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Piping Times

Vol. 50, No. 2 November 1997



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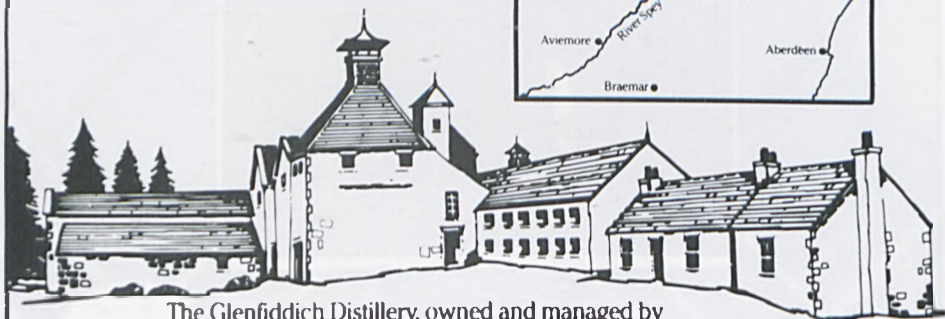
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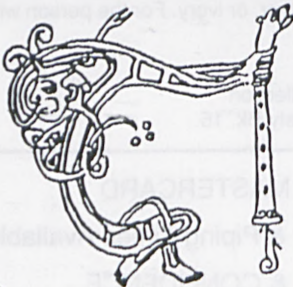
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Morning Mail

Hamilton,
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Dear Dugald,

My apologies for not writing you earlier with my thanks for your publishing of my letter regarding my 3rd great uncle's set of Glen pipes. I really had not expected it to be a story that would be published in such a fine journal. But, as I am learning, the piping community is a very friendly and helpful community that is greatly enhanced by the College of Piping and the Piping Times.

Bridget Mackenzie's response and the information she had managed to gather (which was quite a lot) was entirely unexpected on my part. I have since been in contact with her and have been able to thank her for the gracious giving of her own time and effort.

In regards to the pipes, Bridget and I did clear up that the pipes were not left in Canada when Gregory was here during the mid-1850's (they came to Canada with my grandfather in 1959). Yet a very intriguing mystery about the history of these pipes seems now to have evolved. The foremost question now is if Gregory did not play these pipes and was not a P/M nor a contest judge, then who did play these pipes and how did Gregory come into possession of them? As the stories passed down in the family about Gregory being a P/M and a judge were quite clear, it now appears to me that it may be possible that whomever owned the set before Gregory (i.e. a relative, a friend) may in fact have been the P/M and judge that was being referred to by my 2nd great uncles and grandfathers. But this does again conflict with Gregory's son's (Kenneth Kemp, South Africa) Will that refers to the pipes as "... my Father's Pipes..." and Kenneth's adamantness that the pipes remain in the Kemp family, or Gregory's wife's family (Sutherlands) and failing either of them that they be left to "...any of the old inhabitants of the Black Isle..." As you can see, they did stay with the Kemp side (my mother was nee Kemp).

I may never know for certain where these pipes came from nor who played them prior to Gregory owning them. One angle I have thought of but I have no idea how to explore it is the David Glen and J&R Glen company's old records. The bass drone is stamped David Glen but the pipe chanter and p/chanter are stamped J&R Glen. Is it possible that old records of "Bills of Sale, Order Forms, etc." or even manufacturing specifications (i.e. bore sizes, combing numbers, ring

numbers, types of mounts, drone lengths, etc.) may be in an archive somewhere? I do not know when either of the two above companies began making pipes nor when they ceased making them but I would presume that records pertaining to both companies must survive somewhere.

I am truly thankful for the existence of the College of Piping (and yes, the Green Tutor Book was my first book) and its manner of assisting fellow pipers across the world. Soon, I hope to be considered one of those pipers (I have been playing on the pipes for about 3 months now and on the p/chanter for about 6 months) and be able to play this old set with the ability of its original owner.

yours truly,
Gregor Melanson.

Bothwell.

Dear Dugald,

I read the article "The Great Highland Bagpipe Scale" with much interest in October's Piping Times.

Pythagoras built his scale on consecutive fifth. The scale therefore, reflected a logical and mathematical quality which I suspect Pythagoras must have found aesthetically appealing. It certainly satisfied the musical ear of that time, but from our point of view, it is lacking in natural harmonics. The just natural scale has taken our musical preferences for rich harmonics as a guide to its structure. As the diagram showed, our pipe scale fits into this scale perfectly as long as the player sticks to the pentatonic scale, and as long as the music is pentatonic, the instrument will harmonise with any other (equal temperament being the only problem for some instruments). At this point I would comment that I believe the interval G-A in the diagram should read 10/9 instead of 9/8.

So, while the pipe scale and the instrument are capable of producing harmonics in abundance it all of course depends on the proper tuning and playing. Here, I always notice that the best players tune the instrument in such a way that there is audible, a slow beat on B and also a noticeable beat on high G. This appears to be a criteria for a well-tuned pipe.

Using standard principles I have tried to identify these beats in terms of the natural harmonics and interference tones between the chanter and drones, but failed to find an answer. There are basically three lines of inquiry, namely; complexity of sound, quality of instrument and competence of tuning. Does any reader have a deeper insight to put me wise?

with best wishes,
Rainer Sickmann.

Rainer Sickmann is the only reader who spotted the G–A interval appearing to be a major tone rather than a minor tone. More of this later.

Argentina.

Dear Mr MacNeill,

Piping in Patagonia

I take the liberty of informing you and the College that, as part of my usual promotion of Highland lore, I gave two days ago my first solo concert. It was actually a guided talk aided with video images of how the pipes are immersed into Scottish life, their history and the different musical expressions played on them. To illustrate, I played regimental marches, competition tunes, a funeral march, church hymns, a hornpipe and a jig, two tunes for Highland dancing and, finally, a piobaireachd. I chose *Beloved Scotland*. There was a full house, something unprecedented for a week night, and everyone enjoyed it very much. Amazing, for most of the attendants had never heard the pipes live before nor seen a man with Highland attire. The following day, I received some invitations from local musicians to play with them. Let it be clear: I am a newcomer in Patagonia, and I have always played for myself and for friends who like the pipes. The attraction was not me but the pipes, the sound of them captivating every soul.

Last year, I was invited to do a one-hour radio programme on Highland history and lore, and played some well-known marches, ending with a piobaireachd: *Lament for Sir James MacDonald of the Isles*. I do not know whether it is possible for a non-Patagonian to grasp the significance of the fact that a full ceol mor piece was played on Patagonian radio. I have no record of ceol mor being played on an Argentine radio, let alone a Patagonian one. The feedback I received



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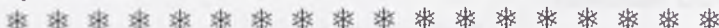
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was that the radio show had been a success, one of the listeners approaching me days later and managing to borrow my copy of the late Seumas MacNeill's *Piobaireachd*. Coming back to my recent concert, the media interviewed me and Highland piping could be heard on radio and TV. The library in Bariloché is the cultural sancto sanctorum here, and I am happy to say that Scotland helped them raise some funds for their worthy activities.

I have other things planned, for the locals, although they are still getting used to the music, love the sound of the Highland bagpipe. According to them – I share this opinion – it blends with the Swiss-like scenery we have here (bens, lochs, woods, etc.). So let it be known to all Highland pipers that they will be warmly welcomed should they approach these shores.

Best regards to you, Sir,
Rodolfo Mazzuchi MacSwain.

Cumbria.

Dear Editor,

After reading Rona Macdonald's article in the Piping Times I am glad my wife and I did not make the trip this year to the Cowal Gathering. I had heard a few band members were not too happy about events.

Toilets, food and organisation just seem to be lacking at many piping events. At the World Championships Glasgow this year the toilets were as bad as ever by lunch time. My wife just waited until the service station on the way home.

