

The Curries are coming!

by Neil Gunn


For two Dumfries pipers the excitement and anticipation of playing at the Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo is keenly felt as they fine tune their performance for this extra special occasion.

This year to mark the contribution of the Scottish Diaspora to the country's history and heritage, the Tattoo and the Standing Council of Scottish Chiefs have invited clans and families, on their own designated evenings, to take part in a pre-show 'Splash of Tartan' event.



As one of the chosen honoured families the Curries (anciently MacMhuirich), who will assemble in Edinburgh from both sides of the Atlantic, will join others at the 10.30 performance on 19 August.

Thanks to an invitation from the American-based Clan Currie Society, a leading international, non-profit, cultural and educational organisation, father and son Stuart and Kyle Currie, who don't often get the chance to play together, will escort members of the Currie family as they march proudly across the drawbridge on to the Edinburgh Castle esplanade.

 To mark this special occasion Stuart and Kyle, in another first for the duo, have penned a new tune aptly called, *The Curries are Coming*, a melodic 6/8 March. Because he had never composed before, Stuart freely admitted, "The pressure was on."

Currie Society Chaplain, the Rev. Dr. David Currie said, "We are delighted that Stuart and Kyle are joining us for the evening. To have two experienced Scottish 'Currie' pipers

marching beside us adds immensely to what already promises to be a very special evening. We are proud to present them with new kilts for the occasion. “

Not only will Stuart and Kyle escort representatives of the family, they will join, “in a Royal Navy led year,” the massed pipes and drums of the Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo at the traditional pre-show warm up – the ‘Big Blaw’.

✘ Although the last time Stuart was at the Tattoo was as a young spectator and Kyle has never been they are no strangers to the big musical occasion. Both are already ‘champion’ pipers.

Stuart, who currently plays with The Vale of Atholl Pipe Band (grade 1) from Perth, first started piping, at the tender age of 11, with his local Kirkcudbright pipe band. He was a member of Dumfries & Galloway Constabulary Pipe Band when they were crowned British Champions in 2010.

Kyle who also first picked up the pipes at the age of 11 is a member of Lochmaben Pipe Band, crowned UK Champions (Grade 3A) in 2014. He is also a member of The National Youth Pipe Band of Scotland.

While Edinburgh is only a short hop from his home, Stuart is well-travelled, having played in Switzerland, Norway, France, Germany, Ireland and Japan.

Like his dad, Kyle has also already taken part in events outside Scotland including with The National Youth Pipe Band, as part of a larger group of musicians, in Buckingham Palace, with some members of the royal family in the audience. Only a week after the Tattoo he will pack his bags and head for the Avenches Tattoo in Switzerland, held in the town’s spectacular 1st century Roman amphitheatre.

Keeping the family tradition going is Stuart’s 12 year old

daughter Kali who is a drummer with Lochmaben Pipe Band.

Although both have confessed to having a few nervous thoughts, they are looking forward to meeting their namesakes from the United States and other parts of Scotland. Stuart said, "To be able take part in one of Scotland's biggest cultural events, with my son, is a fantastic opportunity. It's something we will both remember forever."

The new pipe tune marks the latest in a long series of newly commissioned music by the Clan Currie Society. Most new works enjoy world premieres in New York City at the Society's popular "Pipes of Christmas" concerts. Many can be enjoyed online at the Society's YouTube Channel.

The Currie appearance at the Edinburgh Tattoo will mark the close of an important week in Currie history. Earlier that week, kinfolk will gather in Glasgow to hold a Family Convention to elect the first family leader in over 800 years.

Learn more at www.facebook.com/ClanCurrieSociety