



Queensland  
Highland  
Pipers' Society

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October

2000

## October Meeting Monday 23rd

Souths Leagues Club, Jane Street,  
West End

7.45 pm

The meeting will be a "Pipers'  
Night" featuring the playing of  
piobaireachd

### From the Editor:

As we come to the end of another calendar year, we need to start to plan our activities for 2001. The formula that has worked well for the Society over the last few years, having regular competitions at meetings may need some review as these competitions are suffering from declining entries.

Perhaps we need to introduce greater variety into our activities to increase the interest of active players.

Your committee will be considering this over the next couple of months as we work out a program for next year. If you have any ideas, please communicate them to a member of the committee (Doug Thoresen, Alex McConnell, Bob Payne, Matthew Rigby, Maurie DeHayr) so that we can organise another successful annual program for the Society.

In the meantime don't forget to come to the November meeting, the last for the year, featuring the Veterans' Contest and the Christmas Party.

*Alex McConnell*

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All comments made in this newsletter reflect the views of the author and do not necessarily reflect the policy or views of the Queensland Highland Pipers' Society or of any officer or member of the Society.

## SEPTEMBER 2000 MEETING

Our September meeting featuring the pair of pipers contest attracted about 35 keen members. Although only two pairs had entered we were to enjoy an excellent night of piping.

Doug opened meeting soon after 6.00pm. There were apologies from Matt Rigby and Iain Bruce. He also mentioned the recent birthday of Rosie McLellan (her 93rd) and the slightly less important birthday of your scribe. After the toss of a coin it was decided that Gill MacKenzie and Matthew Supranowicz were to play first, followed by Donald and Andrew Galloway.

Our pipers retired to tune up and Doug mentioned that we were to make the next meeting, listed as a "pipers night" somewhat of a piobaireachd night. Roy Gunn will play (subject to a surgeon's opinion) and Doug said he is one of the most authoritative pipers in Australia, after competing in Scotland for over 10 years and learning about six new tunes a year. Iain Bruce will also be along, Matthew Rigby is planning to come and others were being pressed during the meeting!

While our pipers were out tuning up the rest of the gathering had the opportunity to see Cathy Freeman presented with her gold medal and then it was on to the piping.

The sets of tunes were:

Gill and Matthew - *Mason's Apron, Just Jig, Just another Jig, Mirror Image, End to the Waiting* and *Baroque Bairns*.

Donald and Andrew - *Green Hills of Tyrol, After the Battle, Loch Rannoch, Itchy Fingers, Rowan Tree, Waters of Kylesku* and *My Land*.

Maurie DeHayr had kindly consented to be the judge for the evening.

After the contest Maurie spoke briefly, contrasting the style of music played by the two pairs - one mellow and "traditional" and the other more staccato and modern.

Then we heard another selection of tunes from Matthew while waiting for the results to be announced. Matthew switched to another chanter and gave us quite a varied selection. His playing is certainly continuously improving. Apart from a little difficulty with the pipe, which choked a few times, he played a solid and mature style throughout. His tunes included *Benderloch Bay, Rose Among the Heather, Captain Lachlan McPhail, McNeill of Ugadale, Jean Mauchline, Dora Watt* and *the Judge's Dilemma*.

The results were then announced and the prizes were presented by Margaret Paterson, who had once again donated the first prizes in memory of her late husband Ron.

The results were:

1. Gill MacKenzie and  
Matthew Supranowicz
2. Donald and Andrew Galloway

Next to play was Andrew Galloway, who gave us a short but musical selection including *Scotland the Brave, Marie's Wedding* and *Waltzing Matilda*

Phillip Cowan then volunteered to play and on a big sounding pipe we heard a good range of music, played with strong and confident fingers. Tunes included *Caber Feidh, Farewell to the Creeks, The Pap of Glencoe, Captain Duncan MacGregor, The Sheepwife, Rose of Allandale, The Rowan Tree, She Walked Through the Fair, Mason's Apron, Pumpkin's Fancy, Bulgarian Bandit* and *Calum Iain*.

Gill MacKenzie gave us a short but very substantial selection including *Swifty Mills, Ellen-Orr,*

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*Duncan McGillivray, Bonnie Ann and The Cameron Quickstep.*

Finally, Donald Galloway finished off the evening with a well thought out and musical selection including *Fair Maid of Barra, 10th HLI Crossing the Rhine, Kirkhill, The Bugle Horn, Paddy's Leather Breeches* and *Highland Cathedral*.

All that was left was for Doug to organise the drawing of the raffle (by Dave Sinclair). It was won by Dave Sinclair and all made a move to supper and another time of friendly conversation.

