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AMATEUR
INVITATIONAL
PIPING
COMPETITION
OCTOBER 7, 2023

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The Nicol-Brown Committee has hosted an elite event for amateur pipers since 1982, thanks to the generous donors and volunteers who have given their time and financial support year after year. The Nicol-Brown Chalice, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.

Your donations are welcome via our PayPal button at:
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Checks in US dollars are always welcome. Make payable to Nicol-Brown Chalice, Inc. and mail to our treasurer:

Thompson McConnell
168 Kings Gate Drive
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The 2023 Nicol-Brown Weekend

The Nicol-Brown committee is proud to co-sponsor the concert and competition this year with the Institute of Musical Traditions. Thanks to many generous donors, including the Eastern United States Pipe Band Association, admission is free at all events, with donations accepted at the door or online.

Saint Mark Presbyterian Church
10701 Old Georgetown Road
Rockville, Maryland 20852

FRIDAY, October 6

7:30 pm The Judges' Concert

Amy Garson, Nick Hudson, and Dr. Jack Taylor

SATURDAY, October 7

The 40th Nicol-Brown Invitational Competition

9:30 am 6/8 Marches

11:30 am Group Photo Session and Lunch Break

12:45 pm Piobaireachd

4:30 pm March, Strathspey, and Reel

6:30 pm Awards Ceremony

Saturday schedule is tentative and subject to change.

Previous Judges for the Nicol-Brown Amateur Invitational Competition

1982	Ed Neigh	2003	Bruce Gandy and Michael Rogers
1983	James McGillivray	2004	Stuart Liddell and Donald F. Lindsay
1984	Murray Henderson	2005	Donald MacPhee
1985	Donald F. Lindsay	2006	John Wilson and Alasdair Gillies
1986	William Livingstone	2007	John Wilson and Nancy Tunnicliffe
1987	Amy Garson, Ed Krintz, and Chip Reardon	2008	Nancy Tunnicliffe, Bobby Minnear, R. Iain MacDonald
1988	Donald F. Lindsay	2009	Murray Henderson, Amy Garson, and Andrew Douglas
1989	Seumas MacNeill	2010	Angus MacColl
1990	James McGillivray	2011	Jack Taylor and Bruce Gandy
1991	Colin MacLellan	2012	Willie McCallum, Nancy Tunnicliffe, Paula Glendinning
1992	The contest was not held.	2013	Patrick Molard, Andrew Hayes, and June Hanley
1993	George Bell and Donald F. Lindsay	2014	Andrew Hayes and Michael Rogers
1994	Colin MacLellan and Donald F. Lindsay	2015	Callum Beaumont
1995	Bob Worrall	2016	Willie McCallum and Nick Hudson
1996	Scott MacAulay and Donald F. Lindsay	2017	Ian K. MacDonald, Andrew Lee, and Ben McClamrock
1997	Donald F. Lindsay	2018	Nancy Tunnicliffe and Eric Ouellette
1998	Jack Lee	2019	Callum Beaumont, Faye Henderson, and Matt MacIsaac
1999	Michael Cusack	2020	Matt MacIsaac, Patrick Molard, Sarah Muir, Jack Taylor
2000	Alasdair Gillies	2021	Jenny Hazzard, Nick Hudson, Roddy MacLeod, Bob Worrall
2001	Michael Rogers	2022	The contest was not held.
2002	Jack Taylor		

The Nicol-Brown committee welcomes the judges for 2023:

Amy Garson, Nick Hudson, and Dr. Jack Taylor

AMY GARSON was born in Ottawa, Ontario, and was a highland dancer before she was a piper. She studied Light Music with Pipe Major John T. MacKenzie of the Glengarry Pipe Band, and Piobaireachd with Jimmy McIntosh, who had learned from Bob Brown and Bob Nicol. Amy has been a consistent prize winner in solo bagpipe competitions in North America and Scotland. She won the Silver Medal in Inverness, Scotland at her first appearance in 1981, and has qualified and placed several times in the Gold



Medal Competitions at both Oban and Inverness. In 1988, she was the overall champion at the Colonial Highland Gathering in Fair Hill, Maryland and received a coveted invitation to play at the prestigious Glenfiddich (formerly Grant's) Championship. In 1989, Amy won the Piobaireachd Society Gold Medal (Canada). As a solo piper, Amy's successes are noteworthy,

and in the 1980s and 1990s, she was very much a pioneer for women's piping. Now retired after a career in law, Amy continues to pipe for pleasure, solo competition, and Highland Dancing contests in addition to judging piping events across North America. She is a member of the judging panels for the Eastern United States Pipe Band Association and the Pipers' and Pipe Band Society of Ontario.

NICK HUDSON teaches piping at St. Thomas' Episcopal School in Houston, Texas and plays in the Grade 1 St. Thomas Alumni Pipe Band. Nick grew up in Maryland, and was a member of the Rockville High School Pipe Band and the City of Washington Pipe Band. He holds a BFA in Music Performance from Carnegie Mellon University, where he studied with Jimmy McIntosh and Alasdair Gillies. Nick's solo piping performance highlights include winning the Gold Medal at the 2022 Northern Meeting in Inverness, the Braemar Gold Medal, the London Ram's Head Snuff Mull for A-Grade Piobaireachd, twice the Overall A-Grade Winner at the SPSL Contest in London, the Piobaireachd Society Gold Medal (Canada), the US Piping Foundation Piobaireachd and MSR, the Silver Medal at the Argyllshire Gathering in Oban, the B MSR at the Northern Meeting,

overall winner of The Livingstone Invitational, and overall winner of The Metro Cup. Nick has recorded a BBC "Pipeline" session, and was one of four pipers invited to perform at the 2023 Capt. John MacLellan Memorial Medal Competition-Recital in Edinburgh. Nick is a member of the EUSPBA judges panel and serves as chair of the Music Board.

