



'The DCAT Purr-spective

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

What the heck are we supposed to do every other Wednesday night. Talk about being at loose ends, does anybody else feel this? I've become attached to you people and miss you ... God, I have to get a life!

.....

Sober reflection on G.A.S. '96.

Thursday night Early Bird Party at Lt. Norman Prince Post.

Being eager party goers, we were there in force. There were also some Scout House, Archie, Cab's, Skyliners, etc. and of course Princemen. A civilized way to ease into the weekend. Last year, the Princemen chorus unofficially saluted us with their version of O'Canada. This year, the DCAT chorus sang the American and Canadian anthems for the Princemen, plus "Stout Hearted Men". We really touched a nerve with this one; we had no idea that the song had so much meaning to the Princemen. They refer to members who have passed away as "Stout Hearted Men". It blew them away, some had tears in their eyes. That was enough, just a taster for our Friday night performance.

A few drinks, some socializing and we were off back to our party room (while it lasted). So much for civilized. Oh those newly finished board room tables. Ellie just couldn't resist lying down on one of them doing snow angels or something. I couldn't resist grabbing her ankles and pushing her across the table! Then the lewd comments started, say no more!

The "four on the floor" Orty, Woody, Tony and Juney had Brian Hill leaning over them in animated conversation when he lost his oral cutlery into there midst. He quickly retrieved them, dusted them of and replaced them. On it went...

This was to be our first and last party in our Hospitality? Suite. Who knew that in this little pocket of the country that you couldn't have beer in a hospitality suite, that you couldn't stand up in the bar with a drink in your hand, get another drink before you completely drained the one that you had in front of you (and say may I).

Then the hotel or whoever, confiscated our beer, nice try bucko's. (*never try to separate DCAT from it's beer!*) We confiscated it back.

.....

Friday night Grand Opening, we were performing last, the audience attention was starting to wander, we would soon change that despite some problems with the sound system. What can I say, it was incredible. When the M.C. introduced us he mentioned that we had sung "Stout Hearted Men" for them the night before and he hoped that we would do it again. (yessss!) We hit the first chord and knew that it was our night. Ted Key's face was

shinning like a "sunbeam". We were singing all out and Ted was pulling even more out of us, shaping, encouraging, mugging. *Ted lead and we followed, what a trip.* (I'm getting goose bumps again just thinking about it.) We rocked 'em with "Rhonda", sassed 'em with "Sara" and melted 'em with "Matilda. We swung them gently with "Swing Low". We brought them jumping to their feet after "Stout Hearted Men & the "Battle Hymn". I saw people doing high fives in the audience. Four standing ovations in all. Amazing! Wyatt lead us through our finale "Walking Along" and took us off stage. Jim Pinette of the Princemen, who was sitting right in front of us during the performance said to Wyatt "You people sure starched my shorts tonight!" Compliments abounded. They liked us, they really liked us!

.....

The Saturday Morning Street Parade

Felt a little off that morning. It must have been those potato skins stuffed with cheese whiz that I had before going to bed the night before. (That's my story and I'm sticking to it!) Another first for the chorus. It's really strange singing and marching outside. All you can hear is yourself and you get out of breath really fast. A lot of people were wearing sunglasses more because of the night before, than the sun. The parade was mercifully short and we had our our ever faithful supporters Karen and Joanne cheer leading from the curb. Thanks to Bob Bond for creating the formation and whipping us into marching shape.

.....

Saturday Afternoon Individuals

Joe Watson did himself and us proud with his performance of "Jolly Jester horn playing guy" supported by Lois (let it all hang out) Nicholls. And Lois Nicholls, after a costume change danced and twirled herself into the hearts of the judges (supported by "Jolly Jester sitting guy"). Credit goes to both, it takes guts to get up there in front of that crowd.

There were many horn and drum presentations... Ted Key's observation, horn players can play many things but drummers can only play "The Downfall of Paris and Army 2/4". Preston Scout House Old Boys did their marching presentation and threw in a twist. They broke into line dancing which was kind of neat. John Fox got presented with one of the prestigious "Horses Ass Awards" (surprise,surprise). We set the record for the highest plastic beer glass pyramid 'cause we drank the most beer. How the heck did Dave Jewell falls asleep during the mass drum presentation?

.....

Saturday Night Banquet

When you start off with a badly drawn map, bad things happen. (I think that's one of Murphy's Laws, I'll check with Ted). A 20 minute bus ride turned into 2 1/4 hrs. We missed happy hour, we celebrate anniversaries, birthdays and separations along the way (no conceptions that we are aware of). On our way to the banquet, Dave Jewel jumps off the bus to grab a sandwich and a newspaper. Did he know something that we didn't. We stopped to ask directions, four people gave us four different directions. The bus driver kept his cool others didn't. We saw Scout House's bus going the opposite way to us, maybe we should have followed them. Ya right, they arrived later than we did. Finally a cop got us to the general area, it was a residential area. I don't know how the bus got down those narrow streets without hitting anything. Then we finally saw the little sign nailed to a telephone pole that read "GAS with an arrow pointing down a side street". With our luck it would take us to an out of

the way gas station. Hallelujah there it was. The first thing everybody seemed to need was a drink. We flooded to the bar where a staff of 1 was waiting to serve us. Finally we were seated at our tables and chilling out. It seemed anti-climactic not to be performing at the banquet but what the heck, we had our shot. It was a good meal, and the four final chorus Skyliners, Bonbons, Caballeros and the Princemen performed. After the Princemen sang which was the finale, the M.C. announced that there had been requests for the DACT chorus to sing. Woah, what a kick, the ultimate compliment! We were really loose, we assembled on stage and laid "Stout Hearted Men" on them one more time.

