

# B. C. PIPERS' NEWSLETTER



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

SEPTEMBER 1969 NO. 94



B.C. PIPERS' NEWSLETTER

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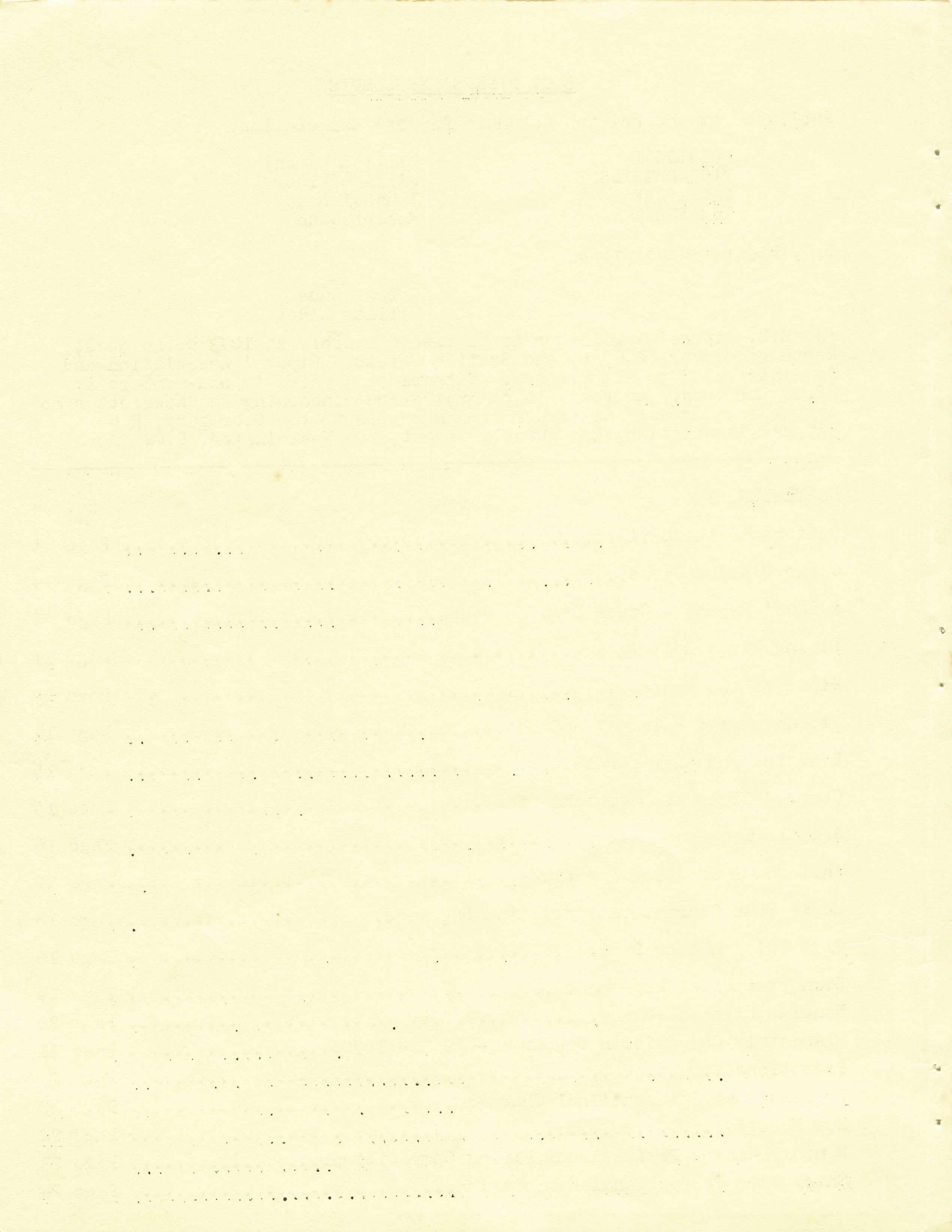
B.C. Pipers' Newsletter

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SEPTEMBER, 1969	Contents	No. 94
Letters to the Editor.....		Page 1
Coeur D'Alene Games.....		Page 4
Judges' Report - Couer D'Alene Games.....		Page 5
Piping Times Editorial.....		Page 11
Piper of the Month.....		Page 12
St. Andrews & Caledonian Games.....		Page 14
Piobaireachd List for 1970.....		Page 15
Couer d'Alene Piobaireachd List.....		Page 15
Seattle Highland Games.....		Page 16
'Hot Scot' Arrested for Pipes.....		Page 17
Music Hath Charms...but Not The Bagpipes.....		Page 18
Play This on Your Samisen.....		Page 18
Burnaby Ladies' Pipe Band.....		Page 19
Nanaimo Highland Games.....		Page 20
Bi-Monthly Competition Schedule - 1969 - 1970.....		Page 21
Promotions.....		Page 21
Professional International Champion.....		Page 22
New Members.....		Page 22
Monthly Winter Professional Piping Competition.....		Page 23
Entry Form Professional Competition.....		Page 24



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Mr. Bob Gunn, Editor  
B.C. Pipers Newsletter  
1073 Doran Road  
North Vancouver, B.C.

Dear Bob:

Your recent suggestion of one large Highland Games attraction has a good deal in its favor. Bellingham did not hold its Games this year for two reasons: small-town attendance problems, and diminishing work force. We hope to be able to return to business again. In eight years of running Highland Games, however, we believe we learned several things from which others may profit. Experience taught us how to schedule events to keep things moving on time. We encouraged audience to watch from the field as well as the grandstand. Individual piping cannot be heard well, if at all, from bleachers. Another popular feature was the use of "exhibition" bands which performed throughout the day. This gave smaller non-competing bands a desirable performance opportunity and it added to the general enjoyment and colorful atmosphere. One year we had 14 bands in the massed parade - a very stirring sight and sound for the audience.

Our ceillidh for performers and guests finally developed into a very fine event.

Abandonment of the track meet erased many problems and did not seem to affect the audience. We like the Old Country athletics better.

We had thought, also, of taking the Games out of the usual arena and holding them in a city park with no admission charged, thus giving people a chance to stroll freely through the grounds, to watch bands perform from close range, etc., in a more scenic surrounding. To many of us, the best part of the Caledonian Games takes place near the cricket green outside the arena. Revenue from such a plan might have been derived from a big concession service.

Bellingham still has interested parties who might be helpful on a large regional event. Keep us posted.

Cordially,

John Munroe  
Bellingham Highland Games  
Corporation

\*

Three years ago I sent you details of Malcolm McPherson, which was published in the B.C. Newsletter concerning his death due to a curse put on the McPherson's.

"Angus MacPherson of Achany House, Lairg, Sutherland has been awarded the M.B.E. in the Queen's Birthday Honours for his services to piping.