Aside from his musical pursuits, Nick enjoys cycling and has cycled coast-to-coast across the United States. He resides in Houston with his wife, Amanda, and their son, Alan.



JACK TAYLOR, from Aboyne, Scotland, was a student of Bob Brown and Bob Nicol, and is now one of the world's leading authorities on Piobaireachd. We are fortunate to have him join us in Maryland for the 40th Nicol-Brown Competition. Jack was taught piping in school in St. Andrews, Scotland, by Bert Barron, before going to medical school in Aberdeen. He started studying Piobaireachd at around age 14, and always says he is still learning. He won the Gold

Medal in Inverness in 1973 and the Silver Chanter in 1984. Jack played with the Buchan Pipe Band as part of their Grade 2 World's winning team in 2010. He is past president of the Piobaireachd Society, and current secretary of a revived Aberdeen Piping Society. In 2017, Jack Taylor and Patrick Molard produced the collection, *Pipers Meeting: New Tunes from the Campbell Canntaireachd*, putting 45 tunes from Colin Campbell's Manuscript (Nether Lorn Canntaireachd) into staff notation, most for the first time. Jack amused himself during lockdown by recording some of these tunes and posting them onto social media.





The members of the Executive Committee of the Eastern United States Pipe Band Association offer their sincere appreciation to

**Dr. Jack Taylor, Amy Garson,
and Nick Hudson**

and best wishes to all of the competitors, volunteers, organizers, and spectators at the 40th Nicol-Brown Amateur Invitational Piping Competition. This is truly one of the premier amateur piping events in the world and it is an honor to be a sponsor.

EUSPBA Executive Committee

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Matt Wood, *Treasurer*

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Scott Fletcher, *Officer-at-Large*

David Hall, *Ombudsman*



Please join us for the 2023 Annual General Meeting (AGM) on Saturday, December 9, 2023.

(The Judges' Seminar will follow on Sunday, December 10.)

The 2023 AGM and Judges' Seminar will be held virtually. Further information can be found in the Friday News Update emails and on the EUSPBA Web site.

Saturday: Officers' Reports / Branch Proposals / New Business

Sunday: Judges' Seminar

www.euspba.org

For more information, please contact:

Executive Secretary Jim Engle at zecsec@euspba.org

The 2023 Competitors

GILLIAN BLANEY **Lower Sackville, Nova Scotia**

Gillian is currently studying Child and Youth Care Studies at Nova Scotia Community College. At the age of seven, Gillian started playing bagpipes at the Halifax Citadel School of Music and she has been taking lessons from Bruce Gandy since she was nine. Currently, Gillian is playing with the Dartmouth and District Pipe Band. Some of Gillian's solo piping highlights for the 2023 season include winning the Grade One Piobaireachd and MSR at the Atlantic Canada Piobaireachd Challenge; winning the Grade One overall for the Antigonish Highland Games; the Amateur Piper of the Day at Maxville, Ontario; and placing 4th in the MacGregor Memorial Piobaireachd Competition in Oban, Scotland. She is honoured to be invited to the 2023 Nicol-Brown Invitational.

CAMERON BONAR **Surrey, British Columbia**

Cameron is 15 years old and started his piping career at the age of 6, working with his dad, Andrew. Since 2017, he has been fortunate to have Jack Lee as his instructor and mentor. Cameron's piping highlights this year include winning the Grade One events at both Winter Storm in Kansas City and the BC Pipers' Association Indoor Gathering. He also enjoyed piping in Scotland this summer where he won Pipe Idol. He was a finalist in the MacGregor Memorial Piobaireachd and won the Intermediate MSR in Oban, both events being held for pipers under the age of 22. Cameron competed at the Northern Meeting in Inverness where he won the Under-18 Piobaireachd and was 4th in the Under-18 MSR. Cameron is excited to be invited to play in the Nicol-Brown Competition.

THOMAS CANGELOSI **Arlington, Virginia**

Thomas is a student of James Stack. He started playing bagpipes in the CuChullain Pipe Band of Morris County, New Jersey under the instruction of Pipe Major AJ McCann and Todd Ferrie. In 2015, he joined the MacMillan Pipe Band and has been serving as Pipe Sergeant since 2019. He is an active member of the piping community, instructing and performing with the Northern Virginia Emerald Society Pipe Band of Fairfax, Virginia. This year, Thomas was the U.S. Piping Foundation Amateur Champion and he won the Piper of the Day at the Fair Hill Scottish Games, Grandfather Mountain Highland Games and the Covenanter Scottish Festival. Outside of piping, he enjoys hiking and surfing.

