

# G&GCC

GREEN & GOLD CAPSULE COMMENTS

Published by The Optimists Alumni  
Drum & Bugle Corps

Please direct all inquiries to  
the Editor: [rick-robida@live.com](mailto:rick-robida@live.com)

A PDF version of this publication is on  
our website [www.optimists-alumni.org](http://www.optimists-alumni.org)



JANUARY 2010

## IT'S BACK!

IN THE EARLY 60s Don Daber burst onto the scene with an explosion of creative art and singlehandedly changed the way we viewed Canadian Drum Corps. Quickly his distinctive line drawings, photographs and montages appeared at the highest levels of the North America Drum Corps movement. Who can forget the record jackets, buttons, crests, souvenirs, programs, cartoons, logos and maps?

But for many in the Optimists organization, the crowning achievement was Don's 1961 creation of Green Capsule Comments (GCC). (Note: after the 1976 merger GCC was renamed Gold Capsule Comments). This innovative newsletter became the cornerstone of the Optimists' championship caliber communications and was published regularly until 1978 when the Optimists vanished from the competitive field. Gone but not forgotten.



Don Daber circa 1963

Now in 2010 we plan to revive GCC with a twist. Because about half of Optimists Alumni members never performed with the original Corps, we have something akin to a melting pot. You might say a marriage. Our newest members bring to the table the proud customs and values from many other drum corps traditions. In keeping with this reality, G&GCC promises to deliver "something old, something new, something borrowed, and something... ah, green?"

Enjoy this inaugural issue of Green&Gold Capsule Comments.

## Director's corner

GREETINGS TO ALL on this special occasion marking the rebirth of Green & Gold Capsule Comments (GGCC). Enough has been said already about the beginnings of this long standing Optimists' tradition but it would be remiss on my part not to again offer our thanks to Don

Daber who started this wonderful publication in 1961. It is my fervent hope that we can sustain the momentum and continue the fine work of Don and those who followed.



Rick Robida, Corps Director

I can't tell you what an honour and thrill it has been for me to become the Corps Director of the Optimists Alumni Drum & Bugle Corps.

I appreciate the faith that has been placed in me and our very capable Management Committee.

The following are the Members who were elected at the Corps' Annual General Meeting (AGM) which was held in September.

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**SADIE MAU MAU** An article reprinted from 1962 celebrating the end of the Christmas parade season.

Rick Robida, *Corps Director*

Bill Kane, *Assistant Corps Director*

Gord Brown, *Secretary*

Brian Byrne, *Treasurer*

\*Mike Lang, *Treasurer Pro Tem*

Brian Adam, Ron Chong,  
and Rick Shearer, *Directors at Large*

\*Mike was appointed by the Management Committee to assist Brian through a transition period – and will subsequently assume the Treasurer's position.

It is fitting that the publication date of our first issue of GGCC coincides with the Corps' first rehearsal of the New Year. As I said in my Christmas message we have the potential in 2010 to have a year that will surpass all others. Dave has finished arranging the new music and Jeff advises the entire drum book is now complete. All the new music can be found on the Optimists web site.

All of that puts us ahead of where we were last year at this time, so let's build on that head start. That does not mean we are without challenges for the coming year. Together, I am confident we can address these challenges and continue to move forward at a pace that is in sync with our capabilities and the Optimists' heritage. We cannot lose site that the Corps is our 'hobby' and it is essential that we all have 'fun' and take pride in our accomplishments.

Finally on behalf of the Management Committee, I would like to extend best wishes for a happy, healthy and prosperous New Year to all of our Members, Fans and Supporters. See you in the spring!

The next issue of the Green & Gold Capsule Comments will be in mid April just prior to the launch of our 2010 spring and summer performances.

Thanks, Regards

Rick Robida

## CANADIAN DRUM CORPS REVIVAL

**REINVENTIONS:** We are not alone. Correct me if I am wrong. Of the performing corps in 1990, only four are still marching. TORONTO SIGNALS, KINGSTON GRENADIERS, KAWARTHA KAVALIERS and DUTCH BOY.

