

B. C. PIPERS' NEWSLETTER



OCT 84
215

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

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

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B.C. PIPERS' NEWSLETTER

Published by the British Columbia Pipers' Association.

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OCTOBER 1984

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EDITOR'S NOTES

Rather than ramble on again this month, I'd like to take this opportunity to thank all those who have contributed to this edition of the Newsletter; to those who took the time to write letters, the judges' remarks from the Mini Gathering, our Roving Reporter, Recipe and even those who submitted ads. This is what our Newsletter is all about.

Well our first weekend is over and the new facilities appeared to come out with a passing mark. Burnaby North School is far superior to the Auditorium for the Mini Gatherings. The number of classrooms available for platforms and tuning rooms will enable us to stage the competitions in a relatively short time. There was some criticism about the Juvenile piping being run in the cafeteria (too noisy), so I believe the drumming events will be held there in future. Although the drumming didn't attract as many competitors as hoped for, we expect a large Novice turnout for November.

There was a feeling that the new hall for the Knock-Out lacked the atmosphere that has built up at the Auditorium over the past dozen years. Although most of that "atmosphere" came from the aroma of leaking gas, it will take a little time to get used to the new surroundings.

P.S. With regard to the September edition editorial concerning pipe band judging, Graham Davidson, Pipe Sergeant of the Triumph Street Pipe Band advises me that the committee for the T.S.P.B. contest will be using a form of merit system at the upcoming competition in December.

Angus Macpherson

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Sir:

I thought your readers might appreciate a local interest story that concerned the Edinburgh Military Tattoo this year.

Included in the programme of pipe music in the massed pipes and drums display was a tune entitled Brentwood Bay. Many of our members may not be aware that the author of this tune is Pipe Major James Watt, principal of our local "Western Academy of Pipe Music".

This particular tune was conceived by the author while he was trolling for salmon on Brentwood Bay, near Saanich B.C., in 1951; the full title is The Boat Song of Brentwood Bay.

Of further interest is the fact that this particular tune has now been adopted into the Regimental list of tunes of the Royal Highland Regiment - The Black Watch of Canada. Additionally, a setting does appear (without credit) in the 2nd Volume of the Scots Guards book, but a more correct setting will appear in the forthcoming edition of the Gordon Highlander's book.

One can imagine the surprise and delight felt by members of Mr. Watt's family who happened to attend this Tattoo, and unexpectedly heard this tune with which they had become so familiar.

Mike All

Dear Sir:

Its About Time or Here's The Beef!

I would love to see this "Piping Society" embrace their fellow musicians "The Drum Corps", a very important section of any good solid Pipe Band! It would be a giant step in the right direction to have your society take a new role and include drummers in your membership, to have a right to vote and be a part of it all.

I must give due respect to your society as you have in the past included new events for drummers in the Annual Gathering. If we do not support this then we have no one to blame but ourselves.

In regards to drumming adjudicators there is a new arrival on the scene. Andrew White, ex-lead drummer with Rutherglen Pipe Band and British Caley, played with Alex Duthart, Shotts; also outstanding kit drummer, studio and recording artist. Was on three Beatles' albums and many other well known recordings. He is now located in New Jersey and will be available for clinics, recitals, teaching and adjudicating. Will not change light bulbs! All interested parties please contact this writer.

"Aw Ra Best"

William J. McErlean
(Musician)
702 Poplar Street
Coquitlam, B.C.
V3J 3K8

LAST MONTH IN AND AROUND THE ASSOCIATION

MINI GATHERING

The first competition in this year's series of Mini Gatherings got underway at the North Burnaby Secondary School on Saturday, October 13th, 1984. The initial feedback from competitors, spectators, and organizers alike appeared to indicate the new location was an ideal venue. We must stress the importance of the classrooms being left in a satisfactory condition so that we may all enjoy this facility in the future.

Apart from the day's number one query, "Who's judging?", another inevitable question is "When are the results given out?". It has been decided that the

most suitable time to announce the results is after the competitions are completed. The reason for this is three-fold. Firstly, with four platforms running concurrently, it is hoped the entire competition will be completed in 2-2½ hours. Secondly, four sets of results are given to the secretary at once and time is required to prepare the certificates. Lastly, younger competitors will be given the opportunity to hear the senior piping event of the competition.

