

Ingersoll Pipe Band



Volume 11 Issue 3 October 2021

Celebrating 111 Years

Happy Thanksgiving 2021



From The IPB

Inside This Issue

Pg 1 Giving Thanks

Pg 2-7 Visit to Tillsonburg

Pg 7 Message from Our Pipe Major

Pg 8 Visit to Cambrocourt Embro

Pg 9-10 Interviews with Two "New" Pipers

Pg 11- 13 Embro Fair Parade

Pg 14-15 A Look Back at the Balfours

Pg 16-18 Band Member & Family News

Pg 19-20 Erieau News

Pg 21 End Notes

The IPB gives thanks for the opportunities we had this summer to play either at venues we were invited to or at practice outdoors at the band hall. The weather definitely cooperated and we had very few "rain outs". No matter who you enjoy a Thanksgiving meal with at this upcoming Thanksgiving weekend, you can impress your family members and friends with some Canadian Thanksgiving trivia. And don't forget to bring your pipes and drums to the celebratory harvest feast! Thanks to all this issue's contributors for thoughts and photos. – Your Editor, *Veronica*

Thanksgiving Trivia – 5 Facts

1. The first Thanksgiving meal was originally held in 1578, in what is now Newfoundland, when English navigator Martin Frobisher held a celebration after his crew survived the long journey over the seas.
2. Thanksgiving was first introduced in Nova Scotia in the 1750s when citizens in Halifax celebrated the end of the Seven Years War with a feast.
3. In 1879 Parliament declared November 6th to be an official Thanksgiving holiday.
4. After WWI, both Armistice Day (now Remembrance Day) and Thanksgiving were celebrated the week of November 11th.
5. The date jumped once last time in 1957 when Parliament declared Thanksgiving to be held every year on the second Monday in October.

IPB Travels Down Hwy 119 Again to Tillsonburg



On Saturday August 21st, the IPB headed south to Tillsonburg to perform at three locations: the first was at Harvest Crossing Retirement Community (pictured above, where we had made a visit the summer of 2020); the second was Woodingford Lodge Tillsonburg; and the third was Tillsonburg Retirement Residence. Both of the latter were also on our touring schedule a year ago. Obviously we have some fans in Tillsonburg!

We received a request from Karen the recreational program director at Harvest Crossing to come and perform for her residents. We were very happy to oblige.



**Gathering Outside prior to Performance
(Doug T, Doug G, Jane, Stew, Steve S and Claude)**

<https://www.facebook.com/IngersollPipeBand/videos/521242448964849>

Video Link to performance of Scotland the Brave



**Two Drummers / One Piper
(Jerry, Ron and Wendy)**



Piper Don with PM Doug C



**Piper Liam with Mom (Transport
Supervisor) Susanne**



Pipe S Charlie and Piper Jim



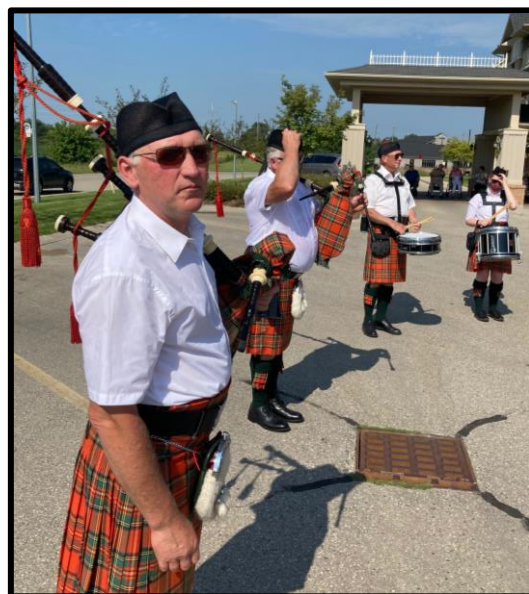
Mom Angelique and Drummer Freya



Piper Steve S almost ready to “march off”



Some video sent to us from Karen, the recreational program director at Harvest Crossing in Tillsonburg from our visit on August 21st. (Click on the photo above)



Piper Ron in the circle



Pipe Major Doug calling the tunes



It was very hot when we visited Harvest Crossing for our 10:30 AM performance. Thanks to the Retirement Home for providing us with cold water and juice when we took a break. It was much appreciated!

