



Graham Lindsey - President's Report (2014-15)

The 2014-15 season (1 October 2014 to 30 September 2015) was another much like the last few. We had a four concert series, with four concerts at City View United Church and a summer of concerts at Andrew Haydon Park which has become part of the identity of the band, with our playing there every summer since the park opened in 1985. We played the usual gig in Lake George and continued the Soundwaves concert series, this time playing at AHP.

Our concert series was a financial success, preventing us from having to resorting to the usual fundraising activities, but the numbers in the church were lower than ideal. I've heard feedback saying that it's more fun to play for more people, and I everyone on the exec agrees!

The four concerts last year were: "Music By The Numbers", our annual Christmas concert which we initially called "A Very NCB Christmas", "Rites of Passage", and "Give my Regards to Broadway".

Music By the Numbers was a concert intended to weave a story through the concert program by involving numbers, like St. John's, 1928 (a great piece sent to us by the composer in the hopes we'd play it), New York, 1927, Twentiana and 42nd Street. There was, of course, Holst's First Suite and Reed's Second Suite. The highlight for me was Michael C. Snelgrove's The 801: Beaumont Hamel. Sure, it featured lots of loud fast stuff from my section, but the overall effect was outstanding and the trumpets at the end were my favourite part of the entire concert.

I set up a few cameras for the concert and edited this video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bqmYQpkaKqU>

A Very NCB Christmas involved a number of pieces that were purchased for NCB by David Oulton, and made for a fresh concert that didn't have a lot in common with our past concerts. A few of the new pieces we played included: Minor Alterations, Silent Night in Gotham, The Most Wonderful Time of the Year, Symphonic Highlights from Frozen, and Secret Agent Santa. Thanks to Dave for bringing that music to the band - both conceptually, and physically (and financially)!

Rites of Passage involved different journey-related pieces, including Synergy Rising, Pablo!, Ghost Train, Transcendent Journey and Highlights from CARS. Once again, we wove the thread of the theme through the concert and played a lot of really interesting repertoire in the process.

Give my Regards to Broadway was a more involved concert, including singers from NCB and "friends of the band" coming from Orpheus and other sources. It was a longer concert (one we've heard was longer than it should have been) and we've been working on that in the concerts since then. This was a lighter concert where we were able to play more medleys than we have in the past - but there was still some of our usual more challenging fare. We played A Frank Loesser Collection, Overture to "Candide", The Lion King, and Four Dances from West Side Story.

The MDR Festival (Madonna della Risurrezione - the church on Fisher Ave.) was another successful performance and we'll look forward to doing it in the years to come. One trick we found was that the audience loves Italian music but also enjoys the other music we play quite a lot, so we'll have the opportunity to play well-rehearsed, not-entirely-Italian repertoire, for an ever-adoring audience.

The summer saw the usual concerts, starting a bit earlier than we have in the past - May 27th - and ending on August 5th. We had planned to run the series until August 19th (two weeks after the final concert), but we ran into a scheduling problem once again: another group has booked the park every third week of the summer months and the person at the city with whom we've been dealing has said that they try to accommodate both groups' needs. I'll be discussing this further with this person.

Lake George was another success, with a balanced concert including Ghost Train, Satchmo!, Sweeney Todd, and Transcendent Journey to name a few. Martha's Dandee Creme is still alive, and we ensured many of the employees could put their children through university (and in the US they aren't subsidized like here!). Rumour has it that we had so much fun this year that another Ottawa-area band will be heading there next summer!

In both the fall and spring seasons, Mary Blais stepped in as our alternate conductor to when Terry was involved in productions outside band. I can't thank Mary enough for coming in, sometimes at the last minute, and often for several weeks at a time (from time to time Terry is involved in a stage production, or takes a few weeks of well-deserved vacation time a few provinces to the East). Having a second conductor helps to ensure we're learning different things from different people - and that's great for the band! When Mary isn't subbing for Terry, she can be seen helping out in our percussion section when we request her assistance. Heather Flinn has also stepped in to conduct in a pinch, and I personally appreciate that, given that she comes to band to play the trumpet.

Cairine Thomas continues to be a force in moving the band to a better and more fun place. She's the one who had many of the ideas for our May the Fourth concert in 2014, and you can see her stand-banner-style numbers in the video linked above. I think you'll be seeing much more of her in the future, because she's interested in planning concerts and when so many are preparing music, moving percussion and any number of other things, Cairine is sewing, glueing and preparing props for concerts.

