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Piping Times

Vol. 46, No. 1

October 1993



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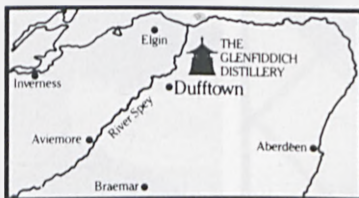
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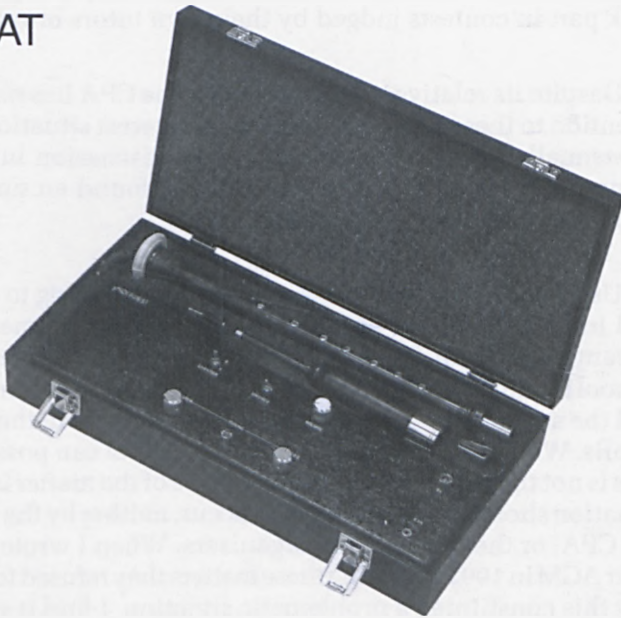
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Morning Mail

Isle of Skye.

Dear Editor,

The CPA decision to boycott competitions not judged by the APA is an irrational and irresponsible act which will damage the piping fraternity for several years. The very nature of the competitive element in the piping world has made relations between pipers, at the best of times, less cordial than is the case among other musicians.

The competitive piping scene has been considered by many to tolerate nepotism and favouritism where family members and pupils took part in contests judged by their own tutors or relations.

Despite its relatively long existence the CPA has never turned its attention to these and other conflict of interest situations in judging. I personally brought the subject up for discussion informally after competitions and with a few exceptions found an underwhelming enthusiasm to discuss the matter!

Using the Director of the Army School of Piping to judge at Oban and Inverness, which was frequently the case, is one example of a blatant conflict of interest situation. The reputation of the Army School is enhanced by the number of prizes at the major competitions and the school understandably takes great pride in the success of its pupils. Whether an instructor from the school can possibly be free of bias is not the question, but the principle of the matter is clear and the situation should not be allowed to occur, neither by the Army School, the CPA, or the competition organisers. When I wrote to the CPA at their AGM in 1991 regarding these matters they refused to acknowledge that this constituted a problematic situation. I find it surprising that one year later they advocate such an extreme measure as a boycott.

I feel that competition organisers should have in the past been advised of problems regarding judging so that they might have had an opportunity to make alterations to their selection of judges before facing a boycott. I am not aware that the CPA has ever tried to do this.

The recent actions are obviously the tail wagging the dog. Though one can applaud the principle of a professional judging organisation, the aims of the body should be clear and should be stated. I am not aware of what it is that binds the present group together as a

professional body. Do they have a code of conduct that they plan to adhere to?

I have observed APA judges already giving their own pupils prizes in competitions. Does this reflect the ethics that we are to expect from the APA? If this is the 'new world order' in piping adjudicating then I am disappointed.

Other countries such as U.S., Canada and Australia have made some attempt to improve their judging situation by instituting a process of examination to ensure that future adjudicators have some basic theoretical knowledge of the music.

These models have much merit and deserve serious consideration.

Yours faithfully,
Dr. Angus N. MacDonald.

City of Bremen Pipes & Drums,
Bremen 1,
Germany.

Dear Mr MacNeill,

That which has got me to write, is Jimmy Buchanan's letter, which appeared in the March issue.

It was a great joy (but no great surprise) to hear that Jimmy is still playing; and that at the age of 78. Further to that, I have often heard from the "Walters" of this world^{!!}, amongst many others" ...that nobody could tune a better pipe." They were right! Today, I am still in the process of forming a competition band here in Germany, and am sadly missing Jimmy's talents. It is a great help, when someone is that musically gifted. He was able to keep those "youngsters" interested (who were Piper/music – or Music/piper – inclined: A very important issue but not one that I wish to enter into in this letter), at the same time instilling in them what a band should sound like. However, it's not only Jimmy to whom I extend my thanks and best wishes, but also the others; without whom "'Crest of Gordon' City of Bremen Pipes & Drums," – Germany, would never have come into being: Andy and Douglas Pierie, Tammy Dick, Hector McClellan and of course, having

enjoyed the drumming side, too "Bill" Budge; whose advice and teaching skills enabled me to get enough people interested in PB drumming – AND to get them (a.s.a.p.) to find a better teacher than myself. (Though I'm not quite sure, which way round that should read! Perhaps it's just that I'd like to say that I love to drum an occasional 6/8 myself – it helps to keep the drummers on their toes)!!

I often look back now at my days in the "Stevenage & District" P&D, and wonder what has happened of those I used to play with – and indeed what other anecdotes my contemporaries (**not of course forgetting my seniors**) may have to tell. Perhaps these words may serve as inspiration.

Victor Besch.

Edinburgh.

Dear Editor,

I am presently working with John Thomson, the military historian, on compiling details of the uniforms of the Scottish Volunteer Regiments 1859-1908.

If any readers have photographs of the volunteers, especially pipers, would it be possible for John to obtain photocopies for study?

John's address is:

John Thomson,
52 Grove Street,
Edinburgh,
EH3 8AZ.

Any help would be much appreciated.

Yours sincerely,
George Robinson.

Marlborough,
Wiltshire.

Dear Seumas,

Re: The photograph of five kilted soldiers in the first World War.
"Letters:" from Thos. Terry.

As an avid collector of piping postcards, photographs and pictures,
I was interested in the one below.

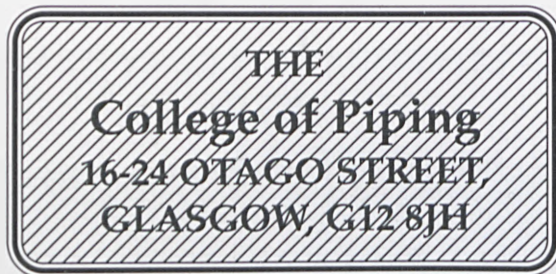


The photograph was an official war photograph (series 5. No. 37.) I have it (in postcard form – in the "Daily Mail" – Battle Pictures – series.) I have shown it to Pipe Major Brian MacRae, Gordon Highlanders, Piper to H.M. The Queen, who thinks it is probably the Gordons, although it could have been the Seaforths due to the white boxing on the kilts. I saw the photograph shown on BBC. 2 during a programme on Scottish military history and the soldiers were said to be the Gordon Highlanders.

Yours sincerely,
Tabby Puzey.

The Piobaireachd Society

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Front Cover: Cpl. Gordon Walker, R.H.F., Oban Gold Medallist

Tartan: MacLeod



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Editorial

Occasionally young competitors ask, often in a roundabout way, how the playing of piobaireachd has changed over the years. When they put the question directly such as, How did the pipers play in the old days? we are torn between indignation that we are apparently being asked to remember 19th century performances and the desire to rebuke them with the honest answer – Better.

They might equally ask about the playing of marches, strathspeys and reels and there with equal confidence we could give the same one-word reply. Naturally everybody thinks that their earlier days constituted a golden age, for memory has a comforting way of holding on to the best and exaggerating it tremendously. Like the sundials we count only the sunny days. A common saying, truly applicable to most facets of life is – Things get worse.

We cannot really tell how pipers played in the old, old days, because tape recorders were invented too late, but there are alive today pipers who can remember fairly well performances of 50 years ago. Many of these men have been taught by a master (and probably also by the master's teacher) so that by extrapolation we can be sure that styles of playing have not altered. What the young people really want to know is whether or not previous generations – in particular fairly recent ones – were better players than the present one.

The common, and indeed universal answer, is always the same – there are more good pipers among the top players nowadays but nobody is the equal of two or three of the former experts. It is debatable whether this is true or not, and there seems no way now of checking.

