

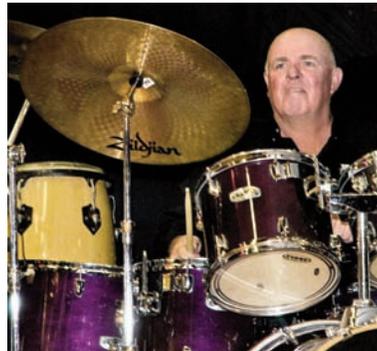


The Season Fun-alee

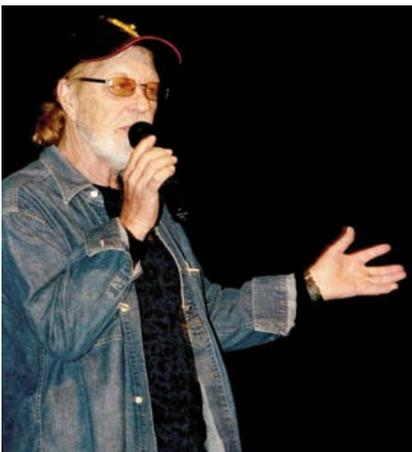
On October 22, 2011, The Midlanders Alumni Corps hosted the Season Fun-alee at the Clarke Road Secondary School in London, Ontario. The evening's Master of Ceremonies was former Toronto Optimist and founding member of Lighthouse, Skip Prokop. Al Chez, member of the band on The Late Show with David Letterman, held a Brass Clinic during the day then was a guest performer in the evening.



DOCA Brass Ensemble



The Optimists Alumni Drum & Bugle Corps



Master of Ceremonies, Skip Prokop.



Barry Bell and Dave Bruce.

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- FEATURE ARTICLES**
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- 1960 IS THE NEW CHALLENGE**
- WE REMEMBER**
- DO YOU KNOW?**
- PERFORMANCE SCHEDULE**

PERFORMANCES (CONTINUED)

The Season Fun-alee (continued)



Sudbury Imperial Knights Drum & Bugle Corps.



Simcoe United Alumni Drum & Bugle Corps.



Western University Mustang Marching Band.



Your hosts, the Midlanders Alumni Corps.



Al Chez.



DIRECTOR'S YEAR END MESSAGE

IT IS WITH GREAT PRIDE that I write this column in GCC as the Director and President of The Optimists Alumni Drum & Bugle Corps. I am so proud of what this organization has accomplished following the first rehearsal on October 22, 2002. We have presented ourselves as a class organization and will continue to do so.

The winter and Santa Claus parades went smoothly including our being announced as the "Best Band" in the Georgetown parade. We believe this must have been judged before we did the 45 degree hill near the end of the parade.

In retrospect, 2011 was a very difficult year with the passing of our friends and fellow corps members Sam Grosvenor, Len Perrin and Frank Rivier. Our condolences have gone out to their families.

The Corps management team has been meeting on a regular basis to ensure that the 2012 season will flow smoothly. The first four months' rehearsal schedule has been posted on the website and we are putting the finishing touches on the summer rehearsal and performance schedule. Dave MacKinnon and Jeff McKay have written the off-the-line from the 1975 Optimists show "Judy Garland Medley" which includes The Trolley Song, Over the Rainbow and The Man that Got Away. At a tempo of 144, I know we are all looking forward to the sound of Dr. Beat this summer.

Here is your management team for 2012. Please feel free to approach anyone on the team to answer any question you may have:

Ric Brown, *Corps Director/Business Manager*

Brian Adam, *Assistant Corps Director*

Carol Munro, *Secretary*

Mike Lang, *Treasurer*

Doug Darwin, Scott Butcher and Dave Bruce,
Directors at Large

Dave Bruce, *Show Coordinator*

It is with great pleasure that I announce that the "Wearing of the Green" dinner and dance will return. The Wearing of the Green Dance was a regular night in the late sixties and through the seventies to celebrate St. Patrick's Day and the "Irish Green" and to present some of the new music for the corps for the coming year. This wonderful evening will be held on **Saturday March 17th** at the Legion with a brief performance by the corps during the evening.

Finally on behalf of the Management Team, I would like to extend best wishes for a healthy and prosperous New Year to all of our Members, and Fans.

1, 2, 3 GREEN!

Judy Garland Medley: background info



Photo: IMDB.

"The Man that Got Away" is a popular song, published in 1953 and was written for the 1954 version of the movie *A Star Is Born*. The music was written by Harold Arlen, and the lyrics by Ira Gershwin. In 1955 it was nominated for an Academy Award for Best Original Song.

"The Trolley Song" is a song written by Hugh Martin and Ralph Blane and made famous by Judy Garland in the 1944 film *Meet Me in St. Louis*. In a 1989 NPR interview, Blane said the song was inspired by a picture of a trolley in a turn of the century newspaper.



Photo: IMDB.



Photo: IMDB.

"Over the Rainbow" (often referred to as "Somewhere Over the Rainbow") is a classic Academy Award-winning ballad song with music by Harold Arlen and lyrics by E.Y. Harburg. It was written for the movie *The Wizard of Oz*, and was sung by Judy Garland in the movie. Over time it would become Garland's signature song.

FYI: Frances Ethel Gumm [aka Judy Garland] Born Frances Ethel Gumm on 10 June 1922 in Minnesota, the youngest daughter of vaudevillians Frank and Ethel Gumm. Her mother, an ambitious woman gifted in playing various musical instruments, saw the potential in her daughter at the tender age of just 2-years when Baby Frances repeatedly sang "Jingle Bells" until she was dragged from the stage kicking and screaming during one of their Christmas shows and immediately drafted her into a dance act, entitled "The Gumm Sisters", along with her older sisters Mary Jane and Virginia.

