

MRP QUARTER NOTES

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER OF THE MUSIC REVITALIZATION PROJECT, INC. JUL/AUG/SEPT 2002 VOL 3.-ISSUE 3



NOTES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Ahh, the lazy days of summer. Right! If your lives are anything like ours, summer is anything but lazy. Taxi the kids to summer day camp. Long weekend visits from out of town relatives. The list goes on. But wait. There really is a chance to sit back and let someone entertain you instead. It's called the Outdoor Park Band Concert, and they are everywhere.

The theme of this issue of Quarternotes is the Summer Outdoor Concert. From its colorful history to a list of scheduled performances in the area, we've tried to highlight this truly American art form. So do yourself a favor and enjoy a lazy summer evening at an outdoor concert in your town.



Dave Rolince, Pres. MRP

'02 \$SCHOLARSHIP WINNER!

The MRP scholarship committee is pleased to announce Amy Hubbard as our winner of this year's award. Amy is a graduating senior from Seekonk High School, and will be pursuing a Music Education degree at the University of Massachusetts, Dartmouth. All of us at the MRP wish Amy the best of luck in achieving her goals. Congratulations Amy!

MRP Scholarship Committee,
-Nancy Allen, Carol Lou Allen

SUMMER CONCERTS 2002

The MRP has teamed up with a number of local libraries and the Massachusetts Cultural Councils to bring you a performance of the **New England Percussion Ensemble at the Norton Public Library, July 23, 7pm.** The NEPE stages a unique show of percussion instrumentation entitled "Language of the An-cients" which traces the use of percussion initially as a means for communication for early man up to the myriad of items used today in modern musical compositions. This is a hands-on interactive program for all ages that you won't want to miss!

On August 12, 6:30pm, the **Con Brio Quintet** will be featured at the **Seekonk Library** as part of the Library's Wednesday Night Concert Series. The **Con Brio Quintet's** arrangements of classical and popular selections performed on oboe, clarinet, bassoon, flute and French horn are a feast for the ears. Bring your lawn chairs and picnic dinners for a most enjoyable evening of Prokofiev's *Peter and the Wolf* and more!



MUSIC THROUGH THE CENTURIES: OUTDOOR SUMMER BANDSTAND CONCERTS

We are now well into the summer season. Already most of us have enjoyed participating in an outdoor band concert, either as a performer or as part of an audience. Every year outdoor band concerts are happening all across America. There is nothing quite like it. I checked out the web looking for information on summer band concerts for this article. I had thousands of hits. These were mostly schedules for summer concerts, but also included some band histories and such. The bands were everywhere you can imagine.

There was a time, when every town had at least one band. Back then music could be heard wafting through the summer air on any given night.

Apparently the summer band concert is today as popular as ever, and more ubiquitous than I realized. In spite of the acoustics that are generally less than desirable (amplifiers usually exacerbate the problem), and performances that are less perfect than the band would like them to be, and the bugs, we still find folks of every age gathering to listen.

It is a wonderful feeling to be out in nature and hearing the sonorous offerings of our fellow human beings. It is at once a part of the natural scene, and yet...well, manmade. The scene has the audience on the grass with a blanket, sitting in lawn chairs or on park benches. It is in a park-like setting, churchyard or open field. The band is in a gazebo, in a band shell, on a staging area or just out under the open sky. Folks are listening intently or chatting among themselves. Children play and dance or mimic the musicians. And at times the audience becomes a bit unruly and physical, usually in synchronous movements and sounds to the band performance.

After all, this is not the symphony hall. This is the outdoors. Nature is the host, the house and the decorations. In some ways the concert is a celebration in nature. Here we can feel free to move and react to the music with little restraint. It is a fun time. It is a social event. It is a time to enjoy in your own way.

I love summer concerts for all these reasons. To me they are as American as hot dogs, apple pie and baseball. When we talk of Americana, very often images come to mind in muted colors or red, white and blue. I see carriages, parks and folks with relaxed

smiles in a simple place and time. More often than not, a band appears in the background. Yes, the summer band concert has been a large part of our heritage for centuries.

