



Hi!

I hope you enjoyed reading my first newsletter last month and are content to hear from me again. I am asked frequently about the pros and cons of cane versus synthetic drone reeds. To put it as succinctly as I can, cane produces harmonics and a great sound but, contrary to what most pipers believe, synthetic can also produce harmonics with a great sound.

When I started my company many years ago, I took a scientific approach from the outset. I continue to strive to produce a synthetic reed that does not only equal cane in harmonics but surpasses cane.

In addition, I have a sound analyzer on my computer. It's a piece of software used by most classical musicians and opera singers to make sure they are obtaining the best harmonics. I have used this to test reeds and have made many adjustments to my own reeds to produce higher harmonics (most other synthetic reeds do not achieve this particularly the carbon fibre tongue ones). Also, most other synthetic reeds constantly leak air. Mine do not and I would never play a reed that was leaking air.

An advantage of synthetic reeds are, of course, that synthetic is not subjected to climatic changes in the way cane is. I have a vintage set of MacDougall pipes which my great-grandfather brought in the 1800s. Naturally, for much of my life I played cane in these pipes – we didn't have synthetic reeds in those days – but these days I test all my own synthetic reeds in these pipes – *all of them prior to despatch*.

If you have any questions relating to any of my products, feel free to [contact me](#). I travel a lot – I was in Australia and now I'm in the North Island of New Zealand (see photos taken at Lake Ngakoro) where I'll be judging at a piping competition this weekend – but I endeavour to respond to queries as promptly as I can.



***If you own any of my products I would encourage you to register them via my [website](#). If you would like to buy any of my products, click on the blue button below which will take you to your local stockist.***

Worldwide stockists



I wish you all the compliments of the season and a 'sound' and 'harmonious' 2020.

Bruce Hitchings MBE BEM.

● **In February (22nd) I will be instructing at the [Wes Weber workshop in San Francisco](#).**

● **In June, I head to Arizona where I teach at the [Jim Thompson Piping and Drumming School](#) in Flagstaff (from June 10-17)**

● **The following week sees me return to California – San Diego – on June 19-26 where I am a long-term instructor at the [Rob McLintock California School of Piping and Drumming](#), the highly respected piping and drumming school run formerly by the College of Piping (2019 group photo, below).**



**Highland Reeds | 07577 949562**