

SEPTEMBER 1983
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B.C. PIPERS' NEWSLETTER



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

SEPTEMBER 1983

THE B.C. PIPERS' NEWSLETTER IS PUBLISHED BY THE BRITISH COLUMBIA'S PIPERS' ASSOCIATION AND IS DISTRIBUTED TO ALL MEMBERS OF THE B.C. PIPERS' ASSOCIATION.

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CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE NEWSLETTER SHOULD BE SENT TO THE EDITOR:
JEAN BOKENFOHR, 1664 LINCOLN AVE., PORT COQUITLAM, B.C., V3B 2J6
OR PHONE 941-9872 NO LATER THAN THE TENTH OF THE MONTH.

ALL OTHER COMMUNICATIONS TO THE B.C. PIPERS' ASSOCIATION ARE TO
BE SENT TO THE SECRETARY: MRS. MARY MACKINNON, 6959 HALLIGAN ST.,
BURNABY, B.C., V5E 1R4.

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REPORT ON PACIFIC INTERNATIONAL HIGHLAND GAMES ASSOCIATION

The meeting was held Sunday, August 13th at 9:00 a.m. in Everett.

It was unfortunate the President, Dave Rickard had a heart attack at the Seattle Games the previous day. Dave's wife, Marion, was very optimistic about Dave's prognosis and we all join in offering our wishes for a speedy recovery.

The meeting was chaired by P/M Albert Duncan (W.P.B.A.)

There was a lengthy discussion on the future of the P.I.H.G.A. It was moved and seconded that the P.I.H.G.A. be continued.

With this main question settled there was general discussion on ways to update the Association. It was decided to discontinue the trophies, certificates and scholarships and in their place present an "Olympic" type medal. The design, number of classes, etc. to be decided at the next meeting on November 6th in Nanaimo. This seems to be a very progressive step forward in Pacific International competition.

All member organizations will be advised of the changes well before next season. Competitors should be sure to read the rules and regulations regarding their particular class groups in Pacific International Competition. Copies of these rules will be sent to all member organizations in the near future. (We hope to print these rules in the B.C. Pipers' Newsletter.)

Hardly a season goes by without some strange kind of "rhubarb" arising. This year has seen some strange happenings in Pipe Band Competitions. To alleviate some of the future problems the W.P.B.A. has made available a handbook containing rules, stationary, etc. for Pipe Band Competitions, and VERY IMPORTANT will if asked supply a representative to run the Pipe Band Competition. Note any Games Committee wanting either of the above services contact the W.P.B.A. directly.

To all Highland Games Associations it has been noted and seen that as the day of the games nears its end the quality of dress and competition seems to go down. It is the duty of all Committees to run the Games as professionally as possible for the benefit of the customer - who after all makes the Games possible by paying.

Respectfully submitted

I.O. MacKinnon, B.C.P.A. Representative

NEW MUSIC BOOK

THE GORDON HIGHLANDERS BOOK OF PIPE MUSIC, VOLUME I IS NOW FOR SALE AT TARTANTOWN, 5000 CLARKE ROAD, COQUITLAM.

COMING EVENTS

LAS VEGAS CONFERENCE UPDATE

This is a first ever attempt to bring together all interested individuals for a weekend of exchanging mutual concerns and ideas, and instruction in an atmosphere totally conducive to the formal, yet informal and social nature of our great art.

Many seminars and conferences are currently being arranged on topics ranging from piobaireachd, the set tunes, history, pipe band and solo instruction for pipers and drummers to the structure and overall organization of highland games throughout North America. There will be something for everyone's interest, whether you be a piper, drummer band executive member or a games organizer. In fact, any suggestion or interest in special topics should be addressed to the committee so that its inclusion may be considered..

Featured instructors and seminar leaders for this conference will be selected from the piping and drumming world both in Scotland and North America to gather with us in Las Vegas for this one of a kind event. The following people, all professionals of the highest calibre, have been tentatively contacted to act as Seminar leaders: Judging - P/M Archie Cairns, Pipe Bands - P/M Jamie Troy, Professional Piping - Murray Henderson, Drumming - D/M Alex Duthart, Highland Games - Bill Merriman. The list is far from complete. Others will be contacted as soon as possible. If you have any suggestions, please bring them forward. By your participation we will make this event a unique and very rewarding experience. Address of P/M Ken Eller is: 2180 Hollow Road, R.R. #1, Fonthill, Ontario, Canada, LOS 1E0.

