



*The*  
***Voice***  
Spring 2015  
Vol. 44, No. 1





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

John Bottomley  
EDITOR  
[john@johnbottomleybagpipes.com](mailto:john@johnbottomleybagpipes.com)

Shawn Hall  
ART DIRECTOR  
[design@shawnhalldesign.com](mailto:design@shawnhalldesign.com)

Editorial Inquiries/Letters  
THE VOICE  
[voiceeditor@euspba.org](mailto:voiceeditor@euspba.org)

ADVERTISING INQUIRIES  
John Bottomley  
[voiceeditor@euspba.org](mailto:voiceeditor@euspba.org)

THE VOICE welcomes submissions, news items, and photographs. Please send your submissions to the email above.

Visit the EUSPBA online at  
[www.euspba.org](http://www.euspba.org)

©2014 Eastern United States Pipe Band Association. All rights reserved. No part of this magazine may be reproduced or transmitted without written permission from the publisher.

The Voice reserves the right to make the final decision on all content and advertisements. The views expressed by contributors are not necessarily those of the EUSPBA, its officers, or its editors.

## Table of Contents

- 4 President's Message
- 5 Editorial
- 6 Letters to the Editor
- 43 Report for the Executive Secretary

### Basics

- 9 Snare Basics: Snare FAQ
- 11 Bass & Tenor Basics: Writing a Basic Tenor Score
- 13 Piping Basics: "Piob-ogetics"

### Features

- 15 Interview
- 17 Bands, Games Come Together
- 19 Willie Wows 'Em
- 21 The Last Happy Days – the Great Highland Bagpipe in JFK's Camelot

### Music

- 33 Jimmy Tweedie's Sealegs

### Reviews

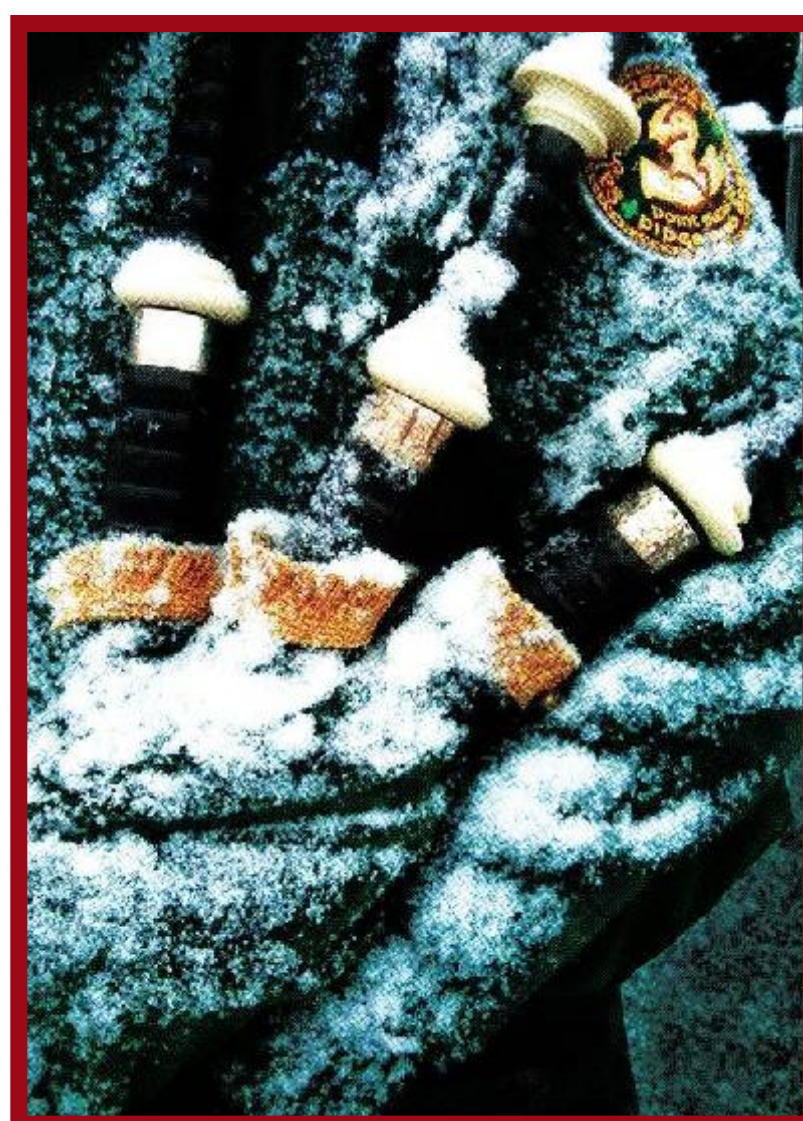
- 34 Review of Gibson Pipe Chanter
- 35 The Campbell Tunable Chanter

### Semiquavers

- 35 The Making of the Casco Bay Contest
- 37 Pittsburgh Piping Society Reborn

### Branch Notes

- 39 Southwest Branch
- 39 Metro Branch
- 40 Ohio Valley Branch
- 41 Northeast Branch



### ON THE COVER:

Derek Midgley captured the joy of early St. Patrick's parades in the northeast with this photo of Rich Harvey's pipe at the Belmar NJ event.

EUSPBA MEMBERS receive a subscription to *THE VOICE* paid for, in part, by their dues (\$8 per member is designated for *THE VOICE*). Membership is only valid from the date of application until the end of the calendar year. To ensure that you don't miss an issue of *THE VOICE*, you must renew your membership early each year! Send membership inquiries and address updates for members to EUSPBA, PMB 316, 560 Peoples Plaza, Newark, DE 19702-4798, or email [membership@euspba.org](mailto:membership@euspba.org).



# CAMPBELL

## CHALLENGING TRADITION

### INTRODUCING A QUICKER WAY TO TUNE YOUR BAGPIPES.

This new chanter will allow you to quickly change pitch by rotating the tuning dial - all while you continue to blow your pipes!

#### TUNE QUICKLY

The perfect solution to quickly tune a bagpipe chanter has arrived. Now you can tune your chanter very quickly by simply turning the tuning dial to raise or lower your reed while you continue to blow your pipes - making tuning a lot quicker!

#### CRAFTED BY McCALLUM

You know that McCallum's experience making bagpipes and pipe chanters are second to none, so we are thrilled to be working together on this chanter. Each instrument carries the McCallum Bagpipes' marking, your guarantee of workmanship to the highest standards.

#### QUALITY SOUND

The Campbell Chanter is based on McCallum's Mark III design that offers a winning combination already recognized throughout the piping community. This chanter presents a bright sound with brilliant projection and stability.



[www.CampbellBagpipes.com](http://www.CampbellBagpipes.com)



[www.McCallumBagpipes.com](http://www.McCallumBagpipes.com)

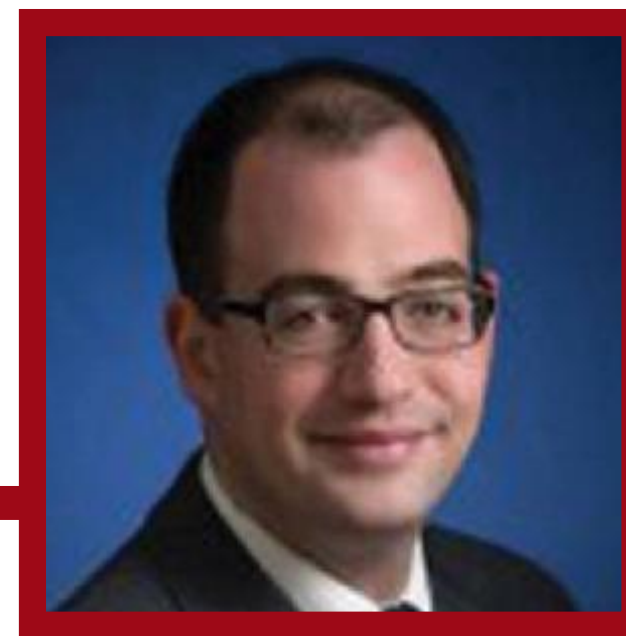






# President's Message

By Dan Cole



For those of us in northern half of the association, a particularly harsh winter is nearly behind us and the spring contest season will soon be well underway. Spring is a season of rebirth and of new life. It is fitting that this is the season for our new online reincarnation of The Voice. While I know many of us, myself included, will miss receiving our hard-copy edition, the electronic version will allow the potential for broader contact, provide better value for our advertisers and will represent a cost savings to our association of nearly \$18,000 on an annual basis. The savings will be put toward improving the standard of our art through competition and education of players and judges alike. I will keep you posted as to these initiatives as they take shape throughout the year.

Another major shift pending that I want to make you all aware of is the with regard to our Annual General Meeting. As some of you may know, the real number is statistically very small, our AGM is boring and poorly attended. It is perhaps a classic chicken/egg scenario. This year we are going to adjust the format. While we are still hammering out the details, our hope is that the weekend will include a workshop and professional piping contest. My hope is that these activities, combined with an attractive venue will remarkably increase attendance. We are hoping to have a "trade show" element to the weekend. Thank you to Wayne Holscott for reaching out to potential vendors! We are looking at locations in Baltimore's inner-harbor and are targeting that location if we can keep costs similar to those of an airport hotel.

The executive committee met in Newark, New Jersey on February 20 and 21st to tie up the last of the loose ends from the AGM in November. You can read about the various proposals and their outcomes in this edition.

You should start seeing a number of new faces on the other side of the bench as a number of our professional pipers will be taking the judges' exam on April 12th in Virginia. To add a unique twist to the weekend, the association will be hosting a professional piobaireachd and march, strathspey, reel, hornpipe and jig event in conjunction with the Woodberry Forrest contest being run on the same weekend. Thanks go to Matt Wood and June Hanley for spearheading that project.

I must say that there are a lot of new ideas "in the incubator" and I am really looking forward to seeing what comes out the other end and reporting to you.

Spring is here and it is meteorological and astronomical fact that summer will follow. I hope you are all accomplishing that you set out to do with your playing and that band halls are buzzing with the activity required to give your sets some final polish.

Have a great spring and I am looking forward to seeing you around the games.

Dan

## EUSPBA OFFICERS

## BRANCH CHAIRS

Dan Cole <i>PRESIDENT</i> <a href="mailto:president@euspba.org">president@euspba.org</a>	Matt Wood <i>TREASURER</i> <a href="mailto:treasurer@euspba.org">treasurer@euspba.org</a>
Jim Dillahey <i>VICE PRESIDENT</i> <a href="mailto:vicepres@euspba.org">vicepres@euspba.org</a>	Helen Harlow <i>OFFICER-AT-LARGE</i> <i>MEMBERSHIP COORDINATOR</i> 24 Highlander Dr. Fredricksburg, VA 22406 (540)373-4890 <a href="mailto:oalone@euspba.org">oalone@euspba.org</a> <a href="mailto:membership@euspba.org">membership@euspba.org</a>
Sheldon Hamblin <i>EXECUTIVE SECRETARY</i> <a href="mailto:zecsec@euspba.org">zecsec@euspba.org</a>	Wayne Holscott <i>OFFICER-AT-LARGE</i> <a href="mailto:oaltwo@euspba.org">oaltwo@euspba.org</a>
Betsy Bethel-McFarland <i>RECORDING SECRETARY</i> <a href="mailto:recsec@euspba.org">recsec@euspba.org</a>	

Metro Branch Brian O'Kane <a href="mailto:metro@euspba.org">metro@euspba.org</a>	Southwest Branch Nancy Love <a href="mailto:southwest@euspba.org">southwest@euspba.org</a>
Midatlantic Branch Mary Wallace <a href="mailto:midatlantic@euspba.org">midatlantic@euspba.org</a>	Ohio Valley Branch Andrew Duncan <a href="mailto:ohiovalley@euspba.org">ohiovalley@euspba.org</a>
Northeast Branch Maureen Connor <a href="mailto:northeast@euspba.org">northeast@euspba.org</a>	Southern Branch Bill Caudill <a href="mailto:south@euspba.org">south@euspba.org</a>





# Editorial

By John Bottomley



I have been an EUSPBA judge for a long time; some might say too long. New judging experiences are few and far between at this point. The games in Jacksonville, Florida, offered me one.

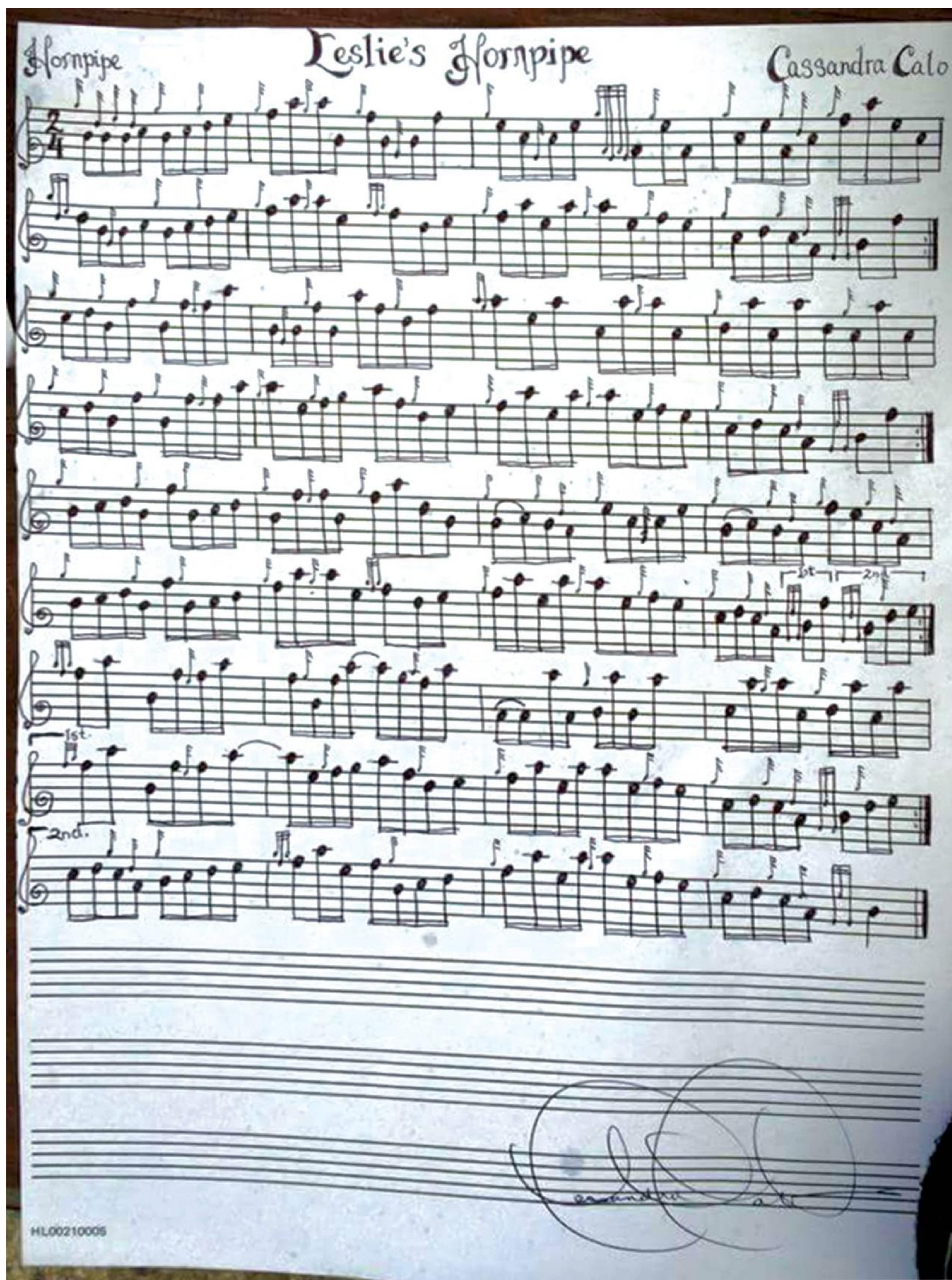
I was asked to judge a composition contest. Open to all grades and all types of pipe tunes. I had grade one players playing hornpipes. I had jigs, 2/4 marches, and a piobaireachd. The quality of the playing didn't count (which, given the weather was a good thing). It was mahhhvelous.

The tunes were ALL good. They were nicely crafted and melodic, and choosing a winner was not easy. And

anybody who ever complains about "How do you compare a two-parted strathspey with a four-parted one" is going to hear from me.

But that's not really the point. The point is that Jacksonville, like a few other games, is doing something different to encourage participation. I believe I had seven or eight players entered in the event. There was a sponsor for the prize--a bit of extra money for the games, or a trophy and recognition for the prizewinners. It is, as they say, a win-win situation.

The winning tune, beautifully hand written:







# Letters to the Editor

## “The Drama”

*Editor's note: The letter writer wished to remain anonymous, and I respected those wishes. I am holding the writer's identity in confidence, therefore. I will not, however, publish a letter that comes to me with no name. Also, anything that feels slanderous or libelous is right out.*

As a member of several pipe bands I have noticed they all have something in common. They all have drama! It is everywhere and it seems so avoidable yet it always occurs. The problem with this is it gets in the way of our main goal and that is to play music.

I am not telling anyone anything new here. Anyone who has been around pipe bands for any time knows exactly what I am talking about. I am not talking about troubles with parade routes or bands being announced as a different band. I am referring to people not practicing, complaining about one another, people taking sides on different issues, band members accusing other band members of stealing solo gigs, and people in leadership positions talking negatively about other bands and their members.

I want to make something clear. This “rant” does not apply to higher level competition bands. In fact I do not know enough about those types of bands to talk about or even give advice. I have however been around higher level bands and it seems the main focus is music. Perhaps that is why they are where they are? I am writing about the street bands and lower level bands because that is where I am knowledgeable.

Don't get me wrong here I am not complaining about these bands. As a matter of fact I belong to several. These bands can be a lot of fun and serve a great purpose. Although some may disagree with my last statement, these bands provide a lot to their communities and that in itself is important.

I really enjoy the competition side of piping. I mean I thought skydiving was a rush. Then I attended and competed in a competition and I was hooked. I absolutely love it and there is nothing that I can compare it too. Having said that I have seen some drama occur with these types of bands also.

The point of all of this is to point out some observations I have made. I want to point these things out because it is very important we all stay focused on what is important, which is the music. Without the music we are not really serving any purpose, carrying on any tradition, or honoring anything or anyone.

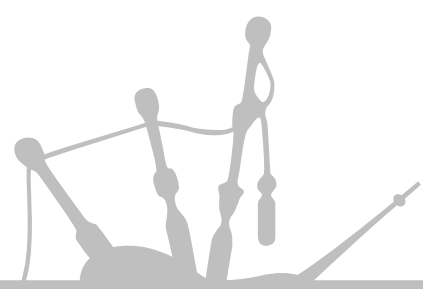
Any way I will get started. Now I am not going to point out every single thing that I believe causes trouble in a pipe band. I can't do that. In fact there will always be some sort of issue with any organization...not just pipe bands.

If it seems there is always turmoil in your band take a look at your roster. Think about who in your band is causing the problems. I guarantee you will find a couple of things. First there will be a lot more good people than trouble makers. There are not a lot of people who want to cause trouble. The problem with a trouble maker is they cause trouble and it can bring the whole group down. Second if that individual or a few individuals never played to any standard they probably never will. They are busy focusing on other things, not the music. Point is you probably have a lot more good people around you than it feels. Negativity is very contagious so do not let one or two people tamper with what you work so hard for.

Something else that causes major issues is members not learning their music. I have seen this create many issues for several pipe majors. What happens is they will feel like they need to cater to the lowest level player at rehearsals. This drives the other members absolutely up the wall! I can't say I ever agreed with this approach. I don't lead a championship pipe band or anything but rehearsals and practices should not be tailored to any one individual.

If you are in a position where you feel like you are a weak link in your band there are things you can do. First thing is, it is very important you know how to identify issues in your playing. If you do not have the ability to identify a problem it will never be corrected. So record yourself playing and if you hear something that does not sound right fix it. If you are not sure how to fix it get with your instructor. If you don't have an instructor ... get one. There are a lot of people who stop taking lessons after a period of time. I am telling you that you are not doing yourself or anyone else any favors if you are not getting help from a good instructor.





I have one last thing to mention. If there is a problematic person in your group just ignore them. Let the P/M deal with it. Most of the time problematic people are looking for a negative response. Do not give them any response. If it is something that you feel like you can't let go, talk to the P/M in private. Do not have these types of discussions amongst the rest of the band, it will only stir the pot. If you are the P/M then remove that individual from your roster.

I hope that some of the things I mentioned are helpful. Keep in mind when you join a pipe band you are joining a family. You will go on long drives and spend long days with the other members. So it is expected there will be silly arguments and disagreements. Just know when there is a major issue nothing is more important than the music you have set out to play. We are carrying on a tradition that is ages old and it is very honorable.

Anonymous

## **I wanted to express my appreciation for the insightful and thoughtful article**

that Nancy Tunncliffe provided in the Winter 2014 edition of *The Voice*. New competitors have much they can learn from it, and even seasoned competitors in the art of "ancient martial music" will be reminded of several important aspects of this musical form.

I would like to add a few more historical insights into the mix, in order to inspire further exploration and excitement into pibroch performance.

Nancy mentions the communicative dimension of musical performance, and this aspect is something often overlooked by many. Before picking up the pipes, ask yourself, "What am I trying to say? What am I trying to communicate? Am I only trying to win? to make it through a song? Or am I sharing an idea?"

She goes on to suggest that the stories and song titles of the tune may be a good starting point. From a certain perspective, I would disagree: It is important to realize that names of pibrochs (not to mention the stories, many of which are apocryphal for the oldest tunes) are notoriously variant in many cases. Take PS 025 - Castle Menzies, Frazer's Salute, and MacGrigors Gathering are among the English titles given to this tune. Or PS 131 - Are you Merimaking (sic) and MacLeod's Dog Short Tail are among those connected with this tune. We should also mention here the large number of tunes with no titles to them at all.

Clearly, one cannot rely on the titles (or stories) to definitively approach an interpretation. But if one views them as suggestive, as possible perspectives from which, as a musician, an interpretation may be given shape to a performance, they are indeed quite useful.

