

B. C. PIPERS' NEWSLETTER



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

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B.C. PIPERS' NEWSLETTER

Published by the British Columbia Pipers' Association.

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B.C. Pipers' Newsletter

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SOLUTION TO THE PROBLEM

Last month I wrote a short note expressing my concern over the fact we are not hearing our more experienced pipers compete. I am no less concerned this month than last but I have been giving some thought to the "why" of the situation.

Several people have expressed their thoughts on the subject and the general consensus is, "Why should pipers practice so diligently and travel all over the country when the prize money is so poor?"

One interested party I was talking to mentioned that a Professional Piper in Eastern Canada, when having a good season, could earn as much as \$700.00 in one summer. This of course means that the prizes for first place must be in the \$50.00 - \$100.00 range. This is quite a contrast to some of our local games where the first place prize money is in the \$10.00 bracket.

According to this theory all we have to do is "pay the piper" and we will hear him play. Many games committees will cringe at this thought as they have enough problems already making ends meet without having this suggestion to contend with. They maintain that the Eastern Canadian Games can afford higher prize money because the attendance is better than on the West Coast. This may be so but perhaps there is a way of getting a larger attendance at our local games. This would solve many problems as well as the one I wrote about in last months Newsletter.

Why not discontinue the B.C. Highland Dancing Association's games held each year in early July? Why not discontinue the St. Andrews and Caledonian Highland Games that follow a few weeks later, and the Nanaimo Highland Games that fall somewhere inbetween? In otherwords let's discontinue all the presently established Highland Games in the lower mainland and on Vancouver Island and have one great "Highland Games Extravaganza"!

If all the presently existing Highland Games Committees plus the B.C. Pipers' Association put their heads together and formed one committee with several sub-committees we could organize and promote one of the best Highland Games in North America. How about a two day affair putting the emphasis on a family picnic theme; one Association organizing the Highland Dancing, one organizing the track and field events, another looking after the individual piping events, another the pipe band events, etc., etc.?

We could encourage all the top notch pipers, pipe bands and dancers to attend by offering large prize money. Why not \$500.00 for the first prize in the Piobaireachd, \$1000.00 for the best band and \$500.00 for the outstanding professional dancer? Sure these are large sums of money but if the Games were properly advertised over the country we might be pleasantly surprised as to the number of excellent competitors we would entice to our Extravaganza. They in turn would draw the attendance. With good competition and good attendance comes financial success.

Surely an arrangement of this sort would be far superior to our present trudging around the countryside every weekend seeing the same people compete every weekend and the same winners every weekend. What does this type of schedule prove? Nothing, except people like to see Highland Games so let's give them one to get excited about!

Robert Gunn

REAPPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

Periodically the Association receives applications for membership from individuals who have been members in the past but have discontinued paying their dues for a lengthy period of time. It is our wish to accept these people as new members. However, in future, the following regulation will be enforced:

"ANY PERSON REAPPLYING FOR MEMBERSHIP AFTER LETTING HIS PREVIOUS MEMBERSHIP LAPSE WITHOUT NOTIFYING THE SECRETARY OF THE ASSOCIATION, IN WRITING, WILL BE SUBJECT TO PAYMENT OF ALL BACK DUES (TO A MAXIMUM OF TWO YEARS) BEFORE NEW MEMBERSHIP IS GRANTED."

NEW MEMBERS

On behalf of the Association the Editors welcome the following new members:

Mr. Albert James Finlay - Active
Mr. Robert Menzies - Associate
Mr. A.D. Wilson - Active

DEADLINE FOR ARTICLES

Those interested in having articles or notices printed in the Newsletter should submit them to the editors by the 7th of the month in which they would like them to appear.

SELKIRK HIGHLAND GATHERING

Once again, under the sponsorship of the Selkirk Fair Board, the Selkirk Kiwanis Highland Dancing and Piping Association are arranging a "Gathering" for July 13, 1969, Selkirk, Manitoba.

This "Gathering" is being held the day following the Mid-Canada Highland Dancing Championship in Winnipeg.

Over \$3,000.00 in prize money will be awarded including \$500.00 First Place Prize Money for the Class A Band Competition.

For further information please contact John R. Burns, Chairman of the Selkirk Highland Gathering, Box 233, Selkirk, Manitoba.

THE BURNABY LADIES PIPE BAND

The Burnaby Ladies Pipe Band will be holding their Second Annual June Dance on Saturday, June 21st, 1969 at the Royal Canadian Legion #83 - 5289 Grimmer Avenue, near Royal Oak and Kingsway.

Dancing 9 - 1. Bar Service available.

