

# B. C. PIPERS' NEWSLETTER



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

NOVEMBER, 1965.

No. 67.





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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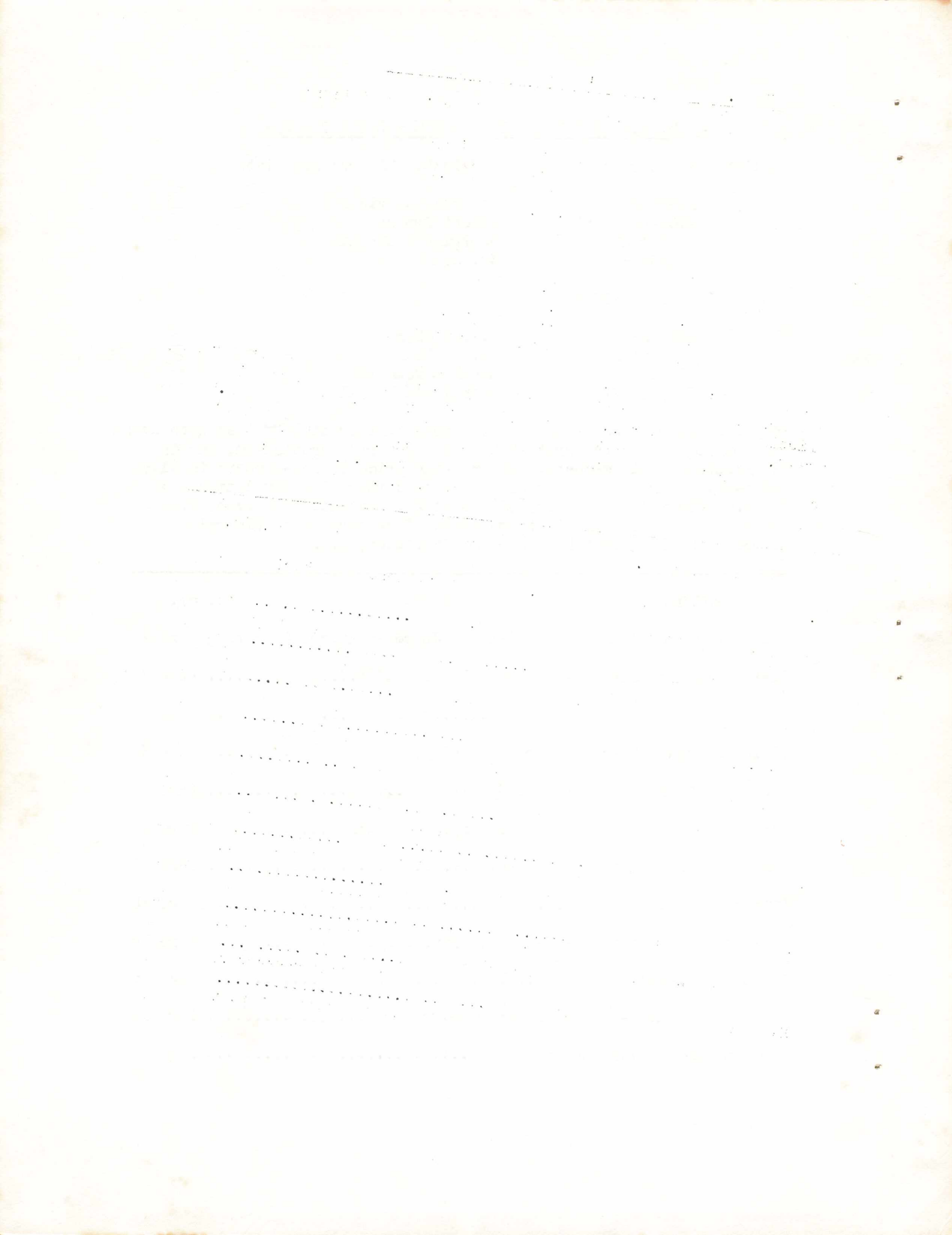
B.C. Pipers' NEWSLETTER:

EDITOR: C.I. Walker  
PUBLISHER: Wm. A. McAdie  
COLLATOR: Donald Urquhart  
SECRETARY: Georgina MacPhail

The B.C. Pipers' Newsletter is published monthly at 3288 East 27th Avenue, Vancouver, B.C. by the British Columbia Pipers' Association, and is distributed to all members. Subscription price to non-members is \$1.50 per year. Address all communications concerning the Newsletter to: The B.C. Pipers' Newsletter, 3288 East 27th Avenue, Vancouver, B.C. Address all other communications to the Secretary, B.C. Pipers' Association, 2340 East 45th Avenue, Vancouver, B.C.