However, in the last two decades Corps reunions have spawned various pseudo drum corps performing units inspiring an exciting new movement. DCAT founded a choir comprised of past alumni from various corps. The HAMILTON FIREFIGHTERS created a brass ensemble ultimately replete with electronic guitars and keyboard. CADRE invented a rudimental drum



DCAT Chorus, 2008



CADRE, 2008



Simcoe United Alumni, 2009



London Midlanders Alumni, 2009

ensemble. UNITED ALUMNI formed a parade and standstill corps with an innovative variation – percussion on wheels. After a few false starts DE LA SALLE OAKLAND CRUSADERS ALUMNI (DOCA) presented a concert band with contemporary Bb instruments including tubas and euphoniums. NIAGARA MILITAIRES have formed a parade corps after a long hiatus. LONDON MIDLANDERS struck up a mini-corps in 2007 and rumour has it they will produce a field corps in 2010.

**THE TRADITIONALISTS:** A decade ago SCOUT HOUSE fielded a virtual replica of their legendary 50s Corps complete with uniforms, glocks, drill formations, and their unforgettable crowd pleasing repertoire. The OPTIMISTS ALUMNI of 2003 eventually evolved their program into a full field show in 2007 with old familiar Toronto Optimists tunes. That same year LES DIPLOMATES reappeared with their trademark 'one of a kind' presentation.



Finale at The Legends Of Drum Corps show in Oshawa, 2009.

A vivid and startling realization of this dramatic Canadian Drum Corps revival

occurred in August 2009 at the Optimists' "Legends of Drum Corps" show in Oshawa. 80+ buglers from OPTIMISTS, SCOUT HOUSE and UNITED ALUMNI joined in a breathtaking mass brass production of "You'll Never Walk Alone". And so it is!

Fierce rivalries from the 50s through to the 70s unfortunately meant, "competition separated us". In today's climate, fortunately, "camaraderie binds us together."

*Continued next page*

Many of the members of the Optimists Alumni Corps over our seven year history were loyal to Corps other than the Optimists. Thanks to these members and their respective originating Corps the Optimists Drum Corps' contemporary experience has been enriched by the existence of the Corps below:

Ambassadors	Golden Monarchs	Oakland Crusaders
Belleville Yardmen,	Grantham Police Boys	Oakville-Trafalgar
Canadian Commanders	Band	Patrolmen
Catholic Daughters of America	Guelph Opti-Knights	Rochester Crusaders
Chessmen	Guelph Royallaires	Scarborough Firefighters
Columbus Boys	Hamilton Conqueror	Seneca Princemen
DCAT Chorus	Jolly Jesters	Simcoe Royal Blues
Danforth Crusaders	Jesters	Simcoe United Alumni
De La Salle "Oaklands"	Kawartha Cavaliers	Sudbury Blue Saints
Dennis Morris Majestics	Kingston Grenadiers	Thorold Black Knights
Don Mills Sky Raiders	La Salle Cadets	Toronto Signals
Dutch Boy	Leaside Lions	Vics from Montreal
Empire Statesmen	Les Diplomates	Western Tech
Etobicoke Crusaders	Merritton Grenadiers	Windsor Optimist Youth Band
	Michael Power Knights	York Lions
	Midlanders	
	Midtowners	

We encourage all former members from our grand fraternity to get involved in any way you can to support the Canadian Drum Corps Revival.

*By Paul Thompson*

## LOOKING FORWARD TO THE 2010 SEASON

AS I WRITE this I am watching the snow fall, turning my lawn from a wonderful shade of green (it's an Optimists thing!) to a less than pleasant shade of white. It is hard to believe that that it won't be too long before we are outside learning our new field show in readiness for our 2010 season. And what a season it promises to be. 2010 offers not one, not two, but three highlight reel shows!

In 2007 the Corps returned to the field at the Alumni Classic in Rochester; the Corps returned to Rochester in 2008 and 2009. In 2009 the Optimists gave birth to our own show in Oshawa and now in 2010 all I can say is WOW!!!



Legends of Drum Corps show, Oshawa, 2009

The Optimists Alumni will not only be appearing at the Alumni Classic in Rochester, not only sponsor our own show "The Legends of Drum Corps II," but

we have been invited to appear in exhibition at the Annual Pageant of Drums DCI sanctioned show in Michigan City, Indiana on July 3, 2010. The Corps last appeared in this Show in 1976 as the Seneca Optimists.

This show is on the DCI summer tour and some of the competing Corps for 2010 include; Cadets, Cavaliers, Colts, Glassmen and Madison Scouts.

