

B. C. PIPERS' NEWSLETTER



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

OCTOBER, 1961.

No. 19.

AN ASSOCIATION FOR THE PRESERVATION OF BAGPIPE MUSIC

AND THE ENCOURAGEMENT OF PIPE PLAYING IN BRITISH COLUMBIA

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

Published monthly by the British Columbia Pipers' Association.

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GENERAL MEETING - SEPTEMBER 29th.

The first General Meeting of the season held at the Seaforth Armoury was comparatively well attended. It was gratifying to see a number of new faces at the meeting.

After the lively business portion of the meeting, the members listened to a tape of "Cronan Padruig Iain", composed and played by Pipe Major Donald MacLeod. This Piobaireachd was very much enjoyed by all, and it is hoped that we shall hear some of our members playing it themselves, in the near future.

Harry Mumford's pipes were well used, with tunes played by John MacLeod, Seb. Nellies, Donald Murray, Angus MacAulay, Rod MacVicar, Ian Walker, Malcolm Nicholson, and by Harry himself.

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CRONAN PADRUIG IAIN

It is with great pleasure that we print this month Pipe Major Donald MacLeod's composition "Cronan Padruig Iain" - "Peter John MacInnes' Lullaby". We are certain that you will enjoy this interesting piobaireachd. Those of us who have had the privilege of hearing Donald MacLeod's tape are firmly convinced that the tune will enjoy great popularity.

It may be of interest to you to read the composer's own notes, explaining the naming of this tune:

"Peter John MacInnes, only son of Doctor John MacInnes of Glenelg, was a brilliant all-rounder, and a Highland Gentleman. He and his crew made the supreme sacrifice whilst flying his bomber in action. LEST WE FORGET!"

We are, needless to say, extremely grateful to Donald MacLeod for sending us this Piobaireachd, and we would be interested in hearing any comments which you might care to make, concerning the tune.

Edmund Esson, who transcribed the manuscript in order that it might be reproduced in the Newsletter, was rather concerned when he had several octaves left over on the second page. Being an Aberdonian, Ed did not wish to waste this space, and copied out the popular but hard-to-find traditional Slow Air "The Fair Maid of Barra".

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CRONAN PADRUIG IAIN (PETER JOHN MACLEOD'S LULLABY)

P/M DONALD MACLEOD.

URLAR.

1.

2.

3.

VAR 1.

1.

2.

3.

TAORLUATH (T) } SINGLING + DOUBLING.
CRUNLUATH (C)

A handwritten musical score for Taorluath and Crunluath. It consists of three systems of two staves each. The first system is marked '1.' and the second '2.'. The third system is marked '3.' and contains two staves. The notation includes treble clefs, a key signature of one flat (B-flat), and a common time signature. The music features a mix of eighth and sixteenth notes, with some notes marked with an 'x' above them. The final measure of each system contains a box with the letters 'S' and 'D' separated by a vertical line, indicating a specific fingering or articulation technique.

THE FAIR MAID OF BARRA.

Slow Air.

A handwritten musical score for 'The Fair Maid of Barra', labeled as a 'Slow Air'. It consists of four staves of music. The notation is in treble clef with a key signature of one flat (B-flat) and a common time signature. The music is characterized by a slow, melodic line with many grace notes and ornaments, indicated by 'x' marks above the notes. The piece concludes with a double bar line.

EARTH IN ORBIT

The different times of day, in different parts of the globe, are often bewildering.

Owing to the rapid means of travel today, one can arrive in Canada at the same hour as he is supposed to leave for some other distant part of the world. Feelings can be affected as well, should it happen to be Saturday here, and Sunday there, or Sunday here, and Monday there.

This story is an example!

A piper and his friend were employed in Northern British Columbia, and since they lived some distance apart, the piper only had the opportunity to visit his friend on the week ends.

On one of these occasions, after partaking of certain refreshments on a Sunday afternoon, his friend said to the piper: "Play me a few tunes on the pipes, Mac!"

"Oh, no indeed,!" said the piper, "What would they say at home in the Highlands of Scotland, if they knew that I played the pipes on the Sabbath day?"

"I don't think it would do any harm", said his friend, and they proceeded to enjoy some more refreshments. After a while the friend looked at his watch and said to the piper: "By gosh, Mac It's Monday already at home in the Highlands of Scotland".

"Indeed", said the piper, "You may be quite right. I'll blow up the pipes and play you all the tunes you want.

