



# THE CLAY PIPER

First Coast Highlanders Newsletter



Volume 4, Issue 3

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NOVEMBER 2019

## Member Spotlight

We cornered the Pipe Sergeant, one of our senior pipers this quarter for member spotlight. We asked him to tell the readers of "The Clay Piper" a little about himself. He serves as Pipe Sergeant and continues to educate our pipers and drummers with his vast knowledge of music and rhythm. Will Wheeler currently serves on the First Coast Highlanders board as our treasurer. Thank you, Will, for all that you do for this band.



**Name:** Will Wheeler

**Where are you from?** I was born and raised in Fairfield, Connecticut.

**What do you do for a living?** I'm retired. After college I became a CPA and joined an international accounting firm where I spent thirty-four years.

**Do you have a family?** I am married to my wonderful wife of 53 years after meeting her on a blind date. We have four grown children and eight grandchildren, all scattered throughout the Eastern USA. Will and his wife spend summers in Connecticut, where the family gets together.

**What is your Scottish Clan?** "Clan Wheeler" – Wheeler is of an Anglo-Saxon decent, an occupational name taken from one who makes wheels. Will laments "that evidently the patent ran out awhile ago." 😊

**When did you start playing bagpipes?** During the 90s I was living on assignment in Paris, where one evening I chanced upon a Robert Burns Night party at a local British pub. Entertaining the patrons was a young Scot playing the bagpipes. That was it: I was hooked, and that night the fateful decision to learn this crazy instrument and hired the young Scot to give me lessons. After repatriating to Connecticut, I had the opportunity to join a newly formed beginner pipe band at a local Irish club, and took more lessons from the pipe major there. Eventually I became pipe major of that band. That led to a brief stint with a beginner-level competition band.

**How did you come to know and join First Coast Highlanders?** When we moved to Jacksonville after my retirement, I abandoned the pipes for several years. One day about nine years ago I learned of a new pipe band in Clay County, now known as the First Coast Highlanders. I was welcomed into the band, as is everyone, and my second piping life began.

**What are your Life Achievements?** My CPA career was very rewarding. Being a part of two newly formed bagpipe bands and serving as pipe major for both, has also been very rewarding. One thing that distinguishes our band is our desire to play certain tunes with "seconds," or harmonies, which not all pipe bands do. One of my roles in the band is to compose arrangements for the seconds.

**What are your future goals?** Now at seventy-six, it's becoming a bit more of a struggle to keep up my piping strength, but that magically enchanting sound keeps me going. Some of my favorite piping tunes are "She Moved Through the Fair," "Bonnie Dundee," "Macpherson's Lament," "The Craggs of Tumbledown Mountain," "Amazing Grace," and of course, "Scotland the Brave."



## Pipe Majors Music Stand

Have you heard? **The band is going to Scotland!** Everyone is getting excited. We continue to practice and are getting better week after week. We still have Thanksgiving and Christmas along with many performances scheduled for the remainder of the year until that day, we perform in Scotland. We must ensure to perform our best while in Scotland and can do that with lots of practice. We must show the people of Scotland that pipers and drummers in the USA love the Celtic music as much as they. I read many articles from those Scottish piping and drumming folks and I feel I have learned much about this musical venture we call piping and drumming. One article is how the adjudicator (an individual who judges during band competitions), don't worry we are not going to compete; however, when they judge, they are looking at Introduction, Execution, Musical Performance and Intonation. All good stuff to consider when we practice alone or as a whole band. Other criteria are considered when being judge i.e. rhythm, melody and harmony, technique and quality/precision of execution, integration, expression and dynamics, tempo, phrasing, time signatures, style and interpretation, musical effect and musical balance. The list continues and we should all consider these items as we strive to



achieve a goal of "let's play the best we can for all of our audiences." We are LOUD, but let's not be unmissable when we play. Thanks to you all for your marvelous efforts and all that you do musically for this band. RCS

## SCOTTISH MUSIC-Scots Wha Hae

Scots **W**ha **H**ae "Scots, Who Have"; Scottish Gaelic:

(Brosnachadh Bhruis) is a patriotic song of Scotland which served for a long time as an unofficial national anthem of the country, but has lately been largely supplanted by Scotland the Brave and Flower of Scotland.

