



# 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 – October 2016**

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On October 19, our **Annual General Meeting** was held at our new rehearsal facility at 885 Milner Avenue, Scarborough. Elections were held and here is our **Executive Committee 2016/2017**:



President  
Ort Beaumont



Vice President  
Dave Cameron



Treasurer  
Gord Irvine



Music Dir.  
Wyatt Gill



Business Mgr.  
Pat Ison



Secretary  
Dolly Fox



Membership Dir.  
Sandy Hale



Fundraising Dir.  
Linda Carscadden



Social Dir.  
Edna Kingsley



Publicity Dir.  
June Beaumont



Past President  
Marion Shearer

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DCAT's most recent performances include our annual concert at the **Scarborough Civic Centre** in July, where we performed the show that was introduced at the GAS Reunion in the States in May, as well as some familiar tunes.

New for the season is "The Purrfections", a trio consisting of Marion Shearer, Pat Ison and Sandy Hale, who also played the banjo and ukulele. They were a great success and we sure hope to hear more from them in the future. A couple of their songs were posted on our Facebook page (just type in DCAT Chorus).

And, as always, you'll find lots of photos and some videos also on our website: [www.dcatchorus.ca](http://www.dcatchorus.ca)

DCAT Chorus and "The Purrfections" at Scarborough!



Another grand occasion was the 90th Anniversary of the **Toronto Signals Band** in September, where DCAT performed:



And before summer was over, the Chorus members were invited to the Watsons for a great BBQ:



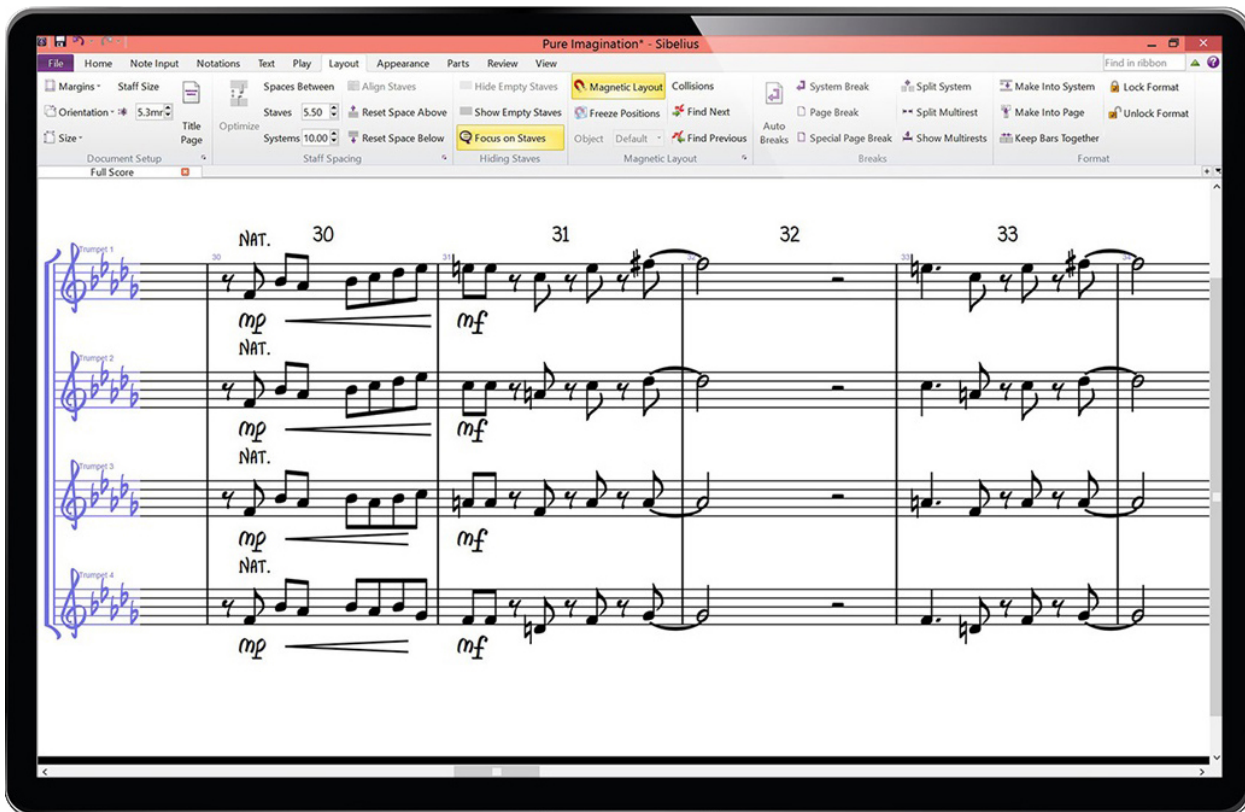
The main job of a chorus member is, of course, to learn the songs and perform them well, but many of us also have other duties and we would like to begin introducing these people to you.

## FIRST, HOW DO WE GET OUR MUSIC?

We all know that Wyatt Gill creates the beautiful and intricate arrangements of the songs we sing. He writes this by hand, so in order for us to get the nicely printed sheets with music and text, as well as the PDFs and sound files on our website, someone has to weave some magic.

