B.C. PIPERS'

NEWSLETTER

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B. C. PIPERS' NEWSLETTER

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LAST MONTH IN AND AROUND THE ASSOCIATION

Knock-Out and General Meeting

The first Knock-out of the 1976-77 season convened before a rather disappointing crowd. The fact that it was the last long weekend of good weather most likely contributed to the small gathering. The trend appeared to be set for the remainder of the evening, however, as only one trio chose to attend. Once again, circumstances - two Richmond Junior trios competing against each other - prevailed. Nonetheless, the threesome consisting of Andrew Peck, Owen Reid and Philip Gordon gave a fairly entertaining performance.

Following the trio, Hal Senyk, fresh from a fourth place in the Jigs at the Northern Meeting, treated the audience to a rendition of the piobaireachd, "Cave of Gold". This, as you will have noticed, is a new item on the Knock-out agenda and it is planned to have one guest player a month play a piobaireachd preceded by a small historical introduction.

After a small intermission for socializing and the consummation of various beverages, the open jig competition got underway. This event saw two "rookies", Jill Laurie and Graham Davidson, get their first taste of open competition. It turned out to be a very sweet taste for Graham as judges, John MacDonald and Andy Perry awarded him first prize. Others in the event included Allan MacLeod, Gordon MacDonald and Hal Senyk.

The remainder of the evening was, of course, devoted to impromptu, the highlight being Pauline Alakija's selection of jigs and hornpipes. Pauline was down from Penticton in preparation for the Bi-monthly the following morning.

Athena Games

A warm, sunny day, plenty of cold beer, excellent piping and colourful dancing all combined to make the first revival of the Athena Caledonian Games and Picnic a memorable event. A crowd of approximately 3500 spectators, almost four times the population of the little town of Athena, spent a pleasant day strolling in the cool park, sitting in the shade of the trees listening to the pipers and watching the dancing on the football field and the Highland Games in the running track area. Both the beef barbecue offered at noon and the chicken barbecue in the evening were complete sell-outs and the food was tasty and well prepared.

All of the events were well attended, especially the professional piping, and the audience was quiet and orderly. The final event was the Tattoo which took place on the football field in the evening. Participating were the host band, The Oregon National Guard Reserve Pipe Band from Albany, Oregon; Triumph Street from Vancouver, B.C.; Blue Heron Bay from Lake Oswego, Oregon; and the Portland Ladies from Portland, Oregon. A special feature of the evening was a fifteen minute concert put on by Triumph Street featuring numbers from their new recording, "Triumph Street". The Grade 2 band competition was won by Blue Heron Bay with the Portland Ladies taking second place.

The general feeling of the day was well summed up by one of the competitors who came up to the games chairman at the close of the day and said, "I've been to a lot of competitions but this is the first time that I realized that they could be fun".