The lyrics were written by Robert Burns in 1793, in the form of a speech given by Robert the Bruce before the Battle of Bannockburn in 1314, where Scotland maintained its sovereignty from the Kingdom of England. Although the lyrics are by Burns, he wrote them to the traditional Scottish tune Hey Tuttie Tatle (this title is supposed to imitate a trumpet) which, according to tradition, was played by Bruce's army at the Battle of Bannockburn.

The tune was brought to France by Scottish archers and was heard when Joan of Arc entered Orleans and also Rheims for the coronation of the French king whose bodyguard was Scottish.

The song was sent by Burns to his publisher, at the end of August 1793, with the title Robert Bruce's March To Bannockburn, and a postscript saying that he had been inspired by Bruce's "glorious struggle for Freedom, associated with the glowing ideas of some other struggles of the same nature, not quite so ancient." This is seen as a covert reference to the Radical movement, and particularly to the

trial of the Glasgow lawyer Thomas Muir of Hunters Hill, whose trial began on 30 August 1793 as part of a British government crackdown, after the French Revolutionary Wars led to France declaring war on the Kingdom of Great Britain on 1 February 1793.

Muir was accused of sedition for allegedly inciting the Scottish people to oppose the government during the December 1792 convention of the Scottish "Friends of the People" society, and was eventually sentenced to fourteen years transportation to the convict settlement at Botany Bay, Australia.

Burns was aware that if he declared his Republican and Radical sympathies openly, he could suffer the same fate. It is notable that when Burns agreed to let the Morning Chronicle, of 8 May 1794, publish the song, it was on the basis of let them insert it as a thing they have met with by accident, and unknown to me. The song was included in the 1799 edition of A Select Collection of Original Scottish Airs for the Voice, edited by George Thomson, but Thomson preferred the tune "Lewie Gordon" and had Burns add to the fourth line of each stanza, to suit. In the 1802 edition, the original words and tune were restored.

'Scots, wha hae wi' Wallace bled,  
Scots, wham Bruce has aften led,  
Welcome tae your gory bed  
Or tae victory!

'Now is the day, and now is the hour:



## Scots Wha Hae (Cont.)

See the front of battle lour,  
See approach proud Edward's power  
Chains and slavery!

'Wha will be a traitor knave?  
Wha will fill a coward's grave?  
Wha sae base as be a slave?  
Let him turn, and flee!

'Wha for Scotland's King and Law  
Freedom's sword will strongly draw,

Freeman stand or freeman fa',  
Let him on wi' me!

'By oppression's woes and pains,  
By your sons in servile chains,  
We will drain our dearest veins  
But they shall be free!  
'Lay the proud usurpers low!

Tyrants fall in every foe!  
Liberty is in every blow!  
Let us do or dee!

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## Scottish Knowledge -From the Past

John Gray, a gardener moved to Edinburgh with his wife Jess and son, John struggled to find work. however, he decided to join the Edinburgh Police Force and worked as a night watchman. John found the nights very lonely, and opted to recruit a partner to keep him company. His partner was of the canine kind, a spirited Skye Terrier to be exact. John named his new friend and 'watchdog' Bobby. It wasn't long before John and Bobby became well known in the local community. A familiar sight, they could often be seen pacing the old cobbled streets of the Edinburgh Old Town, As the years passed, the faithful friends were never parted, John became extremely ill and records show that he was treated by the Police surgeon for tuberculosis.



John passed away on the 15<sup>th</sup> February 1858 and was buried in Greyfriars Kirkyard. After eight years of companionship and service, poor Bobby couldn't understand what had happened to his faithful friend. Touching the hearts of the local community, Bobby soon became a local celebrity as he refused to leave the graveside of his companion John. Just as they had shown strength on their patrols, no matter the weather, Bobby would sit by John's grave, waiting for him to return.

The gardener and keeper of Greyfriars Kirkyard made several attempts to evict poor Bobby, however Bobby was determined to remain close to his companion. Eventually the Keeper gave in and began to provide shelter and food for this determined little dog. He placed sacking under two table stones at the side of John's grave for Bobby to sleep under.

At the sound of the 1 o'clock gun, Bobby would make his only move of the day for his midday meal. Bobby would follow William Dow, a local joiner and cabinet maker to the same coffee house he had visited with his companion John, and the coffee house would feed him.

In 1867 it could have been the end for poor Bobby, when a new bye-law was passed requiring that all dogs in the city of Edinburgh must be licensed. If they were found without a license, they would be put to sleep. In an act of kindness, Sir William Chambers (The Lord Provost of Edinburgh) made the decision to pay for Bobby's license. He presented Bobby with a collar. The collar had a brass inscription which read 'Greyfriars Bobby from the Lord Provost 1867 licensed.

