



The DCAT Purr-spective

**The Newsletter of the Drum Corps Alumni of Toronto -
January 2019**

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.

Sometimes Something Special...

by Sandy Hale

Being a member of a performing chorus can be very rewarding. We are well aware of the benefits of learning music, remembering lyrics, listening carefully in order to stay in tune with each other, following directions and so on. Other rewards are found through engaging with the audience during and after the performance. If we receive compliments and positive responses, we are encouraged to carry on and perform again.

Sometimes something special happens, that inspires all of us as never before. The performance we did at The Wexford Residence in September, provided one of these special moments. At the end of our performance, the Staff member who managed the afternoon gathering read a poem to us that had been written by a resident while we sang. Here is the poem:

*A rainbow of voices came to sing for us today
From the songs of yesterday they brought to us the joy of today
They sang away in such a way their voices were as if one in such a pleasant way
From altos to tenors all were in perfect harmony
As they stood there to sing for us they took all our problems away
Taking us all over the place with the songs they sang
What a beautiful way to spend an afternoon
Thank you to each one of them for their time to come give us such a good time*

We only know that the writer's first name is Ian, but his words and the fact that he took the time to write them, make him unforgettable. Thank you, Ian.

For the Love of Music, Sunday, October 14, 2018

by Sandy Hale

Preparation

After much deliberation regarding fund-raising options for the Chorus, it was decided that a show would be presented in the fall of 2018. Many venues were considered for the event, but thanks to the efforts of a team headed by Marg Gill, St. Frances Hall in Ajax was selected and booked for October 14. A number of committees were formed, under the Chairmanship of Ort Beaumont. His project and financial plans gave excellent direction for those involved and the arrangements for the show fell quickly into place. Unfortunately, a few issues arose on performance day that had not been anticipated, in spite of the detailed planning. After a bit of a delay, the show began.

Introductions

As the show began, DCAT's favourite emcee, Gord Irvine, announced that the performance was to be dedicated to the memory of Edna Kingsley, one of the original members of the Chorus. Edna had passed away just days earlier. She had sent us a message of encouragement, adding her wish to be there on the stage with us, as she had been so many times before.

The Programme

Since the Chorus will celebrate its 25th anniversary this year, our Musical Director, Wyatt Gill, prepared a wonderful programme to highlight our musical journey that began in 1994. He guided the Chorus through the repertoire which included "The DCAT Early Years" – a variety of music with arrangements by Ted Key, "The DCAT Middle Years", "Excerpts from

Grease/Jersey Boys" plus a "Tribute to Frank Sinatra", all arrangements by Wyatt Gill.



The Purrfections (Pat Ison, Marion Shearer, Sandy Hale) were happy to have been invited by Wyatt Gill to sing a couple of songs, thereby giving the Chorus the opportunity to take a break and/or change costumes! The "ladies", with

accompaniment by Sandy on ukulele or guitar, have been taking part in DCAT shows for about 4 years and always enjoyed applying their own special harmonies to old and new tunes alike. This performance by The Purrfections was sadly bittersweet. Marion's beautiful soprano voice was silenced about one month later, after her courageous battle with cancer came to an end.

Accompaniment

We must give praise to percussionists Ort Beaumont and Gord Irvine for their contributions to the show. We also thank Joe Watson for his contributions to the performance with his excellent trumpet accompaniments, especially during the Sinatra Tributes. Many members need to be congratulated for working so hard to learn and to sing music that most of the Chorus has known for many years.



While our interpretation of Grease might not have been our best musical performance, the efforts of many provided fun theatrics for the Chorus. The costumes and visual effects, including the crazy head-gear plus the Greased Lightening autos prepared by Diane Beauchamp were amazing. The pink jackets and the black jacket adaptations by June Beaumont were most effective and of

course the comedic appearance by Parky in a pink wig will not soon be forgotten.

Past Members

A special moment came near the end of the performance, when Wyatt invited past members of the Chorus who were present in the audience, to join everyone on stage for the singing of "You'll Never Walk Alone". The response was overwhelming and there were a few tears shed.



Our thoughts about the show

Generally speaking, DCAT members were pleased with the show and with the wonderful response from the audience. All

remarked that some numbers were well done, while others suffered from the occasional "hiccup"! Once the performance began, sound checks and tuning issues were forgotten and the Chorus' showmanship and love of music prevailed.

From the Audience

"You guys are troupers!"

"What a wonderful afternoon of music – for \$25!"

"When is the next show?"

"Amazing – DCAT can sing 24 songs with no music!" (about a buck a tune!)

A youngster in the audience said *"I want to do what DCAT does when I grow up"*.

Behind the Scenes

The Chorus is grateful for the support and encouragement of family members who joined the audience at our show. Much assistance was also provided by members of the Jennings, Beaumont and Hale families. They did sound checks, tuned instruments, sold water, took photos – and much more! We thank Lynn Kellas and Ann White for their efforts on our behalf during the afternoon. The show was truly a very successful group effort.

Goal Achieved

As a result of the huge effort by the Chorus and all others involved, the financial goal was met. The Board of Directors, with input from Chorus members, will review all aspects of the show and make suggestions regarding the production of another show to be held at some time in the future.

Now, we move on to the next challenge... G.A.S. 2019, Binghamton New York, April 4, 5, 6 and 7!