I feel a lot of piping events have a lot to offer but must move forward in the areas of catering, toilets and organisation.

I agree with the points made in the editorial and in your article about Cowal.

I wish you well and keep the good work up, it's nice to hear the truth.

yours sincerely,
M. Kynman.

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Front Cover: MacDonnell of Glengarry by Sir Henry Raeburn.
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Editorial

We felt that the quiet month of November called for an editorial that would be less controversial than some of late; or rather, while controversial would not give rise to strong feelings, and would indict no one except perhaps Patrick Og.

There is one difficult decision all "would be" pipers must make, or have made for them. This decision has exercised us and many others over centuries. It is the decision to play the chanter with the left hand on top or on the bottom of the chanter. This normally determines which shoulder supports the drones.

In a very busy teaching season I have become more and more aware of otherwise improving and competent players not being able to hold a steady pressure on the bag with their top hand arm. Most of these players are right handed and play with their left hand on top and therefore the bag under their left arm which is their weaker arm. Nowadays when few people do any hard physical work with their arms the left arm can be very weak indeed. This then is an argument for right handed people to play with the bag under the right arm and the right hand on top. The stronger arm is then more able to maintain a steady pressure.

If we now consider the chanter we find that the bottom hand has to span a wider stretch of holes. Girls and many women find their bottom hand barely able to cover the four lower holes with confidence and comfort. For them their weaker hand would therefore be significantly less able to execute grips and birls. Even worse than uneven blowing or pressure is the sound of low A and low G not sounding solidly. For the smaller handed people it is probably best to have the strong hand on the bottom of the chanter. Incidentally the modern higher pitched chanter brings these lower holes (and the top ones as well) closer together and so for the smaller handed, the modern chanter is a help. Grown boys and men can usually span the bottom of the pipe quite comfortably. At the same time one would expect them to have stronger arms and so for them some further comparison of the difference in requirements between the top hand and the bottom hand should be considered otherwise the conclusion would be that the stronger hand should be on the top so that the stronger arm is the pressure regulator. The top hand has to be generally more dexterous and as the stronger hand is usually the more dexterous this supports this conclusion. The only snag – and possibly an over riding snag is the birl, one of the most difficult and

expressive movements which is of course a bottom hand responsibility. The truth is that some of the good right shoulder players generally do not have such good birds.

It would seem that there is no good argument for either hand being on top but you can be sure that the debate will carry on. If we are to believe legend it was always customary to play with the drones on the right shoulder but when Patrick Og played on the left shoulder and played so well it became the fashion for others to copy such a good example. That is why, according to the legend, by far the majority of us now play on the left shoulder. The Army reinforced the uniformity and in a band it is certainly more convenient for all to play on the same shoulder, especially when counter-marching. The late Pipe Major Donald MacLean played on the left shoulder but had the right hand on top; the only person who always played that way.

We suggest that all pipers should try switching the drones in the stocks and for a week play on the other shoulder – keeping the hands in their accustomed position. If nothing else you will appreciate what an able piper Donald MacLean was but you will also enjoy switching back again. You will also appreciate how much the unaccustomed arm has to work to keep a steady pressure.

For new "would be" pipers and their teachers we continue to advise them to have the left hand on top but hope that there will continue to be the occasional exception.

B.B.C. Piping

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Stories of the Tunes

Glengarry's Lament

In our family the two most popular lullabies were Dream Angus and one about leaving the baby there to go and gather blaeberrys. I didn't know it then, but it was my first exposure to Piobaireachd for these words were sung to the doubling of the dithis of Glengarry's Lament. It was a very popular song in Argyll; I sometimes wonder if it predates the Archibald Munro 1828 composition. When I came to be invited to learn Piobaireachd, Glengarry's Lament was the first tune, and right away I was familiar with part of it.

It is pentatonic in A, of primary construction and is a good example of two very simple phrases making an expressive and fine lament. Once learnt it stays in the repertoire. Seumas MacNeill has it as the fourth tune in his Tutor for Piobaireachd. It was composed comparatively recently by Glengarry's piper, Archibald Munro, when Glengarry died as a result of injuries incurred when he had to abandon one of the early steamers which had foundered. This summer the National Gallery of Scotland held an exhibition of Sir Henry Raeburn's portraits among which is one of MacDonnell of Glengarry, (see front cover) the same one who is commemorated by the tune. He is more accurately identified as the 15th of Glengarry and the 22nd in line from Somerled, the first Lord of the Isles. We know all about him because he lived so recently. He always wore Highland dress of some sophistication and always travelled with a large retinue of servants including his piper. He was a contemporary of Sir Walter Scott and took a fairly prominent part in the visit of George IV to Edinburgh in 1822. To preserve his lavish lifestyle he continued, as his father had begun, to clear and evict his own clansmen from their homes in favour of sheep and immediate profit. He was also what would be called in America a 'draft dodger,' having raised many clansmen to go to the Napoleonic wars he himself stayed at home and quarrelled with the sheep farmers.

He negotiated good terms for wayleave for the Caledonian Canal to go through his lands but then made it very difficult for them; opposing the venture and appropriating their timber and equipment. In a subsequent lawsuit he lost even more money and went very deeply into debt. It was while sailing south on one of the earliest steamships in 1828 to deal with his financial problems that the ship foundered in Loch Linnhe, near Fort William. In the scramble to get

ashore he fell and sustained injuries from which he died later that same day.

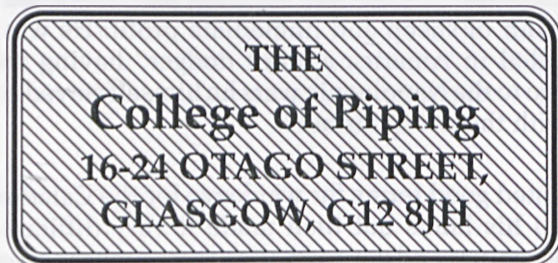
It is difficult to find any redeeming features in his life or character. He was, as his portrait depicts, arrogant and aggressive, and indeed he picked a quarrel with Norman MacLeod, grandson of Flora MacDonald, and killed him in a pistol duel. Alex Haddow in his book on the History and Structure of Ceol Mor says that the Raeburn portrait is the only good thing about him.

I believe the Piobaireachd is also worthy of our admiration albeit that it bears the name of a man of whom Scotland should be deeply ashamed. There is another older tune also very popular called the Lament for Alasdair Dearg MacDonnell of Glengarry. This, if it is correctly named, must refer to an earlier ancestor. It is in the Campbell Canntaireachd where it is called Glengarry's March. We would like to think that Alasdair Dearg was more deserving of his lament than his successor.

Dugald B. MacNeill.

The Piobaireachd Society

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Northern Meeting 1997

Gold Medal Competition

by Angus J. MacLellan

Having been invited to join the panel of adjudicators for the Clasp Competition at this year's Northern Meeting I took advantage of listening to the Gold Medal Competition on the first day of the Meetings, Wednesday 10th September.

Arriving at the Eden Court Theatre at 8.40am I was just in time to get settled in the auditorium and sat there for most of the day in the company of Krista and Don Fitchett and Geoff Hoare from New Zealand. At various times we were joined by Paula Glendenning and Doreen Forney from the U.S.A. Paula was in fact competing at Inverness for the first time.

The following are some comments I noted but must confess I was listening more in the capacity as a member of the audience and not as intently as the judges would be. There were of course set tunes this year and with the number of tunes which were repeated I found my concentration wandering as the day wore on.

Getting the competition underway was Allan Russell from Kelty who was asked to play *Park Piobaireachd No. 2*. Allan got off to a good start with the bagpipe sounding well but the drones went out in the taorluath doubling and I also thought he played the doubling of both taorluath and crunluath variations on the fast side.

Second to play was Alan Minty, Livingston and his tune was *Lachlan MacNeill Campbell's Fancy*. The tune was marred by flat B and D notes, a few misses in execution and drones going off from the crunluath singling.

