

B. C. PIPERS' NEWSLETTER



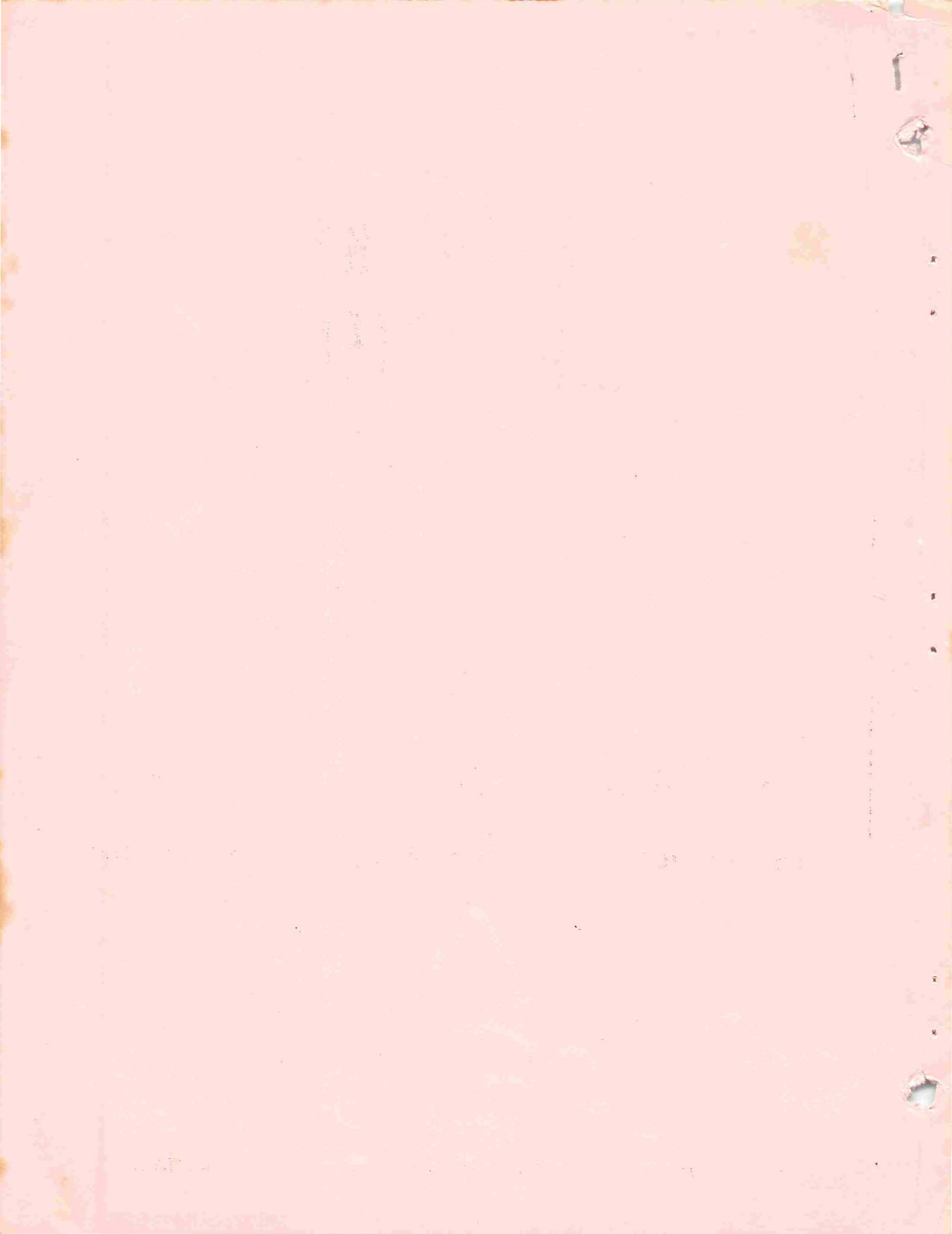
**The official monthly publication of
the British Columbia Pipers' Association**

NOVEMBER, 1962.

No. 32.

AN ASSOCIATION FOR THE PRESERVATION OF BAGPIPE MUSIC

AND THE ENCOURAGEMENT OF PIPE PLAYING IN BRITISH COLUMBIA



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

Published monthly by the British Columbia Pipers' Association.

