

Welcome to Begg Bagpipes

-----Est 1980 Glasgow city centre's oldest bagpipe shop-----

click on the banner to go to Begg Bagpipes home page

Newsletter - December

Dear Customer,

As we head towards the Festive Season and the end of the year, it is time to start thinking about those New Year Resolutions. I've already got a couple in mind, including increasing the Begg share of the Grade 1 bands using my bags from the current 60% to the high 80s - this is looking very likely already and I'll let you know in a future newsletter when we get there.



Piping on the web[®]

Also don't forget, that if you live in the Eurozone or a US dollar based economy, there has never been a better time to buy products from Begg Bagpipes - the weakness of sterling in this time of economic crisis, means our products have effectively become some 20-25% cheaper in the last few months. So treat yourself or a friend to a nice Christmas present.

Yours Aye,

James C Begg

www.beggbagpipes.com

News

Some RSPBA dates for your diary:

1. Scottish Championships - 23/5/09 at Dumbarton
2. British Championships - 27/6/09 at Bainbridge, N. Ireland.
3. European Championships - 25/7/09 at Inverclyde
4. World Championships - 15/8/09 at Glasgow
5. Cowal Games - 29/8/09 at Dunoon.

The fantastic Celtic Connections Event takes place in January in Glasgow and features some hundreds of artistes covering all aspects of celtic music. One of the highlights for me will be the lunchtime concert at the Glasgow Royal Concert Hall on January 24th, featuring the Strathclyde Police Pipe Band (playing Begg Bags) and Brittany's exciting Grade 2 band Bagad Cap Caval.

[Click here for more information on Celtic Connections](#)



Top Tip - Fingering Technique

When learning the bagpipe, it is crucial to have a clean, clear fingering technique. The longer you spend on accuracy in this way, the better you will eventually sound. It is vital that you consistently get all the movements clear so that you can hear all the gracenotes individually as well as the theme notes themselves. Going from D to E is the most obvious point where you hear poor use of the (irritating term) "crossing noise". When I was learning, the cry went up "there's a crossing noise" but somehow you were not aware of what was wrong -perhaps this was because it was not explained fully so if someone can suggest a better term to note unclear fingering, then that would be interesting. Whilst D-E is more noticeable in terms of clumsy technique, we have it in all movements - clarity on B-C, F-G and precision throughout is the thing never to forget. When playing, never play fast -slow your movement down to a walking pace. This may not sound very tuneful but you are better to play slowly and I mean very slowly with accuracy, than playing what initially may sound better i.e faster but with all the gracenotes lost. The only short term gain would be what you perceive to be the correct sound of the melody. We are talking potentially of a long time of pedantic playing -the melody and the overall musical sound is of course essential but this will come in time of its own accord.

So play slowly and steadily in an almost robotic manner, with all the theme notes and the individual gracenotes being heard separately. Take double E for example: you hear the G grace note, then the F gracenote separately and not on top of each other - then the theme note E. It's far from easy and the principal of clarity applies to every single movement through doublings, triplings etc -a clean GDE tripling is one of the most crucial parts of clarity as it comes in all tunes time and time again. Jigs are full of them and so really slow speed at the early stage even in jig playing is so important.

You hear a lot of pipers saying "Oh, we have a jig so it must be fast" but in fact, you will get the effect of speed by good phrasing and technique rather than going hell for leather and fumbling the GDE together .

You can of course do a "Fred Morrison", who features in our Top Tunes this month, and play exceptionally fast - but take note when you listen to Fred, that every single one of his gracenotes are clean and clear. Remember of course that he has spent years and years of pedantic solid playing before he was able to become such a world class player. Fred misses nothing even when at break-neck speed and that is because of his attention to detail and accuracy in his earlier days.

The Top Three Tunes - by Mr Fred Morrison

1. Inveran - a 2/4 March by P/M G. S. McLennan
2. Delvinside - a Strathspey (trad.)
3. The Earl of Seaforth's Salute -a Piobaireachd.

