

B. C. PIPERS' NEWSLETTER



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the British Columbia Pipers' Association**

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER, 1966.

No. 77.

B. C. P I P E R S' N E W S L E T T E R

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Here we are once again, with a combined November/December issue of the Newsletter. We have combined the news received during these two months into one issue, which we hope was worth the wait.

The news item which has attracted the attention of pipers across Canada is, of course, the story concerning the government's refusal to classify pipers as musicians, in the Canadian Army. This ruling has indeed caused a great deal of controversy, and we take pleasure in reprinting herewith the various approaches to this subject.

GOVERNMENT WON'T PAY PIPER - CALLS TUNE: (from the Vancouver Sun, Nov. 29, 1966)

It's enough to curdle Scottish blood, especially on the eve of St. Andrew's Day. The defence department, after considerable deliberation, has refused to class Bagpipers as musicians.

In the recent integration of armed forces trades, pipers were placed in the lowest pay category along with clerks, drivers and drill instructors. And this means \$20.00 a month less than the musicians are paid.

The department's reason, officials say, is that musicians in the armed forces know more - or should know more - about music than bagpipers. Pipers are required to play only the one instrument, albeit nine unforgettable notes. Musicians, however, must be able to play at least three instruments.

There are six full-time pipers in the armed forces compared to 900 full-time musicians.

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PIPERS INSULTED - IN THE POCKETBOOK:

Few of Vancouver's many bagpipers are surprised that the defence department does not classify pipers as musicians. But the fact that this decision was announced in Ottawa Monday means the armed forces' six full-time pipers will receive \$20.00 a month less pay than the 900 recognized musicians has many a city Scot hopping made on this St. Andrew's Day.

"It's the public reaction to the sound of the pipes that concerns us," said John T. McHardy, former Police Band piper and now president of a Scottish imports firm. "We don't care how Ottawa classes us. "We're used to the governments attitude, and it's helpful in one respect - it keeps us out of the Musician's Union. The bagpipes I import from Scotland are not even classed as musical instruments; the pipes are given a special category in the Customs Act. "But I don't think it's right to put pipers in a class lower than musicians, or to dock military pipers' pay."

James McMillan of Burnaby, who served in the Second World War as a staff piper with the Canadian Scottish Regiment, also takes a dim view of the official discrimination. "Why penalize the pipers?" he asked. "I consider myself a musician. When we were accepted for the six-month course in piping given in Edinburgh Castle, we had to be considered musicians or we wouldn't have been accepted. We have our own famous composers, and our music books are published every year. Didn't our music have people cheering in the Grey Cup parade?"

Roderick MacLeod was more outspoken in his criticism of the defence department slight, perhaps because he's 83 years old and was the first president of the B.C. Pipers' Association. "They can never claim that pipers are not musicians," he growled. "The pipers should be placed ahead of all the others, for it's the melodious music of the higher spheres. If the military pipers take offence, it's justified; I would, myself, of course.

Edmund Esson, retired pipe major of the Seaforth Highlanders, illustrated his view with this story:

"Peter Stursberg, the Canadian war correspondent, presented the first recorded sound to come out of Europe after the Allied landing in Italy during the Second World War. It was the sound of the pipes, played by men of Vancouver's Seaforth Highlanders. You could hear the sound of gunfire too, for it was during the taking of the town of Agira, and the fight was still going on. "If that's not to be called music, what is?"

W. Erskine Blackburn, president of the North Vancouver St. Andrew's and Caledonian Society and past-president of the Vancouver society, commented:

"Pipe music sounds like music, written down it looks like music, and as far as I'm personally concerned, it is the finest of music." He added, however, that he could not speak officially for the society for fear of touching off a debate with the Musicians' Union.

Though local Scots agree that Greater Vancouver is THE place for pipers in Canada, with more pipe bands than any other city in the land there were complaints from other centres as well.

"It's the bagpiper who's at the head of the troops in battle," said Edmonton's Malcolm MacGrimmon, official piper for the Clan MacLeod. "They don't send up a trumpeter."

RODERICK MACLEOD ANSWERS THE CHALLENGE:

"To the make of the piper go seven years. At the end of his seven years, one born to it, will stand at the start of knowledge."

- Neil Munro -

According to a report in the "Daily Province" of Wednesday, Nov. 30th, the Canadian Defence Department does not classify pipers as "musicians". Because of this, it was stated that the six full-time pipers connected with a Regiment will receive \$20.00 less a month, than the enlisted men who play "with" other instruments.

This demonstrates that the combining of the three Services is being done with a view to economy, and not to efficiency. It appears that there is some authoritative person in Ottawa who has learned little from history, for it is well known that on many a field of battle, victory has been won by the stimulating music of the pipes.

When troops are hard pressed, the arrival of pipers revives the spirits of the men with pipe music, and they carry the fight to victory - and there is no substitute for victory. There is only one alternative, and that is defeat. It was the above quality in the piper that secured for him the small amount of pay that today is being reduced to below that of the other instrument players.

In 1852 a Scottish regiment was being inspected by Major General Napier, and he reported to the Commander-in-Chief what he considered an irregularity - the fact that the regiment had pipers. This General received a sharp reproof from the Commander-in-Chief, who, at the time, was the Duke of Wellington: "I am surprised", said the Duke, "that an officer who has seen the gallant deeds performed by the Highland Regiments in which the pipers played so important a part should make such a report."

Due to the above, an order was issued in 1854, intimating that a Pipe-Major, and five pipers would be posted, with pay, to Scottish Regiments, and I feel sure than any unbiased person will agree that the Duke of Wellington was well qualified to preside where the value of a piper was in question.

In a letter which I received from a friend in Ottawa it was stated that Defence Minister Hellyer had said that the bagpipe was not a musical instrument. We can brush that aside and credit him with knowing better, as persons of intellect, of all races from every part of the globe know of the superiority of the bagpipe as a musical instrument, when compared in every way with other instruments.

