



**Queensland
Highland
Pipers' Society**

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April

2002

**April Meeting
Monday 22nd**

**Balmoral Bowls Club,
Jean Howie Drive,
Morningside**

at 7.45 pm

The meeting will again be a
"Pipers Night"

From the Editor:

We seem to be in the midst of competitions of one sort or another. Maclean and the Australian Pipe Band Championships have just been and the AOM trophy is in just a couple of weeks.

For this reason, our Patron's Trophy contest (MSR for senior players) will be held at our May meeting, rather than April as it has been in recent years.

We believe the standard of solo playing at Maclean was again high and the Championships certainly showed off some good band playing, so it seems the standards of proficiency continue to rise.

In recent discussions amongst some of us with longer memories (i.e. older!) it has been remarked that we are indeed living at a time when the amount of good standard playing of the highland bagpipe has really taken off. Perhaps the very high-

est standards have not risen but it is certainly much easier to find a good standard of playing to listen to.

Alex McConnell

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HOW TO GET TO THE BALMORAL BOWLS CLUB

For those who like to work out their own directions the UBD Reference is Map 160, Reference Q12.

From the Gateway Arterial—turn north at the Lytton Road intersection (just south of the bridge), travel along Route 24 and the Route 23 (Wynnum Road) till you see the Colmslie RSL on your left. Turn in as if going to the RSL but go right through their carpark and continue along Jean Howie Drive for about 350 metres. Turn left into the Bowls Club car park.

From the City—go across the Story Bridge, left into Shafston Avenue, then into Lytton Road and Wynnum Road (Route 23). Go along Wynnum Road until you see the Colmslie RSL on your right. Turn in as if going to the RSL but go right through their carpark and continue along Jean Howie Drive for about 350 metres. Turn left into the Bowls Club car park.

From the west (old Cleveland Road)—Turn into Bennetts Road. Continue along Bennetts Road, across the railway line and a park will appear on your right. Jean Howie Drive goes through the park (the entrance to the drive is near the boundary of the Bulimba Cemetery). Go about 350 metres along the Drive and turn right into the Bowls Club car park.

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

MARCH 2002 MEETING

Only about 15 stalwart supporters turned up for our March meeting. It must have been the low point between Maclean on the weekend and the Australian Championships at Easter.

However, we had some visitors from Victoria—Ernie & Sue Cartwright. Ernie is the former Pipe Major of the Rats of Trobruk Pipe Band. There were apologies from Matthew Rigby, Glenys and Reg O'Malley and Roy Gunn.

Doug Thoresen started off the evening with a few tunes, first some airs (*Ballad of Glencoe, Loch Rannoch* and *Leaving Lewis*) and then some of the more venerable 6/8 Marches (*10th HLI Crossing the Rhine, Farewell to the Creeks* and *The Glendaruel Highlanders*).

He was followed by your scribe playing Doug's pipes and trying to remember some of the tunes of his youth - in succession the

Airs *Not a Swan on the Lake* and *Highland Cradle Song*, the 6/8s *Rab's Wedding* and *Mrs Lily Christie* and the 2/4 *Donald Maclean's Farewell to Oban*.

Ian Davidson was next to play, with the *Salute on the Birth of Rory Mor MacLeod*. He made a good effort, not assisted by a troublesome drone which growled from time to time. In discussion later it transpired that the pipes had been going well prior coming to the meeting—this is a fate many can identify with!

Maurie DeHayr was next induced to play on Doug's pipes and made his way through quite a variety of tunes. They included the 4/4s *Loch Ruan, Rose of Allandale* and *Wings*, the 12/8 *Wellington Police Pipers in Australia* (Alastair Hanning), the 6/8 *Leaving Port Askaig*, part of *Kantara to El Arish, Glengarry Gathering, Green Hills of Tyrol, When the Battle's O'er* and

Rowan Tree.

Bob Payne gave us a few tunes next. - *Walters of Kylesku, My Home, Dark Isle, Fair Maid of Barra, Skye Boat Song*. He continues to improve each time we hear him.

The last player for the night was Iain Bruce. Starting with some of the slower music, he also showed that more mature fingers can still handle the fast music. His tunes included the little 2/4's *The Piper of Dundee, The Haughs of Cromdale, The back O' Benachie, Dornoch Links* and *The Piper's Cave*; 6/8's *O'er the Water to Charlie, Wha'll be King but Charlie, The*

Steamboat, The Campbell's are Coming and *Morag*; the strathspey *Caber Feidh*, reel *Colonel Macleod*, Slow Air *Iain Macleod* and two jigs, the first of which is a mystery and the second was *Glasgow Police Pipers*. Finally he played a pibroch: *Macleod's Controversy*—which dates from 1603 and which was written by Donald Mor MacCrimmon. He explained that it was part of a trilogy.