COLIN FORREST **Mission, British Columbia**

Colin turned 15 years old in June. He started playing pipes at the age of 8 under the instruction of Glen Robertson. Colin has been taking lessons from Andrew Lee since 2018, and will also be seeing Alan Bevan this Fall. Colin had a successful solo season this year, placing second in the Amateur MSR in Kansas City Winter Storm as well as picking up multiple first-place prizes in the Pacific Northwest competition circuit. Recently in Scotland this August, he competed in the Argyllshire Gathering in Oban, placing third in the Intermediate MSR. Colin also placed first in the Junior March contest at the Lochaber Gathering in Fort William. He competed with the Robert Malcolm Memorial Pipe Band at the World Pipe Band Championships, placing second in the Grade 3A band event. Colin has been invited to practice with the Simon Fraser University Pipe Band in addition to practicing with the Robert Malcolm Memorial Grade 2 band this Fall. His future ambitions are to win the Gold Medals at Oban and Inverness.

MALACHI JOHANNSEN **Modesto, California**

Malachi is 16, and has been bagpiping since he was seven years old. He began his instruction under Pipe Major Gary Speed and later Pipe Major Elizabeth Tubbs of the City of Sacramento Pipe Band. He is currently a student of Callum Beaumont and plays for Silicon Valley Pipe Band in Saratoga, California. He has been fortunate enough to be a multiple aggregate winner of the WUSPBA's light music and Piobaireachd categories throughout the years and most recently won the overall Grade 1 aggregate at Costa Mesa. Malachi is a homeschooled junior in high school and in addition to playing bagpipes enjoys studying astronomy and aviation. Malachi is grateful for his supportive family, and feels fortunate and blessed to have been invited to this year's Nicol-Brown Competition.

KAYLEIGH JOHNSTONE **Aurora, Ontario**

Kayleigh is a 19-year-old, second-year university student, studying Criminology. She began piping at the age of seven. She has been taught by her grandfather, Reay Mackay, and her mother, Glenna Mackay-Johnstone. In addition to piping, she has played piano with the Royal Conservatory Music Program for nine years. Some proud piping moments include: 2023 PPBSO Champion Supreme Grade 1 Piobaireachd; 2023 Champion Supreme Grade 1 Light Music; 2022 Champion Supreme Grade 1 Piobaireachd; 2022 Amateur Piper of the Day at the

(continued)

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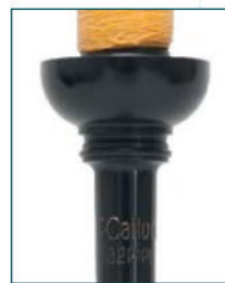
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Glengarry Highland Games in Maxville, Ontario; 2019 Winner of the Balmoral Classic; 2019 Metro Cup—2nd place in MSR; 2019 Winner of the Grade 1 MSR/HJ at Winter Storm in Kansas City; 2018 Winner of the Grade 2 MSR at Winter Storm in Kansas City; and in 2017 The JT MacKenzie Youngest 1st Place Piper at Maxville.

HENRY MICHAEL PALUCH **Aurora, Ontario**

Henry is currently a second-year student at the University of Toronto studying philosophy and law. He started playing pipes at the age of ten, later becoming the Pipe Major of St. Andrew's College Pipe Band while in high school. Henry has competed in PPBSO events for the past eight years, receiving tutelage from Jim McGillivray and Matt MacIsaac. Since its inception in 2019, Henry has been a member of the St. Andrew's College Association Pipe Band. Henry also enjoys composing, and works for the sheet music website, pipetunes.ca, as a tune recorder.

WILLIAM SHROPSHIRE **Durham, North Carolina**

Will grew up in Rockville, Maryland and started piping at age 11, when he joined the Rockville High School Pipe Band (now known as the Maryland Youth Pipe Band). He continued to play with the band through middle and high school, and served as pipe major for 2 years. Will attended numerous National Piping Centre and Invermark College of Piping and Drumming programs, where he had the opportunity to learn from some of the world's top pipers. He is now taught by Glenn Brown. Will attended the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, where he earned a Bachelor of Arts (BA) in music composition and a separate BA in advertising. He currently lives in Durham, North Carolina and plays with the MacMillan Pipe Band, based in Washington, D.C. This year, Will placed highly at several competitions, including being the Grade 1 aggregate winner at the Chicago Scottish Festival, 2nd overall at the US Piping Foundation Amateur Championships and Grade 1 Piper of the Day at the Virginia Scottish Games.

MAGNUS STONE **Natick, Massachusetts**

Magnus is a 14-year-old bagpiper/musician who started playing the bagpipes in 2019 when he was 10 years old, and is currently taking online lessons from Callum Beaumont, Margaret Dunn, and Glenn Brown. He has been competing in Grade 1 for one season, and is currently in 3rd place for light music and 2nd place for Piobaireachd in the EUSPBA, having won the most points in Grade 1 at nine different Highland Games and competitions this year. Along with his local achievements,

he travelled to Scotland this past summer to play in Pipe Idol, a competition for the 24 best bagpipers under 21, and Emerging Talent, where he showcased his self-composed modern bagpiping and Irish whistle along with an original backing track. He also enjoys composing and recording music on the Bagpipes, as well as other instruments like Irish Low Whistle, Bass Guitar, and Electric Guitar. He is excited about the opportunity to play in the Nicol-Brown so early in his piping journey!

