



Sound Off!

Association of Military Musicians

2010/2011 Officers

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TRADOC Band Leaves Ft. Monroe

The TRADOC Band said goodbye to their digs on Fort Monroe on Thursday, June 23, 2011. The last notes sent downrange in the building were by the Dixieband and Salsa band. Completed in 1903 for use as the Main Guard House for the Post, Building 9 occupies part of the site of old Carroll Hall, in which Jefferson Davis was incarcerated. The band took possession of the building in 1970. The building saw a major renovation from 1991 - 1992, and had the first floor gutted and totally refurbished as a result of Hurricane Isabelle in 2003. For over forty years music filled the spaces of building 9. Goodbye Old Girl! On Aug 1, 70+ retirees and former members of the TRADOC band converged upon the new



18000 square foot, state of the art rehearsal facility at Ft Eustis, VA, now known as Joint Base Langley Eustis, for 3 days of reconnection and rehearsal, culminating in a grand concert on the gazebo at Ft Monroe one last time before the post is closed on Sept 15, 2011. There were former commanders of the band conducting and at the concert, those members who were unable to make it for the rehearsals were in attendance as audience members. It was an emotional yet meaningful event for all involved. The TRADOC band will perform 3 more concerts this summer to complete the 77 year "Music Under the Stars" concert tradition.

10th Mountain Division Band Breaks Ground in the 'Stan

By SSG Steve Lester, 10th Mtn Div Band

BAGRAM AIRFIELD, Afghanistan—With its "colors" among the first to be uncased, a new rehearsal hall built, and a myriad of missions that sometimes had nothing to do with music, the 10th Mountain Division Band from Fort Drum, N.Y., under the command of Chief Warrant Officer 5 John S. Fraser, broke ground in early February as the first military band to be deployed here long term in support of Operation Enduring Freedom VII.

They didn't exactly break out their horns during the first week either.

The division command chose this 40-member unit for a high-priority security mission to Pakistan in early February before it ever landed here, its intended destination. While hundreds of soldiers had been spending days waiting for their last flight to Afghanistan out of Manas Air Force Base in Kyrgyzstan, the band got bumped to the top of the priority list and arrived here the next day.

They left for Pakistan less than a week later as the first Army band personnel to perform a mission there, and they did everything from augment earthquake relief efforts to guard Air Force One.

2011 Reunion to be Held in Columbia, SC
Gary Hartman, Entertainment Chairman

Greetings, fellow members. Is it hot enough for you, yet? Speaking of things that are NOT hot:

Here we are, less than 8 weeks away and only 14 members have signed up. This is less than 50% of the minimum we need for the reunion. Seems as if I remember everyone at last year's reunion saying the date is great, the location is great and everyone is going to sign up.

Okay, here's the last reminder for those who have forgotten to sign up. Cut-off date is August 31st. Any rooms set aside for AMM will be released after this date, and the price goes up. Get your room reserved now: AMM rate is \$109 plus tax. And another FYI: the hotel is now listed as DOUBLE-TREE by Hilton, phone is 1-803-731-0300 (sorry, no toll-free number), address 2100 Bush River Rd., Columbia, SC 29210 for those with no internet access. CALL NOW! I had Glenn update the reservation information on the AMM website [<http://a-a-m.us>]. If you have any questions, please call me at (803) 530-6081. The Double-Tree Hotel offers free airport shuttle service to/from Columbia airport. Early sign up is included with your AMM registration. Breakfast is also included with your hotel reservation.

Those who wait until the reunion to register will forfeit their meal on Saturday evening.

Register for the reunion itself (\$50 per person) by sending me your check (payable to Gary Hartman, not AMM). Address is on page 6 of this newsletter.

Here's the tentative schedule:

Thursday, Sept 15th

Check-in after 2:00 pm

Hospitality Room will open around 3:00.

Friday, Sept 16th

Local sight-seeing; Hotel swimming pool open

Bowling Center across the street from hotel

Hospitality Room will be open at various times throughout the day

1:00 to 4:00 pm - Separate area will be provided for Jam Session

7:00 pm Concert by the 282nd Army "Victory" Band, Fort Jackson

Saturday, Sept 17th

10:00 to 12:00 Noon Either rehearsal session or business meeting with election of officers. This will depend on USC event going on in hotel; we won't know until the week of the reunion.

12:00 to 2:00 Lunch on your own.

2:00 to 4:00 pm Rehearsal session or business meeting with election.

6:30 pm Pre-banquet Social

7:00 pm Banquet (suggested dress is casual, tie is optional); door prizes will be given away during the evening. Announcements/Presentations/Memorial during the evening

8:30 pm Mini-Jam Session with dance band

9:00 to 11:00 pm Dancing

Sunday, Sept 18th—Breakfast/Farewell/Departure

We will need a location for the 2012 Reunion. Bring your bid to the business meeting on Saturday. See you in 8 weeks.

Gary Hartman

P r e s i d e n t ' s M e s s a g e

By Dave Ratliff

Can you believe it is August and the reunion is only a few weeks away? As usual, registrations are lagging. We need you to commit NOW to fulfill our contract with the hotel. We have entertainment lined up for Friday and Saturday evenings. As usual, Gary has done a magnificent job in getting the reunion organized.

