B. C. PIPERS' NEWSLETTER





The official monthly publication of the British Columbia Pipers' Association

FEBRUARY, 1967.

No. 79.



B. C. PIPERS' NEWSLETTER

Published monthly by the British Columbia Pipers! Association.

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Roderick MacVicar Albert Duncan Ken. McIlvena Wm. A. McAdie

B.C. Pipers' NEWSLETTER:

EDITOR:
PUBLISHER:
REPORTER:
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FEBRUARY, 1967.

C.I. Walker Wm. A. McAdie Cathrine Paterson Donald Urquhart, Bob McAdie

No. 79.

Ken. McIlvena

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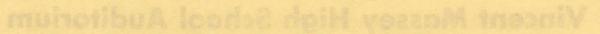
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35th ANNUAL GATHERING: MARCH 17th & 18th, 1967.

The 35th Annual Gathering of the British Columbia Pipers' Association will be held on Friday and Saturday, March 17th & 18th, 1967, at The Gardens, Hastings Park. Friday's events will commence at 3:30 p.m. and Saturday's programme will run from 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m.

The judge for this year's gathering will be Pipe-Major William Gilmour, of Barrie, Ontario. Known throughout the piping world as a very fine performer of considerable achievement, Pipe-Major Gilmour will be visiting our Annual Gathering for the first time. We are extremely pleased to be able to have William Gilmour with us, and know that we will benefit from his experience.

The programme will be as follows:

Friday, March 17th. (Starting at 3:30 p.m.) (NO SHORT LEETS THIS YEAR)

Event No. 1. Novice Marches

2. Juvenile Marches

3. Juvenile Strathspeys & Reels

Saturday, March 18th. (Starting at 9:00 a.m.)

Event No. 4. Junior Piobaireachd

5. Amateur Piobaireachd

6. Senior Amateur (Restricted) Old Highland Airs

7. Junior Marches

8. Junior Strathspeys & Reels

9. Quartette Competition (Junior)

10. Open Piobaireachd

11. Amateur Marches

12. Amateur Strathspeys & Reels

13. Open Marches

14. Dancing Under 16 - Seann Truibhus

15. Open Strathspeys & Reels

16. Open Jigs

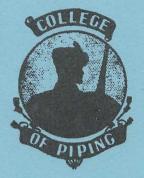
17. Quartette Competition (Senior)

18. Veterans 60 and Over Old Highland Airs

19. Miniature Pipe Band Competition

All entries should be sent to the Secretary Ken. McIlvena, 2641 Ward Street, Vancouver 16, B.C. There is no entry fee, but all competitors will pay admission.

We hope to see you all at our Annual Gathering:



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VANCOUVER LADIES PIPE BAND COMPETITION: FEB. 24th & 25th

Under 12 Novice Marches:

1. Drew Heggie 2. Robbie Menzies 3. Stuart Reid

Over 12 Novice Marches:

1. Drew Noot 2. Tim Noot 3. Ian Hall

Under 14 Marches:

1. Bill MacAulay 2. David Anderson 3. J. Leonard

Under 14 Strathspeys & Reels:

1. David Anderson 2. J. Leonard

Under 16 Marches:

1. Colin Abel 2. Donald MacMillan 3. Bob Gallaher

Under 16 Strathspeys & Reels:

1. Donald MacMillan 2. Donald Taylor 3. Dal Jessiman

Over 16 Marches:

1. Theresa MacInnes 2. Robert Heggie 3. John MacLeod

Over 16 Stræthspeys & Reels:

1. John MacLeod 2. Jean Jarvis 3. Robert Heggie

Ladies Slow Airs (Members of Vancouver Ladies Pipe Band)

1. Heather Upton 2. Mary Swift 3. Lynn Grocott

Quartette:

1. Vancouver Ladies "A"

2. Vancouver Kiwanis Boys "B"

3. Highland Laddies "A"

Aggregates:

Under 16 - Donald MacMillan

Over 16 - John MacLeod

Judge for this competition was Pipe Major James MacNeil, of Seattle, Washington.

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The Auxiliary to the Highland Laddies Boys Pipe Band are holding a dance at the Legion Hall, 4300 East Hastings Street, on March 25th from 9:00 to 1:00. Refreshments will be served. Everyone welcome. For tickets please call 299-2598.

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ANNUAL MEMBERS' DINNER: FEB. 18th, 1967. :

The Annual Members' Dinner, held at the Sports Tea Room, Stanley Park, on February 18th, 1967. was enjoyed by all present.