Following on was Arthur Gillies, Taynuilt, playing *The End of the Great Bridge*. Arthur is one of our senior competitors but on this occasion he never really got the pipe settled from the start and consequently the performance suffered.

Another seasoned competitor William J. Morrison, South Uist, was next playing *The Battle of the Pass of Crieff*, and I thought Willie began at rather a brisk tempo. Nevertheless he was going well until

the Dithis Variations where he played the doubling twice and missed the trebling.

Number five was John Cairns from Canada with *Park Piobaireachd No. 2* and this was a disappointing performance with John appearing to have difficulty in his blowing causing a variant of sounds from D and F and high G. Some of the execution was tight/missing especially in the crunluath.

Next was Donald MacBride, Edinburgh, who played *The End of the Great Bridge* in a very competent manner marred by drones going slightly off in the crunluath.

Donald MacPhee from the U.S.A. but now staying in Scotland never got quite settled with *Lachlan MacNeill Campbell's Fancy*. Perhaps this was understandable with his mother taking unwell the night before. I trust she has fully recovered by now.

Logan Tannock, Tillicoultry, played *The Battle of Auldearn No. 2* and this was a fairly good performance marred for me by a lack of change of pace throughout the tune and rushing the cadences in the taorluath and crunluath singlings.

MacDougalls' Gathering was chosen for John Patrick, Thankerton, and this would have been good had he had a better high G and not had long pauses before the crunluath movements in the taorluath and crunluath variations.

Herve Le Floch from France was rather disappointing with *The Pass of Crieff* which had rather weak execution and drones going badly out.

Following on at No. 11 Gavin Walker, Dunblane, played *MacDougalls' Gathering* well but was let down by some missed execution and suspect F and High G.

No. 12 was Douglas Murray, Glenrothes, playing *The Pass of Crieff* and apart from missing the odd darado and maybe a little bit straight in places this was a pleasing performance.

Duncan MacGillivray, Tain, played *The Menzies' Salute* in a fine bold manner on a steady bagpipe throughout.

Sgt. Michael Gray, The Highlanders, marred his *MacDougalls' Gathering* with a little bit of untidy fingering and was a little lacking in this great gathering tune.



Watched by Brigadier Rory Walker, Gold Medallist Duncan MacGillivray accepts the Seaforth Silver Pitcher from Lady Lois MacDonnell of Glengarry. The Donnie Manson Memorial Trophy is also presented each year along with the Gold Medal.



Scott Drummond being presented with the Silver Medal and 51st Highland Volunteer Cup by Lady Lois MacDonnell of Glengarry.

The winner of this year's Gold Medal at Oban, James Murray, did not appear comfortable with *Park Piobaireachd No. 2* and after a mistake in the taorluath variation stopped.

At No. 16 was Iain Speirs, Edinburgh, playing *The Pass of Crieff* and on a lovely bagpipe started well but for me there was a lack of change of tempo in the variations and any enjoyment was marred by the drones going out from the taorluath on.

One of the best Urlars of the day was played by P/M Iain Macey. On a well balanced bagpipe he phrased *Park Piobaireachd* very well. In the taorluath and crunluath one or two movements were not so crisp as others but overall a good mature performance.

Niall Mathieson, Inverness, played *The End of the Great Bridge* in a fine manner but did not play a taorluath a mach – fatal.

P/M Brian Donaldson, Scots Guards, played *Auldearn No. 2* but it was marred by a poor high G in the early part of the tune and some suspect movements in the taorluath and crunluath variations.

No. 20 was Euan MacCrimmon, Inverness, with *The Park Piobaireachd* but I did not feel Euan let the tune flow with little bits of snatching and at times weak on the throws to F.

The same tune was chosen for P/M Stuart Samson, The Highlanders. Stuart never got the bagpipe 100% settled from the start and naturally the tune suffered.

Another senior competitor, Duncan Watson, Aberdeen, came on at No. 22 to play *The End of the Great Bridge*. Duncan can phrase a tune well but on this occasion he was let down by some weak execution and a big choke going into the Dithis.

No. 23 was Alan Bevan, Canada, who played *MacDougalls' Gathering* in a fine bold manner but he never got the bagpipe settled and this marred what could have been a good tune.

No. 24 was John Angus Smith, Ashford, with a competent *Battle of Auldearn No. 2* on a good bagpipe. If there was to be any criticism maybe the tripling movement was tight and again the crunluath a mach was suspect at times.

Stuart Sheddan, Bishopbriggs, was next (No. 25) playing *Lachlan MacNeill Campbell's Fancy* and on a first class bagpipe this was a

very good tune with the Urlar nicely phrased. In variation one I felt he was a little severe on the short notes but he was consistent and finished strongly.

Here the report falters as I was called away to select the tunes for the Clasp which was being held the next day hence I missed the last four performances but was informed that Stuart Liddell, Inveraray, had been impressive. In the end I did not miss any of the prize winners as the results show.

After a long day the judges agreed on the prize list and although it means little I would have to say I agreed with the result though maybe not 100%. However as has been said before that's competition and as I said at the beginning I was not listening as intently as the judges. I also found out the next day just how different you hear things when you are sitting up on the stage as opposed to in the audience.

One last thing – I fully understand the reason for set tunes but think the list could be bigger – say four out of twelve in an effort to reduce repeating of tunes. It can get rather tedious from the audience point of view to listen to the same tune four or five times in the same competition – just a thought.

As usual the meeting was a great success and the comfort of the Eden Court Theatre where everything is under one roof (except the juniors) and the pleasure of meeting old and new friends makes it a great two days.

My sincere thanks to Brigadier Rory Walker, Angus MacKenzie and the hard working staff for another enjoyable meeting at Inverness. The result was:-

1. Duncan MacGillivray, 2. Donald MacBride, 3. Stuart Shedden, 4. Iain Macey, 5. John A. Smith.

65th Royal Scottish Gathering – Witwatersrand

Piobaireachd Gold – 1. C. Sked; 2. C. Cloete; 3. M. Brown.

Open

March – 1. A. De Bermier; 2. C. Sked; 3. R. Denton.

Strathspey & Reel – 1. C. Sked; 2. R. Denton; 3. C. Cloete.

Jig and Hornpipe – 1. C. Sked; 2. C. Cloete; 3. G. Rudolph.

Andrew Somerville MacNeill

*We were saddened to learn of the sudden death of Andrew Somerville MacNeill on 26th September, 1997, aged 81. We are indebted to **Sandy Macpherson** for the following obituary.*

Andrew Oronsay, as he was known to his huge circle of friends, was a multi-faceted man of many interests. By profession a farmer on the Hebridean island of Oronsay, tidally connected to Colonsay, his



Andrew MacNeill (second from left) at Luss Highland Games in July this year. The others in the photograph are left to right Pipe Major Angus Macdonald, John Patrick and Charlie Cochrane.

skill with sheep and sheepdog training and handling was a byword. He retired to Colonsay some time ago, but never allowed his Hebridean remoteness to interfere in the slightest in his maintenance and fostering of friendships all over the world. He had a very special gift

for encompassing and enduring friendships. A telephone call from him invariably brightened the day; a letter, latterly idiosyncratically typed, was a joy of pithy observation and anecdote. His network of news-gathering would put MI5 to shame.

His passion was the music of the great Highland bagpipe, and especially its classical music – piobaireachd. He learned to play at an early age, and was a masterly exponent, albeit diffident of public performance. His mentor for many years was Pipe Major Robert Reid from Slamannan, who had in turn been taught by J. MacDougall Gillies. Andrew was fiercely loyal to their style of phrasing a tune as passed to him, but as a distinguished judge of piping competitions at the highest level, accepted and appreciated fine playing from other schools. His facility in expressing his love for a beautiful and melodic line made it contagious. He was bitingly critical of careless execution. His knowledge of piobaireachd was encyclopaedic, and was unstintingly shared by tape or in engrossing conversations, by reference to his Master's style, but also, scrupulously, to other turns of phrasing. For many years he enjoyed in particular such exchanges with James Campbell, a Cambridge Don, and another aficionado, who is the son of Campbell of Kilberry, compiler of an important collection of piobaireachd.

