B. C. PIPERS' NEWSLETTER



The official monthly publication of the British Columbia Pipers' Association

FEBRUARY, 1964.

No. 47.

AN ASSOCIATION FOR THE PRESERVATION OF BAGPIPE MUSIC

AND THE ENCOURAGEMENT OF PIPE PLAYING IN BRITISH COLUMBIA

B. C. PIPERS! NEWSLETTER

Published monthly by the British Columbia Pipers' Association.

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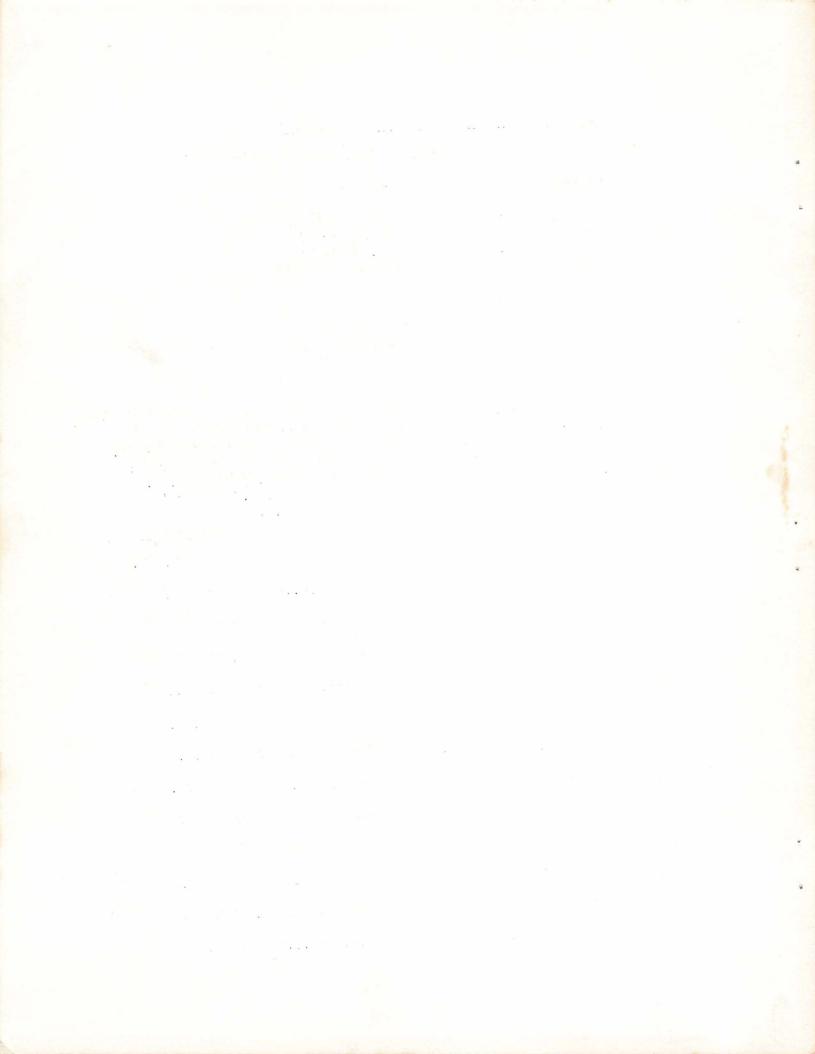
EDITOR: CIRCULATION:

C. I. Walker Donald Urquhart Wm. A. McAdie Georgina MacPhail

SECRETARY:

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32nd ANNUAL GATHERING:

The 32nd Annual Gathering of the British Columbia Pipers' Association will take place on Saturday, March 21st. in the Seaforth Armoury. All necessary details concerning this meet will appear in next month's Newsletter.

It is with great pleasure that we announce that our judge this year will be Pipe Major Neil Sutherland, of the Winnipeg City Police Pipe Band. Well known to pipers everywhere, Pipe Major Sutherland served during World War II as Pipe Major of the Calgary Highlanders Pipe Band, and for several years has been Pipe Major of the Winnipeg City Police Pipe Band. Neil Sutherland judged here in 1960, and we are pleased that he is making a return visit.

We are also very pleased to be able to reproduce this month Pipe Major Sutherland's Slow March "Mrs. Margaret Fraser Sutherland". We are grateful to Neil for allowing us to reprint this tune, which was requested by several of his friends when he visited Vancouver last fall at Grey Cup time. We know that our readers will be glad to have this fine tune.