But I would like to take this a step further: If you take the time to review the names of the roughly 300 extent

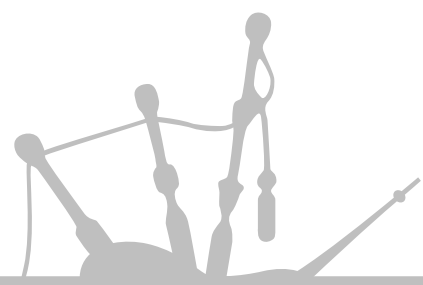
pre-1840 pibrochs you will notice something: clearly several genres of pibroch exist. Marches, gatherings, salutes, laments, even taunts and rowing tunes are all indicated, often quite frequently. Nancy mentions how pibroch is "commemorative music." Certainly some of it is. But the titles tradition show that pibrochs were played in a lot more settings and for many more communicative purposes than simply commemoration. They were also played to call people together, to inspire people to battle, to taunt a rival. They were even played to pace rowers on west Highland seas!

When asking yourself, "What do I want to communicate?" it would be well to consider these options. Indeed, a cursory look in both Donald MacDonald and Angus MacKay books shows that pibroch tunes were not all played as slow dirges. Some were to be played "Lively" (Too Long in This Condition - PS 161); some were to be played "Andante" (Lord Breadalbane's March - PS 002), while others were marked "Very Slow" (The Finger Lock - PS 132, which was, by the way, a "tuning exercise" or etude - nothing "commemorative" at all!) Imagine: The Rout of Glenfrooin (PS 13) can be played as a lament from the perspective of the losing family, but it can also be played as a more lively taunt of the victor over their rivals.

Very few performers, new or seasoned, have time to do deep research into pibroch - it is enough to memorize one, sometimes up to 4 pibrochs, in addition to getting on top of the competition light music and band tunes often required of them. But even a tiny bit of research, now easily made available with the advent of digital technology, opens up a wide vista of possibilities for performers to explore, allowing them a much richer pallet of communicative options to bring to the boards.

J David Hester, PhD  
Publisher, [altpiibroch.com](http://altpiibroch.com)





## Dear editor,

I greatly enjoyed Bob Mitchell's interview with EJ Jones which appeared in the Winter 2014 issue of the Voice. I hope many frustrated GHB players got the message that one can love and play highland, and Celtic music without getting bogged down with the necessary mechanics of the GHB.

For better (or worse), EJ correctly described the highland piping scene as being dominated by competition. There are so many challenges to this approach for the majority of competitive highland pipers.

As a highland piping judge, I have seen and heard many a frustrated piper get bogged down with difficult doublings, taorluaths, crunluaths et al. Because of this focus on mechanics, the "music" can tend to take a back seat. Especially in our lower competitive grades. This is unfortunate for the player, the judge and the small number of people (usually mostly family members) listening.

I hate seeing a competitor approach my table looking like he/she is about to be shot. Let's face it, regardless of grade, most competitors will tell you they find little "fun" in the competitive experience. We seem to have forgotten we are musicians blessed with a very special gift.

Although EJ Jones gave the necessary "reverence" to the highland pipes, he clearly conveyed to me (and hopefully other readers) that small pipes are "fun" and enjoyable to learn and play. I have to wonder whether exposure to small pipes might provide a viable alternative to pipers who love the music but are turned off by the challenges of competitive highland piping.

It was encouraging to read about the current workshops and the possible incorporation of this instrument at some of our "traditional" EUSPBA highland games. I hope these efforts will continue to grow and be successful. I look forward to reading reports about them in future issues of the Voice.

Very well done Bob and EJ!  
Al McMullin



[www.gaif.us](http://www.gaif.us)

4 Stages of Continuous  
Entertainment With Over  
30 Bands  
All Weekend Long

Free Weekend Passes &  
Free Parking To All  
Pipe Band Members.  
Camping Available

**great american irish festival**  
**july 24th. - july 26th, 2015**

**Herkimer County Fair Grounds**  
**Frankfort, NY (NYS thruway exits 30 & 31)**

**Pipe Band Competition**  
**Grade 3, 4 & 5**  
**July 25, 2015**



"Folks, if this event is not on your schedule - put it on.  
Huge crowds, welcoming organizers, well run"

*Jim Engle, EUSPBA Drum Major Judge*

**For Additional Information Contact [pipeband@gaif.us](mailto:pipeband@gaif.us)**





# Snare Basics: Snare FAQ

By Ed Best

For this article, I went to my Facebook page and asked for questions on beginning drumming. There was an amazing response. I picked two questions to respond to, and I will address more in the next edition. Thank you to everyone who submitted.

## **Question #1:** From Brian

What have you found to be the most helpful practice exercise to help adult beginner drummers to build speed and accuracy with the left thumb?

## **Answer:**

This may seem counter intuitive at first, but stay with me through this answer. The first thing I would suggest is to play the taps with your wrist VERY loud and big. Over exaggerate the motion. However, during this exercise, allow your thumb to go along for the ride a bit. Make sure that your thumb is loose and relaxed. You may even drop the stick a few times during this process. But be sure the stick is getting as much rebound off the drum and/or pad as possible.

The reason this works is because you need to train your thumb to feel what the stick is going to do on its own before you try to control the stick. Your thumb has lots of sensory receptors that learn better during big, loud (dare I say, obnoxious) movements. Concentrate on feeling the vibration of the stick with the pad of your thumb.

The next step is to play wrist and thumb movements together. Again, don't be subtle. Really go for it! Try to hit the drum with your thumb while turning your wrist. Imagine that you have a big long thumb (the stick extending out from it.)

This next section may be the most important. It is difficult to start the stick from a dead stop using just your fingers. It is not cheating to pick the stick up with your arm and drop it so that it bounces. Let your thumb feel the vibrations as it starts and then move the stick with your THUMB ONLY, three times. Don't ever go indefinitely. Eventually you will make a mistake and then you'll focus on that instead of the 357 you got right, You'll only remember that you messed up #358. And in reality, you'll never do that many in a row anyway. So, always attempt a specific number. I like to start with three because it is one

more than a standard bounce and it forces you to use your fingers. If you can't do that don't go for more. Be consistent on three, then go to four, then to five, etc. Each step can take a few minutes or a few weeks, or longer. It doesn't matter how long it takes. This is a marathon, not a sprint. Just do it properly.

As an aside, many people attempt to use their fingers too early in their development. There is nothing wrong, especially on slightly easier and slower tunes with playing singles cleanly by using your wrists. The fingers are needed on the faster, quieter, more delicate and intricate phrases. So it is important to evaluate whether you/your student are ready for it. I've found this to be especially true in little kids who are still developing their fine motor skills. Don't try to force it. However, when you get it, entire new worlds in your playing will be revealed to you.

## **Question #2:** From Daryl

How do you start teaching reading music?

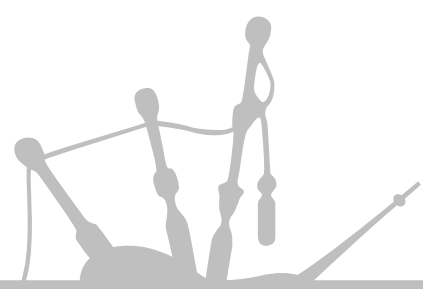
## **Answer:**

Well, let's start with what NOT to do. Please never just put a drum score (such as massed bands) in front of someone and start playing to hope they just magically catch on. People do this way too often when they have a parade, competition, or some other major gig coming up quickly and they NEED drummers. This is never a good idea. I could write an entire book on the subject. But the part I want to focus on, is that when you eventually go back to teaching the music reading, because it is more basic, the student feels like they are taking a step backwards. Psychologically it is better to start with the easier stuff and incrementally get it more difficult. Each step is then new and exciting.

I don't have room in this article to give every single step along the way to teach reading music, but let's give some general overviews: Start with this simple concept; every black dot equals one "boom." Conversely, every squiggly line equals "shhhh." Some have started calling it the "Boom/No Boom method."

Now, take your time and develop this concept. I have a minimum of three pages in my beginner book





dedicated to develop quarter notes and quarter rests. I've seen too many books that give it only one or two lines and then try to move on to the REAL stuff. At this level, this IS the real stuff. Your attitude toward the material will dictate how the student handles it. Next, you need to only introduce one thing at a time and take the time to fully develop it before moving on. A suggestion is to do eighth notes (2 barred together), then single eighth notes, then eighth rests, then sixteenth (4 barred together), etc.

Don't get me wrong, I'm not suggesting holding anyone back. If they understand the concept and can demonstrate it, feel free to move on right away. Again, each step can last a few minutes or up to

weeks or months, depending on the student. But when you move to the next note, both the student and the teacher should be confident that you are ready.

As an aside, this is a great time to be developing the hand technique for tapping the drum. It is easier to talk about it when the rhythms are simple and slow. Don't wait until the material gets too complicated. Also, when they can read and understand the rhythms it is way easier to break down the primary strokes of the rolls. This method sets you up for success in all the future lessons.

I hope this has been helpful. Remember, there is always more than one right way to do everything.



## Take yourself to the next level.

*Learn from the champions.*

Become a better musician

Improve your knowledge and skill of piping and drumming

Personalized instruction  
Small groups

### Balmoral School 2015 Summer Sessions

June 7-12  
Delafield, Wisconsin

June 21-26  
Salina, Kansas

July 19-24  
East Stroudsburg, Pennsylvania

June 14-19  
Albuquerque, New Mexico

July 12-17  
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania



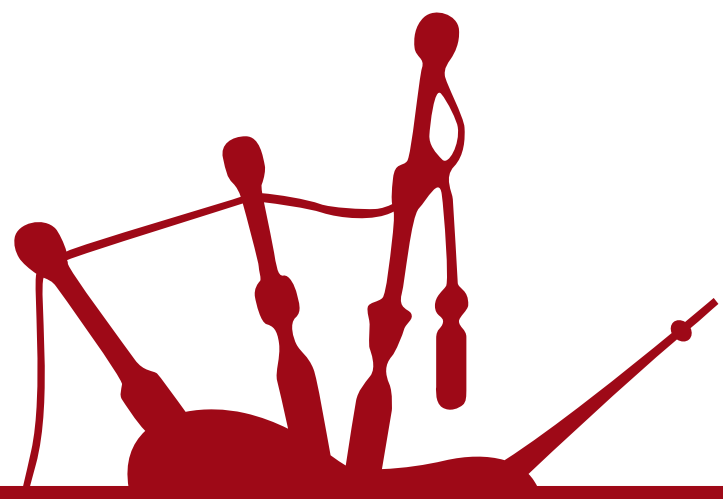
### New this year!

P/M Terry Tully  
(St. Laurence  
O'Toole Pipe Band)  
joins the 2015 staff!



1414 Pennsylvania Ave., Pittsburgh, PA 15233 | [info@bagpiping.org](mailto:info@bagpiping.org) | [BalmoralSchool.org](http://BalmoralSchool.org) | 412-323-2707





# Bass & Tenor Basics: Writing a Basic Tenor Score

By Brian Morgan

Writing a tenor score can seem like a daunting task. In this article, we will look at a few options to simplify the process and hopefully get those creative juices flowing!

There are as many approaches to score writing as there are bands in the EUSPBA. The job of tenor score writing could fall on many different people, including: drum sergeant, bass drummer, lead tenor drummer, or a combination of quite a few people. For the purposes of this article, we will lump everyone together under the same umbrella. We will also assume that our score writers have the basic music theory knowledge necessary to create accurate notation.

## Starting Out

From the outset, there are a few things to be squared away before you can attempt to write a score. For example, will your scores be hand written, or will you use a software program? How many voices are you writing for? What tune type and time signature are you writing in? Do you have a recording of the tune you are writing for? Let's look at a few of these areas in depth.

### Hand Written vs. Software

Both have pros and cons, but either is acceptable. The biggest plus for software-produced scores is that everything will look uniform. Another benefit is that you can also usually cut and paste phrases like common endings, or parts that repeat. Another huge advantage is the ease in making changes. For example, if the snare score changes, which in turn changes a tenor run or rhythm, then you can simply open your file, make the change and print a new copy. A software con can be that some of the programs are cumbersome and take a little while to get accustomed to. If you aren't familiar with how a certain program operates, it will certainly slow you down.

Hand written scores are typically fast to create, but depending on your spacing and penmanship, could be more difficult to read. A con is that a big enough mistake may require you to start over from scratch. Midseason changes to scoring may also create a problem.

### How many voices?

Seems like a pretty easy answer, but most music is scored in the off season. What if you get an awesome tenor player in March, or worse, lose one. Can your score be easily adapted for change? No easy solution here, typically, just splitting

off or divvying up existing parts. It's also not uncommon in the lower grades to have multiple personnel play the same part. While this is totally acceptable, I would urge you to branch out and try to give each player his or her own part, if possible.

### Recordings

A practice chanter and pad recording is your single biggest asset. Being able to start/stop a tune and create a phrase or part to match is the crux of what you're attempting to do. It is essential to have a good recording with the correct parts and snare scores. You'll be listening to the recording over and over to get the parts just right!

## Beginning to Write

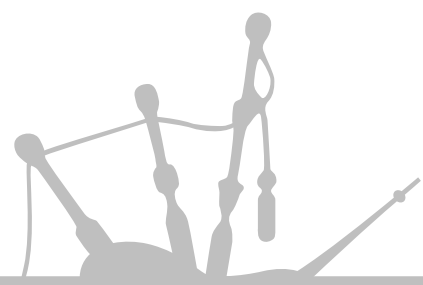
As I mentioned in the recording section, the first step for me is to listen to the recording a few times to get the pipe tune and snare score in my head. Using a 2/4 March as our example, I will typically listen for a common ending first; knowing that once I have a decent ending phrase, 25% of the tune is written. There may also be a common middle. In this case, I will likely listen to that specific phrase to start to generate ideas. The middle and endings do not have to be the same each time, especially if the snare score deviates into something different. However, for ease of memorization and consistency, I will try to reuse middle and ending phrases if applicable, just as the snares would.

### Which note do I pick?

Bass sections will usually be set up in one of two ways. As best described by Mike Cole, "*Functional Tuning*, is setting up each drum to a specific pitch, or *Color Tuning*, which means the drums are set to what 'sounds right,' some may be at a specific pitch and some may not."

Since the number of drums and pitches varies greatly from band to band, I will try not to get too specific. However, as a general rule of thumb, my own approach is to listen to the pipe phrasing and determine if the phrase is going from low hand to high hand, or high to low. This will often determine how I will split the part. You may not have the exact note, for the exact key that is being played, and that's okay. Do your best to create a harmonizing, pleasing to the ear sound split and that will be just fine. I have never once seen a score sheet that said, "Tenor run was dissonant to key".





A word about unison – I like unison, especially in time playing as a support to the overall blend of the band sound. Some sections prefer not to play unison at all. There is no single right answer here. My best advice would be that if you do use unison, do not have multiple drums strike together if the pitches are dissonant to each other. The judges will likely view it as a tuning problem. Bottom line, pleasing to the ear = Good.

### What Rhythm Do I Pick?

Surely this will depend on the ability of the players, but what is the section trying to express? Are the snares using a crescendo, or are they in an accenting pattern. This will dictate which rhythm you would use to both support the snares, as well as the split to support the melodic line. The rhythms don't have to be overly complicated; you can achieve a lot with quarters and eighths when the right weighting and expression is used.

If your section flourishes, don't forget to leave some space. You don't have to play every single snare accent. Shoot for the major parts of emphasis in a tune, then build time and silence around it.

### Finishing up

It's time to see if all of these parts work. Music in our idiom constantly changes (sometimes up to the line), so be flexible and adaptable. No sweat if something doesn't quite gel, just rework the part. Worst case, take the rhythm out! It's not worth trying to force a rhythm that doesn't fit or is too complicated to play. Sometimes you just concede and remove it for the good of the section and the sound.

Score writing is challenging, but if you break it down into small pieces it becomes more manageable. Give a try with something easy and remember... Less is More!

## Hear the Blend while Protecting Your Ears



### Kevin's Sound Exposure: 102 dB

- 95% of allowable daily dose in < 8 minutes
- Maximum allowable time: 9 min, 27 sec (47 minutes weekly)

### Kevin's Sound Exposure with ETY•Plugs: 82 dB

- ETY•Plugs provide 20-dB sound reduction when used properly
- Maximum allowable time: 16 hours (80 hours weekly)



Kevin McGowan — Tripoli Scottish Highlanders  
playing Great Highland Bagpipes

## ETY•Plugs®

High-fidelity earplugs allow you to play longer with less risk.  
For practice, performance and competition.

Hear for a Lifetime® [www.etymotic.com](http://www.etymotic.com)



## ETYMOTIC RESEARCH<sup>INC.</sup>





# Piping Basics: “Piob-ogetics”

By Sean Regan

**A couple of thoughts on why beginning, lower-grade, and non-competitive pipers should want to learn piobaireachd**

By Sean Regan (someone who formerly misunderstood and vastly underrated the importance of piobaireachd)

Over the last year, I met a striking number of pipers who fell into one of the following general categories:

- Those who dislike and refuse to learn to play piobaireachd
- Those who like piobaireachd but feel that, for one reason or another, it is beyond their grasp
- Those who dislike piobaireachd, but play it anyway

If you fall into one of those categories, this is definitely written for you. If you like and play piobaireachd already, perhaps this will give you some points in discussing piobaireachd with folks who don't. I met one gentleman, at the NAAPD summer camp, who loudly and repeatedly announced his disgust of and complete lack of interest in piobaireachd. Over the course of a couple of evening conversations, he both changed his opinion and learned his first Ground. What follows is a short summary of some of the points that led him to reevaluate his stance.

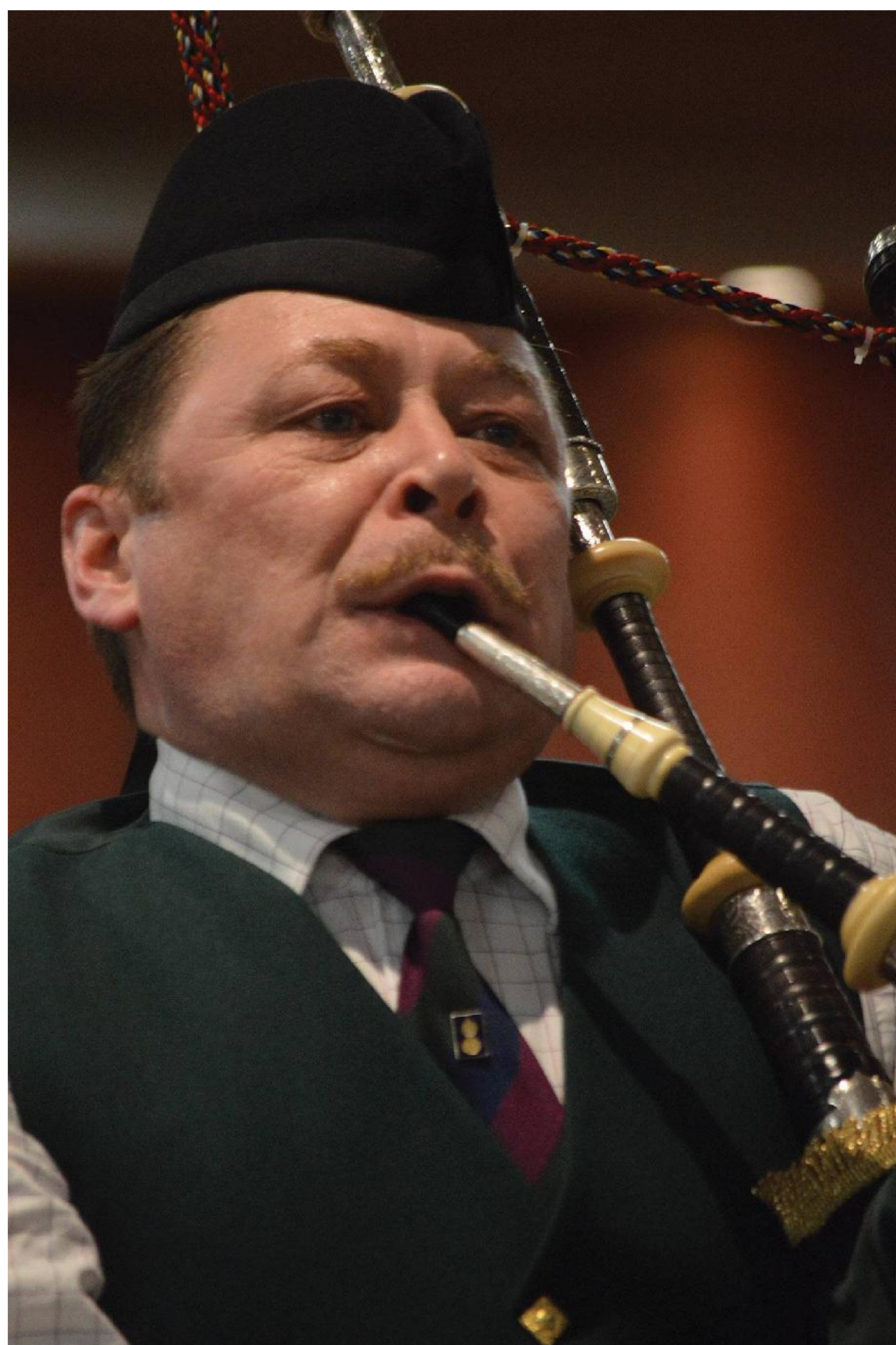
First, the ultimate goal:

- Playing, or listening to Piobaireachd, and knowing what you're playing or listening to, hearing the nuance and subtlety in the music as its played on a well-set pipe, is, in short, grand. The more you learn, the more your capacity to enjoy it grows. In order to get to the point where you can enjoy it for its own sake, most have to go through a longish physical and mental process. Fortunately, there are things that happen along the way which make the process its own benefit to the developing piper.