No other music can touch the heart, and stir the emotions like the music of the pipes, be it one lone piper or a massed band of pipers that play. No instrument is so appealing. With a lively tune it can change drooping spirits to joy and laughter; and no music can express sorrow in such a simple, pathetic and dignified melodic strain, when the occasion demands.

But Oh! there's a grandeur unmatched by anything else in the world, in the contribution of the gallant piper, who, inspiring the martial ardour of his comrades, leads them to victory playing the "Charge" or other Regimental tune.

It astounds us then to learn that, no matter how keen someone may be to economise, that they should interfere with the pay of brave men who get little, at the best, and face great danger voluntarily. There is no law compelling them to take the risk; there is no rule demanding them to act; there is no amount of pay to encourage them to sacrifice their lives, as often happens. What then is it that moves these men to deeds of daring? It is the magic power of the bagpipe, so superior in itself, and its music so sublime, that can influence the very souls of men, and the majesty and power revealed in the melody can carry the emotions to the same lofty height, which is above the music of any other instrument.

If any other instrument, or its music, surpasses this, then the information has been well concealed, but it has not been by the people of Canada, for the bagpipe and its music was well received by them and satisfied their fancy for well over a century, as well as that of any other race who occupy our fair land.

- Roderick MacLeod -

SCOTLAND'S MUSICIANS ---- CALLING ALL PIPERS:

When I tuned in one evening in the middle of a news item on T.V., a reporter was interviewing a military Piper in Ottawa. The Piper was understandably indignant as he gave his opinion on the recent Defence Department's new classification of Pipers.

I wrote to the C.B.C. in Toronto, and asked if they could give me the full news report, as I had missed most of it. I received the following letter from the Defence Department, and I know all Pipers will be interested, and find comfort at least in these pleasant words of truth and recognition --- Pipers ---- "play a special and unique kind of instrument" and"to sound for the inspiration of the men of the Armed Forces" continues to be the Piper's proud duty "as it has in the past".

We know Pipers have a long, long history in Military service -- the original musicians, proudly "serving" long before the other class musicians. The first Pipers in the British Army gave their lives in service "without pay", happy to be with own country-men, when Clan chiefs were allowed to have their hereditary Pipers with them. How about that, "other musicians"? What could you do with nine notes to please the Army and earn you pay? You will never top the history of the proud Piper. His nine respected notes have POWER. And music unlimited. It is the Piper the crowds will follow -- in peace and war.

Marking back through history to the present Bagpipe's ancient origin, Genesis 4: 21 tells us that Jubal was the father of music, of "all such as handle the harp and pipe". And for many hundreds of years "musicians" made music with their small range of notes. All were classed equally as musicians, even the Pipers. (Daniel 3:5,10,15) Here the

musicians of Daniel's time were named by Nebuchadnezzar as players of "the horn, the pipe, the zither, the triangular harp, the stringed instrument; the bagpipe, and all sorts of musical instruments" (modern revised editions, showing the fruits of deep research, recognizing the original "chanter" of the present bagpipe).

Also Moffatt's beautiful edition reads "...whenever you hear all the music of the horn, the pipe, the lyre, the harp, the lute, and the bagpipes ..." Both of these scriptures quote two kinds of pipe -- the first pipe mentioned being the cornet mentioned in other translations, and the second, of course, the bagpipe. Moffatt's translation is not afraid to say "the bagpipes", and mean it. I notice another Bible gives "dulcimer" as one of the instrument, then a foot-note for it "or, bagpipe" in place of dulcimer .. which shows the same harmonious thought, preferring to include the bagpipe instead of the stringed instrument! So strong is the conviction of what that other pipe is.

Then there is the Gaelic Bible. In Daniel 3: verses 5,7,10, 15, where other Bible name the instrument as the pipe, here we read "an fheadain", the pipe - the chanter of the bagpipes. What better translation?

In Genesis 4: verse 21 gives "...clarsach agus organ" (the harp and wind instrument). The use of the word organ here meaning a pipe, agrees with all the other translations "harp and pipe". Looking up the word "pipe organ" in the dictionary I am referred back to Definition # 1 under "pipe" which say "1. a wind instrument with a single tube into which the player blows". This is therefore a dictionary definition for "pipe organ" Organ is an Ancient word meaning a wind instrument. So with the Gaelic use of the word organ referring to a pipe organ, we have "harp and pipe organ" --- "Clarsach agus piob organ". And that makes the player -- what else? - a Piper!

The Great Highland Bagpipe has a venerable history, back to the days of the simple pipe organ, the ancient form of the bagpipe mentioned today in the scriptures .. the Chanter .. many centuries later fitted with a bag, then gradually the drones."..Jubal was the founder of all those who handle the harp and the pipe" (Gen 4:21) And if all the musicians were classed equally then .. why not now?

The following letter shows one thing that cannot be denied -- the Piper is a very special kind of musician.

- Cathrine Paterson -

Office of the Minister of
National Defence,
Ottawa 4,
November 9, 1966.

Mrs. W. Paterson,
2523 Haywood Avenue,
West Vancouver, B.C.

Dear Mrs. Paterson:

Your letter of October 26, 1966, was referred by the CBC to the Minister of National Defence. Unfortunately, the CBC was unable to identify the programme in question, but evidently your concern is about Pipers and pipe music in the Armed Forces.

Let me assure you that although Pipers have been placed in a separate trade classification from that of other musicians, they are, nevertheless, regarded as musicians.

When we began assessing all trades in the Regular Forces two years ago, it was discovered that there were no less than 61 trades related to various kinds of music. These have now been reduced to two: Musicians and Pipers; and these two categories were retained mainly for career management purposes. You see, all musicians other than Pipers compete with one another for promotion and are interchangeable from one band job to another. Pipers, on the other hand, play a special and unique kind of instrument and are not interchangeable except between pipe bands; consequently, they have to be considered separately.

