

Piob Rocks!

THE PIOBAIREACHD SOCIETY OF CENTRAL PENNSYLVANIA

The success of our workshops have been amazing. The goal of the society has been to develop events to promote the study, teaching, and performance of Ceol Mor in the central Pennsylvania region. We have attracted pipers throughout the central Pennsylvania, as well as the surrounding regions. We have attracted pipers of all abilities including Professional grade pipers to beginning enthusiasts.

Our gatherings have included a wide-range events from educational workshops to sanctioned competitions to road trips at some of the regions premier piping events.

In less than a year and a half, we have held instructional workshops where we have been taught thirteen different piobaireachds. We have had six different instructors, many of the

EUSPBA instructors and highly respected piobaireachd players.

There has been much enthusiasm among our membership in the learning & playing of piobaireachd. The Society has provided a much needed service for pipers in the region, providing introductory workshops for beginning players.

Our meetings normally end with an opportunity to play piobaireachd, too. Twenty-one different tunes have been shared during our Society Gatherings by fourteen different members. It has been exciting to be a part of these Society Gatherings, as both a performer and as a member of an audience.

We encourage anyone to attend the Gatherings to share in our enthusiasm of the "Great Music" of the bagpipes.

Tunes Taught During Society Workshops

The Battle of Auldearn #1	I am Proud to Play a Pipe
The Cave of Gold	Lament for Mary MacLeod
Chisholm's Salute	Lament for the Iolaire
The Company's Lament	Mackintosh's Banner
Corrienessan's Salute	Mackintosh's Lament
Glengarry's Lament	The Munro's Salute
Hector MacLean's Warning	

Inside this issue:

Set Tunes—2007	2
News Group	2
Something Old, Something New	3
The Sinking of the Iolaire	4-5
"An Introduction to Piobaireachd"	6
Upcoming Events	7

We support Piobaireachd in Central Pennsylvania!

- "Introduction to Piobaireachd" workshops for pipers new to piobaireachd.
- Provide a forum for piobaireachd players to perform Ceol Mor "Great Music" of the Highland Bagpipe.
- Provide workshops for the Study of piobaireachd

SET TUNES—2007

In the last newsletter, we presented the 2006 Set Tunes. Since that issue, The Piobaireachd Society has issued the 2007 Set Tune list. A copy is available from the website for download, but a list of the tunes is also available here.

The Highland Society of London Gold Medals have long been considered the top prizes in solo competition. The Highland Society of London Gold Medals are the top prize offered at the Argyllshire Gathering in Oban and at the Northern Meeting, formerly at Inverness, and now currently being held at Aviemore. A piper can only win the gold medal at each of these competitions once. After winning the gold medal, the piper is eligible to compete in the Senior Piobaireachd events (The Senior Piobaireachd at Oban or The Clasp at the Northern Meeting).

In the 1970's, the field of competitors for the Gold Medal became too large to handle so the Silver Medal competitions were created as a stepping stone to the Gold Medal.

The Piobaireachd Society has been charged with creating a list of Set Tunes for these competitions. They change the tunes from year to year so that different tunes will be guaranteed play time. The list of Set Tunes also defines the expected level of difficulty for each of the three contests.

James McIntosh MBE, has invited the members of the Society to attend a Set Tune Workshop in Greensburg, PA. This workshop will be held the weekend of November 19-20, 2006. You can visit the Society website for more information on this opportunity.

The 2007 Set Tunes

Senior Competition Set Tunes

(Competitors must Submit 4 of the Following Tunes)

1. Scarce of Fishing
2. The Red Speckled Bull
3. Lament for Hugh
4. Good Health to You Donald
5. Lament for the Duke of Hamilton
6. The Bells of Perth

Gold Medal Competition Set Tunes

(Competitors must submit 4 of the Following Tunes)

1. Lady Margaret MacDonald's Salute
2. Lachlan MacNeill Campbell's Fancy
3. Prince's Salute
4. Lament for Donald Duaghal MacKay
5. Lord Lovat's Lament
6. MacNeill of Barra's March
7. Battle of Waternish
8. Rory MacLeod's Lament

Silver Medal Competition Tune List

(Competitors must submit 4 of the Following Tunes)

1. MacGregor's Salute
2. Parading of the MacDonalds
3. Castle Menzies
4. The Bicker
5. Lament for the Viscount of Dundee
6. The Groat
7. Lament for MacSwan of Roaig
8. MacLeod of Raasay's Salute

NEWS GROUP

In order to maintain a working E-mail Newsgroup, we have created a new Yahoo! Newsgroup specifically for The Piobaireachd Society of Central Pennsylvania. If you are interested in keeping up to date with the latest information on the Society, please subscribe to the newsgroup. There is no charge to receive the e-mail. Only the Society administrator will have access to send you e-mail through the group so there is no un-solicited, broadcast messages.

