



PIOBAIREACHD SEMINAR, APRIL 2015

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It was fantastic to have the numbers we did, and also to see so many teenagers present. That coupled with the two "mature" Piob. learners, meant we had a very wide spectrum to accommodate. To that end we decided to split the attendees into three groups which meant there would always be one group not having an actual lesson, but we balanced that for them by offering them three options:

1. Individual time to work on their own playing
2. Observe either Greg or I teaching. This could have several benefits - to take in an additional tune or perhaps pick up teaching tips.
3. Chill out and clear their mind in readiness for their next lesson.

The classes were split in such a way to try to benefit all students.

Group 1: The Clasp and Gold Medal players were put in one group. The Clasp players being the main focus at one lesson and the Gold Medal players were the main focus at the next lesson and etc. Whilst the Clasp players were more developed as you would imagine, they were also able to benefit from the material we were working on with the Gold group. We were after all trying to focus not only on the stylistics of tunes but also focus on a general awareness and how to quickly assess what was "wrong". Tunes covered for Clasp were: Phantom Piper & Lament for Hugh. For the Gold group, My King Has Landed & Isobel Mackay.

Group 2: The Silver and Bronze players worked very well in the next group. The pressure was on the Silver players to show that they were "better", and the other side of that coin was watching the Bronze players trying to show that they were "as good" as the Silver players. The interesting

thing about this group was the first tune we handed out - "The MacDonald's Are Simple" which of course is one of the set tunes for your Silver next year. All the Bronze players handled this tune with ease. This I think endorses your foresight regarding set tunes moving forward. The other tune we covered with them was Hector MacLean's Warning.

Group 3: The two adult and two teenage "beginner Piob." students were put together. This was a real mix as one had made a start to a couple of tunes but they were all slightly unsure of some of the embellishments. We gave them a crash course on the basic embellishments to get them started on firm ground, and then proceeded with their selected tune, The Marquis of Argyll. We stayed with that tune for the duration as it was a great chance to get them totally comfortable with Piob. and this should stand them in good stead as they progress.

We also offered all attendees the chance of one to one time with Greg or myself. This time was totally owned by the students, and some chose to review the tune they played at Hastings, others took the chance to have additional time on the new material and others wanted endorsement on teaching methods etc.

On the Monday evening I delivered a power point presentation on "Competition Preparation" or as I put it, the five links in the chain. The idea was for this not to be a lecture, but rather a sharing of ideas that have worked very well for me during my career, and to have good interaction with all the students - which indeed it did.

Tue. & Wed. evenings were for "informal tunes" by the students. They were free to play anything they wanted. This was a great opportunity for them to have tune in public

in front of friendly faces. It was just the case of blowing the pipes up and getting on with it as there wasn't space available for a warm up. Most performers seemed to play one or two 6/8's and then part or all of a Piob. It was noticeable that the sheets from Hastings had been read, and the approach to music at the seminar was immediately obvious. After the informal tunes on the Tue. night, a viewing of the concert I did recently for the Big Music Society was requested, and whilst it is not publicly available due to copyright, a bootleg was floating around and I did think that a showing may provide an insight to what is going through my mind when I am playing tunes - the string quartet providing all the flavours of colour that are hard to bring out on solo bagpipe. We kicked off the informal tunes on the Wed. night with the twelve players that were the bronze/silver group attempting to perform the MacDonald's are Simple from memory - as an ensemble. My reasoning here was to show them how easy it is to memorize and develop a tune in a short space of time. It was possible that the some of the "bronze" players were going to be out of their comfort zone after the Urlar, and I told them to simply drop off rather than to start guessing. Some did - and others saw it a little bit like "last man standing"! Two of the Bronze players continued on with the silver players to completed the tune, including the amach - I was extremely proud of their achievement. Once they were left as a tight group there was hardly a wrong note in sight, and under conducting they had a very good grasp of the tune indeed.

It was a very friendly gathering and Greg and I certainly thoroughly enjoyed the challenge of trying to teach/help/stimulate the participants. Fantastic to see three of our friends from Australia fronting up - quite a commitment for them indeed. Everyone seemed to feed off each other which kept the mood very vibrant.

Special mention about the “young ones”. They were an absolute credit to themselves. It must have been a step into the unknown for them but their enthusiasm for the music and eagerness to take on the challenge was outstanding. It was also most noticeable that all the practice chanter work we could hear at lunch breaks was all Piob. Imagine fourteen young players all congregating and practicing the tunes we were working on! It wasn't until the Wed. pm that they broke loose with some light music – which was nice to hear as well – but they knew that main focus was Piob., and they fully embraced that.