Andrew was raised in Helensburgh, where he acquired a keen eye for fine china. He left his individual mark on the 2nd Battalion, The Glasgow Highlanders, with whom he served throughout the war.

Andrew had the liveliest and most enquiring of minds. Widely read, with informed and thoughtful views on many subjects, he constantly astonished the writer with another, and hitherto unsuspected, field of erudition. And he had the gift of words, with a mischievous sense of humour. He was capable of lobbing a verbal grenade into any conversation and enjoying the fallout with a chuckle. An inveterate and inventive practical joker, the latest butt could do no other than join in the laughter – eventually.

He was one of the prime movers in the establishment of the purpose-built Piping Centre at McPhater Street, Glasgow.

The world of piping has its share of characters. Andrew took his place unselfconsciously as one of the most colourful.

To the end – just eight days before the golden wedding celebrations with his beloved wife Flora – he was vital, engaging, and a fount of fun. He is survived by his wife Flora, and one of his sisters, Sheena.

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Glenfiddich Championship

The Glenfiddich Champion for 1997 is Roderick J. MacLeod and the runner-up is Angus MacColl.

The full results were:—

Piobaireachd – 1. Roderick MacLeod, 2. Alasdair Gillies, 3. Michael Cusack, 4. Angus MacColl, 5. William McCallum.

March, Strathspey and Reel – 1. Angus MacColl, 2. William McCallum, 3. Roderick MacLeod, 4. Pipe Sergeant Gordon Walker, 5. Alasdair Gillies.

A detailed report will appear in the December edition of the Piping Times.

Highland Arts Summer Camp

Champlain College, Lennoxville, Quebec, Canada

by Dr. Stuart J. McKelvie

Nineteen eager students avoided some of the July heat to participate in an 11-day introduction to the Great Highland Bagpipe offered by George R. Stewart, Pipe-Major of the Sutherland Schools Pipe Band, and teacher for some 30 years. The idea for the course followed after Mr. Stewart brought his pipe band to the Eastern Townships of Quebec in September of 1996. Mr. Stewart proposed a bagpipe school to help maintain local Scottish traditions that had arrived with the first settlers to the area. The idea was taken up by Steve Thorneloe, who ably advertised and organized the course. Classes were from 9.00a.m. till noon and from 2.00p.m. till 4.00p.m.

We were a varied group of French and British Canadians, ranging from two young brothers aged 8 and 9 and others with little musical experience to a young-at-heart grandmother with expertise on a number of instruments. Piping experience was equally varied, ranging from Grade 3 level expertise (Steve's son Eric) to no knowledge at all

(the majority). In between, others had taken some chanter lessons (38 years ago for yours truly), had started pipes or were self taught.

George rose to the challenge by combining a unique mixture of encouragement, cajolement and a large dab of his inimitable sense of humour. He began with basic music theory, fingering, scales and embellishments so that we were reading and playing two tunes on the chanter by the third day. These and other tunes were carefully chosen to allow us to use the basic finger movements learned as exercises. During the sessions, George instructed, demonstrated then individually checked the self-taught players and those with little or no knowledge, after which they practiced while he devoted time to the two youngsters and to the three more accomplished pipers. He also imparted a wealth of information about the instrument and about Scotland, embedded in stories and anecdotes gleaned from his extensive personal experience of playing and teaching. Not to be forgotten is the contribution of George's wife Alex, herself a fine singer of folk music and ballads. She helped by tutoring individuals, and was also always ready to provide light-hearted relief when our fingers stuck.

Our introduction to the pipes was intensive and, at times, not a little difficult for mature brains to absorb. But we were taught by a devoted man who brought his own specialized skills to the task. In particular, George demonstrated tunes not only by playing them on the chanter, but also by singing them in the traditional but rarely heard *Canntaireachd*, learned on his Grandmother's knee. As I write, I hear his voice intoning the beautiful melody for the Bays of Harris ("un hirra o-min . . ."), which we sang together a number of times. We were also to enjoy the benefits of fellow-student David Lyons' computer skills. During the lunchbreak, he entered the latest tune onto his portable PC, after which we could listen to any part of it at our chosen pace (i.e. slow).

Near the end of the course, we gave a short *Ceilidh* at the Lennoxville community hall, including two group tunes on the chanter, piping demonstrations by George and three students (the highlight being Eric Thorneloe's rendering of the *Piobaireachd* of Donal Dhu), and songs from Alex and local music teacher Chris Obermeir.

As he left, George vowed "tae come back again" next year to begin a new group, parade a band from the 1997 class, and to cover activities such as drumming, dancing and singing.

Tune of the Month

The Leap Year Proposal

March

Duncan Johnstone



This march by Duncan Johnstone was composed for one of his pupils, a young Dutchman who had recently become engaged and he elected to give it this unusual title. We wonder who proposed to whom in 1996?

College of Piping jerseys featuring the College Logo and made by Pringle of Scotland are now available in blue, green or red, round or v-neck. They cost £30 each, plus postage. Sizes available are Extra Small, Small, Medium, Large, Extra Large and Extra Extra Large. The sizes are generous. Please allow 6 weeks for delivery.

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Interceltic Festival of Lorient, Brittany

On Friday 8th August, the Interceltic Festival of Lorient, was held in Brittany, managed by Jean-Pierre Pichard and his President, Mr Guy Delion. The Scottish representative was Mr Douglas Alexander, (known as "Dougie"). More than 300,000 people during the ten days attended the Festival of concerts, parades, piping competitions for bands and solo pipers etc.

For the first time since its creation, on the initiative of Mr Fanch Gourvès the well known piper in Brittany and founder of the Lorient Bagad – Pipes and Bombards Band, also vice president of the Breton Solo Piping Association, the very first Interceltic Piobaireachd Competition was held and sponsored (5000 F), with blessing of the Festival's Organizers and the wonderful help of "Dougie" for the settlement of that competition involving the Scottish – Irish – Breton connections.

Twelve selected pipers were invited to compete, their nationalities comprising: 3 Scottish, 1 Irish, 1 Australian and 7 Bretons.

The jury was composed of Robert Wallace and Jakez Pincet, who both listened carefully to the 12 tunes. No one broke down but a few had text memory mistakes, and there was some quite good playing from the young Bretons in Bob's opinion. Most of the instruments kept in tune until the end although the heat of the day, even felt in the Big Hall of Congress's Palace, slightly marred the whole musical presentations. Here are the results:

1. Mark MacKenzie, Australia, for his very good tune: *Black Donald's March*. 2. Loic Denis, for a very nice *MacGregor's Salute*, on a beautiful instrument. 3. The young Margaret Houlihan, Ireland, who played *Lament for Alasdair Dearg MacDonnell of Glengarry*. 4. Hervé Le Floc'h, Brittany, playing *The Glen is Mine*.

Congratulations to the other pipers who competed that day and seal with their names that first Interceltic Piobaireachd Competition: Gordon MacLean, James Beaumont, Stuart Cassells, Cédric Le Bozec, Alain Cras, Alexis Meunier, François Dominé, Pierre Gallais.

Jakez Pincet.

The Earliest Editions of Donald MacDonald's Collection of the Ancient Martial Music of Caledonia, called Piobaireachd

by *Frans Buisman*

Part 2

The date of 1822 has been ascribed erroneously to the first edition by various authors, who copied Manson and each other blindly. Manson was the first to assign this date to the original edition⁵. The actual date of the first edition can be put some time between 1818 and 1820. It seems that it was published at least before the middle of 1820 when John MacGregor, after having written down six tunes already after the information of Angus MacArthur, suddenly adapted his style of notation in one respect to MacDonald's style of notation. He may, of course, also have been shown a copy of MacDonald's tutor of 1817.

