



Queensland Highland Pipers' Society

www.qhps.org

Newsletter - July 2012

July Meeting

on Monday 23rd at 7.30pm

at Balmoral Bowls Club

Jean Howie Drive, Morningside

The meeting will feature

The Jimmy Durham Memorial Trophy

for junior players (Elementary & Sub-Intermediate - D and C in new terminology)

The test piece is a 2/4 March of 4 or more parts of the competitor's choice played once through.

Prizes: 1st: The Jimmy Durham trophy plus Medal plus \$100.

2nd: Medal plus \$60

4th: Medal plus \$20

3rd: Medal plus \$40

5th: \$15

Entries to qhps@qhps.org or 07 3397 4512 or before 7.15pm on the night.

Sadly, this month has seen the passing of another long time member of the Society, Harry MacKenzie. We have a short tribute to him later in the newsletter.

The last Band Contest of our local season is coming up on the 22nd of this month at Brusbane Boys College. This is the first contest they have run, so good support will hopefully encourage them to continue and also perhaps include solos in the future.

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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 particular officer or member of the Society.

Alex McConnell
Secretary

2012 SOCIETY CALENDAR

MONTHLY MEETINGS

FEBRUARY 27 TH	2/4 MARCH THEME NIGHT - PLAY YOUR FAVOURITE 2/4S AND FIND OUT ABOUT THE HISTORY, STRUCTURE AND PLAYING OF THIS MUSIC,
MARCH 26 TH	HORNPIPE AND JIG (SENIOR) /AIR AND JIG (JUNIOR) CONTEST
APRIL 23 RD	PIPERS' NIGHT
MAY 28 TH	PATRON'S TROPHY CONTEST (MSR FOR SENIOR PLAYERS)
JUNE 25 TH	STRATHSPEY & REEL THEME NIGHT
JULY 23 RD	JIMMY DURHAM MEMORIAL CONTEST (2/4 MARCH FOR JUNIOR PLAYERS)
AUGUST 27 TH	MINI RECITAL NIGHT
SEPTEMBER 24 TH	ANNUAL MEETING & AIR AND JIG CONTEST
OCTOBER	A major solo contest in lieu of the monthly meeting (watch for details)
NOVEMBER 26 TH	JACK McCANDLISH TROPHY (6/8 MARCHES)

After each competition, the floor is open for all.

The aim is to start meetings at 7.30pm (7.15pm for a 7.30pm start) to allow an early finish/more piping/more social time at the end of the meeting. Junior competitions are to start promptly and finish by 8.30pm.

During 2012 we will be awarding competition points for each contest - 4 for first place, 3 for second, 2 for 3rd and 1 for just competing. We are going to approach sponsors to donate substantial prizes for the Junior and Senior Piper of the Year, so watch for details - but more importantly - turn up and compete!

PIOBAIREACHD GROUP

5 th February	6 th May	5 th August	4 th November (Recital)
4 th March	3 rd June	9 th September	2 nd December
1 st April	1 st July	7 th October	

JUNE MEETING

Very cold weather led to a fairly small attendance of 20 or so at our Strathspey and Reel theme night at the June meeting. We had apologies from Nick Tomkins and Tom McGirr. Donald Galloway mentioned the recent passing of long time Society member Ron Scott and then handed over to Tom Campbell who treated us to an excellent talk about the subject of Strathspeys and Reels. He has kindly supplied us with the text of his talk, which is reproduced a bit later in the newsletter. Along the way, he demonstrated the points made in the talk on the pipe.

Following Tom's talk, Wayne Kennedy played us some tunes in the flavour of the evening. After a couple of 6/8s to warm up, he played the strathspeys *Islay Ball*, *Susan MacLeod* and *Inverary Castle* and the reels *Alick C MacGregor*, *Pretty Mation* and *The Smith of*

Chilliechassie.

Lachlan McPhee had also come prepared and played the strathspeys *Lady Loudon* and *Caledonian Society of London* followed by the reels *Mrs MacPherson of Inveran* and *Lexy McAskill*.

