Dundas Concert Band Historical – A Tradition since 1848

The history of the town of Dundas virtually coincides with the history of the Dundas Concert Band and its rich tradition of concert band music. The Dundas Concert Band began as the Dundas Citizen's Band in the year that this community was incorporated (1848 according to research by band member Randall Keast).

The November 9, 1849 edition of the Dundas Warder & the Halton County announced "to the inhabitants of Dundas and vicinity that the Dundas Citizen's Band will give their 2nd Concert of Vocal & instrumental Music."  John Williamson was the bandmaster.  On December 11, 1851, The Dundas Warder & the Halton County said that "the Dundas Band had their 5th Concert, in the Town Hall, on Friday evening.  Our band deserves encouragement...it is a glorious band."  The Hamilton Gazette, on October 10, 1853, announced that the DCB had won 1st prize at the Grand Provincial Fair in Hamilton.

In 1923, the band was renamed the Dundas Concert Band.

Further research of archives and microfiche continues.

The Dundas Museum is in possession of vintage band jackets and a percussion rope drum which is periodically exhibited.

Former band member Keith Hawkes played with the Dundas Junior band in the 1940’s and his father Percy Hawkes was the conductor. The Junior band operated from approximately the 1930s to the 1970s and was loosely affiliated with the Dundas Concert Band (Senior Band). Keith shared that Dave Mitson was the director of the Dundas Concert Band from the mid 1940’s to the mid 1950’s. During this time several members also played weekly and shared cultural aspects with the Six Nations of the Grand River First Nations Reserve band and at their performances.

The Dundas Concert Band has proudly performed at the Dundas Driving Park Bandshells since 1958. Our first concert and ribbon cutting ceremony at the newest bandshell (built in 2008) was July 7, 2009.

While it was under construction (and for rain dates) our Summer Concert Series was held in the Dundas Lions Memorial Community Center.

A significant part of our recent history has been under the tutelage of William Rolfe who has been our Musical Director since 1985.

In recent years the band regularly performed on Canada Day at Webster’s Falls, Stoney Creek Flag Day and Gage Park; and held Christmas Concerts at Binkley United and Dundas Baptist Churches. Out of town concerts included Queenston Heights and Burlington Bandshell. Besides the Dundas Driving Park performances in summer, the Dundas Concert Band is known for playing at the Dundas Tree-Lightings, Christmas Concert at St. Paul’s United Church, Cactus Festivals, Remembrance Day Services in Gore Park Hamilton, Decoration Days for the Hamilton Veteran’s Committee and a variety of retirement homes in the Hamilton and Burlington area.

The current band’s membership is made up of community people from all walks of life.  The level of musicianship spans from the competent amateur to the trained concert performer.  The Dundas Concert Band endeavours to be an inclusive organization.  We welcome all who have presentable skill on a woodwind, brass or percussion instruments who can both contribute and commit to regularly take part in the musical activities of the band.  The membership of the band is comprised of adults who range in age from their twenties to their eighties.   The reputation of the band has enabled it to attract members from the Hamilton, Halton and Brant regions.

The Dundas Concert Band has touched the lives of many people in the immediate and surrounding communities.  It has given a lot of precious memories to those who have listened to performances of the band as well as those who have been active band members.  We are sure that there are many citizens who would like to see this tradition and culture continue in the area.

The Dundas Concert Band has gratefully received support from our gracious sponsors including the City of Hamilton (Community Enrichment grant), Greensville Optimist Club, Turner Family Funeral Home, Dundas Valley Sunrise Rotary Club, Gordon Cameron, and many individual patrons.

The Dundas Concert Band has returned to musically entertaining our local community. Please follow us on Facebook or monitor www.dundasconcertband.com for news.