What happens during the process of learning a Piobaireachd:

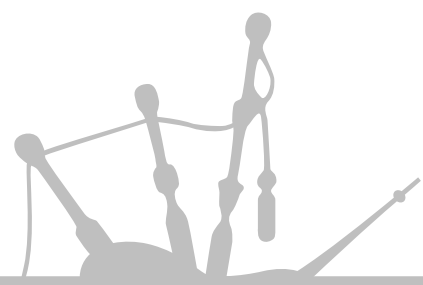
- Physical stamina increases. Playing piobaireachd is, to playing light music, kind of like practicing to lift 200lbs. when all you need to be able to lift is 50lbs. When you're a beginner, it doesn't take long for tired lips, hands, and arms to start messing with your ability to play. This is particularly evident in lower-grade bands, when tone and technical issues arise as a result of fatigue setting in on band members, and solo pipers have the same difficulty. Piobaireachd forces you to play a Ground

and multiple Variations, which is a lot like playing a very slow 5-15 minute medley. At a rough estimate, you could give a competition 2/4 March between 4 and 8 repetitions in the time it takes to play a single piobaireachd. Imagine your staying power if you were able to play a piobaireachd three or four times in a single practice session! Rather than having your arm and hands tightening up by the end of a single time through your tune, you could be ready to play it again, and again, and still have the relaxed feel of *playing* your instrument. I play at a renaissance festival each year, which has me sounding my pipes for 4-5 hours every Saturday and Sunday in September, and I build up my endurance by playing piobaireachds back-to-back in the weeks leading up to the festival.



Wee Gordon Walker, excelling at piobaireachd.





- Mental stamina increases. For years, I would become distracted in the middle of a tune and then couldn’t remember whether or not I’d repeated a part. I had to point my eyes to the ground when I played, because if something shiny caught my eye, I was done. As my repertoire of light music increased so did my physical stamina, but I still had problems focusing. There was a struggle between my desire to play and my ability to do so, and that struggle didn’t begin to resolve until I moved up to Grade III. When I was in Grade IV, only a Ground (3 to 4 lines of music) was required for piobaireachd competition, so moving up to Grade III forced me to learn a full tune. The change didn’t take place overnight, but I can track the development of my competition results, and the size and quality of my repertoire as being significantly increased from the time I started practicing full piobaireachds. The process of memorizing a full piobaireachd helps to develop your mental stamina such that it becomes easier to focus on the *music* and not the notes.

## John Bottomley

**2010 EUSPBA Piobaireachd Champion  
Now offering Skype Lessons!**

**50 years of expertise a click away**

**john@johnbottomleybagpipes.com  
610.417.1554  
www.johnbottomleybagpipes.com**

**Be sure to check out the critically acclaimed  
The Campbells Are Coming**

### Now, a preview:

Different teachers take slightly different approaches, but as a general overview: first you learn the Urlar (Ground) and a few new embellishments, then you learn the variations, then you begin assembling the full tune from the ground up (so to speak). Putting the whole tune together can be difficult, and may take a little while to accomplish, but once you get to this point you’ve nearly arrived at really cool perspective change. After you have all the variations memorized, and have been practicing them in sequence for a little while, a switch flips in your perception and you begin to hear the whole tune as one cohesive piece in a way that you don’t get with light music. It’s really cool, and you need to experience it to get it.

So, how do you get to that point?

- 1 Listen with an active ear to piobaireachd performed by pipers of ALL ability levels. This will get your ears to start recognizing and interpreting the melodic and rhythmic patterns in the genre. It’ll also start increasing the comfort with which you’re able to sit through long pieces of music.
- 2 Get yourself a teacher who loves piobaireachd and knows how to play it. Some people have a teacher for light music and another for piobaireachd. Your teacher will shape how you perceive and pursue Piobaireachd.
- 3 Learn a piobaireachd.
- 4 Learn another one.

Of course, steps three and four are a bit more in-depth than their brevity belies, but that’s what step two is for. A good teacher will ease the process.

If you’re one of the people who “hates” piobaireachd, and you’re still reading this, you’re on the right track. What I ask anyone who doesn’t outright love piobaireachd is that they modify their stance just a little, so that they don’t consciously or subconsciously write it off. Instead of saying or thinking “I don’t GET piobaireachd,” say “I don’t get piobaireachd, YET.” I believe that if you’re a piper, there’s a part of you that wants to play Ceol Mor whether you realize it or not. After all, piobaireachd literally means “Pipe Playing,” or “Pipe Music.” I enjoy light music, but there is nothing like playing a piobaireachd.





# A Labor of Love – Jimmy McIntosh's Ceol Mor

By John Bottomley

Jimmy McIntosh, M.B.E., makes no secret of his devotion to his teachers, Bob Brown and Bob Nicol, and to their teacher, John MacDonald of Inverness. His new book, *Ceol Mor for the Great Highland Bagpipe*, reflects this. It is, however, much more than that.

Jimmy has taken great care to present tunes in a format that allows players to play the tune from the written score, without having to be conversant in what Archibald Campbell call "piper's jargon." He uses small changes in note values to indicate the subtleties in playing that separate the adequate players from the top players.

Tunes are presented without bar lines, as in *Binneas Is Borreraig*, but without the nuisance of players needing to learn the three-line staff used in *Binneas*. Jimmy is also very careful to use a style of notation for embellishments that accurately represents the way they were originally expressed.

I had the chance to sit down with Jimmy and discuss the style of writing and playing the embellishments, which he considers to be a key aspect of his work.

His motivation was made clear to him when he judged at Oban and Inverness a number of years ago, having been absent from the events for nearly 20 years. When he got there, he says, "People were playing the embellishments incorrectly."

He added, "the problem started when Dr. Bannatyne began writing the embellishments in what he considered to be scientific fashion." The first of the original Piobaireachd Society books were not written that way, according to Jimmy.

Jimmy states that, looking at the older, pre-1895 manuscripts, it is obvious that the movements were not played as markedly "down" as they are now. The first E of the dre movement, for example, was written as a short separate note, rather than a gracenote down to the low A. This seemingly small difference changes the entire rhythm of the movement by placing the emphasis on the low A rather than the E.

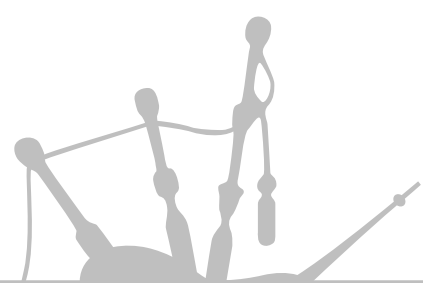
The book contains many examples of movements whose notation style has changed, and exercises to help the player adjust his or her playing to match the older style of play.

PRE-1895	POST-1895
DRE	
DARE	
EMBARI	
CHEDARI	
'DEPARTURE' MOVEMENT	
'VISCOUNT' MOVEMENT	
BUBBLY NOTE	
BIRL	
'B' ECHO	
'D' THROW	

These are exercises that came from John MacDonald of Inverness, who was known among contemporary players for the high quality of his embellishments, Jimmy asserted.

After WWII, Jimmy was in Verdun, at a highland games. ("It took three Germans to carry the caber to one Scot,"





he chuckles). The piobaireachd judge was General Frank Richardson. Although Jimmy and the other contestants were only Lance Corporals, General Richardson took the time to take them all aside and, sitting in the grass with a practice chanter, showed them how John MacDonald taught the movements, with large, open E and F gracenotes. "You can't beat it, John, and it's so easy," he emphasized.

Jimmy gave me some more recent history which backs up his point. He said that in the 1960s, Seumas MacNeill, Captain John MacLellan, and John MacFadyen, formed the Institute of Piping, and they all taught the embellishments played down, as written in the Piobaireachd Society books.

The, around 1983, Seumas asked Jimmy to teach at the Timmins, Ontario, summer school, about 500 miles north of Toronto. When Jimmy heard students there playing the movements down, he asked where they had learned them that way and was told, "From Mr. MacNeill." Jimmy talked with Seumas about it and Seumas admitted, "Jimmy, you're right." The movements should be played as they had been written earlier.

One final example Jimmy gives comes from an email conversation with Ken Eller, the Captain, who had piobaireachd as a teenager from John Wilson. Ken says, "I can still see John Wilson's big fingers lifting off the chanter."

Jimmy concludes, "The gracenotes have to be of equal duration and weight. You are accenting the Low A if you play the E as a gracenote, according to Jimmy. "They can't BOTH be right!"

This book has been a long time in the making. Getting the music typeset the way he wanted it was a task in itself. Eventually Bobby Minnear wrote software to do the job. As mentioned, the tunes are set in phrases rather than bars, with very small changes in note lengths.

And there is more in the works. Jimmy says, "'I'm up to Book Eight of the Piobaireachd Society (rewriting the tunes in the Balmoral style as presented in the current book.) I do it for the mental stimulus, Like Judi Dench who learns a new poem every day to stay sharp.

The book has found favor with many players, and has moved rapidly up many "favorite book" lists.

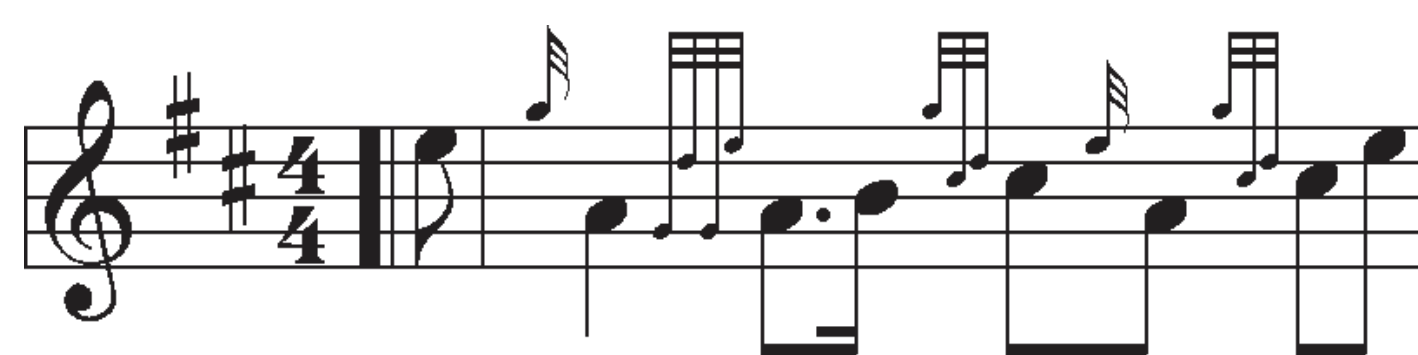
## **Strike GOLD with BAGPIPE MUSIC WRITER GOLD**

for 32 bit and 64 bit Windows operating systems

Want your tunes to look like they were printed in a music book and sound like they are being played by a very good piper on a great bagpipe? Then choose **Bagpipe Music Writer GOLD**. The preferred choice of hundreds of pipers and bands and used for 35 professional music books.

- Print and play any type of light music and piobaireachd (including all piobaireachd abbreviations)
- On-screen music view
- Extensive page layout, font and playing options
- Real chanter & drones sound with certain sound cards
- 100 page printed manual with tutorial & reference guide
- On-line Help file reflects printed manual
- Print multiple tunes on single or multiple pages
- Play tunes together in a medley (with tempo changes)
- Link/embed bagpipe music in other Windows programs
- Compatible with all previous Bagpipe Music Writer files

Available from Piping suppliers or direct from:  
(\*add \$8 p&p, and GST & PST where applicable)



### **Bagpipe Music Writer GOLD**

**\$99 USD and \$99 CAD**

**Order online via our website**

Robert MacNeil Musicworks  
2913 Keets Drive  
Coquitlam, BC, Canada, V3C 6J2  
Tel: 604-552-5674

Email: info@robertmacneilmusicworks.com  
Website: www.robertmacneilmusicworks.com

***The GOLD standard for bagpipe music engraving and playing software.***





# Bands, Games Come Together

By Brendan O'Reilly

The Northeast Branch held a 'Summit Meeting' with contest organizers and bands to discuss a variety of topics at the Celtic Hall in Albany, NY on Saturday, February 28th, 2015. It was well attended with representatives from seven different games and a handful of bands. Despite concerns about this becoming a "gripe session," it was far from it. Chairperson Brian Morgan worked through the agenda in approximately 3.5 hours with lots of lively and productive conversations. The feedback from attendees was extremely positive and most likely this will become an annual event.

Here's a summary:

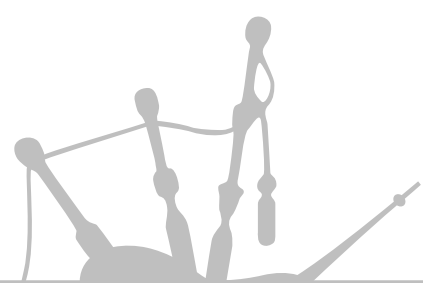
## **EUSPBA or Branch Improvements:**

- Request for EUSPBA to investigate umbrella insurance for contests. Perhaps, a coordinated effort could reduce the overall costs.
- The possibility of a "EUSPBA NE BRANCH" Championship contest was proposed. It would be a rotating event across all of the NE contests. The selection process would be documented and transparent. More discussion to follow on this...The Capital District games organizers requested the 'name' be changed to something different, as it was too close to their "NE Championship" title.
- Request for 'date coordination' of the contests across the NE branch. It was proposed the contest organizers submit their next year's contest dates by the NE Branch AGM. The intention is to publish information as early as possible.
- Create a "Games Best Practices" document to share 'contest organizer' & 'band' tips.
- Sponsorship for contests and awards was discussed for a considerable time. For example, at Loon, they have good relations with local sponsors, who provide free hotel rooms or greatly reduced rates for their judges and performers. It was suggested sponsors will donate more often, when they have a 'SPECIFIC' request, as opposed to just asking for money. It was requested the NE Branch investigate "Hotel Discounts – Block Rates" for the contests. If each contest had a 'specific' hotel with a set of sold block rooms, the contest could receive 'free rooms' for their judges thereby reducing the contest's costs.
- For the EUSPBA, the question was asked, "Why can't a grade 5 or grade 4 band challenge up?"

## **How to make the games better?**

- The NE Branch will be piloting a Northeast Games/Bands Spreadsheet This was proposed by Brian Morgan and is a tool used by the Stuart Highlanders PB. Specifically, this is a shared spreadsheet available on the internet for all NE bands to update accordingly. It lists each of the contests and bands can highlight which competitions they plan to attend for the year. This will be helpful for bands to know if they will have ample competitors or not. Also, it was suggested to add a column for judges. This is pending.  
Here is the link:  
[https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1oTJmCA\\_XQIhsNmjOJJlh0I8H6xDAUnigd84Ws24WKmIQ/edit?pli=1#gid=1847694688](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1oTJmCA_XQIhsNmjOJJlh0I8H6xDAUnigd84Ws24WKmIQ/edit?pli=1#gid=1847694688)
- Order of Play was discussed. Current status: Some contests have a draw on the morning of the games, while others post it in advance. While there was no 'grand bargain' decided on this topic, bands did leave it with this request... "the earlier, the better..." For bands with multiple players in different grades, as instructors, or with different instruments, the ability to know the schedule in advance was a huge help to them.
- It was suggested Games post the list of competitors by grade on their websites.
- It was requested Games update the contest websites with next year's dates asap.
- Stewards are needed for the contests – Organizers asked for volunteers. Free tickets /parking would be provided. Band folks stated stewards needed to be knowledgeable about pipe band competitions. They couldn't just be any Tom, Dick, or Harry. They would need to be trained so the games could run efficiently. The Loon organizers will share their documented "Training Program" for the "Best Practices" doc.
- Bands asked for grades 3/4 to be allowed to play both MSR and Medley with just one final prize for a combined result/winner. It was suggested to have two circles playing and keep the solo judges from the am for the afternoon.
- The topic of "Mass Bands" received some sporty back and forth as well...Most band members preferred only a closing mass bands. However, they understood the 'Crowd Pleasing Nature' of the opening mass bands. Band members asked the organizers, "if they have an opening mass bands, please get the bands on and off of the field as quickly as possible."





### Other General Comments:

- Costs are going up each year for contests. Profitability and attendance at games is all about advertising. It was suggested games organizers need to contact bands directly to generate and encourage their participation. For NY contests, this could mean more generalized advertising...like getting the New York NE Contests into the "I LOVE NY" program...or advertising all of the NE Contests at "New York's Tartan Week."
- There was some vibrant discussion about, 'Why band members must pay to enter a contest.' Some band members pointed out, "Once they pay to get in, they are like any other person. Why are they required to do stuff? Like mass bands..." The other paid attendees don't have to do anything." In the end, it's about the contests trying to break even. Bands noted the "individual band member

entry fee" does affect their 'contest selection.' It is just too costly for a band to pay for all of their members to attend some contests. It was suggested bands stop paying for their members and have their members pay individually.

- In an effort to increase games attendance, it was suggested for contests to host a 'street parade' for Police, Fire, or any street bands. They could be judged, as well. The Capital District's "Beers and Cheers" event was also discussed, as a different type of event to draw and entertain the crowds. However, this requires much planning on each band's part.
- The possibility of a 'family package' for admission was discussed.
- Regarding technology, the posting of results and online registration were discussed. Some contests are 100% online, including payments...others are 'mail' only...others are "online registration, but print it out and mail it in"...At the end of this discussion, clearly some contests are more automated than others. Ideally, a 'best practices' document will be compiled by the branch for the games to leverage and share. (including website html stuff)

### Attendees:

Andrew Adams – EUSPBA NE Branch  
 Maureen Connor– EUSPBA NE Branch/Scotia PB  
 James Dickerson – Loon/RI games  
 Jim Engle – CNYSG/MVF PB  
 Ken & Jen Farrigan –Schenectady games and PB  
 Janet Foy – Glasgowlands  
 Hal Grout – Stone of Destiny PB  
 Carole Hackett – EUSPBA NE Monitor  
 Coordinator / Hunter Mt.  
 Peter Langmore – GlasgowLands  
 Brian Morgan – Stuart Highlanders  
 Bill Munro – Capital District  
 Patti Nisco – Loon  
 Brendan O'Reilly – EUSPBA NE Branch  
 Jared Otto – Manchester PB  
 Jake Otto – Manchester PB  
 Jeff Sweeney – MVF PB  
 John Sullivan – Worcester Kilties  
 Laurie Sullivan – Loon/ RI Games  
 Lezlie Webster – NH Indoor  
 Campbell Webster – NHHSA PB  
 John Webster – Great American Irish fest







# Willie Wows 'Em

By John Bottomley

Multiple-time Metro Cup champion Wilie McCallum put on an absolute clinic on how to win piobaireachd contests, and combined his piobaireachd win with a second place finish in the no-holds-barred medley to walk away with the 2015 Metro Cup overall title. (One of Willie's prizes was a custom-made kilt from O'Kane Outfitters. He has won the event often enough that he must be running out of new tartans in which to make his kilts!) Bob Low matched his placings to win the amateur events.

Young Andrew Donlon, stepping in at the very last moment because both Jimmy Bell and Bruce Gandy had to withdraw, started the event. Some nerves were evident right at the start of his McIntosh's Lament, but he settled in after the first phrase, demonstrating a wonderfully musical and subtle touch in the early variations. His pipe was one of the best of the day; balanced, bright, and full, but it drifted slightly as he went.

Alasdair Henderson followed, playing the Piobaireachd Society setting of the Big Spree. His chanter was on the strident side, creating a blend issue with his drones. His Urlar was well paced but he could have done just a touch more with it by pulling out the Cs and Bs in front of the roidin movement. From the Suibhal onward this was a very well played tune.

Gordon Walker was given one of his favorites, the Lament for the Children. A rather pronounced crow on the High A and a small choke indicated that he was underblowing to keep his chanter in line with his drones. In the Urlar and thumb I felt he was not quite waiting for the phrases but from the classic second variation on this was superb.

Derek Midgley drew the Vaunting, a tune that requires a fair bit of get-up-and-go to make it work. In his attempt to create a tempo progression through the many variations he started out on the slow side. His pipes held perfectly to the end, and his crunluath amach was brilliant. In the taorluath and crunluath singlings, his phrase-ending cadences and mid-phrase cadences were treated the same.

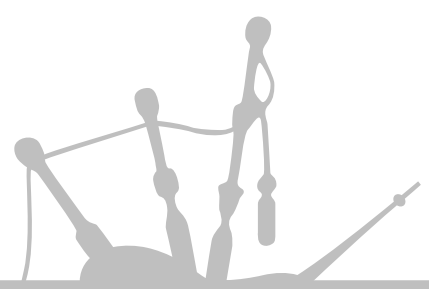
Willie was up next, playing MacNeill of Barra's March. His pipe was lovely, lacking the edgy chanter tone that he occasionally has. He put them perfectly in tune despite the (loud) accompaniment of furniture being moved on the floor above the contest. There was not a note out of place here; everything was balanced and flowed from one variation to the next with nothing done to jar the listener.

Glenn Brown had the daunting Nameless - Cherede Darieva to play. As always, his pipe was smooth and resonant, and absolutely locked from beginning to end. That said, he was walking a tightrope with his blowing trying to avoid tiny chirps on his thumb gracenotes which led to a few surprisingly flat High As. This is a tune that a player can do quite a lot with musically and I felt that Glenn uncharacteristically left a lot of the potential out.

Dan Lyden played the MacKay's Banner on a big pipe. The drones never seemed quite locked, but never moved either. He showed great tempo progression and contrast as he moved through the variations, but I felt his second thumb variation was too regular – the High As need some differentiation. Unfortunately his F sharpened slightly as he went.







Last year's winner Callum Beaumont presented MacLeod of Colbeck's Lament on perhaps the finest pipe of the contest. Again this was a superior performance by a player at the top of his game. I felt he was thinking his way through the first variation rather than just letting it flow naturally; really the only thing that separated his tune from Willie's.

John Patrick demonstrated, using a chanter he made himself, that pitch does not have to be high to be bright. His pipe combined that brightness with a richness that is too often lacking with the 482+ pipes often heard. Although I felt he could have done more with the phrasing of the Urlar and Thumb of Stewarts' White Banner, his touch with the multiple hiharins at the end of each variation created a perfect punctuation between the variations throughout. He played a four-pulse crunluath breabach which gave the feeling that he was jumping off of theme notes early.

