

B. C. PIPERS' NEWSLETTER



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the British Columbia Pipers' Association**

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

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RULES CHANGES RE NOVICE, JUVENILE & JUNIOR PIPERS:

After lengthy discussion over a period of several months, the rules concerning Novice, Juvenile and Junior classifications were finally changed on October 11th, at a meeting of the Board of Directors. Faced with the situation of larger and larger entries in the Novice and Juvenile classes, with a degree of reluctance on the part of many of the competitors to move ahead into senior classes, it was decided that steps would have to be taken to ensure that the senior members in each class would be automatically advanced into the next class. Undoubtedly there will be some unhappy competitors affected by the changes, but it is hoped that the over-all improvement in the classes will be evident to all concerned.

The rule change concerning Novice pipers, takes effect at the Annual Gathering, March, 17th & 18th, 1967. This rule reads:

"A Novice Piper shall be required to move up to the Juvenile class, if he or she places first (1st) or second (2nd) at any major competition during the course of one competition year, commencing with the B.C. Pipers' Association Indoor Gathering, and terminating immediately following the last major games of the season."

The rule change regarding the Juvenile and Junior classes commences with the 1966/67 Bi-Monthly season, and is based on the 1966 results at all major competitions. This rule is:

"All Juvenile and Junior pipers placing first (1st), second (2nd) or third (3rd) at any major competition during the immediate year past, shall be required to move into the next higher class commencing with the first competition of the new season".

As a result of these changes, 22 pipers have been raised from Juvenile to Junior, and at least 10 have been raised from Junior to Amateur. These competitors are as follows:

Juvenile to Junior:

Colin Abel	Bruce McKeddie
Dennis Collister	Ron MacKinnon
David Don	John MacLeod
Michael Evans	Sandy Shatford
Bob Gallaher	Don Smith
Neil Hunter	Mary Swift
Jean Jarvis	Donald Taylor
Bill MacAulay	Janice Taylor
John MacDonald	Kelvin Wood
Murray MacDonald	John Wright
Alex MacInnes	Ronald Skopsev. Name: rs

Junior to Open Amateur

Robert Heggie
Dal Jessiman
Laurie McIlvena
Sherea Barwell
Barbara MacArthur
Kelly Hagan
Donald MacMillan
Harold Senyk, Victoria
Stephen Geddes "
Raymond Irvine

GENERAL MEETING, OCTOBER 29th.

In spite of the poor attendance at the General Meeting held on October 29th, important ground was covered by those few members present.

It was announced that the judge for the 1967 Annual Gathering, to be held on March 17th and 18th will be Pipe Major William Gilmour, now of Barrie, Ontario. We are pleased that Pipe Major Gilmour will be able to visit with us, and hope that we will have an opportunity of hearing this highly accomplished performer in action.

It is planned to hold the Annual Gathering once again in the Exhibition Gardens, due to the favourable response this year.

A 1967 Pipers' Flight to Scotland is planned, departure date being August 26th, and returning date October 1st or 6th. This will be a 5 or 6 week stay this time. Rod MacVicar, the President, has been appointed flight organiser for 1967.

- 0 -

GENERAL MEETING, NOVEMBER 25th, 1966.

The next General Meeting will be held on November 25th, in the usual place, commencing at 8:00 p.m.

Following the meeting, a piping session will be held, and anyone is invited to bring his pipes and play his favourite tunes to the assembled members. A members are asked to attend.

- 0 -

CEILIDH - OCTOBER 14th, 1966.

The Annual Ceilidh for the Bi-Monthly competitors was held in the Seaforth Armoury on Friday, October 14th. It was gratifying to see several members of our Association in attendance along with many parents of our young competitors. However, there was a very noticeable absence of the competitors themselves. In fact, about 75% of the prizes and attendance pins were not picked up that evening.

Our President, Rod MacVicar acted as Master of Ceremonies, and gave our prizes and pins. It must have been uncomfortable to him to call out name after name and be greeted by a dull silence. Perhaps we should make attendance at the Ceilidh a part of the year for awarding pins.

The programme included vocal selections by Murray Shoolbraid and Catherine Paterson, accompanied by Margaret Bagnall, Highland dancing by Donna Fraser accompanied by Wm. Lamont, violin selections by Miss May Bruce, accompanied by Margaret Bagnall, and piping selections by John A. MacLeod and Laurie McIlvena. Refreshments were served following the program.

BI-MONTHLY COMPETITION - OCTOBER 21st, 1966.

The first Bi-Monthly Competition of the 1966/67 seasons was held in the Gymnasium of the Seaforth Armoury Friday, October 21st, for Novice Marches and Junior Strathspeys & Reels. A good turnout of competitors, parents and friends were on hand to enjoy a very fine evening of piping. It was a pleasure to see more new faces in the Novice Class of 30, some of the new ones attacking their first attempt with great vigor.