However, knowing that her youngest daughter would eventually become the biggest star, Ethel soon took Frances out of the act and together they traveled across America where Frances would perform in nightclubs, cabarets, hotels and theaters solo. [and as they say... the rest is history.]

SHOW DESIGN – Dave Bruce

Show Committee: Dave Bruce (chair), Barry Bell, Doug Darwin, Dave MacKinnon, and Jeff MacKay

The show design this year is still a work in progress but generally:

- Judy Garland Medley
- Drum feature (from last year)
- Big Band (modified)
- American Canadian salute and Colour Presentation (same as last year)
- Drum feature (new)
- Aquarius – Flesh Failures from Hair (Hair is currently being current it seems)

NEW MEMBERS



Jackie Nicholls, Drum Major.

Jackie saw her first drum corps show at the age of 10 or 11. At 15 she joined the Oshawa Rebels. She had the honour of being the first Drum Major of the Rebels.

Jackie has been part of a few groups over the years including the Kingston Grenadiers, ROTC Toronto and the Kawartha Cavaliers where she was thrilled to march along side her daughter.

Jackie's "real" job as an elementary teacher has allowed her to conduct many bands and choirs. She has even conducted a 90 piece concert band at Roy Thomson Hall. She also has several medals from being part of the North Metro Sweet Adelines, who are 3 time world champions of Ladies Barbershop.

Jackie is excited and honoured to be the 2012 Drum Major of The Optimists Alumni and being part of the famous... Green Machine!



Brian Flood, Percussion.

Brian began his drum corps career in or around 1968 with the Scarborough Firefighters in their drum line. In the 1970/ 71 season he was chosen corpsman of the year. He stayed with them until he was 18 years of age. He left the drum corps world at that time but maintained playing a trap set, in and out of rock bands. He still plays a trap set.

In 2007 Brian rejoined drum corps as a Kawartha Cavalier. He played bass drum, tenor, quads and snare with the Cavaliers. On January 8, 2012 Brian joined the Optimists Alumni Drum Line where he plays quads.



Andrew Flood, Percussion.

Andrew started playing trap set at a young age. As a fan of AC/DC he began playing their music and eventually moved onto bands like Bullet For My Valentine.

His sister and father joined the Kawartha Cavaliers and Andrew joined them about a year later. He started off on cymbals then moved to bass and now plays quads.

INSTRUCTOR



Bill Thomas, Instructor

Bill's connection with the Optimists goes back to 1977 when he played soprano with the Seneca Optimists. Currently Bill is a Professor of Music and the conductor of the Wind Symphony at York University in Toronto. He is a graduate of the jazz program at Humber College and holds Bachelor of Music and Bachelor of Education degrees from the University of Toronto. He also holds a Masters in Composition from York University and is presently Associate Chair of the Music Department at York.

He taught music for twenty-three years at the elementary and high school levels spending most of that time as the head of the music department at Markham District High School. Bill is much in demand as an adjudicator and clinician. He is a former Drum Corps International adjudicator and he has been active as an arranger for over forty marching bands and drum & bugle corps in Canada and the United States.

His performing groups have won many accolades and awards. He is a member of the international bandmaster's fraternity Phi Beta Mu.



Tania Borsellino, Soprano.

Tania's first experience in a drum corps was when she was 9 years old. She marched with the Ventures Drum and Bugle Corps and was the gong girl in the pit. Tania played trumpet in her school band and was also involved in a Rock/Pop band where she sang and played trumpet for concerts and church.



St. Patrick's Day
Wearing of the Green
Dinner and Dance
 Royal Canadian Legion, Branch 344, 1395 Lakeshore Blvd. West, Toronto M6K 3C1
Saturday, March 17, 2012, Cocktails 6:00pm
\$25 per person
For tickets contact: Brian Adam 905-450-6433 E-mail: holly.adam@sympatico.ca
Ron Smith 416-266-1871 E-mail: smurfy@rogers.com

ARTICLE – AL CHEZ

AL CHEZ is the trumpet player on CBS's "The Late Show With David Letterman".

He has been with Paul Shaffer and the Late Show for 15 years now, appearing on both CBS and NBC. Al previously has toured and played with Bon Jovi, Robert Cray, Tower of Power, Arturo Sandoval, The Young Rascals, The Rolling Stones, David Bowie, Maynard Ferguson, Eric Clapton and The Dave Edmunds Band to name a few.

Al has performed at three presidential inaugurations, traveled the world many times, appearing numerous times at the DCI Championships lending his horn for the National Anthem and concerts.

Mr. Chez has been involved with many drum corps over the years beginning in 1969 with The Saints from New Jersey. In the late 70's early 80's Al became a marching member and soloist of The Garfield Cadets. Alan has also performed with The Bushwackers and Reading Buccaneers.

Following his marching days Chez became a brass and visual instructor. He was part of the team that was instrumental in



Al performing at the Season Fun-alee in London, Ontario.

winning numerous Drum Corps International Championships. His work included the Brass lines of The Oakland Crusaders, Reading Buccaneers, The Cadets, Crossmen, The Bushwackers, Kingston Grenadiers, and Empire Statesmen.

Since 2000 Alan has been on the brass staff of the Crossmen World Class Drum Corps from San Antonio Texas. Chez also wrote drill for a period of time, co-writing the Bushwackers 1986 DCA Championship drill.

Additionally, Al is a member of The John P. Stevens Hall of Honors, Drum Corps. Buglers Hall of Fame and the Cadets Hall of Fame.

Alan Chez had been involved in the drum corps activity since 1969 and intends many more years of service to this non-profit based youth development activity.

Al still believes he owes this great activity and is looking to pay it forward to future generations of drum corps enthusiasts.

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2011 Santa Clause parades

Oakville and Georgetown – Saturday, November 19.

