

# **Band Blurb**

## **November 2019**



### **President's Report**

Hi Everyone

Thank you for patiently waiting for November's newsletter - delivered in December! So much has been happening both on and off the band scene, that we just didn't get the timing quite right - never mind, we are pleased to catch up again in time for Christmas.



The stand out for me since our last newsletter, absolutely has to be the Napier Band and the Hawke's Bay Caledonian bands playing together for the Christmas Parade. Practicing playing and marching on the field outside our band rooms on a stunning evening with over 40 players sounded magic. And whilst I couldn't be there, I understand the Christmas Parade itself was exceptional. We extend our thanks to the teams from Hawke's Bay Caledonian Pipe Band and Lindisfarne College who made up the Mass Band. Thanks too to the Napier Boys High School participants who joined in playing a few tunes afterwards in Emerson Street.

Of course a HUGE thanks to our own team - the Napier Pipe Band - for their participation and enthusiasm. Great job everyone.

As you know, as well as the community parades the band support, there are many other occasions when they entertain. On Sunday 24th November representatives of the band played for Saint Andrew's Day at the Tamatea Community Church. The Scottish flag was proudly carried in by our Patron, Harry Renfree, ably lead by piper Neville Lumb.

We learned that Saint Andrew has special significance for the Scots. At the Battle of Bannockburn, near Stirling in 1314, the Scottish soldiers wore the white cross of Saint Andrew on their tunics for protection.

Our thanks are extended to the parishioners for the warm welcome, the lovely morning tea and the gratefully received donation to the band. Harry - we appreciate the support you continue to give the band in your role as Patron.

Sadly, the local Caledonian Society recently wound up its business. The Napier Pipe Band have supported the Society for a number of years playing at Inglesides. In recognition of

### **Our Vision:**

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

this, the Caledonian Society have very generously donated goods to us - including a lovely set of whiskey glasses used to "pipe in the haggis ". In due course, the band will also receive remaining funds which were held by the Society. We are very, very appreciative of this. Thank you to the Caledonian Society and also to the members of our band who built up such a solid relationship with their members through the years.

Our final practice this year will be Monday 16th December. We will be joined by some members of the Hawke's Bay Caledonian Pipe Band and will be playing a few tunes together. The music will be followed by supper. You are most welcome to come along to our Jull Street band rooms at 7pm. I look forward to seeing you there.

As I reflect on another year that is almost over, I must take this opportunity to thank everyone who is involved with the Napier Pipe Band. This thanks is extended to players, supporters, the Committee members, our families, and of course our community. Each and every one of you, in your own way, whether big or small, contributes to the ongoing success of the Band.

Thank you all.

I wish you all a happy holiday season filled with love, kindness and laughter.

Very warm wishes to you all,

Julie



***FROM THE MUSICAL DIRECTORS***

I feel the process of running the music aspect by Ken and myself is working well. We do miss Kerry's input and this makes us realise just how much we relied on him and indeed assumed that he would do many of the jobs-musical, admin and financial. It is pleasing to have him in the background offering his experienced opinion.

The Centre Contest next year is a milestone for the band and it is pleasing that a significant number of members are interested in playing in the band for that. It is also OK that some members don't wish to do that.

It has been a full year of parades and practices and the standard of both the pipers and drummers remains high.

It is also pleasing that the number of supporters remains high.

It is disappointing that the Caledonian Society is to fold but pleasing that many of their members will remain in contact with the band as supporters.