Our own Legends of Drum Corps show will again take place in Oshawa with a much larger line up of Corps performing. We anticipate a show featuring 6 of the best Alumni Corps available and the invitations have been sent out to these Corps. Watch for further announcements about the line up of the performing Corps. Your show organizing committee anticipates a reprise of the stirring Retreat Ceremony from last year with the potential of approximately 200 horns performing "You'll Never Walk Alone."

Last year, due to the tremendous efforts of all of the Corps membership, we had an attendance of about 400 very appreciative drum corps fans, it is our goal to put at least a thousand "bums in the seats."

*By Gord Brown*

## DIFFERENCES... OR NOT

Differences between modern junior drum corps and alumni drum corps.

Percussionists	Drummers	Blend	Loud
Trumpets	Sopranos	Buzz rolls	Real rolls
Tubas	Contras	"Where are we?"	Home
Faster	Slower	Gym floor	Bed
Slower	"That's better"	Staff	Instructors
Mean and lean	Pleasant and dieting	Conductors	Showmen
Summer tan	Office pale	Food truck	Bar and grill
Anal retentive	Close enough	Tour fees	Dues
Production	The show	Audition	Open House
Visual	M&M	Camp weekend	Parking lot
Uniform closet	Trunk of car	Horn arc	Semicircle
Tour director	Bus driver	Amplification	Play louder
		"Do your best"	"Have fun out there"

## THE BEGINNINGS OF THE OPTIMISTS ALUMNI

THERE ARE DIFFERENT ways to talk about the beginnings of our corps. One approach would be to talk about historical data, giving dates, names, etc.; however, our website already contains that information. This story talks about the values, the personal pride, dedication and sense of family that was instilled in the hearts of its corps members.

A few decades ago there were organizations dedicated to working with youth. In the United States, we find the VFW (Veterans of Foreign Wars), the AL (American Legion) and the CYO (the Catholic Youth Organization). In Canada much of this work was done by military cadet groups and by



*Opti-Corps, 1956*

various fraternal organizations. Among these were the Lions Club, the Sertoma Club and the Optimists Club. Each of these groups worked to help and serve the youth who lived in

their community. Some of these organizations created drum and bugle corps as a way of working with those in their community. The Optimists began when the Downtown Toronto Optimist Club chose to sponsor a drum corps composed of soon-to-be overage Boy Scouts.

You might ask yourself “Why a drum corps?” One of the goals of all of these groups was to prepare the youth for life. They did this by helping to bring out the best in each individual. Drum corps is an excellent vehicle for doing that. In drum corps we learned to be proud of ourselves and proud of our corps. We learned skills and how our individual skills could be put together to create something that was beautiful



*Toronto Optimists, 1964*



*Seneca Optimists, 1978*

and gave pleasure to others. We learned about dedication to a goal and how to work together to manifest that goal, creating something bigger than any of us. In order to do that we often had to set aside some of our personal desires. Success of a corps depends not only on working hard to develop our own skills but in helping others overcome their limitations. And by accepting their assistance in dealing with ours. Truly “Esprit de Corps”.



*Ambassadors*



*Cadet Lancers*



*Canadian Commanders*



*De La Salle*



*Dennis Morris Majestics*



*Dutch Boy*



*Etobicoke Crusaders*



*Grantham Police Boys Band*



*Guelph Opti Knights*



*Guelph Royales*



*Hamilton Conqueror*



*Jesters*



*Jolly Jesters*



*Kingston/Belleville Grenadier Yardmen*



*LaSalle Cadets*



We couldn't work well together if we held on to the anger and resentment that can surface in almost every relationship so we learned to accept the foibles of others and deal with those situations that our discrimination determined to be important.

Memorizing music and performing a drill while playing in an ensemble can be a real challenge but it certainly teaches multi-tasking, concentration and how to work together! We improved by learning to recognize our weaknesses and finding solutions. Setting long term goals taught us that some objectives could only be reached with a lot of work over an extended period of time.

Through all of this we developed a sense of family, respect and caring for others. And enduring friendships – friendships



Toronto Optimists on the bus, 1959. Probably taken just *before* crossing the US border.



Seneca Optimists on the bus, 1978. Probably taken just *after* crossing the US border.

not just with those in our own corps but friendships with our competitors. Many of those friendships have endured for all of the 51 years of the Optimists.

In 2003 a decision was reached to begin an Alumni Corps, a message went out that we were looking for members and we had a chance to see who was in our family. While, former members of Opti Corps, the Toronto Optimists and the Seneca Optimists responded, a great many who answered that call had never been Optimists. The unifying force was a



Al Miller, Mhairi Cumming and Debbi Lapointe at the 2003 reunion.

love of drum corps and the friendships we had made.