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MR. HECTOR MacFADYEN, PENNYGHAEL, TO JUDGE AT ANNUAL GATHERING:

The B.C. Pipers' Association takes great pleasure in announcing that Mr. Hector MacFadyen, of Pennyghael, will be attending our Annual Gathering in 1966, as Piping Judge. Mr. MacFadyen's name is well known in Scotland, as evidenced by its frequency in the prize lists, of the premier competitions.

The Annual Gathering has been scheduled for March 11th and 12th, 1966, and will be held at the Exhibition Gardens. More details will be given at a later date.

Hector MacFadyen will be in Vancouver for most of the month of March, and the association will be arranging classes and get-togethers, of benefit to the various grades of pipers.

We are most honoured in being able to secure Mr. MacFadyen's services, and we know that his presence will serve as a vital stimulus in our piping community. It would appear that piping colonies, such as our own, more or less isolated from the activities in Scotland, from time to time need a transfusion. It is someone of Hector MacFadyen's eminence and abilities who is best able to give us this transfusion.

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BI-MONTHLY COMPETITION: NOVEMBER 19th, 1965.

Mr. John MacLeod officiated as judge at the Bi-Monthly Competition held on Friday, November 19th, 1965.

The following persons were chosen as winners:

Juvenile Old Highland Airs: (41 competitors)  
1. John MacDonald    2. Sandy Shatford    3. Heather Abel  
4. Jean Jarvis        5. Kelvin Wood        6. Bill MacAulay

Amateur Marches (1 competitor)  
1. Douglas Graham

Mr. D.R. MacDougall judged the Department contest and chose David Anderson winner of the Juvenile class.

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GENERAL MEETING: NOVEMBER 26th.

The Association will hold a General Meeting on Friday, November 26th, in the Band Room of the Seaforth Armoury. All members are requested to attend.



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PIPING RESULTS OF ARGYLLSHIRE GATHERING, OBAN - SEPTEMBER 16th, 1965.

Open Marches - The Royal Scottish Pipers' Society's Star:

1. John MacLellan, Glasgow Police
2. P.M. J.M. MacKenzie, Dunblane
3. Sgt. J.L. Wilson, Gordon Highlanders

Open Strathspeys & Reels - The Argyllshire Gathering Silver Medal:

1. A.J. Wilson, Campbeltown
2. John L. Graham, Avonbridge
3. John N. MacAskill, Glasgow

March, Strathspey and Reel (former winners)

1. P.M. J.M. MacKenzie, Dunblane
2. P.M. R. McCallum, 8th Bn. A. & S.H.
3. P.M. Donald Morrison, Aberdeen

Open Piobaireachd - Highland Society of London's Gold Medal:

1. Neil McEachern, Bruichladdich, Islay
2. P.M. Donald Morrison, Aberdeen

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THE C.W.A.C. PIPE BAND ---- MORE MEMOIRS.

"..... Once an honoured member, you are always an honoured member, even after discharge."

While I am waiting to hear from more of the girls I will write a few thoughts for this month, and offer a favourite news clipping, for it contains a splendid address.

THOUSANDS VIEW C.W.A.C. SECOND ANNIVERSARY PARADE.

More than 5,000 persons lined Parliament Hill and thousands more stood along Ottawa streets in the hot sunshine yesterday afternoon to witness the striking garrison parade of the C.W.A.C., held in honour of their second anniversary.

The 500 young women who made up the parade fell into line at Argyle Barracks, and with a motorcycle escort of red-coated mounted policemen and the C.W.A.C. Brass Band leading the way, marched through the streets to Parliament Hill.

Many were the favourable comments from onlookers, as company after company, with hair neat, uniforms spotless, and buttons shining, passed in review.

In colourful contrast to their more sombre-dressed soldier sisters, the members of the Pipe Band with tam o'shanters and plaid-covered pipes almost stole the show as they marched to the centre of the parade grounds to begin the program just as the clock in the Peace Tower struck three.

With the exception of the driver of the ambulance it was strictly an all-women affair. For the first time Ottawa heard the stirring Pipe and Brass Bands together at the head of a parade.

With the thermometer hitting close to 90 degrees, a large number of girls found standing at attention as the program proceeded a little too much for them, and at least 12 had to be carried from the parade ground.

Brigadier James Mess, V.D., Deputy Adjutant at National Defence Headquarters, who took the salute, congratulated the girls on their appearance and bearing, as well as the fine job they were doing.

"You are part and parcel of the Canadian Army, and the Army needs you for the important task you are doing", said the Brigadier. "Once an honoured member, you are always an honoured member, even after discharge".

He said that if each of the 12,000 members of the C.W.A.C. was instrumental in bringing the peace only one minute nearer, then the dreadful days of fighting would be shortened by nine days.

"You will have to build your own code, for it cannot be laid down in black and white but must spring from the thoughts and actions of all of you", he went on. "The narrow prejudice you will have to face will come, in the main, from those who are not prepared to make the sacrifices you have made".

