



The DCAT Purr-spective

The Newsletter of Drum Corps Alumni Toronto • 55 Barber Greene Road, North York, Ontario M3C 2A1 • Feb./96

Well, here we are in March and time for the February Newsletter. Apologies for the lateness but things happen.

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Did we have fun at the Valentine Dance...*I think sooo!* These events just keep getting better and better. Our D.J. extraordinaire, Dave Partridge kept us hopping, bopping and jiving all night long. Added to that, were great prizes and lots of wonderful food; talk about getting your moneys worth. *Good parties don't happen, they're planned; kudos to our social committee.*

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Our rehearsal hall looks just great thanks to various work parties spearheaded by Don Gill. The hall, complete with permanent risers for rehearsing, wall to wall carpeting and a photo and memorabilia wall thanks to DCAT members' contributions .

We even have a fridge donated by John and Evelyn Connell to keep our beverages cold. If you haven't seen the hall yet, drop in and catch a rehearsal and do some socializing any Wednesday evening 7 pm - 10 pm or Sunday 11am - 2 pm (up to April 28).

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Brian Hill has ordered our DCAT jackets and hats. He thinks there is a chance we will have them for the ODCA performance on March 16. Please get the money for these items to Brian as soon as possible.

CHORUS NEWS

On March 3, the chorus packed up and headed down to Leroy N.Y. to perform in a concert with Batavia's Mighty St. Joes and a couple of local bands. They call us the Great White North Hah! We travelled through snowdrifts and whiteouts, we slipped and skidded down the New York Thruway. We got there to find out that one of the local bands had pulled out because of inclement weather.

The chorus performed admirably (*too bad Rhonda didn't show up at the concert*) and was well received by the audience which braved the elements to attend. St. Joes were impressive with 65 horns and 20 percussion. Five DCAT members also play with St. Joes, so it was a particularly busy day for them. Brian Hill has their music down pretty well, but he had trouble with the hand salute during the show. He did it palm out à la Dudley Doright. (*Canadian eh!*) After the concert we stopped in at St. Joes après concert party at the "WISS" (*yup, that's the name of the bar*), a rather elegant watering hole - *not!* It was fun, they had some food laid on and the jugs were very reasonably priced. While we were there we were asked if we would like to perform in their "Classic" on April 27 and a show of hands indicated that we were interested...details to follow.

UPCOMING...

Performance at ODCA Individuals Saturday, March 16.

Performance at Comunicorp (Pringle & Booth) Party Thursday, April 11.

Performance at St. Joes Classic Saturday April 27.

AN EDITORIAL FROM THE SOCIAL COMMITTEE

Dolly, John, Evelyn, John, Barb, Jim

Looking back over the VALENTINE DANCE of February 10/96, one could conclude it to be a most successful social event.

Based on the committee's evaluation, the success of this event lays with "YOU" ... each and every DCAT member and your spouse.

"YOU" ...who brought friends to share in the fun and maximized the attendance at 94 people.

"YOU" ...who prepared and supplied a Gourmet Evening Meal.

"YOU" ...who through your valuable connections, supplied a large and expensive variety of Door and Spot Prizes.

"YOU" ...who designed and printed the tickets.

"YOU" ...who purchased and delivered all the party supplies.

"YOU" ...who Hand-Made the theme decorations for the hall.

"YOU" ...who spelled off Door Duties and Clean-up Detail.

"YOU" ... who on average spent \$29.27 in supporting this event.

In summary, one can see that success was achieved through the efforts of all of "YOU", and your Social Committee extend to all the members our gratitude and appreciation. "YOU" make our jobs easier.

Thanks..

Hear Ye! Hear Ye! Please get your bio's to me so that we can keep this column going. Everybody thinks it's a good idea but I need your story to make it work.

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This month we add to our files Joe Watson and Ann Watson.

"We'd like to know a little bit about you for our files."

Joe (RADAR) Watson - 2nd Tenor, DCAT Chorus

Niagara Falls, my home. It was summer 1948. My age was 11 (Oh God, I'm old). I was watching a parade with friends. Down the street came the Niagara Memorial Band (Drum and Bugle Corps). WOW! what a sight and sound. I wanted to do that and rushed home to tell my parents. My mother smiled and said "maybe some day". My dad said: **1.** You're Too Young; **2.** A Bugle, Too Noisy; and **3.** I can't afford it!. I was crushed but ran next door to tell my aunt and uncle. My Uncle Alf said his brother played in the band and he would inquire for me. A few days later my uncle gave me the bad news, I had to be 16 to join. I resigned myself to wait. One thought bothered me though, how would I learn to play a bugle unless I had one.

