

B. C. PIPERS' NEWSLETTER



**The official monthly publication of
the British Columbia Pipers' Association**

DECEMBER, 1963.

No. 45.

AN ASSOCIATION FOR THE PRESERVATION OF BAGPIPE MUSIC

AND THE ENCOURAGEMENT OF PIPE PLAYING IN BRITISH COLUMBIA

B. C. P I P E R S ' N E W S L E T T E R

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B.C. Pipers' NEWSLETTER

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MESSAGE FROM PRESIDENT:

I would like to extend to all of our members and readers my personal wish for a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. This is a season when we think of our friends home and abroad, and to the pipers whom I have met everywhere I give special greeting.

I hope that next year will be a rewarding and prosperous one for us all, and that the B.C. Pipers' Association will continue to flourish and prosper. We must all strive to work for the betterment of piping in Vancouver and British Columbia during the coming year.

I feel that I should convey the sympathy of our Canadian members to our members and friends in the United States for the tragic loss of their leader, John F. Kennedy, on Nov. 22nd, 1963. President Kennedy's death was a shock to all of us, and to our American friends we send our condolences.

- Ian McDougall -



SEASON'S GREETINGS

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BI-MONTHLY COMPETITION - DECEMBER 13th, 1963.

The Bi-Monthly Competition which was held on Friday, December 13th, in the Gymnasium of the Seaforth Armoury, was again successful, with 66 competitors entered in the five classes.

In order that the evening finish before midnight, it was decided that the Senior Amateur Piobaireachd be held at 7:00 p.m. It in fact got started at 7:30 p.m., and the evening finished shortly after 11:00 p.m., quite an improvement over the 12:25 a.m., of the previous Bi-Monthly.

George Allan was the judge, and picked the following winners:

Novice 6/8 Marches: (31 competitors)

1. Dal Jessiman
2. Heather Abel
3. Tom MacDonald
4. Colin Abel
5. Donald Taylor
6. Georgina Lamont

Juvenile Marches: (21 competitors)

1. Laurie McIlvena
2. Kelly Hagan
3. David Irvine
4. Jean Jarvis
5. Donald MacMillan
6. Robert Vowles

Junior Old Highland Airs: (7 competitors)

1. John MacLeod
2. Douglas Graham
3. Bruce Topp

Amateur Strathspeys & Reels: (4 competitors)

1. Bob MacDonald
2. Bill Elder
3. Peter McNeil

Senior Amateur Piobaireachd: (3 competitors)

1. Bill Paterson
2. Jim Wilson

It was especially gratifying to see Rod MacLeod attend this Bi-monthly Competition. Although Rod has not attended the Bi-Monthlies for some time, it is hoped that we will see him more regularly in the future.

We were also pleased to see Jack Ironside, who attended from Seattle, with his two sons. Both were slated to play, but since one injured his hand that day by dropping a barbell on it, only one was able to compete. You will recall that Mr. Ironside was recently honoured by being made an Honourary Member of the Order of the British Empire, in recognition of his work in Seattle in promoting closer relations between the United States and Britain, in the field of junior pipe band work.

Finally, we should mention that it is encouraging to see the contingent from Chilliwack, who have attended and competed in the last two competitions. Pupils of Neil Stubberfield, these boys and girls are a great credit to their instructor.

The next competitions are slated for February 14th. To alleviate the late evenings and the ever increasingly heavy program, very serious consideration is being given to holding this competition on a Saturday afternoon, presumably on February 15th. We are well aware of some of the problems which such a change might bring about, but it is our opinion that the alteration of time might be inevitable. If any of our competitors have any objection to this change, we would ask them to contact the Secretary, Wm. McAdie (HE 4-1591) either personally or through their teacher. We will announce final arrangements in the January issue of the Newsletter.

The following events will be held at the next Bi-Monthly:

Novice Old Highland Airs
Juvenile Strathspey & Reel
Junior Piobaireachd
Amateur **Jigs**
Senior Amateur Marches.

ANNUAL MEMBERS BANQUET: JANUARY 4th, 1964.

As a wind-up to the holiday season, this year's Annual Members Banquet will be held on Saturday, January 4th, 1964.

