
by Gary J. Dickelman and Tim O'Brien

To tell the story of the Golden Knights could easily fill this volume. There are hundreds of memories of the great benchmarks during 21 years of competition -- stories of triumphs and defeats, of sacrifice and hard work and of long days spent rehearsing and traveling.

There were places called the Newark Armory, the German Hall, Marinello's and Rut's Hut. There were trademarks called *National Emblem March*, rudimental bass drums, *Crazy Army*, the jazz concert and "Throw the ball, junior!"

To tell the story of the Golden Knights is to tell a story of an indomitable spirit in young men and women who

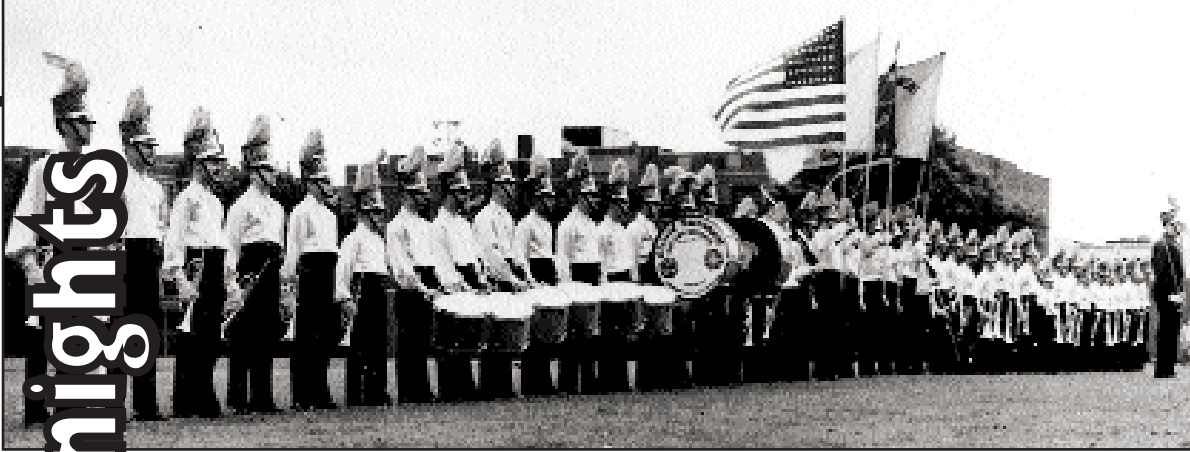


would become "instruments of good." It is the story of how they -- how we -- were positively influenced for a lifetime. It is the story of champions, heroes and dreamers.

In 1946, Monsignor John Kiley formed a parade corps for the boys and girls of Blessed Sacramento Parish on Clinton Avenue in Newark, NJ, at the corner of Van Ness Place. The corps consisted of bugles, drums, glockenspiel, color guard and twirlers. The Blessed Sacramento Cadets wore purple, black and white. Their first public appearance was on Memorial Day 1947.

Marty Nolan was director from 1946 through 1956. He was joined by co-director Vinnie Walsh in 1952, who remained in that position until 1957.

Father Robert F. Garner, who was assigned to Blessed Sacramento Church in 1951 and



Blessed Sacramento Golden Knights

was moderator for the corps, was director from 1958 through 1961, when Fred Dooley took the reigns and held them until the corps disbanded in 1973. Garner was reassigned in 1967; Father Joseph Stulb was moderator from 1968 through 1973.

In 1950, girls were excluded and would not be in the corps again until 1971. The colors were changed to black and gold. In 1951, Garner brought with him a vision of transforming the corps into a competing unit. Instructors Bobby Thompson (drums) and Bill Hayes (drill/bugles) were enlisted to help Garner shape his vision.

The corps entered competition in 1952 with the nickname "Golden Knights."

They competed in six contests, including a 14th-place finish out of a field of 37 at the Legion Nationals in New York City.

In 1953, the corps entered 16 competitions. In Reading, PA, the corps defeated a fine line-up of Pennsylvania competitors to post its first win ever.