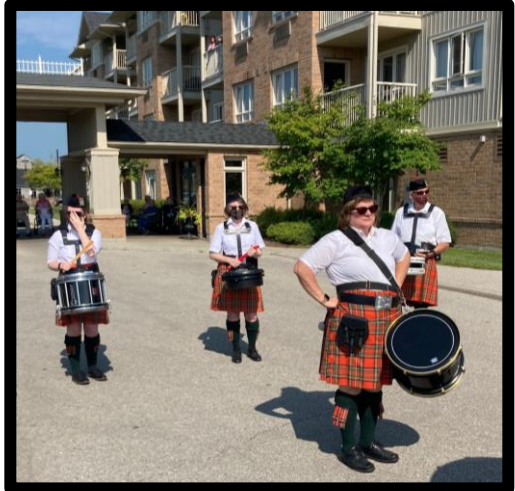


Bass Drummer Doug T

Some of Our Fans at Harvest Crossing



Pipe Sergeant Charlie with Piper Liam

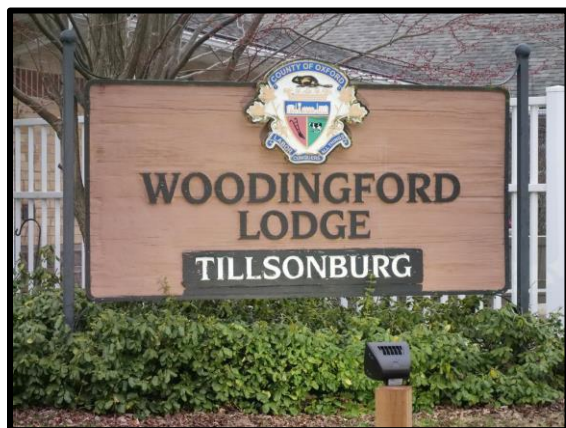


Our Drumming Crew : Snares- Freya, Jane, Doug G and on Tenor – Wendy



Pipers Claude and Don

On to the Next Stop – Woodingford Lodge



After a brief intermission when pipers and drummers found some sustenance at local restaurants for lunch, we reassembled at Woodingford Lodge – Tillsonburg campus. The residents were all in the dining room enjoying their lunches and we assembled in the courtyard to play several tunes for them.



Outside of Woodingford Lodge waiting for tune ups by PM Doug and holding up the trees!



The pipers were kind and gave the shade of the gazebo to the hard working drummers.



Meanwhile the pipers looked for any little piece of shade that was available. It was high noon and extremely hot!



Break time!

The staff at Woodingford were very thoughtful and brought out to the courtyard many jugs of ice cold water. It was wonderful to rehydrate ourselves. The residents cheered us on from indoors and we left after an hour to continue onto our third and final stop in Tillsonburg.



Third Stop – Tillsonburg Retirement Residence



Tillsonburg Retirement Residence is another favourite stop for the IPB in Tillsonburg. Last year we provided a mini concert outdoors twice and this was our first time back in 2021. Again we were met by an appreciative audience and kind caregivers who offered us more cold refreshments! We were very tired at the end of our session and promised to return another day when it was cooler!



Final photos from the Retirement Home

A Word from Your Pipe Major,

Thank you to everyone for your co-operation during this time of Covid.

We are about to move indoors for chanter practice and will have certain rules we must abide by. Social distancing is a must as we are allowed 32 people in the main hall, max.

As we have announced at practices you must be fully vaccinated and show proof to Nancy, our attendance officer in order to go inside the hall.

A mask must be worn if you are moving around the hall. We are providing disinfected wipes and ask you wipe down the chair you are sitting in when you leave. Please try to use the same chair for the night when inside, if possible, no jumping from chair to chair. We will review all restrictions with everyone at practice. No pipes in the hall.

When piping we will stay outside weather permitting.

We are hoping to have some more performances this year and are awaiting word on any Christmas parades. In the meantime we will keep practicing as the turnout has been excellent and the band has sounded very good at our last few practices.

We hope no more restrictions are coming but we will deal with them if that happens.

Stay healthy and practice lots!

