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ATTENTION HIGHLAND GAMES ORGANIZERS: PLEASE SEND GAMES RESULTS TO PETER FOR PUBLICATION IN THE NEWSLETTER.

ALL MONIES ARE TO BE PAID TO THE TREASURER NEIL PALMER, 4694 WEST 7TH AVENUE, VANCOUVER, B.C., V6R 1X5

A Message from Aberdeen

If I may begin these few lines by expressing how honoured I was to be selected to act as one of the judges at your annual Competition this year. It is difficult for me to find words to express how much I enjoyed my short visit, as the welcome and the kindness shown to me will always be remembered.

Over the two days of piping I heard I can only say that both "Male and Female" pipers are to be congratulated on the very high standard of playing, overall it equals that of any I have ever heard. From my previous visit approximately 7 years ago it was noticeable that the standard has been maintained and I sincerely hope that the high quality of playing continues to progress.

I am fully aware of the hard work that goes into Solo playing but one must not forget what has to be done to achieve a good quality band. I am not singling any one specifically but I thought I would mention how impressed I was with some of what I heard.

At this point I make one slight criticism which refers to the Solo players. I thought the finer tuning of the instrument was in some cases not as good as to compliment the excellent playing technique.

Finally I congratulate the Society and its committee on the professional and organized fashion in which the two day event was controlled. It is without doubt a well organised association so I will end by wishing the committee and all members the very best for the future.

Yours aye,
Iain Morrison

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

For most of us, this particular time of year finds us smack in the middle of the summer games, but for the B.C. Pipers' Association the season is just starting. Our Annual General Meeting was held two months ago and a new Board of Directors put in office. But first a look at last year.

The season was brought to a climax with our 52nd Annual Gathering. Held for the third year running in Vancouver Technical School, the Gathering was once again an undisputed piping success if not a financial one. Surrounding the Indoor Meet we had the pleasure of hearing the legendary DONALD MacPHERSON in one of two recitals presented by the Association. Donald's services had been sought after by the B.C. Pipers' for many years and we were extremely fortunate that he could attend this year. We were also very fortunate to have P/M IAIN MORRISON back for his second "tour of duty" to Vancouver.

Shortly preceding the Gathering the monthly knock-out competitions came to a fitting close with our annual dinner. The second year of the dinner, after a few years' rest, proved to be another piping success and demonstrated that it will be around for a few years to come. The knock-outs themselves filled the social

calendar during the winter. The new format of "lighter" tunes during the first round and a warm-up contest proved to be both entertaining to the audience and less of a strain to the competitors.

As usual the mini-gatherings enjoyed another good season with high entries in each class, especially chanter and novice. As has been the practice in recent years, a seminar was held during the prize-giving and this year we were treated to a session on reeds presented by P/H Jim Troy from Victoria.

So what does 1984-85 have in store for us? As most of you already know, the Scottish Auditorium appears to have been sold and an offer made on a building site in Vancouver. This will mean acquiring temporary locations for the knock-outs and mini-gatherings, but more importantly, bring us closer to a dream many of us have had for years - our own building. For this dream to come to fruition a lot of work will be required from our members as well as those from the other Scottish Societies that comprise the United Scottish Auditorium.

As far as the knock-outs are concerned a few changes are being considered. The basic piping format will remain the same but depending on the availability of facilities, the knock-out may be changing to the second Saturday of each month (more details in the next newsletter). The "impromptu" programme will be better organized and more emphasis will be given to a ceilidh atmosphere after the formal part of the evening.

As with the knock-outs, the mini-gatherings are also looking for a new location. It is hoped to secure a school in Burnaby for the new venue. A facility like this would alleviate the problem of a shortage of platforms and tuning rooms experienced at the auditorium allowing three or four classes to be run simultaneously. This will make the mini-gatherings a much shorter event. The possibility of drumming events is also being considered.

This year we will be compiling a judges' list that will be forwarded to the Highland Games Associations. In conjunction with this, a judges seminar will be held in late fall and early spring if necessary. It has been suggested that attendance be compulsory at these seminars to be eligible for the judges' list. A programme for apprentice judges is being set up and will be in practice for the mini-gatherings.

After a year's study, our final scoring sheet is in the process of completion and should be ready shortly.

When all of the above is completed we hope to have a package or kit which will be forwarded to the organizers of all our local contests. This kit would include our revised constitution, updated rules (also available to members), score sheets, judges instructions, judges' list and some helpful hints on running a piping competition.

What else? Well, there are plans for an even bigger and better annual gathering next year. The annual dinner doubled in size from last year to this year and we hope to see that trend continue. We already have good relations with Scotland through the judges we invite each year and the professional aggregate winner travelling there for the past few years. We are doing quite well with our friends in Eastern Canada too with the knock-out winner travelling there to compete and his eastern counterpart attending our Indoor Meet. Maybe

it's about time we looked a bit closer to home, like Vancouver Island. The Vancouver Island Pipers' Club run monthly get togethers and would appreciate some more representation from Vancouver.

