



Presidents Report

Annual General Meeting

24 October 2021

As we close another season with no in person competitions in the Atlantic Provinces I, along with the other members of the executive committee, are happy that all members were able to staff safe and stay busy in other forms of competition.

The ACPBA was well represented in many of the online competitions that have been hosted over the past year including the CLASP League Championships, The Nicol Brown Piping Competition, The George Sherriff Memorial Invitational, and World Online Piping and Drumming Championships, to name a few.

The executive committee wanted a way to reach out and engage our membership and provide some quality instruction. Vice President Amy MacKenzie, with the help of Kate Kimove and Shelena Marsh, organized and put together a fantastic workshop. These workshops were well attended, and the feedback we received indicated that those that attended enjoyed the content that was provided by the some of the worlds best. We are looking forward to being able to provide our members with this type of engagement again the future.

The ACAPBA has once again joined the Alliance of North American Pipe Band Associations on a trial basis. We are in the process of determining if our participation in ANAPBA is going to be of benefit to the members of the ACPBA and if our continued participation will be worthwhile to you the membership of the Association.

I am encouraged knowing that our members and bands have or will be starting up instruction, band practices and being able to again get together face to face to enjoy making music together. It indeed is starting to create a light at the end of the tunnel, and we are all hoping that we can once again safely meet at our Highland games this next summer and rekindling friendships over the passion we all share.

Overall, the Association is on solid footing, and I would like to thank the members of the executive for their hard work and commitment. We remain in a good financial state, our Facebook page and website are being kept up to date, and the administration is very good. I have enjoyed my first year as president and appreciate the assistance and guidance I have and will continue to receive from our long time Chief Steward and Past President Rick Crawford. I also would like to thank Amy MacKenzie for stepping forward to take on the Vice President position and to Shelena Marsh for stepping into the shoes of Marla Barton as Secretary, she has been doing a fantastic job as she continues to learn the ACPBA ropes.

As always, we are looking for volunteers to take many of the vacant position and would like to add new faces and diverse experiences.

I remain optimistic that we will be able to take the field in the summer of 2022 and hope to see you all there.

Daniel Knee

President

Atlantic Canada Pipe Band Association

Vice President Report

ACPBA AGM October 2021

Submitted by: Amy MacKenzie

I volunteered for the position of Vice President in December 2020, which was vacant at the time. Since joining the executive team, I've worked to provide value for ACPBA members during a difficult year for pipe bands globally. Without the ability to practice in person or compete and participate in highland games, I wanted to know what our members would like to see from the ACPBA to help keep motivation and the love of pipe bands alive while in-person band activities were forced to be dormant due to the pandemic.

Upon election to the position of Vice President, I suggested to the executive that we explore online options for providing value to members and to engage our membership directly through an online survey to gather input. The executive agreed and I designed, deployed and analyzed a survey that asked our members to express what they would like to see from our executive team during the pandemic.

The survey indicated that online events would be of value. With this information, I developed a project proposal to pilot an online workshop where ACPBA members could learn from some of the top pipers and drummers from around the world. The pilot was approved and I, with the help of a small group of volunteers, organized and promoted an 8-part workshop series in June 2021. The workshop pilot went smoothly and was well received by participants. A follow-up survey was deployed to participants to gather feedback. The follow-up survey indicated that all who attended viewed it as a good use of membership fees and something that should be continued by the ACPBA in the future – even after the pandemic restrictions are eased. We also received plenty of constructive feedback and ideas for future workshops that I'm excited to pursue in the future.

With the feedback from the participant survey presented to the executive during our Fall meeting, the executive decided to continue to provide online workshops for members, with another tentatively set for February 2022 with details to be determined.

Overall, it was a productive first year in the Vice President position and I hope to continue to bring value to members in a second term. If elected to continue in the Vice President position, I will continue to provide open lines of communication for members to share their thoughts on how we can improve as an association and what ACPBA initiatives they would like to see us provide.

Amy MacKenzie

Chief Steward's report: reported by Dan Knee (on behalf of Rick Crawford)

Really nothing to report other than the Piobaireachd Challenge there was no games again this year. I am sure Kylie and/or James will give a report on that.

Grading Report: reported by Dan Knee (on behalf of Rick Crawford)

Nothing to report as there was no one to grade. And pipers and drummers and their instructors will figure out what grade they should be in when and if we start next year.

Communications and Social Media Report: Tina Oliver

ACPBA Communications (Website & Social Media)

The ACPBA has great social media activity and the website is updated as much as there is updates.

Since Jan 2021 there have been 1200 unique visitors to the website and 1600 visits, the visits to our website have been up this year. Please see the definition below.

Unique visitors refers to the number of distinct individuals requesting pages from the website during a given period, regardless of how often they visit. Visits refer to the number of times a site is visited, no matter how many visitors make up those visits

FB has a total of 1330 likes (up 157 from last year) and our posts engage quite a few folks.