Mr. Wm. Lockie was the Judge of piping for the evening, and chose the following winners:

Novice Marches:

1. Linda Freshwater
2. Drew Heggie
3. Tim Noot
4. Ian Cameron
5. Ken Ringham
6. Cindy Chambers

Junior Strathspeys & Reels:

1. Sandy Shatford
2. Bob Callaher
3. John MacLeod
4. Colin Abel
5. Donald Taylor

Mr. Jas. Earl was Department judge for the evening, and selected the following persons in each class:

- Novice - Ken Ringham
Junior - Ron MacKinnon

The next Bi-Monthly competition will be on November 18th, starting at 7:30 p.m. The events will be Juvenile Old Highland Airs and Amateur Marches.

We are looking for some help from a couple of members or friends to act as stewards at the Bi-Monthly competitions. The task is a very important one, and if you would like to give a hand, call the Secretary.

- 0 -

Our best wishes are extended to Mrs. Mary Isdale MacNab, prominent Highland Dancing teacher, and widow of the late Allan MacNab, Past President of the B.C. Pipers' Association. Mrs. MacNab, who has been unwell for some time, is presently recuperating at home. We know that all of our members wish her a good recovery and send her their fondest greetings.

- 0 -

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THE SEATTLE PIPE BAND - SWEET SKIRLING FOR 50 YEARS:

(from The Seattle Times, October 9th, 1966)

Fifty years ago an old-country Scotsman inflated the sheepskin bag of his bagpipes, barked a command and the brand-new Seattle Pipe Band stepped off to the first tune of its life. Next Saturday evening the band will commemorate that event with a gala gathering for members and former members at the Seattle Elks Club.

The Scot who directed the organization 50 years ago was the late John Ironside, a piper of renown throughout the Pacific Northwest and Western Canada. Ironside skirled his way through parts of South Africa and India as a piper in the British Army before coming here. He wore the medals he received doing his army service with quiet pride.

Today the Seattle Pipe Band is directed by Pipe Major James McNeill, a native of Glasgow who studied the pipes under one of the great teachers of Scotland. McNeill came here in 1953 and has been associated with the band since then.

The Seattle Pipe Band is the oldest piping aggregation and one of the oldest Scottish organizations in the Pacific Northwest. Many of the present day Scottish activities which attract audiences to Seattle from many points in and outside the state, such as the Burns Concerts and the annual Highland Games, owe much of their success to the efforts of its members. Throughout the spring and summer months the band, its members proudly wearing the same MacKenzie tartan which distinguished the group 50 years ago, can be seen in parades and community festivals throughout the state.

ARGYLLSHIRE GATHERING GAMES, OBAN: SEPTEMBER 15th, 1966.

(from The Oban Times, Sept. 22nd, 1966)

The organisers of the Argyllshire Gathering Games at Oban must last week have heaved an audible sigh of relief. After several days of heavy rain, Thursday dawned bright and clear, a perfect day of brilliant sunshine for one of the oldest Highland gatherings in Scotland and in many ways, one of the most spectacular.

The Argyllshire Gathering is one largely pervaded by traditions, which give it a sense of style. There is a certain formality in which the spectator feels himself to be a participant. The day begins with the march of the stewards of the Gathering from Station Square to the games field off Soroba Road. A mellow September sun on Thursday warmed spectators crowding into Argyll Square shortly before nine to view this ritual procession.

As the roll was called by one of the stewards, Colonel H.L.R. Macneal Yr. of Ugadale, and Mr. Kenneth A. MacKinnon, the gathering secretary, with military correctness, the pipers who would compete in the day's events were each presented with their tickets. Then the parade formed up and with 40 pipers playing "The Campbells Are Coming" and "The Glendaruel Highlanders" (the same tunes are always played) moved off through Argyll Square, down Combie Street and then along Soroba Road to the games field. At its head, in kilt, plaid and bonnets tagged with clan crests, were this year's stewards, Brig. I.M. Stewart of Achnacone, Colonel Macneal, the Captain of Dunstaffnage, Mr. Ilay M. Campbell Yr. of Succorth, Mr. Neil T. Macdonald of Barguillan, and Major J.P.T. Mellor, Knipoch.

At the field itself thousands of spectators from all parts of the country - many travelled from the islands in special boats arranged by MacBraynes - thronged the hillside which forms a natural terracing and packed the stand. Bright sunshine, blue skies, cotton wool clouds and a multiplicity of tartans produced a blaze of colour which brought joy to every spectator who carried a camera loaded with colour film. No exception was Mr. Winfield Parks, Washington, who was there "shooting" the games for his magazine "The National Geographic." "This is real Ektachrome light," enthused Mr. Park, whose battery of Nikons must have made every amateur snaphooter green with envy.

The piping events attracted some of the finest exponents in the country and 31 of them vied for the Argyllshire Gathering Silver Medal for open marches, 30 for the Royal Scottish Pipers' Society's Star for open strathspeys and reels and 15 for the march, strathspey and reel confined to previous first prize winners at the gathering.