An ecstatic Garner treated the corps to a swim at Seaside Heights to celebrate the victory. On August 22, the corps again posted a first-place in Philadelphia. Included in the 1953 schedule was the National Dream contest, where BSGK placed third, just 2.225 points behind the winning Holy Name (Garfield) Cadets and 0.005 behind the second-place St. Joseph's Cadets of Newark.

In 1954, the Golden Knights made their first mark on the drum corps world, knocking off the great powers one by one: St. Vincent's Cadets, Holy Name Cadets, St. Joseph's Cadets and the all-girl Audubon Bon Bons. At the 1954 VFW Nationals in Philadelphia's Municipal

Stadium, BSGK capped its dramatic rise to the top by capturing its first national championship, just 26 months after its first contest. Such a feat has never been duplicated, even when compared with corps of the DCI-era with respect to the recognized world championship.

During the 1954 season, BS posted eight wins, 12 second places and seven third places. Included in the wins were the VFW New Jersey State Championship, the VFW Nationals in Philadelphia, Legion Nationals in Washington, D.C., and the Eastern States Championship. The "Cinderella Corps" had defeated all of the great powers of the drum corps activity.

In October 1954, John Scanlan wrote in *Midwest Corps News*, "By the time you read this article, you will already know that . . . Blessed Sacramento . . . won the national championship of their class in the American Legion. Perhaps the 'Cinderella' story of the Golden Knights will be told and retold for a good many years to come."

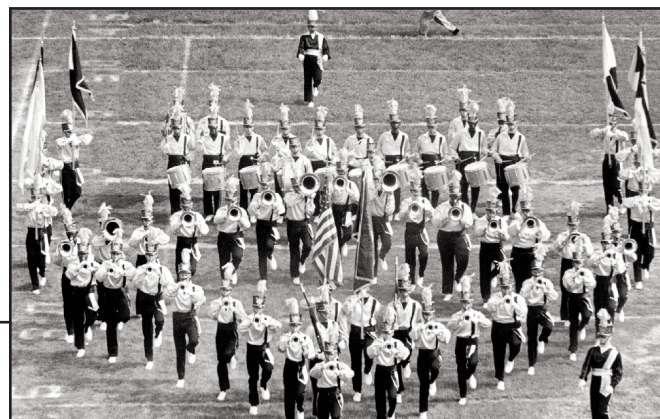
"Having seen their performances throughout the year, I felt they would probably make a championship corps sometime in 1955 and I'm sure they will be among the big five corps of the country for a good four years or more."

The Golden Knights placed in the top five in 90 percent of the 21 VFW and Legion Nationals it entered through 1970, including nine first places. From the first time the corps stepped on to a competition field in 1952 until the last in 1972, they placed first or second in 82 percent of all shows entered. The character Garner instilled in his boys transformed young men into passionate champions with trademark discipline, courage and leadership.

The "Cinderella" label quickly faded as the 1955 season solidified BSGK as a power to be reckoned with. The corps won 11 of its 22 contests that year and captured the American Legion National title at Miami, FL.

In 1956, the record increased to 15 wins out of 22 contests. It was the year of California and another National Legion title in Los

(Top to bottom) The Blessed Sacramento Golden Knights on the starting line at a local competition in 1953; the Newark, NJ, corps in 1952; the 1966 corps (photos from the collection of Gary Dickelman).



Angeles' Coliseum. Now they called the corps "The Golden Robots."

The National Dream, New Jersey State AL and VFW, and Eastern States championships were added to the list of first places. The corps consistently competed with the powers of drum corps: St. Vinnie's, St. Joe's, Audubon, Holy Name, Chicago Cavaliers, Kilties and Most Precious Blood (Boston) Crusaders. So good was Blessed Sacrament in 1956 that, after traveling 3,000 miles in five days from LA, the corps appeared at the Dream and, with no practice and with no one touching any equipment during that time, posted a 90 to win handily.

Garner was a driving force who positively influenced and motivated each of the boys. He wrote, "(The corps is) an 'instrument for good' and, like all instruments, it must be guided and used correctly or else its objective will never be attained.

young drummers on technique and a unique style -- from how to hold the sticks and move the arms and how to position the pinkies, to a mental discipline that would ultimately introduce five snare drummers playing difficult passages as one.