Alex Gandy upheld the family name (as he always does), giving the audience a masterful Earl of Seaforth. I found his drones to be a little bass heavy. His connective notes in variation two did not always flow into the rhythm he had established, especially the short Ds at line ends.

Chris Armstrong came on with a pipe that was biggish, but refined and polished with plenty of depth. His Lament for Rory MacLoude was very strong, but some of his double echoes in the Urlar suffered from very short middle notes that were out of balance with the rest of the melody. This was a strong tune overall.

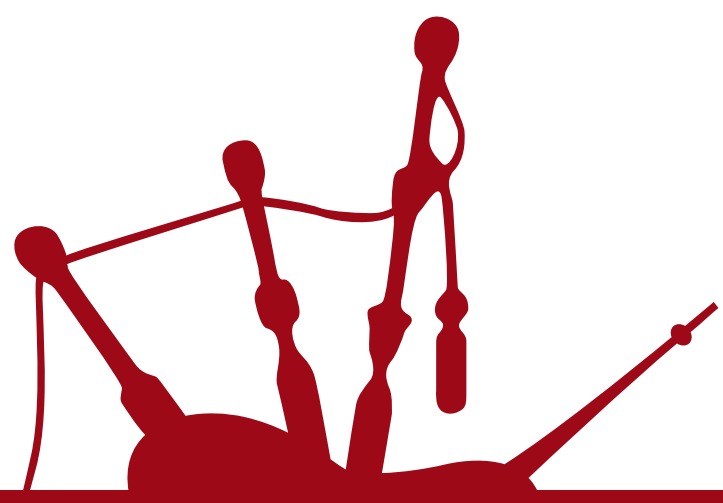
Andrew Carlisle finished the piobaireachd event playing Lament for Donald Duaghal MacKay. After an absolute flurry of tuning notes it took him a phrase to settle into his music, but once he did he provided, for me, the musical highlight of the contest. He established and maintained the

lament throughout his tune; a very emotionally fulfilling performance. Unfortunately he was fighting his instrument the entire time trying to keep chanter and drones together.

The light music event, the infamous "no-rules medley" showed players being a little more conservative in their selections than they have been at times in the past. Alex Gandy took the top spot in the event.







# The Last Happy Days—the Great Highland Bagpipe in JFK’s Camelot

By Robert Keith Gunther



**“I am certain that after the dust of centuries has passed over our cities, we, too, will be remembered not for victories or defeats in battle or in politics, but for our contribution to the human spirit.” (JFK)**

The recent 50th anniversary of the assassination of American President John Fitzgerald Kennedy (JFK) has invoked as much fascination as did his Presidency, affectionately known as Camelot. JFK’s assassination and the days immediately following it are seared into our collective memory ever since. An integral component of this collective memory of JFK’s presidency was the presence of the Great Highland Bagpipe during both the brightest and darkest days of his short but colorful presidency.

## JFK and the Great Highland Bagpipe

No one can actually pin down the exact reason why the Great Highland Bagpipe is so very closely associated with President Kennedy. Was it the ingrained memory of pipers at numerous state functions or of JFK being carried to his final resting place by the tune “The Mist Covered Mountains”? Was it a result of complicated individual memories of JFK or by what David von Drehle calls “the endless quest to recover the shattered promise of that man (which) reflects the unique relationship that many Americans had with their 35th President”? Was it a myriad of reasons: his Irish ancestry, his professed fondness for Scotland, the music itself, or the associated military precision of pipe band marching (JFK was a WWII veteran)? JFK’s unique presidential legacy to piping is not only present in collective memory, but also in the U.S. military via the recently disbanded USAF Reserve Pipe Band and the US Army Special Forces (Green Berets), who unofficially use pipers at major

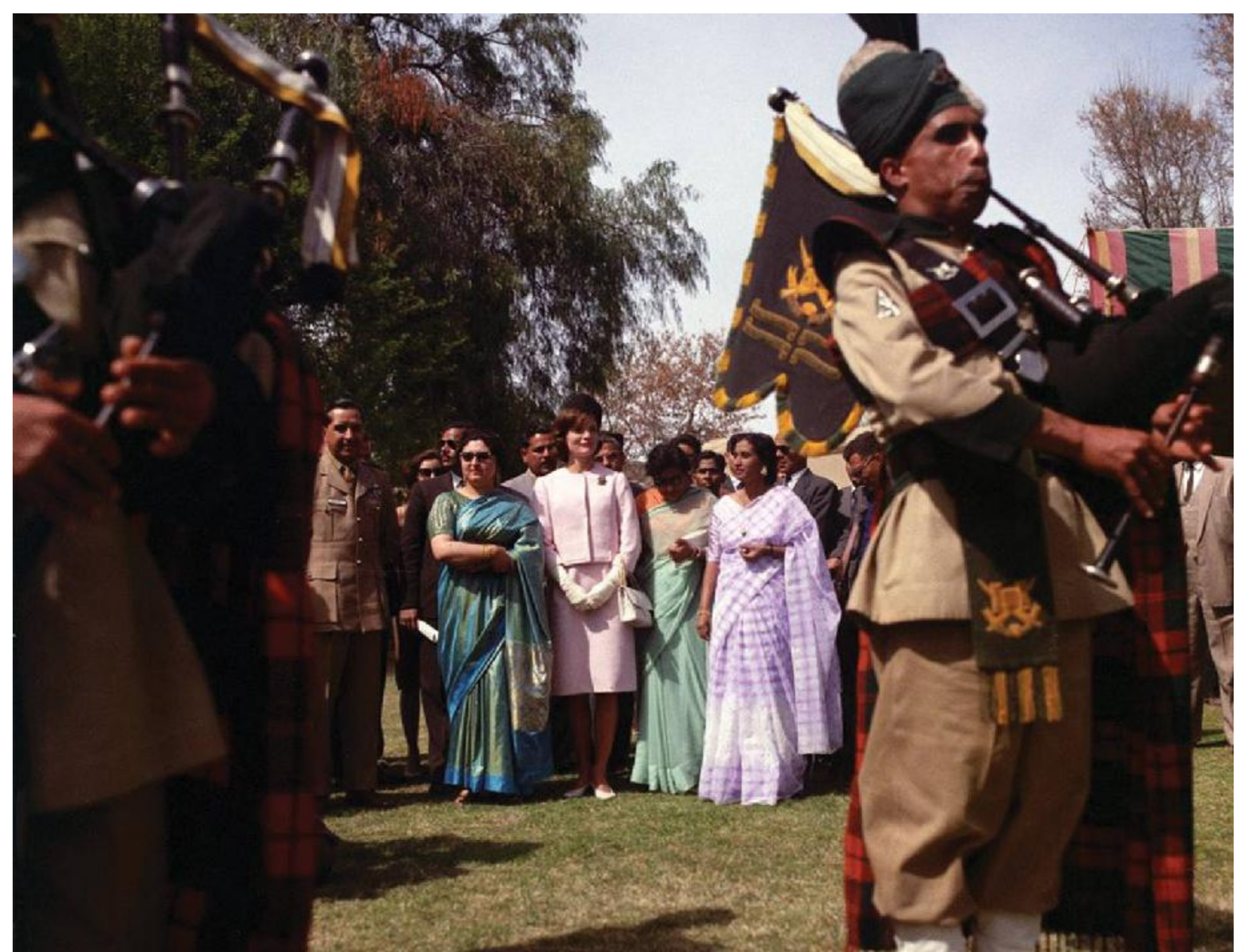
ceremonies and events? JFK was a huge benefactor and the unofficial “colonel in chief” of the Green Berets.

The goal of my article is to chronicle the presence of pipers and pipe bands during the vibrant days of JFK’s Camelot, not just the dim days that culminated his tenure. It is important to detail this positive aspect of piping to the collective memory and to verify incorrect or misleading versions that now surround this collective memory. Washington Star Music critic Irving Lowen’s comment about the JFK funeral is extremely valid. He said “Every momentous event breeds legends, and already the legends about the music that accompanied the dead march proliferate. Some are entirely wrong.” It is a common misperception that only one Pipe Band played during JFK’s state funeral when in fact two separate and distinct pipe bands actually received this honor. It is also a misperception that pipers symbolize the darkest day of his tenure when in fact they symbolize its brightest days.

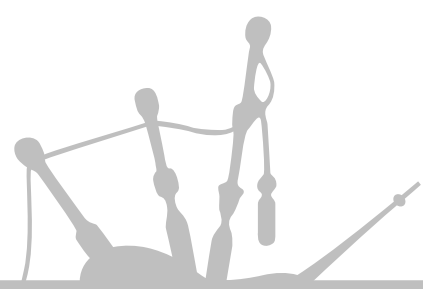
## The Kennedys and the Arts

American historian Lewis Mumford stated that President Kennedy was “the first American President to give art, literature, and music a place of dignity and honor in our (American) national life.” The Kennedys embraced art, music, literature, and culture to showcase American contributions to the world body. Lewis Mumford added that “the first and last major entertainment to be held at the Kennedy White House featured the bagpipes, an instrument appealing to his Irish ancestry.”

**Mrs. Kennedy in Pakistan with the Kyber Rifles Pipers (March 24, 1962)**







Numerous official state visits at the White House or official visits abroad incorporated the Great Highland Bagpipe. The USAF Pipe Band performed at the very first state dinner for President Habib Bourguiba of Tunisia on May 3, 1961. Mrs. Kennedy took a trip to Pakistan on 24 March 1962, where she listened to pipers from the Khyber Rifles. The USAF Pipe Band played for JFK at the Dulles Airport Dedication ceremony on November 17, 1962. Pipers Robert Fulton and George Lucas of the USAF Pipe Band danced in the East room of the White House for a performance of the musical “Brigadoon” after the formal dinner given in honor of King Hassan II of Morocco’s state visit on March 27, 1963. A silent film of the performance can be seen at [www.jfklibrary.org/Asset-Viewer/Archives/JFKPPP-45.aspx](http://www.jfklibrary.org/Asset-Viewer/Archives/JFKPPP-45.aspx). Piper Jerry Cashion also states that the USAF Pipers played at the Annual Easter Egg Roll in 1963.



USAF Pipe Band at the White House for the state visit of the Irish Prime Minister (notice the saffron kilts & piper’s plaids) (around 15 OCT 1963)

### Black Watch Charity Concert at the White House (aka OPERATION WHITEHOUSE)

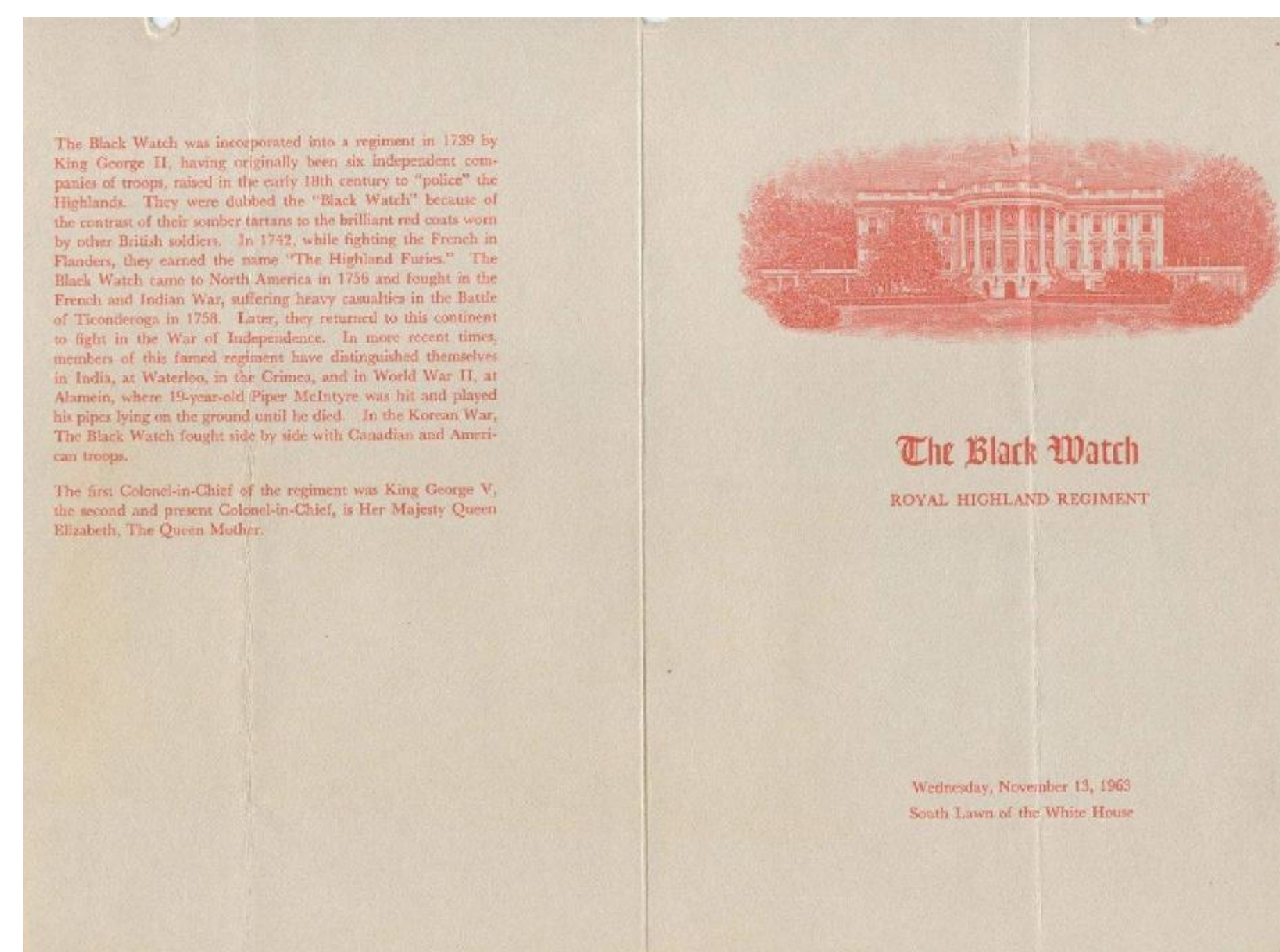
The most publicized Piping event, as well as the last official state event of the JFK White House, was the Black Watch charity performance on the South Lawn on Wednesday, November 13, 1963. It was dubbed OPERATION WHITEHOUSE by the Black Watch Officer Commanding (OC) Tour. President Kennedy’s affinity for Scotland (and piping) are clearly evident in his opening remarks at this event. It can be viewed at the following

JFK Library link: <http://www.jfklibrary.org/Asset-Viewer/Archives/JFKWHF-WHN11.aspx>.

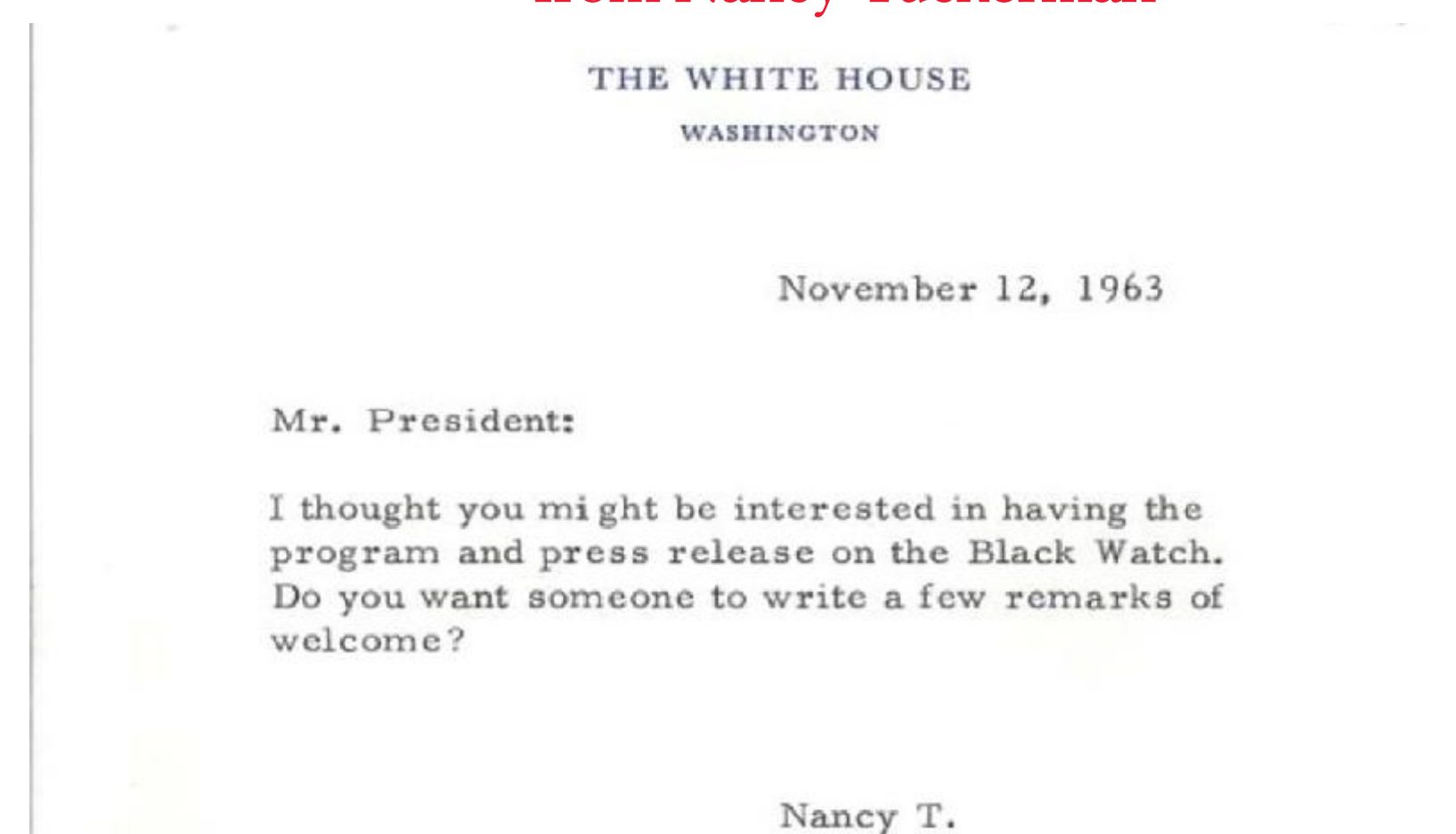
First Lady Jackie Kennedy wrote after the event that “I don’t know when I have seen the President enjoy himself more.”

On September 5, 1963, the USAF Pipe Band and the USMC band played for the arrival of King Zahir and Queen Homaira of Afghanistan on the South Lawn of the White House. This event had “big plans for starting the fall social season” in 1963. The event was initially planned for outdoors, but because of rain, the 116 guests were moved into the State Dining Room for the initial portion. After dinner, JFK and the King observed the USMC band and USAF Pipers followed by fireworks from the second floor balcony of the White House. It was described as “a magnificent display”. A silent video of this event can be seen at [www.jfklibrary.org/Asset-Viewer/Archives/USG-03-A.aspx](http://www.jfklibrary.org/Asset-Viewer/Archives/USG-03-A.aspx)

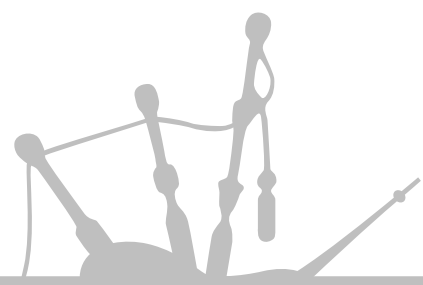
The USAF Pipe Band Quartet performed at the official state visit of Prime Minister Lemass of Ireland around October 15, 1963. Jerry Cashion commented that at this event JFK said “Here come the ladies from Hell”. The JFK library has an audio recording of this state visit (no piping however) as well. James Neary of the USAF Pipe Band was put on official military orders to go from DC to New York to borrow the Irish kilts from the County Tyrone Pipe Band in NY in lieu of wearing “Irish costumes” that the White House Social secretary had acquired from a costume shop.



