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Local Contribution, National Prominence:
The Impact of A. R. Casavant on Marching Band History

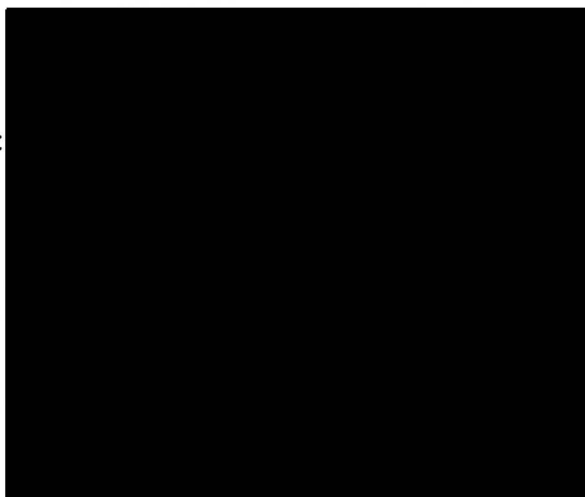
by

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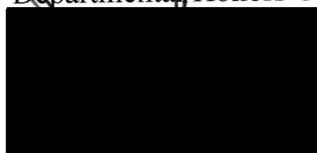


Table of Contents

Acknowledgments	iii
Introduction	1
Music Education Through Marching Band	3
Marching Band History	7
A Profile of A. R. Casavant	11
Personality and Character	17
Theories and Methods	21
Philosophy	34
Influence on Marching Band, Affect on Individuals.	38
Appendix	42
Bibliography	50

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Introduction

Within the field of music education, the history of marching band in public schools has not been thoroughly treated. By documenting the contributions of individuals in marching band, it is possible to obtain a better understanding of the position of marching band in education.

A. R. Casavant gained national prominence through a theoretical approach to marching band instruction, execution, and drill design called precision drill. Formerly the band director at Chattanooga City High School, Casavant is currently retired and residing in Chattanooga, TN. The purpose of this project is to document and examine his contribution to education through the marching band.

The structure of this paper begins with broad descriptions of marching band status and history, and then focuses on the life and work of Casavant. In order to explain the basis of this study, the first section reviews common justifications of the marching band in education. Next, contextual background is provided in an overview of marching band history, and a profile is given of the life and accomplishments of Casavant. Based on interviews with his colleagues, students, and friends, a description of his character and personality offers insight into his success. The largest portion of this paper discusses his theories and methods followed by a description of his

philosophy. Finally, his impact on marching band and on individuals is addressed based on interviews and surveys of prominent musicians and educators.

Music Education Through Marching Band

A. R. Casavant contributed to music education by developing and advancing the marching band. To understand the importance of this contribution, one must realize how marching band is regarded within music education. The role of marching band in school music programs is often a topic of debate. Many prominent music educators believe that marching band offers numerous benefits, of which the most frequently mentioned is its use as a tool for the advancement of music education. In his book *The Teaching of Instrumental Music*, leading music educator Richard J. Colwell states that “music is now fairly secure, not due to technological advancement by marching band, but because it has brought music into the public awareness.” As the most frequently seen school musical ensemble, the marching band represents the entire instrumental music program at each performance as a visible product, thereby inspiring a more positive disposition in schools and communities toward music education as a whole.¹ Furthermore, this visibility advertises future performances by the group and helps to ensure continuing enrollment.

¹ Robert E. Foster, Multiple-option Marching Band Techniques, 2nd ed. (Alfred Publishing Co., Inc., 1978), 21; C. F. Schuller and W. R. Sur, Music Education for Teenagers (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1958), 84, 254.

What is it about marching band that has made it so prominent in American schools more than, say, an orchestral ensemble? The rousing performance of an outdoor band is rooted in military history and American tradition. Powerfully entertaining, it can purvey a climate of fervor that reveals the spirit of any era.² Many view the marching band as an art form that combines auditory and visual stimuli through music and moving designs--“a workable medium of sound and cadence.” In fact, this unique ensemble is capable of evoking “meaningful experiences” for the observer and participant alike on an intellectual and emotional level.³ Often compared to ballet, marching band is music in motion--an art that grows and evolves.

Participation in marching band provides many benefits to students such as unlimited potential for individual growth in the areas of self-discipline, physical fitness, and perseverance. By necessitating the coordination of mind and muscle,⁴ the marching band enables the development of advanced psychomotor skills and agility. Band students can learn the importance of individual effort while working intensely within a larger group; applicable group skills include the development of leadership

² David H. Beier, “Bands at the University of Colorado: An Historical Review, 1908-1978” (Ph.D. diss., University of Chicago, 1983), 97.

³ Foster, p.22; James R. Wells, The Marching Band in Contemporary Music Education (Interland Publishing, Inc., 1976), x.

⁴ Raymond F. Dvorak, The Band On Parade (New York: Carl Fischer, Inc., 1937), Preface.

qualities, the establishment of a work ethic, and the growth of a sense of group pride or *esprit de corp*. Finally, students may be motivated, not only to learn music, but to stay in school as well.⁵

A successful music program depends upon the awareness of non-musical benefits. Bennett Reimer, author of the highly influential *A Philosophy of Music Education*, approves extrinsic rationales because society expects a music curriculum to fulfill certain non-musical purposes. However, he asserts that these “fringe benefits” should not be the sole purpose of the program.⁶ A music educator must always have as a primary directive the teaching of music: understanding, performance, and technique. In his book *The Marching Band in Contemporary Music Education*, James R. Wells defends the educational value of marching band based on its potential for the development of comprehensive musicianship. The marching and maneuvering aspects of this ensemble can facilitate student awareness of rhythm, form, and phrasing, as well as develop precise execution skills necessary for musical performance. Students can benefit from a concrete demonstration of how disparate musical elements come together to complement one another in the form of a completed marching show. To

⁵ R. C. Berg and K. Hjelmervik, *Marching Bands: How to Organize and Develop Them* (New York: The Ronald Press Co., 1953), 1; Dvorak, Preface; Foster, 21; Wells, 26.

⁶ Bennett Reimer, *A Philosophy of Music Education* (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1970), 129, quoted in Wells, *The Marching Band in Contemporary Education*, 26.

reinforce basics such as timbre, harmony, melody, and dynamics, an educator can choose appropriate marching music with these concepts in mind. An innovative band director may further utilize the marching band to create analysis and composition opportunities for pupils through simple marches, fanfares, and fight songs.⁷

Reimer emphasizes the importance of employing all three domains of learning: cognitive, psychomotor, and affective, the latter of which is the most frequently neglected in music education. By participating in the aesthetic creation of a marching band show, students experience this elusive domain “which transcends the benefits of both musical mastery and musical understanding.” Indeed, Reimer states that the entire marching program serves an aesthetic function by combining all of the concepts listed above into a musical experience, which serves participants and observers alike.⁸ In conclusion, experts agree that the marching band serves many capacities in a music program, and the main focus should always be music learning.

⁷ Wells, 11-12, 26, 121.

