

President's Report 2009 SPBA AGM

My term as President [this time] began at the AGM May 10, 2008, and the main focus of the first few months was putting together the Sound Advice summer school, and working with new Board members, and particularly Treasurer Joyce Smith, to sort out some of the financial and administrative issues of the Association. Here are some items covered over the last year.

Non-Profit Registration

At some point in the last four years or so, the SPBA's non-profit registration lapsed without us knowing, likely due to mailing addresses changing, and mail going astray from the Corporation Branch. In any case, we have been working with the Corporation Branch to reinstate the SPBA, and that work has been underway since last summer.

Banking

Last summer our new Treasurer worked very hard to move out bank accounts from the Yorkton Bank of Montreal to Main Branch, Conexus Credit Union in Regina. This is now complete, and this arrangement provides us with a more efficient and cost-effective system. We are no longer paying extra charges for doing physical banking in Regina [deposits, etc.] and having the accounts in Yorkton.

Financial Statements

The Saskatchewan Corporations Branch changed the regulations for reporting for non-profit corporations, and we have had to go backward and re-do financial statements for 2006 and 2007. Last year Joyce Smith put in a lot of time to overhaul the record keeping and reporting on SPBA accounts, and we are now in excellent shape in that regard.

Saskatchewan Band Association

The SPBA must prepare a grant application each autumn, to be submitted to the Saskatchewan Band Association. That application is prepared using information submitted by member pipe bands in their annual reports, and also contains general reporting about the activities of the Association and its activities. The SBA grant is approximately \$12,000, and provides the bulk of the funding for SPBA activities, including community band grants [\$4,000-5,000], Festival grants for MJ and Regina Games [\$4,000], admin expenses [\$1,200] as the main items.

Highland Games

Last year we had three successful games under SPBA rules: Moose Jaw, Regina, and Billings, MT. Although band numbers were down at Moose Jaw and Regina, the events went well, with few snags in terms of the adherence to rules, etc. One area in which we could use some work is in clarifying rules and making sure we have up-to-date versions available to members. I worked closely with the Yellowstone Highland Games in Billings, and they had a very nice event there, which will be repeated this year. The games in Billings encouraged area bands to become members of the Association, and so

we added the Shining Thistle and Great Scots pipe bands from Montana to the SPBA membership in 2008.

Sound Advice Summer Camp

I have attached a report else where in the Annual Report. It was another excellent school as reported in evaluations from students and staff. We had an excellent staff again, and they all worked very hard to ensure a successful learning experience for all those who attended. The Western Christian College staff was cooperative and willing to assist, and the teaching facility was excellent. On the negative side, there was a noticeable decline in the quality of the dorms and the food. I have been working with the University of Regina Conference Services since November 2008 to establish the school at the University of Regina campus, and this has now been accomplished. Key to the negotiation was a huge reduction in their normal rates, so that the school is paying approximately the same as we did at Western Christian College. This was accomplished, in part, through the strong advocacy of the Conservatory of Performing Arts.

Web Site

I continue to manage the web site for the SPBA, and in particular was able to add some great material to the historical archive online.

ANAPBA

The Alliance of North American Pipe Band Associations has not been active for a year or so, and the SPBA has not sent reps to the last couple of summits. However, I continued to serve as the volunteer web master for ANAPBA last year, and provided counsel to ANAPBA Chair Jeff Mann as requested. Currently, Jeff has requested feedback from all Association presidents and Music Board Chairs on the future of ANAPBA.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

I think there are some challenges for the next few years that need to be addressed by the SPBA:

1. The decline of enrollment in junior pipe bands. This has affected many member bands, and new children joining pipe bands and learning pipes and drums is the basis of any future for pipe bands in SK.
2. The lack of local competitions and festivals for pipe bands. I think each community that has a pipe band should have at least a small piping and drumming competition. At one time, Saskatchewan had seven contests each year. Now we are down to two, and those games have older executives who may not be there much longer.
3. On the administrative side, the SPBA needs to overhaul the bylaws, policies and rules. Things have changed quite a bit since they were first written and then revised in the early 1990s, and it's time to renew.
4. The SPBA needs a more active Music Board. This is not a criticism of past work [which has been meaningful and substantial], but it reflects the general state of

things here in terms of contests and player and band development, other than the summer camp.

5. I think the SPBA needs more people willing to commit time outside their regular band activity to develop contests, events, and programs for Saskatchewan pipe bands. I would love to see more Saskatchewan pipe bands commit to developing players and bands through support of the summer school program, and through developing competition and performance opportunities in their communities.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "Iain MacDonald". The signature is written in a cursive style with a light blue background behind it.

Iain MacDonald
President
SPBA