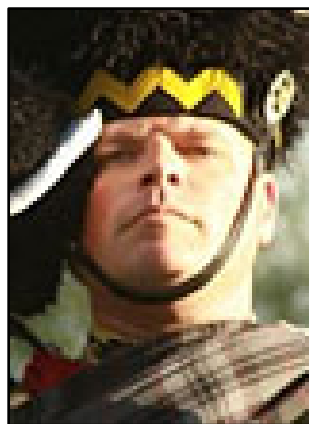


# Words and Music

## Winter 2018

### In this issue

- News you can use! Be in the know!
  - Solo and band registration deadlines
- The Treasurer reports that the 2018 budget is in good shape.
- Read about the legendary Pipe Major Willie Ross, an all-time piping great.
- Hard work and dedication pays off! Meet the Pasadena Scottish Pipes and Drums.
- Jim Thomson United States School of Piping and Drumming, July 13-15, 2018.



The fall of 2017 was an impactful time in my own life, being elected as the new WUSPBA President in November. The ramp-up into this office was swift, to say the least,

but also very eye-opening.

I've learned more about this organization in just two months than over the previous 20 years as a member and committee volunteer. Thank you to the amazing Music Board, Executive Committee, and all outgoing WUSPBA staff members for their advice and hard work during this transition period.

## WUSPBA in 2018 – Core Values and Improvements

*Kevin Conquest, WUSPBA President*  
[Kevin.Conquest@gmail.com](mailto:Kevin.Conquest@gmail.com)

Happy New Year to all of our WUSPBA membership! I hope everyone had a joyous holiday season with a chance to celebrate with family and friends.

### Running Volunteer Organizations Can Be Challenging

Volunteer organizations, particularly non-profits, can be a challenge to run effectively. This is no different for WUSPBA.

Perhaps the challenges are compounded further when we see our piping and drumming pursuits as a lifelong passion more than calling it a mere hobby. Old phrases like “not mixing business and friendship” come to mind as well when

choices have to be made that will inevitably make someone unhappy.

Nevertheless, we have to run WUSPBA like a business to ensure that we deliver top service to our membership. It is my intention to apply leadership skills from a career in the technology and government sectors to improve WUSPBA as a whole during my tenure.

### **Core Values for 2018**

With that in mind, I'd like to share with you the core values that I have set for our officers and staff in 2018:

**Accountability:** WUSPBA must be accountable for every decision made that directly impacts piping and drumming in our region. Both the Music Board and Executive Committee have already been tasked with making improvements to process and standard operating procedures to ensure consistency throughout.

**Professionalism:** WUSPBA must be approachable to our membership. Dissatisfaction and apathy are often born from a lack of basic communication. Our officers and staff have been tasked with delivering reasonable response times to inquiries, welcoming feedback, and showing the levels of service they would wish to see as a customer. Likewise, all members are encouraged to volunteer within their branch and speak up when they have concerns.

**Transparency:** WUSPBA is not a secret society. While we do have to observe confidentiality in many situations, WUSPBA needs to make improvements that will

improve the understanding of our rules or decision-making.

So! What does all of that mean? Here are my improvement goals for 2018:

1. **CPL transparency** – CPLs will be added to the competitor copy of score sheets and be known to the individual band/soloist at every contest. This is without a doubt the most tumultuous topic in WUSPBA! CPLs are used to assess grading placement but were hidden from competitors due to past concerns. Adding these back will provide competitors with instant feedback and no surprises as to how adjudicators and the Music Board will see their progress.
2. **Website and Online Tools** – The WUSPBA website and online registration system need a massive overhaul in 2018! We will implement a web and social media team to provide fresh, timely content to the membership. We have to post results quickly after competitions. We must make it easier to register for events and membership online. We will also employ YouTube and social media platforms to increase our approachability and promote learning.
3. **Process Improvement** – We will be implementing process improvement universally. All committees and offices will improve documentation of our procedures. The Adjudication Panel will see improvements in the form of workshops and ongoing

training. Communication will be more frequent and very open.

In closing, I hope everyone supports these ambitious but very truthful goals for 2018.

