

33rd ANNIVERSARY OF THE
DONALD MACDONALD CUACH

7th June 2019





COMPETITORS



Callum Beaumont
A Ghlas-mheur (The Fingerlock)



Glenn Brown
Sean Chumha a Chlaidheimh (The Old Lament for the Sword)



Finlay Johnston
Siubhal Sheumais (Lament for the Departure of King James)



Stuart Liddell
Fàilte Fear Bhaghasdail (Boisdale's Salute)



Peter McCalister
An T-arm Breac Dearg (The Red Speckled Army)



Iain Speirs
Spaidearachd Bharrach (The Pride of Barra)

Adjudicator

Colin MacLellan

Singer

Griogair Labhruidh

Additional music

Opening piper: Archie Maclean

Interval music by young people from Sleat: Alasdair Stewart, pipes;
Erin and Rosie Winkelmann, fiddle



BIOGRAPHIES

Callum Beaumont

Callum Beaumont currently resides in Dollar, Clackmannanshire, with his fiancée Marita, where he is a piping instructor at Dollar Academy. During his time there he has led the Novice A band to four consecutive Champion of Champions titles including winning all five major championships in 2018.

Callum currently receives tuition from Willie McCallum.

Callum is a previous winner of the Donald MacDonald Cuach. His other prizes include winning both Gold Medals, The Silver Chanter, three clasps at the Northern Meetings and overall titles at The Metro Cup, Uist and Barra, Springbank Invitational, Donald Macleod Memorial and Bratach Gorm.

Glenn Brown

Glenn Brown is a native of Milton, Ontario, Canada. He began playing at the age of nine, and piping is in his blood as he was originally taught by his mother, Gail Brown, whom he still lists as one of his favourite pipers. One of Glenn's biggest role models is Willie McCallum, from whom he has been taking lessons since 2001. Other instructors have been Michael Grey and Bill Livingstone.

Some prizes of note in Pìobaireachd are the Canadian Gold Medal, The Dunvegan Medal and The Northern Meeting Gold Medal. In Light Music, Glenn has won the A grade Marches at the Argyllshire Gathering and the A grade MSR at London. Glenn has also been heavily involved in the pipe band world as the Pipe Sergeant of Shotts and Dykehead Caledonia, with whom he has won three World Pipe Band Championships. In 2017 Glenn placed 4th in the Clasp at the Northern Meeting, 2nd in the Masters Pìobaireachd and 1st in the Senior Pìobaireachd at the Argyllshire Gathering in Oban. In 2018 Glenn won the Bratach Gorm in London.



Finlay Johnston

Finlay Johnston has been surrounded by piping his whole life. His mother, Anne Johnston, was a very successful solo piper, being the first woman ever to win the Silver Medal. His father, Tommy Johnston, was also a successful pipe band drummer and played under Leading Drummer Alex Duthart.

Finlay has played in several pipe bands over his career, most recently with Inveraray & District under Pipe Major Stuart Liddell. He spent four years with Inveraray, during their rise from Grade 2 to the top end of Grade 1. Prior to this he played in the Spirit of Scotland Pipe band under Pipe Major Roddy MacLeod and also the 52nd Lowland Regiment under Pipe Major Gordon Walker.

Finlay teaches at The National Piping Centre, Glasgow. He previously worked as a reed maker and is a time-served Mechanical Engineer.

In 2018 Finlay was the overall winner in the Glenfiddich Championship.

Stuart Liddell

Stuart Liddell, from Inveraray, started piping at the age of nine and was originally taught by his grandfather, the late Pipe Major Ronald McCallum MBE and later, Arthur Gillies. He has also had tuition from Jim Henderson and Hugh McCallum.

He has won three Clasps at Inverness, the Senior Piobaireachd at Oban four times and both Gold Medals. He is a two-time Glenfiddich Piping Champion.

Stuart is founder and Pipe Major of the Inveraray & District Pipe Band, winners of the World Pipe Band Championship in 2017. Previously he was a member of the Scottish Power Pipe Band for seven years, thereafter joining the Simon Fraser University Pipe Band from Vancouver, Canada, with whom he played for eleven years.