One thing to come from our last AGM that the Exec found stalled the progress of the Music Committee was the suggestion that the band should be able to vote on concert themes. We have a Music Committee for the purpose of brainstorming and then selecting a number of themes (though the committee certainly welcomes suggestions for themes, pieces to play, and more), and we on the Exec saw that the feeling that nothing could be decided without the band's go-ahead slowed things down considerably. If anyone has input, you can now enter it in the website's members section (see the "suggest a concert") or you can bring it to anyone on the committee. If your idea is more specific, possibly including a number of pieces that could work together to form an entire concert, it would be easier to understand as a music committee. One or two word suggestions are open to interpretation, so if you have an idea please include all the detail you'd like to send so the committee can move in the same direction as you had planned.

Last spring I updated the website - it was a decent chunk of work, and since it's what I do during the day, I figured I'd spend a few nights and weekends to make something really useful for people. Now it's built around the Wordpress platform and I haven't heard any complaints, but the key features are that people in various positions (Exec, section leaders, etc.) can modify different sections of the site. For example, after I updated the photos that my family had taken over the years, I turned over the metaphorical keys to Julia who has taken over the maintenance of the photos section of the site. Section Leaders actually have the ability to update the people in each section, and the same folks who updated the eNote and Conductor's Notes sections are able to do the same as they always did, but now it looks a whole lot nicer for the viewer. The members section has been expanded a fair bit, and I hope it's okay for all!

We've done our best to expand the role of section leaders in 2014-15, and will continue that move in the future. Remember that if you have a question, perhaps ask the person next to you first - then go to your section leader. If they can't help, your section leader can either come to the conductor or someone on the Exec to see if we can address your issue.

We played more challenging repertoire in 2014-15, and after a lighter 2013-14 to many it was a welcome change. It included pieces (yes, mentioned above) like The 801, Ghost Train and others that were more technically challenging - but the applause after those pieces showed that it was possible to convey a simpler idea (say, a ghost train) using more complex music (I know some people learned to play a quintuplet last year by saying u-ni-ver-si-ty!).

Speaking as the percussion section leader, member of the Music Committee and band President, we have a lot of people who help out a lot. Dave Oulton continues to help set up the percussion instruments weekly after he sets up the chairs – and he has been at the church to help coordinate the setup before every concert. Jenn, Pierre, Tanya, Michelle (and Richard), Julia and Jim, Terry, Rhonda, Warren, Becca and Joe, Dan Yau 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. **I'm missing people, I know it - and I'm very sorry, and even more appreciative!** Everyone who helps after rehearsals is a huge help too - it's simple to pack up your instrument and get out in time for our 9:45pm deadline... but as a percussionist somehow it takes longer! 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. Sharon Flack helps Julia collect money at rehearsals so Julia can do other things that need to be done. Pat & Keith Lindsey and Jim for collecting donations at AHP. Dave Oulton for recording our concerts at City View United Church and posting them so quickly after concerts for us to hear - usually the same day. Everyone on the Music Committee (including Chris Thiessen, the committee chair) 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.

Though Janice Huus has stepped away from the band for a brief period (and will be returning soon, I understand), she spent much of 2014-15 keeping the band organized, from the eNote and various communications to being a critical resource to me, thinking of the small details I might have forgotten. Thanks, Janice - we're looking forward to seeing you back!

The Executive works hard to bring you the best possible band experience, and I happen to work with a whole lot of people who really do a ton to keep things organized. Linda is our General Manager, and she takes care of bookings, ticket sales, Lake George hotel bookings and other related matters; Julia is our Treasurer and in addition to her great ideas she makes sure we're on-track financially; the person who

likely does the most in the band is almost always the librarian, and Warren has been doing the job tirelessly for a number of years - he deserves a special thank-you for devoting more of his time to NCB than most others - so thanks, Warren! You're awesome; as our membership coordinator, Pam welcomes people to the band, gives the weekly announcements, and keeps notes on what we play weekly (please see the white board); and our Equipment Manager (Becca) books the truck to move our gear, keeps things on-track for coordinating everything equipment-related for the band.

This year we saw the departure of one of our longer-standing (yet still younger) members - also she was highly involved in the Music Committee and was on the Executive as our Treasurer. Heather Morris was with NCB in the trumpet section until September when she got a job in Montreal. Given the commute time would be a couple of hours each way, she made the decision to move there and leave NCB (at least until we can woo her back!). On the Music Committee, she had great ideas for concert themes and how to liven up our concerts, on the Exec she wanted to see the band succeed in everything it did. She remains a friend to the band, Music Committee and Exec - as well as to many members who appreciated her humour and good nature. We'll miss Heather at rehearsals, but seeing her at the most recent concert was really great - thanks so much for everything you've done, Heather!

We welcomed Peter Vogelsang aboard the Exec this year as our secretary due to Heather's departure, and though he's only been aboard a brief time, his help has been invaluable. Thanks and welcome aboard, Peter!

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