There are two ways to subscribe to the newsgroup. First, if you are already a Yahoo! Member, add "pennpiob" to your Group list. Log into Yahoo! using your user name & password, click on "Groups". Find "pennpiob" and join. You can also join Yahoo! for free.

The second way to join the newsgroup is to send a blank e-mail to pennpiob-subscribe@yahoogroups.com. This will automatically add your e-mail to the newsgroup.

You can unsubscribe at anytime by sending a blank e-mail to pennpiob-unsubscribe@yahoogroups.com.

We will be using the Newsgroup to relay information about upcoming events and news. Be the first to know by signing up now.

SOMETHING OLD, SOMETHING NEW

The Piobaireachd Society of Central Pennsylvania was pleased to host Patrick Regan of Pittsburgh on December 2, 2006, for a workshop featuring “Something Old, Something New”. Patrick is an EUSPBA Adjudicator and member of the Grade III Carnegie-Mellon University Pipes & Drums. He is also an instructor for the Steel Thistle Pipe Band and Carrick High School Pipe Band, both of the Pittsburgh area. He also runs the Bluebonnet Piping & Drumming School.

The workshop was held in Lititz, Pennsylvania. Those in attendance included Bill Dean, Rhianna Dean, James Diener, Dan Emery, Thompson McConnell, Anne Rae, Thomas Thomson, and Tom Thomson. We were also pleased to welcome piper Francois Llinas of Colonnes, France, who would have happened to be in the Lancaster area for the week.

While setting up the workshop with Patrick, many possible topics were discussed. I didn’t think we would be able to hit them all, but Patrick did a pretty good job of hitting on all of them. The workshop had plenty of great presentations, discussions, and of course, with Patrick leading the way, we kept the Dr. Pepper flowing all day.

We started off learning “Something Old”. Patrick led us through the Piobaireachd Society setting of “The Company’s Lament”. As we went through the tune, we learned to sing the canntaireachd as well as play the tune. We reviewed the importance of being able to sing the tune. Canntaireachd is just one of the tools available in learning “the great music” of the bagpipe.

Not much is known about this tune, but some sources attribute this tune to Joseph MacDonald, author of “A Compleat Theory of the Scots Highland Bagpipe” circa 1770/3. Some have stated that it has something to do with the East India Company.

Patrick also led us through a Donald MacLeod piobaireachd “Lament for The Iolaire”. This tune is found in Donald MacLeod’s Collection of Piobaireachd, Book I. The Iolaire was a ferry that was transporting several hundred servicemen home from the Great War to the Isle of Lewis on New Year’s Day 1919. It was within several hundred feet of its destination when it struck the rocky Beasts of Holm. Only 73 survived. This was a terrible time for the people of the island. Hardly a household but lost either a close or distant relative. “Lament for The Iolaire” is considered a

modern piobaireachd in relation to the classic ancient piobaireachd.

We spent some time reviewing music writing skills. Patrick had us write out the first two measures of “Scotland the Brave” from memory. Patrick reviewed some helpful hints in writing music on the staff. We then put these hints to use, when we wrote out the Uurlar for “The Company’s Lament”. One of the first steps of learning to write music is to copy a written score.

The next piobaireachd on the list was “Corrienessan’s Salute”. This piobaireachd has a crunluath breabach, and some time was spent in reviewing the timing of these variations. The name is somewhat tentatively linked to some scribbles on the paper but it links in rather well with a poem by Iain Dall MacKay, the blind piper, in which he describes a journey from Tongue to the West Coast and relates how the MacKays used to organize deer hunting and feasting at Corrienessan, which means corrie with the waterfall. These feasting events which were probably held every 2nd year were attended by chiefs from near and far, from Ireland and perhaps Scandinavia and Europe. Having walked over the area near the lodge of Gobernuisgach there is a corrie, Corrie Ghraide which is at right angles to Corrienessan and the high ground between the heads of the two corries is a surprisingly large flat area. Corrie Ghraide is an ideal “Elrick”; that is a very steep ‘U’ shaped corrie, which ends abruptly in a nearly vertical wall. Deer were driven up into this corrie believing they were escaping into a remote area not knowing that in such a confined space the stag hounds would have relatively easy task in pulling them down.

