



Old Scotch Pipes & Drums

Newsletter

No.3, 2014



Upcoming Events *(more details later):*

- ❖ Annual BBQ – 12:30pm Sunday 14th December – *Graham Reid's home*
...our final activity for 2014, so we hope to see everyone there!
- **Annual subscriptions become due on 1 January 2015**
- make Graham happy and pay him soon (still only \$80, or \$40 for students)!

Daylesford Highland Games 2014

Once again, OSP&D played in the opening event of the 2014/15 Pipe Bands Competition held in picturesque rural Daylesford in the central highlands of Victoria. See photo of OSP&D street march later.

Competing in Grade 4, we just fell short of a placing. But, by all accounts – and our own assessment – we are making huge strides in our playing skills, and much more relaxed with notably improved confidence. With 21 pipers, 8 snares, 3 tenors, and a bass, we made for an impressive sight and a huge sound down the main street. We also again hosted several junior pipers and drummers in their first competitive outing – and aimed at helping their progress toward the Grade 3 school band.

As usual, in addition to the street march event, our competitive performance included a march-strathspey-reel set, and a medley of tunes – the 2nd (medley) element was maybe the best we've ever played it – maybe we relaxed a bit?

☺ *Recent despatch submittal: Two pipers and a drummer were about to hit off for a round of golf. The very tall piper produced a placard reading "ALL DRUMMERS MUST BE ACCOMPANIED BY AN ADULT".*

The drummer looked around, and couldn't see an adult in the near vicinity – had to go back to the clubhouse to find one.

[Editor's note: Yes, I'm not sure what this story is about, either!]

Scotland's Independence Referendum

As most of you will be aware, the Scottish Referendum on independence

was a close-run thing, right up to final polling day. Depending on your viewpoint, it was either an unfortunate (sad?) or relieving (happy?) outcome. Amongst a number of rather hasty last-minute promises by the leading Westminster politicians of all persuasions, there were promises of greater devolution of fiscal and social powers to Holyrood (reminiscent of Henry 'long-shanks' promises to the Scottish leaders back in 12th century? – have the Scots learned nothing of English duplicity over the last 8 centuries? Oops - sorry).

☺ *Paddy texts his wife: "Mary - am just having one more pint with the lads. If I aren't home in 20 minutes, then read the message again."*



2014 New members

And *hearty welcome* to our new members for 2014, who certainly showed off their playing skills at both the OSMaD shows and at Daylesford:

- Eddie Butler – Scotch P&D P/M '05
- James Atcheson – Scotch P&D P/M '12
- Jack Powell – Scotch P&D '12
- Victor Hortin – Scotch P&D '12
- Peter West – Old boy & ex-Nunawading
- David Forbes – Old Boy & ex-Nunawading

McCrimmon's been travelling again

One of our old stalwarts has again been lending himself around – playing with several 5/6RVR members at a tattoo at Enogerrah in Queensland. The event was convened to mark the 60th birthday of 8/9 battalion RAR, and who were host to the 5/6RVR boys. Our very own champion Drum Major, Benjamin Casey serves with 5/6RVR, and can also be seen in the photo with McCrimmon (see back pages).

Soon afterwards, McCrimmon returned to his apparent 2nd home in Singapore, and scored a practice gig with a contingent of the British Gurkha regiment – we've got photos of that, too. In one, he seems to be seriously sharing some Symington secrets and tips!

Hopefully, we'll see him back in town next weekend at our annual end-of-year BBQ around around at Graham's house.

Ben is watching our northern coast!

Some of you may be aware that our D/M Benjamin has been on assignment in Darwin as a member of the 5/6RVR Army Reserve. Our last newsletter showed Ben riding atop one of the 'toys' that are apparently periodically involved in the exercises. Hope we see him back in town in the new year!

☺ *Winston Churchill was once asked his position on whisky. His reply:*

If you mean whisky the devil's brew, the poison scourge, the bloody monster that defiles innocence, dethrones reason, destroys the home, creates misery and poverty; yea, literally takes the bread from the mouths of little children: if you mean that evil drink that topples men and women from the pinnacles of righteous and gracious living into the bottomless pit of degradation, shame, despair, helplessness and hopelessness – then, my friend, I am opposed to it with every fibre of my being.

However, if by whisky you mean the oil of conversation, the philosophic wine, the elixir of life, the ale that is consumed when good fellows get together; that puts a song in their hearts and the warm glow of contentment in their eyes; if you mean good cheer, the stimulating sip that puts a little spring in the step of an elderly gentleman on a frosty morning; if you mean that drink that enables man to magnify his joy, and to forget

life's great tragedies and heartbreaks and sorrow; if you mean that drink the sale of which pours into our treasuries untold millions of pounds each year, that provides tender care for our little crippled children, our blind, our deaf, our dumb, our pitifully aged and infirm, to build the finest highways, hospitals, universities, and community colleges in this nation – then, my friend, I am absolutely, unequivocally in favour of it!!

