
by Mark Ripley

■ Ambassadors

The Ambassadors Drum and Bugle Corps was formed in September 1973, in Aurora, ONT, as a junior corps by Paul Ranson and his wife Bev. The corps, initially performing only in parades, first appeared publicly in the Maid of the Mist parade in Niagara Falls, NY, in the summer of 1974. They were voted "Corps Most Likely to Succeed" there.

The early uniform consisted of white shirts, neckerchiefs, black pants or skirts, gold cummerbunds and white cowboy hats. Later styles included royal blue shirts crossed with white, black pants and white shakos.

The Ambassadors took part in their first contest in August 1975, appearing in the Canadian Nationals Junior E (novice) Class, which they won. That win was followed by the championship of the Canadian National Junior D (bantam) Class in 1976. These wins were just beginning.

The corps moved to Newmarket under the sponsorship of the Lions Club in 1977. It also received support over the years from the city of Newmarket and from weekly bingo games.

The Ambassadors won the Canadian National and Ontario Provincial C (cadet) Championship in 1978, the Canadian National and Central Canada Circuit C Championships in 1979 and 1980 and the DCI Canada C Class Championships in 1980.

Not free of the political arena, the Ambassadors performed at the Conservative leadership convention in 1973 and were labeled by one parent as "Brian Mulroney's personal band." In 1980, after a Canadian ambassador had smuggled some American political hostages out of Iran, American crowds cheered the corps as surrogate heroes during appearances in the United States.

In 1981, the year Bob Middleton took over as director, the corps placed in the top half of the class A at the DCI World Championships in Montreal, QUE.

The Ambassadors' best year may have been 1984, when they marched in the Independence Day Parade in Washington, D.C., placed second in the Canadian National A Class Championship and were a finalist in class A/division II at the American International Open in Butler, PA.

A large turnover in membership in 1985 limited the Ambassadors to only two

Ontario



Ambassadors, Newmarket, ONT, approximately 1979 (photo by Ed Ferguson from the collection of Drum Corps World).

competitions, including the Canadian Nationals where they appeared in class A. They also hosted a home show in Newmarket that year.

The Ambassadors merged with the Oakland Crusaders in 1986 to form a new corps called Out of the Blue. This corps traveled to the DCI Division II Championships, but were announced and recorded for history as Oakland Crusaders.

■ Arnprior Lions

Arnprior, ONT, was proud to be home to the award-winning Arnprior Lions Junior Drum and Bugle Corps, which was later renamed as the HiRisers Drum Corps. The corps competed at the junior class A level throughout Ontario, Quebec and in several northern states.

After the HiRisers disbanded in 1969, several of the playing members continued to participate in senior drum corps activities throughout Canada and the United States. Interest in once again playing in a local band grew and in 1990 a new group was formed by several drum corps alumni, their families and friends.

In tribute to the HiRisers Drum Corps' final year, the band was named the Spirit of '69.

■ Bandettes

The Bandettes were formed in 1963 by Mary Wilson as an all-girl junior marching and maneuvering corps. They are still under Wilson's direction as they celebrate their 40th anniversary in 2003.

Because they are closer to Grand Rapids than Toronto, the corps competes often in Drum Corps Midwest (now DCI Midwest) and accepts members from the United States. For several years the corps absorbed visiting girl marchers from the Philippines.

The majority of the corps' members are from the Soo, but it also has members from Ohio, Kentucky, Wisconsin and Michigan.

The Bandettes compete in division III. During the summer the corps appears in approximately 25 to 30 competitions, exhibitions and parades while traveling more than 10,000 miles throughout the United States and Canada.

■ Blue Saints

In 1952, students from the Sudbury Mining and Technical School (Sheridan Tech) would play drums, horns and whatever else would make a lot of noise and

loudly cheer on their school football team, the Blue Devils. What they lacked in musical ability, they replaced with school spirit.

The late Maurice Gravelle, the school's music professor, decided to organize the Sudbury Mining and Technical School Trumpet Band from the

ranks of the noisemakers. Most agree it was because Gravelle had too much respect for music to listen to their informal playing style.

Gravelle's school associate and successor, the late George Netzke, continued the process of developing musical ability. However, he also brought military discipline into the mix, for Netzke was quite involved and well-known within the Canadian militia. He brought the group from school band to Canadian drum corps champions.

In 1958, their name became the Blue Saints to compliment the school football team. Recently the corps has placed well. They were the Canadian national champions in 1998, 2000 and 2001 and have returned to DCI Division III where they hope to improve even more in the future.

They also represent the histories of two other drum and bugle corps: the Nickel City Sound and the Imperial Knights.

Since their inception into the world of drum and bugle corps, they have flourished and made their school and city proud. They compete in numerous competitions and take part in the Calgary Stampede and the now-famous Quebec Winter Carnival.

For more than 50 years, they have represented and entertained Sudbury, providing youth with a musical education, self-esteem, a work ethic, pride and, most

importantly, fun.

■ Bluelwater Buccaneers

The Bluelwater Buccaneers, formed in 1974, was a junior marching and maneuvering corps. Its uniform consisted of red jackets, shirts with puffed cream-colored sleeves and tricorner hats. Norm Campbell was the Buccaneers' director. They folded in 1985 after several appearances at the DCI level.

■ Cadets LaSalle

Cadets LaSalle from Ottawa started in 1963, originally sponsored by LaSalle College. The corps later became self-sponsored and became one of the top three corps in Canada by 1966.

They lost the Canadian Nationals



Blue Saints, Sudbury, ONT, 2002 (photo by Ron Walloch from the collection of Drum Corps World).



Bandettes, Sault Ste. Marie, ONT, approximately 1979 (photo by Art Luebke from the collection of Drum Corps World).



Cadets LaSalle, Ottawa, ONT, 1972 (photo by Paul Stott from the collection of Drum Corps World).

on two occasions by two-tenths of a point and folded in 1972.

■ Canadian Commanders

The Canadian Commanders were formed in November 1963 through a merger of two Ontario corps. The Viscounts from Hamilton and the Jesters from Toronto were both struggling to maintain a respectable presence on the Canadian senior drum corps scene at the time, so Fred Hawkes of the Viscounts and Vince Macciocchi of the Jesters joined forces and gained the sponsorship of the Metropolitan Toronto Police Association.

The newly formed Commanders, under the directorship of Bernie Beers, was founded on the principle that everyone would march, so no one would miss out on the experience. The corps started rehearsals in several locations simultaneously in late 1963: in Toronto on Tuesdays, in Hamilton on Thursdays and in Oakville on Sundays.

Because of the split rehearsal locales, the corps was announced at contests as being from the different rehearsal towns on different nights: Canadian Commanders of Toronto one night, Canadian Commanders of Hamilton the next.

