

NEWS
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LETTER
"SOUND OFF!"



2018 REUNION
SEPTEMBER 6-7-8
IN COLUMBUS, GEORGIA USA

To attend you must be a dues paying member of AMM. Join us. Visit MILMUSICIANS.COM

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



By Pete Swanson

Greetings, one and all and a Happy Holiday Season: As I write this, Thanksgiving is over, I made a slight raid on a couple of stores on Black Friday, and my wife and I have just attended our first holiday concert, put on by the

"I was unable to attend this year's gathering due to upcoming surgery but my wife and I are already planning for next year in Columbus, GA, on September 6-8."



Photo: R. Barraca

**THE BOB BARR
COMMUNITY BAND**

In addition to the conductor, Fred Catchings, there are several retired military members in their group.
BOBBARRBAND.COM

Marine Forces Pacific Band (who did a great job, by the way). Like many of you, I play in a community concert band and we are in the middle of rehearsals for our concerts. Yes, we are playing Leroy Anderson's, Christmas Festival. I'll never escape that piece.

I assume that Chris is going to have information about our last reunion in Huntsville, AL, somewhere in this newsletter. I know that there are pictures in our Facebook group. While Hurricane Irma had an affect on attendance, I have heard that a great time was had by all. I was unable to attend this year's gathering due to upcoming surgery but my wife and I are now planning

for next year in Columbus, GA, on September 6-8.

Fort Benning was my first band (way back in 1972), and while I have visited since then, I am looking forward to showing my wife around. Fortunately, the Maneuver Center of Excellence Band isn't (currently) on a list for elimination, so hopefully, we will be able to see them perform. I suspect that, like when I was there, graduations are their bread and butter. This year some of our members sat in and played with the Huntsville Community Band at the reunion. Next year in addition to the MCoE Band (which I will al-

continued on Page 7



Photo: Lynn Milner, Jim Walker, John Vassar, Charles Heinz; courtesy J. Vassar

TREASURER'S REPORT

By Allen Lawless

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

AMM Bylaws require that the address of the organization be that of the serving Treasurer.

That new address is:

**Association of Military Musicians
123 Antler Way Drive
Sherwood, AR 72120**

ACCOUNT BALANCES: As of November 22, 2017, the AMM Checking account has \$8,871.66. The Paypal account has \$950.62, for a total of \$9,822.28.

AMM numbers 115 members today, but 16 of those members are in arrears.

The AMM web site at <http://milmusicians.com> offers a quick and easy way to take care of that task. The cost is still a very low \$15 per year, with a \$175 Lifetime Membership option. Please stop by today! By the time you receive the December newsletter, those members in arrears will have been reminded through email or a short letter, in addition to a short snippet within the newsletter itself. We want to keep you on the roster, but should you not remit your dues, this newsletter will be your last.

Some discussion has ensued as to the IRS status of AMM. Several options could be considered, especially filing for tax-exempt status under 501(c)(19) of the tax code. IRS states, "to be exempt under Internal Revenue Code section 501(c)(19), an organization must be either: a post or organization of past or present members of the United States Armed Forces. An auxiliary unit or society of such post or organization. Or a trust or foundation for such post or organization."

Initial research indicates that it's a formidable task to file, but not impossible. Those with experience in this area are invited to contact the Treasurer for further research and possible application to IRS.

All bills have been paid, save a small amount due to the Treasurer for postage, and the cost of checks and deposit slips. No monies are owed to the organization beyond 2018 dues for those who are in arrears.

WEBMASTER'S REPORT

By Allen Lawless

“Subscribing to the AMM Facebook page is not an official method of becoming a member of AMM.”

For those with internet access, AMM's web site is located at milmusicians.com. We invite you to take a look. The website has seen over 10,000 hits to date.

Paid members of AMM may register on the site. The Log-in portal is on the "Log-in & News" page. Please submit your information, and I'll do my best to approve your registration within a few days. Regrettably, we cannot adhere to a system that automatically registers those who submit their information because spamming is still an art form to marvel. Spammers are not approved, of course, and to clean them out is a never-ending chore.

Those who are registered, however, may visit the "Members Only" page after login to download previous copies of the newsletter. There is even an online forum.

Facebook, the online social network that is hugely popular, provides AMM another opportunity to reach out to prospective members. It should be emphatically stated, however, that merely because a person subscribes to the AMM Facebook page does not make them a member of AMM proper. Requirements for membership to AMM are listed in the Bylaws. Subscribing to the AMM Facebook page is not an official method of becoming a member of AMM.

