

Remarks from the Chair

ONHB AGM November 24, 2024

As I thought about the past year, it was clear that it was another year of growth and change, with a few unexpected challenges thrown in. I guess not unlike the last few years.

Last fall, we had enough interest to add the **Beginner band** back for the first time since the pandemic – this is our feeder band and very important to ONHB’s continued success. We also brought back two additional bands, an **Adv-Int concert and an Adv-Int jazz band**, supported by feedback from our spring survey.

In February, we launched our **new website**. Our volunteer webmaster, Peter Garneau, worked with us on the redesign over the course of several months to create a more functional and up-to-date platform.

A **member survey** went out in April, which we try to do once a year. In addition to getting your feedback on the past session, it gave us a sense of band enrolment for the Fall session which is really helpful for us in our planning.

We had another fantastic **Info Night** in June. This is just a great way to showcase what ONHB is all about in addition to attracting new members. Cathy arranges for Long & McQuade to bring instruments for people to try, plus we have some ONHB members who volunteer to demonstrate their instrument. It’s a very hands-on marketing approach and a lot of fun. I particularly like talking to people about my own experience and encouraging them to join.

In mid-summer, as most of you know, the website went down due to a **malware attack**. Our web hosting company moved quickly to prevent further issues and spent weeks working with us to get things up, secured and functioning again. As a result, we also have additional security measures in place. I won’t lie, it was a lot of effort on the part of Peter and a small group of us. Fortunately, the start of fall registration was only postponed by a few days.

Also this summer, we had a new **part-time paid admin** take over from Anna Tessier, who had been with us since we incorporated in 2017. Janet Jansen now works with us on registration management. Some of you may have met her as she also joined one of the bands this fall!

In closing, I just want to acknowledge my earlier comment about growth and change. ONHB is not the ONHB of 2019. I think many of us have talked about getting ONHB back to where it was pre-pandemic. That might mean different things to different people though. Overall, we’ve managed to bring back almost all of the bands we had at that time. However, some things have changed based on your feedback or simply because there were elements beyond our control. Change is challenging but it can also offer up opportunities. Whatever we do, we want to continue to be thoughtful about what we do based on who we are.

As we move into the next year, let’s continue to embrace our motto “your best is good enough” and remember that our collective effort is what makes us great. As I’ve said before, and have heard from many people, ONHB truly is a very unique band experience. One that is worth keeping.

Thank you

Jackie Scheffel
Chair, ONHB Board
November 2024