PM Doug



Informal Practice Night in Zorra

Cambrocourt Manor Embro



Over the summer, IPB members Lois and Doug Turvey invited band members on Wednesday nights to have some extra practice time at their homestead (north of Ingersoll just outside of Embro in Zorra Township). On one occasion, Doug made arrangements for us to play at Cambrocourt Manor so we had a lovely audience to perform for that evening. Below are some photos of Pipers - Charlie, Lois, Liam, Ron, Angus, Catherine, Veronica and Drummers - Doug T, Bill, Lisa MG, Jerry. A beautiful evening in Embro.



The New Kids In The Playground

As September rolled around and we continued with outdoor practices at the band hall, Pipe Major Doug decided to move a couple of our Intermediate students into "parade" status. Pipers Angus Thomson and Cheryl McEown were outfitted by our Quartermaster Scott Munro and readied for their first official parade in Embro. Here are a few pics and info about the "new kids" at their first official IPB gig!

Cheryl



Piper Cheryl in the playground ready to climb to new heights



Brother Don assisting Cheryl as Pipe Sergeant Charlie tunes her pipes prior to parading in Embro



Interview with Cheryl

"Hi, my name is Cheryl McEown, I started learning the chanter when I was 12 years old in London, with the London Ladies Pipe Band. My oldest sister was a drummer, so I would go to practice with her. Shortly after that my brother Don, and my two younger sisters joined as well, and we all took up the bagpipes. My poor mother, listening to four sets of beginning bagpipers ! No wonder she sent us outside to practice.

After I married and had the second of my three children, the London Ladies Pipe band disbanded, so I joined the St. Thomas band. I found it was just too difficult to continue with practices and the commitment to belong to a band, so my pipes got put away for a bit. Well, that bit turned into 35 years.

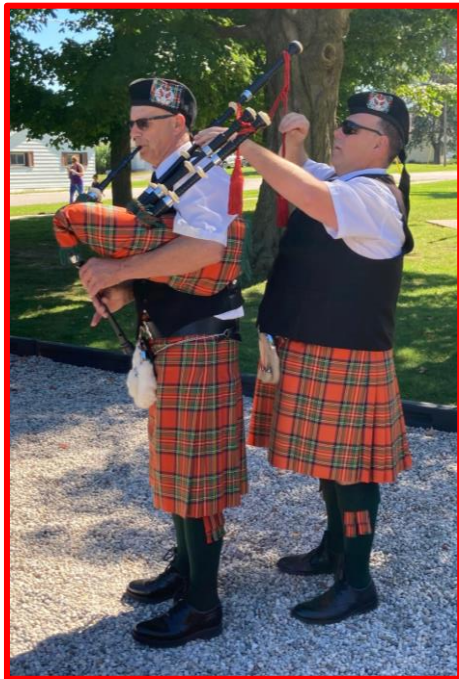
Every year the IPB band would head back to my brother's house after the Belmont Christmas parade for some chili and stew and I was always there, thinking I really should get my pipes back out, but I just never seemed to get around to it. It seemed like I was always busy with home, family, work, and then grandkids.

Then two years ago, the London Ladies Pipe major Jeannine Semple had her 80th birthday. Somehow or other I got talked into playing with Don for her birthday party, and now two years later - I have had to learn a FEW new tunes, and have my old pipes pretty well rebuilt with a new bag, new drones, new chanter reed. Now, two weeks ago it started to pay off. I got my uniform and was dressed for my first parade in Embro,! I am looking forward to continuing on with the Ingersoll Pipe Band." - Cheryl

Angus



Piper Angus making his “official” debut in IPB tartan in his hometown of Embro



Piper Steve Shepherd tuning Angus' pipes prior to parade march off

Angus has participated in several functions with the IPB but due to Covid restrictions was usually wearing his Thomson tartan kilt. In August 2020, your newsletter editor asked Angus to submit a little bit of information about himself to the newsletter. What follows is Angus' interview.



Interview with Angus

“Hello, my name is Angus Thomson. I live in the village of Embro. My heritage is Scottish and have been going to the Embro Highland Games since I can remember. I enjoy listening to the pipe bands and Scottish culture has always been a part of my life. A former member of the Ingersoll Pipe Band who is now deceased lived in Embro and would talk about the pipe band. Now that my kids are grown up and since I am not running them here and there, it freed up time for me. I thought learning to play the bagpipes would be productive and fun. Now I am wondering about my concept of fun but it is rewarding to learn this new skill.

