

Band Blurp

July 2017



PRESIDENT'S COMMENTS.

Welcome to this July newsletter.



Recently we sadly said farewell to a much respected Piper and friend to many, Bruce McLeod. The Band played before and after Bruce's memorial service, which was attended by a large number of his friends and acquaintances. Also since the last newsletter, we have said goodbye to two supporters, Ula Wilson and Rita Coates (Penny Marshall's Aunty). The band's condolences are extended to all their families.

Playing members continue to brave the winter nights and are practicing hard for a concert to be held later in the year at the Napier RSA.

Watch this space! It will be worth coming to.

The committee continue to explore options for the present band rooms and, when we have something concrete, we will present our thoughts for you to have a look at and discuss.

Until next time....happy banding.

Richard Manning
President

Our Vision:

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

PIPE MAJOR'S NEWS

I was interested when reviewing the recent performances of our members in solo competitions to hear what they had to say about their efforts. Did they feel they played well, were their pipes going well, what happened to disrupt their performance? In some cases it comes down to preparation, or rather the lack of it. When playing indoors it is helpful if you can find a space indoors where you can play and prepare. Tuning outside then going indoors to play creates issues with temperature and moisture and means you are unlikely to have a settled instrument when you perform. A piper needs to prepare by blowing their pipes in an environment similar to the one they will be performing in for some time before not in the shade if the performance is to be in the sun, not outside if performing inside. It's no good giving the pipes a quick blow and tune, then standing around waiting to perform. The pipes need to be kept at their playing temperature until the time to perform arrives. Not always easy but a habit that needs to be developed when putting on a performance, whether it be a competition or a family event.



Keep up the good work with the new tunes. We have several performances in the months ahead when we'll be able to present new music. Remember 50 is the magic number - we need to have played the tunes fifty times before we perform them in public.

Regards
Kerry
Pipe Major

Passchendaele Concert – 12 October

We are in discussion with the Napier RSA about presenting a concert on the anniversary of the Passchendaele offensive in WW1. Ever since 1917, Passchendaele has been a byword for the horror of the Great War. In terms of lives lost in a single day, the failed attack on Bellevue Spur on 12 October was probably the greatest disaster in New Zealand's history. In the concert the band will present a variety of music appropriate to the act of commemorating the sacrifices made by so many over the years.

Taradale Song



Being a Songwriter and knowing that there has never been a song written for the town of Taradale, Tracy Rudzevecuis has been creative and written the 'Taradale Song'. It is based around the Taradale Town Clock in memory of our fallen local soldiers that went to war and never returned hence, says Tracy, giving them "a voice" from beyond the grave. Ideally she wants it to be played at an ANZAC Day parade (and eventually pulling in and giving local talented high school students a chance to play a different version every year at an ANZAC service). The next challenge is to do a recording and get the right artists involved. This is Tracy's 'gift to our people and the township

Recital Sunday 16 July and Holiday Workshop

On Sunday 16 July we will be staging a recital at which our All Stars group will be performing. This will be an opportunity for our learner pipers and drummers to show their skills as well for the group to perform.

Afternoon tea will be served at the conclusion.

Where? Tamatea Community Church, York Avenue

When? 2pm, Sunday 16 July



The Recital comes after our July Holidays *Keeping Warm* workshop which is an opportunity for the youngsters to get some concentrated instruction on their instruments (pipes or drums) with tutoring from the Band's senior members. The schools contest group will have the opportunity to work on their music and practice together and of course they will all be preparing for the Recital. Our workshops are for everyone, whether just starting or more advanced, with individual and group sessions. Each day runs from 9am to 12noon with warmup, learning new tunes and revising old ones, group and individual sessions, working on chanter pads, and pipes and drums.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING – 2017

The Annual General Meeting of the Band was held on 12 June 2017 with 40 members present.

The President and Pipe Major reflected on the past twelve months during which time the Band and its members attended 64 functions and events ranging from the big parades of ANZAC Day and Art Deco, to family reunions and weddings. New Year's Eve continues to be a big occasion and once again the Band played at a variety of venues. Due to declining numbers at some venues, the Band may need to reconsider how it celebrates this particular day in the calendar.

Membership numbers remain steady with 36 playing members, 58 associate members and 9 life members.

Band Hall – Nelson Park – Options for maintenance, refurbishment, expansion and other alternatives are being explored so the Committee can bring a viable proposal to members in the near future.

All Stars – This group of young pipers and drummers is working very well and participating in many parades.

Music – Monday night practices have continued throughout the year with Cameron Budge being engaged as Drum Tutor. Thanks must go to Geoff Bainbridge and many others who have played a role mentoring pipers and drummers.

Gray Helliwell – It was a sad day for the Band last year when we lost one of our life members. Gray was always ready to assist and help anyone with their music and he is sorely missed.

The following appointments were made:

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| President | Richard Manning |
| Secretary/Treasurer | Betty Wilson |
| Pipe Major | Kerry Marshall |
| Drum Major | Don Stuart |
| Band Manager | Ken McLoughlin |

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| Committee: | Penny Madden, Richard Loan, Hugh Harrison, Julie Baxter |
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| Patron | Harry Renfree |
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BRUCE MCLEOD

June 20, 2017



The notice we put in the paper said ‘a perfect bandsman’ and those are not words that we would say lightly. When talking about our friend Bruce the list of adjectives includes dedicated, dependable, enthusiastic, hard working, helpful, reliable, supportive, cheerful and kind.

