From the President
by Amy Hall

Welcome to the spring issue of the Blacksburg Community Band Newsletter! First, let’s get old man winter out of the way and welcome spring as we kick off our Seventh Annual Spring Concert on Friday, March 29th at 8:00 p.m. Let’s make this our best concert ever!

Second, I want to welcome all the new members. I’m pleased to have you with us to help make BCB even more successful. Along with this, I want to thank the entire band (and their families) for all your long hours, hard work, and dedication towards performing for the community. More and more people are calling on BCB to perform every year. This is very rewarding! So, thank you, BCB members for all that you do. Keep up the good work, and please continue to be a part of us.

Speaking of rewards. A reception immediately following the concert will be held at Charlie’s Restaurant at the New River Valley Mall. All are encouraged to attend and celebrate another great year with the band.

My hat goes off to Ed Schwartz for his always wonderful job of running the band and conducting. Where would we be without Ed? Anyway, thank you Ed for another great year. May you know that you are always appreciated.

This spring and summer is looking very promising for performances. I realize we are all busy with our own “schedules”, but I encourage everyone to attend when they can. Ed and I will keep you posted on upcoming events.

Looking forward to a great year.

Spring Concert 1996

The Blacksburg Community Band is preparing its Seventh Annual Spring Concert on Friday, March 29, at 8 pm at the Blacksburg High School Auditorium. This year looks to be a high point in the band’s history with record attendance in the band and the most ambitious program to date. Here is the current concert program.

Florentiner “Grand March Italiana” by Julius Fucik, edited by Frederick Fennell
Guys and Dolls Highlights by Frank Loesser, arranged by Philip Lang
Come Back To Sorrento by Ernest De Curtis, arranged by H. L. Walters
Featuring Ed Turner, Trumpet Solo
Rio Chama by Steven Brown
Guest Conductor - Steven Brown
Tannhäuser Overture by Richard Wagner, arranged by V. F. Safranek

15 Minute Intermission

William Byrd Suite by Gordon Jacob
Them Basses March by G.H. Huffine
Toccata for Band by Frank Erickson
My Fair Lady Selections by Frederick Loewe, arranged by Robert Russell Bennett

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1996 SHENANDOAH BACH FESTIVAL
by Joe Montague

The 1996 Shenandoah Bach Festival, June 16-23, at Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, VA continues a tradition of offering the works of Bach and other classical composers each year in an 11-day series of workshops, master classes, rehearsals, and informal concerts for singers, instrumentalists and listeners, capped by 3 formal concerts all in the spring framed valley of Virginia. The fare, interpretation and presentations are first class in an indoor/outdoor environment conducive to listening pleasure. This year's 3 cap concerts, featuring Bach & Mendelssohn include:

I. J.S. Bach's *Contata*
   Virgil Thompson’s *The Plow That Broke The Plains*,
   Mendelssohn’s *Symphony #1*

II. Mendelssohn's *Violin Concerto #1*,
    Schubert’s *Symphony #5* (The Great C Major)

III. Bach’s *St. Matthew Passion*

For additional information contact:
1996 Shenandoah Bach Festival
Eastern Mennonite University
Harrisonburg, VA 22801 or Joe Montague

Q: How many trumpet players does it take to change a light bulb?

A: Five. One to handle the bulb the the other four to tell him how much better they could have done it.

4th of July Concert

The 1996 4th of July concert is shaping up to be a memorable one. The 29th Infantry Division Band of the Virginia National Guard has confirmed their participation in the event. They will march in the parade and join us on stage in the evening with a massed band. We expect over 100 instrumentalists for the occasion! The Celebration Chorus will again be with us under the direction of Kevin Fenton. The finale of the concert will be a "kitchen sink" version of the Overture 1812 with chorus and (with a little bit of luck) three howitzers.

All people interested in performing for this occasion need to contact Ed Schwartz as soon as possible. It is hoped to have over 150 involved in this performance.