Because of the provision that everyone would march, the Commanders fielded an unusually large corps. The first public appearance was at an indoor arena in St. Catharines. The director decided to split all sections of the large corps in half and send them on separately.

The first half marched in to thunderous applause and lined up across the arena floor; they covered the floor from one side to the other and then some. Drum Major Don Chisholm brought the horns up and looked as if he was about to start the performance, whereupon the doors opened again and the second half of the corps marched in, to the astonishment of the audience.

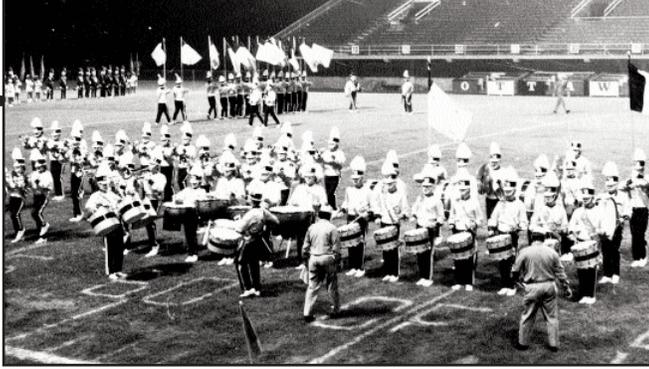
The corps spread across the width of the arena three times. No one had ever seen a corps that big before. The crowd reaction left goose bumps on corps members for hours and memories for a lifetime.

That first night the members had all components of their uniform except for the bright orange tunics, so they went on in corps T-shirts. Designed by Chisholm, the complete uniforms were so bright that they led to the corps'

nickname of "Great Pumpkin." The corps also operated under the moniker of The Spotlight Cadets.

In 1964, the first competing season, the Commanders took second place at the Canadian Nationals, being narrowly beaten by the Guelph Royallaires.

In following years, the corps competed in New York, Connecticut and Pennsylvania,



Canadian Commanders, Toronto, ONT, approximately 1965 (photo from the collection of Bruce Lindsay).

scoring fairly well. They had the honor of being invited to the American Legion Nationals in Washington, D.C., in 1966 where they performed at prelims.

The Commanders' sister corps during those years was the Rochester Crusaders. It was not uncommon for corps members to borrow each other's instruments or play in each other's lines during the retreat.

The Canadian Commanders became the Burlington Commanders when they gained the sponsorship of the city of Burlington, a name the corps retained until the end of its existence in 1978.

Many of the old Commanders continue to perform with various alumni corps in the Burlington area.

■ Canadian Knights

Canadian Knights from Peterborough

were formed in 1977 as the Golden Knights. The corps was named the Canadian Knights in 1978. They were the 1991 provincial and national parade class champions. They mainly competed in class A/division II and they won class A in 1986 at Madison, WI.

■ Cardinals

The Cardinals from Scarborough were formed in fall of 1969 and won many provincial, national and international awards. Under longtime director Jim Towie, the corps was a successful touring corps in the DCI Class A/Division II arena until 1995.

■ Contemporary Youth Ensemble

Contemporary Youth Ensemble, founded in 1992, was a junior marching and maneuvering corps based in Vanier, a suburb of Ottawa. Its

president was Glenn Duncan.

The group finished sixth at the 1995 U.S. Open Division II/III Finals and second in the division III finals at DCEast in 1996.

The corps disbanded in 1997.

■ Conqueror

Sponsored by the Hamilton Optimist Club, this corps was probably one of the most original and individualistic units. The corps

was originally formed in 1960 as a junior corps. The musical styling of the corps was exciting and varied, but all in keeping with the unique, Roman-styled uniforms.

A large, distinctive color party supplemented the visual impression. The entire effect made Conqueror a notable component of any parade, show or contest.

Conqueror II reformed in May 1982 and won various titles

throughout Ontario and the northern United States. The corps made several consecutive appearances at the DCI World Championships before ceasing as a touring corps.

■ De La Salle Oaklands

The De La Salle Oaklands drum and bugle corps was one of the longest-lived corps in history, tracing its origins to 1910. It was sponsored by De La Salle Oaklands

College for 75 years and was affiliated with the Canadian Drum Corps Association and the New York-Canadian Association.

It reached the peak of its fame in the late 1930s and 1940s with its famous blue and gold uniforms, 100 bugles and 50 drums.

Del switched to marching in 1958. The 1961 season was the best year, when it defeated the Canadian champions, the Toronto Optimists, on three occasions, only to lose out at the Canadian Nationals by .05.

Placing second in 1959 through 1964, the national title seemed to always elude them. The corps was the Canadian junior A champs in 1969 and 1970.

The uniform was white, trimmed effectively with red and green scarlet capes with green satin lining and topped with a silver shako and red plume.

The Oaklands were known in Canadian Nationals as "always the bridesmaid, never the bride," due mainly to the success of the Toronto Optimists and their string of 11 straight Canadian National Championships.

Contemporary Youth Ensemble, Ottawa, ONT, 1995 (photo by Ron Walloch from the collection of Drum Corps World).



Conqueror II, Hamilton, ONT, 1999 (photo by Harry Heidelberg from the collection of Drum Corps World).



Canadian Knights, Peterborough, ONT, 1986 (photo by Orlin Wagner from the collection of Drum Corps World).



Cardinals, Scarborough, ONT, 1978 (photo by Brad Harris from the collection of Drum Corps World).





(Above) De La Salle Oaklands, Toronto, ONT, July 1, 1972 (photo by Paul Stott from the collection of Drum Corps World); (right) Oakland Crusaders, 1976 (photo by Jane Boulen from the collection of Drum Corps World).

De La Salle finally broke this string in 1970 and became the elite Canadian corps after that.

In 1971, they entered the United States with a bang, making finals at the World Open and beating the Cavaliers at "Drums on Parade" in Madison.

In 1974, De La Salle became the first Canadian corps to make DCI Finals, finishing seventh. In the off-season, however, they merged with the Etobicoke Crusaders to become the Oakland Crusaders after the sponsorship of De La Salle College came to an end.

■ Durham Girls

Durham Girls started in 1969, succeeding a drum corps of similar name sponsored by a high school that was fazed out during closing of the school. The girls were provincial champions in 1971, Canadian national champions in 1970 and provincial champions again in 1969. The corps folded in 1982 as one of the more memorable all-girl corps in the C circuit.

■ Dutch Boy

This corps has been all over the map, from parade class to DCI Open Class finalist. With a long, rich heritage, Dutch Boy has been a contender in all classes in which they competed. With music from jazz to Vegas show-tunes, the corps understands entertainment and how to get a crowd going. They continue as a DCI Division III corps with John Robbins as the driving force.

■ Emerald Knights

The Emerald Knights from Mississauga were formed in 1980.



They entered competition in 1983 and won various titles, including 1991 provincial and national class B champions.