### **QHPS Program for 2000**

<b>23 October</b>	Pipers' Night	<b>27 November</b>	Veterans' Contest (Medley 3-5 minutes)
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## **Celtic Celebration Committee Qld**

AFFILIATED WITH FESTIVAL .INTERCELTIQUE DE LORIENT

### **Queensland Elimination Solo Piping Final**

Place: Wynnum Manly Leagues Club  
Wondall Road, Manly West  
Sunday 19th November 2000 - 1.30pm  
admission \$2

MSR and authentic Irish selection

to select 2 pipers for Australasian Also:-Kitchen Music

Piping Final - Melbourne 2001 Competition of fun piping

\*new feature\* - audience judging pipers' own selection (5-7 min)

meals: lunch and dinner - reasonable prices

bar facilities available

Bookings: Kathleen O'Malley 07 3396 0820

## **NEXT SOCIETY MEETING (NOVEMBER)**

Veterans'  
(over 50)  
Contest  
5-7 minute medley  
1st: \$40, 2nd: \$20,

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# What's On

<b>O C T O B E R</b>	21	Woollongong Highland Games – Dapto – Robert Webber 02 4296 2715
	<b>23</b>	<b>Society Meeting – Pipers' Night</b>
	28	Ceilidh at Halloween – presented by the Clans Congress at the Irish Club at 7.00pm - \$30 – Enquiries Del Paten 3300 1031, Jenny Ferguson 3289 1697 or Val McDonald 5438 7030
<b>N O V E M B E R</b>	5	Britfest 2000—Blacktown (Sydney) Showgrounds—contact 02 9628 6278
	19	NSW Combined Scottish Societies Contest— Drummoyne Oval. Contact: Michael Stubbings 02 9688 3300
	19	Celtic Celebration Committee Queensland Solo Piping Final (to select finalists for Australian Final for Lorient Festival 2001) - Wynnum Manly Leagues Club—1.30pm (see notice later in newsletter)
	<b>27</b>	<b>Society Meeting – Veterans' Contest</b>
<b>D E C</b>	2-3	Daylesford (Vic) Band, Mini-Band and Solo Contests—Victoria Park
<b>J A N</b>	1	Nambour New Years Day Gathering—Petrie Park Nambour 10am to 4pm. Contact Fred Logan 07 5441 4238

**The NSW Pipers' Society** meets on the 4th Wednesday of each month at 6 Holterman Street, Crows Nest. Contact Ron Clement - 02 9948 1914

**The WA Pipers' Society** meets on the 3rd Saturday at the Autumn Centre, Inglewood. Contact John McMurchie - 08 9401 9587

If you need more details about any of the above events and a contact is not mentioned, ring the Society Secretary (3397 4512 after hours) and we will see what we can dig up for you.

**Scottish Radio Programs**    **SBS Radio** – Brisbane FM 93.3 – Thursday nights 10-11pm  
**4EB** - AM 1053 – Thursday afternoons 3-4pm

## NEWS

**Coffs Harbour Ceilidh** Held at the Coffs Harbour Ex-Services Club, on Aug 26th '00.

As the Entertainment co-ordinator for the concert, I approached Joe Joyce (P/M St Andrews PB) with a request for him to be the guest solo piper for the concert. Not only did he agree to the request but suggested that he would see if it was possible to bring a group from the band down to do a mini-band set. I keenly embraced the idea.

Several weeks later Joe contacted me with the news that they would bring down a small group as well as him doing the solo spot (all at minimum expense, which was greatly appreciated).

"They came, they conquered" Joe's solo was a brilliant mixture of technical sets which showed his skill and expertise in the solo piping field, combined with the more flashy finger

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ing techniques which appeal to an audience at such a concert. Overall, a great performance incorporating skill and entertainment.

The St Andrews mini-band featured in the second half of the concert with a mixture of competition sets and concert sets, which again captivated the audience due to the precision presentation. The group was only small in number but showed the skill and talent which we all associate with the bands-people in the top bands in Queensland. Special thanks to Joe and Joanne Joyce, Fred Douglas, David Shelback and Karen Sheehan.

Coffs Harbour thanks Joe and the St Andrews performers who made the great effort to travel five hours South to make our concert the great success it was on the night.

Other items in the concert were : Coffs Harbour Pipe Band (twice + 2 mini-band segments), Scottish male solo singer, Country dance troupe, Air Cadet Rifle Display, Salute to the Haggis, Drum-corp Drum Salute, Flower of

Scotland sung by a Coffs band member, Special item of Sir Cliff Richard's "Millennium Prayer".