The arrangements will be practically identical to those of last year. The Stanley Park Sports Pavilion will be the location of the dinner. The cocktail hour will commence at 6:30 p.m., and a bar will be set up for those wishing refreshments.

We would ask all interested members and friends to contact Wm. McAdie (HE 4-1591), and notify him of their intention to attend. Since there is accommodation for only one hundred persons, reservations will be on a first come, first serve basis. All reservations must be made by December 29th.

The cost is \$2.50 per person, \$5.00 per couple.

After the dinner, the President will welcome the guests, and after a minimum of formality will adjourn for an enjoyable evening of piping and other interesting entertainment.

All members, their wives and friends are invited, but we would ask you to contact the Secretary early, so as not to be disappointed.

We know that you will enjoy this evening.



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VANCOUVER POLICE PIPE BAND PARTICIPATES IN THE FESTIVAL
OF THE PACIFIC, IN HAWAII:

With the cooperation of the Vancouver and Hawaii Tourist bureaus, the Canadian Pacific Airlines, and our hard working Drum Major, Donald Bellamy, a ten day journey to Hawaii became possible for twenty members of the Vancouver Police Pipe Band.

The band departed from Vancouver International Airport at 3:45 p.m., on November 15th, aboard C.P.A.'s "Empress of Hong Kong". On arrival in Honolulu at 10:25 p.m., we were met by Norman Lee, representing the Hawaiian Tourist Bureau, and by the Lucy Lee Hula dancing group, which included three musical singers playing ukeleles and six dancers. At this time, it was 77 degrees, and needless to say we started to feel the change of climate in our warm uniforms. We were then driven to the Tropic Isles Hotel, where we spent the next nine days in beautiful surroundings one block from Waikiki Beach.

Our somewhat rigid schedule started the following day at 9:00 a.m., when we greeted the "Matsonia" at Pier 9, this ship arriving from Los Angeles. After the dis-embarking of passengers, we were asked aboard and were entertained by a director of the Matson Line. Following this, we paraded at the Ala Moane Shopping Centre, which was said to be the largest of its kind in the states. At 6:00 p.m. that day we took part in a parade, which was to be a daily occurrence. This parade was from the Hawaiian Village down Kalakaua Avenue, past the many hotels and the long white beach to the Waikiki Shell. At this point we put on a display for fifteen minutes, where thousands gathered to attend the nightly show arranged by the Festival. Later this same evening we were escorted to the Honolulu International Airport, where hundreds of tourists enroute to different parts of the world lined the park-like patio to hear us play and take pictures.

The next three days were also filled with many performances. During this time we played at the University of Hawaii, where students of all nations and in all types of dress (many of them barefooted) looked on with welcome and appreciation. The playing at the Shrine Childrens Hospital was one of our most pleasant duties. The children had remembered the Optimist Junior Pipe Band, which had appeared there in June of this year. If we brought a few minutes of happiness to these children, the trip was made a success.

At the Honolulu Police Station, Pipe-Major Baird and Drum Major Bellamy presented a plaque to the Chief of Police from Vancouver's Chief Booth. At this location a few tunes were played, and we then had the opportunity to meet numerous members of their department.

On Wednesday, November 20th, we had the opportunity of doing some shopping. After shopping, several of us went on a tour of the island (Oahu). We were very fortunate to see most of the scenic spots, such as the Garden of the Missing (Punch Bowl), which is the cemetery for the war dead from the

Second World War and the Korean crisis. This is situated on top of an old crater, and is shaped as its name describes. We then drove to the Round Top, situated on one of the highest parts of the island. From this vantage point we could see Pearl Harbour, the city of Honolulu, Waikiki Beach across to Diamond Head. At this point the vegetation at the sides of the highway is very colourful, with different flowers blossoming. The grass is most green, and the undergrowth is impassable.

We then travelled to the Pali, which is a cliff overlooking the opposite coast. Here hundreds of men lost their lives in a native battle for control of the Island many years ago. We were approached here by several Samoan Women, who were selling beads; this being one of the main tourist sites, they were on hand from dawn to dusk.