Then Ross Campbell also gave us a selection featuring the theme for the night. After warming up, he played *Aspen Bank*, *Duke of Gordon's Birthday*, *Captain Horne*, *Mrs Macleod of Raasay*, *De'il Among the Tailors*, *Kate Dalrymple*, *Jock Wilson's Ball*, *Sandy Duff* and finally a couple of MSRs - *Braes of Castle Grant*, *Isa Johnstone* and *Fiona MacLeod* and *Hugh Kennedy*, *The Piper's Bonnet* and *Thomson's Dirk*.

Finally Maurie DeHayr had a few tunes on Tom's pipe which was rather hard for him but nevertheless a good

display of the rhythmic style needed when playing for dancers. He described the strathspey as a way of getting the dancer into the air and the reel as a "skipping tune".

Finally Donald reminded everyone that the next meeting was the Jimmy Durham Memorial competition and also reminded members of the upcoming Piobaireachd group meeting.

The raffle was then drawn by Lachlan McPhee and won by his father!

Piobaireachd Group

As we expected, there were not many in attendance on the 1st of July, but those who came enjoyed the morning's session. We had Alex & Desley McConnell, Bruce and Jean McLeod, Lachlan McPhee and Ralph Nankervis. Maurie DeHayr was an apology as he was in Adelaide for a Pipe Band Association meeting.

First up, Ross Campbell played *Lament for Mary MacLeod*. We then listened to a recording from the Piobaireachd Society website of Murray Henderson playing *The Pride of Barra* or *MacNeill of Barra's March* from the MacArthur/MacGregor Manuscript - this glimpse of an older style, magnificently presented by Murray was a real treat.

Ross then presented his tune for the month, *The Lament for the Little Supper*. Morning tea followed, after which, Ross played the *Little Supper* on the pipes.

Lachlan McPhee then played the ground of *The Desperate Battle of the Birds*, his latest 'work in progress', followed by a very competent and well-timed *Too Long in this Condition*. It was very heartening to hear one of our younger players demonstrating such ability and interest.

3rd & 4th October 2012

Brisbane Boys College

Stuart Liddell, Tyler Fry (Bass Section Drumming), Kyle Warren (Member of Field Marshall Montgomery Pipe Band, and of the Famous Red Hot Chilli Pipers!), Grant Cassidy (Solo Drumming)

2012 Queensland Youth Piping & Drumming School, Brisbane

This is a unique opportunity to learn from World Champion Musicians just for Queensland Piping & Drumming.

This is a two day exclusive workshop to Under 18's. The workshop covers 2 days of expert tuition, meals, accommodation and entry to Wednesday nights' Recital, as well as School T-Shirt for only \$200 per participant!

To register, please contact - Andrew Roach 0417 287 443 or bigmansmate@bigpond.com

Tutors Recital

Wednesday 3rd October 2012

Come and experience the amazing talents of the workshops' tutors who have performed all over the world in amazing concerts, championships and recitals venues.

Brisbane Boys College College Hall commencing at 7pm

\$25 per head

OUR SOCIETY HAS SOME TICKETS FOR PRESALE, SO IF YOU WANT TO MAKE SURE OF A TICKET, DROP US A LINE OR AN EMAIL AND WE WILL ARRANGE IT FOR YOU. PAYMENT CAN BE MADE BY CHEQUE OR BANK TRANSFER.

What's on.....

J U L	22 Pipe Band Contest, Brisbane Boys College Junior School Green - 12 noon to 4pm. Contact Steve Stanley 0400 953 126 sstanley@bbc.qld.edu.au
	23 Society Meeting
	28 European Pipe Band Championships, Belfast
A U G	5 Society Piobaireachd Group
	11 Worlds Pipe Band Championships, Glasgow
	17-19 Scots in the Bush, Boondoomba Homestead (near Mundubbera) Bands, Dancers, Stalls, etc. Contact 07 4168 1068 or buddythomson@bigpond.com
	22-23 Argyllshire Gathering, Oban
	25 Cowal Pipe Band Championships, Dunoon, Scotland
	27 Society Meeting
S E P	6-8 Northern Meeting Inverness
	9 Society Piobaireachd Group
	24 Society Annual Meeting

The Royal Scottish Pipe Band Association has announced that Glasgow will continue to be the venue for the Worlds Championships through to 2015.

