



THE 15TH ANNUAL BALMORAL CLASSIC
presents...



ALASDAIR FRASER & NATALIE HAAS

SATURDAY & SUNDAY, NOV. 13-14, 2021

EVENT PROGRAM BOOK



f America's annual bagpipin celebration

BALMORAL CLASSIC 2021

Schedule of events

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 13

Competition: United States Junior Solo Piping & Drumming Championships
Video performances of 15 pipers and 7 snare drummers to be streamed via our YouTube channel
Piobaireachd, 8:00am EST
Snare MSR, 12:00pm EST
Piping MSR, 1:00pm EST
Snare Hornpipe & Jig, 3:30pm EST
times are approximate

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 13

Concert: Internationally renowned **Alasdair Fraser (fiddle)** and **Natalie Haas (cello)**, 8:00pm EST
Visit our bagpipin.org webpage for streaming information
Tickets: \$25 door, \$20 advance, \$15 students & seniors 65+

The second act begins with virtual performances by the Overall Winners of this weekend's US Junior Solo Championships. Overall piping winner plays his/her March, Strathspey & Reel; Overall snare drum winner plays his Hornpipe & Jig.

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 14

Piping workshop on piobaireachd tunes conducted by Murray Henderson, 11:00am-1:00pm EST
Snare Drum workshop conducted by Stephen Creighton, 11:00am-1:00pm EST
For information on how to participate in our workshops inquire at info@bagpipin.org

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BALMORAL
SCHOOL OF PIPING
& DRUMMING
Setting the Standard



Balmoral School receives state arts funding support through a grant from the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts, a state agency funded by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and the National Endowment for the Arts, a federal agency.



The Piper's Hut



Welcome!

Welcome to the Fifteenth annual Balmoral Classic, Pittsburgh's celebration of Scottish Bagpiping, Snare Drumming, and other traditional arts.

The Balmoral Classic's core event is the United States Junior Solo Piping & Drumming Championships, the only premiere National competition for pipers and drummers 21 years of age and younger. This event takes place on Saturday, November 13, and will be broadcast free of charge through YouTube Premieres of competition videos. There are fifteen piping and six drumming contestants representing Florida, Maine, Maryland, Michigan, Missouri, New York, Texas, British Columbia, Ontario, Nova Scotia, and Scotland. They have worked intensively for years to earn their position by competing with distinction in the upper amateur grades of their respective regional pipe band associations. For any competitor at this level it takes a lot of talent, focus, and time, in some ways analogous to preparation for top athletic contests. They have all come to Pittsburgh at their own expense to prove their skills and compete for awards and valuable prizes, among which are included a new set of MacRae Bagpipes, donated by McCallum Bagpipes, Murray Henderson's Piobaireachd Studio Volumes, donated by Murray Henderson, and an Axial "Silver Sparkle" Snare Drum, donated by Henderson Imports of Traverse City, Michigan.

The Championship video submissions will Premiere in groups on the Balmoral School YouTube channel, beginning with Piobaireachd (the classic style of bagpipe music) at **8:00am** EST. The event continues with the drumming March, Strathspey, and Reel medley beginning at **12:00pm** EST, followed by the piping MSR contest at **1:00pm** EST, and will conclude following the drumming Hornpipe and Jig, which begins at **3:30pm** EST.

The Saturday evening Benefit Concert begins at **7:00pm** EST in the beautiful halls of Calvary United Methodist Church, Pittsburgh, with baskets and items available for in-person attendees to pursue in support of the Balmoral School's annual educational and competitive events. The Concert is a LIVE event, taking place both in person and online via ticketed streaming, with the evening's music being brought to us by the internationally renowned duo Alasdair Fraser (fiddle) and Natalie Haas (cello) beginning at **8:00pm** EST. More information about these artists can be found later in this program.

Arthur McAra returns once again to emcee the Saturday events, and will announce the Championships award winners during the opening of the concert. The second act will begin with streams of the overall piping and drumming winners' videos, MSR and H&J respectively. Awards and prizes are listed elsewhere in this program.

On Sunday, November 14, there will be a Piobaireachd workshop conducted by Murray Henderson, born in New Zealand, and now from Scotland, and a Snare drumming workshop conducted by Stephen Creighton, from Dublin, Ireland. Both outstanding masters of their crafts, the workshops will take place in Zoom sessions **11am-1pm EST** for registered participants.

Please visit our website and follow our Facebook page to be connected to Balmoral School and the broader Celtic cultural worldwide community through the sharing of articles, and events. If you are not on our contact lists for local (Pittsburgh, PA, USA) and online events, please sign up so we can stay in touch, at <https://balmoralschoolofpiping.org/contact/>

The Balmoral Classic is made possible in part by grants and individual and organizational contributions, for which we are very grateful. We thank all of our contributors for their support, which is essential to the survival of this event. To the many Balmoral Classic volunteers, we extend our sincere thanks. Without their time and talents the weekend events would not be possible.

We encourage you to patronize our advertisers and sponsors, and hope that you will join them in enjoying and supporting Scottish and Irish music and dance, traditional art forms that occupy an important place in the diverse world of North American culture.

On behalf of the Balmoral Board and Staff,
Cead Mile Failte! (A Hundred Thousand Welcomes!)


George Balderose, Executive Director
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The mission of the Balmoral School of Piping and Drumming is to raise the standard and promote the appreciation of bagpipe music in the USA by providing world class instruction, cultivating excellence in youth, presenting innovative musical events, and fostering tradition.

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The Pittsburgh Firefighters Memorial Pipe Band proudly represents the firefighters of the City of Pittsburgh and Western Pennsylvania.

The Pittsburgh Firefighters Memorial Pipe Band wishes to congratulate the competitors on their accomplishments in qualifying for the Balmoral Classic and wish you all good luck.