MICHAEL TRENOR **Columbus, Ohio**

Mic began piping at the age of six with the Shamrock Club of Columbus. His first instructor was Bob Ryan. Upon entering competition, Mic started lessons with the late Noel Slagle and instructors from the Ohio Scottish Arts School, Ken Eller and Sandy Keith. With great success, Mic reached the Grade 1 level in 1990, only to retire a year later. After a 27-year sabbatical, Mic returned to the competition stage in 2018 with the support of his wife, Katrisha, to whom he owes all his success. He currently plays with the Great Lakes Pipe Band, continues his lessons and is a consistent competitor in the EUSPBA and the Competition League for Amateur Solo Pipers. Mic and Katrisha live with their son, Ethan, in Columbus, Ohio.



The USPF extends sincere congratulations to all the invited competitors at this year's Nicol-Brown Amateur Invitational! Enjoy the experience!

The USPF hosts the Maclean Macleod Memorial Piping Competition each year, offering Piobaireachd and March, Strathspey, & Reel events for Professional and Amateur competitors.

www.uspipingfoundation.org

6/8 Marches

(The competitors have each chosen two tunes to play in this order.)

1. MAGNUS STONE

Miss Ishabel T. MacDonald
The Booths of Comrie

2. WILLIAM SHROPSHIRE

Farewell to the Creeks
Mrs. Lily Christie

3. COLIN FORREST

Rab's Wedding
Miss Ishabel T. MacDonald

4. CAMERON BONAR

Meg MacRae
Cameron MacFadyen

5. HENRY MICHAEL PALUCH

Mrs. Lily Christie
The Hills of Kowloon

6. GILLIAN BLANEY

The Scottish Division
Kirkhill

7. KAYLEIGH JOHNSTONE

Ian M. Campbell of Oban
Captain John Maclellan

8. MALACHI JOHANNSEN

John D. Burgess
Tug Argan Gap

9. THOMAS CANGELOSI

Captain C.R. Lumsden
Bonnie McAlpine

10. MICHAEL TRENOR

Pipe Major Donald MacLean of Lewis
A Cold Wind From Ben Wyvis

IMPORTANT PHOTO OP

Please meet next to the stage immediately following the final 6/8 March performance for the official 2023 group photo of the competitors and judges. Weather permitting, outdoor photos will also be taken at this time.

PLEASE WEAR YOUR NICOL-BROWN LAPEL PIN!

Piobaireachd

(The judges have selected one tune for each competitor.)

1. HENRY MICHAEL PALUCH

The Lament for the Children
Black Donald's March
Lament for Patrick Og MacCrimmon

2. GILLIAN BLANEY

Melbank's Salute
The Rout of Glenfruin
Andrew MacNeill of Colonsay

3. KAYLEIGH JOHNSTONE

The Old Men of the Shells (Setting 1)
Lament for the Little Supper
Sir James Macdonald Of The Isles' Lament

4. MALACHI JOHANNSEN

Fair Honey
Lament for the Viscount of Dundee
Rory McLoude's Lament

5. THOMAS CANGELOSI

The King's Taxes
MacLeod of Raasay's Salute
My King Has Landed in Moidart

6. MICHAEL TRENOR

A Flame of Wrath for Patrick Caogach
The Battle of Auldearn #2
The Sound of The Waves Against the Castle of Duntroon

7. MAGNUS STONE

Lament for Mary MacLeod (Setting 2)
Rory MacLeod's Lament
Ewen of the Battles

8. WILLIAM SHROPSHIRE

Catherine's Lament
The Desperate Battle
MacDonald of Kinlochmoidart's Lament, No. 1

9. COLIN FORREST

I Got a Kiss of the King's Hand
The Groat
Lord Lovat's Lament

10. CAMERON BONAR

I got a Kiss of the King's Hand
Lament for Donald of Laggan
Black Donald's March

March, Strathspey, and Reel

(The judges have selected one set of tunes for each competitor.)

1. MALACHI JOHANNSEN

2/4 Marches: MacLean of Pennycross
The Ross-shire Volunteers
Strathspeys: Tulloch Castle
Lady Loudon
Reels: The Sheepwife
Bessie McIntyre

2. THOMAS CANGELOSI

2/4 Marches: Morag Ramsay
The Taking of Beaumont Hamel
Strathspeys: The Bob of Fettercairn
The Doune of Invernochty
Reels: Johnnie MacDonald's Reel
The Keel Row

3. MICHAEL TRENOR

2/4 Marches: Mr. Donald Shaw, S.S.C.
Knightswood Ceilidh
Strathspeys: Maggie Cameron
MacBeth's Strathspey
Reels: Major Manson
The Grey Bob

4. MAGNUS STONE

2/4 Marches: Hugh Alexander Low of Tìree
MacLean of Pennycross
Strathspeys: Tulloch Castle
Spitfire
Reels: The Blackberry Bush
Bessie MacIntyre

5. WILLIAM SHROPSHIRE

2/4 Marches: John MacColl's March to Kilbowie Cottage
John MacDonald of Glencoe
Strathspeys: Lady Loudon
Duncan Lamont
Reels: The Sound of Sleat
Kalabakan

6. COLIN FORREST

2/4 Marches: Jimmy Young
David Ross of Rosehall
Strathspeys: Cabar Feidh
The Ewe With The Crooked Horn
Reels: The Sheepwife
John Morrison of Assynt House

7. CAMERON BONAR

2/4 Marches: Inveran
Jimmy Young
Strathspeys: Top of Craigvenow
Catlodge
Reels: The Little Cascade
Alick Cameron, Champion Piper

8. HENRY MICHAEL PALUCH

2/4 Marches: The Argyllshire Gathering
The Conundrum
Strathspeys: Delvinside
The Atholl Cummers
Reels: The Highlanders' Institute
Tom Kettles

