
by Art Kellerman

*We're from the Scout House
Preston,
And our pride you cannot
question.*

*Our main goal is sheer perfection.
SCOUT HOUSE on parade!*

Anyone who has followed drum and bugle corps through its golden era -- the 1950s through the 1970s -- must have a special place in their heart for the Scout House Bugle Band of Preston, ONT. This unit broke the mold of drum corps with its unique style and left an indelible impression upon all who were privileged to witness a performance.

The 1st Preston Scout Troop was conceived as a community-based organization by Wilfred

Scout House

facility, but each time it was lovingly restored.

Boy Scouts, Cub Scouts and Sea Scouts were afforded a variety of worthwhile activities from which to choose. The Coronet Lounge was a reading room. There was a movie theater and physical education facilities. The Teen Canteen was a popular feature that attracted numerous guests to its dances on Saturday nights. The stage would give actors a chance to hone their skills in the "Land of Make Believe."

Bernhardt's daughter, Clara, a victim of polio who was confined to a wheelchair, became a noted poet and author, but she was Scout House's biggest fan for more than 50 years. Her poem, "Scout House," appeared in the *Galt Evening Reporter* in February 1965.

*If walls could speak,
How graphically these
walls so firmly hewn,
From the weathered stone from
nearby cliffs,
Could tell a day now gone,
Of days when shining horses
neighed
Within the now vanished stalls.
When cows and pigs and
chickens, too,
Emitted barnyard calls;
And little children came to play
High in the loft amid the hay.
The years have passed.
The walls still stand
And now the rafters ring
With the youthful laughter of*

*the scouts
At games or as they sing,
Or it may be the bugle band is holding
practice night,
Or else "The Land of Make Believe"
Portrays young actors plight.*

The Scout House Bugle Band was founded in 1938 by Blum, who was a pharmacist with no musical training. Preston industrialist P.R. Hilborn gave him \$250 to start the band as part of Preston's scout group activities.

Blum's musical illiteracy became almost a badge of honor in light of his achievements. Member Gilles Bourque shared one anecdote: "He didn't know one tune from another. On Sunday night, marching back to Scout House after church service, he told us to play a certain song. The drum major would quietly

give us instructions to play a different one. When we got back, Wilf told us how well we played his song -- he didn't know the difference!"

Blum became a father figure to the boys of Scout House and it was felt that when he lost his own mother, Rose, to a flu epidemic when he was only 11 years old, he developed his passion for helping children and the underprivileged. Blum often found jobs for his boys and worked to keep them out of trouble during their difficult teen years by communicating with the town officials.

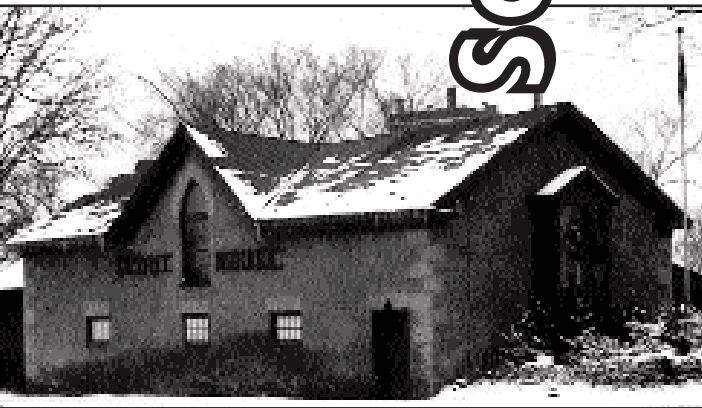
He developed a strong code of discipline for the members of his unit. A combination of Christian ethic and tough love, he had strict yet understanding rules regarding smoking, swearing and drinking. Missing practice for just about any reason was considered unacceptable. His pep talks where he would rant and rave were legendary, but he'd soon smile and say, "Do you think that will get them going?"

