

QUARTER NOTES

MRP

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER OF THE MUSIC REVITALIZATION PROJECT, INC.

JAN/FEB/MAR 2002 VOL 3-ISSUE 1

NOTES FROM THE PRESIDENT

And so begins the third year of the Quarternotes newsletter. We hope it is serving its purpose of keeping our friends and supporters up-to-date on MRP events and music related happenings in the community.

We look forward to this new year as one that will fulfill the "Strength in Numbers" theme I introduced at the Annual Meeting in October. The goal is to double active participation by folks like yourselves in the MRP and MRP sponsored events. By increasing participation we can continue to grow MRP name recognition as a principal force in the community music scene and come up with new ideas on how to expand awareness of and support excellence in live concert band performance - the cornerstones of our organization. Write or give us a call at 508 226 6897 to find out more on how you can help.

On behalf of the MRP board I'd like to wish all of you a prosperous New Year filled with joyous music and good fortune.



Dave Rolince, Pres. MRP

MRP PO BOX 709
"TEMPORARILY"
OUT OF SERVICE

Due to a miscommunication with the US Post Office branch in Norton, the MRP post office box was temporarily out of service from approximately November 24 until December 30. Consequently, any correspondence you mailed to the MRP, PO Box 709, Norton, MA 02766 during that time may have been returned to you marked "Return to Sender-Box Closed." The problem has been corrected and the post office box is now in service. We apologize for any inconvenience this may have caused.

HOLIDAY MUSICAL CARDS UPDATE: HOW SWEET IT WAS!

This year was a very special one for our Musical Christmas Cards fundraiser. At least it seems that way to me. Just think of it. We are a non-profit organization looking for contributions in the months following a disaster that has probably drained more from good-hearted folks' pockets than ever in our history. Why should we expect these same souls to reach down deeper just to help out the MRP in our cause, which pales in compari-

son to other needs? Why indeed!

Well, I'm here to tell you that there is more heart out there...and more to spare. No Grinches or Bah! Humbugs. It makes my heart light when I look back at the Musical Christmas Cards we delivered this year. Those who chose to bring us into their homes, businesses, parties and church services, were not just generous benefactors (and so very generous many of them were). But they also seemed to have a wonderful spirit. A spirit that sang along with our songs even if they uttered not a sound (but many did sing along). It was this wonderful spirit that made our fund-raising seem almost FUN-raising, instead. It's always a pleasure to bring joy into someone's life, especially if it can be done musically. This year I felt much more of the same joy coming back to us than ever before.

I want to thank all those who enjoyed our Musical Christmas Cards this year. You really made this fund raiser the most successful to date. You not only provided us with the largest amount of funds ever, but you also brought a special feeling to those of us who performed for you. God Bless You and Thank You so much.

We had some veterans and some new folks joining us in our performances this year. We seemed to be better than ever, musically. We even added a few new tunes to our repertoire because we had the musicianship to do it. So I would like to thank all the volunteers who gave of their time and helped us to make this the most successful Musical Christmas Card Fundraiser ever!

Something like this may be hard to repeat. My hope for the new year is that when we reach this time again next year, we find ourselves singing in even more harmony as our spirits are lifted together.

Happy New Year!!! -John Zawislak

COMPOSERS THROUGH THE CENTURIES: CIRCUS BANDMASTER, KARL L. KING (1891-1971)

If you've played in a marching band or a concert band, you've probably played at least one, if not many, of the marches composed by Karl King. He is known as America's March King. Surely you must have some familiarity with the *Liberty March Folio* or *Marching to Victory*. These are just two of at least 9 march books containing Karl King compositions that have been used through the decades in high schools and colleges all across the United States.

In all, Karl King published over 200 marches, but his talents were not limited only to marches. He published almost 100 other compositions that included waltzes, overtures,

intermezzos, serenades, dirges, rags, and gallops. This was quite a feat for a fellow whose only formal music instruction consisted of four piano lessons and one harmony lesson.



Karl didn't start out as a composer. He first started playing the cornet at the age of 11 using an instrument he bought with money he earned selling newspapers. The inspiration to play, and his love of music, began after hearing concerts performed by his hometown community band in Canton, Ohio. He joined that community band. His first professional playing experience was with the Thayer Military Band of Canton and the Neddermeyer Concert Band of Columbus, Ohio, on the euphonium.

At the age of 19, Karl began a 9-year stint with traveling circuses. He first joined Robinson's Famous Circus as a euphonium player. Then he moved on to the Yankee-Robinson, Sells-Floto, and Barnum & Bailey's Circuses. In 1913 he wrote his most famous march, *Barnum and Bailey's Favorite*. Even today, if someone were to hear this march, it would invoke visions of the Circus. It became one of the most famous marches in the world, and was adopted as the theme song for Barnum & Bailey's Circus. In 1914 he was appointed Bandmaster of the Sells-Floto and Buffalo Bill Combined Shows. He held this position for two years before taking the position of Bandmaster with Barnum & Bailey's "Greatest Show on Earth." His wife, Ruth joined him at this time as the circus calliope player. They continued with the show until returning to their Ohio home in 1919, when Karl took the position of Director for the Grand Army of Canton.

One year later the Kings moved to Iowa where Karl took the position of Music Director for the Fort Dodge Municipal Band. He had an immediate impact on the band, establishing goals, style and program repertoire that pleased both the musicians and the audience. He was respected and revered by all who played under his baton, and he influenced many who went on to professions in music. The band soon became known as "King's Band." After his death it was formally renamed the "Karl L. King Municipal Band at Fort Dodge."