That Christmas my uncle gave me a chrome plated B flat bugle. He had found it in some scrap metal at work. As he was an electroplater he cleaned it up for me, it looked like new. He told me I could now play and stop talk, talk, talking about the drum corps. Down to the basement I went and blew a lot of hot air before the first note came out. It was instantly requested I move to the garage and after a winter in the garage (God, it was cold) I started to get some good sounds.

Two years later I joined the Air Cadets (126 Air Cadet Squadron) my first band. At age 15 I was allowed to join the Memorial Band who now had a new name, The Niagara Militaires. I was allowed to join as I had become quite proficient at the horn. My parents had to sign their permission. My Mother was all for it; my Dad was finally persuaded.

The years came and went, I left the Militaires, joined the RCAF, played in station trumpet bands. When I left the Air Force I moved to Toronto and joined the famous Jolly Jesters. I couldn't join the Ambassadors, they were toooooo serious!!. I left the hobby as a player in 1966 but followed the hobby as a reluctant spectator. Four years ago I decided to take formal trumpet lessons for my own personal interest and then one year later joined the 2nd. SIGS.

In the last three years, drum corps dreams have come true. I resurrected the Jolly Jester and performed at two G.A.S. reunions. I'm no soloist but I gave it a shot. I marched in an All Star Drum and Bugle Corps in Macey's Thanksgiving Day Parade in New York City. Also I was fortunate enough to be in "on the ground work" in forming DCAT Alumni and now am playing in St. Joe's Alumni Drum and Bugle Corps and wonder of wonders, I'm actually singing with my drum corps buddies.

Thanks for the memories and the memories to come!

Ann Watson - Alto, DCAT Chorus

Drum Corps memories from a Non-Playing, Non-Marching Member

IT WAS THE UNIFORM!

1958 - I was working at CBC, dating who I thought I would marry, my life had routine (boring) I was happy (I thought). A new fellow was introduced to me at work - the new mail boy - he was quiet the *First Week!*. Then he started to talk to me, steal my cigarettes and talk

about drum corps (I had never heard of it). I pictured a lot of drummers, a few horns (that is what he played) and some flags - the picture in my mind was not a pretty one. He kept asking me out as well - I certainly wasn't interested in someone who played in a drum corps - a bugle band - YUUK. All that winter, all he talked about was his beloved band - their great practices and going for Chinese food late at night. The enthusiasm was downright sickening.

But something happened in late spring. He all of a sudden stopped asking me out - he said he was busy every weekend now and didn't have time for dating. I was somewhat miffed and now slightly interested. He mentioned he was going to be playing at the Scottish Highland Games at Woodbine Race Track one Friday evening and I should come and check it out. I declined. But as time got closer and he kept TALKING about it I grew curious enough to coerce my best friend Marie to go with me. Down we went on the streetcar and as we entered under the stadium there was this band, dressed as clowns. They looked pretty funny but they were having a great time, laughing, "clowning around", I saw HIM he looked funny but great. In the stadium we watched them come out, perform, the crowd love them. I was amazed at the sound - it was intoxicating. Later in the evening they came out for retreat. This time in blue uniforms - light blue satin blouses, dark pants, wellingtons, now they looked impressive and especially under the lights and clear cool sky of a June night. It was magical, and the sound. I couldn't get it out of my head all weekend. The following Monday I told everyone at work how great this drum corps thing was and how great HE looked. I anxiously waited for him to ask me out. He didn't. He was playing and marching.

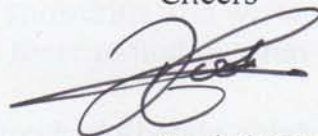
The CBC picnic was coming up on a Wednesday afternoon. I waited for him to ask me. He didn't. He was playing and marching. I finally asked him. He told me he would come if it didn't interfere with his practice time. We went together - we spent the summer together - I went to most of the drum corps shows and by the fall I was hooked.

I was in love with him and drum corps. I was having more fun than ever before in my life.

Now 35 years later, we are both involved in drum corps. I'm not playing an instrument or marching BUT am singing, I have a uniform and and I'm having the time of my life!

That's it for this month, thanks to the Social Committee and Joe and Ann Watson for their contributions to the newsletter.

Cheers

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Dave Cook', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Dave Cook (757-2043)