For the information of our readers, we ar€ listing the judges who have been at our competitions since 1952, when we first started engaging well-known "outside" judges. The list constitutes a "who's who" of the piping world. (The designations are those at the times of their respective visits)

- 1952 Pipe Major William Ross, M.B.E., Army School of Piping Mr. John Burgess
- 1953 Pipe Major John MacLellan, 1st Bn. (Imperial) Seaforth High.
 Mr. Seumas MacNeill, Principal, College of Piping, Glasgow
 1954 Mr. Donald MacLean. of Lewis
- 1955) Pipe Major Donald MacLeod, Fort George 1956)
- 1957 Pipe Major Robert Brown, Balmoral,
- 1958 Pipe Major Angus MacDonald, Calgary Highlanders, Alta.
- 1959 Pipe Major Donald S. Ramsay, San Francisco, Calif.
- 1960 Pipe Major Neil Sutherland, Winnipeg, Man.
- 1961 Pipe Major George Duncan, Detroit, Mich.
- 1962) Pipe Major John Wilson, Toronto, Ontario. 1963)



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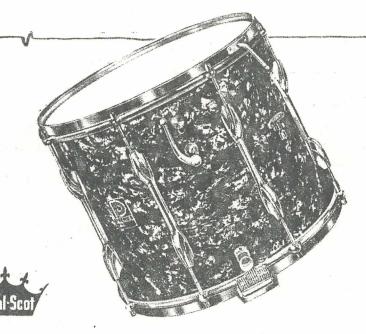
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THE STORY BEHIND BAGPIPE TUNES:

(from "Sunday Post", Glasgow)

THE CARLES WITH THE BREEKS:

This tune hails from Caithness. In 1672 Sir John Campbell, of Glenorchy, received from George, Earl of Caithness, the assignment of all his lands and possessions on the condition that he would adopt the name of Sinclair. Glenorchy agreed, and on the death of the Earl in 1676, took the title.

But George Sinclair of Keiss, the heir to the title before this arrangement was made, disputed Sir John's right to it.

Sir John marched to Caithness with a force of Campbells and defeated George Sinclair's army at Altimarlach, on the banks of Wickwater.

The Campbells, a Highland clan, wore the kilt and despised those who did not. The Sinclairs wore trews.

When Findlay MacIvor, Sir John's piper, saw them retreating he composed and played on the spot:-

"The carles with the breeks, the carles with the breeks, The carles with the breeks are flying before us."

THE MACLACHLANS ' MARCH:

The story behind this tune, also known as Moladh Mairi, is a very romantic one.

Angus MacKay, of Gairloch, was attending a piping competition in Edinburgh. The other competitors were jealous of him and so afraid of his superior talents that they formed a plan to destroy his chances of winning the competition.

They managed to get hold of his pipes and pierced the bag in several places. When Angus began to practise on the day of the competition he discovered the damage.

But his sweetheart, called Mary, managed to get hold of a sheep's skin, from Which, although it was undressed, they managed to make a new bag for his pipes.

With this, the piper carried off first prize, and in gratitude to his helper, Angus MacKay composed "Moladh Mairi" (In Praise of Mary).

GILLIE CALUM:

"I can get a wife for tuppence, I can get a wife for tuppence, Wife for tuppence, wife for tuppence, A useless one for a'e bawbee." Gillie Calum is the pipe tune to which the Sword Dance is performed.

Gillie Calum is said to have been Malcolm Canmore, who displeased the Highlanders by removing his Court from Dunstaffnage Castle in Argyllshire, to Dunfermline.

Malcolm married a Saxon princess called Margaret - and this led to the Court language being changed from Gaelic to English. Also, there was added to the coinage a very small coin, called a bodle, which was equal in value to one-third of a halfpenny.

The infuriated Highlanders wrote and composed this witty and sarcastic song in memory of Malcolm Canmore.

THE BRAES OF THE MIST:

"Cruachan a' Cheathaich" (Braes of the Mist) is a Wild and melancholy pibroch. A ballad can be sung to it and behind the composing of this air and song is an interesting story.

"The Children of the Mist" was the name often applied to the Clan MacGregor. Once a MacGregor woman concealed her husband and two sons in her house when enemies of the clan were approaching. There was no time for escape, so she quickly told them to hide below a bed, and, sitting by the fire, started to sing -

"I sit here alone by the plain of the highway,
For my poor hunted kin, watching mist, watching byeway."

