



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 – July 2015

Free Concert - January 2015

We want to get some new members so decided to go all out and invite our local neighbours to come and see us. We offered snacks while they listened to our Chorus and hoped we would impress them into joining. Flyers were made and distributed but unfortunately the weather did not co-operate. We didn't get as many visitors as anticipated but those who attended seemed to have a good time - some positive comments were made about us. However, to date, none have joined.



So, we are busy re-thinking our approach. If you have any ideas, write to us!

GAS - May 2015

This is the big item of the year for all the Drum Corps that belong to GAS, i.e. the Great Alliance of Seniors! Former member of our Chorus, Ann Watson, and her husband Joe, who also played with the Jesters, could not bear to miss another GAS reunion, although they are not singing with us this year. If you can find Bobcaygeon on the map and note the distance from there to Toronto, you will not wonder why they left. Instead you will wonder how they could remain as active members of DCAT for so many years! Ann kindly offered to write her impressions of the reunion for this newsletter. Here she is:

BINGHAMTON, N.Y. - A View from the Outside!

Attending GAS this year was different for yours truly – not participating – a new experience. We decided shortly before the May weekend that missing another one of these incredible events was not an option. Surprising our DCAT and American friends was great fun. First order of business – stocking up on goodies for the room – off to Wegmans with Althea our Sky chorus and Bon Bon friend. Upon return, the Double Tree Lobby Bar was busy (no surprise there) and happy smiling faces kept arriving, lots of hugs and chatter. Where to eat – a coworker of Lisa Venezia Laurence's brother owns Cacciatores in Johnson City. Ron Lawrence organized shuttle bus service compliments of the hotel. 2 or 3 trips was made by our driver who we named Josh – not his real name. Wyatt had to sit on the floor of



the small bus on the run we were on. Thank goodness we were not stopped by the local constabulary. A cross section of Sky, Melrose, St. Lucy's, Bon Bons and DCAT wined and dined on delicious Italian food. Back to the Double Tree Lobby Bar and visiting. Drum Corps people are never at a loss for words so the din of chatter was infectious.

Friday was rehearsal time for the performers. For those not rehearsing – time to explore downtown Binghamton, a very old city with some beautiful historic buildings and surrounded by rolling hills. Time was allowed by most everyone to partake of this activity and do some shopping, of course. Bon Bon girls returned with many bags from Boscov's – others followed suit. Dropping into the hospitality suite of Bon Bons, we saw Carol Terreri having "highlights" applied to her hair and a lineup of some other chorus members waiting their turn. Having a professional hair stylist in the chorus is great – any DCAT members who could fill this bill?

GAS officially commenced at 7.00 p.m. with opening ceremonies and the singing of the National Anthems. Yankee Rebel Alumni – Phil Gentile was the weekend Master of Ceremonies. Bon Bons Chorus was first. Duke's interpretation of their songs and their sweet voices made for a most enjoyable performance.

Sky Chorus followed singing a medley of older numbers - songs from the 20s, 30s & 40's. A fun and upbeat set.

DCAT members in full costume strolled in carrying props – the audience was puzzled – being a spectator this year did not exclude me from having "butterflies" in my stomach. As usual, DCAT did not disappoint. By the 2nd number, the audience was alive with clapping, Ooh's and Ahh's. It was apparent the Chorus was acting out believably the story that the music and words were telling of "Les Miserables". A STANDING OVATION and cheering continued for some time. The "Master of the House" skit was the icing on the cake.



Later, the electricity in the room carried over to the dancing with D.J. Omar wasting no time getting the crowd movin' and groovin'. He knew what to spin for our crowd. The Double Tree Lobby Bar closed at 11.00, sort of, with people retiring to the hospitality suite where the party continued for many.

Saturday morning saw those who had not partied into the night having breakfast and then off to the Grand Ballroom to pick a seat for the Talent Show. Horn Rehearsal at 9.45 and at precisely 10.30 a.m., Phil Gentile called to order the beginning of the talent show. This always "showcases" the individuals and

ensembles that make up what drum corps is: Musicians with unique and varied abilities who spend the extra time to practice and it shows in their performance. Corps participating included: Yankee Rebels, Archer-Epler, St. Lucy's, and Brooklyn United. Horn players (solo and duets) – soprano solos from Richard (red) Wardlow or as Sandy and I nicknamed him, "Richy Rich" – who had many costume changes!! , very talented - a beautiful duet with Mendito /Wardlow soprano horn and 3 valve trombone. Baritone solos. Drumming, including John and Barb Flowers (John just recovered from a serious medical condition). Maryland Rudimental Drumming Association with Charlie Kammer, front and centre.

A surprise addition was Archer-Epler playing a tribute to Scout House whereupon the back door in the ballroom opened and 12 members of Scout House marched in receiving a standing ovation. Many damp eyes were visible in the assembled crowd. Throughout the talent show, many who had partied late arrived carrying much needed coffee.

