

B. C. PIPERS' NEWSLETTER



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

JUNE, 1961

No. 15.

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

Published monthly by the British Columbia Pipers' Association.

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APPOINTMENT OF HONORARY PRESIDENT:

We are pleased to announce that the Honourable Frank MacKenzie Ross, C.M.G., M.C., LL.D., former Lieutenant-Governor of the Province of British Columbia, has graciously accepted the appointment of Honorary President of the British Columbia Pipers' Association. Mr. Ross has long been a keen supporter of piping and pipe bands in British Columbia, and we are more than honoured that he has consented to act in this office, which was vacated by the recent death of P.M. Wm. Campbell, M.V.O.

It is hoped that we will have the opportunity of formally welcoming Mr. Ross into the Association in the near future.

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HIGHLAND GAMES:

We would like to remind you of the dates of the Highland Gatherings which will be held this summer. Let us hope that the Games will all enjoy fine weather, and that the standard of piping will be high throughout. If there are any inquiries about any of the Games, we would suggest that you contact the Games Secretary concerned.

We would appreciate hearing any comments or suggestions regarding the piping competitions at these games.

July 8th -	Nanaimo	Miss Annie Ross, Ste. 3, 488 Selby Street, Nanaimo, B.C.
July 22nd -	Vancouver	Mr. J.M. Thomson, 2086 Parker St., Vancouver, B.C.
July 29th -	Victoria	Mr. Ken. Munro, 290 Lascelles Cres., Victoria, B.C.
August 5th -	Seattle	Mr. Andrew Cowie, No. 314, 3015 Market Street, Seattle 7, Wash.
August 19th -	Portland-Astoria	Miss Violet Calhoun, 10044 S.E. Stanley Ave., Portland, Ore.

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WHITE HEATHER CONCERTS:

A few advance words concerning the White Heather Concerts will not do any harm. We have just heard that the White Heather Concert cast will again be headed by Kenneth McKellar, Scotland's leading tenor, who will be supported by the character actor Duncan MacRae ("Tight Little Island", "Kidnapped", "Wee Geordie", and "Tunes of Glory"), the famous accordionist Bobby MacLeod, (composer of pipe tunes such as John MacKenzie of Torridon), master of ceremonies Jimmy Warren, soprano Moira Anderson, and pianist Dennis Woolford. Those who have worked on the White Heather Shows will be sorry to hear of the recent argument Show Producer Neil Kirk had with a slipper on New York street. Neil lost the argument and ended up with a broken arm, a fractured nose and eight stitches above his right eye. He assures us, however, that he is now doing fine, and will be in tip-top shape for the opening of the tour in September.

The members of the B.C. Pipers' Association who will serve on the White Heather Committee this year will be Edmund Esson (committee chairman), Al. Baillie, Wm. McAdie, Donald Urquhart and Ian Walker, all of whom will be Association delegates, together with five delegates from the St. Andrew's & Caledonian Society, two of whom are members of our Association (Georgina MacPhail and Ian Milne).

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BI-MONTHLY COMPETITION: June 16th.

The final Bi-Monthly Competition of the season will be held on Friday, June 16th, in the Lecture Room at the Seaforth Armoury.

The following events will be held:

Novice Marches
Juvenile Jigs
Junior Marches
Amateur Old Highland Airs
Senior Amateur Strathspeys & Reels

A special attraction will be an exhibition by the Kiwanis Boys Pipe Band. This band, whose performance should be most enjoyable, was the recent winner of the Junior Band event, at the Bellingham Games.

The Bi-Monthly will commence at 8:00 p.m. sharp. Give it your support!

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BELLINGHAM HIGHLAND GAMES:

The first Annual Highland Games were conducted by the Bellingham Highland Games Association at Battersby Field, Bellingham, on Saturday, May 27th. These games were held as one of the highlights of the Bellingham Blossom Time Festival, and received excellent local support. In spite of rather gloomy weather prospects, a beautiful sunny afternoon was enjoyed by performers and spectators.

The Bellingham Highland Games Association, and especially our friends Bill and Isla Paterson, who were the sparkplugs of the entire affair, are to be commended for their excellent efforts. It is hoped that the Bellingham Games will become an annual event, with even better outside participation, and will next year become a member of the Pacific International Highland Games Association, and form part of our local games circuit.