Each of us is part of the extended drum corps family we started building so many years ago! Of course, most of us hadn't touched an instrument in

years so we really had to revisit those lessons that we were taught in our all too distant past! And it's been fun – because our hearts are pure drum corps!

I was curious about the breadth of our family so I did some research to see where our members have come from. At this point the Optimists Alumni has, or had, members from 48 different drum corps! Our website contains the names of those corps as well as other historical material and photos. I offer my apologies for any corps I have missed. Below are photos of many of these Corps.

In closing I would say that this corps is a living testament to the enduring lessons we learned and the friendships we formed while we were young.

*By Bob Carell*



Leaside Lions



Les Diplomates



London Midlanders



Oakland Crusaders



Oakville-Trafalgar  
Patrolmen



Preston Scout House



Rochester Crusaders



Scarborough Firefighters



Seneca Optimists



Seneca Princemen



Merritton Buccaneers



Sudbury Blue Saints



Toronto Signals



Western Technical School



York Lions

## REMEMBER WHEN

IT'S GOING TO be tough not to make this piece the ramblings of an old man. I don't much like the moniker old man – but I was reminded of it recently when I mentioned to someone that my time in drum corps spanned more than 55 years and the response was 'wow... you're a fossil' I just couldn't resist checking the thesaurus for 'fossil' and much to my chagrin found 'relic,' 'remnant' and 'vestige.' See, I digress already but you can be sure I don't feel like any of those 'names.' So let's move on with my early recollections of Drum Corps and what my involvement has meant to me for more than half century.

Recently someone started a 'thread' on the Grantham Police Boys Drum & Bugle Corps website exploring the impact that drum corps has had on our lives. Certainly, my involvement has played a major role in shaping my life. I vividly remember the beginnings of Grantham – that first rehearsal at Maywood School in St. Catharines with us kids lined up out the door to try out (just to separate drummers from horn players). I was recruited to join the band by a neighbour of my aunt. This neighbour turned out to be Charlie Hill, our original Band Master, who studied under John Phillip Sousa.

My years in Grantham were some of the happiest and fun times I can remember. The friends I made, my ability to play an instrument, and the importance of being part of a team effort all helped shape my principles and values. None of us were 'superstars' in those early days but as a Team we began to excel. At that time there were more than 15 Trumpet Bands flourishing just in the Niagara district. The name trumpet band reflects the military and law enforcement affiliations typical of our early beginnings.

In the early 60s a lot of the Grantham Boys ended up marching with the Toronto Optimists. It was there that I first met a man by the name of Barry Bell. Barry was the horn instructor for the Optimists. He is a member of the Drum Corps Hall of Fame and still marches today



Grantham Police Boys Drum & Bugle Corps, late 1950s



The Optimists Alumni photographed at The DCI Alumni Drum Corps Spectacular in Rochester, New York. September 6, 2009. Photo by [unreadable]



*Rick Robida, Ron Prokop, Fred Lombard and Joe Palanica, 1963*

with the Optimists Alumni Drum & Bugle Corps. The Optimists under Barry Bell's tutelage and example taught me a lifetime work ethic to strive to be the best in all that I do.

The last three years saw the realization of a youthful dream to be a member of the Hawthorne Caballeros Alumni Drum & Bugle Corps. It was there that I learned the importance of the Drum Corps family. The Caballeros are truly a 'family.' From the youngest and newest member of the Caballeros all-

age competing corps to the oldest and most experienced veteran of the Alumni Corps they are all members of the Cabs Family. This spirit is undoubtedly one of the most significant contributing factors to their perennial success.

I could stop right here! But I ask your indulgence to allow me the opportunity to pay a special tribute to my very dear friend Gary Dersham. I met Gary, who played contra beside me for two years, in Lewisburg Pennsylvania following a Cabs appearance at a Bucknell University Football Game.

Gary approached Corps Director, Peter Bishop to share his life-long dream to be a member of the Caballero organization. He did not play an instrument nor did he have any marching experience but, he was willing to work hard. He was given a chance and Gary learned to play contra bass with the help of his wife Joan who plays baritone with the Cabs.

