



Ho ho, Snow ho! Aurora

It was November 23 and we were in Aurora. We were told that the parade was short and, in summer, it might have been short; however, any parade done in a blizzard with temps of -15c before the wind-chill is LONG! Entreaties and offerings to the gods fell upon deaf ears (they were probably inside, in front of a fireplace, drinking hot toddies or mulled wine).

Aurora, November 23.

Rick Roblin (who plays cymbals) grabbed a horn from his brother Doug, and offered it to the All Powerful Canadian Snow God in hopes the storm would stop.... it didn't.



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Santa Claus Parades

The holiday season is always a fun time for the corps. We had parades in Oakville, Acton, Guelph, Aurora (the most snow), Mississauga, Fenelon Falls, Uxbridge and Bobcaygeon (the coldest). It was the coldest Santa Claus parade season that the corps has ever had.

Guelph, November 17.



Warming-up on the side streets is always a treat for the local residences. Not sunny weather but at least it wasn't snowing. Yun Jung Go during warm-up.



Drum Major, Jackie Nicholls getting things warmed-up.

"Oh I just love you guys"



Thanks to the mild temperatures in Guelph the corps actually enjoyed playing their holiday parade repertoire.

PARADES – NOVEMBERRR AND DECEMBERRR

Aurora, November 23.



L to R: Ken Taylor, Lorne Ferrazzuti, Judy Ferguson, Scott Butcher and Doug Darwin.



L to R: Yun Jung Go, Marilyn Sturino and Ric Brown.



L to R: Gord Brown and Warren Berger discuss the finer points of playing in the snow and sub-zero temperatures. There aren't any.



L to R: Bill Kane, Ron Chong, Kunyoon Kim and Scott Butcher discuss the finer points of playing inside where it's warm and food and washrooms are close by.



L to R: Lisa Lin (Cymbals), Yun Jung Go (Bass Drum) and Grace Ho (Cymbals) discuss the finer points of staying warm. Yun demonstrates finesse while maintaining high-fashion decorum.

Uxbridge, November 30.



Brian Collingdon asks Glenda Tokiwa (L) and Sue Roberts (R) "Can every winter parade start like this?"



Marilyn Sturino comments "I've got my flag to keep me warm".



Brian Collingdon suggests to Jack Roberts "Don't worry, it'll come back. It's easy, left, right, left, right. You'll get it."



John Parkinson (L: Colour guard, rifle) asks Marilyn Sturino (National flag) and Sue Roberts (Sabre) "Why are all the hills UP in this parade?"

Santa Claus Parades (continued)

Bobcageon, December 14.



L to R: Lorne Ferrazzutti, Lisa Lin and Ken Taylor enjoy a snack before the parade.



In the Legion, before the parade, Brian Collingdon tries a combination of a refreshing beverage and a sour pickle tongue in hopes it will keep his lips from freezing to his mouthpiece.



Warming up just outside the front door... so far, so good. However the sour pickle tongue didn't work as well as he'd hoped.



L to R: Ken Taylor, Lorne Ferrazzutti, Judy Ferguson and Scott Butcher. It's the festive season. I can't imagine why no one's smiling.



Scott Butcher trying out his new drum head.

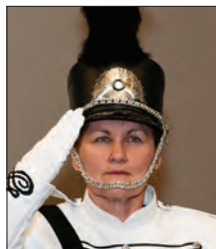


The large bass drum didn't keep the snow from falling on Roger Rafson.

"OK, listen up. Let's do this, on four..."

The Drum Major's Rapport

By Jackie Nicholls



*Optimists Drum Major,
Jackie Nicholls.*

THE OLYMPICs are in full swing and I have been wearing my Canadian Team "garb" to cheer on our country's best. I can't help but get caught up in the excitement of competition and the thrill of victory.

Dedication and commitment are also on my mind and the months and years of preparation that our athletes have put in to be as successful as they can and represent Canada.