The Corps had a parade in Oakville on Saturday morning and Georgetown in the afternoon. Unfortunately our photographers were not available. The good news – the Corps was named “Best Band” in the Georgetown parade.

Uxbridge – Saturday morning, November 26



John Malcolm, Lorne Ferrazzutti, Scott Butcher and Jim Rolfe.



Back: Brian Collingdon and Brian Adam. Front: Dave Bruce, Barry Bell, Matthew Davis and Mike Lang.



Colour Guard: Susan Roberts (L), Guard Captain Glenda Tokiwa (M) and Chelsea Brown carrying the National flag.

Fenelon Falls – Saturday evening, November 26.



Guard Captain Glenda Tokiwa (L) and Susan Roberts.



Brian Adam (L), Drum Major Jeff MacKay, Lorne Ferrazzutti and John Malcolm.



Marching in downtown on a cold evening to an appreciative crowd.



Mississauga – Sunday, November 27



It was a cold and uncomfortable day. However there were a lot of enthusiastic well wishers along the route.

A blast from the past

Reprint from the pages of Green Capsule Comments.

GCC Vol 3, No 2, March-April 1963



Profile of the **CORPS!** BY GENE CHEPSWICK

JOE PALANICA: Joe came to the Optimists in January of 1962 after 8 years service with St Mary's Drum Corps. This kid blows a sweet horn (every once in a while) --- this horn being first Soprano, of course. On the field he is know as "Mr. Smoooooth". At a January rehearsal, Joe won the SADIE-MAU-MAU Award as the "Most colourfully dressed" and at this time expected to meet Sadie Mau Mau as Joe doesn't go steady, but he's looking. That is why he attends Central Commerce \ High School which has 1500 girls, 400 boys, and Joe. The real reason for going to this school is because he wants to be a Business Administrator (so he says) but I can remember being told, "the girl I want --- she has to be beautiful, gorgeous, a debutante, have money and a car". --- Joe, obviously, does not have a car. One of his good habits, besides being a great Corps member, is that he is our own Fashion Plate; being a real gone nut for clothes and expensive things: such as women, women, and women. Next issue we are considering a feature on "the Many Loves of Joe Palanica."



Richard Robida, Ronn Prokop, Fred Lombard and Joe Palanica.

RICHARD ROBIDA: Here is another boy working hard for that pension. In the fall of 1953 Rich started with the Grantham Police Boy's Band and continued with this Corps till the fall of 1961. During part of this time he was a member of "The Conchos" --- Grantham's famed Baritone Trio --- he was member number II. This group was also known as the "Tarzan Trio" . . . they were all big boys and could really throw their weight around! During the summer season of 1962 he was not an active Corps Member, instead he followed the Optimists through their summer schedule and joined the Corps as 2nd baritone in September. This change of corps called for a change of cities, from Merritton to Toronto where he now shares an apartment, better known as "the Cage" with three buddies. Rich, when not with the Corps is with the Bank of Montreal as an exchange clerk. Unfortunately, this is his last year with the Corps but rumours, are that Jesters will have --- guess who? --- on the line in '64 .

RONN PROKOP: Ever since his introduction to a sea cadet band in 1957 and drum corps the following year, Ronn Prokop has been known as "Mr. Energy". This very active individual joined Scout House as a snare drummer in '58 and stayed with this till the fall of 1959, when he came to the Optimists. "I left Scout House at 5 one evening and was at an Optimists rehearsal at 7" --- he says. In those early days, Ronn played a part in the birth of The Conqueror, then The Hamilton Cadets, when he took the position of Drum Major at a few events of this young Corps. Now in 1963, with drumming and corps as advanced as they are he actually finds the time to actively instruct, hold a good job with the Metropolitan Toronto Police Department and also head a folk singing group known as The Waysiders. This, plus the fact that he likes jazz and symphonies, shows his diversified interest in music. At present, Ronn has his heart set on a jaunt to Boston's Berklee College of Music, to attain a Bachelor of Arts in Music and to major in percussion. So, if his energy doesn't run out and all goes well, he should finish off his three remaining years with the Optimists. I hope so --- because in many circles he is rated as one of the best snare drummers in Canada.

FRED LOMBARD: At one evening, in the fall months of 1961, a big, blond, barrel-chested, well-groomed individual walked into The Optimists guard. Now, two seasons later, this figure has become a legend, you know, like Wyatt "Urp"! FRED LOMBARD, alias Fred Flintstone, Fred the Toad, "Gromitz" (plus a few spicy but censored names) was once a refugee of Malvern Collegiate, where he flexed, his muscles on the gridiron toward the thundering foe. (He says he came to The Corps, to nail a few Judges.) Though still in the guard, he did try the bass drum, but the new style collar harness and Freddy's chest, just didn't go together . . . he couldn't see where he was going. So this determined soul hopped from drum line to guard, from guard to drum line, all the while screaming at the top of his lungs --- "C'mon you guys" --- and, as Robin Weatherstone once said, "The darn nearest thing to perpetual motion." --- that's Fred. Both on and off the field he is a mean-looking specimen . . . and how he snags so many women, I'll never know. Just the same, Fred is a nice guy and everybody likes him . . . even Ol' jellybelly himself (Fred). Too bad this is his last year with the Corps but rumours are that Jesters will have --- guess who? --- on the line next year --- Gromitz!!

DCA Alumni Spectacular – Rochester, New York, September

Eleven-corps ‘Alumni Spectacular’ features nostalgia, Bugles Across America salute by *Kevin Gamin*, *Drum Corps World* staff (kevinga) Reprinted with permission of Drum Corps World. Please go to: www.high-velocity-media.com to subscribe to DCW.



IF THERE'S ONE THING that DCA Championship weekend does well, its giving fans variety. The I&E and mini-corps competition on Friday evening featured enjoyable performances in a relaxed and social atmosphere, while the prelims and finals on Saturday and Sunday focus on the serious competitive nature of the activity.