For many years that someone has been Don Gill, recently with the assistance of Sandy Hale. Originally, from 1994, Don worked with a computer program called “Music Time”, but upgraded to “Sibelius 7” in 2008. This program helps with the transformation from hand-written to printed sheet (digitalizing the material), but it doesn’t make it easy.

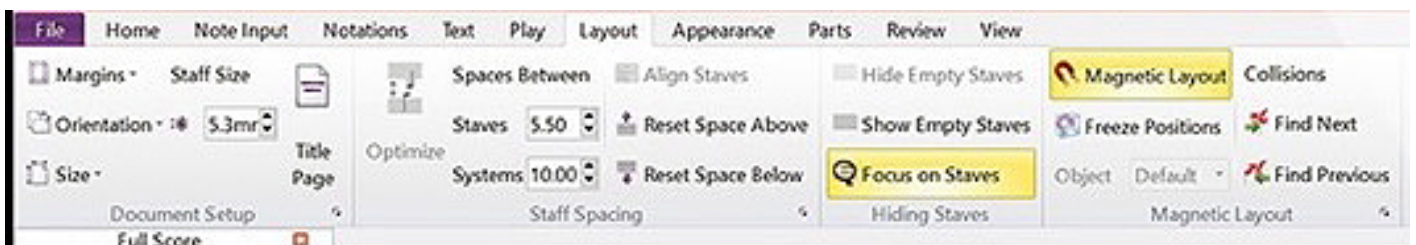
This is what a Sibelius work sheet for four voices looks like (below). Note that DCAT has from six to eight voices!



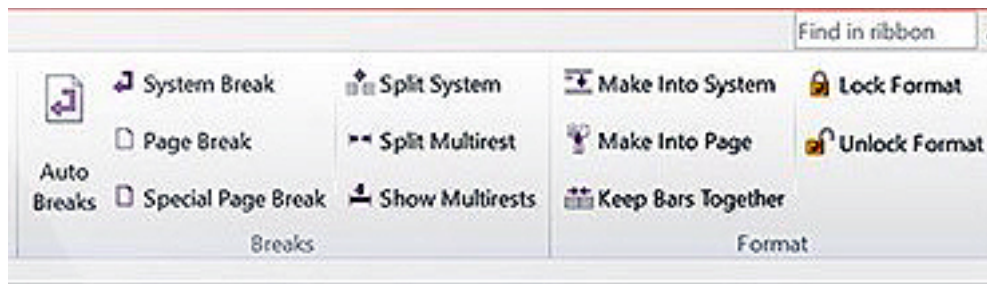
The screenshot displays the Sibelius software interface for a project titled "Pure Imagination". The main window shows a musical score for four voices, labeled "Younger 1" through "Younger 4". The score is in 4/4 time and features a key signature of two flats (B-flat and E-flat). The music is divided into measures 30, 31, 32, and 33. Each voice part includes dynamic markings such as "mp" (mezzo-piano) and "mf" (mezzo-forte), and the word "NAT." (Natural). The software's ribbon menu is visible at the top, with various options like "Magnetic Layout", "Collisions", "System Break", and "Page Break" highlighted.

Also remember that a computer keyboard just has letters, numbers and a few signs (like # and \$); there are no notes on it, so everything on the music sheet has to be created using the Sibelius’ menus.

The menu on top of the picture above is worth studying:



This close-up screenshot shows the top ribbon menu of the Sibelius software. The menu is organized into several groups of options. On the left, there are options for "Margins", "Staff Size", "Orientation", and "Size". The "Document Setup" and "Full Score" buttons are also visible. The "Appearance" group includes "Spaces Between", "Align Staves", "Hide Empty Staves", "Show Empty Staves", "Optimize", "Staff Spacing", and "Hiding Staves". The "Magnetic Layout" group contains "Magnetic Layout", "Collisions", "Freeze Positions", "Find Next", "Find Previous", and "Object". Other options include "System Break", "Page Break", "Special Page Break", "Split System", "Split Multirest", "Show Multirests", "Make Into System", "Make Into Page", "Keep Bars Together", and "Lock Format".



And this is only the “Layout menu”. There are **nine** more menus. In order to work with the program, you need to use the Manual, all **730 pages** of it!

This becomes just about the steepest learning curve you can imagine. It is only possible to remember the basics; you have to resort to the massive Manual to look up most items as you encounter them. Inserting the notes is fairly straight-forward, but how do you make whole notes, quarter notes, triplets? How do you mark tempo and dynamics (forte, pianissimo, etc.)? Major and minor keys? etc. etc.

Then you have to type in the text and print out the score for each voice (from contrabass to soprano, as well as the full score (for Wyatt and Rick Dixon), and also learn to export sound files that can be used on our website or CDs, so that everyone can practice at home.

The amount of work involved is unbelievable and there are chorus members who have tried their hand at it and failed. Hats off to those who are making a go of it, Don Gill and Sandy Hale!

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For those of you who have yet not seen our new rehearsal space, a couple of photos, and a map. Welcome to visit!



As you can see, we are renting at a new and airy location and we do enjoy our new home. If you want to visit us, this is at 885 Milner Avenue, Scarborough.

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Finally, a reminder: our Christmas Party will take place at our new rehearsal location on Wednesday, December 14. More information to follow.

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Visit our website: [www.dcatchorus.ca](http://www.dcatchorus.ca)