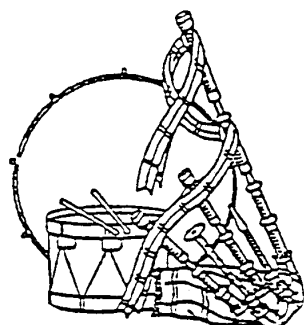


PIPERS' and PIPE BAND SOCIETY of ONTARIO, OTTAWA BRANCH



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2004 Ottawa Branch Workshop and Open Solo Contest



The final solo contest of the Ottawa Branch season is traditionally the Open Contest held the first Saturday of April. This year was no different, with the top pipers of the area vying off for the Glengarry Cup and the first place prize money of \$300 sponsored by the MacLeod Society of Ottawa. Our judge was Jim McGillivray of Aurora, ON and it was our pleasure to have Jim conduct a workshop that afternoon at the Canadian Police College for a



highly appreciative crowd (see below right). Speaking on tuning the pipes, and learning tunes, it was an extremely informative session that was sure to improve the skills all those in attendance. For the evening's fare, also at the Canadian Police College, nine pipers competed with Colin Clansey being the class of the field on this night. Playing Highland Wedding, Susan MacLeod, and the Sheepwife, Colin (Pipe Major of the Glengarry Grade 2 Pipe Band and Pipe Major of the 2 CMBG Pipe Band, Petawawa), demonstrated why he has medalled on the World stage. Also playing well in this year's contest were Murray Bond and John Hugh MacDonald who placed second and third, respectively. A thank you to all the competitors, for we wouldn't be able to hold the contest without your continued support. Following the contest, the

audience was treated to a few extra tunes by Jim McGillivray, who despite working on a brand new reed, was more than up to the task of demonstrating all the skills on which he had spoken earlier in the day. And last, but not least, a special thanks to Heritage Brewing, who this year also helped with sponsorship of the prize money.



Almonte Spring Fling – Saturday 17 April 2004.... Results

In spite of having to be postponed for two weeks for reasons beyond the control of sponsoring band MacEoin-Ramsay, the second Almonte Spring Fling was very well attended by both competitors and spectators. The various competitions got underway sharp on 9 a.m. under the watchful eyes and well-tuned ears of judges Brian Williamson and Jack Coghill (piping), and John Shaw (drumming). Mr. David Moat, Drum Major of MacEoin-Ramsay officiated as Chief Steward and M.C.

** PIPING

Adult Novice

1st Bruce Martin
2nd Ron Gain

Grade 5 March

1st Alanna Holz
2nd Ashley Spruit
3rd Shawn Roberts

Grade 3 March

1st Allison MacDonald
2nd Amanda Pulling
3rd Steve Brook / Bruce Chapman (tie)

Novice Piobroch

1st Murray Bleakney
2nd Ashley Spruit
3rd Jonathan Verret

Open Amateur Duet (Hornpipe/Jig)

1st Allison MacDonald / Jonathan Verret
2nd Bobby Smith / Jon Scott

Practice Chanter

1st Ashley Spruit
2nd Kane Orton

Grade 4 March

1st Murray Bleakney
2nd Jonathan Verret
3rd Steve Brook

Grade 3 Strathspey

1st Amanda Pulling
2nd Allison MacDonald
3rd Steve Brook

Amateur Piobroch

1st Allison MacDonald
2nd Amanda Pulling

** DRUMMING

Practice Pad

1st Matthew Larabie
2nd Amanda Bleakney
3rd Amanda Spruit

Grade 5 March

1st Matthew Larabie
2nd Amanda Bleakney
3rd Amanda Spruit

Grade 3 March

1st Devin Roberts

** BAND

Grade 4

1st Arnprior-McNab
2nd Rob Roy

Grade 5

1st Rob Roy
2nd Arnprior-McNab
3rd Gordon Drums & Pipes

Competition for “top band” of the day was very close. Less than ½ point separated first and second place in both categories! A good time was had by all, and the MacEoin-Ramsay Pipe Band looks forward to sponsoring the Almonte Spring Fling again next year.