⁸ Bennett Reimer, A Philosophy of Music Education, 129, as quoted in Wells, 25, 26.

Marching Band History

The marching band has served many cultural functions throughout history. In his book Multiple-Option Band Techniques, Robert E. Foster states that “the marching band was among the very first ensembles of wind, string, and/or percussion instruments developed in [the] earliest civilizations.” This outdoor ensemble is dependent upon, as well as representative of, the social and political climate of each era. In ancient times, bands consisting mostly of trumpets were used for worship purposes and in battle.⁹ A familiar example is the Battle of Jericho found in the book of Joshua: “The seven priests carrying the seven trumpets went forward, marching before the Ark of the Lord and blowing the trumpets.”¹⁰ Bands used for early military purposes signaled troop movements, portrayed the forces as powerful, and instilled spirit in the troops.

Marching instrument performances as entertainment were seen in early Greek tragedies and have been popular throughout history. By the end of the 11th century, bands of wandering minstrels journeyed through the countryside playing songs, dance tunes, and marches. Eventually, these traveling musicians were forbidden in some towns in order to encourage the formation of community bands, the predecessors of modern bands. Such groups usually

⁹ Foster, 1.

¹⁰ Joshua 6:13 NIV (New International Version).

consisted of four performers with varied instrumentation: fifes, flutes, bagpipes, drums, and many period instruments such as shalmes, bombard, and zinks.¹¹

Beginning in the 1500's, band music frequently accompanied ceremonies and processions in accord with the pomp and circumstance of the times. Richard Franko Goldman, one of America's most revolutionary bandmen, explained that "the marching band as [known] today may be said to stem partly from the fifes, drums, and trumpets associated with the European courts and armies, and partly from the ensemble of similar instruments used for secular music in the 16th and 17th centuries." While the orchestra appealed to the elite of society, bands played for everyone. Three separate classes of bands formed to serve distinct functions: mounted calvary bands, marching bands, and civilian bands.¹² In this way, the marching band came into its own as an exclusive and thriving ensemble.

Early American marching bands consisted of fifes and drums and served military functions. The establishment of the U.S. Marine Band in 1798 was a milestone; a far more advanced ensemble, the first of many, was introduced. Although still affiliated with the military, the group consisted of a

¹¹ Foster, 2, 3, 4.

¹² Richard Franko Goldman, The Wind Band: Its Literature and Technique (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1974). Foster, 6, 9.

variety of brass, woodwind, and percussion instruments to entertain as well as serve. Renowned march writer David W. Reeves founded the American Band of Providence, Rhode Island, in the mid-19th century. This organization, reputed to be one of the foremost marching bands of all time, was purely a civilian group with absolutely no military association. Known as “Father of the American Band,” Patrick S. Gilmore organized and directed immense band festivals in the 19th Century. His band patriotically paraded at Civil War recruiting rallies. The “March King,” John Philip Sousa, became conductor of the U.S. Marine Band in 1880.¹³ Although his band only marched on seven occasions,¹⁴ Sousa’s popularity and extensive composition of marches advanced marching band extensively. By 1889, over 10,000 bands thrived in the United States.

The early twentieth-century saw a decline of the professional bands, yet a remarkable increase in public school music programs that utilized bands. This was largely due to the rise of a new sport in high schools and colleges: football. As this game took root in American culture, the need for quality entertainment during the event increased.¹⁵ Marching bands received more

¹³ Foster, 14, 15, 16-17, 18.

¹⁴ Margaret Hazen and Robert Hazen, The Music Men: An Illustrated History of Brass Bands in America, 1800-1920 (Washington D. C.: Smithsonian Institute Press, 1987), 113.

¹⁵Foster, 19.

public exposure than ever before as they performed as football half-time entertainment. Albert Austin Harding, pioneer band director at the University of Illinois, was the first to use letter formations as early as 1905. In the 1920's, Northwestern University first used field charts based on the five-yard intervals of the football field.¹⁶ Directors formed organizations for the outdoor ensemble, such as National School Band Contests and Festivals in 1923¹⁷ and American Bandmaster's Association in 1929.

By the mid-1940's, marching bands moved away from the traditional military style, and increased membership made possible the formation of pictures on the field.¹⁸ Marching band shows became more sensational and complex as pageantry style became increasingly popular after World War II. The rapid growth of bands in high schools and colleges continued with increasing fervor as televised football games brought new public exposure. Throughout history, visibility within society has affected the success of marching band, from the early military bands to the professional bands of the 1800's and, finally, the school bands of the twentieth century.¹⁹

¹⁶ Harry C. Patzig, "A Description of the Ten Southeastern Conference Marching Band Programs" (Ph.D. diss., 1993), 7, 8.

¹⁷ Foster, 19.

¹⁸ Patzig, 8, 9.

¹⁹ Beier, 95; Patzig, 9; Foster, 20.

A Profile of A. R. Casavant

When examining the contribution of Casavant within education, it is beneficial to know something of his life. Albert Richard Casavant was born February 13, 1917, in Everett, Massachusetts, and he grew up in Warren, Ohio. In the fifth grade, he began his musical career by learning to play the trumpet. The high school bands in that small town were not noteworthy, but young Casavant managed to play in various private, local bands every night, as well as on the road and in circus bands.

At the age of 19, Casavant moved south to Sweetwater, Tennessee, to attend the Tennessee Military Institute on a track scholarship. He led the band there from his first year as a student and stayed on as director until 1943. While on staff at TMI, he attended The University of Tennessee at Knoxville three days a week and during summers beginning in 1939. He also founded and directed the McMinn County High School band program in Athens, Tennessee from 1939 until 1943.

On May 29, 1939, he met and married his companion for life, Mary Nancye Ewing. Richard, the first of five children, was born in 1942.²⁰ The family moved to Chattanooga where Casavant played trumpet with the Chattanooga Interstate Fair and other professional groups. In 1946 he

²⁰ A. R. Casavant, interviewed by author, Tape recording, Hixson, Tennessee, 29 September 1996; Glenna Sue Jones, comp., Chattanooga Today (1982): 33.

graduated cum laude from The University of Chattanooga with a Bachelor of Science and a Bachelor of Arts degree.²¹

Casavant worked to develop music programs in Chattanooga junior high schools. Beginning in 1948, he also assisted at Chattanooga City High School working with the ROTC drill team, directing the swing band, and coordinating band fund-raising and concessions. The legendary Colonel Ira Summers was the band director at City High, an “extremely colorful character” who had played trumpet all over the world with the Buffalo Bill Band. In 1949, he hired Casavant as his assistant, who then took over the program when the Colonel retired in 1951.²²

While teaching at Chattanooga City High School, Casavant had opportunity to try new and innovative ideas. “The drill style he evolved and incorporated into his . . . band. . . attracted much attention in the South and Midwest.”²³ A trendsetter, Casavant was one of the first band directors to utilize football field yard lines to assist step size and formations. He implemented innovative rehearsal techniques using vocally rhythmic commands and “cadet instruction,” wherein student leaders train the others.