Pipe Major Joe Magliocca • 412-341-9244

New members welcome

Please see our Facebook page at Pittsburgh Firefighters Memorial Pipe Band

BALMORAL SCHOOL OF PIPING & DRUMMING

SETTING THE STANDARD

THE BALMORAL SCHOOL OF PIPING & DRUMMING was established in 1979 by co-founders George Balderose and James McIntosh, MBE, “...to raise the standard and promote the appreciation of bagpipe music in the USA by providing world class instruction, cultivating excellence in youth, presenting innovative musical events, and fostering tradition.” It is a non-profit, 501.C.3 a.1 tax-exempt school, and its Board of Directors include professionals from the fields of law, finance, education, management, commerce, and piping and drumming who selflessly serve to guide the organization and realize its mission.

Balmoral School of Piping & Drumming celebrates and teaches traditional bagpipe music dating as far back as the 14th century, along with more recent compositions in the traditional style including the competition repertoire. Long-term commitment to the culture and heritage associated with the great traditions of bagpiping and drumming is encouraged among the Balmoral students. Learning music through the Balmoral School builds character, promotes heritage and fully supports family values.

SUMMER SESSIONS

Balmoral School of Piping & Drumming has introduced to Pittsburgh and other US locations some of the world’s most outstanding senior pipers to teach at its summer sessions, among them John MacDougall, Ron Lawrie, Iain Morrison, P/S John Wilson and P/M Iain McLellan, BEM of the 12-times World Champion Strathclyde Police Pipe Band.

James McIntosh, M.B.E. also founded the Carnegie Mellon University Bachelor of Performing Arts program in Bagpipe Music, the first in the world. Balmoral past instructor & Advisory Board member Mike Cusack was the first American to win the Gold Medal at the prestigious Northern Meeting in Inverness. He also led the St. Thomas Episcopal School Pipe Band to five Junior World Championships. Noteworthy drumming instructors who have taught for Balmoral include Reid Maxwell, Bert Barr, Andrew Hoinacki, Jon Quigg, Andy White, and Gordon Bell.

The Balmoral School’s summer sessions attract pipers and drummers each year, and are held on college and academy campuses.

BALMORAL CLASSIC

Founded in 2007, the Balmoral Classic is home to the only US Junior Solo Competitions for bagpipers and snare drummers 21 years of age and under. Judges are carefully chosen from among veteran judges in the USA, Canada, Australia, Ireland, and Scotland. Successful contestants usually advance to major invitational competitions and are encouraged to compete in Scotland. Balmoral Classic events this year include the Saturday competitions, Saturday evening concert and Sunday piobaireachd and snare drumming workshops.

BRINGING TRADITIONAL BAGPIPE

MUSIC TO WIDER AUDIENCES

Balmoral School of Piping & Drumming and the Balmoral Classic supports the field of bagpiping in new and creative ways within the traditional idiom and widens the public’s understanding and appreciation of quality bagpipe music. During the year, public concerts such as those at downtown Pittsburgh’s historic First Presbyterian Church feature traditional & original bagpipe music, often in combination with other instruments. Educational books published by the Balmoral School include: The Balmoral Collection of Hymns Arranged for the Highland Bagpipe (2012) and The Balmoral Guide to Playing the Bagpipes for Community Dances (2018)





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MEMORIALS

Balmoral School: *In Memory of Frank & Jane George*
Cary & Ken Bohl and David & Marthe Murray: *In Memory of Ralph and Patricia Murray*
Marilyn Cipranic: *In Memory of Gerald "Jerry" Cipranic*
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Denise McNerney: *In Honor of Tim McNerney*
Pittsburgh Firefighters: *In Memory of John Marthens, and Edward D. Moore*
Joseph Stearne: *In Memory of Esta Ann Stearne*
Robert Zappa: *In Memory of Rosemary Zappa*

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School depends on the generosity of donors
and volunteers.

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To find out how, visit BalmoralSchool.org
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2021 COMPETITORS

SOLO PIPING CHAMPIONSHIP

Quinten Bachman	Saint Louis, Missouri, USA
Sebastian Benedetto	Cape Neddick, Maine, USA
Gillian Blaney	Lower Sackville, Nova Scotia, Canada
Cameron Bonar	Surrey, British Columbia, Canada
Kevin Darmadi	Houston, Texas, USA
Jean-Sebastien Gamache	Orleans, Ontario, Canada
Roy Huang	Stouffville, Ontario, Canada
Alexandra Knox	Woodbine, Maryland, USA
Elizabeth Knox	Woodbine, Maryland, USA
Harrison Little	Fergus, Ontario, Canada
Calum MacNeil	Dearborn, Michigan, USA
Thomas McCollum	Deerton, Michigan, USA
Alexandra Miller	Safety Harbor, Florida, USA
Katherine Miller	Safety Harbor, Florida, USA
Canaan Strobel	Houston, Texas, USA

SOLO SNARE DRUMMING CHAMPIONSHIP

Sebastian Arguelles	Houston, Texas, USA
Alec Flansburg	Rotterdam, New York, USA
Tommi McAndrew	Laurencekirk, Aberdeenshire, Scotland
Andrew McNamara	Laurel, Maryland, USA
Caleb Ruddock	Dunedin, Florida, USA
Mae Thompson	Rockville, Maryland, USA



