

# THE CLAY PIPER

First Coast Highlanders Newsletter

Volume 3, Issue 3

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NOVEMBER 2018

## PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Greetings! As I write this, the first hint of fall is in the air, and it is surely welcome. We have a busy season ahead of us. If you check out the upcoming performances elsewhere in this newsletter, you'll see what I mean.



The Veterans' day weekend will be a busy time for us, and we will also be in Jacksonville for the USO

All Services Half Marathon. I wish all the runners the best of luck.

As for me, getting through the entire Military Set (Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines, Coast Guard) is all the marathon I plan on doing that day.

Thanksgiving and Christmas will be a welcome respite to spend with our families. May you all enjoy the upcoming holidays and have a happy new year.

— EJB

## WHAT'S YOUR CLAN?

*Piping student Jim Roberts tells "The Clay Piper" his Celtic clan is of Welsh descent and provides us with this information on the "PROBERT" Clan.*

—

Probert is a Germanic name adopted by the Welsh (Robat) during early medieval times after the Norman conquest. Derived from hrod 'fame' and berht 'bright'. Name would appear to



have its origins in describing a "well known" and sensible person". Thought to be the 6th most pop-

ular surname in Wales.

The surname Probert was first found in Pant Glas near the village of Trelleck, county of Monmouthshire (Welsh: Sir Fynwy), where Thomas ap Robert (d. 1536), son of Robert ap Jenkins (d. 1509), gentleman usher of King Henry VII was found. Thomas' son Walter was the first to bear the Probert surname. Another early reference finds the family name at Chirk, on the Welsh border.

Prominent amongst the family during the late Middle Ages was Sir George Probert (c.1617-1677), Welsh politician from Pant Glas, Raglan, Monmouth-

shire, Member of the Parliament of England for Monmouth Boroughs from 1661 to 1677. His son, Henry Probert (1645-1719?) was a Welsh anti-Catholic activist and politician.



—

*If you have Scottish heritage and can tell a story about what you know of your clan and sir-name, write it up and submit to The Clay Piper editor Bob Simpson, [piper4fch@comcast.net](mailto:piper4fch@comcast.net).*

## SCOTTISH FOLKLORE

Do you know **Brahan Seer**, well-known as Kenneth Mackenzie, or Coinneach Odhar (Kenneth the Sallow)? Known colloquially as the "Brahan Seer," he is believed to have been born on the island of Skye in the 17th century. Little is known about the early life of the Kenneth Mackenzie. The story says that the day after his mother's graveyard encounter, he found an adder stone (a glassy stone with a hole in the center) that he was able to see visions of the future through. He later worked on the grounds of Brahan Castle for the 3rd Earl of Seaforth, after being invited when his prowess for seeing the future came

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## SCOTTISH FOLKLORE ...from previous page



to light. It was a job that would ultimately lead to his downfall. He predicted for Lady Seaforth that her husband was engaging in amorous activities while he was in France. Horrified by the scandal and shame that this would bring upon her house and marriage, she ordered Mackenzie's death. He was reportedly burned alive in a tar barrel at Chanonry Point, near Inverness. In the years following his death, a number of the prophecies that Mackenzie made came to

fruition. Upon visiting Drumossie Moor, the site of the Battle of Culloden, he is recorded as saying:

*"Oh! Drumossie, thy bleak moor shall, ere many generations have passed away, be stained with the best blood of the Highlands. Glad am I that I will not see the day, for it will be a fearful period; heads will be lopped off by the score, and no mercy shall be shown or quarter given on either side."*

He also predicted the discovery of North Sea oil, with the ominous sounding words "A black rain will bring riches to Aberdeen."

He claimed that when men could walk between England and France, Scotland would see its old parliament. The Channel Tunnel was opened in 1994, making this a reality, and the Scottish Parliament was formally reconvened in 1999.

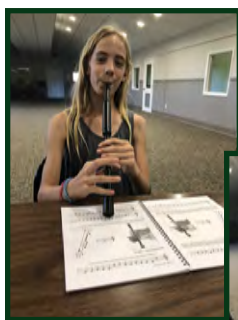
A particular Celtic stone known as the Eagle stone stands in the town of Strathpeffer in Ross-shire. The prophecy goes that if the stone falls down three times, Loch Ussie would flood the valley below the town. The stone has fallen down twice in its lifetime - it has now been set in concrete to prevent that particular prophecy from coming true!

Despite being shrouded in mystery and mythology, the words of the Brahan Seer still ring true today.

## NEW BAND MEMBERS!

First Coast Highlanders welcomes two of our newest students, Josephine and Mikayla Lean, sisters showing that marvelous drive and dedication to learn the art of bagpiping. Welcome aboard and always remember a little hard work will pay off in the long run and have fun too. Our students, Vince Hare, Brooklyn Harrell, and Jim Roberts are doing great.

*Keep up the great work!*



Josephine



Mikayla

## PIPER NEEDED!

Every weekday since she came to the throne in 1952, Queen Elizabeth has started her day to the sound of a lone piper playing beneath her bedroom window. This tradition dates



Angus Mackay (1812–1859), *First Piper to the Queen (1843-1853)* by Alexander Johnston, courtesy of National Galleries of Scotland.

back 175 years to her great-great grandmother, Queen Victoria. The Royal Household can practically set their watches by the pipes, which starts precisely at 9am and last for exactly 15 minutes.

