

163rd Maryborough Highland Gathering

SPOTLIGHT 50 YEARS OF THE GIRL ON THE DRUM

For half a century, the Girl on the Drum has captivated audiences with its breathtaking display. A highland dancer, poised atop a massive bass drum, is lifted high on the shoulders of three burly Scots, surrounded by a full pipe band and dancers.

This unforgettable performance has become the signature moment of the Gathering, embodying the spirit, spectacle, and tradition of Maryborough's New Year celebrations.

The tradition began after long-time Highland Society member Morrie Hutchinson witnessed the performance in Aberdeen in 1960 and suggested it to then-President Bill Sinclair. On 1 January 1976, the first Maryborough performance featured local dancer Christine Maas, supported by drum bearers Darky Duncan, Barry Lugg, and Don Norton.

From 1976 to 2020, the Girl and Drum were lifted onto the shoulders of three bearers. In recent years, health and safety considerations led to the introduction of a support stand from 2024 onwards, ensuring the tradition continues safely for future generations. Despite interruptions during the COVID years and in 2023, dedicated mentors such as Andrew Rae and Chris Plover have kept the tradition alive by teaching new dancers, including Cobi Kaye, to carry it forward.

In 2026, the Gathering will pay tribute to this milestone with special acknowledgments and a commemorative performance, ensuring the 50th year of the Girl on the Drum is remembered as a defining chapter in the event's proud history.

GIRLS ON THE DRUM

Christine Maas - 1976-1980
Allison Grogan - 1981-1983
Meletta Dellar - 1984-1987
Nyree Dellar - 1988-1992
Kellie Tori - 1993-1997
Kate Stevens - 1998-2001
Chantelle Plover - 2002-2006
Lashae Plover - 2007-2011
Sharni Plover - 2012-2013
Bessie Penhall - 2014-2018
Georgina Brown - 2019-2020
Cobi Kaye - 2024-2025

DRUM BEARERS

Bruce (Darky) Duncan
Don Norton
Barry Lugg
Kenneth Maas
Daryl Greenwood
Don Ead
Daryl McLeish
Tom Passalick
Gary Rogan
Wayne Thomas
Andrew Rae
Jim Wright
Garry Coburn
Greg Shay



Program Highlights

8:00am Gates Open

11:00am Harold Hubble Street Parade

1:00pm Official Opening

4:00pm Girl on the Drum

4:15pm Massed Bands

4:50pm Heavy Stones Final

5:12pm Glenn Hooper Ladies Gift

5:22pm Max Martin Mens Gift

7:30pm Community Concert

10:00pm Fireworks

All Day

Carnival Rides

Scottish Dancing

Athletics

Food Vans

Pipe Bands

Heavy Games

ADULTS \$18 **SENIORS \$10**
KIDS UNDER 16 FREE

EXPERIENCE A DAY FULL OF SCOTTISH TRADITION, THRILLING COMPETITIONS, AND FAMILY FUN!

THU 1ST JAN
PRINCES PARK
MARYBOROUGH

- ▶ 11am "Harold Hubble" Street Parade
- ▶ 50th Anniversary of the Girl on the Drum
- ▶ Highland Dancing
- ▶ Highland Pipe Bands
- ▶ VAL Athletic Carnival including the "Max Martin Mens Gift" and the "Glenn Hooper Ladies Gift"
- ▶ Carnival Rides & Food Trucks
- ▶ Evening Concert and Fireworks

