

Next generation of pipers invited to blaze the international trail with the Tattoo

NEXT GENERATION OF PIPERS INVITED TO BLAZE THE INTERNATIONAL TRAIL

Edinburgh Tattoo house band begins recruitment after first global tour

Following the success of its first global tour, young pipers and drummers from across the world are being called upon to join The Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo's esteemed house band, Pipers Trail.

The recruitment appeal, which offers young people the opportunity to tour with the band and perform at international occasions throughout the year, including the spectacular Edinburgh Tattoo, comes following the completion of the band's recent successful expeditions where they took in first-time visits to Germany, Norway, Czech Republic and China.

Pipers Trail was developed by The Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo in 2014 to establish a global network of Scottish piping and drumming performers that can play traditional and contemporary music, with a focus on excellence and performance amongst the next generation.

After their success as a key part of the Massed Pipes and Drums in last year's Edinburgh Tattoo, the band, led by former Director of Army Bagpipe Music Major Stevie Small, kicked off its worldwide journey in September of last year at the Dusseldorf Tattoo. In their first combined performance outside of Scotland, Pipers Trail were joined by the Tattoo Dance

Company and Hjaltibonhoga, the finest Scottish fiddlers from Shetland, with 36 pipers and drummers, 36 dancers and 24 fiddlers showcasing the best of Scottish traditional music and dance.

In March of this year, the band played a central role in The British Embassy of the Czech Republic's celebration of British culture. Performing for the British Ambassador, the Czech Minister of Defence and the Czech Speaker of the House, the Pipers Trail provided a flavour of Edinburgh in August.



Members of the Pipers' Trail

Over the last six months the Pipers Trail has also visited Oslo for a performance at the Norwegian Military Tattoo in April to a record crowd of 16,300; completed a debut concert performance with the Royal Scottish National Orchestra in Edinburgh and Glasgow for 'Gene Kelly – A Life in Music'; and then in June, a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for youngsters Ross Walker (22) from Dundee and Shona Duncan (23) from Duns when they represented the Tattoo at the Third Silk Road International Exposition in Xi'an.

Jointly organised by the three most influential Chinese State bodies in international trade, National Development and Reform Commission; Ministry of Commerce and China Council for the

Promotion of International Trade, the exposition is the biggest commercial cooperation platform between East and West China.

The visit to China comes as the Tattoo revealed its intent to continue the company's growth, reaching ever-larger audiences at home and abroad through an ambitious international expansion programme including a visit to China by 2020.

Stevie Small, Project Officer at Pipers Trail, commented: "The popular appeal of the pipes and drums has never been stronger, both in appreciation of the music and the considerable talent in the bagpipe, drums and traditional dancing here in Scotland and abroad.

"The key reason to launch the band was to form a capability for piping, drumming, Highland dancing and fiddling to a level that can not only draw the skills of excellence for the Edinburgh Tattoo but also for global occasions that provide our young members with once-in-a-lifetime opportunities to better their skills and exposure in the piping world.

"As with every art form, it's important that we are always encouraging the next generation to come through the ranks. The opportunities which this presents are huge, from international tours and of course performing at the world-renowned Edinburgh Tattoo during August. We're excited to meet the new recruits."

The current Pipers Trail members finished off their global tour on home soil taking part in the President's March at Royal Highland Show last weekend. The President's March is a procession of musicians taking place in the world famous Main Ring in the grounds of Ingliston. It remembers the regions which the agricultural show would have been hosted in former years and marks the final salute of the current President who steps down from his post in front of 2,000 spectators.

Pipers and drummers looking to apply for a role within the band should contact PipersTrail@edintattoo.co.uk

To date, the band has brought together more than 200 performers from Argentina, Uruguay, Canada, New Zealand, United States, Australia and across the UK, to perform at Edinburgh Castle's famous Esplanade in the last four years.