It is rewarding when the neighbours say the pipes sound good and I am not buying them beer. So far, I have been working on this for about five years, I had no musical experience but as Robbie Burns once said “Patience and perseverance will conquer many things”. - Angus

And patience and perseverance did pay off for both of these two fine pipers! Thanks to instructors Doug, Jack, Charlie and John for showing the way. Welcome aboard to the new “kids” and enjoy the parades!



(Thanks to Harold for the great “interview” pics taken in Embro of Angus and Cheryl)

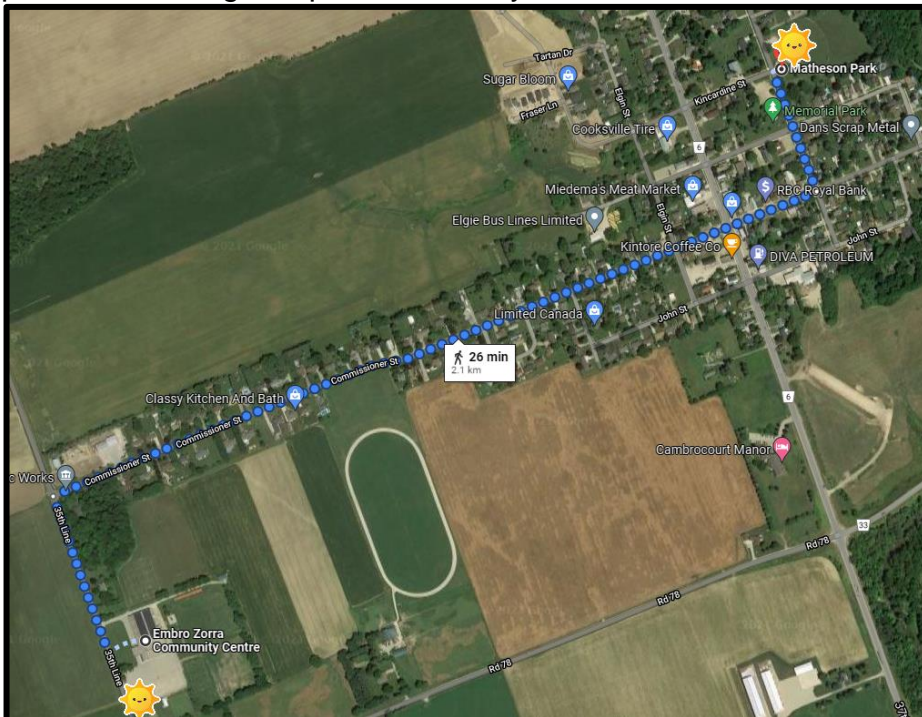
Embroid Fair Parade September 19th

(Link to parade coverage: <https://www.facebook.com/EmbroidFair/videos/223018329849864>)



Photo Taken at the Embroid Zorra Community Centre Grounds After the Parade

The IPB was invited to take part in the Embroid Fair parade. The committee did not want this year to go by with no fair activities in Embroid so it decided to hold a scaled down version. Besides the parade, other events were held, and from 11 to 3 pm at the Embroid Zorra Community Centre, there was an Artisan Market. This Market contained 30+ vendors and multiple food trucks. Other activities took place prior to and after the parade – these included a movie night; a school pumpkin competition; a porch decorating competition; a baby contest; and of course Ambassador of the Fair contest.



Parade route from Matheson Park to the Community Centre – 2.1 km

The weather was lovely for a parade and the band turn-out was terrific.



Embroid Parade

SUNDAY SEPTEMBER 19TH AT 1PM
Leaving Matheson Park and will finish at Embroid Zorra
Community Centre

Register at www.embroidfair.com by
September 12, 2021



Photos from The Embro Parade



Tuning Up at the Park



Our Colour Party – made up of Intermediate Piping Students – Lee, Bonnie, Kathy, Lois and Sam



John Allan McKay from Woodstock proudly carrying the Canadian flag in the parade (John grew up just outside of Embro)



On the March and at the Park!



More of IPB's Past

While researching the article on Jock Johnston in our last edition, our contact Ellen Barker (Jock's niece) sent me the following newspaper clipping with a post-it note attached!

