





Fall 2015  
Vol. 44, No. 3

**THE VOICE is the official  
publication of the Eastern United  
States Pipe Band Association.**

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## Table of Contents

- 3 Editorial
- 27 Report for the Executive Secretary
  
- Features**
- 4 Ed Neigh Remembrance
- 6 Constructing A Pipe Band Medley
- 10 Archives
- 11 George Moss
- 20 Norm Jones 50th Anniversary and Retirement from Pipe Bands
- 21 2015 EUSPBA Election Ballot And Biographies
  
- Review**
- 11 Pibroch: George Moss
  
- Basics**
- 15 Snare Basics: Good is Better; and Funner
- 18 Tenor and Bass Basics: Mind the Gap – The Functional Midsection
  
- Music**
- 17 Royal Scots Polka (First Solo Drum Score)
  
- Branch Notes**
- 24 Northeast Branch Notes
- 25 Metro Branch Report
- 25 Ohio Valley Branch Report
- 26 So, this happened in the Southwest Branch...



### ON THE COVER:

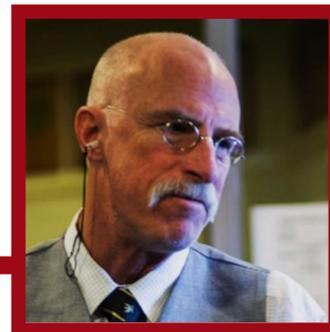
**The EUSPBA's latest Gold  
Medallist, Nick Hudson,  
at the Bridgeport WV games.**

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# Editorial

By John Bottomley



Nick Hudson led a contingent of three EUSPBA players in the top five at the Piobaireachd Society Gold Medal, Canada, held at Maxville. Ben McClamrock took second spot and Bobby Durning fifth. Nick followed up with an impressive second place finish in the Gold Medallist (former winners) event.

It was a solid showing for our young players, and demonstrates that we, as an organization, can boast home-grown players as good as any, especially when you add the results players like these, and Dan Lyden, have been getting in their contests in Scotland. And others who have not made the trip, but who are playing at the same level as these young men, such as Andrew Donlon, Dan Pisolowski, the Bell brothers, Bobby Minnear, and Derek Midgley. Not all are young, but all ARE capable of taking top prize. There are others in this group as well as amateurs coming up to challenge.

Add our imports (Andrew Carlisle and Alastair Murray) and the Professional piping scene is as robust as I can remember it being, and it seems it will be so for quite a while.

It seems the system is working, and the two towers that support it are good teaching and good judging.

The judge's training program has been in place for more than twenty-five years, with the result that our judges start out well trained, and and judges' seminars ensure that they continue their training over the course of their careers.

So the EUSPBA has things covered from the competition aspect.

The Progressive Certification Program (PCP), while it doesn't train teachers, allows students access to the finest teachers the association has to offer, through its series of certificates and seminars. Its specific purpose is to allow musicians who are not interested in competition to improve their skills, following the core mission of the EUSPBA; the advancement of piping and drumming.

How do you get there.....that's the question.

Right now the program is dormant. A few years ago Roddy MacDonald did a fantastic job of getting it going and setting it up. Unfortunately it has fallen by the wayside. We have a few people here who have been qualified to give certifications through the PDQB, formerly the Institute of Piping, but we have our OWN program here, and we should be able to utilize it. The Rory O'Moore School of Piping and Drumming did it, and there have been inquiries from some workshops, where it would be a natural fit.

Our mission is to improve piping and drumming in this country, and the PCP program is an important part of that. Let's get it going again!

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# Ed Neigh Remembrance

By John Bottomley

August 8 in Syracuse, after judging the solos and before the bands began--I had just learned about the death of Ed Neigh, and suddenly it was all different. Now it's evening, back in the hotel, and I'm writing the hardest thing I've ever had to write for the magazine.

Ed, as we all know, was one of the most important figures in North American, and international, piping over the last half century. His legacy will last for many, many years. His innovations changed the face of pipe bands in ways that could never have been imagined. One example: just try thinking of a band without a tuning meter. That was Ed's work.

And he was my friend. As is true for so many other pipers, I would never have gotten where I have without him, and because of that my whole life has been different.

When I joined the Guelph Pipe Band in 1976, I did so because I wanted to play for Ed. I liked piobaireachd, and Ed was a piobaireachd guy, so there I went.

But I learned a WHOLE lot more than piobaireachd.

I mean of course I learned how to play better. Ed was the first to teach me the importance of something as basic as playing on the beat. I learned how important a difference of two beats a minute in a march could be. He managed to coach a first-year professional to a third place at the Gold Medal. And I'm grateful for all that, but it's not the most important thing I got from Ed.

The thing that overshadows any of that is quite simply that I learned that I had to THINK about everything I did as a player, and as a teacher. Analyze and improve my process. Figure out WHY something worked instead of just doing it. Ed never accepted something just on faith, and he passed along that questioning, exploring attitude.

And I learned to think sideways if it meant that I would see a new, better way to accomplish a musical goal. Ed never stopped at a single approach to solving a problem. There was always another way you could try.

Without Ed's influence I would never have started reading all that "stuff" on the right-hand pages of the Piobaireachd Society books. He showed how you always had to keep studying, deepen and broaden your knowledge.



It's a week later now, and Ed's service was today. Jim McGillivray spoke there, and did what I was trying to do here, except that as usual he did it better than I.

In the end, I just want to say that Ed was that rare person who could change both piping and people. I miss him and will continue to.



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# Constructing A Pipe Band Medley

By Brett Tidswell, National Piping Principal, Pipe Bands Australia

## HISTORY

Pipe Bands used to perform March, Strathspey and Reel sets only in competition. In the 1950s the Edinburgh Police under PM Donald Shaw Ramsay started to incorporate hornpipes and jigs into their repertoire and shortly after, the medley was introduced into competition to allow bands a wider variety of music and to give play to some of the smaller tunes that bands seemed to be overlooking.

The medley has now developed into a complex structure rather than a few nice tunes thrown together. The intention of this article is to highlight some of the methods used to construct an entertaining and musical medley. The guidelines in no way are meant to inhibit the compiler/composer, however, good musical taste and some adherence to tradition are still called for when compiling a medley for competition.

## LENGTH

There are obviously constraints when compiling a competition medley as distinct from a concert medley. The first of these is the length. Generally in higher grades the rules require a 5 – 7 minute medley and a lesser time in the lower grades. Ensure that you check the rules and test the length of the medley from the first roll until the end of the performance, at tempo.

## INTRODUCTION

Again there is often a rule constraint here. Most call for two three pace rolls with the band stepping off on the first beat of the roll. If you are trying to be inventive and vary from this, it is best to check the rules of the Associations who have jurisdiction in the places you intend to compete.

## FEATURE TUNES

There are some important factors when considering writing a medley. The first of these are tunes that create an impact. The first tune that takes the band into the circle is of extreme importance. This is the tune that creates the first impression. It should make an impact on the listener, settle the band for a good performance and make the audience want to listen to the performance. Do not be swayed by current trends. So many bands play the round hornpipe intro which has become so common in recent years. It is not rare to hear comments in the judging tent complaining of the monotonous entry tunes.

I always think that the Air is another important punctuation in a medley. It gives the opportunity to show off the tonal quality of the band and demonstrates the quality of the construction and use of harmonies.





The next major feature is the closing tune. This must create an impact and obviously is the last thing the audience and judges will remember. Current trend is to have a hornpipe/reel with passages of harmonies. Jigs are also impressive. What is important is that the medley comes to some sort of exciting conclusion.

The use of reprises, tunes which change time signature or idiom etc. can make another tune a feature of the medley.