You may be sure that the skirl of the pipes has not been stilled. Their music will continue to sound for the inspiration of the men of the Armed Forces as it has in the past.

Yours sincerely,

William M. Lee, Group Captain
Executive Assistant to the
Minister of National Defence

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and finally

SEVEN GENERATIONS: (letter to the Editor, The Vancouver Sun, Dec. 5, 1966)

The decision of the recently integrated Armed Services not to pay pipers as musicians confirms one's belief that the times are out of joint indeed. One wonders how many trombonists have rallied the faltering ranks in battle. Was it the flute that sounded over Dargai's plains and led the Highlanders' advance? To make a really good piper requires seven years of his own tuition and seven generations before him. The army has always been a good nursery for young pipers and the pipers have repaid their debt in more than full measure. I trust that more sober counsels will prevail and the military piper will be restored to his full pay and privileges.

- K. MacRae Leighton -

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SIXTY-FIVE PIPERS COMPETE IN EAGLE PIPERS' MEETING:

(from The Oban Times, November 24th, 1966)

For the second week in succession piping is in the forefront of Highland news in the Capital. The outstanding success of the recital on November 10 under Eagle Pipers' Society auspices was followed last Saturday by a record gathering of players at the society's second open piping competition in the Royal Arch Halls, Queen Street.

Sixty-five pipers, a greater number than either the Argyllshire Gathering or the Northern Meeting attracts, entered for the various classes. Inevitably not everyone was able to appear - Ronald Lawrie, last year's winner of the Glen Medal for piobaireachd, was a notable absentee - but the judges and officials still had to cope with a virtually 12-hour stint. The two piobaireachd competitions began at 9:30 a.m., and the last jig was played at 9:10 p.m.

Ian MacLellan, of Glasgow City Police Pipe Band, emerged as the best all-round piper of the day, scoring two firsts and a second to win the Cameron Challenge Cup presented for the overall championship by Mrs. Flora Cameron, wife of the hon. secretary of the Eagle Pipers. He had not entered for the piobaireachd, but won the marches and the strathspevs and reels, and was second in hornpipes and jigs.

Premier award in the marches classes this year was a trophy with a history. It was won outright by the late Pipe-Major John Macdonald, Inverness, for piobaireachd playing at Kyleakin Games many years ago. Mrs. Isabel Rae, to whom it was bequeathed, has presented it to the Eagle Pipers' Society for annual competition in the open marches event.

The Glen Medal for piobaireachd was won on Saturday from an entry of a dozen masters of the art, by John MacDougall, formerly of Invergordon Distillery Pipe Band, who was also second in Marches and in strathspevs and reels. Hailing from Bucksburr, Aberdeenshire, he was taught by Pipe-Major A. U. Brown, Talmoral, and was gold medallist six years ago at Inverness where this year he won a silver star. Last Saturday he played "Lady Macdonald's Salute".

Because of the large entry the marches and strathspevs and reels were played concurrently, and judging throughout the day was shared by two panels - Dr. Kenneth Mackay (Laggan), Captain D. J. MacLennan (North Berwick), and Pipe-Major William Macostie functioning mainly in the upper hall, and Pipe-Major John MacLellan, president of the Eagle Pipers' Society, Pipe-Major George Stoddart, senior vice-president, and Pipe-Major Ronald Ackroyd, chairman and fear an tìshe judging in the ground floor hall.

Mrs. MacLellan, wife of the president, presented the prizes at the close of the evening. In the absence of Pipe-Major MacLellan, who had to leave for another engagement, Pipe-Major Stoddart presided at the prize-giving, and took the opportunity of welcoming among the audience, Pipe-Major Angus Macmarrie, from Benbecula, who took over as pipe-major of the Lovat Scouts in succession to the late Pipe Major W. Ross.

Also in the very large gathering of listeners were Pipe-Major Peter Wilkie and other members of the Atholl Highlanders' band, some of whom were competing. The printed programme of the competition noted a message of good wishes from Captain Charles H. Carr, commanding officer of the United States aircraft carrier "Valley Forge", at present in the Vietnam war theatre. Captain Carr still plays his pipes when time permits, and has come across no fewer than 20 other American naval officers who pipe.

Pipe-Major Stoddart thanked Mrs. MacLellan for presenting the prizes, and Mr. George Cheyne proposed an omnibus vote of thanks to competitors, judges, donors of prizes, stewards, programme-sellers from Colinton and Currie Pipe Band. Mrs. Rhoda Macphee and Mrs. Ross, who provided tea, and, of course, to the hon. secretary of the society, Mr. Ian C. Cameron, who carried the weight of organising this outstanding successful competition.

The results were:-

Piobaireachd Class I (confined to those who have won the Highland Society of London gold medal at either Oban or Inverness or Piobaireachd Class II): - The Glen medal and 15 pounds

1. John MacDougall, formerly of Invergordon,
2. John MacFadyen, Glasgow (12 £)
3. Hector MacFadyen, Pennyghael (9 £)
4. Duncan J. MacFadyen, Glasgow & Iain MacFadyen, Glasgow (6£)

Piobaireachd Class II (open to all except those eligible for Piobaireachd Class I) - The Witwaterrand Challenge Cup and 8 pounds:

1. Ronald Morrison, Glasgow
2. James McIntosh (6£)
3. George Lumsden, Edinburgh (4 £)
4. John C. Johnston, Islay (2£)

Marches (open) - The Pipe-Major John MacDonald Memorial Trophy:

1. Ian MacLellan, Glasgow
2. John MacDougall
3. Iain MacFadyen,
4. William MacDonald, Benbecula

Strathspey and Reel (open)

1. Ian MacLellan
2. John MacDougall
3. Hector MacFadyen
4. Kenneth MacDonald & William MacDonald (tie)

Hornpipes and jigs (open)

1. David Hutton, Grangemouth
2. Ian MacLellan
3. Hector MacFadyen
4. Angus J. MacLellan Glasgow.

MARY ISDALE MACNAB PASSES IN VANCOUVER:

Mrs. Allan C. MacNab, known internationally as Miss Mary Isdale, passed away on November 14th, 1966, following a long illness, aged 77. Her death marked the end of a long and remarkable career, and was the end of an era in Highland Dancing in Vancouver and in British Columbia.