Mr. MacPherson, who hasn't missed a Northern Meeting since 1894, can remember competing in contests in London 70 years ago.

At 92, Mr MacPherson still has "wonderful health", and is playing the pipes every day. He comes from a piping family, taught by the MacCrimmons of Skye.

"Three generations had the music before me," he said. "My father used to croon simple tunes to me, so that I knew them before I started the chanter at the age of seven."

Eight of the highly coveted gold medals for piobaireachd presented by the Highland Society of London have been won by his family. He has won one, and his son Malcolm won two.

Three years ago his son Malcolm was found dead in Edinburgh. He had been haunted by the Curse of Cruime -- a 400-year-old curse made on the beach of Eigg by some miserable crone, which manifests itself as a crooked right hand that becomes twisted and palsied over the years.

Doctors explain it's not an arthritic complaint -- in fact nothing that medicine understands. And it seems only to affect pipers."

Robert S. S. Gray  
1. Glenhead Avenue  
Coalsnaughton by Tillicoultry  
Clackmannanshire, Scotland

\*

#### Behind the Junior Pipe Band Scene

"The very necessary strong support and steady encouragement of the parents behind those amazing young Pipers and Drummers is a good thing to see. It is the guiding power they grow on, and lonely is the lad who struggles along without it.

But there is something else I have seen behind each boy, and never cease to admire. I feel it is a blessing that should be mentioned -- those wonderful Pipe Band Mothers. Boys neatly kilted from head to toe are supervised by a busy hand, shining shoes cleaning spats, hose and happy feet to care for, clean shirt, kilt to press. Suddenly a growing boy's spats won't fit, all those buttons have to be moved. Sometimes kilt straps have to be moved, or longer straps made. Many are the details taken care of by Mom, including practise periods, band time schedules, and always transportation.

I know of two Mothers who each have two boys to do for, a piper and a drummer. And life can get pretty hectic for a busy band, and those indispensable band mothers. I know of another Mother who has even learned to tune pipes, handle reeds and spot a poor doubling.

To all Junior Pipe Band Mothers, of the littlest ones up, we give you -- ROSES."

Cathrine Paterson  
2523 Haywood Avenue  
West Vancouver, B.C.

\*

The Editors

Dear Sirs:

I write to ask if you would be so kind as to publish this tune in your next edition of your Newsletter. I have composed a 2 part March for this historic flight and moon walk. It would give me great pleasure if other pipers could see and learn this piece of music. Please let me know if you can do this. Also, if any of your readers has any old books of music they can get in touch with me at the above address.

With Best Wishes,

Yours aye,  
Wm. G. Strachan  
33. Sutherland Square  
Walworth, London, S.E. 17

"FLIGHT TO THE MOON MARCH"

Composed by Wm. G. Strachan as this great event took place on the weekend of July 20th, 1969.



### COUER D'ALENE GAMES

For several months now we have been printing a notice in the Newsletter concerning the Games in Couer d'Alene. Many of our members managed the 800 mile round trip to Idaho and I dare say none were disappointed in the show. Possibly more B.C. Pipers' members would have been enticed to the Games if we had mentioned that the entire day and evening consisted of piping events only - no track, no dancing - just piping.

The games were most unique from any other I have attended in our normal games circuit on the West Coast. The entire day time program was held in the Couer d'Alene City Park and consisted of individual and quartette piping. No grandstand, no fences and not to be overlooked, no admission fee. The judges for the day, Lieut. John MacLellan from Edinburgh and Mr. Evan McKay from Hong Kong (via Glasgow) seated themselves in the shade of the well treed park and the boards were surrounded by benches affording ample seating facilities for the interested spectators. I think our local games committees could take a hint from Couer d'Alene as far as seating arrangements for piping audiences are concerned, not only are the seats usually inadequate but in most cases non-existent. One other innovation employed was the use of a blackboard which the Steward used to give the event number plus the competitors' number and name of the tune he or she was playing. The seating arrangements and the blackboard facility were a great asset to the audience and encouraged large numbers to listen and enjoy the performances.

The only criticism of the day was in the Stewardship. In several cases the judge was plagued by noisy children and pipers tuning too close to competition areas. This proves to be unfair to the competitor and judge. Corrective measures will be taken in the future I am sure.

The competition classes for the Saturday were divided in three groups - Amateur under 16, Amateur over 16 and Professional. The Novice competition was run on the Sunday. A large percentage of our regular competing pipers from the Lower Mainland and Vancouver Island attended. As a matter of fact, in the Professional class all of the regular competitors were there. A relatively good turn out of pipers from Washington, Idaho and Alberta participated in the competition but the results were not dissimilar to any one of our local competitions. Our local pipers dominated the scene.

The individual and quartette competition was completed at approximately 5 P.M. At 7:30 P.M. a short parade of pipe bands was held. Their destination was the Baseball Stadium, across the street from the City Park, where they held the Pipe Band Competition. Unlike the daytime competition there was an admission charge for this event. However, there was no exchange on Canadian money. The Pipe Band competition was most interesting and was interrupted with mediocre dancing exhibitions. The organization of this event was excellent. There were absolutely no time lags between bands - as the competing band started to play, the next band was in position to march, ready to compete. A rare treat! John MacLellan was the sole judge for this competition and as the bands competed he assigned them to either Class I or Class II. The competition appeared as one large class until the results were announced. These proved most interesting and surprising to many I am sure.



Just after the last band competed, but before the results were announced the awards for the entire days activities were presented. This very good idea was marred considerably by rushing the procedure which resulted in names being announced before the previous winner had been presented with his award and general confusion as to which competitor should receive which trophy.

Before the evening events closed at about 11 P.M. the audience which I would estimate 2000 were privileged to hear performances by the United States Airforce Band. This band, dressed in evening highland dress, were nothing short of spectacular. The seven pipers, three sides and bass drummer combine excellent musical abilities with entertaining drill manoeuvres to "steal the show". The praise for this band was most generous from several of our more distinguished and knowledgeable piping and drumming authorities. Witnessing this performance was worth the trip in itself.

The weather was perfect (something that can be more relied upon in Idaho than in the local games circuit) and the setting ideal for a relaxed, comfortable, informal atmosphere and the competitors keen and numerous. Generally a splendid day of piping and those responsible for the event are to be congratulated. Make this day a must for next year!

R.D.G.