■ Empire Loyalists

The Empire Loyalists from Amherstview were formed in January 1985 in

commemoration of the International Year of Youth. The corps won a number of first-place titles in Ontario under the directorship of Charlie Cadieux.

■ Etobicoke Crusaders

The Etobicoke Crusaders were started in 1969 and in 1972 they won the junior B national title and were the western circuit champions. The corps merged with De La Salle Oaklands in 1975 to form the Oakland Crusaders.

■ Flying Dutchmen

Formed in 1956, the corps entered competitions in 1959. Originally known as the 48th Field Squadron of the Royal Canadian Engineers, they entered senior competition under the name Flying Dutchmen.

They were absent from competition in 1960, but returned in 1961 with 20 appearances, including eight field competitions. They defeated 20 senior corps and traveled more than 3,000 miles in Upper New York, Pennsylvania and throughout Ontario.

A junior corps was founded in 1967 as a centennial project by members of the senior corps that lasted into the early 1970s.

■ Golden Lions

In 1969, the Simcoe Golden Lions were formed, sponsored by the Simcoe Lions Club. They succeeded a senior corps, the Royal Blues. The corps competed in junior B, junior C and parade class categories, highlighted by a national

championship in 1977. The corps folded in 1979.

Emerald Knights, Mississauga, ONT, 1997 (photo by Harry Heidelberg from the collection of Drum Corps World).



Empire Loyalists, Amherstview, ONT, 1995 (photo by Dan Scafidi from the collection of Drum Corps World).

many successful years as a standstill parade corps. They were known by the catchphrase "The corps with a heart."

They won the 1959 and 1960 Canadian Senior Championship. The 1961 season was their most successful year in their history

with nine first-place wins and 12 trophies won in international competitions, including the Canadian Senior Championship for three consecutive years. They also won the Ontario provincial title and an international competition in Toronto.

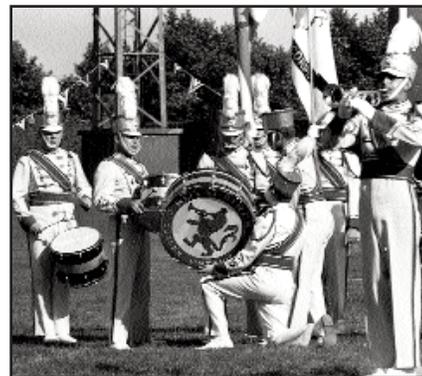
They went on to win the Canadian Senior Championship once again in 1962. Their final competition was in 1989 at the DCA Championships. They still operate as a percussion ensemble for parades.

■ Hamilton Firefighters

The Hamilton Firefighters Senior Drum and Bugle Corps was the idea of Lt. William Mitchell of the Hamilton Fire Department. The first planning meeting was held at Mitchell's home. The original six that put the endeavor together were Mitchell, Ray Bertin,

Gord Bone, George Ireland, Jim Gemmel and Bill Brown.

The corps became a reality when, in 1961, more than 60 active Hamilton firefighters canvassed the downtown city merchants and raised enough money to purchase their first set of



Guelph Royalaires, Guelph, ONT, July 12, 1962 (photo by Moe Knox from the collection of Drum Corps World).

instruments. The first performance was in the Hamilton Remembrance Day Parade, November 12, 1961.

Currently the membership is made up of experienced musicians from various junior and senior drum corps, military and marching bands and other musical organizations. The principle objective is to provide a pleasant social atmosphere for



Golden Lions, Simcoe, ONT, 1978 (photo by Brad Harris from the collection of Drum Corps World).

■ Guelph Royalaires

The Guelph Royalaires senior corps began competing in 1956 after

continuing in drum corps activities without the pressures of a field corps. The corps' activities are primarily family-oriented with several married couples participating and several father/son combinations as members. HFFDC is a social corps that keeps the



Hamilton Firefighters, Hamilton, ONT, approximately 1960 (photo from the collection of Bruce Lindsay).

needs and wishes of the members foremost. The corps has traditionally employed professional music instructors and arrangers. Through this professional instruction, the corps has continuously raised its level of proficiency and expertise.

In 1965, the corps began accepting non-firefighters that had previous musical training and experience.

An all-male organization for most of its history, the corps started accepting female members in 1995. Today, the HFFDC has more than 70 men and women of varying backgrounds and includes alumni from more than 40 junior and senior drum corps and military bands from all over Ontario.

■ Imperial Knights

This corps operated out of Sudbury, ONT, for about 20 years, disbanding in 1984. During that time it was a successful senior corps that placed well in the Red Carpet Association that operated in Ontario and the Northern United States.

The "green machine," as they were known locally, was most successful in 1972 when they were up against some of the senior powerhouses like Guelph Royalaires and Pittsburgh Rockets. The Knights placed fourth at the RCA Championships and, if they had gone on to DCA Finals that year, they would probably have placed in the middle of the pack.

They were led by corps directors Ron Groves and then John Hallows who later directed the Blue Saints for many years.

There were several attempts to revive the Imperial Knights, but without much success.

■ Jolly Jesters

This corps was started by a group of men in the militia and was called the Fifth Column Army Service Corps. It disbanded during World War II, but reformed in 1947-1948 as a parade corps until it won the Canadian Championships (senior novice class) in 1952. In 1956, the corps altered the uniform from dress blue jackets to sky blue with royal blue satin blouses.

Also in 1956, it received its first invite to a major American contest in Albany, NY. Shortly after this, the corps was invited to

participate in a four-week competition sponsored by the Toronto Argonaut Football Club.

As the story goes, in order to avoid conflict with union and army regulations, the corps rented clown costumes for this appearance and adopted the name Jolly Jesters. To their surprise, the name, costume and show caught on and it was unanimously decided they would appear the following year in the clown uniforms.

In 1957, the corps appeared in red and white satin clown uniforms, with the drum major/director, Ted Riley, dressed as a comical tramp. Then 1960 came along and the corps decided to go to dress blues and changed the name to The Jesters. Time marched on, as did The Jesters, and now they are a part of drum corps history.

■ Kawartha Cavaliers

The Kawartha Cavaliers were formed in 1957 when a group of young musicians left the local militia regiment known as the 45th Artillery Corps to pursue new and different musical interests. They gained a respected reputation as they played in many parades and concerts throughout the county in 1958 representing Lindsay, ONT.

Their first uniform was a white shirt, black pants and a pith helmet. However, they soon acquired their highly recognizable uniform of a black and gold cavalier-type shirt with black pants with a gold stripe and, of course, the cavalier hat topped with a gold plume.

In 1960, the group entered the field competition circuit, and in 1967 they won the Ontario and Canadian Senior B Drum Corps

Championships. In 1962, the corps was reorganized and self-sponsored. They tested themselves in DCA for the first time.

