

Youngstars

The National Youth Pipe Band of Scotland
Newsletter No.1

First 'young star' pipers named

THE first intake of pipers for the National Youth Pipe Band of Scotland has been chosen.

It includes boys and girls from across the length and breadth of Scotland, and young pipers from England and Ireland.

Most already have significant piping achievements to their credit.

"Throughout the selection process, I have been very highly impressed by the standards that so many youngsters are achieving in their piping," said Paul Warren, director of the NYPBoS. "I have had to make some difficult decisions, and hope that many of those who were not selected in this first round will persist and try again.

"The young pipers I have met and heard play through the selection process have been a credit to their instructors, bands, schools, families and communities. They also have evidenced their own determination, talent and hard work."

Those selected for the first intake of pipers are (with school and band affiliations, and priciple instructors) are:

Robert Barnes, 17, of Methil, Fife. (A student at Elmwood College, and a member of the Kirkcaldy and District Pipe Band; with instruction from Douglas Young);

Scott Birse, 13, of Bonnybridge, Stirlingshire. (Denny High School; Lomond and Clyde Pipe Band, Royal Burgh of Stirling Novice Juvenile Pipe Band; Bert Smith, Dougie Nicol);

Keith Bowes, 13, of Inchinnan, Renfrewshire. (Parkmains High School; Keith Bowes sr, Gordon Walker);

Emma Buchan, 13, of Shieldhill, Falkirk. (Braes High School; Bo'ness Pipe Band and Falkirk Schools Piping Group; Colin McLuckie, James Grant);

Lynn Calder, 15, of Fraserburgh, Aberdeenshire. (Aberdeen City Music School; Buchan Royal British Legion Pipe Band, Asco Buchan Pipe Band; Pamela Smith/Whyte, Ian Dallas, small pipes — Sharon Hassan);

Sean Cameron, 15, of Fort William, Inverness-shire. (Lochaber High School; Lochaber Schools Pipe Band; Duncan MacDonald, Margaret MacMaster);

Gillian Chalmers, 15, of Fraserburgh, Aberdeenshire. (Scottish National Centre of Excellence for Traditional Music, Plockton High School; Iain MacFadyen, Pamela Smith); cont. p 28

Laura Dickson, 16, of Cathcart, Glasgow. (William Wood High School, Clarkston; 278 Boys Brigade Pipe Band, Strathclyde Fire Brigade Pipe Band; Alasdair Ross, Robert Shaw, Willie Beveridge);

Ben Duncan, 13, of Edinburgh. (Broughton High School; Andrew Wright);

Graham Griffith, 15, of Airdrie, Lanarkshire. (Airdrie Academy; City of Glasgow Kinning Park Pipe Band, Chivas Regal Pipe Band; John Nevins, Sandy Brownlie, Kevin McDermid, Bob McFie, Iain Sinclair);

Jamie Haydock, 16, of Crieff, Perthshire. (Morrison's Academy; Morrison's Academy Pipe Band, Gleneagles Strathearn Pipe Band, Vale of Atholl Junior Pipe Band; Anne Spalding);

Alasdair Henderson, 14, of Dunoon, Argyllshire. (Dunoon Grammar School; Dunoon Grammar School Pipe Band; Craig Campbell, Annie Grant, Jim Henderson);

Ewen Henderson, 15, of Fort William, Inverness-shire. (Lochaber High School; Lochaber Schools Pipe Band; Duncan MacDonald, Dougie and Angus MacColl, Donald Nicholson, Margaret MacMaster, Dr John MacAskill);

Caitlin Houlihan, 14, of Mallow, Co. Cork, Republic of Ireland (Mill Street Community School; Cullen Pipe Band; Con Houlihan, Stephen Power);

Calum Lawrie, 13, of Aberdeen. (Westhill Academy; Bucksburn and District Pipe Band, Robert Gordon Combined Cadet Force Pipes and Drums, Bucksburn and District Novice Juvenile Pipe Band; Alec Elrick, Iain Dallas, Lyndsay Spiers);

