

PRINCE CHARLES PIPE BAND NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY 2024



Pipe Major Corner



Hi everyone! My name is Katya, and I'm the Pipe Major of the Grade 4 "Junior Band". Don't worry – I'm not taking Ken's job, but I am stepping in for this edition of the newsletter, hoping to give you a fresh insight into what the Junior Band has been up to recently!

Looking back on the past year, I'd like to recognize everything our band accomplished! This was our debut year in Grade 4, so our players stepped their games up in both band and solo competition. All of that hard work paid off when we ended our season with 1st place in the Medley at Pleasanton!

I wish I could have spent every spare second with the band this year, but I was across the country at Purdue University where I am studying Computer Science and Math. In the middle of winter in Indiana, knowing I couldn't play with the band until May, it was often difficult to keep motivation up. Regardless, I kept up with the band as much as I could, whether through Zoom lessons or in-person practice when I was home for break. It took some adjustment when I got back for the summer, so I'm grateful for the band's patience through those first few practices. Moreover, I want to thank Colin Thurber for doing an amazing job leading the band in my absence. I speak for the entire Junior Band – not just me and Colin – when I say that this organization has played an incredible role in our leadership and character development.

I returned home to find a more mature and cohesive band each time we practiced. Our members are constantly finding new tunes to learn and discovering new ways to enjoy making music. Their motivation and enjoyment are contagious, and I cannot thank them enough for that!

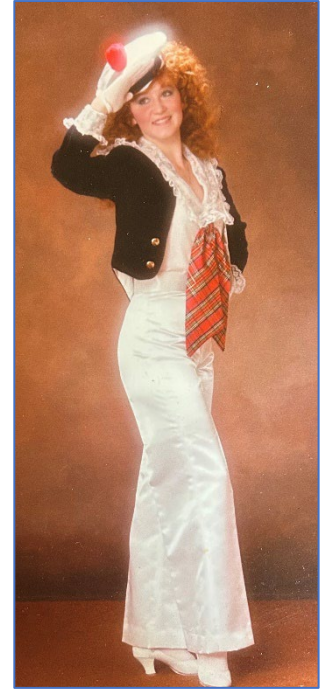
Furthermore, I want to thank the parents, instructors, and supporters who make all of this possible. We deeply appreciate everything you do to keep our band going. With your continued support we have so many exciting opportunities for 2024, and I can't wait to build more memories with the Prince Charles Pipe Band!

Warmest regards,

Katya Teodorovich, Junior Band Pipe Major

Kathleen Braten – From Dancer to Drummer & More

Kathleen Maeve Braten took the stage in Las Vegas, performing nightly alongside the Royal Eight Brendan Bowyer Irish Showband. A champion Irish dancer descended from San Francisco Irish Dancing royalty (Kathleen's mother founded the Deely School in 1963 where Kathleen assisted until its closure in 2005), she dominated the stage with her stunning statuesque 5'8" frame and long, cascading curls of ginger hair. Not long into that evening's performance, an ill-taped power cord caught and broke her foot. When she tried to stand, she dislocated her knee. She would never fully recover from her injuries despite multiple surgeries. Kathleen was only 18 years old.



That event might have swallowed the ambitions of some, but Kathleen Braten Smith is a rare person. Kathleen joined the PCPB in 1978 as a tag-along to her older brothers, Mike and Earl Braten. Her first instructor was Drum Sergeant Trevor Atkinson who promptly dispatched her to Margaret Niven for lessons. Like the Bratens, the Nivens lived in Oakland, so for a short while, Kathleen also played chanter with Helen Niven. But the drums took hold.

After the tragic dancing accident, the drums became her major focus. In addition to Trevor and Margaret, Kathleen studied under a Who's Who of drumming instructors: Tim Gladden, Keith Manifold, and the legendary Alex Duthart. Kathleen progressed quickly from amateur to professional. In 1985, she joined the Simon Fraser University Pipe Band at the Worlds in Glasgow, Scotland to take 2nd Place in Grade 1.

Looking back, her favorite personal drumming achievement was winning the Alex Duthart Memorial Award for Best Professional Drummer in 1988.

The dancing injury gave rise to another musical pursuit. Kathleen's Grandmother Deely suggested Kathleen try playing the accordion that had been sitting unused in her Uncle Lou's Irish import shop on Geary Blvd in San Francisco. Without ever having played, upon her return from the hospital in Las Vegas she played a tune by ear and self-taught the rest. Fast forward, one of the special PCPB concert acts is when Kathleen joins Pipe Major Ken Sutherland in a duet of her accordion and his smallpipes.