John MacGregor and Angus MacArthur were commissioned in March 1820 by the Highland Society of London to produce a collection of pibroch. John MacGregor apparently had finished notating the first 24 tunes before the 10th of June and he and MacArthur were commissioned on that day to record another 26 tunes⁶. In July the year before, the Highland Society of London "(...) subscribed for 5 copies of a collection of Piobaireachd to be immediately pub. by Donald MacDonald (...)"⁷. It is possible that the earlier printings had been available already before July 1819 and that the subscription prompted MacDonald, or was made after a promise made by him, to alter the dedication so as to include the Society's name in the copies "to be immediately published".

A close look at the printed pages reveal that numerous corrections had been made already on the plates before the very first printing was begun. It is even possible that page 38 had been renewed entirely after all printing plates had been engraved, but before the actual printing had started. The wording of the engraver's signature is slightly different on this page. It reads *Walker & Anderson Engravers Edinr.*, whereas all other pages have *En. by Walker & Anderson Edinr.*⁸

The corrections that were made in the music scores for the 3rd edition were engraved on the original printing plates. Apart from the preliminary pages, two more pages were completely renewed for this

edition (pp.106 and 116). One other page was revised considerably, but was clearly redrafted on the original plate (p.38), which happens to be the page with the slightly different engravers' signature.

Some of the corrections made in the 3rd edition concerned details that were not in the style of Donald MacDonald, such as the weaker form of grip consisting of the small notes g-d. This occurred in the earlier printings in numerous places instead of the normal MacDonald grip which consists of the small notes g-d-g, as in later records. The weaker form was used consistently by the anonymous author of the Hannay-MacAuslan manuscript. Nine tunes were taken straight from this manuscript by MacDonald, as I demonstrated elsewhere⁹. The fact that the weaker form of grip appears in so many places makes one wonder whether MacDonald made a printer's copy at all of the tunes taken from the anonymous manuscript. It looks as if he gave the original manuscript to the engravers adding no more than a note instructing them to make such and such changes. It is obvious that things are bound to go wrong in this way.

The same would be true of a few more tunes in MacDonald's collection, which show the same peculiarities, but that were not taken from the anonymous manuscript. The coincidence may be an indication that MacDonald was himself the author of the anonymous manuscript. But it would mean that he had changed his style considerably between writing that manuscript and publishing his collection. This is not at all inconceivable. I found one piece of evidence that Colin Campbell too changed his style of playing about the same time, – namely, precisely with respect to the grip on low A in Taoludh and Criùnnludh. The -g-d-A- style, as found in Joseph MacDonald's treatise and the anonymous manuscript and as presented in the Mackay Transcripts by the Taoludh Breabach vocable *haroden-*, must have been abandoned by him in favour of the -g-d-g-A- style, as found in later records and as presented by the vocable *harodinen-* in the corresponding place in the preserved version of Campbell's collection.

But, actually, this only shows that more pipers used the weaker grip (omitting the second low g) and that different manuscript sources used by MacDonald may have had it. Moreover, the handwriting of the bits of text in the anonymous manuscript looks quite different from the few specimens of MacDonald's handwriting that are found in his later manuscript collection. Whatever the authorship of the anonymous manuscript, the latter manuscript and Donald MacDonald's published collection show traces of tunes

having been taken from various earlier written sources that followed styles of ornamentation that are incompatible with each other.

NOTES

5. William Laird Manson, *The Highland Bagpipe*. Paisley 1901.
6. Proceedings Highland Society of London, Extracts (NLS Dep.268/43), pp.6 and 9.
7. Archibald Campbell, Notebooks (notes copied from Highland Society of London records, including lost papers), vol.1, p.15. Quoted from *Piping Times* 23:1 Oct.1970), p.20, by Roderick Cannon, *A bibliography of bagpipe music*. Edinburgh 1980, p.119.
8. I am obliged to Keith Sangar who pointed this out to me.
9. Frans Buisman, An anonymous manuscript and its position in the history of piobaireachd playing. In: *Piping Times*, 38:3 (Dec.1985), pp.23-27; 38:4 (Jan.1986), pp.30-34.

The Pleasanton Open Piobaireachd Competition

by Ronald Teague

August 29

Pity the poor fan of piobaireachd who lives in California. Although there are three major competitions in the state, the Dr. Dan Reid Memorial in San Francisco, the G.S. McLennan memorial in San Diego, and the Open Competition at the Pleasanton games, over 600 miles separate them from each other. The student or enthusiast has to plan very carefully if he or she is going to take full advantage of what good Ceol Mor is available in the Golden State. To add insult to injury, two of these competitions, the Dr. Dan Reid memorial and the Open Piobaireachd at the Pleasanton Games, are not well publicized. The G.S. McLennan on the other hand is well announced in *The Piping Times*. Not only do individuals have to travel the distance between Edinburgh and Cornwall, but they have to root around to find out when and where the competitions will be held. Ceol Mor in California is not for those who lack tenacity.

The organizers of the Open Piobaireachd in Pleasanton added a further wrinkle to the problem. For years the Open Competitions were held on Friday nights immediately preceding the opening of the Games on Saturday. It was a grand evening with the judges using the

three light system, the names of the competitors as well as the names of their tunes were announced and often a no host bar was available to clear the throat between performances. The date, time and place of the competitions was published in the *San Francisco Chronicle*. Last year, for some reason, the time of the competition was moved up to 1.00pm and placed outdoors at the fair grounds. Now the pipes are wonderful when played out of doors, but in Pleasanton in August the temperatures average around 90 degrees Fahrenheit and a lot of perspiration is mixed with the crunluaths. Last year there was no steward who called out the names of the competitors or their respective tunes. The audience had to badger the poor judges for this information. This year, without warning or advanced publication the venue for the Open Piobaireachd competition was moved again. This time it was in a fine indoor air-conditioned amphitheater with the stage below the audience at the Hilton Hotel in Pleasanton. Unfortunately the stewards did not announce either the performers or the tunes played and the audience was once again reduced to bothering the judges. The unpublished change in venue caused some of the audience to be late for the competition. In future, organizing committees should publish the date, time and venue of these major competitions in *The Piping Times* at least. With the advent of fax machines it should not be difficult to do this in a timely manner. The unfortunate tendency to relegate Ceol Mor to some back room must stop. Piobaireachd is the heart of pipe music and needs to be respected and valued. The public is not going to become educated in this traditional art form without a little help from piping organisations.

— All that having been said, the audience at the 1997 Pleasanton Open Piobaireachd competition was treated to several superb performances and the difficulty of finding the venue was worth the trouble. Third place was awarded to Aaron Shaw for his rendition of *A Flame of Wrath for Squinting Patrick*. Mr. Shaw is well known in California for his version of this tune and he offered a very solid and credible performance. His phrasing was quite clear and measured and his execution of the piece was without serious blemish. He lingered on the E in the third bar of all variations which softened the tune just a bit and was an interesting effect. His performance was even more impressive when one realizes that this was his first attempt at an open piobaireachd competition. He is a fine piper with a good future ahead of him. It would be nice if there were a scholarship available which could send him to Scotland to receive some first rate master tuition.

Second place was earned by P/M John Hanning from New Zealand for his elegant rendition of *Lament for Donald Duaghal MacKay*.

P/M Hanning played the ularl with a grace and balance and maturity which few younger men can match. His phrasing was measured and caught the spirit of the piece in a remarkable way. It has been said that Ceol Mor must be learned when young so that it can be played when mature. P/M Hanning surely proved the truth of that adage. The only slight difficulty was in the transition between the taorluath doubling and the crunluath singling. P/M Hanning was standing under the air conditioning duct when it came on during this important transition and he, understandably, lost concentration for just a second. It was truly a wonderful piece. It had the style of traditional piobaireachd. One sensed that the well knit texture has been directly handed down over the generations. It is possible that P/M Hanning's rendition was what the composer had in mind.