The friendships made by the girls with other girls in uniform would be treasured as long as they lived, he believed.

With Brigadier Mess on the steps of the Parliament Building, where he took the salute following his address, were Col. F.J.G. Garneau, Commandant Ottawa Area Command, Brig. R.E.G. Roome, Capt. A. Kirkwood, Lt. Col. J.B. Kennedy, C.W.A.C., Wing Officer W. Walker, R.C.A.F., W.D.

.....

This occasion was our first official public parade in Ottawa with the Brass Band. And for their first official parade it was fitting that they should lead this very one, on the second anniversary of the C.W.A.C., Aug. 13, 1943.

After the colourful ceremony we marched back to Barracks, playing turn-about, our music the only bracing support in that stifling heat.

I have been enjoying the recollections of Lorna and Jean, little things I had forgotten too, like the shrinking uniforms, and the shoe polishing. Now I distinctly recall daubing that rich brown polish lavishly over the soles of my shoes and then solemnly polishing, with mixed feelings of honour and amazement, yet awed with the importance of the occasion. My shoes never had cleaner soles, nor walked a prouder mile.

- Cathrine Paterson -

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CANADIAN PIPE MAJOR VISITS EAGLE PIPERS' MEETING:

(from The Oban Times, Oct. 14, 1965)

Pipe Major John Stirling, of the Canadian Guards, was among visitors on October 6 to the regular weekly meeting of the Eagle Pipers' Society in the West End Hotel. He is in Edinburgh going through a course at the Army School of Piping under Pipe Major John MacLellan, the Eagle's President:.....

Players during the evening included Pipe Major Ronald Ackroyd, Pipe Major Robert Atkinsons, Tom Spiers, George Lumsden, Gavin Stoddart, Hector MacFadyen (Pennyghael), and Pipe Major John MacLellan, who gave a grand rendering of "The Groat", as the closing piobaireachd. ... "

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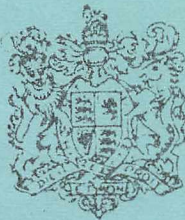
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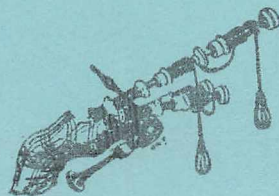
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AUSTRALIAN PIPE BAND CHAMPIONSHIPS:

Recently we received some interesting literature concerning the Australian Pipe Band Championship, to be held in Adelaide, South Australia, on March 12th, 1966. Although it is not likely that many of our readers, except those from that part of the world, will be able to attend, we felt that you would be interested to hear something of the competitions, to compare them with their local counterparts.

We are taking the following items from their announcement.

"The Adelaide Highland Games are pleased to announce the staging of the Australian Pipe Band Championships on the Adelaide Oval to coincide with the opening of the Adelaide Festival of Arts, and have pleasure in inviting your Band to participate.

PRIZE MONEY:

Grade 1	1st	150 pounds	2nd	100 pounds	3rd	75 pounds
2		100 "		75 "		50 "
3		75 "		50 "		30 "
Juvenile		20 "		10 "		

Appearance money will be paid to each Band in accordance with the following table.

Queensland & Tasmania	100 pounds
New South Wales	75 "
Victoria	60 "
South East of South Australia and Broken Hill	50 "
over 100 miles	30 "

The Games Committee will reimburse each Band 16/- per playing member of the Band competing on the Oval for a maximum of two nights. The numbers in each Band will be advised by the Marshal with the Dress Judges and confirmed by the Band's Representatives.

Contest Rules are the Australian Federation of Pipe Band Associations. It is to be noted that Grade 1 Bands must submit two sets of tunes. One set being drawn on the day of the Contest, one hour prior to your Band's time schedule to be at the Entrance Position No. 1. Grade 3 Bands are required to play a 2/4 March of 4 parts as a standing selection.

The Promoters reserve the right to refuse multiple entries should the number of entries make it necessary.

No entry fees are required for the Band Contest.

Solo Piping and Drumming contests will be held on Thursday, 10th March, and Friday, 11th March, commencing at 7:00 p.m.

Competitors may only enter in one section. Where competitors register with their respective State Associations, proof of such registration shall be produced when requested, and where applicable, they shall only play in such section as they are graded by their own State Association.

