

APRIL/MAY 1975

144



B. C. PIPERS' NEWSLETTER

Published by the British Columbia Pipers' Association.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Sir,

By the calendar it is spring but, by the weather, it is still winter in Southern Idaho. However, it is the time of year in Northwest America, when the talented pipers, drummers and pipe bands are polishing their talents in anticipation of the friendly competitions of the many Highland Games scheduled for this area, among them the "Tattoo" at Coeur d'Alene, Idaho. Please note that the dates for the seventeenth Annual "Coeur d'Alene Scottish Festival and Tattoo" for 1975 are July 26 and 27.

We look forward to meeting again our many friends from North of the Border, among them, Patrick MacIntyre, Edmonton, Alta. who will be serving as one of the Piping Judges.

Alvin Halvorson,
2400 S. Roosevelt,
Boise, Idaho. 83705

LAST MONTH IN AND AROUND THE ASSOCIATION

Annual Gathering

The 43rd Annual Gathering of the B.C. Pipers' was held on March 28 and 29 at the North Vancouver Recreation Centre. The two-day affair was another in the long line of highly successful indoor meets.

This year we were very fortunate to have the very competent adjudicating of Mr. Angus MacLellan. I think it is fair to say that Angus enjoyed his visit to the West Coast and has gone home with a very good impression of piping and pipe bands in this part of the world. We were also fortunate to have secured Jimmy Ingles, ex-Muirheads, for our drumming judge.

A special vote of thanks to the short leet judges, the stewards and the organizers for a job well done.

Following the prize-giving ceremonies, the majority "retired to the bar" and settled in to another B.C. Pipers' Ceilidh.

Annual Gathering - Results

Junior Piobaireachd

1. Ruth Tremaine
2. Gordon Gray
3. Donald MacNeil
4. Alan Wilson

Junior Strathspey & Reel

1. Bruce Gandy
2. Ruth Tremaine
3. Aileen Arnott
4. Christine Waddell

Juvenile Marches

1. Judy Carl
2. Jean Nicol
3. Leigh Shelly
4. James Paterson

Junior Quartettes

1. Richmond Junior #1
2. Richmond Senior #1

Amateur Piobaireachd

1. Jill Laurie
2. Allan MacDougall
3. Brian Carse
4. David Hennigan

Amateur Strathspey & Reel

1. Alison Palmer
2. Allan MacDougall
3. Graham Davidson
4. Jill Laurie

Professional March,
Strathspey & Reel

1. James Troy
2. Jack Lee
3. Steve Geddes
4. Hal Senyk

Over 50 - 2/4 March

1. John M. MacDonald

Junior Marches

1. Ruth Tremaine
2. Bruce Gandy
3. Gordon Paterson
4. Valerie Pederson

Novice Marches

1. Paddy McNeil
2. Andrew Peck
3. Moira Waddell
4. Glen McEachran
5. Robyn Nicol

Juvenile Strathspey & Reel

1. Jack Eckersley
2. Tom Leathem
3. Jim Stewart
4. Terry Smith

Junior Miniature Bands

1. Richmond Junior

Drumming - Richmond Junior

Amateur Marches

1. Allan MacDougall
2. Kelly Todd
3. Alison Palmer
4. David Hennigan

Professional Piobaireachd

1. Hal Senyk
2. James Troy
3. John A. MacLeod
4. Jim Barrie

Professional Jigs

1. Rene Cusson
2. Terry Lee
3. Steve Geddes
4. Hal Senyk

Pipers, Over 65

1. Duncan Watson

Senior Quartettes

1. Triumph Street
2. City of Victoria

Senior Miniature Bands

1. City of Victoria
2. Triumph Street

Mrs. Mary McLeod Collins

It takes a very unique person today to be able to communicate with all ages and Mrs. Mary McLeod Collins has that ability. That is one of the reasons she was honoured recently with the presentation of a very unique and beautiful trophy bearing her name. Friends and relatives gathered at the home of Robbie and Heather Collins, and Eddie Glennie spoke for everyone when he said, "This trophy Mary, is not a mere gesture. This is a token, a token of love, affection, and deep appreciation from all the kids, adolescents, and adults who you have babysat, befriended, disciplined, and taught down through the years. Your patience, tolerance, generosity and kindness wasn't entirely in vain. I'm sure the results can be clearly reflected in the faces around you."

Mary is the daughter of William McLeod, a chartered member of the B.C. Pipers' Association. She was active in highland dancing and judging around the Lower Mainland. Since retiring from judging, Mary became associated with pipe bands. It should be noted that the support for this trophy is not centered on any one particular organization.