The piping judges were George Allan, Kenneth MacDonald, Alistair MacRae and Donald Murray. Drumming was judged by Robert Black.

The prize winners were as follows:

Novice Marches:

1. James MacLean 2. Gordon Whaley 3. Stewart Morton

Juvenile Marches:

1. John MacLeod 2. Bruce Topp 3. Michael MacInnes

Juvenile Strathspeys and Reels:

1. Bruce Topp 2. John MacLeod 3. Michael MacInnes

Junior Marches:

1. Robert MacDonald 2. Larry Gillott 3. David MacKenzie

Junior Strathspeys and Reels:

1. Robert MacDonald 2. David MacKenzie 3. Larry Gillott

Amateur Marches:

1. David Wilson 2. Ian Walker 3. Rae Marie MacInnes

Amateur Strathspeys and Reels:

1. David Wilson 2. Ian Walker 3. Rae Marie MacInnes

Amateur Piobaireachd:

1. David Wilson
2. Alex Young
3. Ian Walker

Professional Marches:

1. Donald MacDonald
2. Donald MacInnes
3. Colin MacRae

Professional Strathspeys and Reels:

1. Donald MacInnes
2. Colin MacRae
3. Donald MacDonald

Professional Piobaireachd:

1. Donald MacInnes
2. Colin MacRae

Junior Bands:

1. Kiwanis Boys Pipe Band

Senior Bands:

1. Royal Canadian Engineers Pipe Bands

Trophy Winners:

Buchan's Senior Pipe Band Trophy: Royal Canadian Engineers
Puget Sound Pulp & Paper Co. Junior Pipe Band Trophy:
Kiwanis Boys Pipe Band
Jack Hood Professional Piobaireachd Trophy: Donald MacInnes
Bellingham Clan Cameron and Daughters of Scotia Professional
March, Strathspey & Reel Trophy: Donald MacInnes
Miller Novice Piping Trophy: James MacLean
Campbell Amateur Piobaireachd Trophy: David Wilson
P.M. J.T. McHardy Amateur March, Strathspey & Reel Trophy:
David Wilson
Clan Cameron Champion Senior Pipe Band Drum Section:
Royal Canadian Engineers Drum Section.

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EVENING OF PIPING: - MAY 19th

The Piping Evening held on May 19th was quite successful, although a disappointing turnout of members necessitated the cancellation of the General Meeting to be held prior to the piping session. It would seem that the fine weather and the beginning of the long weekend were a greater attraction. The fine performances, however, were not diminished by the small attendance. Numbers were given by George Allan, Donald Murray, Jim MacMillan, Ian Walker, Rod MacVicar and Robert Young.

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St. Andrews & Caledonian Society's

75th Annual

Caledonian Games

1886 — 1961

at

BROCKTON OVAL

(Stanley Park)

VANCOUVER, B.C.



SATURDAY, JULY 22nd

**HIGHLAND DANCING
and PIPING COMPETITIONS
TRACK and FIELD EVENTS**

MASSED PIPE BANDS

ENJOYMENT GALORE



SEARCHLIGHT TATTOO:

A special section will be reserved for members and friends of the Society on Saturday, July 22nd, following the Games.

Contact the Games Secretary for tickets.

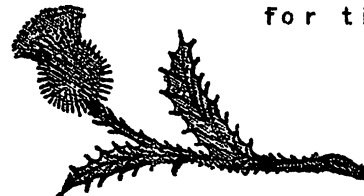
TICKET SALES:

ADVANCE SALES:

Games Secretary
J.M. Thomson
2086 Parker Street
Vancouver, B.C.

GAMES OFFICE (FROM JULY 4th)

Scottish Auditorium
12th Avenue & Fir Street
Vancouver, B.C.



THOUGHTS CONCERNING THE MACCRIMMON CAIRN AND THE CREST:

The B.C. Pipers' Association Annual Gathering holds a prominent place in the hearts of the piping fraternity in this part of the country, and I am one who spent the whole day there, in March.

There came to my mind some incidents, in a way associated with the B.C. Pipers' Association, which may be of interest to readers of the Newsletter.

The first thing I wish to deal with is a piobaireachd tune: "Mary's Praise for her Gift." This piece was played by Pipe Major Alick Johnston, one of the finest pipers in the land, when he won the famous MacCrimmon Memorial Trophy, the first time it had been up for competition, in 1933. I saw his name, and that of the tune, engraved on the "Cairn", which was on display on the day of the Meet.