The lure of the pipe band

Margaret Balfour was a bit apprehensive at the thought of coming to Ingersoll in 1928.

Born in Glasgow, Scotland on May 6, 1901, she was used to living in a larger area.

However, she changed her mind shortly after moving to town.

"It was a beautiful town" when she arrived here with her husband Joe and her then five-year-old daughter Helen. She had two more children in Ingersoll.

"It was nice."

The downtown was quite different in days gone by, she said. There used to be three drugstores and a large grocery store in the core — now, "it's all clothing."

There were two men selling fruit in the downtown area years ago — one at the north end and one at the south end, she recalled.

The men would tell mischievous children "you don't touch and I'll give you something," she added.

The Ingersoll Pipe Band played every Saturday night where the old post office used to be, at the intersection of Charles and Thames streets, she recalled.

In fact, it was the pipe band that drew the Balfours



Margaret Balfour

to Ingersoll in the first place, she said.

After moving from their native Scotland, the Balfours initially went to Niagara Falls. However, the stop there was not destined to be a long one.

"My husband hated the place," she explained.

So, they moved off to Strathroy. The stop there wasn't exceptionally long either — they were only there for 14 months, because the Ingersoll Pipe Band happened to come to town.

As soon as Joe heard about the band playing, he went to see them. As things worked out, he got the chance to try out on drums.

Thomas Johnston, band pipe major at the time, was quite impressed with Joe and coaxed him to come to Ingersoll to join up.

Joe came home and announced "we're moving to Ingersoll."

"Where's that?" Margaret enquired.

"Your guess is as good as mine," her husband replied.

Eventually, they found their way here.

Now, "I wouldn't leave it for anything. Everybody's kind."

"I've got lots of friends. I get spoiled by me friends," she said.

Ellen later corresponded in an email :

"I'm glad you enjoyed the article about Mrs. Balfour. The picture looks like it was taken on a balcony that was the same place that Aunt Mary lived in for a number of years. It was a senior building on Earl Street. She was there during the 80's so that might narrow your search. My guess is that she knew her from the building.....if I'm right on the balcony."

I saw this family name in the book. I don't know why I have this - must have been in Aunt Mary's "stuff". - In case you don't have it -
gg

In our history book, **Ingersoll Pipe Band – 1910 to 2010**, on page 34 there is an article about Joe Balfour. For those of you who do not have access to the book, I have reposted the information below.



Joe Balfour

For over 30 years the Ingersoll Pipe Band was fortunate to have Joe Balfour as their most outstanding bass drummer. Joe was born and raised in Fifeshire, Scotland and in 1914, at the age of 18, he joined the Scots Guard and served with them throughout WWI. After the war he enlisted for an additional three years and did peacekeeping duties in various parts of the world, including Ireland where he joined the Regimental Band and was trained to play the bass drum.

Joe later emigrated to Canada with his wife Margaret and small daughter, and was living in Strathroy in 1928, when the Ingersoll Pipe Band came to perform there one day. Afterwards, Joe asked if he could "take a turn" on their bass drum and his performance was so impressive he was immediately invited to join the band with a promise of a job and a place to live would be found for him in Ingersoll. And so he came to Ingersoll.

Over the years the Ingersoll Pipe Band won many awards and when the band celebrated its 50th Anniversary in 1960 it said of Joe that "he was probably the most spectacular Bass Drummer in Canada". His flawless performance was always a high light of the band. As a drummer, Joe taught many young band members the art of drumming.

Joe passed away in 1978.

On **Ancestry.com** more information was located about the Balfour's deaths - Jean lived to be 94. They are buried in the Harris Street Cemetery just south of Ingersoll on Hwy 19 .

Band Member & Family NEWS

The Starks



Catherine pictured above on day 130 of the Scotia Music Challenge.

Catherine wrote last February – “Scotia Music in accordance with the South Shore Pipes and Drums in Nova Scotia is challenging musicians to play, yes play...play everyday. 10 minutes. 365 days. That's all it takes.

This can be practising on any musical instrument of your choice ... but of course we are partial to chanters, pipes and drums!”



