graham, Pitlochry; 5. David Maitland Gardner, Crieff; 6. Alex Duncan, Saucher

**Jig under 15** – 1. Ailis Sutherland, Brechin; 2. Andrew Clark, Brechin; 3. Douglas Weir, Kinross; 4. Siobhan Kelly, Pitlochry; 5. Eireann Iannetta-McKay, Burrelton; 6. Jack Hamilton, Dundee

**Jig 15-18 yrs** – 1. Craig Sutherland, Crieff; 2. Keith Christie, Dundee; 3. Alex Duncan, Saucher; 4. David Maitland Gardner, Crieff; 5. Jamie McAndrew, Brechin; 6. Kyle Howie, Dundee

**Champion Under 15** – Ailis Sutherland

**Runner up Under 15** – Andrew Clark

**Champion 15-18yrs** – Craig Sutherland

**Runners up (joint)** – Kyle Howie and Keith Christie

### BAG Winter Competition 2009 – Hamburg

*Klaus Linhart reports:* On January, the 18th and 19th the German bagpipe and drumming season started with the BAG Winter Competition at the Kaiser Friedrich Gymnasium, a school close to the in the city centre of Hamburg.

75 participants from Germany, Austria, Netherlands and Ireland have been taking part in 4 different levels. Pipers have been judged by Gareth Rudolph and John Mulhearn and drummers by Eric Ward. John Mulhearn and

Eric Ward together with his wife, who also judged the tenor drumming event, gave a recital on Saturday night.

On Sunday Eric Ward gave an introduction in the PDQB exams and was holding them for four drummers. As these were the very first drum exams on BAG events the Bagpipe Association of Germany reimbursed the fees.

The results were:

**Piping – Slow Air Beginners** – Patrick Lever, Frank Thomas, Jörn Drönner, David Graack

**March Beginners** – Jörn Drönner, Björn Heuckeroth, Frank Thomas, Patrick Lever

**2/4 Competition Type March Intermediate/Experienced** – Martin Heinke, Alfred Paschek, Mael Lever, Michael Ahrens

**6/8 March Intermediate/Experienced** – Mael Lever, Nina Urbach, Martin Heinke, Anja Hoffmann

**Slow Air/Jig Intermediate/Experienced** – Martin Heinke, Björn Frauendienst, Frank Rose, Nina Urbach

**March/Strathspey/Reel Advanced** – Johannes Waizner, Swea Klipsch, Jürgen Rech, Justus Twele

**Hornpipe/Jig Advanced** – Gweltaz Lever, Johannes Waizner, Jürgen Rech, Florian Bohm

**March/Strathspey/Reel Former Winners** – Geza Frank, Andreas Hambsch, Stefan Wagner, Anna Kummerlów

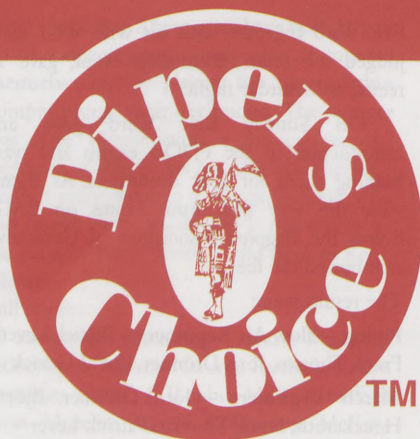
**Hornpipe/Jig Former Winners** – Andreas Hambsch, Anna Kummerlów, Bernd Mößle, Geza Frank

**Urlar Open** – Björn Frauendienst, Christoph Kammer, Franziska Hain, Michi Klug-Offermann

**Piobaireachd Open** – Stefan Wagner (Lament for Mary MacLeod), Andreas Hambsch (Lament for Donald Doughal Mackay), Bernd Mößle (Coriennessan's Salute), Jürgen Rech (Coriennessan's Salute)

**Kilts & More 6/8 Challenge Open** – Geza Frank, Anna Kummerlów, Andreas Hambsch, Mario Rossa





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## *History (cont'd)*

representatives of the College Juvenile band gained places in the final six. The achievement was noteworthy in that they faced competition from the senior bands as well as the Juvenile and Ladies bands. The College pupils were in fact the only juveniles to be placed and Hazel Currie was the only lady in the prize list. The result of the final was: 1. Ian McLellan (Renfrew), 2. Vic Black (College of Piping) 3. E Shields (Paisley British Legion), 4. Evan MacKay (College of Piping), 5. Hazel Currie (College of Piping), 6. D MacDonald (Kenmure Park).

