

8 -- THE COMPLETED -- ?

# CONCISE TUTOR

Highland

FOR

Bagpipe

This is the "pdf" for "Part 3, Concise Tutor for Practice Chanter, 1973" – updated 2012 – and made freely available via the internet "online" to the piping fraternity worldwide in perpetuity through "keepandshare.com" by "a piper too".

# PRACTISE CHANTER

The Canntaireachd and Pibaireachd of Domhnall Dubh

Donald Chalmers, Melbourne, Australia, 1973, and updated in blue, 2012

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### The Boys of Blue Hill - Hornpipe

As I've mentioned, "The Boy's of Blue Hill" was another favourite of Jack Copeland, who also played this one "quite round" – that is, "evenly" played, with just a little "pointing". He also played the "Button Accordion". This music was in his blood, and he loved it, as do "I".

I've encountered several problems as I've tried to "fit" all the notes into the width allowed by the Piob Mhor music program, so that four bars would appear across each line, for optimum presentation and viewing.

You will need a "sharp eye" to catch the "tricks" I have used to make this happen – for you. For instance, in the 6<sup>th</sup> bar of the second part, what appears to be (at first glance) a standard D Doubling "isn't", but rather a "tripling" of B, C, D semi-quavers (as shown in the 3<sup>rd</sup> part, 1<sup>st</sup> bar etc.

The first time through the 2<sup>nd</sup> part, you should play F, G' to repeat the part, as shown by the parts "introductory notes". The 3<sup>rd</sup> part is introduced by the F, E semi-quavers shown as "2".

Similarly, the 4<sup>th</sup> bar of the 4<sup>th</sup> part shows single gracenotes in its first beat, but really, the F and C are "opened out" to sound as "in the triplings" two lines above. Had I been writing the music for this "by hand", I would have joined the sem-

quaver tails of the "triplings" together with the semi-quavers which follow, since there are only two beats in each bar, and it is better to show this "connection" clearly, if at all possible to avoid confusion. But this "beggar" could be no chooser, and most of us are in the "same boat".

### Don and Theo's Jam Session Jig

The image shows a musical score for a jig in 6/8 time, consisting of eight staves of music. The score is written in treble clef and includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and accidentals. There are two trill ornaments in the first staff, and two triplet markings (indicated by a '3' and a slur) in the fifth and sixth staves. The piece concludes with a double bar line and repeat dots.

This was a tune I “made up” while “jamming” with a piano playing friend of mine. I was playing on my electronic DegerPipe, while he strummed away playing many and various piano chords on his electronic keyboard. We recorded our efforts, and this tune came out of it.

As with all dance tunes, we should commence practicing them playing them “evenly” – without “dots” and “cuts” – and introduce “hints” of “expression” as we progress to higher tempo’s, never forgetting our “aim”: to play each tune without blemish, and with regular tempo.

The third parts 1<sup>st</sup> bar reminded me of a tune I used to play, and another I think written by Jim MacIntosh, so I looked up the opening bars of each part, and am pleased to say that only the 1<sup>st</sup> bar of the 3<sup>rd</sup> part has been used before – at least as an introduction to 1<sup>st</sup> parts of Dance and March Tunes, as sorted by my “New Melody Directory – Highland Bagpipe”.

The theme and style of tunes quite often follow on in predictable ways from the opening line of melody, so it is important to find theme’s which haven’t been overused.

In the last part, I have had fun “fiddling around” substituting (some) Low G’s for Low A’s, especially

in the “repeat” to “surprise” myself, while making sure no unintended “crossing noises” express themselves. It is always good to “extend” yourself...

## Birls Practice Jig - Donald Chalmers

Concise Tutor for Practice Chanter 1973 – updated by Donald Chalmers 2012. [Sec 6, Page 57](#)

Like the tune “Don and Theo’s Jam Session Jig” as shown on the previous page, “Birls Practice Jig” can be played at a “rate of knots” (say 104 – 108 beats per minute) if you have done your homework well, and slowly.

Note that I have introduced “dots” and “cuts” only slowly into this tune, but really, you can play them where you like “throughout”, so long as you don’t make this Jig sound like a 6/8 Quickstep March.

This “Long Donald” might turn over in his grave if you were ever to present your tune like “that”.

But especially “galling” would be “crossing noises” and “skirls” from “mis-fingering” and “mis-hitting” the holes of the chanter with your fingers.

But even such misdemeanours “pale” if joined with a musical instrument that is badly maintained, poorly reeded and poorly tuned.

Good “tuning” and fine “control” are the hallmarks of a good player. Mark my word: Listen to the fundamental drone tone, and all will be well !

The best performers might “swallow a fly” – and yet show no sign of inconvenience – because they have hypnotised themselves, as well. And if the audience hasn’t noticed, then that’s as it should be...

Concise Tutor for Practice Chanter 1973 – updated by Donald Chalmers 2012. [Sec 6, Page 57](#)



1st Grandchild, Mt. Gambier, 1998 March 69 beats/min Donald Chalmers

1st Grandchild, Mt. Gambier, 1998 March 69 beats/min Donald Chalmers

{ \$158@69 | 'F8..E5'F8 'D8eA8D8 'E8F8..E5 =F4.F4. | 'F8..E5'F8 'D8eA8D8 'F8..E5D8 =E4.E4. |  
 'F8..E5'F8 'D8eA8D8 'E4. (FEgE)F4.F4. | a8..g5a8 F8A8dA8 'E8F8..E5 /D4.D4. |  
 'F8..E5'F8 'D8eA8D8 'E8F8..E5 =F4.F4. | 'F8..E5'F8 'D8eA8D8 'F8..E5D8 (ABCD)E4.E4. |  
 'F8..E5'F8 'D8eA8D8 'E4. (FEgE)F4.F4. | a8..g5a8 F8A8dA8 'E8F8..E5 /D4.D4'F8 | |;

\$128@69 -a4.a4. F8D4D4. | 'B8D4D4. 'B8A4A8'F8 | -a4.a4. F8D4D4. | 'B8D8F8 =E4.E4.E4'F8 |  
 \$128@69 -a4.a4. F8D4D4. | 'B8D4D4. 'B8A4A4. | \$98@69 'A8B8D8 =F4E8 /D4. | D4.D4.D4'F8 |  
 \$128@69 -a4.a4. F8D4D4. | 'B8D4D4. 'B8A4A8'F8 | -a4.a4. F8D4D4. | 'B8D8F8 =E4.E4.E4'F8 |  
 \$128@69 -a4.a4. F8D4D4. | 'B8D4D4. 'B8A4A4. | \$98@69 'A8B8D8 =F4E8 /D4. | D4.D4.D4. | |;

As mentioned on page 5 of my “Update to 2012”, this is the tune that “came to me” as I was driving long miles interstate to visit my first grandchild. I tried to keep the tune in my head as I progressed, and stopped at the next town to fill up with petrol, and note it down in the “shorthand” I had developed for “The New Melody Directory – Highland Bagpipe”.

Mother and daughter had arrived home from hospital by the time I arrived, so I was able to play, within a few days, and not too closeby, the tune for her on full pipes.

My grand-daughter Grace has grown into a musical girl, but not interested in the bagpipes at this stage, any way. My other older grandchildren have not taken up the bagpipes either, but together they play flute, piano, trumpet and trombone, so I am well pleased.

You should note the unusual (for the bagpipe) time signatures, and my use of the “double dot” and compensating demi-semi-quavers (doubly cut). Also indicated are “tied notes” where no “gracenote” or “movement” separates beats in notes of the same pitch. There are five dotted crotchet beats in 15/8 time per bar in the first part. The second part however presented problems. Can you spot where they are ? But as I’ve mentioned, music is a guide, not a given.

I later transposed my shorthand into the code required for Dr MacMillan’s Piob Mhor system of music notation; this is what is shown here ↙, and then I was able to print out the tune on Staff, and “play the tune” through electronically, to see whether my interpretation “sounded” as I had intended. It did.

There are a number of bagpipe music writing systems now of the “cut and paste” variety, but this was the first I was aware of in 1999. Once you get used to it, it is virtually “foolproof”. Though it wasn’t suggested, I found it easier to show each line of staff notation on a separate line, with “separation” of each beat, as shown here.

*Slow Air. Donald McIntyre's Memory. - Composed by Flora Smith*

This tune was hand written by my friend Flora in memory of her brother-in-law. It is a very pretty tune, I think, and worthy of being collected for posterity. Flora gained her Bachelor's degree in Music from Melbourne University at a time when female graduates were rare.

Though her hands are twisted with arthritis she is still a very good pianist, now in her late 80's. She used to play piobaireachd on the piano, according to her own style. She grew up in country Victoria, and married a farmer, so for many years she had no outlet for her talents.

She was a frustrated piper, since it was her father's view that women should not take up the instrument. She says her parents were Calvinistic and puritanical, and ruled her with the rod, which she resisted in every way she could.

Over many years, she has been a generous supporter of solo piping events. Till now, she retains a prodigious memory, and can remember long gone pipers of renown in Victoria and South Australia, where she now resides.

As I've mentioned previously, the writing of music is not an exact science; it requires interpretation by the player to "breathe life" into each tune – hold a little, cut a little.

Flora has written her tune in 6/8 time, while I have recorded it in 4/4 time, which I think captures the essence of it, and as I remembered it. Especially in the writing of Slow Airs and Piobaireachd, no one way is "right".

It was Flora who recalled that the third next tune I present for you was written by Alex McDermid (one of the Castlemaine Pipe Band's imports from Scotland – see <http://www.chpb.org.au/history.html>), and why it was named "Blink Bonnie".

**In Donald McIntyre's Memory - Slow Air - Flora MacPherson Smith**

The following notation is “**In Donald McIntyre’s Memory**”, as imperfectly remembered and played by me from my hearing a tape of Flora’s piano rendition, before I visited her, and played it for her on the pipes. She noted that I had made some changes, which she demonstrated to me on the piano. She then produced her hand written “score”, written in 6/8 time. I was only slightly taken aback, since I had thought I had the power of remembrance “built in to me”.

Musical notation for "In Donald McIntyre's Memory" in 6/8 time. It consists of four staves of music. The first staff has a '2' above it, and the third staff has a '1' above it. The notation includes various note values, rests, and phrasing slurs.

But like any other “remembrance”, what presents to us as “fact” is in reality a “fiction”, unless the fact is “captured” in some way, like writing the tune out “long-hand”, or making a tape recording, or video, or CD, or DVD of someone playing it.

Only the original creator of the tune “knows exactly” what he/she “intended” – and even “that” might change from one performance to the next.

Perhaps this could be played as third and fourth parts to the tune, or singly as a variation on the tune, for it varies only slightly.

#### The Reunion - March by Donald Chalmers 2001

Musical notation for "The Reunion - March" in 2/4 time. It consists of four staves of music. The first staff has a '2/4' time signature. The notation includes various note values, rests, and phrasing slurs. The final staff has four triplets marked with '3'.

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“**The Reunion March**” is here presented as a “filler” of space, but hopefully, it will give you a “change of head-space” as well as “pace”, just as it did for me in 2001.

It had to do with my being contacted by a long lost Army friend from Western Australia. He’d phoned me from the airport on his way to Tasmania, and had a few hours to fill in, so wondered if he could visit with his son.

