

Welcome to Begg Bagpipes

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

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Piping on the web[®]

Newsletter - June

Dear Customer,

Welcome to June's newsletter 2009. It tends to be a slightly quieter time of the year now as most bands and soloists have acquired their equipment for the season ahead. Nevertheless, we are up and running with an exciting programme of events. A field report on the first major championship at

Dumbarton is included in this issue, and it managed to avoid the worst of the recent weather. The first games at Gourrock were cancelled due to the weather and this seems to be more common now than in the past. We Scots are a hardy breed, with Boys Brigade and Scout camps in our youth making sure of that and games used to go ahead even in "monsoon" conditions. However with our 'Elf & Safety' culture and solicitors able to sue for any excuse, organisers seem reluctant to take any chances and I guess that is understandable to an extent.

Anyway, I am just back from a villa holiday to Majorca and the Spaniards supplied plenty of sun and the odd sangria to set me up for what will be a busy July and August - see the Piping Live! article below.

Yours Aye,

James C Begg

www.beggbagpipes.com



News

As mentioned in previous newsletters, we are getting involved in the now established award winning Piping Live! event in August, run by the National Piping Centre in MacPhater St, Cowcaddens - or Coocaddens as we say in Glasgow. This is 5 minutes away from Begg Bagpipes in Bath St. Having had a discussion over a very nice curry last month with Roddy MacLeod MBE, Principal of the Centre, we agreed it would be a good partnership and most worthwhile for both our establishments to support each other. The idea is that Begg Bagpipes will sponsor the street marquee outside the centre on Tuesday the 11th August. Different acts will perform every hour, with the highlight being the

pop idol heat event at 4 o'clock. I will be on hand with flyers etc and available to discuss your piping needs . On Wednesday the 12th, Thursday the 13th and Friday the 14th August, our attention will revert back to the shop in Bath Street where we would like to invite you to a demonstration of bagpipe and bagpipe bag making by our master craftsmen.

The whole week of Piping Live! is crammed with events all day and night long. It all promises to be the best year yet for the Piping Live! event, particularly with Begg Bagpipes adding an extra dimension. The event starts on the Monday and runs through to the Sunday - check out the link below. We look forward to welcoming all our overseas customers as well as the local guys and girls. Make sure you take the time to visit the shop and take home a quality item made in Glasgow -the capital of piping .

[Click here for Piping Live! website](#)

Top Tip - Practice Pipes

It amazes me that practice pipes are not used by more pipers and more importantly by more learner pipers. I have sold many over the years and it's a great tool to practice quietly indoors. At the same time it is an exact copy of the full Highland Pipe with the added benefit that you don't need to blow so hard i.e. it makes you learn to control your blowing as well and this is an important part of being a good piper.

I source practice pipes through my business associate Ralph Hepburn and he is to be congratulated on his innovative approach to piping.

The Top Three Tunes - on holiday and back next month.



Special Offer - Practice Pipes

This month's offer in support of the Top Tip is 20% off practice pipes with free postage. Choose either a long or short chanter - short is slightly higher pitched and long is more like standard pipe chanter size.

These discounts apply to online purchases only. Look out for more great offers coming soon! At the point of purchase, we will price match any product of the same quality from another supplier.

Field Report - the Scottish Championships, Dumbarton, 16/5/09 (Photo shows the famous Dumbarton Rock)



It was a well run event with free parking (always welcome if you are Scottish) and the dry weather was a lot better than forecast. However, there was a strong, swirling wind off the river Clyde which made it difficult at times for the bands. I was accompanied by my 2 children, Gavin and Lisa, and between the various bands and the fun fair, the children were kept going - there was something for everyone.

It was interesting to see how the bands all went about setting up. Most used separate people other than the Pipe Major to tune the drones, with for example Ian Duncan on hand for Scottish Power - not a bad option and bit like having Ronaldo or Rooney on the bench (don't mention the UEFA Cup Final). A slightly surprising aspect was the fact that a lot of bands do not have a clear identity - most for example don't have the band's name on the drums. This perhaps is fine when we all know the top bands by sight but I was listening to the grade 3 Howard Memorial Band from Northern Ireland -they finished 2nd and whilst I was very impressed by them, I had to ask the girl next to me who they were. She was obviously a member sporting the same kilt but had I not asked, it would have been impossible to know who they were. So not a good position to be in i.e. no point sounding good if no-one knows who you are! Most of the bands in the top 6 are all Begg Bagpipes bag men and women, and yet again the top two in Grade 1 have been long term customers - The Field Marshall Montgomery and St Laurence O'Toole. It was also nice to see another customer P/M Stuart Todd playing again, having put a lot of time and effort into developing the Morpeth Band. Out for their grade 1 debut was Torphichen and Bathgate under P/M Gordon Stafford. They looked like a grade 1 outfit but it may take a bit of time to settle down and up their game a bit. Shotts were solid all round and perhaps were lower pitched than normal. I felt they lacked a bit of sparkle, with their tone unstable at times but never-the-less, this is a very good outfit and will probably get a major this year at some point . There was not much between the O'Tooles and the Field Marshall -O'Tooles had a slightly lighter sound but both were good. Scottish Power somehow did not look as relaxed as other bands and the Vale of Atholl looked and sounded the part - strange spread of marking for the Vale from the piping judges at 5th and 13th. Anyway, everyone has their own opinion, and it was a good day out for all.

James C. Begg



Do you notice anything unusual here with the House of Edgar Shotts and Dykehead Band in the final tuning area at Dumbarton?

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

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