9. GILLIAN BLANEY

2/4 Marches: Mrs. Alex Johnstone
Mrs. Duncan MacFadyen
Strathspeys: Dornie Ferry
The Ewe with the Crooked Horn
Reels: Willie Murray
The Blackberry Bush

10. KAYLEIGH JOHNSTONE

2/4 Marches: Centenary Jewel
Invergordon's Welcome To Queen Elizabeth II
Strathspeys: The Piper's Bonnet
Susan MacLeod
Reels: Broadford Bay
Bessie MacIntyre



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History

In recognition of the continuing development of piping standards in North America, Donald F. Lindsay and students from Williams College in Massachusetts established the First Annual Williams College Amateur Invitational Piobaireachd, where the Nicol-Brown Chalice was first presented on April 2, 1982. This special event was dedicated to Robert Brown and Robert Nicol ("The Bobs of Balmoral") who shared a deep and abiding enthusiasm for Piobaireachd. It was out of their affiliation with John MacDonald of Inverness that their life-long commitment to the teaching and perpetuation of Ceol Mor grew. As musicians and as world citizens, their lives remain an inspiration to pipers everywhere. It is upon the shoulders of these great teachers and Piobaireachd authorities that today's pipers and instructors stand.

Modeled after Scotland's Oban and Inverness competitions, the "Olympics of Piping," the Nicol-Brown Invitational Contest provides

enthusiastic top amateur pipers with a prestigious competition which sets a standard by which to judge their piping, and a goal to direct their hours of practice. Piobaireachd, or classical pipe music, does not always get a fair hearing due to the length, difficulty and intricacy of the tunes, but this invitational contest has become a respected place to play and listen to Piobaireachd in the United States. In order to encourage Piobaireachd of the highest standards, the top amateur Piobaireachd players from across the North American continent have been invited to compete. All competitors selected for the Nicol-Brown must be ranked at the top amateur level for both Piobaireachd and Light Music by their home associations, and must have significant results in the current season.

The Nicol-Brown has pioneered the way for elite invitational events for amateur pipers. Many former competitors and their family members return each year to volunteer their time to continue the traditions of the Nicol-Brown — a testimony to the influence that the contest has had on the lives of so many pipers.



COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Donald F. Lindsay, Founder
Kathleen Brown
Judy Campbell
Jim Feeney
Paula Glendinning
June Hanley
Ben McClamrock
Thompson McConnell
Sean Moran
Eric Ouellette
JoAnn Scott
Chris Shepherd, Chief Steward
Jane Spicer

SPECIAL GIFTS

Competitors and judges will receive a Nicol-Brown lapel pin to mark their participation in this important event. The Piobaireachd Society has donated a one-year membership to each competitor. Andrew Berthoff has donated a two-year *pipes|drums* subscription to each competitor. Sean Somers has donated a copy of *The Out West* Collection for each competitor.

DEDICATIONS

Jayne Bennett's donation was given in memory of Sandy Jones.
Doreen Forney's donation was given in memory of Pipe Major Angus Macdonald.
Daniel MacRae's donation was given in honor of his father, Duncan MacRae.
Cathi Nixon's donation was given in memory of her father, Sandy Jones.
Rick Woolard's donation was given in memory of Ronald Morrison of South Uist.

DONORS AND VOLUNTEERS

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John Bertino
Kathleen Brown
Joan Bull
Judy Campbell
Michael Cole
Thomas Cook
Olivia Corcoran
Betsy and Bruce Douglas
Keith Earle
Eastern U. S. Pipe Band Association
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JoAnn Scott
Chris Shepherd
Sean Somers
Graham Spicer and Claire Ma
Jane and Jim Spicer
United States Piping Foundation
Walker Metalsmiths
Rick Woolard

ROBERT URQUHART BROWN

Bob Brown was born in 1906 in Banchory, Scotland, of a family which had long shown a keen interest in all the music of Scotland. He received his first instruction on the bagpipes from William Fraser, a pupil of G.S. McLennan, who although suffering from a physical handicap acquired during the First World War, was still considered a fine player. Next, the young Brown went to Jonathan Ewen, an Inverness Medalist, who began for him his life-long study of Ceol Mor. Ewen was a pupil of Sandy Cameron, so it was not surprising that his young pupil began to win a number of competitions in his local area. This brought him to the attention of G.S. Allan, who took him under his wing and accompanied



him to the Argyllshire Gathering in 1925, where Brown won the junior piobaireachd. The following year he was unplaced but highly commended in the Gold Medal event.

Although he was a keen competitor and loved the excitement of the boards, Bob Brown did not always find it easy to get time off from his work—which is surprising in view of the fact that his employers have always been enthusiasts for piping. It was in fact 1931 before he was able to return to Oban, and this time he won the Gold Medal. By then, however, he was the holder of the Inverness Medal, which he won in

1928. This was also the year when, according to Bob, there occurred the most important event in his piping life—he began to take lessons from John MacDonald. “I owe my knowledge,” said Bob Brown once, “to John MacDonald who made me the piobaireachd enthusiast that I am.” Certainly, it is partly through his long and close association with John MacDonald that he came to be looked on as a great authority, but this was also due to his own clear and reasoned expositions on this subject, and his unfailing ability to produce great music whenever he played.