Good luck at the first competitions of the year! Please feel free to approach me and say hello.

## Treasurer's Report

Nate Lorenz, WUSPBA Treasurer  
[treas@wuspba.org](mailto:treas@wuspba.org)



2018 is here and I hope everyone is ready for a great season.

### Great AGM in Arizona

The AGM was a great weekend in Arizona in the new Desert Branch. We saw a lot of participation from the branch and surrounding areas and we hope to see it grow. We hope that moving the location will encourage folks to come to meetings that otherwise wouldn't travel. This increased participation should spur more conversation so more of the membership feel included and have their voices heard.

### Budget Established for 2018

We looked at the finances for the year and are in great shape for wrapping up 2017, and we approved a 2018 budget. A few items were underspent and offset by a little overspent. And for 2018 we adjusted for the best understanding of the

organizational spending as we see. High hopes for smooth sailing finance-wise. I have most of the banking re-aligned and streamlined so disbursements to branches will go smoothly. I just need a little wrap-up with a final branch to finalize what has been a year project.

### R2 System for Games Organizers

We look forward to the Games Organizers using the R2 system as it becomes more familiar. Many games are using it as a resource for registration for band and solo competitors. It also gives a great way to mass-communicate to them as things might change approaching the actual date.

Thank you for the vote to be Treasurer again. I hope things go as well for the organization as they have for the last two years. Here is to a great season and some top-notch music!

## Solo Registrations Now Open for Renewal

Lezlie Mann, Solo Registrar  
[mannlezie@gmail.com](mailto:mannlezie@gmail.com)

This is just to let everyone know that the 2018 solo membership is open for membership renewals:  
<https://www.r2sports.com/membership/login.asp>

If you need it we have the step by step instructions for solo and solo/family linked on our WUSPBA website:  
<https://wuspba.org/how-to-join/>



The cost is \$27.00.  
After January  
15th the cost  
increases to \$37.00.

If you have any  
questions or  
problems (forgot  
username ID and/or  
password) don't hesitate to contact me.

If you have already registered please  
disregard this notice.

Thank you and Happy New Year!

## Band Registrations Due

*Jeffrey M. Mann, Band Registrar*  
[Jeffrey.Mann@hsc.utah.edu](mailto:Jeffrey.Mann@hsc.utah.edu)



Good morning. Just  
a reminder that  
band registrations  
were due by  
January 15, 2018.

As per the WUSPBA  
Bylaws, Band  
membership fees

are as follows:

- Active competing bands- \$300.00/  
year. Late fees after January 15, 2018 -  
\$400.00/year.
- Juvenile Bands- \$50.00/ yr. Late fees  
after January 15, 2018 – \$75.00/yr.
- Associate Bands- \$40.00/yr. Late fees  
after January 15, 2018 – \$60.00/yr.

Check out <https://wuspba.org/rulesbylaws/>,  
Article 3, section 5: table 1 for details.

Please feel free to contact me as you need  
help.

## Contents Winter 2018

<b>WUSPBA in 2018 - Core Values and Improvements, Kevin Conquest .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Treasurer's Report, Nate Lorenz .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Solo Registrations Now Open, Lezlie Mann .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Band Registrations Due, Jeffrey Mann .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Intermountain Branch Report, Jamie Cuthill .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Jim Thomson United States School of Piping and Drumming, Marianne Sullivan .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Meet the Pasadena Scots, John MacDonald .....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Pipe Major Willie Ross .....</b>	<b>14</b>

**Deadline for  
Spring 2018 issue: March 20**

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# Intermountain Branch Report

By Jamie Cuthill  
[jrcuthill@yahoo.com](mailto:jrcuthill@yahoo.com)



Happy New Year!

With our branch president taking on WUSPBA's Secretary position, I have stepped into the role of Interim Branch President. Our branch

will vote for a new president at our 2018 AGM. For the time being, we will probably not have any major shakeups, but rather stay the course until we have a permanent president.

## Smackdown!

As we've done for over a decade now, the IMB will begin its planning for our annual Spring Smackdown contest. This event has always been a great venue for our competitors to get their feet wet, and to get feedback on their contest tunes in an informal and stress-free environment. It also proves to be a great community event for all of our bands and soloists.