### FORMAT

There seem to be two common formats used in the modern medley. These are the march in tune, strathspeys, reels, air, jigs and hornpipes/reels. The alternate is the march in tune, jigs, air, strathspeys and reels/hornpipes. There are of course many variations, but these tend to be the basic structural format of most medleys. Try not to be too predictable, as this can make for a boring medley for judges or the audience who have to listen to many in a day, but also try to adhere to some of the traditional changes in idiom.

### NEW MATERIAL

It is always good to have some new material in a medley. There is nothing worse than all old material that everyone

has heard elsewhere. However, there is also a problem going the other way. Some medleys are full of new material, sometimes with limited musical appeal and the entire journey becomes a muddle and very forgettable.

A good medley will have some familiar music. A few of the top bands use familiar music to surround new material and give some breathing space. It breaks the predictability and nicely showcases the new material.

### KEY CHANGES

When moving from one idiom to another it is important to change keys. This can also be used when changing from one tune to another in the same idiom. A medley where the use of key changes is not properly utilised becomes uninteresting to listen to.

A simple way to gauge the key of a tune is to use the last note as a guide. If the tune finishes on a D chances are it is in the key of D. Try the key changes and ensure they are tasteful. With practice you will soon work out which keys fit best in progression. Tunes also transpose keys within their phrase structure, so pick tunes that contrast the previous keys.

## No Paper Votes Anymore!

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## BUILD UP AND RELEASE OF TENSION

Building up tension in a medley can be done with the use of tempo, harmony, or volume of drumming. Tension can be built up and then released to add interest and colour to the medley.

Do not forget the impact of silence for a short time from the drum corps. This can be very effective.

## HARMONIES

Harmonies provide musical colour and contrast. This is ineffective if there are too many or not enough passages throughout the medley. Keep them tasteful and interesting. Try not to be predictable and look at using counterpoint rather than traditional thirds. There are basic rules for counterpoint in most music theory books.

## TEMPO

The various tempos that tunes are played at can be utilised to create impact and increase or decrease suspense or

tension in a medley. Most top level bands will play the smaller tunes in a medley a little faster than a similar larger tune of the same idiom as played for example in an MSR. You should however select tunes and tempos that are within the capabilities of your band. There is nothing worse than listening to low grade bands fumble their way through medleys and tunes at tempos that they cannot manage. I think to a man most judges would prefer to listen to well controlled, cleanly played tunes from the lower graded bands.

## LISTEN

Always take the opportunity to stand out of the band and listen to a new medley. Also try to get an experienced Pipe Major or judge to have a listen as some stage as well. Listen to ensure that the medley is interesting and in good musical taste, that it is not overloaded with harmonies or confusing bridging passages. See that the drum scores match what you are trying to portray, and ensure that obvious things like an over bearing mid section or poor positioning of pipers playing harmonies are addressed.

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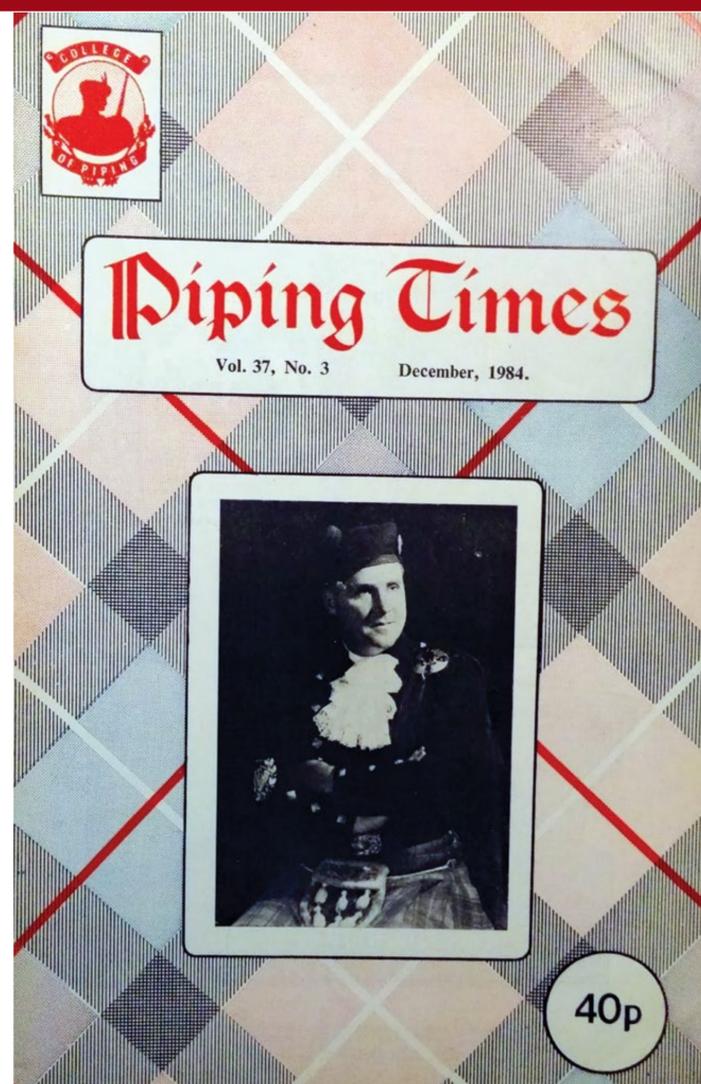
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I recently received the gift of a large collection of older Piping Times magazines, from David Gettinby by way of Marian Beck, and I've already spent far too many hours reading through them instead of working.

I started at the earliest ones, of course, and one of the first things that caught my eye was a note that noted senior judge Reay MacKay had won the 14 and Under March event at the Ontario Pipers' Society AGM. In 1952. Then there was a cover photo of George Bell (complete with lace jabot) in 1984, along with a short story about his accomplishments.

Then I did what any normal person would do, and began looking for references to me. I was disappointed all out of proportion that the August 1954 issue contained no mention of my birth, but there were a few issues in which my performances were evaluated. Some were highly praised, others a great deal less, but that's how it goes.



This brings me, in a roundabout way, to my point. When I was first offered this collection, my first thought was that it should be made available somehow to the EUSPBA membership at large. The Piping Times is a great resource, and a fun read as well. Seumas's editorials by themselves make for hours of entertaining reading, although his famous modesty would most likely have him blushing to hear me say it.

Well, it turns out that the College of Piping is one step ahead of me. The college has plans in the works to digitize their past issues. Any action to do the same here would conflict with that so we'll wait for the official release.

### **BACK ISSUES OF THE VOICE**

However, Albert McMullin has offered another option to allow our membership access to history. Albert, a past president of the association, has quite a collection of past issues of EUSPBA publications which he has generously offered to make available in a digital format. This includes both the Voice and earlier versions of the magazine, some of which were in fact edited by Albert.

I for one am looking forward to seeing them.





# George Moss Review

By John Bottomley

The School of Scottish Studies in Edinburgh has released an extensive series of recordings documenting Scottish music in a number of fields; including four dealing with piobaireachd. Bob Brown and Bob Nicol each are featured, as is Willie MacLean, who won the Gold Medal at Oban in 1898. The Brown and Nicol recordings are an excellent look at the way many players approach piobaireachd nowadays, and Willie MacLean gives us a fascinating glimpse at an older and quite different style.

