

Every legend has a beginning.

Draft

*Every legend transforms itself into a never-ending story
told time and again by those that were part of its unfolding.*

None of us will recall how things ended.

No, we prefer to remember how things were when we were Optimists.

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The legend lives on... in all of us.

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Epilogue

Well, there it is folks, the whole story.

Although this tale was supposed to be the story of the Toronto Optimists Drum and Bugle Corps, I felt it would not be complete without the build-up from 1952 to September 1957. Likewise, with the events that took place from early 1976 to the final denouement in 1979. The Toronto Optimists marched as a unit from 1958 through 1975. Before that and after, it was not the Toronto Optimists but I felt, essential to the story.

There was a brief attempt at a revival that fared no better than many other attempts by other Corps. It lasted a couple of weeks.

Many of those in the story you have just read are no longer with us, mostly due to natural causes. The known ones are Al Baggs, Bernie Beer, Mrs. Nonie McKolskey-Beer, Al Tierney, Gord Robinson, Doug McPhail, John Johnson, Wolfgang Petschke, Norm Cardwell and, no doubt, many among the original Optimist Club. Even some who were Corps members.

As for the rest, where are they now? All over! Most got married and settled down, building successful careers for themselves and their families. A few are still involved with Drum Corps. Some disappeared, never to be seen again.

No matter, wherever they are, they all have one thing in common. They were in the Toronto Optimists Drum and Bugle Corps. They all have fond, or even sentimental memories, which helps to fuel an alumnae association that is still active to this day. A 45th anniversary reunion was held to honour Barry Bell, Lorne Ferrazzutti and Don Daber, three of the main stalwarts of those early years. People from all walks of life came, sharing memories, reliving past glories, rehashing old battles.

This is now where it belongs, in the realm of memory. Any tarnish will disappear, and past glories and legends will glow brighter as, for one more day, the Toronto Optimists Drum and Bugle Corps takes to the field.

From Toronto... The Optimists!

It's better that way.

Colin Hedworth



About the author



Colin Hedworth began his drum corps career with the Danforth Tech Crusaders. He was a charter member of both the Toronto Optimists, as a marching member, and the Seneca Optimists, as a member of their support staff. He played tenor drum with the Toronto Optimists until he aged out at the end of 1962. Colin joined the equipment department of the Toronto Optimists at the end of 1975. As a result, he was also there when the Seneca Optimists began. He stayed with the Seneca Optimists until the Corps folded. During the intervening years Colin maintained an active connection with the corps and its members.

This book is a manifestation of Colin's love for the Optimists. Colin spent a great deal of time, over a number of years, researching the information that has been included. He contacted former staff and members of the Scout Band, Opti-Corps, the Toronto Optimists and the Seneca Optimists. He also talked with staff and corps members of some of Optimists competitors. His goal was to gather and discuss various versions of stories in an attempt to validate the veracity of the material included.

Sadly, Colin passed away in July 2013 without having had the opportunity to see his book published.



"FROM TORONTO... THE OPTIMISTS!"

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ISBN 000-0-0000-00