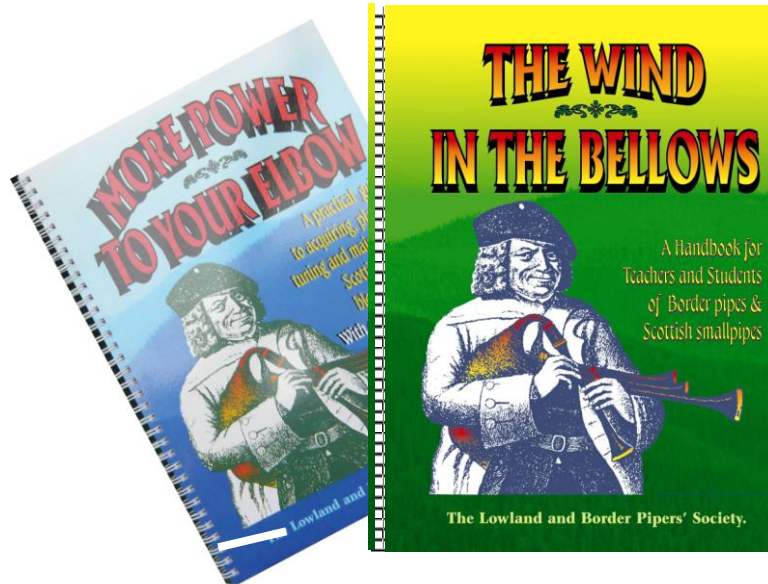


A NEW PUBLICATION FROM THE LOWLAND AND BORDER PIPERS' SOCIETY



**A Handbook for
Teachers and Students
of Border Pipes &
Scottish Smallpipes**

The Wind in the Bellows is a logical step forward from its predecessor, *More Power to your Elbow*, and it is surely a step in the right direction.

While the new book focuses on the business of teaching Border pipes and Scottish smallpipes, it also develops some of the principles and proposals put forward by its predecessor; thus these two volumes are 'intimately linked'.

As all three writers in the Preface have suggested, this is yet another advance along the road of revival and re-development of the bellows pipes that have their origins in the Lowlands of Scotland and the Borders.

The Wind in the Bellows offers a detailed source of technical and historical information. It also provides well-tryed methods of disseminating this information, along with the teacher's own personal experience, to a wider audience. It is not prescriptive. Rather it offers ways of making the learning process more accessible, attractive, and sometimes fun. So the core of the book, rather appropriately contained within the centre pages, deals directly with the 'Teaching Approach'. Here the nuts and bolts of the business are gathered together from piping workshops and schools that have been feeling their way forward over the years. Some of the regulations and pitfalls are examined, with the philosophy that it is better to be ahead in matters such as safety, than to be caught unprepared for each change in legislation.

With regard to the actual process of teaching, 19 coloured pages contain 18 possible steps of development from novice to competent player which allow the teacher (or indeed the student) to work through the process progressively or to pick a particular aspect (e.g. Reading Music) and concentrate on that in isolation.

It is also possible that some of the principles contained in the 'Progressive Schedules' might, at some future date, form the basis for assessing piping competence, and provide modest goals towards excellence.

As an introduction to the main body of the book, there is a chapter concerned purely with the instruments under consideration, and the similarities and differences that exist between them and the Great Highland Bagpipe. Various aspects are examined, and cross-references made to relevant material in *More Power to your Elbow*. Some suggestions are incorporated regarding the sort of problems that might be expected from students' pipes, and how these may be alleviated, even if only as a temporary expedient to allow tuition to go forward.

In any activity the provision of good tools encourages good results, so the section on 'Tools' covers such helpful aspects as Playing in Harmony, Composing, Interpretation and much more. There is information on Singing with the pipes, and suggestions about Playing for Dancing. With more players taking up the bellows-blown pipes who have not come from a Highland piping background, there is guidance on how to deal with musicians who read their music in the key given for the pitch of the instrument, whether the pipes are in G, Bb, C or D.

The latter part of the book is given over to 'Pipes in Context'. Here attention is drawn to sources of suitable music and where that music may be found, cross-referencing the confusing names of many of the different tunes. There is a useful bibliography for further reference and reading, and contact details for many of the establishments and societies that have an interest and an influence in the piping community. There are thumbnail descriptions of many of the bellows pipers of years gone by, and the role they filled in the community.

Finally two short Appendices provide some actual music for consideration in a teaching environment, and a paper postulating cutting edge material on the relationship and use of Modes.

The editorial group, Jock Agnew, Martin Lowe, Simon McKerrell, and Dougie Pincock, who oversaw the production of this teaching handbook (the first of its kind) come from both the Highland piping and the bellows piping traditions, and a large cross-section of the piping and traditional music fraternity was consulted before and during the writing process.

As Roddy MacLeod, Principal of the National Piping Centre, writes in his section of the Foreword: "The book is thorough and fascinating and undoubtedly offers information and advice for even the most experienced exponents and therefore makes it highly desirable for any piper's collection."

114pp. A4. Ring wire bound for easy page display.

Twenty musical examples and exercises.

Twenty-five illustrations and cartoons.

Forewords by Julian Goodacre, Roddy MacLeod and Robert Wallace.

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