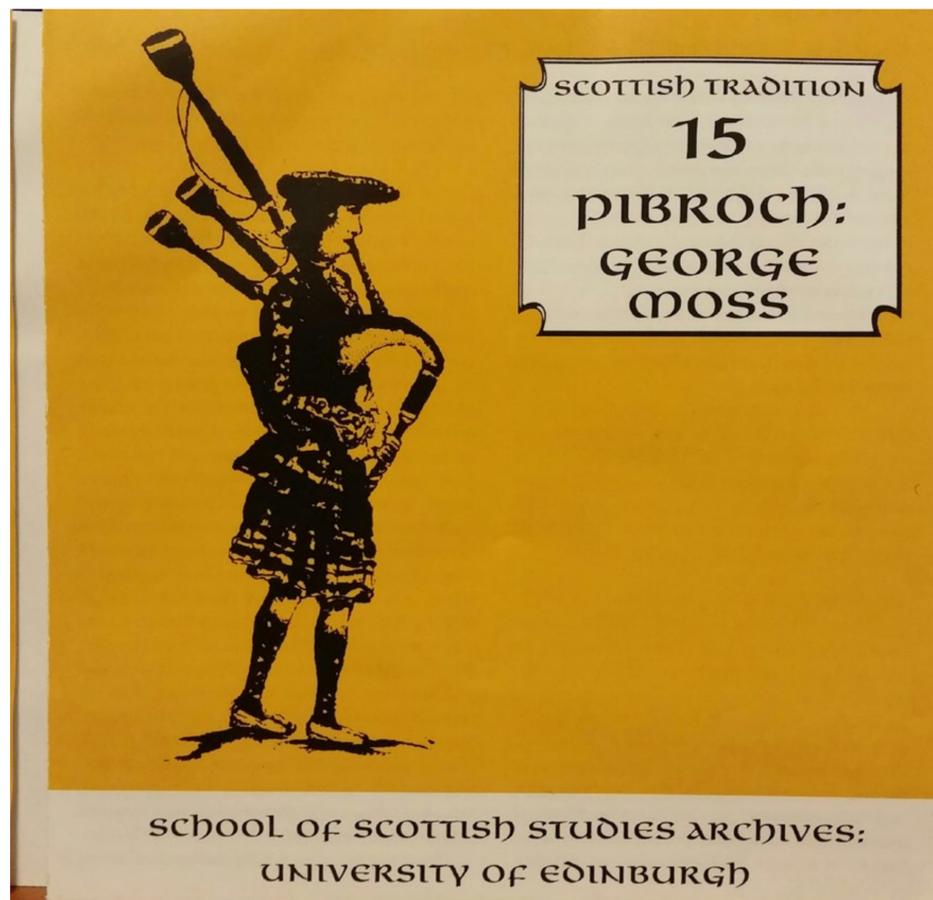
There is a fourth recording of which I was not aware until recently. George Moss, a student of Sandy Cameron, was interviewed at length during the XXXXs, and the original tapes have been re-released as a CD. Again, these tunes and discussions demonstrate a very different take on piobaireachd.

For a start, all the hiharin movements are played down quickly from E to a long low A, followed by two taps. Other double echoes are close to our current style, although the first note is opened slightly, and the second tap is quite short. Moss is quite insistent on the “redundant low A in grips, taorluaths, and crunluaths.

He is firm also that a tune like The Blue Ribbon, where we conventionally play the ground in three pulses and the variations in two, should be played with the ground in two as well. “The variations prove that this is correct. Never go from a three-four ground to two-four variations.”

## George Moss

George Moss was my mother's brother. His interest in piping, and in particular Ceol Mor, was fostered at an early age by his ancestry – the Fraser pipers of Strathglass in West Inverness-shire. Initial instruction in pibroch came from his elderly great-uncle, Alex Fraser (1830-1926) who had inherited the gaelic pibroch chant from his forebears. In 1914 the Moss family moved to Cameron of Lochiel's estate at Achnacarry in Lochaber and it was there that George, aged 11, became a devoted pupil of the legendary Alex. (Sandy) Cameron. He remained with Sandy until the latter's death in 1923. George always stressed to me that the teaching he received in Ceol Mor from Sandy Cameron was essentially the same as he received from his grand-uncle. Throughout his lifetime, despite the criticism he received



*Available from Greentrax Recordings and the School of Scottish Studies.*

After a short period of adjusting my ears, I found the style to be quite attractive. I've recorded the ground and first variation of The Blue Ribbon to illustrate. Jack Taylor has commented that this style is also consistent with Simon Fraser's take.

It's a great listen, although I would not recommend adopting the style on the competition platform, if your goal is prizes.

By James Hamilton

from the pibroch establishment of that era, his piping philosophy remained unchanged i.e. his commitment to the Fraser tradition and the teaching of Sandy Cameron. After 1925 he spent several years with John McColl of Oban the distinguished piper and composer of many outstanding competition 2/4 marches. John had been a great friend of Sandy Cameron and concurred with his pibroch style and teaching.

I began serious instruction with my uncle in 1950. Today, one would probably consider the age of 16 too late for mastering the noble instrument but my home in rural Perthshire was over a day's travel from Ross-shire in the days of long working hours (60 hours and 6 day week for



apprentices) and limited transport. I had tried for several years to find a piper to teach Ceol Mor in my own area without success. It seems ludicrous that a shire famous for piping stalwarts of the past should be so e.g. The MacDougalls of Aberfeldy, MacGregors of Glen Lyon and MacIntyres of Rannoch. In 1952 my family moved to Fort William and travel arrangements greatly improved.

George's primary aim was the teaching of pibroch so light music received no more than 10% of my instruction. The mastery of staff notation was achieved by chanting and following the score which he had written out – no chanter or books at this stage. The pibroch scales etc. were sung time and time again until perfected – from chedari to hi ererin (the hiharin of today) and embari to horodin. George was fully conversant with all three canntaireachd styles – Nether Lorn, Gesto and MacCrimmon but favoured his own version of the chant. He did, however, teach me the Nether Lorn version at a later stage and it has served me well for teaching pupils in more recent times (e.g. the PDQB examinations at level 4 and above). He also spent

countless evenings with me on the historiography of the music. I can still remember that around 65 years ago I played The Lament for Duncan MacRae of Kintail and The Old Woman's Lullaby before learning a 2/4 march. I am also indebted to George for my first bagpipes which I still have in my possession; an 1860s set of MacPhee/Hendersons which had been in the family for over two generations, and the cost to me - £10.

It was only after returning from the Armed Forces in 1959 that I began a serious study of the differences in notation and timing between George's style and that of the Piobaireachd Society and Kilberry collections. In the earlier 1950s I had concentrated wholly on his teaching and what he had been taught. Space does not permit a detailed analysis of the various pibroch movements which differed from the modern approach e.g. the additional low A in leumluth, taorluth and crunluth; the spread birl; open and closed crunludh fosgailte; pibroch scales e.g. shakes, and amach etc. However, the characteristics of the 'old' style are well documented in the cassette (1982) and its recent re-publication in CD format

Regarding the spread birl, and crunluth amach," I still have George's notes from the distant past on this topic which read - "transferring to an E gracenote preceding it the duration and accent belonging to the melody note (e.g. low A) is wrong. In the crunluth amach, Sandy Cameron identified two styles as being equally correct - the dotted quaver as the first note of the movement or the dotted quaver on the second C before the dre, although he favoured the first example." This effectively slowed the movement down as opposed to the 'rattle of machine gun fire which we often hear today'. The crunluth fosgailte controversy also lives on to this day. There are those who assert that in certain tunes e.g. Too Long in this Condition, the closed movement should be followed by the open movement as an amach. George taught me to play the open version at all times thus making the argument irrelevant. As he states in his notes, "The old masters all played the movement open, as the gaelic term implies." On the question of the shakes scale – hiriri, cherede etc. - it is interesting to point out that George taught the double-echo movements exactly as they are played today, with the exception of the 'hiharin'. He argued that the timing was optional because the notation was unaltered by the moving of the dotted note. As regards the timing of pibrochs, he favoured 12/8 or 6/8 where appropriate as compound time, in his opinion, gave a superior melodic flow to the tune as opposed to the stereotyped 4/4 arrangements in some of the

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more modern publications. He also taught me to play the high G and high A with the F finger down at all times in both Ceol Mor and light music.