After a short rebuilding period, they were back on the field in 1972 competing in the Red Carpet Association and holding their own against the likes of the Kingston Grenadiers, Guelph Royalaires, Sudbury Imperial Knights, Pittsburgh Rockets, Erie Thunderbirds, Dunkirk Patriots and Johnsonburg Diplomats, to name a few.

The Cavaliers won many awards throughout their proud history, including many "best band on parade" awards and "best

drum line in field competition."

The Cavaliers have since performed all over Canada and the United States in parades and concerts and also at Walt Disney World. They also took part in a charity concert held at Hamilton Place November 10, 2001, for the relief effort of the victims of the 9-11 disaster.



Kiwanis Cavaliers, Kitchener, ONT, 1996 (photo by Karen Sunmark from the collection of Drum Corps World).

All the members of the corps are proud to carry the title of ambassadors of the town of Lindsay and some travel a great distance each year to practices, parades and shows. The corps is well-known for the exciting music it plays and, of course, for its trademark black and gold uniforms.

■ Kingston Grenadiers

The Kingston Drum and Bugle Corps, based in Kingston, ONT, was formed in February 1961. A former member of The Princess of Wales Own Trumpet Band and other interested individuals held a meeting from which an executive committee was formed and the name the Limestone City Grenadier Drum and Bugle Corps was adopted. The name was changed to the Kingston Grenadiers a year later.

Perhaps, along with many Canadian Championships over the past four decades, performing for her Majesty the Queen and Prince Philip in honor of Kingston's tercentenary was a standout highlight. The Grenadiers are probably the only corps to have done so.

In 1975, they amalgamated the Belleville Yardmen into their corps. The corps had several years of short inactivity, but it always rebounded with great success.

This is the first Canadian corps to place in the top 10 of DCA competition for five years in a row (1998-2002).

■ Kiwanis Cavaliers

The Kiwanis Cavaliers, of Kitchener/Waterloo, ONT, began a collaborative venture with Tampa Bay Thunder in February 2002. Since the organization's formation in 1971, the Cavaliers' programs have reached more than 2,000 youth and a strong infrastructure has extended its valuable support to other organizations to assist them in achieving their goals.

The Cavaliers are known for putting the "I" in DCI and have proudly represented both Canada and other countries around the globe. In 2001, the organization represented DCI at the World Showband Championships held in Kerkrade, The Netherlands.

The two-week European tour that took the corps through Germany, France, Belgium and the Netherlands provided members with unforgettable memories and a great respect for their newfound supporters.

In the fall of 2001, the Tampa Bay Thunder organization in Florida approached the Cavaliers to discuss possible opportunities that would benefit individuals



Kingston Grenadiers, Kingston, ONT, 1998 (photo by Alan Winslow from the collection of Drum Corps World).

participating in both summer programs.

Tampa Bay Thunder had a short but successful history. While under the direction of Jim Newman, Thunder became a large division II competitive corps.

Under the direction of Doug Darwin, the Kavaliers have toured successfully for years. A strong support staff and exceptional educational team have made it possible to offer an excellent experience to the Kavaliers youth.

Therefore, the Kavaliers and Tampa Bay Thunder developed the foundation of a longterm collaborative relationship. The organizations merged to offer new opportunities through the sharing of management, support, staff, resources and membership, and to maximize the summer experience for 135 participants in the Kiwanis Kavaliers' world-class summer program.

The 2002 Kiwanis Kavaliers featured 135 members in a production of "Hall of Justice," based on comic superheroes. They finished 20th in DCI Quarterfinals competition.

The Kavaliers offer several current collaborations, including the Sentenelles Colour Guard, the Ventures Colour Guards and the Spirit Performing Youth Ensemble. All of these groups act independently of the Kavaliers, sharing resources, staff, equipment, management and often membership.

■ **Krescendos**

Krescendos from Peterborough were formed 1969 and became national champions in 1970. They competed in junior B class in 1971, clad in bright yellow uniforms. Their last year in competition was 1982.

■ **Lakeshore Brassmen**

The Lakeshore Brassmen were formed in 1978 comprised of over-age members of the Golden Lions. The Brassmen are a self-sponsored senior competitive parade corps still in operation.

■ **Lionettes**

The Lionettes, formed in 1945, was an all-girl junior marching and maneuvering corps based in Sarnia, ONT. When the Sarnia Marching Diplomats folded in 1972, the Lionettes became the Bluewater Lionaires and invited men to march with them. The year after, the corps became the Bluewater Buccaneers.



Krescendos, Peterborough, ONT, approximately 1975 (photo by Gareth Skipp from the collection of Drum Corps World).

■ **Marching Angels**
Marching Angels, also from Sarnia,

were organized in 1962. The girls wore black princess-style uniforms with a white shoulder sash and a sparkling red shako with a seven-inch white ostrich feather plume. The corps performed until 1966.

■ **Midlanders**

The Midlanders, from London/Woodstock, were formed in 1966 from a merger of the Woodstock Imperials and the Oakridge Optimists. They entered junior class B competition in 1967 and were Ontario junior B champions in 1968 and 1969.

They were the Canadian national champions in 1967-1969. They also won the U.S. Open Class A Championship and the World Open Junior B Championships in 1970.

■ **Niagara Militaries**

Niagara Militaries from Niagara Falls presented one of the most entertaining shows in the business. Since their inception in 1949 as an independent self-supporting corps, the Militaries constantly strived to produce the tops in audience appeal in shows with music, drill and uniforms to match. Fans greeted this corps as one of the most unique and entertaining productions in drum corps circles.

■ **Nickel City Sound**

Nickel City Sound from Sudbury was formed in September 1992 as a senior corps. It became a junior corps in 1993 and was the 1993 Canadian National Champions in division IV, clad in scarlet tunics, black pants and Aussie hats. The corps disbanded in 1994.

■ **North Toronto Lions**

Formerly known as the Midtowners of Toronto, this corps appeared in 1963 under the name North Toronto Lions Golden Monarchs, complete with new uniforms, new drill and new music. The corps was always a crowd-pleaser and was the holder of both the Ontario and Canadian championships as a junior class B M&M corps in 1959 and 1960. Entering junior A competition in 1961, the corps was a threat to all its competitors.

■ **Northstars**

Northstars from Kitchener were composed of several groups from the area. In the fall of 1976, the corps operated as an open class corps and was the precursor to the existing Dutch Boy corps.

■ **O.Y.B. Lamplitters**

Founded in 1957 as the Orange

Young Brittons-Hackett O.Y.B. 120, the corps was renamed in 1963 as the O.Y.B. Lamplitters. As one of the oldest continuing drum corps in North America, the Lamplitters are proud of their heritage. Their symbol is, not surprisingly, the lamp.

In 1987, the new incarnation of the Lamplitters won the New York State junior B title in their first competition. This was no small feat for a corps that had been decimated in years past and relegated to small street band status.