The party after the Saturday night performance in Dave Jewell's room was like a freaking Fellini movie. Thirty-seven people jammed into a hotel room. A swirling, blurr of activity. Rude jokes, rude people, what fun. Remember Ted's emotional speech to the chorus when he said he wanted to touch each one of us personally, well tonight was the night. There was Ellie "high pockets" Cameron (doesn't everyone carry there cigarettes and stuff in their bra). John Moffatt trying to speak but his tongue won't cooperate. The old ice cube down the "whatever" trick. Aggie, Aggie, Aggie nudge, nudge, wink, wink. It really went beyond words ... say no more!

I had an occasion to go to the party room Sunday morning to retrieve something. I guess I woke Dave up when I knocked on his door, he hollered he didn't want room service and I hollered I didn't do room service. He answered the door in his stripped jammies and he was a little grumpy, then crawled back under the sheets. What a den of iniquity it was. Piles of beer cans, wilted party hats, articles of clothing (probably Dave's) and it smelled likewell, you can imagine. I don't know how he could sleep in there.

The price you pay for hosting a DCAT party.

.....

Bob (horseshoes) Bond won Princemen's draw pocketing a cool \$2600.00. Sounds like a good time shopping spree for Diana.

Our first rehearsal/social after GAS (May 15) was a great success with a great number of family and friends attending. As usual there was wonderful food and a sweet table featuring Sara Lee "obscene brownies". Hopefully some of the guests will decide to become members of the DACT chorus.

.....

UPCOMING

- The DCAT performance at the Orillia Legion and barbeque on July 6. Please get your \$5 for steak to Dolly A.S.P. You should have an information letter for this event, if you don't see Dolly.
 - General meeting and elections to be held the first or second week of August. It will be held on a regular rehearsal night, date to be announced.
- Changes to the Constitution should be given to any member of the executive prior to the end of June.

.....

This month we add to our files; Joan Tufts (Moffatt).

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

Joan Tufts - 2nd Tenor, DCAT Chorus

I was a late comer to Drum Corps, joining Parkdale Lions when I was 17 (I think! I really can't even remember why I joined!). I do remember showing up at a practice at the Ex, being handed a soprano horn and told "just play what everyone else is playing"! I had no previous musical experience, unless you call a fling with violin lessons at 7 or 8 experience. I had to take 2 streetcars and a bus to get to practice from York Township to Parkdale and to this day I don't know I had the nerve to travel that distance by myself, let alone wearing that wonderful "Salvation Army Uniform".

I struck up a friendship with young "British" girl named June Slights, who even then was going out with Ort Beaumont. We soon began playing French Horns together and really felt we were the ELITE section. Around 1959 we "older girls" approached the Lions Club with a proposal to change our uniforms. After much debate from the "sedentary gentlemen", we designed new all blue blouses and skirts (although the skirts still had to be well below the knee!).

We still were not too happy with the way we looked, so some fund raising was necessary to update our outfits. Enter Midtowners, with whom we ran several fund raising dances. We got our white satin shirts, blue skirts and WHITE BOOTS! WOW!

Leaside Lions Majorettes decide they wanted their own drum line to march to and since Ort was instructing, June dragged me along to join. She played snare and I played tenor and it was here that we met "elegant Ellie". There are only a few occasions when Parkdale Lions and Leaside had parades at the same time and place - when this would happen June and I would take turns being the solo french horn section in Parkdale. After this I spent my last year at Parkdale as Drum Major.

At this time, I was a voting member for Parkdale on the CDCA - I think it was called then. The highlight of this privilege was the annual Convention (aka weekend PARTY!) In 1962, it was held in Niagara Falls. Sometime during the night of March 31/April 1 at a party in someone's room, I met a young man named Jim and he decide HE was THE ONE. (April Fools).

The 60's also brought many fun trips in my car as we followed Ambassadors to such far off places as K-W. We sang even then, as we drove, with Ellie being able to harmonize better than anyone else. And who can forget Carnival or the Ambassador's Ball.

I also mustn't forget my influence on my younger brothers John and Gord who obviously saw drum corps as a way to get away from home!

My last official parade was with Leaside at the grape festival on a hot September day in 1964. Unfortunately my 4 month pregnant body betrayed me and I didn't finish the parade.

Jim and I have been blowing horns with a few Royalaires for the last 3yrs. and have just recently found the thrill of a lifetime playing with Mighty St. Joe's Alumni Corps, as well as being a member of the DCAT chorus.

Our friends now have to call our kids and ask "Do you know where your parents are? Moms' comment is "it kept you out of trouble when you were younger - I guess it will keep you out of mischief now! (if she only knew!).

There will be more about the "GAS Reunion" in the next newsletter, as I get more photos and stuff!

That's it for this month. Cheers!

Dave Cook (757-2043)



Barb and Jim having some fun... whoops wrong Jim!



Strange bedfellows