



Happy Holidays

Shakos off to former Alumni members who participated in the Santa Claus parades. Good to see you again. We had a fun time.



L to R:
Pat Buttigieg,
Vern Reid,
and Terry
Sweeney.



Santa Claus Parade - Acton



Santa Claus Parade - Oakville



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DOWNLOAD FULL COLOUR ISSUES OF GCC FROM OUR WEBSITE: www.optimists-alumni.org

Scout House Tattoo, August 9 - Waterloo

August 9. Clear skies prevailed and the Scout House Tattoo was a great success. This year's show featured the D.C.A.T. Chorus, Cambridge and District Pipe Band, Mighty St Joe's Alumni, Optimists Alumni, Ghost Riders, White Sabres Drum Corps, the Scout House Cadets and the Scout House Alumni Band. The closing ceremonies consisted of drummers from all corps playing Three Camps plus a massed brass presentation of "Never Walk Alone".



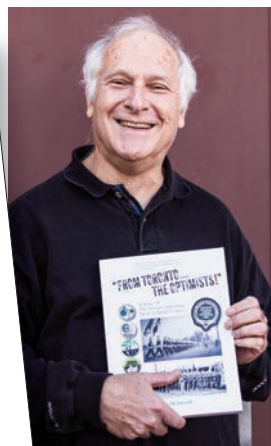
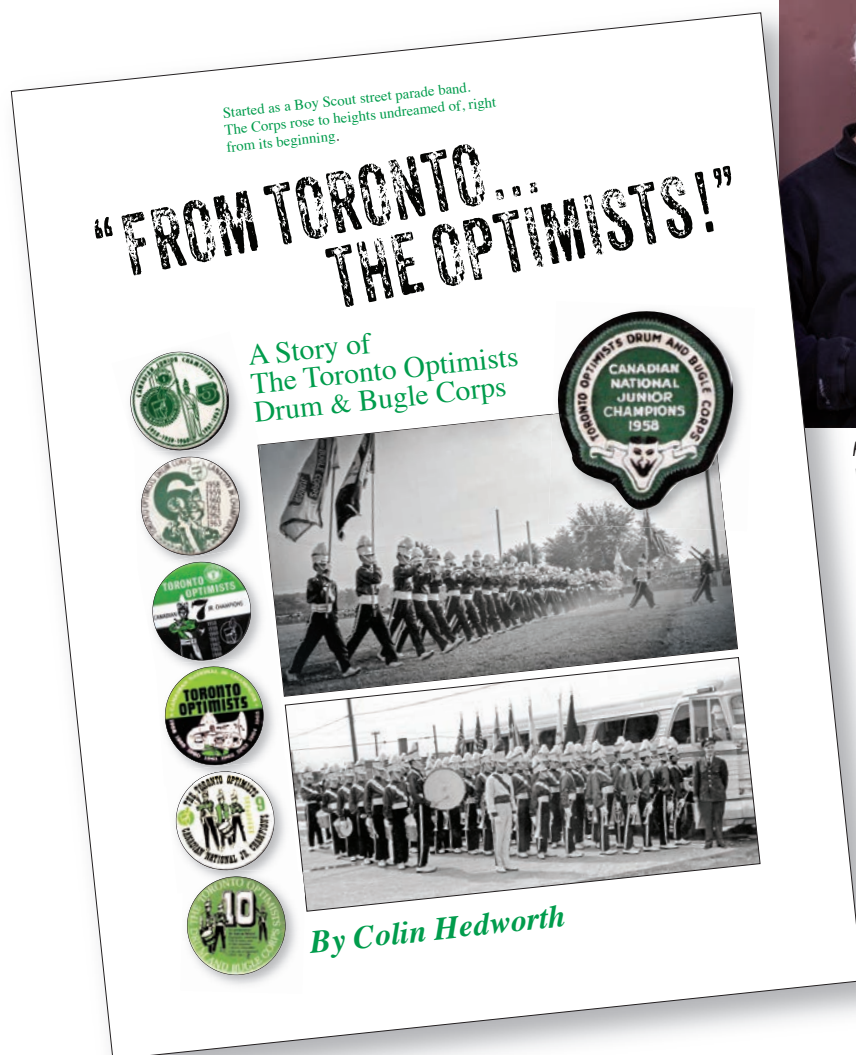
Legends VI, August 16 – Oshawa

