



The DCAT Purr-spective

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DCAT is an organization dedicated to the preservation and joy of Drum & Bugle Corps camaraderie, bringing together past members, relatives, friends and associates in a social environment for the purpose of companionship and musical activities.

It was an unsettling experience preparing a challenging show for GAS when suddenly we lost the services of our esteemed director and friend Ted Key due to a serious illness. What were we going to do now? Enter assistant conductor Wyatt Gill. Wyatt, because of family commitments (new baby and a new house) has had to cut back his chorus involvement. Wyatt agreed to prepare the chorus for GAS and see us through to the end of the year. Enough can't be said about the way he stepped in and took over polishing and directing music that was new to him. Credit also goes to the chorus for the way they responded to and respected what Wyatt was doing. The chorus owes Wyatt a BIG thank-you.

The latest on Ted is that his recovery is on schedule and he has even been spotted at Dickie Lake.

G.A.S. 2003

East Brunswick, New Jersey, hosted by the New York Skyliners.

Been there - Done that - Didn't get the t-shirt.

When we arrived at the hotel Karen and I met up with the other DCAT people that drove down and those who drove up (from Florida). The next group to arrive were the people that flew down. We gathered in the Sports Bar to wait for the bus.

When the bus arrived, members poured off clearly suffering the effects of a 12-hour bus ride. It seems there was a fair amount of "adult beverages" consumed enroute (surprise, surprise). The beer purchased at duty free for the hospitality suite posed a bit of a problem. Hotel policy states that you can only bring in your own beer if it's in kegs. Cans and bottles must be purchased through the hotel otherwise there is a corkage charge. We tried to convince the hotel representative that these were Canadian kegs, smaller and in cases, but to no avail. After some negotiating we paid a small per case premium and they hauled it up to our hospitality suite. **Let the party begin.**

The beer was put on ice, the bar was quickly set up and the munchies were put out - instant party. Edna and Jim Allen were in charge of the hospitality suite. Edna (she who must be obeyed) doubled as the bouncer, making sure there was no smoking or unruly behavior. Although there were other hospitality suites ours seemed to attract the most people. Was it the mini-kegs of Canadian beer or the pleasure of our company?

A few of us found an outdoor patio area beside the pool.

We enjoyed the only sun of the weekend and recharged our batteries for the festivities ahead.

The Saturday talent show had more variety than in previous years. Among the performers were Joe and Ann Watson who did an excellent trumpet and keyboard duet followed by Ralph Silverbrand trying to sing a love ballad to Ann but he kept screwing up the words. There were drummers and trumpeters and flag twirlers. There were flying beachballs and Mardi Gras beads; flying bras and panties (you had to be there).

The Saturday night banquet was marred by a very loud wedding reception on the other side of the hall divider making it difficult for the people sitting at the back to hear the performances. A request to turn down the loud music fell on deaf ears. (deaf from listening to loud music)

Returning to our table after the Tribute to fallen comrades and the sing of The Lords Prayer, the mood was pretty somber. We asked Gord Irvine to tell a joke to lighten things up. Just as he started a waiter carrying a humungous tray of dishes dropped it right beside our table. That changed the mood really fast.

The "Queen" with Sergeant Swampy has become a crowd favourite. Gillian has done a fabulous job developing this character.

I'm left with this vision of Edna Allen careening down the hall on a luggage trolley just about running Ordy over as he stepped out of his room.

The comments about our performance strongly indicated that that our repertoire this year was the best we have ever taken to G.A.S.

Upcoming Events

Sunday, July 6th - Scarborough Civic Centre performance 2 p.m. - 4 p.m.

Monday, August 18th - Seniors Jubilee at Roy Thompson Hall (lobby Show)

Saturday, September 20th - York Lion Reunion (TBD)

Sunday, December 7th Annual DCAT Chorus Christmas Concert at Estonian House 1 p.m. - 4 p.m.

GAS 2003 A Time to Share *by John Jones*



The GAS weekend is always a special time for DCAT. A time to renew old friendships, to make new friends and to share a special moments and memories with the members of our fraternity. GAS 2003 was a particularly memorable event. For the first time,

DCAT would be at a GAS without the leadership of Ted Key. Yet we knew that his training, musicianship, and spirit would be there with us.