P/M Hanning might well have won first place if the final competitor of the day hadn't been so inspired. Ian Whitlaw from Riverside, California, took the honors with a masterful performance of *The Lament For The Children*. Mr. Whitlaw has performed at this competition for many years, usually taking second place. His lack of ultimate success has been controversial for too often the judges have rated technical mastery more important than musical performance and expression. For many years it has seemed that the judges have not quite accepted the fact that Ceol Mor is in fact music and not a finger exercise. Mr. Whitlaw has always played piobaireachd as a piece of music that needs expression in addition to technical proficiency. His expression and attention to detail was well balanced and he was able to produce a performance which was without fault. He used the high

DONALD DRONE



A doubling instead of the single high A in the fifth bar of the urlar second line as well as the first and second variations. This is consistent with D. MacDonald's version which is published in the Piobaireachd Society's Book 3. The overall effect of this was to lift the piece even higher than usual and give it even more pathos. The audience, which by then comprised not only pipers and Ceol Mor aficionados but also the general public, was moved by Mr. Whitlaw's efforts. It was indeed a performance not to be missed. *The Lament For The Children* is a tune revered by pipers and it takes a lot of courage to put this tune up for a major competition. There was talk that Mr. Whitlaw is thinking of emigrating to New Zealand. If this is true the California piping world will be very much diminished. The Kiwis have already taken the *America's Cup* from us. Do they really want one of our best pipers as well?

The Pleasanton Open Piobaireachd Competition was an enjoyable affair. Most of the competitors were competent. Some of them were inspired. The venue was most comfortable. The judges were kind and fair. In future it would be nice to have the time, place and venue advertised and the names of the competitors as well as their tunes announced to the audience so that students or individuals who are interested in Ceol Mor not only plan to be in attendance but also understand the nature of the music as well as the caliber of the performers. Organizing committees have very little to lose, save for a bit of additional effort, and much to gain by doing everything in their power to make this great music accessible not only to pipers but also the general public.

by SEORAS



Scottish Piping Society of London Competition

Michael Cusack won the Bratach Gorm for Piobaireachd at this year's London Competition playing *Lament for the Children*. Second was Pipe Major Iain Macey and third Robert Wallace, followed by Sgt. Wilson Brown who was fourth and in fifth place was Roderick J. MacLeod.

The Gillies Cup results are:- 1. John Angus Smith, 2. William Morrison, 3. Pipe Major Iain Macey, 4. John Patrick, 5. Sgt. Wilson Brown.

The London Medallion March, Strathspey and Reel winners are: 1. James Murray, 2. Michael Cusack, 3. William Morrison, 4. John Patrick.

December's Piping Times will contain a report and the full results of the London Competition.

Solo Breton Piping Association 3rd Annual Competitions

These were held in May in the Castle of Tronjoly near Gourin following a school of instruction under Mike Cusack, Maureen Connors and Jacek Pincet.

The results were:

Piobaireachd A – 1. Hervé Le Floc'h, CapCaval, *MacCrimmon's Sweetheart*; 2. Pierre Gallais, Rennes, *Salute to Donald*; 3. Cédric Le Bozec, Gourin, *Lament for Donald of Laggan*; 4. François Dominé, Rennes, *Lament for Alasdair Dearg MacDonell of Glengarry*; 5. Nadine Le Normand, Paris, *Lament for Mary MacLeod*.
The judges were Mike Cusack and Iain McLeod.

The 1998 event, again for international pipers will be held on 29th May to 1st June with Jimmy McIntosh and Jacek Pincet.



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Young Pipers with Potential Robert and Alain McLaren

Robert and Alain McLaren are two promising pipers from Geneva where they were born and still live. Their parents are from Glasgow. Robert heard the pipes at some of the Highland games when he was on holiday in Scotland at about age 10. He immediately wanted to



learn to play. He began with P/M Eric McIntosh and after a year when he was on holiday in Scotland came to the College of Piping for tuition by Angus MacLellan. A few years after Robert began piping, his brother joined him. Robert is now 16 and Alain 12 and each year they come back to the College for further tuition.

This year they were guest players with Knightswood Pipe Band but in Geneva they are members of Geneva Pipes and Drums and must strengthen that band considerably. In the past two years Robert and Alain have participated in solo competitions whilst on holiday and have done so with a great deal of success. Apart from their piping ability both boys have other talents – Robert is a superb athlete and cyclist in his age group in Switzerland and Alain is a very promising pianist.

The photograph on page 41 shows them in the Knightswood Pipe Band uniform.

Those were the days!

On going through old files and records we came across the following schedule of College Instructors on week nights in 1949. Unfortunately only two of these survive, Tommy Pearston and Dugald MacNeill.

Monday	D. MacNeill,	J. Wilson,	Hugh MacRae	
Tuesday	T. Pearston,	D. MacNeill,	D. MacLean	
Wednesday	S. MacNeill,	C. Scott,	J. Garroway,	I. Thomson
Thursday	S. MacNeill,	C. Scott,	J. Wilson,	I. Thomson
Friday	T. Pearston,	D. MacLean,	Hugh MacRae	

Forthcoming Attraction

The Scottish Pipers' Association will be holding a St. Andrew's Ceilidh on Friday, 21st November at the Woodside Club, 329 North Woodside Road, Glasgow. The Jura Ceilidh Band will be playing for the dancing and guest musicians include Stuart Liddell (Highland Pipes), John Saunders (Small Pipes) and Louise Hay & Friends (Folk Group). The ticket price of £7.50 includes refreshments and the evening will commence at 8.00p.m.

For further details, call the **TICKET HOTLINE: 0141 956 6486** or contact the Secretary:

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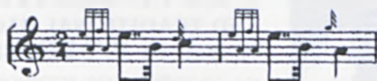
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Who Was The Earl of Antrim?

A Discussion on the Possible Influence of Scottish and Irish Ceol Mor on Each Other

by Frank Timoney

Whenever I would ask this question of any of the playing greats, I seemed always to get the same reply that he was a Scottish MacDonald and that the piece was of course written for him by a MacCrimmon. Various references to the piece in piping publications claim a link to Rory mor MacLeod, Chief of the MacLeods of Dunvegan. It has been said that this great piobaireachd contains virtually everything to inspire the player to master its lovely melody which is carried through from Ground to Crunluath.

Research into this subject has led me to feel that this piobaireachd may have been transposed from an early Irish harp tradition.

The Earldom was created in 1620 by King James I (of England) and VI (of Scotland), upon Irish born Ranald MacSorley MacDonnell, who was descended from two famous families, one a Scottish Highland and the other an Irish Gaelic family. The Earls however became naturally more involved with Irish matters, as their

involvement in Scottish Highland affairs became less successful with each generation.

The Earl's father, one Somhairle Buidhe MacDonald (Sorley Boy) came to Ireland and later on, found quite a lucrative trade in the braining of Spaniards who survived various shipwrecks off the Antrim coast. This was the time of the Spanish Armada and although those who made it to Scotland found a more friendly refuge, Sorley developed quite a taste for Spanish silken shirts and gold. (The Irish today love to explain shipwrecked Spaniards as having been the cause of dark complexioned people among them but the Irish of the time and their uninvited Highland friends put paid to that tale, long before it began. They made short shrift of any Spanish survivors.) In Ireland, Somhairle Buidhe prospered.

It wasn't that he came penniless to Antrim. He came with the best credentials. His father, Alasdair MacIain MacDonald was chief of the MacDonalds of Colonsay. Sorley had married the unfortunate Mary O'Neill, daughter of old Conn Bacach O'Neill, First Earl of Tyrone. His brother James (Seumas Colla Nan Capull MacDonald) married Agnes Campbell, daughter of the Third Earl of Argyll. Things went well until Mary's psychotic brother, the famous Shane O'Neill,



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("friend to The Queen of England and cousin to St. Patrick") put Sorley Boy in prison for quite some time. James came to Ireland to break Sorley out and Shane killed him and his brother Angus. James' younger brother, Alexander, came over and literally cut Shane into pieces and sprung his brother Sorley.