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B.C. Pipers' NEWSLETTER:

EDITOR:	C. I. Walker
CIRCULATION:	Donald Urquhart
	Wm. A. McAdie

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NOVEMBER, 1962.

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BI-MONTHLY COMPETITION: NOVEMBER 2nd, 1962.

In spite of a very heavy fog, the first Bi-Monthly Competition of the season, held on Friday, November 2nd, at the Seaforth Armoury, was a huge success. Over fifty competitors were entered, and judge Donald Murray had an extremely difficult job, and especially in the Novice and Juvenile Classes.

The date of this competition inadvertently conflicted with that of the monthly competition of the B.C. Highland Dancing Association. We would like to thank this Association and its President, Phil Yandle, for their kind cooperation in solving the problems which arose as a result of this unfortunate conflict.

The results of the competitions are as follows:

Novice Marches:

1. Jean Jarvis
2. Bill McMichael
3. Wayne Penner
4. Ross Lamont
5. Dal Jessiman
6. Iola Peace

Juvenile Old Highland Airs:

1. Raymond Irvine
2. Robert Heggie
3. David Irvine
4. Jim Penner
5. Douglas Graham

Junior Strathspeys and Reels:

1. John MacLeod
2. Michael MacInnes
3. Bob MacDonald

Amateur Piobaireachd:

1. Bill Elder

Senior Amateur Jigs:

1. C.I. Walker

GENERAL MEETING: NOVEMBER 30th, 1962.

The next General Meeting will be held on Friday, November 30th, in the band room of the Seaforth Armoury.

The results of the White Heather Concert will be announced, and we would ask all of you to come out and support the activities of the Association.

After the meeting, selections from our collection of tapes will be played, and it is hoped that a set of pipes or two will be produced for our mutual entertainment.

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VANCOUVER ISLAND PIPERS' SOCIETY:

At the regular meeting of the Society, on October 27th, it was voted to appoint the existing slates of officers for the 1962-1963 year:

President: Peter George
Vice President: Ian Duncan
Secretary Treasurer: James A. Berry
Society Piper: John Low
Executive Committee: John McNeil, W.H. Brown, Frank Bertram,
Ian Ross, John MacDonald J.A. MacKay

The Society meets on the fourth Saturday of the month in the Little Orange Hall, 725 Courtney Street, Victoria. Visitors are always welcome.

We are happy to report that the Society is financially in good shape, and that, as a body, and through its individual members is furthering piping in this area. It is intended to put more emphasis on talks on, and discussions of piping in the coming year.

- James A. Berry -
Secretary Treasurer
Vancouver Island pipers' Society

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ART OF BAGPIPING TAUGHT IN GRAFTON'S 'HIGHLAND'S'

(Albany, N.Y. TIMES-UNION
July 15th, 1962.)

There is a school built on the side of a hill in the Grafton Mountains where the students are piped to tea with "The Bannocks o' Barley Meal" and go swimming to the tune of "Pibroch o' Donald Dhu."

It is the Invermark Summer School of Piping, the only one of its kind in existence. The school, two miles west of Petersburg, Rensselaer County (New York State), is operated by John Lindsay, a New York City marine consulting engineer. The school is patterned after the Scottish piping schools of a hundred years ago. There is little else at Invermark but playing the bagpipes and watching clouds drift over the mountains.

Mr. Lindsay and his charges are dead serious about advancing the aged and difficult art of Scottish bagpipe playing. "It's a knack you've got to develop," says Tommy Pearston, co-principal of the Glasgow, Scotland, School of Piping. Mr. Pearston is conducting classes at Invermark this summer. Tommy Pearston, John Lindsay and the students all wear kilts varying in colors and plains, according to their clans.

The students, coming from several states and Canada, usually range in age from 12 on upward. "When a lad reaches the age of 12 we can maintain his enthusiasm for piping. It will be a lifetime thing with a boy and we expect him some day to pass piping on to his sons," Mr. Lindsay said.

The passing on of the art from generation to generation is a tradition in piping. Serious bagpipe playing began with a Scottish family by the name of MacCrimmon about 1500. In olden days a piper called troops to battle. When the Scottish chieftain would shift his battle standard, the piper would pipe the men to position. The piper increased in importance until he ranked fourth to the clan chieftain in importance. Being a Scottish piper was a full time occupation. But in 1746, the Scottish clan system was dissolved by the English after the Battle of Culloden. All Scottish piping colleges had to disband. Clansmen had to turn in their kilts.

