

Piping Times



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Vol. 68
No. 12
September 2016

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Vol. 68 No. 12
ISSN 1468-9634

September 2016
VAT Reg. No. 316 2007 06



Photo: SNS Group/Glasgow Life

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Cover: Pipe Major Richard Parkes leads Field Marshal Montgomery Pipe Band off Glasgow Green last month after the band won its 11th World Pipe Band Championship title.

The *Piping Times* is published monthly by the College of Piping.

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Piping Times

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Last month's World Pipe Band Championships was, on the whole, another success for the Royal Scottish Pipe Band Association (RSPBA). The 'Worlds' wasn't without its frustrations, though, and we are sure the organisation would like to hear our constructive comments in a genuine spirit of improvement. The Grade 1 qualifier on the Friday is, as we've said here before, extremely unsatisfactory. We must return to the format whereby all bands compete on the same day. This levels the playing field for the bands and adds to the sense of occasion. Quite simply, there is no need for the Friday qualifier and neither is there a demand for it from the bands. Ergo, why has it been forced on us?

In addition, on the Saturday there was far too big a gap between the bands playing their MSR and their Medley. Some bands had almost *five hours* to kill. Further, we echo ex-RSPBA adjudicator, Alistair Aitken's comments in the *Piping Times* last September where he suggested seating the adjudicators on a raised platform in the main stand at the front of the competing circle. This results in all adjudicators hearing the same sound projecting towards them. This is worth a try. We have also been saying for years that there should be no prize at all for the best drum corps. It is a band performance.

The March Past took far too long to complete. To be standing on the Green at 7.45pm while the last bands take their positions is ridiculous. It is time to return to having only a select number of bands (we think it was 50) salute the chieftain.

However, running the World Pipe Band Championships over two days is a subject that continues to vex us – and, it seems, most pipers and drummers. We conducted a straw poll on the Saturday. Admittedly, it amounted to around 200 people which could hardly be termed scientific. Nevertheless, of that 200 – all bandsmen and women – only three were in favour of the two-day Worlds. Three. All three were from overseas.

The two-day event was first trialled in 2014. Shortly after, the RSPBA apparently conducted a review of the format and concluded that it should remain. We'd like to know who was involved in this review? Did it involve only the RSPBA board and Glasgow Life? As our straw poll reveals, the overwhelming majority of pipe band people *do not want it*.

Clearly, he who pays the piper calls the tune. It is Glasgow City Council – who a couple of years ago outbid Belfast for the right to host the Worlds until 2021 – that insists on the two-day Worlds. We asked Glasgow Life, the council's marketing organisation that "delivers the Worlds on behalf of the RSPBA", why it insists on the event being held over two days. A spokesman said: "The decision to hold the World Pipe

Band Championships over two days was entirely driven by the continuing very high levels of entries from bands from around the world." This is disingenuous. The number of bands playing at the Worlds this year was 234, a figure that has remained more or less static for years when the event was held in one day.

We then asked about the detrimental effect the two-day Worlds is having elsewhere – Crieff and Perth in particular. Came the reply: "... Given the prospect of arriving at the Worlds early on Saturday morning and the event not concluding until past 8.00pm as it did this year, it is perhaps understandable why bands felt they are unable to commit to a further competition the next day." Of course it is. That's precisely the point! Perth Games had always attracted a large number of bands, especially overseas bands, when the Worlds was held in one day. The March Past at the Worlds certainly does need to finish before 8.00pm but that's not the reason bands didn't compete at Perth this year. It's because it would mean three days' competition in a row instead of two.

The tail is wagging the dog. Glasgow City Council runs the Worlds on *behalf* of the RSPBA. The council would do well to remember it is the messenger not the message. For how much longer will the RSPBA acquiesce to Glasgow City Council's demand for a two-day event?

Stuart Letford.



The Piobaireachd Society

The Piobaireachd Society's publications – Books 1-16, the *Kilberry Book of Ceol Mor*, and *Joseph MacDonald's Compleat Theory* are distributed on behalf of the Society by:

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CORRESPONDENCE

Do you have a point of view or some interesting information you would like to share with the rest of the piping world? Write, fax or e-mail the *Piping Times*. Full contact details on page 1.

Definable ensemble

Sir,

The aftershock from 'the Worlds' has now settled enough for me to comment. My local Novice Juvenile band was fantastic. The band played really well but the statistics say it came second. To lose out on the top spot due to an ensemble preference is just crazy. This should never have been adopted by the RSPBA. It is pure opinion by the adjudicator and there is no defining factor in this. The adjudicators themselves find it difficult to define. No one I speak to can define precisely what 'ensemble' is and the RSPBA's guidelines are as clear as mud.

A pipe band is essentially two types of instruments: pipes and drums. A pipe band isn't an orchestra. Dump the ensemble preference and stick to what is definable piping and drumming.

If anything, piping should be the defining factor.

Fred McKay, Aberdeenshire.

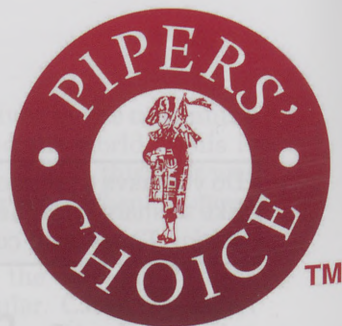
Ramble on

Sir,

In your interview with Ian Embelton of the Royal Scottish Pipe Band Association (August PT), Ian seemed to me to be avoiding the issue of the 'stooshie' surrounding the resignations of Joe Noble, John Wilson and Ian Duncan. He says it would be "rude of me to comment" but I think that's a cop-out. He's the organisation's Chief Executive for goodness sake. The buck stops with him. Perhaps the real reason for his reticence is because the matter may not have ended? Are m'learned friends now involved?

I was intrigued by your headline. I never had Mr Embelton down as being a fan of Led Zeppelin. Given the RSPBA's general indifference to the media perhaps 'Communication Breakdown' would've been a more appropriate choice of heading? On this vein, perhaps 45 Washington Street could be dubbed the 'Houses of the Holier-than-thou'?

John O'Brien, Glasgow.



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The bicentenary of highland games



Sir Henry Raeburn's painting from 1812 of Alastair Ranaldson Macdonell of Glengarry.

Sir,

The *Piping Times*' useful 'Guide to the Games', which you publish each spring, is a reminder of the scores of modern, organised, annually-repeated highland games still held each year in Scotland, not to mention all those held abroad. That this year marks the bicentenary of the first such games either in Scotland or abroad is not yet recognised. A number of books claim St Fillans in Perthshire in 1819 as the root from which the multitude of our contemporary games have sprung, but there were no games at St Fillans in 1819, though a Society was established there in that year to prepare for the first St Fillans games in 1820.

We owe the modern highland games movement, that annual reminder, wherever held, of a significant part of highland culture, to Alastair Ranaldson Macdonell of Glengarry (1773-1828), hardly the most modest of men, who formed The Society of True Highlanders at Inverloch on June 15, 1815. Its aims were to "support ... the True Dress,

Language, Music, and Characteristics of our illustrious and ancient race in the Highlands and Isles of Scotland".

Established within days of the climactic victory of Waterloo which brought almost a quarter of a century of war with France to a close, the new Society, one of a number of quite widely dispersed Highland Societies being set up about the same time, soon attracted a large number of members from various layers of highland life. And to add to its attractions in 1816 there was held a "True Highlanders Fete" in Glengarry on Saturday, September 14. A contemporary report (*Inverness Courier*) stated that after the firing of cannon at 10 o'clock, those assembled "mustered at Invergarry to the Pipe and Clan banner ... and marched down on 'Straidan', the field of sports". There "the martial toned bagpipe summoned the opening of each game". The foot race, along a course "of nearly five miles" was won by a local man, John Kennedy. "The lifting of the stone was next resorted to", and won by another local, Sergeant Ranald Macdonell.

After a feast of "Beef, Mutton, Venison, Broth, Haggis, &c. &c. ... the games were resumed to the sound of the Pipe ... Putting the stone ...

succeeded”, won by yet another local Macdonell. Finally, came “heaving the sledge hammer”, won by the abovementioned Sergeant, while “the shortness of a most joyous and harmonious day, forbade” adding such additional competitions as wrestling or “pitching the cabbar”. In 1816 Glengarry had not yet thought up pulling the legs off a cow, which gave such a distinctive character to later Games there.

By the time Glengarry transferred his games to the Northern Meeting’s new race course just south of Inverness in 1822, the fashion for holding such annual events had spread to Perthshire. It later spread to Aberdeenshire, where a detailed account survives of the games held in 1831 by what had begun as the Braemar Wright Society founded in 1817. (There may indeed have been games there as early as 1826, when the Braemar Wright Society became the Braemar Highland Society. Last September’s Braemar ‘Bi-Centenary’ Royal Highland Gathering was, incidentally, based on a Church of Scotland minister’s historical mistake in the New Statistical Account published in 1845.) The Braemar folk will have to wait for at least another decade before they can genuinely have their own local Bicentenary Games. All those who planned, competed in and attended such games across the globe this year, however, celebrated the actual bicentenary of the very first of the ongoing series of modern, organised, annually-repeated highland games.

George Dixon, Stirling.



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Ewart Alan Mackintosh



Sir,

I note the mention of Ewart Alan Mackintosh in your report last month of Kilbarchan Pipe Band's trip to the Somme. Mackintosh has been largely forgotten. He was born in 1893 in Brighton to an Inverness-shire father who had married an English woman. Ewart [pictured, left] studied literature at Oxford but, perhaps because of the Highland blood in him, he learned Gaelic and took up the pipes. He also took up fishing during holidays to Easter Ross.

When war broke out Mackintosh joined the 5th Seaforth Highlanders. In March 1916 he led a successful raid on a German trench during which three of his men had arms or legs blown off. Mackintosh attempted to carry his comrades back to safety but they died. For this action he was awarded the Military Cross. He was wounded and gassed in August that year and sent back to England. Once recovered, he spent eight months at Cambridge training cadets. He also wrote half a dozen poems about the war. He was, however, determined to return to the front and joined the 4th Seaforths near Bapaume at the beginning of October 1917. One month later he was killed in the fighting around Cambrai.

One of his poems is from *Three Battles* which includes the verse:

*The wild warpipes were calling,
Our hearts were blithe and free
When we went up the valley
To the death we could not see.
Clear lay the wood before us
In the clear summer weather,
But broken, broken, broken
Are the sons of the heather.*

Colin Brown, Paisley.