Tickets may be obtained by phoning Mr. Scott at 433-9792.

BI-MONTHLY COMPETITION

The May Bi-monthly Competition was held in the Seaforth Armoury May 23, 1969. The evening's events were Novice Strathspey & Reel and Junior Marches. Judging for the competition was Mr. Alex Young.

The results are as follows:

Novice Strathspey & Reel -

- 1st - Linda Flynn
- 2nd - John MacKay
- 3rd - Allan MacDougall
- 4th - Robyn Palmer
- 5th - Glen Esdale
- 6th - David Nicholson

Junior Marches

- 1st - Judy Taylor
- 2nd - Allan Skalazub
- 3rd - Tim Noot

Department

- Novice - Francis Kerr
- Junior - Margaret Swanson

COEUR D'ALENE HIGHLAND GAMES

The Coeur d'Alene Highland Games and Tattoo for 1969 will be held July 26, 1969. It will be held in the Muncipal Park commencing at 8:30 A.M.

Prizes - Open Piobaireachd

1st - \$100.00

2nd - 50.00

3rd - 25.00

- Open March, Strathspey & Reel

1st - \$100.00

2nd - 50.00

3rd - 25.00

Amateur Piobaireachd winner will receive the Lt. Col. John McEwing Silver Trophy. This trophy is won outright each year.

Band Competition and Drum Major Competition will be held in the evening.

Prizes - Class I

1st - \$150.00

2nd - 100.00

3rd - 75.00

Class II

1st - \$100.00

2nd - 75.00

3rd - 50.00

Drum Major Competition Winner - \$25.00

All Bands will receive appearance money of \$25.00.

Lt. John MacLellan from Edinburgh Castle will be the sole adjudicator for the day and will assign the bands to their respective class categories. Note: The system of band classification has no relationship to the "Grade System" used at most summer games.

REGULATIONS RE COEUR D'ALENE GAMES

Professional Events - Piping

March, Strathspey & Reel

Each Competitor will be required to submit two separate lots, in sets, of March-Strathspey-Reel, one of which he will be required to play. These sets must be reasonably equal in quality.

Piobaireachd

Each competitor will present the name of two Piobaireachds, one of which he will be required to play. At least one (or both) is to be selected from the following list prepared by Lt. John MacLellan.

These also must be reasonably equal in quality.

1. The Battle of Auldearn (No. 2 Setting)
2. The Desparate Battle of the Birds
3. Glengarry's March
4. The Prince's Salute
5. The Gathering of Clan Chattan
6. The Earl of Seaforth's Salute
7. The Glen is Mine
8. The Lament for the Children

THE SPOKANE CENTRE FOR BAGPIPE STUDIES

The Spokane Center for Bagpipe Studies will be held at the Junior College, Coeur d'Alene, Idaho from July 14th through to July 25th, 1969 under the directorship of Pipe Major Lieut. John MacLellan, Edinburgh Castle.

Arrangements have been made to have college dormitories available at a cost of \$11.00 per week, per student. Two students per room. Food is available at several excellent nearby restaurants.

Contact Lieut. MacLellan, 16 Ramsay Gardens, Edinburgh, or Lieut. Col. John McEwing, W. 3309 Dalke Avenue, Spokane, Washington for further details. The Highland Games and Tattoo held at Coeur D'Alene will be held the day following the school closing.

SUMMER GAMES SCHEDULE

- | | | |
|-----------------------------------|---|----------------|
| B.C. Highland Dancing Association | - | July 5, 1969 |
| Nanaimo Highland Games | - | July 12, 1969 |
| Portland Highland Games | - | July 19, 1969 |
| Victoria Highland Games | - | July 26, 1969 |
| Coeur d'Alene Highland Games | - | July 26, 1969 |
| Seattle Highland Games | - | August 2, 1969 |
| St. Andrews & Caledonian | - | August 9, 1969 |
| Selkirk Highland Gathering | - | July 13, 1969 |

PIPER OF THE MONTH

The second in this series of the "Piper of the Month" is probably the most well known of piping instructors in this area, Pipe Major Malcolm Nicholson. He has instructed hundreds of pipers and many bands in the lower mainland and many pipers look on Mr. Nicholson as "The Father of Piping".

Five generations ago, the ancestors of Pipe Major Malcolm Nicholson left Portree, Isle of Skye and landed in Belfast, Prince Edward Island where his people resided until 1902.

He was born in Pleasant Valley, P.E.I. and came to Vancouver at the age of eleven months. At the age of sixteen he mastered his first tune on the chanter without an instructor as teachers were not available in the district where he was living. With his love of the pipes, great determination and with the support of his Gaelic Speaking Parents he progressed rapidly.