Sandwiched between those competitions and appropriately held on Sunday morning is the annual “Alumni Spectacular,” when the drum corps world gathers as if going to church to look back at the history of their favorite past time. While some groups were old friends playing familiar musical charts, others made their first journey to “Drum Corps Mecca” and were welcomed with open arms and clapping hands.

The Sacramento Freelancers Alumni were the “new kids on the block” this year, but you wouldn’t know it from the way they played. The members were eager to play, too, as they performed the Canadian and U.S. National Anthems, then proceeded to start their show before getting announced. Performing charts from their 1983 DCI show, the corps performed in standstill arc formation with trap set player up front and drum major, who also doubled as a killer baritone soloist. He was not the only soloist to light the crowd on fire as the music allowed for great players to shine throughout the show. Fans appreciated them making the long trek to Rochester from California and would love to see the corps make the trip out to Annapolis next year.

Canada was well-represented this year, starting with the **Toronto Optimists Alumni**. The horn line shined from the get-go, exhibiting a warm tone during songs like *Moonlight*

4, 2011

min@gmail.com) and managing editor of DCPlanet.

The Optimists Alumni with the Northstar Colours
at DCA Alumni Spectacular,
Rochester, New York, September 4, 2011.



Serenade. The guard, comprised of members from the Northstar Performing Youth Organization, had a more modern book than most alumni corps, including equipment changes and even the use of “blades,” modern replacements for rifles. The drum line exhibited flair during their drum solo, making use of stick visuals. Closing with *What Kind of Fool Am I*, a nod to Dutch Boy as the last Canadian corps to make DCI World Class Finals, and a flash of gold from the guard, the Optimists showed the crowd both substance and style with their performance.

A corps as Irish as the **Reilly Raiders** aren't the group you'd expect to play *Russian Christmas Music*. The suburban Philadelphia unit did so and did it well. This show was pure “old school” drum corps, complete with snares and single tenors on slings, with plastic heads and a literal off the line start to the show. Once they were set up on the front of the

field, the drum line parted and swiveled to allow the honor guard to present the colors. Of course, it wouldn't be an alumni corps performance without a group of screaming soprano soloists and Reilly delivered big time. The horns also showed their dance moves with a little Irish jig during the drum solo. Coming to the front sideline to close with *Irish Eyes Are Smiling*, the corps let the crowd have it, bringing fans to their feet in an appreciative ovation.

When your eyes are blinded by long and bright yellow coats, you know it's time for the Banana People to do their thing. **The Bridgemen Alumni** continue to bring fun and wackiness to the field, upholding the tradition of the original corps. That wackiness even extends past the sideline, as one horn player, the venerable Mike Siglow, started the showsitting in a lawn chair, reading a magazine. The

Continued on page 14

Searching for the Silver Lining

by Paul Thompson (with permission of Messrs Don Daber and Barry Bell)

RECENTLY, VERN REID located an original treasure from Don Daber's archives; the reel-to-reel audio recording from the October 31st, 1964 awards' banquet, at Toronto's Royal York Hotel. Vern expressed surprise at the brusqueness of Barry Bell's address to the Corps during such the celebratory occasion. Before hearing the tape, I reassured Vern, the Optimists of that era were as hard as stone who welcomed any critical analysis with open arms.

However, after listening to the recording (see the following transcription), I undertook quite a different tactic. Like any self respecting Optimist confronted with a negative truth, I sought out a silver lining in the cloud of doom and gloom. Despite Barry's critical appraisal;

1. we did win the National Title that year.
2. we defeated the famed 'Madison Scouts' in the East vs West showdown in Racine. Can we ignore the reality that we were in ninth place while Madison secured tenth and last place?
3. and; at the very outset, Barry alluded to a handful of stalwarts. So, donning my omnipresent rose-coloured glasses, I concluded that I was indeed one of those indispensable heroes of the 1964 season, and simply ignored his subsequent negative innuendoes.

So enjoy this replay of Barry's address to the Corps.
Transcribed by Paul Thompson.

"I won't be able to say the usual things I guess because I don't feel the usual way... I was let down last year, or felt let down as did the chaps who showed up slugging it out every rehearsal all winter. [Pause] The main thing I would like to be assured of is that – from the people that are staying, and all the experienced ones that are here – this is not counting the new chaps coming in – but I expect a whole lot from you guys... more than last winter. And I hope you can give it to me.

"And I'm delighted with the recruits that have come. We got quite a few who popped in from here and there, that are

tremendous additions. They're going to, I would say, easily replace [pause] [Barry chuckles] sorry... about the wording [audience laughter]... I would say they're going to replace very well the chaps that are leaving. And they're young and full of vim and vinegar and so on [more laughter]... [Pause] I guess the main thing is that this year, I believe, if we have turnouts, let's say five to one, that's around eighty to ninety percent, then I'll think we'll go great guns and we'll have a better bugle line.

"Last year our line... I wouldn't say 'It stunk!' But there was an odor. [Audience laughter] And now and then it pulled through fairly well, but [pause] we had a lot of trouble... and one of the problems with getting a bum mark on bugles was that quite often, we deserved it. [Pause] You can't argue... you know. So, I think this year if we can get eighty or ninety percent turnouts all winter we'll be away, and we'll have a real hot shot line.



"Every – all the other sections – drums seem to come up tremendous last year, and this year they're falling all over themselves, sending a message, 'Last year was good – watch this year.' And I hope we can expect the same results from the crowd of brass handlers [intrusion from the audience, 'Chrome Handlers'] – [Barry repeats] 'chrome handlers', [Pause] yeah sorry! [Laughter] So I guess the main thing is I should go on record as expressing disappointment in the results of the bugle line last year.

