

# PIPE BANDS AUSTRALIA

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[News](#)

[About](#)

[Education Centre](#)

[Events](#)

[Results](#)

[Awards](#)

[Members](#)

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[All Posts](#)

[Championships](#)

[Solos](#)

[Workshops](#)

[National Council](#)

[Awards](#)

[Q](#)

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Apr 4, 2018



## Recognition of pipe band performance

Recognising achievements through performance

The initial 12 recipients of the award are:

· Nat Russell GC OAM - Nat began his dynamic piping career aged 10 with the 8th Belfast Company of the Boys Brigade, was Piper of the Year in 1969 and competed with Field Marshal Montgomery until enlistment with 1st Battalion Irish Guards in 1970. In the Guards Piping School his piping experience and ability increased under the various Irish and Scots Guards Tutors of the period. In 1974 Nat joined the Royal Ulster Constabulary and under his leadership and direction the band won 7 Ulster Championships, as well as every "major" Pipe Band Championship in the World through Grades 3 and 2, being crowned World Champions Grade 2 in 1981 and became one of the world's top three Grade 1 bands. In 1987 Nat was recruited as Pipe Major of the Victoria Police Pipe Band. Under his direction, the competition success of the band remains unprecedented in the Southern Hemisphere, winning five Australian championships (four in Grade 1) and culminating in winning the Grade 1 World Pipe Band Championship in 1998. Nat served as vice-principal of piping in Victoria for 15 years, teaching and examining candidates for Certification and Adjudication training in piping and ensemble. Nat has produced five highly-acclaimed recordings: two live concerts and three in studio. His services to Piping, Pipe Bands and Adjudication were recognised with the award of the Order of Australia medal in 2007. Nat is an esteemed member of the RSPBA Adjudication Panel and his service to that Panel was recognised in August 2011 with the presentation of the Adjudicators "long service award." He has adjudicated Pipe Band competitions and solo events at the highest level all around the World, including the World Championships on several occasions.

· Bob Semple OAM BEM - In the eyes of the public and the pipe band world, no one more clearly typifies the pipe band experience as than Drum Major RJK (Bob) Semple, involved in pipe bands since 1936 when he joined the Victorian Scottish Regiment. At the outbreak of World War Two he put aside his pipes and joined the Australian Field Regiment and between 1940 and 1945 Bob saw service in some of the most active theatres of war - Palestine, Lebanon, Egypt, the siege of Tobruk, El Alamein and later in New Guinea and Borneo. The same month Bob returned to Australia in 1946, he joined the Hawthorn City Pipe Band after listening to the band playing in a local park. So began one of the great success stories of the Australian pipe band scene. Between 1946 and 1960 Bob served as a piper with the band where the foundations were laid for the great success of the future decades. At the conclusion of his piping career Bob assumed the position of drum major which he still holds today, aged almost 98. As drum major, Bob Semple has made an indelible stamp on the character of the pipe band fraternity - he was the Victorian champion on 24 out of a possible 28 occasions up to 1987. At the national level has won the Australian title no fewer than seven times. In 1977 he was elected the first Principal Dress and Drill and held the

position until his retirement a decade later. Bob is also the chieftain of Pipe Bands Australia.

· Ian Morison OAM – Ian's contribution to the pipe band community has been outstanding. He has helped to broaden the reach of piping throughout Australia. He served tirelessly on the Geelong Highland Gathering Committee and assisted local organisations, pipe bands and individuals. His service to the pipe band community across the nation has been exemplary. Not only has he filled many major positions in the administrative area, he has helped rural communities, assisted small and developing bands, been a senior competition judge, trained band members in dress and drill, instructed other drum majors, and been at the masthead of pipe band performance in competitive and public events across the country. At both of the Sydney Edinburgh Tattoos, held in 2005 and 2010, Ian Morison was the senior Australian drum major. From 1995 until 2005 Ian was Principal Dress and Drill. Throughout all of Ian's commitments, whether administrative, instructional or performance, he continued to serve in his own band, the City of Melbourne Highland Pipe Band, for more than 30 years as drum major.