The sixth annual Optimists Alumni "Legends of Drum Corps" Show was held on August 16 in Oshawa. A torrential downpour necessitated a move to an indoor venue. Thankfully, we were able to use the indoor soccer fields. Performing corps for the evening were: D.C.A.T. Chorus, K-W Northstar Summer Youth Band, Simcoe United Alumni, Sudbury Imperial Knights Alumni, Preston Scout House Alumni. The evening's finalé featured the massed brass playing "You'll Never Walk Alone"



Book release “From Toronto... The Optimists” A Story of The Toronto Optimists Drum & Bugle Corps

Written by Colin Hedworth and published by Bob Carell



Publisher Bob Carell with the first edition.

Colin Hedworth's book on the Optimists has finally been published... the way Colin would have wanted it! The original version was hand-written and the pictures were photo-copied. This new edition contains Colin's text plus almost 500 photographs spanning 1952 through 1978.

It took many years and a great deal of effort to make this book a reality. Feedback from those who have read the book has been very positive.

“I was transported back to my Cinderella life from 1960 through 1965, including the fabulous time on the line in 1962. The tastes, the smells, the power, the thrills, the pride, the brotherhood – Colin, rest his soul, brought it all back.”

“The book is marvelous. Graphically or visually it is outstanding. Colin's narrative is, for me, riveting. I was away from the drum corps scene during the very interesting times of the rise of Del and others and only saw Seneca Optimists one time and that purely by chance. It's so nice to read about those times as well as my own history with the corps from 1959 through 1966... Also a thanks to all of the others who helped in the project, especially a posthumous nod of the shako to Colin whom I knew as a fine tenor drummer and now know to have been a superb raconteur.”



A defining moment...
“... and in second place, from New Jersey...” This is the night in Rome N.Y., 1962 when The Toronto Optimists beat the Blessed Sacrament Golden Knights. Drum Major Jim McConkey holds his hand over his mouth – such a proud moment.



And another...
1977 Seneca Optimists. Perhaps the best Canadian Corps ever to compete. Winning the U.S. Open as well as the Canadian Championships.

The Last Time – by Doug McPhail

Reprinted from November/December 1963 GCC

THE HEAT OF THE SEASON, the trips and the big shows had passed and the Grape Festival was as cold as usual. Besides the cold, the wind blew in October amid the confusion that follows and surrounds the last contest of the year.

For too many, it was your last show with the Corps, **your** last show. But there wasn't any sentiment to speak of, not yet. No remorse, no sighs, no drama; just Optimists and their casual indifference that preceded "another show". There was the normal amount of crabbing and whining, not about anything in particular, just something to crab and whine about. There was no regret. You were Optimists and the time for remembering wasn't even in sight yet.

It was cold on the line, but you'll remember it only as good. Time, besides aging, mellows the past, and the nagging



Members who aged-out in 1960.

instructors, the tired lips, stiff wrists and sore feet on a hot drill field will have been worth it. You'll remember crab-apple fights, grape fights, water fights or just plain fights. Everybody fought because they liked to win, and winning is better when you fight for it. Maybe you'll remember contests and the winning; or maybe card games and the losing. Or perhaps you'll remember a girl. But you will remember the Corps. It was good then. You were in it.

By now you were coming out of concert. The grass moved deftly under you. Your feet turned, stepped out and pivoted with the thoughtless instinct of confidence. With a mean snap of intent the horns came down, a roll-off and just as meanly the horns came up..."I Believe".

I believe it's good to be a part of something that's worth while; and something that strains for your best is worth the while.

Rear march: Horns up!! "The Party's Over."

Yes, now the party was over. "Take off the make-up, all games must end. The Party's over, my friend." Your eye's were watering a bit then, Joe. The wind was cold and mean. Seven years is a long time.

On to retreat, off with the trophy and into the box went the plumes.