"And, it's easy to say, 'Well, considering the lousy turnout we had and all the people we lost, we did pretty good'. And you can say that honestly, that's true. But, considering all the people we lost, 'only', we could have done a lot better. The turnouts really were the key and this year they're going to be the key again.

"So it's up to you chaps. If you turn up, you know, we'll be tremendous.

"If you don't, we can expect to, you know, pull off some bungling marks here and there, and not be consistent.

Searching for the Silver Lining (continued)

“So, this is a little different than I talked in other years. You’re supposed to be overly optimistic. Well, not overly – you’re supposed to be optimistic. This year I am! I feel great! If you fellows will note, last Wednesday was the best bugle turnout we’ve had — and the enthusiasm hit a high peak – didn’t it? [Pause] Terrific! – And that’s the way we got to keep going – and no layoffs – absolutely!

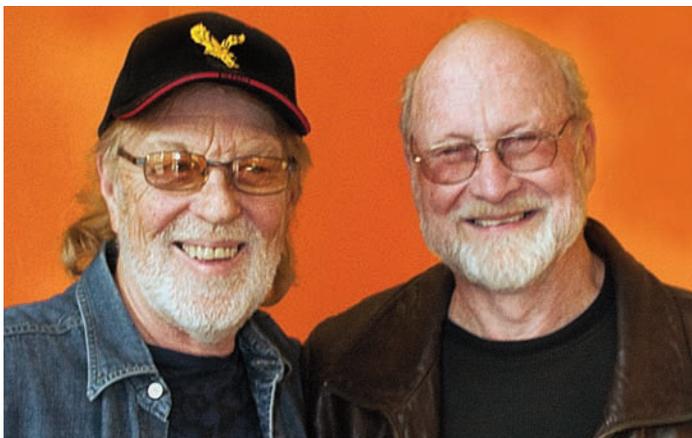
1964 marked the last year the Corps carried brass bugles. We changed to chrome plated bugles in 1965. (There is an oblique reference to this fact within the speech).

“So, especially for those who showed up through thick and thin and never lost faith, you know and all this – [pause] [Barry chuckles to underlying audience laughter] – [he says loudly] ‘YOU STINK!’ [Much prolonged laughter] – I give my thanks then, because I counted – there were some people I counted on more than others – and they came through terrific. So, I think this little bit of faith paid off, and we didn’t do too badly.

“But next year, let’s not have a little crowd of stalwarts. The whole group has got to throw themselves into it, and become semi fanatic – you know. And – the worst of our problem is trying to get guys to start practicing and start being terrific. That’s the kind of problem I want. [Barry chuckles] Ok! I’m going to give these things out.

Post script

You may wonder if this message yielded positive results in 1965. Well? The Corps put on a stellar performance at the Chicago Opera House on February 27, 1965. And we won the National Title in 1965. YES! IT WAS ALL FOR ONE... AND ONE FOR ALL. Can we just forget the details of the ‘rookie revolt’ in Kingston, New York? – Damn it! Where did I put my silver pen?



Ronn (Skip) Prokop (L.), Toronto Optimists, snare drummer 1959 – 1963 and Barry Bell, member and instructor of the Toronto Optimists horn line, 1958 - 1970, and member of the Alumni since its inception, reminisce about their days on the field together at the Season Fun-alee, Hosted by The Midlanders Alumni Corps in London, Ontario in October. Ronn was the Master of Ceremonies for the event.

DECEMBER HOLIDAY PARTY

The corps held its annual Holiday Party on December 11 at the Royal Canadian Legion on Lakeshore Ave. West. Lots of good cheer – fun to meet past members – make new friends – and win holiday prizes.



L to R. Brian Adam, Holly Adam, Pat Bell, Barry Bell, Hazel and Warren Berger.



L to R. Lois (Carol's Mom), Carol Munro, and Carol's brother Rick.



L to R. Ron Chong, Heather Hyslop, Joe Gianna and Bob Carell.



L to R. Jan Smith, Ron Smith, Kevin Clancy, Christie Clancy, Lorne Ferrazzutti and Scott Butcher.