His fame and standing increased as time went on. In the last decade of his life, pipers began beating a path to the door of his cottage at Balmoral and he began taking his knowledge to different parts of the world. For several years he was the instructor at the Invermark summer schools in New York state; he visited South Africa and New Zealand; and it was while he was in Australia in 1972 that the first signs came of the ailment which was to prove so quickly fatal. He was barely able to get home to his beloved Scotland before he passed away.

ROBERT BELL NICOL

Bob Nicol was born in 1905 in Durriss, Aberdeenshire, and was first taught by a piper MacKellar, a pupil of MacDougall Gillies, who was later killed in the 1914-18 war. He was then taught by one of the Ewen brothers. Another of the brothers, Jonathan Ewen, at that time was teaching the young Bob Brown who was later to become Bob Nicol’s life-long friend. Bob Nicol had a successful junior career and his first piping appointment was as piper to Lord Cowdray at Dunecht. It was from here that he moved to Balmoral as King George V’s piper in 1924. In 1926, when only 20 years old he had a shooting accident that resulted in the loss of his right eye. A shot from a fellow gamekeeper ricocheted off a frozen tree and hit him in the eye.

Later in 1926, King George V was anxious to have Bob given the best tuition and he consulted the factor at Balmoral, Sir Douglas Ramsay,

and Sheriff Grant, Rothiemurchus, who were both pupils of John MacDonald. As a result, Bob Nicol was sent to Inverness to study with John MacDonald for a month that same year. It was a nerve-wracking time, as Bob related, “When John MacDonald came into the room he gave me a good dressing-down for a start. He said, ‘You’re no use to me.’ In fact he was quite nasty to me for the whole month.” But on the completion of his course a very good report was sent to Balmoral. The following year he was accompanied by Bob Brown, and the visits continued every year until 1939.

During this period, Bob Nicol became one of the outstanding players, winning all the top honours including the Gold Medal at Inverness and Oban in 1930 and the Clasp in 1932. His medal tune at Inverness was “Lament for Donald Ban MacCrimmon,” a tune he was later to play at the graveside of both John MacDonald and Bob Brown. Throughout the 1939-45 war he served as pipe major in the 2nd Gordons and ran a piobaireachd class for the 15th Scottish Division. He also taught at schools in America and Brittany. He was a very good and firm teacher, a likeable man with a sharp wit and sense of humour. Dedicated to keeping the traditional piobaireachd alive, he was undoubtedly one of the greats and one of the most knowledgeable men of our time. Bob Nicol died in 1978.

(These bios include excerpts from Vol. 24, #10 and Vol. 30, #9 of the *Piping Times*.)



PIPE MAJOR WILLIAM ROSS

Pipe Major William Ross (1879-1965) learned his early piping from his father, mother, and his uncle, Aeneas Ross, who guided his early steps in Piobaireachd. By his own great musical ability, Pipe Major Ross rose to the top of his profession. Music flowed from William Ross’s pipe and fingers with no apparent effort: “the mighty frame seemed hardly to need to blow”. It was the simplicity of the true expert—like the golf swing of a master—making it look easy until we try to do it ourselves. Unlike so many pipers, success never spoiled him, and if ever one needed a tonic, an hour in the company of the illustrious Pipe Major would assure a

cure for the ailment. He was peerless in conversation, a Prince of Storytellers. He loved human beings and was loved by them in return. In his life and work, Willie Ross was a delightful example of the perfect gentleman. By his courtesy, his modesty, and his professional ability, he left an indelible, honoured name that will live down through the ages and cheer the hearts of those who listen to the recordings of his lovely music.



He joined the Scots Guards in 1896 and from that date until his retirement in 1957 he served piping and pipers. In 1920 he was appointed Principal of the new Army School of Piping at Edinburgh Castle. After his retirement

from the Army, it was in 1921 that he became the Piobaireachd Society’s tutor, and through his appointment, pipers both military and civilian were able to benefit from his tuition. His pupils are scattered throughout

the world and always provided the cream of the piping world with many champions amongst them. The world of pipers has not only been made up of players, teachers, and composers; there have been those who worked to make the music of the pipe available to the piper, and those who worked to ensure that the great heritage was passed on. William Ross's collection of pipe music remains the mainstay and guide of many pipers.

(Excerpted from *Piping Times*, June 1966; *A Highlander Looks Back* by Angus MacPherson; *Scots Guards Book 1*; and *The Piper's Handbook* by Pipe Major John MacLellan.)

DONALD MACLEOD

Donald MacLeod was born in Stornoway on the Isle of Lewis on August 14, 1916. His first piping lessons were from his father, and at the age of six he came into contact with Pipe Major Willie Ross, who travelled to the Hebrides on behalf of the Piobaireachd Society. At age 11, Donald had his first lessons with John MacDonald of Inverness, and that relationship lasted for 25 years.

MacLeod joined the Seaforth Highlanders in 1937, and in 1939 went to France with the 2nd Battalion. He was taken prisoner at St. Valery, but escaped, and made his way back across Europe to re-join his regiment. MacLeod was made pipe major in 1941, and in 1944 returned to the front, where he piped his regiment across the Rhine during the last campaign of the war. Following the war, MacLeod spent a number of years at Fort George, where he tutored young pipers in the British Army.