Doug Thoresen finished off the evening with the drawing of the raffle which was won by Alec Macintosh and all retired for supper.

Society Meeting Program for the next few months

AprilPipers Night

May**Patron's Trophy**—MSR for Senior players (Open and Intermediate) - Prizes: 1st \$75 plus trophy, 2nd \$50, 3rd \$30.

JunePipers Night

July**Jimmy Durham Memorial**— 2/4 March for Junior players (Elementary & Sub Intermediate)

AugustAnnual Meeting

Australian Championships Observed

Your scribe was fortunate to be able to observe the Championships from the middle of the field and without the distractions of the beer tent. As well as this, I didn't have too much to do—as a time-keeper, apart from soaking up the ambience and enjoying the music. Not having to listen too critically to the performances as one has to do when judging. I was freer to look for the positives. I won't be putting the results into this report as you can get them from elsewhere and I'll try to focus on those positives. At the end I've listed all the competing bands by grade in their order of play. Obviously I haven't commented on every performance but rather tried to pick out the highlights

Comparing the playing to my earliest memories of bands (only about 35 years ago), it is apparent that there have been vast improvements. The playing overall in Grade 3 is probably as good as much as the playing in Grade 1 was back then and in respect of drumming it is probably better. Most of Grade 4 now would be the equivalent of Grade 2 in the '60s (we only had three grades) with the rest falling into the old Grade 3. The modern Grades 1 and 2 are of a standard that was rarely if ever heard.

Apart from the playing the sound is vastly improved—both pipes and drums being brighter in sound and the bagpipes much steadier, although variation in blowing is still an ever-present reality! The modern drone reeds have done much to cure really wobbly drones but this has focused attention on the chanter tone and it is quickly apparent if some pipers in a band are starting to struggle.

(Continued on page 7)

What's On

A P R	20	Murrumba Celtic Pipes and Drums Ceilidh. Strathpine Community Centre, Mecklin Street. Contact Di: 07 5496 4867
	22 27,28	Society Meeting Celtic Celebration Australasian Solo Piping Final - QIA, Elizabeth St, Brisbane. Kitchen Piping on Saturday and the main contest at 1 pm on Sunday. \$10 for both days. Contact Kath 07 3358 5588 or 07 3396 0820 (A/H)
M A Y	5	RU Brown Piobaireachd Society of SA Competition - see separate notice
	11	Kingaroy Contest. Contact Cam McDonald 07 4162 1541
	18	Scottish Pipe Band Championships - Dumbarton
	25	Brisbane Clans Pipes & Drums Highland Debutante Ball - Riverside Ballroom 7 pm to midnight. Contact Mavis Williams 3849 8271 or Kate Wyse 3369 2232
	27	Society Meeting
J U N E	22	European Pipe Band Championships - Belfast
	22	Bannockburn Dinner (at the Irish Club, Brisbane) Sponsored by Clan Campbell and Clan MacDonald. Contact Trevor 07 3359 6662
	24	Society Meeting
	30	Tartan Day Celebrations - 9.00 am to 4.00 pm, Cultural Forecourt, South Bank. Contact 07 3359 8195. Pipe bands, Highland Dancing, Stalls and much more.
J U L Y	6	All Ireland Pipe Band Championships—Kilkenny City
	13	Toowoomba Caledonian Society Highland Debutante Ball—Indoor Bowls Hall, Toowoomba. Contact 07 4632 8455 (A/H 4635 1486) Tickets \$20
	27	British Pipe Band Championships—Ayr
	27	Redlands Highland Debutante Ball—Community Hall, Smith Street, Cleveland. \$28 (concession \$14). Contact Danni Hartley (3286 5714) or Cynthia McGrath (3286
L A T E R	2-11 Aug	Interceltique Festival de Lorient—Brittany
	10 Aug	World Pipe Band Championships—Glasgow Green
	31 Aug	Ipswich Contest—Contact Liz McGhee 0414 776 361
	31 Aug	Cowal Championships—Dunoon
	28 Sep	Wynnum Highland Gathering—Contact Glenys O'Malley 07 3822 6563

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

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

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

Scottish Radio Programs **SBS Radio** – Brisbane FM 93.3 – Thursday nights 10-11 pm
4EB - FM 98.1 – Thursday afternoons 3-4 pm
2RDJ - FM 88.1 - Wednesday morning 6 am - 9 am