As mentioned above, I was called-up for military service in 1959 and later joined the Cameron Highlanders at Inverness. Until this point George had been my only tutor and I knew little or nothing about the modern way of playing pibroch. It came as rather a shock however when the senior pipe major of the Highland Brigade (retired) on listening to my playing *The Glen is Mine* informed me that my style was long since out of date and I had better 'start again from scratch'. Needless to say I declined to follow his advice but, in the years which followed, did study and play in the 'modern' style without compromising my earlier knowledge and teaching.

In the present age of enlightened thought it is difficult to believe the attitudes of the pibroch establishment to the playing of any pibroch – in competition or otherwise – outwith the style of the Piobaireachd Society collection or Kilberry book. This was certainly the case from the 1930s and for the next forty or so years. For example, it was claimed that any argument regarding the redundant A was irrelevant because there had never ever been an extra low A in either taorluth or crunluth. By the 1980s they were admitting the exact opposite. There are many such examples of this change in attitude and today, thanks to researchers such as the late Roderick Cannon, Dr Peter Cooke, and Colonel David Murray, alternative settings etc. are welcomed. Who would have thought 60 or so years ago, and later, that such settings/ styles would figure as set tunes at Inverness and Oban?

Finally, I continued to visit and correspond with my uncle during the later years of his life and will always be grateful for his knowledge and wisdom on piping matters. For those who listen to the re-published CD it is important to note the difficulties facing George in the 'playing' aspect. By the 1980s he was rapidly approaching total blindness and, owing to a severe lung condition, had not played pipes for around 30 years. The piping part of the original cassette was achieved by his fingering the pipe chanter and another piper blowing the instrument, never an easy option. In fairness to my pibroch pupils I will always teach them what is taught today, given the requirements of certification and competitive requirements but will also ensure that they are aware of how it was performed in the 'past'. Of course I can be accused of lacking objectivity so will close with words from Colonel David Murray in an article which featured *The Voice* magazine some 18 years ago and entitled "The Maverick – George Moss 1903 – 1990"

"...until his death he continued to pass on verbally and in canntaireachd the older traditions to all those who had ears to hear – they were mighty few – and this writer in particular is indebted to George for many happy hours spent in his company as a seeker after knowledge about Piobaireachd. He unlocked many a hitherto-closed door and showed how our modern stereotyped and literal interpretation of the printed score blinded us to the hidden beauty which lies beneath the surface of even the most banal tunes."



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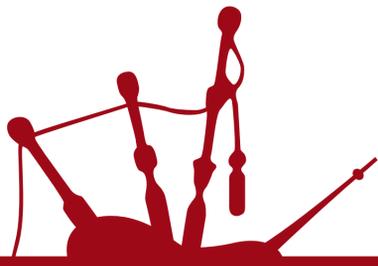
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# Snare Basics: Good is Better; and Funnier

By Ed Best

I've found myself having this conversation frequently lately, so I wanted to share in this edition. I know that I usually write about primarily drumming issues but this is something that can be easily applied to the pipers too, if they want to continue reading.

I work with lots of bands around the United States. They are all levels, have different goals, and have varied experiences. But the one thing that keeps coming up is the difference between competition vs. non-competition bands. For that matter, what is expected of an individual to perform at a bar gig with their band vs. being in the competition circle. If you belong to your firefighter honor guard pipe band that never competes, I'll bet that you or your band mates have been caught saying things like, "We don't do any of that *competition* stuff we just play for fun." Or on St. Patrick's Day I'll bet you've heard, "They don't know better anyway. It's just a drunk bar crowd."

So, let's start with the obvious. There are very few musical genres that primarily focus on competition for their main performance outlet. Pipe bands, for better or for worse, seem to be one of those. So, just for a moment, let's apply the above

statements to a musical group that is NOT a pipe band. Tell me the last time a 50's cover band, jazz combo, country western band, or orchestra said we don't need to tune our guitars/violins/trumpets because this isn't a competition today, or because the primary focus of the group isn't one of those *competition* orchestras.

Next, let me ask you a couple of questions. Please think about your answer before you read on. What is the difference between a competition band and a non-competition band? What DON'T you have to do because you aren't competing?

My answer to the differences is simple: Specific tune and time limit requirements. That's it. For example: In a competition you may have to limit your tune selection to just marches, or have to play an MSR, or keep your set between 3 and 5 minutes. In a concert or parade setting you have more leeway. But everything else is the same. What don't you have to do then? Nothing! Do you not have to tune your instruments? (Yes pipers, you can tune drums). Do you not have to play on the beat? Do you not have to practice? Do you not have to learn your music?

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“Well, the audience doesn’t know anyway!” Right?

My question to you then is ... How do you know that? Did you poll them? Did you hire a private investigator to learn their education, experiences, and background? OR are you assuming that? The trouble is, that phrases such as this are repeated so often that people start to believe them and they pass those beliefs on to their students. Maybe nobody in the audience has ever played in a pipe band, but they may have been in their school band /choir, taken piano lessons, or are professional/amateur musicians in another genre. They understand in tune vs. out of tune, tempo, rhythm, unison, phrasing. I know I have personally walked into bars and other venues where pipe bands are playing. I don’t wear a t-shirt saying that I am a pipe band judge/teacher. In my experience, people using rhetoric like this, use it as an excuse to justify their lack of practice and/or training. Remember that when you perform in public, competition or not, you represent ALL of us.

*We don't have to aspire to be at Alex's level, but working to improve will make everything your band does sound better.*



“But people told us that they loved it!”

Right, no doubt some did. The knowledgeable ones will most likely leave without saying a word. You just had a chance to potentially recruit some new members or to get good word of mouth from influential people for future gigs. Minimal preparation could help you toward that goal. The bottom line is that you always need to respect your audience. Prepare for each audience as though it were the world pipe band championships but play as relaxed as you do on St. Patrick’s Day.

Now, nobody is saying that you need to sound like a grade 1 band. But, always strive to improve and do your absolute best at every show. Have pride in what you do, don’t try to *get away* with anything. I remember as a kid, playing tenor drum in my grandmother’s dining room to impress her and to hopefully get a piece of homemade candy out of it. I did a good job, got the candy, and walked around all day very proud of myself. So, now when I compete I don’t go to win per se. I try to play so well that I walk around the rest of the day as proud of myself and my band as I was in my grandmother’s house. As cheesy as it sounds, that feeling is very real. I really have it whether I get first place or last place. I don’t worry about the things I can’t control. I can’t control how everyone else played or what the judge’s opinion of me is. A successful day doesn’t mean winning first place. A successful day is having the best performance that I am capable of, and hopefully playing a little bit better than last time. Ironically, I get a similar rush after a contest, after a bar gig, or a even a rehearsal where I know I played well. If you keep getting that feeling, the prizes will come eventually and most important, you will have WAY more fun in all of your musical endeavors.

When we can finally convince one of the before mentioned guys/girls who “just play for fun,” to cultivate their craft just a little more, they 100% of the time walk away saying something to the effect of, “Wow, that is way more fun to sound good.” So, the bottom line is, we all have the same goal. To further the art you need to have people constantly improving, and in turn we all enjoy ourselves more. No matter the venue, I’d like to challenge all pipers and drummers to be ambassadors for our art form to the “Best” of your abilities! Have pride in the instrument, the music, your band, and most importantly, yourself!

Cheers!

Remember that there is more than one right way to do things.

# Royal Scots Polka (First Solo Drum Score)

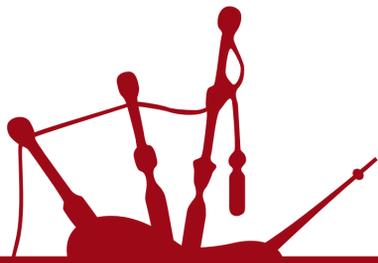
March

Ed Best

*I use this with my students as a precursor to the massed band scores. It has a similar structure, rudiments, and phrasing. If you can play this, then you should be able to play the massed band drum scores. I like using this first, because if a student gets any bad habits on it, it will go away. The massed band drum scores NEVER do. It also doubles well as a solo score to get experience in the solo arenas.*

The musical score is written on ten staves in 2/4 time. It begins with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a 2/4 time signature. The score contains various rhythmic patterns, including eighth notes, sixteenth notes, and triplets. There are several dynamic markings, such as accents (>) and slurs, throughout the piece. The score concludes with a double bar line and repeat dots.

