



the Toronto Optimists *Drum & Bugle Corps*

**THESE UNIQUE CANADIAN JR. CHAMPIONS
THIS YEAR CELEBRATE THEIR TENTH ANNIVERSARY**



"Optimists". . . ten years ago when this name was suggested to the new Corps of 28 boys as a tie-in with their new sponsor, the Optimist Club of Downtown Toronto, it brought grins, and a few chuckles from the assembled group, who had moved out of their Boy Scout Troop but managed to remain together as a Corps. At the time it was thought a strange name for a Corps, but in a few short years the name would grow to be well-known in the top Junior circuit of Drum Corps in North America.

At the close of the summer of 1955, Canada's new "Optimists" featured a bugle line of 14, 4 side drums, bass, cymbal and glockenspiel and a color guard of two! Even with this small group, by April the Corps received the award of the "Canadian Corps making the most progress over the year". By the end of 1956, they had reached the top of their class as "Canadian Novice Jr. Champions".

ON TO JUNIOR "B"

In 1957 the Corps moved up the next rung of the ladder to Jr. "B" and spent much of that summer around the Music Festivals of Ontario taking first place in several and ending the year as 1957 "Jr. B Champions". . . defeating the second place Corps by 15 full points. The next step was into the world of Jr. "A". . . the world dominated by the famed Scout House of Preston who were Jr. "A" Champions in 1953-'54-'55 and 1957.

"1958 PLUS"

With the placement of the Optimist name on the Junior "A" line, expansion and reorganization of the Corps was necessary. It was

fortunate that at this time an event took place that was to set the foundation of the Optimists Corps. The Air Cadet Corps "The Danforth Crusaders" from the Dandroth Technical School reorganized and their Music Director and Drum Instructor joined the new Optimist Corps along with enough members of their Corps to expand the Optimists to 42 on the line. Under the guidance of their new instructors, Barry Bell on bugles, and Lorne Ferazutti on drums, the Corps began their new music and drill for the 1958 season. The blue uniforms of the 1957 Optimists were replaced with the green blouses and black trousers topped with pearl white shakos.

FIRST APPEARANCE. . . OPTIMISTS VS. "THE CHAMPIONS"

The first competition for Jr. Corps in Canada in 1958 was the Spring Tournament Contest of May 3rd., an indoor event in the Toronto University Armories. The hard work of the Optimists over the winter and spring was put to the test at this, their first contest, which also featured the Junior Champions, Preston Scout House. Wearing their new green uniforms for the first time, the nervous new Jr. "A" Corps took their position on the starting line. How would they fare against the fabulous Jr. Champs from Preston and the other seasoned Jrs. at this first Contest of the season? Retreat arrive and the results place Optimists in second position behind the Champions and beating out all the other Jr. Corps there. The Corps now accepted the challenge for the '58 season . . . to close the gap from second place to first. . . and they had begun at the first contest with a 4 point spread.

The Optimists entered 17 contests that first year and at several competed against the Champions Scout House. . . each time closing the point spread. One of the most exciting contests of 1958 was in Falconer, N.Y., when the Optimists were second to Scout House by tenths. . . a few weeks later, at the Canadian Championships in Galt, the Optimists went "over the top" and took the National title. Their record for the year read 10 consecutive firsts, 5 seconds, 1 third and 1 fourth. It was a fabulous first year!

"SOUTH OF THE BORDER"

Across the 49th parallel the grass shone greener in the Drum Corps World and the famed "Preview of Championships" in Jersey City beckoned. Optimists took a surprising third and received a standing ovation. The Optimists were fortunate in breaking into the American circuit early in their career. This helped to keep their standard high. They won two American contests that year. . . the New York-Canadian in Auburn, N.Y. and the Eastern States Championships in Rome, N.Y.

To raise money for the Corps they released their first record on the 1959 Field Show and from the Optimists' profile crest, designed by Barry Bell, their first badges and crests were released.

THE SIXTIES

1960: The Corps was again fortunate in opening their Season at "The Preview". . . during 1960 The Optimists came first in every field contest in Canada.

1961: The year of the big change-over. . . 32 new recruits. . . and a tough, critical year. At the end of that year at the CNE Contest in Toronto, a week before the Champ-

ionships, the Optimists suffered their first defeat; the first M & M contest they had ever lost in Canada. Seven hectic days later they took the Championship title by a score of 85.55 to 85.50 at Seagram Stadium in Waterloo.

1962: Complete new music and drill with not too great a turnover in new recruits this year saw an upsurge in Corps spirit, drive, and determination. Under the direction of their new Drum Major, Jim McConkey, the Corps visited the province of Quebec for the first time when they appeared in Quebec City at Easter.

On the same week-end as The Preview, The Optimist Club sponsored the first Jr. International in Canada. . . with the Garfield Cadets as the special guests. Garfield took the Jr. International trophy and rushed back to Jersey for the Preview Contest on Sunday.