The Smackdown started as a solos-only event. A few years ago we added quartets, then full bands. No doubt we will find more opportunities for our bands and soloists to participate in future Smackdowns.

Watch the IMB Facebook page for details.

## Branch Contest

Beyond that, we will begin our planning stages for our sanctioned annual branch

contest hosted by the Colorado Irish Festival. The Colorado United Irish Society has been good enough to provide our branch contest with a venue for 11 years now.

## WUSPBA AGM Coming to Denver!

We are also getting busy with assisting in the logistical planning of the 2018 WUSPBA AGM, to be held in Denver. We will be looking for reasonable venues, convenient for travel to the sights around our wonderful city.

For those traveling to Denver, I would encourage you to take advantage of our airport train. This will be a \$9.00 pass, which is good for travel all day on any of our city buses and city trains.

All the best for a successful 2018!

## The Best Kept Secret in the Southwest! The Jim Thomson United States School of Piping and Drumming: July 13-15, 2018

Marianne Sullivan  
[mesullivan664@yahoo.com](mailto:mesullivan664@yahoo.com)

Nestled in the largest pine forest in the world is the city of Flagstaff, Arizona. In July of every year this little town hosts the best-kept secret in the Piping and Drumming world, the Jim Thomson United States School of Piping and Drumming.

The school caters to students of all levels of piping and drumming and boasts instructors from all over the world for seven days of piping and drumming instruction held on the Northern Arizona University Campus.

Despite what many think of Arizona, Flagstaff is not in the desert but in the mountains of the pine forest with an average high temperature of 78 degrees in July during the school.



2017 Workshop class photo

### **The School Began in 2009**

The school began with the hard fought effort of Jim "Seamus" Thomson who was an avid supporter and teacher of the great Highland Bagpipe and the unique drumming that compliments the pipes. He started the school with the help of Bruce Hitchings in his home town of Flagstaff, Arizona, in 2002.

Jim Thomson unfortunately passed away in 2009 but by partnering with the Northern Arizona Celtic Heritage Society the school was able to keep going.

### **Outstanding Lineup of Instructors**

The school started out slowly but quickly added both students and instructors to

where the school now has approximately 50-70 students each year and typically five piping instructors and two drumming instructors.

The instructors for the July 2018 School are Bruce Hitchings, Robert Watt, Dixie Ingram, Ann Gray, Aaron Shaw, Gordon Brown, and Ed Best.

### **Workshop on the Northern Arizona University Campus**

This year the school begins on Friday, July 13, 2018, with students arriving and checking into the Ernest Calderon Learning Center on the Northern Arizona University Campus.

That afternoon, piping students will play a music piece of their choice for a few of the instructors so they can be placed in the appropriate class depending on their skill level.

That evening a Welcome BBQ takes place where all the students and teachers can meet and mingle before classes begin.

### **Electives include Piobaireachd**

On Saturday, July 14, 2018, seven days of instruction begin with morning classes in the assigned group and afternoon electives ranging from bagpipe maintenance to beginning piobaireachd. If enough students are interested there will be a full class of piobaireachd for experienced students as well.

Late afternoons, after elective courses, the entire school comes together to play as a massed band and practice for the group performances later in the week.



### Three Nights of Instructor Recitals

Students also get the benefit of three nights of instructor recitals on Saturday, Sunday and Monday nights.



2017 instructor recital

Wednesday night, the students and instructors perform in downtown Flagstaff at Heritage Square with a short parade down the street to the Historic Weatherford Hotel for pub night at the Gopher Hole. This is a night for the students to get up and show what they have learned playing alone or in groups; there will even be some singing and dancing.

Thursday night is another group performance for the public at the Riordan Mansion with the school ending on Friday with morning classes and graduation.

### Northern Arizona Celtic Festival

But the piping and drumming fun doesn't stop there, as the weekend after the school is the Northern Arizona Celtic Festival.