The silver medal went to John N. MacAskill, Glasgow, who gave a very fine performance indeed. Winner of the star was John MacFadyen, whose brother Duncan the day before had won the Highland Society of London gold medal for piobaireachd. John played "Tulloch Corm" and "The Sheepwife". Second place went to John MacLellan of the Glasgow Police. Placed first

in the march, strathspeys and reels confined to former winners was that remarkable piper, Donald MacPherson, Westwood. Anything less than a flawless performance from this superb exponent of the bagpipes would come as a distinct shock to his many admirers. On the afternoon prior to the games Donald won the cup presented by the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders for open piob-aireachd with a brilliant rendering of "The MacDougall's Gathering".

Winner of the local marches was a late entry, Piper Bill MacLean, Dunoon, a member of the band of the 1st A. and S.H. His tune was "Lord Alexander Kennedy". The local strathspeys and reels were won by A.J. MacNeill, Oban, who shared with Piper MacLean the cup for the best all round performance in the local piping competitions.

Without doubt the highlight of the games was the splendid performance given by the Pipes and Drums and regimental band of the 1st Bn. A. and S.H., who gave selections on the field during the games. The excellent playing of these two bands which had a total membership of 60, was matched only by their fine deportment. As the bands "marched past" at the end of their last selection the salute was taken by Sir Charles H.F. Maclean of Duart, Bt., Lord Lieutenant of Argyll.

Marches:

1. John N. MacAskill, Glasgow
2. P.M. J.M. MacKenzie, Dunblane
3. John MacFadyen, Portree

Strathspeys and Reels:

1. John MacFadyen,
2. John A. MacLellan, City of Glasgow Police
3. Duncan MacFadyen, Johnstone

March, Strathspeys & Reel: (former winners)

1. D. MacPherson, Westwood
2. Seumas MacNeill, Bearsden
3. P.M. J.A. MacKenzie

Marches, local:

1. Billy MacLean, Dunoon
2. A.J. MacNeill, Oban
3. W.D. MacLean, Tiree

Strathspeys & Reels, local:

1. A.J. MacNeill,
2. Billy MacLean
3. Brian N. Hughes

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ROUND THE GAMES WITH JOHN WILSON:

SYRACUSE, AUGUST 13th, 1966.

At 2:00 p.m. in downtown Syracuse the day before the Games, I was waiting with my youngest boy for a bus to take us to Syracuse Zoo, and hailstones the size of marbles were bouncing off the streets. Luckily, Saturday turned out to be a perfect day and a crowd of 4,000 turned out to see the Games. There was a large entry in the under 18 class and they were slow in coming forward.

Alex. McNeill and I managed to finish all the solo Piping events before the Band Contests started. The City of Toronto Pipe Band added to its laurels by giving another excellent performance and won 1st prize in the March, Strathspeys & Reel competition and also 1st prize in the Slow March event. In the latter, highest piping points gave the edge to the Toronto band. In the class "B" March, Strathspeys & Reels, St. Andrews of Detroit was an easy first and should make the class "A" event more interesting next year.

In the two Open Solo Piping events, Chris Anderson played well as usual to win both firsts. Gail Brown easily won the under 14 March, and J. Noble was a good winner in the two under 18 events.

The massed bands put on an excellent show at the conclusion of the Games, and I enjoyed several cold beers without a single argument of any kind whatsoever; surely a record.

March Under 14:

1. Gail Brown 2. Ron Peers

March Under 18:

1. J. Noble 2. J. Sutherland

Strathspey & Reels Under 18:

1. J. Noble 2. J. Sutherland

Open Marches:

1. C. Anderson 2. G. Tuck 3. K. Eller

Open Strathspeys & Reels:

1. C. Anderson 2. G. Tuck 3. A. Cairns

Open Drumming:

1. J. Kirkwood 2. F. Fisher

Drum Major: - Norm Mackenzie

- "A" Bands - March, Strathspey & Reel:
1. City of Toronto 96 points
 2. Clan MacFarlane 95 3/4 "
 3. Worcester 94 3/4 "
 4. St. Thomas 94 5/8 "

- "B" Bands - March, Strathspey & Reel:
1. St. Andrews 95 1/2 "
 2. Cameron Highlanders 90 3/4 "
 3. Wilmington 89 "
 4. Manchester 88 1/2 "

LIGONIER - AUGUST 28, 1966.

The solo competitions started promptly a few minutes after 10:00 A.M., and were finished before 2:00 p.m. This was the best attempt at running outdoor competitions properly that I've seen for a long time. The competitors didn't catch on very well, but they'll know better next time and the events move along much better for everyone concerned.

I listed to some very good playing in the three solo competitions I judged - 15 & Under March, 18 & Under Strathspey & Reel, and Open March. The winners of the 18 & under event were actually good enough for open competition. In fact, a young lad who usually competes in the 18 & under class, won 1st prize in the Open March. He generally makes mistakes, but this time he got through his piece perfectly and probably surprised himself as much as he did me.

The day was hot and sunny and the only "fly in the ointment" was in the plural; the flies were really vicious and I was glad I had a spray bomb to protect my ankles. The attendance was very good; around 5,000.