Bruce took up the pipes after he attended the clan MacLeod reunion in Australia in 1999. With typical Bruce determination and stickability he found a tutor, Gray Helliwell, so that in 2003 he was able to stand on stage and play Amazing Grace and Highland Cathedral at the clan MacLeod celebrations in Christchurch. He was persuaded, by Gray, to come along to a band practice and despite his initial trepidation, he was hooked. From 2004 Bruce has been a piper who enjoyed his piping and made a big contribution to the band. In his own words “not being one to give up easily I have persisted and slowly mastered a reasonable number of tunes”.

After the trip to Bundanoon in 2008 Bruce said “if I never progress beyond where I am today I will never regret joining the band and the enjoyment this band has brought me.”

Well, he did progress and in 2011 Bruce was a member of the band that played with the brass band in a concert to raise funds for the Christchurch earthquake appeal and in 2012 he again travelled to Australia, this time to Melbourne, with the band. Over the years he played in all our parades, whenever he could, and even purchased his own full uniform so he could look the part for Anzac Day and Art Deco parades.



We all have our own memories of Bruce but for me the effort he put into getting things right and playing to the best standard he could, stand out. He was always cheerful and got a lot of enjoyment out of his music and band activities.

In the past few days band members have been reflecting on Bruce’s presence in the band and this is epitomised by these comments from the mother of two of our

youngsters: “He was an extremely kind man to the kids at band. They spoke very highly of him and he will be sorely missed in the Napier Pipe Band.”

That was Bruce, always helping, always interested in piping and band things, always supportive of everyone.

To finish let me quote Bruce again. In the band’s 2009 book ‘Ten Busy Years’ he said “We each have a talent which only needs awakening given the right opportunity. May our souls grow from the pleasure we bring to others through our music, our song and dance.”

Bruce, we are privileged that you have shared your talents and gifts with us, something we will always remember. May your soul rest in peace.

Kerry Marshall



The Sporran

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, both deerskin and calfskin proved particularly popular. They were simple in design and usually gathered at the top by thongs with small tassels.

The history and evolution of the sporran can also be traced through early British military paintings and portraits of Highland soldiers; these later sporrans start to show more elaborate decoration.

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 elaborate metal workings of some of these clasps are indeed miniature works of art. 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 *sporan* – Gaelic, has evolved a long way from the doeskin bag containing ammunition or daily rations. Despite modern enhancements however, sporrans retain their basic design principles and carry everything from car keys to mobile phones.

Ula Wilson

The band played recently at Ula Wilson's funeral at All Saints Church, Taradale. It was good catching up with all her family again, some of whom I had not seen for many years. There were sad moments reflecting on Ula's life but also many happy ones as we remembered all the people she had touched over the years. I first remember Ula from when I joined the City of Napier Pipe Band in 1979. Her late husband, Ian, played the base drum and later became Drum Major. Ula was an avid supporter, and continued this support when Ian joined the Drones and Sticks Pipe Band.

This support included organising food for the contests. The economic contribution was significant but more importantly it was loving nurture via bacon and egg pies, tan squares, chocolate cakes and the like. Baking was her forte.

Ula enthusiastically cheered us when we were doing well and commiserated with us when the results were not what we wanted. Bus trips, plane trips, Ula was always there with her smile and laughter. She had a hearty, uninhibited laugh. She even laughed at Ian's jokes when he and Hugh Harrison competed for the funniest puns (or so they thought!).

Ula didn't keep the best of health towards the end and had to move into a Rest Home. However, she still attended many Band supporters' evenings and she obviously enjoyed listening to the music.

Ula's passing marks the end of an era. Her contribution to pipe bands and to fellowship was significant.

Richard Loan

Congratulations to Mary Mills on receiving a Napier Pilot City Unity Award recently.

When a bus company was prevailed upon to increase the concessionary fare to frequent travellers so that they got six journeys instead of four for a pound, one elderly gentleman, renowned for his frugality, even in a community where frugal folk are common, was still unhappy.

"It's all dam' foolishness," he declared. "Now we've got to walk to town six times instead of four times to save a pound!"



Social Afternoon Tea

Our Patron, Harry, welcomed about 40 members to a very successful social get together and afternoon tea held on Sunday 25 June 2017 at the Band rooms. Liam Reid entertained with some tunes played on his violin, after which some of the band members entertained with several tunes played on their pipes. A short game was organised after which afternoon tea was served.

Have you heard the rumour that the Grand Canyon was started by a Scotsman who lost a coin in a ditch?



Did you hear about the Scotsman who got caught making nuisance telephone calls?
He kept reversing the charges.

Coming Events

July

- Sat 8* Napier Caledonian Society Ingleside
11-13 Holiday Workshop for learners and Youngsters.
Tuesday 11 to Thursday 13 at the band rooms 9 to 12 noon each day.
Sun 16 Tamatea Community Church Recital.

September

- Sat 9* Napier Caledonian Society Ingleside
Sat 16 Hastings Blossom Festival