Now, there might never have been such a tune were it not for an incident which took place near where I was born, in Sutherland. This incident is as follows:

The Chief of the Mackay Clan, with his followers, and some other party, arrived at the same time at the Kylesku Ferry, and quarrelled over who had the right to be the first to be rowed across. A young man, Rory Mackay, seventeen years of age, severely wounded a man who had attacked his Chief, and he had to flee for his life.

This young man got to Gairloch, the MacKenzie estate, and was sheltered by this friendly clan. They discovered that he was a first class piper, and for eighty years he was piper to the MacKenzie Chiefs.

This shows that Rory Mackay was playing pipes at ninety-seven years of age, and here am I, almost decided to stop playing, as a youth of seventy-nine. Not on your life!

The above Rory Mackay had a son John, well known to all pipers by the name "Tain Dall" (Blind John). He showed great promise, and was sent to the MacCrimmon College, at Borerrraig, but, unlike the pipers of today, the other pupils were jealous of his skill. They led him to the edge of a precipice over which he fell, but landing on his feet, he escaped injury. He died at ninety, and his son Angus succeeded him as the MacKenzie Chief's piper. (This is not the Angus who was Queen Victoria's piper from 1843 till 1855). Angus was at a Competition in Edinburgh, and those who knew his skill realized that he was likely to win, and slashed the bag of his pipes the night before the competition.

Angus, however, had a friend named Mary, said by some to be his aunt, who secured a sheep-skin for him, and this he worked on throughout the night. With a good tight bag, and pipes going well, Angus entered the competition and won.

After, he composed the tune "Moladh Mairi" (Praising Mary), and well she deserved the honour for the good gift she had given him.

Now, this Angus had a son John, and he with his wife and family came to Canada. It may well be that the reproduction of the piper figure in the B.C. Pipers' Crest is none other than this same John. If it is so, then it was his father who composed the tune that was played when the MacCrimmon Memorial Cairn was won, for the first time, in Vancouver.

- Roderick MacLeod -

- 0 -

CAMPBELL'S CamMac BAG:

Sometime between 1918 and 1920, Pipe Major D. MacTavish, of the Vancouver City Police Pipe Band asked my brother, A.J. Campbell, to make a pipe bag for him. After some persuasion, he decided to give it a try and made one out of Calfskin. The result was such an improvement over the sheepskin that the late Dan MacIvor and Rod MacLeod decided to have one made also. The Calfskin was good, pliable and tight, but it was too wet as a result of the type of oils used in the tanning and the bag had to be used for some time before it stopped wetting the reeds. As far as my memory goes, Rod MacLeod used his bag for over ten years.

When Pipe Major J.T. McHardy took over the business of the late Dan MacIvor, he foresaw the possibilities of us making a bag to compete with the best. His encouragement was so sincere in connection with the marketing, etc., that we decided to go in for bag making on a larger scale.

After inquiring around we found a leather that was light, pliable, non-greasy and airtight - result - the CamMac bag as it is known today.

It is over twenty years now since we started making the CamMac bag, and all during that period there have been no serious complaints.

Mr. Seumas MacNeill and Pipe Major John MacLellan were each presented with one of the bags. They were very enthusiastic about them

being so tight and well made. After he returned to Scotland, Mr. MacNeill sent over for more of the bags.

Pipe Major Esson of the Seaforth Highlanders has been using one for over ten years.

Care has to be taken when cutting out the bags to avoid all cuts, scratches, and warble holes, with the result that there is a lot of waste which cannot be avoided. The bags are sewn by hand after being stuck together with a strong waterproof cement. Only a shoemaker who was taught to hand sew properly is capable of making a success of the sewing. All the seams in hand made boots had to be watertight, and therefore, also, airtight. As for as my knowledge goes, a machine has not been invented to take the place of hand sewing in this type of job.