The corps again demonstrated its ability by placing third in both the Ontario and Canadian National Championships in the junior B class after 11 years of absence from the top ranks.

The Lamplitters corps is unique in that it is both a junior and a senior corps. When participating in junior events or competitions, only members under age 22 perform. When taking part in senior events, all members march.

Ken Cole is the corps' manager. At age 78, he has been a stalwart of the Lamplitters for more than 50 years. He was proud to have been honored as "Volunteer of the Year" in Smiths Falls in 2001.

■ **Ridge Raiders**

Ridge Raiders from Hamilton/Stoney

Creek was formed in 1980. It began as a parade corps, but achieved much beyond the original plan to make several appearances in the DCI arena under longtime directors John McKinley and Russ Hunter. The 1999 season was the corps' last.

■ **Royal Blues**

In 1960, Ron Mann became the director and the corps became self-sponsored and changed the name to the Royal Blues Drum & Bugle Corps. This corps competed in the senior B category, winning

several championships during its tenure. The Royal Blues folded in 1968.

■ **Scout House**

Wilfred Jacob Blum formed the 1st Preston Scout Troop in 1929. In October 1938, he noticed a visiting marching band in town. This set off a chain of events that eventually resulted in the birth of the famous Preston Scout House Band. By 1947, the band was widely known throughout Ontario, and on July 29, it made its first tour outside



Northstars, Kitchener, ONT, 1978 (photo from the collection of Drum Corps World).

Ridge Raiders, Hamilton, ONT, 1996 (photo by Ron Walloch from the collection of Drum Corps World).



Midlanders, London, ONT, approximately 1970 (photo by Peter McCusker from the collection of Drum Corps World).



Scout House, Preston, ONT, August 26, 1961, at an exhibition in Stratford, CT (photo by Moe Knox from the collection of Drum Corps World).

Canada to perform in Buffalo and Syracuse.

Blum received a number of significant recognitions for his achievements in drum corps activities. These awards included membership in the World Drum Corps Hall of Fame, a Canadian Drum Corps Association Founders Award and the province of Ontario Volunteer Service Award.

The sense of pride and the feeling of satisfaction that flows from hard work to achieve a high standard of performance carried Scout House to international fame. All who served under him agree Blum left a great impression on their lives.

The band's early public appearances involved marching the WRENS of HMCS Conestoga to church service in Galt. By 1947, the Preston Band had become well-known outside Ontario and was featured in the *Montreal Standard* "Weekend Magazine." As the band's fame spread, it annually received invitations to play at 400-500 events across North America and averaged 2,500 fan letters a week.

In 1953, the band's music and uniforms were redesigned by Dr. David Ross-Robertson. The traditional scout uniform was replaced by



Seneca Princemen, Scarborough, ONT, 1973 (photo by Peter McCusker from the collection of Drum Corps World).

crimson shirts and socks. Aussie hats and short black shorts were considered risqué at the time.

With the new look and sound, they continued bringing fame to themselves and their community. Canadian National Champions in 1954, 1955 and 1957, the band was noted as a great show band and crowd pleaser.

By the early 1960s, the band began to run into difficulties in competitions. Older

instruments and their unconventional drill program made it increasingly difficult to compete with drum corps marching in the American style and cadence.

The band folded in 1967. A number of attempts were made to revive the band, which then included both young men and women. Unfortunately, the magic could not be recaptured.

Today, you can catch a taste of the color and panache of the famous organization through performances by their alumni

association drum and bugle corps at parades and special performances. The group participated in the 2002 DCA "Alumni Spectacular" in Scranton, PA.

■ **Senators**

The Senators from Brampton were formed 1966 and disbanded in 1968. The corps was re-formed under the Brampton Recreation Department in 1973 as a junior class C corps, but it folded again several years later.

■ **Seneca Princemen**

This corps was formed in 1972, succeeding the former Scarborough Firefighters that formed years earlier. The corps' program formed part of the community services offered by Seneca College.

The unit was a junior marching and maneuvering corps based in North York, ONT. The corps director was Wolfgang Petscke.

The corps merged with the Toronto Optimists in 1975 to form the Seneca Optimists.

■ **Simcoe Scout Band & Optimist Band**

The Scout Band sponsorship was taken over by the Optimists Club in approximately 1958 and thus the name was changed to the Optimists Band.

■ **St. Andrew's**

St. Andrews from Cambridge was formed in 1973. The corps, originally from Kitchener, folded around 1986 after an appearance at the DCI Championships in Madison, WI.

■ **St. John's Girls**

This corps was organized in 1953 at St. John's College in Brantford and went on to become one of Canada's great all-girl drum

corps. In 1962-1963, they were Canadian girl's M&M champions.

Up until 1985, the corps competed in the all-girl category, winning many awards in Canada and the United States. As membership dwindled, the board decided a new strategy must be developed.

In 1985, the corps opened its membership to boys in order to start a strong reorganization process. The rebuilding has gone in stages, with the early 1990s finding the corps progressively stronger. The corps placed first or second at the Ontario regional and Canadian National Championships for seven years. Finalist status was achieved at the DCI World Championships three times in the same timeframe.

St. John's experienced a dry spell and went inactive for the 1999 and 2000 seasons. In

the 2001 season, St. John's finished second in division IV (parade class), mere tenths behind the Blue Saints from Sudbury. During the 2002 season, St. John's successfully re-entered division III.

For a corps where the average age of

the members was 12 and 12 of the 31 members were rookies, they had an excellent season, placing 19th in division III at the DCI Championships in Madison, WI.



St. John's Girls, Brantford, ONT, 1973 (photo by Peter McCusker from the collection of Drum Corps World).



Toronto Optimists, Toronto, ONT, 1973 (photo by Peter McCusker from the collection of Drum Corps World).

■ **Toronto Optimists**

The Optimists can trace their history to 1952 and a scout band that was part of a youth program offered by the 18th Toronto Boy Scout group. The founder was Bud Parker. For a time it was part of the No. 157 scout troop under the direction of Allen W. Baggs.

In 1955, the scout troop decided to discontinue the band and Baggs convinced

the Optimists Club of Toronto to take on the sponsorship of this fledgling group.

In 1956, still using the scout uniforms, the corps won the Canadian novice title. The following year the corps had new uniforms of blue and gold and moved up, entering the junior class B M&M class and winning the championship in Waterloo.

During the fall of 1957, the Optimists added boys from the Danforth Crusaders, along with instructors Barry Bell on bugles and Lorne Ferrazutti on percussion.

The corps moved up another division to the junior A level. Once again, new uniforms were purchased, featuring the now-famous green blouses with white stripe, white shakos and black trousers.

In May 1958, in Toronto, competing against reigning champion Scout House, the Optimists were defeated, but closed the gap all summer at each subsequent contest, finally capturing the class A title in September. They repeated this title for the next 10 years.