Gary also engaged a music major at Susquehanna University and spent many hours working on rhythm, timing and reading music. During Wildwood Camp weekend, you could

*Continued next page*



*Photo: Jolesch Photography*



*Contra bass line of Hawthorne Caballeros Alumni Drum & Bugle Corps, 2008.*

find Gary in a beach chair, at the shoreline, music stand in front of him, practicing his music for hours on end. Following drill practice at the Lewisburg show, the entire corps was treated to a picnic that Gary and Joan would host for us.

Unfortunately Gary died suddenly on December 9, 2009 while shoveling snow. A busload of his beloved Caballero family made the trek to Lewisburg to pay their respects. Gary was a true example of the commitment to an activity that he loved and the importance of Drum Corps family.

GARY W. DERSHEM,

1952 – 2009

RIP

So, for me to say that the drum corps I marched with have had an effect on my life is an understatement.

I believe our beloved activity is on the verge of a renaissance. New alumni organizations are starting up every day. It is in all our best interests to support this activity by participating, promoting and lobbying the government, service clubs and the Legions across southern Ontario to help rekindle an activity that can and has impacted so many lives.

*By Rick Robida*

## IN THE DRIVER'S SEAT

This on-going saga explores and explains the overwhelming demands placed upon the driver of the Corps support van. There will be in-depth reports on tire pressure, driving in the rain, door lock location and why our membership in the CAA is important. These and many more spine-tingling adventures will unfold.

**NOT ALL MEMBERS** of the Corps march in parades. Brian Byrne rides. You could say he is a 'driving' force behind the Corps. Brian put aside

a few minutes to explain some of the demanding responsibilities of driving the support van.

When arriving at the start of a parade Brian's first question is, "Hey, which van"? Brian relies on members to loan him one of theirs. Naturally, they assume Brian has a valid driver's license. A reasonable assumption.\*

Then there's the question of the route. "Many people are amazed that I just know where the parade route is while

following the Corps. It's not intuition. It's taken years of practice. Why, at the end of the last parade I finished at the exact same place the Corps did. A few members have pointed out how much my directional skills have improved since being the Drum Major a number of years ago and that unfortunate re-routing through a wading pool."

In the next issue Brian will explain how running out of gas during a parade builds character. *By David Johns*

\* Yes he does

## 2010 OPTIMISTS ALUMNI SCHEDULE

The Management Committee and the Show Committee will be finalizing the rehearsals including one weekend off per month, the full list will be posted to the website before the end of January.

Saturday	March 13	Parade	Confirmed	St. Patrick's Day	Cambridge, Ont
Sunday	March 14	Parade	Tentative	St. Patrick's Day	Toronto, Ont
Saturday	May 8	Performance	Confirmed	And the Bands Played On	Simcoe, Ont.
Monday	May 24	Parade and performance	Tentative	Victoria Day	Woodstock, Ont.
Saturday	June 5	Parade	Confirmed	Opening of the Locks	Bobcaygeon, Ont.
Thursday	July 1	Parade	Confirmed	Canada Day	Cambridge, Ont.
Saturday	July 3	Parade and performance	Tentative		Michigan City, Indiana
Sunday	July 4	Parade	Tentative		Location to be determined
Saturday	July 24	Performance	Confirmed	Dutchboy	Waterloo, Ont.
Saturday	August 21	Parade	Tentative	Toronto Warriors Day	Toronto, Ont
Saturday	August 21	Performance	Confirmed	Scout House	Galt, Ont.
Saturday	August 28	Performance	Confirmed	Optimists Legends Show	Oshawa, Ont.
Sunday	September 5	Performance	Confirmed	DCA Alumni Spectacular	Rochester, NY.



## SIGNATURE SONG SERIES

### SEARCHING FOR A “POT OF GOLD”

OVER THE RAINBOW by Harold Arlen and E.Y. “Yip” Harburg remains the No. one song of the American Film Institute’s AFI top 100 list.

But, did you know?

► Responding to virulent reaction before the curtain closed on the first sneak preview L. B. Mayer removed OVER THE RAINBOW from the WIZARD OF OZ for the first of three times before the final release of the film.

► Lyricist Yip Harburg dithered with “I’ll Go Over The Rainbow,” “Someday Over The Rainbow” long before he came up with “Somewhere Over The Rainbow.”

► Songwriter Harold Arlen was ready to throw in the towel until Ira Gershwin, a customary arbitrator, offered his favourable opinion.

► Harburg continued oscillating believing first the song too symphonic for a 16 year old Judy Garland and second too old for the character of Dorothy.