The winning formula was simple: practice the *right thing* and win. Be consistent; be strategic; don't peak before it counts; be a solid section man, not a star. The "old guys" taught the "new guys" the hard lessons that were passed down from winning year to winning year.

The 1957 season was a rebuilding year for BSGK as many who marched the 1956 season aged out and were replaced by Squires. The corps won just six of its 23 contests, including the Dream and the Eastern States Championships, but not without attending to



The Blessed Sacrament Golden Knights at the 1964 National Dream in Jersey City, NJ (photo by Moe Knox from the collection of Drum Corps World).

introduced that embellished the familiar gold blouse with the trademark black and white stripe. Innovation was introduced via an uncharacteristic *tuned* horn line (for drum corps of the era) featuring a rich and melodic baritone section, cross-through drill patterns and Thompson's amazing drum section. The 1958 Golden Knights set the bar for the next decade of drum corps.

Blessed Sacrament added 17 victories out of 21 contests in 1959, including another AL National (Minneapolis) and VFW State championships. The Cavaliers were coming of age in 1959 and had put on a magnificent performance at the Legion Nationals.

Because of bad weather there was no retreat. The corps had to simply sweat out waiting for the Cavaliers' score to be posted on the board. The official slowly rounded the track in a Jeep. Gradually he ascended a ladder and moved the name of every corps down one slot. He put his hand on the card in first place, which read, simply, "BS." He slowly smiled and removed his hand, slotting the Cavies' card into second place.

An amusing story was communicated by Cavaliers alumni in 2000, regarding the 1959 contest. The event prompted them to create song lyrics that would be heard on Cavaliers' buses as late as 1970 (to the tune of *Stars and Stripes Forever*):

"Be kind to the Knights dressed in gold,
For we'll soon be punching holes
in their armor.

We'll beat Blessed Sacrament's fold,
Like we've beaten the Belleville farmers,
Don't laugh at the boys from the East,
For we know that they soon will be defeated,
They'll moan and they'll groan to their priest,
And Minneapolis revenge will be completed!"

The 1960 season was another rebuilding summer in more than one respect. Almost the entire baritone line aged out and Hayes -- the horn and drill instructor who had helped produce seven national titles in six years and 80 victories in 157 contests since 1952 -- moved to Florida. The drum corps world asked, "What will happen to the Golden Knights now?"

Hayes was replaced by Jim Day on horns and Jack Stecker on drill, who were not seasoned instructors of championship corps, but alumni of the Golden Knights. On the other hand, these young instructors had been reared by Hayes, Garner and the countless parents and volunteers who shaped character.

As for the rookie baritone line and many other new faces, they were taken under the tutelage of veteran Golden Knights such as



The Blessed Sacrament Golden Knights, 1955 at American Legion Prelims in Miami, FL (photo from the collection of Gary Dickelman).

"A young man who enters this highly competitive sport with the right spirit will one day leave its ranks having gained discipline, self-control, stability, loyalty, courage, courtesy and leadership. It is the end result which we keep in mind -- the molding of character."

The Blessed Sacrament Squires, the "little corps," provided a training ground for Golden Knights through to the mid-1960s. In the Squires and in BSGK, the instructors, staff and members recognized no one as a star. The strongest and weakest sustained hours of close-order drill. Those who came to watch the champions were disappointed, as they mostly saw basic training.

Bobby Thompson, for example, drilled his

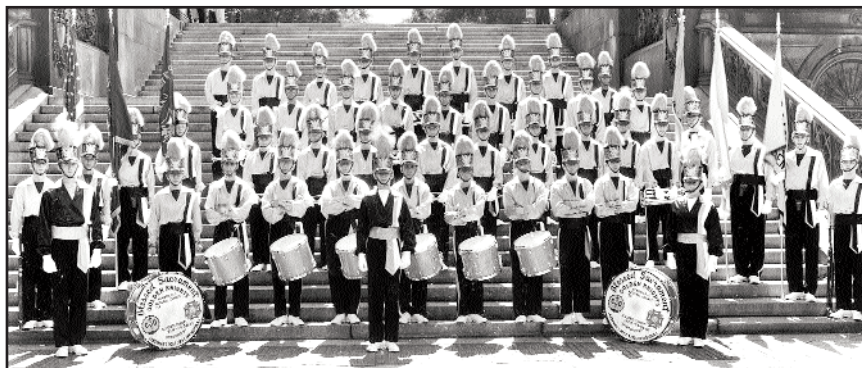
Garner's mandate of building character. The titles were lost, but not without vintage BSGK performances that earned, respectively, fourth and third in VFW (Miami Beach) and AL (Atlantic City, NJ) nationals and second places in the AL and VFW States.