Solo dancing may have ended for Kathleen, however she raised two champions. Her daughters Dee Dee and Maeve were Irish dancers ranked in the top 20 in the world, traveling to Ireland, Scotland, England, Canada and all over the US competing and performing. They, along with her son Brian who played snare with PCPB, accompanied PCPB to Lorient, France in 2013 and 2017. Kathleen and Brian also went with PCPB to the World Championships in 2018. When asked if her husband, Tom, knew what he was getting into when they married in 1996, it turns out Tom has a long family history of supporting Celtic arts: his parents helped run the Milwaukee Irish Fest which boasts over 100 acts across 16 stages.



As noted, Kathleen plays multiple instruments, teaches multiple skills, and has handily carried the torch of Celtic Irish and Scottish heritage in the Bay Area and abroad. She is a mentor and an inspiration, and she never tires of the thrill she gets when playing music. The little red-haired tag-along, now Head Drumming Instructor for the Prince Charles Pipe Band, continues to guide and develop the future of young musicians and dancers.

More Charlies Off to College!

Several more Junior Band members have started their college careers (and we are fully expecting them to continue their piping careers as well!):



Alex Bloom – Stanford University

Rupert Chen – Harvard University



Tribute to Glen Murphey

(A note of gratitude from Board Member Eileen Ambre)

You probably recall seeing the five-gallon orange Igloo cooler reliably filled with lemonade on a picnic table in the PCPB games compound. Maybe you took for granted the stacks of water bottles loaded on a hand truck for the band to keep hydrated during the summer competition season. Without fail, Glen Murphey managed the entire process, from supplies to transport. I can picture him now, early in the morning unloading the hand truck, a little out of breath from hoisting 20-pound bags of ice, but super focused on getting set up. Taking a break, he would smile, wave a hearty hello,



dressed in his signature overalls, buzz cut hair and metal framed glasses. Glen's laid-back style made me think of the 1970's, and no wonder, his distant cousin is Michael Martin Murphey, the singer songwriter of megahit, "Wildfire."

Music must run in the family. Glen became involved with PCPB to support his son, Andrew Murphey, learn to play the pipes. Andrew has learning disabilities, and when he won the Jack Sutherland Ambassador award in 2017, the pride and love that Glen exhibited for his son melted the hearts of the band members assembled for this annual meeting.

In March of 2023, Glen and his family moved to Rhode Island. I spoke with Glen a couple of weeks ago and was thrilled to learn that Andrew is playing with the Rhode Island Highlanders Pipe Band. They are blessed to have the support of a family like the Murphey's. We at PCPB wish them well with immense gratitude for all the years of thoughtful service Glen gave to us.

In Memoriam: Rob Miller

We were shocked and saddened at the recent passing of Rob Miller, a stalwart member of the Band's drum corps for many years. Rob played snare and bass with several generations of the Band, including the first group to compete in Scotland in 1973 and the group that took the road trip to Chicago and Maxville in 1983. Rob had a kind, gentle spirit and was inclined to engage in a bit of fun mischief. Rob's humor and wit kept us all laughing, reminding us to not take ourselves or our foibles too seriously.

Rob was loved by all and will be sorely missed. Our sympathies go to his family and closest friends. RIP, Rob – you will be in our hearts forever. A Celebration of Rob's Life is being planned for March 9 in his hometown of Corte Madera.



Thank You for Your Support!

As you know, the band is a non-profit organization. Comprised of men, women, and young people, interested in Scottish culture, the band has provided unique musical experiences literally around the world.

We are a teaching organization first and foremost. We are one of the few bagpipe bands in California whose mission is to promote and instill the interest in highland bagpipe music across multiple generations with a focus on youth participation.

As most of our readers know, in any given year 50 to 60 percent of the band's revenue comes through donations. While band dues, performance fees, and prize money offset much of the day-to-day operating costs of the band, it is the donations that really help underwrite the national and international travel costs for our participants.

We especially want to thank those of you that provide consistent financial support each year with a special thank you to the Caledonian Club of San Francisco. It really helps to be able to forecast donation revenue as part of our budgeting process

Please help us continue to provide exceptional cultural experiences with your generous donations. Enclosed is a remittance envelope for your convenience, or you can **donate at www.pcpb.org**. Thank you in advance for your support and we hope you have a wonderful 2024!