- Patrick J. Campbell -

IN PRAISE OF THE PIPES & DRUMS OF THE POWELL RIVER PIPE BAND:

No one will deny that it was a far cry from the old-style "78" phonograph records of pre-World War II days, with their crude, erratic and scratchy reproductions of pipes and drums, to the splendid quality evident in the long-playing 12" plates of such notable aggregations as The Scots Guards, The Edinburgh City Police, Muirhead & Sons, The 48th Highlanders of Canada, and Shotts & Dykehead, for example. In this writer's opinion, however, it is an even farther cry to the recent recording (by "Aragon", via the technical skills of Neil Nesbitt, Esq.) of the Pipes & Drums of Powell River, in that, first and foremost, this prize band has literally waded through a series of difficult marches, strathspeys, reels, jigs, hornpipes and retreats in a highly commendable fashion. And, secondly, let it be stated here and now that Powell River has served to raise to the dignity of a fine art what was once, in the minds of the ignorant at least, considered to be "the lousy noise of those infernal bagpipes and drums!"

There is a wealth of outstanding piping and drumming on the Powell River record. Make no mistake about this. The drum cadence, obviously led by Drum-Major George Pryde, is as intricate and clever a performance as one could wish for, and the pipers, under the direction of Pipe-Major David Westie, exhibit a beauty of tone and a cohesion that are truly remarkable. Altogether, it is a highly acceptable accomplishment and represents the fulfilment of a desire of long standing on the part of the Powell River Pipe Band personnel to produce such a treasure. But that is not all.

For the bargain-seeking lover of recordings of pipes and drums, this is the crowning glory of this record. You get this little gem for only \$1.98, as compared with \$4.00 and up for some considerably lesser achievements and as compared with a minimum of \$5.00 for similar works. How Powell River were able to do this is a great wonder.

Powell River Pipe Band, take a well-deserved bow!

- Ian MacLeod -

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CABAR FEIDH GU-BRACH:

On February 7th, 1961, in Edinburgh, The Seaforth Highlanders and The Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders amalgamated to form the Queen's Own Highlanders. Detailed arrangements were made for the amalgamation, so that the new Regiment would combine the history, traditions and dress of both old Regiments.

One of the greatest piping authorities living today, Pipe Major Donald MacLeod, of Fort George, formerly of the Seaforth Highlanders, and now of the Queen's Own Highlanders, composed a piobaireachd - a Salute to his Regiment. This piobaireachd, "Cabar Feidh Gu-Brach" (The Stag's Head Forever) was played publicly for the first time at the Regimental Dinner on July 1st, 1960. P.M. MacLeod felt that despite the threat of partial obliteration, the traditions of the Seaforth Highlanders should live forever, and he produced the Salute, not only to honour present day Seaforths, but also to honour the thousands who in the past served the Regiment so well.

This piobaireachd, which has a very intriguing melody, will likely attain great popularity amongst pipers. It is an unfortunate fact that piobaireachds are seldom composed in our times, and it is our hope that more examples of Ceol Mor will be produced by Donald MacLeod.

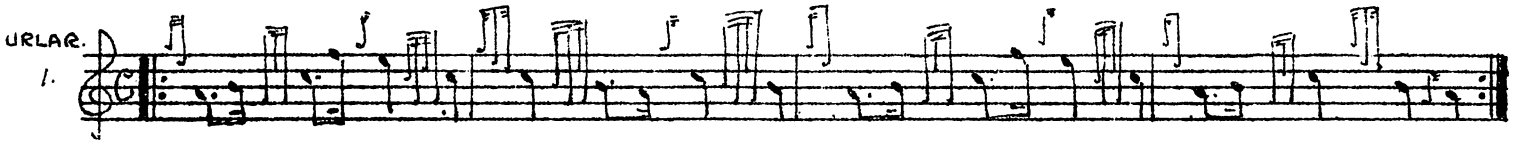
We have asked permission from P.M. MacLeod to reprint "Cabar Feidh Gu-Brach" in the Newsletter. We are extremely grateful for his kind permission. Donald MacLeod, who visited the B.C. Pipers' Association in 1955 and 1956, asked to be remembered to his many friends in and around Vancouver. He asked us to inquire whether his friends had run out of ink!


We would appreciate hearing any comments concerning the piobaireachd "Cabar Feidh Gu-Brach".


CLARABE PEIDH GU. BRACH.