Ceòl mòr at the castle 2016

Sir

For the second year running Perth and District Pipe Band in conjunction with Donald MacPhee have run a piobaireachd tutorial day at Balhousie Castle in Perth (home of The Black Watch). Donald's great uncle, Michael



Donald MacPhee and Alistair Duthie at Balhousie Caastle, Perth, May 2016.

MacPhee, had been Pipe Major of the 11th Bn. The Black Watch during WW1. The battalion was commanded by Lt Col MacRae-Gilstrap of Eilean Donan, having been transferred from the 1st Bn. Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders after being wounded at the Battle of Aisne in 1914.


This year we had eight students ranging from ages 10 to senior years and all were taken through *Too long in this Condition*. Donald took us through the history of the tune and through the MacCrimmon "dudes" first of all. Donald is a great instructor and showed how to pull the music together from the various phrases and describing it like making a good chilli by not putting all your onions in at the same time! Donald explained to the youngsters why practice is very important, not to attempt shortcuts and what happened at his first practice with Field Mashal Montgomery Pipe Band ...

At the end day Donald played a recital. It was an excellent day had by all and we hope we will be able carry on with this in the future.

I would like thank the committee of Perth and District Pipe Band and the Guildry Incorporation of Perth for their support, and The Black Watch

Castle and Museum for an excellent location to hold the event. Also, big thanks to Donald for agreeing to do this again. His teaching technique keeps everyone engaged and on the ball.

Pipe Major (retired) Alistair Duthie, Luncarty, Perthshire.

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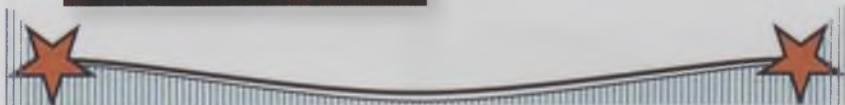
The Hirsute Hall of Infamy



The nominations for entry into the Hirsute Hall of Infamy keep coming. The gentleman sporting this magnificent soup strainer is Wreford Cox who is a member of the Shirley Pipe Band in Solihull, central England. Hirsutes you, sir!

Send your nominations to the usual address.

Successful nominees will receive a bottle of beard oil conditioner, courtesy of Braw Beard Oils (www.brawbeardoils.com).



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— Margaret Dunn

COLLEGE NOTES

Donald Campbell



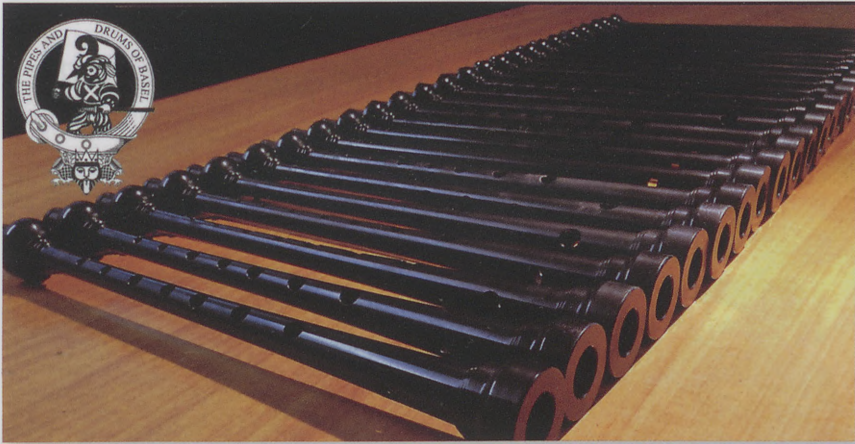
The funeral of Donald Lachlan Cameron Campbell who died last month at the age of 62 after a respiratory collapse, took place on August 30 at Scunthorpe crematorium. A thanksgiving service followed. Donald Lachlan Cameron Campbell worked at Glasgow University for 27 years where he was part of the university's security team and also the Principal's official piper. He played at all important ceremonies at the university, including graduations, dinners and ceremonies, and instructed piping to foreign students.

Donald was taught the pipes by his father and later by Tony Wilson, the former Scots Guardsman who led Campbeltown Pipe Band on Paul McCartney's *Mull of Kintyre*. He was a good friend of the College and was a life member of the Scottish Pipers' Association (SPA), as was his father, Donald senior. Donald often attended the Scottish Pipers' Association's club nights and was a successful competitor at its competitions. He shared a lifelong love of the pipes with his brother, Alastair, who has penned an obituary on p44. Donald is survived by Alastair, his other brother, Graeme, and his sister Liz to whom we extend our sympathies.



Dr Lorn Macintyre studies an engraving of the famous left-handed 18th century piper Neil MacLean, which his relative, Beatrice MacLean, who died in April, gifted to the Museum of Piping. Neil MacLean was the winner of the Premier Award at the Falkirk Tryst in 1783 and appointed Piper to the Highland Society of London in 1784. Readers will recall Beatrice's

donation last autumn of the silver piping regalia of her father-in-law, Pipe Major Hector MacLean (see *Piping Times*, January 2015). Ms MacLean also donated a generous sum of money to the museum.



The College was delighted to receive a donation of 25 pipe chanter reeds last month. Pipe Major Silvio Unternährer of The Pipes and Drums of Basel, Switzerland stopped by the College to hand over the brand new MacCallum chanter reeds to Shop Manager, Willie Park. With many of the youngsters on the College's schools' project ready to progress on to the pipes the donation is a timely and welcome one and we extend our thanks to the band.

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The World Pipe Band Championships, 2016

By Stuart Letford



Victorious Field Marshal Montgomery Pipe Band leaves the field.

As readers will know by know, Field Marshal Montgomery Pipe Band retook the Grade 1 World Pipe Band Championships title held last month in Glasgow. It is the Lisburn band's 11th win and comes after a season where Inveraray & District, St Laurence O'Toole and ScottishPower were chasing them all the way. However, after the band's successful concert three nights' previously, 'FM' perhaps recalled Field Marshal Bernard Law Montgomery's words: "With stout hearts, and with enthusiasm for the contest, let us go forward to victory." The band's MSR and Medley were virtually flawless, the sound robust yet refined. The roar from the crowd in the arena after the Medley ended said it all ... as did the reaction from the players themselves as they left the arena.

Viewers watching the BBC's coverage will have delighted in watching Pipe Major Richard Parkes' reaction when his band's name was called out. Last year, when his band came second, the look on his face was the very definition of the word 'despondent'. This time, this normally quiet, reflective Ulsterman didn't hold back, running forward and tumbling over the grass. A decade ago when Parkes was defeating bands such as Simon Fraser University, Boghall & Bathgate, St. Laurence O'Toole and Shotts at previous 'Worlds' he was like a uniquely gifted poet writing peerless lines. Only in very recent years when Alen Tully, Chris Armstrong, Ryan Canning and latterly Stuart Liddell blossomed, causing him pain, did he become Tennyson. To quote Monty once again, "Leadership is the

capacity and will to rally men and women to a common purpose and the character which inspires confidence.” As anyone who has watched FM over the years, it is abundantly clear that Parkes has assembled a band that utterly wants to play *for him*.

A successful pipe band is, of course, the ultimate team effort. It is noticeable how well Pipe Major Parkes and Pipe Sergeant Dunn work in the tuning areas, efficiently fine tuning each of their areas with a mutual nod here and a wink there, confirming the impression of two confident pipers working, as was said of Braque and Picasso, like two men roped together on a mountain.

FM, though, are not unassailable. On the day Inveraray & District gave a very spirited and musical performance in both the MSR and Medley with an exceptional overall band sound. They came within a whisker of taking the title. The players looked confident, particularly the pipe corps, and it came through in their performances. The band has had a great season, finishing Champion of Champions. They will surely be relishing 2017.

If ScottishPower’s MSR was slightly faltering (only in the strathspey), then its medley was an incredible rescue act that at times conjured up a vision of a metaphorical Raft of Medusa. It was outstanding but coming immediately after FM and with that sound still in the adjudicators’ ears, it wasn’t going to be the Power’s day despite the powerful tone, dynamic construction and truly excellent unison playing. This band’s day will surely come.

In Grade 2, Johnstone retained their title in what was a tightly contested field. A special mention must go to David Wilton, Pipe Major of Lomond & Clyde, who finished third in what is Wilton’s first year as Pipe Major. Hearty congratulations also go to Pipe Major David Methven for leading



Jack Lee of SFU. The band had a much better run on the Saturday.



Pipe Major David Wilton of Lomond & Clyde.



Pipe Major David Methven of Worcester Kiltie Pipe Band.



Pipe Major Neil Henderson of Wallacestone & District Pipe Band.



Gary Nimmon of Ullapool & District Pipe Band, winners of Grade 4A.

Worcester Kiltie Pipe Band to victory in Grade 3A in this the band's centenary year.

The Worlds returns to Glasgow Green on August 11-12, 2017 and in 2018 will be held over August 17-18.

Results:

Grade 1 – 1. Field Marshall Montgomery; 2. Inveraray & District; 3. St Laurence O'Toole; 4. Shotts & Dykehead; 5. Scottish Power; 6. Police Scotland Fife.

Grade 2 – 1. Johnstone; 2. Prison Service Northern Ireland; 3. Lomond & Clyde; 4. Bagad Brieg; 5. Glasgow Skye Association; 6. Buchan Peterson.

Grade 3A – 1. Worcester Kiltie, USA; 2. Aughintober; 3. Kintyre Schools; 4. Portlethen & District; 5. Cameron Highlanders, San Diego, USA; 6. Vale of Atholl.

Grade 3B – 1. Perth Metro, Australia; 2. Wallacestone & District; 3. St. Joseph's; 4. Prestonpans RBLs; 5. Bothwell Castle; 6. 2622 (Highland Squadron), RAF.

Juvenile – 1. George Watson's College; 2. Dollar Academy; 3. George Heriot's School; 4. Boghall 7 Bathgate; 5. West Lothian Schools; 6. Preston Lodge High School.

Grade 4A – 1. Ullapool & District; 2. Cleland Memorial; 3. Portavogie; 4. Burntisland & District; 5. Tullylagan; 6. Culleybackey.

Grade 4B – 1. Johnstone; 2. Clontibret; 3. St Mary's Derrytrasna; 4. Lochryan; 5. Davidson's Mains & District; 6. Gilnahirk.