14 & Under Marches:

1. Larry Jones
2. Pam. Silver
3. Jas. Stewart

14 & Under Strathspeys & Reels:

1. Larry Jones
2. Jas. Stewart
3. Angus MacLeod

18 & Under Marches:

1. Jas. Fryer
2. Trudy Campbell
3. Robt. Hilbert

18 & Under Strathspeys & Reels:

1. Trudy Campbell
2. John Noble
3. Jas. Fryer

Open Marches:

1. Doug Ross
2. Gord Tuck
3. Noel Slegle & Ken Eller (tie)

Open Strathspeys & Reels:

1. Gord Tuck
2. Ken Eller
3. John Goodenow

"A" Class March, Strathspey & Reel:
1. Clan MacFarlane 96 1/2 points
2. St. Thomas 95 1/4 "

"B" Class March, Strathspey & Reel:
1. St. Andrews 90 1/4 "
2. Wilmington 88 1/2 "
3. D & D 83 1/2 "

Open Slow March:
1. Clan MacFarlane 97 1/4 "
2. St. Thomas 96 "
3. St. Andrews 93 1/4 "

Lou. Davidson Memorial Competition:
1. MacDonald 78 1/4 "
2. Gordon Highlanders 77 "

Drumming:
1. Ernie Rookard 2. John Kirkwood, Jr. 3. Jerry Quig

(P.S. Have you seen the advertisement for my Book 3? It may interest you.)

- John Wilson -

BRIGADIER MACLEAN TAKES THE SALUTE AT HIS LAST TATTOO: (Oban Times, Sept. 15th)

The end of the festival last Saturday brought the end of the tattoo, and with it a fitting retirement tribute to the man most responsible for its world renown, Brigadier Alasdair Maclean of Pennycross. As the final performance ended about midnight, Brigadier Maclean, for once forsaking his commentator's role, took the salute from the great body of performers massed on the Castle esplanade.

Now 65 and retired as tattoo producer, he can look back as few can on two notable careers - first, 33 years of distinguished service in the Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders, and then, after retirement from active service in 1953, the full responsibility for producing each year the Scottish Command tattoos, the greatest spectacle of their kind in the world.

Over the years Brig. Maclean has travelled upwards of 100,000 miles all over the world in the constant search for tattoo talent. Something like 4,000,000 people have seen the show "live" on the cattle esplanade in all weathers, for there has never been a cancelled performance, and this year's opening night, in torrential rain incidentally, went out through Europe to an international television audience estimated at over 60,000,000. It is hard to imagine the amount of detailed planning and preparation involved in so vast an undertaking, but it is easy to understand Brig. Maclean when he says that since he became producer of the tattoo it has been his entire life. "I have slept, eaten, drunk, the tattoo," he told an interviewer. He will miss it terribly and he will be equally missed by the great company of known and unknown friends and admirers all over the world who will always think of the Edinburgh Tattoo as 'Alasdair Maclean's show'.

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TO CREATE A PIPER:

When I decided to do something about my urge to teach, and placed a small notice in the local drug store, the first phone call was a honey. It left me almost in tears.

A very serious little voice questioned, "Is this the place were they teach you how to play the Bagpipes?"

"Yes, it is", I answered, enchanted.

"How much do Bagpipes cost?", came the next question.

I proceeded to explain about pipes, the practise chanter, the music, and lessons, then finally asked, "You would really like to learn, would you?"

"Oh yes! Every time I hear the bagpipes, I tell Mummie I wish I could learn to play them! How much does a chanter cost?"

I had already explained he wouldn't need bagpipes for a year, and I could sense the quickening interest. I invited him to come over after supper, and I would show him a chanter and how to play it, and so it was arranged. But later he phoned and politely said he wouldn't be able to take lessons, as his mother said they could not afford it. I knew he was disappointed, and wondered if he had remembered to tell his mother he would not need pipes for a while.

A child was asking --- and then he was gone. But I couldn't forget him. Here was the pure interest I hoped to find. In the days after that my mind was haunted with memory of that little voice, calling all on his own to enquire about something I could tell he wanted very much, yet so obediently abandoning it now.

The more I thought of him the more I felt there must be something I could do. If I never taught another pupil, I had to give this child a chance to learn, and have his fair try, I finally decided. And taking my chanter and another one for him, I went off to the address he had given me to meet his mother and offer my help for a while. That start was all he needed. After that he came regularly for lessons and made steady progress. He was a wonderful pupil, and a pleasure to teach. And I was creating a piper.

In less than a year he acquired his pipes, because his birthday came along, a good set became available, and he has a very loving grandmother, herself a Macdonald. Which was reason enough for his yearning and love for the pipes.

I began taking him to the Bi-monthly gatherings, to see the progress of others like himself. And I taught him to "listen". The quality of his thinking and reasoning never failed to fascinate me, as time went on. Of competing he had this to say one day, " -- but I don't think one should learn and work just to compete with others. I think one should always concentrate on first of all being a good piper".