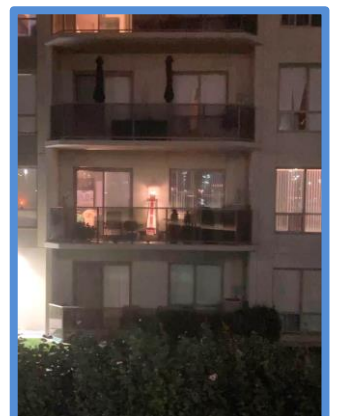
Well done, Catherine! Keep up the great work!

Catherine and her husband, Adam and two of her teenage kids Bill (former drummer with IPB) and daughter Sarah Jean spent some of their vacation time in Nova Scotia and PEI this summer. Due to unforeseen circumstances, Catherine had to leave Bill by the side of the road with all his gear so he could hitch a ride with his cousin. Catherine being the great mom that she is was worried about being charged with “abandonment”. Fortunately, Bill knows how to fish, hunt and find a McDonalds so he was just fine!



Mom’s text message read: “Looking for a good home. Comes with 1 week’s worth of clothes, \$10 and a fishing rod!”

Catherine’s Dad, Larry Perry, who frequently visits us at the band hall to enjoy the sound of the pipes and drums is also an accomplished craftsman and carpenter. Larry worked on his lighthouse project this summer and you can see the fine results below. It shines brightly on The Perrys’ apartment balcony in Woodstock.



London Air Show August 27-29th



Steve S and Heidi taking in the London Air Show on August 27th – Great seats to see The Snowbirds and Blue Angels

Richmond Good Old Days Parade



Macombe Highlanders on parade – Check out our buddy Christine in the red kilt!

This was the 57th year of the Richmond Area Good Old Days. The Ingersoll Pipe Band has been taking part in this parade for many, many years! But not this year as the border between the USA and Canada was closed to unnecessary travel.

Early in the summer, our friend Piper Christine Gatt, a Michigan resident, who usually marches with our band in the parade reached out to us to find out if we were coming to Michigan.

"Hi Veronica! It's Christine from Richmond, boy did I miss you guys last year, and thank you so much for sending the newsletters, I ALWAYS enjoy them so much! I sometimes share/discuss with a bandmate of ours, who is from Canada, of course we have not seen him in sooooo long due to the "border issues".

So anyway, we are having the parade this year, I sure hope you guys are coming, did they contact you yet? I know it's going to be weird due to what is decided about the border, just wondering if you heard anything yet!?

Take care, lotsa love, " - Christine

I wrote back and explained to Christine that yes we had received an invitation from the Richmond parade organizers but obviously we would not be coming.

Christine wrote back:

"Hello Veronica! Well, I'm not surprised. I kind of expected this, was just hoping!! but I certainly understand. Be sure to tell the band I said a big hello and that I really miss you all! just take care, we will all get through this one shining day! I really believe that.

You all take care. I will enjoy the newsletters in the meantime, love to all," - Christine

So hopefully next year, Christine, we will meet up with you in Richmond on the main street for "Michigan's Best Small Town Festival" parade.



Missing! The Search has Begun ...



Piper Jack Habkirk is searching for his missing parlour pipes! Jack lent them to someone pre-Covid days at the band hall and can't remember who. So if you know anything about the whereabouts of Jack's pipes would you please give him a call or dash him off an email. He desperately wants to be reunited with his mini pipes.

Piper Al McPherson

An opportunity to find out a little more about one of our more recent "acquisitions"!



Al's first event with IPB was at the Embro Highland Games on July 1st 2019.



Al tuning his chanter to Steve S's in Embro at the parade in September

You might not want to stand in the practice circle next to the editor of the newsletter. She might twist your arm and get you to divulge secrets of your piping past. So was the case with Al. I asked him a couple of weeks ago if he would consider sharing with our readers his piping journey. Thankfully, he agreed to do so. What follows is his most interesting autobiography.

"Piping Auto bio?"

Hmmm , I would have to say my 1st cultural experience with piping was in the 70's. I had a great uncle that was a piper and he was involved in creating the Forest Pipe Band in 1959. I believe that band went to the Embro Highland games and my family would attend the games on occasion.

Fast forward to 1997 , My father informed me that a piper moved into the neighborhood and lived next door to my parents (he was thrilled 👍).

I worked with a gentleman that informed me he was taking piping lessons from a guy named Gord Black who lived beside my parents. In 1998 my mother passed away. Gord offered to pipe at the cemetery. It was very moving for me and that's where my fondness for piping started.