· Sandy Campbell - Sandy emigrated to Brisbane in 1950 after serving in the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders. After a short stay in Brisbane he married his long-time partner Mary Leask and returned to Scotland for a further three years. In 1954 Sandy and Mary returned to Australia and moved to Mt Isa in north Queensland to work in the mines until 1957 when they returned to Brisbane. He met up with Pipe Major Donald McKinnon (ex-KOSB) and formed the Mt Isa Pipe Band which quickly achieved prominence in the competition arena. Sandy is no doubt a leader and was a most influential person in the pipe band scene throughout the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s in Australia. His success can only be attributed to his dedicated teaching of many hundreds of pupils and the importance of maintaining standards, always seeking to raise the bar. Through his teachings, not only did he excel in pushing the limits in pipe band standards, he is recognised for his contribution in paving the way for many successful solo players in realising their personal achievement in both Australia and Scotland. Sandy set the scene with the introduction of Australian bands travelling to Scotland and Northern Ireland to compete back in 1978 - 1985 saw the pinnacle of his achievements, encompassing a seven-week tour which resulted in Queensland Irish winning the Grade 2 Championship at the Cowal Highland Gathering. Sandy played a significant role in opening up the regular flow of players, instructors and adjudicators bringing their international expertise to Australia. As pipe major he won nine Australian Grade 1 championships – five with Red Hackle and four with Queensland Irish. Sandy was always seeking to raise the bar. Sandy's success in Scotland with the Queensland Irish Association not only put Australian bands on the world stage, but perhaps more importantly it gave Australians the confidence that they could match it with the world's best.

· Duncan MacLennan MBE – Duncan MacLennan was particularly influential in the advancement of pipe band performance in Australia in the years following World War Two, using his training in Scotland and knowledge of the bagpipes to benefit soldiers returning home and the arrival of a new wave of Scottish emigrants, having served as a pipe major during the war. He initially was in Ballarat where he soon had that band as one of the leading bands in the country and later returned to Victoria Scottish Regiment that became a leader in pipe band performance in the 1950s and 1960s. He also continued to tutor numerous other bands in those post-war years. Duncan was also a founding member of the Pipers' Club of Victoria where solo playing was promoted.

· Alex McCormick – After a career as a one of Scotland's leading drummers and principal of the RSPBA college, Alex emigrated to Australia in 1952 with several other prominent players of the time to reform Castlemaine Pipe Band in rural Victoria, which was importing the leaders of a new band before turning to Melbourne and later Ballarat. Alex and his compatriot brought with them from Scotland the style of drumming that caused a revolution in the Australian pipe band world. From 1949 to 1952, he was Principal of Drumming at the Scottish Pipe Band Association College. In this position he was involved as a teacher and also in the development of the syllabus. Alexander McCormick is rightly recognized as one of the pipe band world's most influential leaders, and one of the founding fathers of modern pipe band drumming. His performance career in Australia was short but the impact was immediate and influential, forging a new era in pipe band drumming in this country.

· Allan Chatto OAM – Initially joining St George District Pipe Band, Allan found greater interest as a drummer and over more than 50 years has taken his skills to high levels and shared them as lead drummer with leading bands of the eras including Sydney Thistle and NSW Police and also included stints with top Scottish bands. His record in competition with

Sydney Thistle, at the time one of Australia's premier pipe bands, set up a journey that took Allan to performance opportunities across Australia, New Zealand and Scotland. During his playing career Allan performed with Grade 1 Australian Pipe Bands such as the L/D of the Sydney Thistle Highland Pipe Band from 1959 until 1969, L/D of The NSW Police Pipe Band, from 1975 until 1989 and was L/D of City of Invercargill P B, NZ from 1952 to 1955, and competed with bands in Scotland from 1956 to 1959.

- Harold Gillespie - Began his drumming career in 1961 aged 9 with Mitcham Pipe Band before joining Nunawading, Hawthorn and Victoria Police in Australia and Ballynahinch in Northern Ireland. Harold's extensive record of sustained success and achievement in pipe band circles is one of outstanding and unparalleled excellence. A combination of expert drumming technique and styles have contributed to Harold's wealth of knowledge which he has passed on throughout his years of leadership, band and personal tuition, workshops and adjudication. Harold's many years of playing, leadership, teaching and mentorship see him as most highly respected and admired drummer, both nationally and internationally. Harold's performance career in Australia saw him as drum sergeant or flank drummer with some of the nation's leading bands from the 1970s through to the 1990s, including the 1998 World champions Victoria Police.

