THE PRESIDENT’S PODIUM
BY JIM MARCHMAN

"Wonderful concert." "The best concert on the lawn I’ve ever been to in Blacksburg." These were two of the comments I heard from acquaintances after our May 23 gig at Henderson Lawn. Someone else came up to me two days later at church and asked about the band. He said he was at the same concert and some of his friends were asking how often the band practiced and how much each of us got paid to play, noting that “you must really have to be good to play with that group”? He said the music, especially the big band stuff, was outstanding, just what he and his friends really enjoyed.

If you were like me at that concert you had your doubts about how it sounded, playing on an uneven, sloping surface or an unsteady "stage" in a strange seating arrangement, wondering if any of the sound was reaching the audience because it all seemed to be going straight up and disappearing. Or, if you were sitting near a microphone like I was, you were hoping that your wrong notes weren’t loud enough to be amplified and broadcast to the world. The message from the audience, however, was that we gave a very good concert.

I think we’ve had three great concerts so far in our Spring/Summer season; our big "annual" concert, the gig at Mountain Lake (how can you beat free wine, belly dancing, and "Moonlight Serenade played at circus tempo?!), and the Henderson Lawn performance. The challenge is to keep this up through the summer. The most important ingredient in these successful appearances has been good attendance by you as members of the band. I hope we can keep this going. We plan to keep performances spaced so we don’t have more than one in a given week to try to avoid overburdening anyone’s calendar, and I think we have some good outings scheduled. July will be a good month with the big concert on the 4th and other gigs at Radford and Claytor Lake. The Claytor Lake performance on July 26 is something I hope everyone will enjoy, a day to bring the family to the lake for a picnic and fun in the water, with a concert to entertain what should be a good Saturday crowd at the park. Carl Epley is even going to bring his pontoon boat over to give band members and their families rides. This should be a highlight of our band summer.

Our other big Blacksburg performance is at Steppin’ Out on August 2, our chance to get sunburn on our heads and burned feet from the hot bricks in the street while we play and watch New Age hippies sell their feathers and crystals down the street.

It should be a great summer for the band if concert attendance stays good. Some of us will be gone on vacation on some of the performance dates but that’s OK as long as the rest of us are there. I look forward to joining all of you for a lot more “wonderful” concerts this summer.

Jim Marchman

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FRANK THE MARCHING DOG
BY CRAIG TURNER

Whenever we play certain military marches in the Community Band, it reminds me of my experiences when I was in the Clemson ROTC Cadet Corps Band. The time was 1944 and 1945. WW II was at its height and Clemson had a Cadet Corps similar to the one at Virginia Tech (once called VPI). Due to the draft, the once vaunted Cadet Corps of over 2000 students had dwindled to less than 200. 17 and 18 year olds waiting to be drafted into the army or one of the other services. There were also a few that could not pass the physical examination. I was one of those 18 year olds waiting to be drafted. Since I could play the clarinet a little bit, I chose to join the military band rather than lug a nine pound Springfield rifle on my shoulder. We were a nation at war and military marching and drilling was taken seriously by the Clemson ROTC staff. Since most of us would soon be joining some branch of service, we figured we needed all the military training we could get.

Every afternoon we had a retreat parade. The band marched onto the field to drum cadences and stood to one side playing various military marches precisely at 120 beat cadence ("Stars and Stripes Forever, The Washington Post, The National Emblem" and others), while the rest of the cadets marched on the field. The trumpets blew "Call to Colors" (open valve) and the flag was then lowered to "The Star Spangled Banner". At my first retreat parade, I got my introduction to Frank. He was a large raw-boned white and reddish brown hound dog. I noticed him walking by the band when we first marched on the field. It was when "Call to the Colors" was played that Frank raised his head and let out a loud mournful AOOOOOOOOOOOH (similar to Ed Turner's flugelhorn playing in the lower register). When

the trumpets finished, Frank's howling also trailed off. Several of the new band members, including me, were breaking up at the sound, but the others paid no attention as though this was normal and apparently so it was. Try laughing and playing an instrument at the same time. We then played "The Star Spangled Banner" accompanied again by the mournful howls of Frank. We again played several marches while the cadets marched off the field. Frank never howled when we played the marches. He then marched off the field with us and disappeared. I asked several of the older band members about Frank and no one seemed to know who owned him or where he lived although he had a collar. They said he had been coming to the retreat parades for several years and would show up when the drum cadences started.

We soon became accustomed to the marching and "singing" of Frank, then one evening, he didn't show up. We marched on the field and played our usual marches. Still no Frank. We started into "Call to the Colors", when at the far end of the field, racing as hard and howling as loud as he could come Frank. He raced in front of the entire cadet corps and joined us as the last noted were played. It was on of the few times I recall he was late.

