



JUNE, 1960. No. 3.

Although the regular activities of the B.C. Pipers' Association will be suspended for the summer months, most of us follow, and many participate in the Highland Games held in British Columbia, Washington and Oregon. For your information we list the dates of these games and the names and addresses of the Games Secretaries. We hope to announce the piping results as they become available.

July 9th -	Nanaimo.	Mr. Ron Holmes,	815 Bruce Avenue, Nanaimo, B.C.
July 23rd -	Portland.	Miss Violet Calhoun,	10044 S.E. Stanley, Portland, Ore.
July 30th -	Victoria.	Mrs. K. Logan,	1541 Edgeware Rd., Victoria, B.C.
August 6th -	Seattle.	Mr. Stanley M. Miller,	P.O. Box 984, Seattle, Wash.
August 13th -	Vancouver.	Mr. James M. Thomson,	2086 Parker Street, Vancouver, B.C.

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Another pleasant piping evening was held on Friday, May 13th, at the Men's Canteen of the Seaforth Armoury. It appears that our members were not worried about any bad luck which might befall them on Friday, the 13th, for there was quite a good turnout. Numbers were given by many of the pipers present, including James McMillan, Donald Murray, George Allan, Seb Nellies, Norma Nicholson, Ian Walker, Duncan Watson, Ed Esson, Rod MacVicar and John MacLeod. The evening finally broke up at about midnight. All will agree that these evenings of piping give the members an excellent opportunity of hearing a wide variety of new and old tunes played in different styles.

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We would like to announce that the White Heather Concerts have been scheduled for October 6th, 7th and 8th. The first concert will be held at the Vincent Massey High School in New Westminster, and the latter two at the Queen Elizabeth Theatre. This year the cast will again be headed by Kenneth McKellar, leading Scottish singer. Mr. McKellar will be supported by the well known Scottish character actor Duncan Macrae, famous for his movie and television performances. Also in the cast will be the Glasgow comedian Jimmy Neil, the Motherwell accordionist Ronnie McCulloch, and pianist Denis Woolford, all of whom are familiar to local audiences. A newcomer this year is to be Lucille Graham, a Welsh soprano, well known in Scotland for her television and stage appearances. Further details will follow.

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One of the valuable functions of this newsletter is to acquaint new generations of pipers with some of the history of the B.C. Pipers' Association. The person best able to recall the earlier days is Roderick MacLeod. Mr. MacLeod was elected President at the first meeting of this Association on July 30th, 1932, and served in that office until September, 1934. He has always shown a great interest in piping, and especially in the development of piping amongst young people, and although he has had a great deal of difficulty in getting about in later years, Rod MacLeod is undoubtedly one of the most faithful attenders at our Bi-Monthly Competitions. It is with the greatest of pleasure that we record the following memories and observations concerning the birth of the B.C. Pipers' Association and some of its outstanding early members, as recalled by Roderick MacLeod.

It won't be long until we await the next issue of the B.C. Pipers' Newsletter with the same amount of interest that we look for our evening paper. Pleasure was got from the contents of the last issue, and here is an opportunity for members to send in stories of incidents which could be of interest to all.

Perhaps older members could tell of something with which younger members are not acquainted, so, for a start, I will tell here of those fine old gentlemen who were the "trail-blazers" of the Association and have since crossed the "Great Divide".

It was in 1932 that the late Pipe-Major William MacIndewar told me that it was the intention of a few pipers to form an association, and I at once said to him that it was as good as started. Permission was got from the Chief of Police to hold meetings in the lawyers' room in the Police Station. At the first meeting there was a splendid array of talent - men who had devoted their lives to piping, and I can add too, to good citizenship. At this meeting I was chosen President, although as far as piping went, I was only a humble student, limping along some distance behind these greater lights. To support me, however, I had discreet and likeable Johnnie Paul as Secretary-Treasurer, and away we went.

The patriarch of the flock was Pipe-Major Hector MacKenzie, affectionately called "Old Hector", who came to Vancouver at the turn of the century, and who formed the first pipe band in the city, the Vancouver Pipe Band, at about 1903. He was a good piobaireachd player, and got his start from the master player John MacDougall Gillies, of Glasgow, who could be said to hold first place in his own generation,

Donald MacIver was outstanding in any line of piping, and was credited with being the greatest piper in Western Canada. He did much teaching, and in competition could challenge the best of opponents in any class of the music. His name recalls a link with that other master player, D.C. Mather. They studied piobaireachd together for a few years.

