



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 2016

So, what can we talk about in a June newsletter? What else, but the greatest item of the year:

GAS 2016

This is the DCAT gang that went and sang Americana to the Americans:



It was as fabulous as always and here to tell us about it again is Ann Watson, who decided she cannot stay away from DCAT and GAS (although she tried!) and is, thankfully, back with us again this year!



Ann with Delores
Gentile, Bon-Bons

“We Live With Our Memories”

Do you remember Hawthorne N.J., 1995 - our first GAS? Anticipation and fear of the unknown - what would they (the Americans) think of the new kids – the Canadians? The Cab’s legion post was amazing – so many trophies, so much tradition. A memorable first for DCAT.

Fast forward to GAS 2016 – we sing with enthusiasm and feeling BUT we still get butterflies before performing.

Wyatt designed our show – “a Tribute to America”! Little did we know how well it would be received. As usual, there was hard work – practice, practice! I understand the bus ride was uneventful – *memory jog*: unlike the time we left Parky at the I-90 Service Centre. As we got off the Bus at the Service Centre Parky sat on the bench and had a smoke. Ortie said to him: the Bus leaves at such and such time, since Parky used to be the consistently the last one to get

on the Bus. People were getting on the Bus and Parky decided to go inside. It was time for the Bus to leave so Ortie told the Bus Driver move out but go slowly. We were about half way down the ramp when Parky appeared and was running after the Bus. We stopped and let him on and thus a lesson was learned and Parky has not been late since.

Thursday – arrivals and catching up with our American friends: everyone looks the same. The Double Tree Lounge was packed – a quick drink and off to practice at 5.00 p.m. Back to the bar after a great rehearsal. A Jazz Trio playing in the lounge definitely added a special touch. Dining choices were varied and the evening wound down and by 10.00 p.m. most people had retired.

Memory jog: in years long gone we would stay up half the night even after the long bus ride – not now.

Friday dawned and saw friends visiting, having a leisurely breakfast or lunch. Our practice was intense and we also enjoyed a practice with the Bon Bons of the Anthems and the Lord's Prayer. Then early dinner and time to focus.

The Opening Ceremonies and Anthems mark the official beginning of GAS, with solid and entertaining items to follow.

- The Audubon Bon Bons Alumni Chorus under the direction of John "Duke" Terreri featured some of their traditional numbers with the addition of a medley of Beatles numbers. It gave many nostalgic memories to the audience.

- Skyliners Alumni Chorus, directed by J.D. (John), chose selections from "South Pacific" (in costume) and a first: No Books! Music familiar to all of us and so beautiful. Solos by Ron Lawrence, Charlie Brandenburg, Joseph Jacob and J.D. They were very animated in their performance – excellent. And the highlight was Teresa Mellors playing the role of "Bloody Mary" as only she can do: acting, singing and with an outrageous costume, stealing the spotlight from the chorus. The crowd loved it.

- It was now DCAT's turn and you knew from the opening bugle call, "Call To The Colours", played so well by Joe Watson, followed by our drill ending in the company front facing the audience, that we had them! A standing "O" and cheering. The enthusiasm accelerated after each number, the patriotism and tears shed had touched their hearts. "Take Me Out To The Ball Game" drew both cheers and boos, especially when we mentioned the Blue Jays. A real fun number to perform. All our hard work on "America" paid off. We were definitely a "hit". As usual Wyatt had "sold the product" and deserved all the accolades he received and. to top it off – he looked *amazing!*

Now it was time to relax, have a cold one and just drink in the appreciation being shown.

Omar, the D.J., was a no show but the GAS committee rallied and made a great effort to provide music for dancing etc., and we did.

Saturday is now a fun day, not a day for fine-tuning performances, and it presents many possibilities to choose from: a trip to Boscov's, more visiting, a shopping excursion, a leisurely lunch.

The Talent Show is the highlight for many. Each year it provides a variety of acts – solos, trios, drum corps, skits, etc. It is a chance for participants to demonstrate their unique abilities and this year did not disappoint.