We as musicians in the Drum Corps activity are also ramping up our dedication and commitment to prepare and perfect our Optimists Alumni 2014 Show. We need all in our ranks to step up and be part of this work in order to present an exciting and somewhat competitive product. I know the stakes are not quite as high as the Olympics but, we have an obligation to represent Optimist Green and many years of tradition and entertainment.

Once again our ranks have grown and diminished but, I'm confident that the members that remain are here for the "Team" and ready to make this season a success.

Fit For 14, created by Mike Lang, promises to take us all to a new level of fitness that will only boost our overall presentation. This is a good thing because we've gone a little further outside our comfort zone. Our new tunes will hopefully create some new energy; not to mention a slimmer more fit line complete with a rumble at centre field between the Jets and the Sharks and maybe some green spandex on the podium Oh My!!!!



Again I thank you for all of your hard work, fun-loving and positive attitudes and the privilege to be your Drum Major. Together we will weather this long crazy winter and emerge on the warm side of spring and another music filled summer season.

In the words of Spiderman, Action is our reward, Life is a great big bang up... my Spidey senses are tingling!!!!

From the podium,

Jackie

ON A BREAK DURING THE FEBRUARY 9TH REHEARSAL



Gord Brown, Soprano



Mike Lang, Baritone



*Roger Rafson,
Percussion*



*Warren Berger,
Soprano*



Barry Bell, Baritone



*L-R: Jeff MacKay, Scott
Butcher and Doug Darwin.*



Dave MacKinnon conducts ensemble.

The Christmas rehearsal and party

Dave MacKinnon couldn't make it and we thought that we could relax. No such luck! Kevin Matthew, the Alumni Corps' first horn instructor, was there to guide us through the Jet Song. Afterward we were treated to a great meal. And, yes, Santa Claus does exist. He graced us with both his presence and his presents.



Kevin Matthew leads the rehearsal.



Keith Dearlove is so hungry he could probably eat his glove.



The drumline continues



With the traditional "Clanging Of The Tray Lids"... dinner is served. Yes we we did suggest that he consider joining the cymbal line.



Keith, with wife Kim, is overheard saying "Ya know honey, I'm full. You're right, I shouldn't have eaten my glove".



L to R: Marilyn Sturino, Brian Collingdon, Jan Forsythe and Bill Kane.

CHRISTMAS PARTY (CONTINUED)



L to R: Ken Taylor, Judy Ferguson, Lisa Lin, Grace and Sanson Ho.



L to R: Jane and John Giblin. Lorne Ferrazzutti and Ric Brown.



L to R: Len and Dianne Ticknor, Warren and Hazel Berger.



Doug Darwin and Kunyoon Kim.



L to R: Toby Frechette, Matt Davis and Kathleen Gander.



Josie and Ron Chong with Joe Gianna.

CHRISTMAS PARTY (CONTINUED)



L to R: Lynn Linton, Frank Mitchell, Bob Carell and John Parkinson.



Back: Karen McConachie and Jack Roberts. Front: Sue Roberts and Mike Lang.



Back, L to R: Dave and Debbie Bruce, Glenda Tokiwa and Doug Roblin. Front: Barry Bell.



Bernadette and Barry Woods.



Santa arrives.

CHRISTMAS PARTY (CONTINUED)



Lucky Draw gifts delivered by Santa. L to R: Sue Roberts, Glenda Tokiwa, Jane Giblin and Grace Ho.



Mike Lang gets his just desserts from Santa.



Doug Darwin opened his eyes and was thrilled to discover there really is a Santa Claus.



"For me? Such a big gift Santa."



"It's a fuzzy brush? No, wait... is it hair?"



"Gee thanks Santa. You have such discriminating taste"

What a great winter it was!!

As I sit in my house at my desk downstairs trying to keep warm, I wonder how we as an organization, were able to complete eight fall parades in weather that many of us have never marched. Sure we have had cold or parades with a little snow, however this past fall we had parades with complete white outs (accumulation of 4-6 inches of snow) during the parade and -20C for our final parade in Bobcaygeon. A huge thank you for all the members that attended the parades. It is one of our most fruitful ways to raise funds for the summer.