Bell and Ferrazutti stayed on as the main instructors through all their winning years until 1969, when they helped set up the feeder corps, Optimist Lancers of Etobicoke.

Around 1970, the Optimists Club of Toronto signified its intentions to withdraw its support, saying the operation of three corps was beyond its financial capabilities. Thus, the management formed its own Optimists Club, the Optimists Club of York Toronto. The old club sold all the old assets to the new club for \$1.

Don Daber took over the operation of the corps in 1963 and was succeeded by Al Tierney in 1969 until his election as charter president of the new club. Daber took back the reins and was succeeded by Bob Christie and then by George Wright, followed by Doug Mackenzie in 1974-1975.

During this five-year period, the corps experienced some very trying times with the addition of a younger instructional staff, limited funds and young, inexperienced members, thus reflecting their placement through this time period.

With all of these setbacks, they still managed to place 16th at the 1975 DCI Championships in Philadelphia, a substantial improvement over their 34th-place finish the year before.

In 1970, the Optimists of York Toronto agreed to establish a color guard of girls, the Optimiss, which operated outside the corps. In 1972, the guard merged with the corps and the Optimists became a co-ed corps. Shortly thereafter, girls were admitted to the bugle line, but it was not until 1976 that a girl joined the percussion section.

In 1975, Tierney once again became director. Major financial commitments had to be made. New bugles were needed and the uniforms had to be completely replaced.

During the same period, Optimists were carrying on negotiations with the Seneca Princemen about a proposed merger. Both corps had a membership of approximately 70, not enough to progress into the DCI arena

and too young for the Princemen to field the corps they wanted. Princemen Director Wolfgang Petschka felt the merger would benefit both corps.

The decision to go ahead was made early in 1976 and the two merged corps became known as the Seneca Optimists. Many of the younger members left for the Cardinals, but the new Seneca Optimists were 128 strong, with an enthusiastic membership and dedicated and knowledgeable instructors.

The merger provided the bugles that were needed and surplus equipment also provided some of the needed cash. Along with Wintario funds from the Ontario government,

this covered the cost of new uniforms in a new color -- bright yellow -- not previously identified with either of the corps.

In 1976, the corps was a contender for DCI honors. The directorship laid out a challenging contest schedule, competing 15 times and finishing 12th at DCI in Philadelphia. In 1977, the momentum was maintained, competing 27 times and finishing ninth at DCI in Denver, CO. The following season the corps lost more than half its membership and the potential of the corps was dismal.

The Krescendos of Peterborough had just decided to withdraw from competition that summer and volunteered to loan their members to the Seneca Optimists for the summer. The corps went into a crash program of rehearsal.

Despite efforts of all concerned, it was not



Toronto Signals, Toronto, ONT, 2001, at the DCA "Alumni Spectacular" in Scranton, PA (photo by David Rice from the collection of Drum Corps World).

Seneca Optimists, Toronto, ONT, 1977 (photo by Dick Deihl from the collection of Drum Corps World).



to be. The corps finished 24th at the DCI Championships. Following that season, the members of Krescendos returned to Peterborough. Seneca had a poor recruiting program that year and, although practicing continued in the fall season, with the coming of the chilly winter months it was all over.

The corps actively competed for 22 years, merged twice, changed uniforms four times, changed names three times, started three feeder corps and one color guard unit, won

15 national championships and was among the top 12 in the world on two occasions.

■ Toronto Signals

"Sigs" as they are affectionately known, have been performing for audiences

throughout Canada and the United States since 1926.

Originally known as the 2nd Signal Regiment, this band was the first to inaugurate the one-valve trumpet (they have since moved to a two-valve instrument), along with the bell lyre, into the trumpet and bugle band program of that era.

Continuing to lead in their field, this band also introduced the sound of three-part harmony in trumpet band music to Canadian audiences. Then known as the 2nd Armoured Divisional Signals Regiment, subsequent changes in the merging of 2nd and 8th Signals Regiment brought about the name of the Toronto Signals Regiment.

In 1959, the band left the Canadian army to form the famed drum corps Canada's Marching Ambassadors who were well-known in Canada and the United States. Since the integration of the Canadian armed forces in the late 1960s, Sigs have carried on as a voluntary organization, maintaining the rich tradition and heritage of their former members and today still march as duty band to the 709 (Toronto) Communications Regiment of the Canadian armed forces.

This band has participated in many events in both Canada and the United States, including participation in the Coronation Ceremonies for Her Majesty the Queen held in Ottawa and the famous Calgary Stampede Parade in the province of Alberta.

They were the only Canadian band to appear three times in the Fourth of July celebrations in Milwaukee and they performed at Canada's Centennial Celebrations, touring Northern Ontario. They also performed at Ontario's 200th-year celebration tattoo with Her Majesty the Queen in attendance.

The mayor and council for Toronto bestowed the honor of "Signals Trumpet Band Day" with a presentation of keys to the

city on the occasion of their 50th year.

Invitations have been extended to participate in the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade in New York City, the Tournament of Roses Parade in Pasadena, CA, and the Edinborough Tattoo in Edinborough, Scotland.

The band has the honor of being chosen the Canadian National Exhibition Warriors Day Parade champions on 20 occasions since 1969 -- an award usually reserved for precision drill teams and never before won twice by any other unit.

Since the band's inception in 1926, it has won more than 200 awards and has been acclaimed "Canada's Marching Ambassadors." The band today has maintained the reputation as both a precision marching unit and superb playing group.

■ United Alumni

The United Alumni Drum and Bugle Corps was formed in September 1998. It was an off-shoot of an alumni reunion drum corps formed in January 1998 featuring former members of the Simcoe Boy Scout Trumpet Band, Optimists Band, Royal Blues, Simcoe Golden Lions and Lakeshore Brassmen.

All of the corps operated out of Simcoe, ONT, except for the Brassmen, which operated out of nearby Port Dover, ONT. All five corps originated after the previous corps disbanded, beginning with the Scout Band in 1953. The corps still performs in Ontario.

■ Ventures

The Ventures Drum and Bugle Corps was formed in the fall of 1972 by the late Peter Vanderkolff at the request of the chief of police who wanted a youth activity for young women.

Originally, the Ventures wore gold dresses and became affectionately known as "The Ladies in Gold." The nickname held a special

Even though the uniform changed many times over the years, the dedication, desire, spirit and pride retained the "Ladies of Gold" as a unique and appealing unit.

The Ventures traveled extensively over the years, with stops in Washington, Miami, Las Vegas, New York and Boston. In the late 1980s, the Ventures adopted a sister corps in Japan called the Samanoura Girls Drum



United Alumni, Simcoe, ONT, 1999 (photo by Ron Da Silva from the collection of Drum Corps World).