The junior band made its debut at Cowal Games in August 1957. In the contest for Juvenile bands who have not won a prize at Cowal since January 1951 they were placed

second. The 1st Port Glasgow Boys Brigade taking first place. In the Juvenile Grade the College placed third, following the 214th Boys Brigade and the 1st Port Glasgow Boys Brigade. The tunes played by the College band were 'Charles Edward Hope de Vere', 'Arniston Castle' and 'The Rejected Suitor'.

The band uniforms were still largely home made, although some kilts had been obtained from the army cadets. White football socks had been dyed blue, the matching toorries for the Balmorals had been hand made and the band wore army cadet tunics dyed black over the shirts with the iron-on College transfer badges.

*(to be continued)*

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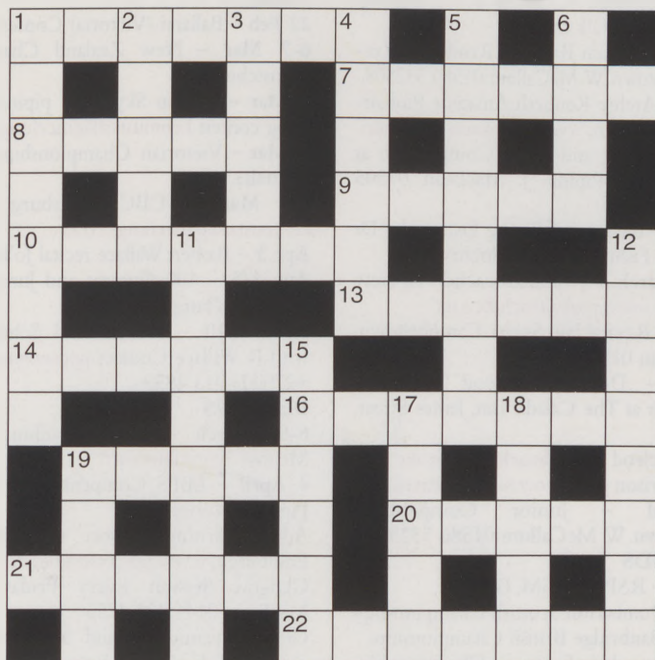


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# CROSSWORD

## Test Your Knowledge



### Across

1. Australian Joe featured last month (7)
7. The PDQB Chairman (6)
8. See 1 down (5)
9. Co-author with Gray of a Pipe and drum tutor (5)
10. ---- - Cheo in M Grey Bk 4 (6,1)
13. Hill where the mist lies thick (6)
14. Village south of Fettercairn (6)
16. Games here in July (7)
19. W.H. Grattan author of a book on the bagpipe (5)
20. Ventilated a tune (6)
21. Retreat when it's over (6)
22. His jig is in John MacFadyen Bk 1 (7)

### Down

1. It spends Sundays under 8 across (8)
2. Often follows a march and a strathspey (1,4)
3. Saint in W Ross Bk 2 (5)
4. D S former P/M of Edinburgh Police (6)
5. Bob Worrall was here in M Grey Bk 3 (2,2,4)
6. Ms Mauchline (4)
11. Coastal town north of Berwick on Tweed (8)
12. River crossing in Gordon Highlanders Bk 2 (4,1,3)
15. Females from Hell (6)
17. Country of origin of the glass bagpipe (5)
18. Take it before you go (1,4)
19. Rudiment for drummers (4)

Test your piping knowledge with the Piping Times Crossword. Send completed puzzles to Piping Times, 16-24 Otago Street, Glasgow G12 8JH, Scotland. *Crossword compiled by Jeannie Campbell.* This month's crossword is sponsored by the CoP Shop. The winner receives a £25 voucher. On line subscribers can download the grid on the PT extra page [www.college-of-piping.co.uk/html/ptextra](http://www.college-of-piping.co.uk/html/ptextra) **Last month's solution:** ACROSS - Alba, The Waking, Times, Creeks, Road, And, Ole Uist, Askaig, Linen, Ross-shire, And A'. DOWN - Kenmore, MacSwan, AGFED, Balkan, Tattoo, Inch, Kinloss, At Anzio, Dornie, Lesson, Barra, Ages. The winner of the December crossword is Donald MacLeod from Lasswade.