The chorus made the long trek down the highway arriving at the hotel in New Jersey late in the day on Thursday. As I looked out of the window of the bus, I saw people moving in and out of the hotel. You can immediately tell this is a drum corps event. Corps T-shirts and jackets; familiar faces; and lots of waving and hugging. Somehow you feel like you are coming to a place you belong.

The lobby of the hotel is like old home week. More people hugging each other. More familiar faces and the usual banter back and forth between friends. Many of the people who had driven down or who were coming back from vacation appear and the chorus is reunited.

Getting settled in the hotel room, walking around getting to know where things are in the hotel. Realizing that getting food on time is going to be a challenge. Seems strange that a hotel with lots of time to plan doesn't know that more people usually means you need more staff and food.

Thursday evening we all end up in our hospitality suite which will become a focal point for the whole weekend. Many friends dropped in. Edna and Jim Allen make the place seem like a little bit of home on the road. Singing - what we do best. I heard several conversations asking if what we were singing was what we were going to perform. The depth of our repertoire surprises people.

It is Friday morning. Getting up early after a late night. Well early for some folks. Time to kill. Rehearsal at 11am. Again lots of people watching. You can tell that the group is aging because the second most common subject after the way we were seems to be about how well we are feeling.

Rehearsal is very intense. Wyatt takes us through the show.

I am amazed by how much control he has given the short amount of time he has had to become familiar with the show. He makes you want to do well. Everyone realizes that this is the last real workout that we will have before our performance. Everyone is focused and time flies. People looking in from the corridor and clapping. Seems like no time and the rehearsal ends. I think that I have never heard the chorus sound so good. Looking forward to showing everyone what we can do.

Soon it is time to get checked in, pick up our packages as the weekend officially gets underway. Again more familiar faces. People greeting each other as we stand in line. It always amazes me that we never seem to have problems at registration. Credit to Anne White's great organization. Lots of old corps jackets and T-shirts in evidence everywhere in the hotel.

Friday night we are entertained by the Princemen who look great in their new black and silver costumes. They perform an energetic show. The Audubon Chorus always favorites and always with a special place in our hearts. They perform well-written charts that show off their particular style. Great versions of "My Country" and a medley from the "Sound of Music."

The day ends in the DCAT hospitality suite, which is fast becoming the place to be. The only thing missing is the friendly sing along since we have to save our voices for the next day's big performance.

Saturday morning dawns early. Seems even earlier after the festivities of the night before. Nothing likes a whole line of drummers drumming to wake you up. Walking around the lobby one sees a steady stream of people moving in and out with instruments. Some people checking in and being greeted by others who are already in the hotel. You get a real sense of fraternity.

Soon it is time to watch the individual and group performances. Loved watching Joe and Ann Watson try something new. Made all of us proud. Lois and her partner also got a good reaction from the crowd for their performance. All of the groups gave excellent performances. Special mention must go to the Canadian Gas Ensemble for a wonderful and musical presentation. "America the

Beautiful" brings tears to the eyes of many.

This year DCAT will be a part of the group performances for the first time. Our U.S. friends have never seen the New Orleans Funeral with costumes. The number is very well received. We get a standing ovation at the end of our performance. Felt great and was a sign of even greater things to come.

Soon it was 5pm and our time to rehearse for the evening's performance. We want to get some feeling for the hall and also to work with the Skyliners on our New York Tribute. DCAT assembles on stage with members from New York watching us. Wyatt takes us through some of the music. I can see that the Skyliners are impressed. When they come on stage to join us I heard someone say "now I know what it should sound like". I can feel the energy coming from the chorus.

Time to get dressed and join everyone for pre dinner cocktails. I must say that DCAT dresses up pretty well. Everyone looks great and socializing seems to be a real talent. Feels great to be a part of such a wonderful group of people.

Everyone proceeds to the ballroom for dinner. DCAT is going to sing the Canadian National Anthem. Some former members join us. Audubon sings their wonderful version of the Stars and Stripes Forever. DCAT sings O Canada. Makes me feel so proud.