### Program and Press Release memorandum from Nancy Tuckerman







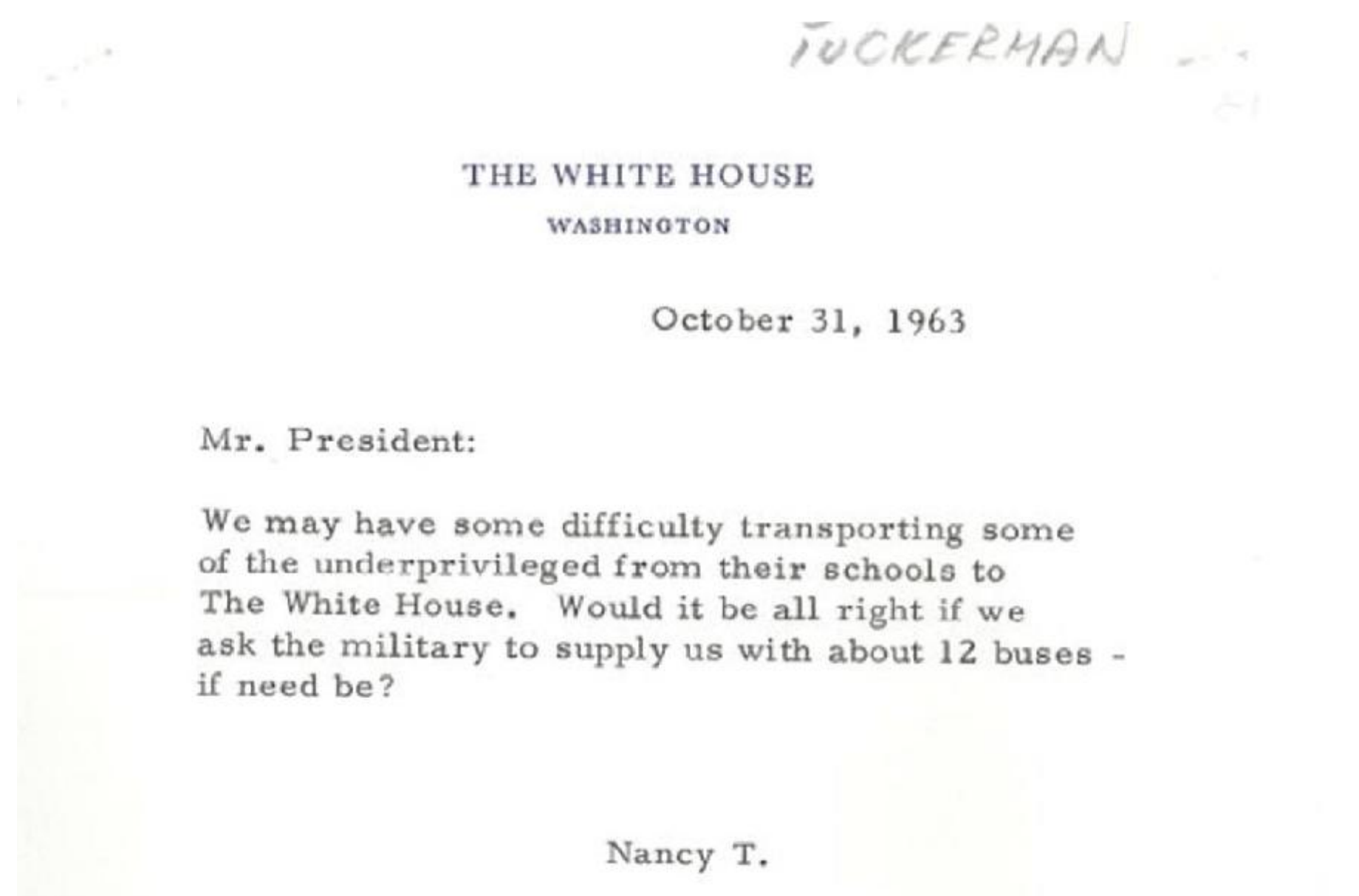
## The Last Happy Days – the Great Highland Bagpipe in JFK’s Camelot

Upon their arrival at Andrews Air Force Base in Washington, DC, the Black Watch band was greeted by the USAF Pipe Band on the day of the performance at 1200. They had lunch and changed into their regimental attire for the event. The last plane didn’t arrive till 1300 that day which shortened the timeline, to say the least, according to the Black Watch’s Red Hackle magazine. The article went on to state that the event came about when JFK told the UK Ambassador that he wished to be “serenaded by the Black Watch” thus the charity event came about. The Black Watch had a 2-day period to accommodate the performance. November 14, 1963 was an alternate day in case of in bad weather.

What is remarkable about the event is that the President opened up the White House to 1,700 local Washington DC area children as guests to this historical performance. If you look closely at the audience you will see how the children present were an integrated composite of America, something that was quite uncommon in the early sixties in the segregated United States. It was not just a charity performance on the South Lawn, but also a composite of JFK’s views on Civil Rights.

The President opted not to invite the 400 children of members of Congress as it would have detracted from ticket sales of the Black Watch performance in Washington DC on November 19, 1963 as well as causing a traffic jam by the mothers who would have taken their children to the event. Nancy Tuckerman, the White House Social Secretary, had the President approve the use of twelve military buses to transport the children to the White House.

An interesting perspective of the event is from Michael Daly, whose Irish father, Chuck Daly, was a special



**Military Bus permission Request  
from Social Secretary Nancy Tuckerman**

TUCKERMAN

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

November 12, 1963

Mr. President:

RE: Black Watch Performance

At 4:00 pm, a military aide will escort you from your office, (around in front of the bleachers so the children can see you) to the center of the field. A microphone will be there for you to make a few words of greeting.

Major Wingate-Gray (commandant of the Black Watch) will then present you with the Officers' Regimental dirk. After your words of reply, the Marine Band will play the British and American anthems. Then you and Major Wingate-Gray will be escorted up the stairs to the Blue Room Balcony to watch the performance.

Our guests will be underprivileged children from Washington, music students from Montgomery County Schools, members of the St. Andrews Society, and Ambassadors of the Commonwealth countries.

The following people will be sitting on the Blue Room Balcony with you and your family.  
Amb. and Lady Ormesby Gore, with one child and nurse  
General and Mrs. St. John - top British military aide  
General Maxwell Taylor  
Mr. and Mrs. Auchincloss  
Major and Mrs. Wingate-Gray - commandant of the Black Watch.

Nancy T.

**Black Watch performance memorandum  
from Social Secretary Nancy Tuckerman**

assistant to President Kennedy. According to the article “My Last Day with JFK,” Michael Daly was selected as a White House junior host for the youngsters who attended the event. According to Daly, his main task of the day was “little more than to point toward an enormous supply of cookies. They devoured in what had to be a world record”. Another interesting moment was described by former Black Watch Soldier Dennis Byrne. He held the dirk that was presented to JFK as a gift from the Black Watch. In David Taylor’s article from the Daily Record, Bryne tells of the trouble they got into when the Black Watch Soldiers came across a huge trampoline in the White House Gardens. He said “We were jumping up and down on this trampoline in full Highland dress – you can imagine the carry-on at that age.” Secret Service Agent Clint Hill was the one who told them off. He was the agent with the President in the limo in Dallas that dark day.

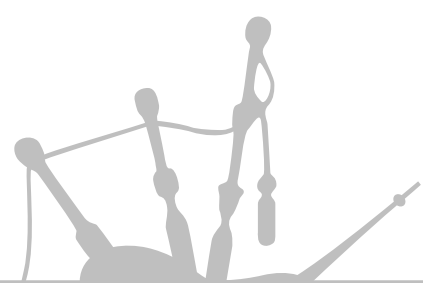
Mr. Daly wrote that the Black Watch filed out onto the South Lawn at 4 P.M. and upon the President’s opening speech “he seemed very much a chief and the spectators all rose unbidden.” Daly commented that he figured he would





*The Voice* Vol. 44, No. 1 Spring 2015 24





Gift photo from Jackie Kennedy to each Black Watch Band Member

day as spectators. Seamus Neary of the USAF Pipe Band remembers speaking with Lt-Col Duncan Beat, the tour's musical director in a restaurant near their DC hotel. Neary stated "He was not only a delightful person, but also a very fine musician." Beat went on to become the Director of the Royal School of Military Music at Kneller Hall.

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON  
November 14, 1963

Dear Major Wingate-Gray,

How can I ever find words to thank you for the privilege of having the Black Watch perform at The White House. The precision, formation and timing of your brigade leaves no margin for improvement, and I don't know when I have seen The President enjoy himself more.

I believe this ceremony was one of the most stirring we have ever had at The White House, and it was an afternoon which will be remembered by one and all for a long time, including both Caroline and John, who actually talk more about their sitting on the porch with Major Wingate-Gray than the Black Watch performance.

I am enclosing a number of photographs which I hope you will enjoy, and have asked that a photograph for each member of the Black Watch be sent to you as a memento.

The President joins me in sending our very best wishes to you and Mrs. Wingate-Gray, along with our deep thanks for the honor of having the Black Watch at The White House.

Sincerely yours,

*Jackie Kennedy*

Thank you letter from Jackie Kennedy to Major Wingate-Gray (and the Black Watch) post South Lawn Performance

Immediately following the South Lawn Performance, Mrs. Kennedy sent a thank you letter to Major Wingate Gray on November 14, 1963. She wrote "The precision, formation, and timing of your brigade leaves no margin for improvement, and I don't know when I have seen the President enjoy himself more." The First Lady also commented on how the Kennedy children, Caroline and John, interacted with Major Wingate Gray on the porch. She enclosed photos for each member of the band as mementos. As if the Black Watch performing on your lawn couldn't be topped, the President was visited at the White House a few hours later by Greta Garbo. Perhaps this was just an ordinary day in Camelot?

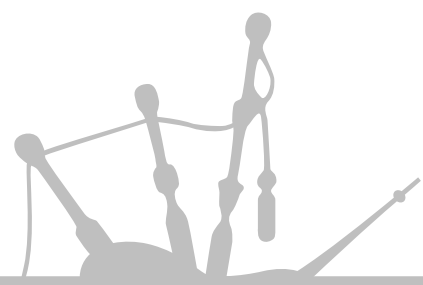
On November 17, 1963, Drum Major/Piper James Neary of the USAF Pipe Band hosted a party at his place on Bolling Air Force Base, Washington, D.C. It included pipers and drummers from the both the USAF Pipe Band and the Black Watch. The Black Watch performed in DC on November 18, 1963. USAF Pipe Band members included: Sandy Jones, Jim Neary, John Bosworth, Alex Massie, John Ryan, and Jack McGilvary. Black Watch pipers included Alec Menzies, Bobby O'Donnell, Drew Carstairs, Jimmy Hume, Dave Robertson, and drummer Lenny Lang. Neary has an audio tape of the party featuring Black Watch pipers Bobby O'Donnell and Dave Robertson singing traditional songs.

## The State Funeral

According to the "Personal Memoirs of the State Funeral of JFK, November 22-25, 1963," PFC Arthur A. Carlson, who led the riderless horse during the funeral, heard that Prince Phillip commented that there was no need to hurry to get to the States to attend the funeral as "it would take at least 2-weeks to plan and execute such a funeral." This massive and ornate state funeral was executed significantly quicker than Prince Phillip's best guess at the behest of those actually participating in it.

Thomas F. Reid, a 26-year-old Captain, the Company Commander of Delta Company, 3rd US Infantry, (The Old Guard) stated that "The Military District of Washington (MDW) had a master plan for conducting a State Funeral, but we never rehearsed the funeral of the incumbent president, so no specific plan had been formulated for him. We only had the basic master plan to work with as a template."





As a result, the state funeral preparations were highly accelerated and chaotic with almost hourly changes to the plan, including the late breaking addition of two pipe bands into the ceremony. Captain Reid stated that when “the **Air Force Bagpipe Band** was given a role in the ceremony, I had to find a way to fit them into the sequence of events. At the last minute, I was told to expect the arrival of a nine-man detachment from the **British Black Watch Regiment**, and to fit them into the ceremony someplace.”

A key point to note is that varying memories exist of the state funeral, because no two participants in it had the same view. This must be taken into account when reading through the multiple sources available. This is plausible explanation for the misleading collective memory of the time period.

The entire funeral plan is detailed in “The Last Salute: Civil and Military Funerals, 1921-1969.” Chapter 23 covers the State Funeral of President Kennedy from 22-25 November 1963. The funeral order of march was from the U.S. Capital Building to the White House to St. Matthew’s Cathedral to Arlington National Cemetery.

### The Black Watch

Piper Bruce Cowie and the rest of the Black Watch band were approaching their hotel when news came through of the assassination. “It was surreal,” said Bruce. When news of the assassination filtered across the country the band’s evening performance was called off out of respect. The Black Watch tour modified its performances and tunes to accommodate the particular US state’s feelings in regards to the national state of mourning.

According to the Red Hackle Magazine, immediately after the assassination the Black Watch performed a small public tribute to JFK in Knoxville, TN. The Pipe Major played “Flowers of the Forest,” followed by the American National Anthem. The tribute was initiated with a short speech by the OC Tour, in which the Black Watch were “offering our empathy to the American people and associating ourselves with them at this time.”

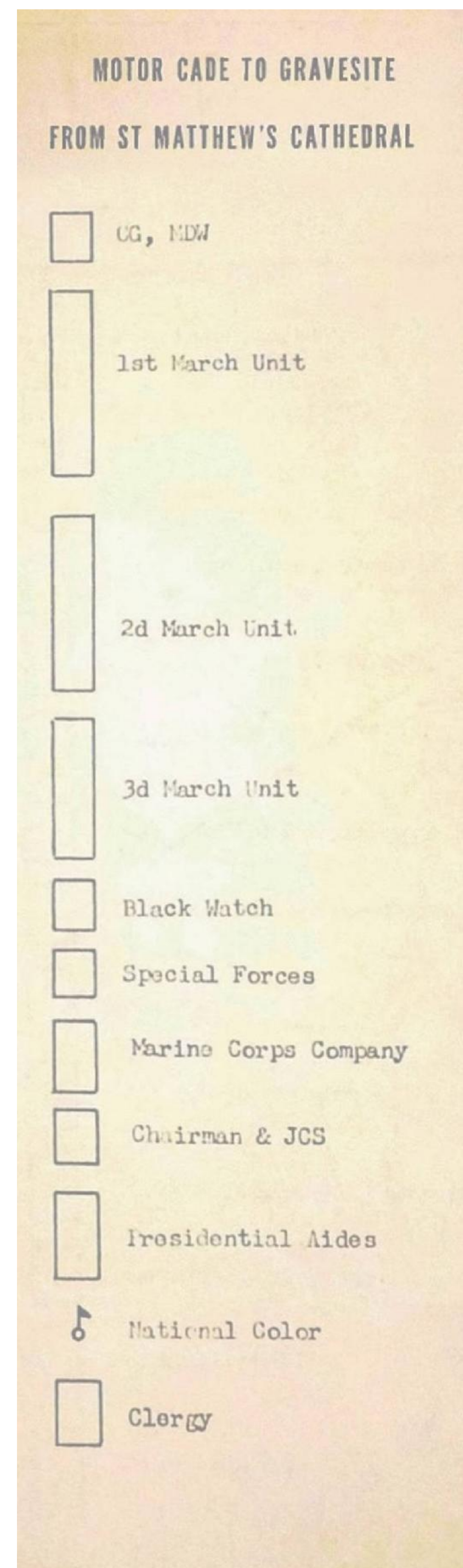
On 24 November 1963, the Pipe Major and eight pipers flew from Knoxville, TN to Washington, DC and were met by Mr. R.C. Robertson of the British Army staff. The 9-man Black Watch contingent was invited to march in JFK’s funeral procession by Jackie Kennedy, who remembered how much JFK had enjoyed the South Lawn performance. Piper Bruce Cowie confirmed that some of the pipers

marched with cuts and bruises from a bar fight in Kentucky, defending JFK’s name on the evening of the assassination. Piper Bruce Cowie stated “there were a few of the pipe band and also several of the military band that did get involved and a few did require hospital treatment.”

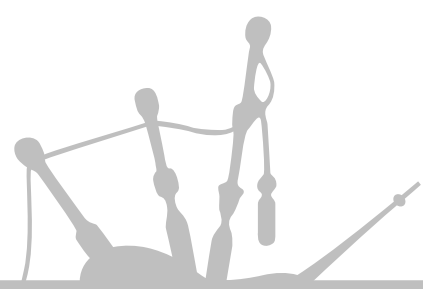
### The White House to St. Matthew’s Cathedral

According to Martin Dalziel’s article “Black Watch Piper will honour JFK 50-years on,” The Black Watch received a letter from Mrs. Kennedy asking the band and their pipe major to perform four tunes at the funeral procession. Piper Cowie stated: “It is a hard thing to explain how I felt at the time. It was only later, afterwards, that there’s a realization of what happened. “You just realize you were part of history. The Kennedys as a family seemed to have a nice touch.”

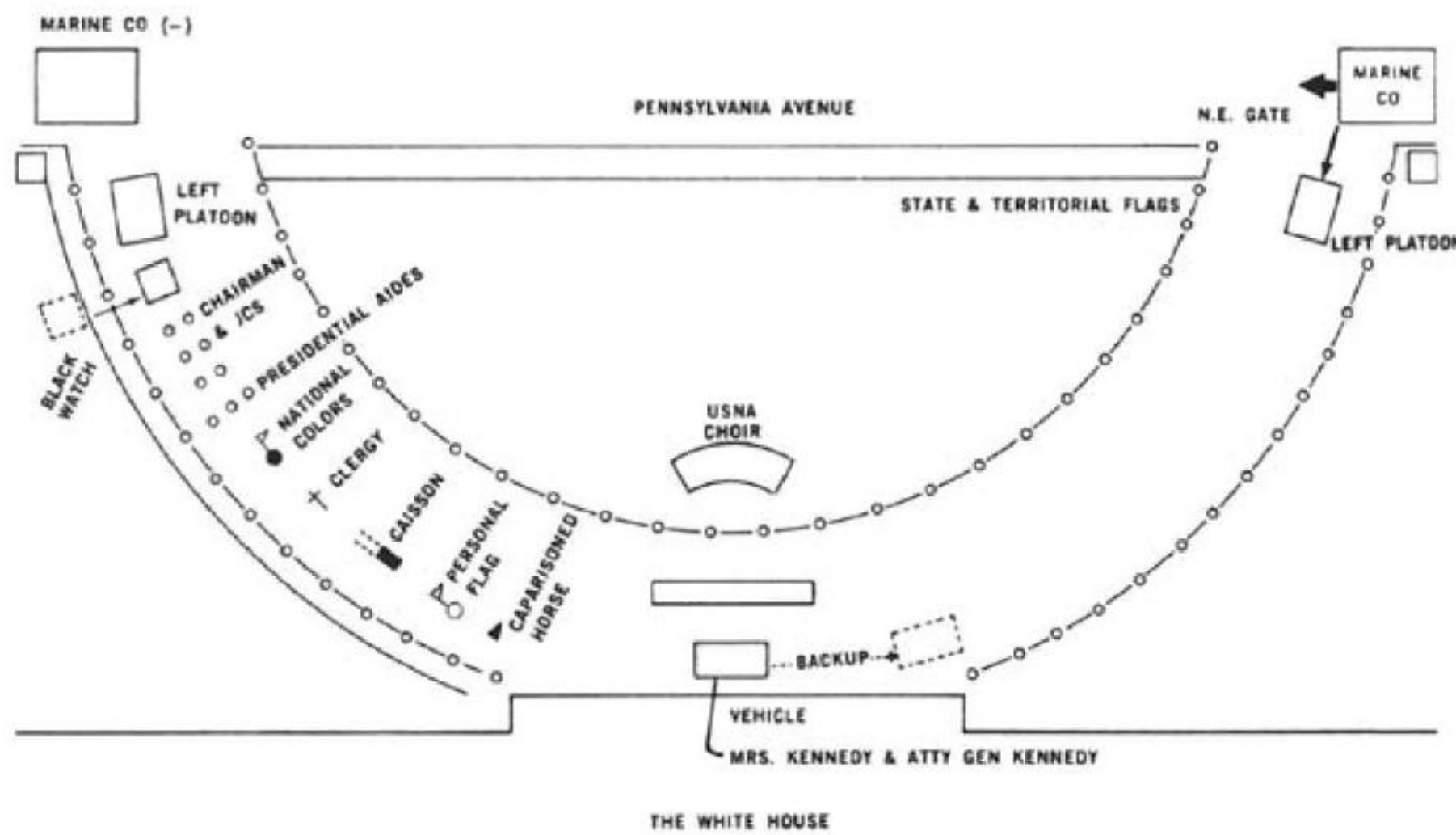
The Black Watch Pipe contingent was in the third order of March behind a Company of U.S. Marines. They were the 24th element out of 32 that made up the funeral procession. The Black Watch entered the funeral procession near the northwest gate of the White House when the funeral procession stopped at the White House momentarily. The Black Watch pipers left the funeral procession immediately after the service at St. Matthew’s Cathedral. The Red Hackle magazine mentioned that “It was bitter cold in Washington that day, with a wintry wind sweeping the wide avenues. The party had to wait two hours outside the White House for the







## The Last Happy Days – the Great Highland Bagpipe in JFK's Camelot



### Black Watch formation at the White House at 11:40 A.M on November 25, 1963 (8 o'clock)

procession to arrive (from the Capital building), by which time fingers were fast becoming numb and frozen.”

As stated in the Last Salute, “After the final plans were drafted on 24 November, only one more change was made in the composition of the procession to St. Matthew’s Cathedral: a small contingent of bagpipers, the Black Watch of the Royal Highland Regiment, was to join the procession at the White House. This unprecedented participation of a foreign unit in the funeral for a President of the United States was the result of another of Mrs. Kennedy’s requests. The pipers were to fall in behind the Marine company at the rear of the military escort.”

Irving Lowen wrote in his article “Accurate Listing of Funeral Music” that at “11:40 a.m the cortege leaves the White House for St. Matthew’s Cathedral. The music was provided by nine pipers from the Black Watch of the Royal Highlanders Regiment, who played “The Brown Haired Maiden,” “The Badge of Scotland,” “The 51st Highland Division,” and “The Barren Rocks of Aden.” Other tunes reported to have been played included The Green Hills of Tyrol, When the Battle’s Over, and Old Rustic Bridge. Lowen added that the pipe tunes played “were identified by Pipe Maj. Anderson of the Royal Highlanders Regiment through Mr. Derek Day of the British Embassy. “

Private First Class (PFC) Arthur A. Carlson commented on the funeral procession from the White House to the cathedral, “At one point bagpipes (from the Black Watch) played. I had trouble getting the beat, but once I learned to march with the music it gave me a burst of energy. That is music to fight by.”

PFC Carlson went on to add that the march from the cathedral to the cemetery was the longest march segment of the state funeral, estimated at three to four miles long.

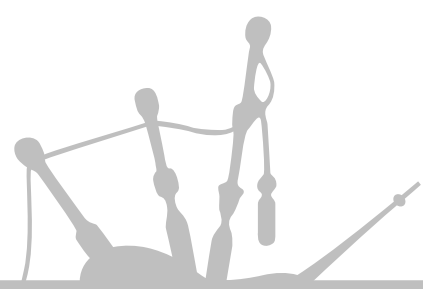
Mourners lined the route from the cathedral to the gates of Arlington National Cemetery. “I remember I thought I had seen it all with the thousands of mourners at the Capitol, however that was nothing compared to this. It was also an eerie sensation that except for a few shouts of encouragement from the crowd, there was absolutely no noise except for the deafening sound of drums. I was haunted by the sound of drums for days after the funeral,” commented Carlson.