"SOUTH PACIFIC" Named As Summer Musical

The Summer Musical Enterprise has named *South Pacific* as its show for 1996. This popular musical by Richard Rodgers and Oscar Hammerstein III came to broadway in 1949 winning the Pulitzer Prize for Drama in 1950. The film version is still available on the video store shelves with great songs such as "Some Enchanted Evening," "I'm Gonna Wash That Man Right Out Of My Hair," "There Is Nothing Like A Dame," "Bali Ha'i," "I'm In Love With A Wonderful Guy," and "Younger Than Springtime."

Audition dates for stage roles or orchestra are Thursday, April 11, 6:30-9:00 pm, Friday, April 12, 6:30-9:00 pm, Saturday, April 13, 9:00 am to 5:00 pm, and Sunday, April 14, 1:00-5:00 pm. Callbacks are on Sunday, April 20, 1:00-5:00 pm. If you are interested in auditioning, please contact Ed Schwartz who will be the Musical Director for this production or visit the web site at <http://www.bev.net/community/NRAC/perform/musical.html>.
William Byrd was born in the late years of Henry VIII's reign, grew up as a choirboy in Queen Mary's Chapel Royal, and spent the most productive years of his life as a Gentleman of the Chapel Royal at Queen Elizabeth's court. This was a period of intense and often violent dissension in England, when irreconcilable differences between Catholic and Protestant factions tore families apart and determined the success or failure of many careers. The respect in which Byrd was held at court is therefore underscored by the fact that he remained a committed Catholic, serving a Protestant Queen who on many occasions forgave fines and penalties levied against him. She also granted him a Royal Patent giving him a monopoly in printing part music and music score paper. His list of compositions, filling almost 15 full columns in Grove's Dictionary, includes large numbers of both Anglican and Catholic religious pieces, the latter often written for private services in the homes of Byrd's powerful and influential patrons. The political skills that helped him survive Elizabethan court intrigues have served his descendants in Virginia and West Virginia well, including one family member who in addition to a successful political career played fair to middling bluegrass fiddle.

Byrd was an excellent keyboard player who was appointed to his first major job as a church organist as a teenager, and he left several large collections of music for harpsichord or the smaller but similar instrument, the virginals. In the early 20th century, Gordon Jacob took several of Byrd's pieces from one of these collections, the Fitzwilliam Virginal Book, as the basis for his "William Byrd Suite" for Band. This suite is not so much a suite of pieces by Byrd as it is a suite of pieces by Jacob, who took Byrd's keyboard music as the starting point for his own creative versions. Byrd generally wrote sets of variations on a basic tune, and Jacob's modern variations capture the spirit of Byrd's pieces very well, except for the Pavan. Since Jacob had no idea how a pavan was danced or what its character and tempo were, he simply took the dictionary definition, "a slow dance in duple time, often paired with a fast-moving Galliard." The character of the pavan in Byrd's time was a stately processional. (In fact the traditional wedding march and step are the last surviving vestiges of the pavan in our culture, so think of "Here Comes the Bride" and that's the character and tempo of a pavan.) Jacob turned Byrd's pavan into a very slow, hymnlike piece of music, quite beautiful and musically effective, but with no hint of the stately dance as Byrd knew it.

All in all, Jacob succeeded in bringing everyday music by a Renaissance master to a 20th-century audience very effectively, following in the footsteps of Debussy, Ravel, Respighi, and other modern composers who have turned to our musical past for inspiration.
INSTRUMENT SHOPPING IN THE WILDERNESS
by Jim Marchman

You've joined the community band, dusting off your old high school or college instrument after years of neglect and have rediscovered the fun of making music. You've tried to renew your instrument as you resurrected your musical skills, replacing pads and corks, unsticking tuning slides and perhaps buying a new mouthpiece. It is almost inevitable that at some time your thoughts will turn to a new instrument. You look around your section and see someone with a top of the line Yamaha, Bach, or Selmer and you look down at your well worn Bundy, Armstrong or Olds and wonder if a new horn might be just what you need to play better. Where can you go to look at instruments?