James Reed, a courageous Scot, was hanged at York by the British in 1746 for the crime of piping. The MacCrimmons kept piping alive, however, and even the British soon realized the value of its music. The British revived piping in their own army to encourage enlistment of the Scots. They permitted the former clansmen to wear their kilts and march to the bagpipe airs.

It is on this long tradition of piping that Mr. Lindsay has built his school. Students are taught that "MacCrimmon's Sweetheart" was not a lady. The sweetheart is the tune itself and written, according to piping legend, by a youthful MacCrimmon. After serving his seven years piping apprenticeship, the young MacCrimmon went off to a cave to write his own music.

He spent three days and nights in the cave. Each of his ancestors came to him in dream-like fashion and played a little of the tune. The MacCrimmons concentrated on the classical school of piping rather than the marching variety which is better known in this country.

Students at Invermark begin with Ceol Beag - the little music - and strive through the years to reach the classical Ceol Mor - the big music. The prospective pipers play their tunes in earnest. Following classes with Tommy Pearston, they stroll off alone playing their pipes in surroundings not unlike the gentle hills of Scotland.

The bagpipe tunes themselves are plaintive in the classical realm; strident and gay in the marching airs. "MacCrimmon's Sweetheart," a classical example, sighs repetitiously, rising and falling, but it occasionally slips slyly into a marching tempo.

Pipers play as much as they can on a basic nine-note range, then go back again, Tommy Pearston explained. His Glasgow colleague, Seumas MacNeill likens the classic Ceol Mor to an infinity. The piper works like an artist, who must fashion a continual framework for his overall picture. The end result, to Mr. MacNeill, is something like the ornate wood sculpturings that show a snake intertwined several times, winding up with its tail in its mouth - infinity.

A full bagpipe is made up of two short drones, or reeded pipes, a longer bass drone and a horn-like pipe called a chanter where the music comes out. A blowpipe is attached to the plaid-cloth covered bag which supplies the power for the pipes. The piper is fingering the notes on the chanter, pumping the bag with his arm and blowing more air into the bag all of the time he is performing.

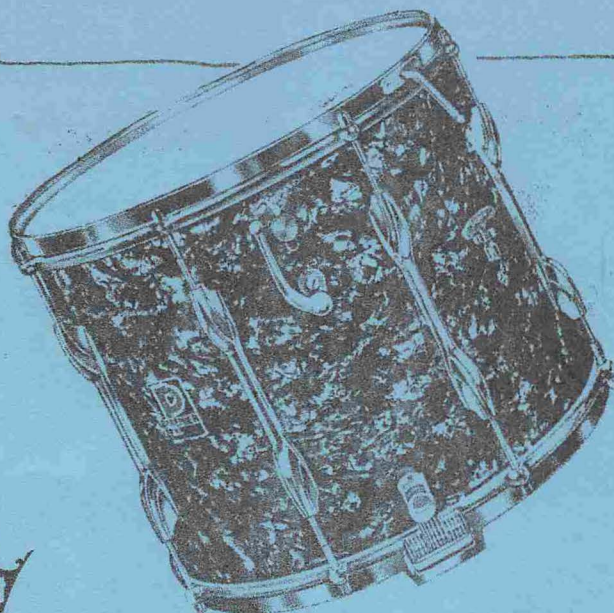
While Tommy Pearston explained the workings of the bagpipe, a lad of 15 came up. "Would you mind playing the "Bannocks o' Barley Meal" Mr. Pearston? The boys haven't eaten yet," he told the Scot.

At Invermark all activities must go by the pipes. That's the way Mr. Lindsay wants it. He said he operates the summer-piping school as a hobby, but with a dedication to tradition.

He and other Scots are sensitive to being ridiculed for their bagpipe playing.

"We're serious, but so many people poke fun at us," he said.

Setting his mouth in a firm line, he added: "Especially the British."



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SCOTLAND

FROM PIPE MAJOR JOHN ROBERTSON'S SCRAPBOOK:

LETTER TO THE EDITOR, OBAN TIMES: (1935)

On Saturday, December 21st, I wended my way to the MacLellan Galleries, Sauchiehall Street, Glasgow, if only to satisfy myself as to the merits of a statement which appeared in your columns recently. The question was "Why is it the audience talks immediately the piper plays?"