In 1921 he joined his first band, the New Westminster Pipe Band which boasted an M.P. member - Tom Reid who later became Senator, and later played with various bands, Clan McLean, The Seaforth Highlanders and the Vancouver Police Band.

A former school teacher, he joined the Vancouver Police Department in 1929 and in 1945 he was appointed Pipe Major of the Band, a post he held until his retirement in 1961. While in the Police he travelled with the band to Mexico City and Hawaii and played in the gigantic parade with units from all over North America celebrating the opening of the Golden Gate Bridge in San Francisco. The band was very active at that time in competition and won the Stewart Trophy on numerous occasions.

During these years he spent his spare time in training young pipers and in 1938 formed his first Boys' Band - The Templeton Junior High School Pipe Band, as part of the school curriculum.

In 1956 he formed the Vancouver Optimist Junior Pipe Band, now known as the White Spot Junior Pipe Band, which wears the Nicholson Tartan in his honour. In 1958 the Vancouver Kiwanis Boys' Pipe Band was formed. The Boys have won the Pacific International Junior Pipe Band Championship for the past 10 years, as well as winning the North American Junior Pipe Band Championship in 1967 in Maxville, Ontario and the Dominion Championship in the Halifax Centennial Games the same year.

In 1964 he organized the Highland Laddies Pipe Band for very young pipers. As well as winning firsts in band competitions they have been runners-up in innumerable contests in the Northwest.

Mr. Nicholson has had an active interest in the Vancouver Ladies Pipe Band for 29 years, from the time his daughter Kathleen, joined as a piper at the age of 11 years. His daughter Jessie also played in the band many times and his daughter Norma played in the band many years before becoming Pipe Major, a position she held for eight years.

Also organized in 1967 and under his direction are the Army, Navy and Air Force Veterans Pipe Band and the Burnaby Ladies Pipe Band.

One of the highlights of his piping career was having the honour of taking the Vancouver Kiwanis Boys' Pipe Band to Scotland in 1962, to compete in the Pipe Band Competitions. In these the band was highly rewarded, having won a first, two seconds and two third places winning second place in the Edinburgh Scottish Championships. In 1964 he took the Vancouver Ladies' Pipe Band to Scotland and the Ladies, besides having some of the members performing as dancers at the Edinburgh Tattoo, won the European Championship in their grade as well as many other prizes.

He had the honour of studying Piobaireachd under Pipe Majors Donald McIver, Archie McIndewar, William Barrie, Donald MacLeod and Robert U. Brown.

He was one of the first members of the B.C. Pipers' Association in the days when finances were very scarce and all members had to contribute to getting the organization under way. His job was designing a letterhead for the new association which was used until the funds allowed for the professional job which now graces our stationery.

Mr. Nicholson is a Life Member of the B.C. Pipers' Association and we wish him continued success.

ROAD SWEEPER SAYS HE'S CHIEF OF MACDONALDS

Hugh Davidson, Canadian Press Correspondent, reports from Glasgow, Scotland, of a retired roadsweeper who claims to be the chief of the MacDonalds of Glencoe, one of Scotland's most historic clans. The roadsweeper is to have his claim investigated by the Clan Donald Society. Donald MacDonald, 83 years old and a former roadworker in Argyll in the West Highlands, said in a recent interview he is a direct descendent of Maclan, the clan chieftain who died in the massacre of the MacDonalds by the Campbells in 1692 in the famed battle of Glencoe. The chieftainship has been vacant since 1840. Donald J. MacDonald, president of the Clan Donald Society, says it's possible the retired sweeper's claim is valid, and he plans to visit the elderly man in the near future. The claimant has been crofting - running a small farm - since he stopped road work.

MacDonald says he has gone every year to lonely Glencoe to place a wreath on the grave of the MacDonalds on February 13th, anniversary of the massacre, in a tradition begun fifty years ago by his father.

His wreath bore the inscription: "From Chief Donald MacDonald". And it has always puzzled members of the Clan Donald Society, because MacDonald always went to the memorial in the early hours and his wreath was always in place when members of the society turned up for their own commemoration service.

"I have no time for the society at all." MacDonald said in his

cottage at Glen Orchy, on the banks of the river Orchy. "If they knew anything about the MacDonalDs, they would know that I am their rightful chief.

My family have placed a wreath at the memorial for more than 50 years, but the society only started to hold its service a few years ago. And in any case many of the members are not true MacDonalDs."

The decision of MacDonalD's claim will likely reside with the Lyon Court - the Scottish equivalent of England's College of Arms.