Fourteen long years, Bobby remained at John's graveside, unwavering in his determination. Keeping a constant watch over the graveyard, he continued to guard it as he had done with his companion, until his death in 1872.



## Scottish Knowledge (Cont.)

The city of Edinburgh will always remember Bobby and his never wavering William Brody, a local sculptor created a statue, from life, and it was unveiled in 1873. The statue can be found opposite the entrance to Greyfriars Kirkyard. The collar given to Bobby by Sir William Chambers can also be seen at the Museum of Edinburgh.

loyalty towards his companion John. On Bobby's headstone it reads, 'Greyfriars Bobby - died 14 January 1872 - ages 16 years - Let his loyalty and devotion be a lesson to us all.'

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## Up-Coming Events

Saturday, November 2<sup>nd</sup> 10AM-2PM  
**FCH Car Show**  
North Military Museum  
State Road 16  
Green cove Springs

Sunday, November 10<sup>th</sup> 10AM  
**Veterans' Day Service**  
St. Giles Presbyterian Church  
Orange Park, FL

Monday, November 11<sup>th</sup> 11AM  
**Veterans Day Memorial Service**  
Magnolia Cemetery, Kingsley Ave.  
Orange Park, FL

Monday, November 11<sup>th</sup> 3PM  
**Veteran's Day Memorial Service**  
Veterans Memorial Service  
Veterans Memorial Park  
St. Augustine Beach

Friday, November 15<sup>th</sup> 6PM  
**Veterans Recognition Ceremony**  
Church Evangel Temple Assembly Church of God Church  
5755 Ramona Blvd, Jacksonville

Saturday, November 16<sup>th</sup> All Day  
Mount Dora Scottish Highland Games  
Elizabeth Evans State Park  
Mount Dora, FL



Vets 4 Vets – Jacksonville Memorial Std

## Up-Coming Events (2020)

Friday, January 10, 2020 11AM  
**Ronald Parker Memorial Service**  
Ronald Parker Park  
St. Augustine Beach, FL

Sunday, February 9<sup>th</sup> 2020 8:30AM  
**Kirkin of the Tartan**  
St. Simons Presbyterian Church  
St. Simons Island, GA

Sunday February 23<sup>rd</sup> 2020 10AM  
**Kirkin of the Tartan (before the Games)**  
St Giles Presbyterian Church  
Orange Park, FL

Saturday February 29<sup>th</sup> 2020 ALL DAY  
**NE Florida Scottish Games**  
Clay County Fair Grounds  
Green Cove Springs, FL



Rob Arthurs – 50's Expo Thrasher Horn



WE ARE RECRUITING NEW MEMBERS



## MUSICIANS, PIPERS / DRUMMERS WITH A DESIRE TO LEARN!

FIRST COAST HIGHLANDERS IS A BAGPIPE AND DRUM BAND BASED IN CLAY COUNTY, FLORIDA.

WE ARE A PERFORMANCE AND ENTERTAINMENT BAND, AN INSTRUCTIONAL ORGANIZATION, AND A CULTURAL GROUP. OUR GOAL IS TO ENCOURAGE AND SUPPORT THE CELTIC CULTURE IN OUR COMMUNITY BY PROVIDING INSTRUCTION, FREE OF CHARGE TO ANYONE INTERESTED IN LEARNING THE GREAT HIGHLAND BAGPIPE OR HIGHLAND DRUMS.

IF YOU ARE COMMITTED TO PLAYING THE FINEST IN TRADITIONAL SCOTTISH AND IRISH MUSIC, WE WANT YOU! PLAYING AN INSTRUMENT OR READING MUSIC IS NOT A REQUIREMENT AS WE HAVE SOME OF THE FINEST PIPERS AND DRUMMERS AS INSTRUCTORS.

WE MEET EVERY THURSDAY EVENING AT ORANGE PARK PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH LOCATED AT 1905 PARK AVENUE ORANGE PARK. LESSONS BEGIN AT 5:00 PM.

WE INVITE YOU TO COME AND CHECK US OUT FOR YOURSELF! NOTHING TO LOSE, BUT YOU'LL GAIN A WONDERFUL UNDERSTANDING OF THE SCOTTISH CULTURE.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

<http://firstcoasthighlanders.com>

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TO ALL THINGS SCOTTISH!



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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.**  
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