Miss Isdale was well known to all people interested in Scottish culture throughout Scotland, Canada, United States and for over fifty years taught highland dancing to countless pupils.

Born in Glasgow, she came to Vancouver in 1907, while still a teen-aged girl. She later married Allan Cameron MacNab, who became one of the original pipers of Canadian Scottish 16th Batt., serving from 1914 to 1918. For his services, Allan MacNab was awarded the Military Medal and also the long service medal. Mr. MacNab also served as President of the B.C. Pipers' Association.

Mary Isdale was director of dancing at the Edinburgh Tattoo, 1964; the Empire Stadium Tattoo, 1958 and 1961; and the Columbia Festival, Royal Marines Tattoo, in 1965. She was the founder and president for 25 years of the Vancouver Ladies' Pipe Band and was also founder and teacher of the internationally acclaimed B.C. Highland Lassies, who toured Great Britain, Canada and the United States. She was a life or honorary member of the British Dance Teachers, Royal Scottish Country Dance, Canadian Dance Teachers, Glasgow and District Dance, Vancouver St. Andrew's and Caledonian, B.C. Highland Dancing, San Diego Highland Dance, Vancouver Ballet Society, Canadian Folk Society and the Vancouver Gaelic Society.

Our sympathies are extended to her son, Gordon MacNab, and to her brother and sister. Although she is gone, she will long be remembered!

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In the Scottish Auditorium, Friday evening, November 18th, the Vancouver Ladies Pipe Band took part in the special concert arranged by An Commun Gaidhealach in memory of Myrtle and William Thomson. Many a fine tribute was paid to the two sadly missed members, and the well planned program was filled with nostalgic memories.

The late Mrs. Allan MacNab (Mary Isdale) was remembered, with Alex Finlayson playing the lament. Mrs. MacNab was the founder of the Vancouver Ladies Pipe Band in 1927, and was the Band's Hon. President at the time of her death. The Band wears the MacNab tartan.

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LETTER FROM CHILLIWACK:

Many thanks for continuing to send my Newsletter even though my subscription had run out. You know how it is, intentions etc.

I was noticing that there was no report on the Legion Highland Gathering this year in the paper, and wonder if Mt. Benson Branch, Nanaimo had failed to send in to you a report of the events. I will be seeing them this Saturday and will check with them then.

I am now Pipe Major of the Legion band, Branch # 4, Chilliwack, so have a keen interest in this matter. I also am the chief instructor and father of the Branch 32 Band in Agassiz. I wonder some-times if you would be interested in the news of these groups. Although I have left the Fraser Gathering Highland Games which my wife and I started and ran for three years, I have all the information and interest in what they are planning for next year. If at any time I can be of assistance to you in any way I would be glad to help. My primary interest is in the furthering of piping and particularly with youngsters.

If I may I would like to make a suggestion to your paper. The name of the executive is in the front of your paper every time, but I have yet to see any instructions as to how a person may become a member of the B.C. Pipers' Association. I know that I would be an interested party and I am sure that there are many others that are equally in the dark.

With regard to the articles in the paper my only comment is "the best". I look forward with great interest to each issue, and have never felt "let down". In the current issue I liked each word of Catherine Paterson's article, and wonder if sometimes we, as instructors, stress the expense involved too heavily. If we compared more, such as the cost of a piano, or a high priced brass piece, we might have more effect on the parents involved. After all, though Piping is the supreme music in any form, can only do good.

I must stop now being a thoughtful piper and rush back to the world of electronics, so my family can eat, and so we can all enjoy our family Scottish life. Even my Highland dancing wife would have to agree with this. Many thanks again.

- K. Bruce McAlpine -

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(Yes, Mr. McAlpine, and everyone who might have news of interest to our readers, we would be most grateful to receive whatever news might arise in your part of the world. The more that our readers participate in the composition of the Newsletter, the more it will contain, and the more interesting it will be. As for membership in the B.C. Pipers' Association, if you drop a line to the Secretary, he will be pleased to send you an application form. Ed.)

JOHN WILSON'S BOOK 3.

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COMPOSITE PIPE BAND HERE FOR ALASKA DAY - REPRESENTING ALASKA, B.C., Y.T.
(from Sitka Daily Sentinel, Oct. 17, 1966)

This Alaska Day will witness an historic event most fitting to the common observance in 1967 of Alaska's Purchase and Canada's Confederation.

Carrying on a tradition that can be traced back to the visit of Sir George Simpson, Governor of the Hudson's Bay Company to the Russian American Fur Company's Sitka headquarters, we will see the parading of a composite pipe band representing Alaska, British Columbia, and the Yukon Territory.

Sitka probably heard the pipes for the first time on that day in 1841 when Sir George landed in the harbor preceded, as he always was, by his personal piper - Colin Fraser.

For this special commemorative occasion Sitka's own two pipers John MacKay and Dick Herring will be joined by the drum major, Frank Ursich; drummers Roy Newton, Peter Frankish, Greg Philips, Gordon Berberich; and piper Danny Lang of the Whitehorse, Yukon Midnight Sun Pipe Band. From British Columbia will come Pipe Major Ian Gardner from Prince Rupert, joined by pipers Tom Traynor and Allan Tutt from Prince Rupert and Terrace respectively.