A piano tuner by trade, he is also piping instructor at Mid-Argyll Primary and Lochgilphead High Schools.

In 2018 he won the open Piobaireachd at the Argyllshire Gathering.



Dr Peter McCalister

Peter started learning pipes aged nine, taught by Pipe Major Andy Wilson in Belfast. Life in a small Irish village was quiet, and to pass the time he studied music at 'O' and 'A' level, with piano being his first instrument. After Edinburgh Medical School and hospital jobs he became a GP in Bonnybridge, Stirlingshire.

In 1994 he took up Scottish and Northumbrian smallpipes – and simultaneously started Piobaireachd lessons with Tom Speirs. He had Light Music tuition from Roddy MacLeod MBE and now goes to Finlay Johnston.

He competed as an amateur for some years, and it was not until 2009 that he joined the Competing Pipers Association. Almost immediately he was successful, going on to win the Silver Medal in Oban (2012) and then the Gold Medal in Inverness (2018). His pipe band experience includes the Robert Armstrong Memorial and RAF Halton.

For some years he has been an active member of the Piobaireachd Society, joining their committees, and working behind the scenes on their website. He enjoys looking at alternative settings of tunes and has a particular interest in *canntaireachd*.

Iain Speirs

Iain Speirs was taught to play by Jack D. Crichton, his grandfather Pipe Major Jock Speirs, and his father Tom Speirs. Iain has also previously received tuition from Donald MacPherson and Murray Henderson.

Iain won the Donald MacDonald Cuach in 2009, 2016 and 2018. He has also won the Gold Medals at the Argyllshire Gathering and the Northern Meeting, the Clasp, the Senior Piobaireachd, the Glenfiddich Piping Championship, the Bratach Gorm and the Silver Chanter.

He has played in a number of pipe bands including the Clan MacFarlane Pipe Band, the Lothian and Borders Police Pipe Band, the College of Piping Band from Prince Edward Island, Canada and the Spirit of Scotland Pipe Band.

Iain lives in Edinburgh with his wife Susanne and children Annie and John. He works in financial services marketing.



Colin MacLellan, Adjudicator

Colin MacLellan was born in Dingwall, Ross-shire, in 1958. He learned the pipes from an early age from John D. Crichton, at George Heriot's School, who was his principal teacher until around 1973 when the influence of this father, John A. MacLellan, became predominant.

Starting his competitive career in Scotland, Colin started playing in open competitions in 1976. He moved to Canada in 1977 at 18 years of age and spent the next 22 years in the province of Ontario. He has won most of the top competitions including the Gold Medals at Inverness and Oban as well as the Silver Chanter on two occasions.

In 1999 Colin and his wife Jenny Hazzard moved to Scotland, with Colin taking up a position as Head of Piping Studies, being responsible for educational initiatives at the National Piping Centre as well as being instrumental in the creation of the BA Scottish Music (Piping) degree. He was appointed President of the Competing Pipers Association at this time.

Upon his retirement from competition he became a Senior Judge and Chairman of the Judging for Scotland's Joint Committee for Judging. Colin has played with Canada's 78th Fraser Highlanders, was Pipe Major of the Lothian and Borders Police Pipe Band and has played since in the Spirit of Scotland Pipe Band.

Griogair Labhruidh, Singer

Griogair Labhruidh is an award-winning Gaelic singer, poet, producer and multi-instrumentalist. Throughout his career he has worked with some of the biggest names in the contemporary Celtic and world music scenes. He has contributed to both film and stage, having performed on the soundtrack to the global sensation 'Outlander' to name but one of his many projects. He is also a part of the multi-million record selling Afro Celt Sound System collective and has made a significant contribution to their two most recent albums.

His love for Gaelic culture stems from his roots in both North Argyll and Skye, having dedicated his life to unearthing the depth of his native tradition. He has also collaborated with musicians from various world cultures, from West Africans to indigenous Americans to the Dalai Lama's Gyuto Monks.

Griogair is a part time lecturer at Sabhal Mòr Ostaig, Skye's Gaelic college and resides in Staffin, the area in which his own family roots lie in the North of the island.