He’d brought with him some photo’s of our time 40 years before in Vietnam, and I was excited to see “old” faces and places. His visit “started the ball rolling”, and slowly I have made contact with my interstate friends, all decidedly wiser.



### Blink Bonnie




A printed musical score for the tune "Blink Bonnie". The score is written in 12/8 time and consists of five staves of music. The notation includes various note values, rests, and articulation marks such as slurs and accents.

“Blink Bonnie” was the name of the property of Jeanette Collins’s father Frank Collins which was at Compton, near Mt Gambier, South Australia. Frank was the Australian born son of Scottish immigrants. His daughter Jeanette was the Pipe Major of the Blue Lake Ladies Pipe Band which was tutored by Dickie Hepburn, another Scot – see <http://www.schoolofpiping.com/articles/dickie-hepburn.pdf>.

Apparently, Alex McDermid was a great friend of Frank Collins and used to visit the farm. According to Jeanette, Alec composed and named the tune to honour her father and his land.

On the other hand, below is the handwritten copy of the music introduced to me in my youth by my second teacher Bill Wallace. The writing of it seems to suggest the style of my first teacher, John MacKenzie, who has noted that this was an “Old Highland Air”.



A handwritten musical score for the tune "Blink Bonnie". The score is written in 6/8 time and consists of five staves of music. The notation is more fluid and includes various annotations such as "OLD HIGHLAND AIR", "SLOW", "1st TIME", and "2nd TIME". There are also several "x" marks above the notes, possibly indicating specific playing techniques or corrections.

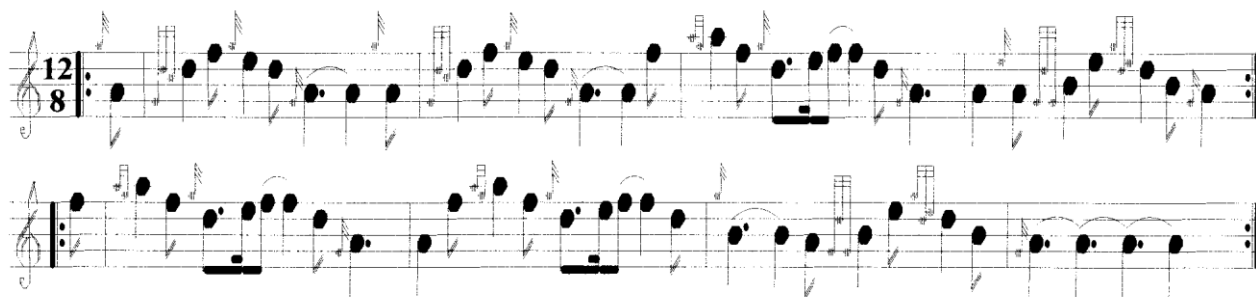
I only heard Alex McDermid play once in the distance, but by the time I found him he’d packed up his pipes. I was attracted like a bee to the flower by his great sound, and style of playing.

He was at that time Pipe Tutor to Haileybury College, which was within hearing distance of my High School. But like himself, the band was hard to track down, and he died suddenly around that time, so that I never got to meet him. But he was decidedly a very good player.

Note the less than optimum presentation of the first part in “my version”, the reason for which has eluded me.

This was a very successful competition tune for me; it seemed every one liked it, though looking at my presentation of it now, I don’t think that I played it as shown, but with a Low A shake to separate the first two E’s.

**PIPERS LAMENT FOR HIS DOG Donald Chalmers 1980 40 beats/min**



Both these tunes were composed at a time of great sadness for me. The first as I lay my faithful Bassett Hound “Suzie” into her grave in our backyard. She had brought light and sunshine into our lives. It was a dismal day; Scotch like, miserable rain, and a cold wind. And my children would soon be coming home from school; I would soon have to compose myself and console them, too. She was a tri-colour white black and tan dog, with long ears, and in her old age, droopy eyes. She’d given our children their first “facts of life” lessons when she produced a litter of nine beautiful puppies. My wife and I stayed up late to be with her, and tried to revive the most beautiful of the pups, which Suzie had wisely known had not survived. She never wandered after that bonding; and was never again accused of eating a child’s guinea pig at the local Primary School. That was another Basset Hound in the area. But it’s strange how such a story was told, and retold, for years afterwards.

**The Twins Farewell (Kathryn & Nicolle) - Lament - Donald Chalmers - 29/9/97**



This tune “came to me” in all it’s strangeness, as I left the Cemetery and felt the keen loss of my sister and her family, when one of her identical twins died suddenly from a brain haemorrhage. Kathryn and Nicolle were inseparable before this, and had performed at a concert together the night before playing a “four-handed” piano piece.

They certainly achieved a great deal in their nearly eight years together, and been through much since Kathryn had been diagnosed with an inoperable brain tumour six months before. Nicole showed no sign of such a problem, and has grown to be a talented musician, as have her sisters.

The first two bars are in Nicolle’s voice, urgent, the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Kathryn, slowly, 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> Niccole, fearful, 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Kathryn, tired. In the second part, the first and 5<sup>th</sup> bars are Nicolle, pleading, while the remaining bars are Kathryn, more tired, and then even more slowly, fading away.

**My Friend Frank (Sertori) - Lament 40 beats/min - Donald Chalmers 1996**

The image displays a musical score for a lament. It consists of six staves of music, each with a treble clef and a 6/8 time signature. The music is written in a simple, melodic style with a somber tone. The notes are primarily quarter and eighth notes, with some rests and phrasing slurs. The overall mood is one of grief and reflection.

As I've previously mentioned, on page 5 of my "Prologue –Update to 2012", "My Friend Frank" was "envisioned" after I had listened in "real time" to a broadcast of the actions of the Falklands War. This dredged up old memories for me

Since I had my cassette tape handy, I "sang" two parts of the tune which "came to me" into it. Years later, I rediscovered the cassette, and happened to have it in my car one day while I was taking my golden-voiced drummer friend Frank to a hospital appointment. He'd been most unwell, having collapsed while volunteering his announcing skills for the Ringwood Highland Gathering. He gave up smoking too late, on Doctor's Orders.

I played it for him. He said he liked it, so I said I would name it for him, hoping that would cheer him up. But in the event, things did not go well for him, so when I wrote it up for the first time, I conjured another part, which I've added as the second of the now three parts

I played this tune at his request at his funeral, some years later, using my pre-recorded electronic DegerPipe, with miniature pipe sound, which, like

the Great Highland Bagpipe, can evoke very plaintive emotions from listeners. There were many that day who felt the shock of tears, even though his departure was a blessed release – for him – and for those close to him.

I've never been of the opinion that drummers are but piper's "labourers". That is a nonsense, which must be rejected. "They" are people like any one else, and have their own foibles like any one else, also. We have been blessed by the rhythmic "beatings" which (at least part of the time) synchronize and hold our music together. "Power Drumming" we might have. That is a great feat by itself. But the best of music comes when pipers and drummers come together to work together, and become the best of mates.

The Pipe Band movement should celebrate the great advances that have been made in it's history, partly at the behest of the military and other organizers, but mostly from the original thought which sprang from flexible musical individuals, sure of their talents, and having faith in others.

**LEAVING - March 80 Beats/Min Donald Chalmers 1998**

The image displays a musical score for a march titled 'LEAVING'. The score is written on ten staves, each representing a different instrument or voice part. The key signature is one flat (B-flat), and the time signature is 2/4. The music is characterized by a repetitive, rhythmic pattern of eighth and sixteenth notes, typical of a marching tune. The notation includes various note values, rests, and dynamic markings. The score is presented in a clear, legible format, suitable for a practice chanter or a small ensemble.

This tune was jotted down by me as I was preparing to leave to live in a new location. I was very excited about the move to a new home where I had the additional responsibility of taking care of (“parenting”) an overseas student about to begin Year 11 studies. I looked forward to this opportunity since my own children had already grown and “flown the nest”.

Because of its repetitive “beating” nature, I have decided to call this tune **“Drummer’s Salute”**. I hope that piper’s and drummer’s will enjoy playing this tune while marching to it, and while standing, to allow the drummers to “show off” their flourishing skills.

The tempo shown here should be the “minimum” marching tempo played. “Soloists” can “ramp up” (quicken) the tempo to show off their skills.

This is an exercise in and of itself, and if you can play this tune at 100 beats per minute, then you will have “arrived” – if you can do so without crossing noises and hesitations and stuffups.

If you haven’t learned to play “double High A” doublings yet, then here is your opportunity to do so. Note the challenge of the 1<sup>st</sup> High G gracenote in each part. In my experience, it is easier to

complete the 1<sup>st</sup> High G by “brushing” the left thumb “downwards” over the High A hole, and then brush it back “up” again to sound the “final” High A of the movement. However great your skills, it won’t do you any harm, and perhaps a power of good, to practice this tune very slowly at first.



The image displays a musical score for the second half of the tune "Drummers Salute" (Leaving). The score is written in 2/4 time and consists of ten staves of music. The notation includes various rhythmic values such as eighth and sixteenth notes, as well as rests. The score is presented in a clear, aligned format with bar lines consistently positioned across all staves. The music is written in a single melodic line on a treble clef staff.

**Second Half, "Drummers Salute" (Leaving).**

These are the third and fourth parts of the tune "Leaving", or "Drummers Salute". If my memory serves me correctly, I wrote what is shown as the 3<sup>rd</sup> part last of all, but decided that it fitted in more naturally as a progression – as the 3<sup>rd</sup> part.

I have struggled mightily to "force" my "Piob Mhor" program to consistently show "four bars" across each line; this page has been taken from a later print, after I "added" more complex "shakes" on D (see examples of these to your far left), which apparently threw the system "out of sync".

Eventually I had to include information I have since "blocked out" by creating a "text box" over it (see that portion of staff "missing" from this image).

This presentation is slightly better than the first two parts of the tune as shown on the previous page, since the bar lines are more nearly aligned under each other. I hope that you will appreciate my efforts on your behalf.... Anything to make the reading of this tune more clear....

I hope that you will have noticed that the last part more perfectly mimics the drums than any other,

concentrating as it does in its first half on Low A. The last D "throw" has been shown this way to illustrate this style of playing which is adopted as "standard" by many, because of its more "solid" sound (see Section 3 Page 22). Note my "change" of the usual single High G gracenote to a "High A Doubling", in lines 3 and 7 above. Note well the additional High G gracenote which has been added to "grace" and note the "finale" (end of tune).

**Hell's Bells ! Senseless Slaughter March Donald Chalmers 2003 120 beats/min**

This “tune” (and speaking recently of the military) may not actually be a “tune”, insofar as the rules of “men” are concerned, because it doesn’t comply with any of our “conventional” sensibilities.

It “comes” in parts of six bars, repeated, whereas the usual number as traditionally defined comes in groups of four or eight. It is “hard” to remember, and keeps on repeating itself in annoying bursts.

It is “simple”, and yet “complex”, requiring much concentration and effort to “get it right” at the tempo suggested. But like all other tunes, if played slowly at first, the tempo can be increased with much practice. I have introduced it here to challenge your powers of concentration – and to help “awaken your giant – within”.

If you have one, a metronome will come in handy, both for your slower practice, and to maintain the “white hot” rage and “cut and thrust” of internal battle at 120 beats per minute.

There can be no lounging and slouching in this angry tune which in some way describes wanton destruction and senseless slaughter by maniacal regimes given over to blood lust. This wail is far from pure and far from simple.