With a festive season smile and a hearty Highland handshake, I was conducted to a seat in the body of the Hall by that well-known figure, Pipe Major M. Maclean Currie, Secretary of the Scottish Pipers' Association. Full of anticipation, I looked forward to enjoying the pipe music, hoping in my heart that the same appreciative and respectful silence accorded to the chairman's (Sheriff John Bartholomew) remarks would be shown during the piping. But, alas, my hopes were dashed to the ground; for as soon as the music of the Gael filled the Hall, the whispered hum of conversation started as if in contract. Surely, I thought, when the finest piping Association in the world spare no effort or pains whatever to entertain us with our national music played by masters, it behoves all present to hold their breath? Taking N.O.T.E.S., I overheard the following remarks during the evening:-

"Going home for Christmas or New Year?"

The speaker on my left was replied to by a gentleman in front, dressed in full Highland garb which gave off the aroma, "Harris", who cupped his ear, and said. "Islay or Oban for me. Both places are beautiful at this time of the year. If you don't believe me, ask "Fingal", pointing in the direction where that well-known personality was seated.

"I brought the wife with me; just to cheer her up. She has been ailing for some time." "Ah!" she replied, "I would rather bury myself in a book."

At this period, piob mhor being rendered, a brawny individual entered, all out of breath, a plumped himself down beside me. Wiping his brow with the latest creation in handkerchiefs (having portraits of all our crack pipers thereon) he gasped out, "I am sorry to be late. I've stood at the other side of the street for over an hour."

"Traffic too thick?" "No, I've lost the wife - she's doing Christmas shopping. I had hoped for this. It will prove to her that a woman doesn't require to be a widow to grieve about her lost husband." Puckering his eyebrows, he asked, "Who has won the Oban Times Gold Medal?" He smiled cheerfully when I told him the result.

"What will you tell the wife when you meet her?" "I'll say that I called on her uncle (whispering under breath) I left my watch. Yes, certainly, I have done it before."

Interjection - "Oh, jings, her's yin o' the polis baund. I ken him, he's on the Govan Docks bate. I ken him fine. He marrit a cook - a fine lassie frae Islay. A case o' love at first bite. He's a grand piper! Prize list sure. Here's anither guid piper. I think he's a tramwayman - he's keeping time a-richt."

Interjection - "What else could ye expect frae a tramwayman? I'm on the caurs tae, and ken whit it is tae get oot o' bed they cauld mornin's. Did ye hear that the new manager is gaun tae gae each o' us a "Bundy Clock"? There'll be nae excuse for sleepin' in noo".

Drawing from his inside jacket pocket a dirty typewritten sheet of paper he pushed it under my nose, sying "Read that!" Adjusting my spectacles I read as follows:-

To a Bundy Clock

O' Soulless thief of time intent,
On filching minutes better spent;
In bed, beware my rising bile,
Some morn I'll punch you on the dial.

At this stage he stood up and, pocketing the poem, said, "Lets gang oot fur a bit exercise. (He nudged his companion." I think I could manage tae bend ma' elbow." The invitation was accepted.

Blowing the froth off his pint, and pointing in the direction from which we came, he exclaimed, "Michty me, that's the best bunch o' pipers in the world alang there. Drink up!"

"Oh by-the-bye," addressing his companion, "What did ye think o' that poetry?" "I widna like tae commit masel' Mac., but I felt like sayin':-

"A Highlander there was named MacDougall
By nature exceedingly frugal;
He took a sea blow,
On a bugle? Oh, No,
He took a "C" blow
On a Bougall.

"Man, that's guid," and, looking up with a glance of further invitation, said, "Drink up, I'm going back to hear the pipers, and before this nicht is o'er I must pay compliment to the president, the organising secretary, and their stalwart henchmen, for the arrangements, also the many gentlemen who turned out in Highland dress, whose presence inspired the "spirit o' the Glens"."

Retracing our steps we were delighted to learn that the Oban Times Medal had been awarded to that master of the piob mhor, Pipe Major John MacDonald, Glasgow Police Pipe Band. All said, "Well done, John".

It was pleasing to return and find that all present, including competitors, concurred with the finding of these two experts, Pipe Majors William Taylor and Angus Maclean.