Clare Lynas, 18, of Livingston, West Lothian (Scottish National Centre of Excellence for Traditional Music, Plockton High School; Drambuie Kirkliston; Iain MacFadyen, Iain Speirs, Angus MacLellan);

Lindsay MacArthur, 15, of Bowmore, Isle of Islay. (Islay High School; Islay Pipe Band; Duncan Head);

Ashley Macdonald, 14, of Grimsay, North Uist. (Lionacleit Secondary School; Uist Pipe Band, Sgoil Lionacleit Pipe Band; Calum Campbell of Benbecula);

Kyle Morton, 16, of Dingwall, Ross-shire (Dingwall Academy; Strathclyde Police Pipe Band, Strafpeffer Pipe Band, Dingwall Army Cadet Pipe Band; Iain MacFadyen, Findlay McCrae);

Daniel Nevans, 14, of Airdrie, Lanarkshire. (St Margaret's Secondary School; Kinning Park Pipe Band, Chivas Regal Pipe band; John Nevans, Bob MacFie);

Ciaràn Payne, 16, of Rosyth, Fife. (St Columbus High School; Dunfermline and District Pipe Band, Lochgelly High School Pipe Band; Neil Cameron, Kay Hogg, Douglas Brown, Tom Brown of Lochgelly);

Stuart G. Peters, 16, of Monifeith, Angus. (Monifieth High School; Arbroath Royal British Legion Pipe Band; Anne Spalding, Ryan Kennedy);

Colin Prentice, 15, of Dunoon, Argyllshire. (Dunoon Grammar School; Dunoon Argyll Pipe Band, Dumbarton and District Pipe Band; Annie Grant, Jim Henderson, Donald MacPhee);

Ruari Stephen, 16, of Edinburgh. (Edinburgh Academy; Edinburgh Academy Senior Pipe Band, Lothian and Borders Police Pipe Band; Jimmy Pryde, Colin Fairburn, Colin MacLellan and Roddy MacLeod);

Sam Stephens, 17, of Kirkby Lonsdale, Cumbria, England. (Gordonstoun High School; Barrow St Andrews Pipe Band; Gordonstoun High School Pipe Band; Oliphant, Roddy MacLeod, Pipe Major Angus MacDonald, Dougie Pincock, Willie Morrison, Gordon Walker);

Samantha Stewart, 16, of Sandbank, Argyllshire. (Dunoon Grammar School; Dunoon Grammar School Pipe Band; Jim Henderson, Calum Campbell);

Struan Thorpe, 13, of Lochgilphead, Argyllshire. (Lochgilphead High School; Lomond and Clyde Pipe Band, Mid Argyll Pipe Band; Arthur G. Gillies, Rod Buchanan, Paul Warren);

Alex Urquhart-Taylor, 17, of Ullapool, (Gairloch High School; Ullapool Junior Pipe Band; Carol-Anne Mackay, Norman Gillies);

Sean Fraser Walker, 14, of Harpenden, Hertfordshire, England (St George's Harpenden School; Luton University Pipe Band, Royal Air Force Pipes and Drums Halton; Stuart Walker, James Caution, Lenny Browne);

Kyle Warren, 14, of Helensburgh, Renfrewshire. (Hermitage Academy; Lomond and Clyde Pipe Band; Jim Kilpatrick, Mark Carmichael, Paul Warren);

Danielle Wishart, 15, of Glasgow. (Hyndland Secondary School; Milngavie Novice Juvenile Pipe Band, Strathclyde Fire Brigade Pipe Band. Instructors include: Seumus MacNeil, Jimmy Kilpatrick, Roddy MacLeod);

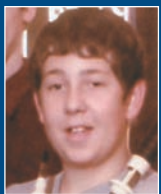
Fraser Wylie, 14, of Campbeltown, Argyllshire. (Campbeltown Grammar School; Kintyre Schools Pipe Band; Iain MacKerrall, William McCallum). ●





Youngstars

To all - well done indeed!