As in the last couple of years, the "Worlds" will once again be streamed live on the Internet by the BBC.

Following on the successful Scotland Homecoming year in 2009, there is to be another one in 2014 - worth remembering if you're planning a trip in the next few years.

VISIT THE COMING EVENTS PAGE AT www.pipebandsqld.org FOR MORE DETAILS ON THE ABOVE, INCLUDING WEB LINKS AND EMAIL ADDRESSES

For more details about above events where a contact isn't mentioned, ring or email the Secretary (07 3397 4512 or qhps@qhps.org) and we'll see what we can dig up for you. If we don't know about your event (social, musical, or whatever) we can't publicise it. So tell us and get free publicity

"Raising the Standard"

The Scottish & Celtic Magazine of Queensland

Be fully informed and up-to-date on what is happening in the Scottish and Celtic Community, here and overseas. Progressive Calendars of Events for Pipe Bands; Highland Dancing; Scottish Country Dancing; Irish Dancing and Clans Congress are featured in each edition of "Raising the Standard"

Annual Subscription - \$28 (including postage)

Write to: ALBA Publications, PO Box 8024, Wynnum North, Qld 4178
07 3396 9025



Vale Harry MacKenzie

Harry passed away after many years of declining health on 1 July. He had still managed to get along to some of our meetings even quite recently. He was 84.

Originally taught to play by his father, Harry was a successful solo competitor in his younger days and was a member of St Andrew's Pipe band in the post WWII era.

In his "non-pipng" life, he was a real estate agent, auctioneer and valuer with a business in Moorooka.

In 1990, he moved to the Redlands with his second wife, Jan, who he met after the death of his first wife Joy, with whom he had five children and then decided to breathe life back into the local piping fraternity.

He played an major role in establishing the Cleveland based Redlands Scottish and Celtic Society and also played a crucial role in setting up Redland's first Highland Gathering in 2001 at the Cleveland Showgrounds before it shifted to Redlands Multi-Sports Club in Birkdale in 2007.

He taught many young players who have gone on to play at high levels.

Harry's pupil and Society member Peter Gallagher played the pipes at his funeral at the Cleveland Uniting Church, as well as the Pipe Band of the Scottish and Celtic Society. The Society was well represented at the funeral.

RADIO PROGRAMS

College of Piping Radio: You can tune in on the Internet on www.college-of-piping.co.uk/html/radio.htm

4EB - FM 98.1 – Thursday afternoons 2.15—4.30 pm

Radio 997 FM (Redcliffe) – Sundays 12noon to 3pm

Burnett River Radio (91.5 FM) - Thursdays 7pm to 9pm

OTHER PIPING SOCIETIES

The Smallpipers Group - Contact Malcolm McLaren for meeting details - mrmclaren@bigpond.com

The NSW Pipers' Society usually meets on the 1st Wednesday of each month. Contact Ron Clement – 02 9948 1914.

Victorian Pipers Association: <http://www.vicpipers.org/>

RU Brown Piobaireachd Society of South Australia: www.rubrown.org.au

CONTEST RESULTS

Donald MacDonald Quaich - Clan Donald Centre, Armadale Castle, Skye - 16 June

Winner

Murray Henderson, *Lady Margaret MacDonald's Salute*

Other Competitors

Faye Henderson, *The Piper's Warning to His Master*

Simon McKerrell, *Too Long in this Condition*

Gordon Walker, *Glengarry's March*

Judge: Jack Taylor

The contest is an invitational one sponsored by the Clan Donald Association. Tunes are from the Donald MacDonald Manuscript of 1822