HISTORY OF BALMORAL CLASSIC CHAMPIONSHIPS

YEAR	OVERALL -PIPING	PIOBAIREACHD	MSR – PIPER	PIPING JUDGES		
2007	Larson Stromdahl	Kegan Sheehan	Andrew Tice	Alasdair Gillies	James McIntosh	John Wilson
2008	Ryan Praskovich	Reid Bishop	Ryan Praskovich	Bruce Gandy	Amy Garson	Scot Walker
2009	Anthony Masterson	Marshall German	Anthony Masterson	Brian Donaldson	Alasdair Gillies	James MacColl
2010	Joseph Stewart	Joseph Stewart	Daniel Pisowloski	Andrew Carlisle	Donald McBride	Willie McCallum
2011	Alexander Schiele	Alexander Schiele	Alexander Schiele	Brian Donaldson	Donald Lindsay	Scot Walker
2012	Kirk Brunson	Nicholas Theriault	Jack Williamson	James Bell	Donald McBride	James MacColl
2013	Scott McCann	Christian Haars	Scott McCann	Duncan Bell	Scot Walker	Andrew Wright
2014	Griffin Hall	Griffin Hall	Andrew Hutton	Brian Donaldson	Ed Neigh	Dr. Jack Taylor
2015	Gavin Mackay	Gavin Mackay	Gavin Mackay	Dr. Bill Wotherspoon	Bill Livingstone, Jr.	Duncan Bell
2016	Kolya Sier	Mark McClennan	Kolya Sier	Ian K. MacDonald	Robert Wallace	James Bell
2017	Joseph Horwath	Liam Macdonald	Callum Younger	John Bottomley	Amy Garson	Dr. Jack Taylor
2018	Charlie Morris	Charlie Morris	Charlie Morris	Dr. Angus MacDonald	Donald F Lindsay	Matt MacIsaac
2019	Kayleigh Johnstone	Kayleigh Johnstone	Kayleigh Johnstone	Ian Duncan	Bruce Gandy	Lezlie Webster
2020	David Stulpner	David Stulpner	David Stulpner	Robert Wallace	Jim McGillivray	Scot Walker

YEAR	OVERALL-DRUMMER	MSR -DRUMMER	HJ –DRUMMER	DRUMMING JUDGES		
2009	Petey Lowrie	Petey Lowrie	Petey Lowrie	Gordon Bell		
2010	Quinn McCormack	Quinn McCormack	Quinn McCormack	Jim Sim		
2011	Petey Lowrie	Petey Lowrie	Petey Lowrie	Gordon Bell	Andrew Hoinacki	
2012	Amber Stone	Amber Stone	Alastair Burgess	Alex Kuldell	Jon Quigg	
2014	Miles Bennington	Miles Bennington	Nick Parr	Gordon Bell	Jon Quigg	
2015	Mackenzie Chamberlain	Mackenzie Chamberlain	Mackenzie Chamberlain	Donald Bell	Gordon Bell	
2016	Blair Beaton	Blair Beaton	Blair Beaton	Gordon Bell	Jon Quigg	
2017	Matthew Darmadi	Matthew Darmadi	Isabella Jackson	Gordon Bell	Jon Quigg	
2018	Shane Stapleton	Shane Stapleton	Shane Stapleton	Gordon Bell	Jon Quigg	
2019	Nicholas Moore	Nicholas Moore	Jeremiah Whitney	Gordon Bell	Jon Quigg	
2020	Thomas Carruthers	Thomas Carruthers	Thomas Carruthers	Jim Kilpatrick	Steven Shedden	Gordon Bell

US JUNIOR SOLO CHAMPIONSHIPS JUDGES & COMPETITORS

The Balmoral School of Piping & Drumming is proud to announce our team of world-class piping and drumming judges for the 15th Balmoral Classic's US Junior Solo Piping & Drumming Championships. This year's competitions will take place online, with an international panel of judges hailing from Scotland, Ireland, Australia, Canada and the USA.



SCOTLAND - MURRAY HENDERSON's accomplishments include Highland Society of London's Gold Medals at both Oban and Inverness, Gold Medal Clasp at Inverness (6 times), Senior Piobaireachd at Oban, Dunvegan Medal, Colonel Jock MacDonald Clasp to the Dunvegan Medal (2 times), Silver Chanter (5 times), Bratach Gorm (5 times), Gillies Cup (3 times), MSR at both Oban and Inverness, Former Winner MSR at London (5 times), Glenfiddich Championship (4 times). He is senior adjudicator for the Solo Piper's Judges Association for both Piobaireachd & light music, and has judged Internationally, and at all major events in Scotland.



AUSTRALIA - P/M BRETT TIDSWELL is the Principal of Piping with the Australian Pipe Band College, and a qualified examiner with the Piping and Drumming Qualification Board, Scotland. He is the only piper to win a record 12 wins of the R U Brown Piobaireachd Society Gold Medal. Under his leadership, the City of Adelaide Pipe Band won the Australian Grade 1 Championships in 1998 and remained at the top of Grade 1 for the next 10 years. During the Scottish competition season, Tidswell competed with 20-times World Pipe Band Champions Strathclyde Police Pipe Band.



USA - MIKE ROGERS is a professional piper and EUSPBA judge from Silver Spring, Maryland. His competitive successes include the Highland Society of London Gold Medal at the Argyllshire Gathering, the Piobaireachd Society (Canada) Gold Medal, the Silver Medal at the Argyllshire Gathering, the Dan Reid Invitational Cameron Gillies Championship, the Piobaireachd event at the Metro Cup, and the Professional MSR event at the USPF Championship. He played with the City of Washington Pipe Band for 10 years, Grades 2 and 1, and served as Pipe Sergeant for several years in Grade 1.



IRELAND - STEPHEN CREIGHTON is the lead drummer with the World Championship winning St Laurence O'Toole Pipe Band, Dublin, Ireland. His solo honours include the 1989 World Junior Championship, 19 World Solo Finals, 5 Senior all Ireland Championships and 3 Ulster Senior Championships. With his corps, Stephen has won five Grade 1 All Ireland drumming titles, two Champion of Champions titles, and six World Drum Corps titles plus the 2010 World Pipe Band crown.