Future competitive successes belied Scout House's humble beginnings. The band began with 12 boys in scout uniforms with no experience. They looked and sounded terrible. Their appearance in parades was compared to a bunch of farmers walking behind plows.

The second year, the number of buglers doubled to 20 and then increased to 24 the next year. They were at least louder, if not much better. Dedication and hard work paid

off and by the mid-1940s, their skill and popularity grew as their schedule dramatically increased.

The war years were good for the band and now prospective



The Scout House building, with a showcase window on the end, still exists (photo from the collection of Drum Corps World).

Jacob Blum in 1929. Having no church affiliation, it had no permanent place to meet. Blum often drove around town in his Ford Meteor looking for a place with potential. He'd take scouts with him to get their opinion and they became interested in a dilapidated, manure permeated stable by the Grand River that was used by Rock Springs Brewery.

The owner, Peter Bernhardt, gave the Scouting Association a 99-year lease, to expire in 2035. This structure needed tremendous work on both the exterior and the interior, but eventually Scout House evolved into a youth community center that served the towns of Preston, Galt and Hespeler in Waterloo County, ONT.

The building, with contributions from community members and hard work by the scouts, was refurbished and made into a show place and model for the others.

Fires in 1940 and 1944 severely damaged the



Inside Scout House, members show off some of the corps' trophies and awards (photo from the collection of Drum Corps World).

Scout House on the starting line at the 1960 National Dream in Jersey City, NJ (photo by Ron Da Silva from the collection of Drum Corps World).



members had to compete for a spot.

Performances were confined to a local area, with a long trip consisting of 45 members being transported outside of Preston on an open-backed flour truck. There was a strange ghostly appearance to the members upon arrival.

Despite the lack of musical training, Blum knew entertainment when he saw it and he developed a penchant for entertaining audiences. He carefully studied such shows as the Ice Capades and the Radio City Rockettes to learn elements of crowd appeal.

His Scouts thrilled audiences with a stage show in 1944 called "Campfire Dreams." It featured song, dance and lots of bugles.

He established a junior band to develop new talent as a feeder system. Also, the first trip outside of Canada was organized. The band traveled to Buffalo and Syracuse, NY, and to a Boy Scout camp in Rhode Island. In preparation, the band learned new music, fashioned new uniforms and carried a new flag designed by Margaret Walkey -- the stylized solid white maple leaf against a bright red background, which was eventually to become the band's logo.

Now known as international travelers, the unit was ready to compete in the newly organized "Fancy Drill" competition to be introduced by the Canadian Bugle and Trumpet Association (later renamed the Canadian Drum Corps Association).

Scout House was an immediate contender. The unit won multiple titles at the prestigious Waterloo Festival. Although finishing first in some categories, a great deal of pride was taken in finishing fourth in the "test piece" category. The band had to perform a new piece of music correctly, note for note. Their achievement was amazing



August 26, 1961, Scout House members were popular, often having "groupies" following them. They were in demand for autographs (photo by Moe Knox from the collection of Drum Corps World).

considering they, like their founder, were musically illiterate and had always learned their musical pieces by rote.

Along with their reputation for showmanship, discipline and toughness were still a part of the band's makeup; Blum insisted upon that. For some reason, he was against drummers using drum rests on their instruments. He thought that they were for girl bands or for sissies. Scout House percussionists had to bleed and scar over in every parade. Drummers finally learned how to hold the drum horizontally, thus relieving the pressure.

In 1949, Scout House appeared before 80,000 people in Cleveland's Municipal Stadium for the Festival of Freedom celebration. They wowed the crowd by entering the darkened stadium wearing pen

lights attached to their hats.

The highlight of 1950 was when they actually won the test piece contest at the Waterloo Festival, along with two Canadian championships, a third-place trophy, a silver and a bronze medal, and a medal for each individual member.

