



Pipes and Drums of the Royal Caledonian Society

A brief History of our Band.....

What started out over a hundred years ago in the City of Adelaide as "The Pipers Band" is now commonly acknowledged as one of the most recognised Pipe Bands in South Australia and the oldest civilian Pipe Band in the Southern Hemisphere. It is furthermore believed, to be the second oldest civilian Pipe Band in the world.



Pipers Band 1894

In approximately 1912 the Band became known as The Caledonian Pipe Band. In 1946, the late King George VI granted permission to the Society to use the prefix 'Royal' in recognition and mainly due to the untiring efforts and devoted services of the Society's Pipe Band members. Many served during the Boer War, World War I, and with numerous receiving decorations for their part in conflicts during World War II.

From that point the Band became known, as they are today, as The Pipes and Drums of the Royal Caledonian Society.

Above all else, it is probably the uniform that has made today's Band the most recognisable of Pipe Bands in South Australia. Certainly, the music and style of playing sets the Band apart from other bands, but the vivid red McGregor tartan, the flowing plaid and full feather bonnet, plus the numerical strength of the Band to provide quality music will en-

hance any occasion.

From their first engagement over 105 years ago at the Grand Concert to celebrate the unveiling of the Robert Burns Statue in North Terrace, the Band has performed on thousands of public occasions throughout South Australia and entertained millions of South Australians, young and old, regardless of their origins.

Well known examples of these are John Martins Christmas Pageant, now the Credit Union Pageant, Anzac Day Marches, Carols by Candlelight, Concerts, smaller pageants, fetes, weddings and funerals.

Members of the Band today all volunteer their services for these performances.

From its inception and until 1982, the Band was an all male band but now has women in both the piping and drumming ranks.

The Band also actively fosters the Scottish Heritage by tutoring young people in piping and drumming as well as participating in Highland gatherings and Pipe Band competitions.

Over the past 100 years, the Band has maintained an excellent competition record competing throughout Australia. In 1986, it achieved the status of Australian Grade 2 Champions. At a recent performance at the Daylesford Pipe Band Competition in Victoria the Band achieved first place in their grade competing against bands from all over Australia.

The highlight for the Band was the invitation to perform at the internationally famous Edinburgh Military Tattoo in 2001. Band members worked hard for two years fundraising for replacement uniforms and equipment to enable the Band to maintain their high standard when they represented Australia and performed at this prestigious event.



*The Pipes and Drums of the Royal Caledonian Society of South Australia —
Edinburgh Castle, Scotland, 2001*



In February 2005, the Band again proudly represented the State of South Australia at the International Edinburgh Military Tattoo – A Tribute to Australia. This was only the second time in history that the International Edinburgh Military Tattoo has travelled from the hallowed soil of Scotland. It was hosted at 'Aussie Stadium' in Sydney to capacity crowds. The Band's participation in this prestigious event is something that South Australia can be truly proud of.



The Pipes and Drums of the Royal Caledonian Society of South Australia at the Edinburgh Military Tattoo - A Tribute to Australia - Aussie Stadium 2005 with a reproduction of Edinburgh Castle in the background.

The Edinburgh Military Tattoo is the most spectacular show and is enjoyed by an international television audience in excess of 100 million people world wide.

2005 was not over when the Band received notification that they had been invited to attend another 'Tattoo' - The 2007 Edinburgh Military Tattoo in Scotland. The Band will be leaving for Scotland on 24 July. Their official Tattoo photo is shown on the next page. It was taken on ANZAC Day (25 April, 2007) at the monument to Col. William Light, the founder of Adelaide, in Light Square in the City of Adelaide.

After an uneventful flight to Edinburgh, the Band spent the first few days in rehearsals on the parade ground at Redford Barracks, primarily to ensure that all the bands taking part knew the formations that they would be performing. There were also two full dress rehearsals at the Edinburgh Castle.



Rehearsals, rehearsals, and more rehearsals



The Official Photo of the Pipe Band for the Edinburgh Tattoo in Edinburgh - 2007



Formal Band photo at the 2007 Edinburgh Tattoo in Scotland

The Pipes and Drums of the Royal Caledonian Society of South Australia have a History that all Australians and the State of South Australia can be truly proud of.

(Updated to October 2007)