With time running short, we then returned to the Hotel for the evening parade. It was on this evening that we were guests at a Luau, at the Hilton Hawaiian Village Hotel.

The next day was again a day for more presentations and parades. Starting at the Iolani Palace, (Hawaii is the only state with a palace) a tune was played for the Governor, and a plaque was presented. Then we went on to the Mayor's Office, where greetings were carried from the Mayor of Vancouver to him, and where a plaque was also presented. Afterwards, we travelled to the Tripler Military Hospital, where we performed for the patients and staff. On our return to the Hotel, a dip in the pool was certainly appreciated, as it was averaging 85 degrees during the day. Having inherited fair skin, the beach was strictly out of bounds for myself during the heat of the day.

Then came the day that tragedy struck the nation, with President Kennedy's death. The pipes and drums were layed away, with all performances cancelled until the following day.

Arising early the next morning, six pipers and one drummer toured to Pearl Harbour, where we caught a cruiser to the U.S.S. Arizona Memorial. At this historic site, a lament was played over the ship, which was sunk in Pearl Harbour, on Dec. 7th, 1941. The evening parade was cancelled, but the band played retreat at the Waikiki Shell, with Pipe Major Baird playing "The Flowers of the Forest". A one minute silence was observed in memory of the late President. Later in the evening, we were guests at Duke Kahanamoku's night club in the Market place, where the Surfers were entertaining. This was thoroughly enjoyed by our group.

With a considerable amount of playing, the pipes stayed in very good condition. Most of us were quite impressed with the lack of tuning that was required. Although practices were limited as a result of our heavy schedule, numerous sessions of piping were held. It was unfortunate that we did not meet any of the pipers on the island.

- 11 -

On our departure at the airport, on the following morning, we were bade farewell by numerous entertainers and officials, that we had the pleasure of meeting during our visit. Suffer as I did from the heat, a return visit would be most welcomed.

- Ian McDougall -

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GENERAL MEETING - NOVEMBER 29th.

Although there were certain misgivings about holding a General Meeting on Grey Cup eve, for those who attended, it was a very enjoyable and rewarding evening.

On Nov. 29th the meeting was chaired by the Vice President Norma Nicholson. Miss Nicholson welcomed as guests to the meeting Pipe Major Neil Sutherland and Mr. George Emery, members of the Winnipeg City Police Pipe Band, who came out to play in the Grey Cup Parade the next morning.

Following the meeting, the members enjoyed the hospitality of the Sergeants' Mess, where a party was being held. Neil Sutherland himself played a number of selections, as did John MacKenzie, who had come down from Powell River for the festivities.

Speaking of the Grey Cup parade, a record number of pipe bands participated in the parade. You might be interested to note that the following bands took part:

Winnipeg City Police Pipe Band
Kiwanis Junior Pipe Band
Optimist Junior Boys Pipe Band
Highland Laddies Pipe Band
Vancouver Ladies Pipe Band
St. Thomas More School Pipe Band (Irish)
Port Moody Pipe Band
Branch 83 Legion Pipe Band (Tom Binnie's Band)
Branch 179 Legion Pipe Band
Prince George Kiwanis Pipe Band

There will be no General Meeting held during the month of December, due to the holiday season.

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DON'T FORGET THE ANNUAL MEMBERS' BANQUET

JANUARY 5th, 1964.

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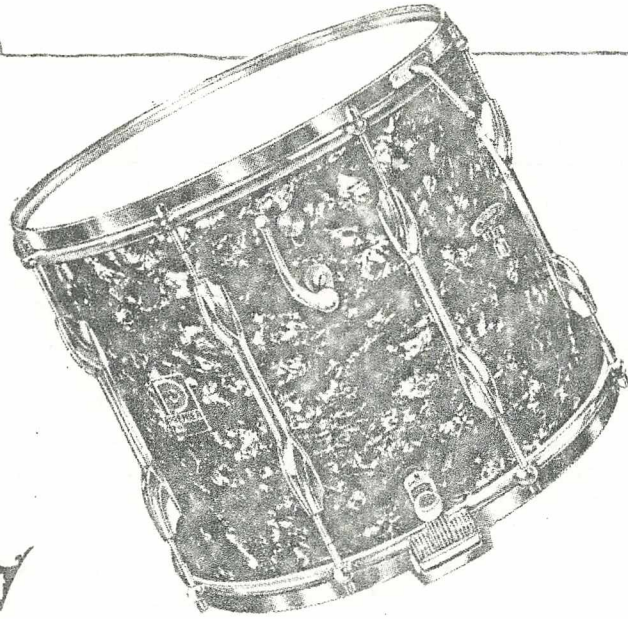
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FROM PIPE MAJOR JOHN ROBERTSON'S SCRAPBOOK:

