

September 22, 2022

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Dear Members of the West Grey Council

Ten years ago, a few members of earlier versions of the Durham Girls' Marching Bands decided to participate in the 2012 Homecoming parade. We borrowed instruments from the Preston Scout House band and practised with the initial hope of playing 3 or 4 pieces well enough to play and march in the parade. Brass players got their lips in shape while they and glockenspiel players learned 10 pieces, drummers recalled earlier percussion routines and created new ones, and 1953 -1955 drum major Liz Schafer Kueneman led us once again. Our goal was to shine leading the Homecoming parade, celebrate the Durham Girls' Band 1949 beginnings and successes until the mid 1980s, proudly call it a day and return the borrowed instruments.

AND THEN shine we did! Thirty of us led the Homecoming parade. Enclosed is a program for our 2012 Durham Homecoming performances and list of participants. We received a dozen more invitations for fall fairs, Remembrance Day and Christmas parades. A few of our renewed sisterhood decided that they had accomplished what they set out to do - to play and march one last time, but several of us wanted to continue. Buoyed by our Homecoming success, we weren't ready to quit. We immediately confirmed with Preston Scout House that we could extend our instrument loan period. Meanwhile we began to investigate the cost of buying our own instruments, as well as getting an ongoing commitment from enough people to continue playing and marching as a band. We were thrilled to have a few younger girls, and some not so young, join us, some learning to march and play an instrument for the first time - just like in earlier days.

We sincerely appreciated the support of the West Grey Council in our application for a Trillium grant. With that money, we were able to purchase 7 trumpets, 3 flugelhorns, 1 baritone, 2 glockenspiels, 4 snare drums and carriers, plus fabric for our talented seamstresses to design and create warm winter capes.

With these instruments we continued our weekly practices and accepted invitations for parades.

With fundraising events as well as our earnings in parades, we were able to become self-sustaining, buying cymbals, summer shirts and hats, triple drums, and cover parade expenses, as well as expenses of a drum instructor who commuted for practices and parades.

We became a valued presence in parades and other events in Durham and several surrounding areas! The musicians learned about 25 pieces while the colour guard developed snazzy routines to accompany much of the music. For the next few years we averaged 15 - 20 performances per year, 24 in 2016 - 17 for example.

Sadly, the health of some of our 2012 members began to deteriorate and some of our younger players headed off to school or employment away from Durham. Some of us turned our attention to other projects or activities. A few males were recruited to join but then Covid struck and like almost everything else, band activity halted abruptly.

This year, ten years after our 2012 reincarnation, it was much more of a challenge to reproduce that activity. Several who had been involved saw this as our “last hurrah”.

Some of the brass instruments had been in storage at the West Grey office for the past few years. During that time they were neither played nor lubricated. When we retrieved them to play for the 2022 parade, several of the valves and slides were stuck. It took some time to lubricate them and get stuck valves and slides moving and thus, playable again.

Returning these brass instruments to storage for any length of time will cause further stuck valves and slides, as well as dried corks. Returning them to playable condition could eventually lead to costly repairs.

We have contacted the recent percussion and glockenspiel players and have not identified anyone interested in purchasing the instruments they played. Our most recent cymbal player might be interested in buying the cymbals. We have also contacted a member of the Durham Sauntering band who has indicated that they “have enough trumpets” at this time, but may be interested in some of the drums.

## OUR REQUEST

A few former members of the Durham Girls Alumni Band would like to purchase some of the instruments we played. A few of us would like the opportunity to purchase 3 or 4 trumpets and 3 flugelhorns. We have investigated the value of the brass instruments we purchased from Long and McQuade (L & M) with the Trillium grant. Earlier this summer Marilyn took a trumpet, flugelhorn and baritone to the band department in the Mississauga Long and McQuade store and requested a current

appraisal. Commenting on the excellent condition of these instruments, Long and McQuade staff valued these instruments as follows:

- L & M would pay the owner \$700 and sell trumpets for \$1000,
- L & M would pay the owner \$875 and would sell flugelhorns for \$1250,
- L & M would pay the owner \$1640 and would sell the baritone for \$2343.