Another gem of thought came when he was deciding his future ... "Someday when I am old enough, I want to join the Seaforth Pipe Band. You know why? Because they are a Military Band, and they have discipline. And I think discipline is good for a boy, don't you?"

At present he is at a stand-still, due to many little set-backs ... having moved three times within a year, and changing schools. Travelling for lessons, and no place to practise etc. was another problem. So many difficulties just piled up, as problems do. But he will pick up, and go on. I know it.

He is not my pupil any more, because when the day came that he set his sights and aspirations on joining a band, as I knew he would, it was time for me to introduce him to "our Piper's friend and father of Bands", Malcolm Nicholson.

He made a valiant start and good progress, until the moving began, and a frustrating set of circumstances. Now that he is back in his old home district and settling down to practise efforts once more, he plans to return to his band work.

He is not any more the little boy who gave me the sweetest call I ever had four years ago. He has done a lot of growing, studying and dreaming since then through difficulties, but is on his way. And a Piper never gives up.

- Cathrine Paterson -

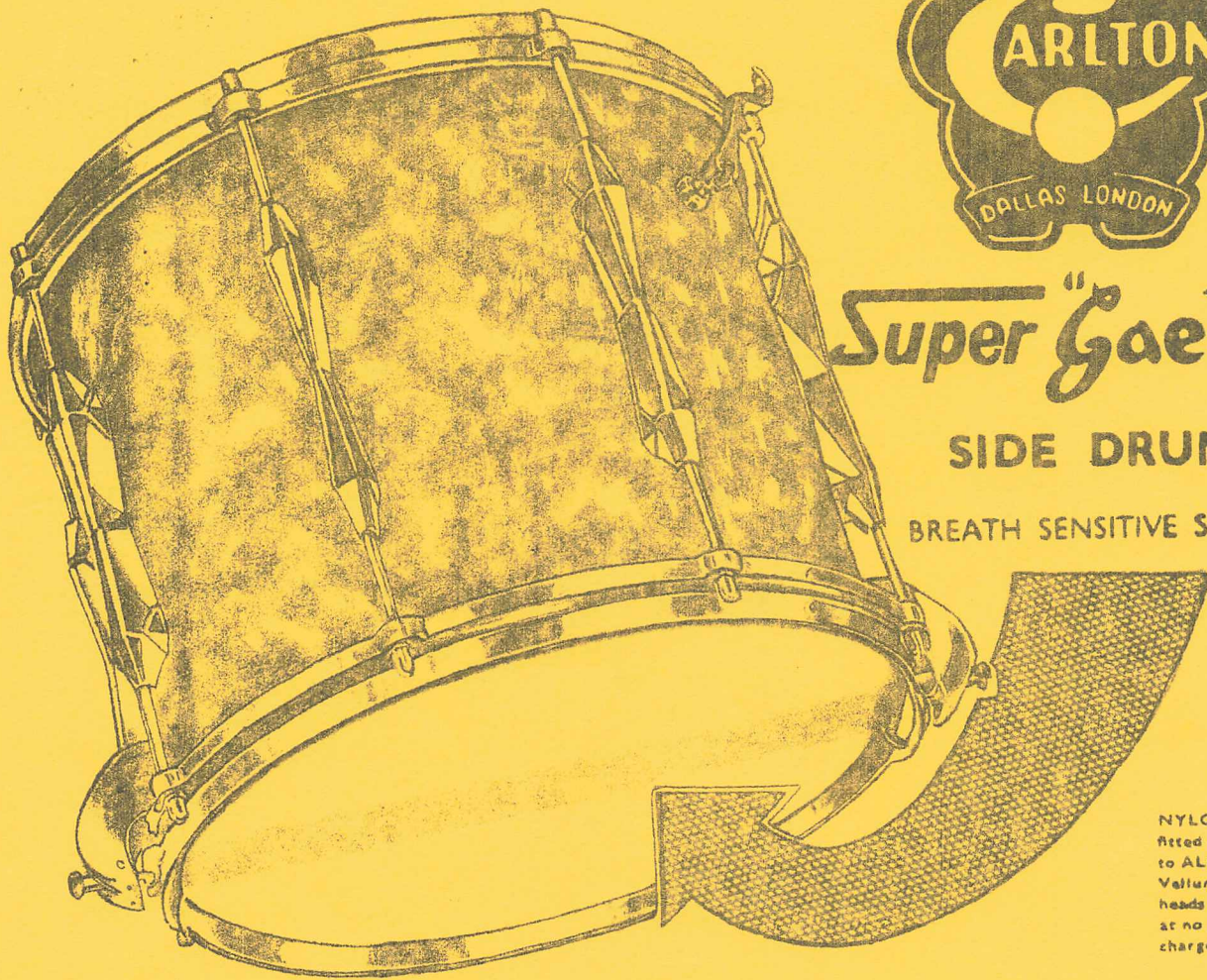
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The Vancouver Kiwanis Boys Pipe Band Auxilliary are holding a Dance and Social Evening November 19th at the Royal Canadian Legion Hall, Branch # 148, 4356 Hastings Street. Dancing from 9:00 to 1:00 o'clock.