THE LOST PIBROCH by NEIL MUNRO

(from "Piping and Dancing, August, 1940)

To the make of a piper go seven years of his own learning and seven generations before. If it is in, it will out, as the Gaelic old-word says; if not, let him take to the net or sword. At the end of his seven years one born to it will stand at the start of knowledge, and leaning a fond ear to the drone, he may have parley with old folks of old affairs. Playing the tune of the "Fairy Harp," he can hear his fore-folks, plaided in skins, towsy-headed and terrible, grunting at the oars and snoring in the caves; he has his whittle and club in the "Desperate Battle" (my own tune, my darling!), where the white-haired sea-rovers are on the shore, and a stain's on the edge of the tide; or, trying his art on Laments, he can stand by the cairn of kings, ken the colour of Fingal's hair, and see the moon glint on the hook of the Druids!

Today there are but three pipers in the wide world, from the Sound of Sleat to the Wall of France. Who they are, and what their tartan, it is not for one to tell who has no heed for a thousand dirks in his doublet, but they may be known by the lucky ones who hear them. Namely players tickle the chanter and take out but the sound; the three give a tune the charm that I mention - a long thought and a bard's thought, and they bring the notes from the deeps of time, and the tale from the heart of the man who made it.

But not of the three best in Albainn today is my story, for they have not the Lost Pibroch. It is of the three best, who were not bad, in a place I ken - Half Town that stands in the wood.

You may rove for a thousand years on league long brogues, or hurry on fairy wings from isle to isle and deep to deep, and find no equal to that same Half Town. It is not the splendour of it, nor the riches of its folk; it is not any great routh of field or sheep-flank, but the scented winds of it, and the comfort of the pine trees round and about it on every hand. My mother used to be saying (when I had the notion of fairy tales), that once on a time, when the woods were young and thin, there was a road through them, and the pick of children of a country-side wandered among them into this place to play at sheilings. Up grew the trees, fast and tall, and shut the little folks in so that the way out they could not get if they had the mind for it. But never an out they wished for. They grew with the firs and alders, a quiet clan in the heart of the big wood, clear of the world out-by.

But now and then wanderers would come to Half Town, through the gloomy covers, under the tall trees. There were packmen with tales of the out-world. There were broken men flying from rope or hatchet. And once on a day of days came two pipers - Gilian, of Clan Lachlan of Strathlachlan, and Rory Ban, of the Macnaghtons of Dundarave. They had seen Half Town from the sea - smoking to the clear air on the hillside; and through the weary woods they came, and the dead quiet of them, and they stood on the edge of the fir belt.

Before them was what might be a township in a dream, and be seen at the one look, for it stood on the rising hill that goes back on Lochow.

The dogs barked, and out from the houses and in from the fields came the quiet clan to see who could be here. Biggest of all the men, one they named Coll, cried on the Strangers to come forward; so out they went from the wood edge, neither coy nor crouse, but the equal of friend or foe, and they passed the word of day. "Hunting," they said, "in Easachosain, we found the roe come this way."

"If this way she came, she's at Duglas Water by now, so you may bide and eat. Few indeed, come calling on us in Half Town; but whoever they are, here's the open door, and the horn spoon, and the stool by the fire."

He took them in and he fed them, nor asked their names nor calling, but when they had eaten well he said to Rory, "You have skill of the pipes: I know by the drum of your fingers on the horn spoon."

"I have tried them," said Rory, with a laugh, "a bit - a bit. My friend here is a player."

"Have you the art?" asked Coll.

"Well, not what you might call the whole art," said Gilian, "but I can play - oh yes I can play two or three ports."