Somehow I have vague memories of youthful visits to music stores with walls stacked with shiny new instruments just waiting to be tried out. Either my memory is bad or times have changed. Today a search of stores would find seemingly thousands of guitars, keyboards, drums and amplifiers but few if any wind instruments. The Blacksburg and Roanoke Yellow Pages have numerous listings under “Musical Instruments - Dealers” but only in their fine print do the ads of a handful of these businesses mention any band instruments. Undaunted, I decided to check out the establishments in our immediate area to see what a member of the Blacksburg Community Band in search of a new instrument might find.

Ridenhour Music Center in the Market Place Shopping Center near Brendles seemed a good place to start since they claim to be the “Southwest Virginia Band Instrument Headquarters”. If this is the "headquarters" I'd hate to see the hqndquarters! On the shelves I found one lonely used Yamaha trumpet, a student or intermediate level horn overpriced at $459. The lone sales clerk explained that this is not the time of year to stock wind instruments, but that in August they would have Yamaha, Armstrong, King and Bundy instruments aimed at the beginning player. They would, of course, be glad to order an instrument at a "competitive" price but they can't get all brands. They have the usual lease-to-own and rental plans geared to the beginner. The store did have a reasonable stock of accessories (mouthpieces, reeds, cleaning supplies, etc.). Perhaps their main store in Salem has some real instruments in their advertised “three floors of musical merchandise”. Ridenhour sends wind instruments needing repair to Ken’s in Blacksburg.

MusicTech, located between the “burgs” on the second floor of a building on US-460, diagonally across from the Southern Classic Car Wash, was my next stop. I had been here before and Star, the owner, had tried hard to find a mouthpiece for my German made rotary valve flugelhorn. She had also given me a good price on the heavy duty stand that I use for outdoor concerts. As at Ridenhour’s, I entered a room packed with guitars, amps and keyboards. There was one “Belmont” brand trombone as the lone representative of the wind instrument world in the store, and a young man who said he had never heard of the Blacksburg Community Band told me they only handle band instruments when school starts in the fall. Star finally appeared and told me they would be glad to order instruments or accessories at a discount of 25% or more from “list” and described a couple of different rent-to-own plans. MusicTech didn’t have many wind instrument accessories in stock. For those interested, however, they do have a “professional digital recording studio”. Like Ridenhours, they farm out instrument repairs to Ken’s.

By now it was apparent that Ken’s Music, located in the rear of a tiny shopping plaza at 2401 South Main in Blacksburg, was the only place that appreciated real band
Instruments. Ken is well known in the area as the leader of a small dance band and as the person to see to get a horn fixed. The small shop has two walls covered with wind instrument accessories and a fair number of used trumpets, trombones and saxes on another wall. A couple of used woodwinds were in the counter and behind that are shelves full of mutes, reeds and mouthpieces. At last, a place with band instruments; but, alas, Ken’s also had no new instruments. Ken, like the other stores, does a big business in school instrument sales and rentals and he will order instruments of almost any brand and quality at a reasonable discount from the fictitious list price. Over the years I have bought seven new or used instruments from Ken for myself or my daughters. This is also obviously the place to take an instrument for repairs. If he can’t fix it he will send it to someone who can. Every now and then Ken starts talking about retirement and the other stores in the area start worrying about who will do their repair work.

There are other music stores in the area which stock some instrument accessories. The Music Shop in Gables Shopping Center specializes in music and is the source for much of the music used by the Community Band. If you are looking for a place to hand select any number of reeds, go to The Music Shop. They also carry other accessories and the prices seem to be the lowest in the area.

The Yellow Pages also sports an ad for Kittingers in Christiansburg, a place everyone should visit at least once just to say they’ve been there.

Unfortunately, even compared to larger places, the local musical instrument sales scene is not unusual. In Paris, France, where I recently visited several stores in the music and art rich “Left Bank”, I found only a few band instruments on display. I did once visit the Yamaha showroom in Tokyo and saw hundreds of instruments on several different floors.