Both of these gentlemen were Mac's of well known clans, and were good Highlanders. If the Sabbath day was broken, it was because of the movement of the earth around the sun, something over which they had no control! When we get transportation, with our pipes, to the moon, pipers won't be so likely to make such mistakes!

- Roderick MacLeod -

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WANTED TO BUY: "Music of the Clan MacLean" and "Donald MacPhee's Complete Tutor for the Bagpipe". Sigurd Aarli, 921 11th Street, Rockford, Ill., U.S.A.

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AN OLD BOOK OF PIPE MUSIC

Some years ago the writer was given a book of pipe music which certainly is an oldtimer. Though yellowed and dogeared it fortunately is nearly complete. The title page, quite tastefully designed, is inscribed "Glen's Collection for the Great Highland Bagpipe, containing 72 Marching, Dancing and Slow Airs, expressly adapted for the Instrument. Edinburgh. Price 3 shillings" (!). There is also a cut of a piper, a sturdy chiel, who might very well have been "out" with Prince Charlie in the '45, as he is wearing a belted plaid, with claymore and targe tucked behind. Possibly arguments about piping were more quickly settled in the old days than they are nowadays!

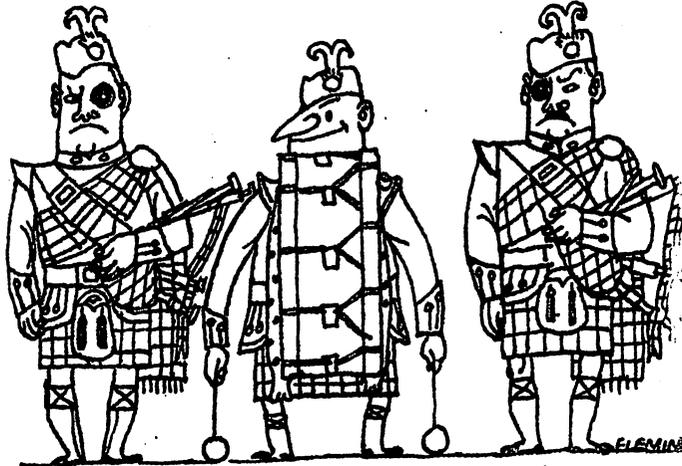
Names of the tunes are given both in English and Gaelic. Studying the music, one is struck by the smaller number of gracenotes than a good piper would use today. The birl rarely appears, the two Low A's at the end of a march or reel being rendered by a simple touch on Low G, or by a single "cut" on D or E. Occasionally the separation is effected by the GDE movement.

Tunes are almost entirely two-parted; many of them are not heard today, and those that are have been improved over the years by slight alterations and the addition of more measures. However, the book contains some fine old pieces like "Roy's Wife of Aldivalloch", a lilting strathspey by the famous Neil Gow.

No date appears on the book. Neither "Barren Rocks of Aden" nor "Lord Alexander Kennedy" are listed, though both were composed in the 1840's. Perhaps they were too new to be appreciated! However, it is doubtful if the book was printed so far back. It is of course highly probable that other copies are in existence, and some reader may be able to fix the date and oblige with further comments.

James A. Berry
Secretary Treasurer
Vancouver Island Pipers' Society

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THE PIPERS' SOCIETY OF ONTARIO

On January 16, 1947, the Pipers' Society of Ontario was granted a Provincial Charter and officially came into being. Its founder and first President was Dr. Norman A. McLeod. The object and main purpose of the Society was to encourage the study and playing of Piobaireachd, and all other forms of pipe music; to lay down a comprehensive system of judging, which could be easily adapted to all bodies regulating piping contests, and at the same time, be of practical use to the individual competitor. The original ambitions, to encourage piobaireachd playing, have been successful, born out by the fact that at several Highland Games in Ontario this past summer, there were eighteen to twenty entries with a very high calibre performance throughout, as indicated by the Judges' scores.

Between 1950 and 1961, there has been a large number of experienced pipers and drummers emigrating from Scotland who have settled in and around Central and Southern Ontario. This has had a tremendous effect on the calibre of performance that has resulted in keen competition with the top three or four bands, often separated by only fractions of a point. At the present time, a review of the Pipers' Society records indicates that there are approximately 80 to 85 bands that are active in this area. This figure includes bands in the nearby United States that attend local games.

The Society is composed of Branches in Toronto and Hamilton, with less active branches in Brockville, to the east, and Grey, Huron and Bruce Counties, in the north-central areas. These branches owe allegiance to a "Parent Body Executive" which meets in Toronto and to which the branches send delegates. The main function of the Parent Body, at present, is dealing with and controlling piping events at various Highland Games in this area, made possible through membership support received from most of the active competing bands. Due to increasing entries in both band and individual competitions, the number of Piping Judges at most games this year was increased from two to three, with one Drumming Judge and one Marching and Deportment Judge.

