


Drones & Sticks Pipe Band



Hawke's Bay, New Zealand

Newsletter

July 2014

The President's Message

SPECIAL THANKS TO ALL OUR SUPPORTERS

The Supporters and friends of the Drones & Sticks Pipe Band deserve a round of applause.

Your comments and encouragement are really, really appreciated.

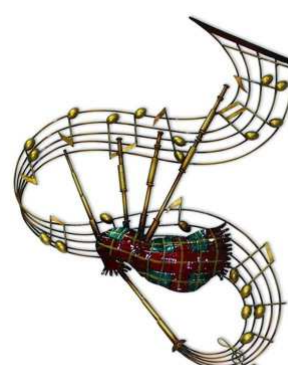
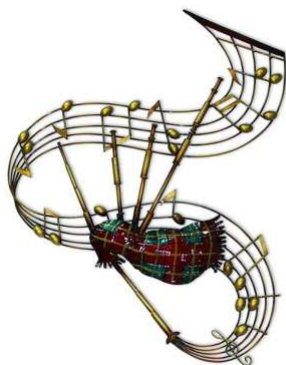
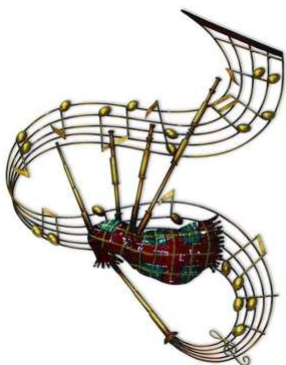
The players respond to your applause and our pipe band is a better band because of you.

When players perform well they need to be told that their hard work is appreciated by the audience - and that is where you come in.

Your comments to the individual players, and to the leaders of our band tell us that we are doing a good job for you and the community.

Thank you for being the lovely group of people who are a vital part of our success story.

Harry Renfree President Phone 844 6539



Our Vision:

To be a musically competent pipe band, responsive to members' aspirations and respected in the community.

Musical Director's Message



The band has been learning some new tunes in anticipation of the next series of concerts which will culminate in the Celtic Connection concert in February. The theme for that concert will be a connection with the remembrance commemoration events associated with one hundred years since the first world war so we will be revising many of the tunes that come from that era.

The fifth edition of our book of piping music has been printed and distributed. This time we've split the music into three sections. The first is the tunes and exercises that a learner will work through as they get into the band. The second part is the core repertoire of the band while the third part contains tunes that some of us play from time to time. My hope is that over time many of these tunes in the third volume will become part of the band's regular repertoire.

The Committee has endorsed a plan for the development of our music for the year. It includes the usual activities relating to individual and group tuition to improve overall standards, keeping the repertoire refreshed and interesting, staging concerts and continuing efforts to attract new members.

We're investigating the idea of staging a solo piping and drumming competition in Napier and if the concept catches on we would aim to make it a regular happening. There would be events for all abilities and possibly one for groups. We'll keep you posted.

The band will again be taking a group to Turakina in January but we're also aiming to go to the Hamilton gardens contest in November. The purpose of the development group taking part in these events is to provide youngsters (and those not so young who want to participate) to add the contest environment to their pipe band experiences. Much will depend on the availability of pipers and drummers.

Regards
Kerry

I like pigs. Dogs look up to us, cats look down on us. Pigs treat us as equals. (Winston Churchill)

Shades of Gray

I started learning the pipes in 1948 at age eleven. My first competition was at Mangatainoka on New Year's Day of 1949 with Bill Budge as judge. I was playing 'Glenside' and, unfortunately, my chanter dropped out near the end of the tune. At the time I had a ½ size set of pipes belonging to Simon McKenzie. I got full sized pipes in 1950 and am now still playing the same ones.

I started at Dannevirke High School in 1950 and that's where I met Rod Seymour and helped tutor him.

I very successfully competed solo from 1950 to 1958 at Wanganui, Turakina, Fielding, Mangatinoka, Dannevirke, Takapau and Hastings.

The school band had at least 8 pipers every year and every Friday we attended school in our kilts and uniform, as we had military training in the afternoon and the band led the parades. We were busy through the summer months playing at galas and garden parties in all parts of Dannevirke and at school functions.



Gray and Rod at Dannevirke High School 90th Jubilee



*Gray - 1948 - age 12
1/2 size set of pipes*

Dannevirke High School, being a co-ed school, had girls who did highland dancing and they joined us on some occasions. A few of us boys learned the Fling and Broadsword dances, as well as did Scottish dancing with the girls.

Gray Helliwell

Success is getting what you want; happiness is wanting what you get.