Mary and Sorley's son Raonull MacSomhairle, was created the **The First Earl of Antrim** probably because King James felt the need of a strong Scottish Gaelic presence in Ireland. The MacDonnells of Antrim were not part of Elizabeth's "planters," King James was himself Scottish. Raonull died in 1636, having held the Earldom some thirteen years. He was related to the Great Hugh O'Neill and was first cousin of Donald MacGilleasbuig MacDonald (James's son) back in Colonsay.

James's widow Agnes Campbell had by now married Shane O'Neill's successor, Turlough Luineach O'Neill. These O'Neills had something having become a strong part in the family of the Lords of the Isles. The First Earl had married into them as well, having wed Alice, daughter of Hugh O'Neill.

The Second Earl of Antrim, Raonull Arainneach MacDonnell (Ranald of Arran) became the First Marquis of Antrim in 1645 and died in 1682. He was the second native born Irishman to hold the Earldom. His second cousin Colla Ciotach MacDonald, James' grandson, was driven from Colonsay in 1639 by his uncle, Archibald Campbell, Marquis of Argyll, and went to Ireland to live with Ranald who himself had married into the O'Neills.

The Third Earl was Alasdair or Alexander, Ranald's brother. He died in 1696 without attaining the title of Marquis. He was very active in Irish nationalism and commanded a regiment in the army of Owen Roe O'Neill at Benburb in 1646. His very famous cousin was the legendary Alasdair MacCholla MacDonald, James's great grandson who had come to Ireland with his father in 1639. MacCholla went to Scotland with Irish regiments raised on the Antrim estates to serve under Montrose.

All of which brings us to our first flaw in the story. Rory Mor MacLeod went to Ireland in 1595 (and gave us our first clear reference to the belted plaid being worn by Highlanders) possibly with a train of MacCrimmon pipers who must have had nothing to do, because the Earl of Antrim wasn't created until 1620! Dead in 1636, **there was no one to write for until another forty one years had passed!** We must imagine that if Rory went to Antrim, he went under heavy guard

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because we all know how the MacDonalds and the MacLeods were bitter enemies. Antrim was thick with MacDonells and their kinsmen the O'Neills and the O'Neills' kinsmen, the O'Donnells. The life of a MacLeod or a MacCrimmon must have been very precarious to say the least. What MacLeod would ever have a piobaireachd written after a MacDonald or a MacDonnell or an O'Neill? And here were these MacDonnells already adopting the O'Neill insignia, "Lam Derig Abu" and all that. What MacCrimmon would ever compose it? Perhaps Rory mor went home leaving his MacCrimmon pipers alone in Ireland. If they composed for the First or the Second Earl, they could have only done so between 1636 and 1645 when the Second Earl became the First Marquis. Perhaps the MacCrimmons stayed in Ireland for a hundred years and composed a piece for The Third Earl in 1696.

This would be impossible because modern day authors remind us that they were back in Skye busily composing. Could the Irish have composed the piece? It's obvious that the earls were as much O'Neill's as anything else.

The **Fourth Earl of Antrim was Randal**, the son of Alexander who became Earl in 1696. The **Fifth Earl, Alexander**, was the son of Randal, and he became Earl in 1721.

If the piece was written in Ireland after 1636, it was written for the harp because as we have seen, the loud mouth blown pipe had gone out of style in that country just as the sixteenth century ended. It's unlikely to have been written for the soft, mouth blown English pastoral pipe (later to become bellows fed) that was now being introduced in its stead. **Could there be a piece of harp music extant that is similar to the Lament for the Earl of Antrim?** Harpers of the Earls of Antrim were in great demand in Scotland. The old order was collapsing there and harpers were becoming scarce in the Highlands. MacKenzie of Applecross was especially praised by one of them as having a most generous hand because he filled the one hand of the harper of the **Earl of Antrim** on a visit to Scotland, with gold and the other hand with silver. Perhaps the grateful harper left MacKenzie with a gift in kind, a Lament! Irish harpers were especially known for their laments, some of which were said to be possessed of magical qualities. In certain Irish families, the profession of harper was hereditary and many of these belonged to important literary families and were drawn from the stratum of Gaelic society that provided literate professionals. This was in direct contrast to the family pipers of Scotland, with the *one* possible exception of Clann An Sgeulaiche, the MacGregors of Ruaro in Glen Lyon, Perthshire.

It is difficult therefore to understand why piobaireachd is not found in Ireland today. Certainly all the conditions were right for it. Until sometime in the early seventeenth century, both Irish music and Highland music were one and the same. The mystery is that in Scotland, piobaireachd is found in its completed form. There is no missing link to indicate that the music emanated from a more simple or experimental art form. **We have seen that Irish culture; poetry, music, language, dance etc was devastated by change after 1600.**

Take for instance dancing and an account by one Fynes Morison ca 1598. He had seen Irish soldiers dancing around a fire in the middle of a room to the strains of a mouth blown bagpipe. "They dance the MATACHINE DANCE with naked swords which they make to meet in divers comely postures." This certainly does not resemble the stiff like Irish dancing we see today (the product of Rome and London) with hands held rigidly by the sides. We have also seen that poetry declined after 1607 with the loss of syllabic Gaelic verse.

In 1185 we are given a startling look at Irish harp music by Gerald of Wales in this abridged account. "The melody is always *begun* in a *soft* and *delicate* manner and *ended the same*. They enter on and again leave their modulations with so much articulation and brilliancy, faultless throughout the most complicated modulation, the most intricate of notes, by a velocity so pleasing, rapid and articulate." Gerald went on to say that the Scots and Welsh played the same stuff, the Scots the better all around! If this isn't a ceol mor format, it's difficult to know what is! But it's certainly a far cry from the songs and melodies that sprung up in the early eighteenth century which are today looked upon as being authentic Irish Music.

(to be continued).

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Can any of our readers give us information or identify anyone on this photograph taken on Bastille Day, 14th July, 1919?

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Round the Games

Invercharron – 20th September

Senior

Piobaireachd – 1. Michael Gray, The Highlanders, *Lament for the Earl of Antrim*; 2. Stuart Samson, The Highlanders, *Lament for Captain MacDougall*; 3. Niall Stewart, Alness, *MacLeod of Raasay's Salute*; 4. Neil Walker, Dunblane, *The Marquis of Argyle's Salute*.
The judge was Norman Matheson.

March – 1. M. Gray; 2. Ian Finlayson, The Highlanders; 3. Lorne Cousin, Inverness; 4. Alistair Fraser, Achiltibuie.

Strathspey and Reel – 1. S. Samson; 2. L. Cousin; 3. M. Gray; 4. N. Stewart.

Jig – 1. N. Stewart; 2. Duncan MacGillivray, Calrossie; 3. M. Gray; 4. A. Fraser.

The Ceol Beag judges were Norman Matheson and Finlay MacRae.

Junior 15 and Under

March – 1. Alan Clark, Alness; 2. James Aitken, Invergordon; 3. Gary Stewart, Alness; 4. Mark MacBeath, Helmsdale.

Strathspey and Reel – 1. A. Clark; 2. J. Aitken; 3. Jan MacLean, Invershin; 4. Joanne Shaw, Strathnaver.

Junior 16 – 18

March – 1. Fiona MacKay, Alness; 2. Yvonne MacKenzie, Bonar Bridge; 3. Alistair Stewart, Alness; 4. Ewen MacKay, Tongue.

Strathspey and Reel – 1. Y. MacKenzie; 2. F. MacKay; 3. A. Stewart; 4. Alistair MacKenzie, Dingwall.