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#### JUDGES' REPORT - COUER D' ALENE GAMES

The sudden realization that the Couer d'Alene Idaho Competition was about to experience a "boom year" came as a shock to myself and members of the games committee. The entries received had more than doubled from one year ago and as the committee had advertized that I would be the sole judge, it soon became apparent that this would be an impossible feat were the Games confined to one day. However, fate dealt kindly in that Police Inspector Evan C. MacKay was currently a house guest of the committee's advisor Lt. Col. John McEwing of Spokane. The Inspector was one of the very bright stars in scottish piping circles in the late fifties and early sixties prior to becoming a member of the Royal Hong Kong Police in that far away highly sensitive empire bastion and he very graciously consented to adjudicate the Amateur Piobaireachd, Amateur Marches, Strathspeys and Reels. Without his capable assistance it would have been impossible to accomplish all the judging of the day as he dealt with no less than fifty two entries. I judged the Amateur Over 16 March, Strathspey and Reel, the Open Piobaireachd, the Open March, Strathspey and Reel, the Quartettes and the Pipe Bands.

The setting for the competition was the same as last year, in the City Park under friendly Ponderosa Pines with a cooling breeze sweeping off the sixteen mile long lake Couer d'Alene. Conditions were well nigh perfect even though low humidity caused some reed problems. Competitors had ample tuning areas in this great park. The Stewards were well trained and effective. Mr. Fred MacLennan whose brother Neill lives in South Uist and Alex in Glasgow was extremely helpful in breaking the numerous bottlenecks that normally occur at

any games. Pipe Major Edmond Esson appeared to be everywhere in assisting the great contingent who drove over 400 miles from Vancouver. Other stalwarts include P.M. Malcolm Nicholson, Angus Macculley, John Ironside, Albert Whyte, Alvin Halverson, John Macleod and many, many others. I will not mention the committee members by name but I would be remiss in not congratulating them on their highly professional handling of the games as a whole. Plain men and women were involved whose only interest was to preserve this priceless pure highland culture. This MacCrimmon legacy which the western part of the "New World" places such high value on. The fact that two Americans were at this very moment walking on the surface of the moon did not for a moment detract from the delightful scene of kilted Highlandmen, gaily dressed ladies and the overriding sound of the pipes.

The following is Police Inspector MacKay's report after which I will continue my detailed report and short summary of the day's activities.

My adjudicating tasks occupied seven hours. Seven delightful heart warming hours since this was the first time in three and half years that I had the opportunity to sit and "soak up" great quantities of perhaps auld Scotland's most important export. First, I must report that I was surprised and impressed with the quality of the playing that I listened to. I cannot help but attribute this to the solid foundation of instructors who live in this great western region and to the specialists who have been coming from Scotland to Canada and the United States each summer to conduct classes in various forms.

A total of nine competitors played in the Amateur Piobaireachd. The first prize, The Lieut. Col. John McEwing Trophy went to Byron Barnard. He played "The MacKays Banner" on a very good sounding pipe. Second prize went to Sandy Marshall with "MacCrimmons Sweetheart". Third prize went to Bill Russell who played "The Lament for Sir James Macdonald". The over all playing in this competition was quite high and presented a rather difficult task. Donald Marshall and Donald MacMillan though not in the list, turned in performances of high merit. Their playing was a joy to listen to. I found that in some instances the tone quality, because of improper tuning, was a shade substandard. There was an inclination to drag in some of the ground work. Not with standing this I felt that there existed a very high potential and there is no question that these splendid players will find their names in the piping "Hall of Fame" before too long.

The Amateur 16 and Under March, Strathspey and Reel events produced a total of twenty-two competitors in each respective event. Was as a whole very good but, again, many performances were spoiled by rather poor tuning. Also, quite a few tackled tunes that were simply too difficult for them. Had they played more simple tunes, I felt that they would have fared a bit better in the prize list. The bearing of some competitors left something to be desired and though not taken into account in the judging, it does detract from the over all picture one has of the competition as a whole. Another noticeable point was the tendency of some to keep bobbing up and down as they marched. Several managed to sway from side to side when playing. I strongly recommend that this practise be discouraged because no player can have complete control of his pipe while engaged in such physical exercise.

In the March, first prize went to Drew Noot. Second to Bill MacAulay and third to Dan Deisner. The standard of the march playing was good although several competitors played their tunes at a shade slow tempo. The Strathspey and Reel standard was somewhat lower than the march because many of the competitors played tunes too difficult for them. Dan Deisner easily won first place, Jack Lee second and Mary Alward was third.

Because of the critical time element involved the March, Strathspey and Reel were played at the same time with the competitor being allowed to tune upon completion of the March.

Lt. MacLellan's Report continued -

At my platform the first competitors were the Amateur over 16 March, Strathspey and Reel because of the critical time factor it was decided by the committee to play these off at the one visit to the boards. This system has advantages to those who are confident and whose pipes are in good order but to some it had disadvantages. One very good player who had extremely bad luck had obviously played his pipe out and because of this decided to stop playing in the Strathspey and Reel portion. I gave him good playing marks in the March competition, but, I consider that in these competitions the sound of the pipe is most important and I will never condone a poor sounding instrument. I wonder when competitors will really understand that to play an untuned or improperly tuned bagpipe is far worse than someone playing on a badly tuned piano or violin. The best bagpipe and the finest reeds do not make an instrument until it is tuned accurately and holds that tuning during a whole performance. The over all playing in this competition was good and the prize list was shared on each occasion by the same three competitors.

The results are as follows:

- |                                     |  |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| Amateur March Over 16               | - Donald MacMillan, Vancouver            |
|                                     | - Louis Heaton, Pulman, U. of Washington |
|                                     | - Bill Russell                           |
| Amateur Strathspey and Reel Over 16 | - Donald MacMillan                       |
|                                     | - Bill Russell                           |
|                                     | - Louis Heaton                           |

Good performances in the Marches were also turned in by Tim Noot, Sandy Marshall and by Ian MacCrimmon. In the Strathspey and Reel, Tim Noot, Sandy Marshall and Byron Barnard did very well.

The next competition was the Open March, Strathspey and Reel where prize money to the tune of One Hundred and Seventy-Five dollars was at stake. Victoriaite Jamie Troy made a fine start in this competition but after playing a fine "Southall" he began the wrong Strathspey and realizing this failed to continue. Twelve in all played in this competition which was keen and of a very high standard. In all, there were three breakdowns but sad to hear when the player is going well. This competition was won by Harold Zenyk from Victoria who turned in an excellent performance on a fine robust pipe which was exceptionally well tuned, second place went to Norma Nicholson Thompson for her rendering in good professional style of Southall,

Cameronian Rant and DC Mathers' Lock Carron. Miss Teresa MacInnes whose technique and expression was flawless, came in for third place. Her pipe, though well tuned, was sharp on top and her tuning did not hold. My marks for this competition may be of interest to the readers.

	<u>10</u> <u>BAGPIPES</u>	<u>10</u> <u>EXPRESSION</u>	<u>10</u> <u>TECHNIQUE</u>	<u>10</u> <u>TOTAL</u>
1st H. Zenyk	9.5	9.6	9.4	28.5
2nd N. Thompson	9.3	9.6	9.4	28.3
3rd T. MacInnes	9.0	9.6	9.6	28.2

The other excellent performances marred by a few imperfections was by John MacLeod who was awarded a total mark of 28.1. On the whole this was a most enjoyable performance by all and a pleasure to listen to.