For those who participate in deliberate Senseless Slaughter, then it’s “Hells Bells”. Now, that is Pure, and that is Simple: Hell’s Bells !

Since we live at the dawning of the Age of Aquarius, it bodes us well to think on these things. Peace and Harmony cannot be attained by lust for blood. Now is the only time there is for us to change our ways. This is the message of this “a piper too” !

**I'll March by Myself! - March 60 Beats/Min Donald Chalmers 1988**

The image shows a musical score for a march. It consists of eight staves of music, each starting with a treble clef and a 12/8 time signature. The music is written in a single melodic line. There are several triplet markings (a '3' over a group of three notes) throughout the piece. The score includes various note values, rests, and phrasing slurs. The piece concludes with a double bar line and repeat dots.

This is the final tune of my selection. It sprang to my mind when my mother sent me a birthday card close to the time of her death.

At that time I was mystified as to why she had sent this card to “me”. It showed a proud mother in a parade, pointing out her son. She was exclaiming “ that’s my son – and he’s the only one in step !’

Having been in the military on National Service, I guess I have been well drilled, and well yelled at. From what I have read in the press recently, all of this was tantamount to abuse.

I certainly felt so at the time, and yet had complied – by making myself as invisible from others as I could – which was difficult, since I stuck out like a sore thumb: too tall and too skinny.

And yet, they stuck me in amongst the short and the fat, the indifferent, the talented and the untalented. Black or white, and in all shades between, all of us had to do our time.

I now realize that in sending me this card, she was sending me a signal that as far as she was concerned, I stood out from the crowd, for her, at least. And that’s what counts most. Not fame, not fortune, but birth into a good life. Thanks Mum !

I’ll let you decide whether this tune has two or four parts, for “herein ends the lesson”, insofar as “Ceol Beag” is concerned. You have my best wishes.

### Reverie - One Drummer's Delight - Alex the Gentle Man's 90th Birthday Party

The image shows a musical score for a piece titled "Reverie - One Drummer's Delight". The score is written for a single melodic line on a treble clef staff, with a 4/4 time signature. It consists of five staves of music. The first staff begins with a treble clef and a 4/4 time signature. The music is composed of eighth and sixteenth notes, often beamed together in groups of four. There are several measures with slurs over groups of notes. The piece concludes with a double bar line and repeat dots at the end of the fifth staff.

I was indeed privileged to be invited to Alex McCormick's 90<sup>th</sup> Birthday Celebration, and attended with my father, Harry, another great friend of his, as mentioned of Page F of "Update to 2012" section of this revised "Concise Tutor".

My father "passed from us" aged 90 himself a couple of years later, but Alex survived him, and like my father, was still 100% "with it" to his own end, on 18<sup>th</sup> August 2007.

Music and his family of friends and relatives were Alex's passion; he loved to demonstrate his ideas on his drum pad, or the kitchen table. He could also pick out tunes and chords on his electronic piano.

And so, I "composed" this piece as a tribute to him within days of his party, and posted him off a copy of it. He said he was "charmed" and "delighted", and had written out a drum accompaniment by the time I next visited. We talked about the "hustle and bustle" of most of pipe band music, but allowed that even the "simplest of scores" for even the simplest of melodies, can be the most effective. And thus I hope that from his place in the "great beyond" that Alex is still actively producing "Heavenly" music for the "All of Creation".

At Alex's party I had the opportunity to speak to my great nemesis Nat Russell. I was pleased to see that he had "settled", and now had his own family to love and support him. That is as it should be, and I wish him "all the best" and hope that he can do the same for me. This is both the least and the most we can do for each other.

The "Peace and Harmony" I have written about so much since my rise as just "a piper too" on the internet depends on such reciprocity of "good will" to all, in all situations, and at all times. Otherwise, we should take to the sword or the net (as expressed in "THE LOST PIBROCH and other Sheiling-Stories", by Neil Munro, 1899 – see "Update to 2012" Page W), and give music a miss, altogether. "Reverie" should probably be played at 90 beats/min.



## SECTION 9 Piobaireachd and the “Balmoral School of Playing”, facts and fantasies: Pages 69 - 78

As mentioned previously in my “**Update to 2012, Page N**”, These notes were prepared by me on the 4th July, 1994, from material collected, from my teachers and friends and associates, and especially from the tape recording prepared by **Robin Sutherland** (formerly of Tasmania, pupil of **Keith Routley**, formerly of City of Hawthorn Pipe Band), while Robin was taking “time off” from his profession as a school teacher, in Scotland as pupil of **Jim McIntosh**, **Bob Nichol**, and **R.U (Bob) Brown** in the 1970's. He also had contact with **Malcolm MacRae** formerly of Sydney and **Hamish MacKenzie** of Adelaide (formerly of Scotland), all renowned exponents of the “**Balmoral Style**” of Piobaireachd Playing. I knew Robin not, but recognised “substance”.

Previously, I'd had recourse to some **Long Playing Records**, like the “mono” (stereophonic sound had yet to be invented) like “Pibroch” Volumes 1 and 2, which included examples of “**cantaireachd**”, the mouth music of sung “**vocables**” which (are supposed to, if the singer is musical, as well as having a phenomenal memory) indicate “pitch”, “timing” and the “movements” played in the “urlar” or “ground” or “basic melody”, upon which increasingly complex variations are usually based, until the “urlar” is repeated, to make the tune “complete”.

Apparently, this is to symbolize the “circular” nature of all creation, and of music as they return always to “the source”. In Australia, piobaireachd playing was the exception rather than the rule, and was heard only at “competitions” where personal rivalries and “styles” were argued about interminably. But for myself, it was the “sound” of the pipe which riveted me, along with musical expression and technique. In those days, it was rare to hear more than one instrument which “passed” the test on the day, so my “decision” was always easy.

So I listened mainly to “Clan Campbell’s Gathering” (P/M MacLellan), “Black Donald’s March” (P/M Burgess), “The Old Men of the Shells” (P/M Burgess), “Lament for Viscount Dundee” (P/M Burgess), “Lament Padruig Og” (P/M MacLellan), “The Battle of the Pass of Crief”, and “The Old Womans Lullaby”. But I have accumulated many more tape recordings, CD’s, and video, DVD, and internet experiences over the last 20 or so years.

In the “early days” of my appreciation of this music, I also sighted and had limited access to some books with background material: **Dr. Roderick Ross – “Binneas is Borreraig Books 1 to 5”**, Angus Mackay, Archibald Campbell of Kilberry – “**The Kilberry Book of Ceol Mor, 1953**”, John Macray, William Ross, Duncan Campbell, Seton Gordon, **Joseph MacDonald – “Treatise of the Great Highland Bagpipe 1767”**, **Seumas MacNeil “Piobaireachd: classical music of the Highland bagpipe, 1968”**, **General Thomason – “CEOL MOR 1900”**, Campbell Cantaireachd 1797 2 VOLS – “**NETHERLORN Canntaireachd**”, Angus Mackay – “**A Collection of Ancient Piobaireachd or Highland Pipe Music 1838**”. I “own” some of them now.

Apparently, **there are approximately 350 surviving “pibrochs”**. “**Pibroch**” is the anglicised spelling of the Gaelic word “Piobaireachd” (pronounced something like “pea brock”, which means “big”, or “classical” music of the Great Highland Bagpipe). Piobaireachd are also known in the Gaelic language as “**ceol mor**”.

Both 2 and 3 Droned Instruments were used in 1745, which we would like to think as the “zenith” of Pibroch playing. However, given the limitations of the instrument at that time (which have only been recently addressed), and the hard work of manual labour expected at that time for most, this can hardly be the case. On the other hand, though there have been thousands of new compositions of “ceol beg” or “little music”, only a handful of “new” piobaireachd have been published, let alone been played and made popular.

In piobaireachd, there are six general “categories” or “tune types”, listed as follows:

1. **MARCH** - These are slow, stately tunes which contain most variations.
2. **SALUTE** - Generally quicker than March, with bolder Playing - cut notes more sharply.
3. **LAMENT** - Slow, but same as March - 2 types - low, High G's, D's - and A F A'E etc. Mostly Pentatonic - Some notes quite sharply cut.
4. **DESCRIPTIVE (OR PASTORAL)** - Describe every day life events, women etc. They can be slow or fast - but are usually rhythmic or pastoral.
5. **GATHERING** - (Clan) - These are warning tunes which contain deliberate, repetitive phrases - for easy recognition. They are slow, atmospheric and “different”.
6. **SIMPLE "SONG"** or just "melodies" – eg “Old Woman’s Lullaby”, and “Battle of Glensheils”.

Expert judgement is required to determine how a tune should be played, as many have been misnamed, due to Gaelic to English translation difficulties, etc.

In 1948 and 1953, **Archibald Campbell of Kilberry**, in his book “**The Kilberry Book of Ceol Mor**” lists the history of the “construction and classification of Piobaireachd music”, in which he, following in the footsteps of **Joseph MacDonald** (1803 - “**A Compleat Theory of the Scots Highland Bagpipe**”, written in 1760), **Angus MacKay** (1826-40 **Manuscript**, containing 183 tunes), **General Thomason** (1900 - “**Ceol Mor**” containing about 278 tunes), and the **Piobaireachd Society** (1925-80 - “**Piobaireachd**” in 13 volumes containing 204 tunes), classifies the 114 tunes of his book by the type of variations they contain. He also set these tunes into “even lined”, “Primary 6,6,4”, “Tertiary”, “4,6,4,1”, and “irregular” tune types.

These books, along with the others listed elsewhere are all recommended reading for the serious piobaireachd player, and made a significant contribution as a visual aide for memory of melody.

Pibroch playing is traditional, and so follows ancient ways to a large extent, or at least, as much as can now be ascertained. Older players have used either the e or f finger to play High A. However, if you mistrust modernity and insist on playing high A with the “e” finger down, you should play that way consistently in each tune. And you must ensure that the pitch achieved is “tuneful” (ie produces “no beats” with the drones).

High A is hardly ever “cut” (ie played very short - unless written as a gracenote) in pibroch. There is always an exception to the general rule, however, as in Black Donald's March.

Traditionalists argue that "closed" High G's (ie E finger down in addition to the High A "thumb" finger) should always be played in pibroch. However, the real test as to which should be used will be the pitch and fingering required for the high G to blend with the drones. There are some tunes in which it might be convenient to play High G and High A in the "alternate way" – like "The Earl of Seaforth's Salute", but really, if you are technically proficient, you should not need to resort to this "shortcut".

As with High G, traditionalists will say that C should always be played "closed" (Low A little finger "on"), and it would seem that most modern players do in fact always play this way, to achieve a better chord sound with the drones. But again, and really, the "test" should be the "tunefulness" or otherwise with the drone chord.

"**Heavy gracenote's**" – performed by raising the gracenote finger higher, or merely by holding it "up" or "down" longer are sometimes appropriate, especially in the "urlar"; "cadences", and "singlings" explained later, are referred to previously in my Concise Tutor "Update to 2012" Pages M and N.

"**Phrasing**" is the "punctuation" (as in reading and poetry) which helps to make a musical statement more interesting. There should be a short pause, or "comma" at end of each phrase, and a longer pause, or "full stop" at end of each line, and end of each variation. Each phrase should make musical sense on its own. In conventional written modern music, one phrase is usually shown as two bars (sometimes one, and sometimes four).