"You can that!" said Rory.

"No better than yourself, Rory".

"Well, maybe not, but - anyway, not all tunes; I allow you do 'MacKay's Banner' in a pretty easy style."

"Pipers," said Coll, with a quick eye to a coming quarrel, "I will take you to one of your own trade in this place - Paruig Dall, who is named for music."

"It's a name that is new to me," said Rory, short and sharp, but up they rose and followed Big Coll.

He took them to a bothy behind the Half Town, a place with turf walls, and never a window, where a blind man sat winding pirns for the weaver folks.

"This," said Coll, showing the strangers in at the door, "is a piper of parts, or I'm no judge, and he has as rare a stand of great pipes as ever my eyes sat on."

"I have that same," said the blind man, with his face to the door. Your friends, Coll?

"Two pipers of the neighbourhood," Rory made answer. "It was no for piping we came here, but by accident of the chase. Still and on, if pipes are here, piping there might be."

"So be it." cried Coll; "but I must go back to my cattle till night comes. Get you to the playing with Paruig Dall, and I'll find you here when I come back." And with that he turned about and went off.

Paruig put down the ale and cake before the two men, and "Welcome you are," said he. They ate the stranger's bite, and lipped the stranger's cup, and then "Whistle 'The Macraes' March,' my fair fellow," said the blind man.

"How ken you I'm fair?" asked Rory.

"Your tongue tells that. A fair man has aye a soft bit in his speech, like the lapping of milk in a cogie; and a black one, like your friend there, has the sharp ring of a thin burn in frost running into an iron pot. 'The Macraes' March," laochain."

Rory put a pucker on his mouth and played a little of the fine tune.

"So!" said the blind man, with his head to a side, "you had your lesson. And you, my Strathlachlan boy without beard, do you ken "Muintir a' Ghlinne so'?"

"How ken ye I'm Strathlachlan and beardless?" asked Gilian.

"Strathlachlan by the smell of herring scale from your side of the house (for they told me yesterday the gannets were flying down Strathlachlan way, and that means fishing), and you have no beard I know, but in what way I know I do not know."

Gilian had the "siubhal" of the pibroch but begun when the blind man stopped him.

"You have it," he said, "you have it in a way, the MacArthur's way, and that's not my way. But, no matter, let us to our piping."

The three men sat them down on three stools on the clay floor, and the blind man's pipes passed round between them.

"First," said Paruig (being the man of the house, and to get the vein of his own pipes) - "first I'll put on them 'The Vaunting'." He stood to his shanks, a lean old man and straight, and the big drone came nigh on the black rafters. He filled the bag at a breath and swung a lover's arm round about it. To those who know not the pipes, the feel of the bag in the oxters is a gaiety lost. The sweet round curve is like a girl's waist; it is friendly and warm in the crook of the elbow and against a man's side, and to press it is to bring laughing or tears.

The bothy roared with the tuning, and then the air came melting and sweet from the chanter. Eight steps up, four to the turn, and eight down went Paruig, and the piobaireachd rolled to his fingers like a man's rhyming. The two men sat on the stools, with their elbows on their knees, and listened.

He played but the urlar, and the crunluadh to save time, and he played them well.

"Good indeed! Splendid, my good fellow!" cried the two; and said Gilian, "You have a way of it in the crunluadh not my way, but as good as ever I heard."

"It is the way of Padruig Og," said Rory. "Well I know it! There are tunes and tunes, and 'The Vaunting' is not bad in its way, but give me 'The Macraes' March'."

He jumped to his feet and took the pipes from the old man's hands, and over his shoulder with the drones. "Stand back, lad!" he cried to Gilian, and Gilian went nearer the door.

The march came fast to the chanter - the old tune, the fine tune that Kintail has heard before, when the wild men in their red tartan came over hill and moor; the tune with the river in it, the fast river and the courageous that kens not stop nor tarry, that runs round rock and over fall with a good humour, yet no mood for anything but the way before it. The tune of the heroes, the tune of the pinelands and the broad straths, the tune that the eagles of Loch Duich crack their beak together when they hear, and the crows of that countryside would as soon listen to as the squeal of their babies.