We have several business items. Where will

the 2012 reunion be held? Who will host? Doing a reunion does not have to be a one man or one woman operation. AMM members will pitch in to ease the load. We will hold elections for President, Secretary and Treasurer. Who is interested in being an officer for AMM?

We will have an update on the Army band program from CW5 Bob Nixon, Army Band Proponen-

cy Officer. The Exchange is only a few miles away. There are lots of golf courses in the Columbia area. And there are shopping opportunities galore. But the best part of the reunion? Renewing friendships, swapping stories (lies?), and being around a group of people who share one common interest - MUSIC.

Call your buddies and get them to Columbia. I know



economic times are tough for everyone but find a way to come to the 2011 AMM Reunion.

See you in September.....Dave

Veterans of the 1st Infantry Division Band Hold Their Own Reunion!

AMM isn't the only outfit that does military musician reunions. This past June, AMM member and retired Army euphonium/trombone player Steve Vonada decided to take the plunge and organize a reunion for veterans of the 1st Infantry Division Band.

Steve served in a multitude of assignments – not surprising for a career soldier who began his career in 1968, finished in 1990, and all of it on active duty. A native Kansan, originally from Sylvan Grove and now living in Wamego, Steve served with the 371st Army Band at Ft. Leavenworth, KS at the time of its deactivation in 1975; and then on to the 1st Infantry Division Band at Ft. Riley from 1975-76 and again from 1977-78.

Steve reports, "I got the idea to host a reunion of the 11D Band as a good way to bring past comrades together for a fun weekend. I booked rooms at the Manhattan Clarion and set a date. Keith Erickson sent me his roster of past members of the 11D Band, and I started emailing, snail mailing, and phoning everyone on that list. I originally had fifteen past members who said they would be there, and several others that were very interested. As it turned



out, we had only eight enjoy the weekend together. I believe one big drawing point for all of them was that the active 1ID Band was willing to have a rehearsal with us and play a joint concert at the Junction City Park during the reunion. With the lack of response from the many contacted, I gave the other seven the option to

either cancel the reunion, or march on with just the eight of us. All of them said, 'Let's do it.' We had guys from Texas, Florida, New Mexico, Pennsylvania, Virginia, Rhode Island, and as far away as Kansas. The experience was gratifying for me personally and while it was a lot of fun, it brought back those memories of having spent time in challenging conditions and situations with others who were experiencing the same things. That sense of camaraderie and brotherhood doesn't diminish with time - it just gets stronger."

Those who attended were: Robert Butler, Paul & Mary Ann Moore, Bonnie & Denise Versoza, Robin & Charlene Venturini, Stuart Workman, John Polion, Ray Bruce, and Steve & Sally Vonada.

5th Army Band—not to be outdone—holds THEIR own Reunion!

AMM Member Jim Gaffney organized and held a reunion of 5th Army Band veterans over a three-day period this past June in and around Madison, Wisconsin. Some 30+ veterans enjoyed themselves thoroughly at the opportunity to get caught up on things and to once again make music.

The reunion featured a concert held on the steps of the Wisconsin Capitol Building on a bright and sunny day. The substantial crowd that gathered was appreciative and their support of the event meant much to the musicians gathered there.

Congratulations, Jim and fellow 5th Army Band vets, on a wonderful outcome!



1st Armored Division Band Returns to the U.S. and Ft. Bliss, TX

By David Burge, El Paso Times

Spc. Felix Guiffra once worked in advertising in New York City but was laid off during the recent recession.

He decided, then, that he wanted to get back into playing music. Guiffra, a drummer and percussionist, is one of about 35 members of the 1st Armored Division Band at Fort Bliss.

"Music has always been a passion of mine, and the Army gave me the best chance to do that," he said. "I also felt motivated to do something more meaningful and be a part of something bigger than myself. I also wanted to serve my country. Both of my grandfathers served in World War II. Now, it's my turn."

Band members are full-time musicians who play at military ceremonies. They also play gigs for the El Paso community and do outreach programs at local schools.

Besides being musicians, they are full-fledged soldiers. "We are musician-soldiers," said Spc. Melissa Kruziki, who plays French horn. Kruziki has two bachelor's degrees and a master's in music. "It's nice to have a job where I get paid to play music," she said.

Band members had to pass an audition and demonstrate proficiency with their instrument.

1st Sgt. Michael Key plays clarinet and is the enlisted band leader. "We have to do what all soldiers do -- qualify for weapons, do physical training and we do pre-deployment training," he said.

The band provides entertainment and helps boost troop morale, Key said. To do that, Key said, the band plays more than just traditional marching music. It also can play pop, jazz, country, rock and classical music selections. "You name it," Key said.

As the Army changes, so do its bands, Guiffra said. "There's more of an emphasis on pop and more modern music," he said. "This initiative by the Army is really exciting to me. We are the world's largest cover band." The band even has two vocalists and one member who raps, Guiffra said.

