

**The Minutes of the meeting of the Lothian & Borders Branch of
The Royal Scottish Pipe Band Association
Held in Bellsquarry Hall, Livingston
On Sunday 29th September 2013**

Present:

J. Hughes, Chairman	Boghall & Bathgate
A. Dalziel, Vice Chair	Lothian & Borders Police
A. Hazzard, Secretary	Bo'ness
LA. Hughes	Boghall & Bathgate
W. Dalziel, Trophy Convenor	Lothian & Borders Police
P. Hazzard, Minute Secretary	Bo'ness
D. Brand	Newtongrange
S. Orr	Royal Scots Dragoon Guards
Iain Simpson	George Watson's College
Willie McIntyre	George Heriot's School

Apologies: N. Purves, G. Purves, B. McMorran, M. O'Neill, V. McMorran, J. Barnes, L.J. Barnes

The Chairman opened the meeting and welcomed all present.

The minutes of the meeting of 28th April were approved by the Royal Scots Dragoon Guards and seconded by Newtongrange.

Matters arising:

There were no matters arising.

Secretary's report:

Cheques have been received for bands failing to appear at North Berwick and also for a new bands affiliation fees. We have had a complaint from St. Ronan's Piping Society with regards to the change of date for their contest for 2014. St. Ronan's are unhappy at not being consulted prior to their current date being given to a Major Championship. The letter was sent to Headquarters for a response.

It was stated by the Chairman that Major Championships take precedence and local contests are required to be fitted in around the Championship dates.

Ann will liaise with St. Ronan's to try and get a date which will suit everyone.

Treasurer's report:

The treasurer gave her report and details are available from the Branch Secretary upon request.

Directors report:

There has been some discussion on the discrepancies on the adjudicators placings at some contests this year. This is being analysed by the Adjudicator Training Group.

Cowal went well this year and there were 60 - 80 bands who played down the street with many of them playing in fancy dress. There was an excellent atmosphere which was more relaxed than previous years for the street parade.

Ormeau Park, Belfast is the chosen venue for the New UK Championships for the next two years and the 2014 contest will be held on the 14th June.

There was some discussion on the separation of Novice and Juvenile players, and they may be separated both by age and playing standard.

Music Board report:

Arthur Cook attended the music board on behalf of the Branch as neither of our representatives were available for this meeting.

There will be a Summer School this year and it will take place from 20th – 25th July 2014.

There was some discussion on the Pipe Band Musicianship qualification, which will be discussed at the Board of Directors meeting on 12th October.

The Outreach Program is also on the agenda for the Directors meeting, this could allow Pipe Majors, Leading Drummers, and Band Tutors to put their band members through the PDQB Courses. This would make the courses available to many more students and will also mean that the costs could be kept to a minimum for bands and students.

The Structured Learning books have now been converted to a digital format and are being considered for distribution through the Association website. Discussions are ongoing with the Education Management Group as to how these will be made available for download.

There was some discussion on regradings and the following are the Branch bands who have been regarded. (these regradings are still subject to ratification)

Novice to Juvenile	George Watson's College, Boghall & Bathgate.
Grade 3b to 3A	Stockbridge
Grade 3a to 2	City of Edinburgh
Grade 1 to 2	Torphichen & Bathgate
Grade 4a to 3b	Newtongrange
Grade 4b to	3 rd Batt. Royal Regiment of Scotland

There was some discussion as to whether a Grade 5 would be beneficial, the current grade 4b bands would be grade 5 with the current 4a bands remaining as grade 4. This would possibly help bands as all bands would then be playing their own criteria at minor contests as well. This has been added to the agenda for the next Music Board meeting.

Trophy Convenor's report:

There are still a large number of fines being issued to bands for not returning trophies and the number of damaged trophies is also unacceptable.

A new trophy donated by Mrs Moir was presented at North Berwick.

Steward's report:

Alex Dalziel thanked all the stewards for their efforts this year.

We now have 15 tents and Alex is going to try and source bags for 8 of these.

Education report:

Craigmount are hoping to run a PDQB course and ask if the branch will support this. The Chairman referred back to the discussion on the Outreach Programme in the Music Board report, and will update the Vice Chairman on any progress, as this may be an opportunity for the Branch to support the bands.

The Associations Education Office, Pat Wheelan, has discussed the possibility of funding for these courses from various sources.

Indoor Contest:

The date of next years Indoor Contest will be 29th March 2014.

A.O.C.B.

There was some discussion on the 2 day worlds.

Various comments were made about this including lack of atmosphere, just no buzz, lack of bands on the march past.

Some of the bands however prefer the new playing criteria for the worlds, in particular the grade one bands.

There was also some discussion on a few of the problems encountered:

Coaches should not be allowed to move before the end of the march past.
Problems with entry into the park, particularly on the Sunday.
Bands not allowed to practice at their bus in some areas.

There was some discussion on how we felt about a 2 day contest and although the general opinion by those present was against a 2 day event there will need to be a lot more discussion on this.

Bathgate – This went well for the first year although there were problems with some final tuning areas and of course the bridge across from the bus park.

Forres – This contest went very well with very few minor problems.

Dumbarton – This contest went very well with no major issues. The change of layout for the Grade 1 arena was a big improvement.

The P/M William Fergusson Contest will be hosted by the North of Scotland Branch and will be held at Forfar in November.

The Branch representatives are Matthew McCafferty (Boghall & Bathgate) and Christie Jack (George Heriot's School)

Major Championships 2013: -

British Championships	Bathgate	31 st May
UK Championships	Belfast	14 th June
European Championships	Forres	28 th June
Scottish Championships	Dumbarton	26 th July
Worlds	Glasgow	between 15 th & 17 th August

The dates for the branch contests have still to be confirmed with the promoters. The Chairman and the secretary will be in touch with each of the promoters before the next branch meeting.

Next meeting: Bellsquarry Hall on Sunday 27th October 2013 at 6.00pm.