# North Tyneside Pipe Band

http://www.ntpb.org.uk/

## North Tyneside Pipe Band compete regularly at competitions run by the Royal Scottish Pipe Band Association. We have made many appearances throughout the UK, as well as France, Germany, Belgium and Holland.

The Band was formed originally as Whitley Bay and District Pipe Band , on 13th October 1958 at a meeting in Whitley Bay Scout Hut, which was to be the practice venue for several years. At first, the band had no uniform of its own. After many fund raising events such as dances at the Berkeley Tavern, etc, the band were kitted out and chose the Macgregor tartan, in tribute to Mr Joseph Macgregor, patron and later Band President. The Sixties From this 'standing start' the band began to grow in numbers and ability and appeared at many functions across the region, gaining valuable experience, before winning the first trophy - coming first in the Grade 4 mini band contest in March 1962, to win the Mcreath Challenge Cup. In October 1966, a new Pipe Major (P/M) was elected - Archie Martin (pictured), from Rothesay on the Isle of Bute. Archie had previously led the Irvine, Ardrossan and Rothesay Bands, and his experience and leadership was to inspire the band to greater heights. In 1968 we were awarded the Whitley Bay Town Cup in recognition of the achievements which had brought honour to the town and to the region. Monsieur Henri Kummerman, Chairman of Macgregor International, (Naval Architects), accepted the position of Band President in 1968. The Seventies Successes on the competition field led to a step up to Grade 3 of the Scottish Pipe Band Association, in 1971. In 1974, Archie decided to retire, and the difficult job of following him was taken up by Michael Smith (pictured), who led the band for two years. Support from MacGregor International was a factor in the band changing its name in 1975 to the MacGregor Pipe Band. Archie came out of retirement in 1977, and returned as P/M. Sadly, he died in May 1980, a major blow to the band. The Eighties After a ballot, Archie's daughter, Ann Beavers was elected as the new Pipe Major. Because she had lost several experienced players, Ann decided that the best course of action was to drop back into Grade 4, so that we could rebuild and compete seriously again. In 1981, since the connection with MacGregors had reduced, it was decided to change the name again to reflect the wider area from which our members were drawn - North Tyneside and District Pipe Band was born. Some success returned but only after much effort in recruiting and teaching new members over a period of years. The Nineties The 90's saw the band re-emerging as a competitive unit. We began to win prizes both at branch and national level, with trophies being picked up at Annan, Markinch, Shotts, Dunbar, Stirling, Perth, Ashbourne, Richmond, as well as being Champion of Champions in Grade 4 at branch level. The drum corps was very successful during this period, winning the branch drum salute contest 9 times. Probably the highlight of this time was qualifying for the last 12 bands at the World Pipe Band Championships in Glasgow, 1997. We finished in 11th place overall, with the drum corps 7th. This placed the band in Grade 4A. The decision was made to replace the original uniform, of doublets, feather bonnets, plaids, etc with a simpler and infinitely less costly uniform of jackets and kilts with glengarry headwear. Also, in 1997, the new Tyneside Blue tartan was launched - a competition was organised at one of our ceilidhs to name the tartan, which was woven specifically for us by D.C. Dalgleish Ltd, of Selkirk, based on the Earl of St. Andrews with a red stripe retained as a reminder of the Macgregor tartan which we had worn for so long. In terms of engagements, we found that paid jobs were becoming fewer. Where once every town and village would have a summer fete or gala, it now seemed that these either did not happen, or if they did, a bands services were expected for little or no fee. We appeared on a play/collect basis to offset this at places such as the City of Newcastle, the City of Durham and the National Trust properties of Cragside House and Wallington Hall. Over the years the band has visited Germany, France, Holland and Belgium. The 21st century The turn of the millenium saw the band striving to return to serious competition, whilst balancing the need to appear at functions locally to raise funds, and give experience to newer players. The younger members of the band, in both piping and drumming disciplines, improved sufficiently towards the required standard that we were able to enter contests again, starting at Strathmiglo in Fife, and continuing with Annan, Melrose, Pontefract. In 2003, we travelled to Alden Biesen in Belgium for the European Championships (part of the 'Scottish Weekend'), and this proved to be a valuable exercise in terms of gaining experience for the newer members as well as a very enjoyable weekend. So much so that we repeated the trip in September 2004, entering the Belgian Championships, again held in the splendid setting of Alden Biesen castle. Two new competition sets, for Grades 4 and 3, were selected over the winter. Due to many different factors, Alden Biesen was the first contest we were able to attend in 2004. The Band entered both Grade 4 and 3 - we were placed 6th in Grade 4 (out of 15 bands), just outside the prize list, but overall the day was capped by winning the 'Prize of the Public' - this was voted for by the crowds on the day for the band out of all 25 who provided the best entertainment. A superb trophy was awarded and brought back to England. Nowadays the band can be seen at various localities such as Durham and York. For information regarding upcoming performances, see the events page.

Grouping: Pipeband
City: North Tyneside
State: EG
Country: GB
Year-Joined: 2012
UL Rank (1 is highest, 4 is lowest): 4

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