- Brett Tidswell - He has a long and respected history as an educator of pipers at the highest of levels and has been principal piping in Australia since 2003 overseeing development of education and training for pipers and adjudicators. Having been employed as a piping instructor in the Defence Force and for some years as a full-time bagpipe teacher; in 1991 he was asked to take on the role of pipe major of the newly formed, City of Adelaide Pipe Band. That band seven years later was crowned Australian champions. During his playing career, Brett has also achieved on the international stage playing with Strathclyde Police. Brett has been described as the only piper to win Australia's top solo piping competition (a record 12 wins of the RU Brown Piobaireachd Society Gold Medal) as well as pipe majoring a Grade 1 Australian championship winning band, "an impressive feat that will not be beaten in this generation".

- Buzz Ennis – Colin "Buzz" Ennis was at the forefront of developing Australian bands in the 1970s and 1980s to reaching world standards in drumming. His playing inspired future generations in a career that was mostly with Queensland Irish where he is still associated and also Red Hackle and St Andrew's. He has been a prolific teacher and composer of drum scores and for decades has been the face of drumming education in Queensland. He is a former vice-principal drumming in the state.

- Sam Young - Sam began his piping in 1960 under his father, Ian Young in Queensland who in his own right had a strong background in tradition piping values and authentic teachings. In 1974 Sam was accepted as a pupil under the Queen's Piper, Pipe Major RB Nicol of Balmoral where he received extensive tuition in piobaireachd and light music. For over 40 years Sam has successfully competed with great success in solo events and bands. Throughout the 1980s Sam was piper in the Grade 1 Queensland Irish Sandy Campbell. Queensland Irish was a forerunner to pipe bands travelling from Australia to Scotland and Ireland to win major competitions. In more recent years Sam was instrumental in the reformation of the NSW Police Pipe Band and its competition achievements throughout the 1990s. He served as pipe major for a total of 17 years in that organisation. Sam was heavily involved with the management of the band structure under the NSW Police Volunteers in Policing program maintaining both musical and business processes. Throughout the years Sam has been involved in both the Queensland and NSW Pipers' Societies with participation in solo competitions, recitals and competition promotions. Sam has held the position of vice-principal piping and in 2005 he was appointed to the Royal Scottish Pipe Band Association's International Adjudicators Panel as a Piping Adjudicator. In recent times his adjudication appointments have included Grade 1 at the World Pipe Band Championships.

- Rob MacGregor – Rob's achievement in pipe band performance of pipe bands has helped chart the way in several the Pacific Rim within Army and community bands. Rob began his career in NSW before moving Mount Isa and later Brisbane as pipe major of Brisbane Caledonian and founder of Brisbane Blue Bonnets, later becoming piper major of St Andrew's. Rob later served as music director for four years of the PNG Correctional Services Pipe Band. He also led Australia pipers and drummers to competition in Jakarta.

All award recipients in this category become eligible for induction into the Pipe Bands Australia Hall of Fame. In each two-year period, a maximum of two new recipients of this award will be named.



## IN RECOGNITION OF MERIT & ACHIEVEMENT

### - PERFORMANCE RECIPIENTS 2018 -



**Nat Russell** GC OAM



**Alex McCormick**



**Ian Morison** OAM



**Bob Semple** OAM BEN



**Allan Chatto** OAM



**Duncan MacLennan** MBE



**Buzz Ennis**



**Sam Young**



**Harold Gillespie**



**Sandy Campbell**



**Brett Tidswell**

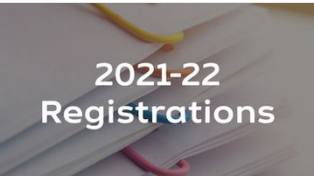


**Rob MacGregor**

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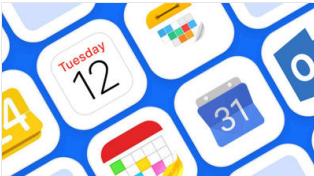


2021-22  
Registrations

Member Registrations

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👁 167



National Events Calendar

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👁 210



Expressions  
of Interest

Expressions of Interest

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👁 141