CANADA - J. REID MAXWELL, as the Lead Drummer in 1995, became the first person in history to lead the drum corps of two different bands (SFU Pipe Band, 78th Fraser Highlanders) to World Pipe Band Champions wins, this preceded by two World Pipe Band Championships and four World Drum Corps Championships as a member of Scotland's Dysart & Dundonald Pipe Band. With SFUPB's capture of the World Pipe Band Championship & World Drum Corps Championships (2008, 2009) Reid obtained his 18th World Championship title.



USA - ERIC MACNEILL joined the Oran Mor Pipe Band in 1996 and in 2000 became lead drummer for the grade 2 band, before joining the SFU Pipe Band in 2012. In 2009, Oran Mor moved to grade 1, and in 2011, qualified for the grade 1 final at the World Pipe Band Championships. Since fall of 2015, Eric has been drumming director for the Dunedin pipe band programs and lead drummer of the City of Dunedin Grade 2 pipe band. He has been EUSPBA Professional Season Champion several times, and a semi-finalist at the World Solo drumming Championships in Scotland five times.

On Sunday morning after the competition, Balmoral is offering a free piobaireachd workshop with piping judge Murray Henderson, and a free drumming workshop with drumming judge Stephen Creighton. The piobaireachd and drumming workshops are open to any pipers or drummers who apply for 2021's competition and to all previous Balmoral Classic competitors. The two workshops will be held online, Sunday, Nov. 14, from 11:00am to 1:00pm EST.

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TROPHIES AND AWARDS

Overall Piping Winner

Ralph & Patricia Murray Memorial Award and Scholarship

(Room/Board/Tuition for a Balmoral School
2022 summer session)

MacRae Bagpipe, African Blackwood,
engraved alloy ferules and imitation ivory
projection mounts, with bagpipe case
(donated by McCallum Bagpipes)

Overall 2nd through 6th place winners

Balmoral Scholarship

(Tuition for one week at a 2022 Balmoral
School summer session)

Piobaireachd Winner

Balmoral Award

Piobaireachd Studio - 5 tutorial bundles
(donated by Murray Henderson Piping)
Pipe Major Donald MacLeod Collection of
Piobaireachd Tutorials Vol 17
(Donated by Balmoral School)

2nd Place Piobaireachd Winner

Handcrafted blackwood pipe chanter
"MAC 1"

(donated by MacLellan Bagpipes)
Pipe Major Donald MacLeod Collection of
Piobaireachd Tutorials Vol 15
(Donated by Balmoral School)

3rd Place Piobaireachd Winner

Antiqued Thistle Faux Seal Fur Sporrán
(donated by Celtic Croft)
Pipe Major Donald MacLeod Collection of
Piobaireachd Tutorials Vol 10
(Donated by Balmoral School)

4th Place Piobaireachd Winner

Piobaireachd Fingerwork
(donated by Balmoral School)
Pipe Major Donald MacLeod Collection of
Piobaireachd Tutorials Vol 12
(Donated by Balmoral School)

5th Place Piobaireachd Winner

Masters of Piobairachd Vol. 3, 4, 5
(Donated by Balmoral School)
Pipe Major Donald MacLeod Collection of
Piobaireachd Tutorials Vol 6
(Donated by Balmoral School)

* Piping medals awarded to the 2nd,
3rd, 4th, and 5th place competitors in
each event. Award plaques become the
property of the winner.

March, Strathspey, & Reel Piping Winner E.W.Littlefield, Jr. Award

Pipers Choice Trad A Smallpipes in the
key of A-440, with case
(donated by Scott's Highland Services)
Pipe Major W. Ross's Collection Book 1
(Donated by Duncans Highland Supply)
Piping Center 1997 Recital Series Vol 1:
McCallum & Worrall
(Donated by Temple Records)

2nd Place MSR Piping Winner

Gift Certificate for pipetunes.ca
(donated by Jim McGillivray)
Pipe Major W. Ross's Collection Book 2
(Donated by Duncans Highland Supply)
Piping Center 1997 Recital Series Vol 2:
Patrick & Liddell
(Donated by Temple Records)

3rd Place MSR Piping Winner

Scots Guards Vol 3
(Donated by Balmoral School)
Pipe Major W. Ross's Collection Book 3
(Donated by Duncans Highland Supply)
Piping Center 1997 Recital Series Vol 3:
Gillies & Stoddart
(Donated by Temple Records)

4th Place MSR Piping Winner

Scots Guards Vol 2
(Donated by Balmoral School)
Pipe Major W. Ross's Collection Book 4
(Donated by Duncans Highland Supply)
Piping Center 1998 Recital Series Vol 1:
Lamond & Parkes
(Donated by Temple Records)

5th Place MSR Piping Winner

Scots Guards Vol 1
(Donated by Balmoral School)
Pipe Major W. Ross's Collection Book 5
(Donated by Duncans Highland Supply)
Piping Center 1998 Recital Series Vol 2:
MacDonald & Walker
(Donated by Temple Records)

Overall Drumming Winner

David L. Peet Memorial Award
Axial "Silver Sparkle" Snare Drum
(donated by Henderson Imports, Ltd.)
Henry Matthews Memorial Scholarship
(Room/Board/Tuition for a Balmoral School
2022 summer session)

March, Strathspey, & Reel Drumming Winner

St. Andrew's Society of Pittsburgh Award

Hornpipe/Jig Drumming Winner

Pittsburgh Firefighters Memorial Pipe Band Award

Overall 2nd through 6th place winners

Balmoral Scholarship
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4th Place Overall Drumming Winner

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5th Place Overall Drumming Winner

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CD (Donated by Balmoral School)

For all pipers: A Controversy of Pipers CD
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Masters Solo Drumming Championship CD
(Donated by Temple Records)
Balmoral Guide to Playing Bagpipes for
Community Dances
Piper lapel pin, Balmoral Classic magnet
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The musical partnership between consummate performer Alasdair Fraser, “the Michael Jordan of Scottish fiddling,” and brilliant Californian cellist, Natalie Haas, spans the full spectrum between intimate chamber music and ecstatic dance energy. Over the last 16 years of creating a buzz at festivals and concert halls across the world, they have truly set the standard for fiddle and cello in traditional music. They continue to thrill audiences internationally with their virtuosic playing, their near-telepathic understanding, and the joyful spontaneity and sheer physical presence of their music.