Written with DrumScribh (Ceol Mor Software & Publishing Ltd.)



# Tenor and Bass Basics: Mind the Gap – The Functional Midsection

By Tyler Fry

*Editor's note: This is reprinted from an article appearing in the Winter 2002 issue of the Voice, which in turn was reprinted from the Summer 2002 issues of the BC Pipers' Newsletter and the WUSPBA Words and Music. At a time when many midsections are going on the "More is better" system of scoring, it bears rereading.*

With the function of the pipe band midsection rapidly expanding, it is important for both players and judges to recognize the increasing ability of the midsection to contribute to the integration of sections within the band. In the 78th Frasers (Ontario), we view the midsection as being devoted neither entirely toward the melody nor toward the snare section, but rather a complete intermediary between the two. This may at first seem like an abstract concept, since historically the midsection has largely weighted its functionality toward the snare section.

*Tenor flourishing should never be random;  
it can add an important visual dimension to the performance.*



This article will outline my vision of the fundamental functions of the midsection in hopes of providing a blueprint for section leaders to use the midsection functionality to their musical advantage. Using the midsection as a means of "bridging the gap" between sections should bring the band ensemble to another level.

We can easily summarize the three fundamental roles of today's midsection:

1. It provides a foundation of time within the pipe band ensemble, providing a rhythmic reference and foundation for the melody and complex rhythmic structures of the snare drumming.
2. It rhythmically highlights or enhances key areas within the melody and the snare section, possibly through the use of various voice (or pitches).
3. It visually interprets the pitches and rhythms of the melody and the snare drum accompaniment, possibly through the use of various arm movements and/or stick flourish combinations.

## **A Foundation of Time**

Time is the foundation for the rhythmic structures of the melody and the snare drum accompaniment. Time defines what the time signature of a tune is; everything that the bagpipes and snare drums play is simply a subdivision of that reference. Historically, the function of the midsection was devoted solely toward providing a foundation of time, or in layman's terms, "keeping the beat." The value and importance of time has recently been placed on "standby" as the functions of the midsection have evolved. I personally believe that the importance of time should not be underestimated. The harmonics and release created by the midsection playing time together as a whole is one of the most beautiful things that can happen in a pipe band.

More important, the playing of time provides a reference toward the "center"-it gives the listener a reference to be able to make sense of what is being played, and where it is being played in relation to that center. Is it on the front end or the back end of the beat? Is the pipe corps playing ahead of that center? Are the snare drums playing behind it? But are they consistently behind?



### Accents and Syncopation

Once time is established, then it is appropriate for the midsection to construct rhythmic structures from that foundation. I view the function of rhythmic accentuation and syncopation by the midsection as a means of highlighting and adding color to important areas in both the melody and snare drum accompaniment-not just the snare drumming! I would argue that today, many snare scores are not written directly to the melody but rather to create a rhythmic accompaniment over top of it.

In our midsection, we focus our compositional efforts on creating rhythmic structures that highlight what is happening in the snare drumming and the melody. Or, if rhythmic structures in the snare drumming are used as a reference for accentuation, we will voice the rhythm using various pitches of tenor drums to either ascend or descend with the melody line or at times even create harmonics within it, depending on the key of the tune and the chosen pitch of the drums. The midsection has the ability to make the snare drumming relate to the melody, regardless of whether it is solely being written as a for of accompaniment over top of it! Therefore, when rhythmic accentuation and syncopation are used, the midsection brings the two sides of the gap that much closer together.

### Functional Flourishing

Today's pipe band has resurrected the visual element of the midsection. We now view tenor drumming as an artform in itself, and an important aspect of the band. Very often I see flourishing within a tenor drum score paradoxically serving as a "function of little function," being incorporated for the sake of filling space.

I believe that the midsection has the ability to create a form of visual integration between the melody and snare drum accompaniment by providing a visual representation of the rhythmic structures. I believe that the attempt to bridge the gap between section should be made visually as well as audibly. In a sense, I see the function of flourishing as almost a type of visual harmonic, or perhaps visual rhythms that "jive" with both sections. Perhaps "visual integration is another fundamental component of ensemble that should be considered in the future?"

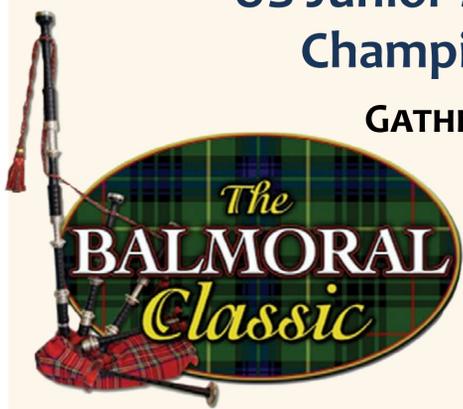
The function behind the process is the key. As a member of a midsection, my mandate is the process of blending, integration, and unity – the "togetherness" we feel when we listen to our favorite rock band on the radio or favorite pipe band at the World Championships. Building a bridge is easy . . . once you know what type of stone to use.

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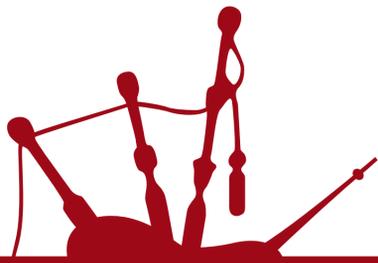


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# Norm Jones 50th Anniversary and Retirement from Pipe Bands

## Drum Major Norm Jones Retires

Norman started out taking drumming lessons with the Manchester Pipe Band of Manchester, CT in 1965 under the tutelage of Fred Sweetman and Drew Nisbet. He then played with the Stewart Highlanders Pipe Band and then later the St. Patrick's Pipe Band both of Manchester. He took over as leading drummer for the Sphinx Temple Pipe Band of Newington, CT in the late 1970s where his late father, Kenneth Jones, served as pipe major. Norman has been involved with the Shriners for more than 30 years, teaching drumming to various groups and helping to raise money for Shriners' Hospitals for Children across the United States and Canada. He returned to the Manchester Pipe Band in 1991 and played under Drum Sergeants Scott Yeomans and Scott Armit. He left the band in 1995 following a rather bad foot injury but returned to help lead Manchester's Grade 5/Juvenile Band in 1997 and played through the 1999 season. In the mid-1990s he helped to resurrect the Trinity College Pipe Band of Hartford, CT and served as the band's drumming instructor for several years.

Norman perhaps holds the distinction of being the only professional snare drummer in the EUSPBA who also competes as an amateur drum major: Norman won the professional snare drumming contest at the first New Hampshire Highland Games at Loon Mountain. He took up drum majoring seven years ago, and has had the honor of serving as the drum major for the Clan Ross Pipe Band of Lebanon, CT and the Stuart Highlanders Pipe Band of Wilmington, MA. He is currently the drum major for the Stone of Destiny Pipe Band of Enfield, CT.

The drum majoring community truly personifies the value of being one's personal best, and competing against a standard and not against one another. Norman credits his good friend, Drum Major William Jordan of Alexandria, Scotland, as a major influence and inspiration. Locally, Drum Majors C.L. "Ox" Gara, Patti Nisco, David Paige, Bruce Harkness, and Dennis Ducsik have been wonderful role models, instructors, and friends. Norman traveled to Scotland with the Stuart Highlanders in 2011 and is traveling this year with the Stone of Destiny Pipe Band to compete in Glasgow at the World Championships.