Few competitors have won as many prizes as Donald MacLeod. He won the Gold Medal at Inverness in 1947, and added eight Clasps between 1948 and 64. He won the Open Piobaireachd at Oban three times, and

six Silver Stars for the Former Winners' MSR at Inverness. In 1959, Donald MacLeod competed only at Oban and Inverness. Of the seven events he entered, MacLeod won six first prizes, and was unplaced in the 7th event!

Donald MacLeod owned the bagpipe firm of Grainger & Campbell after leaving the army, and during those years he travelled around the world to teach and perform. He also was among the first to use recorded lessons for teaching piobaireachd, and he sent tapes to pipers around the world. Those original tapes are now being released in a comprehensive CD series available to all pipers.



MacLeod was a prolific composer with six books of light music, plus a collection of piobaireachd. Many of the tunes collected, composed and arranged for his 7th and 8th books of light music were published by the Gordon Highlanders after his death in 1982. His tunes are standard fare of both bands and soloists, and they are heard wherever the Highland bagpipe is played.

Donald MacLeod left many recordings of himself through years of BBC radio programs and solo records. After he had retired from competition he was heard on two excellent recordings, "The Piper in the Nave" and "The Piper's Ceilidh." Donald MacLeod was awarded the M.B.E. for his services to piping.

—by Iain MacDonald (Regina, Saskatchewan)

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Trophies and Prizes

In 1982, Brian Yates, an American piper and silversmith, was commissioned to craft the Nicol-Brown Chalice, with the winning Piobaireachd competitor's name to be inscribed on the base each year. Inspired by the Ardagh Chalice, c. 800-899 AD, the Nicol-Brown Chalice was designed as a symbol of the pursuit of excellence in Celtic art and music. Brian described the Chalice project as a "cathedral" which would take years to complete. Decades later, Stephen Walker of Walker Metalsmiths volunteered many hours of his artistic skills to bring the cathedral to completion, and it is a masterpiece.

In 1987, the Nicol-Brown committee added a March, Strathspey and Reel contest, and commissioned Mr. Fred Graham, Scottish Celtic Armourer and Silversmith of the "Royal Mile" in Edinburgh, to make a targe in honor of P/M William Ross. The MSR winner's

name is inscribed on the targe each year, along with the tunes played in the winning performance.

In 1990, a 6/8 March contest was added in honor of Donald MacLeod, with a silver buckle designed by Brian Yates to be awarded to the winner. In 2007, Stephen Walker designed a new edition of the silver buckle, to be awarded as a gift from Stephen for the 16th time this year. He has done considerable research on a technique to create "chip-carving," which is how he believes many of the early medieval masterpieces of Celtic metalwork were fashioned. The method seems to have been lost about a thousand years ago, and Stephen is working on a revival.



The overall Nicol-Brown champion for 2023 will win \$1000 in travel expenses to compete in a major competition in 2024, to be approved by the Nicol-Brown committee. The prize is donated by the NHScot Fund. Over the years, this prize has added to the lives of amateur pipers and has helped many take the next step toward Open piping and elite international competitive careers.

Nicol-Brown Chalice For Piobaireachd

1982	Nancy Crutcher: "Lament for Donald Duaghal MacKay"
1983	Ian Beatty: "Black Donald's March"
1984	Robert Minnear: "Lament for Donald Duaghal MacKay"
1985	Kenneth Garson: "The Vaunting"
1986	June Potter: "The Park Piobaireachd" #2
1987	Joyce McIntosh: "The Old Men of the Shells"
1988	Daniel Whatley: "The Park Piobaireachd" #2
1989	Katy Rashid: "The MacDougalls' Gathering"
1990	Daniel Kenny: "The Desperate Battle"
1991	Skip Cleavinger: "The Earl of Seaforth's Salute"
1992	The contest was not held.
1993	Paula Glendinning: "The Desperate Battle"
1994	Andrew Hoag: "Beloved Scotland"
1995	Paula Glendinning: "The Desperate Battle"
1996	Ryan MacDonald: "Grain in Hides, Corn in Sacks"
1997	John MacPhee: "The Battle of the Pass of Crieff"
1998	Brian May: "The Prince's Salute"
1999	Maureen Connor: "The Marquis of Argyll's Salute"
2000	Erin McCarthy: "The Rout of Glenfruin"
2001	Erin McCarthy: "The Rout of Glenfruin"
2002	Jeremy Freeman: "The Old Men of the Shells"
2003	Lyric Todkill: "Lament for the Only Son"
2004	Eric Ouellette: "Scarce of Fishing"
2005	Colin Lee: "The Desperate Battle"
2006	Cameron Scott: "The Old Men of the Shells"
2007	Alastair Lee: "Melbank's Salute"
2008	Johnny Bassett: "The MacGregors' Salute"
2009	Anthony Masterson: "The Mackays' Banner"
2010	Robert Durning: "Lament for the Viscount of Dundee"
2011	Joseph Stewart: "The Red Speckled Bull"
2012	Alexander Schiele: "The King's Taxes"
2013	Andrew Mackay: "The Massacre of Glencoe"
2014	James Dyson: "MacCrimmon's Sweetheart"
2015	Kevin McLean: "The Red Speckled Bull"
2016	Andrew Hutton: "MacLeod of Raasay's Salute"
2017	Laureano Thomas-Sanchez: "Lament for the Earl of Antrim"
2018	Filemon Tan: "Lament for the Only Son"
2019	Blaise Theriault: "The Massacre of Glencoe"
2020	Stuart H. Marshall: "The MacLeods' Salute"
2021	Callum Bevan: "Corrienessan's Salute"
2022	The contest was not held.