Such phrasing is normally indicated at the end of every four "beats". "Singling" variations, with "cadences" help to phrase the tune naturally for you. Phrase recognition "makes the memorising of a tune easy, and aids considerably in the putting expression into the playing". But whatever you do, you should smooth the flow into the next variation, by generally slowing the last theme note, or notes of the preceding variation.

"**Accenting**" is the laying of "stress" on particular beats, or notes of the tune. Most tunes are 3 or 4 beat tunes. Accenting does not usually apply to the "ground" or "urlar", but to variation "doublings" – especially in "**Siubhal**" variations (ie, those which cut "up" from a lower to a higher note (eg "Glengarry's March", "Clan MacNab's Salute", and "Lament for the departure of King James" etc.

Some tunes are said to have "square 3/4 even accent" (strong, medium, strong) – eg's in "Mary's Praise" and "Battle of Sherriffmuir" ? Those having "4/4 accenting" are accented as follows: "Strong, Medium, Medium, Strong", according to the notes, but no examples were quoted, so you must look out for examples of these as you experience and obtain a "feel" for each tune.

The "**Ground**" or "**Urlar**" may contain one or two "Melodic Variations", which comprise the "Basis" or "Theme" of the melody of the tune. The ground is generally played very expressively and slowly, and will probably contain "cadences" and "echo beats" and other movements common to pibroch, together with some doublings, triplings, grips, taorluaths and birls which are also commonly played in "Ceol Beag" or the "light music", such as marches, airs, dance tunes etc.

The word for the concept of a “**Cadence**” is pronounced in English something like “Kay dence”. This is a “two note sequence” played as you would say “1-2” evenly (as in “one, two, three, four, five, six”) etc. Or, the cadence may be played with the emphases on either the first or second note of the sequence. There is no way of telling which way should be used. However, the general rule for Gatherings is to make the “e” predominant.

Modern notation indicates cadences by showing the notes with small “heads”, and with “tails” up. They are usually shown as either semi-quavers, or as demisemi-quavers. The tune “I got a kiss of the Kings Hand” has “even” cadences. Then the lower note (Low A) is cut “up” (the semiquaver B)( from lower to higher notes).

However, it is suggested that we should “round down” semiquavers when “cutting down” from higher to lower notes. We should note also that these are only very general “rules of thumb”, and should be applied with caution, and “subtly”, to give the best effect.

“**Three note cadences**” are “a three note sequence” played as you would say “1-2” evenly (as in “one, two, three, four, five, six”) etc, with no more stress on one more than the other. It is important that the “D” in the cadence from E to C etc. should not be exaggerated (ie opened out and played too long), but played as a normal length a relaxed “d” gracenote.

“**Echo Beats**” may be played from E to E, F to F, G’ to G’. All should “sound” in the same way - ie “1-2, **3-4**” (“one, two -pause- **three**, four”). When this movement is played from E to D, a “D Throw” is used (the “D throw” sounds as the “**3-4**” above of the sequence, the first low g being slightly held - and usually written as a **semiquaver** - to sound the “**three**”).

Where a G’ gracenote follows on the same note after a double echo (as in Mackintosh’s Lament) the said G’ gracenote should follow quickly (don't hold the “4” of the double echoes on f before playing the G gracenote).

“**Grips**” or “**Lemluaths**” when played “**in isolation**” (ie by themselves in a non-grip dominated variation) should in general be “opened out” to obtain a “heavy” effect. However, grips played in a grip variation should be played more normally, but still distinctly (the Low G’s must still be heard, separated by a good G gracenote!).

The “**D Throw**” in pibroch is usually shown with the first Low G as a semi-quaver. However, it should not be accentuated too much. Modern notation also usually depicts the D throw as a grouping of “GDC” gracenotes, always followed by a D melody, or theme note. Some pipers play the “grip” style - ie, grip to C, followed by the final D.

The “**Balmoral School**” it seems, prefers the first style in pibroch, although the more heavy grip style is often preferred by players who like myself play this as a matter of routine, and for its more distinctive sound. But there is no doubt that good players will be able to play the “lighter” style, at will. If they do so, they should be consistent within the tune they are playing, or explain to critics beforehand why they are departing from the “general rule”.



The **Balmoral School** don't use the "redundant a" style of "**taorluath**", which is however still played by exponents of the "Bruce/Fraser" (Hugh Fraser) style, and it is interesting to read in "The Piobaireachd of Simon Fraser with Canntaireachd", by Dr B J Maclachlan Orme, 1985 ISBN 0 9589848 0 8, that Simon Fraser wrote in the Oban Times 23/11/1929:

*"I have often been requested by some pipers to answer the question - did John MacCrimmon use the Low A in the taorluath and crunluath as written by Donald MacDonald, Angus Mackay and other writers of Pibroch ? Most certainly he did. I know this beyond any doubt. These pipers who do not play the Low A have not been taught properly and it is a great pity that they are trying to lead other pipers astray... Gesto, his son Norman, Alexander Bruce, and his three sons, all played the Low A. So did Donald Cameron and his three sons. The Low A in the Lemluath, Taorluath and Crunluath was taught to John MacKay (Angus MacKays father) by John Dubh MacCrimmon."*

However, another view was taken by the Music Committee for the Piobaireachd Society when it printed in 1925 its preface to Book 1 of "Piobaireachd" where it stated:

*"it is thought that the dual purpose (ie where earlier collections printed in staff notation profess to be suitable also for instruments other than the pipe) accounts for some cases in which a movement, if played (on the pipe) as written, is played wrongly, according to the great body of traditional teaching. One example of this is the Taorluath gracenote, in which a Low A is printed in the middle of the movement as a melody note. It is believed to have been so printed to enable other musicians to get the general effect of the Taorluath gracenote movement by sounding two Low A's after the melody note. Thus we are more or less driven to prefer traditional teaching as opposed to (early) staff notation where the two are in contradiction. We are reassured in doing this by the unanimity which exists among the players, who have inherited the traditional teaching, as to the correct way of fingering these movements in spite of (early) recorded staff notation.*

All this is very interesting but remains largely academic these days, where most pipers begin their playing in pipe bands, playing the "light" rather than the "big" music, and where the demands of playing marches etc at fast tempos render the playing of the "redundant a" too difficult.....

The "**Dre**" is sometimes referred to (pronounced) as "dray". This movement of E and F gracenotes on Low A to E is the crunluath "ending".

"**Durree**" is a movement played from E to F, using F and G' gracenotes on E.

"**Throw to High G**" is a movement played from E to G', using F, G' and F gracenotes on E.

"**Shakes**" or "**Strikes**" to Low G from B to Low A etc. should not be too heavy, and be consistent with other "shakes" from B to B, C to C, D to D etc. On the other hand, strikes or shakes in which the chanter is not properly closed to definitely sound the intended Low G, C, Low A, E, F or G' are not acceptable either.

One tune which I have used to practice all manner of shakes in a high-class tune is one printed in the Scots Guards Book Volume 1 by Piper A M Lee called “Raasay House” (1943). The beauty of playing a fine “exercise” in a catchy tune is that the shakes keep on coming one after the other, and you can listen out for consistency of striking, and, if any are deficient, you can rectify them by “isolated” practice.

Many reels like the “The Clucking Hen” by W Shaw, the “Reel of Tulloch”, and the “Sheepwife” as presented in the same Scots Guards Book, are very good “exercises” too, in that they should be played slowly and “evenly” at first until accuracy of fingering is achieved. It is only at this time that you should allow your tempo to increase, and then to begin to introduce some “light and shade” by “dotting and cutting”, to make the tune more interesting, according to your own taste and aptitude.

Since piobaireachd depends so much for its hypnotic effect upon it’s fine “sound”, fine fingering “technique”, and fine melodious “expression”, aspiring piobaireachd players cannot afford to look down upon, nor neglect other expressions of our traditional music. We must build up our stamina to “last the distance”.

It would be rare indeed for a great piobaireachd player not to be able to hammer out tunes like “Hammer on the Anvil”, “Donella Beaton”, “The Braes of Mellinsh”, “The Hen’s March” etc. Slow Airs and Laments also are a must for serious players, because “they” depend on the player to “breathe life into them”, just as piobaireachd do, and not on just a “regular pulse” which is essential for marching and dancing music.

“**Birls**” may be played a little more “openly” if played “in isolation” as in the ground of “MacGregor’s Salute”.

“**Birl with D gracenote**” - don't overdo the D gracenote, which should sound as normally played. This movement is sometimes referred to as a "curl".

“**High A doublings**” – these perhaps may be “opened out” a little in "thumb variations" and in tunes such as "Too Long in this condition".

“**Connecting notes**” – be careful not to hold the semiquavers before cadences too long.

Different tunes use different combinations of “**variations**”. However, the use of some have traditionally precluded the use of others. Archibald Campbell of the “Kilberry Book of Ceol Mor” grouped the tunes in his book by this ploy, and wrote quite a lot on this topic. He notes that “*What may be called unique or uncommon variations occur in only 27 of the 114 tunes (in the book), of which 7 are without taorluath or crunluath variations*”.

“**Thumb Variations**” substitute High A for E, or F in the “repeat” of the “ground” (eg "MacCrimmon’s Sweetheart"). “Here” there should be a slight tightening (quicken) of tempo. We should take care to rest slightly less on theme notes, this being the means by which we have “quicken” our “tempo”.

“**Melodic Variations**” as with “thumb variations” we should rest slightly less on theme notes. If there are two variations, then the second may be a little quicker than the first. In Thumb or Melodic variations, one or two notes may be altered, but the ground should still be predominant and very evident.

The “**Siubhal**” which is pronounced something like "shoe - all", should be a fairly swinging rhythmic sounding variation, where (in general) higher pitched notes are cut to lower pitched notes, using G & E grace notes – and may be found in both “singling” and “doubling” variations. The doubling variation dispenses with any cadences, and should be played at a slightly faster tempo.

The “**Dithis**” Pronounced "Dee-ish" variation is the opposite of the Siubhal – it "ascends" - cutting from lower to higher notes, using G and D gracenotes. This is also a rhythmic variation, and can be quite sharply cut. Don't play in a "rounded" or "sluggish" fashion. The doubling should be played at an increased tempo. Apparently, Siubhal and Dithis variations are never played in the same tune, but “exceptions” (I would think) are sure to be found if we were to look hard and long enough through historic material. Should this be a constraint imposed on modern composers ? I would hope not. When tradition becomes tyranny, we all suffer, and are “stifled” and “stunted” in our appreciation of innovation, and of improvement.

The “**G’DE**” or “**Tripling**” gracenote combination generally cuts “up” to the theme note, and may be played before, or in place of a taorluath variation. The G’, D and E gracenotes are played evenly and quickly, and the theme notes should be emphasised, so that the variation is not too fast. It may have a doubling variation, which should be played a little faster than the singling.

The Singling and Doubling variations of the “**Lemluath**” (pronounced as "LEM-LOO-A") or “**Grip**” variations should be phrased as explained as for the Taorluath and Crunluath variations. The doubling should be played at a slightly faster tempo, but care must be taken to slow down on the last theme note(s) of the doubling to achieve a slowing down affect for the next singling variation.