The Pipers' Society approves and selects judges for the games, and on occasion, revises the rules for competition. At present, the scoring is based on a total of 100, with 70 for piping, 25 for drumming, and 5 for marching and deportment.

There were six Games held under Society rules this summer. Maxville, Ontario, scene of the much discussed North American Championships, drew 23,000 spectators to witness 17 bands and about 50 soloists.

The top band in the March, Strathspey and Reel at Maxville was the Worcester Pipe Band from Worcester, Massachusetts. The 48th Highlanders from Toronto took first place in the Slow March contest.

A review of the master score sheets for the 1961 season shows the City of Toronto Band (formerly known as Cabar Feidh) to be the consistent first place winner. The average prize money at the Games is about \$300.00 for first in March, Strathspey and Reel and \$200.00 for first in Slow March.

The highlight of our winter season in the Indoor Games held in Toronto in March of each year. This is always a popular event and attracts large entries, especially in the quartette piping competitions.

The foregoing is a brief review of some of the activities the Pipers and Drummers engage in down east, and we hope that this brings our counterparts in the west into a closer understanding of mutual interests.

John Wakefield
President
The Pipers' Society of Ontario

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KITIMAT PIPE BAND

The Kitimat Pipe Band has asked us to publicize the fact that they are anxious to obtain a new Pipe Major. The band, which is described as a "learners' band" at the present time, has 47 members, 24 of whom are already in full uniform. We are told that the spirit and enthusiasm of the members is unexcelled.

The Aluminum Company of Canada has offered excellent steady employment to a qualified Electrician who is prepared to accept this offer.

If any of our readers are interested in obtaining further information, or know of any likely prospects, contact:

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Box 374,
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MACCRIMMON'S OWN - PLAYED BY AN AUSTRALIAN

(The following clipping from the "Scotsman", September 30, 1922, was recently forwarded to us by Donald Sutherland, of Glide, Oregon, and we know that you will find it of considerable interest.)

"Mr. Witt, of South Africa, sent me a cutting from your valuable paper, on "Pipers and Bagpipes". In this article "MacCrimmon's Own Coronach" is mentioned. "The Dying Piper's Coronach" is the name of the tune in Neil MacLeod's Collection of Piobaireachd; and according to MacLeod's History of the MacCrimmons, Patrick Mhor was angry with his sister for teaching his son, Patrick, the particular beat mentioned in your article, but no finger breaking took place.

I have seen three different accounts of the finger breaking; first, a lowlander, then a soldier, and now it is a Danish sailor.

Patrick Og promised his father to keep the beat secret till after his death. But he taught the beat to my great grand-father, Charles MacArthur, and grandmother taught my mother to sing the tune containing the beat.

The beat is Dra diririn, and the first line of the tune is Dra diririn trie, Dra diririn tra. I play both the tune and the beat also, but I have never heard any other piper play it, and I have never seen the tune or beat in any ordinary notation. Dra diririn and Hidro tata liriri are the most difficult beats on the bagpipes.

Simon Fraser
Victoria, Australia"

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Gremlins were busy at work in last month's Newsletter, and we apologize for the mistakes which they caused.

We would like to correct one of the results of the International Championships. The "B" Class Pipe Band Championship was won jointly by the Seaforth Highlanders Cadet Pipe Band and the Royal Canadian Engineers Pipe Band.

We regret the confusion concerning the date of the General Meeting. Finally, and this is an apology for errors past, present, and no doubt future, we hope you will forgive us for the chronic spelling mistakes, such as Mac for Mc, Mc for Mac, MacDonald for Macdonald, etc.

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WANTED - A SMALL RED-HAIRED SCOTS PIPER

(From the Weekly Scotsman)

Imperial "400" Motels, Inc., of Los Angeles, California, are looking for a Scotsman - a very special kind of Scot. He must be short, red-haired and bagpipe-playing. This bizarre list of qualifications is necessary because the company, who control a vast empire of motels, need a sandy wee Scot to publicise their firm.

The trade mark of the organisation is "a little Scottish King". Up to now, an actor has been used to portray a little bewhiskered Scot - but the company now want the genuine article.

The full qualifications include - bagpipe playing, prepared to accept a one-year tour of the United States, all expenses paid, plus a monthly salary; should be under five feet six inches in height - the shorter the better; must have red hair and be willing to wear a moustache and beard - and probably smoke a pipe.