In the light music however, the situation is much clearer. Nobody today can play a march in the same class as Archie MacNab or Robert Reid or J.B. Robertson. Nobody can play a strathspey and reel like Duncan MacIntyre.

The influence of the pipe band is often blamed and rightly so, but it is not the only cause. The real trouble is that there is nobody to copy, nobody to inspire with well thought out expression. Everything is routine - a good bagpipe, good fingers and a steady tempo. All are good enough for second, but nobody brings the audience to their feet (as used to happen) with a roar of appreciation.

Young people are taught some at least of the nuances of expression in piobaireachd, so that even in a fairly mechanical way they learn that a slight pause in places can be very effective, or that a bit of *accelerando* in the second line can sometimes give a desired effect. Eventually, in a few years' time (if they stick with their master) the parrot-like reproduction becomes smoothed out and absorbed in the soul. Then, but only then, have they become piobaireachd players.

Marches, next to ceol mor, constitute easily the next most important branch of our music. But nobody seems to be trying to apply the same ideas to these majestic tunes. We are only too conscious of the invisible drum corps in the background, belting out the rigid and unforgiving tempo.

All too often the piper applies the big boot to the suffering platform so that the bass drum at least is not missed.

PT Back Numbers

We have in stock copies of more than half of the former issues of the Piping Times. The price of each of these, at present, including surface postage, is £2.00 (\$5.00).

It is now possible for us to supply photocopies of ones which were completely sold out. The charge for this is £5.00 (\$10.00) including postage.

BBC RADIO SCOTLAND

Programmes for October

on Sundays 4.15 to 5.00p.m.

3rd	Bill Livingstone
10th	Simon Fraser University
17th	Solo piper
24th	Power of Scotland

The Argyllshire Gathering

August in Scotland is undoubtedly one of the most beautiful times of year in one of the most beautiful countries of the world. Provided of course that the weather co-operates.

This year the sun shone on Oban bay. The hills, the lochs and the islands were all doing their very best and (an added bonus) Oban was not so jammed full of tourists as it usually is.



March of the Stewards (pipers at the back) to the Games

The strenuous efforts of the ACPA (it seems to be all one organisation nowadays, so we may as well lump them together) had reduced the entries, but not enough to have any serious effect on the competition. There was a surprising number of call-offs for an amazing variety of reasons but there was still a good entry of fine players. As a result, the standard of the competitions was well up to the previous years and the number of players in each event was able to be handled with comfort by the stewards. Members of the audience were also delighted not to have to sit for hour after hour in order to get the full benefit from any one event.

Perhaps the ACPA, as we mentioned last month, has unwittingly done a real service to piping at the major meetings.

The Silver Medal candidates had to submit four tunes from a list of six – all fairly easy and straightforward pieces. This was judged by James Burnet, Angus J MacLellan and Tom Speirs.



Tom Speirs, Seumas MacNeill and Jimmy Young

The winner was Marion McVean from New Zealand. The other placings were –

second Iain Plunkett of Paisley; third, Sergeant Niall Matheson, QOH; fourth, Sergeant Michael Elder, Black Watch; fifth, John Angus Smith from Feltham.

The standard of the Gold Medal event was well above average and this was a case where it seemed that the favourite had come in first. He was Corporal Gordon Walker, RHF, playing the Prince's Salute. Second was Angus MacColl with an excellent rendering of Macdonald of Kinlochmoidart's Lament no. 2. In third place came Bruce Woodley from Canada and the fourth prize went to Willie Morrison of South Uist, now living in Glasgow.

The judges were Ronald Lawrie, Donald MacPherson and Andrew Pitkeathly.

The Senior piobaireachd event suffered from the fact that the set tunes were all completely new to the pipers. Usually, especially for the top pipers, set tunes contain a number which they have already played in the past, but this was not the case in 1993. As a result



Arthur Gillies

several of those who had entered obviously felt that they had not got four of the tunes off well enough to perform in public.

The top prize eventually went to Arthur Gillies of Kilchrennan playing the Lament for Pipe Major Robert Reid. This was a real masterly performance by a very experienced piobaireachd player

and well deserved the award of Grant's Senior Piobaireachd Trophy and the A&SH Cup, together with the prize of £120. Second prize (£70) went to Andrew Wright of Dunblane who gave a very fine interpretation of the Lament for Angus Campbell, the tune composed by Archibald Campbell of Kilberry for his son.



Willie Morrison

The judges here were Seumas MacNeill, Malcolm McRae and Ronald Morrison.

MSR

The practice now at Oban is to have the march, strathspey and reel for former winners played off in the evening of the first day, in the

Corran Halls. An almost capacity audience responded enthusiastically to the great playing which was heard on this occasion. Each piper, being a former winner of either the march or the strathspey and reel (or both), had submitted six marches, six strathspeys and six reels from which the judges chose a march, strathspey and reel (in any order), each tune to be played over twice.

The winner was Willie Morrison with an absolutely outstandingly musical interpretation of Abercairney Highlanders, the Piper's Bonnet and Doctor MacPhail. As well as the excellent instrument and technique, Willie gave lift to his tunes and was able to put some delightful expressive touches into every one of them.

Not far behind came Angus MacColl with a first class interpretation of The Clan MacColl, The Caledonian Society of London and Mrs Macpherson of Inveran.

Third prize went to Gordon Walker whose Mrs John MacColl was presented in true military style, followed by good playing of the Shepherd's Crook and the Sheepwife. Some parts of his march suffered however from his determination to put expression before technique and – worst of all – the thumping of his feet on the platform distracted seriously from enjoyment in his fine playing. Especially when turning during the march the noise on the boards can only be described as ridiculous. Things improved a bit with the strathspey but the racket came back again with the reel.

In fourth place was Arthur Gillies with a good rendering of Leaving Lunga, Lady Loudon and the Rejected Suitor. The strathspey and reel tended to be a bit fast and rushed.

Other results:

The MacGregor Memorial Piobaireachd for pipers under 22 years of age who had not previously won this contest, – 1. Fraser Bruce Walker, 2. Niall Stewart.

Junior March, Stathspey and Reel (local) – 1. Tracy Brogan, Oban.

Other Results:

March 'A' – 1. James Murray, 2. Alan Bevan, 3. Iain Hurst, 4. Donald MacPhee, 5. Bruce Woodley.

March 'B' – 1. Marion McVean, 2. William Geddes, 3. Douglas Murray, 4. Kenneth MacLeod, 5. Darren Hood.

Strathspey & Reel 'A' – 1. William Morrison, 2. Iain Hurst, 3. James Murray, 4. Alan Bevan, 5. Sgt Wilson Brown.

Strathspey & Reel 'B' – 1. Allan Russell, 2. Andrew Hayes, 3. Neil Walker, 4. William Geddes, 5. James MacPhee

Jig – 1. Insp Barry Donaldson, 2. Cpl Gordon Walker RHF, 3. Colin Clansey.

Local

March – 1. Garry MacEwan, 2. Gavin Davidson, 3. Derek Wilson.

Strathspey & Reel – 1. Garry MacEwan, 2. Derek Wilson.

Best Senior Piper – Arthur Gillies.

Best Military Piper – Cpl Gordon Walker RHF.

Best Local Piper – Garry MacEwan.

The Silver Medal

by Angus J MacLellan

Despite the present problems of the piping world, the Silver Medal at this year's Argyllshire Gathering went ahead and was very successful.

The programme showed a healthy entry of 24 for the event but on the day 15 came forward. The standard of playing was very good, with the prize-winners producing that little something extra on the day.

The winner was Marion MacVean from New Zealand playing Castle Menzies. The tune was presented in a very musical manner on an excellent sounding bagpipe, with some lovely touches in the taorluath and crunluath variations. There was a little sign of physical tiring in the crunluath a-mach but this had no effect on the tune.

A very close second was Iain Plunkett from Strathclyde Police playing Lady Doyle's Salute in a very competent manner. Variation one was slightly on the fast side but he finished the tune very strongly. His bagpipe was good though the chanter was on the harsh side.

Third place went to Sgt Niall Matheson, Q.O.H., playing Sir James Macdonald of the Isles' Lament. This was a good tune slightly marred

by some tight technical work, especially the odd edre and some taorluath and crunluath movements.

Fourth place went to Sgt Michael Elder, Black Watch, who played Castle Menzies – rather straight with very little change of pace throughout; and fifth was John Angus Smith, London, playing Clan Campbell's Gathering. The tune was well played but the bagpipe was not quite balanced, the bottom hand being rather flat.