RESULTS

Novice, Under 16

March

1. Shelly Mutch, Penticton
2. Kris Campbell, Kennewick
3. John Johnson

Novice, Under 16

Strathspey & Reel

1. Shelly Mutch, Penticton

Novice, Under 16 - Slow Air

1. Shelly Mutch, Penticton
2. John Johnson

Novice, 16 & Over - March

1. Selia Miller, Vancouver
2. James Denovan, Kennewick
3. Judy Morrison, Missoula

Novice, 16 & Over

Strathspey & Reel

1. Judy Morrison, Missoula
2. Selia Miller, Vancouver
3. James Denovan, Kennewick

Novice, 16 & Over

Slow Air

1. Selia Miller, Vancouver
2. James Denovan, Kennewick
3. Alison Hansell, Athena

Amateur, Under 16

March

1. Christine Waddell, Vancouver
2. Pat Braniff, Calgary
3. Tom Sutherland

Amateur, Under 16

Strathspey & Reel

1. at Braniff, Calgary
2. Christine Waddell, Vancouver
3. Tom Sutherland

Amateur, Under 16 - Slow Air

1. Christine Waddell, Vancouver
2. Tom Jones, Portland
3. Pat Braniff, Calgary

Amateur, 16 & Over

Strathspey & Reel

1. James Wright, Vancouver
2. Graham Davidson, Vancouver
3. Rob Olsen, Prince George

Professional - March

1. Hal Senyk, Vancouver
2. Andrew Noot, Vancouver
3. Colin Gemmel, Portland

Professional Piobaireachd

1. Colin Gemmell, Portland
2. Colin MacKenzie, Lake Oswego
3. Hal Senyk, Vancouver

Amateur, 16 & Over - March

1. Rob Olsen, Prince George
2. James Wright, Vancouver
3. Graham Davidson, Vancouver & Helen Niven, Oakland

Amateur, 16 & Over - Slow Air

1. James Wright, Vancouver
2. Sue Arbuthnot & Jim Karr
3. Graham Davidson & Matt Burgin

Professional Strathspey & Reel

1. Alan Walters, Prince George
2. Andrew Noot, Vancouver
3. Colin Gemmell, Portland

Professional Drumming

1. Scott Robertson, Vancouver
2. Jack Gallaher, Vancouver
3. Jonathan Moore, Renton

Spokane Piobaireachd Society Award

(Best original 2/4 four-part March composition)
- Alan Walters, Prince George.

B. C.'s PIPERS IN SCOTLAND

Come and visit sunny Scotland? Usually not the driest, Scotland was indeed bright and hot for the Triumph Street and the Richmond (C.P. Air) Pipe Bands this August during their three-week trip to the "auld sod".

Both bands travelled through funds raised over many months of hard work, and set out to conquer the best in Scotland, with C.P. Air competing in Grade II and Triumph Street in Grade I.

The World's Championships in Hawick were quite a disappointment for the two bands, however, with both placing well down the prize list in their respective grades. The Strathclyde Police (Glasgow Police) won the World's with a good, strong performance in Grade I, and Ballycoan won the Grade II, with a not so impressive performance to our ears.

Although playing very well, both bands learned very quickly the unfortunate truth of having to "serve one's time" in the ranks before being awarded recognition, but at Cowal the following week, C.P. Air made their mark by placing a well-deserved first. Triumph Street was once more well down the Grade I list, but undaunted, played again the following day in Edinburgh and claimed a second prize, with C.P. Air third in Grade II.

The European Championships at Shotts the last week were the most successful all round, with Triumph Street placing 4th against the top Grade I bands, and C.P. Air again winning the Grade II title. With the Triumph Street band on their way to London to fly home, C.P. Air claimed one more prize at Peebles the next day, then flew home from Prestwick.

The time had gone quickly during their stay, with the bands involved in hard practices, trips around the country on days off, plus, of course, the occasional (?) and inevitable get-togethers with the ever hospitable pipers and drummers of Scotland.

The bands returned with many good memories as well as prizes, and are looking forward to a return trip.

Hal Senyk.

Pipe Band Championships Results

World Championships, Hawick - Saturday, August 21, 1976

Grade I
1. Strathclyde Police
2. Dysart & Dundonald
3. Lothian & Borders Police (Edinburgh)
4. Muirhead & Sons
5. Shotts & Dykehead

Grade II
1. Ballycoan
2. Royal Scots Dragoons
3. Antigonish Legion
4. 1st K.O.S.B.'s
5. B.P. Grangemouth

Cowal Championship, Dunoon - Saturday, August 28, 1976

Grade I
1. Dysart & Dundonald
2. Shotts & Dykehead
3. Strathclyde Police
4. Lothian & Borders Police
5. British Caledonian Airways

Grade II
1. C.P. Air
2. Bowhill & Seafield Collieries
3. Monktonhall Colliery
4. Torphichen & Bathgate
5. B.P. Grangemouth

European Championships, Shotts, Saturday, September 4, 1976

Grade I
1. Dysart & Dundonald
2. Strathclyde Police
3. Lothian & Borders Police
4. Triumph Street

Grade II
1. C.P. Air
2. B.P. Grangemouth
3. Ayr Pipe Band Society
4. Seven Towers

Argyllshire Gathering

The 1976 version of the Argyllshire Gathering opened under beautiful skies in Oban on Wednesday, August 25. The Gathering, inaugurated in 1871, is regarded as one of the premier competitions in Scotland, the other being the Northern Meeting.

The Gold Medal this year attracted 41 competitors, including our own Jack Lee, in what can only be termed a gruelling ordeal for adjudicators and spectators alike. First prize was awarded to Malcolm MacRae, a native of Australia, with second and third prizes to Bill Livingston, Ontario, and Jacques Pincet of Brittany respectively. It is quite interesting to note that four of the first five prizes were awarded to "foreigners".