A piping school or a series of mini schools? A United Scottish Highland Games? One Association for piping and pipe bands? Who knows, who would have thought we finally have plans for our own hall?

Probably the single most important service the B.C. Pipers' provides is the publication of the newsletter. We have been most fortunate to have had the services of Jean Bokenfohr performing this task on our behalf over the past few years. Unfortunately, Jean has advised us that she will be unable to continue beyond this issue. On behalf of the Association I'd like to thank Jean and her family for a job well done.

Having said that, anyone interested in working on or helping with the newsletter please call me at 939-9614.

In closing, it promises to be an exciting year and it will be with participation from everyone.

Angus MacPherson

THE ANNUAL DINNER

Just over 200 people enjoyed a semi-formal evening of good food, bon camaraderie, and fine piping. There was time for a drink and the telling of lies before sitting down at the Gizeh Shrine Temple in Burnaby to a hot roast beef dinner catered by Woodwards.

The dinner was given a formal air with a head table consisting of Mr. and Mrs. MacNeil, Mr. and Mrs. Nicholson, Mr. and Mrs. Lamont, Mr. and Mrs. Ross, and Mr. and Mrs. Fraser, piped in by James Watt. Master of Ceremonies, Duncan Fraser, kept the evening moving, and the after dinner speeches were well said and, mercifully, short. Life member Mr. Nicholson said a few words, and life member Mr. Lamont presented a life membership in the Association to Mr. Donald Ross, who has given so much of his time, and his wife's, and their organizational skills to our Association and to many other organizations presenting piping events. Who can't remember Donald coming after him or her to say "you're next"?

Donald was lured to the head table by agreeing to a request to say grace. The presentation was to be a surprise, and it was. Donald, not true to form, had some difficulty finding words in his acceptance speech, but his modesty and humility came through.

The final of the knock-out competition went flawlessly, with all competitors playing well in front of Judges Aumonier, Watt and Wilson. Afterwards there was great debating on the Judges' decision, both for and against, so it was a good competition; one difficult to adjudicate. The erstwhile Judges of the evening decided Jack Lee should take the plane trip back East to compete, with Steve Geddes second, and Rob Menzies third.

The evening was rounded out with dancing to the quiet music of John McGregor and his Jerry Macs. When was the last time you were at a

dance and could sit at the table closest to the band and be able to carry on a conversation with the person sitting across the table? Jack Lee played Gay Gordons and a Scottish Schottische and everyone had a pleasant evening of dancing and visiting.

Ted Mark

THE JUDGE'S RECITALS

In conjunction with this years annual gathering the members of the B.C. Pipers' Association were treated to recitals given by two of the great players of our time.

Donald MacPherson gave a memorable performance on the Thursday night before the gathering. Upon hearing Donald play one can truly admire and respect the greatness of this man's piping. His bagpipe was lovely. The chanter was well balanced and lively. The pitch was sweet. The drones, always steady, were well suited to the chanter. The overall blend was everything one could ask for in a well tuned instrument. Donald gave a wide selection of tunes. His first set of march, strathspey and reels was highlighted by the reel Mrs. MacPherson of Inveran. Donald's recital was broken into two halves and he finished up the night with a fine rendition of The Lament for Donald Dughal MacKay. The audience was treated to a night of splendid music and terrific execution by a truly great piper and a fine gentleman.

Only five nights later, on the Tuesday following the gathering, the members of our Association were treated to another fine recital. Iain Morrison was here on his second trip to Canada's West Coast. In 1977, Pipe Major Iain Morrison gave a performance that no one could forget. So those who awaited this year's recital by Iain had high expectations of this wonderful musician. As expected Iain gave an outstanding show. Iain's bagpipe was sweet and melodic. The instrument was well balanced and very refined. Pipe Major Morrison's easy flowing style was full of life and appeared to be effortless. The first half of the recital was highlighted by a lovely interpretation of the Desperate Battle of the Birds. The second half of the recital was full of good tunes. The reel Broadford Bay was extremely well played. Iain finished off in a flurry with an exciting selection of jigs.

The B.C. Pipers' Association extends our warmest thanks to Donald MacPherson and Pipe Major Iain Morrison. These gentlemen have left us with many warm memories. The music they provided was terrific. We hope they take home as good an impression of us as we have of them.

Peter Aumonier

B.C. PIPERS' 52ND GATHERING: excerpt from Saskatchewan Newsletter

Thursday evening about two hundred people gathered in Vancouver's Scottish Auditorium to hear a recital by Donald MacPherson. Mr. MacPherson demonstrated his mastery of all aspects of the music - marches, strathspeys and reels flowed out like water, and his bagpipe stood solid as a rock throughout. The apex of the evening was a performance of "Lament For Donald Douglas MacKay" that captivated the audience with its depth of expression and technical excellence.