Aberdeen Highland Games - 17 June

Piobaireachd

1st Mael Sicard-Cras

2nd Craig Martin

3rd David Wilton

4th Peter McAllister

5th Jonathan Greenlees

Judges: Norman Matheson, Duncan Watson

March

1st Gordon McCready

2nd David Wilton

3rd Craig Muirhead

4th Greig Canning

5th Greig Wilson

Strathspey & Reel

1st Gordon McCready

2nd David Wilton

3rd Greig Canning

4th Craig Muirhead

5th Jonathan Greenlees

Jig

1st Craig Muirhead

2nd Gordon McCready

3rd Greig Wilson

4th Jonathan Greenlees

5th Greig Canning

British Pipe Band Championships - Annan - 30 June

Grade 1 (MSR, 16 competed)

1st Field Marshal Montgomery

2nd ScottishPower

3rd Inveraray & District

4th Boghall & Bathgate Caledonia

5th St. Laurence O'Toole

6th Strathclyde Police

Drumming: Boghall & Bathgate

Judges: William Garrett, John Moles (piping);

Alistair Aitken (drumming); John MacInnes

(ensemble)

Grade 2 (Medley, 19 competed)

1st Glasgow Skye

2nd Denny & Dunipace Gleneagles

3rd Lomond & Clyde

4th Cullen

5th Buchan

6th Manor Cunningham

Drumming: Denny & Dunipace Gleneagles

Judges: Jim Campbell, Gordon Lawrie (piping);

Ciaran Mordaunt (drumming); Bob Shepherd

(ensemble)

Ceres Highland Games - 30 June

Piobaireachd

1st Jonathan Graham, *Lament for Donald of Laggan*

2nd Robert Gray, *Lament for Kinlochmoidart*

3rd Donald MacLeod, *The Blind Piper's*

Obstinacy

4th Greig Wilson, *The MacGregors' Salute*

March

1st Jonathan Graham, *Tom Wilson*

2nd Grieg Wilson, *John MacDonald of Glencoe*

3rd Craig Martin, *Duncan MacColl*

4th Donald MacLeod, *Capt. Campbell of Drumavoisk*

Strathspey & Reel

1st Jonathan Graham, *Piper's Bonnet, Alick Cameron, Champion Piper*

2nd Donald MacLeod, *Maggie Cameron,*

Rejected Suitor

3rd Craig Martin, *Sandy MacPherson, Dr. MacPhail's Reel*

4th Greig Wilson, *Cameronian Rant, John Morrison, Assynt House*

Judge: Colin MacLellan judged all the events.

Cupar Highland Games - 1 July

Piobaireachd

1st Robert Gibb, *Black Donald's March*

2nd John Mulhearn, *The Earl of Ross's March*

3rd Craig Sutherland, *The Lament for Donald of*

*Laggan*4th Michael Elder *Too Long in this Condition*5th Greig Wilson, *The Salute to Donald*6th Craig Martin, *The Little Spree*

Judges: Colin MacLellan, Andrew Wright

2nd Alan Russell

3rd Gordon McCready

4th Greig Wilson

5th Jonathan Greenlees

6th Jenny Hazzard

March

1st Alan Russell

2nd Greig Wilson

3rd Jenny Hazzard

4th Gordon McCready

5th John Mulhearn

6th Jonathan Greenlees

Strathspey & Reel

1st Craig Sutherland

Jig

1st Craig Sutherland

2nd Jonathan Greenlees

3rd Alan Russell

4th Greig Wilson

5th Gordon McCready

6th Jenny Hazzard

Light Music Judges: Robert Barnes, Tom Speirs

Strathspeys and Reels

Tom Campbell

I thought that before we get in to the playing we might have a little chat about what, why and how I play Strathspeys and Reels to give you a little insight into what people have passed their knowledge on to me.

Firstly, a strathspey is a type of dance tune in 4/4 time and has evolved from the old Highland Reels. I keep this in my head at all times. Above all, Strathspeys and Reels are dances and should provide lift. Scottish country dancing, Highland Dancing, solo piping, pipe bands, Army Reels or the more original Cape Breton style all provide great talking points and I hope we can

explore examples of these tune types tonight. The Cape Breton style (from Canada) is not influenced by Victorian musicians and is played flatter and faster

I suppose when anyone mentions the playing of Strathspeys and Reels you should mention James Scott Skinner - The Strathspey King. A pipe tune with this name was written by P/M G S MacLellan to honour this widely acclaimed man. If you ever get a chance to listen to Scott Skinner's music etc then I would certainly recommend it.

