



The DCAT Purr-spective

DCAT (Drum Corps Alumni Toronto) 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.

The Newsletter of the Drum Corps Alumni of Toronto - June 2006

The weeks leading up to GAS 06 saw the return of our snowbirds from Florida with the exception of Marg and Don Gill who met us at GAS in Boston.

On the bus...

The tradition continued, John Parkinson cracked open the first beer at 6:28 am, followed by Joan English and announced the beginning of a long weekend and an 11 hour bus ride down to Boston. John Moffatt was at the back of the bus serving up a liquid breakfast. For the first time in twelve years there was no marathon euchre game on the bus. The bus company forgot to install the tables that were ordered. The bus wasn't full so we had room to spread out (christians at the front of the bus) and keep our coolers close at hand. We had lots of movies to help pass the time thanks to Doug Johns.

The self proclaimed "bus bitch" (Ann White) ran a very tight bus. Everyone was accounted for at all times and there was strict monitoring of time at food stops, pit stops and Duty Free.

A long bus ride gave us time to talk about a variety of topics. The conversation drifted to Dave & Ellie Cammeron's wedding night - say no more. After a long day we finally arrived at the Marriot Hotel just outside of Boston. Getting our social beverages into the hotel was not the problem we thought it was going to be.

After finding our rooms and unpacking we were off on the trolley bus to the Early Bird Party at the American Legion Post, a great way to unwind and have a brew (not the first of the day) after a long bus ride.

The DCAT chorus performed on Friday night. Armed with Ted Key's arrangements along with Wyatt's "Danny Boy" the chorus was well prepared to deliver our most dynamic and entertaining performance to

date. Wyatt dedicated our performance to Paul Kelly. That set up an emotionally charged performance. After our knock out rendition of the American National Anthem the audience leaped to their feet cheering. Leaving the stage I was not the only one with a tear in my eye. The audience knew something special was going to happen later when we came back to perform and we did not disappoint. To borrow a line from the Sig's theme song... "They could sense in the air, that DCAT was there and they knew that they would steal the show".

Wyatt said it was the first time after a performance that no one asked "How did we do"?

The ride home was 9 hours. It was a pretty quiet group on the return trip. There was much talk about the events of the fun weekend.

And the winner is Lynn Connell. Lynn won \$1200 US in the 50/50 draw. Everybody was thrilled for her.

Aside from her bus monitoring job Ann White was also responsible for corresponding with the GAS hosts, booking the hotel reservations, mixing and matching sleeping buddies and arranging for the bus. A big thanks to Ann for her many weeks of detailed work.

Also, on behalf of the chorus I would like to thank Dave Wicken, Gareth Skipp and Phil Panter for their help over the two weeks Wyatt was on vacation. They were certainly a part of the chorus being ready for the GAS weekend.

The fundraising concert at Coldwater on June 3rd was pretty much rained out - but the show went on. It was a beautiful venue and had the weather cooperated it would have been a fabulous event. The bus ride home gave new meaning to "in your cups".

- Dave Cook

The DCAT Chorus presents

For the *Love* of *Music*

Featuring:

The Alexander Mackenzie High School Choir • The Metropolitan Toronto Police Male Choir • Cro-Arte Toronto Croatian Choir • York Highlands Chorus (Newmarket Chapter of Sweet Adelines)
The DCAT Chorus and a very special Guest

Saturday, September 30th @ 7:00pm
City Playhouse Theatre • Bathurst and Centre St. City of Vaughan

Tickets...\$20.00 each • For Ticket Information Contact John Fox at 905.853.9214
or email: foxynewmarket@rogers.com

From the President - John Jones



GAS 2006 was a resounding success! DCAT delivered a performance that was one of the best, if not the best, in all of its history. In addition, all of the behind the scenes work required to deliver that performance – travel arrangements, hotel, publicity, communications, and financial management - were done in an outstanding manner. Every member

and supporter of DCAT should be proud of what we accomplished.

Looking forward to the remainder of 2006, we have set our sights on another milestone performance which will be at our show "For the Love of Music" which will be held on September 30th at the beautiful City Playhouse in Vaughn. This show hosted by DCAT will be the first time that DCAT will be presented along with other high caliber choral groups to a local audience. Following the show – a gala social gathering will allow all participants and audience members to meet and enjoy each others company.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank all of those people who have become Associate Members of DCAT. Your historic support is important and appreciated. Our mission is to bring together all people interested in the Drum Corps activity and promote the bonds of friendship and fraternity

that are the foundation of our organization. Our Associate Members are key to this mission.

Another key area where DCAT is working is to support the organization and development of existing and potential alumni organizations. The Canadian Alumni scene has shown remarkable growth. Scout House, United Alumni, Optimists, GAS Ensemble, all have strong performing groups. York Lions, De La Salle, Oakland Crusaders, Cardinals and Optimist Lancers have developed solid alumni organizations. DCAT has encouraged and in many cases actively supported the efforts to bring together the members of these organizations. We will work with them to seek out ways to support each other.