The organizers hope to see greater competitor support for the Adult Piping Class and the drumming events in the coming months. Despite the lack of numbers in these events, over 70 competitors participated in the October Mini Gathering. We would like to thank Allison Lawrence for organizing and judging the Mini Gatherings' first drumming competition.

The efforts of the extra stewards was greatly appreciated and we look for their continued assistance to enable the extra platforms to run smoothly.

Please look for details in next month's Newsletter regarding mandatory membership to the B.C. Pipers' Association effective January 1st, 1984 to enable junior members to compete at the Mini Gatherings.

The results of the Mini Gathering held October 13th are as follows:

Chanter Class - March

1. Glen Jorgensen
2. High Aspinall
3. Alan Bevan
4. Kathryn Savage

Novice "A" - Slow Air

1. Harlan Janson
2. Shelly Anderson
3. Lyne Irving
Darren Forrest

Novice "B" - Slow Air

1. Robert Hartle
2. Paul Nailen
3. Jennifer Ginter

Juvenile - 2/4 March

1. Paul Laporte
2. Lenna Clark
3. Heather Stephen
Heather MacDonald

Junior - 6/8 March & Jig

1. Ritchie Hamilton
2. Bonnie McKain
3. Bill Saul

Amateur - Jig & Hornpipe

1. Shaunna Stephen
2. Brian Goldie
3. Cheryl Taylor

Adult Open - March

1. Jimmy Wilson
2. Dave Urquhart

Jr. Amateur Drumming - Strathspey & Reel

1. Karen Hinchey
2. Carol MacDonald
3. Glen Wright

The piping judges for the day were Angus Macpherson, Darleen Miharija, Alison Stewart and Jim Stewart.

Jim MacDonald

JUDGES' REPORT

For added interest we are asking each judge that participates in the Mini Gatherings to submit a few lines on their thoughts of the day. The following is from the judges at the October contest.

Chanter Class - Jim Stewart

It has been my experience that the Chanter Class is usually the most difficult class to judge and this contest was no different. The number of variables in a performance in Chanter Class is the greatest of all the competing categories.

I feel the goal of the players should be to play clear and solid execution of movements while at the same time maintaining a fairly consistent tempo from beginning to end. Too often I hear movements being played fairly well, but the tempo and pointing is completely non-existent. This to me becomes merely an exercise of movements rather than a musical tune which the performance is intended to be.

Another thing I noticed on Saturday was the large number of players who tend to curl their fingers around the chanter. This is a terribly bad habit for beginners to get into. Your fingers should be straight on both hands.

Novice "A" - Angus Macpherson

Always one of the most difficult classes to judge, the Slow Air event in Novice is the one that leaves me scratching my head. The execution in a Slow Air is usually very good, as is tempo, so the contest was basically decided on expression and blowing. For the newcomers to the class blowing was an obvious weakness, but the clear fingering displayed by all the competitors was very encouraging. Probably the biggest obstacle in this event is, first of all, do I march, and if so, how do I march? Those that stood still during the tune had a little better handle on the expression, but full marks must be given to those that attempted marching.

Not in the prize list, but certainly knocking on the door, include Val Mark, Patrick Lindsay and Colin Newlands.

I was very impressed with the overall standard and look forward to following this class for the rest of the season.

Novice "B" - Alison Stewart

The main point that I would like to mention regarding the Novice Class is the reason for competition.

My heart went out to a young fellow on Saturday who looked so terrified you would think that his whole life depended on that one performance. I would just like to point out that the main reason for the Mini Gatherings is not to see who can "beat" everybody else, or to compare points to figure out whether or not you finished ahead of the person who has their lesson before you. The most important reasons for competition are:

1. To give yourself goals to work towards.
2. To meet other people with the same interest in piping that you have.
3. To listen to pipers better than yourself and learn from their experience.

My other point has to do with picking an appropriate tune or setting of that tune for competition. Together with your teacher, make sure that you have chosen a

tune that has some execution in it. Execution is a very large part of what the Novice piper's mark is based on, due to the fact that tone and tuning are not taken into account.

Juvenile - Darleen Miharija

The Juvenile 2/4 Marches produced some very fine performances and many of the tunes in this class were of a high calibre.