10,000+

AMM website has seen over 10,000 visits to its pages

MILMUSICIANS.COM



Member Portal

Paid members of AMM may register on the site. There is even an online forum.

Social Media

Connect with the AMM group at Facebook too.



And now you can become a member, renew your AMM membership, or change your contact information (for existing members) online!

MEMBERSHIP OUTREACH

By Rob Kessler

“Even though I have volunteered to do AMM outreach this endeavor requires that we all reach out and find new members.”

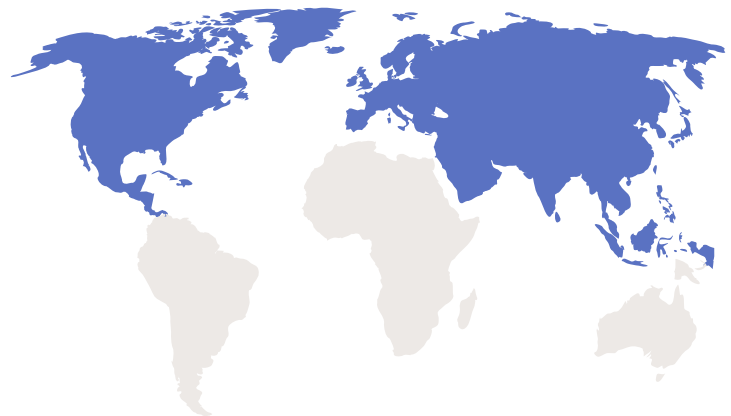
As the AMM Outreach coordinator, I contacted military bands in all components and branches of service.

I sent information regarding the AMM mission, membership, and the 2018 reunion on September 6, 7 and 8 in Columbus, Georgia to 6 Navy, 13 USAF, 8 USMC, and the USCG organizations using their Facebook messenger.

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Photo: C. Wason



JOIN AMM TODAY

MEMBERSHIP IS OPEN TO ALL ACTIVE DUTY, NATIONAL GUARD, RESERVE, RETIRED AND VETERANS FROM ALL SERVICES WHO HAVE SERVED IN A MILITARY MUSIC ENSEMBLE.

And now you can become a member, renew your AMM membership, or change your contact information (for existing members) online!

As for the Army, I was able to utilize a personal contact to have the information posted on the AMI portal. For the NG and USAR, I sent it to a senior WO for distribution. Posting monthly updates about the reunion is a tactic designed to increase the number of participants.

Even though I have volunteered to do AMM outreach this endeavor requires that we all reach out and find new members.

Thanks, **Rob**

WAR STORIES: "BASIC TRAINING"

Contributed by Gary Sapp

"I never did find out who this guy was (who had helped me), but I've never forgotten his selflessness."

In 1966, the most feared words from a Drill Instructor were, "I'm gonna set you back!".

Basic Training sucked enough, but to go back to the beginning and do it all over again - that was torture beyond thought. At the end of Basic Training, among other things, we had to make a timed run. Fail that, and you would get set back.

I was never a good runner. I was a good, strong swimmer and even a Karateka. But I couldn't run. So when the big day came, I was in trouble.

As we took our run, I lagged further and further behind. Suddenly out of nowhere, came this guy running next to me. He put an arm around my waist and pulled me along with him. I could feel his strength.

As he pulled me, he gave me words of encouragement, telling me just to keep putting one foot in front of the other, and that I could do it.

He did this about a fourth of the way, and from the look of him, and seeing his prowess, he probably could have come in first place. But he gave that up to help me.

Placing first wouldn't have given him any official benefits, but he would have had bragging rights.