William Ross Challenge Targe for MSR

1987	Alasdair Wright	2005	Alex Gandy
1988	Daniel Whatley	2006	Micah Babinski
1989	Ken McKeveny	2007	Alastair Lee
1990	Robert Boyd	2008	John Lee
1991	Alan Bevan	2009	Anthony Masterson
1993	Paula Glendinning	2010	Glenn Walpole
1994	Jason Briscoe	2011	Ursa Beckford
1995	Michael Rogers	2012	Alexander Schiele
1996	Michael Rogers	2013	Liam Hilder
1997	Steven Tripp	2014	Liam Hilder
1998	Andrew Douglas	2015	James Dyson
1999	Glenn Brown	2016	Austin Diepenhorst
2000	Glenn Brown	2017	Alistair Bevan
2001	Lionel Tupman	2018	Filemon Tan
2002	Lionel Tupman	2019	Joseph Horwath
2003	Lyric Todkill	2020	Henry Michael Paluch
2004	Andrew Lewis	2021	Henry Michael Paluch

Donald MacLeod Memorial 6/8 Marches

1990	P. Andrew L. Hayes	2007	Gordon Conn
1991	Alan Bevan	2008	Johnny Bassett
1993	Jamie Troy	2009	Richard Gillies
1994	Ryan MacDonald	2010	Chris Lee
1995	Paula Glendinning	2011	Joseph Stewart
1996	Ryan MacDonald	2012	Joseph Stewart
1997	Joss Fisher	2013	Jack Williamson
1998	Andrew Douglas	2014	Tyler Bridge
1999	Glenn Brown	2015	Tyler Bridge
2000	Andrew J. Hayes	2016	Andrew Hutton
2001	Lionel Tupman	2017	Alistair Bevan
2002	Lionel Tupman	2018	Alistair Bevan
2003	Lyric Todkill	2019	Alistair Bevan
2004	Robert Beaton	2020	Henry Michael Paluch
2005	Colin Lee	2021	Stuart H. Marshall
2006	Kegan Sheehan		



Results of the 40th Nicol-Brown Amateur Invitational Competition

October 7, 2023 ~::~ Rockville, Maryland
Judges: Nick Hudson and Dr. Jack Taylor

THE 2023 OVERALL NICOL-BROWN CHAMPIONSHIP

1. COLIN FORREST (21 points) The Nicol-Brown Champion's Pipe Chanter, donated by McCallum Bagpipes (Scotland); plus travel expenses up to \$1000, donated by the NHSCOT Fund (New Hampshire) to be used to compete in a major solo contest in 2024 as approved by the Nicol-Brown committee; plus a pipe bag of the winner's choice donated by Lee & Sons Bagpipes Ltd. (British Columbia).
2. CAMERON BONAR (18 points) \$250 piping scholarship donated by Cathi Nixon in memory of her father, Sandy Jones; plus a \$50 credit for Bagpipemusic.com donated by Lee & Sons Bagpipes Ltd.
3. GILLIAN BLANEY (13 points) \$200 piping scholarship*; plus a \$25 credit for Bagpipemusic.com donated by Lee & Sons.
4. WILLIAM SHROPSHIRE (8 points) \$150 piping scholarship*
5. HENRY MICHAEL PALUCH (5 points) \$100 piping scholarship*

*Three piping scholarships for our prize winners are sponsored by Doreen Forney in memory of Pipe Major Angus Macdonald, 1st Battalion Scots Guards.

THE ROBERT NICOL-ROBERT BROWN CHALICE FOR PIOBAIREACHD

1. COLIN FORREST (9 points) A bound copy of the *Piobaireachd Society Collection*, Volumes 1-16, with presentation page, donated by Jon Maffett of The Piper's Hut (Pickerington, Ohio).
2. GILLIAN BLANEY (7 points)
3. CAMERON BONAR (6 points)
4. WILLIAM SHROPSHIRE (5 points)
5. MAGNUS STONE (4 points)

THE WILLIAM ROSS CHALLENGE TARGE FOR MARCH, STRATHSPEY, AND REEL

1. CAMERON BONAR (8 points) A McCallum long blackwood practice chanter with custom-engraved sole, bowl, and presentation ferrule, donated by Andrew Douglas of The Piper's Dojo (Troy, NY).
2. COLIN FORREST (6 points)
3. HENRY MICHAEL PALUCH (5 points)
4. GILLIAN BLANEY (4 points)
5. WILLIAM SHROPSHIRE (3 points)

THE DONALD MACLEOD MEMORIAL 6/8 MARCHES

1. COLIN FORREST (6 points) The Donald MacLeod Memorial Sterling Silver Buckle created and donated by Stephen Walker of Walker Metalsmiths Celtic Jewelry (Andover, New York).
2. CAMERON BONAR (4 points)
3. KAYLEIGH JOHNSTONE (3 points)
4. GILLIAN BLANEY (2 points)
5. MICHAEL TRENOR (1 point)

DRESS AND DEPARTMENT (judged by Donald F. Lindsay)

1. MALACHI JOHANNSEN \$100 gift certificate for Walker Metalsmiths, sponsored by Jane and Jim Spicer (Maryland).

Save the Date! ■ October 12, 2024

The Nicol-Brown Contest is held annually on the Saturday before Columbus Day / Canadian Thanksgiving.

nicol-brown.org