Pipe-Major John Gillies, M.S.M., served thirty-three years with the Canadian Seaforth's. He was overseas with them in the First World War, and formerly had completed twenty-one years with the Scots Guards, with whom he served in the South African War. His experience in connection with pipe bands, piping, drumming, pipe tunes and pipers was invaluable. Pipe Major Gillies knew all the rules of the game.

Loveable Johnnie Paul, mentioned before, was a member of the Vancouver Pipe Band, of which "Old Hector" was Pipe-Major. He was a good piobaireachd player, and learned to talk Gaelic, principally through his intimacy with the Gaelic names of Piobaireachds and other matters connected with the music.

Pipe-Major William MacIndewar, mentioned at the start, was father of the piping, drumming and dancing family who came to Vancouver at a time when his presence roused many to take more interest in piping and pipe bands. He could give a good account of himself on any competition platform.

Pipe-Major Billy Urquhart was another of our good piobaireachd players and was very successful in competition. His name is inscribed on the MacCrimmon Memorial Cairn no less than seven times. He had a heart of gold, stood firm for the right, and was truly proud of our piping heritage. Billy was missed by all.

Piper Allan MacNab, of pleasant personality, was a hard working member. He was a member of the famous 16th Canadian Scottish, who followed the old Highland custom of having its pipers play the men to the attack. He had an interesting career.

Then there was our good friend Jimmie Robertson, who could just play the chanter, but who was willing to serve his apprenticeship, as he had a tremendous in piping. Jimmie organized concerts and had influence with a certain broadcasting station. We had to start raising money somehow.

Humble, helpful Willaim Bowes, who in piping was in the Robertson category, was held in high esteem and affection by all the members. Courteous and reliable, he was always found where work was to be done.

These are the pioneers, now all deceased, who gave to the Association a wonderful spirit which has been carried on to the present day. I hope that someone may tell of the perserverence and hard work of the faithful members who brought the Association through the "hard times".

- Roderick MacLeod -

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It was stated in error in the May Newsletter that James Wilson was the winner of the MacCrimmon Memorial Trophy. This, of course, should have read James McMillan. Our apologies are extended to Mr. McMillan for this mistake.

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We welcome all contributions concerning piping and pipers. If you have anything which might be of interest to the members, kindly send it to:

B.C. Pipers' Newsletter,
3726 Blenheim Street,
Vancouver, B.C.

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The last of this season's Bi-Monthly Competitions was held at the Scottish Auditorium on June 3rd. The competition was especially keen amongst the younger performers, and the judge, Ed Esson, judged the following competitors as winners:

Novice Strathspeys and Reels:

1. Gordon Hardy 2. Sherea Barwell 3. Robert Heggie

Juvenile Jigs:

1. Robert MacDonald 2. Larry Gillott 3. Bruce Topp

Junior Marches:

1. Tom Richardson 2. Bill Elder 3. Peter McNeil

Amateur Old Highland Airs:

1. Peggy Gillies

Senior Amateur Strathspeys and Reels:

1. William Paterson 2. David Ireland

Quartettes:

1. Kiwanis 2. Optimist

The highlight of the evening was the presence of the Pipe Band of the Seaforth Highlanders Cadet Battalion, under Pipe-Major Arnie Stone. This fine band played a number of selections in the middle of the evening, and at the conclusion of the competitions it played a complete retreat. The performance was greatly enjoyed by all present, and it is hoped that the Seaforth Cadet Pipe Band will visit us again soon. Our thanks are given to all of the members of the band, to S/Sgt. Marks, instructor in charge of the band for the evening, and to Mr. Ian MacLeod, who gave an interesting talk on the origin and significance of the Retreat Ceremony.

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The recently re-organized Vancouver Island Pipers' Society held a very enjoyable banquet on June 4th, at the Monterey Restaurant, in Victoria. Two officers of this association, Ian Walker and Georgina MacPhail, had the pleasure of attending, and they were greatly impressed by the great enthusiasm of the members. After dinner Old Highland Airs competitions were held and Mr. Bill Lockie chose the following as winners:

Junior: 1. Angus Stanfield 2. David Ross 3. Gordon Ross

Open: 1. John Lowe 2. Ian Duncan 3. James MacNeil

There were also numbers given by Quartettes from the Victoria High School Pipe Band and the Canadian Scottish Regiment, and by a miniature Pipe Band from the Canadian Scottish. All the pipers present also had the opportunity of playing in a "tinkers" competition. Our congratulations are extended to the Vancouver Island Pipers' Society for their very fine efforts.

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A General Meeting of this Association will be held on Thursday, June 30th, in the band room of the Seaforth Armoury. It is hoped that the business portion of the meeting will be short, and that most of the evening will be devoted to piping.

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DON'T FORGET:

GENERAL MEETING: JUNE 30th.

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