²¹ Jay Craven, interviewed by author, Tape recording, Hixson, Tennessee, 3 September 1996; Jones, 33.

²² Casavant, interviewed by author; Jan Galletta, “Marching to a Different Drum,” Chattanooga News Free-Press, 1 February 1981, k4.

²³ A. R. Casavant, “Flanks, Turns, and Flash,” The Instrumentalist 10 (February 1956): 59.

Furthermore, he locally pioneered the use of a “classic field conductor” (conducting combined with a utility beat) rather than the traditional drum major, and he broke with the conventional block band style by implementing company fronts.²⁴ In October of 1953, the City High Band under Casavant’s guidance received an unprecedented perfect score at state competition in Bristol, and “a new era in drill style began.”²⁵ The band never lost in competition during his ten years as director and was nationally recognized for its many accomplishments.²⁶

Casavant was inventive in many areas, not just marching band. While at City High, he started a non-profit film distribution center, wherein films for marching and drum major training as well as films of City, Tyner, and Brainerd High School band performances were sent out to other music programs free of charge. He also introduced a vocational music course into the curriculum which provided a training program for students planning to pursue a career in music; they received two credits for taking three periods of music featuring stage band, concert band, and music theory. In addition, Casavant greatly encouraged chamber music groups among his students, and

²⁴ Most bands entered the football field in a simple parade block. Casavant preferred to have his band enter the field in a straight line, or company front, which had a great deal more visual and aural impact.

²⁵ Louise McCamy, “Chattanooga High Marching Band To Be Model in Chicago Exhibit,” Chattanooga News Free-Press, 13 December 1964; Casavant, interviewed by author.

²⁶ Gallette, “Marching...Drum”.

he provided sight-reading sessions on Saturdays for musical growth and amusement.²⁷

Casavant's local fame soon turned to national renown as he began putting his ideas into print. He started his research around 1950 while pursuing a master's degree at VanderCook College of Music in Chicago during summers. By observing the different approaches within military, university, drum corps, and high school marching styles, he developed a drill technique based on the mathematics of movement, musical timing, and function, combined with aesthetics.²⁸ His books detailing this new "scientific approach" to marching were popular nationwide, and he was credited as the "developer of line precision drills. . . a functional system which became a staple to many band directors during the 1960s."²⁹

By 1959 the Casavant family had grown to include four more children: Charles, Edward, Carol, and Brett. Casavant retired from Chattanooga City High School in order to provide a better income for his household and because he hoped to accomplish more in his area of expertise--marching band. In addition to his publications, he developed several instrument-carrier devices

²⁷ Casavant, interviewed by author.

²⁸ Drum and bugle corps are marching bands made up of percussion and brass instruments only. In the 50's, they were usually affiliated with organization sponsors, such as the American Legion. Today, drum and bugle corps are largely supported by their members.

²⁹ Casavant, interviewed by author; Michael Mark and Ancel Patten, "Emergence of the Modern Marching Band (1950-1970)," The Instrumentalist, vol. 30: 11, June 1976, 34.

while at City High for which he attained patents.³⁰ He and his children ran an assembly and production business for the Casavant equipment from their home. Additional income was provided by area high school bands for whom Casavant wrote and taught marching shows.

Due to his renown as a bandmaster, Casavant was able to become a “teacher’s teacher,” traveling world-wide to direct workshops and clinics for directors and students. He taught at over one hundred schools, including University of Massachusetts, Washington State, University of Oregon, and University of Texas. A particular series of these prestigious marching workshops entitled the “Casavant Cavalcade” were held in the summer beginning in 1958 on the campuses of Middle Tennessee State University, Indiana University of Pennsylvania, Boise State University, Morehead State University, Louisiana State University, Murray State University, Hastings College, Tarkio College, and Anderson College. For over twenty years, the Cavalcade provided instruction in Basic Marching Techniques, Drum Major, Flag and Rifle Spinning, Dance, Pompon, and Baton Twirling. A.R. Casavant planned, organized, and directed these workshops personally with the assistance of his son, Dr. Charles Casavant, Director of Bands at Indiana University of Pennsylvania.

³⁰ Casavant devised these carriers to aid in the maneuvering of unwieldy instruments such as the bass drum, snare drum, and tuba.

The career of A. R. Casavant is an impressive story of a man with a vision. At the time of his retirement, he had shared the benefits of his innovations and inventions through workshops and special courses all over the world, including Ireland, England, Australia, South Africa, New Zealand, Hong Kong, and Japan. From 1978-79, he was the Marching Band Chairman of the National Band Association, and he was an official band competition adjudicator as a member of the Southern Judges Association, the All-American Judges Association, and the International Judges Association. For his many contributions to marching band, Casavant was awarded the VanderCook College Distinguished Service Citation in 1966, and he was inducted into the Tennessee Bandmasters Hall of Fame in 1980, the fourth person to ever receive the honor. He has attained five U.S. patents, and he has written twenty-six books on precision drill and marching percussion, four encyclopedic volumes on exhibition marching, and 107 band arrangements with field maneuvers.³¹

Currently, A. R. Casavant is retired and is residing in Hixson, Tennessee, with his wife, Mary, where they enjoy cultivating vegetables, spruce trees, and muscadine arbors. They attend First Baptist Church and enjoy holiday visits with the families of their children.³²

³¹ Glenna Sue Jones, comp., Chattanooga Today, (1982): 33.

³² Gallette, "Marching...Drum;" Jones, 33.

Personality and Character

The charismatic personality of A. R. Casavant is a contributing factor in his successful career. In recent interviews, his colleagues, former students, and friends shared their impressions of his unique disposition. Jay Craven was a student of Casavant at Chattanooga City High School and later worked with him as the orchestra and assistant band director there. Referring to him affectionately as “Cass,” Jay recalls that his ideas were ahead of their time. He knows “Cass” to be sincere and industrious with an emphasis on perfection. His intelligence is sometimes intimidating to others, but in his day, “everyone admired him and his mind was constantly working.” Known to argue for the sake of argument, “Cass” was a true competitor while a student and as a band director. He asserts, “I didn’t always agree with him, I don’t always now, but he. . .[is] a genius.”³³

Al Miller, owner of Al Miller Music Store in Chattanooga, was a student at Central High School when he met Casavant in 1945. He remembers “Cass” as a controversial figure at the beginning of his career. He was a Yankee in a Southern atmosphere, but it did not seem to bother the ambitious, young Casavant. He was a perfectionist who could motivate kids beyond their ability level. Constantly challenging himself and others, he was not a

³³ Jay Craven, interviewed by author, Hixson, Tennessee, 3 August 1996.