I would be remiss if I did not mention the enormous contribution made by the many members of DCAT who do not have a drum corps background. Those of us who have belonged to this crazy sport/art sometimes forget that our use of terms like "pivot," "mark time," "DCA" or "starting line" can be a challenge to people who are new. In fact, as a relative newcomer to drum corps (compared with some members), I sometimes find myself trying to decipher some of the language. Sometimes makes me smile.

Perhaps things can best be summed up in the beautiful music created in 1945 by Rogers and Hammerstein and performed so wonderfully by DCAT.

"May You Never Walk Alone"

Barb & Jim Jennings 50th Wedding Anniversary *by Marg Gill*

May 12, 2006 was the day Barbara and Jim Jennings celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary. It was a first class affair with some 100 people in attendance. Lots of family, friends from their yearly Florida vacations; from Canada Packers; from Jim's Curling and Baseball teams; from the street where they have lived for almost all 50 of those years; and of course some close DCAT friends mostly of which were guys Jim marched with in Ambassadors. It was great to see 3 ladies that you corps members would remember from the past Maria Gillis, Joy McLeod and Ethel Sleeman.

Barb and Jim greeted us all at the door with a kiss and a kind 'thank you' for coming to help celebrate with them as cocktails were served.

Barb and Jim's daughters Donna and Joanne and their son David along with their better halves Chuck, Jamie in his kilt, and Tina, all their grandchildren Zak, Taylor, Samantha, Madison, Dana, Jesse and Kayla were all in celebratory fashion. Then to complete the family there were a number of cousins.

A very diverse group mingled and looked at the original wedding album and other important pictures which made up their 50 years together.

Donna their eldest daughter welcomed us all and proceeded to filled us in on how many months, weeks, days, hours and minutes it took to make up 50 years. It definitely sounded more like an eternity when it was all broken down.

After dinner Donna explained why donations for The Hospital for Sick Children in lieu of gifts was requested by the family. Once again Barb and Jim show their true colours.

The grandchildren had not only all taken the time to write the 10 reasons that Barb and Jim were the best grandparents in the whole world, and reading their lists brought tears to my eyes, but also then told us

why. It seems topping the list was Barbara's spaghetti sauce (we just might have to have a spaghetti sauce roll off), with Jim teaching them how to play pool a close second, and getting a chocolate bar after each visit was third.

I then had the floor for the next 10 minutes with a lot of goods things I wanted to say having known them for over 40 years, and a couple of memories they may have rather forgotten.

Joanne had prepared an excellent visual presentation chronicling their life together to date. It was such fun too watch the fashion and hair style changes as well as the kids grow up.

After a toast to Barb and Jim the dancing began with the disc jockey being none other any Dave Partridge/Feathers (who came out of retirement for the occasion) and to make some of us really feel old brought his son along to help. We all

danced, and even sang at times to the music and just completely enjoyed ourselves as though it was their wedding day all over again. It was a blast!

Round about midnight most of us were saying our good byes and dragging ourselves out to our cars. However, the younger ones including cousins and kids, carried on for another hour and you can believe that Barb and Jim were a big part of the dance marathon.

It was truly wonderful to see how close their family is, and how over all these years they have built a great many long lasting relationships, with people who think the world of them. They are generous, loving, helpful, reliable, fun to be with, kind, and it is no wonder their family is following in their footsteps.

They have been truly blessed as have the people who have been touched by them and we wish them the very best in health and love for many more years to come.



The Golden Girls Club *by Joan English*



We are a group of gals who have known each other since our teens, some 50+ years ago. In the early 50's we were all members of the Parkdale Lions an all girls marching band, some played trumpet and some drummed. We played in parades, shows and competitions in Toronto and other locations in Ontario. This was something we all enjoyed. We not only enjoyed the music but also the fun times and camaraderie with fellow band members. During those years, lasting friendships were formed.

In 1956 a few of us left the band, being of an age where engagements and weddings were in the plans. Not wanting to lose contact with each other we all said as so many people do, "we must keep in touch". But we meant it, so we put together a list of names and phone numbers and our "get together once a month" plan was put into practice.

In the early years of our get-togethers there were wedding showers and weddings (some being bridesmaids at each others weddings), then baby showers and babies. Later, discussions on raising children, tolerating teenagers, marital situations, children's weddings, grandchildren and for some of us great grandchildren. Now as we are getting older the topics have changed to retirement, pensions, travel and comparisons of age appropriate health problems and physical limitations. A few of us are now widows and unfortunately we have lost two of the group. A few years ago one of our gals moved with her husband to a retirement villa near Fergus, she discovered that our former band leader and her sister (also a band member) who we hadn't seen in years were also living there. They are also now a part of our monthly get-togethers.

We all feel very fortunate to be part of this long-standing group of band friends. Even though we sometimes see each other only once a month, it's a means of keeping friendships alive and well.

