



THE SCORE

March 14, 2006

Blacksburg Community Band Newsletter

Not The Brightest Pea in the Pod

I once had a boss who said to me, "You're smart." It was not quite a complement and not quite an insult but it has stuck with me for years. I like to seem smart but it is really quite a façade. If I am working with anything other than base ten I cannot do math in my head, but I am a whiz at geometry. I cannot speak a foreign language but I do know about 300 words in Spanish, although 90% are nouns. I cannot spell the simple words like their/their(?) and I do not always know my left from my right without considerable thought. I want to be the person in the room who has the answer which shocks and surprises everyone else.

You people make it difficult to be a know-it-all. I spend hours searching for that unique, nay, obscure fact about our music to stump you. I am unsuccessful every time. You even argue about the answer or fire back questions. Then there I am... deer in the headlights, exposed as a smarty pants fraud. Keep up the good work and I will continue my pursuit of the ultimate factoid.

Meet the Band

In this installment of Meet the Band let's get to know Mary Keffer, clarinet player.

Mary was born in California but lived with her family in the Alexandria from age six through college at Mary Washington. After graduation in 1983, she moved to Craig County and has been a resident of the area for the past 23 years.

Mary began her love of music in elementary school. Her brother started playing the flute in the school band and Mary wanted to be just like him... well, almost. Mary continued to pursue music through college and after graduation, took a teaching job in Craig County. She was the only music teacher on the county so she taught chorus, band and elementary



school general music. After four years she made the decision to "retire" and be a stay at home mom.

Mary rejoined the musical world in the New River Valley when her mother gave her a little two line clipping from the news paper announcing the formation of a community band in 1989. Even though she had stopped playing she attended the first rehearsal and helped establish our band as a charter member. Since then she has enjoyed an active musical hobby as a member of the Sauerkraut Band, in the pit orchestra for the Summer Musical productions of *The King and I*, *My Fair Lady* and *Oliver*, as a part of a woodwind trio with Mary Walters and Megan Bradley, and as a participant in the Artist in Residence program at Christiansburg Elementary School through the NRV Friends of the Roanoke Symphony.

When asked about her favorite piece of music Mary offers the following: "I guess the Holst Suite, that we're working on right now, is one of my favorite pieces to play and to listen to, especially the second movement. I just love that ending. I also like the March of the Belgian Paratroopers. It has such a beautiful trio melody.

One of Mary's fondest musical memories is while she attended a fairly large church in Alexandria when she was in high school. The choir was performed a big work requiring an orchestra, which the choir director hired out. He gave her the second clarinet part and she was hooked. She says she absolutely loved being a part of the orchestra.

In addition to clarinet and bass clarinet Mary also plays a little piano for her own enjoyment and occasionally for the residents of Warm Hearth Retirement Community, where she is Activities Director, for sing-a-longs.

Thank you, Mary, for being our Meet the Member for March 14, 2006

Blacksburg Community Band

The Blacksburg Community Band is an all-volunteer community organization formed in 1989 under the auspices of the Town of Blacksburg, Department of Parks and Recreation.

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From the Podium

By Ed Schwartz

"First Suite in E-flat" for Military Band by Gustav Holst was written in 1909 and is considered to be one of the most important works in concert band literature. Holst's daughter indicated that it was probably written for a special occasion such as the Festival at the Peoples's Palace, Mile End, London, but the real reason Holst wrote remains uncertain.

The suite was written for a band consisting of mixed woodwinds, brass, and percussion, which had not been done before then. Although the original instrumentation resembled that of a 30 piece regimental band, its first known performance was by the 165-member Royal Military School of Music Band in 1920. The edition that we are performing was edited for the standard instrumentation of American Bands. Holst also requested that since the movements were closely related, the piece should be performed without a break between them.

The suite is in three movements: Chaconne, Intermezzo, and March. A Chaconne is typically written in 3/4 meter and can be defined as a "set of variations composed upon a continually repeated chord progression." It is easy to hear this chord progression throughout the movement starting with the basses and moving through the band. After the initial statement of the chord progression (or ground bass) in mm. 1-8, Holst uses a set of 15 variations for a total of 16 statements of the ground bass. The most interesting variation is a strict inversion of the ground bass in mm. 73-89. Much of the music following in the Intermezzo and March is based on fragments of the repeated chord progression found in the Chaconne.

The term Intermezzo indicates an interlude or middle movement of a larger work. It was written in binary form, or with two parts. The first part, in 2/4, introduces the first Theme and is further broken into an a-b-a form with a short introduction (a - mm. 135-157; b - mm. 159-175; a - mm. 175-198). The second part, in 4/4, introduces the second theme (mm. 199-214) followed by the second theme with a countermelody (mm. 215-230). Both themes are recapped with the first Theme returning at the 2/4 section (mm. 231-254) and second Theme returning at the 4/4 section (mm. 255-274) under fragments of the first Theme.

The March is structured like a typical British Quickmarch. There is a short introduction followed by the First Strain or first melody of the march. The Trio of the march (mm. 310) has a four bar introduction and a key change (adding a flat) as well as a style and dynamic change. The Dogfight (mm. 371-396) is followed by a Break Strain (mm. 397-442) that combines the two main themes of the march. Finally, the Coda brings the work to a stirring conclusion.

Spring Concert Info

Our Spring Concert is quickly approaching and we have some additional information to share and volunteer opportunities:

Prior to the concert: We have flyer available for distribution to announce the concert date and time. Please distribute to any bulletin boards out there.

We also have fund raising forms. The band members collecting the most funds will receive a gift certificate for dinner for two.

April 2, 2006

2:30pm Stage Set-up (chairs, stands, percussion equipment, acoustic shells)

3:00pm Reception volunteers meet in cafeteria for

set up and to receive food from band members

3:15pm Have food to the cafeteria no later than

3:30pm Be in seats on stage ready for warm-up and tuning

4:00pm Down beat

ENLIST YOUR FAMILY AND FRIENDS!!! We need volunteers for the following activities:

- (2) Donation Collections for the welcome table in the lobby to accept donations from the audience.
- (4) Ushers to pass out programs at the door (kids are great at this)
- Reception Volunteers – to help set up and preparation for the reception – May miss the last piece during the concert (There will be a recording so you can catch up later)
- Stage break down – everyone musician should help with this!!! We need to get all the chairs, stands and band equipment back to the band and storage rooms before we exit for the reception. EVERYBODY HELPS!

Weekly Rehearsal

The Blacksburg Community Band holds rehearsals every Wednesday evening, 7:30 to 9:30 p.m. (except for the months of July and August) in the Blacksburg High School band room on Patrick Henry Drive.

Spring Concert – April 2, 2006 4:00pm Blacksburg High School Auditorium

For More Information Please Visit Our Website at: <http://arts.bev.net/blacksburgcommunityband>