Friday saw the start of the solo events, and the morning and afternoon were taken up with the amateur events. I spent the day wandering from one platform to another listening to the best of British Columbia's amateur players, and I heard some fine playing in many classes. The most impressive amateur I heard turned out to be the weekend's big amateur winner - young Bruce Woodley of the Richmond Pipe Band. Bruce cracked off a performance of "In Praise of Morag" that showed a great deal of maturity and poise. Even losing his blowpipe during the crunluath a mach didn't seem to bother him; he calmly caught it with nary a choke or mistake and went on to win this event.

The professional piobaireachd contest got underway about 5:30 p.m., with Donald MacPherson and P/A Iain Morrison on the bench. The big discussion this year was over the use of a five minute tuning limit, marked out by a four minute amber light and a one minute red light. This light can have quite an unsettling effect on the competitor, but it certainly moves things along at a reasonable pace. The winning tune was turned in by Jack Lee, and he collected the MacCrimmon Memorial Cairn for the fifth time.

Saturday morning the march, strathspey, and reel contest began at 10:00, and there were quite a few good performances. The tuning lights didn't create the same stir in this contest, as the committee abandoned the amber light and just turned on the red to signal the fifth minute. The winner here was again Jack Lee, with a first-class rendition of his Silver Star winning set "Bonnie Ann", "Cameronian Rant", and "The Little Cascade". By the time he completed his march, the placing was never in doubt.

The afternoon jig contest saw many good tunes, but it was Steve Geddes of the City of Victoria Pipe Band that captured first prize for the second year running. Steve had a powerful bagpipe and a clean performance. The overall winner in the professional class was Jack Lee, and now he has the worrisome task of deciding how he will use his free trip to Scotland. He should all have such problems!

The mini band event on Saturday night was a splendid one, with a full house of enthusiastic spectators, and the bands were in fine form. Grade III was taken by the Richmond Pipe Band; it had a good solid sound and good execution. Grade II was won by a relative newcomer to the scene, the Sir John A. MacDonald Pipe Band. Grade I was a strong contest, with Simon Fraser University Pipe Band "A" taking first prize and the drumming award for the second year running. They were followed by the City of Victoria Pipe Band, playing the well-known "Mason's Apron" selection, and in a strong third was Triumph Street, also in good form. In fourth spot was Simon Fraser University "B" with a solid but not flawless performance, and bringing up the rear was the Edmonton Caledonian Pipe Band, which seemed to be having difficulties in a number of areas.

After the band contest all retired to the ceilidh site, where there was food, drink, and merriment until after 4:00 a.m. Neil Dickie of Edmonton and Scott MacAuley of Toronto once again entertained all with their comedy routines and nimble hands, and the 1984 show featured lots of new material. These two alone are worth the price of admission to the ceilidh.

I would like to congratulate the B.C. Pipers' Association for an excellent job of organising and running this contest. Not only were the arrangements good, but the various committee members went out of their way to greet me and extend their hospitality.

Iain MacDonald, Regina

SCOTTISH AUDITORIUM

On Thursday, May 31, 1984, a meeting of the Board of Governors for the Scottish Auditorium was held. At this meeting the Governors approved a motion to sell the present site of the Scottish Auditorium. As a result of this the Auditorium will cease to belong to the United Scottish Societies Company on August 1, 1984. The sale price was \$640,000 cash. This price was felt to be a fair one by the committee and the majority of Governors.

At the same meeting an offer to approve the purchase of a new site was passed. An offer has been submitted on a piece of land located at the northeast corner of Haddon Street and 73rd Avenue. This is located immediately north of the Airport Square complex, in the Marpole area. This site is located near the junction of several major traffic routes in the lower mainland. It is also located on a street serviced by a bus. Anyone interested in checking out this site is encouraged to drive by and have a look. The location of a new site is bound to be a difficult and controversial problem. Everyone wants the building in their own area. Realizing this, a poll of all the member societies (those owning shares in the Scottish Auditorium) was conducted. The results of this poll indicated most societies wished to remain in the Vancouver area. By locating in the Marpole area this wish can be satisfied. In addition it is possible to acquire an appropriately sized property for a lot less money.

With respect to money it should not come as too much of a surprise that a considerable amount must be raised if this project is to be successful. A fund-raising drive will be required to raise somewhere between \$300,000 and \$400,000. That sounds like a lot of money, but with the active and hardworking support of the local Scottish Societies and their individual members (that's you!) we should be able to accomplish this task.

Vancouver is the envy of many North American cities in so many aspects of Scottish culture and heritage. Why not strengthen our position with a proud new gathering place. I think we have all heard enough jokes, and made enough jokes about our present facility. The time to put up or shut up has arrived. I would welcome any comments, suggestions or threats you would care to make.

Yours sincerely,
Duncan Fraser