And so on, expressing her sorrow and sadness. The enemies stopped outside to listen to the song, and believing it to be straight from the singer's heart, as indeed it was, they passed on without disturbing her, and her husband and sons were saved.

THE MISERLY, MISERABLE ONE'S HOUSE:

About 300 years ago, the estate of Barbreck, in Argyll, was owned by a Campbell, whose cousin was the neighbouring laird of Craignish. Craignish kept a piper, but his cousin was too mean to do so.

Barbreck asked his cousin's piper to come over a play a New Year salute to him after he had done so for his own master. The piper agreed, and on New Year's Day morning, after first playing for his master, he went to Barbreck.

He played and played, and the laird was in raptures. But the piper became hungry and thirsty, and after much hinting received some meal gruel and bad barley scones.

The piper soon became anxious to get home. "One more tune before you go, the," said Barbreck. "That I will," replied the piper, who there and then composed and struck up "Tigh Bhroinein" - "The House of the Miserly One." For the rest of his life, Barbreck rued the day that he asked his cousin's piper to play one last tune.

JOHN GARBH OF RAASAY'S LAMENT:

This tune is one of the most famous of pibrochs and a great favourite with pipers.

John Garbh MacLeod of Raasay died about 1650 at the age of 21. He was a young man of handsome appearance and great strength. He had been to Lewis visiting a friend and when he decided to return home to Skye the day was so stormy that his crew refused to put to sea.

Raasay then turned to his boatman and said in the Gaelic -"Son of fair Muireil, are you afraid?" The man at once replied - "No, No, Raasay, we shall share the same fate today!"

The rough voyage went safely until they reached Trotternish. A squall of rain hid the boat from the sight of warchers on the shore. When it cleared, the boat was nowhere to be seen.

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CHANGE OF PIPE BAND RULES - "C" CLASS BANDS:

At the General Meeting held on January 31st, it was regularly moved and seconded that the Pipe Band rules be amended as follows:

Part II, Section 4. "C" Class Bands will consist of:

(a) those bands which are composed entirely of pipers and drummers 18 years of age and under at the date of the current competition.

(present rule)

To be substituted with:

Part II, Section 4. "C" Class Bands will consist of:

- (a) those bands which are composed entirely of pipers and drummers 18 years of age and under on January 1st of the year of the current competition.
- (b) no age restriction shall be placed on the Pipe Major of "C" Class pipe bands.

These amendments will be voted upon at the General Meeting to be held on February 27th. Sub-sections "a" and "b" will be voted on separately. If any of our members have any comments to make concerning these amendments, and will be unable to attend this meeting, we would ask them to contact the Secretary in writing, in order that their opinions be brought before the meeting.

- 0 -

LACHLAN FERGUSON PASSES:

Lachlan Ferguson, of 17467 - 2nd Avenue, White Rock, a piping enthusiast, passed away on December 16th. Mr. Ferguson left Scotland in 1911 with his wife and two children and settled in Winnipeg, where three more children came to the couple, and where for 45 years he served as a Winnipeg Electric Motorman.

Lachlan, as a young lad, served in the Boer War, and during the Great War with the Cameron Reserve Pipe Band. He was also Pipe Major of the Elmwood Pipe Band. Mr. Ferguson took great pride in his pipes, and even when latterly he was unable to play, kept them in shining working condition.

He retired in 1950, and the couple celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary in Winnipeg before coming west to be near two of their daughters - one in White Rock and another in Vancouver. Mr. Ferguson is survived by his wife, Jane Ann, and four of his five children, 6 grandchildren and 2 great grandchildren.



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UNIQUE TEST FOR PROFESSIONAL PIPERS PLAYING IN SIX TIES: (from Oban Times, Jan. 9th, 1964)

Commencing on Saturday, January 11th, with a tie between Archie MacPhail and Pipe Major Donald MacLeod, the Scottish Pipers' Association is organising a competition which is unique for professional pipers.

Altogether 12 pipers have agreed to take part and the only rule is that a competitor must play for at least twenty minutes, and for not more than half an hour, pipe music of his own choice. Only one tie will be played off each evening and the audience will adjudicate by placing a tick at the appropriate name on the judging slip with which they will be provided.