“middle-of-the-roader;” he fought to get things the way he wanted them, never allowing his ego to become involved. Al recalls that the students of Casavant idolized him, and he was very well-respected throughout the music industry by popular music manufacturers as well as educators.³⁴

Morris Bales is a long-time friend and colleague of Casavant. The two played local engagements together, and Bales taught band at Red Bank High School when Casavant was at City High. He recalls receiving many pointers from “Cass” during long talks about marching band at the downtown music store. When Casavant introduced the Precision Drill style of marching in 1949, it was “a real eye-opener,” and most band directors were initially overwhelmed. Marching band was very important to “Cass,” and his band was very successful at festivals and game performances.³⁵

Dale Clevenger, currently Principal Horn in the internationally-renowned Chicago Symphony Orchestra, was a student of Casavant at Brainerd Junior High and Chattanooga City High School. As a member of the City High Band at the peak of its achievement, Clevenger recollects that “it was a very special time.” The group received top honors in concert and marching band, sometimes with perfect scores. He remembers his director as well-respected by his students and the community. Constantly developing

³⁴ Al Miller, interviewed by author, Chattanooga, Tennessee, 11 September 1996.

³⁵ Morris Bales, interviewed by author, Chattanooga, Tennessee, 13 August 1996.

new routines for his band, Casavant conducted organized and well-planned rehearsals. Clevenger also recalls him as devoutly religious man who cared deeply for his family and who refrained from cursing, drinking, and smoking. He was extremely serious about music making and marching band, and he is recognized by music educators nation-wide for his work. Frequently when Clevenger identifies himself as a former student of Casavant, “eyes light up” and he is asked, “You were one of his?”³⁶

Bill Cross of Hixson, Tennessee, was a student of Casavant in beginning band at Brainerd Junior High in 1957. He recalls being “shocked to death” at first by his demanding and exacting teacher who was known to “embarrass the daylights” out of students. With the ability to get his students to do anything, Casavant managed to achieve awesome musical presentations that remain still in their memories. He maintained a personal relationship with his pupils that made each one feel important. Furthermore, he encouraged a real camaraderie within the band that bonded it together like a family.³⁷

Richard Casavant, the eldest son of A. R. Casavant, is a Professor in the School of Business Administration at The University of Tennessee at Chattanooga. As an immediate family member who only briefly participated in band, Richard had a unique view of the temperament of A.R. He

³⁶ Dale Clevenger, interviewed by author, Telephone, 15 March 1997.

³⁷ Bill Cross, interviewed by author, Hixson, Tennessee, 20 September 1996.

recognizes his father as “a character--he coached band like a football team.” Often joking around with his students to create a good rapport, he would give “pep talks” before important performances. He could come across as mean, but he was not; his focus was tremendous, and he expected as much out of his students. Greatly desiring to be different, A. R. Casavant was sometimes considered “the hard to control faculty member.” He taught his students to strive and to exert tremendous effort, and he thereby enabled them to know excellence.³⁸

The personality and character of A. R. Casavant as described above provided him with the tools and stamina with which to achieve his goals. He is depicted by those who know him best as a man with a vision, a desire for perfection, and a contagious stamina with which to succeed. In addition, it is clear that he is particularly brilliant in the area of organization and high order thinking. By bearing in mind these attributes, one can better understand the innovative work of Casavant and its affect on individuals and history.

³⁸ Richard Casavant, interviewed by author, University of Tennessee at Chattanooga, 21 February 1997.

Theories and Methods

In order to fully appreciate the particulars of the work of Casavant, it is important to understand the state of marching bands directly prior to and during his career. The development of the marching band was hindered until after World War II by the notion that the ensemble was primarily a parade band. Directors began to experiment with simple formations in the thirties and forties, and by the early fifties groups “entered the field in block formation, passed in review, and then went into various formations.” The main body of most marching shows was in the style of pageantry: the formations are based on a central theme that combines the drill and music in a meaningful way.³⁸ For example, if the band played “Let Me Call You Sweetheart,” then the picture of a heart was formed. The band changed formations by stagger drill (each individual marching straight to an assigned spot) and stood still while playing the tune. Other techniques employed by some bands included dance steps, gimmicks, and the “dog and pony routine.” In the latter style, the band stands and plays accompaniment for a feature group that performs. Nearly all bands during this time marched six steps to every five yard lines, the traditional military step-size.³⁹

³⁸ Mark and Patten, “Emergence. . .”: 33.

³⁹ A. R. Casavant, interviewed by author.

Casavant began researching marching band styles in 1950 while pursuing his Master's Degree at VanderCook College. By examining the techniques of the existing marching units, he concluded that drill teams, military bands, drum and bugle corps, university bands, and high school bands were ignoring one another rather than comparing methods. Military bands were marching to commands given from a drill component sheet, and drum and bugle corps were maneuvering in squads of four. University bands were using pistol shots to coordinate songs and formations, while high school bands were trying a variety of newer styles and strategies. To some extent, the differences in these groups are unavoidable given the dissimilar missions. Military bands are utilitarian whereas the other ensembles serve entertainment roles, and school marching bands have educational considerations and time constraints that do not affect drill teams and drum and bugle corps. Therefore, Casavant determined to combine and develop all methods that could advance the school marching band, considering its purpose, limitations, and advantages.⁴⁰

The purpose of the school marching band is primarily to educate students and secondarily to entertain at school and community functions. As mentioned above, the group has time limitations due to the frequency of

⁴⁰ Ibid.

performances such as weekly football games. However, the marching band has several advantages as well. In his book entitled *Precision Drill*, Casavant discusses these benefits.

Marching bands perform on a football field lined vertically every five yards. By marching a set number of steps per yard line, a band can obtain complete regularity in step size with little individual variation. Casavant recommends the use of eight steps to every five yards as opposed to the traditional six-to-five because it is a shorter step and accommodates individual size and alignment. Furthermore, eight-to-five is easily divisible by four, which fits better for musical phrasing, and it is also more efficient for high knee steps and fast tempos. He is credited as the first band director in the Southeast to implement this method.⁴¹

Potentially, marching bands have an advantage in the performance of music. Casavant believes that any musical merit of drum and bugle corps can be matched or improved upon by marching band. He states that directors can learn a great deal from drum and bugle corps if they can part from the “tradition-bound arrangers and directors who have stifled initiative in the music of the marching band.” For this reason, marching music must be established as a separate entity from the concert band and must contain

⁴¹ A. R. Casavant, *Precision Drill* (San Antonio, Texas: Southern Music Company, 1959), 146. Richard Casavant, interviewed by author.

fundamental music concepts. Casavant asserts that “power for the marching unit is a vital element” achievable through well-planned music selection and visually stimulating drill design. The use of power provides an additional advantage for marching bands by emotionally engaging the audience.⁴²

Casavant mentions several other freedoms available to school bands. In the first place, school band directors are not bound to the military system of drill; they can and should design drill with a football field in mind rather than a military manual. Secondly, marching bands have the advantage of daily rehearsals combined with unlimited possibilities since “the impossible is not formidable to a teen-ager.” Through the benefit of lined football fields, marching bands can achieve greater general effect through more complex formations with larger units.⁴³ Casavant originated precision drill, a detailed and systematic technique for accomplishing the above.

Precision drill is defined as “the controlled movement of individuals and groups and can be used for the flashy entrance, the flowing motion between formations, and the eye-appealing exit.” The term is used in reference to a particular style of marching show, but it can also be applied to pageantry routines and floor shows (“dog and pony”). In his book, *Precision Drill*, Casavant explains the theory and mechanics of drill, rehearsal

⁴² Ibid., 146, 87-88.