Alasdair Henderson



Alex Urqhort-Taylor



Ashley MacDonald



Ben Duncan



Caitlin Houlihan



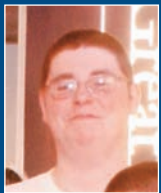
Callum Lawrie



Ciaràn Payne



Claire Lynas



Colin Prentice



Danielle Wishart



Daniel Evans



Emma Buchan



Euan Henderson



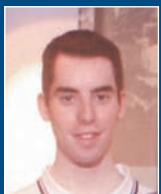
Fraser Wylie



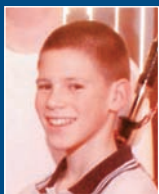
Gillian Chalmers



Graham Griffith



Jamir Haydoch



Keith Bowes



Kyle Morton



Kyle Warren



Laura Dickson



Lynn Calder



Lynsey McArthur



Rhuri Stephen



Robert Barnes



Samantha Stewart



Sam Stephens



Scott Birse



Sean Cameron



Sean Walker



Struan Thorpe



Stuart Peters

Welcome to the “YOUNGSTARS” newsletter. This section is intended to keep you up to date with the progress of The National Youth Pipe Band of Scotland. Why “Youngstars”? Because this is what the young members of this exciting new project will undoubtedly become - YOUNG STARS of the piping and drumming world

We have now completed Entrant courses for pipers and have selected 32 fine young players, who are listed in this newsletter. Well done and congratulations. Congratulations also go to all who attended courses but were not fortunate enough to win selection this time around. I have been extremely impressed by the standard, character and enthusiasm of all of the candidates. Selecting 32 from over 100 applicants of this calibre was no easy task: well done once again to

everyone. And I do hope that those who were unsuccessful on this occasion will consider trying again at a later date.

We are now working on to the selection process for drummers. I am delighted to welcome Garry Killen on board as our Drumming Co-ordinator. Garry is the Lead Drummer with David Urquhart Travel grade one Pipe Band. He brings with him experience, ability, enthusiasm and vision, and is a pleasure to work with.

At the time of writing, we have held two very successful drumming courses here at The National Piping Centre and one outreach course in Campbeltown. We are also running an outreach course in Orkney and plan to visit the young pipers and drummers of the Army Cadet and Combined Cadet Forces at their training camp at Cameron Barracks, Inverness, in April.

As you can see things are both exciting and busy. I will shortly be producing an initial repertoire and

planning some rehearsal days. The repertoire will develop as we go and getting every one back together for rehearsal days although being a logistical nightmare should prove to be great fun.

There are a few interesting engagements in the pipeline (including some trips abroad) but our first priority will be to rehearse and officially launch the youth pipe band here in Scotland.

There is much to look forward to but we must first complete the selection process for the drum corps - so all you drummers out there give us a call and give it a go. And pipers - spread the word to your percussionist friends, including those playing in jazz, rock and other bands. As a concert band, our door is open.

Paul Warren
Director
National Youth Pipe Band of Scotland

‘Centre of excellence’ for percussionists

DRUMMING and percussion selections for the National Youth Pipe Band of Scotland are now well under way under the leadership of Garry Killen, lead drummer of the grade one David Urquhart Travel Pipe Band.

Assisting him is David Urquhart Travel’s Neil Whitelaw.

“We are in very capable hands with Garry and Neil,” said Paul Warren, director of the NYPBoS.

Garry Killen sees the NYPBoS as a longer-term project that ideally will align teaching and standards with Scottish Vocational Qualification (SVQ) standards and establish a system of progression so that younger percussionists are not competing for places with older, more experienced drummers.

“The National Piping Centre is the centre of excellence for piping,” he said, “but hopefully it will also become a centre of excellence for Scottish percussion, for drumming — that’s the way I’d like to see it taken — so members play for their own bands and have their personal aspirations, and this provides something more for them.”

He sees such an approach working well alongside the school system and complementing the aspirations of pipe bands.

“I have intentions to conduct workshops and an outreach into the schools. There are opportunities to build something quite special for the future on the base that’s already here.”

Garry Killen said sufficient instruction was often denied young drummers because of time and resource constraints. But the potential exists.