In spite of their success, their staff knew the band's straight bugles would limit future success. The town government only gave them a small amount of available "arts" money, not enough to consider upgrading their instruments, so they started a furious fund-raising campaign among the people and soon had enough to purchase 29 soprano, tenor and baritone piston bugles.

Scout House toured Ohio on a whirlwind pace, winning

new fans as they went. Cleveland Indians manager and Baseball Hall of Famer Lou Boudreau donated a silk Dominion of Canada flag to the unit before 35,000 admiring fans at Cleveland's Municipal Stadium.

As the band made its way through various states in the United States, the members would often have fun with their fans by telling stories of their native Canada, exaggerating and embellishing facts, and sometimes just fabricating myths around stereotypes of the North.

Americans would "learn" that in Canada, it snowed 10 months of the year, that it was common to be chased by a polar bear and that Canadian children often had wolves and penguins for pets.

With the purchase of a new chrome plated B-flat piston bugles in 1951, the band was able to grow musically and the music director, Harold "Duffy" Duffield, wrote two original compositions to honor the people of two communities, Port Clinton and Shawinigan.

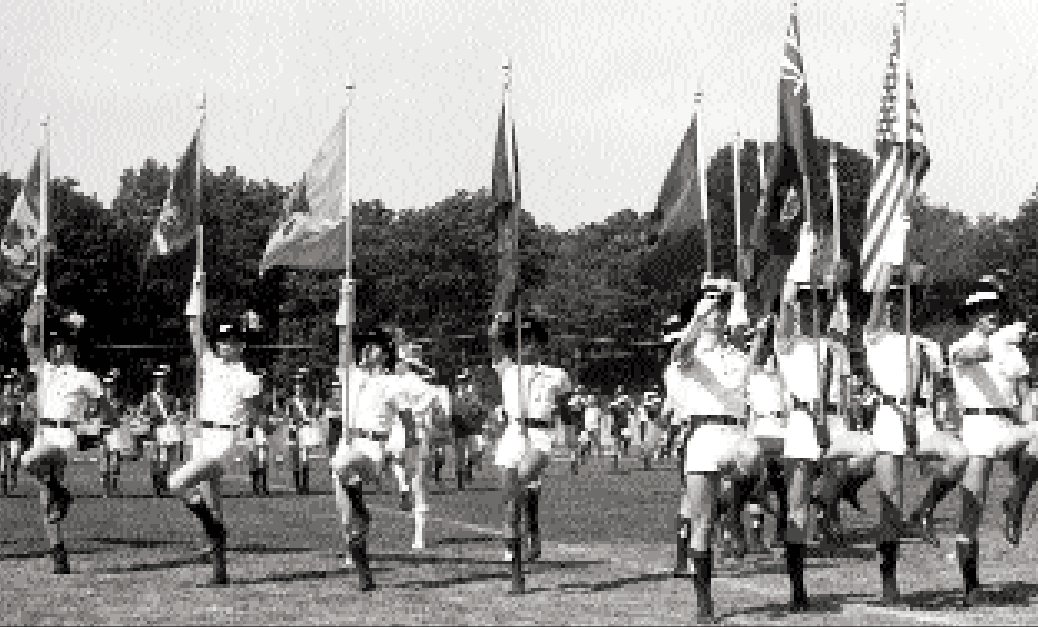
Their popularity increasing, Scout House accepted the invitation to perform in Shawinigan, QUE, as a featured attraction of the Semi-Centennial Celebration. Two buses carried the boys on the 1,000-mile trip. All the other bands at the performance were brass bands, so at first the audience didn't know what to expect, but when the staccato entrance of *Scout House Fanfare*, followed by *Monty*, was heard, hearts were won.

When the band broke into *Slow March*, the applause drowned out the music. Finally, the crowd heard *Shawinigan*. The piece was written to honor them, and thunderous applause erupted again. The next day, thousands of townspeople gathered to watch Scout House parade to church.

The band received the highest praise. Quebec Premier Maurice Duplessis said he would be proud to have Scout House as a Quebec band.