These games host both solo and band competitions and performances by instructor Aaron Shaw and the Wicked Tinkers, instructor Robert Watt, and other local Celtic performers. The festival also has athletic competitions, Celtic workshops and numerous pub tents.

### Raffle for Bagpipes and Snare Drum!

Every year the school raffles off a full set of bagpipes and a snare drum. The School also picks one student a year to receive a scholarship to attend the next year's school free of charge.

### Discounted Rates before May 1

There are rates for single or double occupancy rooms in the dorms, which includes meals at the dining hall. There is a discount if students register before May 1, 2018, and group discounts for four or more people and even deeper discounts for seven or more people.

More information about the school and how you can become a student can be found at [www.jimthomsonpipingschool.com](http://www.jimthomsonpipingschool.com) or on the school's Facebook page. Below is more information about the School's instructors.

### Meet the Instructors

**Bruce Hitchings**, the current director of the Jim Thomson U.S. School of Piping and Drumming, was born in Hunterville, New Zealand, and started playing the pipes at the age of nine. By the time he was 16, he was playing with the New Zealand Champions – The City of Wellington Pipe Band. Bruce joined the Black Watch Territorial Army as a Piper in 1977, and in 1978 he enlisted as a regular into the Queen's Own Highlanders. The following year, he won the Silver Medal for Piobaireachd at the Argyllshire Gathering.

Bruce continued to compete successfully around the Highland Games when his Army career permitted. He attended the Pipe

Major's course at Edinburgh Castle in 1980-81 and received on-going instruction from Captain Andrew Pitkeathly and Pipe Major Angus MacDonald, MBE.

In 1986 Bruce became the Battalion Pipe Major, a position he held for six years. During this time, he was awarded the British Empire Medal (BEM). The last eight years of his military career was spent in the post of WO1 Pipe Major, the Senior Pipe Major, British Army, and Chief Instructor at The Army School of Piping.

In 2000, Bruce used his years of experience in piping to create a highly successful Highland Reeds company and has developed new piping products with an aim to simplify the science of piping. His Balance Tone Drone Reeds and range of moisture systems are popular with pipers the world over for both their simplicity and effectiveness. He continues to work on innovative products to make the life of the piper easier.

In 2012 Bruce was appointed as a Board Member of the College of Piping and as a member of the Piping Committee for the Northern Meeting Piping Competition. He continues to be a Senior Examiner for the Scottish Qualification Authority (SQA) / Pipe & Drums Qualifications Board (PDQB).

**Robert Watt** hails from Londonderry, Northern Ireland. His piping knowledge and experience has been gained through many years of study with top professionals past and present. He belongs to the Competing Pipers Association, the Scottish Pipers Association, the Royal Scottish Pipe Band Association and is a former piper of the World Champion Field Marshall Montgomery Pipe Band.

Robert has won 3rd place in the Argyllshire Gathering Gold Medal of 2003, the Silver medal at the Inverness (the only piper in Ireland to have achieved this status), the Macallan Trophy in Lorient Brittany (3 times 1st place winner), 1st place Highland Club Piobaireachd London Competition, 1st place in the Donald MacDonald Quaich on the Isle of Skye, and is a prolific prize winner in the Scottish Highland Games circuit. Robert was named the Highlands and Islands Young Piper of the Year in 1999 and 2003, and has won every available junior and senior prize in Ireland.

Robert also has a prolific career performing and has performed at the following venues: Capitol Hill, Washington, D.C.; Palace of Westminster, London, England; Hillsborough Castle, Northern Ireland; Aras an Uachtarain (President's Residence), Dublin, Ireland; Royal Concert Hall, Glasgow, Scotland; Prince Regent Theatre, Munich, Germany; Odyssey Arena, Belfast, NI; Viareggio Festival Italy; Waterfront Hall, Belfast; and Emory University, Atlanta, Georgia.

**Dixie Ingram**, from Aberdeen, Scotland, started piping at age nine. He joined the Scots Guards as a boy piper at 15, began his Pipe Major's Course at Edinburgh Castle at 22, and upon completion returned to his Regiment, the 1st Battalion Scots Guards. In 1966, he began solo competitions and in 1969 became Pipe Sergeant of the 2nd Battalion Scots Guards, asking the Scottish Pipe Band Association for the band's permission to compete and giving birth to the Regular Army Pipe Bands on the competition circuit.