The following people have agreed to make group travel arrangements from their respective cities. Please phone the one nearest to you for information.

Ottawa	Donna Ritchie	613-731-4840
Edmonton	Neil Dickie	403-481-4790
Saskatchewan	Jean Remenda	306-653-3009
Calgary	Gail Danysk	403-255-8526
Vancouver	Tartantown	604-936-8548

YOU ARE ALL INVITED TO THE 1ST BURNS SUPPER, JANUARY 28, 1984, PUT ON BY THE SIR JOHN A. MACDONALD SOCIETY PIPE BAND, WHICH WILL BE HELD AT THE BRANCH 148 LEGION IN NORTH BURNABY. FOR MORE INFORMATION PHONE D/M JOHN NICHOL AT 980-1294, OR P/M JIM PENNER AT 941-4631.

"PUB NIGHT"

SIR JOHN A. MACDONALD SOCIETY PIPE BAND

INVITES EVERYONE TO THEIR

"PUB NITE WITH MUSIC"

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 15, 8:00 P.M.

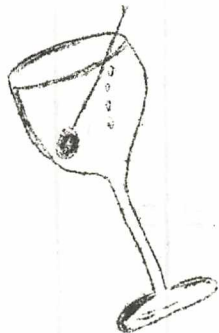
ADMISSION: \$4.00 PER PERSON

LOCATION: BRANCH 148 LEGION, NORTH BURNABY
(upstairs lounge)

TICKETS AT THE DOOR, OR CONTACT

P/M JIM PENNER 941-4631

D/M JOHN NICHOL 980-1294



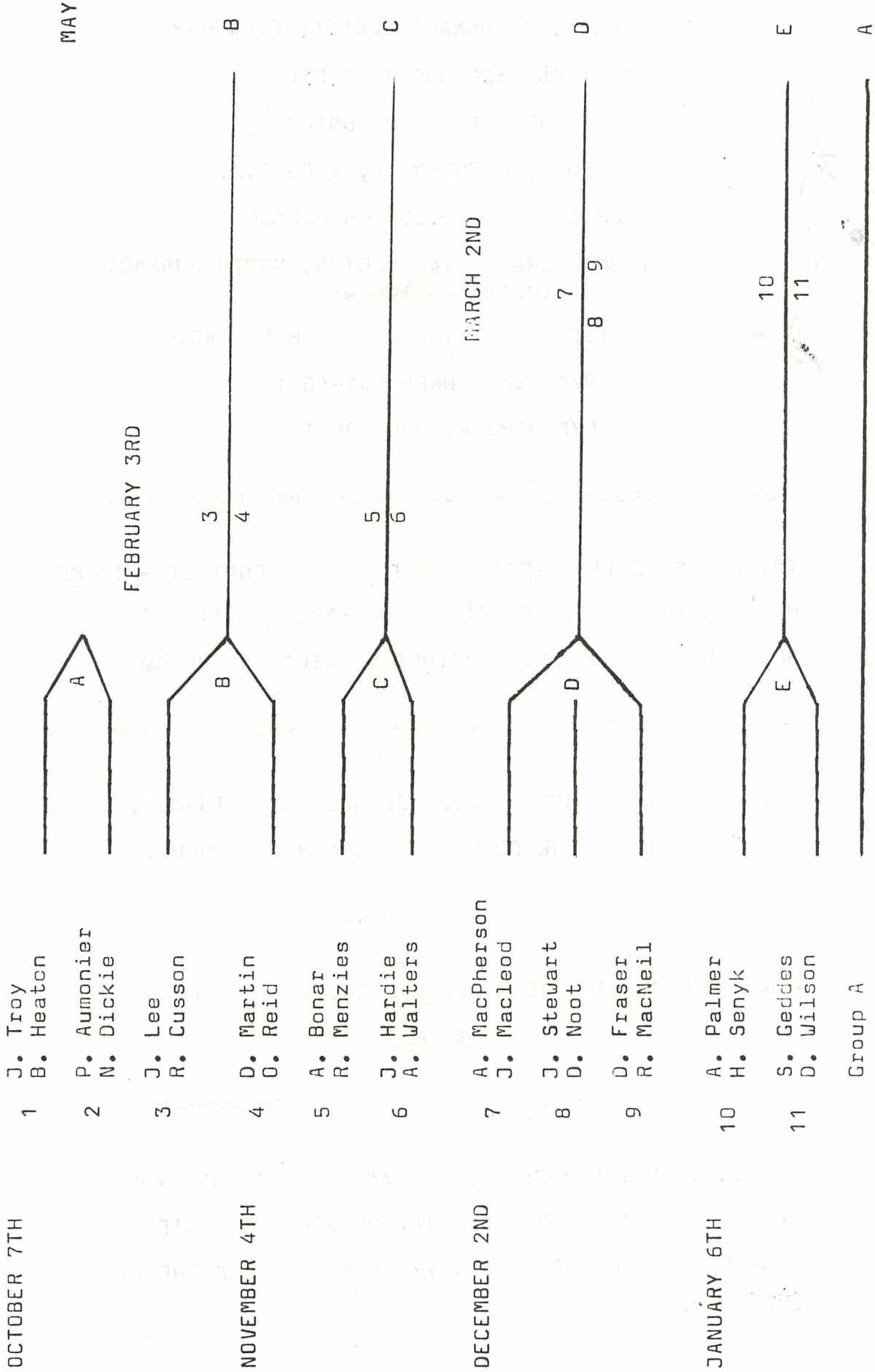
TRIUMPH STREET'S FIRST MAMMOTH TRIVIA CONTEST - TO BE
HELD ON THE NIGHT OF FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 18 AT THE
SCOTTISH AUDITORIUM. FURTHER DETAILS TO FOLLOW.