Grip variations are not as common as Taorluath and Crunluath variations, but do have a special appeal when played well, care being taken to sound a good solid D gracenote between the two Low G’s. In other words, grips should be played “sharply” (but solidly), care being taken to “cut sharply” to the next theme-note, in both the singling and doubling.

Grips found “in isolation” in the Ground of a tune may be “opened up” and played “deliberately”.

“**Taorluath**” (pronounced as "Tor-loo-a") variations are played with sharply but solidly executed taorluaths. Care must be taken to ensure that a good D gracenote separates the two Low G's. Care must also be taken to emphasise the theme notes, and then to cut from the Low A after each taorluath.

Singlings and doublings should both be “phrased”, even though the tempo of the doubling must be slightly increased by a general tightening (shortening) of theme notes and movements.

The “**Taorluath A Mach**” (Pronounced "Tor-loo-a a Mark") version of the Taorluath variation is played only on B, C, and D's . Reverse timing is applied wherever B, C, or D's are found in the tune. All other taorluaths are played in the usual manner. The “taorluath a mach” from D is played as follows: play a short B, D throw (don't hold the first Low G), and E gracenote on the final D, which is held. This variation is played slightly faster than the Taorluath Doubling.

The “**Crunluath**” (pronounced "Crun-loo-a") variation usually includes both “Singling” and “Doubling”. The meaning of “crunluath” is related to the words “crowning adornment”; its proper expression brings joy to the player and listeners – all – especially when the instrument “holds true” to the end, which includes a “repeat” of the “ground”, or “urlar”. One thing must “flow” without hindrance, in a seamless “joining”, before the tune is “complete” in every way.

Care should be taken to hold the theme notes before the crunluath, then to execute a clear and concise crunluath movement, followed by a very short E, before proceeding to the next theme note. Both variations should be phrased, even though the doublings tempo is slightly increased. Most players stand still while playing all of the crunluath variations, but begin to “walk” again when they “restate the initial ground melody” to conclude the piece.

Tunes which contain a “**Crunluath Brebach Doubling**” should not be “phrased” but proceed “smoothly”.

The “middle note” of a “**Crunluath Fosgailte**” (after the initial “grip”) should not be held, so as to achieve smooth flow.

The “**Crunluath A Mach**” variation is played slightly faster than the Crunluath Doubling. As with the Taorluath a Mach, the Crunluath a Mach is played only from B, C, and D, with normal crunluaths being played whenever other notes are being called for.

The Crunluath a mach is quite often played where there are plenty of B, C, and D's in the tune. It should be noted that the "Dre" part of the movement is played quite often "open" (ie the E and F gracenotes are separated by B, C, or D respectively, rather than the Low A of the normal crunluath). This helps “lift the tone” from the predominant Low A.

Although there may be a slight increase in tempo from that of the preceding crunluath doubling variation, care must be exercised to ensure that the overall effect is musical and balanced, and not just a hurried, incompetent mess of notes.

All “crunluath variations” are referred to as the "crowning achievement" of the player, as they require much skill and dexterity to perform, and to achieve a musical effect.

**Preparation Before Pibroch competition** (but this also applies every time you feel stressed about your coming performance):

It is recommended that we should play “slow and steady tuning” phrases, and then play a suibhal or dithis of some other tune, which uses the same notes. If you are going to have a lot of High G's, for instance in your competition tune, it does you no good to play a preparatory tune without any High G's.



Take your time, but don't waste the judges time. Your instrument should be made ready before the event. You should not need to make any reed adjustments on the day of the competition ! Should you do so, you risk that reed altering in pitch during your playing time, and your effort will be ruined.

**Three Drone Tuning:** Learn to tune 3 drones at once. **Practice playing drones only** - ie stop the chanter by removing same and inserting a rubber stopper in the chanter stock. Or you can attach a "water manometer". Tune the outer tenor drone to its usual tuning position, then (with bass drone still sounding) attempt to tune the centre tenor drone to the outer one (try to ignore the sound of the bass drone). Finally, attempt to tune the bass drone to the "combined" pitch of the tenor drones. The result will be your first approximation, and the process must be repeated several times (ie centre tenor, bass, centre tenor, base) until you achieve a perfect chord sound – ie – a blend of the three drone sounds so that no "beats" can be heard.

You must be aware that very steady pressure must be produced by your blowing and arm control. It is wise for learners to attach a "water manometer" via the centre drone, or chanter stocks which can be used as a visual aide for practice sessions. However, there is no substitute for your own listening ability and the ability to hear slight differences in pitch, which electronic tuners show by the wavering of a needle. Ultimately you will have to combine your own talents of tuning to "pitch" (or "set") the chanter, as well as the drones correctly, to attain a well tuned pipe and sound.

The same techniques must be used when you are playing the full pipe - ie chanter and all three drones together. Try to ignore the sound of the chanter high A, and with drones in usual (expected) tuning positions, achieve a chord sound so that no beats between the drones can be heard, then listen to sound of the High A, and check tunefulness with Low A. If "beats" can be heard (or the drones appear to "shift"), make a decision as to whether you think the drone sound needs to be lowered (flattened) to match the chanter, or raised (sharpened). Look at the tuning position, and (eg) tune the outer tenor drone up (to lengthen the drone column of vibrating air, and hence lower the pitch emitted). Then achieve a chord sound between the three drones (as described before) while playing High A, check with Low A again, and decide whether the sound is "better" (you've probably gone in the right direction - up), or "worse" than before. The degree of improvement, or deterioration, will determine how far you will move up, or down this time. Repeat until a perfect chord sound (no beats heard between drones or chanter) is heard while playing Low A on the chanter.

So long as the chanter is "set" correctly (ie is not itself "sharp" or "flat", so that a perfect octave is achieved between Low and High A), so long as a steady pressure is maintained between Low A and High A, and so long as the chanter and reed are good, then no "beats" or apparent "shift" of drones should be heard when other notes are played. It is at this point that you should further check your result by playing a slow air or "tuning phrases". Sometimes, particular notes may be found to be a little "sharp" or "flat" so that the holes may be "flattened" or "sharpened" as described separately.

**Don't tap or march (walk rhythmically) to tune:** Walk slowly with short steps. Time each step. Most competitors do not walk at all for the "crunluath doubling" and "a mach" variations. This allows greater concentration on these "crowning adornments" (complex movements) to the tune, and also allows the judge and audience to appreciate even better the steadiness and tone that you wish to project, along with accurate fingering technique.

**“WINDING UP” (“FINISHING THE TUNE”):** Remember to pause on the final E of the crunluath before replaying the “ground” to conclude the tune. If you have done the correct preparation, your drones will still be sounding their perfect chord sound, so that your repeat of the ground will sound at least as good as your beginning. This is the whole aim of the exercise; otherwise it’s nearly pointless.

All pibrochs are traditionally finished with a replaying of the ground, or base melody, although modern practice does not always demand it. In competitions, players should always check with the Judge(s) on their requirements before commencement. Sometimes, the first line only of the ground is demanded, especially if there are many competitors. This is to save time.

However, if you are playing a tune short by comparison to others, it would be quite reasonable for the Judge(s) to require you to play (and to be judged) the whole of the ground again at the conclusion of the tune.

**LEARN TO “SING” YOUR TUNE “in pitch”, and “time it” as you would like to “play it”:** Staff notation cannot show areas which through study can be recognised and played to achieve the "light and shade" which distinguishes well and musically played tunes from others.

Before staff notation was invented, piping schools taught the tunes by singing them, using a series of specialised vocables, known as "**cantaireachd**" (pronounced something like "canter-arc'd"), and “counting off” the tune on their fingers, to ensure that no “melodic phases” have been left out.

Different schools used different systems, although the most common was the “NetherLorn” system, developed by one Colin Campbell, who produced in 1791 two volumes containing 168 tunes, all in cantaireachd notation. This is the earliest of 15 significant manuscripts consulted by the Piobaireachd Society before the preparation of their first book “Piobaireachd” in 1925.

The “NetherLorn” (see above) is the best recognised of the “cantaireachd” systems. However, for non Gaelic speaking people, all traditional systems are hard to “vocalise” (to “speak” or “sing”) – and so are used as a base only by most pipers, if at all. Particularly grating to the ear are those who cannot sing to “pitch”. Melodic singing of the tune in any language and using any device of voice to indicate “movements” are equally instructive.

Pipers now use the staff notation which was first developed for the Highland Bagpipe towards the end of the eighteenth century. Staff Notation surpassed cantaireachd in popularity by the mid 1800’s, even though it too had to progress through a number of transitions to what we easily read today.

So it is with a deep sense of gratitude that we should acknowledge the debt we owe our Scottish Highlander forbears who, through great trials, death, plague, fire, famine, and rapacious warlords – who would call themselves “Chiefs” – we have no inkling “now”, except when viewing them through nostalgic “rose tinted glasses. And we must also be grateful for small mercies, that “we have progressed” in one hundred and thirty five years from having to rely on “treacle” to dress our bags (as suggested by Donald MacPhee in 1877, and into the 1950’s by the Logan’s Tuter, I think), and we can (by the use of all of the “alternatives” now available to us) now – in our “hundreds and thousands” the world o’er, concentrate on “sound”, “tunefulness”, and “melodic” and “rhythmic expression”, which in previous generations was available only to a very privileged and fortunate few. It has been my pleasure to bring you the work of my heart, also. I trust that this will heighten your desire to go “even deeper” into our ancestral music.

**Section 9 Miscellaneous Pipe Band Information etc:**

The following is a “Tempo Chart” for “easy reckoning” I devised to help bands detect changes in tempo between each performance. It was published in the Victorian “Pipe Bandsman” in the early 1980’s, when digital watches with stopwatch features became available at affordable prices. The “method” is practically “foolproof”, because the “start counting” button is pressed as the first “Left foot” (after the first bar line) strong beat of the melody is played, and the “stop button” (the same one) is pressed at the “repeat” of the tune (the commencement of the drum “double forte”).

		WHOLE SECONDS →									
		7.0	8.0	9.0	10.0	11.0	12.0	13.0	14.0	15.0	16.0
← DECIMALS OF A SECOND	0	137.14	120.0	106.67	96.0	87.27	80.0	73.85	68.57	64.0	60.0
	1	135.21	118.52	105.49	95.05	86.49	79.34	73.28	68.09	63.58	59.63
	2	133.33	117.07	104.35	94.12	85.71	78.69	72.73	67.61	63.16	59.26
	3	131.51	115.66	103.23	93.20	84.96	78.05	72.18	67.13	62.75	58.90
	4	129.72	114.29	102.13	92.31	84.21	77.42	71.64	66.67	62.34	58.54
	5	128.0	112.94	101.05	91.43	83.48	76.80	71.11	66.21	61.94	58.18
	6	126.31	111.63	100.0	90.57	82.76	76.19	70.59	65.75	61.54	57.83
	7	124.67	110.34	98.97	89.72	82.05	75.59	70.07	65.31	61.15	57.49
	8	123.08	109.09	97.96	88.89	81.36	75.0	69.57	64.86	60.76	57.14
	9	121.52	107.87	96.97	88.07	80.67	74.42	69.06	64.43	60.38	56.80

In “2/4 time” and “6/8 time” there are eight bars, repeated which make up the “first part” of each tune, containing “**two** beats per bar”. That is, when the timing is commenced and concluded as explained above, sixteen beats will have elapsed and been timed.