The next portion of the show is a tribute to the members of the organizations who have passed on in the last year. Seems like each year the list gets longer. DCAT lost two wonderful people John Connell and Betty Cannon. All around me there were tears. By the time we got to sing the Lords Prayer, it was hard to say the words. Our fraternity is like a family and the loss of even one leaves a void that will never be filled.

Back to dinner. Phone call to Ted Key reminds us that he is missing. This is an emotional moment for many. Soon we are leaving dessert to begin our preparations for the evening performance. This is the big event. What we have been working for. Soon DCAT begins to assemble in our room. You can feel the excitement in the air. I love this time right before a performance. We have worked hard. Ted has prepared us well. We miss him. We are a product of his creativity and have never done a GAS performance without him.

Soon Wyatt calls us to order. Here is a young man who has taken on a big challenge. He projects an air of confidence. As we begin the warm up, I can sense something within the group. I don't really know how to express it in words. Kind of like the Vulcan mind meld. A whole group of people focused on a single thing. Making music. It is a great feeling.

Wyatt tells us we are ready. Soon we are down behind the stage waiting for our entrance. This is our big night. Interesting to see how everyone deals with the nervousness

we all feel right before a performance. I can hear music from the wedding in the adjoining room. Will it affect our performance? Wyatt tells us to ignore it. Time to go. We are marching on. DCAT is about to perform.

When we get on stage there is a lot of noise. Wyatt takes centre stage and the house becomes quiet. He looks at us and raises his hand and smiles. His hand comes down. The first notes of the opener sound across the room. The whole number feels great. As the last notes of the Finale "NEW YORK NEW YORK" sound across the room the audience is on the feet clapping. A standing ovation.

The show progresses and each number is met with an appreciative reaction from the audience. Wyatt introduces each number with reference to the corps from which it came. There is a slight glitch in "Mame" which only DCAT notices. "On the Square" what a wonderful and unique sound. Lots of applause. When we get to "America the Beautiful" emotions are high. Each number is received well by the audience. This is a great feeling. Feels like our energy is getting transferred to the audience and then back to us.

Soon the Skyliners are on stage with us for the finale. "Tribute to New York." A number that befits the great history and tradition of this perennial drum corps powerhouse. All too soon, the last notes of music sound and the show is finished. Seems like no time at all. As we leave the stage to the cheers of the crowd, I hold my head up high. I am a member of the DCAT Chorus. What a fantastic group.

It seems like after a performance there is always energy let down. Kind of like coming down from a high. Everyone talking about the how we did and what they heard. Lots of positive feedback from those who watched. Some say it is the best performance that DCAT ever did. I know for me it sure was the best I've done in my short time in the organization.

Saturday night is also party night. Last evening of the weekend. In true DCAT fashion, everyone is back in our hospitality room. The evening (morning) ends with good friends eating, drinking, partying and singing together. What can be better than this? A great end to a great weekend.

Writing this now several weeks after the event, when I have recovered from the effects of lack of sleep and a long bus ride, it still seems to me that DCAT crossed a milestone at this performance. Many organizations would have stumbled to say the least at the loss of their musical director. Particularly someone as key to the organization as Ted. The fact that Wyatt could step in, and then have the organization deliver the kind of performance it did is an indication of the internal strength of the organization as well as the talents and dedication of its members.

"We are the DCAT Chorus, we like to sing and dance strut our stuff and ever hold our heads up high." Words that ring true. We should all be proud of what we accomplished.

“On The Bus 2003” by Ann Watson



A light rain greets us at Xerox unlike last years downpour.

It was 5.35 a.m. as I boarded the bus to claim my seat, Parkie passed by with Mike's Hard Lemonade in hand, some things just don't change. Our bus driver Neil was a Santa Claus/Jim Allen look alike. Everyone was on board by 6.05 except

June and Sherry. They had left 1 Yonge St., after June's shift at 5.45 arriving at 6.10 thanks to Sherry Andretti. Tony and Connie took the scenic route - Pontypool via Hamilton via Halton Hills. (i.e. they got really lost)

At 6.20 June, Ordy, Dave and Sherry began the traditional euchre marathon, determined to play all the way to Jersey and back. Ann White reminds us about the importance of having your own I.D. Ahem! With a rendition of Willy Nelson's "On the road again" we were on our way. At 6.37 a.m. Parkie, with beer in hand, declares "GAS 2003" officially under way. At 7.45 the Queen Gillian and her Consort board the bus. Duty free and customs were uneventful. How lucky is that.