Whether we are in the peaceful surroundings of Tanglewood, clapping to the 1812 Overture on the Esplanade, enjoying a community band in the town park, or screaming at one of the many Woodstock-like rock concerts, I think it is safe to say that just about everyone can enjoy a summer concert.

So I had to ask myself just where it all got started. When was music first enjoyed outdoors? Who played the first concert? For such a popular activity, surely some historian has studied and wrote about it. I couldn't seem to find that piece of literature anywhere. So I decided to start looking deeper.

It seems that playing outdoors is an activity that started too far back.

This is something that sits at the very beginnings of modern musical instrument performances. I came across some definitions of the word 'band' as it relates to music.

In general, they said that 'a band is a group of musicians playing principally wind and percussion instruments, usually outdoors.'

Then, in looking over some material about 'early bands', I found such definitions as, 'groupings of loud instruments...for outdoor activities.' These meanings go back centuries, long before there was a USA.

As I thought about this, I began to realize that the tradition of playing a band concert indoors probably has the shorter history. As the band had its beginnings some centuries ago, they were primarily playing outdoors. So I have given up on the pursuit of the first outdoor concert.

Still we have these Americana images floating around that act as an icon for the outdoor concert as I know it. So instead of trying to find the first band concert, I thought I would honor just a few of the bands that helped to create and encourage that image for us. There are many, but I chose The United States Marine Band, The Gilmore Band, The Goldman Band out of NYC, and The Boston Pops. Of these, only the Gilmore Band is no longer active.

United States Marine Band

On July 11, 1798, in the nation's capital of Philadelphia, President John Adams signed an Act of Congress establishing the United States Marine Band. The original "32 drummers and fifers" assisted in recruiting and entertained residents. The United States



The band is still active as the Goldman and the International community. The band's history is a long one, with roots in the early 19th century. It was founded by Edwin Franko Goldman in 1892. The band's repertoire is diverse, ranging from classical to contemporary. It has performed at many of the world's most prestigious venues, including Carnegie Hall and the Lincoln Center. The band's success is a testament to Goldman's vision and leadership.

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If you would like to serve on the Board or volunteer for a committee, meetings are held the 2nd Friday of every month. Call 508-236-6897 for details.

08/14	Seekonk Library	Concho Quarter - 6:30pm
08/18	Warren, Bristol Common	Eastbay Wind Ensemble - 7pm
08/22	Capron Park, Newell Shelter, Attleboro	Youth Summer Bands, 9-12am
08/24	Seekonk Public Library	Eastbay Wind Ensemble - 6:30pm
07/23	Norton Library - 7pm	NEPE "Language of the Ancients"
07/17	Mansfield Town Green Concert - 7pm	MWS, Framingham Center - 6:30pm
07/12	Twenter Center, Mansfield	Not the 4th of July Concert - 7:45pm
07/08	Boston Twp Esplanade 4th - 7pm	

Spread your blankets at these traditional outdoor park concerts, all are FREE!

COMMUNITY CALENDAR:

-John Zanskiak

Christmas holiday. Following Fiedler's death in July 1979, Boston Pops associate conductor Harry Ellis Dickson and a number of guest conductors led the orchestra until John Williams was appointed conductor in January 1980. Williams stepped down as conductor in December 1993 and now holds the title of laureate conductor. Keith Lockhart became the 20th conductor of the Boston Pops in February 1995, expanding the orchestra's touring with annual trips prior to the

The Boston Pops July 4th celebration, a major draw of record crowds and TV audiences. The Boston Pops July 4th celebration, a major draw of record crowds and TV audiences. The Boston Pops July 4th celebration, a major draw of record crowds and TV audiences.

The history of the Boston Pops was for many years linked with the name of Arthur Fiedler, who led the orchestra for 50 years and redefined its role in popular American culture. Included in that legacy was the start of the Pops' proud and illustrious recording history, the introduction of the orchestra to a nationwide television audience through the PBS series *Evening at Pops*, and the creation of the orchestra's free outdoor Esplanade Concerts, which took place on the banks of the Charles River. First held in 1929, the free concerts are more popular now than ever.

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