The Professional or Open Piobaireachd competition got under way after lunch. Competitors were required to offer two tunes. One of their own choice and one from a prescribed list. There were nine competitors only one of which did not complete his tune and one who walked off without starting the tune for all intents and purposes. At stake was one hundred and seventy-five dollars, the magnificent Malcolm M. Ferguson Trophy donated by the Kellys of Couer d'Alene and the "Bratach Na Beann" which may well become the highest and most coveted piping award in the new world, in Canada or the United States. This beautiful banner is given annually to the Spokane Piobaireachd Society by Police Inspector Evan MacKay and the Society in turn makes it available as the Premier award for open Piobaireachd. Regarding this new banner, I salute Inspector MacKay for his imagination in its design and in making it available to the recently formed Spokane Piobaireachd Society who in turn have put it to such excellent use.

The banner itself coupled with the plan to make it possible for each year's New World winner to fly to Scotland and compete with some of the world's very finest pipers can only result in an enriched world of piping. I believe that other countries may follow the leadership represented by this banner and I am convinced that the "Bratach Na Beann" will introduce a vital forward step in useful and friendly competition and as a representative of the Scottish Piobaireachd Society I am most happy and honoured to be its very first adjudicator and send it on its way into piping history.

There was some very fine playing in this competition and it was a marked improvement over last year. There was musical colour in the playing. Bagpipes were steady and well tuned and techniques in general were sound. Spokane school teacher Bill Thomas began with the "Lament for Mary MacLeod". This was a well presented and phrased tune. He was followed by Bramley Eccles from Trail, B.C. who played the "Desperate Battle", Jamie Troy the "Princess Salute", Harold Senyk, "Glengarry's March", Bruce Topp, "Lament for Patrick Og MacCrimmon", John MacLeod "The Battle of Aldearn", Norma Thompson "The Big Spree", Teresa MacInnes "The Prince's Salute", Donald Maxwell of Calgary "The MacFarlanes Gathering". This competition was won by John MacLeod from Vancouver who played a very fine tune (up to Gold Medal Standards) on a bagpipe which was well tuned, well toned and held rock fast during the whole performance. Norma Thompson was second for her "Big Spree" and Jamie Troy was third for his rendering

of the "Princess Salute". Bruce Topp showed excellent form in his ground and doubling, of the "Lament for Patrick Og McCrimmon" but got the wrong end for the doubling and having realized it, stopped playing. This was indeed a very pleasant competition to listen to.

It was now time for piping in concert and the Quartettes got under way on a near by concrete slab. There were nine entries, all of which played. It is still apparent, though sometimes not realized that an effective start is required in this competition. My remarks of last year still hold good when I said "the introduction should be crisp, in unison, concise, and lead the group to begin the competition in an efficient manner". Long winded blowing up of drones, and sounding of "E's" are not good entry sequences.

The Vancouver Ladies No. 1 Quartette was a clear winner, concise start, pipes in unison, crisp accurate playing in brisk tempo, was something of an object lesson. Their drill too was excellent. Most admirable.

Second place went to the Kiwanis No. 1 Group, their start was rather ragged but the remainder of the performance was sound, with good strong virile playing. Some way behind for third place and leading a long group in much the same category were the Seaforth Cadets, their piping hadn't the gay spirit of the Leaders' and sounded in contrast very "Serious".

A fine young combination was the No. 1 Royal Canadian Legion's all boys of less than twelve years of age. They played well together, and had good changes and all in all for "young men" gave a very fine display of good piping which showed great potential.

At 7:45 the sound of the pipe bands approaching the ball park heralded the beginning of the evening Tattoo and Pipe Band Competition. There was a large audience to see the flags of the U.S.A., Canada, and the Rampant Lion of Scotland ceremoniously played onto the field. After the colours were posted, Drum Major Al Graybell invited Chief-tain of the day - John MacRae, United States Attorney to take his seat. Mr. MacRae opened the games and after a massed band salute to the Chief, the evening was under way. The following bands competed:

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| The MacBain Scottish,<br>Calgary, Alberta | The Lockheed,<br>Los Altos, Calif.           |
| The Royal Highlanders,<br>Boise, Idaho    | The Seaforth Cadets,<br>Vancouver, B.C.      |
| The Angus Scott,<br>Spokane Area          | The Vancouver Ladies,<br>Vancouver, B.C.     |
| The Kootenai Kilties,<br>Nelson, B.C.     | The Seaforth Highlanders,<br>Vancouver, B.C. |
|   | The Kiwanis Boys,<br>Vancouver, B.C.         |

I was the sole judge for this competition, and judged on the "ensemble" idea. There is some criticism heard regarding the fact there is only one judge. The advisor to the committee, Lt. Col. John McEwing defends the one judge system with whom I fully agree. This is neither a piping competition nor a drumming competition, but a Pipe Band competition, and as such it must be judged, with only one mark

given to the Pipe Band, thus encouraging pipe band playing, not as is often the case a pipe competition, and a drum competition that could easily be held at opposite ends of the arena. The standards varied, but on the whole one heard sound pipe band playing with good piping and drumming techniques which were fairly well blended together. A feature of the Seaforth bands was there alto drumming which was very tuneful, but which lacked variety and I thought, imagination. The winners were the Vancouver Ladies with a strong performance - this was professional, - excellent introduction, good intonation, with pipes and drums matching each other in volume and accomplishment, although I thought that in the Reel a more simple drumming pattern would have been more suitable. Drummers do not need to impress all the time that they are good technicians. Second place went to the Lochheed Band from Los Altos, California. Their introduction was novel and appealing, the whole pipe band had a very pleasant sound to it, although I did not like the drum strathspey rhythm, it was far from being a dance rhythm, and did not fit the metre of the tune. As they marched off the drummers produced maracas, bongos and all manner of percussion "tools" and what I'd have done, had they used them in the competition, I just don't know. Third prize in the Class I section (classes were determined as the pipe bands played) went to the Kiwanis Boys who played very well and who also have that "professional" sound. I also placed in the Class I section MacBain Scottish, The Seaforth Highlanders, and the Seaforth Cadets. The first prize in the Class II section went to the young Abbotsford band, second place to the Angus Scott Pipe Band and third prize to the Kootenai Kilties.

Once again we were treated to a magnificent display of Pipe Band music of the very highest standards by the United States Air Force Pipe Band under Spokane born Pipe Major Sandy Jones. Sandy tells me that they are to play in the Usher Hall in Edinburgh at the end of September, and I know that his band's playing will open many eyes in Scotland.

Finally the massed pipe bands came under command of Drum Major Hamilton of the Seaforth Highlanders who won the drum major contest and to the strains of "Bonnie Dundee" what was a very long day of piping, and pipe band playing, came to an end.