2014 AGM Report

Our AGM was held on Monday 9 June. Once again it was good to reflect on the many things that have been accomplished in the past year with the highlights being the decision by the City of Napier members to join our band and the Celtic Connection concert staged on Art

Deco weekend. Harry, Betty, Kerry and Don were re-appointed to the positions of President, Secretary/Treasurer, Musical Director and Drum Major respectively. We were also delighted to appoint Geoff Bainbridge to the position of Assistant Musical Director. Geoff Brings a wealth of pipe band experience and talent to our band and we are grateful for the work he is doing.

The three people elected to the Committee are Penny Madden, Richard Loan and Graeme Blank. It was good to see so many people putting themselves forward for the committee but one of the consequences is that June Hawes and Hugh Harrison, past committee members missed out. In the haste of winding up the AGM and SGM we overlooked extending our thanks to them for all the work they've done - June over nine years and Hugh in the past year. We are grateful for your contribution.

We took the opportunity to thank Betty for all the work she does for us, Don Wilson for his creativity with the newsletter and Don McLeod who chaired the meeting in Harry's absence for his ongoing input and assistance.

Special General Meeting - new constitution (rules)

After a protracted period of time developing a new constitution we adopted the new document at our SGM which followed the AGM. As you know we had to revise the Band's constitution because many aspects of the legal framework for charities and incorporated societies have changed over the past ten years. A retired lawyer, Bob Wallis, kindly prepared a new constitution (rules) and this was adopted. It has been lodged with the Registrar of Incorporated Societies for approval and will come into force once this approval is given (expected to be by end June or early July). While the new constitution is longer and more wordy than the old constitution it is more comprehensive and complete.

Update from the Committee June 2014

Uniforms:

The committee decided to continue with the earlier decision to have the McLean Tartan for the pipers and the Leslie tartan for the drummers. We are committed to the repair/alterations of kilts with a Dunedin company and are still waiting for responses to grant applications, before proceeding with purchase of socks and shirts and other items.

Asset transfer from City of Napier Pipe Band Inc:

On 25 June the incorporated society known as City of Napier PB had its AGM and the D&S PB committee was appointed as the committee of that organisation so that we can manage the band rooms. While we are very fortunate to have a band room at Nelson Park especially now that EIT is increasingly using the whare on Monday nights, it does bring some financial responsibilities for the committee to manage carefully. We will certainly respect and treasure the history, traditions and hard work the building represents. All the other assets will be incorporated into our finances in due course. We have several times acknowledged our 'newer' members who came from the CoNPB for the extraordinary efforts they've made to learn our tunes and willingly taking part in our big parade schedule. Your presence in the band has been a big boost for us - thank you.



**Don't forget to get your ticket for the Celebration Dinner.
There will be no door sales!**



Wear a Touch of Tartan

**DRONES AND STICKS &
CITY OF NAPIER PIPE BANDS**

“15th and 125th Birthday
Celebration Dinner”
‘Ode to the Haggis’
All Saints Church
Corner Puketapu & Church Roads, Taradale
19th July, 2014 at 6.00 pm.

\$25.00 per person BYO **No. 29**

Parade Calendar

June

Mon 30 Practice at EIT.

July

Sat 5 Dannevirke Ingleside

Mon 7 Practice at EIT.

Mon 14 Practice at Band Rooms, Nelson Park

Sat 19 Band Dinner

Mon 21 Practice at EIT.

Fri 25 'Retirees' Afternoon Tea - Band Rooms

August

Mon 4 Supporters Night Taradale RSA.

Sat 9 Napier Caledonian Society Ball

Fri 29 'Retirees' Afternoon Tea - Band Rooms

September

Sat 13 Napier Ingleside

Sat 13 Hastings Blossom Parade - to be confirmed.

Fri 26 'Retirees' afternoon tea - Band Rooms.



From The Treasurers Desk



Subscriptions are now due. I would really appreciate prompt payment.

To our Supporters:

For your \$20.00 subscription (maximum of \$50.00 per family) you receive a bi-monthly newsletter which gives a detailed list of all the band events coming up. You are always most welcome to attend any of these events. It lists all the supporters' nights both at the RSA and EIT and we look forward to your attendance at these fun nights. Your newsletter is either mailed directly to you or you receive it by email. We also have a very exciting event coming up on 19 July. A small sub-committee has been very busy over the last few weeks organising a special sit-down meal, followed by the Haggis ceremony and entertainment. We will be running a very nice raffle and there will be a special birthday cake to mark the birthday celebrations of both the City of Napier and the Drones and Sticks Pipe Bands. This is going to be a wonderful evening in a very nice warm venue, so it is to be hoped many of our supporters will join with the band to help celebrate this important event. The band apply for grants on a regular basis for various items of band equipment but it is not always successful. The payment of your subscription assists the band with administration costs and the daily running of the band.