The winner in this class was with no doubt Paul Laport who played for us Abercairney Highlanders. His march was very nicely executed, but in my opinion lacked a little in expression. Second prize was awarded to Lenna Clark, who played P/M John Stewart. Her performance was indeed a very musical one. Her only fault came in the last line when she slowed down considerably. Other fine performances were heard by Heather MacDonald and Heather Stephen.

Junior - Alison Stewart

I really enjoyed listening to this group on Saturday; their execution was terrific.

Overall, I thought this Junior class put a lot more music into their 6/8's than I have heard over the past few years. There were, however, still a few players who sounded as if they had taken one of their band tunes, reproducing it as though they still had the drummers marching along behind. The positive side of this point though is that all of the pipers who produced stale tunes had excellent execution, so they now should turn more of their attention to the musical quality.

Senior Amateur - Jim Stewart

I very much enjoyed helping to judge the Senior Amateur Jig/Hornpipe contest. Senior Amateur is probably the most competitive of all the classes and it is conceivable that the results could completely change hands on a monthly basis.

Generally I felt the problem of slow tempos to be the most noticeable. Some players started slow, while others would tend to slow down when coming to difficult execution spots, usually in hornpipes.

Another aspect of the performances I would like to comment on was the sound of the pipes. It seems to me that at this high a degree of competition the players should be striving for more of a solo sounding bagpipe.

Senior Amateur - Angus Macpherson

A very good turnout for the first Amateur contest this year. It was nice to see some new faces, namely Cheryl Taylor, late of Edmonton, Sandy Thacker from Saskatchewan and Chris Main from the Junior class. All three promise to give the rest a run for their money this year. I thought the standard of playing to be good, especially for early in the season, although some pipes sounded like they had just been retrieved from Santa Rosa.

An innovation tried in this event was the use of aggregate points in judging. Although there was a panel of 3 judges there was no discussion amongst them to decide the winner. Rather a system of 8 points for a 1st, 5 for a 2nd, 3 for a 3rd and 1 for a 4th was used to decide the final placings. Reaction seemed favourable from judges and competitors alike so we may try this again at future contests. Any comments on this would be greatly appreciated.

Senior Amateur - Darleen Miharija

In the Senior Amateur Jig/Hornpipe contest there were a few fine performances, but the overall standard of the class was low on the day.

Shaunna Stephen, the declared winner, gave a beautiful rendition of Center's Bonnet and Pipe Major George Allan. Her pipe was well tuned and her entire selection was very well executed. Second place was awarded to Brian Goldie who gave a very musical performance. His tunes were Bidy from Sligo and Crossing the Minch (two of my favourites!). Cheryl Taylor, a former piper from Edmonton Scottish Pipe Band, was placed third.

My congratulations to all the winners. I'm sure a good day was had by all!

Adult - Jim Stewart

I felt both players in the adult class played admirably, with Jimmy Wilson narrowly defeating Dave Urquhart. Unfortunately, the Adult Class, as usual, had a very small turnout. I find this puzzling since there are so many adult players in the lower mainland. In other parts of the world this class is one of the biggest of all piping categories. Hopefully with more competitions offering the Adult Class participation will increase.

KNOCK-OUT

The first Knock-Out of the 1984/85 season got underway Saturday, October 13th. The switch to Saturday nights seemed to bring in a good crowd for our first meeting of the year. The new location looks to be a good facility and should service us well. The round tables of the Scottish Auditorium will certainly be missed, but our new "home" should soon produce its own memories.

The warm-up competition for the evening consisted of each player playing a Donald MacLeod 4/4 march. Jamie Troy won this event in his usual strong style, picking up the customary bottle of Bells.

The first matchup saw Jamie up against Peter McNeil. Both players gave good performances. Jamie's performance was highlighted by his 3 small 6/8 marches. As always his pipe was sounding very nice. Peter McNeil certainly provided some nice music which was highlighted by his strathspey playing. The judges gave the victory to Jamie and he now advances to round two.

The next matchup had Duncan Fraser up against Bill McMurchy, a newcomer to the pro ranks. Again both players played strongly. Duncan got the nod from the judges in this round and he also advances to round two.

The third matchup automatically went to Robbie McNeil, as his opponent Drew Noot was unable to attend. Robbie gave a nice recital of his medley and will

advance to the next round.

