



Old Scotch Pipes & Drums

Monthly Newsletter

No.1, 2012



Upcoming Events *(more details below):*

- ❖ Next Practice session – Wednesday 14th March, 7:30pm, Pipe House
- ❖ Geelong Highland Games – Sat/Sunday 17th/18th March, Showgrounds
- ❖ Following Practice Session – Saturday 24th March, 2:00pm, Pipe House

OSCA Centenary - 2013

As many of you will know, 2013 represents the **OSCA Centenary** (*founded in 1913!*) – which was a major item on the agenda of the recent OSCA Clubs meeting (*attended by Brian & Stewart on behalf of the OSP&D*). Some big things are being planned for the Centenary year – and the ‘old boys’ band will be featuring in many of these events.

In that light, we’re keenly seeking all those ‘old boy’ pipers and drummers who might have *thought* about joining up with us - but are still prevaricating for various reasons. **Now’s the time to ‘take the bit in your teeth’ as they say!!** The Centenary is still a year away - giving us plenty of time to dust off *your* playing skills and get you back up to speed, so you can be a part of this major milestone. Not only will your ugly face appear in the commemorative photographs of the band playing at the various Centenary events – the OSCA dinner (*Crowne ballroom!*) and the President’s Dinner, for a start - but your name will go down in OSCA history as a band participant at these events.

So, if you haven’t played in 10 years, 20 years, or even 40 years – and worried you can’t do it anymore? - come along to our practice sessions, and we’ll soon have you confidently playing again and enjoying the band...like riding a bicycle!

☺ *The thoughtful Scotsman: My wife and I were walking by a swanky restaurant the other night. "Did you smell that food?" she asked "...incredible!" Being the nice fellow that I am, I thought 'what the heck!' So I walked her past it again.*

Castlemaine BBQ Lunch

On Sunday 30th January, Geoff and Nancy Courtis very generously opened their ‘backyard’ in Castlemaine for a new-year kick-off BBQ for the band. Despite concerns for a ‘fire-danger’ day, it turned out to be a pleasantly warm summer’s day and 15 intrepid members & families ventured up the Calder Highway for a most enjoyable lunch and informal play-out amongst the gum trees. See photographs at the end of this newsletter.

**One OSP&D member found that other places in the world are pretty cold in January:*



2012 Calendar of Events

You will have received an earlier email highlighting the tentative 2012 calendar of band & piping events for this year. A couple of comments and suggestions, and several dates confirmed, brings us an updated events calendar – *see the last few pages of this newsletter* - for the convenience of pinning to your ‘fridge.

Note: the **bold** highlighted items indicate official OSP&D activities – others are optional, if you want to ‘go along’ (*yep, some are contemplating ‘the Worlds!’*) – or just for your general awareness.

☺ **How to make things worse:** Angry wife to husband via phone: 'Where the hell are you??' Husband: 'Darling, you remember that jewellery shop where you saw that diamond necklace and totally fell in love with it....and I didn't have money that time and said 'baby, it'll be yours one day'? Wife, obviously blushing: 'Yes, I remember that my love.' Husband: 'Well...I'm in the pub next door!'

2012 Scotch College Tattoo

Yep – we're once again performing in the Scotch Tattoo. And this year, we've been invited to present a special OSP&D item – so we're now working intensively on our signature medley of tunes, while also brushing up on our drill, to make for an impressive OSP&D show on the night.

The Scotch Tattoo is scheduled for **7pm on Friday 27th April**, on the main oval at Scotch – and, if the last few years are any indication, spectators are once again in for a great show. So, if you're not playing in the band, then bring your folding chair, a warm jacket, and come see a fantastic free evening show (*do make sure to get there early, to grab a good vantage spot – it's always been a very popular event!*).