To our Band Members:

Just a reminder - playing members \$30.00 per person - discounted by \$5.00 if paid by 30th June.

Many thanks to all those people who have already paid their subscription.

B Wilson



The Royal Scots Dragoon Guards



he most famous band in the world: Ten things you might not know.

- 1 THE correct form of their abbreviated title is 'Scots DG' - not Dragoon Guards
- 2 THE man who led them in 1971 and who was the brain behind the inclusion of 'Amazing Grace' on their album was Pipe Major Tony Crease - these days Tony is a retired Major who lives in North Yorkshire where he continues his passion for birds.
- 3 DRUMMERS in the band originally wore trews in Dalzell tartan - later ditched for Royal Stewart.
- 4 THE white bearskin now worn by the bass drummer was originally donated by the Czar of Russia when he was the regiment's Colonel-in-Chief and was worn by the regiment's Military Band until that band was dumped in an army re-shuffle.
- 5 FOR a time the Pipes & Drums had the finest Highland dance team in the British Army. Trained by the late Johnny Bannerman, it won the army championship at the Argyllshire Gathering several times and its members also scooped the pool with the solo awards.
- 6 AMAZING Grace' hit the top of the charts in May 1972 - not 1971 as incorrectly printed on a Canadian piping site.
- 7 THE first public performance after it became a chart-topper was in Edinburgh when the combined Pipes & Drums and Military Band played at Edinburgh's Mound as part of a march along Princes Street shortly after the record hit the charts.
- 8 THE pipers in the band in May 1972 came from Peebles, Musselburgh, Dundee, Edinburgh - and Australia, although the majority came from Edinburgh. The drummers came from Peterculter, Maryhill, Bo'ness, Ayr, Edinburgh and Brechin.
- 9 'AMAZING Grace' was far from a being a one-hit wonder - the follow-up single 'Heyken's Serenade' also entered the charts while 'Little Drummer Boy' was the best selling single 'Xmas' record of that year.
- 10 OTHER successful singles included 'The Water is Wide' and 'Now is the Hour' (number 1 in New Zealand) while the flip side of AG was 'Going Home' which has since also achieved its own iconic status

God must love stupid people. He made so many.

The Evolution of the Sporran



An essential piece of Highland dress to accompany a Scotsman's kilt is the ornately decorated pouch that hangs down the front, commonly referred to as the sporran. But where did the sporran originate and what was its purpose?

In the twelfth century Highland warriors were described as being "bare-legged, with shaggy cloaks and a scrip [small bag] ..." Such dress was, at that time, confined to the Highlands, as Scottish Lowlanders considered such apparel as barbarous, referring with contempt to their Highland kinsmen as "redshanks"!

Kilts of that time were very basic garments that required no tailoring and comprised a single piece of tartan cloth some two yards in width by four or six yards in length. Such dress was ideally suited to the climate and terrain of the Highlands. It allowed freedom of movement, the tightly woven woollen cloth was warm and waterproof, unwrapped it could provide a voluminous cloak against the weather or a comfortable overnight blanket, it dried out quickly and with much less discomfort than trousers. But unlike trousers, the kilt could not provide pockets and so the sporran was born out of necessity. A survival of the medieval purse, the sporran was the Highlander's pocket they didn't have.

Early sporrans were made from leather or skin. They were simple in design and usually gathered at the top by basic thongs with small tassels. The Highlanders of the Western Isles often wore cloth pouches known as *trews*.

Original sporrans dating from the fourteenth century and onwards can be viewed at many Scottish museums.

From the late seventeenth century and early eighteenth century sporrans were generally fitted with metal clasps, usually made from brass, or for clan chiefs, occasionally silver. The goat-haired, *sporran molach* or hairy sporran was introduced by the military in the eighteenth century. These sporrans often had flap-tops and large tassels and featured a variety of furs and hair such as fox and horse, or occasionally sealskin, all set off with a badger's head.

But what is it that a Scotsman actually keeps in his sporran? Well, one sporran on display at the National Museum in Edinburgh features a clasp of brass and steel with four concealed pistols inside, the contraption being designed to be discharged should anybody attempt to open the locked purse, thus either killing or maiming the thief.

The modern sporran, or *sporran* - Gaelic, has evolved a long way from the doeskin bag containing ammunition or daily rations and many now feature stainless steel and even plastics! Despite modern enhancements however, sporrans retain their basic design principles and carry everything from car keys to mobile phones.