WM D. MACLEOD FORT GEORGE


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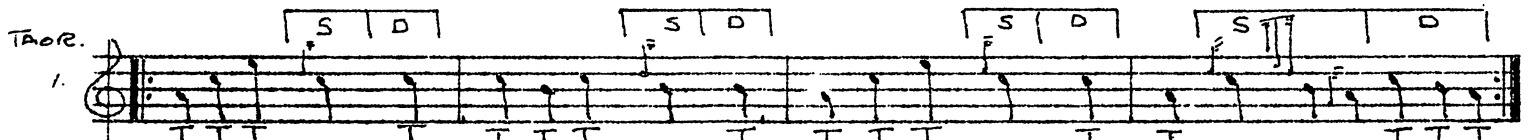
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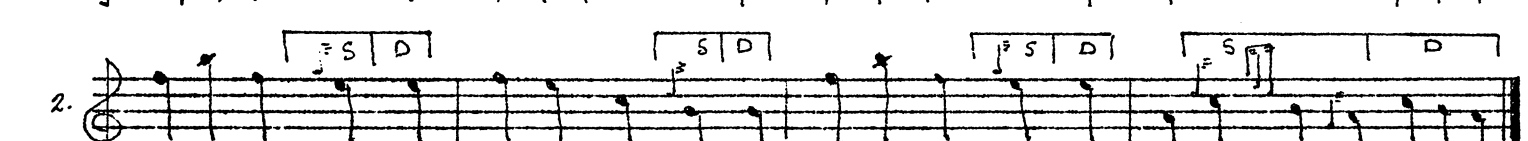
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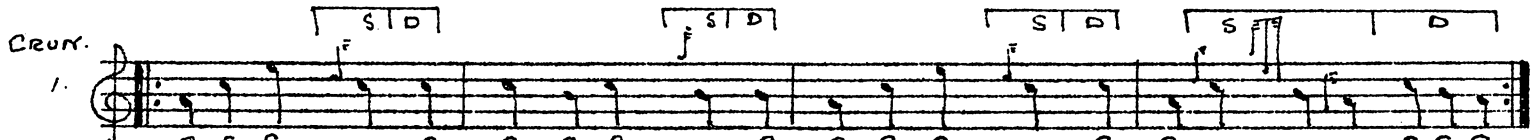
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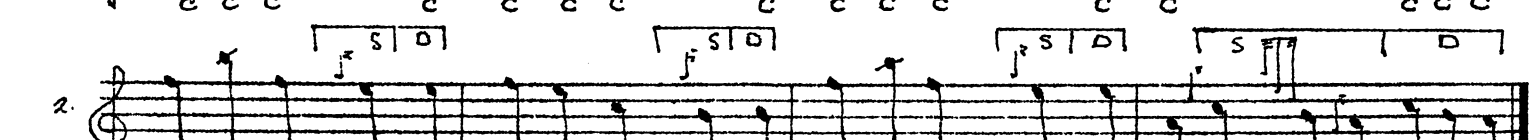
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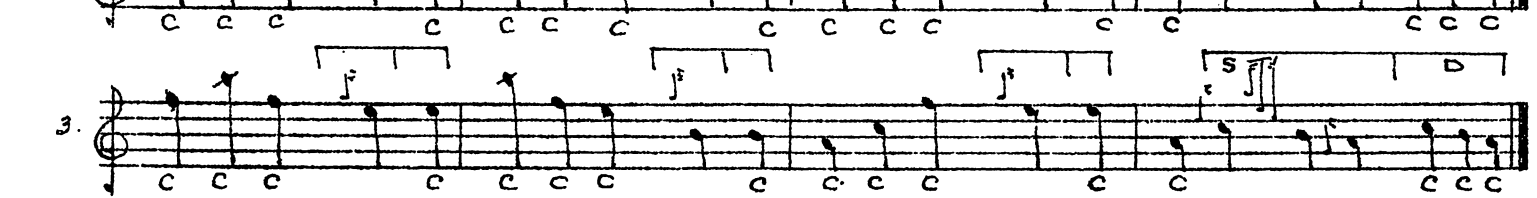
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NEWS FROM SCOTLAND:

The following amusing incident was recently described in a local newspaper.

"BAGPIPES JAM TALK BY ROYALTY Edinburgh, Scotland.

A lone bagpiper on the mist-shrouded ramparts of Edinburgh Castle Saturday drowned out a royal speech with the strains of a Scottish Lament.

Her Royal Highness the Princess Royal, 64 year old aunt of Queen Elizabeth, never gave up trying to make herself heard, but it was a losing battle.