The audience was treated to a show by the Simon Fraser University Pipe Band. The band played some new and old tunes and certainly entertained its listeners. The tone of the band was good and the music was uplifting and lively.

Raffle winner was Dick Hamilton.

All in all it was a good start to what looks to be an exciting year. Lets all make the effort to attend and support our piping events and that will ensure another successful season.

Peter Aumonier

* * * * *

We extend our best wishes to Jack Lee, who is leaving shortly for London, England. Jack, aggregate winner at the 1984 Annual Gathering, is entered in the Bratach Gorm, the London Gold Medal, Former Winners' March, Strathspey & Reel and the Jig competition.

Good luck Jack!

* * * * *

NEXT MONTH IN AND AROUND THE ASSOCIATION

MINI GATHERING

The November 10th Mini Gathering will commence at 10:00 a.m. at Burnaby North Secondary School. The time schedule is as follows:

Chanter	Slow Air	10:00
Novice "A"	2/4 March	10:00
Novice "B"	2/4 March	10:00
Juvenile	Strathspey & Reel	10:00
Junior	March, Strathspey & Reel	Not before 10:45
Amateur	Musical Selection (4-6 mins)	Not before 11:00
Adult Class	2 part March	Not before 11:00
Novice Drumming	6/8 March	10:00
Jr. Amateur Drumming	2/4 March	10:00

The order of play for all classes, except Chanter, will be posted the morning of the Mini Gathering. A new competitor who enters the day of the Mini Gathering will be first to play that day.

Pipers must be ready to play in their positions!

KNOCK-OUT

The second of our first round Knock-Outs will take place on Saturday, November 10th at the Willindgon Heights Community Centre, Carleton and Douglas, North Burnaby. Starting time will be 8:00 p.m. sharp!

The line-up for November has Alison Stewart playing Graham Davidson; Peter Aumonier against Bruce McIntosh and, a repeat from last year, Andrew Bonar drawing Rob Menzies. The warm-up contest requirement will be a 3/4 march that starts with a throw on D. (How's that for originality?)

We had hoped to have the elusive Gaelic Choir as our special guests. Again, however, it appears they will be unable to attend. We'll keep you posted.

Looks like another good night of piping and whatever. See you there, 8:00 p.m. sharp!

As mentioned in an earlier edition, we're planning a "Family Night" for the January Knock-Out. The rules are simple - a minimum of three players (who must be related), 3-5 minute selection. Instruments not necessarily restricted to pipes and drums. Anyone interested please call Angus Macpherson at 939-9614. Lots of prizes!

TRIUMPH STREET PIPE BAND

The 13th Annual Triumph Street Band Contest is scheduled to be held on Saturday, December 8, at Guildford Park Community School, Surrey. A full slate of piping, drumming and pipe band events is being offered (see September Newsletter for entry form) with the inevitable ceilidh planned to round off the day. Solo events start at 1:00 p.m. while bands are scheduled for 7:00.

For more information, contact Graham Davidson at 588-5811.

INTERIOR HIGHLAND GAMES

The Interior Highland Games Association have set the date for their annual games to be held in the Apple Bowl, Kelowna, on Saturday, July 13, 1985.

VANCOUVER LADIES' BURNS SUPPER

The Annual Vancouver Ladies' Pipe Band Burns Dinner will be held on Saturday, January 26, 1985 at St. Mary's Hall, Joyce and Kingsway. Tickets are \$40.00 per couple and may be obtained from any V.L.P.B. member or by contacting Lew Ross at 588-1354.

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ROVING REPORTER

GLENTRIUM SCHOOL OF PIPING AND DRUMMING
SUMMER, 1984

This was my second year as a student of the Glentrium School and for any one in the same position as myself, I would certainly recommend it. As an adult who started playing the pipes at the age of 35, I have found that the older I get the harder the learning cycle. I decided last year to go to a piping school but I must say as the time got nearer, I became more and more apprehensive. I wondered how was I going to fare against young kids with fingers like break-dancers; was I going to look foolish; would I be embarrassed; was I wasting my time and money; would I hold up the class. I was very close to cancelling. I did, however, force myself to go and was pleasantly surprised at the results. I think a combination of things contributed to the success, the main one being the confidence the instructors instilled and the relaxed and well organized atmosphere of the School.