Regards  
Richard Loan

## ***The Piping History of Jason Kaan***

I was attending the Napier Boys High open evening with my family the first time the idea of learning the pipes came up, I was a bit overwhelmed with all of the potential things I could do at a high school, after spending my primary and intermediate school years at a small country school where the roll peaked at around 25 pupils, 3 of which were in the same year as me. My parents and I were talking about the subjects I'd take, when we heard the Boys High band playing, My Mum joked to me, "You could learn the pipes too", although I didn't see it as a joke, I saw a challenge. So once I started at Boys High, I met with Mr. Arrell and picked up a chanter and, with the help of Mr. Arrell and Ian Mansfeild, I was playing the pipes soon after. Once I had a few tunes off, I then started to attend practices on a Wednesday night with the Napier City Pipe Band. From there, Ian continued to tutor me and I entered into several solo competitions around the country, doing reasonably well. Upon finishing school I decided I'd like to be a panelbeater, so I sent my CV to a lot of companies that specialized in classic car restoration (the part of the industry that interested me most), and to my surprise a few weeks later, I received a phone call from a company in Matamata, asking me if I'd like to come and work for them on a trial. So, I packed my bags and drove to the Waikato and 2 weeks later I signed my contract and had my first full time job. During my time in Matamata I didn't play with a band as such, although my Napier uniform still hung in my wardrobe at my parents place.

After 4 years I decided to move back to Napier, where I quickly got a job as a panelbeater in a small company. It wasn't long before I was back playing in the band.

In 2013, along with Richard and Hugh, I joined the Drones and Sticks Pipe Band. When we joined the two bands, we received a warm welcome and slotted into the rhythm of things quickly.

Fast forward to the present day - I've just been elected to the committee where I'm looking forward to serving the band into the future.

Thanks

Jason Kaan



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..... ***As promised in the last newsletter, here is another (American) version of the origins of The Last Post (according to Google).***

I suppose some of you are familiar with this story – for those who aren't....perhaps it may add an extra and special dimension to this familiar tune.

If any of you have ever been to a military funeral in which The Last Post was played, this brings out a new meaning of it.

We have all heard the haunting tune, 'The Last Post.'

It's the tune that gives us the lump in our throats and usually tears in our eyes.

But, do you know the story behind the tune?

Reportedly, it all began in 1862 during the American Civil War, when Union Army Captain, Robert Ellicombe, was with his men near Harrison's Landing in Virginia. The Confederate Army was on the other side of the narrow strip of land. During the night, Captain Ellicombe heard the moans of a soldier who lay severely wounded on the field. Not knowing if it was a Union or Confederate soldier, the Captain decided to risk his life and bring the stricken man back for medical attention.

Crawling on his stomach through the gunfire, the Captain reached the stricken soldier and began pulling him towards his encampment. When the Captain finally reached his own lines, he discovered it was actually a Confederate soldier, but the soldier was dead. The Captain lit a lantern and suddenly caught his breath and went numb with shock. In the dim light, he saw the face of the soldier... It was his own son. The boy had been studying music in the South when the war broke out. Without telling his father, the boy enlisted in the Confederate Army.

The following morning, heartbroken, the father asked permission of his superiors to give his son a full military burial, despite his enemy status. His request was only partially granted. The Captain had asked if he could have a group of Army band members play a funeral dirge for his son at the funeral. The request was turned down since the soldier was a Confederate, but, out of respect for the father, they did say they could give him only one musician. The Captain chose a bugler.

He asked the bugler to play a series of musical notes he had found on a piece of paper in the pocket of the dead youth's uniform.

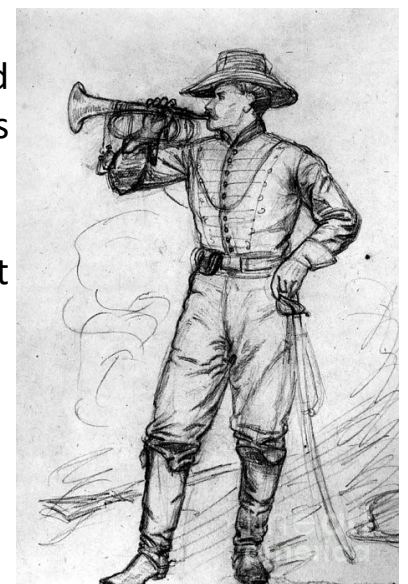
This wish was granted.