At the Legion nationals, a veteran of the corps was removed from the lineup on the day of the championship. But instead of sulking in seclusion, he was at mid-field on the back sideline that night as the corps defended its national title. Every time the corps turned away from the stands and headed backfield, they saw their fellow Golden Knight, clad in his corps jacket, his fists clenched, exhorting his corps onward.

The Golden Knights truly came of age in

1958, winning 20 of 21 contests and clinching both nationals (Legion in Chicago and VFW in New York City), both state titles and the Dream.

It was the year that new uniforms were



The 1958 Blessed Sacrament Golden Knights (photo from the collection of Gary Dickelman).

John Demko, who held extra rehearsals night after night and week after week, until the previous years' excellence was regained.

At Briggs Stadium in Detroit on August 24, 1960, the Blessed Sacrament Golden Knights won their third VFW and eighth national title. Most of the drum line was 17 years old or younger. The two new instructors demonstrated remarkable character by welcoming Hayes back to work their corps on drill and bugles while in Detroit.

The 1960 edition of Blessed Sacrament won 18 of 19 competitions, including the VFW Nationals, two New Jersey State Championships and another Eastern States Championship. The corps had won 56 percent of all contests it had entered since 1952 and had placed first or second in a staggering 88 percent of its shows.

Competition mounted in 1961 and 1962 as the Midwest corps began to flex their dominance. Blessed Sacrament would continue to win more than 50 percent of the shows it entered, adding 28 more victories, including two New Jersey State Championships, an Eastern States Championship and second and fourth places in the VFW Nationals those years (Miami Beach and Minneapolis).

The Chicago Cavaliers clinched the 1961 and 1962 VFW Nationals, with a close second place by the Royal Airs in 1962.

BSGK was the first corps to field rudimental bass drums, an innovation of Thompson's in which a bass drum would be played with both hands, adding lower register rudiments to accentuate the snare and tenor lines.

Unique visuals were introduced in the percussion section, particularly by the snares and rudimental basses. Techniques of spinning sticks, hitting another player's sticks

The Blessed Sacrament Golden Knights at the 1968 National Dream contest at Roosevelt Stadium in Jersey City, NJ (photo from the collection of Gary Dickelman).



The Blessed Sacrament Golden Knights, 1963 (photo from the collection of Gary Dickelman).

or drum and incorporating back-sticking and Swiss rudiments were among the many things that fans paid money to see in the Golden Knights' percussion section.

Blessed Sacrament's horn line introduced the jazz concert, producing a rich, mellow blend in hits such as *Let's Face the Music and Dance*, *You and the Night and the Music*, *Witchcraft*, *Give Me the Simple Life* and Cole Porter's *In the Still of the Night*.

But for all such innovation, there was precise execution that reflected the military roots of drum corps. The BS style characterized Eastern United States drum corps: difficult and entertaining pieces executed with precision. Photos and moving pictures of the day reveal a Blessed Sacrament trademark -- judges listening intently, with clipboards hanging limply at their sides.

In 1963, the Golden Knights swept across the East Coast, posting 21 straight wins during the summer season. Included were the American Legion Nationals (Miami Beach) won for the sixth time and the first World Open, where the corps was presented with a trophy for *every caption*.

The 1963 Legion title was BSGK's ninth and final national win. The corps nonetheless remained a national contender.

The 1964 season was another rebuilding year. But unlike 1957, many new members were not from the Squires. They appeared from New York City, the Jersey Shore, the Philadelphia area and Connecticut. Blessed Sacrament was the first of the elite drum corps to embrace integration and pride itself on a rich diversity of African Americans, Puerto Ricans and Asians.