"Well! mighty well!" said Paruig Dall. "You have the tartan of the clan in it."

"Not bad, I'll allow," said Gilian. "Let my try."

He put his fingers on the holes, and his heart took a leap back over two generations, and yonder was Glencoe! The grey day crawled on the white hills and the black roofs smoked below. Snow choked the pass, eas and corri filled with drift and flatted to the braeface; the wind tossed quirky and cruel in the little bushes and among the smooing lintels and joists; the blood of old and young lappered on the hearthstones, and the bairn, with a knifed throat, had an icy lip on a frozen teat. Out of the place went the tramped path of the Campbell butchers - far on their way to Glenlyon and the towns of paper and ink and liars - "Muinntir a' ghlinne so, muinntir a' ghlinne so! - People, people, people of this glen, this glen, this glen!"

"Dogs! dogs! O God of grace - dogs and cowards!" cried Rory. "I could be dirking a Diarmaid or two if by luck they were near me."

"It is piping that is to be here," said Paruig, "and it is not piping for an evening, but the piping of Dunvegan that stops for sleep nor supper.

So the three stayed in the bothy and played a tune about while time went by the door. The birds flew home to the branches, the long necked beasts flapped off to the shore to spear their flat fish; the rutting deers bellowed with loud throats in the deeps of the wood that stands round Half Town, and the scents of the moist night came gusty round the door. Over the back of Auchnabreac the sun trailed his plaid of red and yellow, and the loch stretched salt and dark from Cairn Dubh to Creaggans.

In from the hill the men and the women came, weary legged and the bairns nodded at their heels. Sleepiness was on the land, but the pipers, piping in the bothy, kept the world awake.

"We will go to bed in good time," said the folks, eating their suppers at their doors; "in good time when this tune is ended." But tune came on tune, and every tune better than its neighbour, and they waited.

A cruisie-light was set aglowe in the blind man's bothy, and the three men played old tunes and new tunes - salute and lament and brisk dances and marches that coax tired brogues on the long roads.

"Here's 'Tulloch Ard' for you, and tell me who made it," said Rory.

"Who kens that? Here's 'Raasay's Lament,' the best port Padruig Mor ever put together."

"Tunes and tunes. I'm for 'A Kiss o' the King's Hand!'"

Thug mi pog 'us pog,
Thug mi pog do lamh an righ,
Cha do chuir gaoth an craicionn caorach,
Fear a fhuair an fhaoilt ach mi!

(To be continued in next issue)

If any of our readers have interesting material for inclusion in the Newsletter, please send it along. We are always anxious to reprint news of local and distant piping events.

We are always pleased to give publicity to any functions connected with pipe bands.