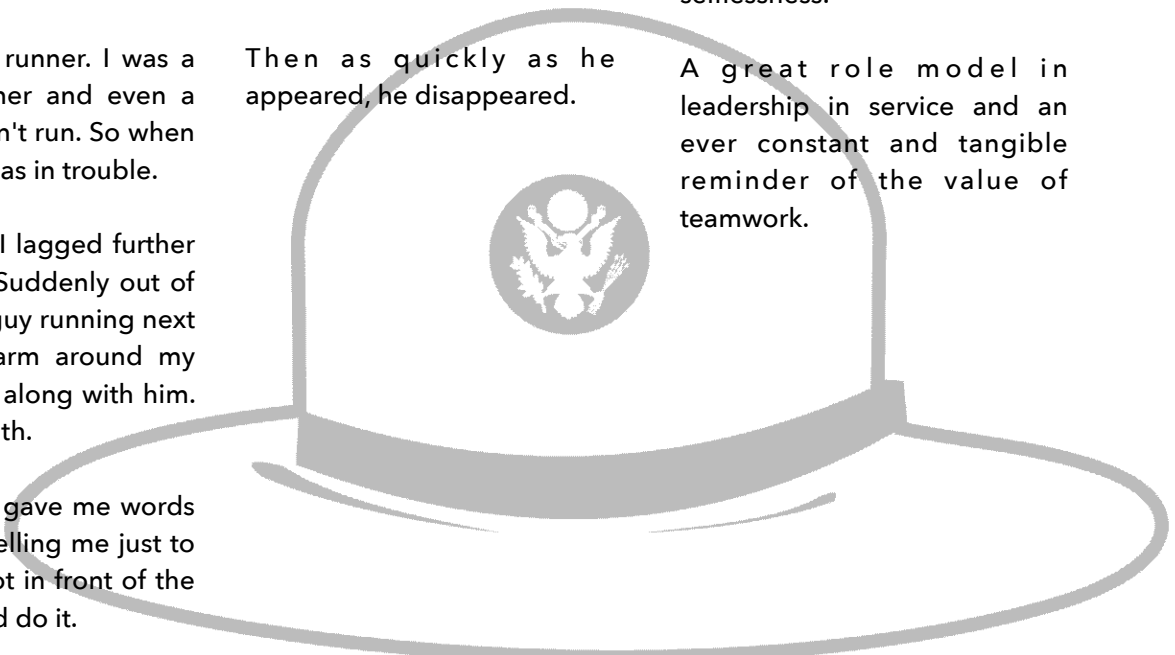
Then as quickly as he appeared, he disappeared.

I finished second to last and only because the last place finisher tripped and fell while I ran past him.

But, I finished!

I never did find out who this guy was (who had helped me), but I've never forgotten his selflessness.

A great role model in leadership in service and an ever constant and tangible reminder of the value of teamwork.



EDITOR'S NOTE:

Submissions to "War Stories" are always welcome. Stories may be edited for length and grammar.

Publication is at the sole discretion of the editor.

MISSION STATEMENT OF NOTE: The United States Army Band "Pershing's Own" will provide musical support for the leadership of the United States, to include all branches of government, and to a wide spectrum of national and international events in support of Soldiers and their Families, public diplomacy, community and international relations, recruiting initiatives, and music education programs; in order to instill in our forces the will to fight and win, to foster the support of our citizens, and to promote our national interests at home and abroad.

BOOK REVIEW:

"INSTRUMENTS OF BATTLE" BY JAMES TANNER

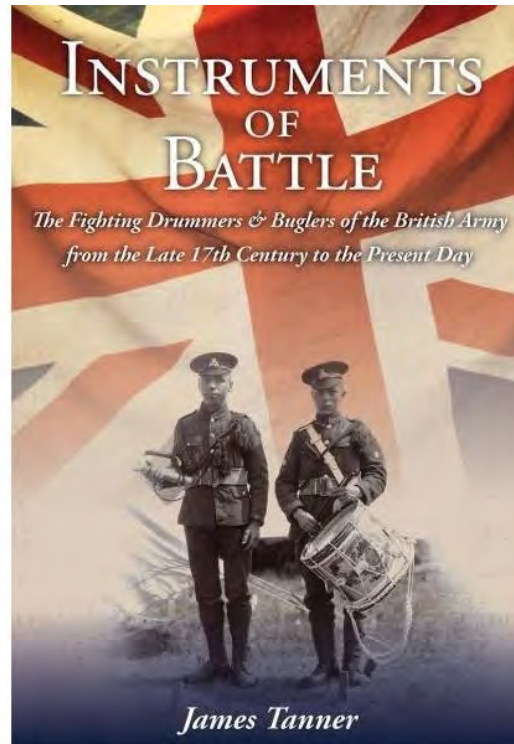
Review by Dr. Bruce Gleason

Familiar to military history readers for his *The British Army Since 2000* (Osprey, 2014), James Tanner's latest book covering drummers and buglers of the British Army is sure to become a pivotal work not only within the slowly expanding field of military music history but also within military history in general.