The Fort Bliss band used to be called the 62nd Army Band, and it changed its name to the 1st Armored Division Band in June. The most significant part of that change is that the band now can be

deployed, said bandmaster Chief Warrant Officer 3 Russell Houser.

No plans are under way, however, for the band to accompany the 4th Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division, which is deploying to Iraq.

Houser said bands play significant roles in the Army, such as help maintain tradition.

Bands were the first signal companies, giving commands to move into battle, he said.

Army bands also participate in ceremonies like "Salute to the Union" leading up to the Fourth of July weekend and the recent flag casing ceremony for the 4th Brigade.

A more modern role for Army bands is to connect the post with the larger community, Houser said.

The band typically plays seven to 10 performances a week on post. Last year, it also gave 30 to 35 performances for the El Paso community. It recently played at Melodies in the Park, a summertime city of El Paso Parks and Recreation Department concert series.

The band also reaches out to schools. For several years, the band has had special partnerships with both Chapin and Irvin high schools and gave private music lessons to students there. Houser said the band has plans to do similar types of things for this coming



Herm Hopkins, 1AD Band trombonist. (Photo Credit—Vanessa Monsisvais / El Paso Times)

school year.

Houser is in his second stint at Fort Bliss and has been back about two months after being most recently stationed at Fort Bragg, N.C.

He said his fondest memory of playing in Army bands was when he was deployed to Iraq in 2003. Playing for fellow troops at Christmastime gave battle-weary colleagues a much-needed break from the stress of battle, he said.

The 1st Armored Division Band has four music performance teams, and at least one practices every day at the band building at Fort Bliss, 762 Merritt.

Two teams are devoted to ceremonial music, and two are geared to popular music.

The U.S. Coast Guard Band—an Overview

The United States Coast Guard Band is the premier band representing the United States Coast Guard and the Department of Homeland Security. The 55-member ensemble has performed at some of the most prestigious venues in the nation, including the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, Lincoln Center, and Carnegie Hall. The Band also has a rich history of performing internationally: it is especially honored to have been the first American military band to perform in the former Soviet Union, with concerts in Leningrad and the surrounding area in 1989. The Band looks forward to touring Taiwan in July 2011.



Tree lighting ceremonies, the American Bicentennial Celebration with President Gerald Ford, World War II Fiftieth Anniversary events in England, and Inaugural celebrations for every President since Herbert Hoover.

The United States Coast Guard Band was organized in March 1925 with the assistance of Lt. Charles Benter, leader of the United States Navy Band; Dr. Walter Damrosch, conductor of the New York Philharmonic; and “American March King” John Philip Sousa, former director of the United States Marine Band. In 1965, President Lyndon B. Johnson signed congressional legislation resulting in the Coast

Guard Band becoming the permanent, official musical representative of the nation’s oldest continuous seagoing service. This event also established the Coast Guard Band as one of our nation’s premier service bands.

Based at the US Coast Guard Academy in New London, Connecticut, the Coast Guard Band frequently appears in Washington, DC, at presidential and cabinet level functions on formal and informal occasions. Historic events include National Christmas

Secretary’s Notes

Deby Kidney, AMM Secretary



I'm looking forward to our annual reunion in September in Columbia, SC....my hometown. I recently had an opportunity to talk to many band retirees and former bandsmen about our organization. I am always "subtly recruiting" whenever possible! However, the question that always comes up is, "what does that group do?" I would ask that you all think about that question as we approach our reunion. Perhaps we should figure out exactly what it is we do in order to recruit the newest retirees that are coming out of the military bands right now. See you soon!

Treasurer’s Report

Mike Noland, AMM Treasurer



As of 4 Aug 11 we have \$6,516.49 in our account. The 2012 dues are due now so I would appreciate it if members would start sending me their dues now. This saves me a little time at the reunion.

I have had the new T shirts for two months and the only ones purchased have been by me. The price for the shirts is \$10.00 and they come in six different colors. Please call me at 931-216-3221 if you are interested in purchasing one or two otherwise they will be at the reunion.

Chaplain’s Corner

Gary Hartman, AMM Chaplain



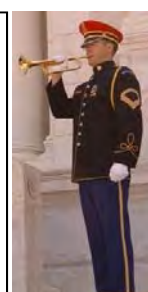
Looking forward to seeing everyone at this year’s Reunion. Seems only a short time ago that we met in Alabama.

As we draw close to our next reunion, let us remember those who still serve. And if you know of an AMM member who has passed, please send information to the AMM Secretary, Deby Kidney.

Taps

There have been no reported deaths since the last newsletter.

Let us be grateful for the time we have with our loved ones and each other.



WE'RE ON THE WEB!

HTTP://A-M-M.US

A s s o c i a t i o n o f M i l i t a r y M u s i c i a n s

AMM's Mission

The Association of Military Musicians is a fraternal organization that strives to preserve the proud tradition of military music. Military musical ensembles don't just play marches and ceremonial music—today's audience demands much more than that, and with panache to boot!

Membership is open to any and all who have served in a military musical organization, whether a band, orchestra, fife & drum corps, or a vocal group.

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