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[October Newsletter](#)

Dear Piping Enthusiast,

I continue to carry my Nato medal which I was kindly given to me by Russell Justice last month. It's in my wallet and since it is slightly on the heavy side, it leads me into a false sense of wealth - there's no get rich quick scheme in piping!

I was sorry to miss the rescheduled Uist and Barra competition as I was just coming back from Mull. I'm informed it was a great day of top class playing. I asked one of our customers Tabby from the Highlands to do a small resume of the event in my absence. Thanks Tabby for the great report below and you may become my roving reporter if you're not careful. It's great to get input for our newsletter so keep it coming.

We are quite busy at the moment and my son Gavin has just headed out to Bangladesh to do his voluntary bit for this country, so it's nice that my daughter Lisa is back in the business and helping out between her uni studies.

Yours aye,
James C. Begg
Piping Perfection

www.beggbagpipes.com

News.

I was glad to support the Strachur piping society via Kate Paton for their annual juvenile competition. Kate recently received the Balvenie medal for services to Piping at the Glenfiddich Piping Championships held at Blair Atholl - piping's top solo event. I understand there will be live streaming again from [this year's event](#) scheduled for the 27th October so don't miss that one. I am also glad to support the Innerleithen Games in a small way, where great work is done in communities such as this all round the country.



Interesting Piping Folk - P/M W. Cochrane

During the recent Piping Live!, I managed to catch up with my old friend Willie Cochrane.

He may not be hugely well known in his homeland of Scotland- from Castle Douglas, Dumfries - but there can be few people in the past 60 years who have been more greatly involved and inspirational in the piping world than Willie. Affectionately known as WC, he is at home in every country he finds himself in and probably has piped in more countries than anyone else. He has been a full time player all his life after he branched out from his army career as P/M of The Kings Own Scottish Borderers to set up a world wide network of players that would play at various events - rugby, football galas, cruise ships, all sorts of festivals and so on. He formed the Balmoral Highlanders who are professional teams of Scottish entertainers with many years of experience as Pipers, Drummers and Dancers. Tours have included Japan, Italy, Norway, U.S.A., Germany, Bahamas, France, Canada and Switzerland to name but a few. The Balmoral Highlanders played in the film "Amazing Grace" and "Tea with Mussolini" directed by Franco Zeffirelli. Willie has toured with Paul McCartney playing Mull of Kintyre and also guesting with Rod Stewart and the Bee Gees.



Having achieved so much over a long career, he never-the-less is still performing from his base in Edmonton, North London. He has played for kings, queens, presidents and even Idi Amin - he was held captive I think in the 70s in Uganda in a big political incident. I suspect it was because Idi Amin loved Scotland and just wanted one more tune from Willie before he left the country! He has in my opinion promoted not just himself with charisma, professionalism and charm but has done a great deal as an Ambassador to promote piping and Scotland world-wide - a bigger unheralded star you will not come across. What a great life he has had, doing something he enjoys so much. Another most interesting, great guy and one who I have the pleasure to call a close friend.

Special Offer - [electronic](#)

Well it's nearly that time again when people spend exorbitant amounts of dosh, shekels and the odd bitcoin on pressies for loved ones. This year get in early with 10% off all electronic chanters. We also have the new fagerstrom uilleann pipe model, as well as old favourites. Prices start from £199 before discount. Discount will be applied this end after the order has been placed. Please order now for certainty of supply pre Xmas.



Field Report - [Isle of Mull.](#)

It was another great trip at the end of September to the beautiful island of Mull with my two brothers, my son and Bill's springer spaniel. We managed some golf, some fishing and a couple of slurps - but of course we had to have some music as well. Check out this Oscar winning [You Tube performance](#).

The first tune is MacLeod of Mull - a great, classic 6/8 march - another Donald MacLeod melodic masterpiece and full of flow and swing. This is followed by "I see Mull" as it is usually called but which is in fact a shortened version of the full name - "I see Mull, Land of my Youth". What a great name for a tune, with a very simple melody. At the Scottish Pipers Club in the 1980s, I heard Angus MacLellan playing this tune every week as a warm up and he must have loved it. It is a lovely tune and open to different interpretations of pace. I seem to play it slightly differently each time, depending perhaps on my mood. I really like playing tunes in their natural habitat so to speak, which seems to bring them more to life. I hope you like my accompanying dress sense, straight from trout fishing on Loch Aros -not quite Inverness Northern Meeting de rigueur or etiquette!



James C. Begg

Tune of the Month - [There's a Monster in the Pond.](#)

We had a great email from Dave Macpherson about his pal and fellow piper Ross Page. Between them in NZ and Oz, they have played with City of Auckland Pipe Band, the Moorrabbin City Pipe Band, the Maryborough Caledonian Society Pipe Band, the Murrumba Pipes and Drums, the NSW Highlanders and the Sunshine Coast Caledonian Pipe Band, as well as a pipe-rock band called the Clan - wow. When you look at their photo (Dave is left and Ross on the right), you wouldn't immediately realise that Ross is a composer of fine tunes as well. He has kindly agreed for us to publish a recent hornpipe, with an absolutely brilliant title - There's a Monster in the Pond. The story behind it is that during a party where there was lots of piping and drinking, Ross fell into a duck pond and surfaced just as his wife turned up!



Click on the link for the music - and thanks Pagey for sharing this with us. Send us more of your great work.

YouReport - [The Uist and Barra, by Tabby Angier](#)

It was great to be back at the welcoming and friendly U.&B. piping competition held at the College on Saturday...always a well-run, top-class event, with so many great players.

Iain Spiers shone in the Ceol Mor, as a worthy winner.

Craig Sutherland winning the M.S.R. was a popular choice.

And, Niall Stewart, took the Hornpipe and Jig, with ease.

Niall's pipe really made a big impression on me ...it was really "going"! and his performance seemed effortless, and laid back..quite superb.

At this level, the players are all heroes in my book, the concentration required, the pressure on all of them, and the standard of their instruments never ceases to amaze me..... (There SHOULD be folk queuing down the street to hear them!)

Jamie Forrester, in particular, has a confident commanding presence when playing, and held back his March, The Braes of Brecklett, beautifully when playing, and with perfect deportment....this is striking as, of course, a piper is also an actor, to a degree, as well as a skilled musician.

I was cheered to see and hear "THE MASTER"! Stuart Liddell (in my humble opinion, the present "King" of the G.H.B. in all its forms...)

Being particularly keen on acoustics, and the BIG sound, I would love to hear these players competing in a great cathedral one day...to hear these great instruments in a BIG spacestone or wood floorsand mega - HIGH ceilings!.....at a military event, I once heard "Lochaber no More" ..in a huge cathedral...never forgotten.....sound "unleashed.".....!.

A date for your diary..U.& B. next year..Sat March 2nd.2019.



YouReport

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

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