As the Gold Medal was being run, the Open Piobaireachd was in progress in the Phoenix Theatre. Hugh MacCallum, Bridge of Allan, was declared the winner out of 17 competitors.

Thursday morning saw the competitions moved to the Argyllshire Gathering Ground. Another beautiful day tended to lessen the effects of the usual hassles associated with the Scottish Games - long queues to get into the park, the piping platforms too far away from the spectators, antiquated dispensary systems at the beer tent and laughable, if nothing else, lavatory facilities.

(It's really not that tragic, but you would think after 106 years they would get it right!)

In the Marches, 38 players competed for seven final spots. Among the finalists were Bob Worrall and Jack Lee who placed second and fifth respectively. First place went to Hugh McInnes with Angus McLellan and Tom Spiers, third and fourth. The judges for the Marches were Seumas MacNeill and Captain A. Pitkeathly.

Unfortunately, a band practice in Glasgow was eagerly awaiting our presence, so we missed the Strathspeys & Reels.

An enjoyable, if hurried, visit to Oban especially with the unbelievable weather. Two former adjudicators at our own Gathering, Angus McLellan and John McDougall, both competing, pass on their best wishes to their many friends in Vancouver.

Northern Meeting

Over sixty competitors competed from early morning till nearly midnight for the coveted gold medal in Inverness. The colossal entry prompted a meeting of the competitors which ended in the formation of a professional pipers' association. Their main task will be to find some means, obviously, of limiting the entry not only in the piobaireachd, but marches and strathspey and reel events as well. The effects of such a large entry can be evidenced by the "tape scandal" of two years ago. Obviously, judges cannot fairly make decisions after fourteen hours of continuous piobaireachd. In fact, many would regard them as having slight masochistic tendencies. Please don't regard this as a knock against the judges. If anything, they must be admired. I think the pipers' committee, chaired by Jimmy McIntosh, face an impossible task. Restricting entry in the open events would have to carry so many qualifications that it would be simpler to remain with high entries. Perhaps the only workable system would be a return to the old white hankie or hook from the days of vaudeville.

The prize lists of the two-day event had a somewhat local flavour. Hal Senyk captured a fourth place in the highly entertaining jig competition. Angus McLellan, a former judge at the Indoor, was awarded the Gold Medal in the piobaireachd while John McDougall placed first in the jigs. P/M Iain Morrison, proposed adjudicator for next year's Indoor, placed first in the very competitive March, Strathspey & Reel event. Ian Whitelaw, while not in the prizes, acquitted himself very well and, apart from slips in the piobaireachd and a lack of concentration in the marches, would most certainly have placed.

Following both days' events, the inevitable "ceilidh" happened. On Thursday night, Neil Angus Macdonald, known to many in Vancouver, chaired an evening of piping, singing and dancing, interlaced with the yarns that he is so noted for.

The Friday night ceilidh, however, was rather a disappointment. Traditionally known as Angus Macpherson's Ceilidh, the function was relegated to the bar of the Cummings Hotel as the usual room had a prior booking. It is unfortunate especially as old Angus' wishes were that the Ceilidh continue after his death.

Results

Gold Medal

1. Angus MacLellan
2. P/M Angus MacDonald
3. Duncan Watson

Clasp

1. Murray Henderson
2. P/M Iain Morrison
3. James McIntosh

Jigs

1. John MacDougall
2. Ed Neigh (Ontario)
3. Rona MacDonald
4. Hal Senyk

March, Strathspey & Reel

1. P/M Iain Morrison
2. Bill Livingston
3. John Burgess

Strathspey & Reel

1. L-Cpl. Peter Fraser
2. Donald McBride
3. Tom Spiers

Marches

1. Tom Spiers
2. Duncan McFadyen
3. Murray Henderson
4. P/M Angus MacDonald

Bi-Monthly

The first Bi-monthly competition of the season was held on October 9 at the Scottish Auditorium.

The Board Members of the B.C. Pipers' had decided to revert to the old system of Bi-monthlies, to replace the Mini Gatherings, in an attempt to stimulate more interest among younger players. Whether the change in format appeared more attractive to competitors is debatable, but the end result was an improvement in both the number of competitors and spectators.