Free time in the afternoon allowed people to visit, do more shopping at Boscov's, rest (we are not "spring chickens" any more) or begin preparing for the banquet. The Cocktail Hour and as I always say – we do clean up well!!—allows everyone more time to seek out the ones we have missed talking with. The National Anthems were sung by Bon Bons and DCAT, and the tribute to deceased members is always a solemn time. Our Brian Anderson's and Gerrie Leabody's pictures were shown along with many others. Each year, the list seems to grow. And DCAT sang "Here's to the Heroes"

Time to partake of the food prepared for us by the hotel. An interesting new switch – D.J.Omar supplied background music and many, many of the assembled crowd chose to sing along and/or dance to the music (mostly old standards) between courses. Fun, fun, fun.

Video highlights – 30 years of GAS – the pictures were worth a thousand words. The 50/50 draw won by a Canadian, (Scout House, I believe). The traditional "Parade of Uniforms" - amazing some can still get into their uni's.

Eventually the crowd started to disperse but many of us "retired" to the Double Tree Lounge for one last round of chatter and of course, singing. Wyatt was front and centre leading all in the usual drum corps songs and teaching the words to those that did not know them. The repertoire expanded including Old Standards, Sunday School songs, and I am sure continued for quite some time after yours truly left. A traditional ending to a great weekend.

- The closing remarks by Larry Bourne, Chairperson, who will be replaced by Mark Fulcomer. Duke Terrerri will take over as Vice President of GAS from Phil Gentile. All the Board Members do a superb job of organizing the GAS weekend. It takes many hours and meetings to help make it all run smoothly.
- One last chance to "kick up our heels" – not much room left on the dance floor. DJ Omar again, spinning the songs we wanted to hear. Many strange moves and I must say Wyatt outdid himself. Not sure what he was doing but it was sort of a breakdancing/jitterbug thing – Great Fun!
- Sunday morning- tired but happy faces ate breakfast and held onto those few remaining moments.
- It all seemed to be over so quickly – but we did pack in a lot in those 3 days. Next year back to Binghamton. I wonder what Wyatt has in store for DCAT?

By Ann Watson - aka Annie in the Tundra – written with pleasure!





Other Performances

DCAT was invited to sing on July 28 at a three-day “Nordic Fair” at the North York Civic Centre. It was planned for the outdoor area, but heavy rains forced everyone indoors where there was not enough space for all vendors and performers, unfortunately. That, together with the bad weather, led to the event having low attendance, but we likely made a great impression on those present, especially with the opening bars of “Ragtime”! We had also hoped to seek out potential new members for the Chorus, but there were not enough people for that either.

And July 12 was our two-hour annual event at Scarborough Civic Centre, and we feel that we really gave them their monies’ worth (the entrance is free!) this year. We started with the “Les Miserables” set, six songs and the “Master of the House” skit, essentially the same show as the one we gave at GAS, and it was received with great enthusiasm. After changing out of our “Les Miz” outfits, we sang another 18 songs, and also conducted a sing-along with the audience. A standing ovation and lots of applause confirmed that our performance was greatly appreciated!





We have two more performances scheduled already: on July 20 in Richmond Hill, and July 30 downtown Toronto. A big hand for our Business Manager, John Fox, for finding all these performance opportunities !



Frank Parker was a member of DCAT from 1998 - 2008. He passed away on June 29th, 2015. He loved music and really loved singing with us, and was a great find for our baritone section. Gary Stone was most responsible for him joining us. He was never involved with drum corps or marching bands, but thoroughly enjoyed the military/band part of GAS. Frank was an avid golfer and was thrilled to have played at St. Andrews in Scotland with Gary on one of their trips abroad. He was an avid sportsman enjoying trips being flown by plane up to 'no man's land' in northern Ontario fishing, as well playing softball and basketball. He loved travelling, reading, theatre, bridge and you could find him at home in the kitchen baking. As owner of Parker Pad & Printing Ltd. he generously did a great job on DCAT's promotional pieces. He was a wonderful husband, father of 5, grandfather of 9, and great grandfather of 2 and was known as the 'Family Man' Frank in the industry. He was a real gentleman and will be remembered by many members who had the pleasure of knowing him.

Marg and Don Gill



Dick Douglas

It is with sadness that we report the loss of Dick Douglas, past member in the years 2000 and 2001. Dick was a graduate of Queens University and a high school teacher in North York. He was also the Past Master of Aurora Rising Sun Masonic Lodge, member of York Region Police Chorus and member of Probus club of Aurora. Dick left DCAT as a result of his wife Shirley's health condition.

Orton Beaumont

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Visit our website: www.dcatchorus.ca