Introducing the work through the use of military instruments of Old Testament practice as well as that of Rome, Greece, Gaul, and other regions and eras, Tanner moves through the conventions of the English army of the second half of the seventeenth century—when Scotland was still its own kingdom and nearly a century and half before Ireland was part of the picture with the creation of the United Kingdom—to the present-day British Army.

Tanner skillfully moves readers through the details of bugle, drum and fife/flute use on and off the battlefield and covers battlefield formation and tactics and how the various military calls were utilized over numerous battles of centuries of wars. I was particularly pleased to find a section of high-quality color images—engravings, paintings, lithographs and photographs—giving even further life to an excellent book. Tanner utilizes scores of secondary sources and repositories including several of my favorites—works by Henry George Farmer, Trevor Herbert and Helen Barlow, J. Paine, Gordon Turner, Alwyn Turner, Raoul Camus, W.Y. Carmen, Sir John Froissart, Francis Grose, and the Anne S. K. Brown Military Collection of Brown University Library. As well, his use of primary sources gives life to various topics including daily calls, teaching calls to soldiers, pay, unit calls, protocol, secondary functions including drummers serving as liaisons, duty compared with that of other nations, and training.

James Tanner. Instruments of Battle: The Fighting Drummers and Buglers of the British Army from the Late 17th Century to the Present Day. Oxford and Philadelphia: Casemate, 2017, 288 pages, ISBN 978-1-61200-369-6. Price \$32.95.



“The strength of Tanner’s writing and research skills will ensure that *Instruments of Battle* will retain a rightful place in the literature for years to come.”

It appears that Brigadier Tanner has left no stone unturned in this well-researched work, which makes for fluid, intelligent reading. Especially impressive was the author’s command of the sometimes blurry line between bands and field music—the latter being the focus of the book and having the historically more utilitarian function of giving direction and communication on and off the battlefield. However, he expertly discusses band function and history when this information is helpful in covering the primary topic. He also deftly steers readers through slippery terminology: “in the Foot Guards and the infantry of the line, whether he carries a drum or a bugle and, at times, a flute, the man is a drummer.” He wisely focuses the book on the infantry, as cavalry and dragoon regiments had their own signaling practices and traditions.



Photo: J. Childs

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE CONT.

-ways remember as the 283rd), the Bob Barr Community Band is in the area and in addition to the conductor, Fred Catchings, there are several retired military members in their group.

It will soon be time to send out Christmas cards, so I would like to urge folks to check your lists for friends who live in the Georgia and Alabama area, are eligible for membership, and with whom you would love to catch up. Invite them to join our happy family and gather with us next year in Columbus.

I wish everybody a wonderful and happy holiday season.

Until next time, Pete

BOOK REVIEW CONT.

The only element of the book with which I took issue, and which I suspect was not a decision of the author, concerned the use and format of endnotes. While I acknowledge that not all readers share my preference for footnotes, the use of endnotes in the case of *Instruments of Battle* takes additional work on the part of the reader above the norm as notes are listed at the book's end by chapter number rather than title. However, chapter identifiers on each page throughout the book are indicated by title rather than number, resulting in considerable page flipping searching for chapter numbers and then back to the end of the book to find the location of a note. Also, another somewhat cumbersome element is the shortened version of notes and use of *ibid* (which actually in most cases throughout the notes should be *Op. cit.* rather than *ibid.*) forcing readers to backtrack to the beginning of the notes of a given chapter, and just as often to notes in a preceding chapter to discover the name of a work associated with a particular *ibid*. If saving ink or space or keeping pages uncluttered were the goals, I don't think the practice was worth it. Shortened titles in each case would have been clearer. These issues however will probably have little affect on many readers. Moreover, the bibliography and index are well done.

An excellent work, I recommend this book for military, military music and general historians—as well as general readers and veteran military personnel, especially musicians. The strength of Tanner's writing and research skills will ensure that *Instruments of Battle* will retain a rightful place in the literature for years to come.

Bruce P. Gleason, Ph.D. (298th Army Band, 1989 - 1991), author of *Sound the Trumpet, Beat the Drums* (University of Oklahoma Press, 2016).



**The 2018
Reunion
of the
Association
of
Military Musicians
is
September 6-7-8
in Columbus, Georgia**

TO:

**AMM "SOUND-OFF" NEWSLETTER
ATTENTION: EDITOR, POST OFFICE BOX 47
LEAVENWORTH, KANSAS 66048-0047**