“Relating this potential with the educational system, with the support of parents and schools, is the way ahead,” he said.

“Teaching is about getting the best out of people — things that perhaps they didn’t think they could do. A good teacher would not hold a good student back from fully developing his or her potential.

“We can arrange specialised tuition for talented youngsters that may not be available through resource-strained juvenile bands — and there needs to be somewhere for them to go.

“A centre of excellence can provide that. The National Youth Pipe Band of Scotland is an extra activity for youngsters of talent who would otherwise miss out.

“Those who take part will be acquiring skills that will be an asset to their band.”

As a concert band, not a competing band, the NYPBoS could be more exploratory in its music and give scope to members’ own creativity and expertise.

“There is a tradition which has to be maintained to the highest standards of excellence,” he said. “The concert side is a development beyond that. We are all learning, we are all progressing; it’s enjoyable. Many of the leading bands are widening their music and performing in concert, and it is good for young people to follow this example. It adds an edge to the overall



Garry Killen

performance — the traditional and the less traditional.”

The trend towards concert performances is one that Garry Killen encourages, as a way to strengthen bands’ relationships with their communities. “Just because you are in a grade 4 or 3 band does not mean you should not have both traditional and more innovative aspects to what you do,” he said. “The concert performance is something a number of bands do very well these days, and there are a lot of avenues to explore. It generates interest and is satisfying to do.

“The general public still tend to have a shortbread tin view of piping and pipe bands, but concert programmes can help to move this stereotype, and communities can become very supportive.

“We need to educate parents and communities more, and the National Youth Pipe Band of Scotland can help to achieve and motivate this.” ●

GARRY KILLEN

Tip stays true to the band ‘across the water’

GARRY KILLEN, lead tip for the David Urquhart Travel Pipe Band and co-ordinator of percussion for the National Youth Pipe Band of Scotland, grew up in Dunoon on the western shore of the Firth of Clyde.

In those days Dunoon was a quiet little place, with a population a little under 10,000. A good share of the local income and residents were American — from the Cold War era submarine base at Holy Loch further north. But it supported two pipe bands: the Dunoon Grammar School Pipe Band and the Dunoon Argyll Pipe Band.

“My dad was an enthusiast,” said Garry Killen, “and he took me down to watch the Dunoon Argyll band all the time.

“One day I picked up a pair of sticks and thought, ‘that’ll do me’. Once you get hooked, that’s you.”

He was eight years old when he joined the local grammar school pipe band and, by the time he was

continued on page 4

Invitation to drummers with a difference

THE National Youth Pipe Band of Scotland is opening its doors to ambitious young percussionists from all areas of musical interest.

"Piping is clearly the basis of what we are about," said Paul Warren, director of the NYPBoS. "And percussionists will have to be willing to work within that tradition.

"But we are a concert band, and can provide opportunities to develop and present concert items that are innovative, exciting and draw on wider skills and fields of musicianship.

"And we offer the chance for the right people to develop their talent, perform on high profile concert stages, represent their country, build their CVs and learn widely relevant stagecraft and presentation skills.

"We already have, among the pipers who have been selected, several able young percussionists, and a wide range of second instrument skills."



Paul Warren

Percussionists who have not learned pipe band beatings will be taught, provided they have the interest and aptitude — and they will be encouraged and helped to work with other youngsters to express their own musical interests and abilities.

"I am happy to work with jazz, rock, classical and ethnic percussionists — young people from any musical background — if they have ability and are keen to fit in," said Garry Killen, who is co-ordinating the drumming and percussion component of the NYPBoS programme.

Selection is by audition during a 3-day residential course at The National Piping Centre, Glasgow.

Interested youngsters should — in the first instance — register an interest with **Paul Warren, Director, National Youth Pipe Band of Scotland, The National Piping Centre, 30-34 McPhater Street, Cowcaddens, Glasgow, G4 0HW. Phone 0141 353 0220. E-mail: pwarren@thepipingcentre.co.uk** ●

14, he was its lead drummer, and getting restless.

"I wanted to play in a band across the water," he said.