In 1976 they won the World Championship Grade II and were promoted to Grade I.



Dixie was the Chief Instructor to the Guards Depot Piping School in 1979, training Pipers and Drummers for Scots and Irish Guards and from 1981-84 they won all five major championships in Grade III. In 1985, he was commissioned as the Transport Officer of the 1st Battalion Scots Guards, severing ties with the band and eventually joining the Caledonian Airways Pipe Band (now Scottish Power), where he instructed the southern half of the band at Gatwick.

Since obtaining his qualifications to judge, he has served on all panels for over 20 years, judging in all Grades at the major championships including the World Pipe Band Championships. He is currently teaching piping to 50 students at 10 schools who range in ages from 8 - 18 years of age. Dixie's accomplishments as an instructor are second to none and he is a highly sought after tutor of the bagpipe.

**Ann Gray** is originally from Nova Scotia on Canada's East Coast. Ann began playing bagpipes at the age 10 and quickly progressed through the amateur grades and into the Professional ranks of solo piping. She spent a number of years teaching and playing at the Gaelic College in Cape Breton, and also earned a Master of Arts degree in Celtic Studies from St. Francis Xavier University in Antigonish, Nova Scotia.

Ann moved west to Calgary, Alberta, after finishing university, establishing herself in the local piping and pipe band scene not only as a piper, but also as a snare drummer. In addition to numerous solo piping prizes throughout North America and Scotland, Ann is also a composer.

Ann's solo piping awards include include the MacCrimmon Cairn for Piobaireachd

and the professional piping aggregate at the BC Pipers' Indoor competition, the Stone Mountain Highland Games Invitational Piobaireachd and open piping aggregate, the United States Piping Foundation aggregate, and the Dunvegan Medal at the Skye Gathering; placings in the North American Gold Medal piobaireachd at Kansas City, in the A-grade piobaireachd at the Cowal Gathering and also in the Clasp to the Dunvegan Medal at the Skye Gathering; and she has also earned the Alberta Society of Pipers and Drummers Professional Piping Annual Aggregate awards for both piobaireachd and light music numerous times.

Currently a member of the Hamilton Police Pipe Band, Ann is also an accredited adjudicator on the panel of her home association, the Alberta Society of Pipers and Drummers.

**Aaron Shaw** is from Los Angeles, California. Most people know Aaron as the piper with the Wicked Tinkers. But Aaron has an extensive resume as a competitor, both in solo and band piping as well. He's a judge with WUSPBA, and in addition to his many private students, also teaches at piping summer schools and seminars around the country.

Aaron makes his living as a piper, performing extensively at private events as well as on TV and film. He's also recorded with a wide range of other artists. Aaron began piping in 1976. He began attending the College of Piping Summer Schools in 1982, becoming a teacher there in 1996. He studied in Scotland with P/M Angus MacDonald and Angus J. MacLellan.

Some of the piping awards that Aaron has won include the Strachan Trophy for A Grade MSR in London 1998, the James Naismith Memorial Targe for Professional MSR at the San Diego Highland Games 1997 and 1999, the John MacPhee Trophy for Top Grade One Piper, Monterey Highland Games, 1994-96, the Silver Chanter for Top Grade One Piper, Costa Mesa Highland Games, 1997, the Amateur Grade One Aggregate Winner, Queen Mary Highland Games, 1997, the Capt. William Mossie Trophy for Piobaireachd, Monterey Highland Games, 1994-96, and the Jim Thomson Memorial Trophy and Scholarship, Costa Mesa Highland Games, 1995 and 1997.

Aaron has been a WUSPBA Piping Judge since 2000. He is a founding member of Wicked Tinkers and Forest for the Trees. He was a piper with the Los Angeles Police Pipe Band, Grade 2 from 1994-2000. Some of his other accomplishments include study in Scotland at the College of Piping and Piping Centre, Glasgow, certificates in Senior Piping and Teaching from the Institute of Piping, Scotland, and a Level 6 Certificate from the Piping and Drumming Qualifications Board.