Novice Juvenile A – 1. North Lanarkshire Schools; 2. Dollar Academy; 3. Oban High School; 4. George Watson's College; 5. Scots College, Australia; 6. George Heriots.

Novice Juvenile B – 1. 1st Troon BB; 2. Bucksburn & District; 3. Sgoil Lionacleit; 4. Lochgelly High School; 5. North Lanarkshire Schools Development Band; 6. MacKenzie Caledonia.



What a difference a year makes.

Bowing out

Jim Kilpatrick, MBE retired at this year's World Pipe Band Championships. Kilpatrick led the Shotts drum corps for 29 years before last year's controversial departure. He remains the only lead drummer to win all five major drum corps championships in one season.

Kilpatrick played with the Spirit of Scotland in this his final year of competing. The band honoured him by having his corps lead the band at the march past.

One other well-known pipe bandsman retired from competition at this year's World's. Colin MacLellan also spent his final competitive season with the Spirit of Scotland Pipe Band. Colin's involvement with pipe bands goes back to 1977 when he joined the Cabar Feidh (City of Toronto) under P.M. Bill Livingstone. The band was one of the precursors of the 78th Fraser Highlanders. Colin was appointed Pipe Major of the Glengarry Pipe Band, a band he led from a non-competitive band to eventual promotion

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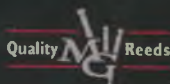
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to Grade One in Ontario. Many of the players were youngsters that Colin taught in the Glengarry County School Board system.

Colin was also a member of Grade 1 Parlin & District Pipe Band of Parlin, New Jersey, in the early 1980s.

In the mid-1980s he spent a few years as co-Pipe Major (with the late Scott MacAulay) of the Dunvegan Pipe Band of Ottawa, a Grade One outfit that played for a few years in Ontario. He then joined the 78th Fraser Highlanders.

On returning to Scotland Colin was appointed Pipe Major of Lothian & Borders Police Pipe Band before joining the Spirit of Scotland.



Jim Kilpatrick competes at the Worlds for the last time. ... as does Colin MacLellan.



Roddy MacLeod won this year's Silver Chanter held at Dunvegan Castle on Wednesday, August 3. Roddy's winning tune was *Lament for Patrick O'g MacCrimmon*. Also competing were Callum Beaumont (*Lament for the Earl of Antrim*); Cameron Drummond (*The Battle of Watnish*); Stuart Liddell (*I Got a Kiss of the King's Hand*); Angus MacColl (*Lament for the Children*); and Iain Speirs, (*MacLeod of Colbeck*). Judge: Iain MacFadyen. Reader: Malcolm McRae. This was the 50th year of the competition – see July's PT.

Piping Times

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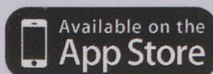
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Iconic statues restored



Two iconic statues which are a familiar sight to residents of Perth have now retaken their place on the façade of the town's Salutation Hotel after receiving some much needed restoration work. The statues – of a Black Watch Drum Major and an officer – stand above the entrance of the B-listed 17th century building in South Street.

The Drum Major statue was placed there in the 1980s when the town's Dewar's whisky factory closed down to make way for an ice rink. The officer statue had previously been used as an advertisement prop on display outside a tobacconist shop to promote snuff.

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The chanter and the pen

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The statues have now been restored to their former glory and are lit by lamps installed at their feet. Glasgow-based scaffolding contractor, GDN Contracts, undertook the painting restoration.

- In 1821 John MacGregor performed a piping recital at the hotel to a large audience.

No bones about it



Piping scholar, Barnaby Brown and virtuoso smallpiper, Callum Armstrong are taking part in a production at the Royal Lyceum Theatre, Edinburgh on October 2016. The duo will be playing aulos, a popular European instrument dating to Biblical times. Barnaby said “The Romans called it the Tibia because it was traditionally made from the tibia bones of deer.”

The duo require eight lower leg bones of deer of different species and ages to produce each instrument. Said Barnaby: “It would be fantastic

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to find someone who was interested in this project – either willing to gather unprocessed bones and store them in their freezer for me to pick up, or potentially interested in processing and selling them as a niche business proposition, supplying instrument-grade tibia bones to craftsmen worldwide.” Contact Barnaby at barnaby@pibroch.net

Closure fears for Fort George

The historic Fort George barracks near Inverness may be closed by United Kingdom government defence chiefs. Scottish Government ministers have been told that the Ministry of Defence is considering pulling the British Army out of the site as part of yet another nationwide review.


The site was built after the Battle of Culloden, and has been in continuous use as a garrison for almost 250 years. Fort George is where the Black Watch 3SCOTS regiment is based but it is also a visitor attraction run by Historic Scotland.

Lieutenant Colonel James Murray, chairman of the Queen’s Own Highlanders regimental association, said: “Fort George is the original home of the Seaforth Highlanders, which became the Queen’s Own Highlanders, which has got The Highlanders Museum there – a five-star visitor attraction. It would be very upsetting if that was to have to close as well.”



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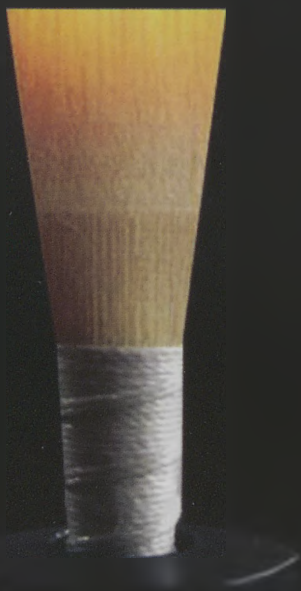
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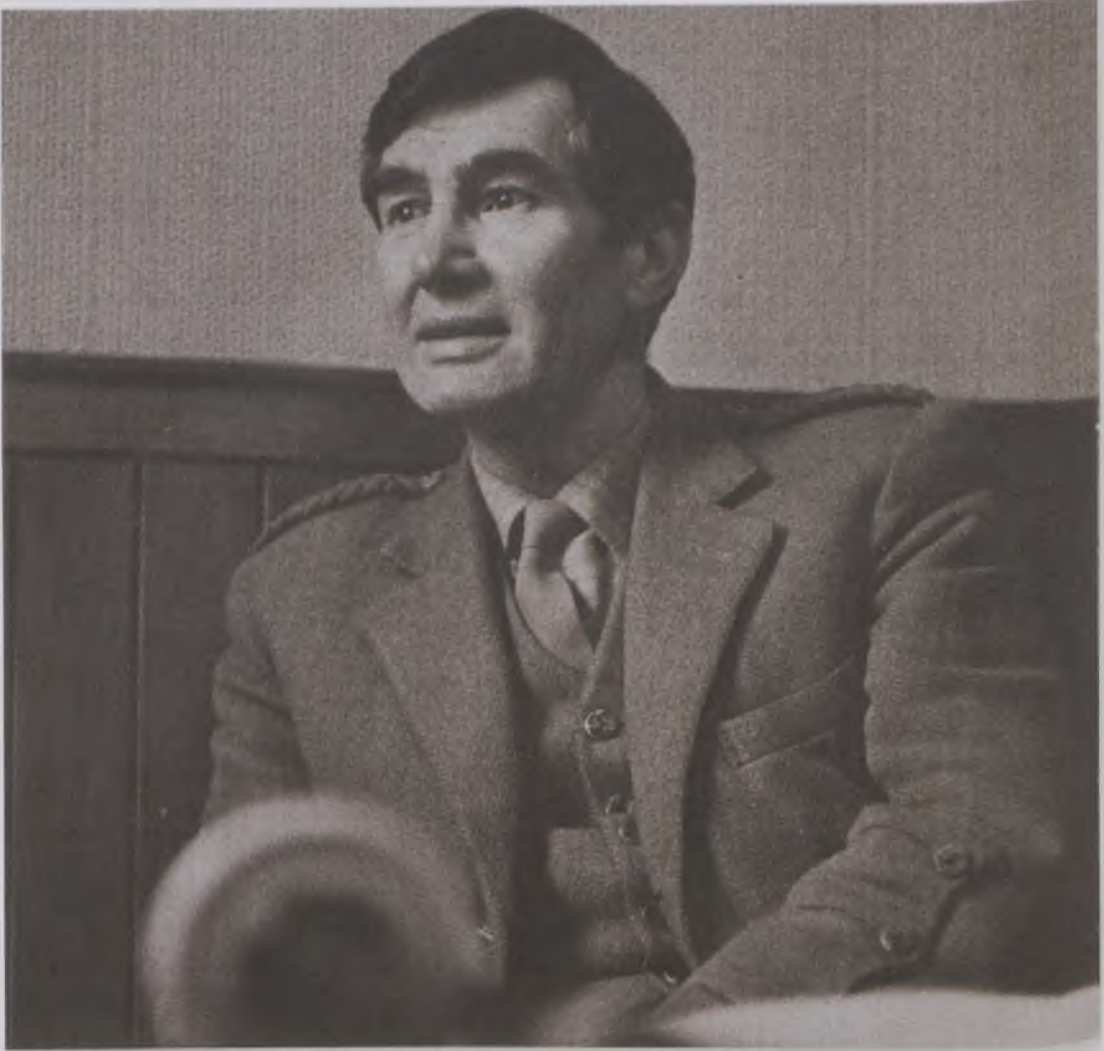
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Donald MacPherson was the senior tutor at the College of Piping from August 1971 to January 1974.

Donald MacPherson, BEM – master musician

By John Shone



It is interesting to note that some pipers stand the test of time, long after they have left the boards and ceased to perform. Their music is still eagerly listened to by us all through the medium of CDs, film and other audio outlets. There are one or two such pipers who have entered the realm of legend. Donald MacPherson is one such musician. I am going to try and explain the qualities that made Donald unique.

Let's start at the beginning. Donald was born in Glasgow on September 5, 1922 and died on April 21, 2012. His father, Iain was an Army piper and served in the 2nd Seaforths during World War 1, and prior to a hand injury was regarded by his peers as an excellent professional player. He was taught by John MacDougall Gillies. Donald's mother was born in Oban and was a Gaelic speaker although Donald wasn't.

Donald's daughter, Fiona told me that in a letter to Donald from his father it says, "Don, always remember what your mother said to me when you were about one hour born, "There's your piobaireachd player"". Prophetic indeed.

At the tender age of around nine years Donald joined the Life Boys, that is, the junior section of the Boys' Brigade (BB). And it wasn't long before he was invited to learn to play the pipes and join the Boys' Brigade band. At first he was attracted to the drums but was encouraged by his father onto the pipes. The BB company issued him with a half set of pipes on which to learn. His father didn't approve and soon furnished him with his own full set which he played at home.