Others who played well but had silly mistakes were Donald MacPhee, USA, and Douglas Pincock, Renton.

This was a very enjoyable competition to listen to and all the competitors had taken the time and trouble to learn the set tunes but it appeared that many were playing them for the first time on the competition platform.

Strathspey and Reel B

There was an entry of 27 for this competition on a perfect day for Highland Games and in the event 21 competitors took part. Apart from the prize-winners, the standard of playing was not the best, with too many players having tight execution especially the round movements in the strathspeys, and G D Es in reels.

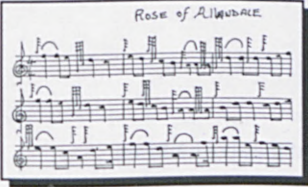
The result was as follows:-


1. Allan Russell, Kely (Tulloch Castle, Cecily Ross), 2. Andrew Hayes, Canada (Arniston Castle, Miss Proud), 3. Neil Walker, Dunblane (MacBeth's Strathspey, Grey Bob), 4. William Geddes, Dumfries (Highland Harry, Major Manson), 5. James MacPhee, East Kilbride (Shepherd's Crook, Mrs Macpherson of Inveran).

Pipe Majors and Dippers

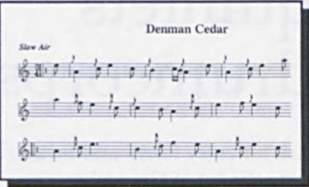
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piobaireachd

march

slow air

march, strathspey & reel

hornpipe & jig

quintets

drumcorps

Ask for entry forms and further information at the above address
from the 1st of November

Entry to the competition NOT later than 1st of December.

Entry forms later than this date will NOT be accepted.

Round the Games

Inverness, 17th July

Piobaireachd – 1. Roy Fraser, 2. Euan MacCrimmon, 3. John N. MacLeod, 4. James MacGregor.

March – 1. Roy Fraser, 2. Robert Munro, 3. Euan MacCrimmon, 4. Moira Morrison.

Strathspey and Reel – 1. Euan MacCrimmon, 2. Roy Fraser, 3. John MacLeod, 4. Moira Morrison.

Jig – 1. Moira Morrison, 2. Roy Fraser, 3. Euan MacCrimmon, 4. John MacLeod.

Junior Events – Under 18

Piobaireachd – 1. Fiona MacKay, 2. Scott Armstrong, 3. Niall Stewart, 4. Angela MacKay.

March – Niall Stewart, 2. Scott Armstrong, 3. Iain Finlayson, 4. Fiona MacKay.

Strathspey and Reel – 1. Niall Stewart, 2. Fiona MacKay, 3. Yvonne MacKenzie, 4. Angela MacKay.

Lochearnhead, 24th July

After a sunny morning the weather settled to steady rain with occasional heavy downpours. The light music judges were provided with shelters but the piobaireachd judges were not and had to juggle with piobaireachd books, notebooks, sandwiches and coffee while holding umbrellas. 18 played in the march and strathspey and reel and 15 played in the piobaireachd.

The results were: –

March – 1. Allan Russell, 2. Iain Macpherson, 3. Wilson Brown, 4. Brian Donaldson.

Judges – Alan Forbes and Finlay MacLaren.

Strathspey and Reel – 1. Brian Donaldson, 2. Leslie Watson, 3. Allan Russell, 4. Neil Walker.

Judges – Alastair Ross and Nigel Malcolm-Smith.

Piobaireachd – 1. Gavin Walker, 2. Logan Tannock, 3. Brian Donaldson, 4. Bruce Hitchings.

Judges – Donald MacPherson and James Burnet.

Portree, 3rd and 4th August

Dunvegan Medal – Piobaireachd – 1. Sgt Niall Matheson, 2. Dr Angus MacDonald, 3. Amy Garson.

Col. Jock Clasp – 1. Cpl Gordon Walker, 2. Dr Angus MacDonald, 3. Sgt Niall Matheson.

6/8 March – 1. Dr Angus MacDonald, 2. Cpl Gordon Walker, 3. Sgt. Niall Matheson, 4. Sgt Michael Elder.

Jig – 1. Sgt Michael Elder, 2. Duncan MacGillivray, 3. Cpl Gordon Walker, 4. Sgt Niall Matheson

2/4 March – 1. Cpl Gordon Walker, 2. Sgt Michael Elder, 3. PM Bruce Hitchings, 4. Sgt Niall Matheson.

Strathspey & Reel – 1. Cpl Gordon Walker, 2. Sgt Michael Elder, 3. Sgt Niall Matheson, 4. PM Bruce Hitchings.

Local

Slow Air – 1. Margaret MacDonald, 2. Hector MacKenzie, 3. Allan MacDonald, 4. Hector Henderson.

March – 1. Hector MacKenzie, 2. Allan MacDonald, 3. Robbie MacRae, 4. Karen Jagger.

Strathspey & Reel – 1. Hector MacKenzie, 2. Allan MacDonald, 3. R. Macrae, 4. A. Macpherson.

Jig – 1. Hector MacKenzie, 2. Hector Henderson, 3. A. MacDonald, 4. A. Macpherson.

Junior (Under 18)

Piobaireachd – 1. Ross McCrindle, 2. Martin Kessler, 3. Liam Roger.

March, Strathspey & Reel – 1. Ross McCrindle, 2. Hector MacKenzie, 3. Scott Armstrong

Judges – Open – *Angus J. MacLellan, Willie MacDonald (Benbecula), Ronald Morrison, Jimmy Young.*

Local Piping – *Finlay MacRae.*

Lairg Games – Saturday 21st August

Piobaireachd – 1. Sgt. Niall Matheson, Q.O.H., 2. Ruairaidh Cameron, Rogart, 3. Dr. Rutherford.

March – 1. Sgt. Niall Matheson, 2. Ruairaidh Cameron, 3. Dr. Rutherford.

Strathspey and Reel – 1. Sgt. Niall Matheson, 2. Ruairaidh Cameron, 3. Dr. Rutherford.

Jig – 1. Sgt. Niall Matheson, 2. Gordon MacKenzie, Fort William, 3. Ruairaidh Cameron, 4. Dr. Rutherford.

Under 15

March – 1. Yvonne MacKenzie, Bonar Bridge, 2. Fiona MacKay, Alness, 3. Allan Clark, Alness.

Strathspey and Reel – 1. Yvonne MacKenzie, 2. Fiona MacKay, 3. (equal) Allan Clark and Toby Renoff, Rogart.

Special prize for the youngest female competitor – Sian Luyken, Achiltibuie.

Under 18

March – 1. Yvonne MacKenzie, 2. Gordon MacKenzie, 3. Ross MacDonald, Bonar Bridge.

Strathspey and Reel – 1. Gordon MacKenzie, 2. Yvonne MacKenzie, 3. (equal) Fiona MacKay and Ross MacDonald.

Judges were Finlay MacRae, Dingwall; Fraser Wilson, Wick; Hugh MacDonald, Ardgay.

Birnam, 28th August

March – 1. Stuart Shedden, 2. James Stewart, Banff, 3. Marion MacVean, New Zealand, 4. Mary Ann McKinnon, Balbeggie.

Strathspey and Reel – Greg Wilson, 2. Stuart Shedden, 3. Marion MacVean, 4. James Stewart.

Jig – 1. Greg Wilson, 2. Stuart Shedden, 3. James Stewart, 4. Brian Mulhearn.

Piobaireachd – 1. Greg Wilson, 2. Mary Ann McKinnon, 3. Stuart Shedden, 4. James Stewart.

Sinagogo Cup for the most points in open piping – Greg Wilson.

Donald Stewart Fotheringham Memorial Shield for most points in Piobaireachd – Greg Wilson.

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The College of Piping and the Piping Times wish to express their sincere appreciation to all those who have contributed, in large or small amounts, to the Piping Trust in order to establish a centre for world piping.

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Total	£604,302.47

The Silver Chanter

August 9th this year was the date for the prestigious Silver Chanter event, held every year since 1967 in Dunvegan Castle on the evening of Skye Games. The function is now of course mainly a recital, intended to show the best of piobaireachd playing, with the tunes confined to MacCrimmon compositions.

This year five pipers had been invited to play, and had been given their tunes weeks in advance so that they could concentrate on producing the very best interpretations of which they were capable. Fear an Tighe was John MacLeod of MacLeod himself and Fear cathrach was Alasdair D G Milne, whose task it was not only to introduce the pipers but to give the background history of the tunes themselves.

