

# Following the piper

Whenever he's asked by friends or family to play the uilleann pipes for them, Bob Sehy just won't stand for it.

That's because, he said, "you have to play them sitting down."

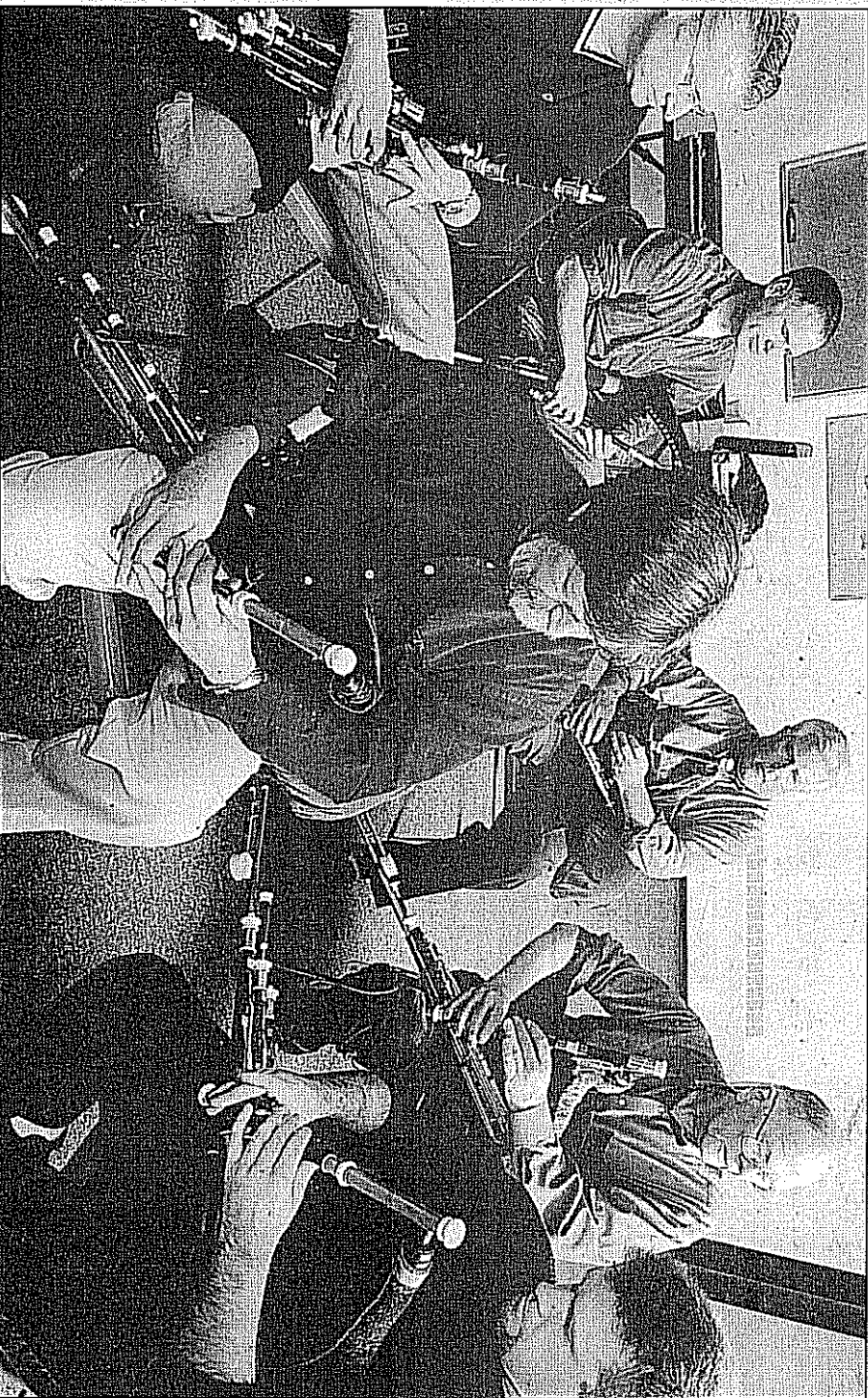
For more than 15 years, Sehy, 42, a Suffolk County police officer, was devoted to the Great Highland pipes, more commonly known as bagpipes, as he marched with the police department band.

But the Irish version of the pipes, smaller, quieter and blown by bellows instead of mouth, had always intrigued him. So two years ago, the Medford resident piped up. He asked if there were others on Long Island like him.

A few responses and a few months later, Sehy had the beginnings of the Long Island Uilleann Pipers Club. And when they gather, the sound they make is familiar to most folks, even if the sight of the pipes themselves isn't.

"You can't just get them at the local music store," said Bill Jablonsky, 39, of Manorville, another enthusiastic group member.

It's the music heard on Broadway's "Riverdance" and on the soundtrack of the



**UILLEANN PIPERS CLUB** members, left to right, Neil Begley, Bill Jablonsky, Bruce Davenport, Robert Lynch, Charlie Mooney and Luke Powers play at Our Lady of Snows Church in Blue Point. The uilleann, created in the 1700s, means "pipes of the elbow."

NEWSDAY PHOTO/MICHAEL EACH

movie "Titanic." That's the sound emerging from the basement of Our Lady of Snows Church in Blue Point once a month, whenever the group meets.

The group also holds occa-

sional workshops with noted piper Ivan Goff of Sunnyside, an award-winning traditional musician who has worked on Broadway and in film. Jablonsky, also a keyboardist, has modest expectations of all

that professional piping instruction he's been getting during the past two years. "I have no real aspirations of becoming a uilleann pipe star," he said.

But like Sehy, he loves the pipes for their musical sound, conduciveness to social gatherings and easy portability. "With uilleann pipes," Jablonsky said, "you don't have to carry anything around — except maybe the tune."