Following the workshop, Patrick Regan put us through an exercise of judging a piobaireachd performance while several pipers presented their piobaireachd. We were joined at this time by Karen Helm, who played “The Munro’s Salute”. Dan Emery played “Clan Campbell’s Gathering”. Thompson McConnell played “MacKintosh’s Lament”. Patrick Regan finished off the day by playing “The Company’s Lament” for the group.

THE SINKING OF THE IOLAIRE—1ST JANUARY 1919

**Reprinted with permission from Siol nan Gaidheal
(www.siol-nan-gaidheal.com)**

New Year's Day, 1919, should have been an occasion of real celebration on the Hebridean island of Lewis. The dawn of a new year, hopes for the future raised following the end, six short weeks before, of the 4 years of slaughter in France, and the return of many of the servicemen from the island who had contributed so valiantly to yet another British war. The population of Lewis at this time was approximately 30,000 - 6,200 of whom served in some capacity during the Great War. One in five of the island's population - and more than 1,000 of these volunteers were killed during their service. One in six of these brave volunteers would never return home, a ratio unsurpassed by any other area of Scotland, itself grossly over-represented proportionally when compared to the rest of Britain...

So it was small wonder that those left behind on Lewis looked forward to a proper home-coming and festive celebration with their loved ones. But for so many, the anticipation of joy turned that day to mourning. The story of the sinking of the Iolaire is, needless to say, little known outside the Hebrides, and it is long gone time to help to rectify this situation. The Stornoway Gazette at the time was moved to describe the effect of the tragedy as 'grief unutterable', and who knows now how much this hidden grief contributed to the mass emigrations from the island which were to follow shortly thereafter. Of the estimated 284 servicemen and crew on board the Iolaire (no proper passenger manifest had been made), a mere 79 were to survive.

The Iolaire, originally the Amalthea, was a luxury sailing yacht built in 1881. Commandeered by the Admiralty in 1915, she became the Navy's base ship at Stornoway, being in fact renamed after the naval base present there. Fitted out for patrol work and anti-submarine warfare, she spent the war years in and around the Western Isles. She possessed sufficient lifeboats for 100 men, and lifejackets for a mere 80. This would be a contributory factor in the carnage to come.

The Scots contingent of returning servicemen had been wending their weary way home for some days. The English navy men preferred their traditional Christmas celebrations, so many Scots had manned their stations until the Englishmen returned, and then were released to

spend New Year on their home soil. The regular MacBrayne's ferry from the railhead at Kyle of Lochalsh, the Sheila, was grossly oversubscribed, and it was realised that another ship would have to be drafted in to provide sufficient passenger capacity. It was decided to ship the army servicemen and civilians on the Sheila, and the huge contingent of Royal Naval Reserve personnel would have to be provided for by the Iolaire.

As a result, the mail steamer Sheila was boarded by civilians and most of the former soldiers, while the Iolaire embarked some 260 former naval and RNR personnel. Despite the serious lack of life-saving equipment for such a number, the master, Commander Mason, agreed with Commander Walsh, officer in charge of movements at the Kyle, that he could carry the men safely. It will never be known whether this was under pressure, or simply a desire to assist the men in their homeward journey. Two trains had arrived with well over 300 men from Lewis and Harris by this time. The Harris men were told they would be transported the following day, 60 more of the Lewis men were put on board the Sheila, and the remainder boarded the Iolaire. She set sail from Kyle at 9:30pm on the 31st December 1918, with the Sheila departing some 30 minutes later.

At around half an hour into the New Year, the Iolaire still had some 12 miles to run into Stornoway Harbour. The wind was rising, and rain was falling as the light at Arnish Point was seen. A local fishing boat reported later that the Iolaire had not changed course at the usual place to head safely into harbour, and was headed towards Holm cliffs. Many on board must have noticed this also, as they would have been very familiar with their home waters. Sleet showers were affecting visibility by now, but since there were so few survivors the full truth of this navigational error will never now be known. At five minutes to two on that New Year's morn, HMS Iolaire struck the rocks known as the Beasts of Holm, taking an immediate heavy list to starboard as the waves started to crash over her decks. Just after 2am, the officer on watch at Battery Point reported sighting the first distress flare from the stricken vessel..

Events unfolded fairly rapidly following this. The two lifeboats launched, packed with men, were swamped and all on board drowned. Over 50 men tried to swim the few short yards to shore, but were dashed against the rocks in the heavy swell, and also succumbed.

(Continued on next page...)