So, if you want an instrument you probably should look at a catalog before going to a store. At least that way you’ll get some idea of the hundreds of choices actually available. But even there you’ll find that things have changed a lot over the past 30 years. When I was in school names like Conn, King, Benge, Olds and others dominated the industry from the beginner to the professional level. Today these are merely “brand names” owned by musical conglomerates who make all their instruments in generic factories and slap whatever name you want on them. Bach/Selmer, Holton/LeBlanc, and Yamaha continue to make their own instruments and take pride in their product, offering student to professional level quality. Several small companies specialize in custom made instruments for professionals, and, if one isn’t afraid to be seen without a “famous name” instrument, a few long-time family owned companies like Blessing offer excellent instruments at very good prices. Prices, by the way, seem to go up about 10% per year even if inflation doesn’t justify it, according to Ken.

Yes, we live in a wilderness where to most folks, even those working in music stores, to be in a “band” means to play something with strings and an amplifier. If you want a good instrument you’ll have to order it sight unseen, unless you’re looking for a beginner’s model and it is August. If it’s any consolation, things wouldn’t be much different if you lived anywhere else.

FOR SALE !!

**Baritone** Buescher-Conn, 3-valve, forward bell, lacquered brass, excellent condition. Contact Roma Scriven (540) 774-5681
Music Sorting & Pizza
by Kendra Kohl

Let’s say thank you to Mary Keffer, our band librarian, for all of her hard work in keeping our music organized. She spends many hours a year helping us to keep our band folders in order and it’s no small job!

On Sunday, February 11, several band members and our fearless leader, Ed Schwartz, met at the Rec. Center to help Mary sort through Christmas and new summer music. It was then categorized, alphabetized, labeled, put in folders and filed neatly away in our brand new file cabinets.

Thanks to Ed Schwartz, Mary Keffer, Alane Homer, Renee Jacobsen, Joe Montague, Karl Sanzabach, Kendra Kohl and Kyle Kohl, we are now officially organized. Our efforts did not go unrewarded as Ed provided us with several pizzas from Little Caesar’s and several of us brought along munchies to share. Thanks Ed! Thanks volunteers!

Note: The task of keeping our music in order, and hauling it to all our functions, never ends. If you would like to help Mary, please let her know. This really isn’t a job for one person.

Where Are They Now?
Search for Michael Stratton
<MS9273@conrad.appstate.edu>

“I promise I’ll return one day…...(maybe that’s a threat not a promise).” These are the words of Michael Stratton. Michael played tuba for the Blacksburg Community Band until his graduation from BHS a few years ago. Now a student at Appalachian State University in Boone, he stays busy in several musical and non-musical endeavors. He is a member of the ASU Marching Band (93-?), ASU Basketball Band (93-?), Tuba Choir (93, 95), ASU Brass Choir (93 and when ever else they met), Boone Volunteer Fireman, ASU Fencing (93-?), treasurer (94), president (95), and an ASU Student. Mike has provided us with a number of musical jokes that the ASU bands find funny, their top 10 in fact. They will be strewn throughout the newsletter. Here are a few about the tuba.

Q: What’s the range of a tuba?
A: Twenty yards if you’ve got a good arm.
Q: What’s the difference between a 3/4 tuba and a 5/4 tuba?
A: About 5 yards.

New Members

The Blacksburg Community Band would like to welcome all of our new members from the past few months. Despite the snow and adverse weather, we have been fortunate to have a growing number of musicians including past members who are now returning. Let’s keep up the good work and have a big group for our concert!

FLUTE
Reine Lea Speed
ALTO SAX
Cheryl Wiltsee
TRUMPET
Angela Fiquet
Mike Jenkins
PERCUSSION
Evan Jacobson

The Blacksburg Community Band Newsletter
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In The Pit for I DO! I DO!