Jig – 1. F. MacKay; 2. Y. MacKenzie; 3. E. MacKay; 4. A. Stewart.

The judge of the Junior Piping was Finlay MacRae.

The Pipe Major Matheson Cup for most points in the Senior Piping: Sgt. Michael Gray, The Highlanders.

The BP Oils Challenge trophy for the best piper aged 15 or under: Alan Clark, Alness.

The Cairngorm Shield for the best piper aged 16-18: Fiona MacKay, Alness.

The Glass Chanter, for the Senior Piper winning most points over-all in the Northern League of Highland Games throughout the summer, went to Pipe Major Stuart Samson, The Highlanders.

What is the difference between ignorance and apathy?
I don't know and I don't care!

Evening Post

Bagpipe Music Museum,
840 Oella Avenue,
Ellicott City, MD 21043,
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Dear Sir,

May we bring to your readers' attention our change of name. The "Bagpipe Music Index" has become the "Bagpipe Music Museum."

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yours faithfully,
Jim Coldran.

Williamsburg,
Virginia.

Dear Mr. MacNeill:

I'm certain the *Piping Times* will in due course contain a tribute to Andrew MacNeill of Colonsay, but on behalf of myself and the other organizers of the "Williamsburg *Ceol Mor* Weekend" I would like to make this statement of gratitude for this man's support and sorrow in his passing.

Andrew had slight interest in academic theories or speculation about *piobaireachd*; he had, after all, learned the living music from Robert Reid, one of its great modern masters. Andrew once wrote "Personally, I was just a parrot and tried to copy Robert – my only *piobaireachd* teacher – minutely, and anything I've heard since has never caused me to try to deviate."

The Second World War and its aftermath denied Andrew a professional piping career. Tapes of his playing in later years convince me he would have risen to the heights of that profession. Instead, living the crofter's life, Andrew worked behind the scenes

corresponding voluminously the world over with those interested in the old piping styles.

To my loss I never met the man personally, but a binder of letters filled with good humoured commentary on piping matters is a treasured legacy of a too brief four year association carried out via the U.S. and U.K. postal systems. Trips to the mail box will certainly be less eventful.

Pipers everywhere have lost a friend; I feel I've lost a mentor; and the Great Music has lost a champion. His family will be in our thoughts and prayers.

Sincerely,
Jay T. Close.

Boreraig, By Dunvegan,
Isle of Skye

Dear Dugald,

I refer to the alleged controversy, arisen from Tony Blair's comment, vis-à-vis the present-day relevance of the Great Highland Bagpipe as part of Scotland's heritage.

Who in their right mind would doubt their presence? The pipes are clearly part of Scotland's heritage; relating to the physical and spiritual vestiges of our history, having survived from the past to be a part of Scottish life today.

Kitschness and blandness only come to the fore when the ancient art is cheapened by "pipers" peddling their wares on street corners, no true monetary value being given to the art, lack of focus due to infighting and no true central body, piping equated with drunken behaviour and a lack of *musical* training. (The RSAMD doesn't count, as student numbers are too small to be significant and the training starts too late in the students' careers.)

Respect for evolving forms is essential, bearing in mind that our current classical music was once experimental, like "kitchen piping" and "Rob-Mathiessonism" today. (Indeed, the first piobaireachd was probably criticised as "nice finger exercises, but when are you going to play us a tune?")

In the light of the forth-coming Scottish parliament, it is certainly not one man's role (Mr Blair) to pretend to know the attitudes of the Nation, nor to decide the continuing survival into future generations of the pipes. For our future heritage is dependent on the attitudes and actions of the present; it is not static. Every generation will continue to sift through certain parts of our heritage with some cultural elements being discarded, yet others are renewed and passed on. Each generation makes its unique contribution to the following generations' heritage.

Just as Scotland has to decide what her identity is going to be, ("Scotland the Brave" or "Flower of Scotland"), so the piping world needs to gather to agree future direction and forms, and be included in future cultural and heritage policy.

Still, if we want to be aye looking back, instead of the way ahead, don't blame me if we trip up – big time!

yours sincerely,

Sarah B. Winter (Mrs).

Administrator for The MacCrimmon Piping Heritage Trust.

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Seattle.

Dear Sir,

I found this neat old pipe band photo in University of Washington Library. The band is most likely Clan Fraser, Toronto, hired to perform for several months at the huge, wildly successful Alaska



Yukon Pacific Exhibition (AYPE) held in Seattle June-September in 1909. D.C. Mather, the Scottish Highland performer who went to Montana, won many of the piping and dancing competitions on AYPE Caledonia Day, August 21st, 1909.

John V. Pearson.

Cornwall.

Dear Angus,

I meant to put pen to paper last week to thank you for my instruction and for the very happy time we had together. The whole week was most enjoyable and I feel that I have come away refreshed and full of enthusiasm to continue with my pipes. Being on your own, every now and again one wonders if one is really progressing – no one to bring bad habits up short!

yours aye,
Bob Cleave.

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Maidenhead.

Dear Sir,

The members of the Reading Scottish Pipe Band have just come back from a ten day engagement in Japan, playing in Tobu World Square, Kinugawa. I thought the attached verses by one of the pipers would amuse your readers.

The heat and humidity did not seem to be as great when Angus MacLellan was playing for the photo in the September edition.

with best wishes,
Bill Simpson.

The Joys of Kinugawa

It's old "Jimmy Findlater," and here we go again
My chanter reed has opened out, it plays one note in ten.
My drones are out of harmony and driving me insane,
But, Oh, the joys of playing in Kinugawa!

We're now into the second part (Dear God, how's this it goes?)
The sweat is getting in my eyes and running off my nose.
If this goes on much longer it will marinade my toes,
But, Oh, the joys of playing in Kinugawa!

The crowd has got its cameras: they're swinging to the lilt.
One guy is lying on the ground, a flash-gun to my kilt.
I wonder if he'll find out how foreigners are built?
Oh, the joys of playing in Kinugawa!

"Kon nich wa!", "Arigato!" (that's all my Japanese).*
I didn't know I could perspire so freely at the knees.
Just put me through the wringer, Mum, and hang me in the breeze,
And I'll forget the joys of Kinugawa.

John Miller.

*Kon nich wa = Hello
Arigato = Thankyou

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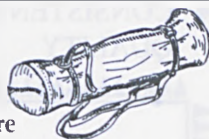


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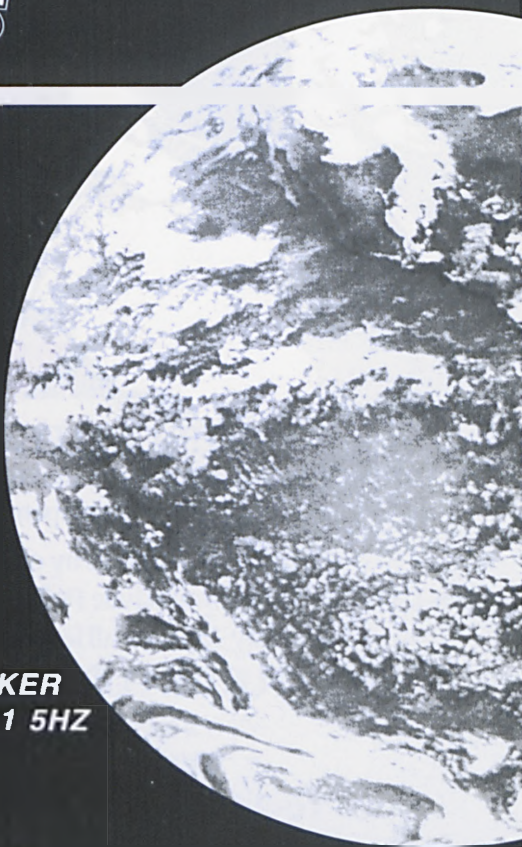
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