TRIUMPH STREET CONTEST WILL BE HELD ON SATURDAY,
DECEMBER 3RD AT THE GUILDFORD COMMUNITY SCHOOL.

A NEW RECORD WILL BE AVAILABLE SOON! TRIUMPH STREET'S
"CHRISTMAS 45"

THE B.C. JUNIOR PIPE BAND IS ANXIOUS TO HAVE YOUNG
PEOPLE JOIN THEIR RANKS. IF YOU ARE INTERESTED PHONE
DONALD MACMILLAN AT 596-0877 OR KATIE FORSYTHE AT
270-2489.

KNOCK-OUT SCHEDULE



To finish up in May, it was necessary to have semi-finalist Group A play-off in January. Groups B and C play in February and Groups D and E play-off in March leaving 5 finalists in May. Draw was held Sunday, September 11, 1933. A Draw was also held to determine which group would end up with the third piper.

PIPERS AND DRUMMERS ARE NEEDED FOR THE KISIMUL CASTLE
PIPE BAND. PLEASE PHONE PETER MACNEIL AT 530-1987 OR
MIKE EVANS AT 942-4286.

NOTICE OF MOTION FOR THE OCTOBER 7TH MEETING

Notice of Motion to amend B.C. Pipers' bylaw Section 10:

Change section 10 to read: The fiscal year shall end on the 31st day of December in each year and the Annual General Meeting of the Society shall be held anytime before the 31st of May of the year following at the call of the Board of Directors.

Reason: to avoid the problems of electing a new board of directors only a few weeks prior to the Annual Gathering. A May election would allow a smoother transition for new directors.

signed The Board, dated June 1st, 1983.

ANYONE WISHING PICTURES OF PRESENTATION OF PRIZES AT
THE 1983 ANNUAL GATHERING CONTACT BILL RUSSEL AT

874-8552.

"FEEDBACK"

Sept. 15

The feedback I would like to make is regarding the "Indoor Meet", last year. According to the "Newsletter", "Professional Piping", was to start at 12 o'clock, when I and others arrived about 12 o'clock, we were told the competition was moved ahead one hour and the judges were split, so the March, Strathspey, Reel and Jigs, were run at the same time. If the association expects to get a large crowd with that kind of set-up, they can forget it, as I heard a lot of complaints.