The Whitehorse Band has appeared previously in Alaska not only here in Sitka, but Juneau, Haines, Skagway, Palmer, Anchorage, and Nome as well. Last winter they received a letter of commendation from Governor Egan for their Alaskan appearances.

Drum Major Ursich was singled out by the United Scottish Societies of California to serve as honorary drum major for their annual Highland Games in Santa Monica. The Prince Rupert and Kitimat Bands have had Alaskan appearances previously in Ketchikan.

This historic first had been brought to Sitka this year through the combined efforts of private citizens, labor unions, businesses, and lodges.

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(Ed.-According to our correspondent, R.M. Herring, of Sitka, Alaska, this pipe band is the first of its kind ever assembled from Alaska, B.C. and the Yukon. Alaska Day commemorates the transfer of Alaska from Russia, which took place here on Oct. 18th, 1867. It is an annual event in Sitka, but this year also marked the beginning of the Centennial Year, which will officially end on Alaska Day next year. The Alaskan Centennial authorities have been coordinating events with Centennial committees in the Yukon and B.C., and all present agreed that this Composite Pipe Band for Alaska Day was a most fitting start of the year. The Band played for the Governor of the State upon his arrival, and at the Governor's Ball the last evening of the event).

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BI-MONTHLY COMPETITION - NOVEMBER 18th, 1966.

Once again a fine turnout of competitors, parents and friends were on hand for the evening of Juvenile Old Highland Airs and Open Amateur Marches. The piping judge for the session was Mr. John MacLeod, and the President, Mr. Rod. MacVicar judged deparment and dress.

Here are the winner.

Juvenile Old Highland Airs (26 competitors)

1. Bob Barker 2. Doug Bernon 3. Terry Leonard
4. Jane Little 5. Ross Marshall 6. Heather Abel

Open Amateur Marches (7 competitors)

1. Sherea Barwell 2. Kelly Hagan 3. DonaH MacMillan

Deportment:

- | | |
|--------------|-----------------|
| Juvenile | David Anderson |
| Open Amateur | Laurie McIlvena |

A small cairngorm brooch was found at this competition, which can be claimed from the Secretary.

- 0 -

BAGPIPE MUSIC INDEX

THE BAGPIPE MUSIC INDEX PRESENT AN ALPHABETICAL LISTING OF THE TITLES, COMPOSER, LOCATION, TYPE, TIME SIGNATURE, AND NUMBER OF PARTS, TO THE 2,430 TUNES CURRENTLY IN PRINT.

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- 0 -

BI-MONTHLY COMPETITION - DECEMBER 16th, 1966.

Another fine evening of enjoyable piping with a very wide selection of tunes, particularly in the Junior class was heard by a goodly number of assembled parents and friends. The piping judge for the evening was Ian O. MacKinnon and the deportment was judged by Rod MacVicar.

Those chosen winners were:

Novice 6/8 Marches (33 competitors)

1. Ian Hall
2. Ian Cameron
3. David Rutherford
4. Russell Lawrie
5. Tim Noot
6. Drew Noot

Junior Jigs: (14 competitors)

1. John MacLeod
2. Mary Swift
3. Kelvin Wood
4. Alex MacInnes

Deportment:

- Novice - Ken Ringham
- Junior - Donald Taylor

The next Bi-Monthly competitions will be held on January 20th, at 7:30 p.m., and will comprise Juvenile Marches and Open Amateur Strathspeys and Reels.

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GENERAL MEETING - JANUARY 27th, 1967.

The next general meeting will be held on Friday, January 27th, 1967, in the Band Room of the Seaforth Armoury.

The meeting will commence at 8:00 p.m., and we would ask all members to attend.

- 0 -

It is now official -- the White Spot Junior Pipe Band will be attending EXpo 67 as the Official Representative of Vancouver on B.C. Day, July 14. They will be leaving by train July 10, and will be billeted in Montreal, making several appearances through the week. On the way home they will make a one-day stop at Ottawa where they will visit and play at Parliament Hill.

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BELLINGHAM'S CAMERON PIPE BAND GETS NEW PIPE MAJOR:

A change of command for Bellingham's Cameron Pipe Band calls a Vancouver piper of long experience to active duty. Jimmy Wilson, 4525 Elgin St., Vancouver, B.C., has been elected Pipe-Major by the 19 Camerons with whom he has played more-or-less consistently since the band was founded by former Pipe Major Bill Paterson six years ago.

Jim got an indirect start with this band when he and Paterson were members of the old Crawford band whose uniforms the Camerons now wear.

Jim began his piping in Bridge-of-Allen Scotland, and has been connected with the following bands: City of Dunblane, Tulibody and Cambus; in Vancouver: Irish Fusiliers, Crawford, Royal Canadian Engineers. He moved to Vancouver from Scotland in 1953. He and his wife Cathy and two children have gained a great number of friends on both sides of the border.

Jim Wilson replaces John Munroe who remains with the band. John tells us, "The Cameron band thrives on friendship with one another and a strong urge to improve. Jimmy helps us both ways. We're very happy to have him."

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LETTER FROM NANAIMO:

Shortly after the Nanaimo Highland Games I mailed in a list to the B.C. Pipers' Newsletter, on which was the prize winners of a raffle sponsored by the Upper Island Highland Games Association, held in Nanaimo. Possibly due to an oversight it was not published in the Newsletter. Many of the piping and dancing fraternity purchased tickets for the good of our cause. For this reason I would feel better if they had an idea who won prizes. Would you be so kind as to place the winners in the next edition of the Newsletter.

1st prize - portable television set	- T. Macadam, Ladysmith
2nd prize - mixmaster	- F. Peters, B.C. Hydro, Vancouver
3rd prize - skill saw	- G. Cormans, Selby St. Nanaimo
4th prize - ladies' luggage	- Chinkis & Davis - Nanaimo
5th prize - transistor radio	- A. Rafter, Cadogan St., Nanaimo
6th prize - electric carver	- A. Reid, Qualicum Meat Market

By the way, a little story that might raise a chuckle amongst the Newsletter readers. There must be many stories connected with piping like this we should invite the readers to send in.