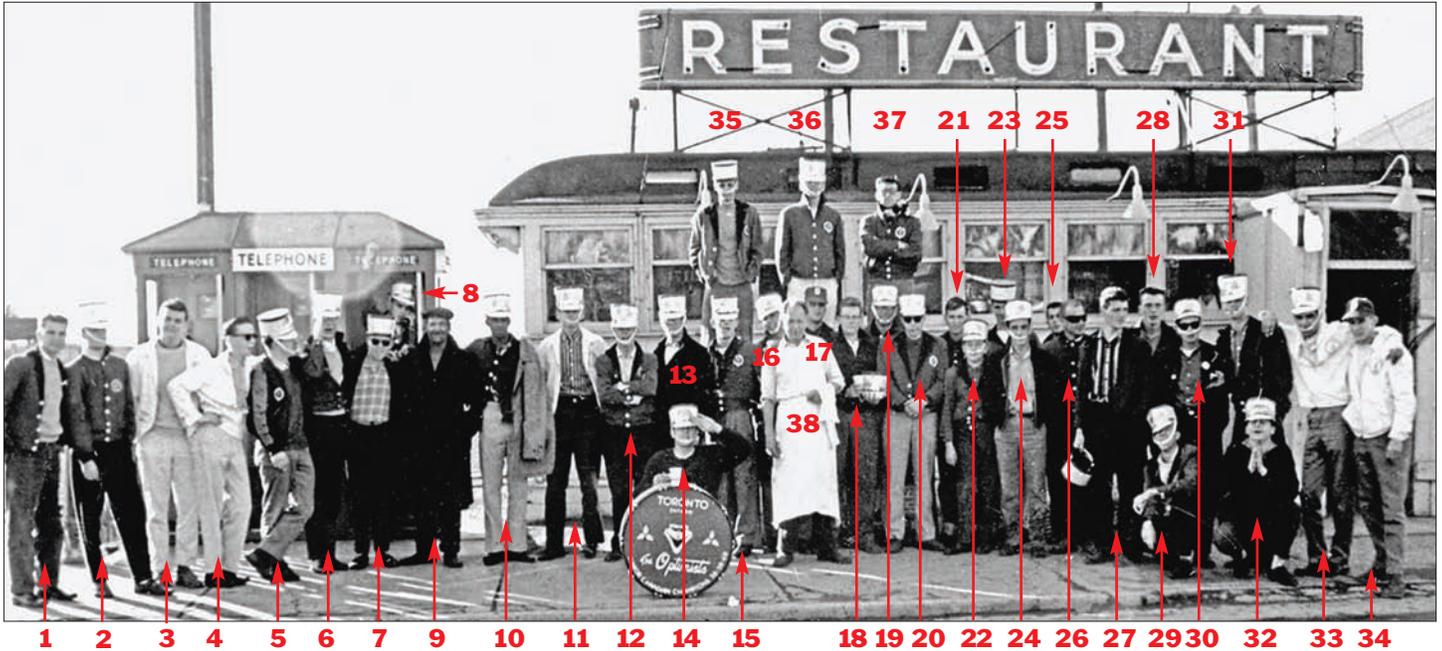


L to R. Brian Hogan, Vern Johansson and Ray Rousel. They all auditioned to be Santa, however, as you can see by their expressions... let's not go there. **All the best for the new year!**

1960 Challenge

DO YOU SEE YOURSELF? DO YOU RECOGNIZE ANY OF YOUR FORMER MEMBERS FROM 1960

THE CHALLENGE. This photo was taken at the Toronto Island Ferry Docks in 1960. GCC would appreciate hearing from you if you think you know who they are. Please E-mail your information to Bob Carell at: Toronto_Optimist@rogers.com. Thank you to Phil Hennings for providing this rare photograph and some of the names to the best of his recollection at time of Web publication.



- | | | | | |
|-------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------------|------------------------|
| 1 Ron Cook | 9 A nice guy | 17 Bob Owen | 25 Glenn Durish | 33 Harry Clark |
| 2 Mel Day (pretty sure) | 10 Hector Roberts | 18 Warren Mills | 26 Barry Bell | 34 Ric Brown |
| 3 Bob Cook | 11 Colin Headworth | 19 Richard Boehnke | 27 Ivor Bromley | 35 Al Miller |
| 4 ? | 12 Dave Watt ? | 20 Brian Williams | 28 Len Perrin | 36 Jim Patten |
| 5 Doug McPhail | 13 Al Morrison | 21 ? | 29 (or 32) Carl Clutchey | 37 Ed Nanni |
| 6 Bob Brown | 14 ? | 22 ? | 30 ? | 38 Our host, the owner |
| 7 Ronn Prokop | 15 ? | 23 Bob Bond | 31 Frans Rood | |
| 8 ? in telephone booth | 16 ? | 24 Warren Berger | 32 (or 29) Carl Clutchey | |



Drum Major Phil Hennings and the corps, 1960.

WE REMEMBER

There has been a noticeable increase in Facebook and email condolences for our recently departed members. These messages come from friends of the Optimists, other Corps, and a vast array of individuals within the Drum Corps Family. On behalf of the Optimists Alumni and the respective family members we express our sincere gratitude for your caring messages. Thank you!

Len Perrin – December 18, 1940 - November 4, 2011



Len was a Toronto boy who found his way into the Optimists before it was even called the Optimists! Mel remembers Len as “a sharp guy, great military bearing, hurling and flipping this 20 lb Lee Enfield rifle around.” Eventually Len joined the horn line playing French horn. He worked hard and played so well that he had a solo in 1962! Like the

rest of us in the competitive corps, our lives revolved around drum corps – not just ours but other corps as well. Len, Mel, Ivor and a few other guys started heading out to Oakville to help out a corps called Trafalgar. Who knew that both Len and Mel would find their future wives in this corps! After aging out of Optimists, Len played in the Jesters, then the Commanders.

In the “real” world, Len married Nancy and they had two wonderful children, Andrew and Caroline. He also worked for General Accident, volunteered for the YMCA, skied, sailed and loved the outdoors.

Following the first reunion Len was instrumental in keeping the Optimists Alumni Association going. When the Alumni corps started Len played Mellophone. Of course, before each rehearsal he'd go into YMCA mode and put on music then force us to do aerobics! From 2006 through 2009 Len was our Alumni President and, in that capacity, he was one of the guiding forces behind the design and acquisition of our current uniforms. During the winter Len fed his passion for skiing so we rarely saw him; however, once winter passed, he was always there at rehearsals and shows.

Here are a few comments from some of those who knew him.

“Wonderful smile, kind gentle man. I am glad I got to know him!”

“A kind and gentle man who I loved to hear laugh. Len, R.I.P. You will be missed.”

“Len you were always there for someone who was in need. You were special.”

“I remember meeting Len for the first time at our very first reunion. I will always remember him as true gentleman and a good FRIEND.”

“Farewell my friend. Rest in peace and have fun.”

Portions of this tribute were expressed during the eloquent and heartfelt eulogies by Mel Dey and Karen Bosworth on the occasion of Len's Celebration of Life, Saturday, November 12th at Glen Oaks Memorial Chapel. Subsequently, the Optimists Alumni Drum & Bugle Corps made a donation in the memory of Len Perrin to the Alzheimer's Society of Ontario..

Gene Chepswick – November 23, 1944 - December 29, 2011



Gene began his drum corps career in 1961 with St Mary's Drum Corps and transferred to the Toronto Optimists in 1962. He stayed with the Optimists until he aged out in 1965.