This is the third in the on-going series of profiles of local pipers/drummers who have made a significant contribution to the pipe band community. The following is the biography of Connie Blaney of Maxville, Ontario, who is best known for her immeasurable impact on the Glengarry Highland Games, beginning as a competitor to finally in 1991 becoming the President of the Games Committee.

Connie (Kippen) Blaney was born in Ottawa but is best known for spending most of her life in Maxville, along with her two sisters and a brother. She grew up in a very musical family; her brother a drummer, one sister a dancer, her mother a singer and her father a piper. So it was not unexpected that Connie would be an accomplished musician herself, with piping coming quite naturally.

Connie's father, Gordon, took lessons as a young man from Peter MacInnis and Angus "Katie" MacDonald. Connie then began to learn the pipes from her father during the early 1940s. She was a "volunteer" when learning to pipe and never had to be coaxed to practice. In addition to the tutelage from her father, Connie also took lessons from Steve MacKinnon (right), Pipe Major of the CNR Pipe Band in Montreal. Those two gentlemen had by far the greatest influence on Connie's piping career.



Connie first learned her tunes by ear and within a short time had some twenty-five pieces memorized. In the late 1940s P/M Steve MacKinnon began traveling to Maxville on weekends to give lessons by note to aspiring young pipers, including Connie. Some fifty students started the classes, but over time most withdrew until only three remained; Connie, Herbert Ferguson and Beverly Campbell. When there were only the three, P/M MacKinnon would stay at one of the students' homes and all would gather there for lessons for the weekend; "... no wonder we learned to pipe!". MacKinnon taught in Maxville and in Alexandria for five years. Both Connie and Beverly went on to compete, with Connie concentrating mainly on light music (although she did play some piobaireachd in her time).

The first Glengarry Highland Games were held in 1948 when Connie, at age fifteen, took first prize in the under-eighteen competition. She continued to compete at Maxville in the under-eighteen competitions for the next few years and then ventured into the over-eighteen grades. As well as being successful at Maxville, she was also a

very successful competitor at games in Montreal, Fergus, Embro, Syracuse and Schenectady, winning many trophies (she remembers one of her co-competitors being Bob Allen, the current president of the PPBSO). It was during this period of her career that she was acknowledged and recognized as being one of the best lady pipers in North America. It was also about this same time that Connie affectionately became known as "Glengarry's Sweetheart".



Following her years in competition, Connie played primarily for dancing competitions. That, she confesses, was rather a trying job as it would quite often be the same tune over and over again, and more often than not be all afternoon out in the hot sun.

During the summer of 1954, the Clan MacLeod undertook to organize and provide piping and drumming lessons for aspiring pipers and drummers. By December, twenty-two applications for piping lessons and ten for drumming had been received. P/M Steve MacKinnon was engaged to teach classes in Alexandria and Connie to teach in Maxville.

This was the start of Connie’s role in tutoring piping where the skills she had learned as a school teacher would stand her in good stead. She continued to teach piping for the next twelve years in Maxville and in Alexandria, with hundreds of local students benefiting from her knowledge and experience.

Connie was not only an accomplished soloist, but also a very capable band player. She was a founding member of the Glengarry Pipe Band in 1961 and served as Pipe Major from 1965 to 1968. Connie also served as a director of the band in 1974 and 1975. In 1964, a girls’ pipe band competition was inaugurated at the Glengarry Games with Glengarry’s own Girls Pipe Band under Pipe Major Connie Kippen Blaney taking first place.

Although she wasn’t a member of the Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry Highlanders Connie was also a frequent guest player with that band, much to their delight.

Connie was involved with the Glengarry Highland Games from their beginning in 1948; first as a competitor, as a member of the Glengarry Pipe Band, an accompanist for dance competitions, and then later with the administration of the Games. Her first administrative position was with the Band Committee.

