Wick RBLS Pipe Band

http://www.wickpipeband.org

The Wick Royal British Legion Pipe Band was established in 1919. It represents the original colours of the Seaforth Highlanders, who later amalgamated with the Camerons.

There has been a long history of pipers and drummers in Wick going back to at least 1884 when they served as part time soldiers with H (Wick) Company of the 1st Sutherland Highland Rifle Volunteers and the Territorial Units that followed. Although they had already been taught locally, their skills would be improved by the Army tutors who came north to train them. As well as playing at camps and local parades they would attend many local events in the town, so the sound of pipes around the town goes back a long way. It was not until after the First World War (1914 – 1918) that a private band was formed in the town in 1919. Although all details of the formation are lost, we know that the Band's first name was the Wick Comrades of the Great War Pipe Band and were part of that organisation which by 1921 affiliated to the Royal British Legion. It was in 1946 with the return of ex-servicemen that the Band was reformed. Once again the Band got off to a great start, playing regularly at many events and street parades. By now there were recruits coming through from the Scouts and Boys' Brigade which strengthened the ranks. By 1949 the Band decided to change back to military style unifoms with MacKenzie tartan kilts and plaids, green tunics and black belts for pipers and red tunics and white belts for drummers, both wore white spats. During this period the Band name sometimes took a change being referred to as "Wick Men's Pipe Band". This came about because of the growing strength and popularity of the Wick Girls' Pipe Band. They were beginning to play at many of the town and county events we were normally engaged for. Our strength slowly dwindled and by the late 1950's the decline was obvious but we still managed the Armistice Parade, Kirkin O' the Council, etc with a little help from Thurso. We struggled to the early 1960's and became more or less defunct.It was on 20th September 1962 that a meeting was called and all the deserters and old stalwarts were brought back to argue out the problems and start again. The newly reformed Band got off to a good start picking up a fair share of town and county events and raising funds to replace old uniforms and equipment. The Band never again disbanded and the 1960's continued as a good period. The 1970's were a more unstable time with the Band up and down almost year by year. The strength of the Band was quite reasonable and we fulfilled all engagements. In 1973 we received a donation of £1,000 from the council and uniforms were immediately updated with the addition of feather bonnets. By the late 1970's the slide was on again and it took several meetings and a lot of serious talk to get us on course again The next significant change took place on 2nd November 1984 when the Band affiliated to the "Royal British Legion Scotland Wick Branch" in an effort to stabilise the Band. The name was changed to "Wick RBLS Pipe Band". In 1986 we played at our first Retreat Parade at Edinburgh Castle with 10 other RBLS Pipe Bands. In 2001 the Band took part in it's 15th parade, Pipe Major Bobby Coghill and Drum Major Raymond MacDonald are now members of the RBLS Piping Committee. From the 1980's the Band was well organised and busy. It was better equipped than ever and instead of any sight of a decline it improved with every year that passed. Our only problem now was fulfilling our busy annual programme, averaging about 60 parades and events each year. Some of the highlights of recent times are as follows:-

Link Type: Pipeband
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Year Joined: 2012
UL Rank (1 is highest, 4 is lowest): 4

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