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**Piping Perfection**  
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## [April Newsletter](#)

Dear Piping Enthusiast,

It may be April Fools' time but we are serious regarding piping. No joking here - your needs are foremost and delivered promptly. The first of the pipe band competitions in these parts starts on the 18th of May with the first major at St James' Park, Paisley - it could be a close run thing as long as the judges are not put off by the noise of aircraft taking off. Maybe I am being a romantic and thinking with my heart rather than my head, but we do manage to pick some grim locations like Glasgow Green et al for our competitions. We could do a lot better on the eye since we have some of the most beautiful scenery in the world available to us. Logistics of course are vital in terms of transport, hotels and the like but surely there must be a better way forward. Any suggestions? A permanent venue on Loch Lomondside to hold a number of comps? A bit like Augusta National for the Masters golf? The time and effort put in by our Pipe Bands to achieve such high standards of playing along with the fantastic visual spectacle of pipe bands in all their glory really do deserve a backdrop of the highest quality.

Yours aye,

James C. Begg

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[www.beggbagpipes.com](http://www.beggbagpipes.com)

## News.

The Uist and Barra

I am a little late in reporting but this was another great event run with aplomb by the Uist committee, ably led by the well known London based piper John Angus Smith. The overall winner was Finlay Johnston. A full house in the National Piping Centre Otago St. helped create a buzz all day long. The event was streamed live which seems the in-thing for a lot of competitions these days and most welcome. The Hornpipe and Jig event ran straight after the players played their MSR which kept toes tapping and the audience entertained.

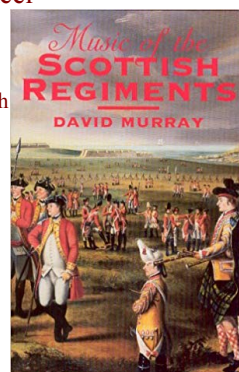


## Tune of the Month. D.J.S Murray - a March and a Reel

The 4/4 march is a classic tune composed by Major Jock Allen and it was converted into a reel by PM Angus Macdonald.

John/Jock was formerly Director of Army Piping in the 80s at Edinburgh Castle where I had the pleasure of many meetings with him. Whilst he was something of a reserved gent, I always found him kind and helpful. John was not only an accomplished piper but a good box player as well. The tune builds nicely and like all really good compositions is convertible to other timings too.

Angus obviously saw that and was able to convert a great march into a great reel. Angus was John's right hand man in the Castle and the reel certainly took on a broader playing public. It's quite different from the march but you will see the similarities in some respects.



D.J.S Murray for his part and the inspiration for the tunes, was a decorated Lt. Colonel in the British Army and a respected piper, historian and authority on piping. His excellent book [Music of the Scottish Regiments](#) is well worth checking out. Click on this [link](#) from the excellent pipes|drums online magazine to read some more about David Murray and his great achievements.

I hope you enjoy the Tunes [DJS Murray - March](#) [DJS Murray - Reel](#)

## Special Offer - [Big Bore](#)

20% off the Big Blow blowpipe - normally £57.50 plus vat but reduced for this month to £46 plus vat and free post worldwide. Why not improve your airflow into your pipes? It comes with an inbuilt valve. Please state the size required in the comments section when you check out - sizes range from 7 to 12 inches with 10 inch being the average size.

James will action the 20% reduction at his end when ordered.



## YouReport - Piping on the Queen Mary, Long Beach, California

Hi James,

Just wanted to let you know Ewan's new sheepskin bag worked out very well. It was the first time he competed solo at grade 3 and this competition was aboard the lovely Queen Mary. There was no age limit, so being up against adults, he got an excellent 3rd place in the Strathspey & Reel. He said that his pipe was really good to play and much easier to strike in and cut off. His PM at the LA Scots seasoned it again for him and thought it sounded great.



Thanks again for a great quality product!  
Lorna Laplante

1. Pic shows Ewan Laplante, aged 13, with his well deserved medal - an up and coming piper with the Grade 2 LA Scots.
2. The Queen Mary, built on Clydeside, is now permanently docked as a hotel at Long Beach.

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### In Passing.....

Have you noticed how some parts of the general public seem to view piping and the great highland bagpipe in a somewhat jocular fashion, and take great pride in denigrating our genre of music? I recently read an obnoxious article which won't be reprinted here and the day after, encountered more of the same on a TV show. What's wrong with these people? Maybe the perception in some quarters will change over time as the trends we have seen in recent years hopefully continue - more youngsters getting involved, females now playing an important role in a previously male dominated pursuit, streaming on the internet improving global comms and so on. Events like Piping Live! also extend the reach to those not normally exposed to piping and pipe bands and long may such events continue.

I have always found great respect for our music and traditions wherever I have travelled and played. I would venture that any negative comments are confined to a very small minority of people whose intellect is severely limited and who cannot comprehend the enjoyment our music brings to so many.

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### You Report

If you would like to report on any aspect of the Piping World from wherever you live, or if you would like to comment on any articles or issues, we'd be pleased to hear from you. Email to [bill@beggbagpipes.com](mailto:bill@beggbagpipes.com)

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