► Author Aljean Harmetz declared, “Without Judy Garland’s unique voice and tragic future being tied to OVER THE RAINBOW the picture would never have taken on the qualities of poignancy, seriousness, and irony.”

► Yet, Margaret Hamilton, the wicked witch, and others recall Judy, at 16 years old, as absolutely enchanting, cheery, and a joy to be around.”



Harold Arlen



E.Y. “Yip” Harburg



Rehearsing “Rainbow” at St. Michael’s College School.

► Director King Vidor, just weeks before production ended, restaged OVER THE RAINBOW with Judy walking instead of standing still to give some rhythmic flow of movement into the ballad.

► Many producers thought it ludicrous to shoot OVER THE RAINBOW in in black and white, again calling for its removal from the film.

► This time Arlen protested vigorously asserting, “These great jerks. Money is power. Money rules the world. The artist is lucky if he can get a few licks in.”

► Before the release of the film, OVER THE RAINBOW soared into No. 4 of the 10 largest sheet-music sellers. THAT ENDED THE DEBATE.

So what, you might say? Well, undertaking such a signature song of Judy Garland may be a challenge that meets more than the eye can initially see. The Corps may have to view this tune in a very different light.

OVER THE RAINBOW sounds simple. In reality it is a complex symphonic musical and dramatic tapestry which deserves - no, demands - a thorough and masterful attention to detail.

So embrace Jamie’s tedious technical, yet invaluable, ensemble exercises with stern determination and conviction. And explore the undefined aesthetic values (expression, imagery, purity, joy, emotional touch, feelings) with all the imagination you can muster.

Keep in mind; we all know that feeling of ‘longing.’ But what does it sound like? Can anyone instruct someone to play ‘longing?’ I think not. But you will know when you hear it.

Better yet — you will know when you feel it — because if you don’t the ‘pot of gold’ at the end of your RAINBOW might well prove to be elusive.

Source material: The Making Of The Wizard Of Oz by Aljean Harmetz. Copyright©1977 Dell Publishing, New York, NY.

For a more detailed analysis of Over The Rainbow, send your request to Paul Thompson: [paulnew48@yahoo.ca](mailto:paulnew48@yahoo.ca). Please refer to Pot Of Gold.

By Paul Thompson

## Submissions

G&GCC is published four times a year. Contributor deadline for next issue is Friday, February 26, 2010. Please submit your material to Rick Robida, [rick-robida@livemail.com](mailto:rick-robida@livemail.com) in one of the following formats: Email. A Microsoft Word document, saved as “Rich Text Format” or “text only”. Or mail to Rick Robida, C/o 306 - 205 Keele Street, Toronto, Ontario M6P 2K1.

Photos should be sent to: [Toronto\\_Optimist@rogers.com](mailto:Toronto_Optimist@rogers.com)

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

If you have prints, there are two options. Scan the prints at 600 dpi (dots per inch) then email the unedited images, or mail the prints to Bob Carell. He will scan the photos and return the originals to you. If you wish to do this, please email Bob at: [Toronto\\_Optimist@rogers.com](mailto:Toronto_Optimist@rogers.com)

## THE OPTIMIST CREED

THE CREED upon which Optimists International is based. Although we are no longer directly affiliated with any Optimist Club, this Creed still represents our guiding Principles.

### PROMISE YOURSELF

- ▶ To be so strong that nothing can disturb your peace of mind.
- ▶ To talk health, happiness and prosperity to every person you meet.
- ▶ To make all your friends feel that there is something in them.
- ▶ To look at the sunny side of everything and make your optimism come true.
- ▶ To think only of the best, to work only for the best, and to expect only the best.
- ▶ To be just as enthusiastic about the success of others as you are about your own.
- ▶ To forget the mistakes of the past and press on to the greater achievements of the future.
- ▶ To wear a cheerful countenance at all times and give every living creature you meet a smile.
- ▶ To give so much time to the improvement of yourself that you have no time to criticize others.
- ▶ To be too large for worry, too noble for anger, too strong for fear, and too happy to permit the presence of trouble.

## G&GCC

Editor: Rick Robida

Associate Editor: Paul Thompson

Staff: Gordon Brown, Bob Carell, Margaret Gianna and David Johns.