Even in the early years of the corps, there were several Asian, Jewish and African American members. Throughout his ministry, Garner worked to strengthen interfaith and cultural ties. His values clearly permeated the BSGK organization as it embraced diversity through the civil rights era.

The 1964 and 1965 seasons produced championship BS corps that continued the greater-than-50-percent winning streaks against increasing odds. The demographics and economics of Newark were shifting toward the inevitable riots of 1967. Church sponsorship was waning as it changed from a neighborhood parish, school and drum corps to simply a meeting place for the corps.

There would be fewer parents, a smaller management committee and profoundly less economic support. Still, the Golden Knights remained a national power, defeating the Cavaliers and Troopers at the 1966 Dream and placing strong third and fifth places in nationals that year (American Legion in Washington, D.C. and VFW in Jersey City).

The greater-than-50-percent wins continued in an era of competition from rising stars and powerhouses such as St. Lucy's, Blue Rock, Boston Crusaders, St. Kevin's Emerald Knights, St. Joseph's of Batavia, Kilties, Madison Scouts, Chicago Cavaliers, Chicago Royal Airs, Chicago Vanguard and Racine Scouts. BSGK defeated all at one time or another through this exciting era of competition.

Blessed Sacrament was one of the first corps to break the three-snare, three-tenor mold in 1966 by successfully introducing five snares and five tenors. Cross-town rival St.



Lucy's began the 1966 season with five-and-five, but they cut back to four-and-four and scored an 89 at the New Jersey VFW States.

In vintage form, Blessed Sacrament retained its five-and-five line and scored a 90 to narrowly defeat St. Lucy's and clinch the state title. Blessed Sacrament ultimately captured 19 New Jersey State titles in its 21 years of competition.

For 1968, it marked yet another transitional year for Blessed Sacrament as it attempted to rebuild almost the entire horn line and color guard in post-riot Newark. It was the first year without Garner. It was the first year since 1954 that the corps did not compete in the AL or VFW Nationals, primarily for financial reasons.

Still, the corps clinched the New Jersey VFW State Title and placed third or fourth in

another dozen victories to go with the 200-plus first places already registered since the corps first stepped off the line in 1952.

What Ake saw that day, though, was not understandable to him. He seemed perplexed as he looked around

the Blessed Sacrament School yard.

His expression telegraphed his thoughts: "This is the home of one of America's greatest corps?" He eyed the graffiti, the bars on the windows, the chain on the door, the peeling paint. He was in the ravaged South Ward of post-riot Newark where hard times prevailed.

Descending to the school basement, he entered what was the corps headquarters, known for 20 years as "The Drum Room." This 15 by 40 foot crevice was the equipment room, the wardrobe room, the trophy room and, yes, the drum room. What couldn't be stashed on the shelves above, or stacked beneath the double set of uniforms, was squeezed into a cabinet below.

On the top floor the color guard was doing close-order on a splintered wood floor. Drummers were pounding on a worn lunch table. Horn players were scattered, some learning a new arrangement, others learning each other's names. That's how November had become then, when membership came from Philadelphia, Bridgeport,

Long Island, all five New York City boroughs, the Jersey Shore and all over North Jersey.

The four-man snare line, in fact, represented four states; yet, despite that handicap, they were second to none.

When practice ended that night, everything belonging to the corps not carried away would be locked up in that tiny room, which was part of



The Blessed Sacrament Golden Knights, 1971 (photo by Moe Knox from the collection of Drum Corps World).

the school's boiler room. The younger Ake did not return the following Sunday.

Looking back, it is easy to understand why an outsider would have been so perplexed. How does one explain how a drum corps could continue to be a national contender with such a small staff, without proper facilities, no longer having parish backing, without a feeder corps and devoid of any financial support?

Yet despite all those obstacles, the following season, 1970, saw the corps in the black and gold right there in August, again challenging for national honors.