Scout House at one of their winter indoor exhibitions, a full evening of entertainment that was usually sold out (photo by Moe Knox from the collection of Drum Corps World).



Scout House, 1964 (photo by Moe Knox from the collection of Drum Corps World).

Dr. Edwin Franko Goldman, at one time considered North America's greatest marching musicians and successor to John Philip Sousa, paid Scout House a tremendous compliment when he described the unit as "the greatest band of its kind that I have ever seen." In fact, Goldman tried to arrange a performance for Scout House at New York City's Radio City Music Hall.

At the Waterloo Festival in 1951, Scout House won two championships, making it three years in a row for that accomplishment. Music director Duffield felt it was the band's best performance ever. The fact that the performance was broadcast live via radio throughout the province assured a large listening audience that further enhanced the unit's fan base.

Although the reputation and popularity of the band had grown immensely, fund-raising was still a major obstacle. Controversy and, occasionally, resentment grew over the lack of financial resources provided by the town council. Supporters argued the good will and free publicity the town received as a result of the band's outside performances should be fairly compensated.

In 1952, a public relations committee was established to promote the band and to handle the increasing number of requests for appearances. Blum organized a successful indoor show at Hespeler Arena that raised enough funds to get the band out of debt.

Then the town council came up with an additional \$500 in recognition of the positive public relations the town received due to Scout House's appearances and things were indeed looking rosy. Some of the great public relations strategies the band used to generate interest and create goodwill included the following:

- 550 Scout House car stickers distributed throughout the province
- Kits that included posters, stickers, Chamber of Commerce brochures and information sheets were distributed in advance to towns in which Scout House was scheduled to play
- Scout House recruitment cards were placed on many rural mailboxes

- A mat service for out-of-town newspapers was organized so top quality photographs could be available to run with advance stories about the band

- As a gesture of friendship and goodwill, a local polio victim was brought by special ambulance to the stadium and presented with a Scout House silk neckerchief

- During National Shut-In Day, the band marched from house to house in Preston serenading the sick who had made such a request and presenting each with a get-well card.

Scout House won championships at the Waterloo Festival for the fourth straight year, an incredible accomplishment, and thousands of fans jammed the streets to watch the victory parade.

The band increased to 70 members, including 20 "spares" who were skilled enough to carry on should a regular be absent. Duffield had to give up his position due to other demands in the profession, but fortunately the band was able to acquire the services of expert drummer Gene Seymour



Scout House and their famous high leg lift, July 1, 1962, at Stratford, CT (photo from the collection of Drum Corps World).

and trumpeter extraordinary Ted Denver, who not only increased the complexity of the musical arrangements to five-part harmony from three, but also taught much of the membership to read music.

Another key point of 1952 was the purchase of a bus, an old one at that, but their own genuine bus! Members spent the winter getting it up to snuff to be used the next year.

The unit faced new challenges in 1953. It appeared to be a rebuilding year with age-outs resulting in 24 new members in the lines. They expected to finish well below the top in the prestigious Toronto Festival. Blum had prepared the band for disappointment and the necessity of facing the possible biases of the judges against the "hicks from Preston," but their fears were allayed when it was announced, "In first place, Scout House!"

Of course, their pride and joy, the bus, broke down on the first day of a scheduled 1,000-mile trip, but that was only a minor obstacle. Then some of the band's Baptist members attended church services at an all-black church in Port Clinton and this was considered an advance in relations for that era.

At the Waterloo Festival, Scout House was understandably the big favorite to win the parade competition based upon its past record. The crowd was shocked to find their favorite did not even receive a runner-up standing. There had been a mix-up with the judges, who thought the unit was not competing in the category and had not reported their scores.

Scout House was finally announced the winner several days later after an emergency meeting of the judges.