Consultant: Don Daber

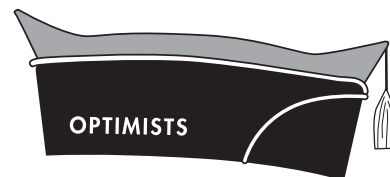
**CORRECTIONS:** We tried to get everything right. If not, please let us know:  
rick-robida@livemail.com

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

## DO YOU KNOW?

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

QUESTION 1: What was the informal name of this Corps hat?



QUESTION 2: What Corps won the VFW (Veterans Of Foreign Wars) and the AL (American Legion) championships in 1954?

QUESTION 3: How do you distinguish between the 1976 and 1977 Seneca Optimists?

Please send your answers by Friday, February 26, 2010 to: David Johns, [openrd2002@yahoo.ca](mailto:openrd2002@yahoo.ca)

## 2010 REPERTOIRE

The Optimists Alumni Drum & Bugle Corps 2010 Production features a blend of old and new titled simply...

### SOMETHING OLD – SOMETHING NEW

**SOMEWHERE OVER THE RAINBOW:** ‘Over The Rainbow’ (often referred to as ‘Somewhere Over The Rainbow’) is a classic ballad with music by Harold Arlen and lyrics by E.Y. Harburg. This beloved Judy Garland tribute was first played by the Optimists in 1975 with an added Dave MacKinnon update for 2010.



Toronto Optimists, 1975

**EL CID AND LAWRENCE OF ARABIA MEDLEY:** A reprise of the classic Optimists Off the Line from 1963.

**BIG BAND CONCERT MEDLEY:** The big band sound of the 1971 and 1972 Optimists originally arranged by Larry Kerchner with updates by Paul Thompson and a Dave MacKinnon “twist” for 2010.

**BATTLE CRY OF FREEDOM AND PATTON:** A reprise of this rousing Colour Guard Presentation from the Optimists of the 1960s and 1970s.

**WHAT KIND OF FOOL AM I?:** A brand new tune arranged for the Optimists by Dave MacKinnon.

## MAKING IT SOUND SO GOOD

FOR THIS FIRST publication of 2010 we thought we would re-acquaint you with our music staff for the upcoming season. In true Optimists tradition, we have engaged the finest talent available to advance our Alumni Corps.

JAMES (Jamie) OATT is first and foremost an educator 'par excellence.' He has been on the Faculty of Music at St Michael's College School in Toronto for the past several years. His drum corps experience has been wide and varied.



*That's Jamie on the left.*

Since his final year as Blue Devil's soprano soloist in 1988, Jamie has composed music, designed drill, and instructed all three drum corps disciplines with several notable organizations.

Jamie's introduction to the Optimists Alumni in 2005 is indelibly stamped in our memories. The immediate impact of his progressive teaching methods was nothing short of astonishing. His insistence on excellence and technical advancement of each and every member has contributed enormously to our continued improved musicality. Many of our principal musicians will attest that they are now playing at the highest level in their entire performance history because of Jamie's positive influence.

We look forward to Jamie's easy-going style, leadership, professional clinical training, and charismatic appeal in this year of 2010.

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DAVE MACKINNON's connection with the Optimists goes all the way to the 1970s when he played mellophone with the Toronto Optimists and the Seneca Optimists. Today he is co-brass caption head for the DCI Bluecoats. His teaching experience dates back to the 1970s when he was the musical director of the Ventures in Kitchener, Ontario.

Dave resides in Kitchener, Ontario, Canada and has taught, written, and consulted for drum and bugle corps in Canada, the United States, Korea, and Japan for many years. In



*Dave MacKinnon.*

addition, he is an active music judge for U.S. Scholastic Band Association, New York Field Band Conference, Ontario Drum Corps Association, Michigan Competing Band Association (C.B.A.), and Indiana State Music Association.

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JEFF MACKAY (Percussion Arranger and Instructor), a graduate of The Humber College Department of Music and York University (B.A. Honours Music, B.Ed), has been a



*Jeff MacKay on the left.*

marching member of the Optimists Lancers, The Oakland Crusaders, The Bayonne Bridgemen and The Kingston Grenadiers.

Jeff was the Canadian Individual Snare Drum Champion in 1979 and the Cadre Individual Snare Drum Champion in 2007.

His drum corps teaching stints have included Oshawa Rebels, The Emerald Knights, The Oakland Crusaders, The Guelph Royales, the Kingston Grenadiers, The West Coast Cadets from Bristol England, and, now, The Optimists Alumni.