The Piper to the Sovereign, Pipe Major Scot Methven, 5 Scots Argyll and Sutherland Highlander, became only the 15th piper to hold the post when he was appointed in 2015. Unfortunately, he sadly had to relinquish his duties unexpectedly for family reasons. For the first time since 1843 (aside from four years during the Second World War), the monarch has no official bagpiper.

The position of Piper to the Sovereign was established after Queen Victoria discovered that

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## PIPER NEEDED ...from previous page

the Marquess of Breadalbane had his own personal piper. Traditionally the post is held by a serving non-commissioned officer and Pipe Major from a Scottish or Irish Regiment.

Of the 15 pipers, 11 have been in the present Queen's reign, including Alexander MacDonald, who served from 1945 to 1966, and his successor Andrew Pitkeathly, who served until 1973.

The piper's principal duty is to play under the Queen's window when she is at Buckingham Palace, Windsor Castle, Holyrood Palace or Balmoral, but he also co-ordinates Army pipers who play after state banquets and escorts the Queen to the audiences she has throughout

the day.

Pipers are personally interviewed by the monarch to see if their personalities will match, as the two interact so regularly. It is said her piper travels with her even more than her husband.

Most remain tight-lipped about their posts but Gordon Webster, who held the title in the 1990s, once said: 'Because the Queen doesn't like you repeating the same tunes everyday, so I had about 700 tunes stored in my head.'

Max Stewart, who has also piped for the Queen said, "At Balmoral you must try not to repeat a tune the whole trip, which is quite an achievement."

## HAPPY HOLIDAYS!

From long ago, through the ages until the present, the Scottish Santa wishes all a very Merry Christmas! The Scottish Santa is dressed in Tartan plaid and wears a flowing velvet cloak to ward off the Highland winds and snow. Children listen for the sounds of his bagpipes announcing his arrival.



***Nollaig Shona Dhaoibh'***  
(Merry Christmas to You)

With Thanksgiving and Christmas coming, FCH wants to wish each one of our supporters and followers a very Merry and Joyous Holiday Season. Have fun and be safe!

## PAST EVENTS



**SEPTEMBER 15** Six pipers and four drummers opened the ceremony at Penney Farms for the First Annual Old Farm Day.

**SEPTEMBER 30** First Coast Highlanders participated in the annual Scottish Kirkin of the Tartan at First Presbyterian Church in Jacksonville.



**OCTOBER 6** FCH entertained the residents at Oak View Rehabilitation Center in Orange Park.

**OCTOBER 20** FCH bagpipers and drummers had a grand time at the annual USO 1/2 Marathon at Metropolitan Park. We played several tunes as the runners came across the finish line.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### Veteran's Day Service

Sunday, November 11, 2 PM  
Magnolia Cemetery  
Kingsley Avenue, Orange Park



### Veteran's Appreciation Day

Monday, November 12, 4 PM  
Golden Corral Buffet  
Blanding Boulevard, Orange Park



### Ron Parker Memorial

Friday, January 11, 9 AM  
Ron Parker Park  
St Augustine Beach

### Veteran's Day Service

Sunday, November 11, 3 PM  
Lakeside Veterans Memorial Park  
2300 A1A South, St. Augustine Beach

### Kirkin of the Tartan

Sunday, January 27, 8:30 AM & 10:30 AM  
St. Simons Presbyterian Church  
St. Simons Island, GA

### Kirkin of the Tartan

Sunday, February 17, 10 AM  
St Giles Presbyterian Church  
Blanding Boulevard, Orange Park

### Northeast Florida Scottish Games and Festival

Saturday, February 23, All Day  
Clay County Fairgrounds  
State Road 16,  
Green Cove Springs



## MISSION STATEMENT



The First Coast Highlanders is a Highland Bagpipe and Drum Band based in Clay County, Florida.

We are a performance and entertainment band, a teaching organization, and a cultural group. We are a community based band and promote Celtic culture through music. We are committed to playing the finest in traditional Scottish and Irish music for both private and public audiences.

Our goal is to encourage and support the Celtic culture in our community by providing instruction to anyone interested in learning the great highland bagpipe or highland drums. Lessons are provided free of charge to anyone that is willing to commit the time and self-discipline to learn.

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FOR \$25 YOU CAN BECOME A MEMBER OF OUR BOOSTER CLUB, and receive the newsletter by email.

**For more information about hiring a piper or the band, or becoming a sponsor, call Art Tenney at (904) 368-8177.**

Please complete the coupon below and mail with your check to the **First Coast Highlanders, 9703 NW 219th Street, Starke, FL 32091.**

We are registered under s.496 405, Florida Statutes, the Solicitation of Contributions Act, registration number CH36692, expiration date June 15, 2019, and we are a 501 (c)(3) non-profit charitable organization and all donations are tax deductible.

# FIRST COAST HIGHLANDERS

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