

TARTAN TIMES

VOLUME 4, ISSUE 4

DECEMBER 2003

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It seems that the old Celtic notion of the never ending circle of life, death and being reborn is being reflected in me being asked to take up the Editorship of the Tartan Times after a break of five years.

Just as the Pibroch music moves from the ground through the variations and back to the ground, here I am again with my snippets of gossip, scandal and bad jokes.

As this issue is prepared in a bit of a rush have patience with me dear readers, I will try harder next time. Not having the benefit of the modern technological tools of email, computers or printers, I am relying heavily on my lovely daughter-in-law, Trudi McMillan, to piece this issue together. Thanks Trudi.

Neil A. McMillan Ed.

PIPIN' HOT II

By Pipe Major Derek Ballantine

The City of Invercargill Caledonian Pipe Band is proud to announce the release of our second CD, simply called "Pipin' Hot II."

A major fundraiser for the Band's trip to the 2004 Edinburgh Military Tattoo, Pipin' Hot II showcases the Band's successful stage show, in conjunction with some hot local talent.

Debuting at this year's Highland Cathedral show, which many of the new recordings were arranged for, new musical director Craig Allott features prominently throughout. From writing original backing scores to lead vocals on the band's re-working of the well-known "Bittersweet Symphony" song, Craig has put together a talented solid team that will travel with us to the prestigious Edinburgh Military Tattoo in August 2004.

Award winning vocalist Neil Chilton opens the CD with "Copperhead Road." Already a crowd favourite at the Band's many engagements, this song starts the CD the way we want it to continue.

Neil Chilton's vocals on the U2 track "Still Haven't Found What I'm Looking For" are a soulful tribute to Pipin' Hot's commitments to world-class entertainment, both by U2 and the Caledonian Pipe Band.

Craig Allott provides all acoustic guitars, mandolin, lead and backing vocals and lead guitars. His duet with local saxophonist Morgan Bickley on long-time stage favourite "Going Home" is heart-rending in its intensity.

Also featuring on "Going Home" is well-known keyboard player Brendon Burgess, who is musical director of the Y'all Come Country Music Show.

John Hendry-Blair, part of the Kramit duo, contributes backing vocals and provides the thundering bass guitar, a perfect compliment to the Pipe Band drum corps.

Pipe Band Drum Corporal Matt Ward plays the kit drum, snare drum and provides percussion, as does Craig Allott and Drum Sergeant Neil Mogyey.

A feature on this CD is the drum corps intro, at break-neck speed on the "Cape Breton" set, a tribute to the Band's tour to Canada in 2001.

Last, but not least, long time crowd favourite Sheena Naughton is back to thrill on the frantic "Toss the Feathers" and the traditional "Auld Lang Syne", a fitting finale to the CD.

Above all, the Pipe Band is at the fore of the CD, keeping up the long tradition that has flourished, due to the dedicated support of friends, family, and all Southlanders.

For your continued support of the Band, we thank you all.

Pipin' Hot C.D. Launch

A function in the Band Hall on Monday 15th Dec., kicked off the launching of the Piping Hot II C.D. and a number of sales for presentation as Xmas gifts were made.

My own purchase included a copy to relatives in Scotland in exchange for the usual Scots Pictorial Calendar.

As the sales of the C.D. are hoped to boost band funds for the 2004 Edinburgh Festival trip please promote it amongst your friends (and even your enemies).

6000 odd copies of Piping Hot (I) have already been sold and they are still selling.

If you can't find a copy in the music shop any band member will get you one - provided you have \$25.00.