Had a phone call from a mother who wanted piping lessons for her ten years old daughter. She explained that the little girl's hands were small and that she might not handle the chanter, but she was quite sure that she could manage the Pìobaireachd!

- Ian Wallace -
Nanaimo

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HIS PIPES GOT HIS LAST GASP: (from the Weekly Scotsman, April 23, 1964)

"The General says this hill must be taken at all costs. The Gordon Highlanders will take it!" This was the assurance given by the regiment as they stood before the Heights of Dargai, India, beneath an avalanche of fire from fierce Afridi tribesmen. It was October 20, 1897. Three regiments had already attempted an attack, only to be mercilessly mown down. Now the Gordons had been called upon to make the supreme effort, and they could not fail. There was a brief, deathlike silence following the order.

Then a great cheer rose from the Highlanders - a cheer which drowned the arrogant beat of the Afridi drums. All around, dead and wounded lay among the rocks. A bugler sounded the "Advance", which was followed by the soaring screams of the great Highland war pipes. Across the fire-swept plain, a steady stream of kilt-clad men charged - wave after wave. Many of the "gay Gordons" fell in that first advance. But still the pipes sang, forcing them on in the face of impossible odds.

The first wave reached the temporary cover of the rocks, and among them was Piper George Findlater. But he had been shot in both feet. Despite the pain of his injuries, Piper Findlater remained there, with bullets hailing down in vicious showers. He played throughout the action, and the tune which lingered in the minds of every man who scaled the Heights of Dargai was "The Cock of the North."

The action won him a Victoria Cross. In the "London Gazette" of May 20, 1898, this announcement was made: "During the attack on the Dargai Heights, on the 20th October 1897, Piper Findlater, after being shot through both feet, and unable to stand, sat up, under heavy fire, playing the regimental march to encourage the charge of the Gordon Highlanders."

Piper Findlater was decorated by Her Majesty Queen Victoria at Netley Hospital, and later all the world acclaimed him for his bravery.

As a result of the same action, a Distinguished Conduct Medal was awarded to Lance Corporal Piper Patrick Milne, 1st Battalion, Gordon Highlanders, who was shot in the chest while leading the troops. His pipes are now on display in the Scottish United Services Museum, Edinburgh Castle.

Among other bagpipe displays in the Museum is the middle joint of the big drone from the pipes played by Pipe Major D. Mathieson, 1st Battalion, Seaforth Highlanders, smashed by a shell at La Bassée, November 1914. Mathieson was severely wounded and was awarded the D.C.M. for his bravery at that time.

Pipe major Kenneth MacLeod stands out in the ranks of the Seaforth Highlanders and also with the Gordons. Known as "Coinneach Mor," he was a native of Lewis, enlisted in 1885, and served in the Boer War at the siege of Ladysmith. It was at the Battle of Elandslangte that he earned his D.C.M. Although twice wounded, MacLeod continued to play until a bullet smashed the chanter. His colonel gave him a set of silver-mounted pipes to replace the broken set. He served again in the Great War and died in Lewis in 1939.

Piping others into battle was a brave deed, of course, but it was not enough for some.

In all the history of Highlanders in our country's regiments, no piper was ever more heroic than Pipe Major Adam McPherson of the 72nd Highlanders (Duke of Albany's Own), the old 78th or Seafort's Highlanders. The number of the regiment was changed in 1786 to "the 72nd". At the end of 1805, the 72nd was included in a force, under Sir David Baird which took part in the Battle of the Blaubergh - the taking of the Cape of Good Hope from the Dutch. During the action a halt was made and the pipers struck up a reel tune. Men of the grenadier company took time to dance a reel, much to the astonishment of an English regiment. Then, handing his pipes to a comrade, Pipe Major McPherson drew his broadsword and exclaimed in Gaelic to those around him: "We will show them that if we can play, we can also fight!" He rushed forward and engaged the enemy, presently returning to pick up his beloved pipes again and to resume playing!

Yes, the pibroch has a part in our history, but a point about the bagpipes is that they are not particularly Scottish, although we consider them such. Throughout the pages of history many nations have played a form of bagpipe, even in Asia. Today, there are pipers in Brittany and the Tyrol. Amazingly enough, the English used to play the pipes. Indeed, Henry VIII had pipes as well as wives. He used to be one of the finest pipers in England. Northumberland pipes were said to be the same as those used by their neighbours in the Scottish Border towns.

Many tales are told of the old pipers.

Lord Drummore, a judge of the Court of Session, used to take his pipes with him on walks. On occasions, he would accept tips from passers-by, who thought him a street pedlar.

One keen piper in Peebles was the town piper of Lauder. He had to put in quite a bit of travelling, and his job filled him with pride. This was his undoing. He boasted that he would march all the way from his home town to his civic duties in Lauder, piping all the way. It was with sadness that the Lauder folk heard he did not keep his boast. He collapsed and died on the way. His last breath had been reserved for his beloved pipes.

An old piping saying has it that it takes seven years to train a piper, and that the man should have seven generations of pipers in his blood. Whether this is true or not, there is no doubt Scots seem to have the pibroch in their blood, especially our mighty men of war.

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VANCOUVER LADIES PIPE BAND PRODUCE RECORD:

On sale in early December is a new London recording by the Vancouver Ladies Pipe Band called PIPING AND DRUMMING -- 1964 European Champion. The number is AML - 2.

The record features a solo, The Three Love Song, played by the former Pipe Major Norma Nicholson. Norma, now Mrs. Thomson, was the first lady ever to win the MacCrimmon Trophy for Piobaireachd, holding it for three successive years.