The events were adjudicated by two of the younger professional pipers; namely Donald MacMillan and Bob MacDonald.

If the present standard of piping continues among our younger players, we should have no worries about the future of piping in our area.

Results

Novice - Slow Air

1. Laurie Young
2. Autumn Oberg
3. Donald Kinch

Junior - Jigs

1. Jack Eckersley
2. Owen Reid & Callum McLeod

Juvenile - 2/4 March

1. Ian Putz
2. Pauline Alakija
3. Maureen Lee
4. Brenda Barker & Rod Bellamy

Amateur March, Strathspey & Reel

1. Alison Palmer
2. Grant Wilkie
3. James Stewart

NEXT MONTH

Knock-Outs

The next general meeting and knock-out will be held on November 5, 1976 in the Scottish Auditorium.

The trio competition will see Victoria #2 and Triumph #1 competing in what promises to be a very interesting event. Incidentally, special financial arrangements have been instituted this year to aid out-of-town trios attending the knock-outs. This was especially in respect to the Island competitors who have supported the knock-outs so faithfully over the years and who have recently been hit with a 100 per cent increase in ferry fares.

The requirement for this month's open competition will be two jigs. As always, no prior entry is necessary.

The knock-outs have always been regarded primarily as social functions but don't forget they are also general meetings. The Board of Directors were elected to manage the affairs of the society, but please don't feel hesitant about bringing up a point you feel needs discussion.

Remember 8:00 p.m. Bar service available.

Portland Ladies' Indoor

The Portland Ladies' Pipe Band are holding their annual competition on Saturday, November 13. A full slate of events is available for piping, drumming and pipe bands.

Unfortunately, further information is unavailable at this time.

KNOCK-OUT DRAW

Oct. 8	Richmond Jr. #3 (winner) Richmond Jr. #1	vs.
Nov. 5	Victoria #2 Triumph St. #1	vs.
Dec. 3	Richmond Jr. #2 Richmond Sr. #1	vs.
	Richmond Jr. #4 Seaforth #1 Victoria #1	vs.
Jan. 7	Seaforth #2 Richmond Sr. #2	vs.
	Triumph St. #2 Seaforth #3	vs.
Feb. 4	Winners of October & November	
Mar. 4	Winners of December	
April 1	Winners of January	
May 6	Semi (Tremi)-Final Winners of February, March & April	

FINAL AT ANNUAL DINNER - DATE T.B.A.

Triumph Street Band Contest

The fifth annual Triumph Street Band Contest will take place this year on Saturday, December 4 in St. Thomas More School, 12th Ave. & Kingsway in Burnaby. As usual, the competition will offer a varied selection of events for competitor and spectator alike, including trios, drum sections and miniature bands. This year the organizers have decided to seek the support of the Legion Bands by creating another class especially for bands that do not normally compete. Hopefully, this will encourage both the bands and the summer games committees to reinstitute this category in an effort to revitalize the pipe band events at the local games.

The contest has been scheduled to commence at approximately 11:00 a.m. with novice drumming and junior trios. Drumming events are open to novice, amateur, senior amateur and professional players in addition, of course, to drum sections. Further details regarding the programme of events, prize money, etc., will appear in next month's edition of the Newsletter.

Following in the tradition of previous contests, the Triumph Street Pipe Band will present a Ceilidh on the Saturday evening. In an effort to please all age groups, the services of a record man have been secured.

Unfortunately, the change in venue was brought about by the actions of an inconsiderate minority who caused some damage at St. Francis de Sales, the previous location. Slight as the damage was, we can ill-afford this kind of nonsense as good facilities are few and far between. The organizers ask that bands and trios using classrooms as tuning areas kindly leave the rooms as they find them.

* * * *

The Vancouver Ladies' Pipe Band, who will be celebrating their 50th anniversary next year, are looking for new members.

The band, recently revitalized by the return of a number of former members, are working towards the revival of their junior band. Any girls interested in piping or drumming, are asked to contact Peggy Askew at 941-6038 or Shelley MacLean at 298-3417.

CLASSIFIED

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BINGO

Variety Club International

Watch for Canada's largest bingo November 16th. Tickets will be on sale soon at all Ford Dealerships.