The greatest challenge of 1953 was neither the bus nor the judges. It wasn't the constant fund-raising, the travel or even the town politics. It was the friction between the 1st Preston Scout Troop and provincial Boy Scout officials. The troop received the Boy Scout Charter in 1929, but over the years there was bickering about numerous procedural matters as the band created its own identity.

Disagreements about uniforms, publicity,

scheduling, innovative scout activities and other issues hampered cooperation, and personality conflicts built barriers that were only surmountable when it was decided the band would sever its relationship with the

Scouts and no longer even wear the uniform of the Boy Scouts.

Scout House thrived, in spite of (or because of depending on one's point of view) the lack of affiliation with the Scouts and soon fans throughout North America came to know the young men wearing the distinctive black shorts, knee socks, red shirts, white gauntlets and wide-brimmed Aussie hats,



Scout House, 1961, during an exhibition in Stratford, CT (photo by Moe Knox from the collection of Drum Corps World).

(actually a modification of the plain, wide-brimmed Mennonite hats that had been worn for many years by men in that area).

The band had always worn the traditional Boy Scout uniform, but Blum didn't like their loose, baggy appearance. He wanted the shorts to be shorter than regulations would allow and now there was no reason to follow such regulations.

The length crept up high above the knee. Of course, the Canadian winters were a factor, so in cold weather, the band switched to Sea Scout uniforms, which featured bell-bottomed pants. The new uniform was considered quite risqué for the times.

The muscular development of the member's arms and legs were highlighted by the outfit and further accentuated by the marching style to the stances the unit adopted. Long hair was encouraged since the style of hat was ill-fitted to short hair.

We must keep in mind that this was the 1950s, when modesty was part of military bearing. How shocking the appearance of Scout House must have been to the previously uninitiated!

Blum extended a dress code to practices and to all public appearances of the band to mold a feeling of cohesiveness and

discipline. Membership in Scout House was a total commitment and strict standards of conduct were to be adhered to at all times.

Blum stated publicly that one of the primary purposes of the band was "unsurpassed citizenship training."

Music is our keynote,

Precision is our aim

*At our best, when put to the test,
Our honors we will rise up to maintain.
Hours of practice, years of training,
We'll admit we're strict, but who's
complaining?*

*Our reward is just in being
SCOUT HOUSE on parade!*

Even more distinctive than their uniform was their style of marching. Scout House introduced choreography to drum corps as an addition to the military-type drill that was status quo for the day. Blum created intense and exhausting practices so members could master marching -- "Scout House style."

Arms were swung shoulder high in military fashion and *march* was more like a prance. The cadence was 96 steps a minute compared to the traditional 125-150 of the era, because in the beginning, the band would lead the Women's Royal Navy Service parade each weekend.

This was an ideal pace for such a purpose, in that the women wore long skirts and could not keep up with the traditional marching tempo. The high knee lift of the band also helped to slow down the pace.

The use of the B-flat piston bugle the band adopted in 1951 contributed to the uniqueness of the unit, and modern day drum corps fans are still struggling with how they feel about the introduction of any-key (but mostly B-flat) instruments as a replacement for the traditional G bugle today. Perhaps Scout House knew something way back then.

By 1953, the band's reputation had grown greatly and it had received invitations from far and wide. It was incorporated and its resources grew.

The 1954 season saw the introduction of French horns into the horn line, so there was a new sound to compliment the new look. The music ranged from Latin numbers to religious selections. A natural tie-in with the new Aussie-style hats was the song *Waltzing Matilda*. It was a match made in heaven and the tune became an unofficial signature song for the group.

Due to a tabulation error, Scout Houses' fourth consecutive championship at the Waterloo Festival (now in open class competition) wasn't announced until two weeks after the show. Incredibly, their percussion scores had been switched with that of another unit on the judge's sheet.

Another honor bestowed upon the band was an invitation to perform at halftime of the Grey Cup Football Championship in Toronto, but this created an awkward situation as they were now in conflict with the American Federation of Musicians Union.

