

# PIPE BANDS AUSTRALIA

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## Applications open for Pipers Trail 2018

Would you like to play at The Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo? Continuing on from the success of Pipers Trail at The Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo (REMT), Stevie Small writing on behalf of the Producer, Brigadier David Allfrey MBE, has invited applications for the 2018 show 'The Sky's the Limit'.

Australians pipers and drummers have joined musicians from around the world as part of Pipers Trail at the Tattoo in recent years. And if successful in gaining a spot in 2018, they will join Australian bands Brisbane Boys' College and 5/6 Royal Victoria Regiment performing on the Esplanade of Edinburgh Castle.

Stevie says:

Last year, we almost doubled the size of the band, bringing in a total of 45 volunteer pipers and drummers from across the world, under the magnificent leadership Pipe Major Alistair McLaren. Integrating with the 12 other pipe bands (over 250 pipers and drummers) as part of the Massed Pipes and Drums we created a major impact over the 24 performances. Additionally in 2017, Pipers Trail, the Tattoo Dance Company and Shetland fiddlers Hjaltibonhoga, performed a spectacular set of jigs in the Finale. This was the first time we had performed as a collective group and it was widely considered as a highlight of the show – and of course great fun! This performance has encouraged us to further develop our vision and plans.

The Massed Pipes and Drums that have played at the Tattoo to such tremendous effect for the last 68 years have traditionally been drawn from the United Kingdom's armed forces: the Scottish regiments along with those with a Celtic tradition and the Royal Gurkha Rifles. This core capability has been reinforced by pipes and drums invited from amongst our friends in the Commonwealth and allies around the world; a rich mix of military and civilian bands and some schools and colleges. The combination has always worked well, with everyone receiving the Tattoo pipe music programme some months ahead and then coming together for a period of rehearsal in Edinburgh before joining up with the rest of the cast for rehearsals at Redford Barracks and at the Castle.

Pipers Trail was originally conceived in 2007 as an 'Army in Scotland' campaign to engage with the civil community. Over four years the scheme covered the length and breadth of Scotland visiting schools and communities encouraging an interest in the great Highland bagpipe, pipe band drumming and dancing. Now the project is proud to be part of the Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo with the same broad intentions, but also enabling a wider community to participate in one of the world's greatest celebrations of the pipes, drums and military music.

The development of Pipers Trail was stimulated by a comment by a piper made in 2011: 'I have been waiting all my life to march across the drawbridge with the Massed Pipes and Drums playing as one. This remark, coupled with the Tattoo's desire to draw talented individual pipers and drummers to the Massed Pipes and Drums, led to our developing a scheme that would allow individual musicians, who may or may not be linked to a formed band, to join in. With Scottish Government support, we equipped and uniformed a single file

of pipers and drummers with a Pipe Major and Drum Major. The process of recruiting and auditioning volunteers, equipping and uniforming them, conducting practice and rehearsal has been refined through the pilot scheme in 2014 and further still in 2015 and 2016. Last year we expanded the group to two full files for the 2017 REMT. We also took a combined group of 90 pipers, drummers, fiddlers and dancers to the first ever German Military Tattoo in Dusseldorf, Germany, performing as the headline act under the banner of Pipers Trail. So we continue to develop and look for new opportunities and we are now looking to recruit a new and more advanced group for the 2018 season. This time we are again looking for two full files, so a maximum of 50 pipers and drummers in all, and again under the leadership of Pipe Major Alistair McLaren.

Those pipers and drummers looking to be considered to take part in this unique musical experience should have a smart bearing and presence, be a proficient musician, capable of marching in time and prepared to practice hard and perform throughout the Tattoo period. The 2018 Tattoo will run from 29th July – 25th August 2018 (including rehearsals).

We are looking for pipers and drummers who can play essentially to RSPBA Grade 3 standard and ideally Grade 2, with the ability to assimilate the 2018 piping and drumming scores and take instruction. We are keen to encourage selected, talented players from both home and from the international piping and drumming community.

This year we celebrate the centenary of the formation of The Royal Air Force and the development of flight under the theme 'The Sky's the Limit'. We have a show rich in culture, tradition and colour, bringing acts from the UK, China, Czech Republic, Mexico, Oman, Switzerland and the USA. We also have pipe bands from Scotland, Australia and Canada. The two Pipers Trail files will join this huge array to form a single Massed Pipes & Drums of over 250 musicians.

Those interested should email applications to: [piperstrail@edintattoo.co.uk](mailto:piperstrail@edintattoo.co.uk). The email should be accompanied with a CV and some evidence of playing standard. If formal qualifications are unavailable, applicants may provide a reference from a pipe major of an established pipe band or a recognised instructor. Previous participation and/or membership will be taken into consideration during the selection process. Applications will close on 19th January 2018.

Successful candidates will be provided with full dress uniform and the necessary tuition in foot drill, turnout, musicianship and have the opportunity to join over 250 other pipers and drummers as part of the Massed Pipes and Drums. The band will perform each evening in front of a live international audience of 8,800 – a total of 220,000 during the season and a further 100 – 300 million on television around the world!



[#Tattoo](#)



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