A mellow mood settles in for the first few hours then a Red Skelton video sets us all laughing the loudest being Gary Stone. Lunch and ice cream break at Painted Post, N.Y., is it even on the map? Edna and Jim's numbers game brings some moans - depending on your prize serviette holders and timers are popular - Now two tables of cards - the 2nd one having rotating players. Assorted drinks and snacks flow, voices are

louder - one thing missing, singing, perhaps because Ted is not here. We become part of the New Jersey rush hour arriving at 5.45 p.m. a long trip, but safe. Check in at the Hilton smooth - it looks quite grand - but who knows what evil lurks inside.

The Bus Back

Ann White's request for 9.30 a.m. start is only off by 5 minutes - no frantic phone calls to rooms for missing bodies - impressive. Sad good byes to old and new friends. The card marathon commences immediately. Sleep consumes most for the morning hours - maybe a result that many of us were still singing at 3.00 am in the hospitality suite. ^

When consciousness returns lunch time is near. We stop (which state/) and there are many choices for dining - a table of 6 (including Joe and I) and a table of 4 choose Italian - clean spot, freshly cooked - by the time we get our food we package it in styrofoam - true take out, but delicious - one of the best meals of the weekend.

The movie "Brother Where Art Thou" with fabulous sound track is enjoyed followed by more Red Skelton and Mr. Bean. Edna and Jim's candy shop makes the rounds. The beer begins to flow slowly - me thinks some are still HURTIN'. Jim and Barb offer me wine I virtuously decline and then the power of suggestion takes over, I pop a cork and share a splash with Gillian. We take our leave of the Queen and Consort after snacking at Tim Horton's on the Queen E. (appropriate). Back at Xerox at 7.30p.m., safe, happy, tired. Another GAS trip completed - we sure missed Ted.

Good News - no long trip next year - GAS 2004 is in Hamilton, YAHOO!

The following is the first in a series of bio's on chorus members presented by Ann Watson.

Edna Kingsley

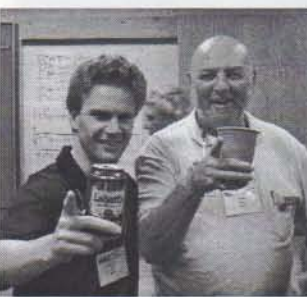


Edna was born in Toronto and attended Regal Rd. Public School (she was in grade five with Barry Bell), she went on to Oakwood Collegiate (at the same time as Dave Wood and Bob Miller). Edna studied piano from age 7 to 17 mainly at the Royal Conservatory of Music switching to voice at 17. From 1953 to 1958 Edna sang in the Toronto Mendolsohn Choir under Sir Ernest MacMillan, Frederick Sylvester and Walter Susskind. She then switched to performing operettas in various chorus' doing Gilbert and Sullivan.

After being married in 1963, Edna moved first to London, then Ingersoll and finally Kitchener-Waterloo, all the while singing in various cathedral choirs, church choirs and then the K.-W. Philharmonic Choir doing solo work as well. In Kitchener-Waterloo area the drum corps idiom was large and before long the Kingsley family became familiar with it. All of Edna's four children, Diana, Richard, Nancy and Victoria took an interest and were involved in various levels doing guard, playing horn and doing winter guard with Dutch Boy Cadets, Dutch Boy and Royalaires. With Edna's musical experience before long she also became involved behind the scenes, sewing costumes, chaperoning on corps trips, cooking, driving - You Name It! It was now in the 80's, Edna was widowed and decided to return to high school to complete her education, graduating grade 13 with two scholarships and then continued on to a one year course at Conestoga College. Edna stayed in K-W until 1995 then moved to Toronto. The "tie in" to DCAT came from her daughter Nancy who had been active with Royalaires and knew Lois Nichols. Nancy heard about DCAT, told Edna and in December 1996 Edna joined and made her first GAS trip in 1997 to Baltimore, What Edna loves about DCAT - "the companionship, the fun and laughter, the ability to still perform, her friendship with Diane, and on occasion helping to teach and work with the sopranos".