Thinking of the up coming summer, two new pieces have been chosen and written for the brass line by Dave Mackinnon. The brass line have had three rehearsals with the new tunes and they are sounding better each time they rehearse. The drum line have had two rehearsals with the new music for Jets and they look forward to the first rehearsal in February to dive into the opener. The opener is a step out of the box of our comfort zone; however, everyone I have spoken with is looking forward to the challenge and entertaining the audience with recognizable music.

This year will be the first time in Optimists Alumni history that the corps will be able to perform the whole show at the Wearing of the Green Dinner and Dance on March 15 at the

Legion. The marching staff, following a year of discovering what we can best perform, is very excited about the new musical selections we have chosen and look forward to writing a very entertaining visual show.

The Alumni corps is looking at returning to many of our favourite performance venues (Simcoe, Woodstock & Waterloo) and is currently evaluating the possibility



of a return trip to Michigan City, Indiana with a couple of July 4th parades and a trip to Roger Rafsons' favourite pizza parlour.

The Alumni Board would like to thank everyone for their continuing commitment to the corps and we look forward to an exciting 2014.

NEW MEMBER: FRANK MITCHELL



Frank Mitchell, baritone

Frank started playing the bugle in 1967 with the Boys Brigade in Scotland. After coming to Canada in 1968 he played in different bands. I joined the Toronto Signals in 1981 and remained with them until 1999 when children's sports took over. Frank missed music and was given the opportunity to help the Optimists Alumni Colour Guard in 2013 and realized how much he missed the music and the people.

Frank thanks the Alumni for the opportunity to join the Corps and getting back into something that he truly loves.



Always good to see Keith Dearlove.

Excerpts from the October 1968 edition of the Cadets LaSalle Publication::

Drum Corps On The March Dedicated to the Toronto Optimists.

THE OCTOBER 1968 ISSUE of “Drum Corps on the March”, the official paper of Cadets LaSalle, Ottawa, was dedicated to the Toronto Optimists and their 11th Championship. Today, when consecutive wins are not always recognized this dedication of their complete paper to The Optimists was a very fine gesture and very much appreciated.

As most corps followers know, the Optimists are Canadian National Jr. Champions for the 11th consecutive year. As a means of congratulation, the staff of DCM dedicates this edition to Canada’s greatest corps in 1968 – THE OPTIMISTS!

“IT WAS A VERY GOOD YEAR”... 1968 is over. For most corps, anyway! And what a year it was! I personally think it was the best year in drum corps long history. Nobody can claim to have had a “Powerhouse Corps” such as the Boston Crusaders of ‘67, Cabs in ‘64 and the Optimists 10 years absolute reign in Canadian Corps circles!

PORTS OF CALL column, by Paul and Ian Stott

GREATNESS COMES in many shapes, sizes and colours. One of these colours is green. On August 17th, at Varsity Stadium in Toronto, the Toronto Optimists, who had been staggering and reeling on the ropes of defeat week after week, dug down into the depths of pride that only a true Champion has. They were at home for the first time since the Mets pulled the upset of the decade in Kingston and paved the way for Del to record victory after victory over them. Opti wanted this one so bad they could taste it. For them it was not only a 6 corps competition, it was the necessity to prove to the home town fans that the Canadian Green Machine was still The Class of Canadian Drum Corps... the corps that had to be beaten if you wanted to call yourself Champion... the corps that had to be reckoned with!!!

Well, as you know, they didn’t beat Del that night. But they marched off the field tall and proud. Your authors said (to some disbelieving Delettes in the next row)... “They will win the Canadian Championship!”. We wonder if they knew it that night?

The following week Del won the Ontario Championship but the hand writing was on the wall for all to see. Time was now the only foe. But the Green Machine wasn’t having any of this! By Labour Day they had licked old man time too. So 5 days later they hit Kingston riding high on the crest of their Labour: Day Victory and the only question left was how they would win.