Another Blessed Sacrament tradition was the "Bee Hive." The name derived from the primary activity of a room where members "discussed" corps business. Those who fell short of the bar would be completely surrounded by the rest of the corps, as in a beehive, with fists flying, voices wailing and important lessons learned over a brief interval of time.

You might have lost tenths in a competition, or perhaps you didn't carry your weight by selling candy or raffle tickets as required to raise money. No, we did not physically hurt each other, but the lessons were quickly learned. As in a true beehive,



The Blessed Sacrament Golden Knights, 1970 (photo from the collection of Gary Dickelman).

the Dream, the CYO Nationals and the World Open.

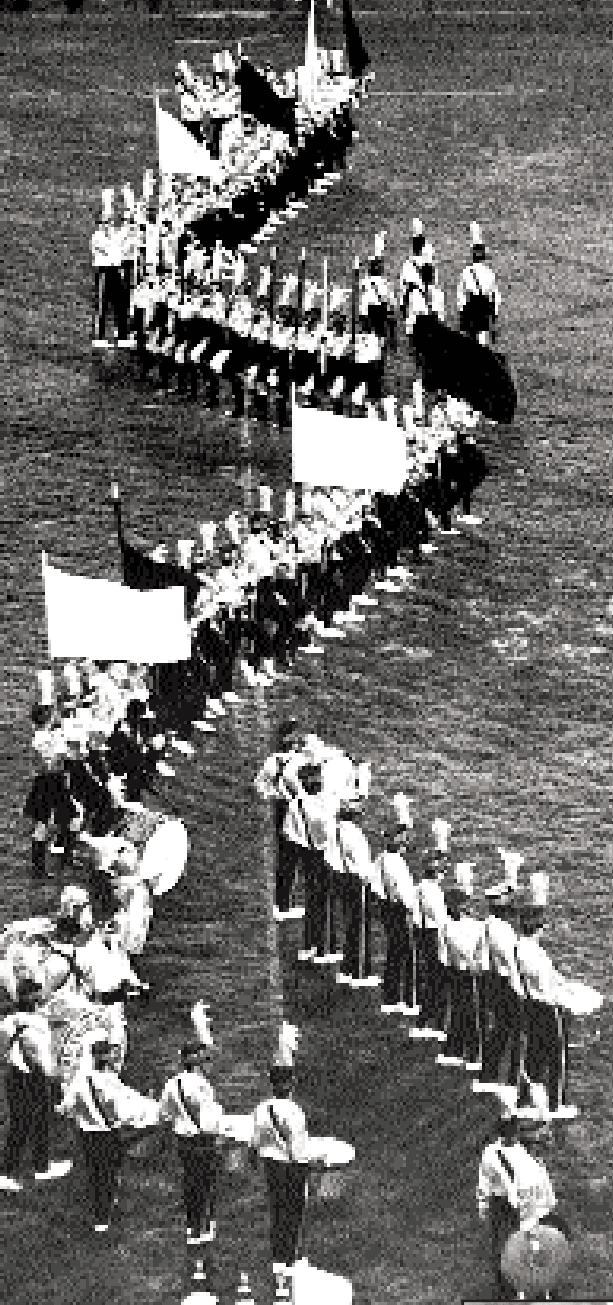
As the season progressed, the 1968 edition of BSGK proved to be spirited, motivated and determined to regain its footing in the late season and into 1969. The corps won only four contests in 1968, but remained in the thick of things in August, when it counted. Rebuilding for BSGK meant growing the character necessary to be a winner, not simply increasing musical and marching talent.

There was a poignant, almost prophetic moment in 1969. H. Worth Ake, the writer for *Drum Corps News*, had come to a Sunday afternoon rehearsal in November. As the Eastern columnist for the publication, his interest was understandable. Equally understandable was that his son, who accompanied him, was interested in joining the corps.

Blessed Sacrament in 1969 had just logged another good year -- a third at the Legion Nationals in Atlanta, GA (after winning the prelims), a fifth in the VFW Finals in Philadelphia, a Dream victory and



The Blessed Sacrament Golden Knights, 1970 (photo by Ron Da Silva from the collection of Drum Corps World).