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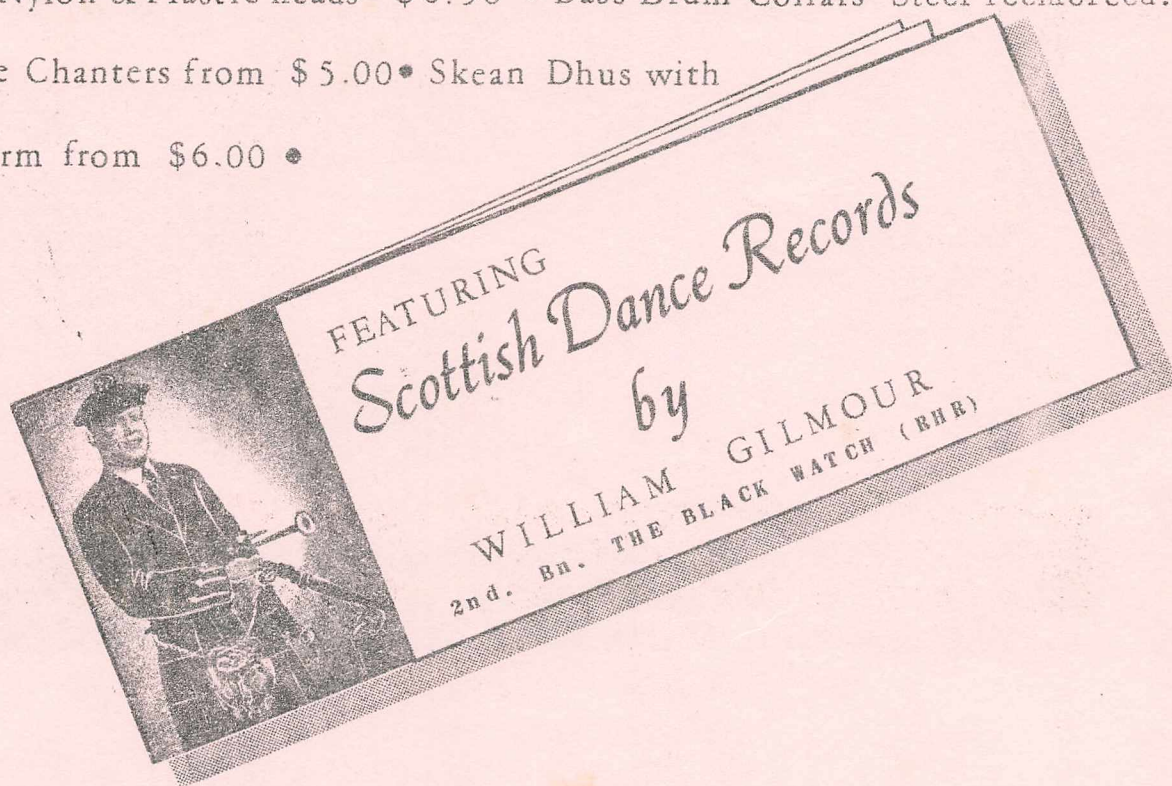
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ODDS & ENDS:

We regret to announce the death of one of Vancouver's former greats in the piping community - Archie MacIndewar. Mr. MacIndewar, who has resided in Victoria for several years, passed away this month in the capital city, after an illness of considerable length. The son of the late William MacIndewar, and the brother of Alex Dewar, a drummer, Archie's name ranked with the best during the 20's and 30's.

We hope to include in another Newsletter an article on Archie MacIndewar.

- 0 -

Our sympathies are extended to Mr. and Mrs. D.R. McDougall, of Vancouver, for the recent loss of their son, Stuart. Mr. McDougall, a loyal and enthusiastic Associate Member of this association, is well liked by all of our members, and we know that all that know him join in this expression of condolence.

- 0 -

We see that Dame Flora MacLeod of MacLeod is again back in town, visiting her world-wide family. Known and respected by Scots around the world, Dame Flora is indeed an itinerant ambassador of Scotland. We hope to hear something of her visit from our once-in-a-while contributor Rod MacLeod.

- 0 -

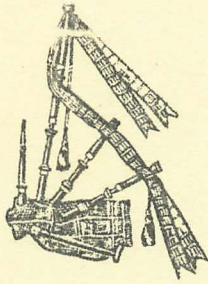
It has come to our attention that one of the local Junior bands is in demand for a trip to Quebec, but there seems to be some doubt as to which band is going. Any suggestions?

- 0 -

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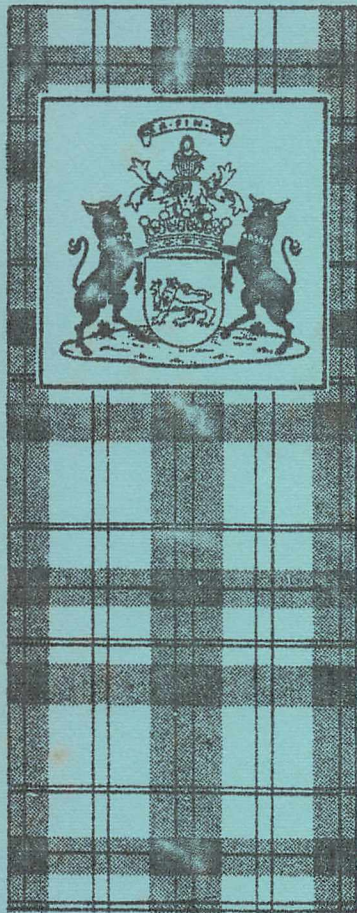
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