

Archie Kenneth Quaich 2014

The 22nd Archie Kenneth Quaich competition for amateur piobaireachd players was held in the Royal Scottish Pipers' Society rooms in Edinburgh on Saturday 1 March. The competition is sponsored by the Piobaireachd Society. The Archie Kenneth Quaich was won by Bob Low, originally from Helensburgh but now living in Wales, playing the Nameless tune 'Hiharin dro o dro'. The full list of prize winners and their tunes were as follows:

The judges were Colin MacLellan and Jenny Hazzard, who put the competitors at their ease throughout the competition. Colin wrote critique sheets for each performance which were much appreciated by the competitors. The prizes were presented by Tom Graham from Liverpool, a stalwart of the competition for many years and an enthusiastic member of the Piobaireachd Society. Tom unfortunately broke down in his own tune, but his grandson Michael also competed and gave a good account of himself playing 'Grain in Hides'. Dugald MacNeill once again took on the task of steward and announcer and kept things moving along smoothly all day.

On this occasion there were 28 competitors, mostly from Scotland, various parts of England and Wales. Jackie Lewis from the USA and Susy Klinger from Germany formed the overseas contingent. Several competitors were making their first appearances in this competition and two of them did very well in being placed first and fourth.

Competitors submit two tunes and are advised a week in advance which has been chosen for them to play. A wide variety of tunes was presented and, on the whole, they were well prepared and performed. The degree of difficulty of the tunes submitted seems to increase every year, but the standard of playing and the quality of bagpipes has never been better.

Thanks are due to the Royal Scottish Pipers' Society who once again contributed the use of their rooms and bar. This is an ideal venue for the competition and makes for a relaxed congenial atmosphere, although competitors have to play with the great pipers of the past frowning at them from the array of old photographs which lines the walls.