

The Celts in Conflict.

One thousand years before Christ, the Celtic people first came from Europe; (mainly from the north of Germany and northern France). These new settlers, in Scotland and all of Britain, were skilled in working iron. Now, armour and weaponry, due to these new Celts, took an evolutionary leap forward due to their iron working abilities. The Celts, (actually a type of generic word, as there were so many types of Celtic people throughout Europe), were the first race to use the long sword and small shield (a type of buckler shield) in Europe. Previously, knives or daggers, short swords -- as the Romans used -- were the accepted Roman way of fighting. This three and one-half foot long sword put fear in the Romans. The great Roman historian, Tacitus wrote of the Celtic weapon -- "...their (Celts) swords of this iron materials, and extreme length seemed a poor choice of sword to the legions until they saw that these monstrosities could actually be used quickly and efficiently with proper training. The Ninth Legion under Agricola, in Britain, feared the barbaric Caledonians extreme advantage in reach, with this overly long sword."



Settlements such as the one found in East Lothian had to be fortified as tribal warfare became a way of life for the Caledonians. Hundreds of years before the birth of Christ, the Celts built hill forts all over Scotland.

The Celts also built artificial islands called Crannogs for shelter against animals and invaders. These so-called floating islands were small circular homes, like huts, built on wood pilings over a pond or body of water for exceptionally good protection. And they needed that protection, sea raiders (not Vikings yet) invaded Scotland, in search of slaves for the Roman Empire, a century before Christ. To better protect themselves, the settlers (Celts) built fortified towers called Brochs.



Brochs (pronunciation: /'brɒx/) are among Scotland's most impressive prehistoric buildings, the large majority of them dating from around 100 BC to 100 AD, the time of the Roman invasion of Britain. There are over 500 known sites of these iron age structures in Scotland, but it is only in the Highlands and Islands that brochs are to be found in any numbers.

Huge windowless towers, ingeniously engineered, they represent the pinnacle of dry-stone wall building, and remain one of the finest construction achievements of Iron Age Europe. Brochs were almost certainly originally roofed and would have had several timber floors known as galleries



Spurtle

The **spurtle** (or "spirtle") is a Scots kitchen tool, dating from at least the fifteenth century. It was originally a flat, wooden, spatula-like utensil, used for flipping oatcakes on a hot griddle. Over time, the original implement changed shape and began being used specifically for stirring oatmeal and soups. The rod-like shape is designed for constant stirring which prevents the porridge from congealing and so becoming lumpy and unappealing. It looks like a fat wooden dowel, often with a contoured end to give the user a better grip.

Band Blurb

March 2016



Presidents Comments

What a magnificent start to the year.

PARADES The list of parades seems endless !

Art Deco street march, our Celtic Connection concert on the lower level on Art Deco Saturday.

Vintage Car display on Art Deco Sunday, our free Sound Shell Concert on 27 February, Taradale RSA Concert in early March, and the forthcoming Napier Navy Charter Parade.

INGLESIDES: Many thanks to the players who perform so well at the Napier Inglesides on Saturday evenings. Well done.

MUSIC: We have received many favourable comments about how good we sound when we play. Congratulations everyone.

LEADERSHIP and TUTORING: Many thanks to Kerry Marshall and Geoff Bainbridge for their tutoring of our learners and leadership of our piping and drumming sections.

NELSON PARK CLUBROOMS: Many thanks to everyone who has helped spruce up our clubrooms. They are looking good.

COMMITTEE: Our Committee strives to lead wisely but if you have any thoughts which would help our Band, we would always like to hear them.

Regards

Harry Renfree.

Our Vision:

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

Pipe Major's Report

Our Art Deco and Sound Shell concerts went well with a variety of tunes played to a good standard. The Sound Shell is a good venue and if you enjoyed playing there perhaps we might consider repeating the experience. At month end the EIT graduation parades give us another opportunity to play for a group that has been very supportive of the band over many years.



The challenge now is for us to think about what music we want to be playing at the end of the year and into the first part of next year - if we want new tunes we have to use the winter months for learning and refining. So how do we go about learning new tunes? Monday night sessions might be a start but does there need to be follow-up in terms of individual and small group work? If so when does that happen, who leads it and how do we make sure everyone plays the music the same way?

Cheers
Kerry

Supporters' Events

Monday Night Concerts

Our first Monday night concert (7 March) staged at the Taradale RSA was very successful with a good turnout of Supporters and friends of the band with the band performing items from its recent Art Deco and Sound Shell concerts. The second one will be on Monday 7 November at the RSA.