I would like to give a bit of background about the School. Bill Sutherland, the founder, met up with an old friend and fellow Seaforth Pipe Major, Donald MacLeod, at the Dunkirk reunion in 1970. While they were reminiscing about old times, Bill suggested to Donald that he come out to Nelson the following year and start a small piping school, to assist local pipers. In 1971 there were 23 pupils and the name Glentrium, the village that his teacher hailed from, was chosen by Donald. The School ran under Donald for eight years in the David Thompson University facilities. Unfortunately due to ill health, Donald was forced to retire in 1979. Over the years some very impressive students, such people as Iain MacCrimmon, Rene Cusson, Alan Davidson, and Judy Morrison, graduated under his instruction. The School itself would not have been so successful if it had not been for the hard work of Bill Sutherland and many members of the Nelson Kootenay Kilties Pipe Band. A problem arose, of course, when a new instructor of Donald's calibre was needed. It was difficult to replace one of the masters of the great highland bagpipes.

In 1981 a former student, Rene Cusson, was approached to take over principalship of the School and has remained in that post with a team of fine instructors including Rob Reif, of Calgary, and Judy Morrison of Spokane. Bill Sutherland has handed over the administrative duties to Tina Shields, who has done a first class job of handling the administration.

Because of the shutdown of David Thompson, accommodation this year was at the Willow Bay Motel, located on Kootenay Lake. The rooms were self-contained with separate bedrooms. The School itself was held in a delightful 1920's style schoolhouse but most of the classes were outside due to the magnificent weather. The opening ceremony was conducted by the co-founder and after speeches, a tribute to Donald MacLeod was played by Rene Cusson and Rob Reif. A MacKenzie Seaforth plaid was draped over a fine set of antlers originally donated to the School on their first year and the youngest pupil had the distinction of removing the plaid - with some difficulty since the antlers were mounted eight feet high and he was only three feet tall.

After each pupil was assessed by the instructors, classes were formed for the start of school. The next day we took our places around the table and waited apprehensively for the instructor to arrive and inform us that we would have been better learning the tamborine or cymbals. The classes were made up of a mixture of ten year olds with fingers like lightning, teenagers with well developed mature muscial expression and older folks with the musical ability of a deaf snail and log fingers. Instead of an enemy who intimidated our playing abilities, the instructors offered a bit of criticism here and there, but all very constructive and when we really thought about it, our own laziness was the real culprit.

We were informed the first morning that we were going to learn a 2/4 march, strathspey, reel, hornpipe and jig the first week and follow up the next week with tunes chosen for the Tattoo held just before the highland games. There were cries of "There's no way we'll learn that in a year leave alone a week." The chanter work around the table lasted from 9:00 a.m. until 11:30. After a period of exercises and then tune work, the fingers were really beginning to feel good. From 11:30 to 12:00 we had our pipes out and got them ready for the afternoon session. I might add the first day the pipes were inspected by Rene who showed us where they were causing problems and how to rectify them. It was goodbye teflon tape, chewing gum, scotch tape and all the other weird concoctions that appeared. A very good lecture on pipe maintenance was given by Rene and we all walked away with a good set of pipes and a note book full of pointers on the art of keeping them in good shape. During the lunch period, while the kids ran wild, the adults crept away to a quiet corner to practise.

After lunch, it was back to the pipes. Each pupil was seen individually by the instructor who listened to our playing, assessed weaknesses, brought out practise pieces to help and generally covered all aspects of individual problems. School let out at 4:00 with an extra hour of Piobaireachd instruction for those interested.

Food was included in the price of the School. On the first morning, we were given a week's supply of breakfast supplies including cereal, eggs, bacon. Some of the younger members were back the next day as they had devoured their week's groceries in one meal. Oh well, kids will be kids. Lunches were in the form of pack lunches and in the evenings a bus took us to a very pleasant restaurant on the outskirts of town. Evenings were spent either practising, socializing or just taking it easy. The instructors had an open door every evening. Two youngsters from Penticton just ate and slept Piobaireachd. A recital was given one evening and all three instructors played for us.

By the end of the week, I found that I had gained so much enthusiasm that I promised myself that I would never again neglect my practise time. All in all, I found it to be a great experience and extremely enjoyable. It has now become a summer holiday I really look forward to each year.