If the time shown on the stopwatch was 12.0 seconds, then the tempo of the piece will have been “80 beats per minute”, which is probably still considered “a good ‘quickstep’ marching tempo”. If, on the other hand the time taken was 13.7 seconds, the tempo will have dropped to 70.07, or (say) 70 beats per minute.

In “3/4” and “9/8” tunes, there are “**three** beats to a bar” in each of their (usual) “eight bars” – (mostly, or sometimes) repeated. Therefore, (most likely) 24 beats will have elapsed and “timed”, so that the “tempo” of tunes taking the same time as explained above, must be divided by two, and multiplied by three (x 1.5) to obtain the correct tempo’s of 120 or 105 beats/minute respectively. Or, the naturally longer time taken (to play 24 beats) should be divided by 1.5 (x 2 ÷ 3) to enable the tempo to be read off directly.

In “2/2” (reel time) tunes, there are “**two** beats per bar”. Each part has “traditionally” (mostly) four bars, to be repeated. In 4/4 (strathspey or march tunes) or 12/8 march tunes, there are four beats per bar, and (usually) four bars to each part, to be repeated. Thus the same tempo chart can be utilized, making allowance for the actual number of beats timed for one part (with its repeat for reels), or without its repeat (for most others).

I trialed this in my judging of bands, and reported to them the tempo’s they had actually played on the day, tested at the beginning, and close to the end. I hoped that this would alert them should they be playing more quickly “in competition” than in their practice time, since this fact should be noted, and allowed for, for peak performance. At about the same time, **electronic metronomes** with a flashing light were introduced to the market, and “switched on” Pipe Major’s and Tutor’s began to use them as a practice aide, to stabilize band performances, from one practice session to the next.

Such accuracy is very important, especially if the band is performing “drill movements” which require the band to attain a “crash halt” (cessation of motion and sound) at the end of a tune and marching routine. It is also of vital consequence when playing for dancers, who (also) rely on “routine”.

P/M John A Maclellan MBE in his book “**More Music for the Highland Bagpipe**” published in 1967 (?) wrote about “The Tempo of Bagpipe Music”, and suggests 68 beats per minute as optimum playing tempos for 2/4 marches such as “John Mac Coll’s March to Kilbowie Cottage” (see page 9 of his book), while (for instance) “Patrick W Sandeman” (see page 17) can be played a little faster at 74 beats per minute. In other words, the complexity of the tune should be allowed for. Less complex tunes can be played at a slightly faster rate, if desired.

He suggests 132 beats per minute for dancing Strathspeys, and says that reels such as “Anon” (page 30 in his book) should be played at 84 minim beats per minute, while “Daldownie’s Rell” (page 34) would be better played at 92 beats per minute.

On the other hand, he mentions that for “Ceol Beag” (little music), 6/8 Marches might be played at 80 – 84 beats per minute, “Light” 2/4 Marches at 84 – 90 beats per minute, “Retreat” Marches (which are usually in 3/4 time) at 84 – 90 beats per minute, Jigs (which are usually in 6/8 time) at 124 – 128 beats/min, Hornpipes (which are usually in 2/4 time) at 104 – 110 beats/min, and Reels (in 2/2 time) at 100 – 108 beats/min.

What is difficult to play for some, is “easy” for others. A good Pipe Major and Tutor should choose tunes which the majority of players can play easily. This should generally reflect the grade of competition that the band has entered; the lower the grade, the easier the tunes should be. Some tunes lend themselves to “simplification”, and the tunes selected should certainly be simplified for those who find them difficult.

The movements selected in simplified tunes should not be “heavier” than the original setting. Unison (sameness) of the melodic line is what Band music is all about, where every player expresses the tune selected in the same way – together. The only variation to this general rule is in the playing of intentional “harmony”, where very few of the players might interweave an alternate melodic line. This line usually does not usually by itself sound “well” in and of, or by itself, and is reserved for group playing, as “counterpoint” to the original tune.


As mentioned previously (and especially with regard to lower grade bands), all tunes should at the beginning be played without any “movements” or gracenotes whatsoever, so that the “base melody” can be clearly heard. When gracenotes and movements are “added”, they should not detract from, or confuse the base “melodic line”, which should still be “clear”, or strongly evident. If the leader “lowers” him or her self to this level, even the least abled will be able to “hear” what is required, and will be happy to play a simplified setting, so that they can “get the tune right” (correctly pointed).


Such humble leadership serves the group well. No one needs to be excluded, provided that they can also provide a steady drone and chanter tone, without skirls, which are caused by misfingering the holes of the chanter. Those players who have long given up hope of improvement in this area, can be channeled into “helper” mode by making them responsible for the electronic tuning of drones etc. No one should feel excluded from the group.


This is “team-building” at its best. A happy group makes harmonious music. There should be no need for a tyrant to emerge. A happy band does not need one. In fact this is the last thing they would want, because it puts everyone (including the tyrant) under great stress – and the “joy of playing” music harmoniously is quickly lost, and becomes an unwanted burden. Those who cannot take it quickly leave, and friendships are severed.


Further to my notes on the “Scale of the Great highland Bagpipe” in Section 5 Page 31:

Some bagpipe music books are printed especially for those pipers who like to play with other musical instruments. As well as indicating that our music is played on the “Treble” or “Upper” Range, or “G Clef” as related to the Equal Tempered Scale of the Piano, some books also indicate which notes other musicians might need to “sharpen” or “flatten” to tunefully play along as accompaniment to the pipes. One such book is “**Irish Tunes for the Scottish and Irish War-Pipes**”, where the following indicators are used:

 See tunes such as “Skiver the Quilt”, “The Maid on the Green”, “Will you come home with me”, “The Merry Harriers” Gramachree Molly”, “John Roy Stewart”, etc.

 See tunes such as “Little Nora Cunningham”, “The Rocky Road to Dublin”, “The Black Haired Lass”, “Little Kelly the Fair Haired”, “The Soldiers Joy”, “Cosla (Galway) Bay” etc.

 See tunes such as “The Irish Nation”, “The Rambler’s Rest”, “How much has she got?”, “The Humours of Tralibane”, “Larry Grogan”, “The Highway to Dublin”, etc.

 See tunes such as “The Dawning of the Day”, “Gillespie’s Hornpipe”, “Kiss me Sweetheart”, “Rory O,More”, “Neil Flaherty’s Drake”, “County Down”, “Paddy Whack” etc.

Apparently (and this information was derived from the internet), the arranger of the tunes was David Glen, and this collection was first published in 1911, after David Glen had published all of his collections of highland pipe music. David was a pipe maker in Edinburgh, and published pipe music from from 1876 to 1911. He was the son of Alexander Glen.

My version of the book was compiled by William Walsh of Chicago Illinois, and is apparently the 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition of the book (if the information contained in [http://www.ceolsean.net/content/GlenIris/GlenIris\\_TOC.html](http://www.ceolsean.net/content/GlenIris/GlenIris_TOC.html) is correct). It says on my copy that the book was printed in Scotland by Mozart Allan, 84 Carlton Place Glasgow C5, and that its price was 4 shillings and six pence. No date is recorded.

According to “**A Bibliography of Bagpipe Music**” by Roderick D Cannon 1980 as updated by Geoff Hore (a New Zealander) via his website <http://www.silverchanter.com/irishwarpipes.htm>, a book of the same name was published in 1909, but the authorship was noted as D Parfitt. Perhaps the 1911 book “Irish Tunes” credited to Wm Walsh and D Glen was the “Second Edition” of the same book, and my “Third Edition” is a reprint.

This does still not tell us who it was that introduced the “indicators of key” to the music. There can be no doubt that this information is important to the other musicians who wish to accompany a piper in a musical group. Some tunes have no indications of key. That is really all a Highland piper needs to know. Since we now have this information, we should let our accompanists know that some tunes are best played with F sharpened, or with C and F sharpened, or with C, F and our High G sharpened, or with C and F sharpened, while High G is played “natural”. But whatever we piper’s do, all we can do is to play our tunes as tunefully as possible, and hope that the other musicians will be able to “work things out” – by themselves....



Section 10 – “The Epilogue”, which includes a miscellany of piping tidbits and links etc:



An Older Gentle Man “A MacScruff” Speaks his Kind Mind again in 2012:

Here I sit in sweat-ful slip. Today is the 29<sup>th</sup> November 2012, and the temperature in the house is 32°Celcius. It must be absolutely scorching outside. I have been engaged this day in revising my text. I am hopeful that my self-imposed “burden” of hard work, collection and projection is finally coming to its end, so that a new chapter may emerge. And I am hopeful that I may have the skills to navigate its unfolding, as I (also) “progress”.

I am thankful that I do not have to play my bagpipes in this heat; that would be a disaster ! Although the Township of Daylesford where next Saturday’s Highland Gathering is to be held is way up in the mountains, and has plenty of trees for shade, that place can get very hot, also.

Extremes of weather are now very bothersome for me, and yet, the young and intrepid regularly play, even then. Those feats seem amazing, and I congratulate all those, who against all odds, carry the sound of piping to the general public. If you have the strength for it, go for it ! Enjoy it while you can. For your history (her story too) goes back a long way: apparently the Chaldeans played the bagpipes; so did the Hebrews, the Egyptian’s and the Greeks (they had a word for them — “bumble-bee music”).

It has been claimed that King Henry VIII played the “bagpipe” (of sorts – which sort ?), and when he died he left five sets to Queen Elizabeth (the 1<sup>st</sup>). It has also been rumoured that whoever brought them from continental Europe, it is “certain” that the pipes were played in England long before the Scots and Irish had ever heard of them. For there were the Bulgarian, Czechoslovakian, Chinese, Finnish, German, Norwegian, Persian, Russian and Spanish variants on the bagpipe before the Scots developed the Great Highland Bagpipe in its current form to replace the Lowland Pipe, which has a softer tone, and is more suitable for indoor playing. The Irish developed their own variant, the Uilleann Pipe for indoor playing, and lovely it is.

It has been said that the three droned Great Highland Bagpipe we know today was developed for militaristic purposes, for “rallying”, and “rousing” troops – for war. It seems “passing strange” that it was the English who used Scottish forces as mercenaries to conquer much of the known world. And it was through this means that the Great Scottish Highland Bagpipes became well known throughout the world, as the descendants of Scottish warriors settled into local communities, and made their way peacefully forward – for the most part – when they were allowed to do so.

For many years much squabbling went on, as to which “style” and which “school” was the “authentic line” back to the ancients, “who” it is claimed – were so much better players than the ones we have today. Thankfully, we are now able to communicate quickly with other pipers from around the world, and have no need for local (narrow-minded) parochialism.

We can seek out good players, and can listen to them as they speak and play, years after their death. Oh happy days ! Although we know for a fact that “A Man’s (just) a ‘Man’ for All That” from Scotland’s National Poet of high renown, we can also appreciate that within the sameness, there are also gifts (talents) “in-borne” in some more than in others.

As mentioned before (Update to 2012, Page W) *“To the ‘make of a piper’ go seven years of his or her own learning and seven generations before”* – but this does not mention the blood, sweat and tears required from each and every one so that we can rise to the level that our inheritance gives us.