As always a high standard was expected but perhaps this time not completely fulfilled. The Drawing Room of the castle was packed to capacity with piping enthusiasts from literally all over the world, all keen to experience the magic of the greatest tunes played in the very room where they had first been performed by the legendary MacCrimmons.

First to play was Sergeant Brian Donaldson of the Scots Guards, his tune being the Lament for the Earl of Antrim, composed by Padruig Mor MacCrimmon about 1636. Brian had some difficulty in getting his drones set to his satisfaction and this may have detracted to some extent from his concentration.

Alasdair Gillies, the other Army piper involved also had a struggle to get the instrument tuned, but eventually he got going with I Got a Kiss of the King's Hand, another of Padruig Mor's compositions, this time probably about 1651. Shortly before the end of the tune one of his drones stopped, which might not have happened if he had got off the mark a bit quicker.

If the long tuning of these two had a depressing effect on the audience it was nothing to what Roderick MacLeod inflicted on us.

Roderick's tune, The Earl of Ross's March, though well played, was not worth the time involved in getting the bagpipe settled.

The interval was taken up with the usual informal meeting and talks, and the imbibing of Glenfiddich and Standfast dispensed liberally by Liz Maxwell and Derek Maxwell respectively. One has to say that when William Grant and Sons Ltd sponsor an event they do not hold back in any respect.

After the interval we had Angus MacColl playing Mrs MacLeod of Tallisker's Salute, a Donald Ruadh MacCrimmon composition, and this was a very enjoyable performance. Finally Murray Henderson gave us the Lament for Donald Duaghal MacKay, another Padruig Mor tune, composed probably about 1649.

There the competition/recital usually finished and it was left to the two adjudicators, in this case Hugh MacCallum and Iain MacFadyen, to decide to whom they would award the Silver Chanter. While this was happening, a new idea was introduced, that there should be a guest player, not involved in the award of the chanter, but someone who was a retired competing professional piper but still able to shoulder the pipe and produce a tune. Mainly because I was not present at the meeting of the John MacFadyen Trust that decided this innovation, I was instructed that I should be the first of the guest players.

The tune I chose was the Battle of Waternish, probably a Donald Mor composition of the late 16th Century. There is great merit in being given the freedom to play without the restriction of trying to please anyone other than oneself and I must admit that I enjoyed the opportunity. To get properly into the mood I had visited the site of the battle earlier in the day and reminded myself of all the grisly details.

The last time I had played in Dunvegan Castle had been the night before Dame Flora MacLeod of MacLeod's funeral. She had expressed the wish that when that day arrived, John MacFadyen and I should play MacCrimmon tunes while she lay in state. So for two hours, without a break in the music, we went through a fair number of what had been her favourite tunes.

Anyway, enough of dwelling on the dear dead days of the past. The real pipers were eventually brought back into the Drawing Room and the presentation of the Silver Chanter was made to Murray Henderson, thus bringing his score to five – one above Iain MacFadyen and one below Hugh MacCallum.

Everyone then adjourned to the Dining Room where a splendid

buffet had been laid out together with a choice of wine and a selection of the amber nectar. As Mairi Nighean Alasdair Ruaidh said, "the drams were not a rarity."

Altogether another very successful Silver Chanter event, the 27th since the first one began in an effort to bring pipers back to Portree.

R.S.P.S. Recital

by Jeannie Campbell

On Thursday 3rd June the Royal Scottish Pipers' Society held a recital in Edinburgh at St. Cecilia's Hall. The venue was comfortable and the accoustics were excellent. The performers were a mix of Highland and Lowland which provided contrasts not only in instruments and music but also in style and presentation.

First on was Robert Wallace who began with 2/4 marches Muir of Ord, Col. H.H. Burney's Farewell to the Gordon Highlanders, the Hornpipe Pipers Controversy and Jigs Donald MacLean and the Old Woman's Dance. Next was the slow air Loch Etive Side then the marches Hugh Alexander Low of Tiree and Isle of Barra March, two strathspeys Highland Harry and Struan Robertson and two reels Broadford Bay and John MacDonald's Reel. Robert finished with the piobaireachd Lament for Mary MacLeod.

Roddy MacLeod began with two 6/8 marches, The Highland Brigade Depot and Ben Gullion then some strathspeys and reels, The Duke of Gordon's Birthday, Donald Ruadh, Stirling Castle, Rip the Calico, Jenny Dang the Weaver, In and Out of the Harbour and The Famous Bridge. Next were two 2/4 marches Jim Christie of Wick and PM Robert Rennie then two strathspeys Delvinside and Cameronian Rant and two reels Pretty Marion and Charlie's Welcome. This was followed with the piobaireachd Patrick Og MacCrimmon's Lament then the slow air Sailing with a Heavy Heart and the jig Kenny Gillies of Portnalong. By this time Roddy had drone trouble so did not play the last two jigs listed on his programme. Donny MacGregor's Jig and The Broken Chanter.



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Picture Puzzle

The photograph below was sent to us with the request that we identify the piper and the place, but unfortunately all efforts proved unsuccessful.

One suggestion is that it is Jake Kowalski practising before the annual games at Upper Sandusky and all the local inhabitants have fled to the hills.



The other possibility is that this is the scene of the famous Clachan at the Empire Exhibition held in Bellahouston Park, Glasgow in 1938. Neither proposal seems very likely. If anyone can identify the place or the piper we would be most grateful.

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BBC Piping Programmes

We get regular requests from readers who live outside of Scotland (hard luck on them) asking us to use our influence with the BBC to have the piping programmes put out on the World Service. Our own attempts have not led to any great success in the past and our regular advice to those who would like to hear the broadcasts is to write directly to the BBC.

One address to try is the Music Department, BBC, Queen Margaret Drive, Glasgow, G12. In addition it might just help to write to the

BBC English Language World Service,
Attn: Mrs Elizabeth Scott,
The Controller of English Services,
Room 306, Centre Block,
Bush House, The Strand,
London, England, WC2.

William R. Tubbs Jr. of West Sacramento, California sent the following letter

Dear Mrs. Scott

You have undoubtedly received at least a few letters requesting the broadcast of piping on the shortwave bands as an addition to your local BBC Scotland piping programs.

This is also a plaintive request from the West Coast of the US for the BBC to include piping on a frequency which is receivable here. As you may know, piping is continually on the upswing around the world and particularly in Commonwealth or other British heritage countries. While it is possible for us to purchase recordings of pipers and pipe bands, it is rare indeed that we are able to hear recent performances that never make it to the marketplace.

I urge you to consider a regularly scheduled show of piping for worldwide broadcast, and in the interim, to consider making past and current shows available for purchase on cassette tape or even CD if practicable. Many of us enjoy dozens of fine BBC video programs here in the US and I suspect there is some market for the radio shows as well. You may be surprised at the potential popularity!

Sincerely,

Piping 1940 – 1945

by Jeannie Campbell

During the war years the Oban Times was much reduced, both in the number and size of the pages. Most of the space available is devoted to war news. There was a special obituary column for war deaths and many photographs and articles on local boys lost at sea, reported missing or killed in action.

There are some more cheerful items such as brothers meeting unexpectedly in far off places and news from prisoner of war camps. The regular piping events were not held but pipers continued to play in the army and the juvenile and amateur competitions still took place.

In 1940 the results of the S.P.A. amateur competition were as follows;

Piobaireachd, John MacDougall Gillies Trophy – 1. R. Hardie, 2. J. Love, 3. J. MacFadyen, 4. R. Morrison.

Slow March – 1. R. Hardie, 2. J. Love, 3. J. Liddell, 4. A. MacLeod.
Jig – 1. J. Love, 2. J. Liddell, 3. R. Hardie, 4. J. MacFadyen.

March under 16 – 1. J. MacFadyen, 2. R. MacFie, 3. J. Love, 4. K. MacDonald, 5. H. MacFadyen.

Strathspey and Reel, under 16 – 1. J. MacFadyen, 2. R. MacFie, 3. K. MacDonald, 4. A. Taylor, 5. William Simpson.

Next year the results were;

Piobaireachd, John MacDougall Gillies Trophy – 1. Donald Macpherson (I Got a Kiss of the King's Hand), 2. Iain Macpherson (The Battle of Auldearn), 3. R. Morrison (MacGregors' Gathering), 4. Angus MacLeod (Lament for Mary MacLeod).