In his first year with the Optimists Gene was a member of the Colour Guard where he carried the New York – Canadian Championship flag. He also

carried a flag in Optimists' 1963 mini-corps. In 1963 he was appointed Colour Guard Sergeant and in 1964 and 1965 Gene served as our Guard Captain.

Not only did he march with the corps, but Gene volunteered his services as both an Associate Editor and a writer for the corps newsletter, Green Capsule Comments.

Here are a couple of comments from some of those who knew him.

“I marched with Gene in the guard for two years. Boy could he strut his stuff on the field. He set such a high standard and made me proud to be an Optimist!”

“I remember Gene as being a classy guy. In my opinion he was one of the best colour guard Captains we had.”

DCA Alumni Spectacular (continued)

centerpiece of this year's production was a tribute to the heroes of 9/11, although some policemen might question a tribute that includes a member in cop uniform chasing a box of "Bridgemen Donuts." For all their antics, though, the Bridgemen come to play, thanks to brass charts from Larry Kerschner and percussion by Dennis DeLucia. The percussion really steps things up during their solo, as the basses remove their drums and place them on racks before soloing with stick visuals normally done by the snare line. The tribute closes with three members in the center of the field, one in each of the uniforms of the NYPD, FDNY and NYEMS. The corps returns to silliness soon after, coming as close to the stands as they can and ripping the faces of the fans with a final "William Tell" fanfare.

When you hear *Captain from Castille* and *Conquest* for the opener, you know it's the **Boston Crusaders**. When you hear four cymbal crashes to start *Captain from Castille*, you know it's the Crusaders Senior. The crew from Boston engage the crowd right from the start thanks to *Conquest* and don't let up until they close the show, once again with *Conquest*. In between, the drum line shows off serious rudiments, difficult to do on modern Kevlar heads, while the horns get the fans clapping with songs like *Hava Nagila*. Even the drum cadence as the corps marches off the field features hints of *Conquest*, a sign of how important this song is to the Crusaders and their fans.

Mighty St. Joe's can pretty much consider the "Alumni Spectacular" their home show for the past six years, what with their home base of LeRoy only a half hour drive away down Interstate 490. With songs like *Bully* (Cavaliers) and the *Battle Hymn Swing* (Royal Airs), the corps would also find themselves at home in Chicago. It's Rochester, though, that gets the love, as the corps also focuses on Chuck Mangione, who was originally from the area, with *Children of Sanchez*. The cymbals take up drum heads, which the tenors bang on to add thunder to the opening of the piece. To finish their performance, St. Joe's looks to the "Empire State of the South" with their final selection, *Georgia*, with the full corps coming forward to unleash their sound.

Unlike the other alumni corps performing today, **Park City Pride** represents multiple Connecticut drum corps which are no longer with us. As a result, there are a lot of talented players in the group, including some multi-tasking cymbal players who double on rifles during the show each season. The drum major joked that, due to Hurricane Irene, the corps had to leave two buses home and that they normally have 350 members on the field. When the corps starts playing, you're glad they don't have that number as your ears would bleed from the resultant sound. The drum line really shines, exhibiting tight technique throughout, finishing off with patriotic flourish, unfurling a large American flag while performing an uptempo rendition of *American the Beautiful*, complete with company front.

Preston Scout House just loves to do things differently. They're not a drum corps, they're a drum and bugle band. The bugles are Bb horns, not G, a nod to their Canadian drum corps heritage. They also have a line of Scottish tenors, complete with spinning mallets. Of course, who can forget their glockenspiel line, which rings clear throughout their performance. With all the differences, though, this is still straight-up drum corps, including a color presentation, although with a Canadian focus. Scout House leaves the field playing *Colonel Bogey March*, inducing rhythmic clapping from the appreciative fans.

"From the concrete canyons of New York City... These words can introduce only one drum corps in the world, the incomparable **New York Skyliners**. While the competitive corps has not marched since 2006, the alumni corps has kept the tradition very much alive. This year focuses very much on the anniversary of 9/11 and the attack on the very heart of this corps, with the guard opening spinning flags featuring the silhouette of the Twin Towers and the head of a bald eagle. Despite the solemn occasion, the Skyliners came to entertain, with *Big Noise from Winnetka* kicking the energy up early in the show chock full of highlights, right down to the *New York Fanfare* at the end, complete with traffic jam and full-out, down and dirty closing. No performance of the Sky Alumni is complete without an encore of *Elk's Parade*, as the corps threw down with unbridled energy.

There are certain things which only the **Hawthorne Caballeros Alumni** can have or do: the uniforms, of course, as well as plenty of Latin-themed music. Jimmy Russo directing the Cabs as only he can, the Rumps, marching Latin percussion instruments, including bongos. To top it all off, there's that insanely loud horn line which, even when playing backfield, makes peoples' hair stand on end. Hearing the opening "rumps" as they high mark time on the starting line is drum corps living history which the fans are lucky to experience. This year's edition is especially on fire or, more appropriately, en fuego. The brass soloists thrilled fans, while the drum line, which included eight bass drums, thundered throughout. There was no letting up and the crowd responded with multiple standing ovations.

A SPECIAL PERFORMANCE closed out the show. Bugles Across America, joined by members of competing corps, the World Drum Corps Hall of Fame and alumni from all over the all-age corps activity, gathered together on the field to perform a "Salute to the Heroes," an event to commemorate both the 10th anniversary of 9/11 as well as the military heroes, active, retired, missing and fallen.

The performance featured two musical selections, *Battle Hymn of the Republic* and a medley of the Armed Forces songs. The truly special moment came when Jeff Gibbens began to play *Taps* from the 50 yard line, echoed by another

DCA Alumni Spectacular (continued)

soprano player further downfield. The echo players continued out of the stadium, pointing toward Annapolis, site of next year's DCA Championships.