The novices March competition was held on the Sunday morning. I think that it is a pity that more spectators do not support these young pipers who are making their debut in the competition field. I change my attitude to the bagpipe for novices and mark out a column "control of Bagpipe" and in this way I can give credit to those who show that they can wind the instrument in proper fashion so that a steady sound is made. There were eleven competitors. Two of these were badly taught - which is a pity. The remainder had all sound basics which will stand in good stead as they progress in "up tempo" and tune difficulty.

The prize list comprised of:

- 1st - April MacDonald - Vancouver
- 2nd - Candy Parker - Osbourn, Idaho
- 3rd - Craig Hazelbaker - Dillon, Montana

Thus came to an end the judgement on 146 performances, which entailed a great deal of paper work for Inspector MacKay and myself,

however, we were able to furnish every competitor an adjudication sheet.

In conclusion I can comment with interest on the dramatic growth and steadily improving quality of these games, all the committee members appear to work in complete harmony with each other and in a highly professional manner at all times.

Lieut. John MacLellan

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### PIPING TIMES EDITORIAL

"The great search for a new kind of ceol mor -- a "pop piob-aireachd" as some unkind critics christened it -- ended, as most of us expected, in utter failure. No genius appeared who could find something new and, at the same time convince the higher echelons of the piping world that what he had found was of any value.

Still, the experiment was not in vain. There emerged at least half-a-dozen piobaireachds -- in traditional form -- which are well worth hearing, and at least the two prize-winning ones are well worth playing. Now, of course, we will have to wait a few years to find if pipers will be interested enough to make these tunes part of our piping heritage, or whether they will consign them to the dusty shelves and forget them.

One thing quite startled the adjudicators of the competition, and that was the fact that any really good tunes emerged at all. Considering the fact that nearly all these composers are part-time musicians and that many of them have had less theoretical musical education than would get them an A level in music, the standard was astonishingly high. Even if none of the tunes is ever played again (except by their composers) it has been clearly demonstrated that the piping world contains talent of the highest order -- just waiting for the day when conditions are favourable enough for the big step forward into a new golden age. Although the new tunes may not be played much, it must be remembered that they have to compete with some of the greatest music in the world. The choice for all of us is inevitably one of the new ones of "Donald Ban" (or a similar classic we haven't yet got round to learning).

What next? as they say on the radio. Well, composing must continue to be encouraged, especially when such efforts are so happily rewarded. The Prince Charles Trophy will again be there for the winning next year, and although the Saltire Society will be encouraging some other aspect of Scottish culture, some further incentive will be found to keep the new music flowing.

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### NON-STOP SKIRL

Stevenage, Herts, famous pipe band has established a new world bagpipe-playing record by playing non-stop for more than eight hours.

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## PIPER OF THE MONTH

Few individuals in our organization have had as distinguished and honourable piping career as Pipe Major Edmund Esson, M.B.E. Mr. Esson is one of the founding members of the British Columbia Pipers' Association and has contributed greatly to the present success we, as members, now enjoy. He has been one of the driving forces behind such events as suggesting the Association should participate in sponsoring the White Heather Show, conceiving the idea of the MacCrimmon Cairn Trophy for the Professional Piobaireachd winner at our Annual Gathering and, more recently, suggesting that we take advantage of the presence of P.M. Archie Cairns by having him conduct our currently completed judging classes.

Edmund Esson was born in Aberdeenshire, Scotland and immigrated to Canada with his family at the age of seven years. Most people will remember Mr. Esson as the Pipe Major of the Seaforth Highlanders of Canada. His distinguished service with the Seaforths started at the age of 13 when he joined the Seaforth Cadets in Vancouver. Encouragement from his father prompted young Esson to answer a call for volunteers to join the cadet pipe band. After 3 years as a cadet piper he was asked to join the Militia band and applied to join the Regiment. Although his application was turned down due to his young age, he continued to play in the Militia Pipe Band under Pipe Major Sim. On reaching the age of 18 he was formally accepted into the Regiment. Shortly thereafter John Gillies was appointed Pipe Major of the Seaforth Band and Mr. Esson started formal tuition under his guidance.

In 1927 P.M. Esson became a Corporal piper and in 1935 attended the Royal School of Infantry in Esquimalt and studied to become an Army Sergeant. On completion of his course he was made a Lance Sergeant.

1936 was a big year for Ed Esson. Early in the year he was appointed Acting Sergeant, then Full Sergeant, Acting Pipe Major and then in April of the same year, Pipe Major.

In 1937 the Pipe Major accompanied Commanding Officer Lt. Col. J. R. Stewart-Lough to the Coronation of George VI. He took part in the Coronation Parade and represented the Seaforth Highlanders in the Canadian contingent.

During the years 1932-1938 Mr. Esson was under the tuition of the well known piper and teacher Donald MacIvor, who gave Ed his grounding in Piobaireachd.

When World War II broke out in 1939 P.M. Esson took an active part. In December of that year he went overseas with the Regiment as part of the First Canadian Division and was first stationed in Farnborough, England. He remained in Britain for three years during which time he was most fortunate in being able to attend the Pipe Major's course at Edinburgh Castle under the world renowned William Ross. His stay in Scotland afforded him the time to attend three courses offered at the Castle. The year 1944 saw Edmund Esson appointed as the Senior Pipe Major of the Seaforth Highlanders of Canada.

After participating in the Italian, French and North Western Europe Campaign Mr. Esson was honoured by being awarded with an M.B.E. for his long and loyal service in the Seaforth Highlanders.



Rather than attend the Investiture at Buckingham Palace associated with this award, he chose to attend a Seaforth reunion and later attended the Investiture in the Officer's Mess at the Seaforth Armoury in Vancouver conducted by Governor-General Alexander.

On completion of his military service he returned to Canada with the Regiment October 8, 1945 and became a civilian. Five months later, however, Mr. Esson returned to the Militia Regiment as a piper under Pipe Major John McHardy. On P.M. McHardy's retirement in 1946 Ed Esson was once again the Pipe Major.

After recruiting the talents of the accomplished Seaforth Cadet Pipe Band which included such pipers as Jock Low, Andy Perry and Bill McRae the P.M. succeeded in developing one of the best pipe bands ever to compete in North America. The years 1948 - 1958 proved to be the Seaforth Highlander Pipe Band decade. The Band dominated all the local pipe band competitions and won the Stewart Trophy for ten straight years.

One of the highlights of the Band's ten year reign was a trip to the Edinburgh Festival in 1951. This was in the days when the round trip airfare was \$1000. per band member and raising money to send a band to Scotland was no mean feat. Competiting in the Overseas Section the Seaforths captured third place.