⁴³ Ibid., 147.

techniques, music and instrumentation, and routines. A review of the book appearing in *The Instrumentalist* described it as a “must” for persons involved with marching instruction of any kind.⁴⁴

Casavant states that drill mechanics and individual responsibility are the key to perfecting a marching unit. He asserts, “The secret of success in all marching, whether regular or special, lies in getting everyone to do the right thing at exactly the right time.”⁴⁵ By persistently repeating small details, a marching unit can develop self-discipline through conditioned response; thus the students form habits during the training period that carry over into performances. Casavant advocates a mental-physical approach to regiment the individual toward flawless mechanics. He provides three rules that should govern the marching unit:

“Rule Number One--Keep The Head Up.” Physically, this maintains feet movement independent of the eyes. Mentally, it characterizes pride.

“Rule Number Two--Stand Between Two People.” Students should use peripheral vision to align with the people on either side of them. They should physically and morally understand the interdependence of individuals within the drill unit.

“Rule Number Three--Do Not Anticipate.” Precision is essential for the group and the individual. Students should avoid leaning into movements.⁴⁶

⁴⁴ Review of Precision Drill, by A. R. Casavant, The Instrumentalist 12 (February, 1957): 25.

⁴⁵ Casavant, 148, 72, 12.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 75, 72-74.

In describing the theory of drill, Casavant begins by defining the marching step as three distinct points in time: start, peak of motion, finish. This provides definite rhythm to every part of the step, as opposed to a walking step which contains a start, a finish, and a vague middle motion. He explains that understanding the points in time of every movement is fundamental in precision drill.

The movements . . . are sharply defined, regular, and consistent. The components of these movements are not numerous and are uniform in regard to different movements and to different individuals. The acceleration time from rest to motion and from motion to rest is nil.

Each movement must have a purpose and rhythmic motion, and movements should match in start, motion, stop, and defined motion changes. Since every move is a change either in direction or position, the first beat of each movement is of primary importance over the motion itself and must receive emphasis. The patterns of movements can provide a means for expression, artistically portraying ideas and musical climax.⁴⁷

The speed of drill motions is a factor of precision drill which must be considered when determining the tempo of marching music. To begin with, flexibility within tempo is essential to accommodate uncontrollable performance situations such as difficult terrain and inclement weather. The

⁴⁷ Ibid., 2, 4, 5.

desired style of drill affects the speed of movements as well. Each motion has an ideal speed at which it is performed smoothly and accurately by each band member. If the velocity is too slow, the movement is jerky and uncertain; too fast, and it is uncontrolled and lacks definition of points in time. The audience perceives a mass effect rather than individual movements when the tempo is quicker; however, fast speeds are better received at brief intervals to avoid physical and mental fatigue.⁴⁸

At great length Casavant discusses drill steps which he calls the “building blocks of precision drill.” Achieving uniformity of step within the marching unit is imperative, although extremely difficult due to individual walking styles. Each band member must understand, practice, and assimilate the drill step until it is an automatic reflex. In his book, Casavant describes in great detail the following steps: the highknee step, the stride, the Zouave step, the walking step and drill step, the accented step.⁴⁹

Two types of turns are defined and illustrated in *Precision Drill*-- standing turns and moving turns. The main difference between them is the amount of time between the command and the execution. Since a standing turn involves no prior motion, it begins directly after the command. A moving turn, however, starts one beat after the command to allow the body to

⁴⁸ Ibid., 5.

⁴⁹ Ibid., 5-9.

overcome inertia and change direction. Standing turns are used to position the group and to teach unison movement, while moving turns are more useful during the precision drill routine. Casavant discusses in much detail the logic of one pivot or two pivot point turns and concludes that one pivot point is more musical and functional. In addition, precision drill turns should be fast to provide a distinct, attractive motion.⁵⁰

The use of drill commands is primarily for training purposes since a marching show dependent upon commands is considerably limited. Except for the signal to begin, the unit performs without aural commands; visual movements by group leaders may indicate important points in the drill and communicate any necessary changes or adjustments. To function in every possible situation, a system of aural and visual commands is beneficial.

Aural drill commands dictate body position, motion, or change of motion. Of profound importance to precision drill, body positions serve to promote uniform posture and discipline. Casavant writes,

The command ATTENTION is *the* command. It is given in order to bring the body and the mind to a position proper for drill purposes. All drill is done while at ATTENTION. Practice or rehearsal in other positions or attitudes would result in very sloppy execution.

The following body position commands are also defined and illustrated in *Precision Drill*: parade rest, at ease, rest, dress right dress, ready front, count

⁵⁰ Ibid., 9-10.

off, present arms, hand salute, fall in, fall out. Since these positions are executed from a stationary placement, the execution follows the command immediately.⁵¹

Commands of motion are quite visually appealing, especially when executed by a unit in a straight line formation. In order for the group to maintain this arrangement, all members must stay in step and match step-size. One count follows the command to allow the individual to physically and mentally prepare for the unison move. “Mark-time march” is a command used to “maintain marching continuity and cadence without moving the unit;” the group marches in place starting on the left foot. To move the unit forward, the command “forward march” is given, also starting on the left foot. Other commands of motion defined in Casavant’s book are detail halt, backward march, half step march, right step march, and left step march. Extra movements added to executed commands add flash to the motion.⁵²

Casavant explains that the theory of changes of motion involves two parts--a period of time and a point in time. The period of time is the amount of time consumed by the turn in a new direction and is dependent upon the tempo of the drill. In contrast, the point in time is set by the rhythm of the first step in the new direction. The three main commands of changes of

⁵¹ Ibid., 13-26.

⁵² Ibid., 27-32.

motion are right flank, left flank, and to-the-rear, each with several variations and modes of execution. *Precision Drill* also contains descriptions of right oblique march, left oblique march, in place march, detail march, freeze four march, rock four march, vamp four march, drag turns, sliding turns, delayed turns, and compound turns. Before adding flash to any of these commands, the basic movements must be thorough and distinct. Casavant states that in many marching units, changes of motion are the most badly executed commands; however, “the lack of precision in the individual cannot be hidden in the mass of the group.”⁵³

Rather than produce stationary picture formations connected by stagger drill, bands using precision drill can execute geometric formations that correspond to musical phrases and transitions. Casavant devised this method with the goal of playing while simultaneously maneuvering. He based it upon small group movements called squad drill, which he describes as “the backbone of the precision drill unit.” Since the majority of music is written in units of four, Casavant based drill movement on what he termed the Theory of Fours: the individual is incorporated into a squad of four band members, and the number four governs all formations, patterns, and movements. A squad of this size is perfect for precision drill because it is small enough to remain

⁵³ Ibid., 33-40.