A light supper was served during the Interval.

In conclusion I would stress our appreciation of the support we received from the St Andrews Pipe Band for our events in Northern NSW. St Andrews will also be the Special guest band at the Jacaranda Festival in Grafton on Sat 4th November, featuring during the day and presenting a full concert at night. We look forward to that event.

Dennis Sheehan (Band Sec...& Concert Co-ordinator)

**S**imon Fraser University Pipe Band in Australia next year--SFU are planning a series of concerts and competing in the Australian Pipe Band Championships. The likely dates are:

CONCERTS April 7 in Christchurch

April 11 at the Sydney Opera House

April 13 in Melbourne

Australian Championships April 14 and 15.

The Sydney concert may be recorded.

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## A Day At The Worlds Neil Readshaw

The World Pipe Band Championships provide the ultimate test for a pipe band, regardless of their grade. It is one of the few opportunities to compare yourself to bands from all over the world. This year, I played in the Grade 2 competition with a band called "MacTarnahan's Prince Charles Pipe Band", based in San Francisco, California. We were privileged enough to take the trophy that day, as well as Best Bass Section. Alex asked me to share my thoughts on the day, so here they are.

After leaving Brisbane in January of 1996, I moved to Santa Cruz, California, located near San Francisco and the famous Silicon Valley. My pipe band career went into hibernation for a couple of years as the rigours of working for a small startup company took their toll. In early 1998, I came across a local band called the Prince Charles Pipe Band.

The band has been around for 30 years, and had traveled to Scotland periodically through the 70s, 80s and early 90s. We've been to the worlds every year since 1997, finishing as follows:

\* 1997 - 3rd in Juvenile \* 1998 - 5th in Grade 3

\* 1999 - 6th in Grade 2 \* 2000 - 1st in Grade 2

As you can see from the results, the progress being made by the band is rapid, eclipsing the race to Grade 1 of many great bands around the world.

Our day at the Worlds this year was a long one. Due to the RSPBA receiving 44 entries in Grade 2 this year, the competition was split into two heats, each of 22 bands. The heats were played in the morning, and the top six bands from each heat progressed to the final in the afternoon. We played the first time at around 11:30, late enough that the sun had come out and the morning dew had started to evaporate - ideal playing conditions. This was our best run of the day in my opinion, and good enough to move us into the final as the second qualifier in our heat. We had a good draw towards the end, but still surrounded by some strong bands. Immediately following our heat, we returned to the band bus and rested, saving our energy for what we hoped would be a busy afternoon. The draw was announced for the final - we were in, and playing 10th of 12 bands. Another great draw.

The final was rich with mistakes from all bands, everybody suffering some fatigue perhaps, and an amount of instrument fatigue as well perhaps. The weather became unpredictable at this stage, with some light showers, cooler conditions and overcast skies. This was a real test of the instrument, and provided some separation in the field in my opinion. Our sound held well, thanks to Mike Gilmour's great reeds, and our practice regime of long sessions on pipes throughout the year.

I found the biggest differentiator between bands to be stability of sound and quality of strathspey playing. Even a few of the placegetters in Grade 2 struggled to keep top hands stable, or understand and demonstrate the strathspey idiom effectively.

Massed bands is always long at the Worlds, and even worse if you are in the first half a dozen bands onto the field following the centre bands. A rain squall hit during mass bands, creating a business opportunity for every drycleaner in Glasgow. By the time the Grade 2 announcement came along, we'd had enough - ready to get on the bus and head for home. Of course, good news perks everybody up, and the ensuing melee after the announcement was a little crazy. RSPBA officials had asked us to quieten down for the Grade 1 announcement. We didn't. It was not until the next morning that I heard any results for the rest of Grade 2 or any of Grade 1.

Playing off the field in front of 200+ bands was the start of a celebration that was to last for some time, and created a set of memories that will never be forgotten or replaced.

The Band plans to go back to Scotland in 2001, this time in Grade 1. This is our greatest challenge yet, but one that we are preparing for as thoroughly as we are able. Look for us on the Grade 1 master sheet next year, and hopefully you'll see our name before a few others as you look from top to bottom !

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Useful MacTarnahan's Prince Charles Pipe Band URLs:

Band Web Site - [www.pcpb.org](http://www.pcpb.org)

Band History - [www.pcpb.org/history.html](http://www.pcpb.org/history.html)

Worlds 2000 Photo Gallery - [www.pcpb.org/gallery/worlds2000/index.html](http://www.pcpb.org/gallery/worlds2000/index.html)

Worlds 2000 Multimedia - [www.pcpb.org/gallery/gallery-2000.html](http://www.pcpb.org/gallery/gallery-2000.html)

Seen on the Internet--

some comments by noted Canadian piper Jim McGillivray on shaving chanter reeds.