In 1952 P.M. Esson was honoured by being appointed the Senior Military Pipe Major in the British Commonwealth. This seemed a most appropriate appointment for a man who had dedicated so much of his life to the betterment of bagpipe music.

P.M. Esson had competed individually in local competition for many years before the war and was encouraged by Rod McLeod to continue his efforts after the war. His success can be shown by examining the MacCrimmon Cairn Trophy for Professional Piobaireachd. The name Edmund Esson is engraved for three years in a row.

After stepping off the boards for the last time Mr. Esson made his judging services available. His judging ability has become as widely respected as his piping ability and the demand for his services have spread throughout Canada and the Western States.

Teaching the Highland Bagpipe has not dominated a great deal of Mr. Esson's time but he has been engaged as a teacher to a limited capacity since the early 1930's. In recent years he has been known to offer his tremendous tuning ability to various bands and individual pipers on competition days.

In June 1965 P.M. Edmund Esson retired from the Seaforth Highlanders after 46 years service, five of which were as a Cadet. The Seaforths were truly sorry to see such a man leave their ranks and showed their appreciation of his service by presenting him with a beautiful Grandfather Clock which occupies a prominent location in his livingroom.

Truly a remarkable man and piper - P.M. Edmund Esson, M.B.E.

ST. ANDREWS & CALEDONIAN GAMES

The St. Andrews & Caledonian Games were held August 9, 1969 at Swangard Stadium in Burnaby, B.C. The results were as follows:

Novice Marches

- 1st - John McKay
- 2nd - Cindy Chambers
- 3rd - Glen Esdale

Juvenile Marches

- 1st - Angus MacPherson
- 2nd - Ken Ringham
- 3rd - Mitchell Bain

Juvenile Strathspey & Reel

- 1st - Angus MacPherson
- 2nd - Alan Walters - Calgary
- 3rd - Ken Ringham

Amateur Piobaireachd

- 1st - Bill MacAulay
- 2nd - Bill Russell
- 3rd - Sandy Marshall

Amateur Marches

- 1st - Sandy Marshall
- 2nd - Donald Taylor
- 3rd - Bill Russell

Amateur Strathspey & Reel

- 1st - Donald MacMillan
- 2nd - Bill Russell
- 3rd - John F. MacDonald

Junior Piobaireachd

- 1st - Margaret Swanson
- 2nd - Robert Menzies
- 3rd - Allan Skalazub

Junior Marches

- 1st - Drew Noot
- 2nd - Malcolm MacLeod - Ontario
- 3rd - Glen Palmer

Junior Strathspey & Reel

- 1st - Robert Menzies
- 2nd - Malcolm MacLeod
- 3rd - Margaret Swanson

Professional Piobaireachd

- 1st - Bruce Topp
- 2nd - Norma Thompson
- 3rd - James W. Troy

Professional Marches

- 1st - Norma Thompson
- 2nd - John A. MacLeod
- 3rd - Bruce Topp

Professional Strathspey & Reel

- 1st - John A. MacLeod
- 2nd - Bruce Topp
- 3rd - Robert Leslie

Professional Jigs

- 1st - John A. MacLeod
- 2nd - Bruce Topp
- 3rd - James W. Troy

"C" Class Bands - Kiwanis Boys Pipe Band  
- Burnaby Ladies Pipe Band  
- Highland Laddies Pipe Band

"B" Class Bands - Anavets Pipe Band

"A" Class Bands - Seaforth Highlanders of Canada

PIOBAIREACHD LIST FOR 1970

Professional pipers must submit one tune from each list. The judge will inform the piper which tune he is to play.

LIST "A"

1. Clanranald's Salute - Piobaireachd Society Collection
2. End of the Great Bridge - Piobaireachd Society Collection
3. I Got a Kiss of the King's Hand - Piobaireachd Society Collection
4. The Prince's Salute - Piobaireachd Society Collection
5. Clan MacNab's Salute - The Kilberry Book of Ceol Mor

LIST "B"

1. Glengarry's March - Piobaireachd Society Collection
2. Lament for the Viscount of Dundee - Piobaireachd Society Collection
3. Lament for MacSwan of Roaig - Piobaireachd Society Collection
4. Old Men of the Shells (Setting # 1) - Piobaireachd Society Collection
5. Tulloch Ard (The MacKenzie's March) - Piobaireachd Society Collection

In List "A" the Crunluath a Mach must be played in tunes 2: 3: 4: & 5:, while in tune 1, it is optional.

In List "B" tunes 1: 2: & 4:, are Fosgailte and 3: & 5: are Breabach.

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COUER D' ALENE PIOBAIREACHD LISTS

At the 1970 competition, it will be necessary for the competitors to come prepared to play any one of the following three tunes:

- "Lament for MacSwan of Roaig"
- "The Battle of Auldearn" - Either setting
- "Lament for Sir James MacDonald of the Isles"

For the 1971 competition -

- "The Vaunting"
- "Scarce of Fishing"
- "Lament for the Earl of Antrim"

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SEATTLE HIGHLAND GAMES

Piping results, competition held August 2nd, 1969.

Novice Under 14 - Marches

- 1st - Cindy Chambers
- 2nd - Ian Keith
- 3rd - Angus MacKay

Strathspey & Reel

- 1st - Cindy Chambers
- 2nd - Ian Keith
- 3rd - Tobias Nichols

Novice 14 Years & Over - Marches

- 1st - Elouise Roane
- 2nd - John MacKay
- 3rd - Robyn Palmer
- 4th - Marion Wood
- 5th - Susan Lowden

Strathspeys & Reels

- 1st - Mike Monks
- 2nd - Pat McGranaghan
- 3rd - Elouise Roane
- 4th - John MacKay

Juvenile - Marches

- 1st - Heather Zinck
- 2nd - Ian Cameron
- 3rd - Angus MacPherson
- 4th - Mary Alward
- 5th - Lee Anne Alward

Strathspeys & Reels

- 1st - Angus MacPherson
- 2nd - Alan Walters
- 3rd - Heather Zinck
- 4th - Ken Ringham
- 5th - Cameron Prouse

Old Highland Airs

- 1st - Jeff Brewer
- 2nd - Mary Alward
- 3rd - Alan Walters
- 4th - Ian Cameron
- 5th - Cameron Prouse

Junior - Marches

- 1st - Margaret Swanson
- 2nd - Drew Noot
- 3rd - Glen Palmer

Strathspeys & Reels

- 1st - Drew Noot
- 2nd - Tim Noot
- 3rd - Glen Palmer

Old Highland Airs

- 1st - Drew Noot
- 2nd - Tim Noot
- 3rd - Allan Skalazub

Amateur - Marches

- 1st - Bill Russell
- 2nd - Angus Ironside
- 3rd - John MacDonald
- 4th - Sandy Marshall

Strathspeys & Reels

- 1st - Sandy Marshall
- 2nd - Donald Taylor
- 3rd - Bill MacAulay
- 4th - John Wright