flexible, yet large enough to allow group movement. Each squad has a squad leader and the squad formation is a line with all members facing the same direction. In order to move, the squad rotates either on a fixed pivot (a pivot person marks time in place as the others turn) or a moving pivot (the pivot person moves as the others turn). *Precision Drill* provides numerous examples and illustrations of squad commands and movements. The use of squad drill and the Theory of Fours made possible the company front formation that Casavant originated and popularized. A high energy crowd-pleaser, the band enters the field in a straight line from which squads break off into other formations.⁵⁴

In order to utilize precision drill, a band director must possess the attributes for developing a highly disciplined and well organized group. Casavant is quick to assert that this method requires a great deal of perspiration as well as inspiration. The drillmaster must have confidence in his knowledge and the constant desire for improvement. In rehearsing the ensemble, he must first require attention, and then demonstrate, clarify, practice, and inspect details. He should always remember, "The unit must

⁵⁴ Ibid., 11, 41-71. Casavant applied the Theory of Fours to his band in every way possible; he always used only 64 members during the exhibition show, a number multiply divisible by four ($4 \times 4 \times 4 = 64$).

listen to hear. The unit must look to see. The drillmaster must THINK in order to say something.”⁵⁵

When developing a precision drill routine, Casavant contends that there are two basic elements of which the director must be constantly aware. Forward motion is a “progressive action that continues to stimulate audience appeal by a definite acceleration.” Therefore, pacing is essential to avoid reaching the climax of a routine too early. Change of pace is “the contrasting or relieving element . . .” which maintains interest without constant acceleration. It is best used with great subtlety to avoid giving the audience mental whiplash and to remain in good taste. The drillmaster should bear these two aspects in mind when choosing music as well as drill design.⁵⁶

The theories and methods employed by Casavant and described in his book on precision drill are “the result of . . . [his] vivid but practical imagination, painstaking care in reducing things to detail, and excellent training of his marching and drill corps.” The above descriptions are but a sketch of the complexity and thoroughness of his work. He published an entire series of books about precision drill, along with a Percussion Series and an Exhibition Marching Series. As tools for band directors, his books are listed as traditional texts in several relatively current publications on marching

⁵⁵ Ibid., 76.

⁵⁶ Ibid., 150, 151.

band. The reference value of the book is well-represented by the note on its last page: "D. C. ad lib."⁵⁷

⁵⁷ Review of Precision Drill, by A. R. Casavant, The Instrumentalist 12 (February 1957): 25; Patzig, 18, 125; William Mellroy, "Precision Drill is Here to Stay," The Instrumentalist 14 (November 1959): 67.

Philosophy

Exploring the philosophy of A. R. Casavant, professional and personal, can provide insight about his outstanding work and his affect on the lives of others. Being a music educator was Casavant's first ambition, but he "got soured on that." He decided that music education contained irrelevant information that confused matters of practical band instruction, so he chose to just be a band director. He describes himself as a musician technically, a band director culturally, and a music educator while at college. As a band director, his main goal was not to develop professional musicians, rather to give students a wonderful musical experience. He considered his program a success if his students listened to and collected music later in life. Dale Clevenger, the aforementioned principal hornist of the Chicago Symphony, recalls that Casavant tried very hard to talk him out of being a professional musician when he was a student at City High: "He figured that if he could talk me out of it, then I wasn't committed enough." In addition, Dale remembers constantly listening to recordings of orchestras in Casavant's bandroom during lunch; in particular, he recalls hearing records of the Chicago Symphony long before he ever thought he would be a part of it.⁵⁸

⁵⁸ Casavant, interviewed by author; Craven, interviewed by author; Clevenger, interviewed by author.

Another goal of Casavant as a band director was to teach students to play and read every piece of music that could be fit into three years of high school. He wanted them to be well-rounded and capable of many things. In order to achieve this, he needed an expansive music library. The former director of the City High Band, Colonel Ira Summers, had a military philosophy of music--it was expendable, to be bought and discarded. Therefore, Casavant set a precedent in starting a music library, which eventually required two full-time librarians. The band always had two folios of music so they could play out of one while the other was being replaced. In order to keep the music reading level high, Casavant never worked for more than two weeks on one piece of music.⁵⁹

Marching band, Casavant's area of expertise, was very important to him. He used it to develop within his group *esprit de corps*, which is "enthusiasm, devotion, and jealous regard for the honor of the unit." An essential for precision drill, *esprit de corps* fosters calmness, pride, work ethic, tradition, and helpfulness. He believed that the marching band, at that time, was the "enigma of both the musical and drill world." According to Jay Craven, "He used the band to develop new ideas. He was trying to prove something and expected the kids to help him. . . . He wasn't exploiting them;

⁵⁹ Casavant, interviewed by author.

they were part of a new era.” Beginning August fifth each year, Casavant taught his new style of marching and brought national acclaim to his band. However, after the last football game, marching season ended, and the group focused whole-heartedly on concert band and chamber music.⁶⁰

The development of precision drill by Casavant was the result of a philosophy which he adopted early on in his career. He explains that when he “arrived on the scene,” directors were wanting the answers but were not asking the questions. Music is a “catechism of answers,” but it should be more like science--a search for the questions in order to define the fundamentals. After researching various marching styles, Casavant determined that the fundamental lacking in drill technique was mathematics. He designed precision drill based on the Theory of Fours, which enabled moving geometric shapes on the field as opposed to stationary pictures. When asked why he was so driven to renovate drill technique, he responds, “I got tired of hearing university band directors put out that malarkey!”⁶¹

On a personal level, Casavant describes himself as “basically a theorist.” “I’ve always been able to visualize well and to imagine,” he explains, “and I like to try different things.” His friend and colleague, Al

⁶⁰ Bales, interviewed by author; Casavant, Precision Drill: 75, 146; Craven, interviewed by author; Casavant, interviewed by author.

⁶¹ Casavant, interviewed by author.

Miller, says that he is a perfectionist, always challenging himself and others. He believes that educators are often educated beyond their educational level, which results in ineffectual instruction. Casavant admits that, while band directing, his main goal was to get out of teaching because he did not make enough money to raise his five kids. Frustrated by mediocrity, Casavant was reaching for even more than he was actually able to accomplish, according to former student, Bill Cross. When asked about his current view of marching bands, Casavant is quick to assert that he no longer views them at all. "I'd like to see the band be something besides a pit band for the guards and rifles. No one is innovative anymore." He enjoys hearing British brass bands, but he feels that modern marching bands have taken a bad turn.⁶²

A. R. Casavant is described by those who have known him best as energetic, innovative, motivating, assertive, honest, sincere, dedicated, and brilliant. They also depict him as stubborn, difficult, argumentative, and opinionated. Perhaps his son, Richard, put it best when he called his father a "character," and that he is. The philosophies and attributes discussed herein provided Casavant with the ability to accomplish an impressive career and affect a great many lives.

⁶² Ibid; Miller, interviewed by author; Cross, interviewed by author.

Influence on the Marching Band, Affect on Individuals

A. R. Casavant's work influenced marching band history, and, most importantly, he affected the lives of his many students and other individuals. Although it would be difficult to ascertain the full extent of his influence, the following text attempts to provide a sampling of his far-reaching affect.