4/4 time is probably the easiest and most popular time signature but as we all know the phrasing and pulse of the Strathspey is unique to the Scottish culture. Very difficult to pick up as a young bagpiper. The radio when I was growing up was full of fiddles and accordions playing these tunes — a great asset to someone who couldn't read music!!

My first teacher was Bob Shepherd. Bob taught by singing one bar phrases or the stutter method. He also found it best if we missed out most of the doublings and played gracenotes instead. I think it is fair to say that was a common custom back in the day. Definitely not now a days though. I found this a good way to pick up the tunes and understand how he wanted them played, especially as I just said I couldn't read music.

A few years later I attended a course through the Territorial Army under P/M Sandy Davidson who after the first couple of hours asked me to his desk and exclaimed " how can anyone lead a pipe band, teach kids, win the world championships without being able to read music?" I admitted I had to keep going over and over until it was what I was looking for. He took it upon himself to correct that omission in my tuition and to this day I am grateful to him.

Later again, I worked at the College of Piping in Glasgow. During my seven years there I received tuition from Angus MacLellan, Jimmy Young, Dugald MacNeill and Robert Wallace, all of whom were prolific competitors. Jimmy Young was the most successful competitor over a three or four year period in light music and always had a listen and offered advice on how to lay out your light music. I was Gordon Walker's Pipe Sergeant for five years in the 52nd Lowland Regt and went on his recitals as his warm up player with him. He was a great mentor and advisor of how to play tunes and set up the pipes.

When I was P/M of Milngavie Pipe Band I found one of the most challenging things was to come up with new tunes for competition sets. As I worked at the College of Piping at the time, I used the resources there. Looking through

the old Glens of Edinburgh collections, I found it interesting that most of the tunes played in a round pipe band style at that time were originally dot and cut. Over the space of fifty years or so the style had changed. A lot of older players found it really hard to change their style and there was a definite split between the different generations of pipers.

On to some tunes now. Starting with some simple strathspeys and reels I'd like to set a tempo and a phrasing that we can discuss as we move through the styles. I hope we can see the differences as we go from the simpler, dance tunes to the more complicated finger technique in the solo style and compare that in turn to the band strathspeys and reels before finishing with smaller pipe band tunes more suited for faster reel dances.

Orange and Blue and Mrs MacLeod of Raasay by Neil Gow to show simple dancing tunes emphasising the dancer NOT the piper. As we know the first beat in the bar is the strong accent but what if that note is a cut note to assist the musical effect. The second part of Orange and Blue shows that the emphasis would be carried over to the second note of the bar.

The tempo amongst competitors varies from 114 to 120 BPM. The SCDS recommends this tempo for REELS!!! I'll now demonstrate the tempo with a metronome. Pipe bands will play at the top end and solo players at the other end. Sometime the danger is players can get bogged down in the accent and forget to let the tune flow. Gordon Walker used to say "people think I can play fast but its I think its just the way I phrase the tune." That's true in my opinion but nevertheless he can play fast!!!!

Introduction to Agogic accents

There are four kinds of agogic accent:

- Longer notated duration of a note, for example, a half note among quarter notes.
- Extended duration of a note within its full time value (without altering the tempo). For example, players of organ and harpsichord (which don't afford the use of dynamic accents) can emphasise one of a sequence of staccato quarter notes by making it less staccato.
- Extended duration of a note with the effect of temporarily slowing down the tempo.
- **Delayed onset of a note.**

There have been very few strathspey compositions in the last twenty or so years whereas reels have been composed much more frequently. One such strathspey composition to be aired in the competition field is Keith Bowes composed by Kyle Warren. This was one of the tunes I played with WAPOL in this year's Australian Pipe Band Championships and I will play it a little later.