The traditional design and detailed drawings for this trophy were prepared by Ken Nelson, a very close friend to Mary. The miniature replica of the Stewart Trophy and the gold plating in the trophy were done by Charles Johnson, son-in-law of Mrs. Collins. The construction of the solid oak shield was handed over the Mr. Vern Doland, a personal friend of Mr. Nelson's, and the fine silver work was hand-crafted by Acme Plating & Silversmithing.

The trophy will be presented to the aggregate winner of the professional piping class at the B.C. Pipers' Annual Gathering. The Mary McLeod Collins Trophy is a perpetual trophy and is to be competed for annually.

Bill Elder.

White Heather Concert

One of the "classiest" White Heather shows was staged on Friday, April 25th. Playing to a full house, Kenneth McKellar and Helen MacArthur treated the partisan audience to a beautiful selection of songs both Scottish and otherwise. Although considered by some to be past his prime, Kenneth McKellar is still head and shoulders above any other "singers" that have graced the stage of the Queen Elizabeth in past years.

Empress Scottish Gathering

The weekend following our own Gathering, a repeat performance took place in the Empress Hotel, Victoria. Mr. Angus McLellan and Mr. Neil Angus MacDonald supplied the Gathering with some very competent adjudicating as well as a "touch of class". P/M Archie Cairns was supposed to fly in from Ottawa, but both Archie and drumming judge, John Kerr, were stranded under a blanket of snow.

The City of Victoria Pipe Band earned the right to represent B.C. in the Inter-Provinceals at Ottawa by capturing first place in the Grade I competition. Grade II was won by Richmond Senior.

For complete results tune in next month.

Highland Wedding

On Saturday, April 12th, the last holdouts on the Newsletter staff were joined in holy matrimony at St. Francis de Sales Church. Following a most colourful ceremony, James and Janice were piped out of the church to the strains of "The Highland Wedding" played by John MacDonald.

Jim's parents, Neil Angus and Nan, flew from Inverness to attend the proceedings. Following the ceremony the guests retired to the bar ... oops ... to the reception at the Burnaby Lake Pavilion. Is it necessary to say ... " and a guid time was had by all"?

Our very warmest congratulations and wishes for a lifetime of happiness and PIPING.

P.S. Full marks to Mrs. Taylor who did such a fine job of concealing her broken leg.

NEXT MONTH

Annual Dinner

The social highlight of the year, the B.C. Pipers' Annual Dinner, will be held on May 31st at St. Francis de Sales, Sperling and Balmoral, Burnaby.

Following the very palatable smorgasbord, the knock-out finalists will take to the floor. Victoria #2 winners of last month's knock-out will take on Port Moody #1 in what promises to be a very close competition.

Dancing, piping and socializing will be the order of the evening after the formalities are dispensed with. Tickets are \$8.00 each and are available from any board member or by phoning 526-7905.

Bar Service Only. Remember May 31st. See you there.

Trail

The 11th Annual Trail Caledonian Society Highland Games will be held at Trail Memorial Arena, Victoria Street, Trail, B.C., on Sunday, May 18th, 1975, commencing at 9:00 a.m. sharp.

Triumph Street Pipe Band have chartered a bus for the weekend and some seats are still available. For more information, phone Angus Macpherson 526-9006 or Hal Senyk 872-0839.

Bellingham

The 12th Bellingham Highland Games will be held on June 7, 1975 at the Civic Field in Bellingham, starting at 9:00 a.m. A list of rules and entry forms are obtainable from the Bellingham Highland Games, P.O. Box 1477, Bellingham, Washington, 98225. Entry forms should be submitted to the Games Secretary at the above address not later than Tuesday, May 20th.

A complete programme of Solo Piping, Individual Drumming, Pipe Bands, Dancing and Field Events are all available for your entertainment and participation.

A ceilidh will be held after the Games at 7:00 p.m.

Ottawa

The City of Ottawa is presenting the Second National Highland Games to be held on June 27 & 28th at Lansdowne Park, Ottawa. The Canadian Inter-Provincial and Open Championships will be held for Solo piping, drumming, pipe bands and highland dancing. B.C.'s delegates to the Inter-Provincial Championships include Jamie Troy, professional piping; Allan McDougal, amateur piping; Willie McErlean, open drumming; and City of Victoria, Grade I Pipe Bands. Richmond Senior will be our representatives in the Grade II competition.

Following the competitions on Saturday, a "Scottish Spectacular" is scheduled featuring massed bands, sheep dog demonstration, military display and Highland Dancing. The B.C. contingent, comprising of four pipe bands and 137 dancers, will command an exclusive spot in the Tattoo.