Donald proved a very rapid learner. When his father took him through his first piobaireachd he told Donald to go away and learn the ground. About two hours or so later Donald went back to his father and asked whether he could play to him. His father, naturally, thought that Donald would probably play the first line or so. He got a great shock when Donald played the whole tune through to him on the pipe.

It was at that point that his father recognised he had a son of great talent, which he then proceeded to nurture. Taking him in hand, it was not long before he became the Glasgow Bn. Boys' Brigade (BB) overall champion. In those days there were far more BB companys than today and many, many more BB pipers. It was quite a feat for such a young player at the time to win the BB championship.

During World War II Donald served in the RAF and as a result had an injury to his left arm. This for some time threatened his piping career but he overcame it. It was while he was stationed in Wiltshire that he met his future wife, Gwen. She told me that all during his courtship and up to and after he was married he did not mention he was a piper. In fact, she had no idea until well after the marriage! Now began Donald's extraordinary piping career. He seemed to take the piping world by storm. Competing for the first time at Oban in 1948 he won the Gold Medal and the Senior Open Piobaireachd. He was 26 at the time. His Gold Medal-winning tune was *The Old Men of the Shells*. He was only the second piper ever to win the double in the same year at Oban, the first being John MacDonald of Inverness. He was, however, the first player ever to win the double at Inverness i.e. the Gold Medal and senior contest. That was in 1954. Donald previously won two Clasps (in 1950 and 1953). He then continued to achieve the most remarkable record of any piper:

- 15 firsts in the Oban Senior Piobaireachd, which included five wins in succession.
- Nine firsts in the Gold Clasp at Inverness.
- Six firsts at Inverness in the Former Winners MSR.

Donald competed 22 times at Oban, and in addition to the 15 firsts, he broke down once and in the remaining six appearances came either second or third. What a record!

As I have said, he was the first piper ever to win the 'double' at Inverness i.e. the Gold Medal and Clasp in the same year. It was not his habit to continually attend the various highland games around the country but those he did attend he invariably won or was placed.

Between 1959 and 1986 he attended 39 highland games and gained the first prize in the piobaireachd contest in each one. What is so notable when one looks at these results is the quality of tune he submitted to the judges. On almost all occasions he submitted the very biggest tunes, e.g. *The Lament for the Chidren*, *Ronald MacDonald of Morar*, *The Big Spree* etc. These were some of Donald's favourites.

It's worthy of note, that 'old' Angus MacPherson heard Donald when he won the Open Piobaireachd at Oban in the 1970s playing *Lord Lovat's Lament*, and stated in the *Oban Times* that in Donald we had the greatest exponent of piobaireachd he had ever heard, and hoped he would as time went on teach the music. I happen to have a recording of that performance given to me many years ago by Duncan MacDiarmid of Aberfeldy. Unfortunately, it is a recording of a recording as it were, but it gives one a sense of the fine musicianship which Donald brought to the tune and the terrific quality of the pipe. One is carried along by the forward thrust he gives to the tune. It is indeed a legendary performance. I will now play a little of the ground for you to judge for yourselves, make allowances for the quality of the recording. [Digital subscribers can hear this recording – Editor].

What is so outstanding about Donald's competition record is that

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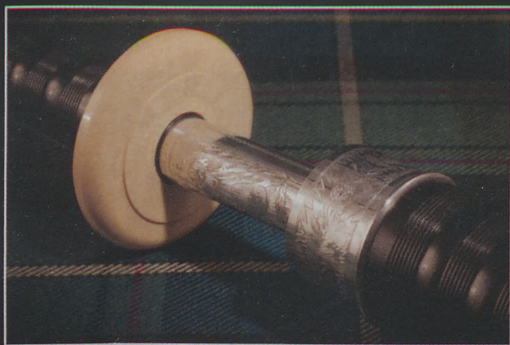
Donald receives the Balvenie Medal for Service to Piping from Pipe Major Angus MacDonald, 1997.

there were many years when he didn't appear because of work and other commitments. In fact, Gwen told me that she on many occasions had to cajole him to practice and appear at all. Gwen and Donald spent a considerable time living in England and, for some time, in Wales.

I have a favourite story of Donald competing at Birnam one year. I also was competing as a very young piper, quite inexperienced in the whys and wherefores of the contest scene. While I was snatching a well deserved cup of coffee sitting in my car, a rather small man in a MacPherson kilt arrived carrying what appeared to be some sort of small case. He proceeded to undo the case and, turning it upside down, proceeded to empty pieces of pipes onto the grass. He then proceeded to assemble the pipe. I was rather encouraged to see this 'amateur' fit up his pipes and decided that if this was the quality of the opposition then I stood a chance in the piobaireachd contest. How wrong I was.

Slinging his pipe over his shoulder this small man promptly began playing *The Old Men of the Shells*. Before Donald had reached the end of the first line I realised I was in trouble. And so it was. Donald took first prize playing *The Vaunting*.

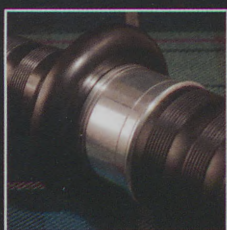
This is the bare bones of Donald's career. Donald retired from competitive piping to become a senior judge in 1990. We must also record that Donald had considerable pipe band experience as a member of the Glasgow Shepherd's Pipe Band under the guidance of Archie MacPhedran.



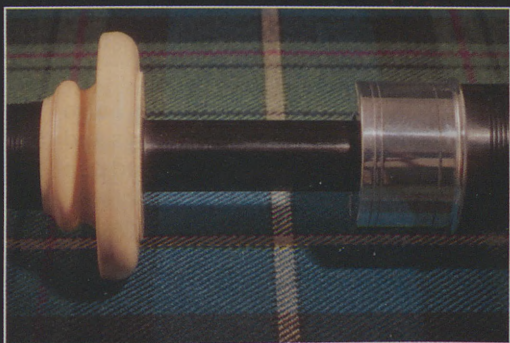
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I had the privilege of a close friendship with Donald for around 40 years. We first met when he came to the London Piping Society to give a recital some time in the 1970s. Over the years we had an ever increasing friendship and I sought instruction from him on every possible occasion. I was encouraged in this by the great J. B. Robertson whom I attended for lessons in Chelsea Sq. London. J. B. told me on more than one occasion that there was one man who should be acknowledged as the piper who set the tone and standard of the modern pipe. Donald, he told me, set the standard that every competing piper coveted and tried to emulate. It was Les Cowell, he said, the founder of David Naill and Co., who following Donald's lead, possibly independently, developed the tone we all hear on the boards today.

This can be illustrated by listening to Donald playing *MacCrimmon's Sweetheart* from the *A Living Legend* CD. While listening, try to forget the tune on this occasion and just concentrate on the tone of the pipe, it is in my opinion nigh perfect in pitch and setting. Each note on the chanter blends beautifully with the perfect set drones. [Digital subscribers can hear this recording – Editor].

Donald was a well rounded musician. He played the piano well, being very keen on the music of Chopin. He loved the harmonica and was a great fan of Larry Adler, and he could play it very well; I am told he was of professional standard. He also had a good singing voice. His revered composers, other than Chopin, were Gershwin and some of the French late 19th century ones. Surprisingly, he was a very good boxer, and while in the RAF was cajoled to box. I understand he hated boxing and would have liked to give it up but a senior officer persuaded him to take part.

Let me describe a typical lesson from the master. I usually arrived at Curlew Cottage in Balbeggie, Perthshire, mid morning after motoring up from the Lake District where I had stopped overnight on my way to the annual Piobaireachd Society Conference. There was always a genuine warm welcome with coffee and biscuits laid on before we started. Gwen would then withdraw to another room and the lesson would start, and it would go like this:

“Well John what are you going to play?”

“*Too Long in this Condition* on the pipe or chanter, Donald?”

“On the pipe, of course! That's our instrument!”

There never was a time over all years I went to Donald when we played the chanter first; he always wanted to hear the tune on the full pipe. I would sling up, and after perhaps a march or two, tune the pipe and start the piobaireachd. I cannot remember one occasion when he ever interrupted the tune. Once he did jump up and tune my drones while I was playing but that was only on one occasion. Having completed the crunluath, I usually stopped without repeating the ground. The reaction I got was nearly always the same: “John, that was very good *but ... come*

and sit down.”

I came to fear that “but”. He always made notes while I was playing and usually had the Piobaireachd Society collection open with the score of the tune clearly in view. This always intrigued me since he knew all my tunes backwards. Then he would pick out a section he thought I had not quite got right and ask me to play it on the chanter with him and follow and copy his fingers. This may seem easy to do but I can tell you from bitter experience it was not! The tempo he selected for each variation was unique and not easy to copy. At this point, he would often ‘throw out’ a few tips to improve the presentation of the tune:

“John, when you come to a longish low A hang on to it for a fraction longer. This will bring out the beauty of the well tuned drones sounding against the low A.”

“John, there is a time to start the tune! Miss it or come in too early and you will unsettle yourself not to mention the audience and judges!”

“John, when you start a variation ‘come in’ a fraction before the beat, this you will find adds interest for the listener. This is especially true in the light music.”

He always emphasised that the pipe should sit comfortably on the shoulder and be ‘easy’ to play. He abhorred a hard pipe and his reeds



Fiona Dickson, Gwen MacPherson and Katrina MacPherson at the 2015 Piobaireachd Society conference.



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were always very easy to blow. One day he offered me his pipe to play. Of course, I jumped at the chance. On the boards his pipe was unique in the sound it produced, and it had a tremendous volume and each note always blended with the drones. I picked up the pipe but it soon became clear that I could not play it. It was just far too easy!

Donald told me that on one occasion at the Cowal Games he offered J. B. Robertson his own pipes since J. B.'s were damaged, and JB proceeded to win the 6/8 March playing them. He gave them back to Donald with the words, "These pipes are so good they nearly play themselves!"

He kept a small red tin in which he stored what he called his good reeds. I remember him saying, "John, when you practice or play here to me, use any old reed. Save the good reeds for the recital or contest!" He had a reed which had the date 1948 on it. He told me he still played it and it produced a good tone. Needless to say, I never used "any old reed" when playing to Donald. For me, to play to Donald was a privilege and I was always nervous and tried to be at the top of my form. Receiving a lesson from him was a life-enhancing experience, I always felt that he unlocked the essence of the tune for me. I find it difficult to do his instruction justice. He gave me insights into the music which I have carried over into other musical spheres.

