



Hi Friend,

I don't know about you but it has been a fairly busy start to the new year for me. On January 16 I had the pleasure of judging alongside my good friend, Andrew Frater at the Vale of Atholl Pipe Band's annual

junior competition in Pitlochry – see photo. This was followed on the 25th with the Boghall & Bathgate Caledonia concert at the Celtic Connections festival in Glasgow, and then on February 1 I had a fantastic evening at the Army School of Piping in Edinburgh. The occasion was the 20th anniversary of the move there from Edinburgh Castle. It was great seeing many old colleagues again. The photograph at the top of this newsletter shows me on the way to the dinner ... *best not to show any after-dinner photos!*

I am now preparing to travel to California where I will be judging at The Queen Mary Highland Gathering at Long Beach, California this weekend. I then stay with my friend, Aaron Shaw before hiring a car and traveling north on the I.99 visiting and teaching more dear friends from the Rob McLintock School (formerly run for many years by the College of Piping). I then should end up in Los Gatos where I teach at the Wes Weber workshop (February 21) and then on the Sunday the Santa Clara County Sheriff's Office Pipe Band.

Last month's newsletter resulted in quite a few you contacting me to discuss further my claim that there is no sound produced inside the bag. I now realise this was bold statement! It was – is – never is my intention to insult or disrespect anybody. I have the utmost respect for a lot of good people who will disagree with me. All I want to do is open a discussion on how the bagpipe really functions, scientifically. I am also interested in trying to find out and understand why many respectable pipers disagree with the statement and there are some good reasons for them believing so but it does not change my understanding of the principles involved. It must be my dyslexic brain that makes me so inquisitive.

There are a huge number of aspects to look at. For instance, the air pressure in the stocks is different to the air pressure inside the bag (Bernoulli's Equation). People **feel** vibrations on the drones or the chanter and confuse these vibrations with **sound**. (It is the sound wave that is perceived through the sense of touch) The 5 senses are Sight, Hearing, Smell, Touch and Taste. When you fell the vibrations and hear the sound you are using two senses and your brain then thinks it is more responsive/loud. There has been a lot of work and testing done on other woodwind instruments to explain this is not sound. I am currently getting my website revamped with the intention of posting all of my findings and evidence for scrutiny and, hopefully, open and constructive discussion.

I welcome all feedback. Over the years I have constantly striven to perfect all of my products and in doing so get pipers to think about sound, about harmonics, and about the overall importance of the drones for the clarity of chanter notes.

As ever, feel free to contact me with any aspects of my products. Email me at bruce@highlandreeds.com

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.

[Click here to view worldwide stockists](#)

Enjoy your piping,



Bruce Hitchings MBE BEM.

- In February (22nd) I will be instructing at the [Wes Weber workshop in San Francisco](#).
- In June, I travel 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).
- The following week, I head to Arizona where I teach at the [Jim Thomson Piping and Drumming School](#) in Flagstaff (from July 10-17). The photo below shows last year's class and instructors.



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