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CONTEST RESULTS

Maclean Highland Gathering—23 March

Open Piobaireachd

1st Angus MacKinnon, Lithgow
2nd Stuart Easton, New Zealand
3rd Mark McKenzie
Judge Dennis Browning

Open MSR

1st Mark McKenzie
2nd Cory Dale
3rd Stuart Easton
Judge Roy Gunn

Open Hornpipe and Jig

1st Stuart Easton
2nd Alastair McInnes
3rd Andrew Roach
Judge Angus McKinnon

Open Air

1st Alastair McInnes
2nd Andrew Roach
3rd Mark McKenzie
Judge Roy Gunn

Champion Open Piper

Stuart Easton

Restricted Piobaireachd

1st Matthew Supranowicz
2nd Fraser Bolton
3rd Michelle Hodder
Judge Sam Young

Donald MacSwan Memorial

1st Alastair Wallace
2nd Alastair McInnes
3rd Fraser Bolton
Judge Dennis Browning

Lachlan McCabe Memorial

Matthew Supranowicz

Intermediate MSR

1st Cory Dale
2nd Matthew Supranowicz
3rd Fraser Bolton
Judge Roy Gunn

Intermediate Hornpipe/Jig

1st Matthew Supranowicz
2nd Cory Dale
3rd Fraser Bolton
Judge Sam Young

Champion Intermediate Piper

Cory Dale

Sub-Intermediate MSR

1st Jordan Whicker
2nd Ryan Hofmann
3rd Michelle Hodder
Judge Angus McKinnon

Sub-Intermediate Jig

1st Michelle Hodder
2nd Ryan Hofmann
3rd Gavin Doherty
Judge Sam Young

Champion Sub-Intermediate Piper

Ryan Hofmann

Elementary March Heat 1

1st Nicholas Barber
2nd Alexander Haig
3rd Jordan Whicker
Judge Angus McKinnon

Elementary March Heat 2

1st Christopher McLeish
2nd Katrina Stead
3rd Lachlan Durham
Judge Dennis Browning

Elementary March Final

1st Jordan Whicker
2nd Nicholas Barber
3rd Katrina Stead
Judge Roy Gunn

Elementary Air Heat 1

1st Samantha Shelley
2nd Matthew Hardy
3rd Cheryl Sutherland
Judge Sam Young

Elementary Air Heat 2

1st Scott Goulter
2nd Christopher McLeish
3rd Nicholas Omdahl
Judge Roy Gunn

Elementary Air Final

1st Samantha Shelley
2nd Christopher McLeish
3rd Scott Goulter
Judge Dennis Browning

Champion Elementary Piper

Jordan Whicker

Chanter Learner

1st Bill Hunt
2nd Anthony Dawes
3rd William Alexander
Judge Angus McKinnon

Grade 3 Bands

1st St Andrew's
2nd Qld Irish Association

Grade 4 Bands

1st Maclean District Services Club
2nd Qld Highlanders No 2

3rd Scots School Bathurst

Band Street March

1st Grafton District Services Club
2nd Redland Sporting Club
3rd Maclean District Services Club and
Tamworth Highland Society (equal)

**Australian Pipe Band Championships—
Cleveland 30, 31 March****Grade 1**

1st Manawatu Scottish
2nd Qld Highlanders no 1
3rd City of Blacktown No 1
4th St Mary's Band Club
5th City of Melbourne No 1

Grade 2

1st City of Bankstown

Grade 3

1st Canberra Burns Club No 1
2nd St Andrew's
3rd Qld Police Juvenile

Grade 4

1st Haileybury College
2nd Maclean and District Services Club
3rd Qld Highlanders No 2

Juvenile

1st Qld Police Juvenile
2nd Haileybury College
3rd Scots PGC No 1

Quickstep

1st Ipswich Thistle
2nd Scots PGC

**Donald MacLeod Memorial Invita-
tional—Stornoway, Isle of Lewis, Scot-
land - 5 April****Piobaireachd**

1st Angus MacColl, "Field of Gold"
2nd Alasdair Gillies, Pittsburgh
3rd Gordon Walker
4th William McCallum, Bearsden, Scotland

MSR

1st Chris Armstrong, "Mrs. Duncan MacFadyen," "Major Manson at Clanchantrushal," "Capt. Colin Campbell," "Caber Feidh," "Drumlithie," "John Morrison of Assynt House"
 2nd Gordon Walker
 3rd Angus MacColl
 4th Alasdair Gillies

Hornpipe & Jig

1st Chris Armstrong, "The Piper's Controversy," "Geese in the Bog"
 2nd Alasdair Gillies
 3rd William McCallum
 4th Donald MacPhee, Alexandria, Scotland

Overall

1st Angus MacColl
 2nd Gordon Walker

(Continued from page 3)

At this stage I should warn that I tend to use the names "Medley" and "Musical Selection" interchangeably, so please don't get too confused!