The haunting melody, we now know as 'The Last Post' used at military funerals was born.

I too have felt the chills while listening to 'The Last Post'

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***I leave you to select the version that you believe in.***



## **How Scotland's 35-Year Kilt Ban Backfired in Spectacular Fashion**

At the behest of England's national Anglican church, 1688's Glorious Revolution—also called the Bloodless Revolution—deposed the country's last Catholic king. It is widely considered Britain's first step toward parliamentary democracy. It is less known, however, for setting the table for a kingdom-wide kilt ban decades later.

That year, King James II (he was also James VII of Scotland) became the proud poppa of a baby boy—and England's parliament was not happy about it. James was Roman Catholic, a deeply unpopular religion, and the birth of his son secured a Catholic lineage that, in the opinion of England's Anglican parliament, guaranteed a future of religious tyranny. To stop this, the establishment pushed James off the throne and handed the seat to his Protestant daughter and son-in-law, Mary and William of Orange (who ruled jointly as William and Mary). Over the next 60 years, a series of bloody uprisings ensued as James's supporters, called Jacobites, attempted to restore their anointed Catholic king back to the big chair. Many of these supporters were Scottish.

Scottish Jacobite armies regularly went to battle wearing tartan kilts. A staple of Highland dress dating to the early 16th century, these outfits didn't resemble the skirt-like kilts we're familiar with today; rather, these kilts were 12-yard swaths of cloth that could be draped around the body. The garment, which could be looped and knotted to create different outfits to accommodate the fickle Highland weather, was part of a practical workman's wardrobe. As the politician Duncan Forbes wrote in 1746, "The garb is certainly very loose, and fits men inured to it to go through great fatigues, to make very quick marches, to bear out against the inclemency of the weather, to wade through rivers, and shelter in huts, woods, and rocks upon occasion; which men dressed in the low country garb could not possibly endure."

Because the kilt was widely used as a battle uniform, the garment soon acquired a new function—as a symbol of Scottish dissent. So shortly after the Jacobites lost their nearly 60-year-long rebellion at the decisive Battle of Culloden in 1746, England instituted an act that made tartan and kilts illegal.

*"That from and after the first day of August, One thousand, seven hundred and forty-six, no man or boy within that part of Britain called Scotland, other than such as shall be employed as Officers and Soldiers in His Majesty's Forces, shall, on any pretext whatever, wear or put on the clothes commonly called Highland clothes (that is to say) the Plaid, Philabeg, or little Kilt, Trowse, Shoulder-belts, or any part whatever of what peculiarly belongs to the Highland Garb; and that no tartan or party-coloured plaid of stuff shall be used for Great Coats or upper coats."*

*Punishment was severe: For the first offense, a kilt-wearer could be imprisoned for six months without bail. On the second offense, he was "to be*

*transported to any of His Majesty's plantations beyond the seas, there to remain for the spaces of seven years."*

The law worked ... mostly. The tartan faded from everyday use, but its significance as a symbol of Scottish identity increased. During the ban, it became fashionable for resisters to wear kilts in protest. Many of them worked around the law by wearing non-plaid kilts. Some found another loophole, noting that the law never "specified on what part of the body the breeches were to be worn" and "often suspended [kilts] over their shoulders upon their sticks." Others sewed the centre of their kilt between their thighs, creating a baggy trouser that must have resembled an olde tyme predecessor to Hammer pants.

According to Sir John Scott Keltie's 1875 book *A History of the Scottish Highlands*, *"Instead of eradicating their national spirit, and assimilating them in all respects with the Lowland population, it rather intensified that spirit and their determination to preserve themselves a separate and peculiar people, besides throwing in their way an additional and unnecessary temptation to break the laws."*

By 1782, any fear of a Scottish uprising had fallen and the British government lifted the 35-year-old ban. Delivering a royal assent, a representative of parliament declared: "You are no longer bound down to the unmanly dress of the Lowlander."