Among the selections by the Band are the Dundee Military Tattoo, Crossing the Minch, Lochanside, Donald MacLean's Farewell to Oban, and ending with Will ye no' come back again? and We're no' awa'.

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A NIGHT TO REMEMBER:

The night the Vancouver Ladies Pipe Band will never forget is the night when they made the above mentioned record.

The girls had no idea that the work of recording their new PIPING AND DRUMMING record would keep them there until 1:00 o'clock in the morning. As time wore on every girl except Norma was eyeing the clock wilting slowly on pins and needles by midnight. What Norma didn't know was the secret plan they had -- to take her with them afterwards to a big shower which the Band Auxilliary Mothers had planned and prepared at Sherea Barwell's home. They waited for the girls all evening in puzzled wonder, and finally well after 1:00 o'clock the girls arrived victoriously with the tired and protesting Norma, who couldn't see why they were going there when she thought they should be relaxing at the nearest coffee counter.

With persistence they coaxed her, using the best excuse they could dream up. The mothers were still sitting there when Norma walked in to the biggest surprise of a busy night, and surveyed the crowd and shower of gifts. The tired girls, ready for the waiting refreshment, grinned at Norma as they all relaxed at last. The party broke up in the wee small hours, of course -- a triumph.

- 0 -

PIPERS' FLIGHT PLANNED FOR 1967:

All the members will now be aware that a Pipers' Flight is scheduled to depart August 26th, 1967, and will return October 6th, 1967.

The flight will again be carried out by Wardair Canada Ltd. Further details will appear in a later issue of the Newsletter.

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EYES OF WINNIPEG ARE UPON THEM: (from Edmonton Tribune, Nov. 7, 1966.

Special to The Tribune. Austin, Texas.

Upwards of 1,000 astonished Texans watched 20 teenage pipers from Winnipeg march away with every prize offered Sunday in the South-west United States Piping championships, sponsored by the Scots of Austin pipe band.

The Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders of Canada cadet corps band, its members aged 13 to 17, took first place in the all-adult contest, and three of its young pipers were the winners and runners up in the individual piping competition.

The full band scored 88 marks out of 100 in the band contest. The first individual prize went to Cpl. Randy McNicol of 872 Centennial St., with S. Sgt. Bruce Taylor of 328 Kimberly Ave., East Kildonon, and Sgt. Steve Kane of 187 Roseberry St., St. James in second and third place.

The kilted lands from Winnipeg swung on parade behind Lt. Donald Morrison and caused heads to turn wherever they appeared. They were flown from Winnipeg to Minneapolis by R.C.A.F. transport and taken from there to Austin by Braniff International Airlines at a reduced rate.

The idea of their visit to Austin was hatched in 1962 when a member of the Scots of Austin took part here in a piping competition during the July 1 Scottish sports day at Assiniboia Downs. He issued an invitation on the spot to the young Winnipeg pipers and added his opinion that they could probably take every prize at the Austin contest. He was right.

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RAE-MARIE MACINNES & NEIL MACAULAY WED - A HIGHLAND WEDDING:

It was a colourful Highland Wedding in Vancouver on December 3rd in St. Francis De Sales Church, when Monsignor Brown united in marriage Pipe Sgt. Rae-Marie MacInnes of the Vancouver Ladies Pipe Band, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Michael MacInnes, and Piper Neil Macaulay of the Royal Canadian Legion Pipe Band, Branch 83, son of the late Mr. and Mrs. Peter Macaulay, both originally from Inverness, Scotland.

The groom wore his kilt, and after the ceremony helped cut the wedding cake with his own skean dhu. All the ushers were in kilts, together with other members of the wedding party and the two Pipers, Michael MacInnes and Peter MacNeil.

Four members of the Vancouver Ladies Pipe Band formed the honour guard, - P.M. Peggy Gillies, Pipers Sherea Barwell, Linda Grocott and Drummer Ann MacNeil. Among eleven telegrams received from overseas, many points in Canada and U.S., were two from relatives in Eriskay and Barra, Inverness.

- 0 -

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lent workmanship.

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books of all kinds, including Ross's, 5 in 1 with hard cover, Scot Guards
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BAGPIPE MANUFACTURERS ABOUND IN PAKISTAN:

There is no place equal in the world, where there is a large concentration of Bagpipe Manufacturers, such as Sialkot City, West Pakistan.

During my sojourn days in India, as it was then called, I had the opportunity of going to Sialkot City, with the Pipe-Major to obtain our band supplies, and I was amazed at the number of manufacturers, who would make anything required for a pipe band. Then there were 15 manufacturers, and since 1944, many more can be added to the list. Some had modern machinery, and others used primitive, but effective lathes for turning out the various pipe parts.

Truly they are craftsmen, and were able to copy and make intricate badge work, and tartan weaving. The Scottish Regiments were able to give them plenty custom during the war years. They could make up a very impressive set of fully mounted bagpipes for a few pounds, but would lack the quality in tone as we are used to from our Scottish manufacturers. It would be very easy for an experienced piper to pick out someone in the band playing a set from Pakistan as they all seemed to be flat as to the original tone and pitch.

Anyone contemplating purchasing a set, would be well advised to seek expert advice; to obtain a really good set of bagpipes, even if it costs a little more. You will have pleasure and enjoyment playing them.

- Robert S.S. Gray -
Coalsnaughton by Tillicoultry
Clackmannanshire, Scotland

- 0 -

PIPER WHO WAS HAUNTED BY CLAN CURSE:

The piping world will be sorry to hear of the death of our champion piper Malcolm MacPherson, who lived in fear, and afraid of an ancient Highland curse, which he thought was crippling his hand. He often told his friends: "when I die, mark my grave with a Rowan Tree, this is the only thing that will rid me of the curse."

Malcolm, ex-world Piobaireachd champion, won his championship at the age of 20, and was one of the worlds greatest pipers.