Sections:

Novice under 18 years	-	Non first prize winner in any event
Novice over 18 years	-	Non first prize winner in any event
Junior	-	Under 18 years
Sub-Intermediate	-	Non first prize winner in any Intern. or open event or in three sub-int. events
Intermediate	-	Non first prize winner in any open event

Entry fees:

Novice under 18 years	-	20¢ (2/-)
Novice over 18 years	-	20¢ (2/-)
Junior	-	20¢ (2/-)
Sub-Intermediate	-	20¢ (2/-)
Intermediate	-	40¢ (4/-)
Open	-	50¢ (5/-)

Prizes:

		1st	2nd	3rd
Novice under 18 years - Air & March	-	\$3.00	2.00	1.00
Novice over 18 years - Air & March	-	3.00	2.00	1.00
Junior - Air, March, Strathspey & Reel	-	4.00	2.00	1.00
Sub-Intermediate - Air, March, S. & R.	-	4.00	2.00	1.00
Intermediate - Air, March, S. & R.	-	5.00	3.00	2.00
Piobaireachd	-	10.00	6.00	4.00
Open - Air, March, S. & R., Jig	-	10.00	6.00	4.00
Piobaireachd	-	20.00	12.00	8.00

Similar events are offered for Solo Drumming, in the Novice under 18 years, Junior, Sub-Intermediate, Intermediate and Open Classes.

Drummers must be accompanied by a piper.

Side and Tenor drummers who wish to play as a team should forward entries together and mark accordingly, otherwise they may be paired at the discretion of the promoters.

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# The CLANSMEN

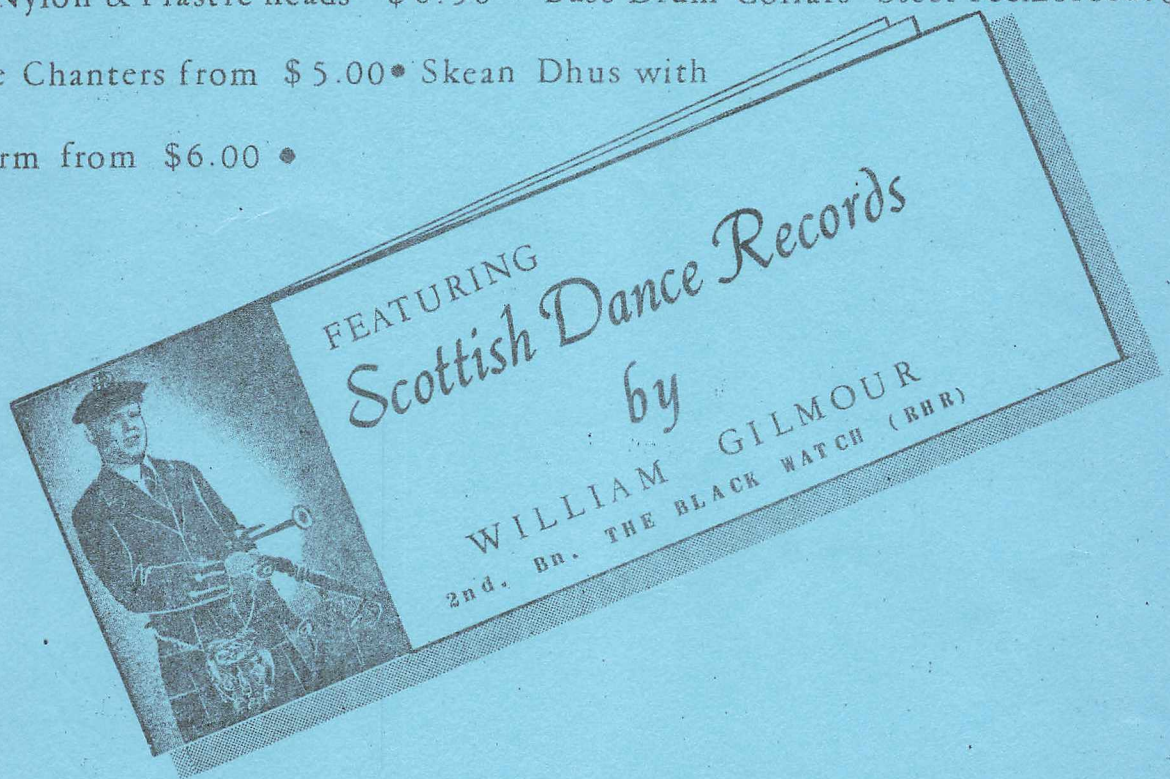
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LETTER FROM JOHN WILSON, TORONTO, ONT.