My 1st lesson was in September 1998. Gord Black created the Paris Pipe Band in 2000 (10 pipers 1 drummer and a miss match of kilts). By 2002 the band had grown and improved enough to make a visit to Scotland. I left the band in 2003 as I started a new job and my daughter was born in the same year, and things got busy.

I relocated to Woodstock in 2007 and had watched IPB in local parades.

I was asked to play at my aunt's memorial and figured joining IPB was the best way to begin playing once more.

Hopefully you have enjoyed my piping journey!" – Al



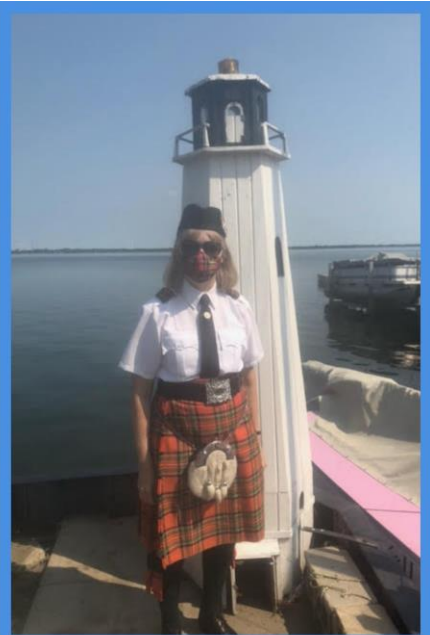
Al works a variety of shifts at the Toyota plant in Cambridge so whenever he is able to join us at practice and on parade it is always a welcome occurrence.

Erieau July 2021

Several of our pipers and drummers journeyed to the lakeside village of Erieau to support the Royal Scots from the Mocha Shriners' organization in London. From time to time Ingersoll Pipe Band members have assisted them on parade to help raise funds for the Shriners Hospital for Children in Montreal. Here are some photos from the most recent collaboration of bands.



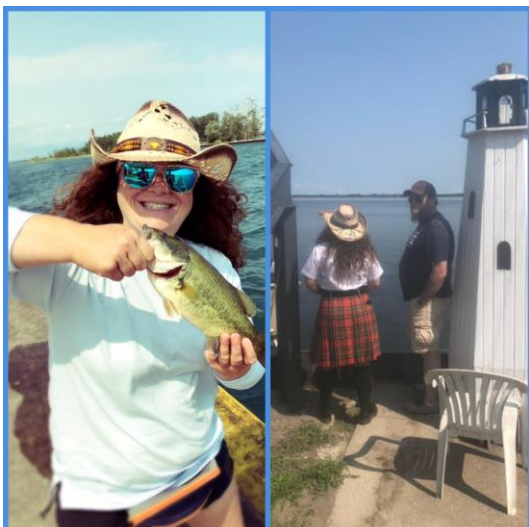
Group photo with The Admiral of the Erieau Yacht Club



Piper Steve Shepherd acting as PM of the Royal Scots / Pipers Catherine and Nancy / Piper Veronica



Top Row : The MacKay Brothers / The Chevriers (Father & Son) / The Watts and The Matthews & Rosie (the dog) Bottom Row : Tenor Drummer Graham / Band Marching Down the Boulevard



Catherine and Adam Stark checking out the fishing near Erieau



Steve S showing off his ghillies with his shorts

End Notes



Photo taken by John Rimington - Railway Tracks at Sunset near The Band Armoury Hall
(While waiting for his daughter Freya to finish drumming practice one Thursday September evening, John snapped this stunning photo and shared it with the editor).



Discussions are ongoing for upcoming parades. The tentative dates for a couple of these are:

Saturday November 27th – Aylmer Kinsmen Santa Claus Parade

Saturday December 11th – Innerkip Santa Claus Parade

As more dates are made available, our Secretary and Pipe and Drum Majors will keep us informed. Some communities have already decided to cancel their pre-Christmas parades due to Covid protocols, lack of organizers, and financing. Other communities are still evaluating the landscape.



IPB President Harold Matthews came across this photo the other day. He sent it in for this edition Perhaps a new parade hat for Drum Major Gail? It might keep his ears warm on those cold November and December days.