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IRISH PIPE MUSIC

The British Isles have several distinctive types of indigenous bagpipes, the best known being the shrill Scottish pipes, the sweet-toned Northumbrian small pipes, and the beguiling Irish pipes. In contrast to the mouth-blown Scottish pipes, the Irish and Northumbrian pipes feature an elbow-operated bellows to inflate the air-bag. The Irish bagpipe - known variously as the "Irish organ", the Uilleann (i.e. "elbow") pipes, and the Union pipes - differs from all others by having three keyed melody pipes that sound only when the player pushes on their keys with his right wrist. The keys are so arranged that when a row of them is depressed by the regulator, or "chord bar", the pipes produce a chord; thus, the Irish pipes are able to produce chordal accompaniments to supplement the continuous one-note sound of their (two or three) drone pipes.

The tune is played on a pipe with finger holes called a chanter, which has a conical bore and keys like a clarinet; the chanter is capable of playing the chromatic notes over a two-octave range upwards from D just above middle C. Chanter styles are frequently characterized as "open" or "close" according to the manner in which the player ornaments the melody. The open style is legato, slower than close, and rather sparing of ornamentation, while the close features staccato triplets and abrupt, rhythmically complex figures. Most pipers mix the two styles to achieve their own particular blend of tranquil simplicity and ornate virtuosity.

The cane reeds of the pipes are notoriously unpredictable. Many performers have experienced the chagrin caused by a reed - which had worked well in rehearsal - refusing to play in concert. Barry O'Neill, a noted American scholar of Irish folk music, has recounted the story of the piper who called for his pipes as he lay on his deathbed. Those who were gathered round naturally assumed that the ailing master wished to play his beloved instrument one last time. But when the pipes were brought to him, he opened the reed chamber and crushed the reed in his teeth, thereby assuring that no other piper should benefit from his own jealously guarded reed-cutting skill.

Seeking out or retaining possession of a fine set of pipes has led some pipers to even more extreme tactics. O'Neill tells the story of one piper who "transgressed the Decalogue" to get a good instrument. "The original owner, Canon James Goodman of Kerry and Cork, died in 1896, and by his request his Taylor pipes were buried alongside him. The executor of his will, Alderman William Phair of Cork, was a piper himself and withstood temptation only four days. With a party of friends he returned to the cemetery at night and exhumed the pipes. They are now in the possession of Owen O'Riabhaigh of Cork."

- Reprinted from the cover of the recording, "Irish Pipe Music", by Finbar Furey and Eddie Furey.

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BAND CHATTER

Reports from California inform us that Rueben Santos has taken over as P/M of Culloden Moor.

The L.A. Scots, top band in Grade I for many years, have disbanded.

It is indeed unfortunate that Jack Lee has decided to resign as Pipe Major of C.P. Air Sr. After leading his band to first place in two championships in Scotland this summer, Jack has decided that school work and his own piping will occupy most of his time. Hopefully, C.P.Air will continue to enjoy the success they have experienced over the past years.

* * * *

Congratulations to Jo-Anne and Sandy Reid on the birth of their first child, Amy Jennifer. Born September 8th, Amy is the first grandchild for Mr. and Mrs. Alec Reid.

* * * *

Two members of the Triumph Street Pipe Band weren't on the plane for the return trip. Robyn Palmer is currently touring Europe and Ian Whitelaw is staying in Scotland. While there, Ian is receiving tuition from Andrew Wright.

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"TRIUMPH STREET"

"Triumph Street", the recently recorded album from the band of the same name, is still on sale. The well produced record received well earned acclaim from some top authorities in Scotland, and is a must for afficionados of pipe band music. "Triumph Street" features some old favourites along with some tunes that have been recorded for the first time.

Your copy can be obtained by contacting any band member or from the following distributors:

The Scotch Shop	- 261-8914
West Coast Piping Imports	- 253-1743
Scottish Supply Shop	- 522-2151

Triumph Street Junior Pipe Band

The Triumph Street Pipe Band is forming a juvenile pipe band in an effort to provide the opportunity for younger pipers and drummers in the Vancouver area to play in a competitive juvenile band and to receive the best in tuition. The pipers and drummers of the Triumph Street band will be supervising practices, and if necessary, provide individual tuition.

Pipers or drummers (boys or girls) under 18 (need not be experienced players) are urged to come out and be a part of this new band. For further information, please call:

Hal Senyk - 253-1743
Angus Macpherson - 526-9006