

NOTES from the Concord Band

52nd Season

Since 1959

the community band with a professional attitude

Winter/Spring 2011

Box 302, Concord, MA 01742

(978) 897-9969

www.concordband.org

WINTER CONCERT

New and Blue—Saturday, March 5th

2011 marks the continuation of the Concord Band's 52nd season with an exciting series of concerts and musical outings beginning with its annual Winter Concert on Saturday, March 5, at 8 PM, at 51 Walden Street in Concord. Come hear the Concord Band's presentation, *New and Blue*, led by Music Director James O'Dell, featuring the Massachusetts premiere of *Twilight of the Gods* by Andrew Boysen, Jr., as well as works that have colorful images and jazz influences.

Fruitlands Overture by Music Director Emeritus Dr. William G. McManus was written for the Concord Band to celebrate its 25th anniversary season of summer concerts at Fruitlands Museum in Harvard, Massachusetts. This lively mixed-meter overture captures the festive outdoor flavor of the longstanding summer concert series at the museum. McManus' love of irregular meter forms the musical bookends of this piece, with a "cool jazz" middle. The *Overture* was premiered on June 30, 2010 at the Silver Anniversary concert, with the composer conducting.

Notable composer and conductor Gunther Schuller, who served as president of the New England Conservatory of Music from 1967 to 1977, in the late 1950's coined the term "Third Stream Music" to describe the fusion or synthesis of classical and jazz music. *Three Jazz Moods* is based on *Three Little Feelings* by Modern Jazz Quartet music director and pianist John Lewis. This work reflects the colors, sonorities, and feel of the music of composer/pianist Gil Evans, and his musical collaborations with Miles Davis and "Birth of the Cool" sessions in the mid 1950's.

Moving from blue note jazz harmony to the deep blue sea, *Sea Songs* by English composer Ralph Vaughan Williams takes us on a journey featuring three English sailing songs. An original composition for British military band written in 1924, the piece features Vaughan Williams' clear love of traditional songs and melodies.

In 2010, composer and University of New Hampshire professor, Andrew Boysen, Jr., was commissioned by a consortium of 26 college/university and community bands, organized by the Western and Northwestern divisions of the College Band Directors National Association, to

write a major work for concert band. The resulting new composition, *Twilight of the Gods*, is a programmatic work depicting the story of Ragnarok from Scandinavian mythology. Boysen has penned an exciting



Composer
Andrew Boysen, Jr.

and dynamic composition that captures the complex story of the traditional myth and its take on the old Norse religion.

Jan Van der Roost is a prolific Dutch composer of works for concert band. His *Firework!* is a fanfare that reflects the power and virtuosity of the modern concert band. His vast compositional output encompasses a wide variety of musical genres and styles. During the 2001–2002 season the Concord Band performed his work *Minerva*, a festive march commission by the German "Musikverein Braunshausen" on the occasion of its 75th anniversary.

George Gershwin's folk opera *Porgy and Bess* was first performed by the Theater Guild in Boston and New York in 1935, and its revival in 1942 enjoyed the longest run of any revival in Broadway musical history. *Selections from Porgy and Bess* was arranged for concert band by master musical theater arranger and American composer Robert Russell Bennett. Bennett is credited with creating the "Broadway sound" recognized throughout the world and with orchestrating over 200 Broadway shows that span more than three decades.

Colours by Roger Cichy, commissioned by the Kansas State University Bands, was written in 1997 and premiered on May 10 with the composer conducting. Each of the

New England Intercollegiate Band Festival

On April 2, 2011, the Concord Band will be honored to be the invited guest ensemble participating in the New England Intercollegiate Band Festival at Gordon College in Wenham, MA. The 7 PM performance by the Concord Band will be followed by a program presented by the New England Intercollegiate Band (NEIB), with guest conductor Malcolm W. Rowell. The festival, sponsored by the New England College Band Association, features the NEIB, composed of selected college musicians from the six New England states. The Concord Band invites you to this special concert at the A. J. Gordon Memorial Chapel on the Gordon College campus. Additional information regarding the NEIB Festival can be found at www.necba.org.

Steven Barbas Named Assistant Conductor

We welcome Steven Barbas as the new Assistant Conductor of the Concord Band. He is a music specialist at Waltham High School, where he conducts a wide range of ensembles and teaches courses in Music Theory, Technology, and Sound Recording. Steve received a Master of Music degree from Northwestern University. A versatile musician and experienced conductor, he brings a wealth of knowledge to the podium and will be conducting *Fruitlands Overture* on the March 5th concert.



six movement's (Amber, Dark Jade, Blue Sapphire, Mauve, Dark Ivy, and Burgundy Red) goes beyond the color itself, deeply delving into the symbolic meaning and "musical" pigments of each color. This results in each movement's creating an impression of that symbolism. Several movements employ jazz style, inflection, and harmony. This composition was the required audition piece in the search for a new music director to replace Dr. William G. McManus upon his retirement. The Concord Band first performed *Colours* at its Winter Concert in March, 2008.

The Concord Band—*The Community Band with a Professional Attitude*

When the Concord Band's Board of Trustees became aware, in 1994, that our first Music Director, William M. Toland, planned to retire at the end of the subsequent season, the Board put in writing for the first time the Mission Statement of the Concord Band. In the process of preparing the Band's Mission Statement, we also penned what became the Band's motto: *The Community Band with a Professional Attitude*. Since we feel that this dual nature of the Band is what makes us somewhat special, we thought that it would be a good idea to discuss the meaning of our motto here.