☺ *Sent an SMS to my elderly dad the other day, but I carefully spelt out every word and checked the grammar to make sure he could clearly understand it. None of our regular abbreviations in this case! Got a response back in less than 3 minutes: ATD WTFA FWIW LMDO GGLKI CUATSC 5PM. It made no sense at all to me - had to call up my mum to ask if the old boy was finally losing it. Seems the two of them are catching on pretty fast: "At the doctor's – wet the furniture again – forgot where I was – laughed my dentures out – gotta go, laxative kicking in – see you at the Seniors Centre – 5pm!"*

New 2012 OSP&D Medley

We've mentioned our new medley – here it is (*with target tempo*) – get practising:

- Wings (95 bpm)
- When the pipers play (80)
- Molly Connell (120)
- Christie McLeod (95)
- Atholl Highlanders (118) – jig version
- Major May (85)

Other OSP&D Activities in 2012

For a bit of variety, and to include spouses and partners, the band always includes regular activities besides just playing pipes & drums. This year, we're planning a few more 'social' events – always with a little playing at the end (*or in the middle*):

- Annual OSP&D cycling trip – a day-outing following a scenic cycle track/rail-trail, with obligatory band performance at a carefully selected lunch venue;
- Country pub lunch – venue yet to be decided (*Commercial, Alexandra?*) – open to suggestions – also culminating in a band performance.
- Rural vineyard lunch – venue to be announced (*Yarra Glen area?*) – along with our usual informal performance
- The VPBA band competitions (*see more below*)
- Plus others, as suggestions emerge, just to keep things interesting ...*golf day @ Mornington? ... bowls day?*

If anyone has any other thoughts/ideas for some interesting social activities or day outings, don't hesitate to pass them along to a member of your committee for consideration.

2012 Pipe Band Competitions

With our signature 'medley' coming together under Brian's tutelage, and as our playing skills continue to improve, we may start thinking about the various band competitions. However, there is nothing firm on the horizon yet. For general awareness, the remaining 2012 events are:

- Geelong – Showgrounds, Sun 18th March
- Haileybury (Vic Champs) – 25th March
- Ringwood – Jubilee Park, Sun 1st April
- Scotch mini-bands – Sun 28th Oct
- Daylesford – early December

We believe these events should always be an 'enjoyable' day-outing for everyone (*with 'shared' picnic lunch, etc*) as are all OSP&D activities.

And don't forget the 2012 Australian Pipe Band Championships to be convened in Ballarat this year: **6th~8th April** at the **Eureka Stadium**. This will no doubt be a fantastic display of top bands, and wonderful entertainment for pipe-band 'geeks' and other less-obsessed spectators.

☺ A recent joint study by the Department of Motor Vehicles and Department of Health showed that 23% of car accidents are alcohol-related. What I got from that statistic is that the remaining 77% of accidents are caused by idiots who drink bottled-water, tea/coffee, juice, energy drinks and stuff like that. So, beware of those who do not drink – they cause three times as many accidents as the rest of us. Just thought you should know!

World-class Solo Piping Recital

For those who haven't noticed: there's to be a solo piping recital on the Friday evening 6th April preceding the Australian Championships, featuring the gold-medallists:

- **Stuart Easton** – Manawatu PB, NZ
- **Andrew Roach** – Burns Club, AUS
- **Jamie Hawke** – Canterbury PB, NZ
- **Ian Lyons** – Moorabbin PB, AUS
- **Martin Frewen** – Auckland PB, NZ
- **Craig Sked** – Scottish Power, Sth Afr

Starting at 7:30pm, at the George Hotel (27 Lydiard St North, Ballarat), for just \$10pp - this will be a great show not to be missed. Maybe you could arrange to join an informal OSP&D group, and drive up together...?

☺ Wee Billy from Glescaie tried hard to be 'cool'. His friend told him he needed a good pair of designer trainers to go with his 'shell suit'. Billy saved up all his Giros, and all the money he got from returning his empty Ginger bottles and finally managed to get himself a pair of brilliant white trainers to go with his shell suit. Strutting down the street, Billy called out to all he passed "Check oot ma new trainers pal? Stonkin, eh?" One gentleman pointed out that while they were indeed a fine pair of trainers, was young Billy aware that "Ye've no' done up the laces on wan o' them, ya daft bastirt!" Billy scornfully retorted that it was deliberate, and especially 'cool' to have a trailing lace on one trainer. Indeed, on the sole of the trainer,

were instructions for the wearer to do so. When asked for proof of his claim, Billy took off his trainer and held it upside down for the disbeliever to read. "There y'are! Clear as day it says ... Taiwan !!!!!"