The Earl of Seaforth's Salute was composed by Findlay



Dubh Macrae in honour of his clan chief in exile. William MacKenzie, the 5th Earl of Seaforth, led 3000 men for the Jacobite cause during the inconclusive battle at Sheriffmuir on 13 November 1715, and this turned out to be the last major engagement of the first Jacobite uprising. In 1716, the Earl was subsequently forced into exile in France by the British Government.



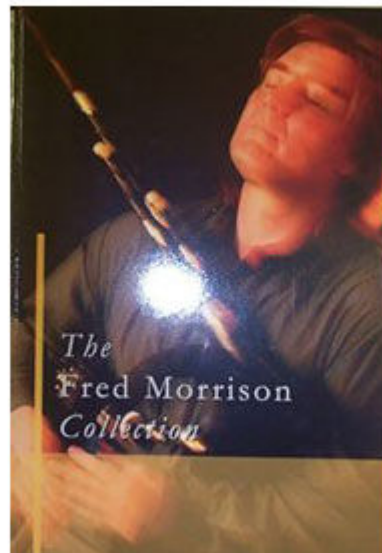
This month's top tunes piper needs no introduction. Fred Morrison is renowned world-wide for his virtuoso performances and outstanding ability. He has many cds to his name, including Up South, Broken Chanter and The Sound of the Sun. His new book, The Fred Morrison Collection is a classic, and no self-respecting piper should be without a copy. When I asked Fred about his top 3 tunes, he was initially slightly coy about it. We had a good laugh when he was about to name 3 of his own compositions, albeit with "tongue somewhat in cheek"! However I managed to prise out the 3 tunes above and he suggested that these were his current favourites -in about 1/2 hours time, he could well have a different three. Fred has played with many instrumentalists and famous bands like Capercaillie, but more recently has played predominately on his own or with Jamie MacMenemy on bouzouki. Fred is a master of the Highland pipes and the bellows-blown Lowland or Border pipes, as well as playing Irish uilleann pipes and low whistle. He has also won every major solo competition and many on a multiple basis.

Thanks Fred, for your top tunes selection. Watch out for other world class pipers making their selection in future issues.

[Click here to check out Fred on his website](#)

December Special Offer

Make it a Fred Morrison Christmas with this special offer - his new CD Up South and his book, The Fred Morrison Collection, with his own compositions. When sold separately these come to £28.49 plus vat - buy them together for just £20 plus vat of only £1.35. Postage will also be free of charge to anywhere in the world.



[Click here to buy this Fred Morrison Combo](#)



Special Feature



YouReport

Our thanks go to Peter Müller-McDougall who reports on a concert which took place in the beautiful Swiss city of Lucerne. Piping has really become completely global and it is a great pleasure to be in communications with players and enthusiasts of different backgrounds and nationalities.

"The 10th World Band Festival took place in Lucerne, Switzerland, from September to October 2008. Among many "sounding " names like The Herald Trumpets of the Regimental Band of the Irish Guards and the Suworow Military academy, the SWISS MIDLAND PIPE BAND (SMPB) appeared on stage under enthusiastic applause. The KKL (Kultur und Kongress Zentrum Lucerne) is Switzerland's most prestigious concert hall, accommodates an audience of more than 2000 people and clearly ranks amongst the worlds finest "stage" locations.

The photograph shows the SMPB, under the leadership of P/M Thomas Müller on stage during the booked-out concert.

Reported by: Peter Müller-McDougall"

YouReport

If you would like to report on any aspect of the Piping World from wherever you live, we'd be pleased to include it in this Newsletter and our website - click on the link below and then my email link on the home page, or copy and paste bill@beggbagpipes.com

Thanks

Bill Begg

www.beggbagpipes.com

Past Newsletters

If you would like to see past newsletters, check them out on our website.

[Past Newsletters](#)

One Stop Shop

For all your Piping needs, visit

www.beggbagpipes.com

To unsubscribe/change profile: [click here](#).

To subscribe: [click here](#).

*Begg Bagpipes
202B Bath Street
Glasgow, Strathclyde G2 4HF
United Kingdom*

Email list management powered by <http://MailerMailer.com>

This is an approximate view of what your HTML message will look like. The only way to get an exact preview is to send yourself a sample copy and view it in your mail program. You will do this in Step 2 of preparing your message.

[Close](#) this window to return to the template editor.