Slow March – 1. Donald Macpherson, 2. John MacFadyen, 3. Angus MacLeod, 4. Iain Macpherson.

Jig – 1. Iain Macpherson, 2. Donald Macpherson, 3. John MacFadyen, 4. John Love.

Juvenile March under 16 – 1. John MacFadyen, 2. Archie Taylor, 3. Hector MacFadyen, 4. Donald Campbell.

Juvenile strathspey and reel under 16 – 1. John MacFadyen, 2. Donald Campbell, 3. Archie Taylor, 4. Hector MacFadyen.

The MacFadyen boys are said to have Tíree connections and "Wee Hector" is given a special mention.

The Macpherson brothers, Iain and Donald, are described as from Glasgow but with an Oban connection. Soon they too would be away to the war. Iain served with the H.L.I. winning the Military Medal and was awarded a life membership of the S.P.A. on his return. Donald was still around for the 1942 competition then joined the R.A.F. and suffered an injury to the left arm which left him with a permanent disability, making his piping career that bit more difficult.

The 1942 results were;

Piobaireachd – 1. Donald Macpherson, 2. Angus MacLeod, Partick, 3. John Love, 4. Roderick Morrison.

Slow March – 1. Angus MacLeod, 2. Donald Macpherson, 3. John MacFadyen, 4. Roderick Morrison.

Jig – 1. Angus MacLeod, 2. John MacFadyen, 3. Donald Macpherson, 4. John Love.

Juvenile March under 16 – 1. George Rich, 2. John MacLean.

Juvenile Strathspey and Reel under 16 – 1. John MacLean, 2. George Rich.

Although war news was dominant, readers continued to show an interest in other items. There were letters and articles on the meanings of place names, local events and various historical topics. The Glasgow Letter and Edinburgh Letter continued to appear regularly. In 1942 there was a series of articles, 'The Piping Reminiscences of John MacDonald M.B.E., Honorary Piper to His Majesty the King.'

Also in 1942 on May 30th are published the words and music of 'My Dream Valley on the Road to Glendaruel' by Pipe Major John MacLellan, Dunoon. Below it says 'P.M. MacLellan writes lyrics first then sets them to piping tunes. Such was the origin of three of his best known compositions, Heroes of Vittoria, Lochan Side, Magersfontain.'

In 1943 there is a photograph of the 51st Division entering Tripoli led by pipers.

The results of the S.P.A. Amateur competition were;

Piobaireachd – 1. Hector MacFadyen, 2. John Love, 3. John MacFadyen, 4. Ewan MacDonald.

Slow March – 1. Joseph Henderson, 2. John Love, 3. John MacFadyen, 4. George Morrison Reich.

Jig – 1. John Love, 2. John MacFadyen, 3. Ewan MacDonald, 4. James Sutherland.

March, under 16 – 1. Hector MacFadyen, 2. George M. Reich, 3. Wm. Allison, 4. John MacLean, 5. James Sutherland.

Strathspey and Reel, under 16 – 1. Hector MacFadyen, 2. John MacLean, 3. George M. Reich, 4. James Sutherland, 5. George MacColl.

In 1944 there are several items of interest. First some news from the camps where Scots continued to pursue their interests. There is a picture of a Prisoner of War Shinty team and a report from Stalag 383 'where the prisoners include no fewer than 13 Pipe Majors. The Stalag 383 Piping Academy now has ten sets of pipes sent by various societies, friends and relations, and with drums borrowed from the orchestra make a good band. There are thirty in the learners' class, all with chanters, and many more want to start when more chanters are available'

The camp must have resembled an early Summer School.

Back to the home news and there is a photograph of the Class at the Army School of Piping in Edinburgh Castle. William Ross is at the blackboard, using his chanter to point to the notes, a pupil with a chanter is standing in front of the board and five more are sitting behind the table. A note underneath the picture says 'Malcolm Roderick MacCrimmon, now in the Scots Guards, was recently a pupil in the school – a link not to be forgotten between Boreraig and the school.'

The S.P.A. Amateur competition is announced for 29th April, but the results do not appear.

The Highland Pipers' Society held a competition in Edinburgh on 22nd April 1944. The results were as follows:

March, 15 and over – 1. W. Cowie, 2. R. Thomson, 3. A. Macfaren.

March, under 15 – 1. John Burgess, 2. Iain Cockburn, 3. A. Campbell.

Strathspey and Reel, under 15 – 1. J. Burgess, 2. A. Campbell, 3. I. Cockburn.

Strathspey and Reel, 15 and over – 1. J. Ross, 2. R. Kilgour, 3. W. Cowie.

March, Strathspey and Reel, 15 and over – 1. G. Cockburn, 2. J. Ross, 3. R. Thomson.

March, Strathspey and Reel, under 15 – 1. J. Burgess, 2. I. Cockburn, 3. A. Campbell.

On August 12th there is a group picture entitled 'Champion Pipers

of ten Years Ago'. These are G.S. MacLennan, John MacDonald, Glasgow Police; Philip Melville, Glasgow Police; Alexander MacDonald, Glasgow Police; and P.M. Robert Reid.

On August 26th there is a report of Milngavie Highland Games, under the joint auspices of the Glasgow Uist and Barra Association and the 3rd Dunbartonshire Battalion of the Home Guard Pipe Band. This is the second year of the Games but the first piping competition. Twenty leading pipers competed and the judges were P.M. Wm. MacLean, Kilcreggan, P.M. George MacDonald, Dunoon, and P.M. Hector MacLean.

The results are given as follows;

Piobaireachd – 1. P.M. John MacDonald, Glasgow City Police, 2. Piper J.C. Johnston of the same band, 3. Pipe Corporal Donald R. Stewart, 3rd Battalion Dunbartonshire Home Guard, 4. Nicol MacCallum, 8th Argylls, 5. Roderick MacDonald, Glasgow City Police.

M.S.R. – 1. P.M. John MacDonald 2. Piper Roderick MacDonald, 3. P.M. Charles J. Scott, 12th Battalion Glasgow Home Guard, 4. Nicol MacCallum, 5. John MacKinnon, Glasgow.

On September 2nd there is more news from the prisoner of war camps, a photograph of the pipe band of OFLAG VII.B. The instructor and moving spirit is Lieutenant J. Hector Ross and the band had been equipped by the Association of Highland Societies of Edinburgh.

Last item for 1944 is a report of massed bands playing in liberated Florence. These were the combined bands of the Gordon Highlanders and the Royal Scots.

In May 1945 the results of the S.P.A. Amateur competition are given.

Piobaireachd – 1. Ewen MacDonald, 2. James Sutherland, 3. George M. Rich, 4. John Burgess.

Slow March – 1. Donald Murray, 2. G.M. Rich, 3. Ewen MacDonald, 4. James Sutherland.

Jig – 1. D. Murray, 2. Kenneth Bell, 3. J. Burgess, 4. James MacColl.

Juvenile March – 1. John Burgess, 2. J. Findlay, 3. R. MacDonald, 4. J. Bell, 5. J. Sutherland.

Juvenile Strathspey and Reel – 1. J. Burgess, 2. J. Findlay, 3. J. Sutherland, 4. R. MacDonald, 5. Kenneth Bell.

The Silver Medals for the best dressed went to Mary Munro and, of course, John Burgess.

In the same paper is a photograph of the City of Glasgow Police Pipe band who will be appearing in a charity concert on the following Friday. Those in the picture are;

Front Row – C. Scott, Roderick MacDonald, John MacDonald (P.M.) Chief Constable Malcolm M. MacCulloch, Angus Morrison, John MacMillan, John C. Johnston.

Second Row – George White, Malcolm MacPhail, John Greenshields, John Garroway, Hector MacDonald, Duncan Gillies.

Back Row – John Seton, Alexander MacCormack, Alexander Walker, Norman Black, Andrew Cullen, Neil Campbell, Robert Seton.

At this time the paper is full of the Victory in Europe Celebrations and information on candidates in the forth-coming election.

In June there is a notice that Taynuilt Highland Games will be held the following month. There are no details of events and no mentions of any other games but on August 11th there is a report of a pipe band competition in Edinburgh for the Lothian and Border Pipe Band Association Championships. The results were;

Open – 1. Shotts and Dykehead, P.M. MacAllister, 2. Hutchesontown British Legion, P.M. Appleby, 3. Newtongrange Lothian, P.M. O. MacIntosh, 4. Bowhill Colliery, P.M. C. Sutherland.