The competition is a complete departure from those hitherto organised for professionals and it says a great deal for the magnanimity and enthusiasm of those taking part. For obvious reasons the number of competitors had to be curtailed this year but it is hoped that next session a similar competition can be organised commencing earlier in the year.

The winner will receive the trophy generously donated by the "Piping Times". It is hoped that the general public will respond to the enthusiasm of officials and competitors by turning out in large numbers to support the venture.

The ties and dates are as follows: - January 11, Archie MacPhail v. P.M. Donald MacLeod. Jan. 25, Duncan Johnstone v. Hector MacFadyen (Pennyghael) Feb. 15, P.M. James MacGregor, GlenIsla v. Ronald Lawrie. Feb. 29, Seumas MacNeill v. Iain MacFadyen. March 21, Duncan MacFadyen v. John MacLellan. March 28, James Young v. Dugald Ferguson.

On Saturday, January 18 the association hold their annual professional competition in the Boys' High School commencing 10 A.M. This year Mr. Alan Cameron, Editor, Oban Times will be in the chair while Pipe Majors Nicol MacCallum and Hugh A. MacRae, Edinburgh will be faced with the difficult task of selecting the winners.

For the first time the Duncan MacFadyen memorial trophy will be presented to the competitor with most points in all competitions. This trophy, magnificient silver salver was presented by public subscription and the association wish me to record their gratitude for such a magnificent response.

Last Saturday they held their usual meeting when early in the evening Archie MacPhail played the pibroch "Lament for Mary MacLeod" while President John MacFadyen rounded off the programme with the self same classical piece. Donald Lindsay chose "I am proud to play a Pipe" while Ronald Morrison favoured "Gille Chriosd". Among others who contributed to the programme were David Munro, Ian Mackay and James Brown.

1. "

HIGHLAND PIPERS:

(from Oban Times)

Seven pipers combining in a series of tunes made a fine finish to the meeting of the Highland Pipers' Society in Lothian Road, Church Hall on December 23. Led by Honorary Pipe Major Duncan R. Camerson, they played "Blue Bonnets", "Because he was a Bonnie Lad", "High Road to Linton" and "Glendaruel Highlanders".

About 50 pupils attended the dancing section under Miss Jean Reynolds, which began at seven o'clock and enjoyed the piping services of Pipe Major Cameron, Alastair Macdonald (South Uist), Robert Black, and Charles Innes, Alastair Moyes, Allan Ronaldson, and Andrew McHae were among those who played when the pipers' section of the society met later in the evening.

- 0 -

Fairly early in the New Year the Highland community in the Capital will be losing a fine piper and true friend in the person of Mr. James Margach, one of the two Honorary pipers to Edinburgh Ross and Cromarty Association and also to Lt. Col. Gayre. Mr. Margach, with his wife and their family of four - a son of 14 and daughters who are 12, 9 and just on 2 years of age - is leaving this country to settle in Australia.

The family's new home will be at Bundaberg, in Queensland, a rapidly expanding community about 200 miles south of Brisbane and practically in the centre of the Australian sugar cane industry. Bundaberg lies about eight miles from the sea coast, and Mr. Margach, a skilled bagpipe maker, will be working as a wood turner for a firm of boatbuilders.

Behind the move is the fact that the Bundaberg pipe band wanted a good piper from Scotland to strengthen their resources, and since they have been dealing over the years with Bailie Hugh Macpherson in Edinburgh, they finally persuaded one of his bagpipe makers to go out to join them.

Mr. Margach is a native of Munlochy in the Black Isle, and was brought up in Morayshire. At the age of 18 he joined the Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders as a regular soldier, first as a piper and latterly as sergeant piper. During the war he was taken prisoner at La Bassee in May 1940 and remained in German hands until the end of hostilities.

When he left the Army after completing a 22 year's engagement, he was employed in Edinburgh College of Art until about four years ago, when he joined Messrs. J. and R. Glen, Lawnmarket, as a bagpipe maker. Two years ago he left Glen's to join Bailie Hugh Macpherson's staff of pipe makers.

Mr. Margach will be very much missed, particularly by members of the Ross and Cromarty Association whom he has served so well for a number of years. A wide circle of friends will join us in wishing him and his wife and family all happiness and success in their new life. The daily press pays generally so little attention to piping concerns that the "Edinburgh Evening News"msst be praised for a feature article on a particularly kenspeckle figure in band circles. It was a well deserved tribute to the work and enthusiasm of Mr. Peter Roberts, the secretary and treasurer of the Lothians and Border branch of the Scottish Pipe Band Association.