PIPERS' SOCIETY OF ONTARIO (HAMILTON BRANCH) 2nd NORTH AMERICAN  
MINIATURE PIPE BAND CHAMPIONSHIP:

I had heard nothing about this event, and as it wasn't even advertised I had assumed that it wasn't going to be held this year. Suddenly, bang!, it was on, and I was told I was one of the piping judges. The invitation Pibroch competition was held in the men's mess of Hamilton Armourites while the Highland Dancing competitions were run off on the main floor. The accoustics in the men's mess were very good although the heat was a bit high (I actually saw the perspiration dripping off some of the competitor's faces) Nine players competed and there was no hesitation on Reay MacKay's part in agreeing with me that P.M. William Gilmour of the Black Watch was the winner. He played "The Desperate Battle" in fine style on a really brilliant instrument which kept in perfect tune from start to finish. Reay and I differed slightly on 2nd and 3rd and when our total points were averaged a tie resulted which seemed very fair to me. The importance of having one's instrument keep in perfect tune for the whole Pibroch was strikingly emphasised in this event. P.M. Chris Anderson played "The Lament for Captain MacDougall", and he played the Urlar or ground in such beautiful style that I felt the tears coming to my eyes.\* By the start of the Taorluath the drones were slightly out and were further out by the start of the Cruinluath. When this happens the spell is broken for both performer and audience, and the player tends to hurry the tune in order to get it finished before the drones go too far out. Chris however, didn't hurry. John Goodenow, Detroit, played "The Battle of the Pass of Crieff", a tune I've never heard before in Canada. John made a very good job if it, I thought, but I agreed with Reay MacKay's criticism that from the Dithis onwards there wasn't enough change in tempo. I think the singling should have been played slower, leaving room for a faster doubling and a still faster trebling. This, of course, calls for a stern control of the tempo. Perhaps John hurried when his drones started to go out. Anyway he deserves every credit for playing something quite different from what we usually hear. Ken Eller was the best of the rest with "The Massacre of Glencoe" played on an excellent pipe, but hurried so much, that the beauty of the tune was lost.

The Invitation March, Strathspey & Reel (one event) was held on the platform on the main floor of the Armouries after the dancing was over. According to my points, this produced five outstanding performances with very little between them. Young Sandy Dewar played as I knew he could play, and was worthy of his place in the prize list.

The open Miniature Band competitions were very good but rather spoiled by the poor accoustics. Last year the Bands marched from the East towards the West and formed circle and I heard the piping fine (although the audience didn't). This year the Bands marched from the South towards the North and formed circle and I didn't year the Piping so well, and neither did the audience. It must have something to do with the accoustics.



Eleven Bands took part and the competition in the Open event for the Championship of North America was very close, with (according to my book) the City of Toronto # 2, winning by a short head. Here are the results:

Invitation Pibroch:

1. P.M. Billy Gilmour	97 pts.	prize - \$50.00
2. Chris Anderson )	94 $\frac{1}{2}$ "	30.00
John Goodenow )	94 $\frac{1}{2}$ "	20.00

March, Strathspey & Reel:

1. P.M. Billy Gilmour	95 pts.	Prize - \$50.00
2. Sandy Dewar	94 $\frac{3}{4}$	30.00
3. P.M. Chris Anderson	94 $\frac{1}{4}$	20.00

Best Bass Drummer:

1. Jim Orr, City of Toronto	\$10.00
-----------------------------	---------

Best Drum Major:

1. Norm MacKenzie, 48th Highlanders	\$10.00
-------------------------------------	---------

"A" Class Bands:

1. City of Toronto # 2	- \$130.00	89 $\frac{3}{4}$ pts.
2. Clan MacFarlane # 2	- 70.00	88 $\frac{3}{4}$ "
3. St. Andrews	50.00	88 $\frac{1}{4}$ "

"B" Class Bands:

1. St. Andrews	50.00	88 $\frac{1}{4}$ "
2. Highland House	35.00	8 $\frac{1}{2}$

Best Drum Corps:

1. Clan MacFarlane # 1	\$30.00
------------------------	---------

Piping Judges: Reay MacKay & John Wilson, Toronto.  
Drumming Judge - Fred Fisher, Toronto.

\* This reminds me of a story told by the late Archie MacPhedran of Glasgow. He was competing in a big Piobaireachd competition, and the three judges were all old timers with long white beards. When it came Archie's turn to play, he was in such great form, and his Pipe was going so sweetly, that he had barely finished the first line of the Urlar when the judges started to sniff and to surreptitiously wipe away the odd tear. By the time he neared the end of his tune all three judges were bawling unashamedly and wiping away the copious flow of tears with their long white beards. This so affected Archie that the tears streamed down his face and then down the blowpipe and he had to tilt the chanter horizontally in front of him to avoid making bubbly notes where they shouldn't be at all. Needless to say he won 1st prize, even though the judges notes were useless, having been turned into a soggy pulp. This of course was all according to Archie.

- John Wilson -



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- Highland Fling..... 8 Steps
- Highland Fling..... For Beginners
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- Sword Dance ... 3 Slow and 2 Quick
- Sword Dance ... 4 Slow and 1 Quick
- Seann Triubhas.... 4 Slow and 2 Quick, 6 Slow and 2 Quick
- Reel O' Tulloch .. 6 Slow and 2 Quick
- Strathpey and Half Tulloch.....Irish Jig.....
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## BI-MONTHLY COMPETITION - DECEMBER 17th, 1965.