First Grade – 1. Edinburgh Special City Police, P.M. S. Halliday, 2. West Calder, P.M. T. Crookston, 3. Pumpherston, P.M. R. Brown.

2nd and 3rd Grades – Repetition of 1st Grade.

Juvenile Bands – 1. Newtongrange Juveniles, P.M. O. MacIntosh, 2. 47th St. Bride G. BB. P.M. Simons, 3. Eyemouth A.T.C. P.M. R. Barton.

August 1945 was the bicentenary of the Raising of the Standard at Glenfinnan so the paper at this time is mainly concerned with the celebrations and commemorations of this event.

On November 3rd there is an article under the heading 'MacCrimmon Descendant Married in India'

'Lieut. Iain L. Alexander of the Black Watch to Nursing Officer Sarah MacCrimmon daughter of Mr and Mrs Donald MacCrimmon of Meoul Schoolhouse, Wigtownshire and Glenelg, Inverness-shire. The bride's father is headmaster of Meoul and is a direct descendant from Patrig Caogach of Moyle, Glenelg, who was a brother of the great piper Donald Mor MacCrimmon of Skye.'

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Evening Post

The Common Room,
Manchester Grammar School.

Dear Seumas,

I'm back home now, after a long-awaited session at the College of Piping, and a brief trip to Skye for the Games and the 'Silver Chanter' evening at Dunvegan, with my colleague from School, David Allan. Here are a few impressions of the week.

We spent Monday and Tuesday at the College. It was good to receive the kindly welcome and we were put through our paces by Jeannie Campbell, Rona Macdonald and P/M Peter MacInnes. We also had a look at the old Cowcaddens Free Church which will be the College's new home, and what a splendid new home it will be.

After lessons on Tuesday we travelled to Mallaig, stayed the night there, and on Wednesday crossed over to Armadale:

'Oh come with me where the sea-birds fly
Remote and far by the Isle of Skye' –

I had not been to Skye for nearly thirty years, when I used to take the boys from School on an annual trek to the North; Col Jock MacDonald kindly let us camp in one of his fields by Viewfield House when we were in Portree, and it is in fact 56 years since I had seen the Games there; they left an indelible impression. It was a sunny day, I remember and there were competitors in the Piping and the Heavy events that had names 'That would start a spirit as soon as Caesar' – P/M J B Robertson, 2nd Bn Scots Guards; Bob Reid, 7th Bn HLI; Hugh Kennedy, Scalasaig Tiree; Lewie Beaton, former P/M Cameronians; and John Wilson, Edinburgh. And in the heavies there were Eddie Anderson, Dundee; and George Clark, Grange. The Pipes and Drums of the 4th Camerons were there too.

And this time? In the first place, the Piping was held indoors. Is this the practice at all Games now? I must say I missed the sight of the pipers marching, nay, surging, round the platform in the magnificent setting – of Skye, the home of the MacCrimmons, and the proud owner of a formidable military tradition. I am thinking now of the island's record over 40 years, 1797-1837, when it provided 10,000 soldiers, 120 pipers, 600 Captains and Subalterns, 21 Generals and Major-Generals and 2 Governor-Generals of India! There were over 1000 Skyemen in the ranks that withstood Napoleon's Arme Blanche

at Waterloo, and one wonders how many men there were in the force that marched all the way to take part in the Battle of Worcester in 1651.

And here was the one jarring note. When the competitors after the piping came forward to receive their prizes, most of them were in track suits and sweat shirts – as if they had wished to get out of the garb of old Gaul as quickly as possible!

But in the evening we went to Dunvegan Castle to hear the pipers play the pibrochs composed by the MacCrimmons. In this case, the setting was perfect. Even the poorest imagination would be roused by the thought that these tunes were played in that room by the MacCrimmons, to their Chief, all those years ago. As Dr Johnson said to the Lady of MacLeod: 'Keep to the rock; it is the very jewel of the Estate. It looks as if it had been let down from heaven by the four corners, to be the residence of a Chief.' As we listened to the Great Music that night, we were all chiefs.

On Thursday, we left for Glasgow. The weather was glorious, not a cloud on the Coolins, as we sped along Skye's excellent roads, ever and anon passing new bungalows, their new white paint gleaming in the sun. After an absence of nearly thirty years, what struck me most forcefully and favourably was the heartening sight of new homes. Homes mean people: the ineffably sad sight of a roofless ruin, with its gloomy memories of Evictions and Clearances represents a long gone distant, dismal past.

On Friday we were back at the College. I had as my mentor P/M Angus MacLellan. He knows how to encourage the feeblest beginner who makes an effort when he turned to me and said: 'Come on now, Ian Ban MacCrimmon, let's hear what you can do!'

It made my day!

Yours sincerely,
Ian Bailey.

Unterhaching,
Germany.

Dear Seumas,

I'm interested in computer-software for writing pipe music, but I don't know whether there are any programmes on the market. May be

you can give me an advice?

Thank you very much!

Best regards,
Reinhard Bauer.

Bayport, NY,
USA.

Dear Seumas,

Regarding the article by Frans Buisman in the April issue of the Times, "Dungallon's Lament/Salute Playing styles and the exchange of tunes in Ceol Mor" part 2, I've got a little confused regarding the musical score and canntaireachd examples given on page 28, and a few other points:

Gesto: V. MAC, VIC HOROMOID [= MAC MHIC THORMOID],
alias M'LEOD GESTO'S LAMENTATION

Colin Campbell, Vol.II: 52. Called DUNGALAN'S LAMENT (*also*:
86. Called Dun Gallans Lament)

Structure: || AB || (2x) || A+B+ | A+T ||
Compass: low A to high A (D and low G excluded)

Very Slow

1

2 I him bo-tro^din hiodro,bietrieo ho-chin, hie-o ho-chin dro,
3 I him bo-tro^din hiodro,bietrieo ho-chin, hie-o ho-chin dro,
4 Hino-drô^din hiodro dâre-e ho-en dre-o ho-en-dro

I've numbered each of these for easy reference.

Line 1: The musical score; Is this from the MacArthur MS or has it been transliterated from the Gesto Book of 1828? Frans, I think, refers to it as a translation of Iain Dubh MacCrimmon's version, but there is no actual example of any music or canntaireachd written by a member of the MacCrimmon family.

Line 2 and 3 I think are from Gesto and line 4 from the Nether Lorn MS.

Am I to understand that canntaireachd is governed by the grammatical laws of the English language? I can't understand how a Gaelic-speaking, thinking person of some two hundred years ago would go out of his way to construct a piece so that a person speaking an alien language would be able to understand it!

Allowing for Gaelic orthography and phonetics, the vowels of the Gaelic language (which I don't speak or read) cannot possibly be A, E, I, O, U. Canntaireachd is not based or derived from the Gaelic. It represents the sounds or notes of the chanter. So how can it be governed by the English language?

Lastly, can someone please tell me how to play a "suggested D gracenote"? Why would I want to play it? What is it? Where is it? Is it like the redundant low A that can be felt but not heard?

All the best,
Frank Timoney.

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Urbana,
Illinois.

Dear Seumas,

Now and again I meet someone who thinks that Upper Sandusky, like Erewhon, is just the figment of a fevered imagination. Here is the pictorial proof of its existence and I can now say with perfect confidence, "Yes, Virginia, there is an Upper Sandusky."

I should point out that the town is somewhat larger than the few buildings which appear in the photograph. For those information-hungry souls who wish to find this town on a map, it is located in North Western Ohio, about four and a half inches (on my map) below



the city of Sandusky. To those readers who think that something must be wrong here because, logically, Upper Sandusky should be above Sandusky on the map, the explanation for this strange circumstance is that the early settlers of Upper Sandusky had their map upside down because the unscrupulous ship's captain who brought them to this country told them he was taking them to Australia.

The piper in the photo is not, as some may suspect, my friend Jake Kowalski, but is a very promising performer named Steven Knox. Steve was named the outstanding student at this year's summer school in Timmins in spite of the fact that Tom Speirs seems to have



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him confused with Eric the Red, a former piper of note in the Norwegian navy who is reputed to have discovered America long before Columbus, for whom the capital of Upper Sandusky's state, Ohio, was named.

Having made everything very clear, perhaps we can now get back to settling something important, like the heavy throw controversy.

All the best,
Jim Lynch.

That controversy can be settled very quickly. "Heavy" or "light" is a matter of choice. But don't attempt the heavy one unless you are a good enough player to get it right.