(Above) The Blessed Sacrament Golden Knights, 1971 (photo by Moe Knox from the collection of Drum Corps World).

we were all workers with missions that needed to be upheld. There would be no stars or slackers, only champions.

There were heroic efforts, such as the World Open in 1964 when the corps won the preliminaries, but placed a close second in the finals. There were the super jobs performed in 1966 at the VFW Nationals in Jersey City and the Legion championship in Washington. There was the Dream win over the Cavaliers, Troopers and Kilties.

There were outstanding performances at the 1967 Legion Nationals in Boston and 1969 Legion Nationals in Atlanta, where again BS captured the prelims, only to be turned back by a narrow spread that night. The corps quipped that its preliminary victory

resulted from the good fortune of bad weather, which relegated the competition to a parking lot. After all, BS practiced on asphalt most of the time, on a potholed lot sandwiched between a decaying wing of Newark's Ballentine Brewery and the incredibly polluted Passaic River. Members recall being sickened during rehearsals by the smell of decaying hops or the river -- or both.

The 1970 edition of the corps was perhaps the last great corps in terms of winning, but certainly not the last in terms of spirit and character. That summer the corps was second in the VFW Nationals prelims (Miami Beach) by just two-tenths of a point and they placed fourth in finals.

The corps won the World Open Prelims and earned a very close second in the finals. But it was at the 1970 Dream that BS was given its final tribute by the drum corps world. When the corps started into its exit at Roosevelt Stadium that humid afternoon, the ovation by 20,000 fans, which had been building throughout the show, was so loud and so sustained that the exit number, *Free Again*, simply could not be heard above the din.

Maybe they sensed that they were witnesses to the end of an era. It seemed a final salute to a legend and it was the last hurrah, the final Dream BS would win. It was the beginning of the end of a dream begun 20 years earlier in a rectory on Van Ness Place.

In 1971 and 1972, the Golden Knights strove against increasingly insurmountable odds to maintain the rich heritage. As the corps reorganized for the 1971 season, it was clear that it could not field a color guard. Only the lower brass remained intact from the

great 1970 season.

It was decided that girls would fill the color guard ranks. A large guard was quickly assembled from championship organizations such as the Colleens, the Mellodears, the Meadowlarks, the New Jersey Royalaires and the Paterson Sentries. In the spirit of diversity that characterized BSGK, the girls were welcomed, albeit reluctantly by some who struggled with tradition.

In spite of the challenges of changing from the all-male culture, the shift occurred and the gold and black got on with the program, fielding a large and talented guard for its final two seasons.

Blessed Sacrament was one of three corps in 1971 to break the drum corps mold and present a "total show" that would define the next era of the activity. The Golden Knights' "King and I," Cavaliers' "Circus Show" and Madison Scouts' "Alice in Wonderland" covered new ground and suffered unintended consequences of doing something new.

The 1972 edition of BSGK showed marked improvement over the 1971 season. The horn line completely recovered to a quality that rivaled the 1970 corps. The color guard was large and effective. BSGK broke new ground in drill and music.

Ironically, the drum line, which had been the hallmark of glory years, had the greatest challenge. The last victory of the Golden Knights was recorded by the 1972 corps, which carried on the tradition by steadily improving and by capturing several first places.

The last contest appearance of the Blessed Sacrament Golden Knights was in Ridgefield, NJ, in September 1972. The last song played was *When You Wish Upon A Star*. The tradition that began on a June day in Wildwood, NJ, ended on a chilly April afternoon in the upstairs of the German Hall, an Irvington, NJ, establishment where the



The Blessed Sacrament Golden Knights senior corps, 1975 (photo by from the collection of Gary Dickelman).

corps gathered for its final rehearsals. The corps simply did not have the people or resources to put out a competitive unit.

Fred Dooley and John Demko put the question to the 30 loyal members there. "Should BS continue as a class B corps?"

The answer was a painful, but unanimous, "NO!"

The Blessed Sacrament Golden Knights were winners of nine national championships and 19 state championships during a period when New Jersey was considered the Mecca of the drum corps world. The corps won 11 National Dream titles in 14 appearances, a record that remained unsurpassed for the history of the competition.