**Gordon Brown** was born in Whitburn, West Lothian, Scotland, and showed a keen interest in drumming from an early age. His father, Drum Major Tom Brown, instructed him in those early years. In November 1976 he joined the Boghall & Bathgate Caledonia Novice Juvenile Band. In February 1977, Gordon placed 6th in the Juvenile Section of the World Solo Drumming Championship. That season, Gordon and the Novice Corps went on to win the Drumming in the five Major Championship Competitions.

In 1978, the Grade 3 Adult Band was upgraded to Grade 2 and Gordon became a member of the Drum Corps under the leadership of his father. During the seasons of 1978 and 1979, the Grade 2 Drummers gained about every major championship-drumming award. On the solo side, Gordon won The World Juvenile Solo Drumming titles in 1980 and 1981. Gordon also began teaching at his dad's famous "Tuesday Night Drumming Class" in Whitburn. It is interesting to note that just about every drummer during that time with the Boghall Grade 1 Band came through Tom's famous school.

Gordon and the Boghall Band were promoted to Grade 1 Status in 1980. In their first season, they won the Cowal Drumming Championship. The next three seasons saw them lift a fine hat trick of World Drum Corps Championships; 1981, 82 and 83, and 86.

One of the proudest moments and memories for Gordon and the Boghall Drum Corps was being the First Drum Corps to win the "Alex Duthart Memorial Trophy" for the Grade 1 Champion of Champions Drum Corps. Boghall's Novice and Juvenile Corps also won the title in their respective grades that season.

Gordon began instructing the Novice and the Juvenile Drum Corps within the band, winning many major drumming awards through the 80's and 90's. The most recent wins with the Juvenile Corps were the World Drum Corps Titles in 2009 and 2010, and The British Title 2011.

In 1991, Gordon took over as Leading Drummer of the Grade 1 Corps from his dad

and he won his first Major Drumming Award as Lead Drummer, winning the European Drumming Title.

Gordon has won the Scottish, British, European and Cowal Championships with both the Corps and as a Band, as well as winning The Best Drum Corps and Bass Section at the 2001 World Championships. Recent title wins include the Champion of Champions Drum Corps Prizes in 2007 and 2010. The Corps also gained first place in the British, European, Cowal and the Worlds (MSR & Medley) in 2012, making them Champion of Champions Drum Corps.

Gordon was also named "2012 Drummer of the Year" in the 10th Annual Pipes / Drums Honour's List. In 1994 Gordon's won 1st place in the World Solo Drumming Championship, fulfilling a life-long dream. Gordon won 1st place again in the 2002 event.

Gordon has followed his father's footsteps by teaching. He has taught throughout the UK, Europe, South Africa, the United States and Canada. With his achievements as a solo player and as leading drummer of the Grade 1 corps, he is sought all over the World for teaching workshops and seminars. He continues to teach the Juvenile Drummers in the Band.

He unselfishly continues to pass on what he regards as a Noble Art, especially to youngsters, to make them the Drummers of the future. Gordon has about ten (10) young players who have advanced through the Novice and Juvenile ranks and achieved Grade1 status over the past 4 – 5 years. Gordon is a fully qualified Trainer/Assessor (SVQ D32, C25). He currently instructs at

the Glenalmond College and Morrison's Academy, both in Perthshire.

Gordon and his father own and operate TG Drumming ([www.tgdrumming.com](http://www.tgdrumming.com)), a drumming supply business, which includes their own T.G. & Tom Brown branded product line. He is also heavily involved in product development with Andante Percussion ([www.andantedrums.co.uk](http://www.andantedrums.co.uk)) and is an endorsee of their Andante Drum Range. Gordon also works with Drumming on Demand ([www.drummingondemand.com](http://www.drummingondemand.com)), a website with Drum Manuscript down-loads and access to instructional videos.

**Ed Best** is a qualified, professional educator with over 30 years of successful pipe band experience who holds a Bachelor's Degree in Music Education. He has held many band and solo titles in all grades, including North American Champion, East Coast Champion Supreme, Ontario Champion Supreme, West Coast Champion of Champions, and Canadian Champion.