I don't know whatever became of Frank since I left Clemson shortly thereafter for the army. I did hear later that the members of the band made Frank an honorary member. I thought that it was appropriate and the least they could do.
COMMUNITY BAND MEMBER TRYING FOR THE BIG TIME

By JOHN & SUSIE HOWELL

Ian Howell, former Band member (timpani, percussion), will know very soon whether he’s ready for the big time. In mid-June he’ll be in San Francisco for the final round of auditions for “Chanticleer,” a 12-voice all-male professional choral ensemble that tours and records year-round. Ian is one of four finalists for a countertenor (male alto) opening in the ensemble, and four other finalists will be competing for a baritone opening. The finalists will sing their prepared songs (one classical and one non-classical—the ensemble does a variety of styles) for the members of the group, meet individually with the directors for vocal range and sightreading tests, and then attend a rehearsal of the whole ensemble and take turns singing with it, sightreading the music. “The whole thing is kind of scary,” says Ian, “but the more I think about it the more I really want to do it.”

Ian, who graduated from B.H.S. in 1993, is finishing his percussion performance degree at the Capital University Conservatory of Music in Columbus, Ohio. (Along the way he has majored in music education, jazz, and was strongly recruited by the commercial songwriting and production faculty, but right now he just wants to graduate!) The speaker at his B.H.S. graduation told the students to “Find something you love to do so much, you’d do it for nothing, and then find a way to make people pay you to do it.” Ian must have listened. For the past year and a half he has been supporting himself, in something less than luxury, with his music. He is leader of two bands. “Tungee” is a 4-member acoustic contemporary folk band (Ian and the other singer on acoustic guitars, plus bass and violin). They perform original songs written by Ian and the other singer, and they are now national semi-finalists in a new band/new music competition. “Calypso Island” is a 3-member (sometimes 4) band (Ian on steel drum plus marimba, bass, and sometimes a percussionist) that plays weekends at the Kahiki Restaurant and is just breaking into the garden party scene. He is a paid countertenor soloist with the largest church choir in Columbus and also sings in the church’s paid chamber choir. And he performs early music, singing, playing percussion, and playing recorder and crumhorn, with “The Early Interval,” a professional 8-member early music ensemble. June 14th is the big day. Keep him in your thoughts and prayers.

THE NEWS FROM FINLAND

By MARY RHOADES

Olaf and Marjatta Staffan send their greetings to the band. Olaf played trombone with us for a while when he was a visiting professor at Tech. He has a new job as Professor of Mathematics at Abo Akademi University in Abo, Finland (He was in Helsinki). Abo is two hours train ride west of Helsinki. To be closer to his job, he plans to move his family to downtown Helsinki, closer to the train station. He and Marjatta both love to dance, and performed at the Octoberfests while they were here. Their new spare time activity is to lead a square dance group in Helsinki, featuring the "new American western type" of square dances. It is built on the traditional type square dance, but is faster, more flexible, and uses a larger amount of calls than they learned in Blacksburg. Olaf travels to the U.S. occasionally. He visited Mary Rhoades last summer when he was consulting with colleagues in Blacksburg.
The History of Punch and Judy

By Aasha Leahy

One night at practice, someone asked about the history of Punch and Judy. Someone said that it was created in the sixties for a movie, but I was sure it was much older than that. I came home from practice and began my web search. I found that there are many sites which talk about Punch and Judy.

"Mr. Punch is 300 years old. The earliest account of the puppet show that evolved into 'Punch and Judy' was recorded May 9, 1662, performed by Italian puppeteer Signor Bologna, in Covent Garden, England. Then, Punch was known as Punchinello, and was most likely a marionette. He was a master of ceremonies, introducing various pantomimes in the style of the commedia dell'arte. Judy—originally named Joan—and baby appeared in Punch's life sometime after 1688, putting Punch on his way to becoming the outrageous character we know today.

By 1710, Punch had become so popular a figure to the English people that he was given the honor of playing a command performance to four visiting Iroquois Indian chiefs who were then the toast of London. Despite Punch's popularity in the English court, he was not without detractors. A letter appeared in the London Spectator that year, complaining that since Punch and Judy shows begin at 10 am—the same time as morning church services—people were taking the church bells as a signal that the puppet show was beginning, and Punch was luring the congregation (and their money) away from the church.

By 1737, the Licensing Act was established, creating a 'theater monopoly' that prevented street performers from practicing their arts. Many found work 'accompanying teas' as entertainers in the parlors of the upper classes, while many more worked fairgrounds, where no special permission was required. Punch found himself being used to attract attention to merchants selling ointments, or to advertise 'pullers of teeth'. (Often the puppet show was more profitable than the tooth-pulling.) Surprisingly, many of Europe's most famous puppeteers practiced dental arts as their main profession, hence the tradition of presenters of the Punch and Judy show calling themselves 'Professor'.