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The Scottish program 'Mang the Heather' featuring Neil Nisbet (Wee Neil) is back on the air. A popular feature several years back, this program consists of Scottish entertainment and news of interest to the Scottish listener. The time is 6:05 Sunday evenings. The place - CKWX radio. (980 kc)

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MEN THE GERMANS FEARED - 'THE LADIES FROM HELL': (from the Weekly Scotsman,
April 16th, 1964)

No war brought more evidence of the terrific blood-tingling appeal of the pipes than the Great War of 1914-18 - a war infamous for its sheer futility, spilled blood and horrific conditions. This was a time of man-to-man battles in crumbling muddy trenches. Men were expected to rush in their thousands to certain death by the murderous fire of enemy machine-guns. These charges were incredible tests of valour.

It is to the credit of the Scots that not only were they considered by their own commanders to be the best soldiers in the British Army, but were acknowledged as such by the German High Command. The 51st Highland Division was the formation every German general hated to have facing him. When the skirl of the pipes was heard the enemy knew he was in for trouble.

Yet, there were lighter moments in France, such as the time a Canadian Division held a sports day. Canadians have blood links with Scotland, and naturally they had a Highland Brigade which invited every pipe band within reach to join them. Up turned 245 pipes and 187 drummers. It is recorded that the volume of wild piobaireachd produced by the massed bands was something to be proud of.

On other occasions, the pipes played for sadder things, such as when heroes were brought home to be buried. It was not an uncommon sight in Inverness for a cortege to pass through the streets with pipers playing "The Land o' the Leal," while onlookers stood moist-eyed thinking of the young Scots lying dead in France.

Actually, many Scots were attached to Canadian Highland regiments. One was Lieutenant Norman MacLean, of Inverness, who had been promoted on the field of battle. His story was typical of the Highlanders in the British Army. He was wounded in February, 1916, wounded at the Somme the same year, and again the following year. At Arras, his fighting days came to an end when he was killed leading men of the Canadian Black Watch. He died in a Canadian regiment, but he died with the music of the pipes in his ears.

The drummers of the pipe bands also possessed the fiery blood of the ancient Highland clansmen. Men like Drummer Walter Ritchie of the Seaforth Highlanders. He had been twice wounded and twice gassed, but his greatest feat of heroism was during the Battle of the Somme. The 2nd Seaforths were ordered to attack the third German line. It was well defended. The Germans had ample ammunition and ample guns. The Seaforths were mown down. Many officers and n.c.o.s were killed. In these circumstances, it is all too easy for men to become bewildered. Drummer Ritchie took care of this situation. He stood on the parapet of the enemy trench and although enemy machine guns fired burst after burst at him he repeatedly sounded "The Charge." For this devotion to duty he received the Victoria Cross.

The "Ladies from Hell", as the Germans called the Black Watch, were very much in evidence in the Canadian Army. When the 3rd Canadian Army. When the 3rd Canadian Division entered the relieved city of Mons, it was the pipers of the Canadian Black Watch, from Montreal, who sounded a pibroch of victory.

There have been many testimonials to the magic of the pipes, but one of the most poignant came from that famous Scots general, Sir Colin Campbell. When he said farewell to the 42nd, the 79th and 93rd Highland Regiments at Kamara, he said: "A pipe will never sound near me without carrying me back to those bright days when I was at your head and wore the bonnet you gained for me, and the honourable decorations on my breast, many of which I owe to your conduct. Brace soldiers, kind comrades, farewell!"

Memories indeed for Sir Colin. Memories like the day the Highland Brigade trounced 12,000 Russians at the Battle of Alma, 1854. Again the pipers led the way.

Perhaps one of the finest testimonials to what the pipes mean to Highland regiments is this tale from the Kaffir war, when the 72nd Highlanders captured the Kaffir chief Hintza. He was extremely interested in the pipes which he had grown to fear and respect. He was intrigued to learn about the sound for "advance", and asked what noise was made when the troops had to retreat. "The pipes cannot give such a signal," was the proud reply!

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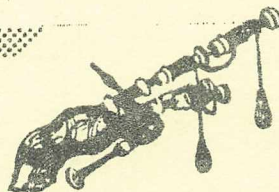
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SCOTLAND

NORTHERN MEETING - JOHN MACFADYEN WINS MEDAL AND CLASP:

(from The Oban Times, Sept. 29th, 1966)

John MacFadyen, of the noted family of MacFadyen pipers, scored an almost unique distinction last week by winning both the gold medal competition and the clasp at the Northern Meeting. It is understood that the only other time that this has been accomplished was in 1926, when Pipe Major John Macdonald achieved the same distinction. John, who is a schoolmaster at Busby, Renfrewshire, won the gold medal at the Argyllshire Gathering in Oban in 1960. His brother Duncan won the Inverness medal in 1963 and won the Oban medal this year. Another brother Ian is also the holder of both medals.

The gold medal competitions at Inverness this year had 35 competitors judged by Major General F. Richardson, Dr. K. MacKay and Pipe Major John MacLellan.