THE SINKING OF THE IOLAIRE—1ST JANUARY 1919 (CONTINUED)

One man, John F. MacLeod, a boat-builder from Ness, did make it ashore hauling a line with him, and another five men managed to use this to drag themselves to safety. This heaving-line was then used to pull a hawser ashore, and another 35 men were saved by scrambling along it. John MacLeod was awarded the Carnegie Hero Fund Medal and Certificate in 1921 for his efforts that dark night - "in recognition of heroic endeavour to save human life". Three men climbed the masts, but only one, Donald Morrison, survived as the ship started to break up in the stormy seas. The Iolaire's back broke sometime after 3am, before the Coastguard contingent arrived to render aid. They were met by a scene out of hell itself - bodies and wreckage were strewn all along the coast round the area. All told, only 79 men survived out of the complement of 284.

Events unfolded fairly rapidly following this. The two lifeboats launched, packed with men, were swamped and all on board drowned. Over 50 men tried to swim the few short yards to shore, but were dashed against the rocks in the heavy swell, and also succumbed. One man, John F. MacLeod, a boat-builder from Ness, did make it ashore hauling a line with him, and another five men managed to use this to drag themselves to safety. This heaving-line was then used to pull a hawser ashore, and another 35 men were saved by scrambling along it. John MacLeod was awarded the Carnegie Hero Fund Medal and Certificate in 1921 for his efforts that dark night - "in recognition of heroic endeavour to save human life". Three men climbed the masts, but only one, Donald Morrison, survived as the ship started to break up in the stormy seas. The Iolaire's back broke sometime after 3am, before the Coastguard contingent arrived to render aid. They were met by a scene out of hell itself - bodies and wreckage were strewn all along the coast round the area. All told, only 79 men survived out of the complement of 284.

Two investigations were subsequently held regarding the tragic loss of the Iolaire. The official Naval investigation was downgraded immediately from a Court Martial to a Court of Inquiry, due to the Navy's fear that the findings of a Court Martial might imply blame was being accepted by them. The Naval Inquiry was held in private, on 8th January 1919 - and the findings not released into the public domain until 1970... They had apparently ruled that due to the non-survival of any of the officers on board the Iolaire "no opinion can be given as to whether blame is attributable

to anyone in the matter." File #693: The Iolaire Inquiry gathered dust in the Admiralty vaults for over 50 years.

A Public Inquiry was held in Stornoway commencing 10th February 1919, and the local community provided seven men for the jury. This was the only opportunity that the people of Stornoway were given to ask the questions so many had, and they were represented by a local solicitor, Mr J.N. Anderson. When the jury reached their verdict, at least this one was made available to the public, unlike the Naval Inquiry. Despite rumours to the contrary, drink was not held to have been a factor in the sinking at any point. The conclusions were that "the officers in charge did not exercise sufficient prudence in approaching the harbour; that the boat did not slow down, and that no look-out was on duty; and that the number of lifebelts, boats and rafts was insufficient for the number of people carried." They recommended that the last point should be particularly noted by the Navy and the Government, and also that "the Government should in future provide adequate and safe travelling facilities for Naval ratings and soldiers", which must have been scant consolation to the 58 widows and 209 father-less children bereft by the sinking. Mr Pitan, one of those representing the Navy at the Public Inquiry, reported back to his masters that the island's population as a body held the Navy wholly responsible for the tragedy.

The word tragedy is today bandied about totally inappropriately, in relation to rubbish like television soap operas. It is in danger of losing its real meaning due to over-use in situations where it does not apply even remotely. But a tragedy occurred that dark Hogmanay off the Isle of Lewis. These words from the 10th January 1919 edition of the Stornoway Gazette sum it up most appropriately.

"No-one who is now alive in Lewis can ever forget the 1st January 1919, and future generations will speak of it as the blackest day in the history of the island, for on it 200 of the bravest and the best perished on the very threshold of their homes under the most tragic circumstances. The terrible disaster at Holm has plunged every home and every heart in Lewis into grief unutterable."

“AN INTRODUCTION TO PIODBAIREACHD”

The Piobaireachd Society of Central Pennsylvania held its 2nd Annual “Introduction to Piobaireachd” workshop on November 4, 2006, in Lititz, Pennsylvania. This workshop is designed as a beginner’s introduction to piobaireachd. The workshop includes an introduction to the history of piobaireachd & piobaireachd competition. We briefly covered the classification and structure of piobaireachd.

The workshop was led by Thompson McConnell and Karen Helm. Those in attendance included James Diener, Joshua Dye, Nathanael Green, Troy Hafer, Marty McKeon, and Anne Rae.