2012 Scotch/Hawthorn Ceilidh

Once again, there are emerging discussions about another 'charity performance' in 2012 – and, if OSP&D is interested to contribute an item or two, it's likely we may be invited to participate. Last year's performance at the James Forbes Academy was a very impressive musical event - under the creative direction of Mark Saul. And Mark, once again, proved himself an innovative and brilliant piping composer, arranger and band master – with a truly amazing collection of enthralling music – some quite different to traditional pipe band tunes! So, stay tuned (☺) – we'll let you know more as the planning progresses.

☺ A wealthy Arab Sheik was admitted to hospital for urgent heart bypass while visiting Edinburgh. Prior to the operation, doctors checked his blood to ensure enough of the correct type was available to see them through the procedure. As luck would have it, the Sheik had a very rare type, and none was to hand – so the call went out for donors. Within 15 minutes, a big strapping Scot from the orderly room stepped up announcing that he had the required type, and he'd be proud to supply whatever might be necessary. After the surgery, to show his profound thanks, the Arab Sheik sent the generous Scot a new BMW CSI, a handful of large and beautifully-cut diamonds, and US\$20,000. A couple of days later, the Sheik had to go through some further corrective surgery, so his doctor called up the Scot again – who was more than happy to oblige once more. After this second operation the Sheik once again expressed his thanks by sending the Scot a jar of barley sugars and a simple 'thank you' card. The Scot was naturally a bit disappointed and phoned the Arab's bedside phone to ask why so meagre a token of appreciation this time around? After all, it was a very rare blood type and he had now stepped forward twice in just a couple of days! "...ah thought yu'd be equally thankful, this time – but all I got was a jar of barley sugars and a card..??" The Sheik replied "Aye, but now I've got Scottish blood in my veins!"

OSP&D AGM & Election of Committee

On an official note, our AGM was held on Sunday 5th February – attended by most of our paid-up members of last year. A couple of apologies submitted, due to work/travel commitments. In addition to standing agenda items, several other items raised:

- Income from piping engagements continues to be a prominent source of funds – members urged to keep Brian informed of any upcoming opportunities;
- Insurance of assets (drums, uniforms), and for members & audiences at official events – under investigation by the Committee;
- OSP&D should set up a 'register of assets' that would also be depreciated over time;
- Following our recent fitting of lightweight Argyle jackets, 2012 band acquisitions will likely include: new drum harnesses, more formal sporrans, and uniform half plaids; and
- Likelihood of increased practice sessions over next few weeks leading up to the Scotch Tattoo.

2012 Committee Members:

President: Brian Symington - Tel: (03) 9818 8414

Vice-Pres: Stewart Wallace - Tel: 0409 022 334

Treasurer: Graham Reid

Secretary: Colin Bates

Committee: Keith Heale, Benjamin Casey

Piping Tutor: Brian Symington – Tel: (03) 9818 8414

Drum Tutor: Scott Diener – Tel: (03) 9314 4441

Otherwise, our 2011 committee was duly re-elected, and is looking forward to again leading the band to bigger & better things in 2012 – to the enjoyment of all members and their families, partners, and miscellaneous hangers-on!

Finally, several of you, please note:

Annual membership subscriptions for 2012 are now overdue

(...still only \$60 pa, or \$30 pa student/absentee concession).

As subscriptions are the only other major source of income for the band, we welcome all offers/requests for membership. Graham Reid will shine one of his very large beaming smiles on each and every one of you fronting up with a cheque in hand.

2012 Band Leaders:

Pipe Major: Brian Symington

Drum Major: Benjamin Casey

Lead Drummer: Scott Diener

New members:

Contact: Stewart Wallace - Tel: 0409 022 334

Webmaster: Andrew Buick – Tel: 0408 034 919

Castlemaine – a smartly-dressed ‘mini-band’ group in action amongst the gum trees
(rest of the drummers were obviously assigned to ‘BBQ duties’):



...and, at the other end of the world, a rather chilly (-16°C) January afternoon in Geneva for an intrepid OSP&D piper heard practising our new medley:



....and several of our good-looking drummers
... including (L to R): Lead tipper – Scott Diener; Craig Cunningham (*our own rock star!*); and the
inimitable ‘Traz’ (*Dr John Zelcer*):



...and the unfortunate ‘serious’ end of town:
(L to R: Peter Falconer; Dr Geoff Courtis; and yours truly, trying to figure out which part we’re on ...)