By Mary Keffer

Some members of the band have been moonlighting again. This time in the production of I DO! I DO! sponsored by New River Valley Hospice and Va Tech Theatre Arts Department. Two performances were given, March 8th & 9th, to benefit the NRV Hospice. I DO! I DO!, written by Tom Jones with music by Harvey Schmidt, has only two characters, Agnes and Michael. The play begins on their wedding day and progresses through 50 years of marriage. The orchestra numbered 17, nine of which were members of the BCB: Bob Thomas, Eric Carlson, Spencer Taylor, Damien Wimbush, Mike Reid, Karl Sanzenbach, Mary Keffer and Bob Langford. Ed Schwartz was Artistic Consultant.

What is it like to play in a pit orchestra? It's nerve wracking and exciting. The orchestra sits down in the pit in front of the stage, therefore, the musicians can't see anything unless the actors come right to the edge of the stage. The mood in the pit, during the show, is very intense. Everyone is working together; listening, counting and watching the conductor. Often, while playing along, you come to a "vamp," or a measure or two that repeats over and over again as some bit of business takes place on stage. The director watches the action and has to bring everyone back in to continue the song without missing a beat. Occasionally an actor will jump in too early or wait too long to come in. Whatever happens, the musicians have to listen and be ready to make adjustments. The music is very expressive. A couple of string pizzicatos and muted trumpet notes set the mood, or a little flute trill adds humor. It is challenging as well, with fast passages, complicated rhythms and hard key signatures.

After the show is over the music plays in your head for days. You find yourself laughing to yourself at jokes made on stage or by fellow musicians during the show. It's a great experience and one that you don't soon forget.

My Fair Lady Lyrics

The Broadway musical is one of the classic forms of American music. Each Spring concert has featured at least one of the great musicals of the Broadway stage. This year, My Fair Lady is our featured work. Here are a few of the lyrics that go along with the music. Enjoy!

On The Street Where You Live
I have often walked down the street before
But the pavement always stayed beneath my feet before.
All at once am I several stories high.
Knowing I'm On The Street Where You Live.

Are there lilac trees in the heart of town?
Can you hear a lark in any other part of town?
Does enchantment pour out of ev'ry door?
No. It's just On The Street Where You Live.

And oh, the towering feeling,
Just to know somehow you are near!
The overpowering feeling
That any second you may suddenly appear!

People stop and stare, they don't bother me
For there's nowhere else on earth that I would rather be.
Let the time go by, I won't care if I
Can be here On The Street Where You Live.

I've Grown Accustomed To Her Face
I've Grown Accustomed To Her Face,
She almost makes the day begin.
I've grown accustomed to the tune,
She whistles night and noon.
Her smiles, her frowns, her ups, her downs
Are second nature to me now;
Like breathing out and breathing in
I was serenely independent and content before we met;
Surely I could always be that way again and yet,
I've grown accustomed to her looks;
Accustomed to her voice; Accustomed to her face.

I've Grown Accustomed To Her Face,
She almost makes the day begin.
I've gotten used to hear her say:
"Good morning" every day,
Her joys, her woes, her highs, her lows
Are second nature to me now;
Like breathing out and breathing in
I'm very grateful she's a woman and so easy to forget;
Rather like a habit one can always break and yet.
I've grown accustomed to the trace
Of something in the air; Accustomed to her face.
Upcoming Schedule At-A-Glance

Full Band Schedule

1. March 29, Friday, 8:00 pm - 7th Annual Spring Concert, Blacksburg High School Auditorium.
2. March 31, Sunday, 2:00 pm - Brush Mt.Craft Fair, Rector Field House, Virginia Tech.
3. May 18, Saturday, 1:00 pm - Richfield Retirement Center - Salem.
4. May 19, Sunday, 2:30 - 4:00 pm - Mountain Lake Wine Tasting.
5. May 25, Saturday, afternoon - Festival in the Park - Amphitheater, Downtown Roanoke. Joint Concert with the Martinsville Community Band.
6. July 4, Thursday, 1:00 pm - Parade Blacksburg Middle School.
7. July 4, Thursday, 8:00 pm - Concert, Virginia Tech. Joint concert with the 29th Infantry Division Band, Virginia National Guard, and the Celebration Chorus.

Disclaimer

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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