Corps. Both units engaged in member exchanges, with a small Venture corps traveling to Osaka, Japan, in 1990 to perform with their sister corps at the Expo. Eventually the Japanese corps changed its name to Ventures to model its North American counterparts.

The Ventures were always known as trendsetters in the drum corps activity. In 1984, they became the first unit to place their entire percussion ensemble in the front pit area. This revolutionary idea paved the way for a more musical approach to percussion writing and

expanded new percussion sounds not previously heard in a drum corps atmosphere.

The Ventures were also the first corps to adopt uniform changes within a performance with the multi-colored ponchos, which were removed layer by layer. The use of pennants and a large painted tarp for "Suite Earth" were other Venture innovations.

One of the most successful drum corps in history, the Ventures won the DCI World Championships in the class A division five times. They are also the only corps in history to win both the all-girl and class A titles in the same season in 1980. In 1986, the Ventures made history again when they became the first all-girl corps to place in DCI's prestigious top 25.

In 1981, a feeder unit was established as a baton corps. Within two years the baton unit evolved into a winter color guard program for girls between the ages of seven and 12. This junior guard program proved highly successful competitively and graduated many members into the drum corps.

Change came about in January 1995 when the board of directors made the agonizing decision to suspend operations. Like other drum corps of the time, the Ventures were faced with the challenges of finding enough girls to fill the ranks, as well as increased operating costs. The resolution was to find all existing members placement with another local drum corps, the Kiwanis Cavaliers, and to

continue the operation as a winter guard enterprise.

The junior guard program was firmly in place and the organization then added a senior program for older members. The

philosophy of the Ventures has been to grow at a slow, steady pace. As the age and maturity of the Ventures increases, so does the program.

With seven Provincial and three Northeast Guard Circuit titles, as well as three WGI Regional wins, the Ventures' winter guards have firmly established their name.

■ Viscounts

It all happened one year in 1887 with the forming of the Royal Hamilton Light Infantry Bugle Band. Then in 1959, under Frederick J. Hawkes, bugle major of the R.H.L.I., the Viscounts senior drum corps was created. This resulted in dual organizations under one roof.

Although they met all military requirements, the dual situation gave rise to a number of objections from the military command. This eventually resulted in the separation of the Viscounts from the militia in 1961.

In their first year of senior competition, the Viscounts placed in the top five at the New York-Canadian Championships in Rochester, NY. They went on and competed in many events in their short four-year existence across the Northeastern United States and Canada.

In 1963, because of financial problems, the corps came to an end and amalgamated with the Jesters of Toronto to form a new organization known as the Canadian Commanders.

It was a fitting end and a great beginning to two of Canada's great drum corps.

■ York Lions

The York Lions Drum and Bugle Corps, an offshoot from the original 180th Mosquito Squadron Air Cadets, perennial Canadian junior champions, was organized in 1961. The program was sponsored by the York Lions Club of York Township, a suburb of Toronto.

Their competition affiliations were with the Canadian Drum Corps Association and the the New York-Canadian Association. The York Lions' titles included Lions International Champions, 1963; Ontario Junior B Champions, 1963; National Junior B Champions, 1963; and fourth place in the junior A championship in 1964.

York Lions Drum Corps, also known as the White Knights, had a relatively short but lively existence. Formed in 1961 and disbanded in 1966, the corps managed to cram a lot of travel and improvement into what was really five short competitive seasons.

The corps would not have existed without its founder and driving force, Doug Saunders. He was the director of the Leaside Lions, also called the Jungle Kings. He was instrumental in convincing the York Lions Club to start a new drum corps in what was then the Borough of York. The York Lions Club had previously sponsored a bugle band in 1942 called the 202 Squadron RCAF York Lions Bugle Band, which evolved into the very successful 180th Mosquito Squadron Air



Ventures, Kitchener, ONT, 1981 (photo by Art Luebke from the collection of Drum Corps World).

meaning for each member and was a definition respected by all. Since that first season, thousands of young ladies experienced the joys of belonging to the Venture program.

Corps, so they were aware of the needs of a competitive drum corps and readily provided the tools necessary to start the new corps.

Throughout the fall of 1961, the corps began rehearsals and recruiting. By the start of the 1962 competitive season, the York Lions were ready to take to the field.

In the early 1960s, every small town in southern Ontario seemed to have a drum corps, usually sponsored by a service club, local branch of the Canadian Legion or some other military-based organization.

York Lions joined this large fraternity, entering in the junior B competitive circuit, an equivalent to today's division II junior corps. There was no touring required in that era, as corps selected when and where they wished to compete according to their budgets.

In the normal traveling circuit were such corps as the Brantford Belltones, Trafalgar Patrolmen, Columbus (Toronto) Simcoe Optimists and Hamilton Optimists (later to become Hamilton Conqueror). The 1962 season ended with the corps finishing third at the Canadian Nationals.

The summer of 1963 became a great building year for the corps. The White Knights, as they were beginning to be called due to the white uniforms with purple and gold trim, started to dominate the circuit and by the close of the season had captured the junior B national title.

As a Lions Club-sponsored corps, there were numerous parade and concert obligations to fulfill. One of the most desirable commitments was a trip to the annual Lions International Convention. In 1963, the convention was held in Miami, FL. The corps traveled two days via charter bus to Florida, arriving somewhat worse for the wear, but nonetheless managing to capture the coveted parade championship in scorching June heat.

In 1964, it was evident the corps was good enough to move up to the junior A circuit with the perennial powerhouses, Toronto Optimists and De La Salle Oaklands. The corps was competitive throughout the season, but it turned out to be a humbling experience as they finished fourth at the Canadian National Championships in Waterloo, ONT.

Toronto Optimists (84), De La Salle Oaklands (79) and Sarnia Sertomanaires (77) finished in front of York (72). For the first time in its short history, the corps was not at or very close to the top.

Again the corps was fortunate to be sponsored by the Lions Club as it traveled to Los Angeles, CA, for the international convention, where it again captured the best parade unit title. Of course, the Lions Club did not cover the total cost of all these trips. Corps members sold chocolate bars and raffle tickets, and conducted various other fund-raising activities to help defray the costs.

The 1965 season was a truly watershed year for the corps. With enhanced instruction, professional musical scores from

some of the activities' finest and an influx of personnel, the corps truly became a serious contender.

Help came from such esteemed sources as Fred Johnston, Ted Key, Vinnie Radford and John Sazzo, some of whom are now World Drum Corps Hall of Famers. The corps again finished fourth at the Canadian Nationals in Toronto's Varsity Stadium. However, the quality of the corps had risen significantly and the gaps between first and fourth had shrunk considerably.

Sarnia Sertomanaires had, unfortunately, left the scene, but a new corps called Cadets LaSalle filled the opening quite nicely and proved to be a strong contender, finishing third. The big Lions Club trip of 1965 turned out to be a little anticlimactic as the convention was held in Toronto that year. Nonetheless, the corps again took top honors and participated in many local public appearances over the Lions Club week.