Martin Dalziel’s article states that Bruce Cowrie, of Kirriemuir in Angus, was 24 in 1963. He recently traveled to London to play alongside opera singer Alfie Boe to mark the 50th anniversary of the assassination. Bruce has now given up playing the pipes and his last performance was at



The Nine Pipers of the Black Watch during the funeral procession included (left to right): 3rd column - Lance Corporal Charles Clark, Charles Graham, and Andrew Carstairs. 2nd column - Bruce Cowie, Peter Campbell, and Ronald Cairns. 1st Column - P/M James B. Anderson, Jim Mackie, and Sgt J. McNie. Pipe Major James B. Anderson died in 2004





a recent family wedding, which fulfilled a promise made to his niece when she was a young girl. Major Ronnie Proctor, Black Watch Association secretary said: "Bruce is the lasting connection of The Black Watch to the whole series of events. It is a great honor that a foreign country's pipers and servicemen are allowed to take part in an overseas head of state's funeral. It's pretty unique."

According to the Brechin-Advertiser's article, "Brechin-born Pipe Major who helped mourn JFK", Piper Charles Clark "is also believed to have come up with the score that eventually became one of Scotland's best known tunes "Amazing Grace." He entered the Black Watch before completing his apprenticeship and began what was to prove to be a highly rewarding military career. Something which would continue as he also saw service in the Royal Scots. Another significant musical contribution was a tune Clark wrote for Princess Anne's wedding. The article stated that he died in 2001.

Michael Wingate Gray died in November 1995. After the Kennedy funeral he went on to become a Brigadier General and the commanding officer of the SAS.

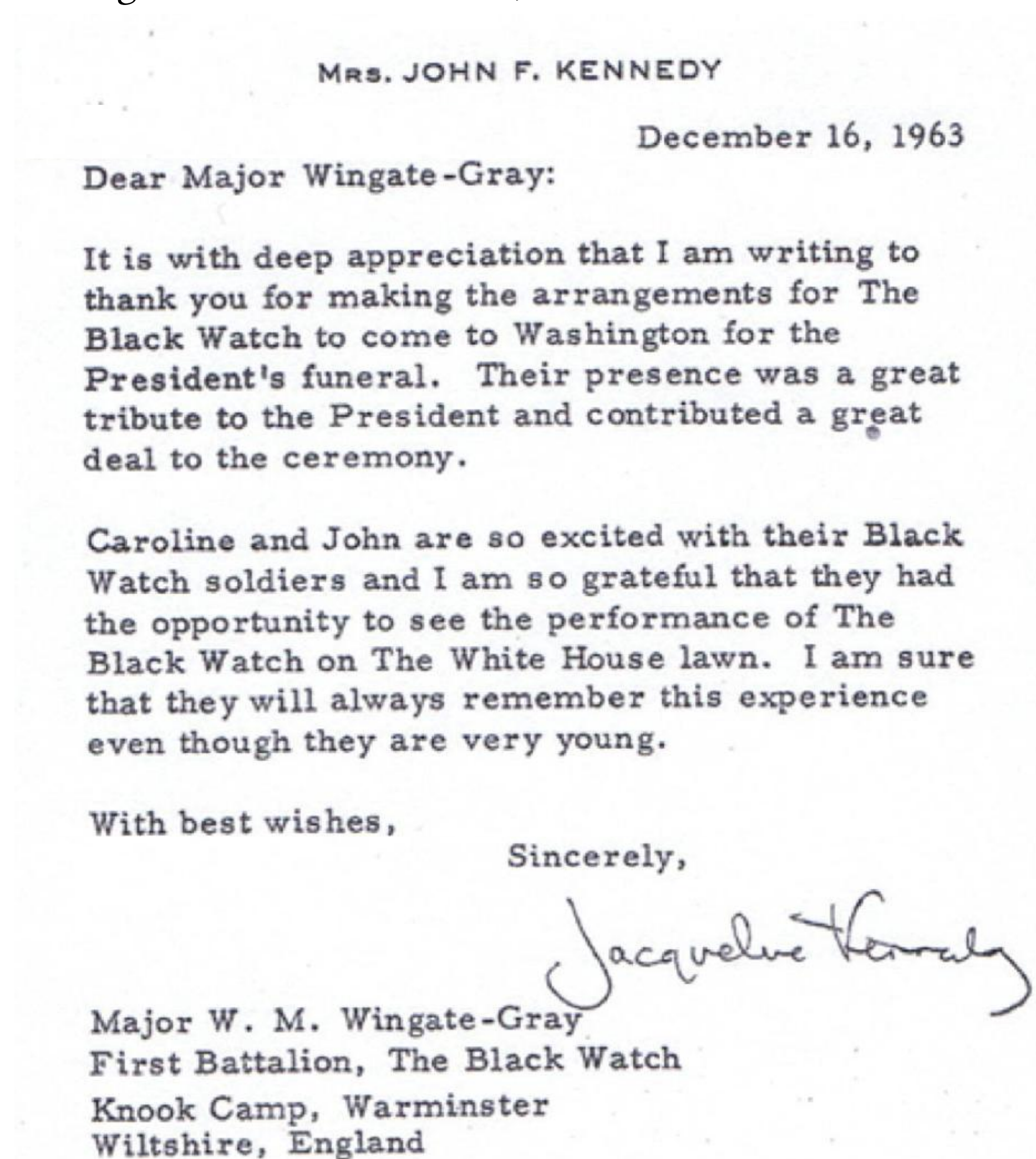
## Tune Selection

During the funeral procession, the Black Watch contingent didn't play the normal repertoire associated with British military funerals, but instead played tunes featured during the South Lawn Performance that were specifically requested by the State Funeral planners.

In the BBC article, "The Black Watch Piper who played at Kennedy's Funeral," Piper Bruce Cowie stated that "the tune choice did not reflect the music the band would normally play at a funeral, and the Black Watch Piping Contingent struggled to keep time with their US counterparts." He stated that "As far as we were concerned, it was a bit of a debacle. We were flown from Kentucky and went to an American airbase. We spent two-and-a-half hours doing the funeral marches, Flowers of the Forest, Land of the Liel, and all that stuff. Then our pipe major came in and he was livid – to say he was unhappy was to put it mildly. The bonnet went flying in the corner and he said, 'you can forget it.' They don't slow march, they do what you call trail arms – which means they are faster than we were.

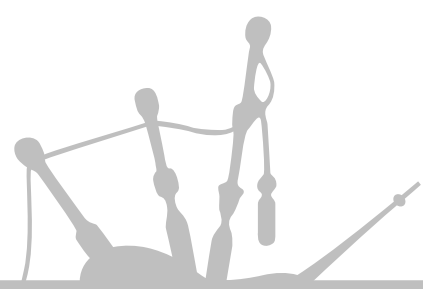
Piper Cowie went on to add that the "pipe major was caught short and nobody was happy with the tunes we had to play because they weren't what we would say was in

keeping with a funeral. They weren't even slow marches. On reflection, if the pipe major had been given more time he could have come up with better tunes, but they were picked by the Americans. We weren't happy about it, but the Americans seemed to enjoy what we played". Piper Cowie's comments were listed in the Daily Record Article "Last Surviving member of pipe band at JFK's funeral tells of row over service music." The Red Hackle magazine states that "the funeral pace was laid down as 100 paces to the minute, which accords neither with our funeral march nor with any British marching step". The solution was found when "the Pipe Major had to thus sit down and practice his pipers that night (November 24, 1963) in a selection of 4/4's and 4/2's (misprint - should have read 2/4's) to obtain the right speed." A clip reported to be the Black Watch participation in the JFK State funeral can be seen at: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=14Dl4ytKpq0>. Consequently, Major Steven Small, Director of British Army Bagpipe Music, noted that the mentioned clip is actually a dubbed over version of the film footage. He stated that "the YOUTUBE clip is not completely accurate as the sound is dubbed from a recording and not what was played on the day. This is evident as you can clearly hear drums playing, there were no drummers at the funeral, only 9 pipers. I have spent many hours trying to find footage that is more accurate, without success."



Thank you letter from Jackie Kennedy to  
Major Wingate-Gray (and the Black Watch)  
for their participation in the state funeral





## *The Last Happy Days – the Great Highland Bagpipe in JFK's Camelot*

Immediately following the state funeral on November 25, 1963, the nine Black Watch pipers flew to Lexington, Kentucky, and rejoined the rest of the Black Watch tour, which had a performance that night. The OC Tour spoke with the local sponsors for an hour and a half as well as the British embassy in Washington on whether to perform that night as it was a national day of mourning. A large audience assembled for that night's show and a second tribute to JFK "went down excellently" according to the Red Hackle magazine. It also stated that "the funeral party got back in a general's plane right before the show". What a day for those nine pipers!

Keeping with her impeccable etiquette, Mrs. Kennedy sent a thank you letter to the Major Wingate-Gray on December 16, 1963. She stated about the pipers that "their presence was a great tribute to the President and contributed a great deal to the ceremony." She also thanks the Black Watch for sending Two Black Watch toy Soldiers to the Kennedy children as birthday presents. The Black Watch sent figurines to the Kennedy children for John John's birthday, which occurred on the day of the state funeral and Caroline's birthday, which occurred two days afterwards. The children had their birthday party together shortly after the state funeral was concluded. The thank-you letter is distinctly different in that the White House logo is replaced simply by Mrs. John F. Kennedy.

### **The USAF Pipes & Drums**

The USAF Pipe Band was originally organized in 1950 by Colonel George S. Howard. An article from September 13, 1963 states that it was composed "exclusively of players of Scottish and Irish ancestry, attired in authentic kilts of the (Billy) Mitchell tartan. The band alternated playing with the bugle section of the USAF Drum and Bugle Corps while on the march and during field exhibitions."



Left to Right are: Mel Ross, Jerry Cashion, Dick Rau, George Lucas, Ward Willis, Leroy Carroll, John Bosworth, Bob Fulton, Sandy Jones, John Ryan and Jack McGillvary with Jim "Seamus" Neary out front.... circa 1963



Left to Right are: Mel Ross, Jerry Cashion, Dick Rau, George Lucas, Ward Willis, Leroy Carroll, John Bosworth, Bob Fulton, Sandy Jones, John Ryan and Jack McGillvary with Jim "Seamus" Neary out front.... circa 1963.

Read more: [www.dvidshub.net/image/1055389/historical-reunion-military-bagpipers-50th-anniversary-president-kennedys-funeral#ixzz2p3SaCFJA](http://www.dvidshub.net/image/1055389/historical-reunion-military-bagpipers-50th-anniversary-president-kennedys-funeral#ixzz2p3SaCFJA)

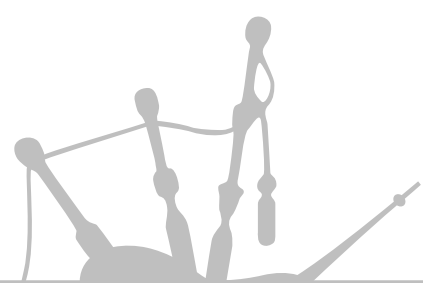
According to U.S. Air Force Piper Jerry Cashion, the USAF Pipe Band was in New Orleans when JFK was assassinated. The band had arrived the day before and toured Bourbon Street, and now the men were relaxing in Navy barracks, preparing for an evening show when they were notified. The Pipe Major received a call from Washington ordering The Pipe Band's immediate return to Bolling Air Force Base.

In Geoff Redick's article "Local Bagpiper recalls JFK's funeral," Piper Cashion said, "We were in a gymnasium, ready to play a job down in New Orleans, Louisiana, and we were getting dressed, ready to go. And the announcement came over the loudspeaker that Kennedy had been shot." He added, "Immediately, they packed us up and brought us back to Washington, D.C. We had to stay on base all weekend, and learn this new tune they told us we had to play "Mist Covered Mountain." The band learned it quickly and practiced the ceremonial march ahead of the funeral on November 25 during that cold Monday in Washington, D.C.

According to the article "The 11th Air Wing at Bolling Air Force Base and the Kennedy Funeral," The Pipe Band arrived back in Washington and returned to Bolling, landing just ahead of the plane carrying cabinet members who were on the way to Japan for a summit meeting when they received the news of the president's death. Because of the president's fondness for pipe music, The USAF Pipe Band was invited to play at the interment ceremony.

Monday, November 25 turned out to be a bright, sunny, but very cold day. The pipe band reported to Arlington in the early morning for a run-through of the graveside ceremonies to take place later that day. "We rehearsed in





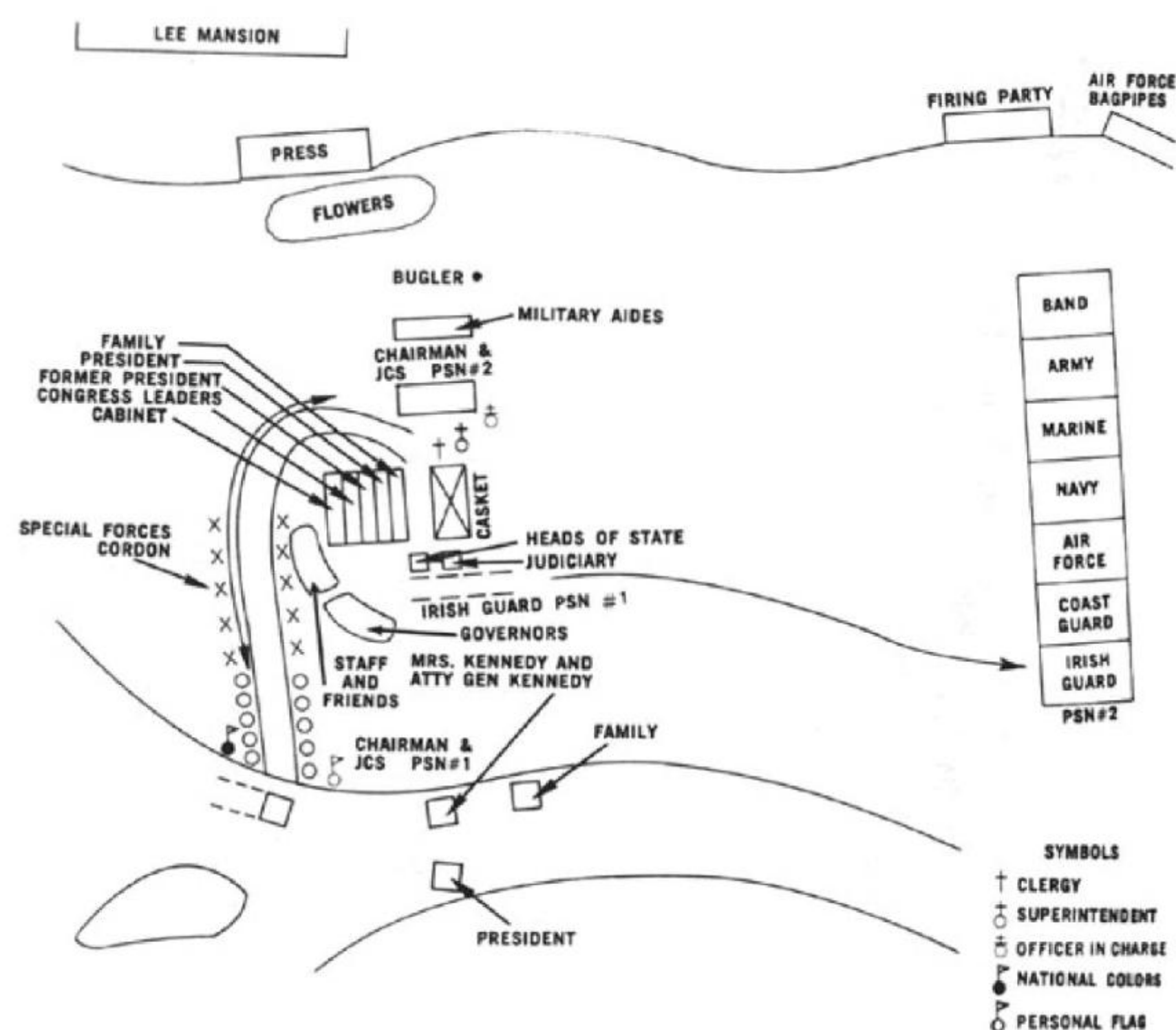
## The Last Happy Days – the Great Highland Bagpipe in JFK's Camelot

our full outfits,” (kilts with the special Billy Mitchell tartans designed for the band) recalled Bosworth, “and it was cold as hell.” After their dry run, the pipe band moved to an area near the Old Amphitheater to run through the music and marching one more time to ensure perfection.

The band then staged “on the hill in front of the Custis-Lee Mansion. It was a perfect view to watch the magnificent, solemn pageantry of a state funeral unfold. Sergeant Bosworth related that they were waiting in position for about an hour and a half and could see each marching unit in the state funeral as it approached the gates to Arlington. Upon arrival at Arlington National Cemetery, The Marine Band opened the graveside rites with ruffles and flourishes and played the national anthem. When the anthem ended, the Air Force pipers began.

Irving Lowens wrote that at 2:43 p.m. “As the coffin was moved from the caisson to the burial site, the Air Force pipers played “the Mist Covered Mountains.” The band slowly marched by the grave and onto the street. They were led by Drum Major Seamus (Jim) Neary. Overhead, fifty jet fighters flew in formation followed by Air Force One. After the funeral, the band returned to Bolling Air Force Base “with the knowledge that they had contributed to a momentous event.” The USAF Pipe Band performance (and the fifty jets flying overhead) can be watched at 32:27 into this 34-minute clip: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3KJQkn6zUvM>.

As stated in the Last Salute, “*In a wide departure from customary graveside procedure in which a band, standing fast in formation, plays an appropriate hymn as*



USAF Pipers located top right

Eastern United States Pipe Band Association



Piper & Drummer Line up at Arlington National Cemetery  
The USAF Pipe Band Roster for the JFK State Funeral included (as originally lined up): SSgt James Neary, drum major, SSgt N. B. “Sandy” Jones, A1C Tom Kirkpatrick, TSgt Melvin (“Mel”) Ross, SrA “Jack” McGilvary, TSgt George Lucas, A1C Jerry Cashion, SrA Robert (“Bob”) Fulton, SrA Richard (“Dick”) Rau, SSgt John Ryan, SSgt LeRoy Carroll (Bass Drum), SrA Ward Willis, SSgt John G. Bosworth

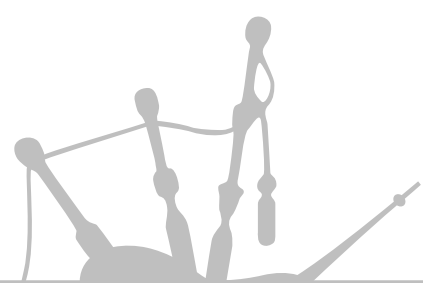
*the casket is carried from the caisson to the grave, Mrs. Kennedy preferred that the Air Force Bagpipe Band march past the gravesite playing “Mist Covered Mountain” while the movement of the casket was taking place. The Air Force group was so scheduled, and a route permitting the group to perform as requested was marked out at the gravesite.”*

Piper Cashion stated that “Being at the graveside, piping, I think the thing that got me the most was the fifty thunder jets that flew over, right after we played. It was very moving. And I was very proud to be there.”

Drum Major James “Seamus” Neary, the son of an Irish Immigrant, was also a piper, but ended up as the USAF Pipe Band Drum Major. Neary actually started out in the U.S. Army as a piper from 1955 to 1958 with the 2nd Army Pipe Band. He then joined the USAF Pipes & Drums from 1958 through 1976. He recalls the first time playing for JFK was when he was president-elect in an ice arena. Neary was friends with Liam Clancy and Tommy Makem and details a party the famous Irish folk singers came to with the USAF Pipe Band after the folk singers’ performance at the JFK White House on St. Patrick’s Day 1963.

Sandy Jones, according to the North American Academy of Piping website, began piping at the age of eight under George Mars of Victoria, British Columbia, Canada. He served as the Pipe Major for the U.S. Air Force Pipe Band for eight years. As a member of the pipe band he often performed for presidents, heads of state, and dignitaries of foreign nations. During his tenure in the Air Force he continued his studies of the bagpipe with Jack Chisolm of Inverness, Scotland, and the late John MacFadyen. In 1970, he





and John MacFadyen co-founded the North American Academy of Piping. Sandy is the author of the tutor *'Beginning the Bagpipe.'* He travels throughout North America judging at highland games, conducting workshops, and performing at recitals. He retired from The Citadel in Charleston, SC, where he taught bagpipes for twenty-five years. Currently he is active with the Grandfather Mountain Highland Games and the Charleston Scottish Games.

Gerald Cashion joined the USAF Pipe Band in 1960. In 1961, Cashion was chosen to be a White House piper. Upon leaving the military, he returned to Glens Falls, New York, where he taught English for thirty years. During that time, he was pipe major of the Adirondack Pipes and Drums of Glens Falls, as well as the Galloway Pipe Band. He was taught by Hugh MacInnes and Sandy Jones.

Piper Tom Kirkpatrick, from Glens Falls, NY, also played that day. From 1960 to 1965, he was part of many



events at the White House such as the state dinner for the Prime Minister of Ireland and the Dulles Airport Dedication Ceremony.

Piper Robert Fulton was one of only two sword dancers band ever had during its existence. He learned the pipes from John Irvin, 1st Battalion Queens Own Cameron Highlanders in 1952. Fulton started playing with the Caledonian Pipe Band of Cleveland, OH, from 1952 until 1960. Piper Fulton learned the sword dance, broadswords, highland fling, hornpipe and sean trews from one of the dancers who danced with

the Caledonian Pipe Band. At the Brigadoon performance, besides dancing, his other task was to make sure the other dancers in the performance were doing the steps correctly for the highland fling. Neither Fulton nor George Lucas played pipes for this event.

Drum Sergeant John Bosworth retired from The USAF Band in 1984 as a Senior Master Sergeant and is still quite active as a percussionist. The drum he used in the Kennedy funeral was on display at Arlington National Cemetery for three years, according to [www.tapsbugler.com](http://www.tapsbugler.com).

### Conclusion

Although collective memory of the JFK presidency culminates with the sound of the Great Highland Bagpipe carrying this energetic young American president to his early grave, our instrument's drones and tunes were heard on the brightest days of his presidency. Pipers were present at the first and last official state events and at numerous other events in between. The most celebrated moment was that of the Black Watch performance on the South Lawn, but they were not the only pipers present during Camelot. The Great Highland Bagpipe's presence during the state funeral reflected their high regard by the Kennedy family, not to mention the unprecedented honor of inclusion of a foreign military unit. The collective memory of only one Pipe Band at the state funeral is incorrect. There were actually two distinct units, the Black Watch and the USAF Pipe Band. Collective memory tends to only associate the Great Highland Bagpipe with its prominent position in the state funeral, when our instrument's presence during the brightest days of President Kennedy's administration added to the splendor of the last happy days before the end of Camelot.