The boys, not being members of the union, could lead the Grey Cup parade, but could not perform on the field.

It wasn't until the 1960s that non-union amateur bands and drum and bugle corps were allowed to perform at professional football games.

The band again dominated the field in 1955, but in victory received an ominous warning from a judge at the Waterloo Festival: "Keep away from the American style of band and the music they play."

At Emancipation Day, thousands of blacks had traveled to Windsor to celebrate the 121st anniversary of the end of slavery in the British Empire and to recognize the importance of the Underground Railroad in helping American blacks escape slavery.

Scout House was the only white group to march in the parade and to appear in other public ceremonies, having been invited by "Mr. Emancipation," Walter Perry.

The band then performed at the National Dream contest and took New York and New Jersey by storm. American fans loved them. At the end of the season, Gene Seymour left for a position in the Royal Canadian Air Force. Then the Canadian Bugle and Trumpet Band Association made some changes in classification rules that would make it more difficult for Scout House to dominate as it had in the past.

No more open class or separate music classes meant bands would have to obey age restrictions to register as either a junior or senior band and be judged on marching, music and general effect in a single 15-minute routine.

Since success was to be determined during a single 15-minute show, Blum was determined to make changes for maximum impact. There would be new music, new instruments (E-flat baritone horns) and a new show concept for 1956. Music featured the famous *Scout House Fanfare*; tunes from Disney's "Snow White"; the rousing *Waltzing Matilda*; *Hi Lily, Hi Lo*; *Rhapsody in Blue* (an early visit to classical music); and *Somewhere Over the Rainbow*. Wooden soldiers led into *Wish me Luck*.

The field show was one of the most crowd appealing and original of its time. This show was considered a benchmark for modern drum corps and met unparalleled popularity.

Politics again entered the scene when the Canadian Bugle and Trumpet Band Association scheduled its first national championship on the same day as the Waterloo Festival. Scout House's sense of loyalty had them give up the championship show to return to Waterloo County.

They won the hearts of thousands just by appearing, won the field show with a score of 93.6 and also won the parade for the eighth straight year.

In 1957, Scout House was faced with rule changes as judging associations in the United States and Canada tried to standardize criteria. Still, there was much inconsistency and a unit that traveled through a wide area would have difficulty meeting different

standards. The band was in high demand based upon its 1956 performances and members were optimistic in meeting the challenge.

The big showdown with the reigning junior champions, the Leaside Lions, took place in Toronto in early May. The Lions had won the championship the previous year when Scout House was appearing in Waterloo. The result was a seven-point victory by the boys in the short shorts. Still, a long season awaited.

The band kept winning and a treasured moment was the taking of the prestigious Ringling Brothers "Big Top" trophy -- a gold-plated circus mallet. The closest rival was the Madison Scouts, four points behind.

The accolades mounted week after week. All the Canadian corps fell behind Scout House. The band was crowned Canadian Bugle and Trumpet champions. Still, the members didn't rest on their laurels, but continued their strong work ethic. In putting on an exhibition at the famous National Dream contest at Roosevelt Stadium in Jersey City, NJ, they brought down the house and had to perform twice to satisfy the exuberant crowd.

If things seemed too good to be true, they were. The first competition of the year was to be against six top senior drum and bugle corps in Toronto's International Championships.

Along with Scout House, the show featured the Guelph Royalaires, Jolly Jesters,

Marching Ambassadors, Syracuse Brigadiers, Princemen and Reilly Raiders. When Scout House was announced in sixth place, the audience was stunned. They were trounced in general effect. General effect! General effect was practically Scout House's middle name, but the contest was judged by American rules and the unit did not perform the American type of drill.

The new rules did not value what was Scout House's forté: exciting the crowd. It seemed the handwriting was on the wall; Scout House could not compete on equal terms with the traditional drum and bugle corps.

Still, the band had high hopes for 1958. Being in high demand, many shows were booked throughout Canada and the United States. They looked forward to being able to play more sophisticated music with the new slides on their horns allowing for chromatics.