Tales From The Tundra

by Annie Watson

At Christmas time we all enjoy the sounds of the season. They bring back memories of childhood, families gathering together, perhaps some sadness as well, but we want to partake of it. I believe it is part of what makes us who we are.

As we did last year, many DCAT members chose to attend the Toronto All-Star Big Band - "A Swingin' Christmas" concert at the Flato Markham Theatre on Sunday afternoon, December 9th. It was as good and some say better than last year. There is nothing like live music to stir the soul. The musicianship of these young people and the enjoyment they derive is very evident. A cross section of their repertoire included music by George Gershwin, Irving Berlin and other music greats from the American Song Book. Christmas favourites performed by vocal trios, duets and solo artists, as well as instrumentals all added

to the variety. The overall "big band" sound was tremendous. I would be remiss if I did not mention the "sing-a-long". For many people this may be the only time they get to sing these wonderful seasonal numbers. The producers probably thought of that! Add in the set design, costumes, lighting and you have a complete entertainment package. Some DCAT members and friends who did not attend last year were very impressed and they thoroughly enjoyed the afternoon. A pleasurable "afterglow" at Kelseys put the finishing touch on the adventure.

News from Our Fellow Drum Corps Friends in The States

Both Audubon Bon Bons and the Sky Chorus are busy working on their show for G.A.S., with Sky doing a whole new show and Bon Bons adding a new number.

Finally, if you have not already done so, check out the You Tube performance of OKTOBERCORPS 2018 (<https://oktobercorps.com/video>) in Waterloo. Several DCAT members participated. All were amazed at what could be accomplished in only FOUR rehearsals, beginning in May 2018. Very impressive.

From the Musician's Dictionary

"NOTES; little black dots with stems and flags that are the peculiar language of music. The 'whole' note is divided into 'halves', 'quarters' and so on. These divisions are usually referred to as 'long', 'short' and 'really short'. Widely held to be understood by musicians (and sometimes by singers) they are in fact, a bafflement to all - but everyone is too proud to admit it."

Until next time... Annie in the Tundra

A Great Idea!

by Annie Watson and the Social Committee

On December 12th, 2018 a Christmas Party for the DCAT Chorus was held at ATS. This



annual gathering is a wonderful way to share the joy of Christmas with those we love. We are a very sociable bunch and enjoy singing, talking, laughing and "letting our hair down a little".

The DCAT social committee asked for volunteers to come early to help set up and many

complied. By 7:30 we were comfortable in the larger room and our President, Ortie Beaumont, took a few moments to outline the events of the evening. Normally at this time the announcement of the new inductee for the "Hall of Fame" would be made. Since no one achieved the necessary number of votes this year, no presentation was made and the evening programme continued.



John Parkinson (Parky) introduced yours truly and provided me with a step stool to stand on, calling me "Stand Up " Ann - referring to my short stature. This garnered a great laugh . I introduced a game - (I thought it would be fun) but neglected to explain exactly how it worked!! Eventually winners were declared and great prizes awarded - pencils, a tin of tuna, candy canes, candles - it did get everyone moving about. Then it was time for

Linda Carscadden's "bag draw", which is always a great fund raiser.



Next, we returned to the cafeteria for food , and did we have food! The Town and Country Buffet in downtown Toronto, "back in the day", could not compete with the offering on our table. No matter what your palate desired, there was something to satisfy you. The tables filled quickly and the buzz of conversations ranged from what are you doing for Christmas, the latest sports news, telling tales of drum corps in the past, and more. We do know how to

chat!. Ian and Sandy Hale provided music for a sing song, directed by Wyatt. Some brave members chose to perform individually.

As always, we were glad to welcome guests to our celebration. These included Karen Cook, Kelly Parkinson, Joyce Irvine, Lynn Kellas plus associate members Wilf Morrison, Ann White, Val Machnicki, Ian Hale and Brian Collingdon. And of course, we were all happy to



have Ellie back for the evening.

All good things come to an end, and soon it was time for the cleanup. By 10:15 pm, thanks to the help of everyone, the party room, aka "the kitchen", showed no signs of a party. I could go into more details but the sum total of our efforts produced a wonderful evening. People left with smiles on their faces, saying "What a great idea!" and "What a fun evening it was!" and "When is the next one?"



The DCAT Social Committee was and is pleased with their first effort.

(From Parky, Joe, Sandy and Annie)



A Great Fund-Raiser!

by Linda Carscadden

The Christmas party was a huge success! Annie Watson and her Social Committee did a great job planning and organizing the party.

Our December sales and the fund-raising portion of our Annual Christmas party were very profitable! The bag draw, 50/50, book sale for December and the 2 paintings donated by Leonie, gave us a grand total of \$490.50. Well done, everyone! I would like to thank Joan English, who did the 50/50 sale and Shirley Hay, who sold tickets for our successful bag draw. I also thank everyone who contributed items. Without all of you and your help we would not have had such a good time.

Upcoming Performances

Edna Kingsley - Celebration of Life



Edna's family has invited our Chorus to sing at this celebration, to be held on Saturday March 23, 2019. The event will take place at the Royal Canadian Legion Branch 11 from 1 to 4 PM. The Legion is located at 9 Dawes Road, east side, south of Danforth.

Marion Shearer - Celebration of Life



Margaret McFadyen, Marion's sister and a soprano in the Chorus, has asked us to sing at the service to honour Marion. The celebration of her life will be held at 2 PM on Saturday May 4, 2019 at Hamilton Unitarian Church. Details will be provided at a later date.