At this time, I offer apologies to your brilliant correspondent, already referred to, who spurred me to write on what might be termed breach of etiquette, which is somewhat pardonable when we come to think of it - the entertainment was of seven hours' duration. In further mitigation, may I quote John Selden, who says "Old friends are the best", who have never met each other but at the Highland Games. To them and to all - "Happy New Year for 1936"

I am, N.O.T.E.S.

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THE MACCRIMMON PIPERS: Completion of Memorial Tablets: (Oban Times, 1932)

Two handsome granite memorial tablets, one of which is to be inserted in a cairn at Borreraig, Skye, and one in St. Mary's Church, Kilmuir, Skye, commemorating the famous piping family of MacCrimmon, have just been completed in Inverness. The cairn is to take the form of a bee-hive cairn one of the oldest types, composed of selected local stone, and is to be built immediately above the hollow in the cliff to which the MacCrimmon's and their pupils retired, and will have an imposing position 200 feet above Loch Dunvegan.

The tablet for the cairn has a Gaelic inscription, which means;-

The memorial cairn to the MacCrimmons, of whom ten generations were the hereditary pipers of MacLeod, and who were renowned as composers, performers and instructors of the classical music of the bagpipe. Near this spot stood the MacCrimmon school of music.

The tablet for the Kilmuir Church bears two leaded inscriptions - one in Gaelic with the following English translation:-

This tablet is erected to commemorate the MacCrimmons, of whom ten generations are interred in this place. They were the hereditary pipers of MacLeod, and for a period of three centuries were distinguished for their gifts as composers, performers and instructors of the classical music of the bagpipe.

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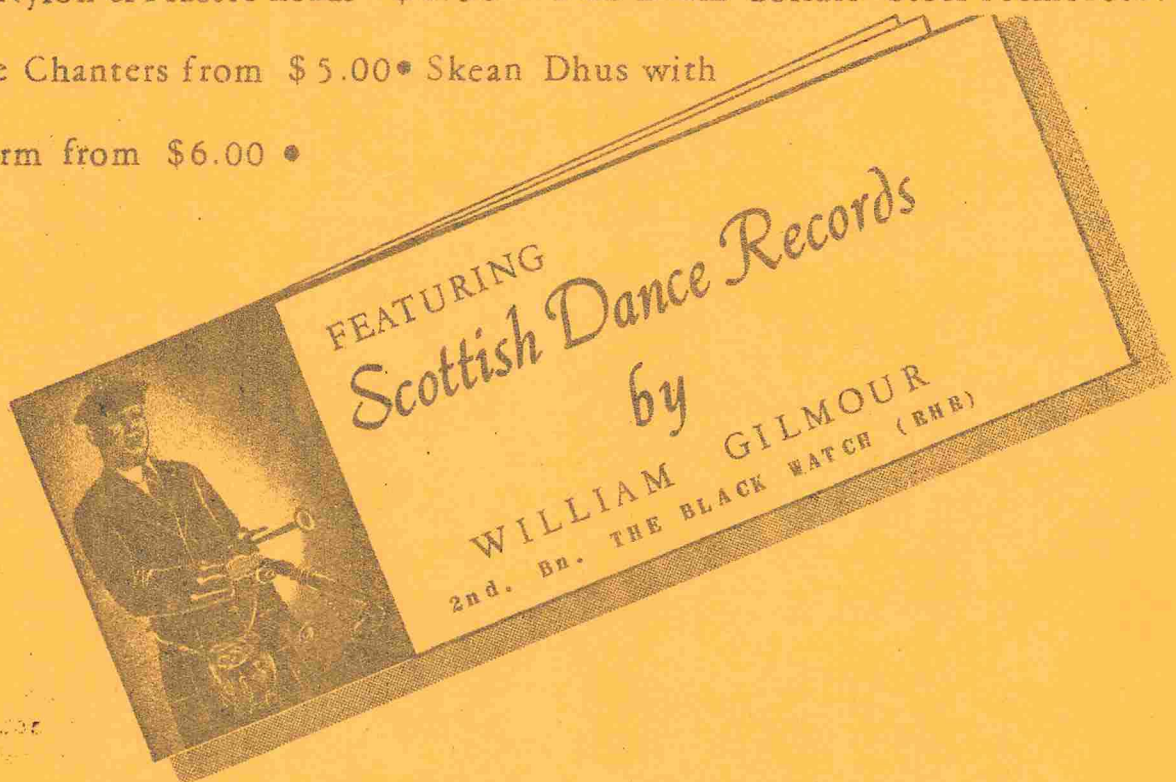
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SCOTLAND ON THE SCREEN:

On October 21st at the Vogue Theatre, an interesting and varied selection of Scottish films were presented to a capacity audience. Sponsored in Vancouver by the St. Andrew's & Caledonian Society of Vancouver, the films were part of a Canadian tour set up by The Scottish Council (Development and Industry) in consultation with the Secretary of State for Scotland. The films, which were very enthusiastically received by those present, were commented on by Mr. H. Forsyth Hardy, Director of "Films of Scotland".

"The Queen In Scotland" depicted the Royal Family visiting various places in Scotland during 1960. We saw the Queen in the Shetland Islands, the Orknies, Perth, Balmoral Castle, and at Edinburgh. Of special interest to pipers were shots taken at the Braemar Games.

"Weave Me a Rainbow", perhaps the most interesting film of the evening, described the woolen textile industry. We were shown every stage of this industry, from the birth of a lamb to the finished products, ending up in the capitals of the world. It was interesting to see how the designers used natural motifs in fashioning the textiles. The sound effects and musical background of "Weave Me a Rainbow" were especially effective.

Of special significance to pipers was the film "Over the Sea to Skye". The home of the MacCrimmons, and the site of Dunvegan Castle, Skye figures prominently in Scottish history and legend. An interesting shot in this film showed the Highland Games at Skye.

Also of considerable interest, the "Edinburgh Festival" showed several interesting shots of the Military Searchlight Tattoo.

"The Heart of Scotland" was a film, dealing with Stirlingshire, and its role in Scottish history. We saw its industry and people, and were shown how the farmers wrested fertile farmlands out of non-productive and stubborn peat bogs.

The final film of the interesting evening was "As Long as You're Young", a fresh and poetic portrayal of youth hostellers travelling around Scotland.

We would like to congratulate those responsible for the production and showing of these films. It is our hope that it will possible to show similar films regularly in the future.

BI-MONTHLY COMPETITION: DEC. 14th.

The Bi-Monthly Competition, scheduled for Dec. 7th will be held instead on December 14th. We regret this switch, but it has been made, in order that we do not conflict with the monthly competition of the B.C. Highland Dancing Association.

So that the evening might not be too long, we would ask those in the Novice Class to be ready to play by 8:00 p.m.

The competitions will be held in the gymnasium of the Seaforth Armoury.

The classes are as follows:

Novice 6/8 Marches
Juvenile Marches
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Amateur Strathspeys and Reels
Senior Amateur Piobaireachd.

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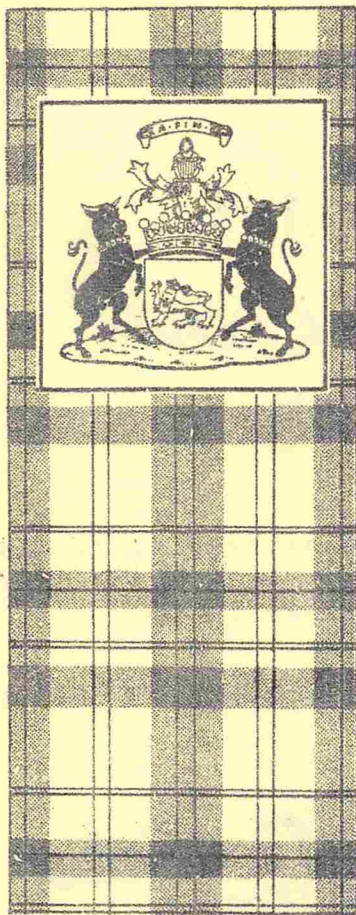
DANCE NOTE JARS AT CREMATORIUM:

(from the Vancouver Sun)

Brighton, England : Mourners at a crematorium in this seaside resort were horrified to find an advertisement for courses in Scottish dancing on the back of their hymn-sheets.

An official of the Society for the Propagation of Christian Knowledge, which supplied the sheets, said: "It does seem an unusual advertisement."