When you hung up your blouse you pulled the sleeve down so it wouldn't get creased and you smoothed down the shoulders almost with a little reluctant affection. But that'd silly; imagine getting sentimental over a piece of cloth. A little piece of green cloth; green satin cloth; a smooth

green satin cloth that shimmered with pride beneath the lights and heard the cheers that made it strong. You mused at their missing it; it'd be nice to keep.

But they'd miss it. They'll give it to some new guy who's greener than the pinnacles of his optimistic aspirations and who'll end up beating the corps that made you leave the field muttering..."Next time...!"

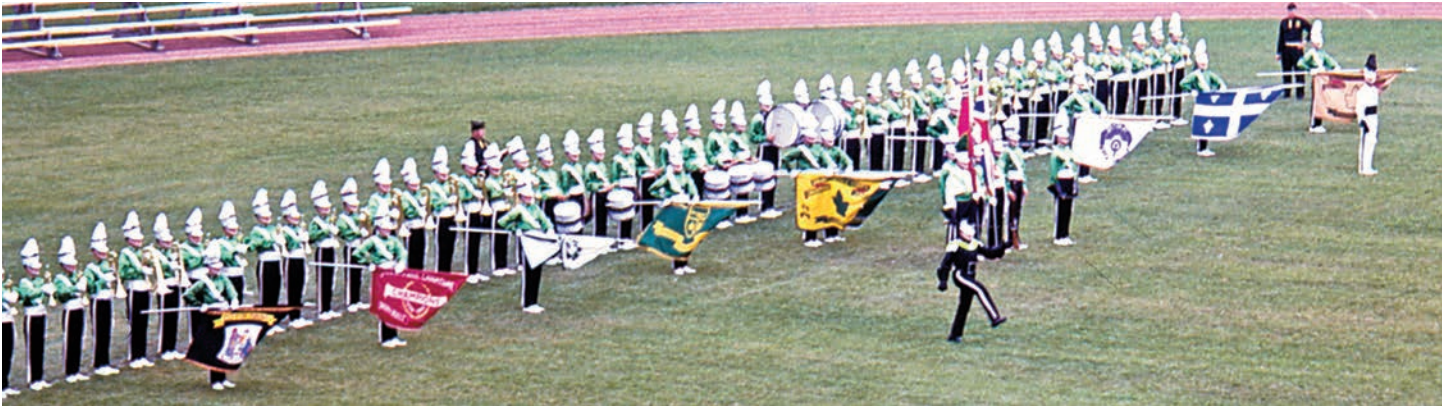
Along with your years of work, your uniform was packed away.

The stands were empty and the wind pushed bits of paper across the field. The bus was revving up and the guys were waiting.

They had grapes.

The “Corps”, 1963 - 1973 - 2003 - 2013

We decided to showcase 1963, 1973, 2003 and 2013. Why? The first public performance of the Alumni corps was in 2003 so we started with years ending in 3.



The 1963 Toronto Optimists at the preliminaries for the Nationals.



The 1973 Toronto Optimists at the Borough of York Stadium.



The Optimists Alumni perform at the 2003 Optimists Reunion at the Bruce's Mills Conservation Area.



The Optimists Alumni perform at the 2013 DCI Alumni Spectacular in Annapolis, Maryland.

DCA Alumni Spectacular, Rochester – August 29 - 31

2014 marked the 50th Anniversary of D.C.A. (Drum Corps Associates). Celebrations began Friday with the Labor Day parade. On Saturday members were able to show off their talents individually or in small group ensembles at the Convention Center. Sunday morning brought the Alumni Spectacular and, in the evening, the DCA World Championship finals were held at Sahlen's Stadium.

DCA 50th Anniversary Parade – Friday evening, August 29

It's not easy to put on a parade in the midst of rush hour but Rochester broke tradition and kicked off its Labor Day celebration a little early. Typically the parade is held on Monday but because of the Drum Corps Associates (DCA) World Championships Rochester rearranged its schedule and shifted the parade route. Ten drum and bugle corps, including the Optimists Alumni, were featured in Friday's Parade. The Optimists were very well received.



Annual Year-end Dinner – Saturday, August 30

Good cheer – good fun – good food – good night...



L to R: Ken Taylor, Yun Jung Go, Jackie Nicholls and Joe Gianna.