CALENDAR

May 17	- Trail
May 24	- Victoria
May 31	- B.C. Pipers' Annual Dinner
June 7	- Bellingham
June 14	- New Westminster/Ottawa Dance
June 20	- Nothing
June 27, 28	- Ottawa
July 5	- Vancouver/Triumph St. Dance
July 12	- Nanaimo
July 19	- Portland
July 26, 27	- Coeur d'Alene
August 2	- Seattle
August 31	- Nelson

Who was the clown that said playing bagpipes is a relaxing hobby?

Victoria Highland Games

On Saturday, May 24, 1975, the Victoria Highland Games Association will present their 38th Annual Games, billed as the Macdonald Scottish Gathering. If the organizers follow last year's highly successful format, spectator and competitor alike are in for a very enjoyable day. The Games will be officially opened following a parade of pipe bands from the Empress Hotel to the Games' site at Beacon Hill Park.

An official event in the "Victoria Days Celebrations" the Gathering has received a lot of support from the community. As a result prize monies are very attractive and a large turnout is expected.

Schools

The Coeur d'Alene School (largest in the world) will be held June 29th - July 11th and July 13th - July 25th. Details are available from Col. John McEwing, W. 3309 Dalke Avenue, Spokane, Washington, 99208.

The 4th Annual Northern California Piping and Drumming School under Captain John MacLellan, James McColl and James MacMillan (a 4th to be announced) will be held 18th through 29th of August. Details from P/M Bill Merriman, 33 El Pavo Real Circle, San Rafael, California, 94903. The enrollment for this school has a 40 student maximum.

The Seumas MacNeill Summer School will be held the first two weeks of August at Pebble Beach. The drumming will be under Robert Barr of the Shotts Pipe Band.

Ottawa Dance

Following the New Westminster Games on June 14th, a dance sponsored by Port Moody, Triumph Street and City of Victoria Pipe Bands will take place at the Queens Park Arenex, New Westminster. Proceeds will go towards sending the three bands to Ottawa to compete in the Canadian Championships. The bands, joined by C.P. Air Senior and 137 dancers, will also take part in the Scottish Spectacular.

The New Westminster Games Committee has very kindly cancelled its ceilidh which has been traditionally held after the Games.

Tickets for this worthy cause can be obtained from any member of the above bands and will also be available on the day of the Games.

The Bratach Nam Beann

Recently, a number of people have been inquiring regarding the history of the Bratach Nam Beann, "The Banner of the Mountains", and I believe it would be appropriate if its history was factually recorded at this time.

In 1968 during a visit with Hong Kong Inspector of Police, Mr. Evan C. MacKay, a discussion took place regarding establishing a gold medal for Piobaireachd to be played for by a select group of invited guests on the last day of the two-week summer school which is held annually at the North Idaho College, Coeur d'Alene, during the month of July.

Upon his return to Hong Kong, he wrote and asked if I had ever considered a silk pipe banner rather than an ordinary gold medal. I immediately replied in the affirmative and invited him to design such a banner and possibly have it fabricated in Hong Kong by one of those talented Chinese craftsmen. Inspector MacKay lost no time in accomplishing this. The banner was made on heavy black silk with the emblem of Auld Scotia on one side and the Great Seal of the United States on the other side, all done with bright golden threads. Also, on one side is the wording "The Bratach Nam Beann" and the appropriate year.

The late Fred MacLennan who, along with Evan MacKay, was a Charter Executive Board Member of the Spokane Piobaireachd Society, was responsible for its most appropriate name. This Banner is given outright each year, and after the first year a cheque for \$300.00 was attached for the winner to represent the Society in Scotland at one or more of their Highland Games. Originally, it was oriented towards the Argyllshire Gathering, but sometimes it is inconvenient for the winner to arrive in Scotland at that specific time. The cost of the Banner and cheque is borne by the "Private Sector" and not from the general funds of the Society.

John MacLeod of Vancouver, B.C., Canada, was the first man to win this prize, in 1969.

Seven others competed for it. There were four "Set" tunes that year. Again, in 1970, John MacLeod won with "Latha Allt Eire". There were ten competitors.

In 1971, Hal Senyk of Victoria, B.C., Canada, won the Banner with ten others competing for it.

In 1972, James Troy of Victoria, B.C., Canada, won playing "Fairwell to the Laird of Islay". Thirteen competed.

In 1973, William Livingston of Whitby, Ontario, Canada, won playing "Guileagag Moraig". Fourteen competed.

In 1974, James MacColl of Los Angeles, California, won the Banner. There were fourteen competitors.

The "Set" tunes for 1975 are "The Blue Ribbon", "The Lament for Captain MacDougal", "Lord Lovat's Lament", "Mary's Praise", "Nameless Hiharin Dro o Dro", "Route of Glenfruin", and "The Groat". These have been nominated by James Campbell of Kilberry and Cambridge, England.