**Enquirer** Could someone help me with some tips on how to shave down Megarity-Ross chanter reeds. I used to shave down Shepherds by sanding down the sides on the lower half of the reed. Megarity-Rosses are the "other" kind of reed and have to be shaved the "other" way. In non-supporting areas, but for ridge-cut reeds like the M-R, that's in the middle, not at the edges like you'd shave most other (molded) kinds of reeds.

**Jim McGillivray** This is not what I've found. I demonstrate in my video a good way to carve ridge-cut reeds, but it's a hard thing to describe on the keyboard. It entails cutting quite deep and merciless gouges in the shape of a C off all four edges of the reed right at the shoulder. The carved C actually straddles the very prominent shoulder crease. I learned how to do this some years ago from Donald Lindsay when we were working on Warnocks. I believe he learned it from Frances Ducharmes. I've never seen anyone else do it and it works like a charm. Makes the reeds virtually as easy as you want without affecting the pitch of the notes in any way. I've done it a million times. Well, maybe a hundred.

**Another Enquirer** Is there an equivalent "secret shave" technique for non-ridge-cut reeds?

**Jim McGillivray** This is the only secret shave I know. And it's not really secret; word just hasn't gotten around yet, that's all. For more profiled reeds I find that my shaving technique varies with the maker, and one must expect a learning curve. Certainly the edges are the best choice for changing strength dramatically. However, a touch with the sandpaper right smack in the middle where everyone says you shouldn't go sometimes frees up a reed that is only slightly hard. It's safe to do if you've got tape on the mid-range of the chanter -- D, F -- but if not you risk having one of these notes go flat on you.

I think experimentation is important with any reed. I mean, if you're just going to toss the reed aside and never look at it again because it's too hard, why not take a few good whacks at it and see what changes?

## CONTEST RESULTS

**Nicol-Brown Amateur Invitational Piping Contest October 7, 2000 - Hartford, Connecticut**

**Judge: Alasdair Gillies**

## **P/M Donald MacLeod Memorial 6/8 March Competition**

1. Andrew J. Hayes (Slingerlands, NY) Mrs MacDonald of Uig; Capt. Craig Brown
2. Glenn Brown (Milton, Ontario) Kenneth J. MacLeod; John Gordon of Drummuie
3. Alison Dunsire (Camano Island, Washington) Angus McKinnon; Dovecote Park
4. Andrew Douglas (Marietta, NY) Invermark's Welcome to J. Reid Maxwell; Duncan McGillivray, Chief Steward
5. Lionel Tupman (Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ontario) Bruce Gandy's Farewell to the Iron Horse; General Montgomery
6. Erin McCarthy (Fort Ann, New York)

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Ross Battery; Bengullion

### **Robert Nicol-Robert Brown Chalice for Piobaireachd**

1. Erin McCarthy (Fort Ann, New York) - The Rout of Glenfruin
2. Andrew Douglas (Marietta, New York) - The Groat
3. Glenn Brown (Milton, Ontario) - The Massacre of Glencoe
4. Patrick Regan (Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania) -
5. Doug MacRae (London, Ontario) - MacCrimmon's Sweetheart
6. Lionel Tupman (Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ontario) -

### **William Ross Challenge Targe MSR**

1. Glenn Brown (Milton, Ontario)
2. Andrew Douglas (Marietta, New York)
3. Tristan L. Wilson (Centerville, Kansas)
4. Elizabeth Tomlik (Lower Sackville, Nova Scotia)
5. Lionel Tupman (Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ontario)
6. Andrea Boyd (Antigonish, Nova Scotia)

### **Aggregate Winner - Glenn Brown**

Wins round trip airfare to 2001 London Competition

### **Nicol-Brown Chalice Winner - Erin McCarthy**

Wins a room, board and tuition-paid week at a year 2001 Invermark Summer Program



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*Subscriptions for 2000/2001 are now due.*

*The Annual Meeting decided to keep the annual figure at \$20.00*

*If you haven't paid yet (we've had a good response from the notice last month), can you please either post your subscription to the Society PO Box (see front page of the Newsletter) or pay it at the October meeting. Please use the form at the foot of the page to make sure we allocate the payment correctly.*

**Queensland Highland Pipers' Society**

**Subscription 2000/2001**

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