Edna now works as an operations assistant for an insurance company. We are lucky to have someone with her musical background and talent in DCAT.

G.A.S. 2003 New Brunswick, New Jersey



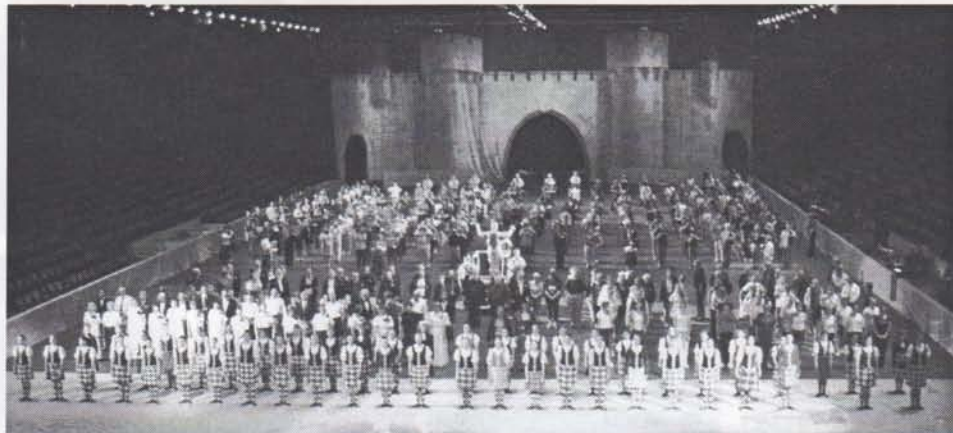
The Hamilton International Tattoo

The Hamilton International Tattoo held on June 7th & 8 at Copps Coliseum was a very well organized event. Just like a Drum Corps show (but with lots of kilts and fluffy hats). There was the usual waiting around and killing time. The dressing rooms were a little crowded, so we created our own.

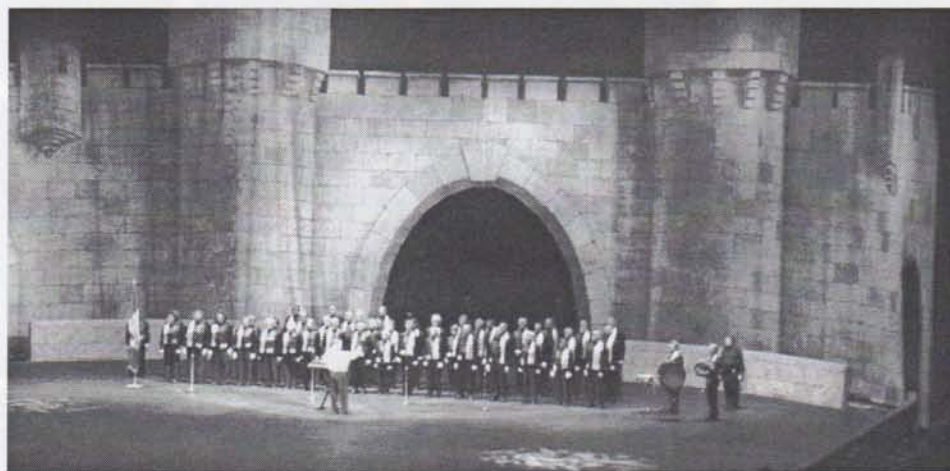
The chorus performed well under the direction of Paul Kelly. This was Paul's "trial by fire" and he handled it very well. The sound system in the arena was excellent. There was a lot of feedback on the quality of our performance in particular the dynamics and texture. The organizer for the Kingston Tattoo was impressed with our performance and is interested in having us perform there.

Apparently the event lost 8 bus loads from the US because of the SARS thing but there was still a good crowd.

Wilf arranged for the chorus to go to a legion for a meal after the Sunday performance.



Impressive even at rehearsal



Just because he's cute



Just because she's cute