And, finally.....our very patient Drum Major, Benjamin Casey:



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See the attached 'updated' 2012 calendar of events

Pipe Band Events Dates 2012



JAN	15	Sun	OSPD Practice	Pipe House	10am
	29	Sun	OSP&D Summer Lunch	Castlemaine	12noon
FEB	5	Sun	OSPD AGM & Practice	Pipe House	9/10am
	11	Sat	Berwick Highland games	Arkoonah Park	9am
	22	Wed	OSPD Practice	Pipe House	10am
	26	Sun	Ballarat Band competition	Eureka Stadium	TBA
MAR	4	Sun	OSPD Practice	Pipe House	10am
	14	Wed	OSPD Practice	Pipe House	7:30pm
	17	Sat	Geelong Mini-bands	Showgrounds	9am
	18	Sun	Geelong Highland games	Showgrounds	9am
	24	Sat	OSPD Practice	Pipe House	2pm
	25	Sun	Victorian Pipe Bands Champs	Haileybury College	9am
APR	1	Sun	Ringwood Highland Games	Jubilee Park	9am
	4	Wed	OSPD Practice	Pipe House	7:30pm
	6-8	Fri-Sun	<i>Aust Pipe Bands Champ.</i>	<i>Eureka Stadium, Ballarat</i>	
	15	Sun	OSP&D Cycle Tour & lunch	*route TBC	
	21	Sat	<i>Brigadoon Highland Gathering</i>	<i>Bundanoon, NSW</i>	
	22	Sun	Scotch College Tattoo rehearsal	Pipe House	9am (tbc)
	22	Sun	Croydon RSL ANZAC Day*	Street March only	1:30pm
	25	Wed	ANZAC Day Melbourne March	City Sq., Flinders St	8am(tbc)
	27	Fri	Scotch College Tattoo*	Pipe House	6pm (tbc)
MAY	2	Wed	OSPD Practice	Pipe House	7:30pm
	12	Sat	Simon Chandler's GM	TBA	TBA
	13	Sun	OSPD Practice	Pipe House	10am
	20	Sun	Solo Piping Competition	Scotch College	9:30am
	20	Sun	<i>RU Brown Poibaireachd Comp</i>	<i>Scotch College, Adelaide</i>	
	25	Fri	OSCA Annual Dinner	Leonda, Hawthorn	6pm
	30	Wed	OSPD Practice	Pipe House	7:30pm
JUN	3	Sun	Solo Piping Competition	University of Ballarat	9:30am
	8-11	Fri-Mon	Portarlinton Celtic Festival	Portarlinton	
	13	Wed	OSPD Practice	Pipe House	7:30pm
	24	Sun	OSPD Practice	Pipe House	10am
JUL	4	Wed	OSPD Practice	Pipe House	7:30pm
	8	Sun	Solo Piping Competition	PLC Burwood	9:30am
	15	Sun	OSP&D Country Pub lunch*	Alexandra	TBC
AUG	1	Wed	OSPD Practice	Pipe House	7:30pm
	5	Sun	Solo Piping Competition	Terang (*date TBC)	9:30am
	12	Sun	OSPD Practice	Pipe House	10am
	12	Sun	<i>World Pipe Bands Champs</i>	<i>Glasgow</i>	
	29	Wed	OSPD Practice	Pipe House	7:30pm

SEP	9	Sun	OSPD Practice	Pipe House	10am
	2	Sun	Solo Piping Championships	Mt Waverley	9:30am
	26	Wed	OSPD Practice	Pipe House	7:30pm
OCT	7	Sun	OSPD Practice	Pipe House	10am
	24	Wed	OSPD Practice	Pipe House	7:30pm
	28	Sun	Scotch Mini-bands Comp	Scotch College	(tbc)
NOV	4	Sun	OSP&D Vineyard lunch*	Yarra Glen	(tbc)
	10-11	Sat-Sun	<i>Beechworth Celtic Festival</i>	<i>Beechworth</i>	
	21	Wed	OSPD Practice	Pipe House	7:30pm
DEC	1	Sat	Daylesford Highland Games	Street & Victoria Park	8am
	9	Sun	OSPD Practice & annual BBQ	Pipe House	10am