“... you would think they’d been playing together for centuries. While his fiddle dances, her cello throbs darkly or plucks puckishly. Then [Haas] opens her cello’s throat, joining Fraser in soaring sustains, windswept refrains, and sudden, jazzy explosions. Their sound is as urbane as a Manhattan midnight, and as wild as a Clakmannan [Scotland] winter.”
— Boston Globe

Fraser has a concert and recording career spanning over 30 years, with a long list of awards, accolades, radio and television credits, and feature performances on top movie soundtracks (Last of the Mohicans, Titanic, etc.). In 2011, he was inducted into the Scottish Traditional Music Hall of Fame.

Haas, a graduate of the Juilliard School of Music, is one of the most sought after cellists in traditional music today. She has performed and recorded with a who’s who of the fiddle world including Mark O’Connor, Natalie MacMaster, Irish supergroups Solas and Altan, Liz Carroll, Dirk Powell, Brittany Haas, Darol Anger, Jeremy Kittel, Hanneke Cassel, Laura Cortese, and many more.

This seemingly unlikely pairing of fiddle and cello is the fulfillment of a long-standing musical dream for Fraser. His search eventually led him to find a cellist who could help return the cello to its historical role at the rhythmic heart of Scottish dance music, where it stood for hundreds of years before being relegated to the orchestra. The duo’s debut recording, *Fire & Grace*, won the coveted the Scots Trad Music “Album of the Year” award, the Scottish equivalent of a Grammy. Since its release, the two have gone on to record three more critically acclaimed albums that blend a profound understanding of the Scottish tradition with cutting-edge string explorations. In addition to performing, they both have motivated generations of string players through their teaching at fiddle camps across the globe.

Workshops, Master Classes, and Residency Activities

Through the four summer programs that Alasdair founded, the Valley of the Moon Scottish Fiddling School, the Sierra Fiddle Camp in California, a week-long course at Sabhal Mor Ostaig on the Isle of Skye, and Crisol de Cuerda in Spain, Alasdair and Natalie have inspired hundreds of aspiring musicians.

Alasdair and Natalie give master classes and workshops for performers of all ages, levels, and instruments, with an emphasis on the linguistic nature and rhythmic drive of traditional music. Several different themes are available, including: finding your own voice on your instrument, becoming ‘groove’ aware, ensemble playing, arrangement, creativity & improvisation, and working with orchestra and smaller chamber groups. The focus is on inclusivity and building community through music-making. They create a safe, non-judgmental and non-competitive place to learn. All teaching is done by ear.

"Fraser, one of the most respected of all exponents of the Scots fiddle, would look long and hard to find a more appropriate cellist as a partner. Haas can switch just as effortlessly as Fraser from a gentle singing tone to driving, dancing melody. A positive joy." — The Scotsman

"As many gigs as they must have played together over the past decade or so, there remains a striking spontaneity about Fraser and Haas's music-making. He has tonal variation and attack to spare, but what makes them so consistently absorbing is the responsiveness each shows to the other. Haas is more than a cellist: she's the rhythm section who uses the percussive chip'n'chop of her bowing and the double bass-like pulse of her pizzicato playing to great effect. The accompanist's role moves so fluently between them, building tension all the while, and then they'll slip into unison and it's like floodgates opening."

— The Herald

"[Alasdair and Natalie] create a sumptuous orchestral mix through the subtle art of aural implication, an intricately textured sound built upon Haas's extended cello technique."
—Andrew Gilbert

www.alasdairfraser.com
www.nataliehaas.com
www.alasdairandnatalie.com



"Natalie basically wrote the book on the cello's place in Celtic music." — Peter Winter

Partial Discography Alasdair Fraser and Natalie Haas

Syzygy (2021)
Ports of Call (2017)
Abundance (2014)
Highlander's Farewell (2011)
Fire and Grace (2009)
In the Moment (2007)
Legacy of the Scottish Fiddle, Vol 2 (2004)
Legacy of the Scottish Fiddle, Vol 1 (2002)

Skyedance Band
Live in Spain (2001)
Labyrinth (2000)
Return to Kintail (1999)
Way Out to Hope Street (1997)

Dawn Dance (Indie-Best Celtic Album of 1996)

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IN DEFENSE OF COMPETITION

By Sean Patrick Regan

We may look back on 2020 and 2021 as the years of our lives that most strongly and favorably impacted the future of bag-piping and drumming. They were not good years; they were great years, and their positive effects will be seen in subtle and overt ways for generations.

I promise you, I am neither mad nor insincere.

In order to look into the future to discover their potential impact, and in particular to see why it may be of relevance to this weekend's outstanding young competitors, I am going to reference some of my experiences as a competitor. My apologies if this seems self-indulgent, but it is intended as quite the opposite; each of us has an utterly unique life experience, and from that perspective our uniqueness represents the one thing that we all have in common. By observing parts of mine, you may find bits that distinctly do not match parts of yours, and better understand either or both because of it. Be warned, though; if you only read part of this, you're likely to think I'm a different person than I am.