They came out driving. Some say they were only 75% of former Optimist Corps. Maybe so, but the other 25% and more, was made up in pure guts. And that is what Champions are made of. There was none of this, “Take it easy, its only Prelims” attitude. Too much had already gone by the boards. Now it was “Grab everything in sight that isn’t nailed down!!!”

They blew heat and stomped to an 81.83 prelim score... 1.2 ahead of Del and 1.7 ahead of a newly vibrant, vastly improved Cadets LaSalle... and 5 points ahead of Mets, who, as we noted previously had started the whole thing on this very field.

But yet, there was more to come. Del, so often the bridesmaid, now had the added motivation of a loss in the prelims to spur them on to a super-human effort in the finals. The Cadets seemed to have shot their bolt in the prelims for their final score was only 73.666. But Del and Opti locked horns in a battle of the Junior Giants. The scores? Del: 78.3 Optimists: 79.033.

When the chips were down they did it. Eleven National Championships in a row! But not since #4 have they been challenged so much. When the going gets tough, the tough get going!

PORTS OF CALL salute a corps that is in every way a true Champion – THE TORONTO OPTIMISTS.

CORPS OF THE MONTH PAGE: “THE OPTIMISTS” – The setting is 1958. The time of year, September. On the P.A. system we hear, “On the line, in their first year as a Jr. “A” Corps, the Toronto Optimists!” That same day the same corps became Canada’s top Junior Corps. The following year revealed the same story. Then in 1960... oops... a little more competition. A rivalry had started that was to last for a long, long time – De La Salle took # 2 spot beating such favourites as Scout House, Grantham and Leaside Lions.

1961: The location, Waterloo Seagram Stadium. As everyone knew Del had beaten the Optimists at the CNE at the beginning of the week and now, NOW would it happen? The Optimists still won but by only .05!!! 81.55 to 80.50. Wow. What a cliff-hanger!

1962: Del was closing in from the previous year. Something had to be done! Music had to be changed. Truman Crawford wrote... everything. In came a superb repertoire: “Big Wide, Wonderful World” – “St. Louis Blues.” Concert of “Mood for Love, Riverside” – “Tabu” – “I Believe” – and

Continued on page 12

Drum Corps On The March

Continued from page 11

"The Party's Over". MAGNIFICENT and Champs again for #5.

1963: Optimists, this year, we believe, the strongest corps in drum corps history. That year, they met and defeated The Blessed Sacrament Golden Knights in Rome, N.Y. an 86.4 to 84.6. The Champions in Waterloo in Sept. – another 1st with 89% – #6 – GREAT! [Ed. Note. Optimists actually defeated SAC in 1962]

Music changes in '64 – "Who Will Buy?" – "The Battle Cry Of Freedom" (acclaimed as great) – "El Cumbanchero" and "Mandy". That year Nationals moved home, to Toronto, and again another first, again quite easy an 84 to Del's 79.

The same story again in '65!!!... in Toronto.

1966: Nationals were on the move again, for the first time they travelled to Quebec and Montreal's Autostade. And that year, a newcomer to the finals, Cadets LaSalle were closing in fast. Optimists had to settle for a 2nd in the prelims but bounced right back to take a convincing 1st in the night finals — 86 to 83.5!!!

1967. CENTENNIAL YEAR: The scene, Ottawa, home of the Cadets. Again Optimists came second in the prelims. At night both corps presented fantastic shows. Optimists nevertheless walked away with first place, though not too convincingly. Scores: 86.3 to 86.1.

1968: Del had the most successful season to date, beating Opti 5 out of 9. However, Opti came through with a superb performance to win the Nationals. No.1!!!

So there we have a short summary on the life of Canada's top Junior Corps, if not Canada's TOP CORPS. Good luck in '69. 

WE REMEMBER



Gary "Chops" Czapinski
1941 - 2013

In the 1970s Gary designed shows for the Toronto Optimists and the Seneca Optimists. The famous parachute of the 1977 Seneca Optimists was one of Gary's creations. The idea is said to have been inspired by Czapinski's walk through an elementary school one day where he saw students doing an exercise routine with a parachute coordinated to music. He will certainly be missed.