"I had an opportunity to join the Babcock Renfrew Pipe Band in 1984, and I went up for an audition."

Jackie Houlden gave the keen youngster a place in the drum corps: "He took me in and basically taught me everything I know as a player," said Garry Killen... "an excellent tutor and an excellent percussionist.

"I joined his corps and played the following season when I was 15-16."

For six years, Garry Killen travelled two hours each way, by ferry and train, from his home in Dunoon to practices in Refrew. There were a couple of times when, having missed the last ferry home, he had to rely for the night on the hospitality of the Gourrock Police Station.

"We had a very young corps and were playing at the top level of grade one with a very successful pipe band.

"I was with Jackie Houlden for 16-17 years, then the band became Black Bottle Whisky and now is David Urquhart Travel. We had a lot of good fun and quite a successful time."

2003 sees Garry Killen putting in his 19th season with the same band — "loyalty is a good thing for youngsters to understand and respect," he said. "All the jumping about between bands doesn't help."

When, five years ago, Jackie Houlden retired, Garry Killen replaced him as lead tip.

"It was a massive challenge to take over from someone such as him," he said. "It was quite scary and a lot of hard work.

"We started teaching the youngsters again, bringing them on through to the corps we have now. The average age of the drum corps is early 20s.

"The corps we had with Jackie was a young corps as well. And there was a lot of high quality drumming at that time.

"We have been working to re-establish that and carry on that tradition: good tuition, good sound and a great team environment. Everybody plays for each other and because they are all younger they have a brilliant attitude to win, lose or draw. They take criticism well, and listen and learn from others."

Based in Dennistoun, Glasgow, the David Urquhart Travel Pipe Band draws from the community, recruiting younger drummers who want to progress but with a care not to split up other bands.

"It's a policy that, when we do things, we do things right," said Garry Killen. "We speak with a young person's parents before he or she comes into the band and let them know the practice schedule and how committed they have to be. We take account of young members' schoolwork and exams schedules and what pressures they have in their own lives, and work hard as a unit.

"We have a good youth policy."

While Garry Killen believes that the role of a grade one lead drummer is neither more nor less challenging than it was 20 years ago, he has seen some clear shifts in emphasis. Most importantly, beyond the need to establish a technically able drum corps, it has become imperative to produce a good sounding pipe band.

"In the past, there were undoubtedly a lot of high standard drum corps," he said "and they set a standard to follow.

"The rudiments haven't changed much but now it's not just about technical playing — you are working more as a whole band; drumming is ensemble-oriented. You have to have high standards at both ends of the band, and the standards are increasing year to year," he said.

"The drum sound has gone very much sharper, and the mid and bass sections are more involved in the band now. The bass sections used to be there mostly to keep time. These days, the bass section is

much more involved: different pitches and sounds down the spectrum are adding more colour and flavour to the music.

"And tenor drum flourishing has become a big focal point" said Garry Killen.

"Nowadays, they are expected to play and to flourish.

"We have a tenor drummer, Norman ("Haggis") MacLeod, a world bass section championship winner, a master of flourishing, who has worked wonders with our bass section. He is a joy to watch, known worldwide.

"He teaches in private schools and has taught other grade one corps — Vale of Atholl, Dysart and Dundonald and others."

On 5 April, for example, the David Urquhart Travel Pipe Band's bass and tenor sections, led by Norman MacLeod, are presenting a groundbreaking free workshop for bass and tenor drummers at the Royal Scottish Pipe Band Association headquarters, Glasgow, for west of Scotland bands. They recently gave a workshop in Campbeltown.

"Piping has changed as well," said Garry Killen, "and tempos are faster.

"Faster tempos make it harder for lead drummers to make good technical drum scores because you can't get the amount of material in — it can't just be a drumming thing anymore.

"We have a good pipe major who understands this, and we work very closely together to produce a good integration. Though the drum score may not sound so brilliant on its own, and the pipes sound okay, when you marry them together it goes up to another level of enhancement.

"And you get a few corps who stand out on their own.

"A lot of people set out to emulate these top bands, but there is something to be said for standing alone and claiming your own identity." ●