The bug caught me early, and I quickly became SERIOUSLY competitive: in the community soccer league, I played to win and was righteously dismayed when I discovered that no one else was keeping score. While other kids were happy to have a shiny figurine at the end of the season, I smouldered all the way to the pizza parlour. Every participation trophy awarded was a dagger thrust into my personal sense of the world's credibility and justice. 4 was a rough age.

I also took up Highland Dance at 4, then pipes at 8, then drums at 12, at which age I also started teaching and gigging on the pipes. When I was 9, a youth band was formed and I discovered a new passion; I enjoyed performing, teaching, and competing, but my favorite thing was playing with other people. Fast tunes and harmonies, all day! We would go around the games and compete with each other, listening to and commenting constructively on each others' performances, and very practically helping each other develop as musicians and people.

It was marvelous for a while, a time of great sympathetic joy, because having friends in the same grade and in the same community allowed me to sharpen myself even as I basked in their success (even when their success occasionally resulted in my placement lower down the prize list). There was a perspective and sense of boundless possibility and inevitable greatness about our individual and collective futures. There was no doubt in my mind that at some point we would all of us be contending at the top events, though there was no rush to get there. "Don't let it be forgot, that once there was a spot, for one brief, shining moment..." -(Arthur, *Camelot*)

A friend once summed up a perspective similar to the one held by my 4-year-old self, saying, "**An inherent part of competition is the requirement that for someone to win, someone else must lose.**"

The problem with the win/lose dichotomy of course is manifold, in that it is not fun to lose, that, by one interpretation of the statement, all who are not The Winner are by default The Losers, and that whom is awarded the prize in a contest is determined by whom is sitting behind the table and not

by whom is playing the instrument. Taking those ideas into consideration, and having a reasonable amount of empathy, a person might identify this not as a win/lose dichotomy but as a lose-lose situation; even if a person wins, by virtue of doing so they have participated in a scenario which causes the other competitors to lose, which, as previously observed, is not fun. Recognizing that losing is part of the game, and therefore determining to win, an individual or organization develops an edge. I adopted one, and encouraged the band to do so as well in 2006, **not knowing the negative side effects of doing so until it was too late:**

At some point, Pittsburgh crossed a threshold from the first perspective into the second. I have since seen it crossed in many organizations and communities, where competitive spirit turns into a "win at all costs" attitude and a performance-based arrogance, often accompanied by unchecked ambition and those in leadership losing sight of the bigger picture and greater potential of their community. Backbiting becomes commonplace and organizations are inclined to trade long-term stability for short-term gains regardless of what bad blood might develop. They focus on winning prizes, to the detriment of their art and the health of their community. I was going into my senior year of high school when it all happened, and I felt powerless as I watched the Pittsburgh piping and drumming community tear itself apart for nearly a year and a half.

I saw former friends at every contest, sometimes wearing their gear from our band in the circle of their new group. I could hardly look at some of the competitors at the games, but I didn't want to feel or think ill of them, and the shift in perspective as it had manifested in me was too close to a toxic mentality for safety. This problem was solved, or at least put off, by mentally setting myself as my only competitor. By always striving to be better than the memory of my last performance, even on the rare occasion when I didn't take a prize at the games I was able to count each performance as a personal victory. Whether anyone else decided to compete against me and suffer the consequences was their own decision.

For a while, I thought I had achieved enlightenment and built a perfect system! I had not. The perpetually critical approach to my own playing meant that I was never happy with the performance. It was as if every win required a self-imposed loss to cancel it. **I was winning competitions, but playing a bunch of notes with no music in me.**

I recognized the staleness and lack of heart in what I was doing, and started to slip in my practice. Then I stopped practicing, and stopped competing. I would go weeks and longer when the only time I sounded my instrument was for a gig.

Months passed this way. After a while, I had difficulty playing to the level of the memory of my last performance.

After a while longer, I simply accepted that I would never again play as well as I had in my late teens. I felt that it didn't really matter. Nothing mattered. "You're only given a little spark of madness and, if you lose that, you're nothing."-(Robin Williams, *Off The Wall*)

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I didn't compete, not really, for three years. Then, in 2012, a worldwide online competition took place and I thought I'd give it a try. The buildup to it and subsequent, pleasantly surprising result rejuvenated my enthusiasm. I won all but one of the seven events that I entered, and with the competitors' videos all available for the world to see I felt a relief that hadn't been present in competition for me for a long time. There was no need to second-guess, or let some self-sabotaging part of my mind consider whether someone else deserved the placing. More importantly, because of the amount of practice I had put in over the months leading to the contest, **I was back to playing my instrument. Playing. Not sounding, or operating, or analyzing. Playing. For fun.**

After only 17 years of contemplating the relationships between winning and losing and competition, I can say with certainty that **there is a perspective which incorporates the best of the others without sacrificing the quality of musicianship.** The event that began the realization of this perspective took place 9 years ago, this month, and the last two years have resolved the process. **It begins with these questions:**

1. Given the amount of stress, general negativity, and subsequent burnout that is evidenced in competitive piping and drumming culture on a regular basis, why do we consistently foster a competitive spirit in young musicians?
2. As music is an art form, why do we compete at all?
3. Why don't we just get together every month or so and have people take turns playing a couple of tunes?
4. What has competition done for us?

The first question is easy to answer. The discipline, focus, and structure that come with effective competition coaching are tremendously valuable to the development of an effective individual. Furthermore, they can support the development of the skills needed to function as a musician of great proficiency, allowing the student to more quickly move past the initial hurdles that serve as hangups to less driven students. It also facilitates future opportunities for them to travel and live through new and exciting experiences as soloists and band members.

Many of the **answers for the second question** overlap with those from the first. Competition provides structure for the development of those musicians who participate. It is a platform for developing some skills related to performance as an art, and allows pipers the chance to receive input and alternate perspectives from judges and other musicians.