Saturday 30th March dawned fine and clear, in contrast to the downpours of the previous day. The Cleveland showgrounds were looking good and the contest got away to a fine start. The Grade 3 MSR was running in one circle and the Grade 4 Musical Selection in the other, with performances alternating between the circles.

The crowd was pretty small but built up a bit during the day. The circles were arranged next to each other, with a covered seating area adjacent to each one and seating also available in the stands behind the fence.

The Grade 3 MSR had plenty of meat in it, with all bands opting to play four parted strathspeys and reels despite having the option to play two parted tunes. The standout performances were from Canberra Burns Club and St Andrews. There were some familiar faces in both that we are perhaps more used to seeing in higher grades! However, all bands showed a good appreciation of the music with the main differences being in how tightly the playing was integrated and, of course, the occasional mistake!

One interesting aspect was the side drums used by the University of Ballarat—just a top head and a few centimetres of the shell—a bit like the ones sometimes used for very young drummers unable to carry a full side drum. Although it might be expected the tone would suffer a lot, any effect seemed to be pretty small, so perhaps all the other drummers are working too hard!

Meantime the Grade 4 Musical Selection (Medley) was going along in the other circle (it lasted almost all day with eighteen competitors). There was a mixture of bands, some big in numbers and some small and also a mixture of approaches to the medley. Some tried fairly simple and musical tunes within the capabilities of the players. Others stretched themselves with more complex music and harmonies, sometimes to good effect but also sometimes a bit beyond the capabilities of the fingers and/or the blowing.

Maclean and Haileybury really stood out with strong performances with medium levels of difficulty—this was obviously the winning formula. Both had good integration between pipes and drums.

The bands which were "No 2" bands within an organisation containing a higher grade band showed the benefits of this arrangement, with Qld Highlanders, Canberra Burns Club, City of Melbourne and City of Blacktown all turning in good performances. One constant over the years seems to be that bands with access to good tuition and pipe set-up expertise definitely have an advantage in this Grade but the main problems for these bands also seemed to come from the fact that they were trying music that was perhaps just a little too difficult for them, so there are traps in having your expectations set a bit too high because of the association with a higher grade band..

Just before lunch we heard the only competing Grade 2 band, City of Bankstown, playing its Musical Selection in the circle vacated by the Grade 3 bands. This was an excellent performance, with good

music, tight playing and some interesting harmonies. No doubt they benefited from Gill MacKenzie and Matthew Supranowicz playing with them as the Qld Police are currently not competing but this band looks like one to watch in the future.

In the afternoon, alongside the Grade 4 Medley continuing in one circle (see previous comments) we heard the Juvenile Bands playing their Medleys and then the Grade 1 MSRs.

The Juvenile Medleys were of a high standard, with a noted absence of major errors and with the main differences being in the finer aspects of tone and integration. Again the design of the medleys varied, from the relaxed and musical to the more aggressive. Qld Police No 2 turned in the outstanding performance, but Haileybury was also very strong with Scots PGC very musical and BBC playing as well as I have ever heard them.

Grade 1 at last! Manawatu, fresh from their win in the NZ Championships and Qld Highlanders following up from their win in Grade 2 at the Worlds last year both put in powerful performances, but I especially liked Manawatu—as I noted at the time: “When all you can say is that the bubbly note in the 3rd part of the Strathspey lacked a bit of definition, you know you're in "big band" territory”. Blacktown had a very big band (15 pipers) and formed an open circle formation. Both these factors perhaps worked against them a bit. St Mary's and City of Melbourne were said by some to have been a bit disappointing, but I think it's more realistic to say they have just been overtaken a bit by the current world “big band” standard. You just can't afford to make mistakes or to play with anything less than total conviction and confidence any more.

Interspersed among the band contest were the Drum Major contests. At the end of the day there was a much depleted Quickstep contest with a number of the original six entries dropping out. I missed this as I had to leave.

The weather on Sunday was a contrast - windy with squalls wandering around waiting to pounce on the ground. It was fortunate that they didn't, apart from a couple of very short sharp showers. The crowd was a far bit bigger and built up well during the day. The many stalls seemed to be kept pretty busy.

The pattern of the day was similar to the Saturday, with bands that had played their MSR/March Selection on Saturday having their Musical Selection to play on Sunday and vice versa.