The Princess, Colonel in Chief of the Royal Scots Regiment, was opening a regimental museum in the castle when the piper started his daily practice session - unaware of the royal presence nearby.

Skirling down from the battlement came the Skye Boat Song, blotting out all but a few of the royal words.

An army spokesman declined to disclose the piper's name. "He's a fine lad," the spokesman said. "He just didn't know about the ceremony and he's very, very sorry." "

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VANCOUVER OPTIMIST JUNIOR PIPE BAND'S NORTHERN TOUR:

The Vancouver Optimist Junior Pipe Band, together with the West Vancouver Boys & Girls Band, the Madeline Finnegan Gressel Dance Team, and the Chinese Girls' Drill Team, will be making an interesting trip from June 30th to July 8th to northern British Columbia. To commemorate the City of Vancouver's 75th Anniversary, these groups will be producing a Junior Tattoo in Williams Lake, Quesnel, Prince George and Dawson Creek.

Albert Duncan, a Director of this Association, will be in charge of the piping portion of the show. He assures us that he will have a few interesting tales to relate on his return.

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JOHN MACKAY:

We announce with regret the death of John Mackay, of Victoria, who passed away in that city on May 14th, 1961. Mr. Mackay, who was born in Edinburgh in 1890, and who was educated in Thurse, Caithness, came first to Canada in 1911, at which time he settled in Swift Current, Saskatchewan. He moved to Victoria in 1918, where he remained until his death. Mr. Mackay was employed by the Stationery Department of the Printing Bureau for twenty-five years, and retired as Superintendent of Stationery for the Province.

John Mackay's consuming lifetime interest was the study of the cultures and traditions of his native land. He was the Secretary-Treasurer of the Victoria Highland Games Association for thirteen years, and served as this organization's President for two years. He helped to organize the Seattle Games and was the first Secretary of the Pacific International Highland Games Association. He served for many years on the Executive of the Burns Club of Victoria and was one of its recent Past Presidents. He was also a member of the Vancouver Island Pipers' Society.

Our sympathies are extended to his widow, Ruth Mackay, and his daughter Mrs. T.W. Matthews, and his three sons, John, Donald and William.

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B.C. HIGHLAND DANCING ASSOCIATION COMPETITION:

The B.C. Highland Dancing Association will hold their 28th Annual Competition for dancing and piping on Saturday, July 1st, at the Stadium, University of British Columbia. Dancing will commence at 9:30 a.m., and the piping events will begin at 2:00 p.m.

The official opening will take place at 1:30 p.m., and the Guest of Honour, Brigadier Alasdair McLean of Edinburgh, will officially open the gathering. In the event of rain, the competitions will be held in the Women's Gymnasium.

Entry forms may be obtained from Don Fraser, 2470 West 19th Ave., Vancouver 8. (RE 3-5414) The awards (other than trophies) this year in piping events will be medals. It has been felt that these are more popular with the competitors than gift certificates. All piping events will be governed by the B.C. Pipers' Association Rules and Regulations.

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BROSE AND BUTTER

All pipers and many non-pipers know the rollicking tune, "Brose and Butter", but I for one was vague about its history until I ran across a reference to it in an old book of Scottish music. An anecdote concerning it is perhaps worth jotting down.

The Laird o' Cockpen, no doubt still "proud" but no longer "great", since he had lost his estates on account of adherence to the Stuart cause, was in London after the Restoration, vainly seeking an audience with the King, Charles the Second. Finally, through connivance with the organist of the Royal Chapel he was able at the close of service one Sunday to strike up "Brose and Butter", which he knew the "Merry Monarch" liked to hear. The stratagem worked. The King hastened to the organ. "You almost made me dance", said he. "I'd dance too, if only I could get my estates back", quoth the wily Cockpen. And, according to the story, got them back he did.

This would certainly date "Brose and Butter" to well before 1660. Like all tunes which have come down from the past it has that happy lilt, easily felt but hard to describe, which never loses its appeal.

As an "aside" it will be remembered that the same Charles Stuart, during the ill-fated attempt to overthrow Protector Cromwell, inspired a clan piper to compose "I Got a Kiss of the King's Hand". This great pibroch has thus been piped over a full three centuries.