From time to time I would ask Donald how and what he did to get his superb tone. He once told me that, in the early days of his career to make fine adjustments to a chanter, before the days of the use of black tape on the upper part of a hole, he would have to melt hard wax and alter the size of the hole by coating inside the aperture. He said this took an inordinately long time and great patience was required. It was the late Captain John MacLellan who showed him the trick of the use of black tape. He also told me that when he was young he worked for hours to get the tone he required, he said he knew what tone he was looking for, and worked at it until he got there.

From 1954 onwards Donald played his famous pipes – a chanter made by Hardie and drones by R.G. Lawrie. These were sold not long after he died for £28,500 to an Australian.

One of the endearing characteristics about Donald was his apparent ordinariness and lack of self importance. Let me give you an example of what I mean. When I pick up my chanter to demonstrate a note or part of a tune I hope I hit the right note first time. Not Donald. He often picked up his chanter to demonstrate to me and skirl on the first note! It never bothered him. He would take the chanter apart make a simple adjustment and carry on. In the early days of our friendship as a young competing piper I found this very endearing. I felt encouraged that even the master and acknowledged greatest piper of the 20th century had the same trouble as myself.

His fingers were fascinating to watch. He never seemed to rush. He



The author delivers his presentation to the 2015 Piobaireachd Society conference.

appeared to be playing slowly but he wasn't. Each finger seemed to be placed deliberately on the chanter. His hands were completely relaxed; he never strained in his playing. He had an uncanny sense of what was 'right' for the music, it all seemed so easy and relaxed. And, of course, it was the tone and accuracy of his instrument that started the revolution in the development of the pipe. When he appeared in a contest or recital there was always an expectant hush. He seemed to have a direct line of communication to pipers in the audience. Mind you, there was no way you could get away with the smallest technical blemish. He would be firmly down on you like a pack of cards and you had to follow his fingers until you got it right. As I said he would often

demonstrate on his chanter and ask me to play with him and it was not easy to get it just right for him: "John, you are ahead of me ..." I would have to play the bars with him again and he would not let me off until I got it right. Tempo was all-important to him. He told me, talking only a few years ago, that, our light music players were playing too fast and that this detracted from the beauty of the tune, particularly our heavier marches.

Donald's playing has been recorded many times. The collection under the title *A Living Legend*, is probably the most representative of his playing, and should be in everyone's collection. To Barnaby Brown, the producer of this CD, we owe a great debt. Oddly, although we have many recordings of Donald, none of them has captured the magical tone he produced. I have no idea why this is so, but it may have something to do with the wide harmonic his drones produced.

Make no mistake, his tone was magical. Every note on the chanter blended with the drones. His top A was the envy of all pipers. It sounded clearly but with a slight harmonic drift which lifted it above the ordinary. I have tried over and over again to reproduce this sound without achieving it once!

I once asked Donald whether he had composed any piobaireachd. He replied very firmly that he had not and would not do so. Why? I asked. "Because," he replied, "we have enough tunes already and remember, we only have nine notes to use and it is very difficult under these circumstances to be original." However, when it came to the light music

Donald's compositions are both very original and melodic. A great feature of his tunes is their very melodic nature. Two of Donald's daughters have now published all of his compositions.*

Four years ago we lost arguably a genius from our scene. I will now endeavour to sum up this man as I got know him over almost half a century:

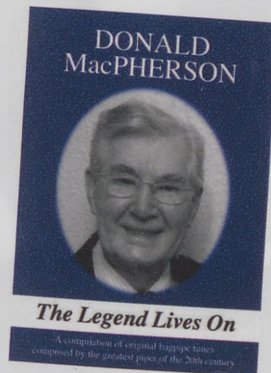
- He had complete technical command over his chosen instrument and a sense of perfect pitch;
- He was, rather surprisingly, self effacing to a marked degree, but over brimming with abundant talent and a deep knowledge;
- On the competition boards or in recital he was a huge force;
- He was an excellent composer of light music;
- He had an enormous repertoire of tunes both piobaireachd and light music;
- He performed naturally with a gentle finger and complete coordination;
- He captured the listeners attention immediately he began to play;
- He was an exceptionally nice man to know and be with.

I believe I had the friendship of a musical genius borne out by of many years of instruction and listening to the great man. I speak from the experience of having received instruction from most of the foremost piping teachers of the latter half of the 20th century.

I am grateful to Iain Speirs who musically illustrated my talk – which this article is based on – at the Piobaireachd Society conference in Birnam, Perthshire, 2015. Iain played two of Donald's favourite piobaireachds: Scarce of Fishing and MacLeod of Colbeck's Lament.

I am also grateful to Stuart Shedden for the anecdotes of the great man. Lastly, I'd also like to thank Gwen MacPherson who sadly died last December and two of Donald and Gwen's daughters, Fiona and Katrina for all the help they have given me in the preparation of my talk and with this article.

* *Donald MacPherson – The Legend Lives On*, a collection of all of Donald's compositions is available priced £16 + p&p from the College of Piping.



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REVIEW

Field Marshal Montgomery Pipe Band Royal Concert Hall, August 24



This was 'FM's' first concert here since 2007. In the intervening years the band has utterly dominated Grade 1; it has placed either first or second – except last season when it came fourth. Uncharacteristically, the band secured only one 'major' – the United Kingdom Championships – prior to the Worlds. Tonight, though, the band didn't appear worried. Perhaps

they recalled a quip attribute to Monty himself: "Discipline strengthens the mind so that it becomes impervious to the corroding influence of fear."



Naturally, the packed audience included many piping luminaries – Jim Semple, Dr Angus MacDonald, Pipe Majors Ian McLellan, Nat Russell, Peter Maxwell ... and with a dapper Bob Worrall – Boab Brummell – compering at a minimum, the audience was treated to almost three hours of hair-raising, nigh perfect pipe band playing. The show began with the sound of a piobaireachd ground emanating from up in 'the gods'. It was Jonathan Greenlees, one of the band's fine solo players and one of its Glasgow based

members. The band entered as he played, took their spots, and joined in. The set was a tribute to the band's late president, Billy Maxwell and it was a nice opener; very tasteful. Phil Cunningham's *Jewel of 100 Years* was next, with an arrangement that reminded me of John Allan's in the Vale of Atholl Pipe Band's 1990s heyday. This was the first of two of Cunningham's compositions given an airing tonight.

At this point I counted the number of pipers and drummers. There were 26 and seven respectively. However, for me, the snares were still a tad loud – an issue which most pipe bands struggle with in this venue – and the bass drummer was standing too near the microphone at times resulting in a booming bass. Murray Blair will doubtless perform his usual wizardry when he mixes the concert for the CD which will be released later this year.

An entertaining tag team solo followed. This featured Kris Coyle, Ross Hume and Connor Sinclair who all played short but entertaining sets. Bradley Parker was next. The Co. Down youngster's contribution, in particular, stood out. It was as satisfying as an Ulster fry.

Two more sets featuring first class unison piping took us up to what was, for me, a highlight of the night, *MacLeod's Oran Mòr*. It featured the singing of Catriona Watt from the Isle of Lewis. The song came almost as a welcome relief. Until now it had felt like our senses had been pummelled musically. No wonder the show was entitled 'Impact'! Ms Watt has a beautiful voice. One piper played the air as she sang but when the full band joined in they almost drowned her out. The song segued neatly into *The Shepherd's Crook (Bat'an Tailear)* with six pipers accompanying Ms Watt. Wonderful. Staying with the Isle of Lewis, the first half ended with a rollicking *Ness Pipers*, P.M. Iain Morrison reel which has stood the test of time.

After a short interval the band gave us a satisfying rendition of William MacLean's rarely heard, *The Braes of Badenoch* before Andrew Carlisle delivered a thoroughly entertaining solo set that was only marred, for me, by his first tune; it was one of those hornpipes that had a tune inside it somewhere trying desperately to get out. It was a blistering set though. With Andrew presumably having a recuperative lie down backstage, we were then treated to a quartet of FM's younger pipers next: Graham Drummond, Bradley Parker, Connor Sinclair and Glenn Ross. Their set began with the other musicians playing the first line of the *Earl of Seaforth* before the quartet flew into Gordon Duncan's *Pressed for Time* and *The High Drive* before the fiddler joined in with a reprisal of the *Earl of Seaforth*.

Three more snare drummers joined the drum corps for a short but powerful drum fanfare, *Salute to D/M Bobby Rea*. It was very entertaining and saw at one stage four of the snare drummers drumming on tenor drums that had been held aloft for them.

The band then gave fresh impetus to Phil Cunningham's pot boiler, *The*

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Ruby. It was a very attractive arrangement. One of the pipers – I couldn't make out who – then introduced us to P.M. Donald MacLeod's *Donald MacLellan of Rothesay* before he was joined by the rest of the band and the other musicians. Then it was into a the jigs *Jimmy McGregor* and *John Paterson's Mare*. The band didn't hold back. This was top drawer unison jig playing. The band stopped but P.M. Parkes played on with *The Boys of Ballymote* before the band joined in. Playing *John Paterson's Mare* once wasn't enough. They played it again to close this set.

A medley which had apparently been chosen due to its popularity on the band's Facebook page was next. It was *The Sandpiper* set which included *La Baum*, *Jenny Dang the Weaver* and *Francis Morton* (by Fred Morrison). The band's arrangement of *Train Journey North* – its signature victory tune – ended the show. Although, not quite. The band came back on stage – with an extra side drummer – for two final sets which included Fred Morrison's *Seonaidh's Tune* and *Tar the House*. The high perfect unison playing continued.

I wasn't the old one who felt punch drunk on leaving the building. This must have been how Led Zeppelin fans felt after leaving its concerts in the early 1970s. Non-stop, bludgeoning into an almost catatonic state. It may seem churlish to mention that some tunes were played so fast by the band and soloists that the music disappeared but this is nevertheless a valid criticism and something that was stated by more than a few folk on the way out. But this is a relatively minor criticism. This show was an utter success, make no mistake of that. The technique, the phrasing, the tone ... magnificent. Also, as well have seen, it set the band up perfectly on the grass a few days later.

As someone who has played at one of these shows I can attest to the preparation, dedication and hard work making a concert like this a success. Other than congratulate P.M. Richard Parkes and everyone involved in his organisation, we must also give a nod to Dougie Orr and the Glasgow Skye Association for continuing to promote what has become such a highlight of the pre-Worlds activity in Glasgow.