The dinner was undoubtedly one of the most successful of its kind, with a near capacity crowd enjoying the comradeship of dining, drinking and conversing with fellow pipers.

After the dinner, the President Rod. MacVicar welcomed and introduced the guests, who included Dr. Patrick McTaggart-Cowan, President of Simon Fraser University, and new Honorary President of our association. Lt.-Col. Douglas Anderson, Commanding Officer of the Seaforth Highlanders of Canada, Honorary...Vice President of the B.C. Pipers', and Pipe Major John M. Robertson, D.C.M., Honourary Vice-President. Mr. MacVicar then presented a Life Membership in the association to Roderick MacRae, as an appreciation for his many years of service to the B.C. Pipers' Association. In making the presentation the President reviewed some of Mr. MacRae's achievements, . including his two terms as President, several terms as Chairman of the White Heather Committee, present delegate to the Pacific International Highland Games Association, and member of the Board of Directors. Mr. MacRae, replying to the presentation, spoke of how much he enjoyed his relationships with the pipers, and with humour said he couldn't understand how he could get the letter informing him of his appointment as Life Member the same day as he received his request for 1967 membership dues!

Short speeches were also made by some of the past Presidents and the guests. Pipe Major Esson, in his inimitable after-dinner style, spoke briefly on last year's Pipers' Tour, and urged everyone to try to make the trip this year. Ian Walker, reminded by the recent Army-pipers' controversy, read some humerous clippings of the ill-fated John Sutherland, tinker piper in Vancouver in the 30's and 40's, who got himself into difficulties with the authorities as a result of his musical endeavours. Dr. McTaggart-Cowan expressed his pleasure at being appointed Honorary President, and spoke of the support which his university is giving its own pipe band. He felt that with all the anthropological studies which are being made on the various indigenous cultures today, the pipers would do well if they were to have the Scots declared indigenous, so that their culture would receive the attention and support given to some of the other native cultures. Lt.-Col. Doug Anderson spoke of the pleasure he received from his regiment's Pipe Band, and told of how Pipe Major Esson once tried to teach him the fundamentals of pipe music. Finally Pipe Major Duncan, Vice-President of the B.C. Pipers' summed-up each speakers talk, taking a humous excerpt from each address.

Following the dinner and speaches, was a programme of piping and guest artists. Several of the pipers present gave selections, and the visiting artists were the Misses Forsythe and Ann MacNeil, in a quartette of Scottish dancing, vocal selections by John McCabe and Jessie Rowane, accompanies by Mrs. Margaret Bagnall, and the Norman Cheyne and Family accordion and fiddle group band.

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SASSENACHS WHO DERIDE THE SOUND OF THE PIPES: (from The Oban Times, Feb. 2nd, 1967)

Speaking at the annual bagpipe competition organised by the Scottish Pipers' Association in Glasgow High School last Friday, Dr. Kenneth A. Mackay made a considered and justifiable attack on those Englishmen and Scotsmen who scoff at the sound of the pipes.

Prefacing his remarks with reference to the upsurge in interest which was taking place in the playing of the pipes Dr. MacKay said that it was not so long ago that the Scottish Pipers Association at their amateur and juvenile competition had 40 entries. The Drumnadrochit Association in Inverness, under the leadership of Willie MacDonald, had 60 youngsters altogether, from wee boys playing wee tunes on the chanter to lads of 16 - 17 playing piobaireachd, and for every one of these youngsters competing on the platform, there are at least half a dozen learning at home. Behind every one of these are parents, friends, teachers - encouraging them, supporting them and paying money for their instruments and equipment, which means there is, as never before, a vast body of backing for piping in Scotland today, but it is a body that is largely unheard of.

"What we do hear of - and what gets a degree of publicity it never deserves - is another attitude altogether, of which we should be aware," he continued. "Not long ago, in the House of Commons, where one would expect the men elected to run the affairs of our Government to treat matters of serious public interest with intelligence, with a serious approach, the elected member of a Scottish constituency was speaking of his convictions on matters of vital interest to Scotland.

"He was greeted with a storm of derision - and the highlight of that derision - the flash of devastating wit that rocked the House of Commons with laughter, was this - "Where's your bagpipes?"

While the great majority of these were Englishmen - and we can understand the English for their own reasons having a certain distaste for the pipes - they may still have, deep in their memory, a nerve that twitches and protests at the first far sound of the pipes. But we have no reason at all to tolerate the same attitude on the part of people who enjoy fame and good fees for appearing on Scottish Television, men who make a living as Scottish musicians, singing and playing Scottish music to their fellow Scots.