Doug Grant

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Please note that the December Knock-Out will be held on Saturday, December 1. The January and February Mini Gatherings and Knock-Outs will revert to the second Saturday of the month.

RECIPE OF THE MONTH

Thanks to Ishabel Ross who saved you from another in the Kraft (Dinner, that is) Series.

Sorry pipers and people but the "Pavlova" is a carefully guarded secret recipe, but here is an unguarded recipe.

Pineapple Cake with Cointreau

1 1/2 cups butter	1/4 cup milk
2 3/4 cups sugar	1 tsp. vanilla
6 eggs	3/4 cup crushed pineapple with juice
3 cups flour	1/2 cup cointreau
1 tsp. baking powder	

Cream butter and sugar until light, add eggs one at a time, sift flour and baking powder alternately with milk and vanilla, blend well, stir in pineapple. Grease and flour Bunt pan, pour in mixture, bake in oven 325° for 75 minutes. Cool 10 minutes in pan then invert on rack to cool. While still warm, pierce cake all over with skewer, drizzle over with cointreau. When cake is cool, glaze with icing sugar and pineapple juice (quite thick).

Ishabel Ross.

BANDSTAND

A feature that ran a few years back, Bandstand, was a page devoted to pipe band news, record reviews, band histories, etc. It is hoped to re-run this column but, as with other features, it requires your participation.

Do you have any beefs you want to air? What about one less prize than bands entered at the summer games? The Pacific International Highland Games Association's general meeting is coming up in November. Let them know how you feel. The response for articles this month has been very encouraging. Keep those cards and letters coming.

DELTA JUNIOR PIPE BAND

I would like to bring to the attention of members of the B.C. Pipers the existence of a new junior pipe band in the Lower Mainland. In March, 1984 some members of the Delta Police Pipe Band were discussing the lack of junior bands in the region and decided to start a new one. After discussing the problems, they put out some feelers and were surprised at the level of the positive response.

The next problem was to find a teacher. Mr. Robert Heggie, who teaches the St. Thomas More Band and many children in the Delta area, was approached and threw himself in whole-heartedly. The drumming teacher is a new piper with the Delta Band who had played drums for a number of years.

Practise location was the next hurdle. The Branch 61 Legion has very generously provided a large room above the Legion with a smaller room for future instrument storage.

The Band has now been going approximately seven months and has about fourteen children at different stages of piping; there are also three children learning the side drums, one on tenor and another on bass. The Band now has a complete set of drums and hopes to make its debut next May in the Ladner Days parade. Uniforms should start appearing in early 1985.

For anyone interested, the Band meets at 7:00 p.m. at the Ladner Legion, upstairs, and practises until 9:00. For more information, call:

James McInnes	943-1226
Robert Heggie	945-3541
Doug Grant	946-8779

BAND CHATTER

On behalf of the Association, we'd like to offer our congratulations to Peter and Linda Aumonier on their recent wedding. With many guests from the local piping fraternity attending the service and reception, the proceedings had a most familiar and friendly atmosphere and were enjoyed by everyone. Notable out-of-towners included Bob Worrall from Toronto and the Alakijas from Penticton. Best wishes Peter and Linda in your new life.

The Triumph Street Pipe Band have re-issued their Christmas E.P. recorded last year. Originally recorded at 33 rpm, it has been changed to 45 rpm. According to band members, the pitch and clarity have improved immensely.

Pipers and drummers are wanted for the Langley Legion Pipes and Drums. Practices are held every Tuesday night from 7:30 to 9:30 in the Langley Legion. Age is no barrier and free lessons are available.

Good to see Fred Brodie out and about again. Fred, who has had a bout with illness, was at the Mini Gathering and appears to be on the mend. He hopes to get involved with judging again in the near future.

* * * *

THE QUESTION MARK

Are you tired of competition? Are you looking for a good professional street band? The Delta Police Pipe Band is looking for experienced pipers and drummers. The band has a very good reputation around the Lower Mainland and has won many trophies for parades, carnivals, etc. The members are police officers and civilians. Practise is held Wednesday evenings, 8:00 - 10:00 p.m. at the Delta Police complex, 4455 Clarence Taylor Cres.

For more information call Roddy MacLeod, 946-4411.

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