Our one and only first tenor giving it her all



DCAT Talent



All spruced up



Happy gang

St. Lucy's "Call To Colors" and combined U.S. and Canadian brass and drums set the tone. Seventeen acts in all. Some of the highlights were Brooklyn United with some jazz numbers; Melrose Blackhawks: "Strike Up The Band", "Anchors Away", "God Bless America", etc., a patriotic

medley; Yankee Rebels with "South Pacific" in skit style with comedic overtones – Larry dressed in (sort of) drag), lovely! A whole new side of Charlie Kammer and Phil and Delores, great fun; Yankee Rebels, rudimental drums and a trio; DCAT's Sandy Hale, Pat Ison and Marion Shearer with folk tunes – "You Belong To Me", "Every body Everybody", and "Lie Down", accompanied by Sandy on banjo and ukulele. Very impressive! St. Lucy's Alumni Ensemble conducted by Duke Terreri and also Carol Terreri, with a medley of favorites; Percussion Ensemble with Bon Bons, Skyliners, and Rebels; "Silver Leaves", beautiful medley; Skit – Melrose – I Want A Girl/Beer – funny; Yankee Rebels Alumni Ensemble, conducted by Phil Gentile; Brooklyn United duet, a Menditto and Wardlow medley, sitting under beach umbrella with a beer! Evidently they do this in the summer at the beach. (I wonder if people throw money?); Scout House Drill Team of 12 plus D.M. Gary Tones, a crowd favourite; Archer-Epler with favourites: "We Are The Musketees", "Wonderful Day Like Today", "South Rampart Street", "Manhattan Beach" – so good.

To close this wonderful entertainment: the combined brass and drums under Rick Dixon and Phil Gentile played the GAS theme – "Walk Alone".

Time to relax, regroup, have a few pops and clean up.

6.00 pm: Cocktail Hour – everyone sparkling and shiny. The lineup for drinks was long, only one server for a while, not really acceptable.

7.00 pm: National Anthems were sung by Bon Bons and DCAT followed by "The Lord's Prayer" and the tribute to deceased members including our Frank Parker.

Dinner as usual was amazing including the cabbage rolls. *Memory jog* – The year Brian Anderson ate a whole plate full of them and then declared he was full!

A delightful touch by Omar – music to sing along with (which most did, and danced, too) between courses.

The video of 50 years of GAS Highlights – amazing but so many faces not with us now – brought cheers and tears. Ron Bonadonna was a wonderful M.C. and Mark Fulcomer said a few words, including that GAS 2017 will again be held in Binghamton, a popular choice by every one.

Our Ortie Beaumont won the 50/50 draw; the 2nd year in a row a Canadian has won.

Time for dancing, visiting (again) and the evening ended with the traditional sing-a-long in the Double Tree Lounge by an assortment of GAS members. It always winds down with the singing of Sunday School Songs! What is that all about? The party continued, for those who wished, in hospitality suites - Bon Bons had an amazing one: food, drink, ice in the tub and more chatter.

Memory jog – remember as a kid being called in by your mother and not wanting the fun to end. Now, we don't want it to end BUT could we handle another whole day of fun and frivolity? Probably not!

Another memory jog – a visit from security – quiet down, please!

Sunday breakfast – perhaps eating with someone we had not visited with over the last four days.

The Assembling of everyone for the bus ride home – Is everyone accounted for?

Memory jog – Requesting the front desk to call ... - I will not name names. Also one memorable time – A certain someone was in the lobby ready to leave, packed bag and stretched out on two chairs fast asleep. So many more great stories could be told about this weekend – and the ones many of us have experienced of the years – they produce *Memory Jogs* that would probably fill a whole issue of the *Purrspective* - I have touched on only some of them.

Thanks to our DCAT GAS committee for all their hard work and to Wyatt Gill for, once again, guiding us in the right direction.

Until Next Year!

Annie In The Tundra
(with apologies for any errors or omissions)





And after all his hard work, whipping the chorus into shape, our director could finally relax. For some reason, he called this “dancing”!



In addition to GAS, we also performed (in February and March) at Amica Mature Lifestyles in Newmarket, MacKenzie Health in Richmond Hill and Villa Colombo in Toronto. The last concert had to be re-scheduled three times due to a winter that just wouldn't give up throwing snow at us – but we are stubborn and made it, finally.



That all these events were appreciated can be seen from the comments on our website!

And now we are looking forward to our annual performance at the Scarborough Civic Centre at 2 p.m. on July 10, and also a performance at the Signals Band 90th Anniversary dinner/dance in September. Enjoy the summer that finally seems to have arrived!

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Visit our website: www.dcatchorus.ca