

## **A History of the Alliance of North American Pipe Band Associations**

For many years, the 10 pipe band associations located across the United States had held competitions, promulgated rules and existed with no (or virtually no) communication with each other.

When issues arose that crossed association boundaries, it was difficult to resolve them. In addition, it was difficult for bands and solo competitors to travel to other associations and understand their rules.

To alleviate many of these problems, in 2001, the Alliance of North American Pipe Band Associations (ANAPBA) was incorporated as a 501(c)3 nonprofit.

The ANAPBA held its first meeting in 2009 with the mission of advancing the development and quality of pipers, drummers and pipe bands across North America through:

- Communication and sharing of information
- Providing a forum for the study and discuss of issues
- Making and receiving recommendations from member associations regarding education, adjudication, administration, communication, competition and other related issues
- Fostering a culture of cooperation among member associations.

The ANAPBA was the vision of three officers of the Western U.S. Pipe Band Association -- Jeff Mann, Secretary, of Utah; Susan Thornton, President, of Colorado; and Jim Laughton, Treasurer, of Nevada.

The three surveyed leaders of the 10 North American pipe band associations about their processes, procedures, rules, etc., and invited them to a founding meeting of the ANAPBA.

The associations that participated in the first meeting of the ANAPBA in October of 1991 in Salt Lake City were:

- Alberta Pipe Band Association
- Atlantic Canada Pipe Band Association
- British Columbia Pipers and Pipe Band Association
- Eastern U.S. Pipe Band Association
- Midwest Pipe Band Association
- Pipers and Pipe Band Society of Ontario
- Prairie Pipe Band Association of Manitoba
- Saskatchewan Pipe Band Association
- Southern U.S. Pipe Band Association
- Western U.S. Pipe Band Association

Among the highlights of that first meeting was a stretch limo ride for participants to Utah's State Capitol, where Governor Mike Leavitt signed a proclamation welcoming ANAPA delegates to Utah.

When the newly founded ANAPBA met again in October of 2000 in Chicago, the original members were joined by a representative of the Australian Pipe Band Association and the Atlantic Canada Pipe Band Association.

The ANAPBA met again in January of 2002 in Toronto, and over the years, the ANAPBA has welcomed representatives of the New Zealand and South American pipe band associations, as well as from the Royal Scottish Pipe Band Association. (The South African Pipe Band Association is said to be interested in attending in the future.)

In addition, the director of the London Tattoo has attended one of the meetings and invited members to send band and/or solo pipers and drummers to the world-known event.

Subsequent meetings were held at::

- 2003 – Atlanta
- 2004 – Vancouver
- 2005 – Winnipeg
- 2006 – Orlando
- 2009 – Las Vegas
- 2011 – Salt Lake City
- 2015, 2017 and 2019 – Kansas City

Over the years, the ANAPBA has discussed many issues, and those that were agreed upon include:

- Standardized registration of pipe bands and soloists (except Grade 4 soloists)
- Standardizing grading of pipe bands and soloists by judges
- Recognizing each other's registered bands and solo competitors without requiring local membership fees
- Code of conduct for games participants

Now 22 years later, Jeff Mann continues to chair the ANAPBA and association members continue to meet. The 2021 meeting will be by Zoom to minimize problems from the global COVID-19 pandemic.

Overall, the establishment of the ANAPBA, the relationships it has formed, and the cooperative agreement it has agreed upon is truly a remarkable achievement, and reflects both ongoing leadership and a remarkable length of service from Jeff Mann.

**Comments from International ANAPBA Attendees**

Michael Flight, President of the Scottish Pipe Band Association of South America (SPBASA) has this to say about the impact of the ANAPBA on his association:

*My exposure and participation has been thanks to Jeff's kindness and outreach. I believe we first spoke in 2008, when he invited me to attend a summit in Las Vegas (if I remember correctly). I unfortunately had to decline that invitation, but Jeff later called me in Oct 2014, to attend the Jan 2015 Summit at Winter Storm. I accepted and committed my attendance, before he finished giving me the details!*

*ANAPBA and the Summits have positioned the Alliance as a think-tank of the PB World. Its most visible value is perhaps to find the opportunities to have consistent competition rules. Yet the overarching value is in fact the forum to discuss and resolve major and common challenges across the PB World.*

*While representing the South American arena at the ANAPBA Summits, I had the opportunity to meet and connect with the pipe band association leaders, learn directly from their experiences, know what was on their minds, and in which direction their fronts were advancing. This helped to prioritize, course-correct as well as confirm some of our own efforts. This also gave me the opportunity to share our relatively young Association's stage of evolution, and in turn receive strategic advice and support on specific challenges. The support our PB Association has received through these relationships has an incalculable value.*

*Specifically in the 2015 Summit, we met with Brig. David Allfrey, MBE, at the time the Producer of the Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo, and who was recruiting pipers and drummers worldwide for the recently-formed Pipers Trail (the house pipe band of the REMT). South America has had 3 to 4 pipers and drummers at the REMT since that Summit (myA History self included in 2016 and 2017). This relationship was thanks to Jeff's vision of the potential of the Summit, above and beyond the PB competition World.*

Greg Gordon, OAM, JP, retired from Pipe Bands Australia in 2015 after 18 years as President. He writes:

*It was part of my vision to develop a broad communication network so that the newly formed Australian Association, which replaced the Federation of State Associations, could gain recognition as the primary entity in Australia. In that sense, I felt that we and the ANAPBA had a significant number of goals in common, and that made for ease of dialogue. Right from my first communications with Jeff and then others there was that feeling of working together towards the many points of interest in an open and productive manner.*

*This contact enabled us to broaden our horizons and become aware of what is happening beyond our close relationship with our nearest neighbour, New Zealand, and affiliation with Scotland. At the time when we prepared to embrace ensemble adjudication in band contests, we found our greatest support from Ontario and this became the model for our implementation.*

*Without doubt, the biggest single advantage of engaging with the ANAPBA is the development of extended lines of communication and of personal friendship and understanding.*