A new rival, the Toronto Optimists, was beginning to make its mark on the Canadian scene. With skilled musicians and talented staff, a main goal was knocking Scout House off the championship perch.

The season started with an exhibition at a senior show in Bridgeport, CT, in which they had to follow the ever-popular Hawthorne

Caballeros. More than 28,000 spectators gave the boys from the North the highest applause. Shouts of, "More, more," poured down upon Scout House.

The following for Scout House was such that a fan club was organized in Minnesota with Miss Stillwater, the winner of the town's beauty contest, serving as president. Drum Major Paul Bauer became an Elvis-like celebrity in the state, but despite it's popularity, Scout House was having difficulty winning competitions.

At the National Dream, invited for a record third time, the band performed a thrilling exhibition before 30,000 screaming

were almost no local residents in the ranks, in complete contrast to the first 20 years.

Financial problems were beginning to become a major concern as operating expenses increased beyond revenues.

As 1959 began, the band was buoyed by the tradition established over the years, but faced the realization that they couldn't expect to do a Scout House type of show and compete successfully on the field.

They toured Canada and the United States and thrilled audiences wherever they went, but they could not win. Their performance at a senior show in Hamilton's Civic Stadium was recorded by Fleetwood Records and was released as "The 49th Parallel," co-featured with St. Vincent's Cadets of Bayonne, NJ.

Success in 1959 had to be measured by the number of appearances, distances traveled, revenues earned and audiences awed. Winning, except for parades, was no longer part of the mix and was not to be for the next seven years.

Transportation became a major headache for Blum in 1960 as the fact that his unit was no longer a community-based organization became a reality. Members finally agreed to share gasoline costs to ease the expense of the boys having to travel great distance to practice. Tragedy struck when the equipment van was involved in an accident that resulted in three fatalities to non-band members.

These and other travel problems were overcome as the

band prepared to do battle with the Optimists for the championship September 10. Not only did the Optimists win, but Scout House didn't even make finals. When they finished fourth in the street parade competition in St. Catherine's, it became more obvious than ever that the new judging standards could not be overcome.

Scout House approached 1961 with new uniforms, updated horns, a more active feeder band for talent development, an expanded guard, new instructors and new music. Only *Waltzing Matilda* was kept.

The *Lord's Prayer* stunned crowds by its reverence and spiritualism. Audience appeal increased, even as the unit's ability to compete declined. Unfortunately, attendance at practice also declined and the problem of absenteeism forced Scout House to withdraw from the Canadian National Championship.

In 1962, Scout House accepting the role as the premier exhibition band and thrilled audiences throughout North America. They did, however, surprise many by finishing third among the Canadian juniors, though 10-and-a-half points behind the winning Optimists.

There was some consolation in the fact that the Guelph Royalaires, a corps having



Scout House was featured in the Toronto newspaper magazine section in the early 1960s, with Drum Major Paul Bauer out in front (photo from the collection of Drum Corps World).

fans. After an informal post-show concert in the parking lot, they signed autographs for their admirers.

The Holy Name Cadets competed as the Garfield Cadets, wearing white shorts, tops and knee socks, and Stetson hats, looking amazingly similar to Scout House. Losing church sponsorship, the Cadets needed temporary uniforms, so they looked to the Scout House concept as a solution.

At the Canadian Championships, the Toronto Optimists defeated Scout House by a point and a half. The boys in shorts accepted their loss in their usual classy manner. They knew it would eventually happen and they were happy to win the street parade trophy, best drum major award and second place in the field show.

Still, when the Audubon All-Girl corps topped them by five points in the International Championship Music and Pageantry contest a week later, it was a bitter pill to swallow. The loss to the Optimists was almost expected; losing to Audubon was a shock.