OSMaD: The Producers

This year OSP&D again provided a welcoming performance at each night of the OSMaD show 'The Producers'. Apart from being seen to be actively supporting other OSCA activities (*brownie points!*), this also affords us very useful opportunity for lots of pre-competition season practice under the public gaze. And, as some of you noted, forces us into improving our '*blowing fitness*' (*drummers, too?*). We always attract considerable attention and quite some applause – so our public profile benefits as well. So a huge thanks to all those who were able to contribute (*our 'bass' was touring Scotland, at the time*) – you will no doubt have felt notable playing improvement as a result.

VHPBA Public Performance – Scottish Immigration Exhibition

OSP&D recently performed alongside Frankston RSL on Southbank on **Sunday 16th November** – in an effort to promote the profile of Pipe Bands Victoria and to attract new band members - and as a part of the Scottish Immigration Exhibition. Whilst only a 1-hour performance overall, we did get to showcase our competition medley and MSR in public – and by common acclaim amongst our players on the day, we did outshine our Frankston colleagues in terms of both quality of performance and number of players! See photos later.

Annual end-of-year BBQ

As you should all be aware, Graham Reid has generously offered to host our annual EOY BBQ – at his home, next Sunday:

- 12:30pm – for lunch
- 82 The Esplanade, Clifton Hill
- Melway Map 30 – G12.

Keith is also to be gratefully applauded for kindly offering to supply all of the BBQ delicacies – although we understand that Lauren is bringing something rather special, too! In addition to a salad/dessert, don't forget to bring a chair or two, couple of glasses (*drinking, Aust Pattern*), and your preferred beverage.

Oh, and also **bring your pipes, drums, bodhran** (*look it up on e-Bay!*), **small pipes, spoons, fiddle, and any other musical paraphernalia** – **so we can ensure that Graham and Elizabeth are forever truly famous in their neighbourhood!**

Lastly, some EOY notes from our Pipe Major:

Well, 2014 has clearly been another BIG year for the Old Scotch Pipes & Drums! We've enjoyed frequent performances of all sorts – we've continued our active social events – and still enjoying lots of practice sessions. We're gradually upgrading our uniform, as finances permit – and we have recently received a generous grant from the Scottish Cultural Heritage Foundation, which is to be used to acquire Inverness Capes to protect and comfort us on those drizzly days (*recall ANZAC day, several years ago?*) and to also replace our Glengarries with a better quality 'crisper' version.

Playing at the OSMaD shows was back 'on' again, and gave us a great opportunity to play in small groups while carefully listening to our pitch and tempo – and playing exactly in *unison* is a aspect on which we just have to keep working (*reflected in the Daylesford judging sheets*).

A number of pipers have helpfully played at quite a few weddings, funerals, and other events – notably bolstering the band's finances. My sincere thanks go to all volunteers for those efforts. More recently, Keith, Peter F and myself also played at the launch of **Tim Fisher's** book on **Sir John Monash** fittingly held in the Memorial Hall at Scotch.

Most importantly, we have had a bit of an influx of younger 'old boy' pipers into the

band (*and all still with good hand dexterity!*) – very warmly welcomed by one and all! They've already made their presence felt by their excellent contribution to our Daylesford competition performances. Welcome also to Peter West and David Forbes, who've also noticeably lifted our playing standard.

In regard to our playing, you will all have surely noted that we are *not the same band* as we were - even one year ago! We're now so much better! And it's very pleasing as your P/M to see the progressive improvements continuing – even accelerating, this year. Keep chipping away at it, and we'll no doubt soon be in amongst the prizes. I am very much looking forward to the remainder of the 2014/15 band contest season, to see just what we can achieve. So, keep up the practice – wherever/whenever you can, over Christmas – every little bit counts.

Otherwise, I look forward to seeing as many as can make to our BBQ next weekend, out at Graham Reid's home.

All the best for the Xmas season!
Brian

© *The best re-cabling team available?:*
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jo3ohNxEGkM>

NOTE: Search www.youtube.com under **OSP&D** and/or **Colin Bates** for some nice videos of us playing at various events – including our recent Daylesford performance.

And, finally, for those keen to see some impressive piping skills, check out these small pipes performances by Callum Armstrong:

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1GBflrA8TFk&feature=youtu.be>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fJisKPjCEXA>

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2014 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, Bruce Webb

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

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

2014 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

*OSP&D competing at 2014 Daylesford Highland Games
Opening Street March Event
...a big band: 21 pipers, 8 snares, 3 tenors, and a bass!!*



McCrimmon (2nd from left) with 5RVR in Brisbane recently:



... and Benjamin can be seen 3rd from right.

