

Band Leader Rep Report for Virtual 2020-2021- by Cathy Wilcox

Good afternoon!

Thank you, Colin, for agreeing to share the work of the band leader representative on the board with me and for your leadership with the in-person program.

One responsibility of the band leader rep is to pull together a team of band leaders, and ONHB is so fortunate to have such enthusiastic and talented leaders, both in the in-person and virtual programs. The band leaders set the encouraging tone that allows musicians to grow in a spirit of community effort, where your best is good enough.

As Brian showed in his presentation, Ottawa was expanding from 9 bands in December of 2019 to allow everyone the opportunity to play at a level that is comfortable yet challenging. Fast-forward to 2021, and we have been able to pivot to a virtual program during the pandemic and re-introduced a transitional in-person program. We will continue to evolve with the times and respond to musicians' needs as circumstances allow.

The Virtual Program continued with four bands this term with:

- Myself, leading a Jazz group,
- Colin Williamson, who has been with ONHB since 2019 and who added an exciting Jamulus feature to his concert band this past term,
- Felicia Persaud, who plays 11 instruments, has a Masters and B.Ed from Ottawa U, has loyally served ONHB since its inception in 2008 as a volunteer, clinician and for the past 5 years as band leader, was leading a concert band,
- Tessa MacLean was also leading a concert band. Tessa was also with ONHB in our early days at Dominion Chalmers, but moved to Montreal where she is finishing her PhD, is chair of the Montreal NHB, and raising two lively children with her husband Cam. A virtual program was the ideal way to get Tessa back with our ONHB family, and we appreciate that she found time in her very busy schedule for us this fall.

The Virtual program provided a vehicle for continuing to meet and make music, get direction, and see friends from the comfort of one's home. Many musicians have expressed gratitude for this option, as it allows one to play what one can without any worries, to progress at the speed one is able, to join more than one band, and to attend in safety and consistently in spite of bad weather, or feeling under the weather, or a distant address – just show up at the click of a Zoom link, even wearing pyjamas if the video camera is turned off! **If** there is continued interest, it is very possible that this format may continue to be offered even when the pandemic is in our rear-view mirror.

Ottawa New Horizons Band was founded on volunteerism, with a provision to pay the professional musicians who lead, the building rental, the music and insurance. At our first home - Dominion Chalmers United Church, we had much guidance and leadership from the first band leaders and church leaders, most especially Daphne Picklyk, the first chairperson, registrar, accountant and a new clarinet player in the very first band.

Jumping to the present - I would like to thank the very talented volunteer members of the board, both current and past, who have been instrumental in creating the foundational bylaws, and the planning that goes into our successful organization. Each board member has contributed *so* much to our organization- everything from program and financial planning, booking venues, writing cheques, taking inventory, moving instruments, arranging storage space, investigating virtual platforms! These talented people not only take on challenging tasks with enthusiasm, but they present various views respectfully, and in the end, we collaborate to the benefit of all. They demonstrate flexible thinking, react quickly to changing situations, and have poured much energy and time into the program.

I especially wish to thank outgoing chairperson, Brian Carr, for his dedication and service over the last four years on the board (first as secretary and the last two years as Chair). He has seen us through a very challenging time of transition: from Dominion Chalmers to a not-for-profit organization, expanding to 4 new locations, and then a pandemic. I have seen Brian loading timpani drums to drive to a new location or concert, helping with scanning, working at his computer creating arrangements for a special birthday party or transpositions to allow the flutes to join jazz band, sharing his skills and teaching others how to use MuseScore, spending hours writing minutes, visiting and organizing on behalf of fellow musicians in times of trouble, creating surveys and reports and graphs, and generally keeping the ball rolling from anywhere he might be traveling in the world. Brian has even offered to take on special projects in future. We cannot thank you enough, Brian!

Many of you have answered the call to help ONHB. On behalf of the board and all 200+ musicians, I wish to also thank:

- Leslie Carlin, who was our Communications officer for the last year, who helped with all the email blasts and website content that keep you informed. She is stepping down from this role and we will miss her valuable input.
- Sarah Meyer, for brilliantly finding and organizing volunteers according to their skills and abilities.
- The band reps who support each band: Anne Adair, Carrie Gallo, Jackie Scheffel, Susan Palmer, Robbie Archibald, Rita Riopel, Harry Turner. Thank you so much for your weekly assistance to the band leader and the musicians.
- Tomas Hanson, Peter Garneau, Michel Marinier for their capable and enthusiastic work on the website and SharePoint music library.
- Jacqueline Poulet and her husband Doug Thompson for the immense task of maintaining the physical music library, and organizing the music and the volunteers who scan music for uploading to the SharePoint library.

Thanks to the many others who have volunteered to scan music, set up chairs and percussion, help with Covid protocol sign in etc. We acknowledge your invaluable support of the ONHB - THANK YOU!

We have an amazing resource in the highly-skilled, energetic people in our ONHB family – you, the members, pull together to help make the environment inviting and supportive to new-comers, while connecting with and supporting long-time friends made through ONHB.

You are here on a Sunday afternoon to participate in the important work of running the Ottawa New Horizons Band, and I thank you for coming today and giving of your time and interest by attending the AGM.