Because of the great interest that has been taken regarding this prize and the "prestigious" position it now enjoys all over the world of piping, it has been suggested that former winners should be ineligible to compete for it. In other words, it should be treated the same as the Gold Medal at Oban or Inverness. This suggestion has been fully evaluated and agreed with. It is hoped, however, that a suitable reward will be established for former winners and others in the future.

The Spokane Piobaireachd Society does not wish to become directly associated with piping competitions per se. This is the traditional responsibility of the Highland Society, St. Andrew's Society, Caledonian Society, etc., and the playing for the Banner is for an entirely different purpose than the support of professional piping. It is designed for the hundreds of students who come to this largest and most renowned summer school so that they can listen to and emulate the playing of some of the very finest players in the world. They are encouraged to tape record these great demonstrations of playing skill so that their friends and they will learn from and enjoy these masterpieces of music in the quiet of their homes during the remainder of the year.

In conclusion, I would be remiss if I did not record that when John MacLeod won the silk banner for the second time he, to his everlasting credit, returned the first Banner to the Society with this statement, "These Banners cost a lot of money, and I am happy and proud to have one."

The Lochinver Medallions

In 1971, a Gaelic speaking Highlandman born at Lochinver, Sutherlandshire suggested to the Spokane Piobaireachd Society that he would like to donate a special incentive prize for the playing of Piobaireachd at the Summer Piping School which is held at the North Idaho College, Coeur d'Alene, Idaho.

Donald Mor' MacKenzie, a long-time piping devotee and perhaps the leading lapidary in the United States, volunteered to fabricate a large and appropriate Medallion and present it annually to the Society, the winner to have permanent possession. Inasmuch as student/instructors could compete for this prize, the \$300.00 that went with it came out of the Private Sector and not the general funds of the Society. In 1974 a change was made as follows. Inasmuch as only students, and not student/instructors, were eligible to play for this incentive prize, the cost of the \$300.00 for travel should come out of the General funds of the Society. In 1973, the summer school was expanded to include two additional two-week summer training periods, and in 1974, a decision was made to offer a Medallion and travel for each two-week period. It was also decided that any student who failed to win during the first two weeks and was unable to attend the second two-week period would be eligible for a second try.

Those who already won the Medallion would be ineligible to play for it, but they would be encouraged to play for the prestigious Bratach Nam Beann.

In 1971, Byron Barnard of Victoria, B.C., Canada, won the Medallion and its \$300.00 cheque for travelling to Scotland during the Games season. His winning tune was "The MacKays Banner". Twelve competed.

In 1972, Allan Walters from Calgary, Alberta, Canada, won with his excellent playing of "The Desperate Battle". Eighteen competed.

In 1973, Brian Carse of Vancouver, B.C., won with his playing of "The Lament for the Old Sword". Twenty competed.

In 1974, at the end of phase one, the first two weeks of school, Robbie MacNeill of Surrey, B.C. won when he played "Glengarry's Lament". Nine competed. At the end of phase two, the end of the last two weeks, Colin MacKenzie of Portland, won when he played "Donald Dugal MacKay". Seventeen entered in this incentive competition.

As a rule, four tunes are "set" for this prize, and the competitors are invited to select one of the four. However, they are encouraged to memorize the four tunes but it is not mandatory. The tune that they select will be established and made a matter of record on the first day of the school.

John McEwing.

Port Coquitlam Pipe Band

Legion 113 (Port Coquitlam) are in the process of reorganizing their former Pipe Band under the direction of Pipe Major Bill Dow. The members would prefer to be regarded as a Community Band rather than a Legion Band. With this factor in mind, it is apparent that anyone showing interest would be made most welcome.

New members would be most fortunate to have the benefit of instruction or guidance in piping and drumming from two very experienced exponents of each art, namely P/M Dow and Jack Gallaher.

The band has been functional for a few weeks now and Pipe Major Dow is well satisfied with present progress and is highly optimistic about the future. If the present enthusiasm continues, the band committee would consider introducing a Junior Band in due course.

Practices are held on Thursdays 7:30 p.m. at the Legion Auditorium, Port Coquitlam. Anyone wishing further information should contact Bill Dow. Please phone 521-1911 and ask for the Dow Residence.

* * * * *

Congratulations to Peggy and Don Askew on the arrival of their baby boy, James Donald. Peggy was a former member and Pipe Major of the Vancouver Ladies' Pipe Band.

* * * * *

For Sale

Small size (17") Hardie Practice Chanter.
N/S and imitation ivory. Used very little.

\$15.00

Contact Jim MacDonald in Richmond at 277-4883.

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