DCAT Executive

President - John Jones

Vice president - Dave Wood

Business Manager - John Dickinson

Treasurer - Gord Irvine

Secretary - Lois Nicholls

Publicity - Dave Cook & Don Gill

Membership - Linda Norton

Webmaster/Newsletter - Dave Cook

Musical Director - Wyatt Gill

DCAT mailing address:

DCAT c/o John Jones

107 80 Mondeo Drive

Schedule

June 25th, 2:00pm - 4:00pm - Scarborough Civic Centre

September 30th, 7:00pm - **For the Love of Music**
- City Playhouse in Vaughn

November 15th, 7:00pm - Donway Place



Former DCAT member and friend Rik Robinson passed away on Saturday, May 20, 2006 after a year-long struggle with Curtzfeld-Jacob disease.

At a private family funeral, Rik was buried next to his loving wife, Betty, at Resurrection Cemetery in Ancaster, Ontario.

A memorial garden, in Rik's honour, is being created at his most favorite place in the world, Kabshe Lake.

GAS 2006 by Ann Watson



The beds, the pillows, the soft white fluffy towels, the classical music that greets you outside the main entrance, in the foyer and the fitness centre and the beautiful, tall arrangement of fresh flowers on the marble table – WHAT A HOTEL!!

Was it the best GAS ever? Many people thought so as did I.

Highlights

DCAT's Performance. Wyatt pulled out of us the best we have ever sung, it was quite electric being on the stage and enjoying the response from the crowd with each number we did. Thanks Wyatt for your enthusiasm and confidence in us; Bon Bons, singing stronger and with poise. The Friday night dance after the performances was a blast with the singing D.J., Jack Hawes from Melrose, MA. What a great voice and entertainer; The Saturday individuals which are an eclectic grouping of serious musical talent, funny skits, major drum corps performances it was all there; Lynn Connell winning the 50/50 draw in American cash and the overwhelming positive response from the crowd on her luck; Saturday evenings "dress up" time. We do clean up well don't we? Sky's performance of Chicago was a knockout. Great music, fun, Tom Swan conducting in his own unique fashion and the costumes (purchased through ebay from the Midwest for \$20.00 per dress). How great was that; The Princemen and St. Kevin's also entertained us with their traditional and patriotic numbers; The Queen, who always delights the American crowd but did confess she felt a little lonely on the stage without us behind her; The Tribute to all those who have left us, always very emotional and each year the list gets longer. A fact of life, but hard to accept.

The evening would not have been complete without the JAM session. 50 horns were conducted by Jim Russo, Rick Dixon and Duke Terreri and for many of us the last sound of drum corps for a few months

Humorous Moments – the trolley trip which turned into, let's everyone follow Dolly to the washrooms; The creative way beverages were carried around the main lobby area so as not to ruffle the feathers of the "suit man with the headset" Tom Swan carried his in a very professional athletic bag that had a funny clinking sound; Lois attempted to retire after "scotching" and was invited to party with some Sky people. She did the right thing, she partied!!; The sing song at the Post with the traditional "Swing Low Sweet Chariot" being taught to the newcomers who had not heard it before. Joe and I meeting with three interesting American fellows at Nantasket Beach, on our mini trip of 4 hrs. Their names were Joe, Rocky and Tony. They were smoking Cuban cigars and we knew not to ask where they got them and what their occupations were. They presented Joe with a \$40.00 Monte Cristo, we did not ask questions – they were a trip; Upon entering Kilroy's Pub you were always sure to find a collection of drum corps people with tables pushed together enjoying food, drinks, laughter and just happy to be together.

I could go on and on about the fabulous weekend but we have our memories.

Congratulations to Ann White who is on the GAS executive as the Canadian representative and to Bob Neuhoff the new Chairman.

Next Stop – Johnston City, New York., 2007

Annie in the tundra

"Raindrops keep falling on my head...." OR A Day in Coldwater

A vintage grist mill restored and turned into a café was the setting for our performance. Along side is a stream that was turned into a fast moving river from the rain but still a beautiful setting. The fabulous buffet spread out for us included elk, buffalo and regular beef burgers plus elk sausage – hey, we were in the country.

The gazebo we sang in was just far enough away from the mill that one was guaranteed to get wet unless you had an umbrella which most of us did not.

Jim Bartholomew remarked while gingerly walking to the gazebo "I'm walking on a cow field" but actually Jim it was a well groomed lawn, just like in the city! Time to perform – It was decided no uniforms, too wet. The crowd was small but came well equipped with various types of rain gear One old dolly sat in a plastic white chair holding a very large Casino Rama umbrella and kept perfectly dry. The audience was appreciative but there was little applause as they were busy holding onto their brollies. Although we were smaller in numbers than usual we sang well, directed with enthusiasm by Wyatt who wore shorts and sandals not your typical director's uniform. The Queen a.k.a. Gillian, who was just recovering from a bad flu performed and was hilarious – what a trouper.

Following DCAT, Optimists entertained. The drum line was so large they took up the whole gazebo and the horns had to stand on the grass in the rain but they played with gusto. All in all, a great fun day in spite of the inclement weather – lots of laughter, camaraderie and good music. The Show Did Go On – That's Entertainment.

Many thanks to the owner of the Grist Mill Café, Bob Neagle a former York Lions member. Hopefully we will be invited again.

P.S. congrat's to Edna and Jim Allen the winner of the 50/50 draw – 2 Muskoka chairs.



GAS Reunion 2006