If his claim is upheld, he may yet lead the tributes of the worldwide MacDonalD clan at the Glencoe memorial on a future February 13th.

The above article is reprinted from the North American Piper and Dancer Bulletin.

MAY GENERAL MEETING

The social format of the May General Meeting was most successful. After a short business meeting the Bi-monthly winners, Angus MacPherson and Sandy Marshall each played a selection of tunes. A program of piping and dancing by the Burnaby Ladies Pipe Band followed.

An excellent performance by our special guest Pipe Major Archie Cairns was the highlight of the evening. Mr. Cairns also gave a short talk which is printed in this issue. Mr. Albert Duncan, our past president, then presented Mr. Cairns with an Honourary Membership to our Association and a desk pen and pencil set as a token of our appreciation for Mr. Cairn's valuable contribution to piping in our area.

At the conclusion of the program refreshments were served and the impromptu piping took place.

The Board of Directors hope to carry on this type of meeting and look forward to the members' support.

MR. CAIRN'S ADDRESS TO THE GENERAL MEETING

"What I'd like to talk about just for a few minutes is a topic that has long bothered me and I think your organization is one which could do a great deal to get around this problem. While I'm here on the West Coast I hear about West Coast piping and when I'm back east I hear about piping back east. The people back east are turning their nose up at the people in the west and the people in the west are turning their nose up at the people in the east and so on. I think it's a very sad situation that such should be the case.

With the world getting smaller and smaller all the time, with jet travel and what have you, I would like to offer a suggestion and perhaps your association can start the ball rolling. This is with regard to having a North American, and I mean the whole continent, a North American Pipers and Pipe Band Association. Presently you seem to have so many things going on. You have your Pacific International contest here and the winners of the bands are very important here. I suppose that in the mid-west they have the mid-west championships; on the east coast of the States they have the American Pipe Band Association; the American Pipe Band championships, and the U.S. Championships. In Maxville, Ontario they have what they call the North American Championships. We're all at odds.

I think we could do a great deal here if we were to divide the North American continent into four sections. One on the east coast, a central area, a mid-western area and the western area. We could have representatives from each area to help organize annually what you might call the Grey Cup of Piping or the Stanley Cup of Piping. Semi final competitions where the mid-west and western sectors competed to represent the west and the central and eastern sectors compete to represent the east with a final championship representative of a complete North American championship. The band or competitor winning this particular prize will be sponsored by the association as a whole and would be sent to represent North America at the world championship the following year. This would be a true representation of North America and piping in North America.

There are just as good pipers, just as good pipe bands in North America as a great number who compete in Scotland. We live in our little world which was fine perhaps forty years ago when we used to read about what happened in another section of the country but there is no need for this now. I think we could do a great deal to standardize knowledge and standardize playing. Have judges from the west go east to judge and vice versa. Run this thing with all of the associations instead of having 12 or 14 associations all over the North American continent. Band them all together into one representative of the piping world. Let's face it, other organizations can do this. I am by no means advocating a union, I don't mean that, what I mean is to try to draw pipers together and piping together, to do away with this feeling of one in the east is better than the one in the midwest, the one in the midwest is better than the one in the west, let's standardize the whole thing.

The cost of the representation in Scotland could be borne as I say by all of the associations. You could have a national council representing all sectors and a national executive. Thoughts might be given to perhaps having a solo competitor who won the North American championship being sent to compete and represent North America at the Northern Meeting. I feel that we have a wealth of piping in this country. It's not being brought to the fore, perhaps because for a long time the attitude was the best pipers are from Scotland. New Zealand had since proved this is not quite true. They have had a gold medalist and I think we should be able to get our scope in for Canada and the United States.

Piping on the West Coast, I have heard a great deal about and I

must say I am tremendously impressed with the amount of piping that there is to hear, the enthusiasm there is for piping, and the number of pipers there are. I would like to hear a great deal more of the pipers who are on the West Coast, I haven't heard anywhere near as much as I would like to have heard but I'm just overwhelmed with the enthusiasm. For the work that has gone on by the organizers I extend my heartfelt congratulations for what I feel is a job being very well done. I hope you think about what I've said and I thank you for inviting me."

JUDGES CLASSES

At the February Board of Directors meeting it was decided to institute a series of judging lessons under the direction of P.M. Archie Cairns. The classes commenced on March 8th, 1969. There were six lessons held every two weeks through March, April and May. The course was as follows:

- Lesson I - history of piping and pipes
- Lesson II - theory of pipe music
- Lesson III - the pipes themselves; proper tuning, tone and care
- Lesson IV - Little and Middle music
- Lesson V - Ceol Mor - classification, construction and types
- Lesson VI - review - discussion of judging techniques

Unfortunately these classes were not as well attended as was first anticipated. However those who made the effort to attend benefited greatly by being able to listen to the wealth of knowledge this man had to offer.