Undoubtedly, the highlight of 1962 for the Corps was on July 14th when they entered Rome Stadium in new uniforms and defeated the Blessed Sacrament Golden Knights.

1963: The year the ambition of the Corps was fulfilled with their first invitation to the fabulous Midwest area at the first "Blue and Gold Championships", through the kind invitation of Larry Grabouski. At the beginning of the season The Cavaliers visited Canada for the first time and took back to Chicago the Optimists Jr. International Trophy.

1964: Jim McConkey left the Corps as Drum Major and the Guard Captain, Andy Henderson took over his position. This year the Optimists were fortunate in visiting the Midwest area twice as well as entering the province of

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The Corps' Executive is as follows:

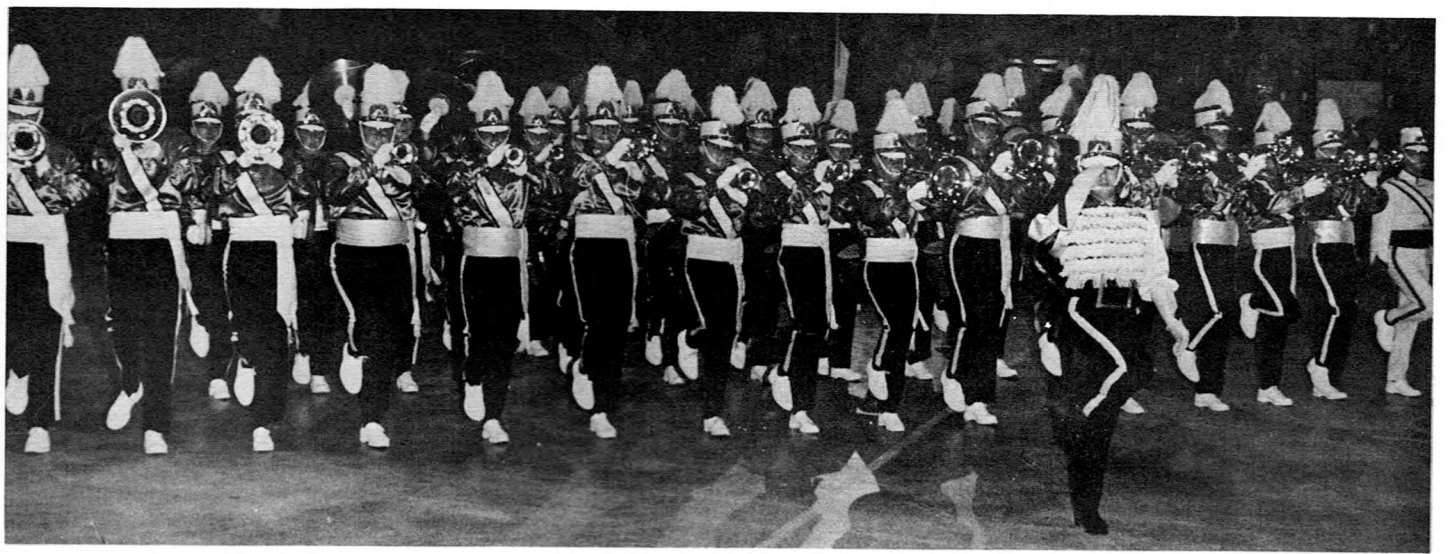
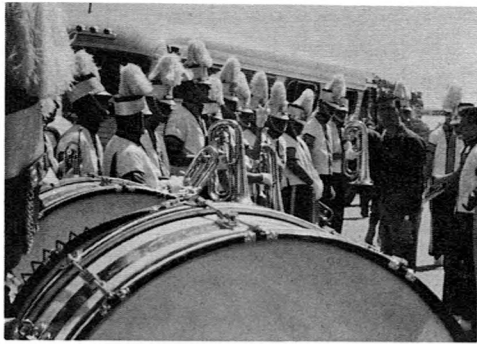
Director and Business Manager Don Daber	Assistant Drill Instructor Richard Boehnke
Music Director Barry Bell	Equipment R. Shearer
Drill Instructor Ivor Bramley	Publicity Dave Johns
Drum Instructor . Lorne Ferazutti	Treasurer Al Peczeniuk

- For those interested, Optimist Booster Material available includes:
1. Large 3 inch Corps Decal, green on white. 25¢
 2. 1965 Optimist Corps Calendars (while they last). 30¢
Calendars are 8 1/2" by 12" and features 6 photos of the Corps "in action"
 3. Seven Year Championship Button, in 2 colors 2 1/4" size. 50¢
 4. Official Corps Crest as worn on the Optimist jacket, cloth, white design on green, 3" size. \$1.00
 5. 1964 Field Show Record as recorded at the Canadian Championships. 33 rpm, Mono. \$1.25