The Golden Knights won the first World Open and placed first or second in more than 82 percent of all contests entered from 1954 through 1972. BSGK won nine of 13 nationals from 1954 through 1963 and between 1954 and 1970 placed in the top five in 19 out of 21 nationals. From 1958 through 1963, BS placed first an astonishing 112 times in 135 contests.

A 1993 *Drum Corps World* article titled "The winningest corps in history!" said, "It is important to recognize that only two corps in history with more than 100 first places also won more than 50 percent of all contests they entered. The two corps are the Blue Devils and the Blessed Sacrament Golden Knights, having won 53.84 percent of all the contests they entered."

The Golden Knights were inducted into the Drum Corps Hall of Fame in 1965. Ironically, in their final season, they became a founding member corps of Drum Corps International. They would not compete in the 1972 DCI Championship at Whitewater, WI, and, as of this writing, the Golden Knights remain



The Blessed Sacrament Golden Knights alumni corps, 1999 (photo by Dale Eck from the collection of Drum Corps World).

the only founding member corps to have never appeared at a DCI World Championship.

In 1975, the Golden Knights were reunited as a senior competing unit and made a respectable showing in DCA competition. But the former junior corps members who committed to a single year to launch the senior corps voted against fielding a senior corps in the long term. However, the corps continued to organize annual reunion events starting in 1983.

In 1990, several alumni suggested reforming the Golden Knights as a family-oriented, traditional drum corps. The unit welcomed alumni and anyone with an interest in good, old-fashioned drum corps. The Golden Knights re-emerged early in 1991 as a parade and exhibition corps.

Alumni and former BS instructors Dick Burns, Tony Sepe, Don Interdonato, Jack Boyko and Al Cohen came forward to launch the corps with the trademark tunes of the junior corps, including *National Emblem March*, *America the Beautiful*, *Witchcraft* and *In the Still of the Night*.

Membership increased as the word spread. A new organization emerged that was

completely diverse in all respects, including age, race, culture, sex and drum corps roots. The familiar gold, black and white uniforms were recreated.

The corps has continued its rich tradition by maintaining a membership of more than 100, including 70-plus buglers, 20-plus percussionists and 20-plus color guard. About 50 percent of the corps consists of BSGK alumni, with others from St. Lucy's, St. Vincent's, the Boston Crusaders, St. Kevin's and other corps. Members also hail from Canada, Tennessee and Georgia. The corps practices once a month and averages 15 appearances a year.

Today's Golden Knights strive to present an organization of excellence, but in a relaxed atmosphere where members feel a hint of the past while enjoying the camaraderie of the new organization.

The corps continues to reach for -- and touch -- the stars as it carries on a rich tradition and pays homage to the glory that was -- and is -- the Blessed Sacrament Golden Knights. A complete historical record can be found at www.bsgoldenknights.org.



Gary J. Dickelman was a member of the Blessed Sacrament Golden Knights from 1968-1971. He assisted in forming the Golden Knights alumni corps in 1990. He has been an active member since 2000, playing contra bass and arranging and teaching the horn line.

In his professional life, Dickelman is a senior partner for Christensen/Roberts Solutions of Woodbridge, CT, where he creates computer systems that human beings can actually use.

He is a contributing author of two books and author of numerous articles for industry periodicals and guest editor for "Performance Improvement" journal.

He is owner and webmaster for www.ESPSCentral.com and serves on the faculties of George Mason University and Boise State University. He can be reached at g dickelman@EPSScentral.com.

Tim O'Brien was a member of the Blessed Sacrament Squires from 1954-1956 and was in the Golden Knights from 1956-1963, then served as assistant director, 1968-1971.

O'Brien graduated from Seton Hall University in 1964. He has been a professional journalist since 1970 and recipient of several New Jersey Press Association awards for investigative and enterprise reporting.

He has been with American Lawyer Media, LP since 1986. He and his wife reside in New Jersey.

This chapter is based largely on his "A Not-So-Brief History of the Golden Knights," prepared for a BSGK reunion in 1983.



The Blessed Sacrament Golden Knights alumni corps, 1999 (photo by Moe Knox from the collection of Drum Corps World).