A Community Band... The Concord Band is a community band in that it exists primarily for the pleasure and entertainment of its volunteer members and audience of friends, neighbors and residents of the area in which it performs. Players, all of whom must be beyond high-school age, are attracted to the Band by its reputation or their personal experience. This has led in our case to an average tenure of more than 15 years, with members coming from 36 area cities and towns.

In keeping with the inclusive nature of community music, it has been a long-standing policy of the Concord Band not to employ "ringers" (professional musicians) to fill in gaps in the group's instrumentation except in emergency situations. Nor do new players go through a formal audition process when openings become available. While the Band's Music Director does listen to all such prospective players, it has always been our policy to let a newcomer see how his/her capabilities fit. When a player is not quite ready to play at the Band's level, he or she usually goes home to practice for a time until the player's skill levels are appropriate. While some new players lack the dedication or native ability to achieve the desired results, rarely has it been necessary for our Music Director to ask a player to leave involuntarily.

Although a few of the Band's mem-

bers, in addition to our Music Director, are professional musicians whose principal activity is performing and/or teaching music, a few others are conservatory-trained individuals whose careers have made music a hobby for them. Still others are very skilled musicians who never

our Music Directors (we had only two in our first fifty years; Jim O'Dell joined us only two years ago) have always challenged the Band with some repertoire that, for many of our players, requires something of a reach. In a few cases, a piece has been in our folders for an entire



thought about music as a career. Most are ordinary members of the community, employed as engineers, business people, scientists, healthcare professionals, teachers and lawyers, or retirees, for whom playing their instruments in a large ensemble has been something that they have generally enjoyed ever since they were children. For the majority, music has always been an avocation, but one that most have taken very seriously.

...with a Professional Attitude. With respect to professionalism and standards, community bands lie on a spectrum on which the "marching and chowder society" lies near one extreme, and a band that wants to "be all that it can be"—short of displacing volunteers with professional musicians—lies at the other. The Concord Band's "professional attitude" places us near the high end of that range.

In an earlier article, we talked about our recognizing that, for example, the only difference between the public relations effort conducted by a musical organization such as the Boston Symphony Orchestra and that which the Concord Band intends to conduct is that we must carry ours out with a very limited budget and through volunteer rather than paid help. Note that we didn't say "volunteer rather than *professional* help"; we seek volunteers who know what they are doing.

The Concord Band is a founding (1975) Resident Performing Arts Group of the Friends of the Performing Arts in Concord (FOPAC), which operates the Performing Arts Center at 51 Walden Street in Concord. While most community-based music organizations must compete for access to public school facilities, we are one of very few community bands anywhere in the country that has a permanent home. We share 51 Walden's principal facilities with the Concord Orchestra and the Concord Players. Our small (400-seat) facility is highly functional, with drama and music stages at opposite ends of the auditorium, theater or table seating, convenient on-stage storage for the extensive array of percussion instruments shared by the Band and Orchestra, and storage for the Band's library of more than 1,200 pieces.

Because the members of the Concord Band are serious about the music we play,

season but was not ready for presentation until the next.

In the previous issue of this newsletter, (visit concordband.org) we talked about the video archive of the Concord Band's formal concerts, begun in 2008 as an extension of the audio archive that goes back many years. (Visit <http://concordtv.org/?q=video-on-demand> and search for "Concord Band".) In December, 2010, we augmented that archive with a video of the Band's Holiday Pops concert because it is so different from our formal concerts. The professionalism in the Concord Band concert videos stems from our partnership with Concord-Carlisle TV and their superior management and technical personnel who have guided our efforts. We have the good fortune to have access to an experienced director, our own producer, the best equipment and four trained camera operators at every concert. We couldn't be happier with what CCTV has done for us.

In recognition of the effort most of our members put into making music with the Concord Band, the Band has a long tradition of bringing in world-class guest conductors and soloists. We don't have room to list them here, but a list can be found on the Band's website. We also give solo performance opportunities to the most skilled of our own players.

What the Concord Band is probably best known for is our commissioning of new works for concert band. Since the first piece written for us as a gift in 1969, the Concord Band has either commissioned or had written for us as gifts 74 original works for concert band or arrangements for band of existing works, frequently with soloists. Our most recent commission, as part of a consortium of college and community bands, will receive its Massachusetts debut on March 5.

While none of the Concord Band's volunteer members with professional attitudes is paid, it does cost about \$40,000 a year to run the Band, which cannot operate solely on the income from ticket, CD and DVD sales and sponsored concerts. If you'd like to help out financially, please write a tax-deductible check for as much as you can afford and mail it in the enclosed envelope. If you have no return envelope, simply send your check to the Concord Band at the masthead address. ♪

The Concord Band

Concerts at 8:00 PM

WINTER CONCERT

Saturday, March 5, 2011
The Performing Arts Center
at 51 Walden Street
Concord, Massachusetts
For tickets call (978) 897-9969

SPRING POPS

Featuring vocalist Amanda Carr

Friday, April 8, 2011

Spon. by the **Rotary Club of Concord**.
For tickets call Joan Hale at Shoemaker & Jennings (978) 369-1500.

Saturday, April 9, 2011

Spon. by **Emerson Hosp. Auxiliary**.
For tickets call Karen Maines
at (978) 635-0912.