1965 OPTIMISTS BOOSTER CLUB MEMBERSHIP \$2.00 yr.

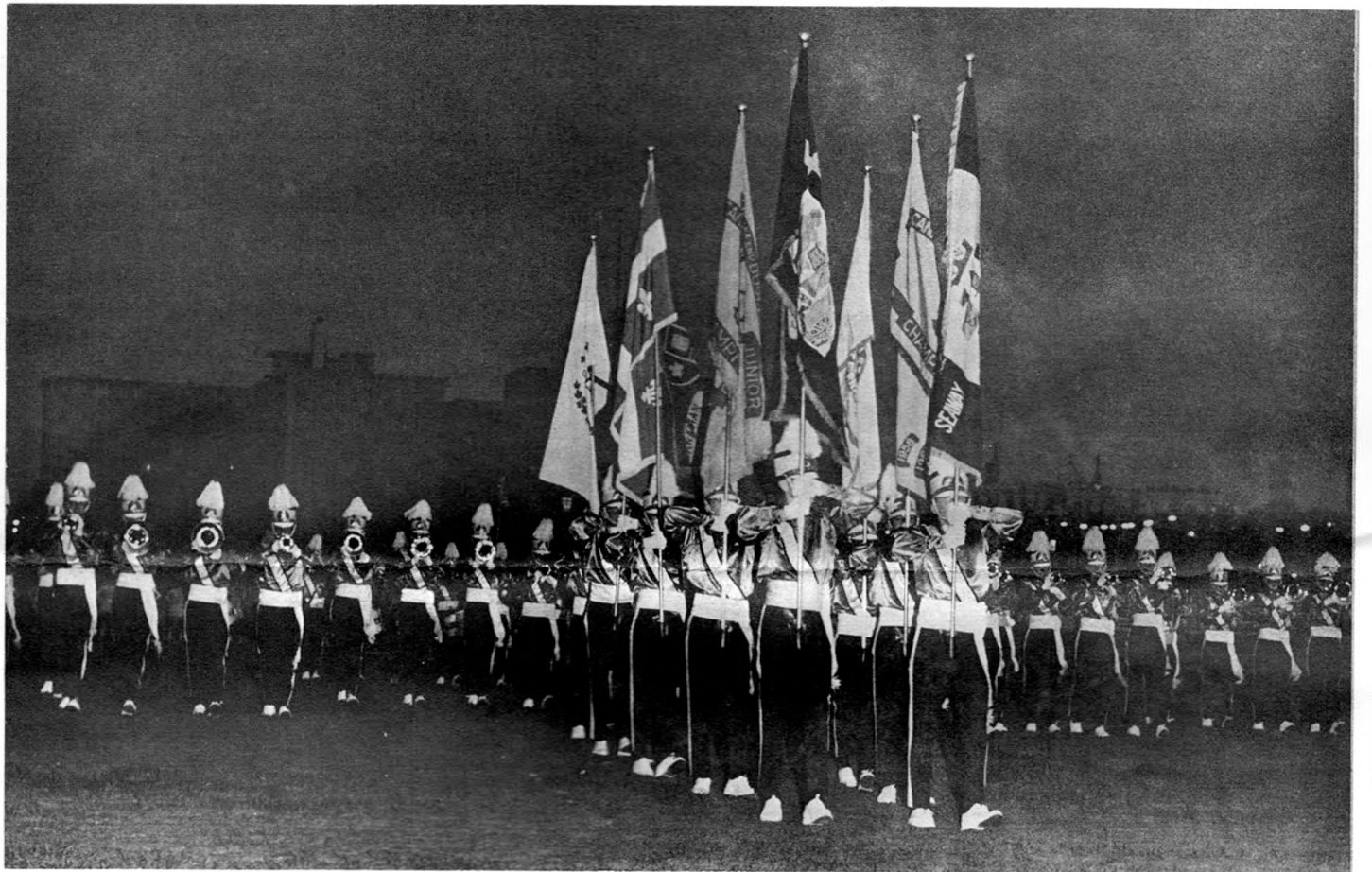
Members receive the Corps Newsletter "Green Capsule Comments" regularly plus other benefits to keep "up-to-date" on the activities for 1965.

ORDER FROM: DON DABER, 205 KEELE STREET, Suite 302, TORONTO (9) ONT. CANADA.



The Optimists under the direction of "Mr. Showman" Jim McConkey, through the years 1962-1963.

Optimist Publicity Photos



Optimists' first field show appearance, 1964, in Toronto, May 18th.

Optimists parade down the main street of their home town led by Drum Majors Andy Henderson (left) and Vern Johannson (right.)



Photos above, top to bottom:

Ivor Brambley, Drill Instructor, explains to the Corps the course of a parade and concert formation at the Mosport Raceway, June 6, 1964. They wear the white parade uniforms.

Early spring drill rehearsal outdoors calls for warm clothing.

Initiation capers at Rome, N.Y., July 1962

Being Drum Major has its pleasant moments as Andy Henderson accepts the Ontario Jr. Trophy in Waterloo, June 27, 1964.

Barry Bell, Music Director since 1958 . . . a member of the Executive "team" that has built the Corps on a solid foundation over the years.