An examination was held on June 15th, 1969 which is the B.C. Pipers' Association's first step in the direction of standardizing the qualifications necessary to judge the playing of the Great Highland Bagpipe.

Congratulations to Terry & Betty McHardy married on Saturday June 7th, 1969. Terry is one of our better known pipers. Terry played with the Seaforth Cadets and at present plays with the Seaforth Highlanders. Betty is a member of the B.C. Highland Lassies. We extend to them our best wishes.

The following are the results of the New Westminster Highland Games held at Queens Park Stadium June 14, 1969:

Piping Competition

Novice Marches

1st - Allan MacDougall
2nd - Glen E. Lale
3rd - Robyn Palmer
4th - Pat Dawson

The Glamis Camp Trophy -
Allan MacDougall

Juvenile Marches

1st - Hazel Ramsay
2nd - Terry Lee
3rd - Angus MacPherson

Juvenile Strathspey & Reel

1st - Angus MacPherson
2nd - Jack Lee
3rd - Hazel Ramsay

The Camilo Mather Trophy -
Hazel Ramsay & Angus MacPherson

Junior Piobaireachd

1st - Robert Menzies
2nd - Margaret Swanson
3rd - Allan Skalazub

Junior Marches

1st - Tim Noot
2nd - Drew Noot
3rd - Robert Menzies

Junior Strathspey & Reel

1st - Judy Taylor
2nd - Drew Noot
3rd - Margaret Swanson

The Alex Murray Trophy -
Robert Menzies

Amateur Piobaireachd

1st - Bill MacAulay
2nd - Bernie Rudsit
3rd - Colin Abel

Amateur Marches

1st - Sandy Marshall
2nd - Bill MacAulay
3rd - Colin Abel

Amateur Strathspey & Reel

1st - Bill MacAulay
2nd - Dave Anderson
3rd - Heather Abel

Amateur Jigs

1st - Heather Abel
2nd - Sandy Marshall
3rd - Bill MacAulay

The Barry Trophy -
Bill MacAulay

Professional Piobaireachd

1st - Norma Thompson
2nd - Bruce Topp
3rd - James Troy

Professional Marches

1st - Norma Thompson
2nd - John MacLeod
3rd - Alex Young

Professional Strathspey & Reel

1st - Bruce Topp
2nd - James Troy
3rd - Norma Thompson

Professional Jigs

1st - James Troy
2nd - John A. MacLeod
3rd - Bruce Topp

The Donald Stewart Ross Trophy -
Norma Thompson

Individual Drumming

1st - Katie Forsyth
2nd - Gordon McCartney
3rd - Shannon McGranaghan

Drum Corps Competition

1st - Vancouver Ladies Pipe Band "A"
2nd - Vancouver Ladies Pipe Band "B"
3rd - Seattle Boys Pipe Band

Pipe Band Trophies

Class C

1st - Kiwanis Boys Pipe Band
2nd - Burnaby Ladies Pipe Band

The Sons of Scotland District 16
Trophy - Kiwanis Boys Pipe Band

Drumming - Class C

The Johnston Trophy -
Burnaby Ladies Pipe Band

Class D

1st - M.S.A. Br. #15 Royal Canadian Legion
2nd - Burnaby Br. #83 Royal Canadian Legion

The Bollman Roofing and Sheet Metal Trophy -
M.S.A. Br. #15 Royal Canadian Legion

Class B

1st - Vancouver Ladies Pipe Band
2nd - Seaforth Cadets of Canada

The McCrae Trophy -
Vancouver Ladies Pipe Band

ENTRY FORM DEADLINES

At last it's happened! On Saturday, June 14th, the New Westminster Highland Games decided to enforce their entry closing date and they refused to allow pipers to enter on the field. Three cheers!

We pipers are a strange breed. We complain about the way the competitions are run, we complain about the prizes and prize money and yet we cannot do a simple thing like entering a competition on time. Pipers should realize that a closing date serves a purpose in helping the Games Committee and Secretary to run efficient games.

For years dancers have had to comply with similiar regulations or they didn't compete and yet the pipers have been able to amble up to the Secretary's tent at their leisure. This practice has ended. All pipers please take note. Enter competitions before the closing date or all that practising will go for naught.

We sincerely hope that all Games Committees will continue to enforce this rule.

William Elder

Gas at the Pass

100

100

100