Very recently one such singer announced that his next song would be accompanied by the pipes - 'the kind of pipes you can sing to not the kind you have to walk about with to get away from the noise.'

Now, there is no wit there. As a sneer, it is childish. It is as sensible to scoff at the pipes because you can't sing to them, as to scoff at the piano because it couldn't lead the advance at Alamein, or play for a Highland funeral or put the right life and lilt into a foursome reel.

This attitude on the part of people privileged to appear on Scottish Television programmes is not childish at all - it is, of course, bad taste and bad manners, but it is something worse. Russell Johnston, speaking earnestly and seriously of his convictions in the House of Commons, Kenneth MacKellar singing a Hebridean song to a nation-wide audience, the Edinburgh Pipers impressing on the people of Moscow that British means Scottish, John MacDonald playing "The Lament for the Children" at the funeral of John McColl standing around - these all have the same views and speak the language. The man who sneers at any one of them is trying to belittle us all."

Introducing the chairman, Mr. John MacFadyen said Dr. Kenneth MacKay was had a lifelong interest in piping and is doing something about that interest by teaching the art. The judges throughout the day were Pipe-Majors Hector MacLean and Nicol MacCallum and Mr. Archie MacPhail was in charge of stewards.

All trophies and prizes were presented by Miss Flora MacNeill, secretary. Here are the results:

Piobaireachd: ("Oban Times" Challenge Gold Medal)

1. Hector MacFadyen, Pennyghael (MacDougall's Gathering)
2. Duncan MacFadyen (The Vaunting) 3. Kenneth MacDonald
(The Big Spree) 4. John MacFadyen (MacLeod of Raasay) and
Ronald Morrison (Glengarry's March)

March: (The Donald MacDougall Memorial Trophy)

1. John MacFadyen 2. Kenneth MacDonald 3. Hector MacFadyen

4. Iain MacLellan 5. John Percival

Strathspey and Reel: (The Duncan MacIntyre Memorial Trophy)

1. John MacFadyen 2. Seumas MacNeill 3. Kenneth MacDonald

4. Duncan MacFadyen 5. Hector MacFadyen

Duncan MacFadyen Trophy presented to competitor with most points in all events - John MacFadyen.

The CLANSMEN

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BI-MONTHLY COMPETITION - FEBRUARY 17th, 1967.

The largest gathering of friends and parents this season enjoyed still another fine evening of piping. 33 competed in the Novice Old Highland Airs and we were treated to no less than 7 different Piobaireachd from ten competitors in the Junior class. The selection and performance in the Piobaireachd class held the attention of the hardy dozen or so who stayed till the last tune, and were rewarded by excellent interpretation.

Our judge for the evening, Mr. Jim MacMillan, selected the piping winners, and our President, Mr. Rod MacVicar judged the deportment.

The winners were:

Novice Old Highland Airs:

1. Tim Noot 2. Tina MacLeod 3. Susan Purdy 4. Linda Freshwater 5. Robert Gunn 6. April MacDonald

Junior Piobaireachd:

1. Bill MacAulay (Caber Feidh Gu Bragh) 2. Sandy Shatford (Black Donald's March) 3. David Don (Caber Feidh Go Bragh) 4. Jean Jarvis (McDonald of Kinloch Moidart)

Deportment (Novice) - Robb Armstrong

The next Bi-Monthly competition will be on Friday, April 21st, in the Gymnasium of the Seaforth Armoury, at 7:30 p m. The events will be Juvenile Strathspeys and Reels, and Open Amateur Jigs.

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PIPER'S A PIPER FOR A' THAT: (Vancouver Province, January, 1967)

Nancouver pipers are overjoyed - the defence department has recognized that bagpipers are musicians and not something from the twilight zone.

The recognition came Wednesday - on the 208th anmiversary of the birth of Robbie Burns - when Defence Minister Hellyer announced that henceforth, armed services pipers are classified as musicians. This reverses a November decision that put pipers in a trade classification below musicians and cut their pay by \$20.00 a month. Now they get the \$20.00 back to give them the same pay level as the 900 musicians in the services.

"Although they don't say so in so many words, I suspect the defence department's hand has been forced," said Ed Esson, former senior pipe major in Canada and the Commonwealth.

"The pipers probably have been laying down their pipes and asking to be returned to regular duty. They can force a piper to be a soldier, but they can't force a soldier to be a piper "

He said the men who play the pipes are true musicians. "They have to complete a course on music theory before they can be classified as pipers," he said.

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DRASTIC CURE: (from Vancouver Province, January, 1967)

Dorney, England (UPI) It's an ill-wind, they say of the bagpines - but it did good for 11 year old Ian Robson, who had suffered breath stopping asthma for five years.