Norm Jones, who has been competing in pipe band competitions for 50 years, was recognized for that feat at the closing massed bands at the New Hampshire Highland Games at Loon Mountain on Sept. 26. Norm is a professional snare drummer and currently the drum major for the Stone of Destiny Pipe Band of Enfield, CT, and has competed as an amateur drum major for the last seven years. His son Ryan, center, presents Norm, left, with the plaque.

New Hampshire Highland Games Executive Director Patti Nisco stands behind the podium.



# 2015 EUSPBA Election Ballot And Biographies

## Treasurer

### **Matt Wood:**

I have been playing bagpipes for approximately 35 years having played with CuChullain Pipe Band, St Columcille UGPB, and currently Rory O'Moore School of Pipes and Drums under the instruction of Joe McGonigal, Jim Stack, Eric MacNeill and Christina Hanks. In this time period, I have seen many changes in the bagpiping world. I have been involved with these three bands at the Grade 5, Grade 4 and Grade 3 levels; I am currently a grade 3 soloist. I am at many games and speak to the membership regularly. I had been the Piping and Drumming Director for The NWNJ Feis for 9 years. I have also been involved with instructing local bands; Rory O'Moore School of Pipes and Drums, Saint Ann's of Hampton, Columcille School of Piping and Drumming and the Police Pipes and Drums of Morris County.

Professionally I have managed multiple sites along the East Coast for a large worldwide corporation. I am responsible for operations, management of personnel, technical needs, profit and loss, engineering and sales.

As the Treasurer, my goals would be to continue to offer individuals an experienced voice in profit and loss statements and experienced management of the organization's funds. I would also continue to seek to pursue new and challenging competition avenues outside of the traditional format of Irish Feis's and Scottish Festivals. While our past is of vital importance in such a traditional art form, we must be mindful of the present and seek to enhance and improve to meet the current times. I would also look to continue the EUSPBA support of member bands and soloists making the trek abroad to represent us at events such as the World Pipe Band Championships, the North American Championships, various Professional contests throughout the world, and the World Solo Drumming Championships. Some of the events I have been involved with running were the Grade 2 contest in Fairhill with Joe Noble as a guest judge and the Premier Piping and Drumming events of this year. Success at events such as these showcases our organization as a whole and helps to improve OUR members, not just for the bands and soloists that make the trips, but among all of the bands in our organization that they have contact with.

## Executive Secretary

### **Sheldon Hamblin:**

I am the incumbent executive secretary. I compete as a soloist in grade 2 piping. My start in piping came from the Brian Boru Pipe Band on Cape Cod, where I served for 6 years as treasurer, assisting the board of directors in reaching their financial goals and helping the band achieve their dream of competing in the All Ireland Competitions, not once, but twice. I moved up the operations ranks to the pipe major's position where I served for four years and brought the band from grade 5 to grade 4. I took a short time off from bands to concentrate on solo work, but am now the pipe major of the Highland Light Scottish Pipe Band on Cape Cod.

In my other life...I have served as president of the Fire Prevention Association of Massachusetts, (a statewide association of 500 fire prevention officers) having served in that position for two years. Prior to that I served as vice president, and as treasurer for 10 years before that. I retired as Deputy Fire Chief for the Town of Mashpee, Massachusetts after serving 38 years in the fire service.

My education ranges from associates degrees in liberal arts and fire science to a bachelor's degree in business administration with a concentration in management. A graduate of the Executive Fire Officer program at the National Fire Academy in Emmetsburg, MD, included many management courses.

I have a true interest in our organization, as well as the time and ability to serve in the capacity of Executive Secretary.



## Officer At Large

### Carole Hackett:

My involvement with the EUSPBA began in 1997 when I served as Officer at Large of the Northeast Branch. In that capacity I represented the branch at Executive Committee meetings, mainly to help foster communication between the EC and the branch membership via the Northeast Branch newsletter, which I published from 1997 to 2001. In May of 1999 I was appointed to fill in an unexpired term of Executive Secretary and continued to serve in that position until the end of my term in 2009. From January 2001 until May of 2003, I also served as secretary of the EUSPBA Music Board. I have been the recipient of the Dan Dickel Award and the President's Award, and upon my retirement as Executive Secretary in 2009 I was honored with a life membership in the EUSPBA, something I am extremely proud of. I am also the Monitor Coordinator for the Northeast Branch. In addition, I function at many contests as a monitor, assistant organizer, results tabulator (and cheerleader!). Over the years I have truly enjoyed getting to know so many people who are involved in piping and drumming. I have been playing snare drum since 1986 and have been a member of the Schenectady Pipe Band for almost 20 years, having played both snare and tenor drum. I also serve on the Games Committee of the Capital District Scottish Games. I am employed as an Administrative Aide for Albany County in Albany, NY. Having been 'retired' from serving on the Executive Committee since 2009, I look forward to again being involved and am confident that I have the experience and knowledge to fulfill the duties of Office at Large.

### David Bailiff:

Hello EUSPBA Members,  
My name is David Bailiff and I am seeking the position of Officer At Large in the 2015 EUSPBA Executive Committee Election. I would appreciate your support in this election.

I began playing the pipes at age 14 (1976) under the instruction of the late Robert Gilchrist. I also was given valuable instruction from Sandy Jones, John MacFadyen, Murray Henderson, James McIntosh, MBE and Robert Worrall.

Some of my competitive success includes winning the Amateur North American Piobaireachd Championship, the EUSPBA Open March and Piobaireachd Championship held at the Virginia Scottish Games and 3 time winner of the Boreraig Trophy at the Colonial Highland Gathering.

I am a past member prize winning bands Parlin & District, Denny & Dunipace and the Schenectady Pipe Band.

My previous EUSPBA experience includes the following:

**EUSPBA Vice-President**

**Music Board Chairman**

**Music Board Member**

**EUSPBA Adjudicator (current)**

I am currently the Piping and Drumming Director of the Colonial Highland Gathering (aka Fair Hill). This is both a challenging and rewarding position. Fair Hill is one of our association's biggest competitions and requires a high level of organization, administrative and planning skills. These skills are very transferable to the position of Officer at Large.

As I stated above, I am a EUSPBA adjudicator and have been fortunate to attend competitions in all of our branch regions. Because of this, I have been privileged to be able to converse with new competitors, as well as with members who have known me for decades. Because of this, I will have ample availability and approachability to listen to your concerns at a face to face level. I can ensure you that I will listen to all of your concerns and either raise these to the Executive Committee or to the appropriate committee for discussion.

I am very excited at the potential of rejoining the Executive Committee in the position of Officer at Large. This position has no specific duties, but the duties assigned can be of a wide variety. I feel that my experience as an Executive Committee, Music Board, Piping and Drumming Director can be an extremely valuable asset to the committee. I also am employed in the financial industry and I feel that this places me in an excellent position to help make responsible monetary decisions for our membership.

In conclusion, I feel that my past experience with EUSPBA committees, games committees, being a competitor for close to 30 years and being a current adjudicator positions myself to be an extremely value addition to the Executive Committee. I understand the current issues that are facing our organization; specifically the need to balance our competitors concerns with our games needs to run their competitions smoothly. It would also be a goal of mine to promote contests that would spotlight our top individual competitors and to bring our top bands to a common venue that would better prepare them for their international contests.

I sincerely would appreciate your consideration in supporting me in my bid for this office. Thank you.



**Andrew Kerr:**

Hello – I am Andrew Kerr and I want your vote as I seek to become the next EUSPBA Officer at Large. Since 1985, I have been active in the EUSPBA Southern Branch, competing as a member of numerous bands and individually.