This meant that one circle was taken up all day by the Grade 4 Selections of Marches. Haileybury and Maclean again set the standard, but with plenty of other strong performances. Most of the comments from the previous day also apply. One tendency that is worth mentioning is that many of the tunes played were really song airs and tended to be played as such rather than as march tunes, especially after the bands had halted. In this way this element is turning into a bit of a mini-medley, which was probably not the intention of those who framed the rules. The top rating bands mostly used this sort of tune.

The Grade 3 Musical Selections were the first cab off the rank in the other circle. Again Canberra and St Andrew's produced the best performances with well designed medleys played with confidence and generally pretty mistake free. Both had a bit of loss of integration from time to time. The others were also generally good—a comment that can be made is that all bands seemed to play some of the difficult bits well, so it seems they have the capability. It just remains to get the total consistency needed to win in highly competitive company. Also, a couple of bands played pretty cautious sets of tunes—you need a least a bit of flair in this grade and you also need a consistently good tone throughout.

Bankstown then played their MSR. I thought it wasn't quite to the same standard as their medley the previous day, but I did note at the time “played in a very professional manner with good tempo and expression” so it can't have been too bad.

At lunch time, Doug Thoresen was asked to play a lament for the Queen Mother, whose death had been announced overnight. It was fitting that we were able to commemorate such a great Scottish

lady at one of the major regular meetings in Australia to celebrate the contribution that Scottish culture has made to our history.

Next in the "other" circle was the Juvenile Selection of Marches. The impressions were much the same as for their medleys, with some highly professional performances despite the inexperience of the players.

Finally we had the Grade 1 Medley. Again the performances of Manawatu and Qld Highlanders were very good and in fact the piping judges had them locked together. It was Manawatu's piping from the MSR the day before and their drumming in the Medley that carried them over the line. Personally I preferred Manawatu's musical approach but thought that Qld Highlanders were slightly better in the technical department, but it was one of those situations where the ranking really could only be a matter of opinion. The other performances were all enjoyable as well but they sorted themselves out with occasional mistakes and lack of integration and sometimes a bit of lack of control.

In summary, a most enjoyable couple of days of listening to Pipe Bands. The organisers are to be congratulated for the smooth running of the contest and I understand that it also proved to be financially viable.

Our piping judges were Tom Brown (Scotland—convenor of the RSPBA Music Board and former P/M of Dysart & Dundonald), Chris Stevens (NZ), John MacKenzie (NSW) Maurie DeHayr (Qld) and Doug Thoresen (Qld). Drumming Judges were Alistair Pratt (NZ) and David Gray (Qld). Dress & Drill was an all Queensland affair, with David Booth, Norm Hughes, Ross Huth and Peter Flexman supplying their knowledge and experience. Brian Edmonds was the Contest Supervisor, assisted by Christine Gordon (SA).

Bands and order of play:

Grade 1: City of Melbourne No 1, Celtic Inn Manawatu, St Mary's, Band Club City of Blacktown No 1, Qld Highlanders No 1

Grade 2: City of Bankstown

Grade 3: Qld Irish, Taupo, Qld Police No 2, Maryborough & District, Canberra Burns Club, Warrnambool, University of Ballarat, St Andrew's

Grade 4: Caboolture City, Redland Sporting Club, Haileybury College, City of Blacktown No 2, Sunshine Coast, Clan Stuart, Canberra Burns Club No 2, Northern Suburbs, Gold Coast Tweed, City of Brisbane, Lismore City, Scots PGC No 2, Qld Highlanders No 2, Maclean & District, City of Melbourne No 2, Ipswich Thistle, Wynnum RSL, Scots PGC No 1

Juvenile: Scots PGC No 1, Haileybury College, Qld Police No 2, BBC College

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Solos commence 8.00 am—Pipe Band Competition—12 noon

Saturday 31ST August 2002

Please come along and join with us for the day, savour the unique sound of the bagpipes and drums, witness the spectacle of tartans on parade and visit the many stalls displaying their traditional wares. Plenty of food and drink stalls on site for the hungry and thirsty so why not come along and have a lovely day out. We would greatly welcome your support in our efforts

DIRECT ENQUIRIES PLEASE TO SECRETARY

LIZ MCGHEE MOBILE No. 0414 776 361

CORRESPONDENCE TO PO BOX 689 BOOVAL 4304 QLD

Entry Forms will be available soon for solo and band events. The contest will again feature the Roddy MacSween memorial. The music for this was published in the newsletter last year—if you need a fresh copy please contact the society Secretary