His father, Alexander Robson, brought him a set of pipes and a series of lessons from a former army pipe major. Three months of blowing cured the asthma. Neighbours agreed drastic ailments require drastic cures.

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SEVEN AND EIGHT MEN OF MOIDART: (from The Oban Times, Jan. 26, 1967)

To the Editor of The Oban Times,

109 Warrender Park Road, Edinburgh, January 11, 1967

Sir: - Your correspondent "North Argyll" asks in his letter (29/12/66) if it was Clanranald's piper who composed the piobaireachd, "Thainig mo Righ air tir am Muideart" - "My King has landed at Moidart" - in celebration of that historic event. I think not. It has been said that it was composed extempore, (presumably in a state of exhilaration) by one of the pipers present, and of course the Clanranald was well represented at the landing.

I am very doubtful, however, about accepting claims for composing what may be termed in the modern idiom "Instandt Piobaireachd".

In my brief note on this tune in Volume II of "Binneas is Borreraig" I have given the credit of composition to John MacIntyre - one of the Rannoch MacIntyres who were pipers to Menzies of Menzies, and several of whom were noted composers. John MacIntyre was a fellow-pupil with Patrick Og MacCrimmon at the College of Piping at Borreraig in Skye.

Angus Mackay in his published notes on this tune gives details of the story of the Prince's landing but makes no mention of a composer. In the notes to the tunes in DavidGlen's "Collection of Ancient Piobaireachd", and in the Kilbery Book of Ceol Mor, John MacIntyre is named as the composer although no authority is given for so doing. In MacIntyre's favour, he was, like the Menzies's, a Jacobite supporter, and had already composed a tune to celebrate the questionable victory at the Battle of Sheriffmuir in 1715 (although in fairness it must be said that some ascribe this tune to Finlay Dubh Macrae).

Prince Charles lost no time in letting the loyal clans know of his landing, and the Menzies's declared for him on September 1, 1745 - they were led by Archibald Menzies of Shian who was factor to the chief, Sir Robert Menzies. MacIntyre would therefore have had ample time to confer with his inspirational muse and compose his tune before actually meeting his Prince.

As to the dance, the Eight Men of Moidart, Glen quotes from the book "Moidart, or Among the Clanranalds" as follows: "While the clans were busy mustering throughout the various districts, Charles crossed by boat from Borrodale to the Moidart shore. On landing at Glenuig, he was met by a crowd of natives, some of the oldest of whom, in the exuberance of their joy, danced a reel in his presence, and a very excellent spirited reel it is, known for years afterwards as the Eight Men of Moidart".

The pipe tune of the same name is to be found in Book One of Pire Major William Ross's collection.

I was very interested to learn from North Argyll's letter that my good friend Angus Macpherson, Invershin, intended to play on the Glenaladale pipes at Moidart - I am sure he would choose this piobaireachd to play on such an occasion, and he would play with a depth of feeling that few could equal.

He and Pipe Major William Taylor must be the oldest gold medallists still actively taking part in piping affairs. May they long continue to do so.

- J. Hector Ross -

To the Editor of The Oban Times,

16 Planefield Road, Inverness

Sir: As far as I know, the story about the eight men of Moidart first appeared in the Rev. Charles MacDonald's very interesting and informative book Moidart, or among the Clan Ranald.

According to him the eight gentlemen who accompanied Prince Charles in the French ship in the exuberance of their joy in finding themselves standing on Scottish soil danced a reel which has ever since been known as the Eight Men of Moidart.

I am aware that a correspondent in a newspaper, probably the "Oban Times", many years ago denied the whole story and challenged anyone to give proof of it. I do not know anything about the truth or otherwise of the story but I do know that the tune Eight Men of Moidart has been known by that name since the eighteenth century. It appears under that title in the Museum, Vol. III, song no. 376, as the air to Burns's song "Sic a wife as Willie had."

It is evident that the vocal melody has been adapted from a reel known as Blue Breiks, which is considerably older than 1790, the year that volume III of the Museum was published. Bremner has it in his collection.

Niel Gow altered the name of the tune to Link him Dodie and published it in his first collection as a strathspey.

There is a tune in the Skene Mss called Blue Breiks which Dauney transliterated from the Eight Men of Moidart alias Blue Breiks. The Rev. Charles MacDonald does not say the tune wasnew but he implies that the name was altered.