The set tunes were - "The MacGregor's Salute", "The Marquis of Argyll's Salute", "Lament for Laggan", "Clan Campbell's Gathering", "Black Donald's March" and "Hector Maclean's Warning". On the average the playing was good with 17 outstanding performances.

In the playing of "The MacGregor's Salute" some competitors did not play a crunluadh a mach which, according to Mr. Angus Macpherson, it is not complete without it. However, there are some authorised versions published that do not include the crunluadh a mach so it is permissible to play it without it. Again in "Black Donald's March" some pipers played a third variation though there are some recognised versions that do not show it. So the competitor is free to choose.

There could not have been a more popular choice for the winner of the gold medal than John MacFadyen whose flawless playing of "Black Donald's March". Superb fingering and an excellent pipe made one feel that his name was already being inscribed on the gold medal halfway through his tune.

Seumas MacNeill was the runner-up with a faultless performance of "The Lament for Donald of Laggan". About 10 other pipers were given this tune but Seumas was in a class of his own with his interpretation of this melody. His pipes were purely tuned and in excellent tone.

George Lumsden, Edinburgh Police, gave a near faultless performance to earn his third place, playing "Hector Maclean's Warning". Duncan J. Watson, Dingwall, was fourth playing "Clan Campbell's Gathering", which must be a good encouragement to this young piper who is being taught by Pipe Major John W. Riach, 11th Seaforth T.A. Fifth was Ian Fraser, Carrbridge, who gave a good interpretation of "Hector Maclean's Warning".

Though not in the prize list Finlay MacNeill, home on a vacation from Freetown, West Africa, where he is headmaster of a school. made good work of his tune "Marquis of Argyll's Salute".

A competitor who surprised most of the audience was Donald E. Varella, from Manhattan, U.S.A., who gave a good account of "The Lament for Donald of Laggan". He was born in New Zealand of a Scottish mother and New Zealand born father of Italian parentage. Aged 37, Mr. Varella started piping under John MacFadyen who since 1962, has held piping classes in New York during the summer. For 11 years Donald Varella was a jazz drummer with some of the leading dance bands in America.

It is generally recognised by the leading pipers that playing at the Argyllshire Gathering the previous week sets the competitors at the Northern Meeting with a high standard of playing and coming direct to Inverness they are in top form.

With about 10 performances in the clasp competition for piobaireachd so outstanding, the judges - Maj.-Gen. F. Richardson, Capt. D.R. MacLennan and Mr. Donald MacGillivray - had a most difficult task in selecting the best four.

The winner received one of the most rousing applauses ever heard at the Northern Meeting. John MacFadyen's playing of "Beloved Scotland" was so perfect one felt it just could not be improved. John had pulled off the double, winning the clasp and the gold medal at the same meeting.

Second was another famous performer, Donald MacPherson, who played "The Park Piobaireachd No. 2" in a superb, faultless and beautiful style. Third was Seumas MacNeill playing "The MacDougall's Gathering" with a beautiful flow of musical expression that could hardly be improved upon. Fourth was that great musical artiste, Pipe Major Donald MacLeod, who studied for 24 years under the late John MacDonald, Inverness. His tune "The Lament for the Union" he played with the excellence of musical expression of his famous tutor. Donald, who had travelled up from Glasgow in the early morning had little time to adjust himself to the competition. The clasp he has won eight times, and only the late Willie Ross has equalled this.

The March, Strathspey & Reel confined to previous first prize-winners attracted 27 competitors and was judged by Captain MacLennan and Mr. Donald MacGillivray.

John MacDougall, Invergordon, was adjudged the winner, playing "Highland Wedding", "Tulloch Castle" and "Mrs. MacPherson of Inveran". Donald MacPherson, winner of the march, strathspey and reel at Oban last week and winner of this competition at the Northern Meeting more times than he can remember, was placed second playing "The Braes of Brecklett", "Caledonian Canal" and "Alick C. MacGregor". A worthy third prizewinner was Pipe Major Ian MacLeod, Edinburgh Police, playing "Mrs. Margaret Anderson of Craellachie", "Inverary Castle" and "Sheepwife".

There were 35 competitors for the Strathspey and Reel event, which excludes former winners, and the playing was also of a high standard. First was Hector MacFadyen, Pennyghael, playing "Tulloch Castle" and "Major Manson"; second Sergeant A. Anderson, Gordon Highlanders, playing "Atholl Cummers" and "Rejected Suitor"; third James MacIntosh, Dundee, with "Atholl Cummers" and "Alick C. MacGregor"; and fourth, John A. McLellan, Glasgow Police, who played "Caberfeidh" and "Mrs. MacPherson of Inveran".

In the march event where previous winners were again excluded, 42 competitors participated and it was not an easy task for the judges - Captain D.R. MacLennan and Mr. Donald MacGillivray - to select four prize-winners.