One of the points that gives me great hope for the future of the Pittsburgh scene is the existence of the **Pittsburgh Piping Society** which, **to the point of the third question**, DOES meet (or did, pre-COVID) on a fairly regular basis to play tunes. I'm not sure why they've not convened for a while, despite the availability and proven viability of Zoom as a platform, but for some time at least the PPS was doing a great thing in Pittsburgh by bringing people together just for the sake of community and music. I hope to see them resume again, before too long.

And the fourth question... **"What has competition done for us?"**

These two years have showcased great adaptation and resilience, not just on the part of the Balmoral School but for the world of Piping and Drumming at large. The virus hit most of the United States over St. Patrick's Day Weekend, the universal "high holiday" of pipers of all persuasions and the start

of our spring performance and competition seasons. It was a blow sorely felt.

The spring 2020 Ohio Valley Branch Indoor Competition was canceled (for those who don't know, OV is the branch of the Eastern United States Pipe Band Association under which the Balmoral Pipes & Drums is registered.), and for the rest of the year we watched the entire season of in-person events get canceled one at a time.

While many organizations and bands either chose, or were forced, to "cancel 2020," the Balmoral School and the Balmoral Pipes & Drums were prepared. We had a framework for online band practice in place, and held our first remote rehearsal the first week of April, 2020. **We might have been physically separated, but we were not isolated as individuals and we were not alone in the wider community:** over a dozen virtual competitions and four online summer camps (two of which were Balmoral's) were organized in the EUSPBA during the remainder of the year, and the Ohio Valley had the distinction of hosting the largest contest in the association!

"What has competition done for us?"

In the last two years of online competitions:

–It has produced a library of thousands of videos on YouTube, which represents an unprecedented record of the full range of ability present in the international piping and drumming community as of this point in our collective development

–It has provided those competitors who need it the impetus of a contest to get up-and-at-'em

–It has kept our community connected, internationally as well as locally, as pipers and drummers call-in via different video messaging systems for info sessions, workshops, award ceremonies, jam sessions, and live contests

–It has advanced the overall quality of music technology education and subsequently the recording capability of at least hundreds if not thousands of musicians as they have adapted by learning to use and improve audio and video recording software

...But none of those is what I consider to be the element of greatest potential out of this whole shared and unique experience.

Prior to the pandemic, a lot of people had forgotten why they started playing, but didn't realize they had forgotten until they didn't have band practices, or performances, or competitions to distract them. Without impending performances, many of them stopped attending rehearsals, or stopped practicing. That's something of which I am really proud, regarding Balmoral's handling of the year, that is, the sense of community reflected in our attendance at band practices, summer camps, workshops, and the Classic. Not only were we musically prepared when the Canonsburg 4th of July Parade came around this year, but we had over a dozen musicians in attendance and we looked and sounded like a BAND. It felt like no time had been lost, because we never stopped.

For those around the country who have found themselves without the motivation to attend rehearsals, or who question the point of holding a band practice when there is no contest or performance to work toward, this pandemic is a gift. Please, PLEASE, try to remember:

I presented four questions earlier that all boil down to a fifth, which is actually the first and only question that each of us needs to answer.

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IN MEMORIAM



JAMES MCINTOSH, MBE 1925-2021

It is with sincere regret we announce the passing of one of the most influential Highland bagpipers of the 20th century, Jimmy McIntosh MBE. He died at his home in Anderson, South Carolina, after living for many years in Pittsburgh, PA. He is survived by his loving wife, Joyce and their son Cameron.

Jimmy was born and brought up in Broughty Ferry near Dundee, Scotland, and was sent off to the Army when only 14 as a “boy piper”. in the Cameron Highlanders.

At 46 years old, and relatively new to solo piping after a hiatus of 20+ years, he turned his late-blooming career into competitive success. In 1972 he won the Highland Society of London’s Gold Medal at the Northern meeting, Inverness. 1974 he was the overall winner of the first Grant’s Invitational Solo Piping Championship (later the Glenfiddich). He would also win the Dunvegan / Portree Gold Medal (1975) and Portree Clasp (1976), and the Highland Society of London’s Gold Medal at the Argyllshire Gathering in 1978.

Jimmy was brought to Pittsburgh, and the USA in 1979, on an H-1 visa for “artists of distinguished merit and ability” by Calliope House, Inc, to teach at the Balmoral School of Piping’s summer schools. Later on, Jimmy married Joyce MacFarland of Pittsburgh, emigrated from Scotland, and was hired by Carnegie Mellon University to revive its defunct bagpipe band. In the process Jimmy took the assignment a few steps farther when he presented a proposal to the Music Faculty at CMU which established the first Bachelor’s Degree in Bagpipe Performance in the entire world at CMU. Later, Jimmy was awarded the M.B.E. for his services to traditional piping.

While he was a competing piper of the first order, it was as a teacher that he gained his greatest renown. He resolutely passed along the knowledge of piobaireachd (classical bagpipe music) that he gained primarily from Robert Bell Nicol and Robert Urquhart Brown – the Sovereign’s Pipers at Balmoral – to students around the world, leading several pipers to their own greatness, such as the first Americans to win the Gold Medal at the Northern Meeting, Inverness: Mike Cusack, Donald MacPhee, and Mike Rogers.

Jimmy also played a major role in the development of a new solo pipe chanter with David Naill Bagpipe Makers. The chanter caught on quickly, and for at least 10 years became the instrument of choice with most solo pipers.

After he retired from CMU to his successor, P/M/ Alasdair Gillies, and latterly to Andrew Carlisle, the McIntoshes moved to South Carolina in 2011.

