



Graham Lindsey - President's Report (2013-14)

The 2013-14 season (1 October 2013 to 30 September 2014) was our third season running a series of four concerts held at City View United Church. We're well underway with a concept that gave us a lot of really strong concert ideas, and we've returned to Andrew Haydon Park (which we've done every year since 1988) and Lake George – both being good venues for our band and allowing us to use material from the previous concert series.

Our four concerts in 2013-14 were Shall We Dance, 'Tis the Season, From Russia With Love, and May The Fourth Be With You. Special thanks to the Music Committee for coming up with some great concepts that allowed us to take the concert experience beyond "just a band playing music for an audience".

Shall We Dance involved bringing in people from a couple of other Ottawa-area spheres – the contradance band Ever Hopeful Stringband (with caller Pippa Hall) who taught limited number of dances and provided Celtic music to accompany it, and Debbie Miller-Smith as our waltz instructor, playing with the band on some Strauss waltzes we've played before – but never for dancers!

'Tis the Season was our annual Christmas concert with the a cappella quartet Polaris, who sang such songs as The Christmas Song, Jingle Bells and If My Nose was Runnin' Money, just to name a few. They were very well-received. We had to arrange the group a bit late in the game, so the exec agreed to make any bookings much earlier in the cycle in years to come.

From Russia With Love was a concert based around the idea that the Winter Olympics were in Russia in 2014, and the movie From Russia With Love (a James Bond classic). It proved successful because it blended popular movie music with Russian music and of course we had David Foster's Winter Games in the mix too.

Easily our best-attended concert of the year (and possibly best of any concert we've held at City View) was the May The Fourth Be With You concert, held on (you guessed it) May 4th. We had a local group called "Capital City Garrison, 501st Legion" who provided a number of costumed personnel (including former NCB member Amber Peters, who helped to make it happen), a photo backdrop for excellent intermission photo opportunities (also positive feedback to the percussion section).



We returned to Lake George last year to continue our trend performing high-level music (and playing it well) that is different from what people would hear in other bands. Followers of this report will be happy to know that the Lake George Community Band gave us the box formerly containing their sleigh bells (new band members: our percussion section stole them, brought them back to Canada, and then paid the USPS to return them), and they gave us sand and water from the beach – a continuing international gesture. Unfortunately, one member of the percussion section (who may be writing this report) neglected to pick it up amidst the rest of the folders and instrument cases while packing the car, and it was ushered to the great beyond by a Lake George city employee (or something like that). Many of my fellow Lake George-goers will have seen (or more aptly, heard) the tail end of a successful Martha's excursion when Jim's Jeep returned from a successful ice cream expedition, the passengers singing Bohemian Rhapsody as they entered the parking lot. I'm sure the author of this report was in no way responsible for that, either.

Andrew Haydon Park began early in May 2014 because of a scheduling conflict later in August. We began the last Wednesday of May and continued to the first Wednesday in August (playing every second week) and had a very successful summer, both from attendance due to a healthy income from donations that we accepted during one of our concerts. We will try to have better weather in 2015, as we were rained out at least once (maybe twice).

On many occasions, as needed, we had one of a few substitute conductors step in. David Yensen has helped out for years, and continued in 2013-14 by subbing for Terry when he was unavailable. Mary Blais proved a great resource as well, assisting with the percussion section and on a number of occasions helping to bring an experienced conductor's skill to the podium. Heather Flinn is also happy to stand-in whenever she's needed, and that all contributes to the good time the band has – and the flexibility!

Cairine Thomas is an absolute superstar. She brought such life to our May The Fourth concert, and (spoiler alert) after the end of the 2013-14 season, she continued to bring great ideas to the concerts. For the past decade or so, she's been suggesting that it might be fun to have a projector to make a multimedia performance a reality – and with the May The Fourth one, she hand-made stand banners, communicator pins, clothing for multiple changes (some even in front of the entire band AND audience!). I don't think she received enough praise after each concert, but she certainly deserves it – so if you see her at some point (hint: she's the one who gets excited about all the other stuff we can be doing at our concerts), and if you like what you're seeing, perhaps say hi! The force is strong with that one.

Repertoire last year was lighter than in previous years, and I've heard comments suggesting that more challenging pieces along the lines of the wind band repertoire we'd played the previous year would be more up some people's alley, and one person did suggest we should play more popular music.

In December 2013, we lost long time NCB member Max MacDonald. A number of NCB members (as well as the directors and members of the low brass sections of bands from Perth to Orleans) were in attendance at his funeral. I spoke with Max's wife Anne, and asked if she thought it would be okay to borrow his tuba to bring to our concert the following week – she was very pleased that we'd be interested in remembering Max in that way, and I had said a few words about why a tuba with a santa hat (which Max would always wear) was sitting by the piano.

We had a lot of help, speaking both as the percussion section leader and the band President – and I guess as a guy who's on the Music Committee, as well. Dave Oulton continues to help set up the percussion instruments weekly after he sets up the chairs – and he has been the lead person setting up the church for every concert. Jenn, Pierre, Tanya, Michelle (and Richard), Julia and Jim, Terry, Warren, Becca and Joe, Alison, Dan Yau (who won the free tickets for 2014-15) and Mary – they all came out at least once to move instruments before or after a concert, and I can't express how much we appreciate it. Gary Thomas who helps to set up the church and runs our bake sales. Warren and Doug, our music library gurus who are an essential resource for the band - a group that requires their knowledge and organization. Barb Lamb, who sends cards on behalf of the band, sometimes without our knowing that a card is warranted until after it arrives. Pat & Keith (yup, my parents) and Jim for collecting donations at AHP (NB: Jim didn't have the big pink hat this year, but Julia can likely remedy that). Dave Oulton for recording our concerts at City View United Church and posting them so quickly after concerts for us to hear. Everyone on the Music Committee for helping to make our concert season so successful, and all section leaders who let me know how many people we can expect in each section for the concert.

Every year I try my very best to ensure that I haven't forgotten anyone from the thank-you list, and it's an extensive one. If I've missed anyone, I apologize for the oversight - and thank you so much for helping to make the Nepean Concert Band so much fun!

Thank you once again for another fantastic year!

Graham Lindsey
President