

## Induction of Paul Kelly (*posthumously*)

by Dan Moloney



Dan Moloney, presenter - Judy Kelly, Meghan Kelly and Marion Shearer DCAT President

It is an honour and a privilege to speak to you tonight as we induct Paul Kelly into the DCAT Hall of Fame.

Today, it is hard to remember there was a time when DCAT did not exist. Back in the early nineties, it had been 20 or 25 years since many of us had actually marched in a drum corps but we still maintained solid friendships with the men and women we had performed with. We still enjoyed drum corps, of course, and many of us travelled regularly to watch them in competition. Some liked the senior corps and travelled to Allenton or Hershey for their championships; others of us travelled across North America to enjoy the juniors.

But, with the exception of the Toronto Signals Band, there really were no active drum corps in Toronto or Southern Ontario back in 1994. So when Paul and a number of us heard that Preston

Scout House had started up an "Alumni Drill Team" and were sponsoring a convention of the Great Alliance of Seniors – GAS – in Cambridge, Ontario, we just could not miss the party. And what a party it was. A real eye-opener. And something we just had to get in on.

Most of you have heard how things progressed from there. Word spread; old friends connected; enthusiasm grew; and in no time DCAT was born. We might have been a little too old to march, but singing? No problem! Or so we thought. Well it took a little time and a lot of work but as the organization grew in size, sophistication and talent, Paul got more and more involved.

When we needed help in the baritone section, Paul was there. When the bass section needed a lift, Paul was there. When Ted Key decided a set of "tympanis" was required to compliment his music, Paul tracked them down. When River Dance was all the rage and we decided that an Irish Dance Team would be a nice touch, Paul was right up front. When a male soloist was required, who else but Paul would take on the challenge? And whenever we lacked a Director at rehearsal (or even for a show), once again Paul was there for us.

But while Paul was an outstanding performer, he was also a talented executive and a leader by nature. So when our finances ended up in disarray Paul took on the role of Treasurer and very soon had us back in the black. The accounting system he instituted and the checks and balances he put in place back then still serve us well today. Gord Irvine followed his lead for many years and Tony Casciato and I will continue to do so in the future.

But as Treasurer, Paul was just warming up. When a number of our original executive members decided to turn over the reins, Paul was ready to accept the leadership challenge and he became our next President. And in this role, Paul revitalized the organization. First, internally, by expanding the roles of Membership Director and Social Director and inviting them to attend and contribute to the executive meetings. And second, externally, by doing everything he could to make sure DCAT maintained its position as a respected Chorus and valued member of GAS and by constantly encouraging us to take on more and more demanding performances in front of the general public.

And when it came time for Paul to step down from his role as President, he did what very few leaders ever manage to do. He displayed his vision and leadership acumen by making sure that the next generation of leaders was ready and able to take his place. People like John Jones, John Dickinson, Edna Allen and several others who were not among the very original members but had joined us several years later proved that DCAT enjoyed a wealth of leadership talent and was in no danger of faltering as our membership expanded.

So we can say with absolute certainty that Paul has had a profound effect on DCAT and the DCAT Chorus and, in fact, on the lives of all of us who love and enjoy the "DCAT experience". From that very first gathering in Cambridge way back in 1994, through our initial struggling years, right through our growth in size and sophistication, in fact right up to this present day, Paul's influence has been immense. Without Paul's contribution, DCAT today would be a very different organization.

I know that Paul would be very proud and pleased to accept the honour you have bestowed on him by electing him to the DCAT Hall of Fame. So tonight, let me say of behalf of Paul...

Thank you DCAT!

May you continue to grow and thrive in the spirit of friendship and fellowship.

May you continue to enjoy yourselves while you entertain the audience.

May you keep the memory and camaraderie of drum corps alive and well for generations to come.

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