

News

Skirl of local pipes to sound at world's greatest tattoo

By Philip Round
Echo Staff

Eight members of Courtenay Legion Pipe Band are to perform before crowds gathering for the world's most spectacular pipe and drum event - the Edinburgh Military Tattoo in Scotland.

The trip of their musical lifetimes will also involve marching in several parades, playing at traditional Highland Games and appearing at other events in seven towns and cities across Scotland later this month.

They have been invited to tour the home of the Highland Pipes as part of the Ontario Legion Massed Pipes and Drums.

As a teenager, the president of the Courtenay Legion Band, Lisa Phillips, played with the Ontario band and it was her long-standing contact with the pipe major there that sparked the invitation.

"I was really thrilled that we were invited to join them," she told the Echo. "We were told we would be watching the tattoo as the highlight of the tour, but when we heard we would actually get to play there I could hardly believe it."

Her enthusiasm is echoed by the local band's pipe major, Steve White, who regrets he cannot be with his fellow members on the tour.

"This really is a big deal for us," he said. "We're really proud that our members will be there playing in the pre-show at Edinburgh Castle."

The band will also be marching on

the Royal Mile in Edinburgh, which links the castle and Holyrood House, the Queen's official residence in the city.

Other events in the itinerary include playing in the city of Dundee and also close to the birthplace of Scottish national poet Robert Burns in Ayrshire.

They will also be attending some traditional ceilidh dances as well as sightseeing while in Scotland.

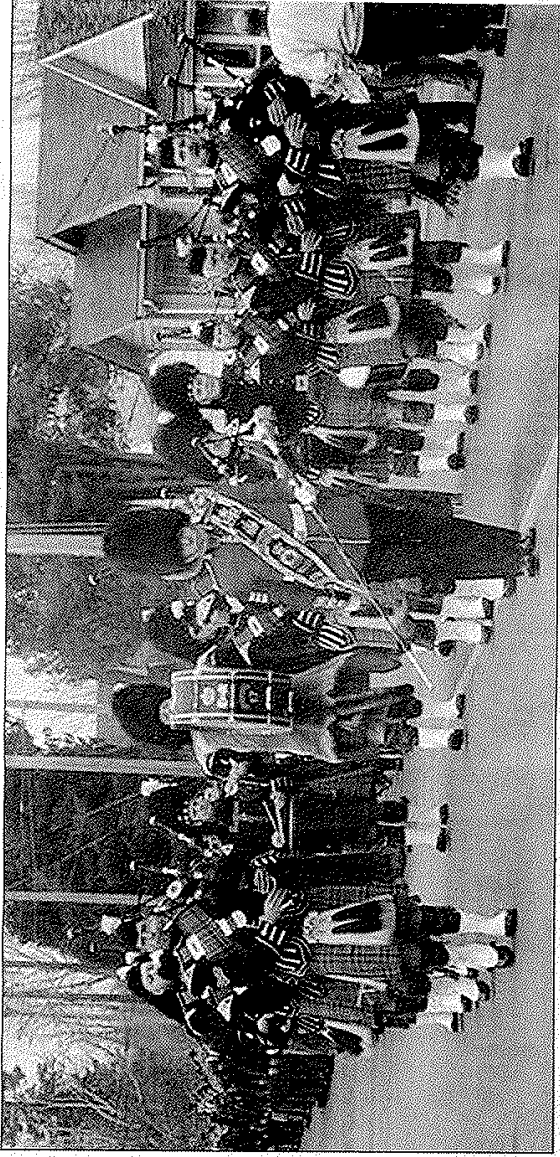
After the tour, some members will go on to neighbouring Ireland, but they are not scheduled to play there.

The local pipers and drummers travelling to Scotland are Ralph Burton, Alison Fraser, Lisa Phillips, Greg Olynyk, George McKenzie, Jerry Worth, Gary Usher and Dave Log5an.

Olynyk said he had never been to Europe before and was looking forward to what he expected would be a great and likely emotional experience at the tattoo. And Burton said he had always wanted to go to Scotland, but never dreamed he would be playing the pipes there.

Edinburgh Tattoo performances are attended by almost 250,000 people over a three-week period each August, with highlights televised in 30 countries around the world.

* The 50-year-old Courtenay Legion band is always on the lookout for new members of all ages. Practices for both pipers and drummers are held weekly at the Legion hall on Cliffe Avenue, where lessons are free and uniforms are supplied.



Off to Scotland: Eight pipers and drummers from Courtenay Legion Pipe Band will be performing in Edinburgh at the world-famous tattoo