Years ago the "Professional Piping", and the Quartet, were the main attraction, now it seems they have been pushed aside for the miniature bands.

When I became a member of the association in the 30's, my understanding was to promote piping and to recommend qualified judges,

not miniature bands, now to get back to the competition, what is wrong with Sunday, the P.N.E. runs wide open, horse-racing and many other events, why not run "Professional Piping", and "Quartets", outside of "Piobaireachd", I think if these arrangements were made, the association would receive a large crowd at the meet.

George K. Allan

EDITORIAL

Are we furthering the piping in B.C. as dictated by our constitution? I think not! As it has always been the tradition of the B.C. Pipers' Association to promote the highest aggregate point winners in each class, the decision this year not to do so is, to say the least, a short-sighted and disappointing move.

If the top three or four competitors in a class have accumulated a wide point gap between themselves and the rest of the class, by season's end, it seems reasonable to me that these competitors should be promoted to a higher class to test their obvious skills and to provide an added incentive to excell to the standard of the higher class. Rather than shelter these youngsters by overprotective teachers and parents by restricting them to a class that is obviously below their standards is in my opinion, that they will stagnate with no challenge offered them, their music stifled and we along with the student will be the loser in the long run. Eg. Last year there were thirty-eight competitors in the novice class. This year with the compulsory move of the chanter class to the novice, it is possible to see forty-five or fifty in a novice class.

Dancing associations promote on the basis of points as we have done. Why not us, and why not now? Do they know something we don't or are we just ignoring it?

As an association we should, I feel, be looking after the welfare of the majority of youngsters, not the minority.

Peter MacNeil, President, B.C. Pipers' Association

ANNOUNCING WHITESPOT / SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY PIPE BAND ASSOCIATION

On September 14, 1983 the White Spot Pipe Band became formally associated with the Simon Fraser University Pipe Band and will come under their musical direction. This association was brought about to advance the abilities of juvenile pipers and drummers. Any juvenile pipers or drummers interested in joining the complete organization should contact Jim Stewart at 465-5876.

SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY PIPE BAND IN SCOTLAND (FIRST TRIP)

On August 7, 1983 the Simon Fraser University Pipe Band and entourage boarded CP Air Flight 800 bound for Prestwick, Scotland. The mood was upbeat as North America was being represented by the 1982 and 1983 North American champions (SFUPB and the 78th Fraser Highlanders, respectively). Arriving in Scotland, the band settled into their residence, Reith Hall, University of Strathclyde, a sentimental favorite as many of the band members had previously stayed there when the CP Air bands travelled to Scotland in 1976 and 1977. A week of hard practise culminated in the World Championships at Bellahouston Park, Glasgow.

The day before the contest the band "taxied" it down to the park to check out the grounds and see where the Grade 1 band contests would be held. While the band practised near the circles, BBC Scotland was setting up their new \$1.5 million dollar recording van (a 1983 World's record was to be produced). One of the recording engineers approached the band and asked if they would play in one of the circles for a sound check. The band obliged with a medley and MSR and then was invited into the recording van to listen to the sound. The system was astounding as was the clarity of sound from the recording. This was not the only time that SFUPB and the engineers would work together.

The day of the World's was very sunny and very windy. Over 150 bands competed from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. The band was on 6th in the morning's MSR contest and on 9th in the afternoon's medley contest. The band played exceptionally well in both contests only to be awarded 10th overall. The prize results were:

- | | |
|-------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. Strathclyde Police | 4. Dysart and Dundonald |
| 2. Boghall and Bathgate | 5. Polkemmet Colliery |
| 3. Shotts and Dykehead | 6. Royal Ulster Constabulary |

The result was slightly demoralizing but it was put behind as "they know who we are now".