According to my notes from **Bill Kirk**, which came from **Jim Oswald** (and which formed a part of the feature Published by The **Pipers’ Club of Victoria** in April 1987), **Pipe Major Willie Ross** had this to say about our chosen instrument’s origins: *“But the matter is placed beyond all doubt by Joseph MacDonald the first piper as far as we know, to give any -description of piping in writing. **Joseph MacDonald** was the son of a minister and was born in Strathnaver in Sutherlandshire. He seems to have been, to some extent a musical genius. He may or may not have had a complete knowledge of the pipes but he had a good knowledge and he was certainly a player.*

*During a voyage to India in 1760 he wrote a treatise on the Highland bagpipe in which he made the earliest attempt to fit pipe music to the musical staff notation. A good deal of his descriptions about how to finger grace notes is hard to understand principally because there are many obvious printing mistakes in the book, but his general description of Highland pipe music is most instructive.*

*What he calls pipe music is rather music for the Highland bagpipe we call piobaireachd. He divides piobaireachd into (1) Marches including “Gatherings” such as the “MacLeans March”, (2) Rural pieces and Laments. The use of the Highland pipe he says is both to arouse men to the defense of their country and to animate them when approaching an enemy, and also to solemnize rural divisions in the fields, and to parade before companies and to play amongst rocks, hills, valleys and caves where echoes abound. In the low countries (the Lowlands of Scotland), he says all their pipe music consists of imitating the music of other instruments such as violins, etc.*

*He calls it a ridiculous and preposterous thing to attempt to play on the Highland pipe music peculiar to other instruments such as slow scotch tunes. The lowland pipe he describes as blown with bellows and used for imitating Italian and Scotch tunes and minuets, and he alleges that is what has given people so contemptible a notion of a pipe because the imitation is so poor a one.*

*The Highland Pipe, according to him should only have played upon it music especially composed for it. This music is firstly piobaireachd and secondly reels and jigs of which the latter he says there is a large number. Joseph MacDonald makes no mention of what we nowadays call marches, nor any direct mention of strathspeys, but he says that the Highland Pipe plays well all dancing music that is within its compass, but as many of the violin tunes deviate from the proper style, they cannot be so properly executed. He is perhaps referring to Strathspeys. Quick marches were evidently not known to him as pipe music. What he calls marches were piobaireachd. He writes “Slow music; vis marches are always performed **walking**”.*

*To sum up what I have been saying, I believe that the piobaireachd is a product of, not of barbarism, but of civilization. That it is the end and not the beginning of the development of music solely for the Highland Pipes. That it is not very much older than three hundred years, and that although we have advanced in comparison with the pipers of old days, and that we are making bagpipes and reeds, we have not advanced and we have not got so far in the art of musical composition, once the ability to compose what is acceptable to the best pipers as the highest class of pipe music has departed.*

*Before going on to describe what a piobaireach is, and how it is made, I shall say a few words about the other classes of pipe music which exist at the present day. These are:*

*(1) Quick marches for drilled troops to march to, either with or without drums.*

*(2) More elaborate marches which are not, played quickly enough for regimental marching but are played for competition or for exhibition of a pipers ability.*

*(3) Slow airs played sometimes by bands at Military displays, and often by individual pipers at concerts and the like and which are very suitable for beginners.*

*(4) Strathspeys (5) Reels (6) Jigs*

*What. are the mysteries of these several classes of music?*

*(1) Quick marches.*

*In 1760 we have Joseph MacDonald saying that the only kind of music fit to be played on the Highland pipe is music composed specially for it, and that music borrowed from other instruments are quite unsuited to it. In 1750 we have the Highland Society a long series of competitions in piobaireachd only. According to Joseph MacDonald the only music for the Highland pipe which was in existence in 1760 was piobaireachd, reels and jigs.*

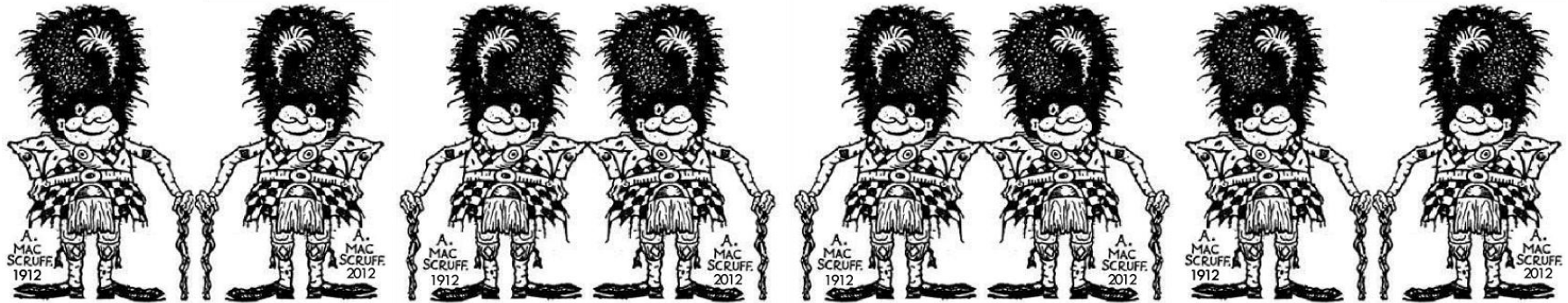
*The Highland Regiments were being raised at the time when Joseph MacDonald wrote. The first raised was the 42nd, now the 1st Bn. Black Watch in 1740. The last of these regiments now remaining was the 93<sup>rd</sup>. Now the 2nd Bn. A & Sh. which was raised in 1800. It is pretty clear that there were no pipe bands in Highland Regiments playing quick marches in 1760 when Joseph MacDonald wrote, and it is exceedingly doubtful whether there was any quick march music in existence when the Highland Society started their competitions in 1760.*

*Our present quick marches include several tunes adapted from songs and from the music of other instruments (for example Highland Laddie, Killiecrankie, Bonnie Dundee etc) which Joseph MacDonald considered an improper use of the Highland pipe. We have no marching tunes called after any battles before Waterloo 1813 or indeed before the Crimea more than forty years later. We hear stories about pipers playing in the Peninsular War and at Waterloo, but the tunes mentioned, are piobaireachd such as Cogadh na Sidh or the Cameron's gathering.*

*Major MacKay Scobie a historian of the Seaforth Highlanders states positively in an article written for the Regimental magazine "Cabar Feidh" that pipers were not recognized officially by the War Office until 1854 and before that date the Regiments had fife and drum bands with Company pipers, who usually played individually in barracks or in camp and very seldom if ever in concert. Their music was mainly piobaireachd, and the peculiar pipe tunes for reveille, funerals, tattoo dinner etc. were piobaireachd."*

Now, a quick look at the internet makes me wonder if all of the above is correct in every detail, but this was believed at the time of writing by P/M Ross, apparently. As with all history, much is soon forgotten. And much is "made up", to enhance rather than detract from one's "reputation". This occurs in civilian life as well as in the military. I should know, since I've been through all of "that", and can "see clearly" that military life is **not** all that it is "cracked up to be"; in fact, most of it is a "hoax" foisted upon a gullible public (more fools "we", as we are tricked into fighting other people's wars).

I trust that you have been instructed as well as being entertained, as you have read this book. And I bid you "farewell" and a kindly "goodnight", as I send you (whoever you are) "All my very best wishes", as well. This is both the least and the most we can do: "The best ensue, The worst eschew, "My" mind shall "be"; Virtue to use, Vice to refuse, "I" shall use "me" ...." Long may you hark to the fundamental and unwavering drone tone !



...Hear No Evil See No Evil Speak No Evil Do No evil – A. MacScruff, Esquire, Old and New – Hear No Evil See No Evil Speak No Evil Do No evil...

**From Little things, Big things Grow:**



*Perfect in every way? Malleable. Though "already"; lots to relearn.*



Lots to consider here: Puffed cheeks, raised left shoulder, inclined head because of angled blowpipe, eyes shut, tenor tuning positions not equal, bass drone slide too low, etc. These things are best corrected as learning proceeds before bad habits become ingrained.



We have to laugh. Someone sent me this on the internet. It shows a "double trouble". But "The "Secret" is definitely "Out" !

**"The Answer" is not always what**

**we expect !**

"Me" at 20 months.

"Me" at 17 years old with MHPB uniform in 1962.

Definitely not "Me", the young or the old versions.

Yes, I've had a few embarrassing moments in my time. I've swallowed a fly, and "me-thought I'd die" ! But I still managed to "play on" regardless. .... After all, the Band was competing at Daylesford. We took these events quite seriously, though I have to laugh now, for "The man of independent mind He looks and laughs at all that (our thanks to Scotland's National Poet Robbie Burns for this wise quote – see [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Robert\\_Burns](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Robert_Burns))."

Another embarrassing incident occurred whilst I was playing the pipes onstage at a Mayoral Concert. That day, I'd had to baby-sit my oldest son. He was about 3½ years old, and I'd carefully explained to him what I was about to do – to start playing, then march out from behind the curtains to centre stage, and then play a few tunes, before returning to collect him. I didn't hear him screaming until he had latched himself onto my leg, and clung there, suspended. I did not know what to do, so played on to complete my bracket, and then carried him offstage in my arms to the applause of the crowd. Almost a standing ovation, you might say. Just as well no-one has produced a photo of the incident; I'm sure that my face was bright red.



Prior to the modern era, “**The Australian Ladies Pipe Band**” sailed off into the wide blue yonder for months on end, back to “the old country” in 1926, and performed with honour there, where they were followed by the press, and reported worldwide. Details of the band’s successes may be found on the internet, at <http://nla.gov.au/nla.pic-an23217773> , <http://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/result?q=Australian+Ladies+Pipe+Band> , and [http://boxandfiddle.com/australian\\_ladies1.htm](http://boxandfiddle.com/australian_ladies1.htm) etc. All of these references were found by simple “Google-Search”, and there are many more.

Also uncovered in my search was the following reference which had to do with the history of the role Military Bands (both Pipe and Brass) have played since the First Fleet arrived on 2 February 1788 at Sydney Cove, to occupy the land and dispossess the native people, as they used convict labour to till unwilling virgin soil. A reference to “the Australian Ladies Pipe Band” may be seen in the “Links” section at the bottom of the page: <http://australia.gov.au/about-australia/australian-story/military-music> .

The following reference <http://www.ceol-alba.wellington.net.nz/tunes/Australian%20Ladies.pdf> gives the tune “Australian Ladies”, which was composed by P/M W Ferguson. This is a “gracenoteless” version, as arranged by L Scott, probably for other musicians, since he does not abide by the piping convention of showing melody notes with stems all descending from their heads, and has included “key change” references throughout.

As I have mentioned previously, we pipers should be able to play our tunes with or without embellishments “at whim”, for this gives us the mental space to concentrate on the “core melody”. It also allows us to hear any “extraneous” (superfluous and distracting) sounds which may appear as “crossing noises”. That is, this method of playing is a good “exercise” for the mind, which will allow you to take control of your fingers; make them do what you want them to do.

Get that “right”, and you are well on your way to playing well. Your final presentation with all of the embellishments your “required” version shows, or as simplified for you by your Pipe Major or Pipe Tutor, must still fit comfortably within the confines of “tunefulness” required by the base melody; otherwise, your contribution to the band should be rejected. Winning bands ruthlessly apply this rule: if you don’t come up to scratch (that level) in any of the areas being judged, then you should not play.