The first tune of the day is a standard tune in the beginner’s repertoire. We started off reviewing “Glengarry’s Lament”. This was composed by Archibald Munro on the lamented death of his master, 1828, and it was the last tribute he paid to him, when he played it preceding the funeral procession. Mr. MacDonell of Glengary was on his way to Edinburgh, on board the Stirling steam boat, accompanied by his two daughters. The boat was sailing tolerably well, till she came abreast of Drumarabin, a farm of the Duke of Gordon's, the blast out of which glen became too powerful, and drove her on the Ardgower shore at Inverscaddel. The landing was extremely dangerous, as the passengers had to be dragged ashore by means of ropes. Glengary was much hurt in the face and head on the rocks, as he was brought to shore. He was able, however, to walk to the farm house of Inverscaddel, where he had his wounds dressed, and did not appear to be in a dangerous state. He was put to bed; and in the evening was seized with convulsions, which terminated his life at ten o'clock. The remains of this distinguished chief were consigned to their " narrow house" on the first of February. A large concourse of clansmen (about 1600) assembled to pay the last sad duty to their chief, and were plentifully regaled with bread, cheese, and whisky. The procession commenced about two o'clock in the afternoon, and reached Kilfinan, the place of interment, between four and five o'clock. The coffin was borne breast high by eighteen Highlanders who relieved each other at regular intervals. The chief mourner was the young chief of Glengary, (the only surviving son of the late *MacMhic Alasdair*,) dressed in the full Highland garb of his ancestors, with eagle's feathers in his bonnet covered with crape. Some hundreds of the people were arrayed in the Highland garb. The mournful

Piobaireachd was wailed forth by six Pipers; and none of the formalities usually attending on the obsequies of a chief, were omitted; at least none that were fitted to give a character of impressiveness to the solemnity.

Following a break for lunch, we reviewed a tune with more difficult movements. We took a look at The Cave of Gold (Uamh an Oir). This tune has found a resurgence since Murray Henderson recorded it on his *World’s Greatest Pipers Volume*. Jimmy McIntosh, MBE, reviewed the tune in the Summer 2006 edition of *The Voice Magazine* (Publication of the Eastern United States Pipe Band Association). This tune is attributed to Donald Mor MacCrimmon, circa 1610.

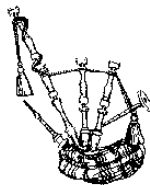
Uamh an Oir (Cave of Gold) - An ancient Hebridean legend tells of a famous piper who goes into a cave to find out why it claims so many lives. From deep within, his pipe music echoes out, telling those listening that a green fairy-demon is attacking him. This surreal song imitates the pipes and begins “It’s a pity I didn’t have three hands, two for the pipes and one for the sword.” The chorus repeats his promise to return.

At each workshop, The Piobaireachd Society of Central Pennsylvania opens up the floor for anyone interested in playing a piobaireachd for the group. Three pipers performed.

Joshua Dye played “The Massacre of Glencoe”.

Marty McKeon played “Glengarry’s Lament”.

Thompson McConnell played “The Desperate Battle”.



**THE PIBAIREACHD SOCIETY OF
CENTRAL PENNSYLVANIA**

c/o Thompson McConnell
168 Kings Gate Drive
Lititz, PA 17543

Email: lancaster_piper@comcast.net

*Piobaireachd players do it with
variations on the ground.*

We're on the Web!

www.geocities.com/pennpiob

UPCOMING EVENTS

February 17, 2007—Road Trip to the Metro Cup

The Society has a block of tickets to the Metro Cup in Newark, NJ. This is a full day of top-notch piping. An invitational amateur piping competition is held in the morning. The professional piobaireachd competition is held in the afternoon. A professional medley competition is held in the evening. Several members attended the event last year. Amateur pipers are invited from throughout North America. Professional pipers are invited from throughout North America, Scotland, and Ireland. You can read about last year's trip in the April 2006 newsletter.

June 9, 2007—The Piobaireachd Society of Central PA Solo Piping & Drumming Competition

The Society will be holding our annual solo piping competition in Harrisburg, PA. We will be back with the Scottish Society of Central Pennsylvania at Fort Hunter & Mansion on June 9th. This competition will be EUSPBA-sanctioned for solo piping. We will be adding sanctioned solo snare drumming competition to the event.

We will also be holding four new unsanctioned events: This includes Piping Quartet (3-5 Minute Medley), Drum Salute contest, Short Piobaireachd contest, and a "modern" piobaireachd contest. The list of approved short tunes will be included in the next newsletter. The modern piobaireachd contest will include tunes written since 1920.

November 3, 2007—Introduction to Piobaireachd Workshop

Are you a piper who has heard about piobaireachd, but never made the plunge? Join us for our 2nd Annual "Introduction to Piobaireachd" workshop. This workshop is designed for pipers who have little to no experience with piobaireachd. We will be reviewing "Lament for the Old Sword."