At DCA next year, echo Taps players will play into the stadium in, delivering the memorial to Annapolis much like the torch is delivered from Athens to the site of each Olympic Games. This was a very moving moment and is also a moment to look forward to next year when the journey is completed.

DCA, ROCHESTER, NY – THE “RAIN GODS” STAYED AWAY

Bill Selfe, a proud octogenarian (who probably is hoping our readers don't know what an octogenarian is) recalls, as a young man, competing with a much younger Lorne Ferrazzutti. His 66 year career as a drummer includes a very long stint with the Toronto Signals Band. His wife, Rosemary, is a drum corps aficionado and recently began performing with the Sigs Colour Party. In fact, she was part of the Signals' Honour Guard which marched with the Optimists in Rochester's 2008 DCA Alumni Spectacular. In this GCC issue, both Bill and Rosemary colluded to provide a Canadian perspective of the 2011 DCA Alumni Spectacular. We welcome their contribution.



1st Corps in Exhibition – **Freelancers** (Sacramento, California)... a reasonably good stand still show.



2nd Corps – **Toronto Optimists**... GREAT SHOW – only 16 horns but sounded like 26... Clean Sound. Just a side note: Going

back several years, prominent side drummer Lorne Ferrazzutti and I competed at the Waterloo Festival's individual Snare Contest. He's one heck of a drummer.

Next – **Reilly Raiders** (Willow Grove, PA) – Great to see them back... They were a competitive Senior Corps in the 40-50-60's renowned for their theme song WHEN IRISH EYES ARE SMILING... playing some of their former music brought back fond memories.

4th in appearance – **Scout House** from Cambridge, Ontario... with Larry Blondell serving as one of the Drum Majors performed a full field show with exciting maneuvers and a Great Sound – an outstanding show.



Next – **Boston Crusaders**... were a competitive Junior Corps in the same era as the Optimists – a Top Notch Show.

GCC STAFF

Editor: Paul Thompson.

Editorial Staff: Brian Byrne, Bob Carell and David Johns.

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

Consultant: Don Daber.

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

A special thank you to all those who send photographs to the Optimists Alumni. Your initiative is appreciated.

6th in performance – **Mighty St Joe's** with Canadian Bob Bond as DM... as usual displayed a Fantastic Presentation with Great Music and Drill.

Next – **Park City Pride** from Connecticut... Entertaining production and nice sounding Music.



8th on the field – **Bridgemen** (Bayonne, New Jersey) 'Former Junior Champions'... delighted the crowd with their unique and busy field production ending with a spellbinding rendition of

THE WILLIAM TELL OVERTURE – Superb Showmanship.

Next – **New York Skyliners** ignited the audience with their famous New York Themes and their mesmerizing Street Beat that hasn't change in fifty years.



Finally, **Hawthorne Caballeros** (New Jersey) – What Can We Say? Seventy-five Horns... Thirty Drummers... thirty

Guardsmen... all performing at the top of their game. Excellent Music and Drill – THE BEST.

As a **FINALE**, horns from every Corps dedicated a tribute to all Servicemen from the 'Allied Wars' to '911' – asking these Veterans to stand – with an inspiring medley of tune's including GOD BLESS AMERICA and BATTLE HYMN OF THE REPUBLIC.

PROPOSED 2012 OPTIMISTS ALUMNI SCHEDULE

The schedule below is under review at time of publication. Please check the website for an updated schedule.

Saturday	May 12	And The Bands Played On	Confirmed	12:00 noon	Simcoe, Ontario
Monday	May 21	Parade and performance	Confirmed	10:00 am	Woodstock, Ontario
Saturday	June 2	Parade	Tentative	10:00 pm	Bobcaygeon, Ontario
Sunday	June 24	Parade and performance	Confirmed	12:00 noon	Welland, Ontario
Sunday	July 1	Parade	Confirmed	1:00 pm	Cambridge, Ontario
Saturday & Sunday	July 21 and 22	Performance	Tentative	1:30 pm	Sudbury, Ontario
Saturday	August 18	Scout House Show	Confirmed	7:00 pm	Waterloo, Ontario
Saturday	August 25	Legends 4 Show	Confirmed	12:00 noon - 10:00 pm	Oshawa, Ontario
Saturday & Sunday	September 1 - 2	DCA Alumni Show	Confirmed	TBA	Annapolis, Maryland

Let's hear from you...

GCC is published four times a year. Contributor deadline for next issue is **Friday, March 23, 2012**.

For the moment, please submit your material to David Johns at: openrd2002@yahoo.ca 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.

DO YOU KNOW?

In each issue there will be questions related to Drum Corps, past and present. The winner will be selected randomly from entries having the correct answers and will receive the Optimists Anniversary Plaque showing photos from 1955 to 1978. The answers will appear in the next issue.

Congratulations to Glenda Tokiwa. Glenda wins a 50th Anniversary plaque.

ANSWERS – SEPTEMBER

- Who was the first Director of the Optimists Alumni Drum Corps?
Dick Brown.
- Who were the four founding members of the Optimists Alumni Drum Corps?
Dick Brown, Mhairi Cummings, Vern Johansson and George Wright.

- When was the first public appearance where the current Alumni uniform was first worn?
Simcoe, Ontario – May 2007.

QUESTIONS FOR JANUARY

- Name the relatives that marched from 2002. For example, husbands and wives, fathers and sons or daughters, brothers, sisters.
- How many members in the largest drum line of the Optimists Alumni Corps? (Hint: It's more than the 19 in the February 2011 rehearsal photo below)
- What was the temperature (F or C) during the Whitney Lake parade in Michigan in 2010?

Please send your answers by **Friday, February 24, 2012** to: David Johns at: openrd2002@yahoo.ca