After a few days off, the band entered the BBC Scotland Studio 1 recording theatre, just 2 blocks from Reith Hall. It was a pleasant surprise to find that the recording engineers that night would be the same chaps that covered the World's. The band cut 6 tracks between 7:30 - 9:00 p.m., listened to parts of the tracks, re-recorded one track at 9:30 p.m., and then hit the Studio 1 Pub in the Grosvenor Hotel with more than an hour to spare before "Time Gentlemon Please!". The recording has been scheduled for broadcast on October 5.

That Saturday was the Butte Games at Rothesay. The weather was a mixture of partly sun, partly gusty winds, and partly downpour. Also, the games did not start until noon (quite a difference from the World's). At the end of the day, the band ended up third and proceeded back to Glasgow.

The final week started again with hard practise for the ultimate Highland Games, COWAL. A midweek break allowed the pipers to go to

Oban to hear the Silver and Gold Medals, the Clasp, and the morning's piping at the Argyllshire Games. Sgt. John Wilson of the Strathclyde Police won the Oban Gold Medal, a prize that had alluded him for 15 years.

The day before Cowal, the band had to switch residences as Reith Hall was one of the residences designated for the 100th anniversary of the Boys Brigade. The band bade farewell to Reith Hall and the Botanic Gardens (the band's practise area) and took up new residence at Paisley College.

The next day everything was set. The maple leaf flag filled up the back window of the "coach" as the band left Paisley College. After crossing to Dunoon, the band played up Argyll Street and awaited the Grade 1 contest. Again, the band was 6th on, sandwiched between Boghall and Polkemmet. The steward at the starting line drew out the same MSR as at the World's and the band cruised through a brilliant set.

After the Grade 1 contest was finished, the band congregated around the coach awaiting the massed bands finale. A steward approached the band and said that another duty band was needed and we had been picked. Suddenly there was a mass scramble for jackets and glens as well as a "speed blowing in" of the pipes. As the band entered the field to take its place as one of the 6 duty bands, the announcer indicated to the 30,000 people the presence of the Simon Fraser University Pipe Band from Vancouver, Canada. Only when the band struck up did they realize who they were in the company of. As it turned out the 6 duty bands were the ones in the prize list and it was the first time in 11 years that a Canadian band entered the Grade 1 prize list at Cowal. The results were:

- | | |
|-------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. Strathclyde Police | 4. Shotts and Dykehead |
| 2. Boghall and Bathgate | 5. Royal Ulster Constabulary |
| 3. Dysart and Dundonald | 6. Simon Fraser University |

As always the march down Argyll Street was excillarating. One can never know what Cowal is like until you experience the march down Argyll Street.

The next day was the contest at the Princes Street Gardens in Edinburgh. Like Cowal, the weather was sunny and a large number of bands were in attendance. The results of the Grade 1 contest were:

- | | |
|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. Boghall and Bathgate | 3. Polkemmet Colliery |
| 2. Simon Fraser University | 4. 78th Fraser Highlanders |

Afterwards, there was a massive tie swapping between the band, Boghall, and Polkemmet. One made the comment that next week at Pitlochry, Boghall would look like SFUPB! (Boghall wears the Hunting FRASER tartan!). After a "braw feed" (good dinner) the band, along with some of the Polkemmet lads, returned to Paisley College and proceeded into a party that has piping and drumming going until 2:30 a.m.! It was the last few hours of the 22 days in Scotland as the band boarded CP Flight 801 back to Vancouver at 4:00 p.m. on Aug. 30.

In retrospect, the trip was very successful and educational. The band accomplished its goals by being recognized and ranked with the top bands in the world. Also, very favourable impressions were made with the top bands, especially with the Strathclyde Police who again proved to be THE class band on and off the playing field. The band enjoyed a close relationship with the Strathclyde Police and attended some of their practises (and vice versa).

Finally, one must take notice of the pipe band environment created by a collected organization of more than 200 bands. Scottish and Irish bands have a slightly higher pitched sound, play at slightly faster tempos, and tend to "under-phrase". Support for the latter finding seems to be in a predominant feeling that music should not be sacrificed for technical accuracy. The Grade 1 bands on the West Coast are definitely of the calibre as the top 6 in Scotland however, times are a'changing and the West Coast bands must be prepared to change with the times to remain in that select six.

Robert MacNeil