Hugh A. MacCallum, son of a great piping figure, Pipe Major Ronnie MacCallum, 8th Argylls, and the Duke of Argyll's personal piper, gave an excellent rendering of "John MacFadyen's Welcome of Melford". It is true to say he was in a class of his own here to be awarded first place. Second was John F. Perceval, Edinburgh Police, playing "The Duchess of Edinburgh"; third was Sgt. A. Anderson, Gordon Highlanders, playing "The Royal Scottish Pipers' Society"; and awarded fourth was Harry S. McNulty, Edinburgh Police playing "Milbank Cottage".

The junior competition for boys under 18 - march, strathspey and reel - was won by J/Cpl. Michael Kernahan, Junior Company, Queen's Own Highlanders, playing "Caberfeidh", "Ewe wi' the crooked horn" and "Alick A. MacGregor". Michael, whose home is in London, studied ceol mor under the late D.R. Calum MacCrimmon, and until he decided on a piping career in the army, was a pupil of Pipe Major Bob Hill, R.A.M.C. T.A., Middlesex, and a member of the R.A.M.C. pipe band. Pipe Major Hill, at present on holiday in his native Invergordon, was at the Northern Meeting to hear his former pupil play a splendid selection. A very worthy second prizewinner was Brian W. MacDonald, son of the famous piping figure Mr. Willie M. MacDonald, Muirtown House, Inverness. This again was a high standard of playing for a 15 year old with "The Duchess of Edinburgh", "Captain Colin Campbell" and "Miss Proud". Third came Sandy MacKenzie, Evanton, with another set of good tunes - "Brig. Gen. Ronald Cheape of Tiroran", "Dornie Ferry" and "Blackberry Bush". The judges were Mr. Neil A. Macdonald (Barra), an Inverness schoolmaster, and Pipe Major John A. MacLellan, Edinburgh Castle.

The jigs was the last competition of the meeting, with 51 competitors who had to enter four tunes. First was Pipe Major Ian MacLeod with "Alan MacPherson of Moss Park", second Angus J. MacLellan, "Babs of Balmoral"; third Lawrie Gillespie, Edinburgh Police, "Donella Beaton".

A special prize this year was presented by Mr. Angus Macpherson to the first prizewinner of the gold medal and clasp competitions. It was two copies of his book "A Highland Looks Back" to commemorate his family's long connection with the Northern Meeting and the centenary of the year his father won the gold medal playing "My King has Landed in Moidart". As John MacFadyen won both events he gave one of the books to the runner-up in the clasp event, Donald Macpherson.

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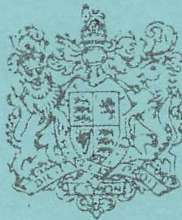
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At the invitation of the Mayor of Chicago, the Midwest Pipe Band Association joined forces with the city to bring about the first City of Chicago Pipe Band Competition on August 20. An invitation was issued by the Mayor's office to all bands of the U.S.A. and Canada to come to Chicago for this competition. Travel funds were offered as well as top prize money to the winners -- the best on the continent, to our knowledge. Fourteen bands competed at the beautiful new Civic Center, in the heart of the Chicago "Loop". The weather was perfect, and a sizable crowd was in attendance.

Judges were Pipe Major George Duncan (Piping), Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario, Mr. Ralph Barker (Piping), Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario, and Drum Major Duncan Dixon (Drumming), London, Ontario.

The Midwest Pipe Band Association Championship Competition was a part of the afternoon program and was won by the Chicago Highlanders for the third straight year. Competition for dancers was omitted this year, at the request of the City of Chicago (due only to the limited space at the site), but it is hoped that this competition will be resumed in 1967.

In the event, all competing bands marched down famous State Street in massed formation. It was a thrilling sight for the thousands who witnessed it.

The City of Chicago plans to invite the Pipe Bands of Canada and the U.S.A. to an expanded competition in 1967. All bands interested may correspond directly with Colonel Jack Reilly, Director of Special Events, Office of the Mayor, City Hall, Chicago, Illinois.

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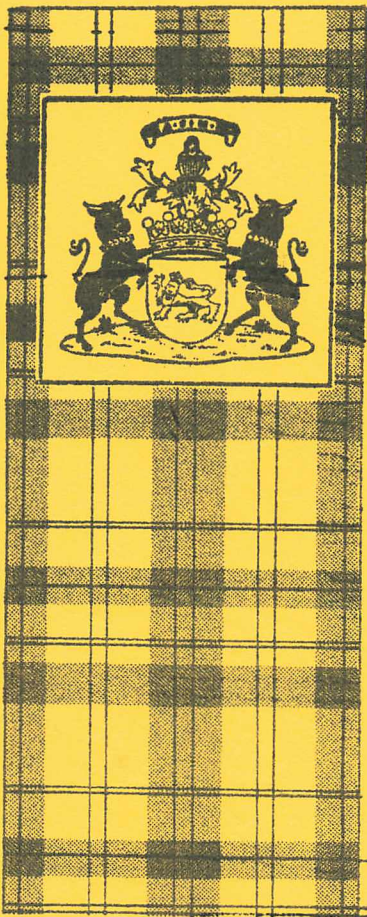
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