Ed also spent 10 years as a School Music Teacher in all grades from Elementary through the University level.

Ed has competed in, and placed at the World Pipe Band Championships in Glasgow, Scotland, in many grades up to and including Grade I. Ed is also an active as an adjudicator at Highland Games throughout the United States. He is an "A" panel drumming and ensemble judge in the WUSPBA and a drumming judge in the EUSPBA.

He also serves on the Music Board of WUSPBA, where his primary functions are

grading of bands and soloists and Adjudicator training/education and certification. He recorded a DVD for adjudicator training, available to the general public at <http://www.wuspba.org>.

Ed is a regular instructor for bands and schools across the country. He provides instruction to the drummers, helps with music composition and arranging. He also provides instruction in band ensemble. His individual students and bands regularly appear in the prize lists at highland games across the country. Ed understands that everyone is different and has different strengths and goals. He works hard to be sure that your needs are met. He has experience teaching ages 4 through 80.

## Meet the Pasadena Scots

*By John McDonald*  
[mcdonaldjoh@gmail.com](mailto:mcdonaldjoh@gmail.com)

After a very successful year of competition in 2017, The Pasadena Scottish Pipes and Drums are looking forward to an even more exciting 2018, culminating in our third trip to the World Pipe Band Championships.

We have just completed our first decade as a competitive pipe band, and our first year as a two-band organization. In WUSPBA aggregate standings, our Grade 3 band placed first, and in its first season out, our grade 5 took fourth.

### Formed in 2006

The band was formed in 2006 with a tiny



Drum Major Dave Melton leads the Pasadena Scots on parade

corps, under the leadership of Pipe Major Jennifer Febre. Instruction was the primary focus of our new band, as most of our players were beginners; our first instructors were John Allan and Ed Best. We rehearsed weekly at the Villa Gardens retirement community in Pasadena.

### First Competition at Queen Mary

Our first competition took place in Grade 4 at the Queen Mary in 2007 with the minimum numbers: 6 pipers, 2 snares and a bass. It was a memorable event for several reasons, including the sounding of the Queen Mary's 3 p.m. horn right as we finished our set! One of our judges humorously commented on our "trailing drone."

Over the years, we have changed practice locations and instructors, but our goal is always to provide strong instruction and to field competitive bands. We encourage members to also seek private instruction and to compete as soloists. As our players improved, so did the band.

### **The Move to Grade 3 in 2010**

After a very successful Grade 4 season in 2009, placing first at North Berwick, Bridge of Allan and Crieff, sixth at the World's and second WUSPBA aggregate, we advanced to Grade 3. We won WUSPBA aggregate grade 3 in both 2010 and 2011.

### **Leadership Changes Over the Years**

As the band has matured, we have gone through leadership changes. Trevor Takahashi took over the role of Pipe Major from Jennifer Febre in 2015.

Jennifer has been far more than the founder and pipe major of this band. She is our kilt-maker, logo-designer, and was our primary source of funding in the early years. She also gave birth to our entire original snare corps, her sons Adrian and Benjamin! Jennifer's brewery, MacLeod Ale, is the band's official sponsor.



The Band poses at George Square, Edinburgh, Scotland

Trevor has been the key force in getting our new Grade 5 band off the ground, instructing its pipe corps while continuing to lead the Grade 3 pipe corps. Glenn Kvidahl, who competes in Grade 1 with the renowned Shotts and Dykehead, is our

grade 3 drum instructor. Leilani Lucas is the Grade 5 snare instructor, and David McCormick serves as mid-section instructor for both bands.

### **Original Members Still Active**

Original members of the band, including John McDonald, Robert MacTavish, Karen McIlvena and I are still active as officers and players. We began as a "family band" and have become a "band family."

### **Trips to China, Scotland and More**

The band loves to travel, and we have had several wonderful experiences, including a 2007 trip to Beijing, China, where we participated in a pre-Olympic cultural festival, representing Pasadena as a Sister City to Beijing Xicheng District.