The summer of 1966 was the last year of the corps' existence. It was another great season. When you are No. 4, it takes a lot of recruiting, a lot of things going just right and a big load of talent to knock off the big guns. The corps worked extremely hard, but fell short in its quest to overtake the top three. However, it did obtain a fourth straight championship title at the Lions International Convention in New York City.

At the Canadian Nationals, the scores were Optimists, 86.1; De La Salle Oaklands, 82.35; Sertomanaires, 78.45; and York Lions, 74.95. The contest was held at Montreal's Autostade Stadium, which was built for the upcoming 1967 Olympics.

A few old White Knights felt that York had edged out DEL at the Port Hope competition in 1966. However, newly found score sheets of the 1966 show say Optimists, 78.2; De La Salle Oaklands, 71.0; and York, 70.85. True, they were only 0.15 away, but that might have been the closest York ever got to defeating the Oaklands. Regardless, it was still a great year.

The corps folded after the 1966 season with its members spreading throughout the local drum corps market. Some went to Toronto Optimists and De La Salle to finish their junior careers. Others went to local senior corps such as Canada's Marching Ambassadors and Canadian Commanders. Some would say the win by Ambassadors at the 1967 Nationals in Ottawa was heavily influenced by the influx of well-trained York personnel.

The corps folded due to the heavy costs associated with running a drum corps in the late 1960s. The York Lions Club reactivated its musical involvement with the York Lions Steel Drum Band a few years later. This



Compagnons, Ottawa, ONT, approximately 1973 (photo from the collection of Drum Corps World).

group was another Saunders endeavor as Doug's brother, Don (who was also an assistant director with the White Knights), was a prime mover in this new activity.

The steel drum band still performs at parades all over the continent, including a recent performance for Queen Elizabeth in Toronto.

Little information was readily available to include in this chapter about the following corps:

■ **Belltones**

Brantford -- 1960 Canadian National Champion, 1960 provincial champion, feeder corps for the Brantford Girls

■ **Bluenotes**

Pickering

■ **Bluewater Bridgemen**

Sarnia

■ **Cardinal Cadets**

Scarborough

■ **Chessmen**

Prescott

■ **Chessmen**

St. Catherines

■ **Coachmen**

Keswick -- folded in 1972, folded in 1977

■ **Compagnons**

Embrum/Ottawa

■ **Etobicoke Knights**

Etobicoke -- feeder corps for the Optimists

■ **Georgian Lancers**

Owen Sound

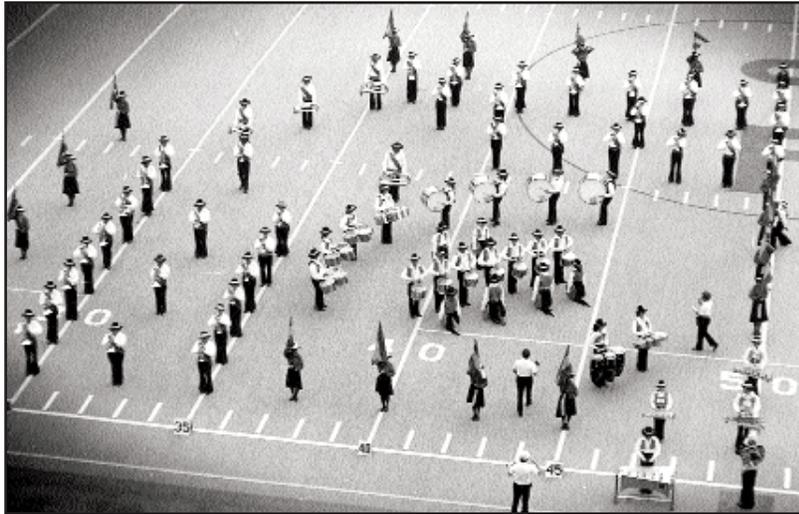
■ **Guardsmen**

Windsor -- founded in 1974, folded in 1977

Guardsmen, Windsor, ONT, approximately 1978 (photo from the collection of Drum Corps World).



- **Hilltoppers**
Richmond Hill
- **Hylighters**
Etobicoke
- **Imperials**
London
- **Imperials**
Woodstock
- **Kinsmen**
East Scarborough --
founded in January
1972.
- **Lions of London**
London
- **Marching Saints**
Carleton Place -- founded
in 1965, competed in
junior "B" for seven
years, folded in 1972
- **Niagara
Regionnaires**
St. Catharines -- senior corps, competed
at the DCA level in the early 1980s
- **Oshawa Rebels**
Oshawa -- founded in 1977, changed name
to Northwind and folded in 1996 following
an appearance at the DCI Championships
in Orlando, FL
- **Patrollettes**
Hamilton
- **Pirettes**
Parkdale -- all-girl corps sponsored by the
Lions Club
- **Royal Knights**
Cambridge
- **Royals**
St. Thomas
- **Senoritas**
Stoney Creek
- **Skyraiders**
Don Mills
- **Trojans**
Welland



Regionnaires, Niagara, ONT, 1982 (photo from the collection of Drum Corps World).



Mark Ripley started in Navy League Cadets at the age of 10, playing the snare drum. At 12, he graduated to the Royal Canadian

Sea Cadet Corps "Admiral Mountbatten" where he got his first taste of playing a bugle.

While the Cadets and Blue Saints were participating in similar community events, his appetite for playing grew. At 18, he hung up his military uniform and put on the white and blue uniform of the Blue Saints.

Already having experience on the bugle, he started out as a lead soprano.

In 1983 and 1984, he marched in two corps: the Blue Saints and the Imperial Knights senior corps.

In 1985, he took on a staff position with the Blue Saints to give something back to the community and also marched with the Ontario All-Star Drum & Bugle Corps. In 1986-1988, he marched with the Guelph Royalties senior corps, returning to the Blue Saints from 1988-1991 as brass instructor.

Having seen the Blue Saints finally make it to the DCI World Championships in 1990, he took several years off, settled down and started a family.

After his daughter begged him, he allowed her to join the Blue Saints in 1999. While vowing to himself that he would not get totally involved, he is more involved than ever and now his son is also involved.

When not occupied with drum and bugle corps activities, he is an avid fan of all drum corps, traveling to as many shows as geographically possible each season.



(Above) Oshawa Rebels, Oshawa, ONT, 1987 (photo by Roger Ellis from the collection of Drum Corps World); (below left) Northwind, Oshawa, ONT, 1996 (photo by Ron Walloch from the collection of Drum Corps World).



HMCS Ontario Sea Cadets, 1988, one of a number of youth military-affiliated drum and bugle corps that still exist in the province of Ontario (photo by Don Daber from the collection of Drum Corps World).