Welsh Bagpipes and Pibgorn

Bagpipes have been documented in Wales since the 10th century.

Welsh traditional music declined somewhat with the rise of Nonconformist religion in the 18th century, which emphasised choral singing over instruments, and religious over secular uses of music, and the pipes had disappeared from use in Wales by the late 19th century. Now only one possible example of a Welsh bagpipe exists and is kept in the Museum of Welsh Life.In the last 20 or so years there has been a revival in piping in Wales. This revival lead to the formation of a repertoire of Welsh piping tunes, the reconstruction of extinct instruments and the introduction of new instruments based on common European types.Pibgorn (Welsh lit. "pipe horn")- A number of examples of this instrument survive, these date from the 17th and 18th centuries. The pibgorn is a mouthblown hornpipe, having a parallel bore, six finger holes and a thumb hole. The pipe has a cowhorn mouth piece and an intricately carved cowhorn bell. The reed is of the single beating type usually made of cane but some players now use synthetic reeds. Modern pibgyrn (pl.) play in the key of D using open fingering, with many tunes in E minor.A further development (probably a redevelopment) of the pibgorn are the pibau cyrn where the pibgorn is played with a mouthblown bag and a bass drone playing an octave below the tonic . A notable player of these pipes is Ceri Rhys Matthews who has done much to ignite the interest of many in this revival. Makers include John Glennydd of Carmarthenshire and John Tose from Pembrokeshire.Another development of piping in Wales has been the making of mouth blown pibau cwd, pibgwd or bacbib which are based on the veuze and Galician gaita. They have a steep conically bored chanter with seven finger holes and thumb hole with a double reed and a single base drone usually tuned two octaves below the tonic. Drones are also tuned to one note below the tonic for minor tunes. Welsh pipers most often play bagpipes in the key of D but other keys are also used, particularly C or B#. Pibau Pencader (Site in Welsh and English) Welsh Bagpipes and the Welsh Pibgorn Welsh pipers Antwn Owen Hicks and Gafin Morgan (Dwylaw Cwyth) and Bagad Pibau Morgannwg. Ceri Rhys Matthews - Yscolan

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