According to “The New Melody Directory – Highland Bagpipe”, the “Australian Ladies” appears in four music books including the “Scots Guards Collection Vol 1 (1965), though its earliest appearance was in 1942 in the “P/M William Ross’ Collection Volume 3”. There is no reference to the tune in the “Dance Music” section of the NMD, though obviously, accordionists can play this as a Hornpipe or Polka for Scottish Country Dancing, and do.

This tune has been popular with Australian Bands over the last 60 odd years, and could well do with a revival. Since the advent of the internet, I am constantly amazed at the accumulation of knowledge freely accumulated and dispersed. This next reference gives us some actual photographs of Pipe Major William Ferguson who died in 1949 after publishing *Fergusson’s Bagpipe Melodies* in 1940, which contained tunes and arrangements by himself and others: <http://www.pipetunes.ca/composers.asp?pg=Details&composerID=89> .

This book was obviously one of the ones “missed”, though not named by Seumas MacNeill in his review of “The New Melody Directory”. Dr. William Donaldson’s comments published by “The Highland Pipe and Scottish Society” regarding Fergusson’s accomplishments in the evolving role of the competitive Pipe Major (and his/her ability to create a “highly charged and gregarious atmosphere” in civilian bands) make riveting reading.



Section 10 – “The Epilogue” – Continued – which includes a far from complete miscellany of piping internet links:

I have shown these links alphabetically, so that no partiality is shown. All of these are interesting, and some display new work and processes, which I’ve quickly assessed are essential reading for serious pipers. We are not alone. Apparently there are at least 30 types of surviving Old World pipes. The Great Highland Bagpipe is but one of them, though through its use in the British Army, it has become well known the world over. But pipers we are !

- <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/fraser-simon-alexander-6238> (re father of Hughie Fraser)
- <http://australia.gov.au/about-australia/australian-story/military-music> . (History of Military Bands in Australia)
- [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Festival\\_Interceltique\\_de\\_Lorient](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Festival_Interceltique_de_Lorient) (Annual August Celtic Festival in Lorient, Brittany from 1971 to the present)
- <http://www.edintattoo.co.uk> (The Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo – Three weeks of Matchless Entertainment each August at Edinburgh Castle)
- <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pibroch> (re Piobaireachd and Hughie Fraser – Dr Barry Orme etc)
- <http://www.collegeofpiping.com> (Piping Times, Tuition etc)
- <http://www.electricscotland.com/history/australia/melbourne15.htm> (re Royal Caledonian Pipe Band ref to W Wallace to P/M 5RVR etc)
- <http://www.euspba.org> (Eastern United States Pipe Band Association)
- <http://www.hotpipes.com/main.html> (The universe of Bagpipes – 30 kinds of Old World Bagpipes, CD’s etc, and a great section on Tuning)
- <http://www.lindsaydavidson.co.uk> (the piping website of Dr Lindsay Davidson, as he “drives piping forward”. Not to be missed)
- <http://www.mildurapipeband.org.au/PDF/dannymac.pdf> (re Danny McPherson) -see page B
- <http://www.mv.com/ipusers/lsg/Bagpipes/BagpipeLinks.htm> (links to Music Writer programmes for untidy writers, stored tunes etc)
- <http://www.nzpipebands.org.nz> (Royal New Zealand Pipe Band Association)
- <http://www.oocities.org/heartland/6402/Folk1.txt> (Another tunefinder resource “online” (but without the melody ref) I trust that you will have found my work both interesting and amusing. You might like also to ponder my mature age work in another area, which began with an artwork from life: <http://www.wound-wisdom.tk>
- <http://www.pbasa.co.za> (The Pipe Band’s Association of Southern Africa)
- <http://www.pipebandsvic.com> (Victorian Highland Pipe Band Association, Australia)
- <http://www.pipesdrums.com> (Online piping and drumming magazine – from Canada)
- <http://www.pipetunes.ca/> (Jim McGillivray’s wonderful online piping resource, some of it free. You will want to “join”.)
- <http://www.ppbso.org> (Pipers’ and Pipe Band Society of Ontario)
- <http://www.rspb.org> (Royal Scottish Pipe Band Association)
- <http://www.schoolofpiping.com/profiles.html> (re Australian School of Piping, and Brett Tidswell etc) and <http://www.wound-wisdom.tk>
- <http://www.silverchanter.com> (the Bibliography of Bagpipe Music as updated for Roderick Cannon by Geoff Hore of New Zealand)
- <http://www.spbasa.org> (Scottish Pipe Band Association of South America) <http://thingsihavelearnedinmylife.com/users/apipertoo>
- <http://www.thepipingcentre.co.uk> (The National Piping Centre, Bagpipe School in Glasgow)
- <http://www.thepipingcentre.co.uk/bagpipe-education> (the BA [Scottish Music-Piping etc], Masters and Post Graduate studies in musical performance)
- <http://www.thepipingcentre.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2009/08/pt41-rorygrossart.pdf> (A must read article about reeds – look for the tenor drone tip)
- <http://www.vicpipers.org> (Victorian Pipers Association)

As an “old time” player, who had to contend with all the difficulties of postage delays, I’ve accumulated a number of books which of particular interest. Nowadays (mostly in the last twenty-five years), a huge array of books, some “electronic” have flooded the market, as you will see if you’ve taken a look at the websites listed on the previous page. So many new tunes “put out there” – by talented players, and I suspect some less so. I do not have the time left to look at all these tunes, so no doubt I am missing out on some beauties. It is just amazing how much can be done with just the nine notes we have on our chanter’s. Only time will tell as to how “newly hatched” tunes will prosper, for the “old ones” are still hard to beat.

Some of these books I have mentioned in preceding sections, as their relevance came up. I hope that I will have copied the details of there hereunder faithfully, but since I might err, you should take a look throughout (I wish I had a copy of the last book listed. Can any one help me ?):

**Some Tutor and Other Book References** (alphabetically listed):

“**A Bibliography of Bagpipe Music**” by Roderick D Cannon 1980 as updated by Geoff Hore (a New Zealander) via his website (See “Update” Page Z).

“**A Complete Tutor for the Highland Bagpipe**” by Donald MacPhee 1877 (See “Update” Page T).

“**Ceol Mor**” by General Thomason (1893) (See “Update” Page T).

“**College of Piping**” Tutors, 1 – 3 by Seaumas MacNeill and Thomas Pearson (revised by Robert Wallace (See Sec 1 Page 1 + “Update” Pages J, K, and L).

“**Essential Music Theory**” by Gordon Spearritt (before 1973 – See Section 1, Page 1).

“**Piping and Drumming**” – an Integrated Approach, by S.H. Bailie, Volume 1 1986. In checking via computer search (rather than unearthing the book) I have discovered that there is a second volume published in 1988, by the Royal Northern Ireland Piping and Drumming School, in 1988. If this book is as good as the first, both are “must reads”. At this point I should humbly apologise to the Royal Northern Ireland Piping and Drumming School for not including a link to them on the preceding page. But here it is (and a valuable resource it is !): <http://www.nipds.org> .

“**Piobaireachd and its Interpretation**” by Seamas MacNeill 1954 (See “Update” Page N).

“**Piobaireachd**” by the Piobaireachd Society, Books 1 – 11 (1925 – 1966) (See “Update” Page T).

“**The Kilberry Book of Ceol Mor**” by Archibald Campbell of Kilberry 1948/53 (See “Update” Page T).

“**The New Melody Directory – Highland Bagpipe**” by myself, Donald Chalmers and the late Robert McCullough 1986/7. Some copies still available.

“**The Piobaireachd of Simon Fraser with Canntaireachd**” © 1985 ISBN 0 9589848 0 8 by Dr Barrie Orme, Melbourne Australia (see “Update” Page B).

“**The Piper’s Handbook**” by Captain John A Maclellan 1964 (see “Update” page Q).

“**The Oboist’s Companion Volume 3**” by Evelyn Rothwell 1974 (see “Update” page Q).

“**The Scottish Pipe Band Association – Tutor and Text Book**” Vols 1 (1962) and 2 (1971).

“**Treatise of the Great Highland Bagpipe**” by Joseph MacDonald **1767 – the first book of its kind** (see “Update” Page Z, and Pages 69,70, 83 and 84).



# WHOM CAN WE BLAME FOR THE BAGPIPES?



**T**HE ROMAN legions advanced through the surf from their galleys towards the screaming mass of ancient Britons on the beach — and somewhere a bagpipe was playing its wild battle skirl.

One of the legions had been recruited in a hilly district of central Italy, called Abruzzi — and its men had brought their own “squealy bag.”

The folk of Abruzzi still say that this is how bagpipes came to Britain.

Outside Britain, the kilt, tartan, haggis, whisky and bagpipes have come to mean one thing—Scotland.

The kilt, tartan, haggis and whisky — yes. But bagpipes — well!

Nevertheless, the British War Office has just agreed to equip Scots Territorial Army units with bagpipes “for prestige and recruiting purposes” — and a Glasgow firm, largest bagpipe manufacturer in the world, has recently undertaken to equip 24 Scottish regiments.

Who started this bagpipes business? Who invented them? Where did they come from?

The Irish have a word to say in this age-old argu-

ment. They claim they gave them to Scotland.

But did they? It has been discovered that the ancient Chaldeans played the bagpipes; so did the Hebrews, the Egyptians and the Greeks (they had a word for them — “bumble-bee music”).

## England first

Whoever brought them, it is certain that the pipes were played in England long before Scotland had ever heard of them.

King Henry VIII played them, and when he died he left five sets to Queen Elizabeth.

She must have taken a poor view of them, for she issued an order forbidding

the playing of pipes in Ireland.

Probably she thought Ireland was troublesome enough without that!

So the Irish invented a new kind of pipes with no drones, worked by a bellows, which could be played indoors without the sound travelling far.

Before the Highland bagpipes came to be, the first instrument used in Scotland was the Lowland pipes — a smaller instrument than the warpipe we know today.

It had a softer tone and was more suited for country dances than for military purposes.

For one reason or another, it lost popularity, and it is doubtful if any exist today.

By Roderick Wilkinson

Later, it was discovered that the three drones, chanter, mouthpiece and bag of the Highland pipes could make a greater noise than anything so far made in this line—and the Scots couldn't get to blowing them quickly enough!

Let us not forget the German bagpipe (the “tottle-sack”), the French musette, cornemuse and bignou, the surdelina of Naples, the Bulgarian bagpipe, the Irish Uilleann pipes and that peculiar Irish bagpipe with a keyboard like a piano.

Let us not forget the pipes played in Czechoslovakia, Spain, Norway, Finland, Persia, China and Russia.

Let us not forget the London firm of Cockneys who have supplied pipes to battalions of the Scots Guards for 28 years.

And let us forget talking about “Scotland's national instrument!”

## OUR PETS

Jim Read, of Tatura, Vic., says he found a tortoise at school. He feeds it on lettuce and meat, and is keeping his new pet in a glass bowl with sand on the bottom and rock in the centre. Jim wants to know the right way of looking



HERE'S one way the bagpipes could have come to Britain. Just what the gentleman below would say about the whole thing, we don't quite know.

## A word with Jack and Bob

For ADRIAN RAWLINS and NEVILLE BOOTH

I suppose I was the avid reader who collected this ! It must have “fired my imagination” just as much as “The Pipes of Lucknow” (see “Update” Page Z).