In 1828, John Collier, a student of drama, was hired by an English publisher to preserve a contemporary street performance of Punch and Judy. The performer whose show was recorded for posterity was an elderly Italian puppeteer named Piccini, and drawings of his puppets were made by illustrator George Cruikshank. This first published version of Punch and Judy is the best known, and is the framework upon which all subsequent versions of the show are based.

By the end of the nineteenth century, Punch had evolved into his fixed form: the nutcracker nose and chin, three-cornered hat, ruddy complexion and hunchback, evoking the image of a fighting cockerel rooster, dressed in scarlet and yellow. He wears his wooden 'pleased as Punch' grin as he uses his slapstick (the original source of all 'slapstick' comedy) to do away with the doctor, the policeman, the hangman, and even the devil. Mr. Punch is vain, deceitful, rough, and vindictive, but he remains popular because he is, after all, only a puppet, able to do what we cannot, flouting authority and outwitting any censorship. However, Punch and Judy has always been a morality play, illustrating how important it is to play by society's rules. When the antisocial Mr. Punch says, 'That's the way to do it,' after perpetrating some mischievous act, the children in the audience scold, 'Oh, no it isn't!' until Punch is punished for his misdeeds in the belly of the alligator.

Charles Dickens was once asked if Punch set a bad example to the young. He
replied: 'In my opinion, the street Punch is one of those extravagant reliefs from the realities of life... I regard it as quite harmless in its influence and as an outrageous joke which no one in existence would think of as a model for any kind of conduct. I think that one secret source of pleasure derived from this kind of performance is the satisfaction the spectator feels in knowing that likenesses of men and women can be so knocked about, without any pain or suffering.'

George Speaight said, 'Every child knows the blows from Punch's stick do not hurt. There is some mystery in human nature which makes us laugh at such things... by laughing at them, we drive them away from our own lives. The Greeks call this "Catharsis." Not a bad legacy for a 300 year-old.'

Well, there you have it, the history of Punch and Judy. I hope you have enjoyed this month's musical history lesson.

Stars and Stripes Forever

Here are some of the lyrics for this march that a few of us do enjoy playing and listening to.

Main melody
Let martial note in triumph float
And liberty extend its mighty hand;
A flag appears 'mid thunderous cheers,
The banner of the Western land.
The emblem of the brave and true.
Its folds protect no tyrant crew;
The red and white and starry blue
Its freedom's shield and hope.
Other nations may deem their flags the best
And cheer them with fervid elation
But the flag of the North and South and West
Is the flag of flags, the flag of Freedom's nation.

Trio
Hurrah for the flag of the free!
May it wave as our standard forever,
The gem of the land and the sea,
The banner of the right.
Let despots remember the day
When our fathers with mighty endeavor
Proclaimed as they marched to the fray
That by their might and by their right
It waves forever.
Childrens Answers in Music Education

Sent in by Rene Jacobsen

These are stories and test questions accumulated by music teachers in the state of Missouri, circa 1989.

Agnus Dei was a woman composer famous for her church music.
Refrain means don't do it. A refrain in music is the part you better not try to sing.
A virtuoso is a musician with real high morals.
John Sebastian Bach died from 1750 to the present.
Handel was half German, half Italian, and half English. He was rather large.
Beethoven wrote music even though he was deaf. He was so deaf he wrote loud music.
He took long walks in the forest even when everyone was calling him. I guess he could not hear so good. Beethoven expired in 1827 and later died from this.
Henry Purcell is a well known composer few people have ever heard of.
Aaron Copland is one of your most famous contemporary composers. It is unusual to be contemporary. Most composers do not live until they are dead.
An opera is a song of bigly size.
In the last scene of Pagliacci, Canio stabs Nedda who is the one he really loves. Pretty soon Silvio also gets stabbed, and they all live happily ever after.
When a singer sings, he stirs up the air and makes it hit any passing ear-drums. But if he is good, he knows how to keep it from hurting.
Music sung by two people at the same time is called a duel.
I know what a sextet is but I had rather not say.
Caruso was at first an Italian. Then someone heard his voice and said he would go a long way. And so he came to America.
A good orchestra is always ready to play if the conductor steps on the odium.
Morris dancing is a country survival from times when people were happy.
Most authorities agree that music of antiquity was written long ago.
Probably the most marvelous fugue was the one between the Hatfields and McCoys.
My very best liked piece of music is the Bronze Lullaby.
My favorite composer is Opus.
A harp is a nude piano.
A tuba is much larger than its name.
Instruments come in many sizes, shapes and orchestras.
You should always say celli when you mean there are two or more cellos.
Another name for kettle drums is timpani. But I think I will just stick with the first name and learn it good.
A trumpet is an instrument when it is not an elephant sound.
While trombones have tubes, trumpets prefer to wear valves.
The double bass is also called the bass viol, string bass, and bass fiddle. It has so many names because it is so huge.
When electric currents go through them, guitars start making sounds. So would anybody.
Question: What are kettle drums called? Answer: Kettle drums.
Cymbals are round, metal CLANGS! A bassoon looks like nothing I have ever heard.
Last month I found out how a clarinet works by taking it apart. I both found out and got in trouble.
Question: Is the saxophone a brass or a woodwind instrument? Answer: Yes.
Victory At Sea –
The Alternative Version