All in all, a totally memorable time from a personal point of view, and thank you again for having me. It was fantastic to have Greg's tireless contribution, and we both had the very same feeling about how enthusiastic everyone was.

Also many thanks to Marion, who made sure that everyone was well looked after and generally made sure we were well looked after. That let us all concentrate on our job, knowing everything was going smoothly behind the scenes.

**AS OF 20 DECEMBER,
THERE ARE
98 DAYS
UNTIL HASTINGS**

FEEL LIKE CONTRIBUTING?

We would love to have anything our members feel is worth publishing.

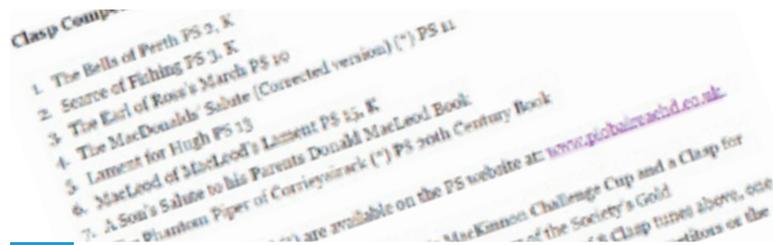
Please feel free to send your articles or links to piobaireachd nz@gmail.com and we will include them in the next edition.

HOW'S YOUR MEMBERSHIP?

Need to renew that lapsed membership? You're not alone!

Lots of our members have had their membership lapse, and it's time we gathered them all back up. So head on to our website - www.piobaireachd.org.nz - and access our super easy to use membership form.

Don't leave it another day!



SET TUNES 2016

If you haven't got onto these yet, you should make it a priority! Here are the lists for 2016, which can also be found on our website along with helpful recordings.

Clasp Competition

1. The Bells of Perth PS 2, K
2. Scarce of Fishing PS 3, K
3. The Earl of Ross's March PS 10
4. The MacDonalds' Salute (Corrected version) (*) PS 11
5. Lament for Hugh PS 13
6. MacLeod of MacLeod's Lament PS 15, K
7. A Son's Salute to his Parents Donald MacLeod Book
8. The Phantom Piper of Corrieyairack (*) PS 20th Century Book

Scores for tunes marked (*) are available on the PS website at: www.piobaireachd.co.uk. Competitors are to submit 4 tunes chosen from the list of 8 Clasp tunes above, one of which they will be required to play.

Gold Medal Competition

1. Lament for MacSwan of Roaig PS 1, K
2. The Battle of Waternish PS 2, K
3. The Gathering of Clan Chattan PS 2, K
4. Mary's Praise PS 5, K

DOWNLOAD TUNE RECORDINGS BY CLICKING HERE

2016 CALENDAR - MAJOR DATES

JANUARY

- 1st - New Zealand Championships, Waipu
- 10th-15th RNZPBA Summer School, CHCH
- 30th - Turakina Highland Games, Turakina

FEBRUARY

- 13th - Paeroa Highland Games, Paeroa

MARCH

- 30th - Hastings Highland Games (Clasp, Gold Medal, Silver Medal, Bronze Medal, U21 Piobairachd)

MAY

- Date TBA - NZ Claidhmor & Targe

5. My King has landed in Moidart PS 5, K
6. Isabel Mackay PS 6, K
7. I got a Kiss of the King's Hand PS 7, K
8. The Stewarts' White Banner PS 7

Competitors are to submit 4 tunes chosen from the list of 8 Gold Medal tunes above, one of which they will be required to play.

Silver Medal Competition

1. Lament for the Castle of Dunyveg PS 1
2. Hector MacLean's Warning (#) PS 2
3. The Rout of the MacPhees (#) PS 4
4. A Flame of Wrath for Patrick Caogach PS 5, K
5. I am Proud to play a Pipe PS 6, K
6. Castle Menzies PS 8
7. The MacDonalds are Simple (#) PS 9
8. The Piper's Warning to his Master PS 12, K

Competitors are to submit 3 tunes chosen from the list of 8 Silver Medal tunes above, one of which they will be required to play.

Bronze Medal Competition

Competitors are to submit 2 tunes of their own choice, one of which they will be required to play.