Piobaireachd

- 1st - Bill MacAulay
- 2nd - Sandy Marshall
- 3rd - Bill Russell
- 4th - Bill Heaton

Professional - Marches

- 1st - Bruce Topp
- 2nd - Norma Thompson
- 3rd - John A. MacLeod

Strathspey & Reel

- 1st - Norma Thompson
- 2nd - Bruce Topp
- 3rd - Jamie Troy

Piobaireachd

- 1st - John A. MacLeod
- 2nd - Norma Thompson
- 3rd - Bruce Topp

Seattle results continued:

Drumming competition - Open - All ages

1st - Mike Palmer	Class "C" Pipe Bands
2nd - David Dickens	- Kiwanis Boys Band
3rd - Jenny Berg	- Burnaby Ladies Pipe Band
Ron McColl	- Highland Laddies
5th - Mark Brecco	Class "B" Pipe Bands
Sheila Roane	- Seaforth Highlanders of Canada

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"HOT SCOT" ARRESTED FOR 'PIPES"

"Local radio hot-line announcer Allan Hassen was arrested for playing his bagpipes Sunday and charged with disturbing the peace.

Hassen, referred to as the Hot Scot, was dressed in his kilt and played for a group of friends about 6 P.M. in his West End apartment.

"It was ridiculous," Hassen told the Province after being released on \$75. bail. "I had only been playing for 2½ hours and everyone was enjoying it. Anyone knows you can play for 6 hours without disturbing anything."

He said he had gone onto his 16th floor balcony because his neighbours had encouraged him.

"When the police came everyone started booing. What got me was that they also arrested my bagpipes. I mean I'll get over it, but the pipes will never be the same.

"The police were unhappy about the whole thing, but very friendly.

"We had a humorous chat about it on the way to the jail."

Hassen will appear in magistrate's court on the charge."

Reprinted from the Province

It seems we of the piping community are often referred to as playing a most unharmonious instrument. Pipers and most of the public realize that the bagpipe when well played and properly tuned is a most beautiful sounding instrument but we should appreciate that not everyone likes the bagpipe. Publicity like this can do nothing but degrade and ridicule our instrument.

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"MUSIC HATH CHARMS... BUT NOT THE BAGPIPES"

Toronto Telegram, An editorial

"Evenings, after his parliamentary duties were over, the late Senator Thomas Reid of New Westminster used to relax by playing the bagpipes.

It wasn't unusual for visitors to Parliament Hill to hear the strains of Road to the Isles, the Campbells are Coming or perhaps Scotland the Brave wafting over the twilight air.

Senator Reid's playing had the support of five successive prime ministers, and he never hesitated to inform his critics of this.

If he were still alive, Senator Reid would be certain to tell Parliament what he thought of a recent decision by a Woodstock, Ontario, court that issued an injunction to prevent a resident from playing his pipes.

Alex Robertson, a big, redhaired Scot, who also sells bagpipes, was ordered to desist after seven neighbours, including Mayor James Hutchinson, complained about the "noise".

Subsequently, the restraining order prohibiting Robertson from playing the pipes was withdrawn, but not before he signed a written promise that he would demonstrate the bagpipes for prospective customers only if the doors and windows were closed.

The shame of it, suggesting that the bagpipes make a noise! It's discrimination against an historic and honored musical instrument."

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"PLAY THIS ON YOUR SAMISEN"

Editorial Vancouver Sun

"Next to bagpipers themselves, nothing better illustrates the indomitable character of man than the futile persistence of those who would shut them up.

They never learn, do they? A couple of years ago, a piper celebrated Burns' Night by wailing laments outside a West End apartment block at midnight. Was the charge of causing a disturbance dismissed in court? Of course it was.

Last year, in Penticton, a piper inspired a riot that culminated with 17 arrests. Was the piper even apprehended? No, he "vanished" -- a euphemism, probably, for the cops taking him home and feeding him cookies.

Then there was that recent attempt of the defence department to have the pipes classified as a non-instrument for trades pay purposes, a utensil, sort of. The resultant backdown before the wrath of Canada's Scots was the beginning of the political eclipse of Paul Hellyer, then defence minister.

And just a few days ago, of course, still another piper had the court defend his right to drone for hours on end from his West End high-rise balcony. Judgement otherwise would have been a surprise in the man bites dog category.

Without getting into the debate over whether bagpipes make music or noise, one still may wonder about this seeming discrimination in Canadian law. An Albanian balalaika player who roused neighbours to the point where they dumped nightsoil on his head would not only be hauled away in the wagon but probably thumped.

Suspicious, however, are not enough. The anti-pipers must find the source of the pipes' protection -- piping senators and MPs, piping judges and prosecutors, piping police? -- or retreat.

The pipers will play that for them too."

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Your Samisen??

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#### BEST WISHES FOR JOHN MACLELLAN

The Editors of the Newsletter were saddened to hear that Lieut. John MacLellan had a heart attack in late August. We understand he had just returned from his busy teaching and judging schedule in B.C., Washington and Idaho. The latest word we have, however, is that John is back at work at Edinburgh Castle and we can only surmise by this that his attack was not too serious. In any event I am sure the Association sends their best wishes for his speedy and complete recovery.

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#### BURNABY LADIES' PIPE BAND

The forty-five members of the Burnaby Ladies' Pipe Band just returned from the 104th Annual San Francisco Highland Games where they won a total of 31 awards for piping, drumming and dancing.

The band won first for Juvenile Bands, first for "C" Class bands and second for Marching and Deportment in open competition.

The girls were invited to be Guest Band at the Highland Gathering and put on an exhibition the two days of the Games, as well as at Union Square in downtown San Francisco. The band also provided entertainment at the dance following the first day of competition and received a standing ovation for their performance.

Their awards include 8 trophies, 12 gold medals, 5 silver and 9 bronze. Notable awards were 1st for Best Dressed Competitor and 1st for Best Drum Major.

During the trip the band spent a day in Disneyland.

The band also won first for Best Ladies Pipe Band in the Pacific National Exhibition Parade and first for Junior Bands in the New Westminster May Day Parade.

The band is under the direction of Pipe Major Malcolm Nicholson and Norma Thompson.

