

**RECEPTION TO CELEBRATE THE 75TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE
FORMATION OF THE CITY OF HOBART HIGHLAND PIPE BAND
REMARKS BY
HER EXCELLENCY THE HONOURABLE BARBARA BAKER AC
GOVERNOR OF TASMANIA
DRAWING ROOM, THURSDAY 4 AUGUST 2022**

I warmly welcome you all to this reception to celebrate the 75th anniversary of the formation of the City of Hobart Highland Pipe Band.

I begin by paying my respects to the traditional and original owners of this land: the palawa people. I acknowledge the contemporary Tasmanian Aboriginal community. I recognise a history of truth, which acknowledges the impacts of colonisation upon our First People. I stand for a future that respects and acknowledges Aboriginal stories, culture, language and history.

My husband Don and I are pleased to be able to host this celebration. Don hails from Scotland and therefore has a much more nuanced ear than me when it comes to the appreciation of the bagpipes.

Everyone, though, is familiar with the haunting and rousing sounds of the bagpipes. They have been a fixture of military bands for centuries. Bagpipes are normally associated with Scotland, although their origin is not completely agreed upon by historians.

Ancient Egypt would seem to have chronicled the earliest form of the pipes. As early as 400 BC the ‘pipers of Thebes’ are reported to have been blowing pipes made from dog skin with chanters of bone.

Research indicates that the first mention of the use of bagpipes in war was the 1549 Battle of Pinkie. Due to the penetrating sound, the pipes could be heard at distances of up to 10 miles away, even over the sounds of battle.

In 1746, the government in London, after the Jacobite Rebellion, passed an Act of Parliament to make the carrying of weapons and wearing of kilts, penal offences. Included in the definition of “weapon” was the ear-piercing and dangerous bagpipe!

Although the Act was eventually repealed in 1785, ironically, the expansion of the British Empire also expanded the wail of the Highland bagpipes world-wide.

In Tasmania, the City of Hobart Highland Pipe Band can trace its origins back to the first years of WWI. The Band accompanied the Governor and Premier

around our State, performing as part of the war effort and leading the procession of returned soldiers in Hobart on their welcome home parade.

After a hiatus during the depression, the band reformed in 1946. By mid-1947 there were some 27 pipers and 10 drummers under instruction. They were obviously good students, as the Band played its first official engagement at the 148th Royal Hobart Show in 1948.

The Band has piped at Hobart celebrations and commemorations over the intervening years. Members have competed at the Edinburgh Tattoo, considered by many, to be the World's premier Pipe performance venue.

The City of Hobart Band retains an association with the Band of the famous Black Watch, a band connected with both the Scottish and Canadian Regiments of the Black Watch.

I know that you have planned celebrations for the actual date of your anniversary, Saturday 6 August. A massed band has been organised for the lawns of Parliament House in the afternoon, followed by a celebration dinner at the Hobart Function Centre. There will be a band performance by The Iain MacLeod Ceilidh (kay-ly)¹ Band, with a dance caller, a Kitchen Piper Competition and a presentation on the band's history with a rolling gallery of historic and current band photos.

Seventy-five years of operation is an historic achievement for any organisation. This is especially so for the volunteer group of the City of Hobart Highland Pipe Band. I congratulate everyone, the Band and their supporters on their efforts to keep alive the musical tradition of the highland bagpipes. Thank you also for your support to our many community events.

On our behalf, please continue your work and we all hope for a centenary concert in 2047.

We shall now hear a performance of a set of tunes from the Band. The performers are Pipers Niall (Neil) Mitchell, Sally Kennedy, Louise Trennary and Sarah Tollner, and Drummers Paul Munday, Peter Gartrell, Steven Smith and Meghan Ball.

Thank you.

¹ Ceilidh is a Gaelic word for a social gathering <https://electricscotland.com/history/articles/ceilidh.htm> accessed 2 August 22