Gary worked with many units, among them were the Norwood Park Imperials, Santa Clara Vanguards, Saginaw, Madison Scouts, Toronto Optimists, Seneca Optimists, and the Pioneer Corps.

His creative show design skills, as well as his adjudication abilities have been well recognized. He earned the honor of becoming a member of the D.C.I. Hall of Fame, Class of 1999.



1976 Seneca Optimists



CORRECTION to the November issue

Yun Jung Go was incorrectly named Yun Park. Our apologies for any inconvenience this may have caused.

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(Black ink on green paper (just like the original GCC), includes postage.)

It was just like instructing the horn line in the 1960s

On January 12 Barry Bell: □ volunteered, □ was asked, □ was pushed, □ voted most competent, □ raised his arms while stretching and this was interpreted as “let me, let me”. And so it was. After the rehearsal Barry commented “It brought back fond memories. It was just like directing the horn line in the 1960s only then they listened to what I said – just kidding”.



Being the consummate instructor, Barry reviews the music before starting and ignores Mike Lang's (third from right) antics.



Allways looking on the bright side.



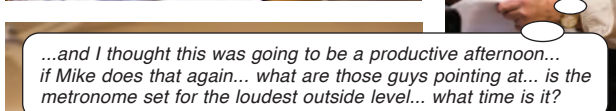
Bob Carell.



In his haste, Matt accidentally placed his music upside down.



Rick Lang and Doug Roblin playing air-music.



Kunyeon Kim observes.



The metronome is an essential part of any rehearsal, especially for the “over 39” members.



Matthew Davis sensed this day was going to be special... so he got a haircut.

The Optimists Alumni Drum & Bugle Corps presents

Wearing of the Green Dinner and Dance

We invite all our friends and supporters to join us.

Saturday, March 15, 2014

Cocktails 6:00 pm. \$30.00 per person

**Royal Canadian Legion, Branch 344
1395 Lakeshore Blvd. West, Toronto M6K 3C1**

The Alumni Corps will introduce their 2014 musical program!

For tickets contact:

Laurie Brown 905-723-7154

E-mail: brownlaurie@rogers.com



"Wow Mike, this is great! Now my music won't blow away. Thanks for installing your ingenious system of mirrors, special optics, levers and low-stick surgical tape to my horn, shako and head."

From DrumCorps Digest

CANADA & UPPER N.Y.

by ROBERT SCHLEIDT

Did you ever hear the song, "Mission Impossible?" Well, it was achieved. After 10 straight years of being the Canadian National Jr. Champions, the boys from Toronto had their backs to the wall. They had lost over 30 members and that was a lot to make up. The Opti Cadets did not yield that many boys, but being a champion, they went out with pure courage and skill and did what no corps could ever accomplish.

After setback after setback, and losing the Ontario Championships they won their 11th straight Canadian National Jr. Championship title. This is a record, I believe, held by no other Jr. Corps. Optimists, we salute you and may you win 11 more!

STAY CONNECTED WITH YOUR FAMILY

Keep in touch!

Have you ever wondered how many different people marched with the various corps in the Optimists organization?

We have; however, since we have no current records all we can do is wonder.

Periodically we get messages saying something like "I used to march with Joe Bloggs and I'd like to contact him. Do you know how to contact him?"

Of course, if we did have the information we'd first ask Joe if it was OK; however, since we have very little info we usually have to answer "no".



AS PEOPLE MOVE, much of the information we have no longer applies. While a few people have filled out the form on our website, we're missing

both the names and the contact info for hundreds of people. Our goal is bring this information up to date but we need your help. In fact, without your help, nothing will happen.

So, how can you help?

Please don't be worried about getting lots of junk mail. At this point we are only sending out emails four times a year – whenever a new issue of GCC has been published.

With the cost of postage, unless there's something major, it's unlikely that we'll be sending out anything by regular mail.

By the way, the "We Remember" section on our website honours corps members and staff who have passed so please let us know about those who are no longer with us.