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NANAIMO HIGHLAND GAMES

The Nanaimo Highland Gathering was held at the Caledonian Grounds, in Nanaimo, B.C., July 12th, 1969. The following were the results:

Novice - Marches

- 1st - Robyn Palmer
- 2nd - Cindy Chambers
- 3rd - Ian Keith
- 4th - Pat MacGranahan

Strathspeys & Reels

- 1st - John MacKay
- 2nd - Ian Keith
- 3rd - Robyn Palmer
- 4th - Alan Strachan

Juvenile - Marches

- 1st - Angus MacPherson
- 2nd - Jack Lee
- 3rd - Hazel Ramsay
- 4th - Terry Lee

Strathspeys & Reels

- 1st - Jack Lee
- 2nd - Angus MacPherson
- 3rd - Susan Purdy
- 4th - Heather Zinck

Junior - Marches

- 1st - Stewart Prescott
- 2nd - Drew Noot
- 3rd - Lynn Grocott
- 4th - Margaret Swanson

Strathspeys & Reels

- 1st - Tim Noot
- 2nd - Janice Taylor
- 3rd - Drew Noot
- 4th - Robert Menzies

Senior Amateur - Marches

- 1st - Bill MacAulay
- 2nd - Donald MacMillan
- 3rd - Sandy Marshall
- 4th - Sherea Barwell

Strathspeys & Reels

- 1st - Donald MacMillan
- 2nd - Bill MacAulay
- 3rd - John Wright

Piobaireachd

- 1st - Bill MacAulay
- 2nd - Donald MacMillan
- 3rd - Byron Barnard

Professional - Marches

- 1st - Jamie Troy
- 2nd - Norma Thompson
- 3rd - Bruce Topp

Strathspeys & Reels

- 1st - John A. MacLeod
- 2nd - Theresa MacInnes
- 3rd - Norma Thompson

Piobaireachd

- 1st - John A. MacLeod
- 2nd - Norma Thompson
- 3rd - Theresa MacInnes

"B" Class Bands

- Vancouver Ladies
- Seaforth Cadets

"C" Class Bands

- Kiwanis Boys Band
- Highland Laddies
- Vancouver Junior Ladies



BI-MONTHLY COMPETITION SCHEDULE

1969 - 1970

Competitions will be held in the Gymnasium of the Seaforth Armoury, Burrard Street, Vancouver, B.C. The Novice and Junior Competitions will commence at 7:30 P.M. and the Juvenile and Amateur will commence at 8:00 P.M. Pipers are asked to have their pipes tuned ready to play at the above times.

DATE	NOVICE	JUVENILE	JUNIOR	OPEN AMATEUR
Sept. 19	Marches		Strathspey & Reel	
Oct. 24		Old Highland Airs		Jigs
Nov. 21	6/8 Marches		Piobaireachd	
Dec. 19		Marches		Hornpipe
Jan. 16	Old Highland Airs		Jigs	
Feb. 20		Strathspey & Reel		Piobaireachd
April 17	Strathspey & Reel		Marches	
May 22		6/8 Marches		March, Strathspey & Reel

Competitors are asked to submit their name, and class they wish to enter, at least one day before their first competition, to the Secretary:

Mrs. Ishabel Ross  
834 Burnaby Street  
New Westminster, B.C.

Annual Gathering  
- April 3, 1970

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PROMOTIONS

The following are the promotion lists for the season 1969 starting with the Annual Gathering and ending with the St. Andrews and Caledonian Games. This does not include the winners of the Victoria Games as to date we have not received the results. Any piper - Novice

who won 1st, 2nd or 3rd in the Victoria Games must move up to Juvenile Competition, any piper - Juvenile who won 1st, 2nd or 3rd in the Victoria Games must move up to Junior Competition, and any piper - Junior who won 1st, 2nd or 3rd in the Victoria Games must move up to Amateur Competition.

NOVICE to JUVENILE

Ian Keith  
Allan MacDougall  
Elouise Roane  
Glen Esdale  
Robyn Palmer  
Cindy Chambers  
John McKay  
April MacDonald  
Leland Larson  
Mike Monks  
Doug Southgate  
Angus MacKay  
Tobias Nichols  
Pat McGranahan

JUVENILE to JUNIOR

Terry Lee  
Hazel Ramsay  
Angus MacPherson  
Malcolm McCaig  
Jack Lee  
Susan Purdy  
Bill Stockler  
Brian Beck  
Heather Zinck  
Ian Cameron  
Alan Walters - Calgary  
Jeff Brewer  
Mary Alward  
Ken Ringham  
Mitchell Bain

JUNIOR to AMATEUR

Drew Noot  
Glen Palmer  
Byron Bernard  
Tim Noot  
Jocelyn Lange  
Joe Shearer  
Robert Menzies  
Margaret Swanson  
Allan Skalazub  
Judy Taylor  
Stewart Prescott  
Lynn Grocott  
Janice Taylor  
Dan Diessner  
Malcolm MacLeod - Ont.

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PROFESSIONAL INTERNATIONAL CHAMPION

The competition was most keen this summer in the Professional class. It was not until the last tune was played at the last International Games in Seattle that Norma Nicholson Thompson managed to edge by John A. MacLeod for the Professional International Championship.

Congratulations are most certainly in order for Norma and to all the other professional pipers who made the competition a success.

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NEW MEMBERS

The Association is always pleased to welcome new members. The following people have joined the Association this summer:

Byron E. Barnard - Victoria, B.C. - Active  
James W. Troy - Victoria, B.C. - Active  
A. Harold Senyk - Victoria, B.C. - Active  
Norman D. MacLeod - Vancouver - Active

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MONTHLY WINTER PROFESSIONAL PIPING COMPETITION

For some time now people have been wondering why the professional pipers in our area do not compete during the winter months. The answer is simple. There are no competitions.

This year, we of the B.C. Pipers' Association, are doing something about this lack of a competition environment. As of the October General Meeting and every general meeting throughout the year we plan to have two professional pipers compete. A different two pipers will compete each month with the winner being invited to compete at a later general meeting.

The details of this competition are as follows:

1. Each competitor will be required to play the tune or tunes of his choice.
2. Each competitor's performance must not be less than 10 minutes nor more than 15 minutes.
3. Three judges are to award their score of each piper by holding up a card showing a number from 1 to 10.
4. In the case of a tie the competitors should be prepared to give a 5 minute tie-breaking performance. These must be different tunes from those already played.
5. All professional pipers are invited to participate.
6. Entries must be submitted to Mrs. I. Ross  
834 Burnaby Street  
New Westminster, B.C.  
by September 30th, 1969.
7. Once all entries have been received the pairing off of competitors will be done by drawing from a hat.
8. Entry fee is \$3.00.
9. First prize money - \$50.00 (minimum).

We are very optimistic concerning entries for this competition and anticipate a favourable reaction from our members. This should be a first class competition and we will look forward to your attendance either as a member of the audience or as a competitor.

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ENTRY FORM PROFESSIONAL COMPETITION

Name .....

Address.....

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Entry Fee - \$3.00 - To be included with entry form.

Closing Date - SEPTEMBER 30th, 1969

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CONGRATULATIONS to Wendy and Allan MacNeil married early this summer. Allan is an Active Member of the Association and has played with the Kiwanis and Port Moody Pipe Bands. Many of our members met Allan this year when he sang at our Annual Dinner.

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Yah, Uh Huh!