Left to Right: John Bosworth, Sandy Jones, and Seamus Neary





**LOTHIAN**  
KILT RENTALS  
& BAGPIPE SUPPLIES

## Bagpipes, Supplies & Accessories

1570 Main St., Dunedin, FL 34698

727.733.6838

[www.LothianBagpipeSupplies.com](http://www.LothianBagpipeSupplies.com)

[www.LothianKiltRentals.com](http://www.LothianKiltRentals.com)



## Kilt Rentals & Sales





## JIMMY TWEEDIE'S SEA LEGS

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.





## Reviews

### Review of Gibson Pipe Chanter-

Adam Holdaway

In November, 2014, New Hampshire welcomed the relocation of Gibson Bagpipes under the direction of new owner Mike Mansfield. Since the acquisition and relocation, Tom and Mark Piercey, Gibson veteran pipe makers, have been working around the clock to train and pass on their extensive knowledge of the Gibson tradition, to a new generation of wood turners.

Campbell Webster, Gibson Bagpipes' new General Manager, has worked very closely with original owner Jerry Gibson in developing the topic of this review; the new 'Voice' of Gibson pipe chanters. I received a polypenco pipe chanter from Campbell several weeks back and admittedly didn't give it a thought for some time. My last experience with Gibson chanters was about 10 years ago in a band setting. While it was a solid chanter, it wasn't the sound I was personally satisfied with on a consistent basis.

I have spoken with Campbell at length about his improvements on the chanter. While he acknowledges that 75% of the actual chanter design was already in place by the former owner, the remaining tweaks to the internal bore dimensions, hole placement and pitch are just a few of the recent developments of the chanter. The design of chanter neck is sleek and very simple with no beading under the bulb. The 'Naill-esque' external diameter of the chanter on the top hand seems a bit less beefy than other modern chanters. This, in my opinion, makes for a very pleasant top hand positioning. The hole placement is very comfortable and the round, regular-sized holes make it easy to articulate technique clearly and cleanly (especially birds!) The bottom of the chanter is, again, simple without much emphasis on aesthetics. The reed seat is threaded for ease and accuracy of seating and moving the reed.

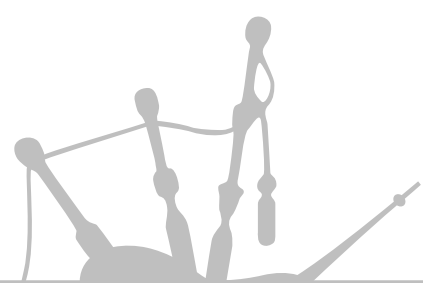
My understanding from Campbell was that this chanter was developed with the Shepherd reed in mind. Since I didn't have a Shepherd reed on hand I decided to try my own reed made by David Chesney. My first impression was, "WOW! THIS is a Gibson chanter?!" I had an absolutely perfect octave from Low A to High A right off the bat with good volume from the High A. All the note

intervals were right and just few pieces of tape to fine tune the mid-range (D, E, F) and the chanter has ready to go and pitching nicely at 484hz. The timbre of the chanter is excellent and while it would work nicely in a band setting, I think it was developed with the solo performer in mind.

Campbell said he is working on another design with a bit more 'crack' for a bigger band sound. I played this chanter exclusively for a few weeks and it has become my recent go-to chanter. I'm looking forward to trying the blackwood version of this great chanter as well as the band version when it comes available. I'm also looking forward to trying a few different reed combinations. I would absolutely recommend this chanter to anyone looking for an easy to set up chanter with comfortable hand positioning and excellent

**Cameron's Drumming Studio**  
**CDS**  
Custom Drum Sound  
Toll Free: 1-866-239-2090  
Local: 519-576-6847  
Fax: 519-576-6464  
**CDS**  
Custom Drum Sound  
Email: info@cameronsdrumming.com  
www.cameronsdrumming.com





## The Campbell Tunable Chanter

By Gary Guth

As a person who plays the pipes for a living, I can attest to the fact that playing in the winter time can be really difficult! When the call comes in for a funeral, the date, the location, and the weather all play a factor in doing the job successfully. Another determining factor of a successful gig in severe weather is the bagpipe itself.

Bagpipe technology has changed and improved a lot in the last 30 years. Some of those improvements have been in the form of drone reeds, pipe bags and moisture control systems. But the biggest problem with playing in severe weather is tuning the bagpipe and keeping it in tune. I have found that with the various bagpipes that I have owned and played that my drone reeds pretty much stay in tune together. The problem is the time between the prelude and the postlude at a graveside service. The amount of time that it takes for the priest to say the mass at the grave and the funeral director to make his announcements is enough time for the chanter to go out of pitch. You just want to stop everything and say: "Excuse me, give me a minute so that I can retune my pipes to the new chanter pitch." Believe me, that doesn't go over very well. It might insure that that particular funeral director doesn't call you again.

Recently, I read online about a new product that was being made by a company called Campbell Bagpipes. They have taken a McCallum Poly Pipe Chanter and modified it in such a way that the player can raise and lower the

chanter reed by the turn of a screw! The screw is located at the top of the chanter right above the finger board. When you strike up those pipes to play "Amazing Grace" after the mass or graveside service, you can make a quick adjustment by turning the screw. You can make an educated guess and simply turn the screw a quarter of a turn, or you can do a quick flash adjustment when you get to the high hand part of Amazing Grace. The turn is enough to bring the chanter in tune with the drones. Wow, I wish that I had thought of that.

Recently, I damaged the bass drone on my bagpipes to the point where I had to send the bottom section back to the pipe maker for a repair. As such, I decided to purchase a set of poly pipes to use while my pipes were being mended. I fit the Campbell Chanter on this set of pipes to use in the bad weather. The combination of the pipes and the chanter amazed me. The stability of the instrument in cold weather was greatly improved. I've played about four gigs so far in the cold using this product. All I can say is "wow."

This piece of technology is priced in the market at around \$250.00. If you play a lot of gigs like I do, then it would be well worth the investment. Here you are: You've taken the time to practice your craft, invested the money to buy a nice set of pipes and a uniform to do the job and you may even be a "Grade 1 Piper". The weather doesn't care who you are. Having the right tools and setup is the key to performing in all sorts of climate conditions. Again, you're only as good as your last performance, which could be even better with The Campbell Chanter.



---

*Our goal is to provide quality bagpiping, drumming, and  
highland dancing supplies with professional service at a  
reasonable price.*

*Royal Oak • Michigan • 313.701.6728 • 248.397.8315  
[info@duncanshighlandsupply.com](mailto:info@duncanshighlandsupply.com)  
[www.duncanshighlandsupply.com](http://www.duncanshighlandsupply.com)*





# Semiquavers

## The Making of the Casco Bay Contest

By Tom Ryan

In the northeast, our competition season wraps up with either Loon Mountain or Scotland, CT. We take a few weeks off, then get right back into it, trying to build on what the judges and our instructors have taught us throughout the season with an eye on the next year. The Casco Bay Solo Bagpipe Contest was created in Portland, Maine, to fill the small gap in solo contests between the first weekend in January and the last weekend in February. In the event's first year, there were 24 competitors in all grades (except Open) who were offered a full slate of events. The organizers held their collective breath as entrants trickled in at the beginning, but filled the fields in the last week of registration, which is typical.

The first thing to do was to secure a venue and date, most likely a school so there would be warm-up classrooms and other rooms to change into and out of kilts. Once the venue was secure, judges were needed and the event needed to be up on the EUSPBA website and be sanctioned. Expenses were beginning to grow - and no revenues in sight! Sure, hearty competitors can get up early in the morning and make the drive to a contest, but no one wants tired judges, so the organizers then contacted Portland's Convention and Visitors Bureau. There are many hotels in Portland so the CVB solicited its members for discounted rates to offset the expenses for lodging for judges and/or competitors who stayed overnight. Another expense that wasn't anticipated was liability insurance.

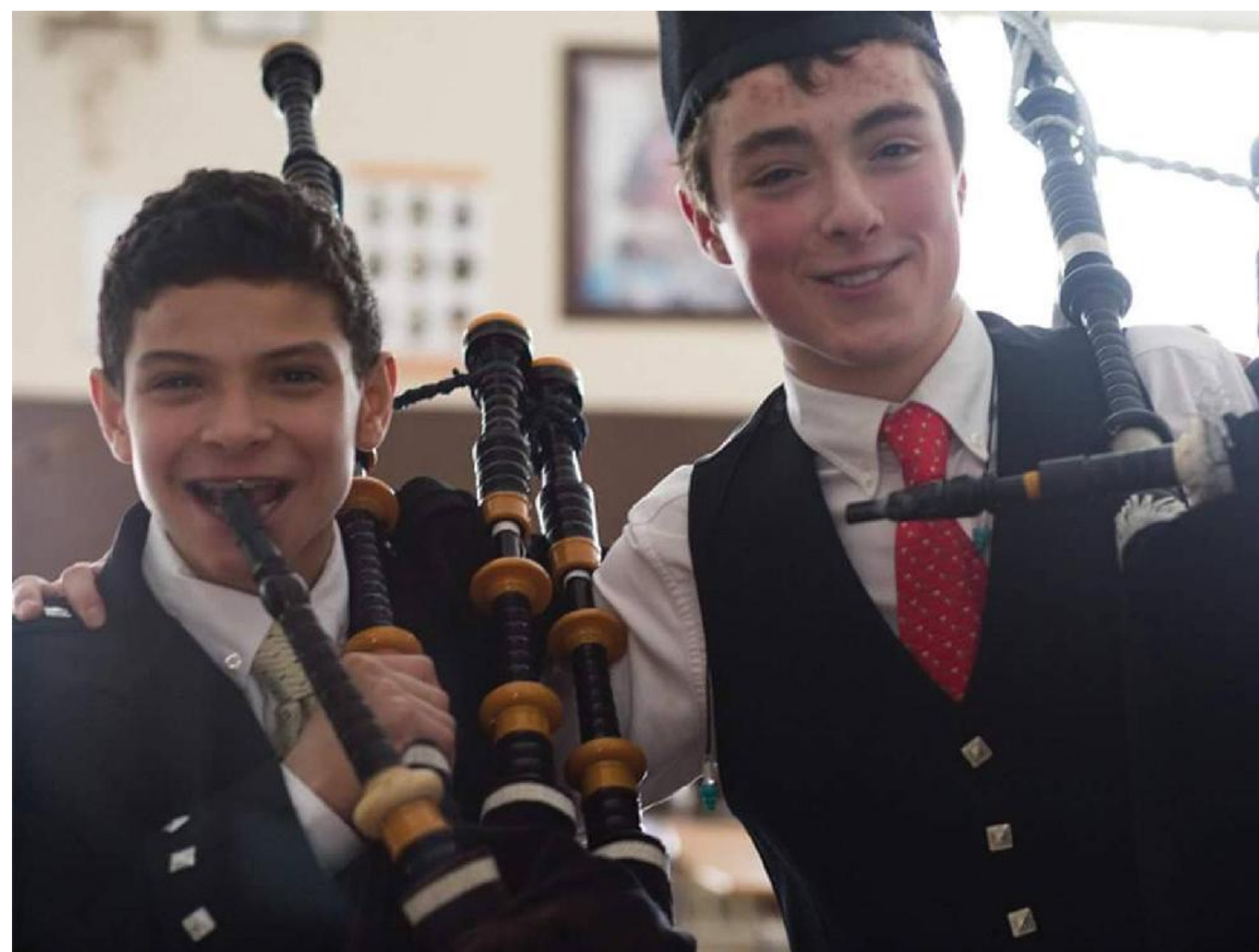
Fundraising efforts were successful as Maine has several pipe bands that supported the event as did the local St. Andrews Society and individuals throughout the community. But, there were a greater number of requests for 'funding the arts' rejected than were approved, which was discouraging. Anyone who contributed was given recognition on the event's website and entry tickets to the event.

Another reason for the event's success was the generosity of the many vendors in the bagpiping community. Donations of auction items and prizes



were received from many suppliers from the US, Canada, and Scotland ranging from signed music books and on-line lessons to highland wear and shortbread pans! A silent auction was held with proceeds going towards next year's event. Also invited to participate were Maine's smallpipe makers who were on hand to allow anyone interested in giving small pipes a go.

In anticipation for next year, the organizers are hoping to grow the number of competitors and include Open players. There is also consideration to having drumming events and workshops. Portland is a wonderful town with many great shops & restaurants. The organizers hope you'll consider attending once the event is announced. Visit <http://cascobaypiping.weebly.com> for information about this year's event.





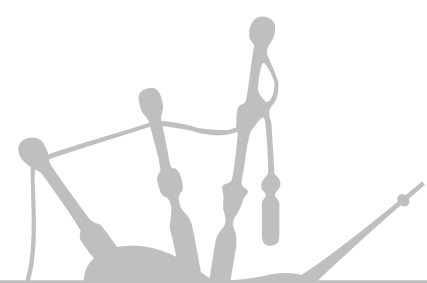
# THE ROSS SUEDE PIPE BAG

The supreme choice for  
quality, comfort and  
moisture control



[www.rossbagpipereeds.com](http://www.rossbagpipereeds.com)





## Pittsburgh Piping Society Reborn

By Nick Hudson

The nation's oldest piping society has been reborn in Pittsburgh, thanks to the efforts of Nick Hudson, Andrew Carlisle, and Palmer Shonk. We had our first meeting last month with a great turnout of just over 50 people, a mix of pipers, non-playing enthusiasts and even a few drummers.

We had an informal recital format, much like an open mic night, from 8:30-10pm.

After I introduced the evening and the players, we heard tunes from 10 pipers, ranging from top professionals to lower-grade players. Time spent tuning was minimal, thankfully, and we were able to feature a lot of music in a short time. Palmer Shonk started the evening with a great selection of light music on a smooth, mellow pipe. Andrew Carlisle closed the evening, playing a variety of immaculate Ceol Beag leading up to a performance of "Lament for Donald Duaghal MacKay."

These piping evenings will be run every other month on the second floor of a local pub/restaurant. Each night will feature a few soloists drawn on the night, with an opening player and piobaireachd player chosen ahead of time.

One of the pipers in attendance, Rob Felsburg, played a few tunes on a set of bellows-blown smallpipes which he turned himself. They go by the name Quiet Piper Smallpipes and are well worth a look. This served as a teaser for a similar event we will hold on the months between the bi-monthly highland pipe evenings. We will hold a smallpipe session at the same location and time.

As great as it was to see many pipers from different bands come together and share tunes, a lot of smallpipers don't have even a weekly band practice as a musical, social outlet. These bi-monthly sessions will open to any Scottish musicians and hopefully will be able to serve the fringe smallpipe community as well as providing interest and alternatives for the larger highland bagpipe population.

Rob Felsburg will have loaner instruments, which he has made, on hand for those who want to take part but don't yet have such an instrument.

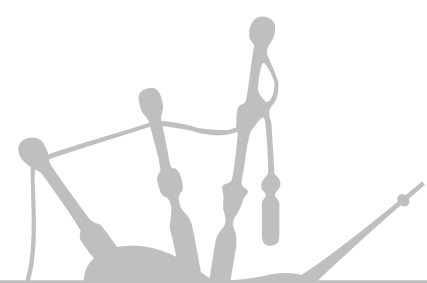
The original Pittsburgh Bagpipe Society was formed in 1898 and there is record of it's activities as late as 1906, though exactly when it ceased to exist is not known. There is a program for a Hogmany night put on by the Society in 1906.

Interesting to note that all the dancers were male. The Juvenile dancer doesn't even get his or her name listed! You'll see quite a few dances listed that have since fallen out of fashion since that "Auld Year's Nicht." This program is in the collection of local St. Andrews Society President, Paul Thompson. I've attached scans of the program.

The society venture is headed by myself, Nick Hudson, with Andrew Carlisle and Palmer Shonk. Andrew Carlisle will be known to many as a prize-winning soloist on an international level, a member of Field Marshal Montgomery, and the piping professor at Carnegie-Mellon University. I, Nick Hudson, am another local professional piper and head the bagpipe program at the College of Wooster as well as being a member of the Grade 1 Toronto Police PB. Palmer Shonk, also a member of Toronto Police







PB, is a professional piper, by grading, not profession, as he plies his trade as a geologist. Together we form the cheekily-titled, "Board of Directors."

Trying not to take ourselves too seriously, we have a unicorn featured on our logo! Since our national animal was already taken by a prominent piping society in Edinburgh, I incorporated Scotland's national animal or,

rather, national mythological creature into the design. The rest of the logo takes its cues from the City of Pittsburgh official seal.

We have a website up at [PittsburghPiping.org](http://PittsburghPiping.org), which is still under construction but will soon feature dates and other useful information.



take the high road to...

**HIGH COUNTRY  
SCOTTISH-IRISH SHOPPE  
& PIPE BAND SUPPLIES**

Located in Charleston, South Carolina.  
Serving the South & Everywhere else!

If you don't see it, ask!  
Check out our Christmas  
& Holiday section.

**(843) 469-5691**  
**[www.HIGHCOUNTRYSCOTTISH.com](http://www.HIGHCOUNTRYSCOTTISH.com)**

**Now Available!**



**\$65 USD**

**[JimmyMcIntoshPiobaireachd.com](http://JimmyMcIntoshPiobaireachd.com)**  
or send your check to Jimmy McIntosh,  
2001 Pompano Drive, Anderson, SC 29625

**"In the Balmoral Style"**





## Branch Notes

### News from the Southwest corner —

The Southwest Branch is pleased to congratulate James M. Bell of Batesville, Arkansas, on winning the gold in his 1st place finish in the U.S. Gold Medal Piobaireachd competition at the Midwest Highland Arts Fund Winter Storm, held in Kansas City, Missouri January 9-11, 2015! James' family is part and parcel of the founding and history of the EUSPBA. He is currently the director of the Scottish Heritage Program at Lyon College and Pipe Major of the Lyon College Pipe Band.

The Southwest Branch is also pleased to congratulate Harry Isensee on his 3rd place finish in the MSR portion of the 2015 Metro Cup amateur division! Harry lives in Houston, Texas, and teaches at St. Thomas Episcopal School. Harry was the Southwest Branch's piping competitor for this invitational, held on February 21 in Newark, NJ.

### Upcoming events and opportunities in our branch:

The 36th Arkansas Scottish Festival will be held on April 10-12, 2015, in Batesville, AR. There will be EUSPBA sanctioned events in solo piping and drumming (Professional through Grade 5) and band contest. Judges will include P/M Brian Donaldson, Jeff Anderson, Patrick Regan, and Donald Bell (snare). Participation in the Bonniest Knees contest not required, but *strongly* encouraged! This event is held on the beautiful campus of Lyon College and features high

quality vendors, highland dancing, a British car show, and great attendance from far and wide. Enter the Celtic Poetry Contest and, if you win, read your poem aloud at the Celtic Concert Friday night! More info can be found at <https://www.lyon.edu/scotfest>.

The Louisiana Highland Games is returning for 2015! The Saint Andrew's and Caledonian Societies of Baton Rouge are working to resurrect this games, on hiatus since 2008). It will be held on May 23 – 24, at the LSU Rural Life Center and Museum in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. Stay tuned to the EUSPBA events page for information on sanctioned events.

The Southwest Branch encourages and needs members to be involved! Please consider volunteering and supporting events in your area and throughout the branch, and consider becoming involved in the leadership of your branch. Branch elections will be coming up in the summer. Also, we welcome your fresh ideas and energy to encourage and support our art and our members! Keep in touch through our facebook page: [Southwest Branch, euspba](#) (look for the sandpipers in the cover photo), and look for a branch newsletter to arrive in your email box, soon. Happy piping and drumming!!!

submitted by Nancy Love

## Ohio Valley Games

There are five competitions currently scheduled in the Ohio Valley Branch this year, with even more in the works.

3/28 Erepa Grotto/EUP solo indoor and workshop  
6/27 Ohio Scottish Games  
7/11 Presque Isle Solo Competition  
9/12 Edinboro Highland Games  
9/20 Ligonier Highland Games

Of particular note to Ohio Valley Branch members, the Ohio Scottish Games is no longer going to be the Ohio Valley Branch Championship. Instead we will determine the branch champion based on the results from the EUSPBA Sanctioned events listed above.

We will calculate the Branch Champion using the same point system the EUSPBA uses to calculate the Champion

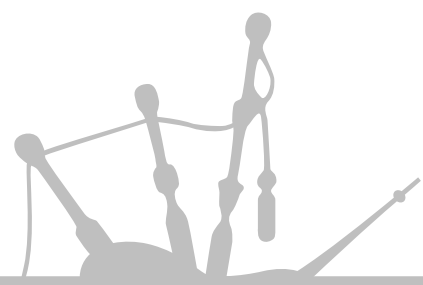
Supreme winner in each grade. It is our plan to announce the Branch Champions at Ligonier. The goal of this is to encourage more competitors to attend more games. This will only strengthen the level of play in our branch.

For a specific description to how the points will be calculated please follow the link below:  
[http://euspba.org/resource/rules\\_policymanual.pdf](http://euspba.org/resource/rules_policymanual.pdf)  
The description is found on page 9, section p-1 through p-3.

Also of interest is the Ohio Scottish Arts School, 6/28-7/3. Applications for this school may be found at:  
<http://ohioscottishartsschool.com/>

“Like” our Facebook Page: [Ohio Valley Branch EUSPBA](#).  
Patrick Regan





## Southern Branch Results

The 2015 season is underway in the Southern Branch! Our most southern friends in Florida have already had several contests - with the Orlando (Central Florida) Games being the first and enjoyed with lovely spring-like 70 degree weather. Unfortunately, the Northeast Florida Games in Jacksonville did not enjoy the same blessing, being a cold and rainy day. Reports are that the Sarasota Games were successful, with a guest appearance there by the "Red Hot Chilli Pipers." The only contest left in their circuit is the Dunedin Games which will feature a judging panel from the National Piping Center in Scotland, as well as workshops.