Some more heavy men, as evidenced at Oban this year are Angus MacColl, Dr Angus MacDonald, Arthur Gillies, Cpl Gordon Walker.

Campbeltown,
Argyll.

Dear Seumas,

I am writing regarding the article on Mr Moore's plates. My mother had two plates exactly the same, in colour and design. They are now in the possession of my sister who lives in Norway.

We go there on holiday every year, and I have always admired them. After reading the article in the Piping Times, I phoned my sister and asked if there were any markings on the back of the plates. She said there was a stamp on both of them which resembled a lover's knot. My sister who is 80 years old always remembered them being in my mother's house. If I receive any more information about the plates I will let you know.

Yours aye,
George M. McIntyre.

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Jacobite Punch-bowl

The illustration below shows a Chinese famille rose Jacobite punch-bowl which was put up for sale along with many other items in Fingask Castle, near Perth, in April of this year.

The following is taken from the description by Christies - the auctioneers. "The exterior is painted with a rifleman and a piper and branches laden with peaches and peonies, the interior with a portrait medallion of Bonnie Prince Charlie within a border scattered with branches of peonies.

"The piper is copied faithfully from the 1743 frontispiece engraved by George Bickham for *A short history of the Highland Regiment*. The



private is also after a Bickham drawing of the same date. The piper has been reversed, but the rifleman is as he appears in the drawing. (The same piper design was still being used in 1786 for he appears again in Grose's *Military Antiquities*, published that year.)

"The prints had also been sold separately at the 'Black Horse' in Cornhill in 1743 as a 'set' of four by John Bowles, and it seems probably that two were taken to China (rather than a copy of *A short history of the Highland Regiment*).

"This Regiment, the 42nd Foot, amalgamated later with the 73rd and became the Black Watch. On 18 July 1743 Rifleman Farquhar and Shaw, together with Samuel and Malcolm McPherson of the 42nd, were shot at the Tower, while Piper Macdonnel (some records say Macdonald) was among those sent as a convict to Georgia for their

part in a mutiny. This was the occasion commemorated by John Bowles's set of prints, and a Macdonnel was a piper, it was inevitable that the very recent print of a piper of the 42nd should be used, and given his name. It is thought that Piper Macdonnel's companion on the porcelain is rifleman Shaw, but it may equally well have been another of these 'Jacobite martyrs'.

"Five or more punch-bowls are known, but most show that many a toast has been drunk from them. There is also a dinner service painted with these two figures. At least twenty plates are known, none showing any signs of wear for they were probably hidden and never used."

The Donald MacDonald Quaich, 1993

by Malcolm McRae

The stone arches and timber-clad interior of the magnificent former stables building at Armadale Castle, Skye, rang to the sounds of pipe, clarsach, fiddle, bodhran and whistle at the sixth annual competition for the Quaich on 18th June.

Four former winners of the Quaich, Robert Wallace, Roderick MacLeod, William McCallum and Allan MacDonald, had been invited by the Clan Donald Lands Trust to participate this year in a Champion of Champions event sponsored by those eminent patrons of traditional music, the producers of Glenfiddich pure malt Scotch whisky. The fear an tigh was David Murray who introduced each performance with informative comments, and the judges were John Burgess and Iain MacFadyen. As in previous years, the piping was interspersed with other traditional music, this year presented by the Traditional Music Scholars of Lomond School, Helensburgh.

Initial introductions by the International Director of the Trust, Rob MacDonald Parker, were followed by a tuneful selection from the pipers of the Isle of Skye Piping Society. The serious stuff of the evening began with the "White Flag", usually now known as the "MacKays' Banner", played by William McCallum. The Donald

MacDonald settings of the tunes are de rigueur at this event, and the MacDonald version of this tune is particularly attractive. The pipe was good and stayed well and the player kept the music flowing and skilfully negotiated the intricacies of the settings' taorluath and crunluath variations.

Then came two selections from the schoolgirls – six of them, average age 14, each proficient on more than one instrument, producing individual, duet, vocal and ensemble performances of a high order throughout the evening.

Allan MacDonald's "Cill Chrìosd" was a vigorous tune of high emotion, "screaming vengeance" on a pipe which, while not as tuneful as the others, was well suited to his treatment of the piece. He played rather more of the urlar than was called for by the score.

"Siubhal Sheumais" was Roderick MacLeod's piece – a setting with fewer variations than we are used to, but with some attractive turns of phrase. He exploited the F gracenote embellishments to good effect and although the pipe did not remain quite steady throughout it did not detract from the performance.

The final piobaireachd was Rab Wallace's "MacDonald's Warning", better known as "The Piper's Warning to his Master", well played on a good pipe. His relaxed style suited this tune and this was another enjoyable performance. He did not play the whole of the urlar at the end of the piece and some listeners wondered if this counted against him with the judges.

After a final rendition from the younger musicians, Willie McCallum was announced as the recipient of the Champion of Champion's Quaich, gracefully presented by Mrs Liz Maxwell on behalf of Glenfiddich.

Once again this event proved to be one of the most enjoyable musical experiences of the piping calendar. The mix of ceol mor and other traditional music makes for a unique occasion and this year's probably ranks as the best yet.

WANTED

A copy of "The Pipes of War" by Sir Bruce Seton and P/M John Grant with introduction by General Frank Richardson.

Box A.M.

Proceedings of the Piobaireachd Society

Some old copies of these proceedings are still available, price £6 each including surface postage. The low price is because we are tired of storing them. Also some are not in great condition.

The various talks, with subsequent discussion, are typed and duplicated. We are planning that if any are left over by November 5th we will add them to one of the local bonfires. These are lit each year to show thankfulness (or regret) for the failure of Guy Fawkes in 1605 to blow up the Houses of Parliament.

Details are: –

Volume I – 1973

1. The Unpublished Tunes in the Campbell Canntaireachd – A G Kenneth
2. Problems of Judging at Piobaireachd Competitions – D R MacLennan and Frank M Richardson
3. Ceol Mor and Gaelic Song – Finlay MacNeill and Jake MacDonald.

Volume II – 1974

1. Modern Piobaireachd – John A MacLellan
2. Canntaireachd – Morag Macleod
3. The MacKay Tunes – the Story of some Sutherland Piobaireachd – Alec J Haddow

Volume III – 1975

1. Piping in the Army – David Murray
2. Aspects of Piobaireachd Playing – John MacFadyen
3. Teaching Piping in the Highlands – Iain MacFadyen

Volume IV – 1976

1. Reminiscences of Pipers and Piping – D R MacLennan
2. Views on the Structure of Piobaireachd – Seumas MacNeill
3. A Bibliography of Bagpipe Music – Roderick Cannon

Volume V – 1977

1. Piping in North America – E D Neigh
2. History of the Piobaireachd Society – James Campbell
3. The Emendation of Piobaireachd – A G Kenneth, David Murray, John MacFadyen

Volume VI – 1978

1. Comparison of Bagpipes by Harmonic Measurement – Alex C MacKenzie

2. Modern Piobaireachd Compositions – John MacLellan
3. The Problems of Adjudicating Piping Competitions – Eddie Swindle

Volume VIII – 1980

1. Some Pipers of the 19th Century – Seumas MacNeill
2. The Judging of Piobaireachd Competitions – General Discussion
3. The Set Tunes for 1980 – John MacLellan and James Campbell

Volume IX – 1982

1. The Mackays of Gairloch – Alec MacRae
2. (i) What kind of Piobaireachd Society do we Want? – Tom Speirs
(ii) Preparation for Piobaireachd Competition – Iain Cameron
3. Piping Reminiscences – Colin Caird

Volume X – 1983

1. The Life and Work of General Thomason – Brian D Mackenzie
2. More Reminiscences – D R MacLennan
3. A Centre for Folk Music – Richard J Powell

Glasgow Academy

Piping at Glasgow Academy is enjoying a very successful period at the moment. Having come second for the last two years in the Glasgow Highland Club's annual competition for school bands they won this year's competition held recently in Glasgow Academy, thus winning for the first time the splendid banner and Challenge shield presented by the Highland Club.

In addition to their band success Glasgow Academy won for the third consecutive year, the Forrest McLelland Trophy for Quartet piping, which took place in Edinburgh in November. This competition is for the Independent Schools. Incidentally Tom Speirs, of the College of Piping, was one of the two judges.

It is good to see school boys from the West of Scotland doing so well in schools piping, which has for so long been dominated by Edinburgh and the East.

John Davidson Kelly.