December's Bi-Monthly competition will be held on December 17th, in the Gymnasium, of the Seaforth Armoury. The Events will be Novice 6/8 Marches and Junior Jigs.

All competitors should contact the Secretary at least one day before the competition, if they have not already entered for the entire year.

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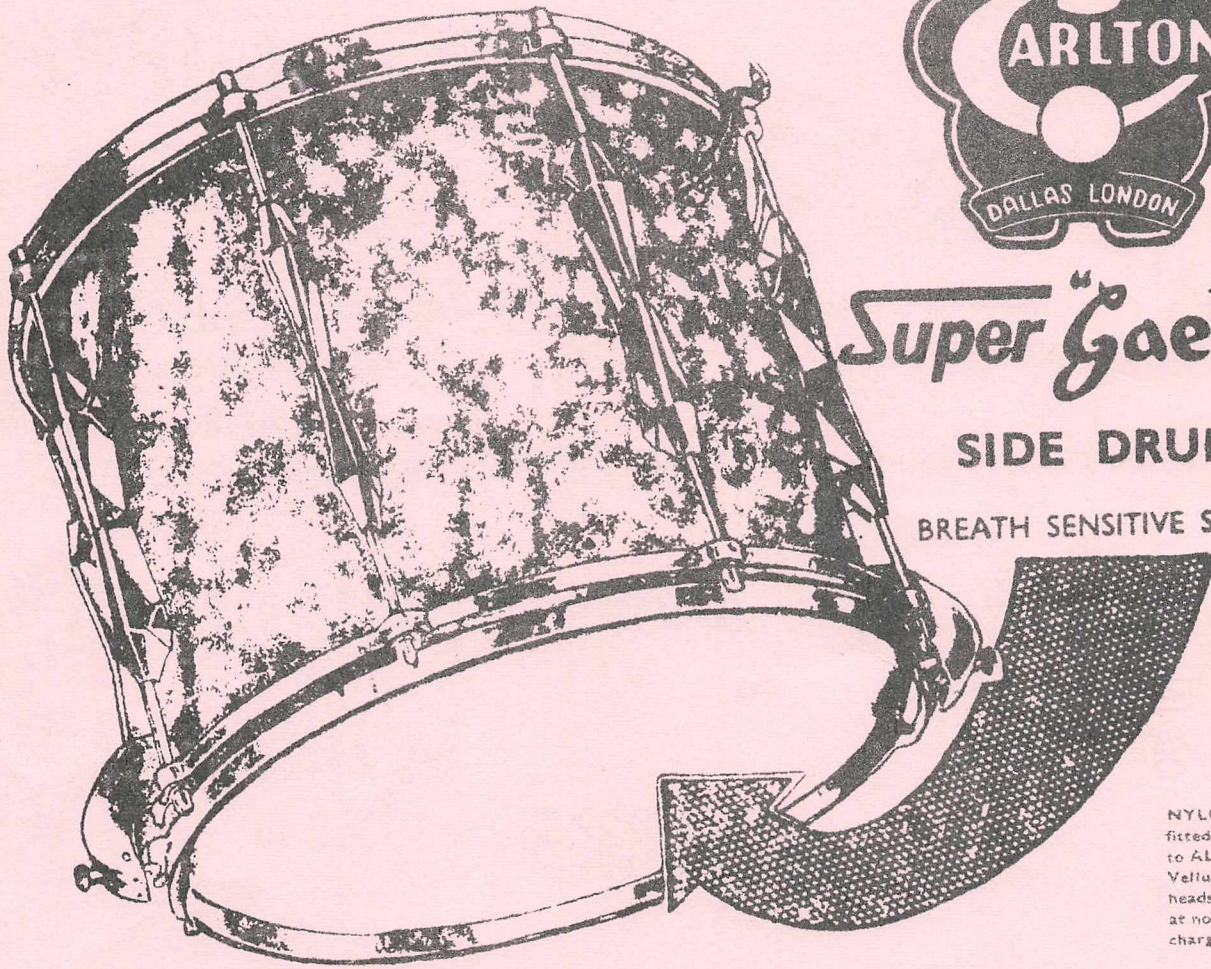
## HIGHLAND PIPERS' SOCIETY (from The Oban Times, October 28, 1965)

Bailie Hugh Macpherson, Edinburgh's senior magistrate, made his first appearance as the new president of the Highland Pipers' Society at the society's meeting in the Drummond Hall of Lothian Road Church, on Monday, October 18. It was the opening of a 60th season, for the society was established in 1906 and is, as Hon. Pipe Major Duncan R. Cameron reminded members, the oldest piping society in Scotland.

