



## At the Highland Games Girls Pipe Band set to entertain

Keeping your nails short isn't necessary for playing the bagpipes. Neither is having enormous lungs.

Ask Virginia Hulme, the pipe major with the Georgetown Girls Pipe Band. Mrs. Hulme, who has been playing the bagpipes since the early age of nine, will perform with her band at the Downtown Pioneer Days celebration.

Mrs. Hulme began piano lessons when she was six years old, but she disliked them and didn't enjoy practising.

She took up the bagpipes at age nine and in her teens, she decided to join the Georgetown Girls Pipe Band. Today, she teaches the pipes at Sheridan College, where students come from Oakville, Mississauga, Toronto and even Grimsby to watch her teach.

Mrs. Hulme has been pipe major for the Georgetown Girls Pipe Band since 1967 when she took over the place of Allan Munn. The band was named 1986 Citizen of the Year by the Georgetown Lions Club and won "best overseas band" at the World Pipe Band Championships in Glasgow, Scotland two summers ago.

This all-women band has a long list of awards and honors to their credit, beginning with the Lions Club convention in 1948 at Philadelphia, Pennsylvania where they were presented with the keys to the city.

Over the past 13 years, they have been regulars at the Georgetown Highland Games, competing in the Grade 4 category. That's a category for bands who have less experienced players. The band also leads the opening parade at the Games.

This summer, they anticipate going to the CNE to take part in the opening day parade once again. There is also the Georgetown and Acton Fall Fairs.

Although it was difficult, the band had to say no to Santa when he invited them to join his parade. It's too risky on the Spanish Cane wood of the bag pipes, especially the newer

pipes, explained Mrs. Hulme. Up to \$400 is spent on repairs seasonally.

The band participates in several community functions including the Georgetown Optimists' Victoria Day Bang-o-Rama, the hockey association opening in April at the Alcott Arena, Robbie Burns nights, weddings, dinners and conventions.

Because the band is involved in so many things, it has been unable to train recruits from scratch due to the lack of time. So they would prefer new members with some piping experience or lessons.

The group has a few extra sets of bagpipes they can lend out, until new members can acquire a set of their own.

What does it take to play the pipes? Co-ordination. People erroneously think you have to have enormous lungs, says Mrs. Hulme. Co-ordination and fingering is quite intricate and many people who have taken other instruments find the bagpipes hard, she added.

In many cases, it is almost better if students have no experience with music whatsoever because the fingering technique is quite different from the piano.

But it is not impossible for adults to learn the bagpipes. All it takes is interest and patience.

"I'm irretreivably hooked," Mrs. Hulme laughed. She has many pipe music records at home and says that she is most fond of the Clan MacFarlane Band from St. Catharines.

"I like the way they treat the bagpipe music. It's traditional, but done very well," she said.

Mrs. Hulme's all-time favorite is "Amazing Grace".

"We usually get requests for it. Everybody knows it. You can see people dabbing at their eyes when you're playing," she said.

So be sure to watch for the red and green MacGregor tartans at the upcoming Highland Games. They belong to the Georgetown Girls Pipe Band.

Save  
Save  
Save

**30 - 50% OFF**

All In-Stock  
Furniture

**40% OFF**

Housewares  
and  
Giftware

**h GOODLET'S**  
HOMELAND FURNITURE

DOWNTOWN GEORGETOWN

877-2851      SINCE 1937

PIONEER DAYS