While in America, this truly remarkable figure will make a publicity tour from coast-to-coast as a "Little Scots King", complete with full Highland outfit and playing the pipes. Not surprisingly, he would make any amount of appearances on television.

In June, Mr. Bernard Whitney, president of Imperial "400" Motels, will be arriving in Glasgow to meet the long stream of midget applicants who apply for this unusual post.

Why the Scots tag? Well the company knows the reputation possessed by Scots for thrift - and like advertising this Scots guarantee of value for money.

One of their slogans is - "Aye Royal accomodation at Thrriifty rates".

Aye, a wee Scot wi' a kilt is a gr-r-r-r-and idea, Mon!"



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SCOTLAND

GEORGE NELSON GIBSON

One of the leaders of the Scottish community in Vancouver, and a member of this Association for several years, George Nelson Gibson passed away on September 19th, 1961, in his 71st year.

George Gibson was born in Coldingham, Berwickshire, and migrated to Canada in 1912. He first settled in Winnipeg, where he was employed by the Winnipeg Constabulary until 1920, at which time he moved out to Vancouver. Mr. Gibson worked for several years for the Orange Crush Company, and later was with the Union Steamship Company as a Security Officer, retiring from the latter company in 1955.

Always interested in Scottish activities, George Gibson was a Past President of the St. Andrews & Caledonian Society, and a Past Chairman of the United Scottish Society. It was under his leadership that the Scottish Auditorium was purchased, and largely through Mr. Gibson's efforts did it become a going concern. For the last three years he organized economy tours to Scotland, and many people took advantage of these extremely reasonable flights.

George Gibson operated a highland dress and equipment shop in his house, and in a relatively short time, he developed this business into a thriving enterprise. This business was operated in conjunction with that of his son, John, in Ottawa.

Always interested in civic affairs, George Gibson ran at various times as a candidate for the Provincial Legislative Assembly, Vancouver City Council, and Vancouver Parks Board.

Mr. Gibson's funeral was held on Sept. 22nd, with the Rev. Donald Gillies officiating. Alex Finlayson played the lament. Our sympathies are extended to his wife Margaret, his son, John, Ottawa, and his daughters Mrs. Connie Rattenbury, of Vancouver, and Mrs. Alice Brooks, of Castlegar, B.C.

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GENERAL MEETING - OCTOBER 20th.

A General Meeting will be held on Friday, October 20th, at the band room of the Seaforth Armoury. As usual, it is hoped that the business meeting will be concluded early in order that we might hold a social evening. Refreshments will be available, and pipes will be played!

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WHITE HEATHER CONCERT

We are certain that those of you who saw the White Heather Concert this year again enjoyed the show. We are pleased to say that the houses were excellent, -in New Westminster on October 5th, and in Vancouver, on October 6th and 7th.

At a dinner held in honour of the cast on October 6th after the show, Honourary Memberships in the B.C. Pipers' Association were presented to Neil Kirk and Kenneth McKellar. The producer of the White Heather Concerts since their inception, Neil Kirk is very highly regarded by those who have had the pleasure of working with the concerts, and is considered by all to be a very good friend of this Association. Kenneth McKellar, Scotland's leading entertainer, has been the star of the White Heather Concerts for several years, and is a truly great artist. We sincerely admire these two gentlemen, and are proud to have them now within our membership.

This year's White Heather Committee consisted of Edmund Esson (Chairman), Betty Crossen (Secretary), James Thomson (Treasurer), Ian Milne (Publicity Chairman), Al Baillie, Anne Duncan, Robert Gill, Bill McAdie, Georgina MacPhail, Donald Urquhart, and Ian Walker. Tickets for the Vancouver concerts were sold by Mrs. Amy Findlater of Modern Music, and Mrs. Emily Berry sold the New Westminster tickets.

We would like to thank everybody who assisted in promoting the concerts, and it is hoped that the concerts will enjoy success in coming years. Next year's shows, which will be held on October 4th, 5th and 6th, will feature Jimmie Logan, the foremost comedian in Scotland today.

REVIEW OF WHITE HEATHER CONCERT

While the nimble fingers play an old favourite, the curtain opens on another White Heather Concert. Dennis Woolford is, without a doubt, a wonderful pianist and accompanist. His accompaniment to the "Wee Cooper of Fife" was outstanding.

A new face with a new twist is Jimmy Warren. He said he wasn't afraid - he was simply terrified. This perhaps was the reason for his bad timing in spots. Nevertheless, it was a change that we all enjoyed.