Stuart Letford.



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OBITUARY

Donald Campbell, 1954-2016



If my brother Donald refused to let his illness define his life, the same cannot be said for his relationship with piping. The illness, schizophrenia, came brutally and unexpectedly when he was in his early 20s, serving in the Pipes and Drums 1st Bn Scots Guards. It is, as doctors will tell you, one of the worst illnesses in the world. It strikes when the workings of the mind become separate from the reality around you, so that you see things that are not there, hear voices that exist only in your mind. It can be terrifying, and the medication, though it can silence the voices, is so powerful that it can take on average 20 years from the lifespan of the sufferer when he or she has to fight physical illness.

Donald died on Tuesday, August 9, aged 62. Our father, also Donald, was 82 when he died. So in his lifespan at least, Donald was a 'normal schizophrenic.'

It was dad, a Hebridean vet who had moved to Yorkshire where Donald, Graeme, Liz and I were all born, who taught Donald and me the pipes. Like so many, we learned the scale, *Scots Wha' Hae*, *High Road to Gairloch*, sitting in the kitchen of our Keighley home with practice chanters, then onto the goose, and before long we were on the real thing, down in the cellar.

By the time we moved to Leicester, Donald now 14, we were both competing regularly. It was at a competition in Harpenden, Herts, that I beat him for the one and only time – my gold to his bronze – and I think he may have had a point when he said the judges got us mixed up.

We played with the Seaforth Highlanders band in Leicester, and on summer holidays with the Three Pipe Band on dad's native island. But by now we – and especially Donald, now learning piobaireachd – were good enough to merit special attention and special teaching, and so every Sunday dad drove us to Peterborough to be taught by former Scots Guardsman Tony Wilson, a wonderful piper who would later achieve a fame of sorts as Pipe Major of the band playing the pipes on Paul McCartney's hit *Mull of Kintyre*.

Tony did not just fuel Donald's passion for the pipes, and a passion for learning which he did not exactly extend to the classroom in school; he was also perhaps the spark for Donald's decision to join the Guards. Donald's Army career ended sadly, in a military psychiatric hospital in Hampshire, and then discharge. It was a scary time for all of us. But just as Donald did not allow his illness to destroy his life, so he did not allow it to destroy his love of piping. On the contrary, his passion grew.

It was perhaps inevitable, given the centrality of piping to his life, that he would spend most of his adult life in Scotland. He worked for 27 years in the security team, mainly in the library, at Glasgow University. He liked his job. But what he loved was his role as the official piper to the University Principal, playing at ceremonies, dinners and, above all, graduations. Among the hundreds of nice messages we have received since Donald's death have been a wonderful tribute to Donald's role and legacy from current Principal, Anton Muscatelli, and pictures posted by students of their graduations being piped out by Donald with their degrees.

He competed all his life. He composed. He recorded, and we will be selling his CDs at the funeral and beyond to raise money for Donald's chosen charities, MIND among them. He also taught, and he loved teaching. He having played at so many family funerals himself, it will be our second cousin, Gavin, one of his pupils, playing at his. He taught students at the university, including from overseas. And by both Skype and with regular visits to the island, he taught children on Tiree. He loved that part of his life.

It was a sadness to us all that he had to retire early when his breathing deteriorated, and eventually he had to give up the pipes too. The last time he played the 'real' pipes was at the university's memorial for Charles Kennedy, my friend through politics and Donald's from when Charles was Rector. Donald didn't look well. He was struggling for breath even before we started. I said to him, "Listen; I can do this on my own." "No," he said, "I'll do it. I liked Charlie." A third of the way round the quadrangle he had to stop to fight for breath and I finished alone. He never played again. To lose his work and then his piping to *physical* ill health, after doing so well for so long with his *mental* ill health, that was cruel. But he never complained. He just banked the thousands of hours of



Donald and Alastair piping together last summer at Glasgow University's memorial for Charles Kennedy, MP.

pleasure gained and given from his playing days, and got himself a set of electronic pipes.

Amid the sadness, it is a joy and a comfort to us that we have pictures of the last time Donald played, thanks to Glasgow University; and because of a couple of television programmes I made about the pipes, we also have footage of Donald playing, on Tìree and at the University. Above all, we have his CDs.

I'll be honest, there were times as children when we wished that rather than playing the chanter in the kitchen, we'd been out playing football in the park. I'm so happy now that we stuck with it. Piping gave not just pleasure to Donald. It gave meaning to his life. It gave him sounds more pleasant than those which sometimes intruded on his mind. It gave him a community full of characters and camaraderie. It gave him ritual and discipline. It gave him connection and status.

When Liz and I cleared Donald's flat, we came across six sets of pipes, about a dozen chanters, hundreds of reeds; sheet music, books and records. Oh, and every back copy of the *Piping Times*, neatly packed into his drawers by the television set. You have lost an avid reader. We have lost a wonderful brother. The world has lost one of the best human beings who ever walked it, music in his soul from first breath to last.

Alastair Campbell.

• *Alastair Campbell is an ambassador for mental health charities, MIND and Rethink Mental Illness.*

Benjamin Angus Manson, 1932-2016



It is with much sadness that we learned of the passing on Friday, April 29 of a friend and piper, Benjamin Angus Manson. He was 84. Benny, as he was known to all, was born in Edinburgh where his father – who was from Brora – was employed there in the banking industry.

When the Second World War began Benny's father was called up for army service and at the end of it the family returned to Brora. It was here that Benny began receiving piping tuition from William MacDonald of Gruids near Lairg. He would hitch a lift on the north train and again on the return journey to Brora after his lesson. He undertook his National Service with the Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders from 1951 to 1953.

One of his postings was Tel-el-Kebir in Egypt. It was a tented camp and the nearest 'watering hole' was such a distance away that Benny renamed it Tel-el Without Beer. When he completed his National Service he served for two years with the Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders TA while permanently employed with British Rail.

In 1956 Benny emigrated to Ontario, Canada where he played for some time with the Saint Catherine's Pipe Band before moving to British Columbia where he played with the well known Powell River Pipe Band. This period, the late 1950s/early 1960s, was the band's most successful competition years.

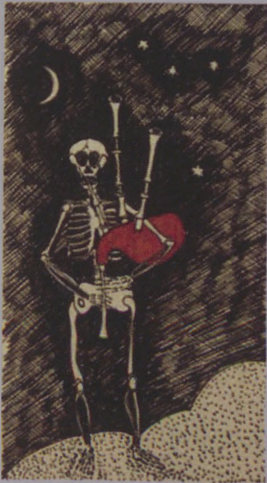
In the early 1970s Benny returned to Scotland. He lived in Dingwall, Ross-shire, where for many years he tutored numerous pupils. His final move was to West Strathly in Sutherland where he lived in the croft house where his mother was raised. He resumed tutoring until six months prior to his passing because of a heart operation early last November. He was transferred from Edinburgh Royal Infirmary to Raigmore Hospital in Inverness and then finally to the Caithness General Hospital in Wick. Benny always wanted home to Strathly and this was granted to him on May 2, four days before he passed away.

Benny's cremation in Inverness was well attended. During it, Carol Ann MacKay from Strathly played a nice selection of tunes which Benny would have approved of. The casket containing his ashes was afterwards played in to the Brora Communal Cemetery by Valerie MacKay and interred in his father's grave. The graveside service was conducted by Colin MacKay from the Seaman's Mission in Wick. The writer concluded the service by playing the Cameron Highlander's funeral lament, *Lochaber No More*. This was followed by a 6/8 march called *Benny A. Manson*. It was composed by the writer in his honour.

Benny is survived by one of two sisters, Joan, who resides in Canada. His older sister, Wilma, predeceased him in 2015. Benny was bachelor all his life and his motto was, "Have pipes will travel". Thanks for the memories, Benny. We will see you in the morning.

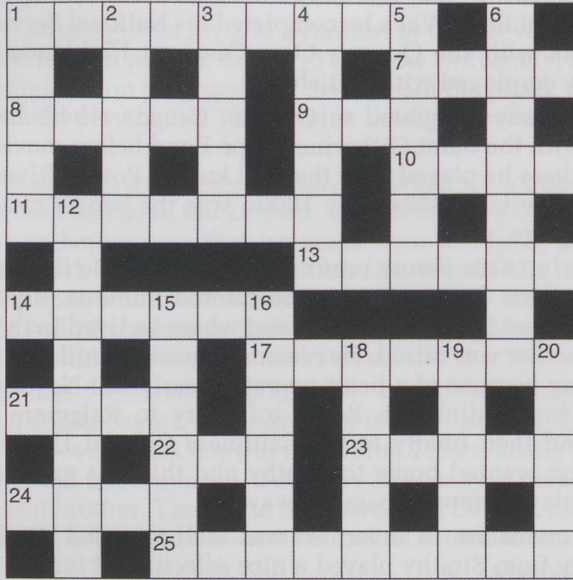
Ronald I. MacLean.

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CROSSWORD



Across

1. A third of her army was Scottish according to last month's PT (4,2,3)
7. Dale in the Royal Scots book (4)
8. The desert one in Angus MacDonald's Book 2 (5)
9. Car mentioned in last month's editorial (1,1,1)
10. Alastair of FMM & R. G. Hardie's (4)
11. An eminent Gaelic one was mentioned in last month's set tunes article (7)
13. The cloth for kilts (6)
14. Donald Mòr watched them leaping in Kintail (6)
17. -- ---- of Ireland in Seumas MacNeill's Book 1 (2, 5)
21. There's one in a cab in About Time 2 (4)
22. --- of Ben Lomond in the Seaforth Collection (3)
23. One of several at the Games (5)
24. Katie supplies item of neckwear (1,3)

25. Important job in the piping world (4,5)

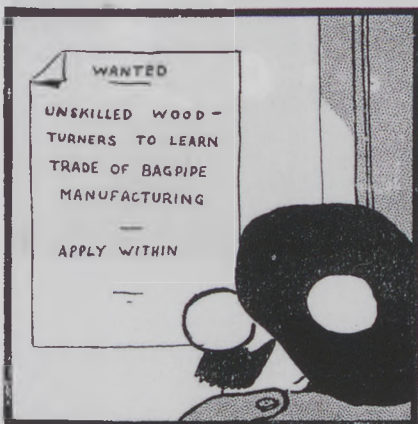
Down

1. Young Mr Miller pictured last month (5)
2. The games here were in July (5)
3. Hills east of Dunblane (5)
4. One of the Anderson Pipe Majors mentioned in a letter last month (6)
5. Islay was granted to this Campbell laird in 1614 (6)
6. One of the Games mentioned in last month's editorial (8)
12. He was taken at Dunyveg and hanged from his galley mast (8)
15. 12 down was this to the piper (6)
16. Were the MacDonalds this or shy? (6)
18. The train to Mallaig (5)
19. Royal Guard in More Music for the Highland Bagpipe (5)
20. The green one is for beginners (5)

Test your piping knowledge with the Piping Times Crossword. Send completed puzzles to Piping Times, 16-24 Otago Street, Glasgow G12 8JH, Scotland. *Crossword compiled by Jeannie Campbell.* This month's crossword is sponsored by the College shop. The winner receives a £10 voucher. Online subscribers can download the grid on the PT Extra page at www.collegeofpiping.org

Last month's solution: *Across* – Waternish, Alba, Ronda, Feu, Garb, Sponger, Master, Sticks, Ancient, Crit, Ord, Cairn, Wolf, Fusiliers. *Down* – Worts, Tango, Roaig, Inform, Haughs, Aberdeen, Peterson, Cutoff, Sandy's, Cecil, Etive, Tunes. The winner of the July crossword is Donald Morrison, Barvas, Isle of Lewis.