Loved for more than just his music, he was

a good citizen, always working and using his influence to help improve life for all in the community. Most days he was seen about town, stopping to chat with local folks about one thing or another. Occasionally he would help out someone who was down on his or her luck. Even the media enjoyed his intelligent and witty exchanges, quoting him often.

During his life he received many tributes. He received honorary degrees, memberships and awards of all sorts from many organizations. He was president of the Iowa Bandmasters Association and of the American Bandmasters Association. He was the first non-high school director to receive the prestigious Edwin Franco Goldman Award from the National Band Association; then in 1980 they listed him in the Hall of Fame of Distinguished Band Conductors.

Today the Karl King Band is still very active in Fort Dodge, carrying on the great musical traditions of Karl's time. If you travel there some day you may cross the Des Moines River via the Karl L. King Bridge. As you enter Fort Dodge, you will be greeted by a great sign that says, "Welcome to Fort Dodge, Home of Karl L. King."

Once, at the Iowa Bandmasters Convention, Karl wrote a special march for his friend Henry Fillmore who was a guest conductor. They pulled it out as a surprise, and when Fillmore saw the title, *King Henry*, he turned to Karl and said that he would someday dedicate a march to him. After Fillmore died, it was discovered that he fulfilled that promise, but the march had never been published.

At an American Bandmasters Convention, Karl was invited to be guest conductor. They pulled out Fillmore's march as a surprise to him. He then conducted the premier performance of *King Karl King*, a very appropriate title for America's March King.

More information on Karl King and the Karl King Band may be found on the web at www.s-hamilton.k12.ia.us/karllking.

LOCAL BAND SPOTLIGHT: SOUTH SHORE CIRCUS CONCERT BAND

If you live within a 30-mile radius of East Bridgewater, you most certainly have had opportunities to hear one of the south shore's finest. Depending on the night and nature of the performance, this community band might entertain you with anything from standard concert band fare to the music for which it is nationally known, the music of the American Circus. This is the music that accompanied thousands of performances under the Big

Top, entertained between acts, and was used to parade through the streets.

With about two dozen musicians, this band has made 21 recordings on cassettes and CD's of original music that was used by circuses for more than a century. These recordings preserve the "Sounds of the Circus" that were actually performed until the standard circus band was replaced by electronics.

The band started life as the Abington Legion Post Band in 1947, then moved to Rockland, then to East Bridgewater, their home today. In 1964 Richard Whitmarsh took the baton. It was his fascination with circus music that started their odyssey under the Big Top.

Since that time the band has had premier performances with the Big Apple Circus and played ringside at the Hanneford Brothers Circus, the Sells and Gray Circus, and the Clyde Beatty Cole Brothers Circus. They have also performed at national conventions of the Circus Fans of America. Experts within the circus world, such as Alan Silfka, founder of the Big Apple Circus, have recognized this local troupe of musicians to be one of the finest examples of a circus band that exists today. In 1972 Merle Evans, long time conductor of the Ringling Brothers and Barnum and Bailey Circus Band, honored the band when he guest conducted at a concert and pronounced them to have an "authentic circus sound." In 1985 the band went to Milwaukee, Wisconsin, where they provided the background music during Turner Broadcasting's presentation of the "Great Circus Parade."

Most recently they performed at the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade in New York City aboard a Circus Wagon. The wagon, pulled by 8 horses, was taken out of a circus museum for the occasion. Only half the band could fit on the wagon, but they still made a glorious sound as they passed through Herald Square. This was their second Macy's Parade.

The band has had many performances around New England including the Heritage Plantation, Brockton Art Museum, Canobie Lake Park and "The Big E" in Springfield. They are probably the only civilian band to have played aboard the USS Constitution. So if you find yourself in a south shore community this summer, look for a performance by the South Shore Circus Concert Band. You won't be disappointed.

If you would like to know more about this community band, to arrange for a concert, or to purchase one of their recordings, "The

Sounds of the Circus," please contact Richard Whitmarsh, 41 Bedford St., E. Bridgewater, MA 02333, (508) 378-9967, or visit the website at www.soundsofthecircus.com.

-John Zawislak

2002 LCC GRANT STATUS

We are happy to announce that the MRP's grant proposal to sponsor a live performance by the New England Percussion Ensemble in Attleboro has won approval from the Attleboro Cultural Council. This promises to be an exciting show for the whole family. Details of the event, which is scheduled for June, will appear in the next issue of QuarterNotes.

Last October we submitted grant proposals to 3 local cultural councils for live musical performances this coming summer. We expect additional responses shortly and we will keep you informed of other concert dates as they approach. Stay tuned!

MUSIC LENDING LIBRARY

If you have music that is not being used, why not put it on the shelves of the MRP library, in order to make it available to others who may not be able to afford to purchase music. To obtain a list of current band music for loan, or to make a donation, call Carol Lou Allen at 508-222-3804. The library is free for any music organization to borrow.

MRP WISH LIST:

- Resources for Website Creation
- Donations of Band Music for the Music Lending Library
- Woodwind, Brass or Percussion Instruments
- Volunteers

COMMUNITY CALENDAR:

- 01/27 Boston City Band - 1 pm Faneuil Hall, Boston
- 03/2 Metropolitan Wind Symphony Natick High School - 8pm
- 03/17 SEMass Wind Symphony Irish Concert Wheaton College, Norton - 3 pm

If you would like to serve on the Board or volunteer for a committee, meetings are held the 2nd Friday of every month. Call 508-226-6897 for details.

The MRP QUARTER NOTES Newsletter is a quarterly publication. Contributions are welcome by writing to the Music Revitalization Project, Inc. P.O. Box 709, Norton, MA 02766. All articles included are at the discretion of the editor as space allows.

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