*From the Jan. 1962 issue of Green Capsule Comments.*

## A NEW CANADIAN DRUM & BUGLE CORPS HITS THE TORONTO AREA!

**W**ELL, AFTER MUCH jollification and mirth, gorging and gaiety here we are settling back into our everyday humdrum little lives. Oh, we still have the festivities of the “New Year” to entice us into surviving the ill effects of our Christmas folly. However, I still insist that a week is barely sufficient time in which to recoup. New Years should definitely be postponed for at least one month after Christmas.

Christmas certainly hit us with all its enormity this year. It seems that one day there was nothing... then PANIC.

Unfortunately, everyone seemed to push their own little private panic buttons on the same day... all of a sudden there were CHRISTMAS LIGHTS, TREES, JACKED—UP PRICES, FRANTIC SHOPPERS and above all, CHRISTMAS PARADES. Yes, parades. The delight of little children (usually past their twenties) with their shining eyes and red cheeks, cluttering up the sidewalks and making any shopping even more unbearable. I myself, had the misfortune (or maybe it was fortune) of becoming involved with a Santa Clause Parade.

Being a great bargain hunter, I had traveled some 40 miles to the west end of Toronto where I had been informed by a disreputable person that an even more disreputable Meat Market now had a tremendous sale of rhinoceros steaks, and rhinoceros steaks being one of my weaknesses, I partook to make the long journey. West Toronto seemed like the rest of Toronto... overrun with children, and on this day they had all been let loose from their basements watch this small, annual Santa Clause Parade.

NOW, I DON'T usually stand like an idiot, during mid-winter, on a crowded sidewalk in West Toronto, to watch a mythical old man in red make a fool of himself. However on this one day I was caught, and I did (stand on the sidewalk and watch, that is.) Then I heard THAT SOUND... the undeniable sound of DRUM CORPS... the music was GREAT; a little unpolished, but great... so naturally I just had to find out who they were.

I managed to stand on someone's shoulders for a while in order to get a good view... and one thing I will say about West Toronto, the kids here are kind of weak... and so, not being able to get a little elevation, I grabbed a popsicle from

a small girl and pushed my way to the front of the crowd, just in time to see The Port Credit Saints go marching smartly by. And the rest of the parade went on, and on... till, near the end, prancing down the street in all their glory came a real weird outfit, Who they were I didn't know, but if the Salvation Army had been on hand, the nearest hostel would have been put to immediate use... these boys were undoubtedly poverty stricken... their clothes hung in rags and tatters, and some had odd shoes, and some.... well, I tell you, I could have cried when I saw those pathetic boys!!

As they passed by me, and in between dabbing the freezing tears from my eyes, and licking my popsicle, I managed to look closely at those poor little souls, and believe it or not, they were happy. I tell you, HAPPINESS shone from those anemic eyes. They were completely oblivious of their shoddy dress, and my heart went out to them. But their Drum Major!!! If I ever felt PRIDE for a person, I felt pride for him. Dedication,



I tell you there was dedication written all over that man.

Here was a lost soul, aged and bent, desperately in need of care and attention leading his boys in their wonderful part of the parade. And to think, that every Christmas I have cried over the “Little Match Girl”.

Here was a whole Corps of

“Little Match Boys”. I could picture them later, burning their flag poles in order to keep warm, and then, when the flag poles were all burned, this wonderful old man, burning his treasured mace so that they might all be warm to the end. I left the scene with sadness burning in my heart.

I later learned, they were THE PORT CREDIT PEAR PICKERS\*. Where they came from nobody knows... or where they have gone. From the name, we can only gather that this wonderful Corps wander from orchard to orchard... gathering pears where they can!

I just pray that the “Pear Pickers” will somehow find the strength to survive the cruel winter, and may have the fortune to make themselves better known during the coming Corps season. Just a little financial help from some kind person would give these boys the encouragement they need. I say financial help, because undoubtedly, if a Corps ever needed a new uniform, the Pear Pickers do... or at least matching rags.

And so, to the “Port Credit Pear Pickers”, in whatever snow-bound Orchard you may be, a Happy New Year... and may you have a wonderful and successful Corps season, and matching rags. Naturally, the same good wish is extended to the OPTIMISTS, although wallowing in wealth, have everything Corps-wise that the PEAR PICKERS have.

\*The Port Credit Pear Pickers were the Toronto Optimists in disguise.