If you are interested in creating a newsletter for us or if you know of anyone, please have them contact me.

Tina Oliver

Communications Chair

Games Liaison Report: Kylie MacHattie

I had sent out a request for reports to all of the highland games on the Atlantic Canada Pipe Band circuit. Three responded to my request (admittedly, I did send out the request later than I had meant to).

For the third time in their history, the Antigonish Highland games were cancelled this year. They didn't, however, let Covid get the best of them as they held an outdoor variety concert, heavy events and a kitchen piping contest. They are looking ahead to the summer of 2022 where hopefully the games can resume.

The Greater Moncton Highland Games and Scottish Festival was held virtually this year. They are planning on a two day event next year.

The Atlantic Canada Piobaireachd Challenge was held online this year. There were 44 competitors from all over the world and the four judges were all from the southern hemisphere.

AHS Kitchening Competition Report

This year the Antigonish Highland Games did not take place. For the second year in a row and for just the third time in our 158 year history our Games have been only been cancelled. Only during World War I and then again for during World War II did we have to cancel for a year or two.

This summer the Highland Society which sponsors our Games decided not to let COVID-19 to completely get the better of us. On August 14-15 weekend, we staged an outdoor Scottish variety concert as well as Heavy Events display and also a piping competition. The Saturday afternoon concert featured lots of Highland dancing, step-dancing, fiddling and singing. It also included piping numbers by the Clan Thompson Pipe Band and then some solo piping featuring

Heather MacIsaac. The piping competition was held the next afternoon at Chisholm Park in downtown Antigonish with five top-notch pipers playing 5-7 minute medleys of their own choosing. The competition was billed as a kitchenpiping contest featuring three 'locally-grown' pipers - Heather MacIsaac, Andrea Boyd and Ian Juurlink - and two other invitees - Pipe Major James MacHattie of the College of Piping Pipe Band from PEI and Kenneth MacKenzie from Mabou Coal Mines, Cape Breton.

Even with COVID restrictions in place, the competition was well-attended with more than 100 people taking it in on a hot, sunny afternoon. Pipers were asked to play fast-paced medleys with audience appeal and were encouraged to include some local (Cape Breton/Antigonish) tunes. All said they were happy to have the chance to perform for a live audience even though some said they experienced butterflies (can't imagine why).

It was the second time in the past few years that the Highland Society has put on a kitchenpiping competition with cash prizes up for grabs. In the first one, at a Friday night event during our 2017 Highland Games, P/M James MacHattie took home first prize. This time, James, the defending champion again took home top honours, with Andrea Boyd taking second prize. The other three contestants, Kenneth, Heather and Ian, also played very well and were each awarded a cash prize.

The Highland Society wishes to thank all five pipers as well as our three judges - pipers John Walsh and Doug Boyd and fiddler Brian MacDonald – for being such good sports and for treating us to a very entertaining and lively competition.

We look forward to 2022 when surely we will be able to resume our Highland Games and welcome the Maritimes piping and drumming community back to Antigonish.

2021 Atlantic Canada Piobaireachd Challenge Report

The 2021 Atlantic Canada Piobaireachd Challenge took place online this year because of Covid restrictions. We were able, with the online format, to hire more than one judge and we were then not limited by geography. We had Greg Wilson (New Zealand), Stuart Easton (New Zealand), Marion Horsburgh (New Zealand) and Brett Tidswell (Australia).

We had 44 competitors and quite a few international players. We were disappointed by the lower turnout from Atlantic Canada but also acknowledge that Nova Scotia's Covid restrictions that were in place at the time hindered some competitors which affected entries.

The 2022 Atlantic Canada Piobaireachd Challenge will be held on April 29 and 30th. As of writing this we are hopeful that it will be in person.

Membership Report: Mike Dupuis

Attached

Financial Report: Mike Dupuis

Attached

Area Reports

ACPBA NB SOUTH REPRESENTATIVE ANNUAL REPORT 2020-2021 (via Zoom)

Prepared by Tom McGrath for the ACPBA AGM

October 24, 2021

I became the NB South Rep in October, 2020. I'm very glad to be a part of the ACPBA organization. I've been involved in pipe bands for a number of years. In the early 90's as Bass Drummer for the Jervis Bay Memorial Pipe Band and most recently for the Simonds Lions Caledonian Pipe Band as both Bass Drummer and President. Throughout my entire Pipe Band journey, I've been accompanied by my wife Ethel, a Piper, and the reason I joined in the first place.

Unfortunately, Covid brought a halt to almost all band activities this past season. Restrictions forced us all to cancel practises, gatherings, and games. The two bands in my area, the Simonds Lions Caledonian and The Moncton District Band had parades, concerts, and engagements cancelled, not unlike the rest of the Bands in the Association. I am glad to report that Covid did not deter these Bands from keeping in touch with their members and supporting each other through these trying times.