DONALD DRONE By SEORAS



RESULTS

Contest secretaries and other organisers should note the *Piping Times* email address: thepipingtimes@gmail.com. Please forward all results and photographs (in a high resolution and in jpeg format) to this address. Please include date and place of contest, tunes played by the prizewinners in piobaireachd competitions, and a list of the judges. Light music tune names are also welcome. Editorial and comment on individual events and performances is also encouraged.

Lochaber Gathering, August 20



Juvenile winners, L-R: Andrew Ferguson, Finlay Cameron, Angus MacPhee, Archie Drennan and Finlay Frame.

Senior P/A Piobaireachd – 1. Callum Beaumont; 2. Gordon McCready; 3. Euan MacCrimmon; 4. Derek Midgley.

P/A March – 1. Ben Duncan; 2. Gordon Walker; 3. William Geddes; 4. Gordon McCready.

P/A Strathspey and Reel – 1. Gordon Walker; 2. Ben Duncan; 3. Nick Hudson; 4. Callum Beaumont.

Judges: Archie MacLean and Robert Wallace.

B/C Grade Piobaireachd – 1. Jason Craig; 2. Mael Sicard-Cras; 3. Andrew Donlon; 4. Bruce MacDonald.

Judges: Alan Forbes and Andrew Frater.

B/C Grade March, Strathspey and Reel – 1. Matt Pantaleoni; 2. Duncan Beattie; 3. Andrew Bell; 4. Greig Canning.

Judges: Neill Mulvie and Barry Donaldson.

Open Hornpipe and Jig – 1. Callum Beaumont; 2. Gordon Walker; 3. Gordon McCready; 4. Ross Cowan.

Judges: Andrew Frater and Alan Forbes.

Junior 18 and Under Piobaireachd – 1. Archie Drennan; 2. Finlay Frame.

18 and Under March, Strathspey and Reel – 1. Finlay Frame; 2. Archie Drennan.

18 and Under Hornpipe & Jig – 1. Finlay Frame; 2. Archie Drennan.
15 and Under Piobaireachd – 1. Andrew Ferguson; 2. Finlay Clark; 3. Angus MacPhee.
15 and Under March, Strathspey and Reel – 1. Robbie MacIsaac; 2. Angus MacPhee; 3. Finlay Cameron.
15 and Under Jig – 1. Robbie MacIsaac; 2. Finlay Cameron; 3. Angus MacPhee.
 Youngest competitor: Eosaph Caimbeul, An Caol.
 Judges: Neill Mulvie and Euan MacCrimmon.

Assynt Games, August 12

14 and Under March – 1. Alex Innes Mackay, Seattle.
Strathspey and Reel – 1. Alex Innes Mackay.
Jig – 1. Alex Innes Mackay.
Seniors March – 1. Charlie MacDonald, Inverness; 2. Susy Klinger, Germany; 3. Alex Innes Mackay.
Strathspey and Reel – 1. Charlie MacDonald; 2. Susy Klinger; 3. Alex Innes Mackay.
Jig – 1. Charlie MacDonald; 2. Susy Klinger; 3. Alex Innes Mackay.

Masters Solo Piping Competition, Piping Centre, Glasgow, August 9



Photo: Derek Maxwell

Piobaireachd – 1. Finlay Johnston (*MacLeod of Colbeck*); 2. Angus MacColl (*Lament for the Earl of Antrim*); 3. Faye Henderson (*The Earl of Ross's March*).
 Judges: Malcolm McRae, Jack Taylor and Bob Worrall.
M.S.R. – 1. Gordon Walker; 2. Angus MacColl; 3. Alasdair Henderson.
 Judges: Ian Duncan, Iain MacLellan and Jim McGillivray.



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MacCrimmon Trophy, Festival Interceltique de Lorient, August 7

1. Fred Morrison; 2. Robert Watt; 3. Stuart Easton; 4. Quentin Meunier; 5. Cedric Lebozec.

Judges: Steff Kermabon, Pierre Gallais (Breton); Brian MacMahon, Eamonn Curran (Irish); Bruce Hitchings and Andrew Frater (Scottish).

Newtonmore Highland Games, August 6

Piobaireachd – 1. Charlie MacDonald; 2. Derek Midgley; 3. Ben Duncan.
Judge: John Don MacKenzie.

March – 1. Ben Duncan; 2. Graham Mullholland; 3. Charlie MacDonald.

Strathspey and Reel – 1. Ben Duncan; 2. Graham Mullholland; 3. Derek Midgley.

Jig – 1. Graham Mullholland; 2. Ben Duncan; 3. Emily MacLellan.

Judges: Gordon Clark and Jimmy Jackson.

Killin Highland Games, August 3

Seniors Piobaireachd – 1. Ross McCrindle; 2. Donald MacPhee; 3. Ben Duncan; 4. Bill Geddes.

Judges: Ronnie Clark, Neill Mulvie and Andrew Wright.

March – 1. Ben Duncan; 2. Graham Drummond; 3. Ross McCrindle; 4. Craig Martin.

Judges: George Lumsden and Logan Tannock.

Strathspey and Reel – 1. Graham Drummond; 2. Graham Mulholland; 3. Ben Duncan; 4. Bill Geddes.

Judges: George Lumsden and Logan Tannock.

Jig – 1. Graham Mulholland; 2. John Dew; 3. Ben Duncan; 4. Ross McCrindle.

Judges: Ian Duncan and Tom Speirs.

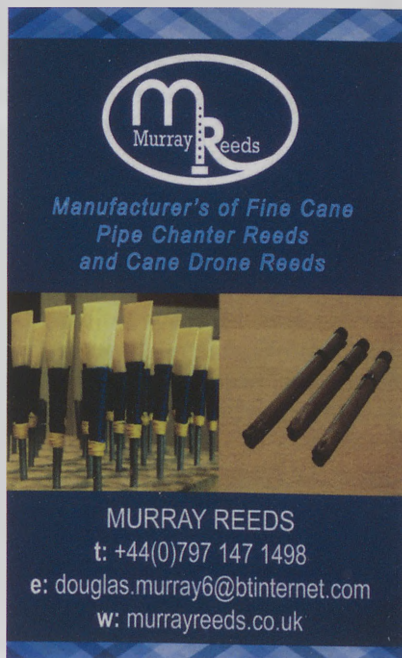
18 and Under Piobaireachd – 1. James MacDonald; 2. James Miller; 3. Robbie MacIsaac; 4. Duncan MacDonald.

Judges: Ian Duncan and Tom Speirs.

March – 1. Robbie MacIsaac; 2. James Miller; 3. Callum Davidson; 4. Gregor MacDonald.

Judges: George Lumsden and Logan Tannock.

Strathspey and Reel – 1. James Miller; 2. Robbie MacIsaac; 3. Callum Davidson; 4. Callum Younger.



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Judges: George Lumsden and Logan Tannock.

Jig – 1. Callum Younger; 2. Robbie MacIsaac; 3. James Miller; 4. Gregor MacDonald.

Judges: Ian Duncan and Tom Speirs.

14 and Under March – 1. Gregor MacDonald; 2. Duncan MacDonald.

Judges: Ian Duncan and Tom Speirs.

Strathspey and Reel – 1. Duncan MacDonald; 2. Gregor MacDonald.

Judges: Ian Duncan and Tom Speirs.

Jig – 1. Gregor MacDonald; 2. Duncan MacDonald.

Judges: Ian Duncan and Tom Speirs.

Skye Gathering, Isle of Skye, August 2-3



Photo: Caillean MacLean

Dunvegan Medal – 1. Derek Midgley, New Jersey (*Battle of Watnish*); 2. Sandy Cameron (*MacLeod of Raasay's Salute*); 3. Brighde Chaimbeul (*The Groat*); 4. Jamie Elder (*Flame of Wrath*); 5. Nick Hudson (*MacLeod of Colbeck's Lament*).

Judges: Alan Forbes, Dugald B. McNeill and Malcolm McRae.

Derek Midgley shows off his Dunvegan Medal.

Col. Jock MacDonald Clasp –

1. Cameron Drummond; 2. Anne Gray; 3. Euan MacCrimmon.

6/8 March – 1. Stuart Liddell; 2. Gordon Walker; 3. Alasdair Henderson; 4. Cameron Drummond.

Jigs – 1. Stuart Liddell; 2. Gordon Walker; 3. Alasdair Henderson; 4. Cameron Drummond.

Judges: Ian MacFadyen, Archie MacLean and P.M. Iain Morrison.

Kemble Star: March – 1. Stuart Liddell; 2. Cameron Drummond; 3. John-Angus Smith; 4. Jamie Elder.

Peter MacFarquhar Star: Strathspey and Reel – 1. Stuart Liddell; 2. Alasdair Henderson; 3. Cameron Drummond; 4. Derek Midgley; 5. Jamie Forrester.

Under 18 Piobaireachd – 1. Connor Kellett; 2. Martin MacRae; 3. Archie MacLean.

MSR – 1. Finlay Cameron; 2. Connor Kellett; 3. Archie MacLean.

Durness Highland Gathering, July 29

Seniors Piobaireachd – 1. Graham Mulholland; 2. Martin Kessler; 3. Bruce MacDonald; 4. Gary Nimmo; 5. Jan Belak.