Mr. Roberts has plenty on his hands, even after a lifetime of association with bands. The Lothians and Border district has a membership of 26 bands, averaging about 20 members each, but its "parish" is not quite so restricted as the title would suggest. In this case the Lothians and Borders stretch up as far as Wick to include the remarkable Wick Girls' Pipe Band, with its 56 pipers and drummers from the age of eight upwards and a record of having twice won the Scottish ladies' championship, appeared in Edinburgh's Princes Street Gardens and other parks in 1962, and also toured on the Continent.

Mr. Roberts has been a band enthusiast for no fewer than 57 years. In 1906 he joined the 48th Boys' Brigade, attached to the Church of Scotland Mission in Fishmarket Close, and took to drumming. Before the first war, while working in the workshops at Lady Victoria Pit, Newtongrange, he was in the band of the 8th Royal Scots at Dalkeith, and he was mobilised and went with them to France, where they were the first Scottish Territorial Army unit to go into action in the war - in the battle of Givenchy on December 18, 1914.

After the war he joined what was then the Scottish Motor Traction Co. Ltd. as a bus conductor, and it is typical of his energy that by 1926 he had founded the S.M.T. Pipe Band and got the late Sir William Thomson, the chairman of the company, to fit out a dozen pipers and seven drummers with complete Highland dress. The band played at the launching of the Queen Mary in 1934, and again when the ship sailed from the Clyde for Southampton in March 1936.

In 1931 Mr. Roberts was one of the founder members of the Scottish Pipe Band Association at that time with between 50 and 60 bands interested, but now embracing over 400. He retired from the S.M.T., or rather from the nationalised Scottish Omnibuses, Ltd., in 1957, and has filled his so-called "leisure" years with a host of activities, most of them connected with bands. Apart from his administrative work for the Scottish Pipe Band Association, he spends a couple of nights a week with St. Joseph's School band in Tranent, continues his boyhood attachment to the 48th Boys' Brigade, is still secretary of the S.M.T. band, acted as a dance marshal at Edinburgh Highland Games, and is a Scottish Tourist Board guide in the summer.

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BI-MONTHLY COMPETITION: FEBRUARY 28th.

The Bi-Monthly competition for February will be held on February 28th, in the Gymnasium of the Seaforth Armoury.

The following events will be held:

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

The Novice Old Highland Airs event will commence at 7:00 p.m. sharp, and we would ask all competitors in this event to be ready to play at this time.

- 0 -

GENERAL MEETING - FEBRUARY 27th,

A General Meeting is scheduled for February 27th (Thursday), in the band room, at the Seaforth Armoury.

The change to Thursday night has been necessary due to the Bi-Monthly competition falling on the Friday night.

It is hoped that there will be a good turn-out.

The meeting held on January 31st was well attended, and the groundwork was laid for the Annual Gathering to be held on March 21st.

- 0 -

VICTORIA HIGHLAND GAMES ASSOCIATION 11th ANNUAL INDOOR MEET: FEB. 29th;

We would again remind you of the 11th Annual Indoor Meet, to be presented by the Victoria Highland Games Association, on February 29th, 1964.

The competitions will be held at the Club Sirocco, 1037 View Street, Victoria, and piping events will commence at 11:00 a.m. Details of events are contained in the January Newsletter, or can be obtained from the Games Secretary, Ken Jackson, 632 Head Street, Victoria, B.C.

 $\,$ All entries must be in the hands of the Games Secretary by February 22nd.

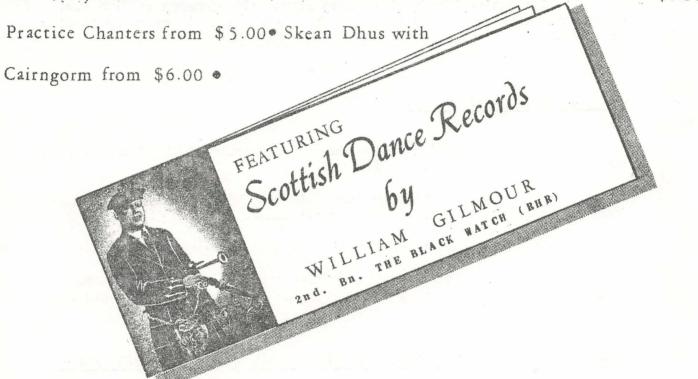
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A LETTER CONCERNING THE LATE ARCHIE MCINDEWAR:

I thought that our readers would be interested in reading a few lines concerning the late Arcie McInDewar, recently deceased.