I have been exposed to the bagpipe and drum community throughout my whole life because of my family. Beginning in the 1920s, my grandfather and father were key members of the King's Own Scottish Borderers, London Scottish, and Isle of Thanet pipe bands. Once our family immigrated to Florida in the 1970s, my father organized pipe bands throughout southern United States. I began chanter lessons at the age of 5 with my father until his passing in 1981. I later rekindled my interest in the piping and drumming community at age 9, when I resumed piping instruction under Dr. Ray Monroe (of the original Pensacola (FL) Pipe Band).

For the last 22 years, I have had the honor and pleasure of serving our great nation in the United States Air Force. My service in the Air Force allowed me multiple opportunities to travel the world. While abroad, I experienced other piping and drumming organizations, and had the chance to gain understanding into their operations. During the past ten years, I've enjoyed opportunities to be involved with the Scottish Piping Society of London and the Royal Scottish Pipe Band Association. Since retiring from active duty military service in August of this year, I am devoted to bringing my experience in the EUSPBA, and other pipe band organizations, to improve the quality of our organization, and to expand the reach of our hobby throughout our Association.

Over the last year, I have served as the Southern Branch Secretary. In this position, I have striven to foster a culture of open communication with branch members in order to identify ways to improve our organization, and identify how we can better serve our members. As EUSPBA Officer at Large, I will work to encourage open communication and new ideas from all those in the EUSPBA. Open communication will help foster friendship among ourselves and create a nurturing environment for the coming generations of the piping and drumming community.

As EUSPBA Officer at Large, I will work closely with the Executive Committee and Music Board so I can serve the Association and be an available point of contact and information between members and highland games. I will

ensure timely availability of information about upcoming events and the organization, as a whole. Where needed, I will work to resolve competitor concerns with tact, respect, and a focus on doing the right thing.

In the coming year, I would be delighted to serve you as the EUSPBA Officer at Large. I would be honored to receive your vote. Know that I am committed to you, and to the furtherance of the piping and drumming community. Together, we can ensure the success of generations to come. I look forward to working with you to accomplish this goal. Thank you.

**Jim Davidson:**

I would like to submit my name and run for the position of Officer at Large. I am a retired piper and former pipe band instructor. I played with the Manchester Grade 2 Pipe Band for 12 years and later with the Worcester Kiltie Band in Grade 1 for about 6 years. After retiring from Worcester, I was invited to instruct the Manchester Grade 4 and 5 bands and did so until health issues forced me to retire after several successful years with both bands. I was a piper and performing member of the USAF Academy Band at the USAF Academy in Colorado in the early 1960's. As an early member of the EUSPBA in its formative years, I was active on several committees of the original organization including the establishment of the first newsletter which I named the Voice (incidentally, after the Village Voice). I have not been active for several years due to ill health, however, my health has improved and I would like to get back involved and help with the continued development of the association. My experience runs the gamut of piping activity over a career of nearly 60 years having functioned in many capacities from PM of a non-competitive band to a professional piper at the highest level in a world class grade 1 band to instructing prize winning individual students and grade 4 and 5 pipe bands. I am now retired from my day job and have the time and the interest to devote to this effort and would be grateful if you would consider me for the position.

Submitted by:  
Jim Dillahey

2015 Nominating Committee Chairman  
EUSPBA Vice President



# Branch Notes

## Northeast Branch Notes

The 2015 Nicol-Brown Contest will be on Saturday, October 10, 2015 - 9:30 am to 7:00 pm at St. Paul's Episcopal Church, 21 Hackett Blvd., Albany, NY 12208

Ten of the finest Amateur pipers from across North America will be invited to play in an elite invitational contest with three events:

- 6/8 Marches
- Piobaireachd
- MSR

The contest is dedicated to the memory of Robert U. Brown and Robert B. Nicol.

The Judge for the 2015 Nicol-Brown Contest will be Callum Beaumont, from Linlithgow, Scotland.

His accolades include:

- Gold Medallist at Oban in 2011
- Gold Medallist at the Northern Meeting in 2013
- Winner of the Clasp at the Northern Meeting in 2012 and 2015

Callum has played with the Grade 1 Lothian & Borders Police, Shotts & Dykehead, Simon Fraser University, and Inveraray & District Pipe Bands. He is currently an instructor for the Dollar Academy Pipe Band.

On Friday, October 9, 2015 - 7:00 pm, there will be a concert by Callum Beaumont at St. Paul's Episcopal Church, 21 Hackett Blvd., Albany, NY 12208. The recital will be a benefit for the Nicol-Brown Amateur Invitational Competition and a welcoming reception for the competitors. The competitors will be introduced, and will receive their tune selections from the judge.

Admission is free at all events during the Nicol-Brown weekend, thanks to the EUSPBA and other generous sponsors and volunteers. Your donations are always welcome!

For more info about the Nicol-Brown, contact Barb McCarthy.

tel: 518-682-2814

email: [IRISHIZ9@aol.com](mailto:IRISHIZ9@aol.com)

## Brian Boru Band in Ireland

The Brian Boru Pipe Band traveled to Ireland this past summer, where they were the guest band at the "Rose of Tralee International Festival" in County Kerry. The band played at the Rose of Tralee Ball, performed around the town, and marched in a series of parades. The highlight was being joined by the "Tralee Pipes and Drums", who were just back from competing at the Worlds, and being asked to lead the final Midnight Parade!

## MVFHOF

The Mohawk Valley Frasers were inducted into the Rome Performing Arts Hall of Fame on April 26, 2015.

In 1973, 4 pipers from the Mohawk Valley (Dr. William Forbes, Jim Clough, Tom Carl and Frank Dugan, Jr.) created a new pipe band. Based in Rome, NY, the band was named after the famed British 78th Regiment of Foot, commonly known as Fraser's Highlanders. Incorporated as the 78th Fraser's Highlanders, the Frasers have fielded three different grades (3, 4 & 5) on the competition field over the years, and are popular local performers at parades, historic sites, festivals and college commencements.

If you have any updates for our next issue or suggestions for our branch, please feel free to contact me at [bpo15@earthlink.net](mailto:bpo15@earthlink.net).

Brendan O'Reilly, NE Secretary

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## Metro Branch Report

Metro Branch congratulates all who participated in the games this summer. Congratulations to NY Metro for taking 2nd in the Medley at the Glengarry Games and taking 2nd place overall.

Just a reminder, this year's AGM is in Maryland on November 13, 2015. Plan ahead to attend. There will be no meeting of our own. Anyone who has concerns or would like to give their input please send an email to the executive committee. The contact information is listed on the EUSPBA website.

As of January 2016, the secretary spot is open. We need a new member or members to take over and lead the branch. Anyone who is interested about a branch position please feel free to contact us.

Always remember you can register online at the EUSPBA website along with checking out events.

It's being great everyone and I wish you all well in your endeavors.

Kathleen Jedlica  
Metro Branch Secretary

## Ohio Valley Branch Report

The Summer has gone well. It has been nice to catch up with everyone at all the games. We would like to congratulate all the EUSPBA bands who traveled to Scotland on a strong showing at the World Pipe Band Championships.

We will announce the Ohio Valley Branch Champions at the Ligonier Highland Games.

Our AGM is planned for October, 18th.

Location:

P. J. McIntyre's Pub  
19119 Lorain Avenue  
Cleveland OH 44111

Contact

Upcoming events include:

Edinboro Highland Games:

Highland Games - Edinboro University

Ligonier Highland Games on September 26th:

57th Ligonier Highland Games

We are also planning our third annual Spring Workshop. Additional information on this event will be available shortly.

Be sure to like The Ohio Valley Branch on Facebook:

Ohio Valley Branch E U S P B A

We wish everyone the best of luck as we finish up the 2015 outdoor competition season.