They were fortunate in getting such a prominent public figure as president, Pipe Major Cameron said. He was the successor of many notable presidents, among them, Pipe Major William Ross, P.M. Duff and Donald MacLean.

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THE HONEST TRUTH - BY THE PIPER O' GLENCOE:

(from The Sunday Post, August 22nd, 1965)

As long as anyone can remember, there's been a piper in Glencoe, playing marches, laments and pibrochs for tourists. Old John MacDonald, the original piper, who stood at the gorge in the shadow of Buchaille Etive Mhor, died last February. But the tradition goes on. Here, his successor, a grand nephew, tells of the life -

What's your name and where do you come from?

My name's Alec McFee and I was born and brought up near Perth. I'm 29, and I've been piping in the glen every summer for 12 years. My father played in the Trossachs for tourists for over 40 years. My great-uncle was the original piper of Glencoe. He came here for many years with his grand-daughters. He died last February. I'm carrying on the tradition.

Are you actually a member of one of the tinker clans?

Yes. The McFees have been on the road for hundreds of years.

Where do your travels as a piper take you?

We start off in May at the Trossachs. Then we move on to Oban, Glencoe, Inverness and Braemar for the games. As the season finishes, we move slowly south again.

Did you have any schooling?

I went to school until I was 14, but only for six months of each year. I was out on the road every summer, but I can read, write and count as well as any.

How much do you earn in an average week?

That depends on two things - the weather, and how you dress. If it's a good sunny day, people will stop. If it's raining, I could blow till I burst and wouldn't earn a penny. But if I have a week of fine weather, I can earn over 20 pounds in six days. I never play on Sundays. And you've got to dress well. I've got a neat Highland rigout and there's no doubt it's a great help. If you don't look neat, people want nothing to do with you.

Who are the most generous tippers?

The English, despite all the stories about wealthy Yanks. I once got a quid from an Englishman who was touring with his family. All he wanted me to do was play the pipes so he could take pictures. One Yank gave me a tip of a dollar bill. We'd a devil of a job to get it changed before my wife finally found a grocer in Oban who gave us seven bob for it.

On the whole, are folk more generou now than, say, five years ago?

That's a very difficult question, but I suppose they must be. My father and great-uncle were lucky if they made 15 bob a day. Of course, there wasn't nearly so much traffic on the roads then.



Which tune is the favourite of people who stop?

They all like the well-known marches. But the top choice is "Scotland the Brave." Everybody knows it, even the English and foreign tourists. Then there's a tie between the "Glendaruel Highlanders" and the "Green Hills of Tyrol." You know them better as Andy Stewart's songs, "Campbeltown Loch" and the "Scottish Soldier".

What was your most unusual request to play a particular tune?

Last year two chaps with cameras and a tape recorder asked me to play a tune that had a connection with the glen. I gave them "John MacDonald of Glencoe" while they filmed me. Afterwards they told me they were making a film to be shown in America to boost Scottish tourism over there. It gave me a thrill to think thousands of folk in the States would see and hear me playing the pipes as one of the attractions of Scotland.

How long do you spend by the roadside each day?

I generally start about 10 in the morning when the tourists start coming in. I go on to about five at night. That's about seven hours. It doesn't sound much, but believe me, it's a devil of a long time to play the pipes.

What's been your most dramatic experience in the glen?

I remember I was playing up the gorge some years ago. One of those thick Highland mists fell like a blanket over the mountains. But the road and valley were clear, and I kept playing my pipes. About two hours later two young chaps staggered off the hills and thanked me for saving their lives! It turned out they'd been lost in the mist. But they'd heard my pipes, and slowly made their way towards me and safety. We'd a dram or two to celebrate that one!

What's the worst weather you've experienced in the glen?

Even in summer, the weather in Glencoe can be ferocious. I remember one night a couple of years ago when one of the wildest storms I've known hit us. We turned the caravan end-on to the wind. But still it was nearly overturned by the gusts. Finally, we'd to tie it down with ropes weighed with rocks. And the rain! It was like a solid sheet. A second after you stepped out of doors you were soaked. I'm glad I'm not here in winter. Summer's bad enough.

You must meet thousands of folk every year. Which of them do you remember most?

That's easy. Early this year an American offered me a job with a pipe band in the States. He told me to write to him when I'd made up my mind. He's already taken quite a few Scots lads over. If I'd been single, I'd have gone like a shot. But I wasn't sure how I'd get on with the wife and family. I'm still thinking about it.

Where do you stay while you're in the glen?

I've a caravan in the lay-by; It's a sheltered spot, and there's a nearby burn to draw our water from.



How do you get a bath?

I swim in a pool in the river, or in the sea if I'm near enough.

Do you pay tax on your summer earnings?

No, I don't pay tax. Over the whole year, I don't think I earn enough. After all, I've a wife and three children, and I don't get a steady wage. I don't pay National Insurance, either. But with all the fresh air, we're a healthy lot.