Archie was the founding genius of three pipe bands - the McLennan Pipe Band, Spencer's Remnants, and the Highland Gentleman, and also helped form a Naval Pipe Band in Victoria. To my knowledge the McLennan Pipe Band was the first band to compete for the Stewart Trophy, playing heavy tunes.

Archie personally won the local aggregates many times. I have heard some remarks to the effect that he put too much work in his playing. In my opinion he was playing ahead of his time. When Archie was in his prime, he was a hard competitor to beat, and I know that his knowledge of the music and of the instrument will be missed in piping circles.

- George Allan -



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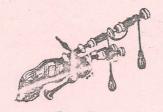
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FROM PIPE MAJOR JOHN ROBERTSON'S SCRAPBOOK:

EDMONTON ANNUAL HIGHLAND GAMES:

May 25, 1945.

Marred by cloudy skies and cold, rainy weather, the annual Highland games were held at the South Side athletic grounds Thursday afternoon. Hundreds of clansmen and friends turned out for the program of piping and dancing sponsored by the Edmonton Highland Games association.

To the strain of bagpipes the competitors, with brilliant and flashing tartans, complete with kilts and sporran, sought piping and dancing honours. Harry Lunan was the piping judge and Mary Gillis was the judge of the dancing.

Alderman Downey, acting for the mayor, officially opened the program at 3:00 p.m. in front of the grandstand. Introduced by Chieftain T.H. Campbell, Ald. Downey spoke of the benefits of the Highland games, and mentioned the popularity of these games in the Bruce and Perth Counties, of Ontario where he came from. A welcome to the people in attendance, who have recognized the work of the association all through the years, was given by Staff Inspector Alex Riddell, of the city police, and president of the games association.

Pipe Major John Robertson, D.C.M., was presented with a gift from the association by Hon. James A. MacKinnon, honorary president of the association, in recognition of his work with the Boys' Band and the promoting of piping generally in the city. Pipe Major Robertson is leaving Edmonton shortly for the coast.

"In a quiet, unobtrusive, but most effective way, Pipe Major Robertson has made an unparalleled contribution for the benefit of Edmonton's young manhood in instituting and successfully managing for the past quarter century the well known Edmonton Boys' Pipe Band," Mr. MacKinnon said.

"Gratuitously, and with no thought of material reward, he has been unstinting in his sacrifice of time, energy, and domestic comfort so that Edmonton might continue to be served, at call, with the rousing, martial music of Scotland." he concluded. "By the force of his own great example, these boys, numbered by hundreds throughout the years, have stood ever ready to obey the summons of our civic and military authorities in patriotic "send-off" or "welcome" parade, ceremonial, or public gathering."

The program was featured by a march past of 200 members of 27 Company, Veterans Guard of Canada, who are stationed in Edmonton. The parade marked the fifth anniversary of the formation of the guard, Chieftain Campbell took the salute.

Piping results:

Piobaireachd - open: 1. Robert MacPherson 2. Albert Duncan 3. Thomas Oliver

March, under 16 years: 1. Albert Duncan 2. Roderick Small 3. David Duguid

March, under 19 years: 1. Thomas Oliver 2. Jessie Duguid

March, professional: 1. Robert MacPherson 2. James Milne 3. Donald MacKinnon

Strathspey and Reel, under 16 years: 1. Albert Duncan 2. David Duguid 3. Roderick Small

Strathspey and Reel, under 19 years: 1. Thomas Oliver. . 2. Jessie Duguid

Strathspey: and Reel, professional: 1. Robert MacPherson 2. Harry Gerrard 3. James Milne

- 0 -

VANCOUVER LADIES' PIPE BAND ANNUAL FESTIVAL - FEBRUARY 21st & 22nd.

You are again reminded of the Vancouver Ladies' Pipe Band Annual Festival of piping, dancing and drumming, to be held on February 21st and 22nd. This event will be held at the Cambrian Hall, 215 East 17th Avenue (17th and Main), and the piping events will be held on *February 22nd, starting at 1:30 p.m.