## Piping Times DIARY

### SOLOS

21 Feb – Lorient Qualifying Competition at the College of Piping.  
[tompiperair@talktalk.net](mailto:tompiperair@talktalk.net)

28 Feb – McCallum Bagpipes Roadshow Recital. Campbeltown. W McCallum 01586 552508

7 March – Archie Kenneth Amateur Piobaireachd Competition. [www.piobaireachd.co.uk](http://www.piobaireachd.co.uk)

14 March – Uist and Barra Competition at the College of Piping. J. MacLean 01505 612134

19 March – College of Piping Lecture by Dr John Purser, Fisher's Hotel, Pitlochry

20-22 March – Piobaireachd Society Conference. [www.piobaireachd.co.uk](http://www.piobaireachd.co.uk)

28 March – Recital Iain Speirs. Campbeltown. W McCallum 01586 552508

3 April – Donald Macleod Memorial Competition at The Caladh Inn, James Street, Stornoway.

Donald Macleod [donaldmacleod@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:donaldmacleod@tiscali.co.uk) or Iain Morrison [pipeymorrison@hotmail.com](mailto:pipeymorrison@hotmail.com)

25 April – Junior Competition, Campbeltown. W McCallum 01586 552508

### PIPE BANDS

14 March – RSPBA AGM, Glasgow

16 May – Dumbarton Scottish Championships

27 June – Banbridge British Championships

24 July – Inverclyde European Championships

15 August – Glasgow World Championships

29 August – Dunoan Cowal Championships

### SCHOOLS

College Winter School. Germany 8-15 Feb 2009.

College at Carbisdale. 29 Mar-Apr 4 2009.

### OVERSEAS

Every 1st Wednesday each month – Pipers Club of Copenhagen (DENMARK); meeting at 8 p.m.

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[seniorpipemajor@gordon.dk](mailto:seniorpipemajor@gordon.dk)

8 Feb – Berwick (Victoria) Highland Gathering. Australia

15 Feb – The Saffron United Pipe Band "You Be the Judge" Competition. Babylon, NY, 11780. Tickets \$20 adults \$10 under 21 Eric M. Stein 631 241 5757 [stein\\_eric@emc.com](mailto:stein_eric@emc.com)

15 Feb – Moss Vale New South Wales Band Contest.

22 Feb – Ballarat (Victoria) Contest.

6-7 Mar – New Zealand Championships Christchurch.

7 Mar – African Skye solo piping & drumming contest [kennmustard@mcclungs.co.za](mailto:kennmustard@mcclungs.co.za)

8 Mar – Victorian Championships. Geelong, Australia.

23 Mar – CBC Boksburg gathering [kennmustard@mcclungs.co.za](mailto:kennmustard@mcclungs.co.za)

Apr 3 – Robert Wallace recital Jo'burg, SA

Apr 4/5 – 100 Guineas and Junior Guineas contests Jo'burg

April 6-10 – Piobaireachd School, Jo'burg with R Wallace Contact [pppserv@nwweb.co.za](mailto:pppserv@nwweb.co.za) +27 (11) 913 4859

### BELLOWS

6-8 March – LBPS Teaching Weekend Melrose. [www.lbps.net](http://www.lbps.net)

4 April – LBPS Competition at College of Piping [www.lbps.net](http://www.lbps.net)

Adult learning project smallpipe classes, Edinburgh. [www.alpscotsmusic.org](http://www.alpscotsmusic.org)

Glasgow Session Every Friday. Malcolm MacInnes 0141 429 4755

Group meeting, 1st and 3rd Thursday each month NE England S. Barwick 0191 286 3545

Group meeting. Monthly NW England. R. & A. Evans 016974 73799

Group meeting 3rd Thursday each month except July and August, London. J. Agnew 01621 855447

Smallpipers Group. Australia. Malcolm McLaren [mrmclaren@bigpond.com](mailto:mrmclaren@bigpond.com)

### RADIO

College of Piping Radio at [www.college-of-piping.co.uk](http://www.college-of-piping.co.uk). Solo and bands; archive spot; history, interviews, and informed comment.

BBC's 'Pipeline' is on FM 92.4/97.7MHz; MW 810 (Dumfries 585) and on Radio nan Gaidheal FM 103.5-105 at 9.05pm on Saturdays and repeated at 7.05pm on Sundays. Also on Radio nan Gaidheal 'Crunluath' with Cailean MacLean at 4pm on Thursdays with repeats at 10.30pm on Thursdays.

**Piping Times** Diary is compiled by Jeannie Campbell. Let her know what is going on in your society or pipe band. Tell us when you are holding a contest or fundraiser. All Diary insertions are free. Send your Diary info to Jeannie at the College. E-mail: [collegemuseum@ntlbusiness.com](mailto:collegemuseum@ntlbusiness.com). or see page one for other contact details. Please check before travelling to events.



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