In the foreword of *Precision Drill*, Lieutenant Colonel Creed F. Bates, principal of Chattanooga City High while Casavant was there, writes:

Chattanooga High School is extremely proud of the achievements of our band and drill squad. For years these groups have received much commendation on their accomplishments. Recently, however, with the development of the new precision technique, there has been an outstanding transformation and marvelous improvement. Public approbation of the precise maneuvers and smart appearance of these groups has been most generously expressed in our own community, in cities and towns of this general area of the South, and even on the national scene. In the various contests in which they competed, they were peerless.

In addition to the superiority of their technical performance, these groups also help instill a splendid *esprit de corps* not only in their own membership, but in the school as a whole. The boys and girls of the band and drill squad work sedulously and enthusiastically on all phases of their training.

I salute these groups on their splendid achievement and I salute their director, Mr. A. R. Casavant, the originator of this precision drill, who with his staff, works so diligently, inspiringly, and understandingly with these groups under their tuition.⁶³

⁶³ Casavant, Precision Drill, Foreword.

Jay Craven described City High as a “microcosm of life;” similarly, the affect of Casavant’s work upon this school depicts its larger influence upon the world of marching band.⁶⁴

Morris Bales believes that the work of Casavant was a “stepping stone” that completely changed the style of marching band in the eastern part of the country. Bands were previously entering the field and performing like block parade bands, but to “Cass” “the field was like a long stage and sometimes the players were in blocks, sometimes in arcs or circles, moving in obliques, rear-marching, or just moving as individuals.” As director at Central High School and later at the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga, Bales utilized precision drill in his half-time shows and contest shows.⁶⁵

Dale Shafner was the originator and director of the Soddy-Daisy High School Band during the tenure of “Cass” at City High. He states:

A. R. elevated the standards and the recognition of high school marching bands in a way no other had before or has done since. His marching bands raised the standards for all bands. His were the bands to emulate, to inspire and even strive to compete against.

According to Shafner, Casavant’s influence on the band world has been greatly unrecognized. Shafner used precision drill books and methods at

⁶⁴ Craven, interviewed by author.

⁶⁵ Bales, interviewed by author.

Soddy-Daisy and at Rossville High, and he remembers “Cass” as very helpful to him and other directors.⁶⁶

Many other well-respected and established band directors were trained in precision drill and used it with their marching bands. Frank Hale, director of the Hixson High School Band, owns all of Casavant’s books and has used them extensively with his award-winning band. Another accomplished director and former Executive Director of the Georgia Music Education Association, Boyd McKeown, used Casavant’s drill designs in his shows, in marching band workshops, and as “stimulus” for his creativity. William Hull and Tom Tucker took their Columbia Central High Band to several of Casavant’s summer marching clinics and used much of his drill theory and arrangements. Hull asserts, “There is no doubt that A. R. has a tremendous influence and effect on the precision drill movement and much of what bands are doing now.”⁶⁷

Craven feels that Casavant probably influenced the marching band field more than anyone else in the U. S. He adds that the personal affect of “Cass” on his life is tremendous, and he is very thankful to have taught under him at City High. Also greatly influenced on a personal level, Al Miller

⁶⁶ Dale Shafner, interviewed by author, survey by mail, August 1996.

⁶⁷ Frank Hale, interviewed by author, survey by mail, August 1996; Boyd McKeown, interviewed by author, survey by mail, August 1996; William Hull, interviewed by author, survey by mail, August 1996.

started one of the first marching band festivals in the South and later opened his music store to provide rental instruments for the area, both at the urging of “Cass.” As a former student of Casavant, Bill Cross says that his former teacher encouraged him musically; he was an important part of Cross’ life then, and still is today.⁶⁸

In a recent interview, Dale Clevenger, hornist of the Chicago Symphony and celebrated horn performer, described some of the significant advances by Casavant which modernized marching band. While most bands were using concert band instruments on the marching field, “Cass” change the horn angles of many instruments in his group to allow better dynamic range and power. He amazed audiences with the company front, and then he surprised them further by performing it backwards and as a pinwheel. By the 1960s the company front was a standard move in marching band shows. Clevenger asserts that he has yet to see a high school band do anything markedly different in terms of geometric designs. Casavant “absolutely, without question, affected marching band history.”⁶⁹

⁶⁸ Craven, interviewed by author.

⁶⁹ Clevenger, interviewed by author.

University of Tennessee
217 East James
Chattanooga, TN 37424

Appendix:

Page 11, 1998

Text of the letter of appreciation
sent to the
University of Tennessee

- I. Form Letter of Survey
- II. Survey
- III. Results of Survey

Page 12, 1998

Text of the letter of appreciation
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University of Tennessee

Page 13

University of Tennessee
217 East James
Chattanooga, TN 37424

Sherry Hoff
327 California Avenue
Chattanooga, TN 37415

July 24, 1996

«Title» «FirstName» «LastName»
«Address1»
«City», «State» «PostalCode»

Dear «Title» «LastName»:

As a senior at the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga, I am researching the impact of a local man's work in Marching Band History. Under the direction of Dr. William Lee, my research will take the form of an Honors Project paper entitled "Local Contribution, National Prominence: A.R. Casavant's Impact in Marching Band History." An important aspect of my paper involves Casavant's status within the music education community.

As a prominent music educator, your input on this subject would benefit my work tremendously. Please take a few minutes to answer the enclosed, short questionnaire and return it by August 18, 1996, in the stamped, addressed envelope provided.

«Title» «LastName», your valuable time is greatly appreciated. Thank you for your contribution to my research and for your progression of music education.

Sincerely,

Sherry W. Hoff
Music Education Major
UTC
(423) 877-7395

What was your view/philosophy of marching band within music education from 1950 to 1980? Has your view changed, and if so, how?

Compared to marching band status prior to 1950, what direction do you feel its development has taken?

- great improvement
- some improvement
- no improvement
- some decline
- great decline
- uncertain

Comments:

What year did you begin your career as a music educator? _____

Do you know any other persons who might be acquainted with Casavant's work?

Are you familiar with the achievements of A.R. Casavant in the area of marching band?

 6 yes
_____ no
_____ other

Comments:

Frank Hale: "I have read all his books and was trained in his style--'Precision Drill.'"

Morris Bales: "'Cass' applied many innovative moves and steps to the marching band. I can remember when bands marched on a football field like a block parade band. 'Cass' change all that. To him the field was like a big stage and sometimes the players were in blocks, sometimes in arcs or circles, moving in obliques, rear marching, or just moving as individuals."

Dale Shafner: "A. R. elevated the standards and the recognition of high school marching bands in a way no other had done before or has done since. His marching bands raised the standards for all bands. His were the bands to emulate, to inspire, and even strive to compete against."

Boyd McKeown: "I have read his books, seen his marching band once or twice, heard the concert band one time. (I remember a fine rendition of 'Pines of the Appian Way' in Nashville at the Middle Tenn. Band and Orch. Contest one time when he brought the band there instead of East Tenn. for some reason.)"