The Caledonian's were able to utilize social media and chat groups to keep each other apprised of what's happening with each other and checking on each others well being and health. Periodic reminders were sent out to encourage folks to continue to practice for the day would come when we would be able to get back together. During this summer, restrictions were lifted to a degree that allowed us to gather and socialize as a group. We spent a very lovely summer evening boating the Saint John River, enjoying food, drink, music, and each others company. Recently, restrictions were lifted enough that we were allowed to actually meet as a Band and play our instruments. We were able to play as a Band for the season opener of the Imperial Theater in Saint John. I'm sure I speak for my fellow Band Mates; it was nice to be

back at it!! Alas, Covid issues returned and we are again unable to practice and play together as a Band. We are all hopeful this step backward will be short lived and we will once again find ourselves rolling our eyes at our Pipe Major... 😊

Earlier this summer, I reached out to the Moncton District Band to see how they were getting along. Ray Wallace replied. Below are some highlights from his note...

“We had spent last winter and Spring doing Zoom meetings.... Once the weather was nice we started playing outdoors on practice evenings. The summer was well attended by our core group.”

“We were contacted by the Miramichi Highland Society this summer and they were looking for pipers on Sundays for the summer. We were able to have a piper for their weekend events at MacDonald Farm and Wilsons Point.... It certainly was a great opportunity for our pipers to be out in the public piping again.”

Ray went on to note that they too are also experienced gathering issues related to Covid. As well, much like the Caledonian, numbers are becoming an issue. They’ve had movement from section to section which has left them with drum corps issues and leaving it difficult to gain momentum.

When asked “What can the ACPBA do for them?”, Ray replied, “ I would say that work shops are always a good way to keep members learning and improving.” I’m glad to say that shortly after that communication, the ACPBA held our workshop which I believe was a great success. Ray’s last comment was this;

“I don’t know if you could put forth ideas of how bands are continuing practices, or even just keeping members interested in piping and drumming in general. I know there has been a drop in players through the band world in general. Again, if someone has good ideas for holding practices, it would be beneficial for others to know. “

I'm confident that as we hear of new and innovative ways to promote our craft and attract new blood and energise existing members, this organization will surely share those insights and methods.

In closing, I believe the two bands in my area are strong and resilient. As the effects of Covid diminish and the world repairs itself, our membership Bands and players will gain strength and find that lost momentum. I'm confident the winter will bring back in-person practices, music, and strengthened band relationships. Perhaps my dreams will come true and the Pipers and Drummers will play at the same speed so I don't have to work so hard.

I wish you all well and look forward to continued service to the association as the NB South Representative.

Respectfully submitted.

Tom McGrath

Northern NS – Ray Halliday

NORTHERN NS REGIONAL REPORT Submitted by Ray Halliday

Virtually all pipe band activity ceased in March 2020 and didn't restart until late summer 2021. Clan Thompson managed to have their pipers meet via Zoom on a weekly basis, but no other activities took place. Starting in August, the band did a few socially distanced out door performances in the Stellarton and New Glasgow areas.

Looking ahead to 2022, planning is underway for the Gathering of the Clans in Pugwash July 1st 2022, and the Antigonish Highland Games July 9th & 10th 2022

The Festival of the Tartans will return on July 16th 2022. There will be no competitions again this year, however small groups of pipers and drummers may be performing around the site. Any pipers or drummers wishing to participate can contact me through the association.

Let's hope Bands and regroup and hit the circle in 2022

Ray Halliday

PEI – James MacHattie

PEI 2021 Report for the ACPBA AGM

Pipe band activity in PEI was limited, much like the rest of the world. Events and parades were all cancelled. The Belfast Pipe Band was not active. The two College of Piping Pipe Bands were able to practice through the winter, and took the summer off. The bands' first public performance in quite some time will be for Remembrance Day. The College bands are planning to travel to Maxville in 2022, depending on the state of public health next summer.

NFLD- Matt Clark

See meeting minutes

Cape Breton- Trevor Kellot

Things in Cape Breton are starting to materialize once again with a focus on youth and development. The CBU Pipe Band has restarted it's free teaching program and are back on campus at CBU for lessons and practices. Two of CBU's young members, Aidan and Cameron MacNeil, performed at Celtic Colours this year and did a phenomenal job representing themselves and the band to an in person audience as well as on the Festival's Live Stream concert series.

The Gaelic College continues to work at piping development with a series of online lessons this past summer. They are hosting more online sessions this fall.

With the addition of vaccines and responsible following of public health directives, we are looking forward to more involvement and development of piping and drumming here on Cape Breton Island.

HRA/Valley- Kate Kimove

See meeting minutes