DCA Alumni Spectacular, Rochester – 2014 official co



L to R; **Back Row:** Rick Lang, Joe Gianna, Heather Hyslop, Rick Shearer, Ron Chong, Bob Carell, Keith Dearlove, Bill Kane, Matt Davis, Dave Bruce, Brian Collingdon, Kristen Kern and Sydney Kereliuk.

Middle Row: Doug Roblin, Warren Berger, Doug Johns, Yun Gung Go, Hannah Dove, Allisa Francis, Megan Peters, Cheryl Hewson, Marilyn Sterino, Courtney Harder and David Johns.

Corps photograph



Front Row: Rick Roblin, Glenda Tokiwa, Barry Bell (behind), Roger Rafson, Eric McConachie (behind), Barry Woods, Ken Taylor, Lorne Ferrazzutti, Judy Ferguson, Jeff MacKay, Doug Darwin, Scott Butcher, John Giblin, Ric Brown, Jackie Nicholls and Debbie Bruce

DCA Alumni Spectacular – Sunday, August 31



DIRECTOR'S VIEW

Looking forward to 2015



Corps Director, Ric Brown.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone for their efforts in providing a very entertaining show to our supporters and the fans of drum corps for 2014.

It took hours of personal and ensemble rehearsal so that we could perform to the level that we did. The video is proof that hard

work and togetherness equals personal reward and satisfaction.

Now I look forward to 2015. The new Board of Directors have met a number of times putting together a plan and discussing and debating the direction that will make the upcoming year the most successful in our history.

For 2015 we look forward to participating in DCI SoundSport. SoundSport events showcase instrumental ensembles of any instrumentation. SoundSport's goal is to

be entertaining for both the participants and the audience. There are no age restrictions and all instruments are legal. SoundSport teams consist of five or more members. Shows are five to seven minutes in length with a focus on music. The performance area is 20 yards deep and 30 yards wide.

The show committee has spent many hours developing an entertaining show that will excite and entertain within the established parameters of SoundSport. From what I am hearing, we will be keeping a number of our tunes from 2014 and adding one or two tunes that will make the show more "theme" oriented. I can't wait until we start learning the new music in 2015.

On a personal note I would like to wish you and your families a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

1, 2, 3 GREEN



Welcome back
John Peachey, Contra.

ARTICLE

Then and now

Terry Sweeney, Warren Berger and Joe Gianna.



Terry 1961.



Warren 1961.



Joe 1960.



Terry 2014.



Warren 2011.



Joe 2009.

WE REMEMBER

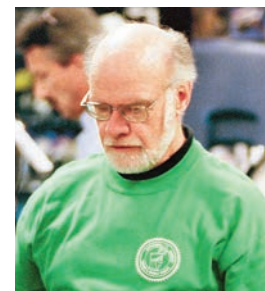
Gerrie Leebody 1937 - 2014

Passed away suddenly at his home on November 29th, 2014 in his 77th year.

Gerrie was a man of music and a master of the drum. His talent and passion won him the respect and admiration of all those that music brought together. He was a proud man. Always loved, always respected, always to be remembered.

Gerrie marched in the Optimists Alumni snare line in 2006 and 2007. Most recently he had been drumming with Simcoe United Alumni. Gerrie's history with drum corps goes all the way back to the Jolly Jesters, with whom he marched. Gerrie will be missed by all who knew him.

Please send condolences to
leeber@sympatico.ca



A salute to our Drum Majors



Phil Hennings and Barry Bell.



Andy Henderson and Vern Johansson.

1958	Phil Hennings	1965	Dave Johns, Andy Henderson
1959	Phil Hennings and Don Chisolm	1966 - 1969	Vern Johansson
1960	Phil Hennings and Barry Bell	1970 - 1974	Mike Arsenault
1961	Al Morrison and Doug McPhail	1975	Mike Arsenault and Mike Williams. Peter Byrne for Brantford contest
1962	Jim McConkey	1976-1977	Mike Williams and Dawn Canning
1963	Jim McConkey and Glen Durish	1978	Mike Grimes and Keith Gallagher
1964	Andy Henderson and Vern Johansson		



Phil Hennings



Don Chisolm



Barry Bell



Doug McPhail



Al Morrison



Jim McConkey



Glen Durish



Andy Henderson



Vern Johansson



Mike Arsenault



Mike Williams

ARTICLE (CONTINUED)

Drum majors are an integral part of any corps. In this issue we highlight those who were Drum Majors for the Optimists, be it the Toronto Optimists, the Seneca Optimists or the Optimists Alumni.