In 1994, James McIntosh was awarded the MBE for services to piping. He travelled to Buckingham Palace to accept the award from Queen Elizabeth II. And in 2002 he received the Balvenie Medal for services to piping, presented at Blair Atholl Castle.

In 2014, at the age of 89, he published *Ceol Mor* for the Great Highland Bagpipe Presented in the Balmoral Tradition, a well-received 144-page book that paid homage to his teachings from the Bobs of Balmoral and their interpretation and analysis of more than 70 piobaireachds.

He always had a vision for the future of piping. He is leaving us such a rich legacy.





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IN MEMORIAM

PADDY MOLONEY (1938-2021)

Paddy Moloney, the playful but disciplined frontman and bagpiper of the Chieftains, a band that was at the forefront of the worldwide revival of traditional Irish music played with traditional instruments, died on Monday [October 11, 2021] in Dublin. He was 83.



Mr. Moloney was a master of many instruments: He mainly played the uilleann pipes (the national bagpipes of Ireland) and the tin whistle, but he also played the bodhran (a type of drum) and the button accordion. In addition, he was the band's lead composer and arranger.

For nearly 60 years the Chieftains toured extensively and released more than two dozen albums, six of which won Grammy Awards. They were particularly known for their collaborations with artists from other genres, including Van Morrison, Mick Jagger, Paul McCartney, Nanci Griffith and Luciano Pavarotti.

"Over the Sea to Skye," the Chieftains' collaboration with the flutist James Galway, peaked at No. 20 on the Billboard classical album chart in 1996. "San Patricio," a 2010 collaboration with the guitarist Ry Cooder that fused Celtic and Mexican influences, reached No. 37 on the Billboard 200 and topped the Latin album chart. "Irish Heartbeat," the group's collaboration with Mr. Morrison, charted in 1988.

"Our music is centuries old, but it is very much a living thing," Mr. Moloney told The Philadelphia Inquirer in 1989. "We don't use any flashing lights or smoke bombs or acrobats falling off the stage." He added, "We try to communicate a party feeling, and that's something that everybody understands."

In 2012, when he was vice president, President Biden told People magazine that his desire was to sing "Shenandoah" with the Chieftains "if I had any musical talent." He invited them to perform at his inauguration this year, but Covid-related restrictions kept them from travelling.

"It's music that belongs in you, it's who you are and what you are," Mr. Moloney told The Post in 2002, describing the musical tradition that shaped his career. "You've been given this God-given gift of being able to play for people and make them happy. And that's been our mission in life."

Mr. Moloney and his band were appointed official musical ambassadors for the Republic of Ireland in 1989, at a time when they were seeking to connect traditional Irish songs with other musical traditions. "Playing in China or Japan, they don't understand a word of the garbage I'll be pouring out at them," he once told The Washington Post, "but when we start to play, people realize you don't have to be Irish to enjoy or understand Irish music and this is the essential thing."

"His legacy will remain with us in the music which he created and brought to the world," read a statement from Irish President Michael D. Higgins.





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IN MEMORIAM

ROBIN (ROBERT SAMUEL) MORTON,

folk musician and record producer, born 24 December 1939; died 1 October 2021. “For decades, Robin Morton has made a massive contribution to traditional music.

As a founder member and player-manager of the early Boys of the Lough, he helped take traditional music to huge audiences worldwide. As a long-term manager, producer and ‘fifth member’ of Battlefield Band, one of the great institutions of Scottish traditional music, he has brought talent to the fore for decades.



He is an enthusiast, author, song-collector and promoter of folk music, who was instrumental in founding the Ulster Folk Music Society and served as Edinburgh Folk Festival director, with a stint as chairman of the Scottish Record Industry Association.

His record production has won acclaim time and again over the decades, and his Temple Records label has championed Scottish music since 1978. He pioneered early releases of harp music and Gaelic song, long before they fell into popular favour; releasing records of Alison Kinnaird, Flora MacNeil and Christine Primrose when no other labels would do so.”

It was at the Ulster Folk Music Society that he was introduced to a young Fermanagh flute and whistle player called Cathal McConnell who later, along with Robin and Tommy Gunn, another Fermanagh musician and ‘a great fiddle player and carrier of tunes’, would form a trio which they named after a reel they played: Boys of the Lough.

After Robin retired from the Boys of the Lough in 1978, the reformed ensemble included fiddler Aly Bain from Shetland, string and concert box player Dave Richardson from Northumberland, and Christy O’Leary from County Wexford, Ireland (uilleann pipe/whistle/vocals).

Always on the lookout for fine traditional musicians, Robin founded Temple Records and was a pioneer in recording several genres of Scottish music: Gaelic Song, harp players, bagpipe and fiddle orchestras. Temple’s longest recording relationship was with the Scottish-based Battlefield Band, with Robin producing their first album for Topic in 1977, and every record since, through all the many changes of band personnel. He also acted as their manager for many years.

Robin served as Chairman of the Scottish Record Industry Association and was Director of the Edinburgh Folk Festival for three years. He survived by his wife Allison Kinnard, a distinguished glass artist as well as a musician, and their children, Ellen and John.



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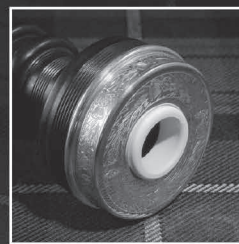
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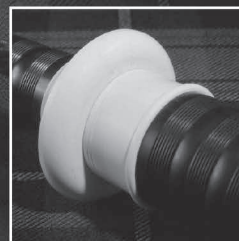
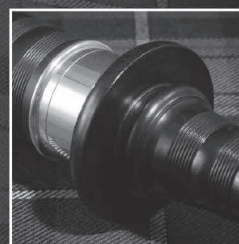
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B DUNCAN MacRAE *Bagpipes* by Stuart Liddell



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