John Kirkwood

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LETTER TO THE EDITOR FROM RODERICK MACLEOD:

3651 Granville St., Vancouver 9, B.C. Feb. 10. 1967

Dear Sir: I am enclosing here a report I have written on the passing of an old friend Kenneth MacLeod who was a familiar sight at games and the B.C. Piper' Meet in the earlier days, as he always wore the "Clan MacLeod" dress tartan. This is a bright yellow, - but I speak of it with pride as "our gold and black" tartan.

Kenneth was well known to many old timers, and you may get other reports, but I would like it if you could find space for this one.

I hope you may have a good attendance at the Annual Banquet, and a good time, but I fear I am not physically fit to be there.

Wishing you and your family good health, good wealth, and the enjoyment of good weather, and well pleased with the Association treasurer's reports,

Yours fraternally,

R. Macleod

PASSING OF KENNETH MACLEOD - WELL KNOWN PIPER AND ADJUDICATOR.

News of the passing of piper Kenneth MacLeod at the age of 80 years, in Burnaby hospital, from a heart attack, on January 29th, came as a great shock to members of the B.C. Pipers' Association, and his other friends.

He was for a long time a member of the Association, and was one of those who helped to keep it going when times were bad. At the time of his death he was a Life Member.

I write this, and feel that I should start with an apology, as he was a player of "Ceol Mor", and many of the piobaireachd players in the association may have been closer to him than I have been; but, while I was not an able exponent of "Ceol Mor", I was an able listener to it, so I know you will take this kindly, as I am sharing with you all your deep regret at his passing.

For many years I visited his home regularly and was graciously received by himself and Mrs. MacLeod, and enjoyed listening to him as he played all classes of the music, but principally "Ceol Mor". Until a year ago he played with an extraordinary suppleness of fingers, and liked to play the odd piobaireachd and old airs.

Kenny, as he was familiarly known to us all, was born in Tolsta, Isle of Lewis, Scotland, and came to Canada in 1907. After four years in Winnipeg, he came to Vancouver, and for about thirty-five years, was in the Canadian Custom and Excise Service.

In Winnipeg he was a pupil of Pipe Major Lachlan Coley, and in Vancouver got tuition from that great all-round player Pipe Major Donald MacIver, and also received tuition from D.C. Mathers, an early day "Ceol Mor" champion.

Since his retirement twenty-one years ago, Kenny taught piobaireachd occasionally, but more often "helped" those who were interested in the classical music of the pipes.

He was proud of a gold medal he won as first prize in a piobaireachd competition, where a score of well-known players of that day forty years ago took part. He also won numerous other prizes during the years he was competing.

Soon after coming to Vancouver he became a member of the Clan MacLean Pipe Band, and for a time was a member of the Seaforth Highlanders Pipe Band.

During the first visit of Chief Flora MacLeod of MacLeod to Vancouver, he was her official piper, and was present at all the functions she attended while in the city. He was also piper to the newly organised Clan MacLeod Society of B.C. at that time.

Clad in the Highland garb of the Clan MacLeod dress tartan, which he loved, he was a noticeably colourful figure, and often officiated as judge of piping at the St. Andrews and Caledonian Society games in Vancouver, as well as at games in other B.C. cities.

Of a genial disposition he was a general favourite with his fellow pipers and the public. The piping world here is the poorer of his passing. His funeral took place on February 1st from the Royal Oak Funeral Chapel, to Ocean View Cemetery, the Rev. D.G. Gillies officiating.

As was most fitting the music he loved sounded his "coronach" The President of the B.C. Pipers' Association, Roderick MacVicar played the ground of that fine old piobaireachd "Glengarry's Lament" at the graveside.

Kenneth leaves to mourn his passing his wife, Peggie, a married son, Iain, in Nanaimo, B.C., and a married daughter, Mrs. J. Deildal (Cathie), also 3 grand-daughters, and several nièces in Scotland.

As comrade pipers, we wish to express our deepest sympathy to his widow and family, and all other relatives in their bereavement.

- Roderick MacLeod -

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Everyone is welcome.

- 0 -

We have just received notification that the New Westminster Highland Games will be held on June 10th, 1967 at Queen's Park Stadium, New Westminster, B.C.

Further information can be obtained from the Recording Secretary, Mrs. E.D. Macdonald, 530 East Columbia Street, New Westminster, B.C.

We would ask all Games associations to send us details of their games, as these details are decided, in crder that we might publicize the same.



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PAYMENT: A deposit of \$100.00 per person with application and the balance to be paid in full by June 15th, 1967. Cheques are to be made payable to the B.C. Pipers' Charter Flight, and together with application may be sent to: Canada Permanent Trust Company, 11th & Granville Street Vancouver 9, B.C.

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