So I suppose we have different tempos for strathspeys and Reels. Country dancing, Highland dancing, solo piping sets and pipe band sets etc.

When playing a strathspey I try and show the positive effect of my drone sound during the strong beats and employ the agogic stress. Agogic stress - the old school teachers just said hang on the note all day. Again though as I said earlier, I think it is still important to drive the tune and not let it hold you back.

The tempos increase as we move along these disciplines. In a pipe band set we tend to use two smaller tunes back to back, lightening the difficulty slightly to enable a more driven tempo. Often in discussions with drummers it is they who prefer to accent the strong beat and find it difficult sometimes to fill in the pipers desire to stretch that beat. Settling somewhere in the middle and increasing the tempo from the solo style a bit as well.

The tunes I have picked to play are here because they are my favourite tunes and some will hopefully demonstrate what I am trying to say.

Shepherds crook notes from P/M Bill Robertson

In the above the "Es" and high "As" should sing out. The second time through with the variation last two bars should have the spring of the dance really well on the dotted high "As" in the second last bar **until it "hurts"**. The last three pulses from the dotted "F" should have slightly relaxed short "E"* and

"C"* with a really solid grip to "E" for clarity and rhythmical effect. Full pulse high "A"• leading to the third part to follow. Similar principles apply to these two parts as for the first and second parts. Remember good value on all dotted notes.

Note that the Strathspey tempo in Scottish Country Dancing is much slower than the Strathspey in Highland and Ladies' Step Dancing though the dotted rhythm is the same in the traditional tunes. Slow Airs are often used to provide an alternative rhythm at the same tempo.

Shepherd's Crook and The Sheepwife. Both these tunes were very popular in Fife around the Dysart hey days and there were certainly some fantastic players. Especially when this area didn't have any piobaireachd teachers so light music was all we had.

Showing the pick up in pace I will play **Maggie Cameron** (the wife of Donald Cameron) composed by P/M Willie Ross which is a very popular pipe band piece and a good tune for solo pipers setting out in competition as it lends itself to the Strathspey idiom but in the bands its all about hitting the E's consistently. I feel the first part comes across as MWMW instead of SWMW.

See if you agree?? **Mrs MacPherson of Inveran** by GS MacLellan. Just an aside. When I worked at the College of Piping we used to catalogue all tunes that were recorded and the most popular was the Strathspey, Susan MacLeod composed by P/M Donald MacLeod for his daughter and of course Mrs MacPherson of Inveran.

I think it should be mentioned that although some tunes lend themselves to either band or solo worlds and NOT both, that traditional tunes were around long before Pipe Bands claimed them!!

For anyone who enjoys hearing excellent strathspey and reels played by an expert piper on fantastic bagpipes then I would recommend a CD by Dr. Angus Macdonald called As Sireadh Spors. The CD is unique in that rather than play a recital type performance he focuses on very musical strathspeys and reels at least for the most part.

To finish up I'd like to play smaller tunes used in medleys by a few bands. This will show another rise in tempo. I've played these tunes in two bands I've been with namely WAPOL and the 52nd Lowland Regt. The first tune is called **Keith James Bowes**, composed by Kyle Warren. Both Keith and Kyle were young pipers with the Scottish Power pipe band. I knew young Keith well and spent a bit of time with him and his father Keith senior, who incidentally was in the Scots Guards and is well known for making sheepskin pipe bags. The first part will again demonstrate the Low A cut note at the beginning of the accent for musical effect and the stress moving to the second note B. The second tune is Mac an Irish and the reels were arranged by Gordon Walker in a medley we played a few years ago and I'll let the tempo pick up a bit to get closer to the eightsome reel speed I've been asked to play particularly for the Army dancers. The first tune is called **Mac an Irish** (interestingly the tune name translates into son of an Irishman, but this man was not an Irishman but was called as much as he was a rebel) then **Kenneth Mor** (I can only translate this tune title to Big Kenneth), Marion and Donald and the **Duke of Hamilton's Reel** (This is not a connection to the

dance called the Duke of Hamilton's Reel but a completely different composition by P/M Donald Shaw Ramsay.