McCrimmon (the distinguished silver pate) playing with the British Gurkhas in Singapore



*McCrimmon in serious 'coaching' mode with the Gurkhas....
... love the 'crossed Kukris' logo on the bass, behind!*



OSP&D welcoming patrons to the OSMaD 'The Producers' show:



... with Peter, Keith, Graham, and Brian looking pretty good!



... has Peter put out his 'busking bowl' there at the foot of the Burning Bush?

OSP&D performing at Southbank – part of the Scottish Immigration Exhibition:



....and taking a little 'breather' afterwards:



....would you tell him? ... or just watch?



A selection of *Twitter*[™] comments, on the occasion of the Cameron-Clegg-Miliband desperate dash to Scotland three days prior to this year's historic referendum:

Don't Panic, Mr. Cameron. Oh, you already have.

Great News! The three stooges are coming to bonny Scotland to save the Scots from themselves!

That's the political equivalent of writing a 50,000 word essay on the Sunday evening before its due date. Guaranteed botched job.

*Yer nae kissin' my bairn ya f***in' vampires!*

Whiskey Tango Foxtrot!!

A boost for the Yes campaign, surely.

All going to plan, then!

Well that's it then. Goodbye Scotland!

Beaker, Bert and Ernie - in 'The Muppets go to Scotland'...

England says vote 'yes'!

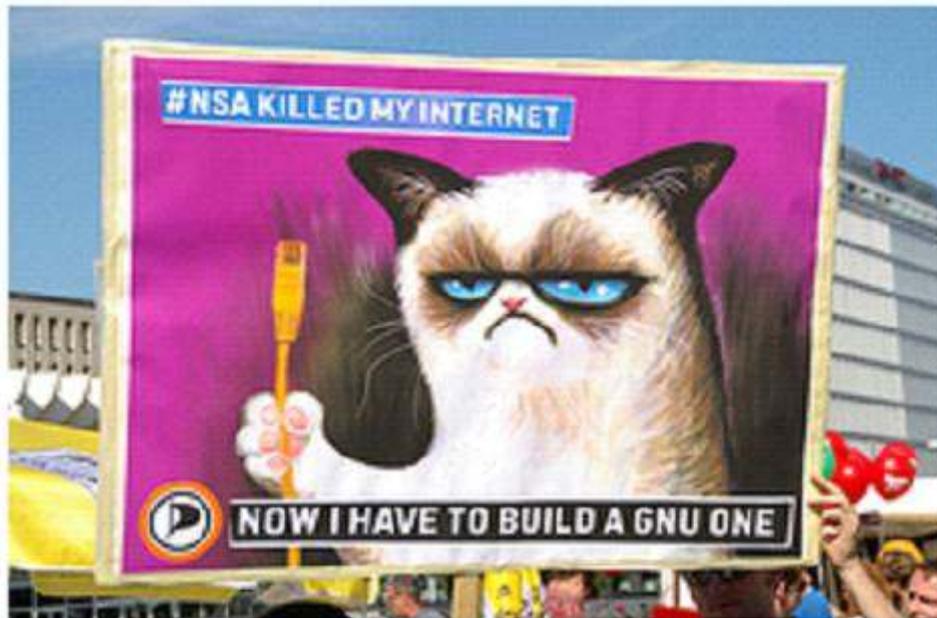
Can we leave them there and close the border?

So basically three English guys are going to turn up to tell the Scots how they should vote. Yep. What could possibly go wrong?

...and, proof of a little pre-comp practice happening in Nyon...



...calling the 'peche' fishers home perhaps?



Preliminary 2015 OSP&D Calendar (as at 8 December 2014)
(Note: some dates may further change – we will try to provide earliest email advice)

(*Colour Code*: Scheduled Practice dates – Band & Solo contests – OSCA/Scotch functions – External parades – Social events)

Sunday 14 Dec: OSP&D Christmas BBQ lunch – 12:30pm

Thursday 1 Jan: Maryborough Highland Games

Sunday 1 Feb: OSP&D – first practice session for 2015 – 10am

Sunday 8 Feb: OSP&D practice session – 10am

Wednesday 11 Feb: OSP&D practice session – 7:30pm

Saturday 14 Feb: Scots Day out (Bendigo Highland Games)

Wednesday 18 Feb: OSP&D practice session – 7:30pm

Sunday 22 Feb: Ballarat Highland Gathering

Wednesday 25 Feb: OSP&D practice session – 7:30pm

Sunday 1 Mar: Geelong Highland Gathering

Sunday 15 Mar: OSP&D practice session – 10am

Sunday 29 Mar: Ringwood Highland Gathering

Friday 24 Apr: Scotch College Tattoo 2015

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