The curse was put on the MacPhersons and the MacLeods in 1492, after they took part in a massacre of 400 MacDonalds. The massacre was ordered by Alastair Crottach - chief of the Clan MacLeod, because he thought the MacDonalds were sheltering witches.

It was strange that Malcolm's fingers of his right hand were beginning to curl, and eventually he would be unable to play his bagpipes. The curse was called "Cruime" which is "bent" or "crooked" in Gaelic.

- Robert S.S. Gray -

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LONDON LETTER - PIOBAIREACHD RECITALS POPULAR WITH HIGHLAND EXILES:
(from The Oban Times, Dec. 8, 1966)

A popular feature on the syllabus of the London Piping Society is the piobaireachd recitals held from October to March. David Ross, Pipe-Major of the society gave the first recital to a capacity-filled hall. His tune was "Clan Ranald's Salute", a piobaireachd written by John MacIntyre, one of the greatest of the 18th century composers.

He studied for seven years under Patrick Og MacGrimmon and then for 35 years was piper to the Clan Ranald in South Uist. "Clan Ranald's Salute" is not an easy tune to master, but it was played with good musical interpretation by David Ross, who has had a remarkable piping career spanning 60 years.

He was first taught at the Royal Caledonian Schools, Hertfordshire, when his instructor was John Wallace, who according to David was a fine piper and instructor who seldom took part in competitions. David's first job was piper to a Colonel MacKenzie who formerly commanded a battalion of the F.L.I. For four years until the outbreak of war in 1911, David Ross studied under the late Pipe-Major Willie Ross, then of the 1st Batt. Scots Guards. In 1913 he made his first mark in piping when he was placed in the march, strathspey and reel competition at Oban. The following week he won the march at Inverness where he has competed almost every year since.

He gives Willie MacLean the credit for giving him a sound teaching in ceol mor. David studied under Willie MacLean for 15 years. The latter, a great ceol mor authority, was a pupil of "Calum Piohaire".

With this piping knowledge and experience behind him, Mr. Ross, who has known all the great piping figures of this century, interested his audience with his reminiscences before giving his recital. He also gave a selection of tunes composed by pipers who had been taught at the Royal Caledonian School. Among the tunes played were those of David C. Mather, who was not only a famous piper, but also an athlete and dancer of repute. At the Highland Gathering in Edinburgh in 1895 he won four piping competitions, three Highland dancing events, and the caber, shot-putt and hammer-throwing competitions.

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MALCOLM MACPHERSON - TRIBUTE BY SETON GORDON:
(from The Oban Times, Dec. 8, 1966)

Malcolm Macpherson, between the two wars, was a piper of unusual distinction, inheriting the skill of his father Angus and his renowned grandfather Malcolm.

I remember two occasions when his playing deeply impressed me. The first was at the Kyleakin Games. John MacDonald, of Inverness had as usual played his piobaireachd faultlessly. This meant that he would almost certainly win the competition, but Malcolm who followed played so well that we, the judges, decided that they should be placed equal first.

The second, and more memorable, occasion was at the Argyllshire Gathering when Malcolm Macpherson played "Lament for Donald Ban MacCrimmon". That performance - expression, fingering and flow of melody throughout that arrestingly beautiful tune - remains clear in my mind after more than 40 years. Only a truly great piper could have played that MacCrimmon masterpiece as he did.

When that revered and loved Highland chief, Norman MacLeod of MacLeod, was laid to rest at Dunvegan, near the burial place of the MacCrimmons, it was Malcolm Macpherson and his father Angus who in unison played the MacLeod lament "Tog Oru Mo Fhìob", their pipes, perfectly tuned, sounding as one on that dark day of early winter nearly 40 years ago.

The understanding sympathy of friends in many lands goes out to the father of a loved only son.

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EAGLE PIPERS:

(from The Oban Times, Dec. 1, 1966)

There was a good turnout to the weekly meeting of the Eagle Pipers' Society in the West End Hotel on November 23. With Pipe Major Ronald Ackroyd as fear an tìche, the company enjoyed a fine evening's music from Pipe-Major Robert Atkinson, Edward Ross, George Lumsden, Pipe-Major Ackroyd himself, and Tom Spiers, who also played "The Battle of Auldearn" as the closing pìobaireachd.

Links between the Eagle Pipers' Society and the Scottish Piping Society of the Witwatersrand have even extended this year to the holding of their respective competitions on exactly the same day, November 19, and while in Edinburgh players were competing for the Witwatersrand cup, in South Africa they were playing for a sgian dubh presented by the Eagle Pipers.

Pipe-Major John MacLellan, Eagle president and hon. Vice-President of the Scottish Piping Society of the Witwatersrand, has already had by air mail a marked copy of the latter society's programme, from which it appears that the sgian was won by Pipe-Major James Young, who happens to be an Eagle member too. It was presented for second place in the "best piper for the year" competition which was won by Pipe-Corporal N. Dodds, Royal Irish Fusiliers, and J. Pettigrew, Johannesburg.

The Witwatersrand Society was formed in 1947, with Pipe-Major George Ackroyd, then pipe-major of the 2nd Transvaal Scottish, as hon. pipe major and senior instructor. George Ackroyd is, of course, a former pipe major of the 2nd Black Watch and brother of Pipe Major Ronald Ackroyd, chairman and fear an tìche of the Eagle Pipers' Society.

Though last month's event was the South African society's first competition, they have been able over the years to invite leading personalities from Scotland to go out to give lectures and recitals and to judge at the Royal Scottish Gathering. Among those who have gone out in this capacity are Pipe Major J.B. Robertson, Scots Guards, Pipe Major Donald MacLeod, Seaforth Highlanders, Sergeant-Piper Ronald Lawrie, Glasgow City Police and Pipe Major MacLellan.

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JANUARY 27th