James A. Berry
Secretary Treasurer
Vancouver Island Pipers' Society

If you enjoy reading the "Newsletter", why not send a subscription to a friend. Only \$1.00 per year.

MILITARY SEARCHLIGHT TATTOO, 1961: 14th - 22nd, July.

The greatest Military Tattoo ever staged, produced by "Mr. Tattoo" himself, Brigadier Alasdair Maclean, will open at Empire Stadium, Vancouver, B.C. on July 14th as part of the City's Seventy-fifty Anniversary Celebrations.

Creator of twenty Military Tattoos at Edinburgh, Copenhagen, Lisbon, New York and Bermuda, Brig. Maclean expects this time to surpass his previous efforts directing over 1,000 men in the huge 36,000 seat Empire Stadium.

A salute to the Royal Engineers, who built the first church and school in British Columbia, the theme will symbolize the growth of Vancouver, from the days when they built the first road into the City across the very site on which the Stadium now stands.

The stage is set with a wooden stockade from which the massed bands will enter to fill the huge arena with a blaze of colourful uniforms and stirring music. Searchlights and special lighting will flood the marching men and transform the stockade to the modern skyline of Vancouver today.

Pipe Bands and Military Bands from the Navy, Army and Air Force from across Canada, as well as from the Corps of Drums and Fifes of the Household Cavalry from Buckingham Palace will be moulded by Brig. Maclean into a spectacle never before seen here.

The Royal Air Force will fly their sensational gymnast team direct to Vancouver. This Team, featured last year at New York's Madison Square Gardens, were acclaimed the outstanding success of the Tattoo.

Army teams are already at work on special drill routines. Scottish dancers are rehearsing to music that will eventually be played by two hundred pipers, who are now practising also the intricate dance tunes.

Coordinating arrangements will be made by Major E. Bissonnette, the Organizer of the 1958 Tattoo, who will again assure that every minute detail from accommodation to entertainment goes without a hitch. In charge of the pipe bands will again be Pipe Major Edmund Esson, of the Seaforth Highlanders of Canada.

The first Tattoo seen in Vancouver was the highlight of the British Columbia Centennial in 1958, when 126,000 spectators paid and clamoured for an early return.

Sponsored by the Vancouver International Festival Society, it is hoped that the Tattoo will become a triennial event..

The following pipe bands will take part in the Tattoo:
The Royal Canadian Air Force Band from Winnipeg, Manitoba, The 48th Highlanders, from Toronto, Ontario, The Lorne Scots, from Brampton, Ontario, The Seaforth Highlanders of Canada, Irish Fusiliers and 7th Field Engineers Regiment from Vancouver.

As military bands, the following will participate: The Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry from Edmonton, Alberta and Victoria, B.C., The 2nd. Battalion Black Watch from Camp Gagetown, N.B., The Royal Canadian Navy Band from HMCS "Naden", Victoria, B.C., The Royal Canadian Horse Artillery from Winnipeg, Manitoba, Lord Strathcona's Horse from Calgary, Alberta, and The Royal Canadian Engineers from Chilliwack, B.C. The mounted Trumpeters of the Household Cavalry will also come from England, and there will be the Corps of Drums and Fifes of the Household Brigade of Guards comprising of picked bandsmen of the Scots, Grenadier, Welsh, Irish and Coldstream Guards.

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BI-MONTHLY COMPETITION JUNE 16th

B.C. HIGHLAND DANCING ASSOCIATION
JULY 1st

PIPE MAJOR
J. T. McHARDY

HIGHLAND EQUIPMENT
COMPLETE OUTFITS FOR:

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★ DRUMMERS

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Representative of all leading Scottish Bagpipe makers
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NOW FEATURING:

The Pipes and Drums of Powell River
(33 r.p.m.)

\$1.95

Shotts & Dykehead Caledonia Pipe Band
World Champion Pipes and Drums

\$4.25 (L.P.)
\$5.75 (Stereo)

P.M. Wm. Lamont's Dance Records (45 r.p.m.)

RXE #1. Highland Fling, Sword Dance, Seann Triubhas, Strathspey
& Reel.

RXE #2 Irish Jig, Sailor's Hornpipe, Flora MacDonald's Fancy.

Catalogues forwarded immediately on request

Phone TRinity 6-9715

231 West 23rd Avenue

Vancouver 10, B. C.