

House of Gordon USA Scholarship Report 2010

First I would like to congratulate the 2009 Scholarship recipient, Marshall German, on his achievements including the Balmoral US Junior Solo Piobaireachd Championship last fall and 2nd Overall in the US Junior Solo Championships. Our scholarship helped him to travel from California to Pennsylvania for the competition.

At the AGM in Richmond last fall, the treasurer's report recommendations included doing more with the scholarship program, something that I had long been advocating! At the first board meeting of the new executive board I proposed we sponsor the Grade 4 Junior Piper of the Day here at Grandfather Mountain with a scholarship for one week's tuition to the piping school of his or her choice for the following year as an annual award. We further discussed giving out three \$500.00 scholarships this year. After a round of discussion the board passed this initiative.

Interest in our scholarship program exploded and where in past we had to seek out candidates, this year we had to turn away many qualified young people. We will be setting dates for our 2011 application process soon – application open and deadline dates as well as the number and amounts available to give and will be updating the website and applications to reflect those changes. The more donations we garner for our scholarship, the more young people we can help. We are also excited about the possibility of an online clan store to help fund the Heritage and Scholarship Funds which was discussed at Richmond and is being worked on now!

Our first scholarship recipient of 2010 is **Miss Jean Stein of Elgin, Illinois**, a fourteen year-old highland dancer of great promise who has been Mid-West Inter-Regional Champion since 2006 and United States Inter-Regional Champion in 2008 and 2009. She also competed last year at Cowal in the World Highland Dance Championships placing as fourth runner-up in her age group. We are happy to be able to assist her in her endeavors with our scholarship which she will be using to attend the Ohio School of Scottish Arts.

I was pleased to make a big check presentation to our second scholarship recipient today! **Miss Zoe Shell of Elizabethton, Tennessee** is a fifteen year-old highland tenor drummer with the Grandfather Mountain Highlanders. Relatively new to competition she has successfully competed with her pipe band and will be attending the World Pipe Band Grade 4 Championships this year. We are happy to assist her to improve her skills with our scholarship used to attend the North American Academy of Piping and Drumming in Valle Crucis just down the mountain!

Our third and final scholarship recipient for the 2010 year is **Mr. Marshall C. German of Corona, California**. Marshall competed last year in Grade 1 amateur bagpipe for the first time and at the PM Angus MacDonald Western Regional Championship was named as Piobaireachd, MSR and Overall Champion in San Diego, CA in November 2009 qualifying him to compete in the prestigious USPF Amateur Championship in Newark, DE on June nineteenth. We were pleased to again sponsor him with a scholarship to assist him in his travel expenses. Marshall was the youngest amateur in the competition placing 2nd in Piobaireachd and 5th overall! All other competitors had a minimum four years in Grade One and several are now moving to open competition. CONGRATULATIONS on a FANTASTIC competition Marshall!

Finally I was pleased today to be able to present the Charles O. Gordon Memorial Grade 4 Junior Piper of the Day crystal obelisk trophy and certificate for our scholarship to today's winner, 9-year old Liam MacDonald of Elora, ON, Canada!