Moving further north, there was a fair turnout for the Charleston Indoor Contest and the Sandy Jones Invitational that evening. The results of that contest were:

### Piobaireachd

- 1 Grace Washam - Lament for Donald Duaghal MacKay
- 2 Chance Bell
- 3 Laureano Thomas-Sanchez

### MSR

- 1 Lauraneo Thomas-Sanchez - The Pap of Glencoe, Caberfeidh, Mrs Macpherson of Inveran
- 2 Grace Washam
- 3 Gabriel Nierman

### Air, Hornpipe, Jig

- 1 Chance Bell - Bu Deonach Leam Tilleadh, Tam Bain's Lum, Donald McLean
- 2 Grace Washam
- 3 Tied: Gabriel Nierman & Laureano Thomas-Sanchez

**Overall Winner:** Grace Washam

The next contest for the Branch is the Cary Indoor Solos in Cary, NC on March 28, which is a growing event within our region. Many of the Southern bands are in the final preparations for their first outing at Loch Norman on April 18.

A couple of branch bands recently had the honor of being invited to give guest performances with "The Chieftains" who are currently on a U.S. tour. The St. Andrews University band and the Atlanta band both represented the South well in their sold-out appearances, which were the second and third stops on the band's current tour.

We have some exciting new "pilot programs" which we are going to experiment with in the coming season. Because of an interest among some of our "elder" players, we are going to hold an "Over 50 - Open" event at three Games within our branch to gauge the interest in such an event. This would be an opportunity for any of our players who

are 50 and over to compete on a level with others within their age group. We are hoping that this may revitalize some of our current (and perhaps former) association members, and encourage them to play with others within their age/peer group. Currently, only the Grandfather Mountain Games offers such an event. We intend to start a small "over 50 circuit" within the Branch, with prizes at the Games level as well as an aggregate award being presented to the overall winners at the concluding event. Currently, we are looking at offering this at Grandfather Mountain (where it is already offered), Charleston, and Scotland County, which would be the concluding event for this season. So..... over 50 players, get practicing! We hope that this "pilot program" may encourage other Games and perhaps other branches to follow suit. This will not be a "Southern Branch ONLY" event....we invite any folks who would be eligible to come visit our great games in the sunny South!

We are also currently considering two Games to serve as a "Branch Championship" for our branch bands. One Games has already offered a special increase in prize monies in order to help get this program off the ground. Other branches have offered a "Championship" contest designation in the past (Capital District in the Northeast serving as a Branch Championship for several years), and we hope to begin this in our branch with another "test" at one of our contests, which could perhaps be rotated among other contests in the future. Further information on this will be available soon, and we hope that our membership (as well as members from other Branches as well) may be interested in helping us "test" these two new "pilot" programs for the 2015 season.

Bill Caudill  
Southern Branch

---

## The Metro Branch

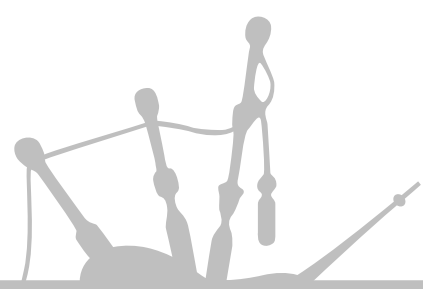
The Metro Branch would like to congratulate Ed McKenna for receiving the R.G. Hardie piping award. A well deserved award for all the years of work.

Thanks to Eric Stein for running another great event. Hopefully next year, the weather will be better.

Anyone who is interested about branch positions please feel free to contact us. Remember to register for these years' events. You can register online on the EUSPBA website.

Have a good summer competing.





## Northeast Branch Notes – Spring 2015

### Upcoming Events at the Celtic Hall, Albany, NY:

**April 11th:** There will be a 'Spring Workshop' with special guests from the Inveraray & District Pipe Band.

**Pipe Major, and 2014 Glenfiddich**

**Champion Stuart Liddell,**

Plus

**Lead Drummer, and 2014 World Solo**

**Drumming Champion, Steven McWhirter**

will lead the day's activities...

Followed by a Ceilidh that night,  
featuring performances by Stuart and Steven

Come on down and learn from  
some of the best in the world!

**May 9th:** The Scotia-Glenville outdoor  
contest for solos and bands.

For more information about the contests,  
visit <http://www.sgpipeband.com/>

For more information about the workshop,  
visit <http://celtichall.org/>

### West Point Hosts RMC

The West Point Pipes & Drums hosted the Bands of the Canadian Royal Military College January 22-25, 2015 as part of the 92nd Annual Royal Military College of Canada – United States Military Academy Exchange Weekend. This is an annual event when cadets from both academies visit one another and learn about each other's culture and military traditions. It is hosted on a rotating basis by each Academy; this year was our turn to host the cadets of RMC. Over the past 30 years of this historic exchange, the bands and dancers of both academies have worked together in workshops and seminars to improve and push each other to become better performing groups.

The West Point band and dancers received the RMC cadets on Thursday and hosted them in their rooms throughout the weekend. While living with each other, the bands shared meals, attended classes together, and built bonds of trust and understanding. On Saturday, the bands held workshops in the morning

in preparation for that evening's Army-RMC Hockey game. The bands broke down into sections and rehearsed sets to present combined performances for the visiting public.

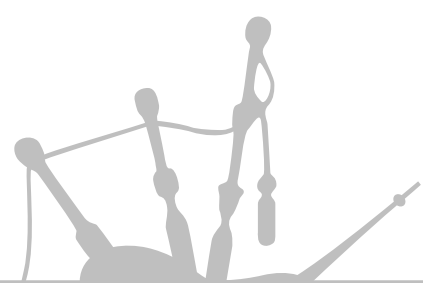
While the bands rehearsed, the dancers of both programs met in the multipurpose room of Arvin Gym and held a workshop where the talented dancers of RMC trained the West Point Celtic Dancers in several new routines. The bands and the dancers then linked up at Crest Hall to do a full scale rehearsal for the performance later in the evening. The bands and dancers then broke for the afternoon and shared lunch in Crest Hall and then changed into traditional highland wear for the game.

The performance before the hockey game was a huge success. The crowd loved the performances of the bands which included: solo performances, dance performances, and a fantastic rendition of Amazing Grace which featured the Brass and Reed section of the RMC Band (and reduced several members of the crowd to tears). Following performing the bands attended the hockey match and our cadets cheered the Army team on to victory. RMC Exchange weekend is a really special weekend for our cadets and it engenders bonds between young officers that may find themselves on some distant battlefield fighting against a common foe.

The Dean of United States Military Academy, Brigadier General Trainor, thanked the band Officer-in-Charge for the bands' performance and remarked about how impressed he was with the development of the West Point Pipes & Drums and our dance program. He further remarked that he hoped the band and dancers could continue to build on their recent development and performance successes.







Reminder: The 33rd Annual West Point Military Tattoo will be held at the United States Military Academy on April 26, 2015. This event is a FREE outdoor concert that features: Pipe bands, Military Drill teams, Field Music Groups, Highland/Irish dancers, and is hosted by the West Point Pipes & Drums and the West Point Celtic Dancers. The event starts with individual performance groups rotating from 11:00am to 5:45pm and culminates with a Retreat Ceremony and Massed Bands Performance. Please bring your own seating and a picnic and enjoy the day on our campus, concessions are also available. Rain date is May 3rd, 2015. For more information please follow us at: [www.facebook.com/WestPointPipesandDrums](http://www.facebook.com/WestPointPipesandDrums) and our website [www.usma.edu/pipes](http://www.usma.edu/pipes)

Jared Nichols  
MAJ, U.S. Army  
Officer-in-Charge  
United States Corps of Cadets Pipes & Drums  
United States Military Academy  
[jared.nichols@usma.edu](mailto:jared.nichols@usma.edu)

### **Congratulations to Carole Hackett !**

She is our new Monitor Coordinator for the NE Branch.

What does a monitor do, you might ask ???

Monitors are critical to the smooth operation of EUSPBA sanctioned contests. Monitors are the representatives of the Association at the contest site. As such, they should possess a thorough knowledge of EUSPBA Rules and Regulations, the ability to work with volunteers/competitors, and a desire to forward the mission of EUSPBA. Monitors are given training opportunities throughout the year, and are provided with a stipend of \$100 for their service (free ticket and special parking, when applicable...)

Some of the Monitor Duties include:

- Explain EUSPBA Rules and Regulations
- Settle disputes concerning Rules and Regulations, when possible. If not, assist in filing protests
- Validate the draw (order of play) and contest results
- Verify EUSPBA membership among competitors
- Maintain the cooperative relationship between competitors, the Games, and EUSPBA
- Ensuring that the paperwork is done correctly and delivered promptly to EUSPBA

### **MONITORS ARE NEEDED FOR OUR 2015 GAMES !!!**

If interested, please contact Carole Hackett at [carolehackett@hotmail.com](mailto:carolehackett@hotmail.com)

### **Casco Bay Solos**

Sandwiched between two snowstorms in Portland, ME, the Casco Bay Solos went off without a hitch. The contest offered competitors the chance to play in a full slate of events as they prepare for the upcoming contest season. Competitors came from as far away as Long Island, New Jersey and Cape Cod. With the support of the local Portland community, our generous bagpiping community in the US and abroad and the positive feedback we received, we're already looking forward to next year! Visit <http://cascobaypiping.weebly.com/> for details on the event and [www.euspba.org](http://www.euspba.org) for the results. A big thank you to the judges, stewards and vendors. See you in 2016!

Tom Ryan  
Claddagh Mhor Pipe Band  
Portland, ME  
[www.claddaghmhor.com](http://www.claddaghmhor.com)

### **Instructors**

We are compiling a list of piping and drumming instructors in the Northeast Branch to post on our website.

If you'd like to be on the list, forward the following information to Tom Ryan at [tryan4@maine.rr.com](mailto:tryan4@maine.rr.com):

- Instructor's resume
- Level of proficiency the instructor would consider teaching
  - individual / band / both
  - beginner / intermediate / advanced
- Method of instruction – skype, in-person, off line - video / wav files
- Tune / Score writing
- Willingness to travel

Instructors to date:

- Andy Adams, Drumming, [andrew.adams.drums@gmail.com](mailto:andrew.adams.drums@gmail.com)
- Norman McLeod, Drumming, [nmcLeod12@gmail.com](mailto:nmcLeod12@gmail.com)
- Eric Ouellette, Piping, [esouelle@syr.edu](mailto:esouelle@syr.edu)

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





# Report for the Executive Secretary

By Sheldon Hamblin

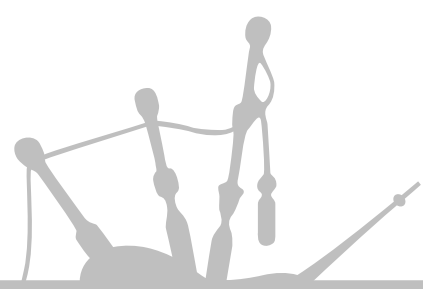
We have spent the past few months actively working on the proposals from the Annual General Meeting, the new website and revisions to the policy manual.

To address the proposals, please refer to the last Voice for explanations of the items and their rationales. Much of the policy and rule changes are here. The work on the new website I will leave to our president.

- 1 Clarification of the contest rules for Tenor Drum Competitions. Effective February 21, 2015, the clarification is on the website and is in the new rulebook.
- 2 Splitting large contests: After significant review the executive committee has determined that there are isolated cases of contests being split that perhaps would better serve us if they were not split. These will be handled on a case-by-case basis, and all members are encouraged to notify the executive secretary of issues they feel are not appropriate.
- 3 Grade 5 and Grade 4 band requirements. The music board and the executive committee reviewed these items pertaining to the span from Grade 5 to Grade 4 and has determined that it is in the best interest of all to leave the requirements as they are.
- 4 Was combined and treated as part of item 3.
- 5 Was combined and treated as part of item 3.
- 6 There will be no separation of Light music and Piobaireachd at this time. There are options being considered, however, the issue at hand is that of fostering a well-rounded piper, and the committees do not feel that allowing separation would produce the same level of player.
- 7 Proposed changes in solo piping requirements. Neither the music board nor the executive committee felt that the requested changes would be beneficial to us.
- 8 Creating a grade 6-practice changer level. The music committee felt that this proposal had not merit at this time, the executive committee agreed. This proposal was voted down.

- 9 Combined with item 8.
- 10 Allowing players to change band rosters two times a year. The executive committee voted down this proposal.
- 11 Removing the ensemble score in the band competitions and replacing it with another piping judge. This proposal was moved to the music board at the AGM, but without support. The music board will increase training for ensemble judges and the executive committee felt this was an appropriate move.
- 12 Action on this item was the same as item 11.
- 13 Allowing each member of the EUSPBA to be a band member of up to three bands. The executive committee voted this down.
- 14 Require band draws to occur a minimum of 1 week prior to the contest. Since the EUSPBA does not generally run games, it was felt that we could best address this by suggesting it to the games in the sanction packet. This is not a rule change, just a change in wording in the sanctioning packet.
- 15 Similar to 14, but regarding solos. Action was same as above.
- 16 Executive Committee members should be required to pay dues. This was withdrawn on the floor of the AGM.
- 17 Proposal to allow every branch a seat on the music board. This was sent to the executive committee. The committee felt it would limit the options of appointments to the music board, and that would not be in the best interest of the association. The executive committee voted this down.
- 18 This proposal required the music board to send minutes to the executive committee. This was withdrawn on the floor.
- 19 Each administrative position should be held by a different person (membership coordinator, sanctioning officer and results coordinator). The executive committee is reviewing this and has high hopes that our new website will deal with much of what this issue is about.





- 20 Forming a senior judges pool. The music board is actively studying this, and will report back to the executive committee at our April meeting.
- 21 Create an "Approved Judges" list from other associations: withdrawn on the floor.
- 22 Require individual band members to become members of the association. The executive committee does not feel this would be beneficial at this time.
- 23 Form a committee to study the feasibility of establishing one or more high level; high profile EUSPBA sponsored solo contests. The past chair of the music board will head of this committee.
- 24 Amend the mission Statement: The executive committee will review this in the next few months, with the input of the branch chairs.
- 25 Education Program or Progress Certification Program (PCP). The music board will review this and report back to the executive committee in April
- 26 Send out renewal notices: The chair of the northeast branch has volunteered to do this.
- 27 Amendment to the EUSPBA bylaws, disallowing paid employees of the EUSPBA to run for or hold a position on the executive committee. This is still under review.
- 28 Clarify and state what the monetary compensation of the positions of the Membership Coordinator, Sanctioning Officer and Results Coordinator are in the Bylaws of the EUSPBA. The executive committee has revised the policy manual to reflect the duties, not only of the above but also the executive secretary.

# Invermark 2015

July 19-24

Hunter Mountain, NY

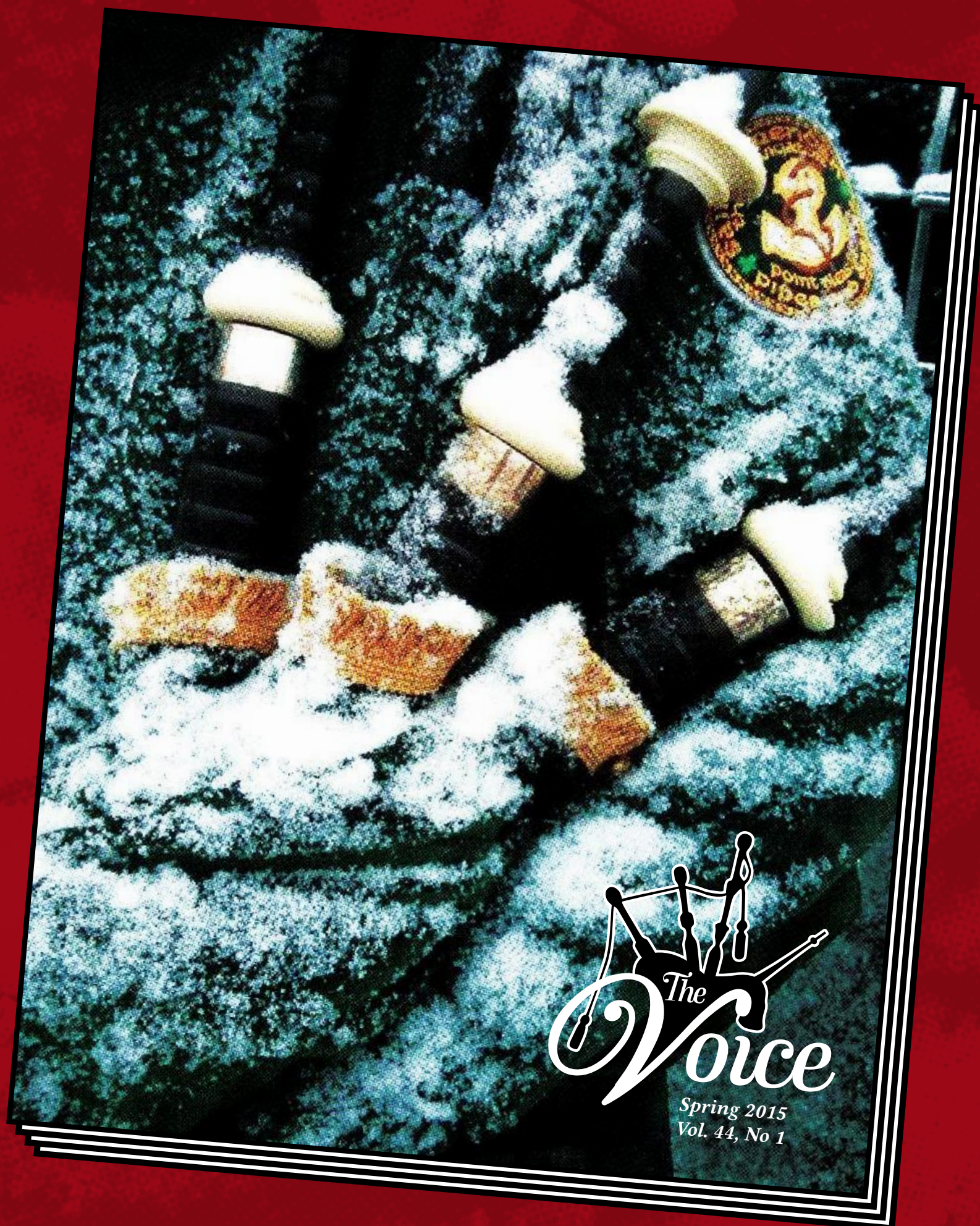
[www.invermark.org](http://www.invermark.org)



Don't miss the greatest week of the year  
for piping, snare, tenor, & Bass

A fantastic Christmas Present for your  
favorite piper or drummer





**Keep up with the latest!**

Check out your Voice on Facebook at  
[www.facebook.com/EUSPBVoice](http://www.facebook.com/EUSPBVoice)



13. Publication Title <b>The Voice</b>		14. Issue Date for Circulation Data Below	
15. Extent and Nature of Circulation		Average No. Copies Each Issue During Preceding 12 Months	No. Copies of Single Issue Published Nearest to Filing Date
a. Total Number of Copies (Net press run)		1050	1850
b. Paid Circulation (By Mail and Outside the Mail)	(1) Mailed Outside-County Paid Subscriptions Stated on PS Form 3541 (include paid distribution above nominal rate, advertiser's proof copies, and exchange copies)	1850	1850
	(2) Mailed In-County Paid Subscriptions Stated on PS Form 3541 (include paid distribution above nominal rate, advertiser's proof copies, and exchange copies)		
	(3) Paid Distribution Outside the Mail Including Sales Through Dealers and Carriers, Street Vendors, Counter Sales, and Other Paid Distribution Outside USPS®		
	(4) Paid Distribution by Other Classes of Mail Through the USPS (e.g., First-Class Mail®)		
c. Total Paid Distribution (Sum of 15b (1), (2), (3), and (4))		1850	1850
d. Free or Nominal Rate Distribution (By Mail and Outside the Mail)	(1) Free or Nominal Rate Outside-County Copies Included on PS Form 3541		
	(2) Free or Nominal Rate In-County Copies Included on PS Form 3541		
	(3) Free or Nominal Rate Copies Mailed at Other Classes Through the USPS (e.g., First-Class Mail)		
	(4) Free or Nominal Rate Distribution Outside the Mail (Carriers or other means)		
e. Total Free or Nominal Rate Distribution (Sum of 15d (1), (2), (3), and (4))			
f. Total Distribution (Sum of 15c and 15e)		1850	1850
g. Copies not Distributed (See Instructions to Publishers #4 (page #3))		—	—
h. Total (Sum of 15f and g)		1850	1850
i. Percent Paid (15c divided by 15f times 100)		100	100

\* If you are claiming electronic copies, go to line 16 on page 3. If you are not claiming electronic copies, skip to line 17 on page 3.

**UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE®** Statement of Ownership, Management, and Circulation (All Periodicals Publications Except Requester Publications)

16. Electronic Copy Circulation	Average No. Copies Each Issue During Preceding 12 Months	No. Copies of Single Issue Published Nearest to Filing Date
a. Paid Electronic Copies	0	0
b. Total Paid Print Copies (Line 15c) + Paid Electronic Copies (Line 16a)	1850	1850
c. Total Print Distribution (Line 15f) + Paid Electronic Copies (Line 16a)	1850	1850
d. Percent Paid (Both Print & Electronic Copies) (16b divided by 16c x 100)	100	100

☐ I certify that 50% of all my distributed copies (electronic and print) are paid above a nominal price.

17. Publication of Statement of Ownership

☒ If the publication is a general publication, publication of this statement is required. Will be printed in the 3/21/15 issue of this publication.

☐ Publication not required

18. Signature and Title of Editor, Publisher, Business Manager, or Owner

John Batty, Publisher

Date

2/19/15

I certify that all information furnished on this form is true and complete. I understand that anyone who furnishes false or misleading information on this form or who omits material or information requested on the form may be subject to criminal sanctions (including fines and imprisonment) and/or civil sanctions (including civil penalties).