2024 PCPB Special Recognition Awards

At the Band's AGM in January, several members were honored with the annual PCPB Special Recognition Awards for their actions and accomplishments in 2023.

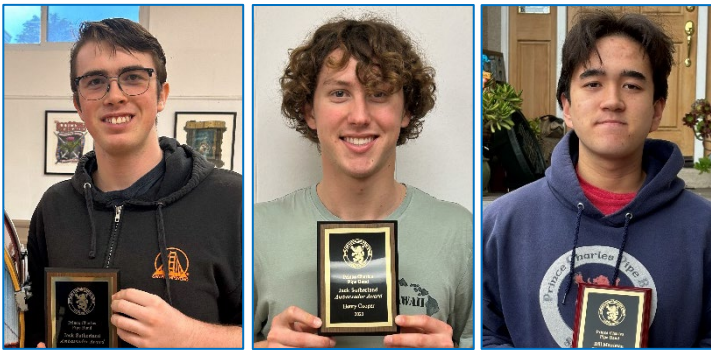
The **Bill Merriman Director's Award** is given to a member of the Band who in the past year has demonstrated a high level of commitment, initiative and leadership. This year's award went to piper **Lars Lund**.

Last year Lars captured the Western U.S. Grade 3 solo aggregate award and was promoted to Grade 2 for 2024. Lars leads by example, with near-perfect attendance at practice. He actively contributes to the band with ideas for music and settings. He also plays percussion in his High School marching ensemble and (when he has the time!) plays baseball as well.

The **Jack Sutherland PCPB Ambassador Award** is given to a member of the Band who over the past year has demonstrated superior citizenship within the Band and within the community, and who clearly embodies the mission of the Band. This year's award was a double-double: drummer **Henry Stockett** and piper **Henry Cooper**.

Henry Stockett goes out of his way to be at practice. He was one of the first members of this generation of the Junior Band and has been a fixture in the drum corps. He took on the lead drummer role in the Junior Band, and promoted and researched the purchase of new drums. His enthusiasm is contagious, and he represents the Band's ethos everywhere we go. As Kathleen put it, "Henry is a true Charlie Drummer!"

Henry Cooper is a rock-solid Band piper and has also excelled in Solo competition. He brings positivity and exuberance to his work, which rubs off on everyone around him. He enjoys supporting the drum corps by attending their practice sessions and playing for them. Outside of the Band, Henry is currently completing his Eagle Scout project, building a storage cart for his High School music program (in which he also plays bassoon and clarinet!). Henry was defensive MVP on his school's League Champion water polo team!



Award recipients Henry Stockett, Henry Cooper & Lars Lund

An Exciting Year Ahead!

We have big plans on two fronts this year. Our Grade 4 Junior Band will travel to Canada in August to compete in the **North American Pipe Band Championships in Maxville, Ontario**. This is a great opportunity to test our skills and show how much we have improved as a Band in a few short years. Everyone is excited to make the trip and take in one of the biggest contests in North America!

Our other big news is that we will be introducing our **Grade 5 Juvenile Band** this spring. Otherwise known as our "Rising Stars", this group will venture onto the pipe band competition field for the first time. Led by PCPB Instructors Brian Cooper and Shaelyn Mosbaugh, the rest of the band is comprised entirely of youth 18 and under.

Plenty to root for this year! Go PCPB!

2024 PCPB Calendar

Date	Event
Mar 17	St. Patty's Street Fair, Los Gatos
Mar 23	Pipes N Pubs #1 – Lodi – Band/Solos
Apr 6	Caledonian Club Tartan Ball
Apr 27	NorCal Celtic Fest, Woodland – Band/Solos
May 11	Rowell Ranch Rodeo Parade, Castro Valley
May 18	Menlo College Commencement, Atherton
May 25-26	Scottish Fest, Costa Mesa – Band/Solos
Jun 8	Pipes N Pubs #3, Elk Grove – Solos only
Jun 15	Chicago Games, Chicago, IL (tentative)
Jul 4	July 4 th Parade, Danville
Jul 27	San Francisco Indoor Games – Solos only
Aug 3-4	North American Pipe Band Championships, Maxville, Ontario, and the Montreal Games
Aug 30 – Sep 1	Caledonian Club Games, Pleasanton – Band & Solos
Nov 3	Veterans Parade, Pleasanton
Nov 9	St. Andrew's of East Bay Banquet



PCPB Annual Holiday Party – December 2023