In 1981 Connie became the Secretary for the Games Committee and she remained in that position for fifteen years. In 1988-89 she served as a Vice-President and 1991 she became the President. Being responsible for twenty-four committees was challenge enough, but Connie also continued to remain as her own Secretary. Connie holds the “unofficial” record of participating in every Glengarry Highland Games since the first.

During her tenure as President, Connie worked closely with the PPBSO to ensure that piping/drumming and band events were run as smoothly and efficiently as possible. In her first year as President, 1991, it was probably appropriate that General John de Chastelain, then Chief of the Defence Staff, and an accomplished piper in his own right, opened the Glengarry Highland Games.

Connie Kippen married Walter Blaney in 1955. Connie was still an active competitor when the young couple moved to the Blaney farm immediately south of Maxville (the Blaney family has operated the farm since 1908). Despite the requirements of managing a household, helping to run a farm and raise a family, Connie still found time to practice, teach, compete and play with the Glengarry Pipe Band.

Walter and Connie have two sons, both accomplished pipers, who have also played with the Glengarry Pipe Band. Their sons went on to competitive programmes involving extensive experience on the national and international scene. Both are married, one to a piper and the other to a tenor drummer.

Few, if any, have equaled Connie Kippen Blaney’s contributions to the piping scene in Glengarry. But even though now retired, Connie will, on a warm summer’s evening still take her place on the porch and play her electronic pipe – to keep in practice just in case.....!

In 2003, Connie (Kippen) Blaney, Glengarry’s Sweetheart, was inducted into the Glengarry Hall of Fame in recognition of her contributions to piping and the Glengarry Highland Games.



Veterans Memorial Highland Games

Saturday 19 June 2004

Spencerville Fairgrounds, Spencerville, Ontario

Solo Piping/Drumming Competitions start **9:00** am

First Massed Band: **1:00** pm

Pipe Band (Grade 5/Novice, Grade 4, Grade 3) Competitions start **1:30** pm

Tenor Drum, Bass Drum, Drum Major Competitions start **4:30** pm

Final Massed Band: **5:00** pm

SOLO EVENTS

Piping

- Event 1. Grade 5 March
- Event 2. Grade 4 March
- Event 3. Grade 3 March
- Event 4. Grade 3 Strathspey/Reel
- Event 5. Grade 2 March
- Event 6. Grade 2 Strathspey/Reel
- Event 7. Grade 2 Jig
- Event 8. Grade 1 March
- Event 9. Grade 1 Strathspey/Reel
- Event 10. Grade 1 Jig
- Event 11. Novice Piobaireachd
- Event 12. Junior Piobaireachd
- Event 13. Intermediate Piobaireachd
- Event 14. Senior Piobaireachd

Drumming

- Event 15. Grade 5 March
- Event 16. Grade 4 March
- Event 17. Grade 3 March/Strathspey/Reel
- Event 18. Grade 2 March/Strathspey/Reel
- Event 19. Grade 2 Hornpipe/Jig
- Event 20. Grade 1 March/Strathspey/Reel
- Event 21. Grade 1 Hornpipe/Jig
- Event 22. Novice Flourishing Tenor
- Event 23. Amateur Flourishing Tenor
- Event 24. Novice Bass
- Event 25. Amateur Bass
- Event 26. Amateur Drum Major

Entry Fees... Solo: \$5.00 per Event. Band: \$25.00.

Entries must be postmarked no later than 01 June 2004.

VETERANS' MEMORIAL HIGHLAND GAMES 2004 SOLO ENTRY FORM

Name: _____

Mail Entries to:

Band Affiliate: _____

Graeme Ogilvie
1730 Bonaventure Terrace
Orleans, ON K1C 1W4

Telephone Number: _____

Event Numbers: _____

VETERANS' MEMORIAL HIGHLAND GAMES 2004 BAND ENTRY FORM

Band Name: _____

Mail Entries to:

Grade: _____

Graeme Ogilvie
1730 Bonaventure Terrace
Ottawa, ON K1C 1W4

Band Contact/Tel Number: _____