March – 1. Graham Mulholland; 2. Martin Kessler; 3. Carol-Ann MacKay; 4. Gary Nimmo; 5. Jan Belak.

Strathspey and Reel – 1. Graham Mulholland; 2. Bruce MacDonald; 3. Gary Nimmo; 4. Jan Belak; 5. Carol-Ann MacKay.

Jig – 1. Graham Mulholland; 2. Carol-Ann MacKay; 3. Bruce MacDonald; 4. Gary Nimmo; 5. Jan Belak.

Judge: Pipe Major Ronnie MacLean.

Under 15 March – 1. Anna Magee, Bettyhill. **Jig** – 1. Anna Magee.

15 to 18 March – 1. William Campbell, Halkirk; 2. Anna Magee.

Strathspey and Reel – 1. William Campbell; 2. Anna Magee.

Jig – 1. William Campbell; 2. Anna Magee.

Piobaireachd – 1. William Campbell.

Judge: James Mather.

Arisaig Highland Games, Traigh Farm, Arisaig, July 27

Senior Piobaireachd – 1. Angus J. MacColl; 2. Ben Duncan; 3. Andrew Hall; 4. Jonathon Simpson; 5. Bruce MacDonald.

Strathspey and Reel – 1. Andrew Hall; 2. Sandy Cameron; 3. Jonathon Simpson; 4. Angus J. MacColl.

Junior March – 1. Finlay Cameron; 2. Megan Campbell; 3. Ben Fulford.

Strathspey and Reel – 1. Finlay Cameron; 2. Ben Fulford.

Judges: Archie MacLean (ceòl mòr) and Iain MacFadyen (ceòl beag).

Highlands and Islands Young Piper of the Year 2016

July 21, Sgoil Lionacleit, Isle of Benbecula



Angus MacPhee took the Under 18 trophy.

Open Chanter – 1. Innes Scullion; 2. Kieran MacCormick; 3. Ryan MacIntyre; 4. Ruairidh Drennan/John Finlay MacKinnon (equal).

Novice Piping – 1. Molly Perkins; 2. Allana Beaton; 3. Andrew MacNeil; 4. Eosaph Galbraith/Liam Joseph Harvey (equal).

Under 15 Piobaireachd – 1. Finlay Cameron; 2. Christopher Happs.

March – 1. Finlay Cameron; 2. Kevin Beaton; 3. Calum MacDonald; 4. Eilidh MacLeod.

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Finlay Cameron swept the boards in the Under 15 category.

Strathspey and Reel – 1. Finlay Cameron; 2. Christopher Happs; 3. Eilidh MacLeod; 4. Marion MacCorquodale.

Jig – 1. Finlay Cameron; 2. Christopher Happs; 3. Eilidh MacPhee; 4. Marion MacCorquodale.

Overall Under 15 Winner – Finlay Cameron.

Local Under 15 Winner – Kevin Beaton/Eilidh MacLeod.

Under 18 March – 1. Angus MacPhee; 2. Calum Craib; 3. Archie Drennan; 4. Cailean Martindale.

Strathspey and Reel – 1. Calum Craib; 2. Angus MacPhee; 3. Katie M. MacDonald; 4. Sheena Peteranna.

Under 18 Hornpipe and Jig – 1. Angus MacPhee; 2. Calum Craib; 3. Douglas Mair; 4. Archie Drennan.

Piobaireachd – 1. Angus MacPhee; 2. Calum Craib; 3. Finlay Frame; 4. Archie Drennan.

Overall Under 18 Winner – Angus MacPhee.

Local Under 18 Winner – Calum Craib.

30 Years and Under March – 1. Alasdair Henderson; 2. Cameron Drummond; 3. Brighde Chaimbeul; 4. Jonathon Simpson.

Strathspey and Reel – 1. Cameron Drummond; 2. Alasdair Henderson; 3. Jonathon Simpson; 4. Brighde Chaimbeul.

Hornpipe and Jig – 1. Alasdair Henderson; 2. Jonathon Simpson; 3. Cameron Drummond; 4. Brighde Chaimbeul.

Piobaireachd – 1. Alasdair Henderson; 2. Cameron Drummond; 3. Brighde Chaimbeul; 4. Emily Kate MacLellan/Jonathon Simpson (equal).

Kinlochard Gathering Junior Solo Piping, July 17

2/4 Marches – 1. Brodie Watson-Massey; 2. Ruairaidh Brown; 3. Finlay Cameron; 4. Andrew Ferguson.

6/8 Marches – 1. Finlay Cameron; 2. Brodie Watson-Massey; 3. Andrew Ferguson; 4. Ruairaidh Brown.

Tunes of own choice – 1. = Ruairaidh Brown and Finlay Cameron; 2. Brodie Watson-Massey; 3. – Andrew Ferguson.

Jigs – 1. Brodie Watson-Massey; 2. Ruairaidh Brown; 3. Finlay Camero; 4. Andrew Ferguson.

Overall winner – Finlay Cameron.

Judge: Gilbert MacKay.

Competition sponsored by the Gordon Duncan Memorial Trust.

DIARY

COLLEGE OF PIPING TUITION

Evening and Saturday morning classes at the College. Autumn Term: September 17-December 10.

October 17-21: Autumn schools at the College.

Winter School in Homburg, Germany: February 5-12, 2017

Tuition in Edinburgh on Monday evenings from 7.00pm-9.00pm held in the RSPS Rooms, Edinburgh. Contact Dugald MacNeill at college@collegeofpiping.org

For more information and bookings on all College of Piping tuition, visit www.collegeofpiping.org and click on Tuition/Schools or call 0141 334 3587.

EVENTS

September: Friday 2 – the Junior Contest at The Northern Meeting.

Saturday 3 – Braemar Gathering: www.braemargathering.org contact Jim Wood secretary@braemargathering.org.

Sunday 4 – Blairgowrie and Rattray Highland Games: www.blairgowriehighlandgames.co.uk; contact murray@hendersonreedmakers.com



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Sunday 4 – Chatsworth Country Fair; www.chatsworthcountryfair.co.uk
contact Irene Samson branch_secretary@rspsbalondon.org

Saturday 10 – SPA Junior Competition at the College of Piping.

Saturday 17 – Springbank Invitational Piping Competition, Seafield Hotel, Campbeltown. Contact Finlay Wylie, kintyrepiping@btinternet.com

October: Friday 14-Saturday 22 – the Royal National Mòd. Contact www.acgmod.org/nationalmod

Saturday 15 – Festival of Juvenile Solo Piping. Contact J. Gerard McClumpha fofjsp2003@hotmail.com

November: Saturday 5 – Annual London Competition www.scottishpipingsocietyoflondon.com. Contact Jackie at Jackiespsl@aol.com

July 10-14, 2017 – the South West Scotland Academy of Piping & Drumming Summer School, Barony College, Dumfries. Contact Andy McCartney 07754 326746; www.swspda.co.uk

Every other Tuesday – Eagle Pipers Society, 7.30pm at The Scots Guards Club, Clifton Terrace, Edinburgh: www.eaglepipers.wordpress.com

Every other Wednesday – Highland Pipers' Society at the Scottish Arts Club, 24 Rutland Square, Edinburgh. Contact bob@boblawson.co.uk

First Friday of each month – SPA Club Nights at the College of Piping.

EUROPE

Nov 11-18: Northern Winter School, Fassberg, Germany. Contact winterschool@t-online.de

First Wednesday of each month, the Pipers Club of Copenhagen. Contact: tue@it.dk or +452075 3306.

Every Friday at 11.00am, the Costa Blanca Pipers meet in the Casa Cultura in Finestrat Village near Benidorm. Pipers and drummers of all levels would be most welcome: email drewthepiper@yahoo.co.uk or call 0034676993716

USA / CANADA

Sept 2: Caledonia Club of San Francisco Gathering and Games, Pleasanton, California: www.uspba.org

Sept 3: Capital District Scottish Games, NY: www.scotgames.com

Sept 3: Wisconsin Highland Games, Waukesha, WI: www.mwpba.org

Sept 3: Virginia Scottish Games and Festival, The Plains, VA

Sept 3: Calgary Highland Games, Calgary: www.calgaryhighlandgames.org

Sept 4: Canmore Highland Games, Canmore:
www.canmorehighlandgames.ca

Sept 10: Columbus Scottish Festival and Highland Games, Columbus, IN:
www.mwpba.org

Sept 10: Covenanter Scottish Festival, Quarryville, PA.
Sept 10: Edinboro University Highland Games, Edinboro, PA.
Sept 10: Saskatoon Highland Games, Diefenbaker Park, Saskatoon.
Sept 16-18: New Hampshire Highland Games www.nhscot.org
Oct 8 – Nicol-Brown Amateur Contest; First Reformed Church of Scotia,
224 N. Ballston Ave (Route 50) Scotia, NY12302.

AUSTRALIA / NEW ZEALAND

Sept 3: Norah Head Gathering of the Clans (mini band contest):
www.pipebands.asn.au
Sept 3: Scots PGC Mini Band and Solo Contest, Warwick:
www.pipebandsqld.org
Oct 1-2 – Australian Pipe Band Championships, Knox Grammar School,
Sydney.
The Smallpipers Group – First Tuesday of the month at Milton. Contact
Malcolm McLaren for meeting details: mrmclaren@bigpond.com or 3820
2902.
First Thursday of each month – The NSW Pipers' Society. Contact: Adam
Wishart – 0409 1 58 237 or adamwishart@live.com.au
Third Saturday of each month – The WA Pipers' Society, Autumn Centre,
Inglewood. Contact Alma Dender on +0894487446.

SOUTH AFRICA

Sept 17: SA Solo Drumming Championships.
Sept 23/24: Cape Town Celtic Festival.

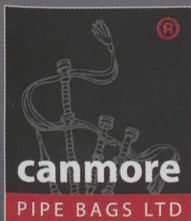
BELLOWS / FOLK

Monthly group meeting, NW England. Richard & Anitra Evans on 016974
73799.
Group meeting on the third Thursday of each month except in July and
August, London: J. Agnew 01621 855447.

RADIO

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

Piping Times Diary is compiled by Margaret Maxwell at the College of
Piping. Let her know what is going on in your society or pipe band. All
Diary insertions are free. Send your Diary info to Margaret.Maxwell@collegeofpiping.org
or see page one for other contact details. Please check
before travelling to events.



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