BY ELIZABETH BOWLES AND JUDY KEEPER

As some may know, we played “Victory At Sea” a few years ago. It was at that time Judy and I discovered that some people are very fond of this number, and some are, well, very not. And on a particularly odd night of practice we came up with a terrific way to get through the song, embrace it, even love it. So, for those who need some extra encouragement, or are just plain silly, we present – Victory At Sea, the Alternative Version. Sit back and enjoy...

INTRODUCTION: Our Heroine, armed with a float, sunscreen, and a picnic lunch, heads towards the beach to enjoy a fine day or recreation and relaxation. The waves are rolling, the sun is shining, and she’s standing on the burning sands taking in the sights and sounds of Mother Nature at her most majestic.

(31) TRANQUILLO: As Our Heroine (now to be known as OH) settles in for the day, she spreads out her blanket and her picnic lunch, lathers up with sunscreen (it’s a must, you know) and reclines on the sand. The sun is high and she drifts into a light sleep, imagining...

(57) TANGO: dancing on the Spanish plains with a handsome caballero. As the breeze rouses her a bit, she finds she’s slightly hungry. She rises to enjoy her inviting picnic lunch, only to discover...

(90) ALLA MARCIA: Ants! Everywhere. They’ve marched in, in platoons of thousands, have amassed a front at the fried chicken, and dug a trench through the potato salad. At this point, OH marches along in the beat, hoping to take out as many troops as possible. Finally, she has become weary, and watches the remaining ants victors march off with a chicken wing and a sizable clump of potato salad. Not to mention the pecan tart.

(172) 4/4 and MODERATO: After the skirmish, OH picks up a chicken leg, grabs her float, and drags it out to the water. Lying on her stomach, picking at the chicken leg, she floats back and forth, up and down over the undulating waves. All is tranquil again. Until-

(202) CON MOTO: Suddenly the sky turns black and the water turns fierce. OH looks up, and, to her horror, spies: a fin!! (da-da-da-da-da-dum.) By (220) FURioso, the great toothy predator has grabbed the rope of her canvas float and is pulling the float towards him with the idea of his own picnic lunch. Gnashing of teeth, screams, fighting tooth and nail, until, OH – pokes the great white shark right in the eye! (the right eye!) A direct hit!

(253) LENTO: If not mortally, then certainly visually wounded, the shark rolls over onto his back, lolling in the waves and bemoaning his fate. As he makes his final retreat, (277 or so) OH suddenly finds herself surrounded by other creatures of the deep, who have made their way towards her to thank her and celebrate the villain’s defeat. They wave a fond farewell as she drifts on the waves back to the sand.

(292) Packing up the lunch and blanket after a rewarding day out, Our Heroine starts back home, turning only briefly to look once more at the sun and waves, and feeling satisfied with her adventure. Her – Victory At Sea (the Alternative Version).

Now we know what the oboes do between their brief periods of musical activity. Ed.
The Blacksburg Community Band Newsletter

Upcoming Schedule At-A-Glance

1. July 4, Friday, 2:00 pm, 4th of July Parade
   Blacksburg Middle School
2. July 4, Friday, 7:30 pm, 4th of July Concert
   Henderson Lawn
   Blacksburg
3. July 15, Tuesday, 7:00 pm,
   Radford Summer Concert Series
   Bissett Park Gazebo, Radford
4. July 26, Saturday, 2:00 pm, Claytor Lake
   (band picnic at noon) Picnic Shelter 5,
   Claytor Lake State Park, Dublin
5. August 2, Saturday, 12 noon, Stepping Out
   Corner of College and Draper Streets
   Blacksburg
6. August 6, Wednesday, 7:00 pm,
   Karr Activity Center
   Warm Hearth Retirement Village

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The Blacksburg Community Band Newsletter is an occasional communication organ of the Blacksburg Community Band (sort of).

The views expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily anyone's in particular, so they are not necessarily the views of the Blacksburg Community Band, the Town of Blacksburg, the Commonwealth of Virginia or the United States of America! Believe what you wish to believe, forget the rest.

If you have a problem with anything in this rag, contact our lawyers in Boston, the law firm of Dewey, Cheetham & Howe (firm on retainer by Click & Clack).

If you decide to litigate one of our writers, let us know so we can run the slanderous louse out of town.

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