As the season ended, the junior band was recognized under Paul Bauer's leadership. Membership now included many boys from outside Preston. In fact, by the 1960s there



Scout House Alumni, September 1, 2002, during an exhibition at the the Drum Corps Associates "Alumni Spectacular" in Scranton, PA (photo by Moe Knox from the collection of Drum Corps World).

many Scout House alumni, won the senior championship.

The band's official 25th anniversary was celebrated at the annual Spring Show in 1962. Then it was on the road again, this time complicated by a bus company strike. Scout House was content to win the hearts of the people, since winning the contest was impossible.

In 1964, the band fully embraced its style of the 1950s, not even attempting to compete as a traditional drum and bugle corps. Blum felt that the boys would be "advancing backward." He felt drum corps was losing its overall appeal because all the units seemed to be the same. There was no Spring Show -- interest was on the wane.

Then financial disagreements between Blum and board of directors members resulted in their resignation. The 1964 tour schedule was much reduced as compared to other years. Scout House finished the year in sixth place, well behind the Optimists, who won the title for the seventh consecutive year.

Blum was requested to appear before the Canadian Drum Corps Association to explain his "behavior unbecoming a corps director" in regard to an argument with the director of the Optimists. He apologized for what had happened.

A European trip was proposed with great enthusiasm for Scout House in 1965, but it never materialized. The band was still in high demand and excited audiences as always. Momentum for a successful season was building as everyone looked forward to 1966.

The Spring Show was reinstated and was an emotional as well as artistic success, but it drew fewer fans than anticipated.

An exhibition at JFK Stadium in Bridgeport, CT, gave Scout House the greatest and longest ovation in the structure's history, but still, judges were not impressed.

An August show in Ottawa found them in last place with a score of 57.95. Scout House, in disappointment, dropped out of the Ontario Championship.

Financial difficulties were insurmountable and plans to come back strong in 1967 were unsuccessful, despite the hiring of Hawthorne Caballero great Don Angelica as music arranger and instructor.

In April 1967, Blum sadly announced that Canada's Famous Scout House Bugle Band would cease operations. Ironically, this was at the time of Canada's Centennial and Scout House would have certainly been a featured attraction at many of the festivities.

Efforts to resuscitate Scout House were made in 1968 as girls were admitted to the horn and drum lines for the first time and the unit did perform in street parades, but the organization collapsed again during the winter of 1968-1969.

A senior corps was attempted in 1969, but financial problems and obsolete instruments curtailed success.

In 1978, the band was revived and appeared at the Barnum Festival in

Bridgeport, CT, and then paraded through the streets of Cambridge -- the new name for the combined former communities of Galt, Preston and Hespeler. There was hope, but success was short-lived for the new band and it disbanded in 1983, as conflicting opinions of board members and the inability to retain its membership sounded the death knell.

Blum, who passed away in 1992, was recognized for his achievements by the drum corps community. He was inducted into the World Drum Corps Hall of Fame and was a recipient of the Canadian Drum Corps Association Founders Award and the Province of Ontario Volunteer Services award.

Of the many tributes offered to Scout House over the years, one that ranks high is a statement made by the Honorable Leslie M. Frost, prime minister of Ontario, "This (band) has been, in fact, an ambassador of goodwill, helping to create fine neighborly feelings between Canada and the U.S."

Enthusiastic crowds greeted the exhibition of the alumni corps version of Scout House at the DCA Championship weekend in Scranton, PA, in 2002, where the familiar strains of *Waltzing Matilda* were heard once more. Blum would have been proud.

*Drums and trumpets loudly ringing,
See those sun-tanned knees up bringing,
Arms and gauntlets freely swinging,
SCOUT HOUSE on parade!*

Source:

"Magic on the March," the 50-year history of Canada's famous Preston Scout House Bugle Band by John Malcom, Pete Sanderson, Bryan Schmidt, Richard Truman and Roy Wilson. Materials were provided by Karl Jorgenson and Steve Vickers.

*For a photo and bio of Art Kellerman,
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