Supporters' Nights - 2 May

You are invited to join us at practice at the Rugby Club rooms, when we will provide some entertainment and followed by supper.

The Foundation Youth Pipe Band of New Zealand

NZ's Youth Pipe Band will be having a weekend training camp in Napier on the 16th and 17th April, 2016. As is becoming a tradition, the band members will arrive in Napier on the Thursday afternoon/evening and on Friday will visit several local schools, giving them a 20 – 30 minute concert. Friday night, all day Saturday and Sunday morning are utilised for rehearsals which will be at our band rooms at Nelson Park.

The Youth Band comprises talented youngsters from throughout NZ who come together on a regular basis. In recent years they've been to Australia and Canada



Cliff Remembers

My Band life started in 1945 at the age of 15. I was riding to work on my bike, when John Briasco called out “Hey, Cliff, how would you like to join the Pipe Band?” I thought that it sounded alright, so after discussing it with him and my mother, I decided on the pipes and John took me to practice the following Tuesday in the Hastings Citizens Band Hall. On the following Thursday I went to Alan Hutchison’s to start practice on the chanter. I found that I didn't have much idea at all.

After a lot of practice, I managed to play the Brown Haired Maiden and a few tunes like that and, ultimately, became good enough to play the pipes.

I couldn't afford a set of pipes but I was in town one day talking to a bloke who said “I've got a set at home, they're silver mounted, all embossed, they're Henderson's and if you come around you can have them for as long as you like”. So around I went to his place and we hunted the house high and low. We finally found a box on the shelf in the fowl house! Unbelievable! He cleaned off all the chicky-poo and inside was a beautiful set of pipes. All they needed was a new bag and a set of reeds. I played them for about a year and on Burn’s night I was piping in the Haggis for the Scots Society. The Scots Society had a meeting a month later and, knowing the pipes were not mine, decided that they would buy me a set of pipes and I’d have to pay them off at five shillings a week. So a month later I went into Sutcliffes and here they were in a cardboard type box. I opened it and it was a silver mounted set of Lauries and I played them for the rest of my band days.

I have wonderful memories of my association with pipe bands over the years – winning the Drum Majors display at Dunedin in 1948 under the tutelage of Bill Mosley’s father (Mo) – the City of Hastings Band – the Wellington East Coast Regimental Pipe Band – supporter of City of Hastings from 1956 and, now, supporting the Drones and Sticks Pipe Band (now the Napier Pipe Band).

From 1945 up until now is a long time and I have enjoyed every minute of my association with some wonderful people.

Cliff Wilson

Teachers open the door, but you must enter yourself. (Chinese Proverb)

Money isn't that important. After all, Henry Ford had millions and never owned a Cadillac.

Now, here's a wee challenge for you!

The item in the photo on the right is made of wood (oak, in this case) and is approximately 300 mm (12 inches) long. It is used in the kitchen and is of Scottish origin.

I was asked to make this for a lady and it is the first one I have ever made — in fact, I had never heard of this article previously.

What is it called? What is it used for?

The answer is on the last page of this newsletter.

Sorry! No prizes for getting it right.

Don Wilson



The Band entertaining during Art Deco Weekend.



... and God promised man that Good and Obedient wives would be found in all four corners of the world.

Then He made the Earth round and laughed and laughed.

and this year will be returning to Australia in October to compete in the Australian PB championships. In 2018 they will again be travelling to Canada and the USA.

We're excited by the visit of the these ambassadors for pipe bands as it gives us an opportunity to promote pipe banding to the local populace and with the youth pipe bands teenagers not much older than the children at the schools that are visited, will hopefully encourage new learners to get involved in piping and drumming.

Everyone is welcome to call into Nelson Park while the Youth Band is practising. There's a special welcome for Saturday evening when we'll be joining them for a meal and their relaxation time.

Parade Calendar

Upcoming Events

March

Sun 27: Highland Games, Hastings

Thurs 31 and Fri 1 April: EIT Graduations, Napier

April

Sat 9: Napier Ingleside

Sat 23: Navy Charter Parade

Mon 25: Anzac Day parades – Taradale, Waipawa and Napier

May

Mon 2: Supporters night.



The audience at the Soundshell Show—27 Feb 2016

Ken's Korner

Practice or Rehearsal?

I was recently challenged after reading an article by PM Brett Tidswell, Australian Pipe Band College as to the difference between Band practice and a Band rehearsal.



