



1921 Winnipeg Police Pipe Band led by Pipe Major Jock Coghill with Police Chief Chris Newton

100th Anniversary of the Winnipeg POLICE PIPE BAND

By Inspector Doug Roxburgh

Since 1920 the Winnipeg Police Pipe Band has performed and stirred both national and international audiences with their music and striking full dress uniform.

The Winnipeg Police Pipe Band is proud to display the traditional Royal Stewart Tartan, which it was granted permission to wear by the Lord Master of the Rolls for the United Kingdom.

The band was formed after the 1919 General Strike, at a time when the Winnipeg Police Department was looking for ways to improve morale and have an entity to connect with the community.

Chief of Police Chris Newton was interested in starting a Brass Ensemble band but was convinced to create a Pipe Band from serving police member Jock Coghill.

Pipe Major Coghill started and remained the Pipe Major of the band for the next 28 years. Pipe Major Coghill was also one of the first members of the Winnipeg Police Department to volunteer for War Service in 1915.

The Pipe Band has had only 6 Pipe Majors over the last century;

- John (Jock) Coghill 1920-48
- Neil Sutherland 1948-69
- Donald A. Morrison 1969-85
- A. Bruce Taylor 1986-99
- Stewart McPherson 2000-03
- Doug Roxburgh 2003 - Present



1937 Winnipeg Police Pipe Band followed by Police Officers on parade, marching west on Portage Avenue

Upon its inception, the Pipe Band was formed with only serving police officers. This has since shifted to a band comprised of 70 members from across the community, including:

- Serving and retired police officers, and
- Volunteer members ranging from university students to business owners as well as fire fighters, pharmacists, nurses, etc.

The Winnipeg Police Pipe Band has been considered the Official Pipe Band of the City of Winnipeg and Province of Manitoba and has performed at numerous venues and events from competitions, fairs, festivals, civic holidays, and special events, among many others. Some highlights include:

- Pine to Palm (Winnipeg to New Orleans) tour in April 1957 lead by Mayor Stephen Juba. A plaque commemorating this event can be located at Pembina and Stafford.
- The annual Minneapolis Aquatennial.
- The Rose Bowl Parade in California.

- Belfast, Ireland, where the Pipe Band accompanied Civic Officials to Ireland to promote the City of Winnipeg. City councilor and later Premier of Manitoba the Honourable Gary Filmon also participated in this tour.
- Performances at every Grey Cup city dating back to the 1960s when the Pipe Band used to travel by train to the festivals.
- The ceremonies for the opening of City Council after every civic election for decades.
- Invited performers for most of the Royal Visits including Queen Elizabeth in 1984; Princess Anne during the Pan Am Games in 1999; and Prince Charles for the Order of Manitoba in 2014. Not to mention playing before a crowded stadium in support of Sir Paul McCartney in 2013.

In addition to local events throughout the City, the Pipe Band has played at Festivals around the Province of Manitoba as proud representatives of the Winnipeg Police.



1953 Pipe Major Sutherland posing with the wife of Mayor Garnet Coulter

Members of the Pipe Band take particular pride in supporting the Winnipeg Police Service or law enforcement members who call upon the band during times of happiness and sorrow (birthdays, funerals and weddings).

As the Band has grown so has our ability to represent the Service, City and Province internationally. The highlights include:

- Cleveland International Tattoo 2009
- Las Vegas International Tattoo 2011
- Virginia Military Tattoo (Norfolk Virginia) 2012
- Pacific Tattoo (Victoria BC) 2013
- Okanagan Military Tattoo (Vernon BC) 2015
- Festival Interceltique - Lorient France 2016
- Belfast Ireland International Tattoo 2017

The musicianship and dedication of our members has made the Winnipeg Police Pipe Band a diverse and engaging group. The band currently has beginner players all the way to three world champions amongst our ranks. The diversity of our performers has led to the band expanding its focus to a Grade 2 Competition Band that has successfully competed at Highland Games all over North America.

In the years ahead, the Pipe Band is excited to be celebrating its 100th anniversary and have invitations to attend the World Pipe Band Championships in Glasgow, Scotland, in 2022 and the Basel Switzerland Tattoo in 2023.

The Pipe Band is a strong supporter of youth Piping and Drumming. Each year the band sponsors local youth to participate in summer music camps where they receive world class instruction.

For more information on the Winnipeg Police Pipe Band the public can go to our website at www.wppb.ca



1976 Charlie Bell shows off band uniform at 52nd Winnipeg Policeman's Ball



2005 Winnipeg Police Pipe Band led by Pipe Major Doug Roxburgh on steps of Legislature

2020 Pipe Band Display, Winnipeg Police Museum