The Band poses on the Great Wall of China

We have gone to SFU's Piping Hot Summer Drummer several times and made a second trip to the World's in 2011. On both of our Scotland trips, we were able to visit several amazing sites as a band, such as Stirling Castle, Doone Castle and the Glasgow School of Art, where we saw the Macintosh-designed inspiration for our own logo.



Our most recent out-of-state competition was in Stone Mountain, Georgia, in 2016. We are now planning and preparing for the World's in August.

### **Participation in Community Events**

Besides competing, our bands regularly participate in a number of community events in the Pasadena and greater Los Angeles area, including inaugurations, the Tournament of Roses Parade activities, Fourth of July and Christmas parades, other cultural festivals, and nonprofit fundraisers such the American Cancer Society Relays for Life.

### **New Players Welcomed!**

Our bands currently practice at the beautiful San Marino Community Church – Grade 3 on Monday evenings, Grade 5 on Tuesday evenings. We welcome visitors to our rehearsals, and we especially welcome potential new players to both bands.

Visit our website: [PasadenaScots.com](http://PasadenaScots.com) for more information.

## **A Look Back at the Greats: Pipe Major Willie Ross**

Who has not heard, played or simply enjoyed the following tunes?

- *Leaving Port Askaig*
- *Corriechoillie's Welcome to the Northern Meeting*
- *Captain Norman Orr Ewing*

Familiar and well-loved tunes, each was written by famed Pipe Major Willie Ross.



Pipe Major Willie Ross

PM Ross was born in Scotland in 1878, and as a child was taught by his maternal uncle Aneas Rose, piper to the Duke of Atholl. He also took taking lessons at Blair Castle during school holidays.

At the age of 18, he joined the Scots Guards, and fought with the 1st Battalion in the Boer War from 1899 to 1902.

In 1905, at the age of 24, he became Pipe Major of the 2nd Battalion. His younger brother, Alexander, was also a piper and became Pipe Major of the 1st Battalion in 1911.





Chanter Practice at the Castle

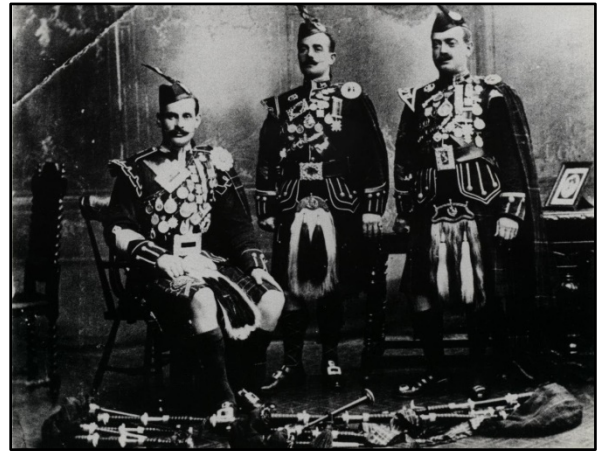
In 1919, Willie was made Instructor at the Army School of Bagpipe Music and Highland Drumming at Edinburgh Castle, where he taught hundreds of pupils, including almost all the top players produced by the army.

Among his most famous students was John D. Burgess, who he taught as a private pupil from a young age. Burgess won both Gold Medals at the age of 16, and went on to become one of the most successful competitive pipers of the 20th century.

PM Ross was also pipe major of the Lovat Scouts between 1921 and 1933.

He won the Gold Medal at the Northern Meeting in 1904, the Gold Medal at the Argyllshire Gathering in 1907, and Clasps at the Northern meeting more than eight times.

He also collected 240 tunes into his five-volume publication, *Pipe-Major W. Ross's Collection of Highland Bagpipe Music*.



Pipe Major Willie Ross, Scots Guards, P/M G.S. McLennan, Gordon Highlanders and P/M John MacDonald, Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders

PM Ross died in Edinburgh in 1966, aged 87. There is a memorial cairn near the house in which he was born, which is now a ruin.

Rare footage of Willie Ross teaching at Edinburgh Castle can be seen at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HpbN8JpP92o>.