A rehearsal is when we focus on a particular performance and play through the repertoire of tunes. Having recently prepared for the Art Deco parade and concert, the Sound Shell concert and now currently preparing for the EIT graduation and Navy parade it seems to me that our Monday nights are actually Band Rehearsals rather than Band Practices.

Practice on the other hand is to give attention to detail. From a piping point of view this involves some exercises, learning tunes, improving technique, phrasing, expression etc. It could be on pipes or on chanter and for drummers, a practice pad or drum.

In reflection I think that most of our practice time should be spent at home learning new tunes and developing good technique so that when we come together as a band on Monday nights, we will be ready to rehearse for our next parade that is coming up.

Practice involves time and effort and if we are not practicing and memorising new tunes at home, then as we rehearse our repertoire on Monday nights for our next performance, we will probably struggle with the limited time available.

Whether we are practicing or rehearsing, our Monday nights Band Practice is always a good time to come together and play those wonderful instruments called bagpipes or drums

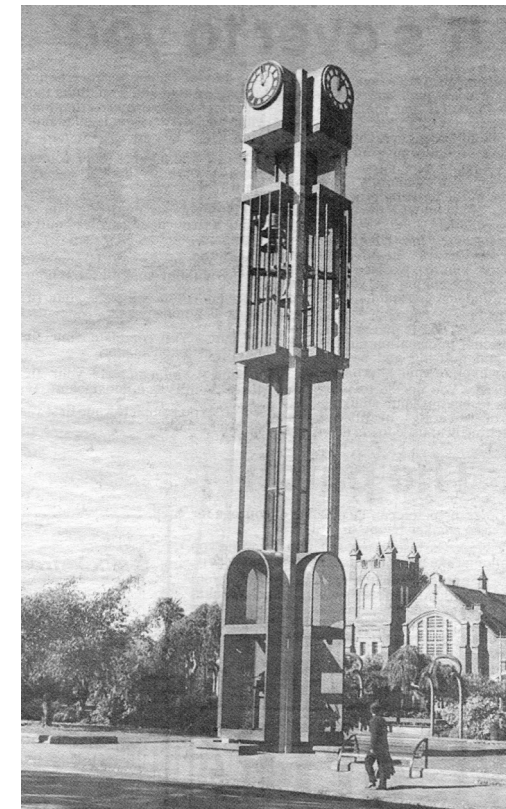
Happy Piping
Ken McLoughlin

NOTICE NOTICE NOTICE NOTICE NOTICE NOTICE NOTICE

May 2nd - Supporters Night

This evening is to be held at the Rugby Club Rooms,
8 Durham Ave, Tamatea (behind Z petrol station).

More Monster Clocks.



The Ashburton clock

This is the last of Rogers series about some unusual timepieces.

Last newsletter we left Roger and family leaving Masterton after viewing the old CPO clock and heading off to Ashburton to view a similar clock that had been restored. Now read on!

I was totally impressed by the excellent job completed in 1972 and paid for by the Lions Club.

As you can see from the attached photos, this is a serious clock we are talking about. Apparently these clocks were all made by W. Littlejohn and Son, Wellington 1903 and apparently about 200 were made. I would say he probably cornered the market in those days.

While sitting in the park across the road having lunch, we were able to appreciate the clear melodious Westminster chimes every quarter hour. To my great luck, while we were there, the caretaker/keeper of the clock arrived and he

allowed me inside for a closer look. The Ashburton clock is

very interesting, because they mounted the clock mechanism at street level to enable public viewing, instead of high up near the clock faces. This means the weights powering the clock only have about a four foot drop to the floor.

This is less than 12 hours power and would mean somebody having to wind them up twice a day. To get around this problem, they attached electric motors to the three weights (one each for the clock, quarter hour and hour chimes) and when the weights approach the floor, a trip switch activates the motors to re-wind the clock. Very cunning and simple but has worked for 28 years.

In every other respect the clock is fully mechanical and kept in pristine condition. When I asked the "keeper" how much work was involved in restoration, he said it was basically just cleaning and painting. The clock had been pretty much in original condition. Looking back, I would think that in another 100 years' time it will still be ringing out the chimes for all of Ashburton to hear.

Returning to Whangarei, I could soon see that Wolfgang felt the same way that I did about the task. It obviously won't happen overnight, as funding for the job has still to be finalised and a tower of some sort will have to be built to accommodate the clock.

Roger Schofield



Monday 21st March.

Tonight we presented Graeme Blank with a gift in recognition of his many years with the Drones and Sticks Pipe Band. Graeme was very willing to share his expertise with us all and was a cornerstone of the band for the last fifteen years.