Submitted by:

Andrew J. Duncan  
Ohio Valley Branch Chair



## So, this happened in the Southwest Branch...

### **Lyon College Celtic Arts Summer School,**

June 14-19, Batesville, AR -- "What a great week!" said Jimmy Bell, Pipe Major of the Lyon College Pipe Band and director of Lyon's Scottish Heritage program. Twenty students of all ages spent a week receiving piping and drumming instruction from Willie McCallum, Jimmy Bell, Jon Quigg, and Kenton Adler. The students hailed from Ohio, Texas, Florida, Tennessee, Louisiana, Missouri, and Arkansas. In addition to class instruction, unison tuning and playing, individual sessions, and instrument workshops, attendees enjoyed an instructor's concert, and played in the student recital. Food and music starred in the after-hours at cookouts and a special treat: a crawfish boil hosted by Dr. William and Lara Bulkley of Paragould, AR. Several informal and wonderful music sessions featuring a wide range of instruments sprung up at all hours throughout the week. Each day began with a musician's warm-up session, targeting large muscle groups and fine motor movements, strengthening focus, and offering information on preventing and addressing musician injuries. – *submitted by Nancy Love, Lyon College Pipe Band*

**The Red Stick Regional** solo piping and drumming competition was held this year on July 25 in Baton Rouge, LA. Jerry Finegan and Chris Apps were the piping judges, with Jon Quigg and Marc Dubois judging drumming. The event had a record 36 competitors participating, and 15 attended the Saturday afternoon drumming workshop and the Sunday morning workshops for both piping and drumming. This year also included an unsanctioned "micro band" competition, as well as a piping duet event. Prizes were donated by McCallum Bagpipes, Henderson's Ltd, McGillivray Piping, and J Higgins. We would like to thank our many private sponsors, and the EUSPBA for a grant to help support the workshops. – *submitted by Rosemary John, Baton Rouge Caledonian Pipes and Drums*

### **Silver Thistle Travels to the 2015 Worlds**

Silver Thistle Pipes and Drums from Austin, Texas (Southwest Branch) once again tested their mettle against the world's best in Grade 3B in Scotland this August. Despite having rebuilt their drum corps from the vestiges of their Grade 4 Band a year ago, they decided last year that if they were going to make the trip, they simply had to decide a timeframe and make it happen. So for the past year, they have been working hard to both pay for the trip and develop their competition game.

Despite the challenges, they departed Austin for Glasgow on August 4th and competed in North Berwick and Perth during their first weekend in Scotland. It was a great warmup for the coming World Championships, not only for the instruments but for the players as well. Being based in Austin, and therefore outside of the wide variety of East Coast Highland Games, North Berwick was actually the first competition of the season for them. The band used the judges' comments and the experience of that games to settle itself for the World Championship.

While they did not make the finals in Glasgow, all of the members of Silver Thistle had a fantastic trip. The experience will be invaluable for the future and another possible run to the Worlds in 2017 or 2018! – *submitted by Doug Slauson, P/M Silver Thistle*

The Southwest Branch now looks forward to **The Louisiana Renaissance Festival** – the first solo contest of the new competition year, November 21-22 in Hammond, LA. The sanctioned contest is for pipers and drummers, and the entry fee includes admission to the festival. This is a great and unusual competition opportunity!

See the EUSPBA event page, or visit this link: [www.larf.net/documents/LARF2015-EUSPBA.pdf](http://www.larf.net/documents/LARF2015-EUSPBA.pdf)



# Report for the Executive Secretary

By Sheldon Hamblin

## The Annual General Meeting

The AGM is held every year on a Saturday in November. Branches host this event on a rotating basis. This year we are changing the format and the executive committee in concert with the mid-Atlantic branch are hosting the meeting. The new schedule is for a full membership meeting Friday night, November 13th 2015, so please arrive early so that you may participate that evening. We will be covering the annual reports and any other old business that night. Saturday morning we will again have a full membership meeting to cover the proposals submitted by the branches. Saturday afternoon we will break out for workshops in reed manipulation, a drumming workshop and a piping workshop. Saturday night there will be a professional drumming contest followed by a ceilidh at the hotel. Vendor tables will be available Saturday.

**Please check the website for any updates on the meeting including reports and/or proposals that will be posted. Proposals will not be printed in time for the meeting, a projector will be used, and you are encouraged to print the proposals from the website and bring them to the meeting.**

Prior to the AGM, each branch shall hold their own meeting to have their members submit and discuss possible agenda items to pass on to the AGM. The purpose of these branch meetings is to make sure items are well thought out, clearly worded, concise, not in conflict with the by-laws, and that all of the ramifications have been thought through.

Once this has been done, these items are sent to the Executive Secretary by October 23rd, to be included on the agenda for the AGM. *The branch chair or his/her designated representative is required by By-Law to attend the AGM to present their branch's agenda items and speak for their members.*

Usually there is not a quorum of EUSPBA members at the AGM (this would be 15% of the total voting membership), so any business items brought up at the AGM cannot be passed there. After discussion, they can either be 'killed', or if the membership so desires, they can be brought before the Executive Committee or the Music Board. The committees then meet in early December to handle all of the business passed on from the AGM. This is also when the grading committee addresses upgrades. The Executive Committee then ratifies all business.

## No Paper Votes Anymore!

All voting is now held online. Ensure the Association has your correct email address to receive your ballots.





Sometimes, actions on proposals take time and the executive committee continues to work on these proposals to completion.

It is our goal to provide an atmosphere for our members which focuses on furthering the arts of piping and drumming. We **do** listen to our members, but we can't listen if you don't speak. Beer tents and Internet discussion groups are great places to swap stories, gripe and share ideas. But the AGM is where your opinion **really** counts.

### **Annual Mailing**

Be on the lookout for the annual mailing. This coming October you will be receiving a mailing which will include only the notice of the meeting.

### **Notice of the Annual General meeting (AGM)**

You will not receive the ballots or bios for the executive offices that are up for election. This year it is being done by email, similar to the way most of the branches have done. The offices open this year are the treasurer, executive secretary and officer at large (position 1). When you get this email, please do not consider it spam, in fact you may want to check your spam or junk mail folder to make sure it hasn't been directed there. This email is specific not only to email, but to membership number also.

### **Membership renewal form 2015**

You will not receive this in the mailing. This form is available on the web at [www.euspba.org/resources\\_forms.aspx](http://www.euspba.org/resources_forms.aspx). Select the appropriate form, print it and send it in with your membership fee.

### **Upgrade Requests**

You will not be automatically upgraded based upon your overall season results. If you feel that you are ready to perform at the next level, please print the form from our website. This can be found under the "Membership" tab and is labeled "Regrade Request" ([http://www.euspba.org/resource/form/application\\_regrade.pdf](http://www.euspba.org/resource/form/application_regrade.pdf)). If you are unable to print this form, please email me at [zecsec@euspba.org](mailto:zecsec@euspba.org), and I will be glad to send it to you. Fill out this form according to instructions and send it with your membership renewal to the address on the upgrade form. These must be postmarked no later than November 1, 2015. Letters from your instructor are welcome.

The grading committee will meet in early December to address grading issues. Their recommendations are then forwarded to the Executive Committee for approval. Please direct all grading questions to the Executive Secretary at [zecsec@euspba.org](mailto:zecsec@euspba.org), and make sure all materials are submitted by the deadline.

### **The Executive Committee**

We continue to meet via the Internet, inviting the branch chairs and music chair when feasible. We attempt to meet the first Monday of every month, but during our busy season, it is not always possible.

We are currently upgrading our website and are aggressively working with our own membership to make this work. Our goal is to make membership semi automated to again contain costs but also to supply our members with their numbers quicker than is possible currently.

Respectfully Submitted  
Sheldon C. Hamblin  
Executive Secretary  
([zecsec@euspba.org](mailto:zecsec@euspba.org))  
*Tada Gan Iarracht*



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