Bobby MacLeod, making a return appearance after a few year's absence, was a pleasure to hear. His tight rhythm is characteristically Scottish, and tunes set the foot tapping. We shall look forward to seeing him back next year.

Another newcomer, billed as "a beautiful girl with a beautiful voice" is Moira Anderson. She is a very beautiful girl from Ayr with a truly beautiful voice, especially in the lower register. A harsh "oh" vowel on top notes was not enough to mar a charming performance. We hope that Moira will return on another White Heather Tour.

Duncan MacRae, Scotland's greatest character actor, is a favourite. He doesn't quite fill the bill as a comedian, and one is a little disappointed as Duncan is capable of great characterizations. His expressive voice makes one long to hear him in something more worthwhile. However, "A Wee Cock Sparra" topped off an enjoyable performance. We hope that he will be back again.

Top of the bill is the Scottish singer Kenneth McKellar, a very fine artist. This year Kenneth was in better voice than ever. His musicianship and artistry make the least of songs sound like the greatest, as was heard Saturday night in the singing of "My Aid Folk". We look forward to hearing him again.

Many thanks to Neil Kirk of New York for a wonderful White Heather Concert.

- Anne Duncan -

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CEILIDH - NOVEMBER 10th.

Our annual Ceilidh will be held on November 10th, 1961, in the lecture room of the Seaforth Armoury. As in past years, the highlight of the evening will be the presentation of prizes to last year's Bi-Monthly Competition winners.

We are going to make some of these winners work for their prizes, and there should be an interesting selection of piping from the various winners. As well as piping, a variety programme will be presented, with highland dancing and vocal selections. At the conclusion of the concert, refreshments will be offered. The evening will commence at 8:00 p.m.

We would ask the following winners to be present to accept their prizes:

Novice: 1. Dorothy MacArther 2. Linda Rowe 3. Laurie McIlvena
4. Bob Lamont

Juvenile: 1. John MacLeod 2. Raymond Irvine 3. Bruce Topp
4. Douglas Graham

Junior: 1. Bob MacDonald 2. Larry Gillott

Amateur: 1. Bill Elder

Senior Amateur: 1. William Paterson 2. Harry Mumford

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BI-MONTHLY COMPETITION - OCTOBER 27th.

The first Bi-Monthly Competition of the season will be held in the Lecture Room of the Seaforth Armoury, on October 27th.

The following events will be held:

Novice Marches
Juvenile Old Highland Airs
Junior Strathspeys and Reels
Amateur Piobaireachd
Senior Amateur Jigs

The competitions will commence at 8:00 sharp, and we would ask all competitors to be prompt. Refreshments will be available after the competitions.

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COMPOSITION CONTEST

We wish to announce that the B.C. Pipers' Association is holding a competition for original bagpipe compositions. This contest is open to all readers of the Newsletter. It is hoped that by holding the competition we will uncover new music and will perhaps discover new talent. We would urge our readers to try their hand at composing a tune.

The winning pieces will be published in the Newsletter, and prizes will be presented to the winners at the Indoor Gathering.

The competition will consist of three classes:

1. Marches
2. Strathspeys or Reels or Jigs (one only)
3. Slow Marches or Retreats

The prizes will be \$10.00 for the winning tune in each class, and an additional \$10.00 for the top tune in the contest.

The following rules will govern this contest:

1. Each tune will be submitted in duplicate.
2. The composer's name, the name of the tune, and the year of its composition will be stated in an accompanying letter, but will not be written on the music.
3. An entry fee of one dollar will accompany each tune.
4. A competitor may enter as many tunes as he wishes in each class.
5. All entries must be sent to 3726 Blenheim Street, before March 1st, 1962.
6. The Association may reprint any of the entries at a future date.
7. The names of the judges will be announced only at the conclusion of the contest.
8. Prizes in any class may be withheld in the event of insufficient entries.

If this Contest is successful, it is hoped that it will become an annual event.

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We would again ask our readers to send us any material which might be suitable for publication in the Newsletter. Your participation is necessary, if this publication is going to continue to develop, and take its place amongst piping literature.

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All pedestrians had better take cover in the South Granville district! Rod MacLeod has traded in his old and faithful Standard for a brand new Vauxhall. He thinks he is now going to be able to beat a certain rather well known Jaguar driver, who is familiar with the speed limits on South Granville!

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GENERAL MEETING: OCTOBER 20th

BI-MONTHLY COMPETITION: OCTOBER 27th

CEILIDH: NOVEMBER 10th