A full list of events is given in the January issue of the Newsletter. Entries may be obtained from the Secretary, Dorothy MacArthur, 725 Browning Place, North Vancouver, (WA 9-3094). Entries must be in the hands of the Secretary not later than February 9th, 1964.

Entry fees are 50 cents per event or three events for \$1.25.

As well as solo piping events, there will be Class "C" and Novice individual drumming, and Class "B" individual drumming. There will be a Drum Corps competition,, and a Pipe Band Quartette class.

We would ask our members to support this worthwhile event in the piping calender. The Vancouver Ladies are to be commended for their efforts in promoting piping in Vancouver.

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LECTURE ON PIOBAIREACHD:

(from Oban Times, Dec. 19, 1963)

The art of piobaireachd is the ambition and often the despair of many a piper, so it was not surprising that there was a full turnout at the Highland Pipers' Society meeting on December 9 to hear a lecture recital by one of today's foremost authorities, Pipe Major John MacLellan, chief instructor of the Army School of Piping at Edinburgh Castle.

Pipe Major MacLellan was introduced by Mr. Duncan R. Cameron, Honorary Pipe Major of the society and was assisted in his demonstrations by Pipe Major Archie Cairns, of the 2nd Canadian Guards, who is a student at the Army School at the moment.

The subject of the lecture was the classification, characteristics and main differences of various types of piobaireachd, the pipe major's object to illustrate various interpretations to the audience in such a way that the pipers present might be helped in their own playing of ceol mor, and might also have a better understanding and appreciation of what the reard from others.

The four types of piobaireachd dealth with were battle tunes, gatherings, descriptive tunes, and laments, and the tunes used to illustrate them were: - Battle tunes - "Battle of the Pass of Crieff", "The Rout of Glenfruin" and "The End of the Little Bridge", gatherings - "MacDougall's Gathering" and "Clan Campbell's Gathering", descriptive tunes - "The Unjust Incarceration", laments - "Patrick Og MacCrimmon's Lament", "Lament for the Children", and "Lord Lovat's Lament".

Pipe Major MacLellan described the mental pictures associated with his interpretation of selected passages, driving each point home by playing a tape of excerpts from piobaireachd which he had recorded. The illustrations became dramatically clear when a startling contrast was effected by the insertion of two or three bars of one classification in the middle of a line of another, and the whole lecture was so interesting and entertaining, apart from its education value, that although it lasted for about an hour and a half it seemed to end almost as soon as it had begun.

Pipe Major Cameron moved a warm vote of thanks to Pipe Majors MacLellan and Cairns for a stimulating performance which had awakened the imagination of many keen pipers in the hall, and he then invited Pipe Major MacLellan to give another demonstration of his skill in a short recital.

The tunes played included "Highland Wedding", "Leaving Lunga", "Caber Feidh" (strathspey) "Blair Drummond" (reel) "Caber Feidh" (reel) and "Smith of Chillicassie" (reel), and they brought a great ovation from the audience.

During the evening Charles Innes played over to the company his new tune "51st Division Reunion", which was extremely well received.

COOMMENT WAS LESSON TO LESSON TO SEE



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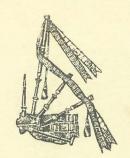
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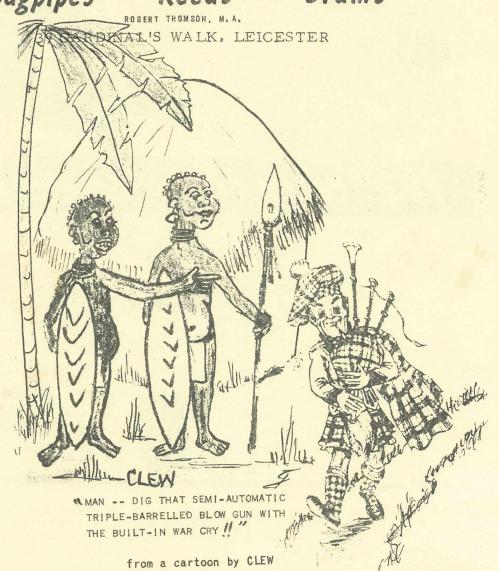
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VANCOUVER LADIES FESTIVAL -FEBRUARY 21st & 22nd

GENERAL MEETING - FEBRUARY 27th

BI-MONTHLY COMPETITION - FEBRUARY 28th

VICTORIA INDOOR MEET - FEBRUARY 29th