Archie Maclean, opening piper

Archie Maclean is from Edinbane and a piping pupil of Ian Ruari Finlayson and Dr Angus MacDonald. He is Pipe Corporal of the Isle of Skye Pipe Band a long standing member of the Skye Youth Pipe Band. In 2018 he won the Clan Donald Lands Trust prize for best overall junior piper at the Colonel Jock Macdonald Memorial Trust Music Festival.



DONALD MACDONALD

ARCHITECT OF CHANGE

Donald MacDonald (1767-1840), Skyeman, piper, soldier, bagpipe-maker, music publisher and 'Pipe Maker to the Highland Society of London' is a key figure in the history of piping. He was the first person to make a comprehensive collection of Highland bagpipe music in staff notation. A part of his unique collection of piobaireachd was first published in about 1820 and then republished in 2006. The balance of his collection remained in manuscript until 2011 when 50 tunes were published for the first time in a scholarly edition prepared by Roderick Cannon and Keith Sanger for the Piobaireachd Society. This was made possible through the generosity of the Highland Society of London, William Grant and Sons Distillers, the MacRobert Trust and the Clan Donald Lands Trust.

Besides the music, in a concise form which is readable by present-day pipers, Donald MacDonald's Collection of Piobaireachd Volume 2 (1826) has chapters on the history of the original author, on the making of the manuscript and on the styles of music which were current when it was written.

THE CRAFTSMAN

Donald MacDonald was one of the first of the emerging class of professional bagpipe makers in Edinburgh and London. Although his products were overtaken by the work of other makers in the course of the busy 19th century, it was his distinctive design and workmanship that came to define the Great Highland Bagpipe as we know it today. Donald MacDonald marks the point of entry into the known history of the Highland bagpipe.

Donald was born in Glenhinnisdale, Trotternish, Skye, in 1767. His father was a carpenter and it is noticeable that his sons and other younger relatives took up work in various handicrafts – cabinet-making, metalwork, printing and basket-weaving. He began his pipe-making business in Edinburgh possibly as early as 1802 and his legacy has become apparent in recent studies of sets of pipes of his workmanship, still surviving in museums. The 'finish' and decoration of the Donald MacDonald bagpipe reflects the new styles of the 19th century while dimensions and acoustic properties seem to reflect older Gaelic styles. Hugh Robertson was the Edinburgh bagpipe maker chosen by the Highland Society of London in 1781 to make the first prize bagpipe for the piping competition staged at Falkirk and for the subsequent Edinburgh competitions. The succession of the honorary commission of 'Pipe Maker to the Highland Society of London' passed in 1812 briefly to Malcolm MacGregor of London, back to Hugh Robertson in 1816 and to Donald MacDonald in 1822.



DONALD MACDONALD THE PIPER

As already mentioned, Donald MacDonald was born in 1767 in Glenhinnisdale in Skye. It has been said that he was taught by the MacArthurs – at least he himself dated his own early piping experience to the late 1770s. He first comes to our notice when he joins the armed forces – the Rothesay and Caithness Fencibles – in 1795. Donald served until about 1802 and then, as he settled in Edinburgh, he began to make his mark in the annual pìobaireachd competitions of the Highland Society of London. Both Donald and his three sons took many prizes, and Donald himself (after another break for military service) won the top award in 1817. But still more significant for us, he learned to write pipe music in modern notation, and, as early as 1806, he won a substantial prize for producing the largest collection seen up till that time. In 1820, he finally published his first collection of pìobaireachd. This publication prefigures an important pattern whereby the most significant published works were produced by the bagpipe makers themselves, Donald MacDonald thus being the pioneer of such enterprises. In many ways, the notation set the standard for all the books we have today. Donald's 1820 book contained 23 pieces noted in complete detail, and the quality of the music and sophistication of his style of ornamentation show clearly what a strong tradition he had inherited. Many of our most famous tunes first saw the light in that book – 'The Prince's Salute', 'The Finger Lock', 'Craigellachie', 'Glengarry's March' and so on. They are still favourites today, and although styles of playing are now different, the basic melodies remain as he gave them.