But by that point, kilts and tartan were no longer staples of an ordinary Scottish labourer's wardrobe. In that sense, the law had done its job. But it also had an unintended consequence: It turned the tartan into a potent symbol of Scottish individuality and patriotism. So when the law was lifted, an embrace of kilts and tartan blossomed—not as everyday work clothes, but as the symbolic ceremonial dress that we know today. The law, which was intended to kill the kilt, very well might have helped saved it.

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### ***Young Piper of the Year Competition - Heath's perspective.***

**I played the pipes at the Nelson Institute of Technology. It was very insightful as to big events around the nation. It was a step up from my normal competition in the level of competitors. It was well run with many well known judges , big fields of competitors and fierce competition. It was my first time to travel to Nelson for a solo competition in the South Island. We also collected a few awards on our way. Particularly Morgan with a second in the Strathbone Reel. Conrad came third in the d-grade. I came 5<sup>th</sup> in the c-grade 2/4 march. It was the first time that I had Stuart as my judge and tutor, which I think was quite a daunting experience for us all. But was also a great opportunity to push ourselves and to see what the differences In our piping has regarding the solo competition. Morgan in particular was able to step up and compete in the under 21 MSR and Hornpipe and Jig event which was the last event held for the night which personally challenged her as she had never had to prepare two MSR and two hornpipe and jigs and to then perform them to 4 amazing judges who are widely known in the piping community. However through this event she learnt about the different ways that she should be**

approaching the event and how she should adjust her own techniques of piping especially blowing due to the factors of pressure and to learn to adjust to the certain playing environment.

(Conrad was excited to play to the judges and put himself to the test. He played in the 2/4 March and the strathspey and reel both C and D. He was excited and nervous at first but then got on with it. He was happy with his results of finishing with good reports and placing 3rd in the 2/4 march in d grade.)

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## Piping & Drumming Academy Hawke's Bay

Almost twelve months on from setting up the Academy, four Hawke's Bay pupils have been receiving tuition from Stu Easton, piping tutor. Stu is engaged to teach and mentor young pipers, subsidised by the Academy. Whilst his tenure is at an end for 2019, we know he has made a big difference in the piping lives of Liam, Conrad, Heath and Morgan.

Following is an extract (abbreviated) from a letter written by an appreciative parent:

"The growth in the last 6 months has been massive and a tribute to Stuart's ability to get through with what he needed/ and continues to need to do. I am sure that all 4 of the pipers will in time, be able to show their appreciation of the Trusts support, when in the future, they are in a position to give back to the Trust and the HB piping community."

The Trustees of the Academy are Kerry Marshall (Chair), Jarrod Cawood, David O'Hanlon (both of HB Caledonian Pipe Band) and Julie Baxter. Plans are in place to encourage new students through the local schools in 2020.

## Centre Contest 2020

On Saturday 29th February the Napier Boys High School will be hosting the Wellington/Hawke's Bay Centre Contest. The Napier Pipe Band will be entering the contest (a first for them). The pipers and drummers are busy practicing sets and medleys and are looking forward to the occasion.

Thanks to all these people for their contribution to the band, both in the past and future.





**Love Music?**

If you have a smartphone ..... and if you have Spotify..... search "Editor NZPB" to listen to a variety of contemporary and traditional piping Celtic pieces.

**COMING EVENTS**

**December**

- Sat 14 Palmerston North Square Day
- Mon 16 Final practice for the year
- Thurs 19 Final night in Hastings with HB Caledonian PB
- Sat 21 Hastings Scots Society Ingleside 7.30pm
- Mon 30 Hampton Court 1.30pm
- Tues 31 New Year's Eve



**2020**

**January**

- Sat 25 Taradale Club

**February**

- 19-23 Art Deco Weekend
- Sat 22 Band Concert St Paul's Church
- Sun 23 Vintage Car Club
- Sat 29 Wellington-HB Centre Pipe Band Contest