Anonymous: "Mr. Casavant is known nationally for his outstanding contributions to the marching band. He created, honed, and refined the techniques utilized by countless high school marching bands. His influence is far-reaching and of extreme importance to every facet of the marching band from the mid-50's."

William Hull: "I was the concert band director at Columbia Central during the mid-60's and our band attended several summer marching clinics at MTSU. Cas was the clinician during those summers. We got to work very closely with the man, his drills and his music."

Have you ever utilized the work of A.R.Casavant in any way?

_____ no
 6 yes (please describe)

Frank Hale: "Step-2, Block drills and turns and wraps. Preciseness of calculation of drill movements."

Morris Bales: "In high school half-time shows and contest shows at Central High. Also in half-time shows at UTC."

Dale Shafner: "I used his books and methods. One time I tried to use several of his drills in a show I was doing and found that it was impossible to do so. I called him on the phone and in checking he found the misprints and after correcting verbally the misprint, I had a drill that incorporated perfectly with the show I wanted to use."

Boyd McKeown: "I used his 'step-two' designs in my own drill writing and found them and other designs in his books to be very good stimuli for my own creativity. Also, I developed and presented a four-day marching workshop for band directors in which I utilized his works, those of two or three other experts in the field, and some ideas of my own."

Anonymous: "As a high school band director. As a staff member assisting high school band directors."

William Hull: "Tom Tucker was the marching band director in Columbia at that time and used a lot of the Casavant approach to drill and much of his arrangements for marching bands."

What was your view/philosophy of marching band within music education from 1950 to 1980? Has your view changed, and if so, how?

Frank Hale: "1950-1970: precision and regimentation. Mid-70's-present: entertainment."

Morris Bales: "(a) As I stated before the marching band inspires kids to get in the instrumental program in the schools. (b) The marching band inspires kids to practice for perfection. (c) Gives kids a sense of 'belonging' to a musical family. (d) Gives many kids a real reason for staying in school. (e) Lots of kids get started in a marching band then later branch out into other forms of music. (f) A good marching band program can even introduce kids to the themes of great music. I guess you could say that I feel that the marching band has been a positive element within music education. I don't agree however with the practice of one show per year."

Dale Shafner: "I previously stated my basic philosophy. There have been great improvements made. The advent of the marching competitions has greatly improved the bands. However, in recent years the advent of so many superfluous contests has given some directors who are 'trophy hunters' the opportunity to aggrandize themselves to the extent that many bands have been 'burned out' and that many repetitions of the same show week after week has diminished the educational value and purpose of the marching band. I also believe that directors who try to emulate the 'Corps' within music and drills that are too difficult for their bands has been detrimental. I see this so often when judging the competitions. Corps style has for the most part diminished the entertainment factor."

Boyd McKeown: "My view has not changed, but high school marching bands have. Much of my philosophy is implied in the paragraph on importance/contribution at the beginning of this questionnaire. Marching band is effective and necessary as motivation. I have often said that if I had taught chorus or orchestra I would have had to invent something to replace it for building esprit de corps. There is limited educational benefit to be derived, but it is valuable in some areas. A group of us once had to determine the amount of school time that could be beneficially spent on marching band. The figure we agreed upon 6 weeks from the school year of 36 weeks. In today's one-competition-for-all-occasions method of operation, the sight reading value mentioned in a previous paragraph no longer exists. In many cases the entertainment quotient has dropped to zero as that portion of the football crowd who are not band parents are either bored or at the concession stand. (I realize those statements qualify me as a curmudgeon.)"

Anonymous: "Viewed primarily as the 'vehicle' for 'selling' the music program to the general public. It's the group within the school program that most people experience; i.e. parades, festivals, football games, etc. In my opinion, the modern-day marching band has developed as an art form of high quality. Drum and bugle corps have also contributed greatly to the popularity of the marching band."

William Hull: "My first experience with marching bands, roughly, from 1958 to 1963, was a balanced emphasis on marching and concert, leaning a bit toward concert. Marching contests in Tenn. started about 1962 and very little change was noted until the numbers of marching contest (not festivals) increased. My view hasn't changed but I have seen the gradual swing from balanced programs to a heavy emphasis on marching band and resulting decline in many concert programs. Many young directors would much rather win 'Contest of Champions' than to have a grade 6 concert band."

Compared to marching band status prior to 1950, what direction do you feel its development has taken?

- 5 great improvement
- some improvement
- no improvement
- 1 some decline
- great decline
- uncertain

Comments:

Frank Hale: Marked "great improvement." Commented: "Mostly in the area of entertainment. Sound projection has also improved. Since mid-70s, Precision, because of Casavant."

Morris Bales: Marked "great improvement." Commented: "The rise and development of Drum Corps has been remarkable and bands have gotten many new ideas from them. BUT I sort of resent the Marching Band becoming a Drum Corps with band instruments. I hate to see it go too far in that direction."

Dale Shafner: (see above)

Boyd McKeown: Marked "some decline." Commented: "There is no doubt that today's fine marching bands, those which excel in both concert and marching, are better than we used to put on the field. The playing in those groups is better as well as the marching, and many of them play concert music throughout the fall, considering marching to be extra-curricular. As mentioned above, though, they have lost the audience. Some community support is obtained from winning contests throughout the fall, but in general the home audience is more important than a press than a press box filled with judges. There some other considerations. What are students finding to be important when a case full of marching trophies is displayed, but the band goes to one `concert evaluation per year? What is happening to oboe, bassoon, flute, even clarinet players in those bands which spend all rehearsals marching that one show? Could money spent on all the expensive marching percussion be better spent on quality basic instruments for concert band? What kind of music consumers are we developing with our teaching? (I know of a situation in which a band director played a recording of a drum corps' version of a classic work rather than the original orchestral version.) The current situation lends itself to overemphasis if a band director's interest lies mainly in marching and winning and he/she fails to exercise professional responsibility."

Anonymous: Marked and underlined "great improvement." Commented: "Both musically and in marching abilities."

William Hull: Marked "great improvement." Commented: "There is no way to compare what bands (marching) were doing in the 50s and what they are doing now. There is also no doubt that A. R. has a tremendous influence and affect on the precision drill movement and much of what bans are attempting now."

What year did you begin your career as a music educator? _____

Frank Hale: "1969"

Morris Bales: "1940"

Dale Shafner: "1949"

Boyd McKeown: "1949"

Anonymous: "1960"

William Hull: "1958"

Do you know any other persons who might be acquainted with Casavant's work?

Frank Hale: "Bill Henson, Morris Bales, Jewell Tilson, Jay Craven, Linda Pennebaker, Bill Cross, Andy Hagan."

Morris Bales: "Al Miller with the Al Miller Music Store."

Dale Shafner: "Bill Henson--Retired Chattanooga, former director, Brainerd High. Jay Craven--presently Chattanooga Symphony and former City High Band Member. Jim Souders--presently band director, Lakeview, Fort-Oglethorpe, GA High School."

Boyd McKeown: (Gave names over the phone.)

Anonymous: (Gave names over the phone.)

William Hull: "Kenn Hull. . . Tom Tucker."

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