Lone Piper

by *Elizabeth Somerville*

Part 4

My efforts in the Recruiting Campaign were purely local and I received no government or army recognition whatsoever, but the Edinburgh Recruiting Staff made me a private presentation. It was an African Blackwood practice chanter with a solid silver band with the following inscription:-

Presented to Miss Bessie Watson
by the Edinburgh Recruiting Staff
as a memento of the Recruiting Campaign
in Edinburgh 1915-1916

The presentation was made by Major Robertson who remarked that I would no doubt cherish it as a memento of an eventful two years' recruiting campaign during which I had rendered excellent service by piping. He said he had no doubt that the fact that a number of young men had been enticed into the Army by my music would entitle them to regard me as a miniature Duchess of Gordon. (Major Robertson was a Gordon Highlander and a V.C.)

With the Recruiting Campaign over, I had a little more time for other aspects of piping. Through the mothers of some of the Highland Pipers' Society dancers, I was invited to join the East Edinburgh, commonly known as the Abbeyhill Pipe Band. The band had lost a number of its members because of the war, and readily accepted me as a new member. It met every week on a Friday evening in the Canongate, the centre of the old town of Edinburgh. The standard of playing was not as high as that of the Highland Pipers' Society, but there was a drumming section and that was new to me. At first I hated it because I could not hear the pipes clearly enough, but I persevered and accepted it. I was in the band for three or four years and, during that time, won eight awards, including the two championship trophies, the Walker Cup - a beautiful silver rose bowl - for March, Strathspey and Reel, and the Murray Cup - a more conventional type of trophy - for Strathspey and Reel. I kept each trophy for a year and, on returning the Walker Cup, I received a beautiful silver medal with inscription. On returning the Murray Cup I received a slightly smaller, but equally beautiful, medal in gold. I was very proud of those medals and have them to this day. I won the Walker Cup at the

end of March, 1916, and on the 2nd of April of the same year there was a Zeppelin raid on Edinburgh. When I was wakened up in the middle of the night by the noise of the zeppelins, my chief worry was not for the safety of my home and my family, not even for my intermediate Latin examination which I had to sit on the following day, but for the safety of the Walker Cup. I got out of bed and removed it from its usual stance on the chest of drawers and hid it under my bed! We were not hit. Until the end of the war in 1918 there were many concerts and summer fairs held in aid of the troops, but to me the most outstanding event was my first lesson in pibroch playing. I was lucky to be accepted as a pupil by Roderick Campbell, one of the foremost civilian pipers of the day. He taught me how to play the taorluath and crunluath in their various forms, and also made an effective revision of grace notes generally. I felt that under Roddy I was beginning to play with my mind and not just with my fingers. We studied several short easy pibrochs, and after about a year or more, he allowed me to play in the pibroch class at the Highland Pipers' competition. He chose the tune for me, The Little Spree, and wrote it out for me by hand. I have the copy to this date and still know the piece by heart. I worked really hard at it and finally played it correctly. I did not win a prize. I did not expect to win and Roddy didn't expect me to win, but I had cleared the first hurdle. I had played a pibroch in public without breaking down, either in breath or in memory, and that for me was a great enough reward. But from that first performance came a greater reward still. After my performance, one of the stewards at the competition came to me and said that a gentleman in the audience wished to talk to me, and that is how I made the acquaintance of the man who changed the whole of my attitude to piping. He was Captain Iain MacLennan, father of George and Donald. He was quite elderly. He said he had enjoyed my playing, and he made me an offer which I have never regretted accepting. "If you will come to me, I shall teach you for the sheer joy of teaching you. I have taught dozens of pipers, but I have never taught a woman." I went to him and I learned about pibroch - the history, the meaning and, above all, how to play it. He loved his subject, and he certainly passed on that great love to me and I am eternally grateful. He attended to the slightest details, not only of playing, but of stance, and of marching - (slow marching is not too easy) - and I used to emerge from his lessons feeling truly revitalised. "I don't want any payment for these lessons, but if you ever have the chance to play before musicians, please let them know that the bagpipe is really a great instrument." I promised. How I fulfilled that promise will be told later.

(to be continued)

Donations

We receive a large number of small donations when readers are renewing their subscriptions to the magazine. In the past we have meticulously written thanking the individuals concerned but it has been pointed out now that in some cases the cost, in a modern office, of dictating, typing, signing and sending a letter is in excess of the donation received.

We will continue to welcome most enthusiastically even the smaller donations, but it would be counter-productive for us to spend more on saying "Thank you" than we actually receive in benefit. Accordingly, we have decided not to write personal letters of thanks for donations under £10, (US \$15, CAN \$2) although we are very grateful for ALL donations.

We hope that this policy will prove acceptable.

Broadcasting House,
Glasgow.

Dear Seumas,

RADIO SCOTLAND PIPING BROADCASTS

Could I, through your letters page, draw attention to the rescheduling of piping output on Radio Scotland.

I'm pleased to say that from 26th September the programme will be extended from its customary thirty minutes to forty-five minutes, and moves from Monday evenings to Sunday afternoons, 4.15 to 5.00 pm (FM 92.4 – 94.7 MHz).

The traditional studio-based recital remains at the heart of each programme (there will be a featured soloist or band each week), while extra time will allow for interviews, news, reviews and archive material as appropriate.

Coverage of major contests will continue as formerly, with additional time devoted during the summer months to the competition scene. Our aim is to keep abreast of modern developments in piping, while showcasing the most enduring elements of the Highland pipe repertoire.

Full details of programme content will be available, as ever, in the Radio Times, and in the piping press.

Many thanks,

Yours sincerely,
Iain MacInnes,
Music Producer Scotland.

Dingwall,
Ross-shire.

Dear Seumas,

You may recall that following the National Mod in Dingwall in 1991, you received a letter, falsely using my name as the signatory, and very critical of the judges.

You had the good grace to offer me an apology, since you could not find the original letter and I was left with rather a "bad piping taste" in my mouth.

I would like you to know that following a lot of investigation I have discovered the real writer of the letter and I will be taking appropriate action. I hope you can find a short place for this in your Piping Times.

Yours sincerely,
Finlay M. MacRae.

The original letter was in the December 1991 issue, page 45. Our apology appeared in February 1992, page 17.

COMPLETE BAGPIPE TUNE & DRUM SCORE INDEX



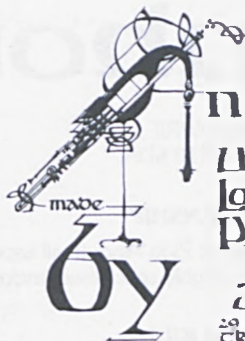
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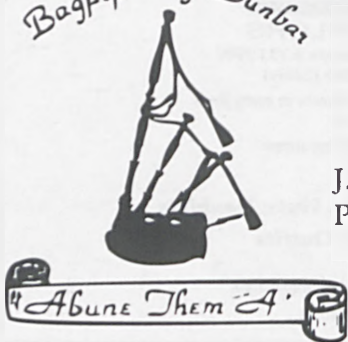
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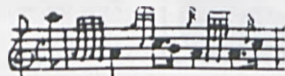


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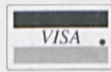
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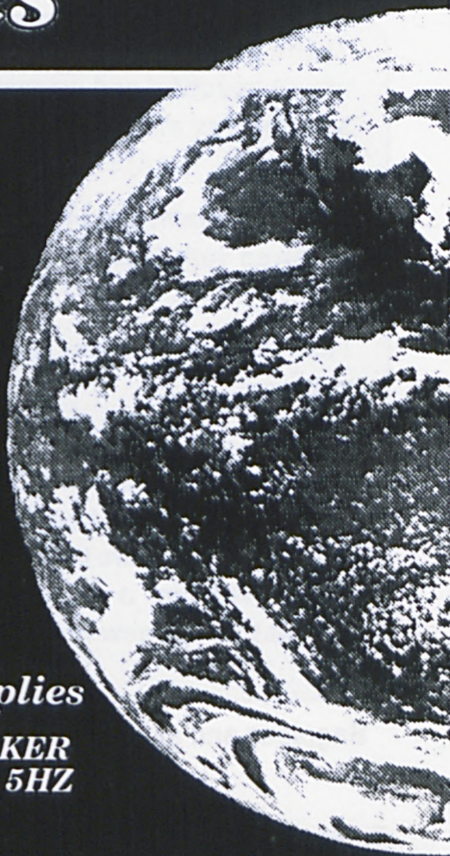
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