Do you draw National Assistance in winter?

No, I don't. I earn my money and always have done.

What do you do in the winter?

Well for two months in the autumn I contract at tattle-lifting. I get paid so much an acre. If I put my back into it, I can make as much money from that as I do from piping. After that's finished, I sell firewood round the doors in Glasgow and places like Bishopbriggs. I get the wood straight from the sawmills, chop it up into bundles and take it round on my wee lorry.

Did you vote at the last election?

No, neither my wife or I are registered voters. We don't stay anywhere long enough. But, to tell the truth, politics don't interest or affect me very much.

Have you ever been outside Scotland?

Oh, yes. I've been down to England a few times. But I've never been abroad, not even during my National Service.

What's your most treasured possession?

My bagpipes. They were my father's before me and he played them with the Black Watch in 1914. He was all over the Western Front during the war. I learned to play them when I was 10. They are donkey's years old, and still in first-class condition. Aye, it's strange to think pipes that played on the battlefields of France are still ringing over the mountains of Glencoe today.

Subscription rates to the Newsletter will be increased in the coming year. All subscriptions paid in advance will be on the basis of the current rates - \$1.50 per year. Why not save the increase, and get your subscriptions in advance?



DIDDLEING ABOUT WITH BAGPIPES: (from "Drone and Drum", Western Ontario Pipe Band Association)

There are many people who like bagpipe music and who enjoy having a fling at the pipes without being too terribly serious about their little pleasure. There is much that can be said in favour of not taking the instrument or ourselves too seriously.

Probably there are a majority of pipers and would-be-pipers with this approach to the noble instrument. This is not to infer that such players may be inferior or are lacking in appreciation of the finer points, but that only they are unable or unwilling to devote themselves to practice with the dedication of the competitive devotee. Such players not only don't play piobaireachd - they are usually entirely indifferent to it - as it requires a great deal of technical knowledge to appreciate this severely stylized and formal form of musical expression. This having been said - there is a large body of wonderful pipe music that is too often neglected, and is only waiting to be explored - and waiting to be played.

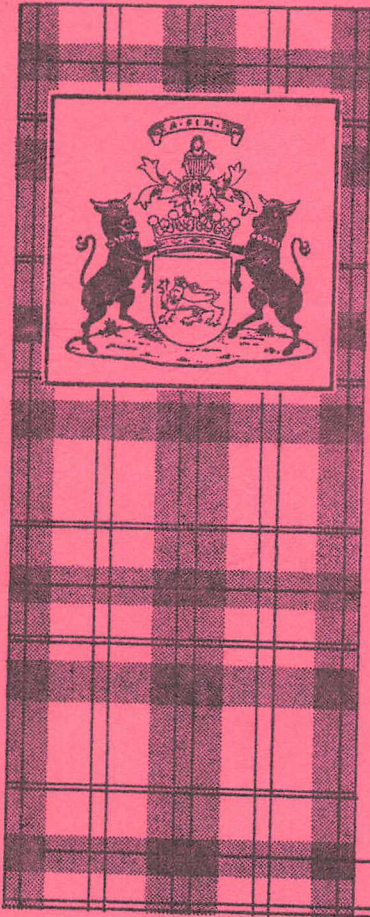
The musical repertoire of the bagpipe covers a wide spectrum, and it would seem that many pipers might profit in enjoyment by delving into the mysteries of the jig, the reel, the hornpipe, slow marches and slow airs. Much of this music is considered light, or easy, and yet is very good for developing the finger and is a delight to the untutored ear of the general public. This music is largely ignored in competitive piping, but it provides a true measure of the scope of the bagpipe, and could conceivably lend itself to competitive instincts if someone were rash enough to try it.

Fun pipers of the World - let us unshackle ourselves from the formal march, strathspey and reel combination. Let us unlimber our fingers on the hornpipe and the jig - combine slow airs with them as simple setts; perhaps we could form quartettes or miniature bands to play for dancers and for concerts. Let us entertain the public with the bagpipe, with music the public can appreciate and understand.

If you will recall the relatively rare occasions when you have heard a piper play a few jigs or such at a party - you will recall the enthusiastic response from the people present - and their enjoyment of it. This music looks much more formidable than it is to play. It is no more difficult than the usual band tunes, and yet it has a wonderful soul-filling sound - with lots of complicated looking fingering that ain't as hard as it looks. Try Paddy's Creeks or the Boys of Bluehill and you'll see what I mean, as examples of a jig and a hornpipe.

Playing this music is fun, and it is very good practice for the piper. So - come on - pipers - work on a few of these tunes. You'll be glad you did. And who knows - perhaps this will become so popular that some clot will think up contests for this kind of thing? ? ?





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