In order to broaden the market – for his book was generally beyond the financial reach of the piper community – Donald designed his notation to be readable by other musicians as well, especially pianists. In this, he was unsuccessful and he lost money; yet he went on to prepare a second larger collection of 50 pieces of music, which he completed in 1826 but was unable to publish. The story of how he gifted the manuscript to a young pupil, who by that time was in India, and how it was preserved in the family, is a romance in itself. The tunes in the second volume again include a large number of classics and the names tell their own story – 'MacDonald's Warning', 'The Massacre of Glencoe', 'Cnocan Ailean Mac Iain'. Together with a fascinating collection of historical and traditional stories they add up to a distinctive Clan Donald view of the turbulent period of Highland history in which they were created.

Compared with the modern way of playing, Donald MacDonald's style seems flexible and ornate, with introductory grace-notes and 'reflexive shakes' which are no longer in use. Some pipers see these negatively, as if to say that if Donald differed from the ways we have today, he must have been wrong. Other pipers are experimenting to rediscover the old ways. The leading venue for this innovative approach to piping is the annual competition for the Donald MacDonald Cuach.



2018 Winner Iain Speirs

The Winners

1987	Hugh MacCallum	2003	Robert Watt
1988	Iain MacFadyen	2004	Ross Cowan
1989	Robert Wallace	2005	Stuart Shedden
1990	Roderick MacLeod	2006	Niall Stewart
1991	William McCallum	2007	James Murray
1992	Allan MacDonald	2008	Pipe Major Brian Donaldson
1993	William McCallum	2009	Iain Speirs
1994	Alfred P Morrison	2010	Stuart Liddell
1995	Dr Angus MacDonald	2011	Angus MacColl
1996	Angus McColl	2012	Murray Henderson
1997	William McCallum	2013	Cameron Drummond
1998	William J Morrison	2014	Roddy MacLeod
1999	James Murray	2015	Bruce Gandy
2000	Niall Matheson	2016	Iain Speirs
2001	Donald MacPhee	2017	Callum Beaumont
2002	Colin MacLellan	2018	Iain Speirs



Programme

Welcome and opening remarks by

Dr Angus MacDonald

The evening will commence with local piper Archie Maclean.

Singer Griogair Labhruidh and young people from Sleat will perform in the intervals between pipers. There will be a break half-way through the performance, when the bar will be open.

PRESENTATION

The cuach will be presented by the Right Honourable Godfrey James Macdonald of Macdonald, 8th Lord Macdonald and 34th High Chief of Clan Donald.

After the event a light buffet will be served and the bar open.

The competition will be live streamed via the Armadale Castle Facebook page and Vimeo channel, and will be made available for viewing after the event. Please visit www.armadalecastle.com for links and to sign up to our newsletter.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Clan Donald Lands Trust would like to thank Dr Angus MacDonald for his assistance in organising this competition. We also offer a special welcome to adjudicator Colin MacLellan.

For the first time this year the competition is part of Clan Donald Gaelic Arts Week / Seachdain nan Ealan Gàidhlig aig ionad Clann Dòmhnail (1-8 June), supported by EventScotland's Scottish Clan Event Fund. We would like to thank EventScotland for their support.

The final event of Clan Donald Gaelic Arts Week, the Princess Margaret of the Isles Memorial Prize for Senior Clàrsach (UK), takes place at 2.30 on Saturday 8 June. All welcome to attend. For more information visit www.armadalecastle.com/events

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ISLE OF SKYE

The Clan Donald Lands Trust was formed in 1971 to save the last remaining remnants of the once vast clan lands as a focal point for clan history and activity worldwide.

The Trust, a non profit making charitable organisation, holds the lands and properties, not only for MacDonalds and associated names, but also for all who are interested in the conservation of our Highland heritage.

The Clan Donald Lands Trust also sponsors the Junior Piping Competition at the Highland Games in Portree and a number of piping competitions worldwide, as well as the Kate MacDonald Memorial Prize for Junior Clàrsach and the Princess Margaret of the Isles Memorial Prize for Senior Clàrsach. The Trust also supports local clàrsach tuition and provides 12 clàrsachs on long term loan to local schools.

The Trust is grateful for the support of donors who help make our sponsorship of the Gaelic Performing Arts possible. If you are interested in finding out more about how you can support our work, please contact:

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