

Pipe Major **ROBERT PEARCE O.A.M.**

Robert Pearce began learning the art of piping at 10 years of age with Manly Warringah Pipe Band and within twelve months played his first engagement on Anzac Sunday 1958.

At twelve Robert began competing in the 'Under 16' solo piping events where he was highly successful. He also competed in Under 21 and Open events, often gaining places in all three categories. More recently he has won a number of solo events including the Open State Solo Piping Championships 1996, 1997, 1998, 1999. During his 46 years of piping he has been one of NSW most successful solo pipers.

Robert joined Northern Suburbs Scottish Pipe Band, a Grade 1 band, at age sixteen where he remained until it went into recess. In 1969 he joined Sydney Thistle Highland Pipe Band, becoming Pipe Major in 1972. Robert reformed Northern Suburbs in 1978 and brought it up to win Grade 3 at the 1980 Australian Championships. By 1982 the band had reached Grade 1 and achieved fifth place in the Australian Championships that year.

In 1980 Robert established the 1/19 RNSWR Pipes and Drums, was appointed to the rank of Sergeant and rose to the rank of Warrant Officer before leaving the unit. In 1989 he was invited to accompany the Tasmanian Police Pipe Band to Scotland as tutor and to participate in the Edinburgh Festival and Military Tattoo.

During the past twenty years Robert has regularly performed on stage with Kenneth Mackellar, Jennifer Shaw, Billy Raymond and Arthur Spink.

Robert has also been active within the NSW Pipe Band Association, serving for a number of years as a Councillor, member of the State Piping Panel, State Vice Principal for Piping with the Australian Federation of Pipe Band Associations, and is a registered piping judge.

Since 1970 Robert has been making and repairing bagpipes as a part time hobby but recently gave up his career as a teacher to follow his passion in life and is now a full time bagpipe player, maker and repairer.

Robert's contribution and dedication to the bagpipes was recognised in 1998 when he was awarded the Order of Australia Medal.

Pipe Major **ROBERT PEARCE O.A.M.**

Robert Pearce has been an avid piper since the age of ten. He has become one of New South Wales' most successful solo pipers. He is also Pipe Major of the Northern Suburbs Pipe Band.

Although Robert's profession was teaching, during his early days he worked as a machinist making equipment for the mining industry. He also tested bagpipes for James (Jimmy) Martin who migrated to Australia from Edinburgh where he was foreman to the bagpipe-maker James Robertson. Robert learnt the craft of bagpipe making by closely observing Jimmy's skills and techniques.

At 17 he was taught to make leather pipe bags and cane drone reeds by his principal piping tutor, Ray Anderson and had made his first set of pipes by the age of 20. He continued to make leather bags, practice chanters and complete sets of pipes as well as doing repairs and maintenance on a part-time basis until he resigned from the Department of School Education in 2000 to follow his passion for making the Great Highland Bagpipe.

Robert uses top quality African Blackwood and Alternative Ivory. He takes pride in his craftsmanship and the quality of his **GlenAlan** bagpipes are recognised for their superior sound and finish.



Bagpipe Services Australia

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