Two of the women seeking to purchase some brass instruments, wrote the original Trillium grant application, one as the initial Chair of the Durham Girls group during the early years, and the other arranged and taught most of the band's music, as well as playing for some community events. Another has recently played The Last Post for Remembrance Day services at the cenotaph.

The women hoping to purchase these instruments have all demonstrated an ongoing commitment to the Durham Girls Alumni Band and in our opinion, have well earned the opportunity to purchase some brass instruments.

We sincerely appreciate the support of West Grey during the past and are seeking a positive response to our request.

Most Sincerely,

Marilyn Dickson,  
Member 1958-63, 2012-2017, 2022

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and

Sharon Pegelo,  
Member 1966 - 72 & 2012 - 2022

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**CAPTAIN**  
**ASSISTANT**  
**MEMBERS**

**COLOUR PARTY**

Kerry Dickson Pratt  
Sharon Dickson Pegelo  
Linda Kerr Blazing  
Darlene Kennedy Burns  
Kim Garvey  
Berniece Hamel  
Audrey Morrison McInnis  
Lisa Griffin Monk  
Bonnie McKenzie Quarrie  
Sofia Ramirez  
Susan Schwartz Sankey  
Brenda Weaver Wheeler

**DRUM MAJOR**

Liz Schafer Kueneman

**MUSICIANS**

**SNARE DRUMS**

Marlaine Caissey Elvidge  
Evelyn Watson Hastie  
Cheryl Reaburn Hewson  
Carolyn Player Nixon

**BASS DRUM**

Susan Marshall Nixon

**CYMBALS**

Jackie Glenholme Gingerich

**GLOCKENSPEILS**

Dianne McDougall Benninger  
Vanda Elvidge Harris

**TRUMPETS**

Marcy McCracken Glass  
Lorrie McLean  
Dorothy Schafer Mead  
Crystelle Owens  
Kim Wilson Tone

**FLUGELHORNS**

Marilyn Dickson  
Debbie Fleischmann Tanner  
Marj Miller Wells  
Angela Clark Schenk

**BARITONE**



**DURHAM HOMECOMING 2012**

Formed in 1949, the Durham Girls Band performed at hundreds of events and won many competitions until they disbanded in 1984.

About five months ago, Marilyn Dickson got a few trumpet players together to see if they could get their lips back in shape after not playing for 30, 40 and even 50 years. During the next few weeks we added glockenspeils, drums, and former drum major Liz (Schafer) Kueneman, the second Drum Major of Durham Girls from 1953 until 1955. Kerry (Dickson) Pratt and Sharon (Dickson) Pegelo organized routines for a colour party to perform with the music.

These talented women have mastered the music Marilyn arranged for the parade as well as a Homecoming Medley. They have squeezed weekly practices into lives already busy with family, work and personal commitments.

We are thrilled once again to lead a parade in Durham. We hope you'll recognize some old favourites such as **Powerhouse, Saints, Lucky Old Sun, Somewhere Over The Rainbow** and **Fanfare for the Common Man**.

We appreciate the generosity of Preston Scouthouse Alumni Band in lending us several instruments during the past few months.

## HOMECOMING MEDLEY

Arranged by Marilyn Dickson

Our former Durham Girls will perform a Homecoming Medley which tells a story typical of many of us, as follows:

*When we were born, our parents had great hopes and dreams for us. They heralded our births with fanfares and celebration (**Fanfare for The Common Man** and **Simple Gifts**). Then as we grew up, especially during our teen years, many of us wanted to leave town (**I'm Going to Leave Old Durham Town**). We went off to seek our fortune (**Somewhere Over the Rainbow**). After years of hard work ("Up in the morning, out on the job, work like the devil for my pay" – **Lucky Old Sun**), many of us decided home looked pretty good after all (**Show Me the Way to Go Home** and **Home Sweet Home**), we headed back to Durham – at least for this homecoming - where we are catching up with old friends and celebrating the good old days. (**Auld Lang Syne**).*