Glen Durish, 1963 Hull Québec.



Vern Johansson and Brian Hogan, 2008.

2003 – 2004	Vern Johansson	2009	Vern Johansson and Brian Hogan
2005	Brian Byrne	2010	Laura King
2006	Vern Johansson	2010 - 2011	Jeff MacKay
2007	Brian Hogan and Dave Burgess	2012 - 2014	Jackie Nicholls
2008	Brian Hogan and Vern Johansson (Dave Burgess until St Patrick's Day parade)		



Peter Byrne



Dawn Canning



Mike Grimes



Keith Gallagher



Vern Johansson



Brian Byrne



Brian Hogan



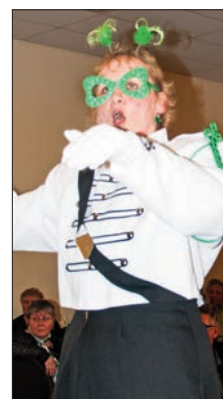
Dave Burgess



Jeff MacKay



Laura King



Jackie Nicholls

REHEARSALS

Kitchener, August 9

John better not have forgotten his pole and flag again. I wish he'd pay more attention to the drill. He seems distracted... Oh Oh!

Oh Oh! Wait a minute, let me think... shako, tunic, pants, shoes, flag harness, uh, uh, let me think...



Rochester, August 30

OK, how hard can this be? Let's see... 28 + 18 + 32, oblique 6, 90° turn. MT 16, 180°, back 28, horn up on 7 (7?), 90°, 34 to hash, pirouette, bow, 8 steps back, horn up on 3 (3?), 4 back, MT for 16, halt. I think I've got. Thanks Rick. Thanks Bill.



Oh, this way.

My left or his right? Right?

I'm confused!



Oshawa, August 16

Oh Oh! I think we may be in do-do when we marked this field with orange spray paint for this practice... Then again, I'm sure it'll wash off with water. Maybe the roof will leak while we're at dinner.



Legion, September - November

WOW! This rehearsal is so inspiring.



No. That's me... really.

That's you?



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".



A S 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.



1978 Seneca Optimists in Allentown, PA.

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 - 2015 OPTIMISTS ALUMNI SCHEDULE – FOLLOW THE CORPS

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

Date	Status	Location	Time	Activity
NOVEMBER				
Saturday November 15	Confirmed	Oakville	8:30 am	Santa Claus Parade
Saturday November 15	Confirmed	Acton	1:00 pm	Santa Claus Parade
Sunday November 16	Confirmed	Guelph	12:30 pm	Santa Claus Parade
Sunday November 30	Confirmed	Mississauga	Noon	Santa Claus Parade
DECEMBER				
Sunday December 7	Confirmed	The Legion	Noon – 4 pm	Rehearsal
Sunday December 7	Confirmed	The Legion	4:00 – 7:00 pm	Corps Christmas dinner
JANUARY				
Sunday January 4	Confirmed	The Legion	Noon – 5:00 pm	Rehearsal
Sunday January 18	Confirmed	The Legion	Noon – 5:00 pm	Rehearsal
FEBRUARY				
Sunday February 1	Confirmed	The Legion	Noon – 5:00 pm	Rehearsal
MARCH				
Sunday March 1	Confirmed	The Legion	Noon – 5:00 pm	Rehearsal
Sunday March 8	Confirmed	The Legion	Noon – 5:00 pm	Rehearsal
Saturday March 14	Confirmed	The Legion	2:00 – Midnight	Wearing of the Green
Sunday March 29	Confirmed	The Legion	Noon – 5:00 pm	Rehearsal

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.

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 **March (2015)** issue is **Friday, March 6, 2015**.

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.