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GLENGARRY GIRLS BAND: (from the Piper and Dancer Bulletin, July, 1945)

The Glengarry Girls' Pipe Band of Vancouver, B.C., was formed by the late William A. Urquhart in 1941. The band derived its name from Glengarry in Ontario, the birthplace of the pipe major's father. Very few of the original members are with the band now, but they have been replaced by pipers and drummers trained by the band members and are carrying on in the tradition already set for them.

The Glengarries have maintained a high standard of performance, and are able to compete with men's bands from all parts of British Columbia.

On the last Saturday in July the band members travel to Victoria to compete in the annual Highland Games held there. Last summer they were very successful, being placed first in the open competition over the Vancouver City Police Band and the band of the 2nd Battalion Seaforth Highlanders. The band also competes in the annual Caledonian Games held in Vancouver on the first Saturday in August.

Several of the members play in individual competitions at these gatherings as well as in the competition sponsored by the B.C. Pipers' Association held during the winter months. Outstanding in this field are Mrs. Margaret (MacDonald) Newbold, Frances Kellas and Lorna Wilson. In the Highland Dancing competitions Mrs. Betty (Pringle) Barrett and Frances Kellas take top honors.

This band is the only self-supporting pipe band in the Province. Each girl supplies her own instrument and also her uniform. Funds are maintained with the proceeds of an annual concert for which the members of the band and guest artists provide the entertainment. The program is followed by a dance. These annual affairs become more successful each year.

The death of Pipe Major "Bill" Urquhart in January of this year was a shock to every member of the band. His untiring efforts, patience and perseverance for the good of the band as well as his excellent piping and teaching of piping will be difficult to replace. Each member is determined to keep the band together and to continue playing. They are now practicing for this summer's competitions and hope to do as well, or better than they have done in past years.

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PATRICK SANDEMAN, ESQ.

We are very pleased to announce that in next month's issue of the Newsletter we will be reprinting "Patrick Sandeman, Esq.", a recent composition by Pipe Major J.A. MacLellan, of The School of Piping, Edinburgh Castle.

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J. A. (ARNIE) STONE: (SWIMMING TRUNKS TO LONG JOHNS)

Another loss to the British Columbia piping fraternity is that of Arnie Stone, who was recently transferred by his employer to Edmonton, Alberta.

He will be greatly missed by all those who knew him, especially the Seaforths, where Arnie was once Pipe Major of the Cadet Band, and since 1960, a member of the Battalion Band. He will be missed, also, by members, parents and directors of the Optimist Junior Pipe Band, with whom Arnie had been working as a 'Junior Executive Officer', a title given to him in Hawaii by the U.S. Navy.

An active competitor for several years, Arnie is the winner of many trophies in the Amateur class.

May we wish him health and happiness in his new prairie abode, and we sincerely hope that he is 'No awa tae bide awa'.

- Albert J. Duncan -

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ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP BANQUET:

On Saturday, January 5th, 1963, (seems a long way away), we will hold our Annual Membership Banquet at the Stanley Park Sports Pavilion.

This event has been held for the last three years, and is becoming the leading social event of the piping year.

Since accomodation is limited to about 100 persons, we would suggest that you reserve your ticketsearly. All persons interested should contact the Secretary, Wm. McAdie, at HE 4-1591, and tell him the number of tickets required. First come, first serve.

Tickets will cost \$2.50 each, \$5.00 per couple.

Further plans will be announced in the next issue of the Newsletter.

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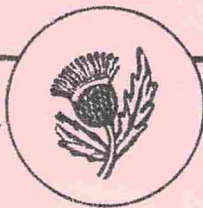
PIPE MAJOR GEORGE ALLAN

'Hornpipe'

BY PIPE MAJOR DONALD MACLEOD

The image displays a handwritten musical score for a piece titled 'Hornpipe' by Pipe Major Donald Macleod. The score is arranged in eight systems, each consisting of two staves. The notation is characteristic of traditional Scottish pipe music, featuring a series of rhythmic patterns and melodic lines. The first staff begins with a treble clef and a common time signature (C). The notation includes various note values, rests, and dynamic markings such as 'f' (forte) and 'ff' (fortissimo). The piece concludes with a double bar line and repeat dots. The handwriting is clear and legible, typical of a professional composer's manuscript.

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MEMBERS' BANQUET JANUARY 5th