1972 soloists. L-R: George Nasello, Bob Beachin, Peter Byrne and Jim Farrell.

We're also searching for pieces of our shared history. For example, we've heard rumours of a video of the 1978 Seneca Optimists; however, we can't find anyone who has

a copy. Perhaps you have a copy in a treasure chest or an old banker's box that contains memories of your youth. Have you looked in it lately? If you looked you might find old photos or film of the Corps. Maybe it contains newspaper clippings about the corps or a journal or a scrapbook or even a corps uniform? One of our members even found an old

corps flag. Who knows what you'll find if you look! If you do find something to share, please let us know! If you're interested in seeing some of what others have contributed, please visit our website or our Photo Gallery.

Keep in touch.

Let's hear from you. If you choose to share your contact info, we will happily add it to our alumni records and include you in future mailings.

Please send mail to:

Bob Carell,
1407 – 3050 Dufferin Street,
Toronto, Ontario M6B 4G3

E-mail: toronto_optimist@rogers.com

Website: www.optimists-alumni.org

Photo Gallery: www.optimists-alumni.org/photos/



2014 OPTIMISTS ALUMNI SCHEDULE – FOLLOW THE CORPS

Please check the website for any last-minute changes to our schedule.

Date	Status	Location	Time	Activity
MARCH				
Sunday March 2	Confirmed	Humber College 3199 Lakeshore Blvd. West	Noon – 4:30 pm	Ensemble and staging
Saturday March 15	Confirmed	The legion	3:00 – 5:00 pm	Music rehearsal
Saturday March 15	Confirmed	The Legion	6:00 pm – 12:00 pm	Wearing of the Green
Saturday March 29	Confirmed	Kitchener	Noon – 4:30 pm	Ensemble and staging
APRIL				
Sunday April 13	Confirmed	Humber College 3199 Lakeshore Blvd. West	Noon – 4:30 pm	Ensemble and staging
Sunday April 27	Confirmed	The Legion	Noon – 4:30 pm	Music rehearsal
MAY				
Sunday May 4	Confirmed	The Legion	Noon – 4:30 pm	Music rehearsal
Saturday May 10	Confirmed	Simcoe, Ontario	Noon to 10 pm	And The Bands Played On (The show starts at 7:00 pm)
Sunday May 18	Confirmed	Kitchener	10:00 am – 4:00 pm	Ensemble and staging
Monday May 19	Confirmed	Woodstock	9:00 am	Parade and performance
Saturday May 31	Confirmed	Oshawa	10:00 am – 5:00 pm	Ensemble and staging
JUNE				
Saturday June 14	Confirmed	Ken Cox Community Center	Noon – 5:00 pm	Ensemble and staging
Sunday June 22	Confirmed	Welland	Noon – 3:00pm	Welland Rose Festival Parade

GCC Staff

Editor: Bob Carell.

Editorial Staff: Brian Byrne, David Johns and Eric McConachie.

Photographs by: Don Daber, David Johns, Eric McConachie and Frans Rood.

Consultant: Don Daber.

A special **thank you** to all those who contributed to this issue: Ric Brown and Jackie Nicholls.

CORRECTIONS: We tried to get everything right. If not, please let us know: openrd2002@yahoo.ca

Thank you to all those who send photographs.

Let's hear from you...

GCC is published four times a year. Contributor deadline for the **May** issue is **Friday, May 16, 2014**.

Please submit your material to Bob Carell at:

Toronto_Optimist@rogers.com in one of the following formats:

E-MAIL. A Microsoft Word document, saved as "Rich Text Format" or "text only".

Or **MAIL** to Bob Carell, 1407 - 3050 Dufferin Street, Toronto, Ontario M6B 4G3.

E-PHOTOS should be sent to: Toronto_Optimist@rogers.com

If your photos were taken using a digital camera, please save them to your hard drive then email the unedited photos.

PRINTS contact Bob Carell at: Toronto_Optimist@rogers.com.

NOTE: GCC may need to edit your stories for space allowances. We will make every effort to retain the spirit and intent of your submission.