



Tyrone Heade, Piper  
Cathedral Piper, St. James Cathedral  
& St. Mark's Cathedral, Seattle

206.285.4989  
BAGPIPE101.COM



## PIPING STUDENT REVIEWS (unedited), page 1

### "A excellent teacher for the youth and adult bagpipe learner"

Clyde J., Mukilteo, Washington

*I've been taking lessons from Tyrone Heade since c.2001. It's a group lesson although attendance has varied from one to six students.*

*The class atmosphere is encouraging, not competitive. Tyrone is very tolerant of adult learners. We may not have the time to practice like a teenager at home. Plus vacations, family matters, and work can interfere with bagpiping. Nonetheless we have all improved markedly.*

*We have covered a lot of ground in this class that includes a range of pipe tunes (2/4, 3/4, 4/4, 5/4, 6/8 marches, jigs, slow airs), bagpipe tuning and maintenance, marching, keeping time, and so on. The thing I've found most valuable is how to learn a tune. Since bagpipe tunes are committed to memory this is an important skill.*

*Would I recommend Tyrone? Absolutely -- he's infinitely patient but still presses the student to practice good technique and play with strong musicality. Would I recommend this class? Absolutely -- if you are an adult learner you'll find the group welcoming and interesting. If you haven't played in a group setting, you'll find it's fun. There's something very satisfying to hear a tune come together with the group either on the practice chanters or on the pipes.*

### "Patient, effective, and motivating"

Chuck G., Seattle, Washington

*One day, at a much older age than typical, I took complete leave of my senses and resolved to learn to play the bagpipe.*

*What's not to like about what's probably the loudest unamplified instrument in the world? Why wouldn't everybody gravitate toward mastering a musical device that demands absolute coordination of eight fingers, both lungs, the left side of the torso, and both feet (if marching)? What fun could there possibly be learning some other instrument that required less than four separate reeds, all with a propensity to independently wander off pitch if too moist, too dry, or not set at an exactly defined depth into the appropriate chanter or drone? Compared to playing the bagpipe, unicycling on a high wire while juggling angry rattlesnakes and singing "Don Giovanni" with perfect pitch would be a snap.*

*Alas, there is probably no other musical instrument that sounds better when played well, (or worse when played poorly). I listened to enough well-played bagpipe to become intrigued with the possibility of learning to perform at an adequate, personally rewarding level- perhaps advancing eventually to playing for family or friends willing to tolerate a "decent", but not championship piper. My first foray into learning the bagpipe involved the purchase of a cheap plastic practice chanter and a "do-it-(to?)-yourself" bagpipe instruction book. After I thought I had learned to play Amazing Grace on the chanter, I decided that I probably needed a short series of lessons to master some of the more technical points of the instrument. Perhaps 4-6 months, I thought. [next page please...]*

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*I picked Tyrone as an instructor more or less at random. That proved to be a stroke of good luck. Sort of like looking for a math tutor and stumbling across some fellow named Einstein simply because he was conveniently located.*

*I showed up for my first lesson, and proudly proceeded to butcher Amazing Grace as I had imagined that I learned it from the \$3 text book. I know now that I was worse than awful. Without deflating my ego too drastically, Tyrone skillfully communicated that there were a few basic skills missing from my performance (in reality, virtually all of them).*

*Tyrone re-started my piping education from scratch. In the beginning, I thought I would go mad with exercise, after exercise, and was impatient to start playing tunes. Eventually I understood that the exercises are the building blocks of the tunes, and I now enjoy a sense of accomplishment when I execute any of the basic techniques particularly well. In fact, Tyrone has taught me to examine the technique within each tune and improve the tune by improving the incorporated techniques. I had to overcome the disadvantage of about 50 years' reading staff notation for other instruments, and slowly acquire a sense of the unique "pointing" involved in bagpipe timing. Old dogs can learn new tricks, but sometimes we learn them at a slower pace than a young pup. Tyrone brings to bear the exactly correct combination of discipline, expectation, encouragement, and example. He is quick to share in the joy of an accomplishment, and is very patient when we encounter a portion of the learning process that proves more difficult.*

*Learning the bagpipe has been, to me, like learning a new way to think and speak. Tyrone has taught me far more than the mechanics and timing involved in playing the bagpipe, he has been an essential part of acquiring an understanding of the instrument and an appreciation for the traditional Celtic folk melodies that will eventually lead to more proficient performance. Tyrone has taught me how to learn as well as how to play the instrument, including steps to take if things go poorly during practice.*

*Some small portion of a single percent of the world's population plays the bagpipe, and a smaller portion yet can play it well.*

*Tyrone is one of the rare individuals who can perform to a very high standard \*and\* is able to teach the instrument. My advice to other wanna-be pipers? Expect it to be one of the most time consuming, frustrating, rewarding, maddening, exhilarating, challenging, fantastic, and slightly oddball endeavors you will ever pursue. (In addition to the Great Highland Pipe, the Scots are responsible for the game of golf). Absolutely engage a teacher, and don't even begin to attempt learning on your own. (You have about as much chance as leaning to unicycle on a high wire while juggling angry rattlesnakes and singing opera at perfect pitch). There are undoubtedly some other good teachers around, but in my life I have met very few instructors in any subject better suited to guide and inspire students toward success than Tyrone Heade. I can recommend him without reservation.*



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