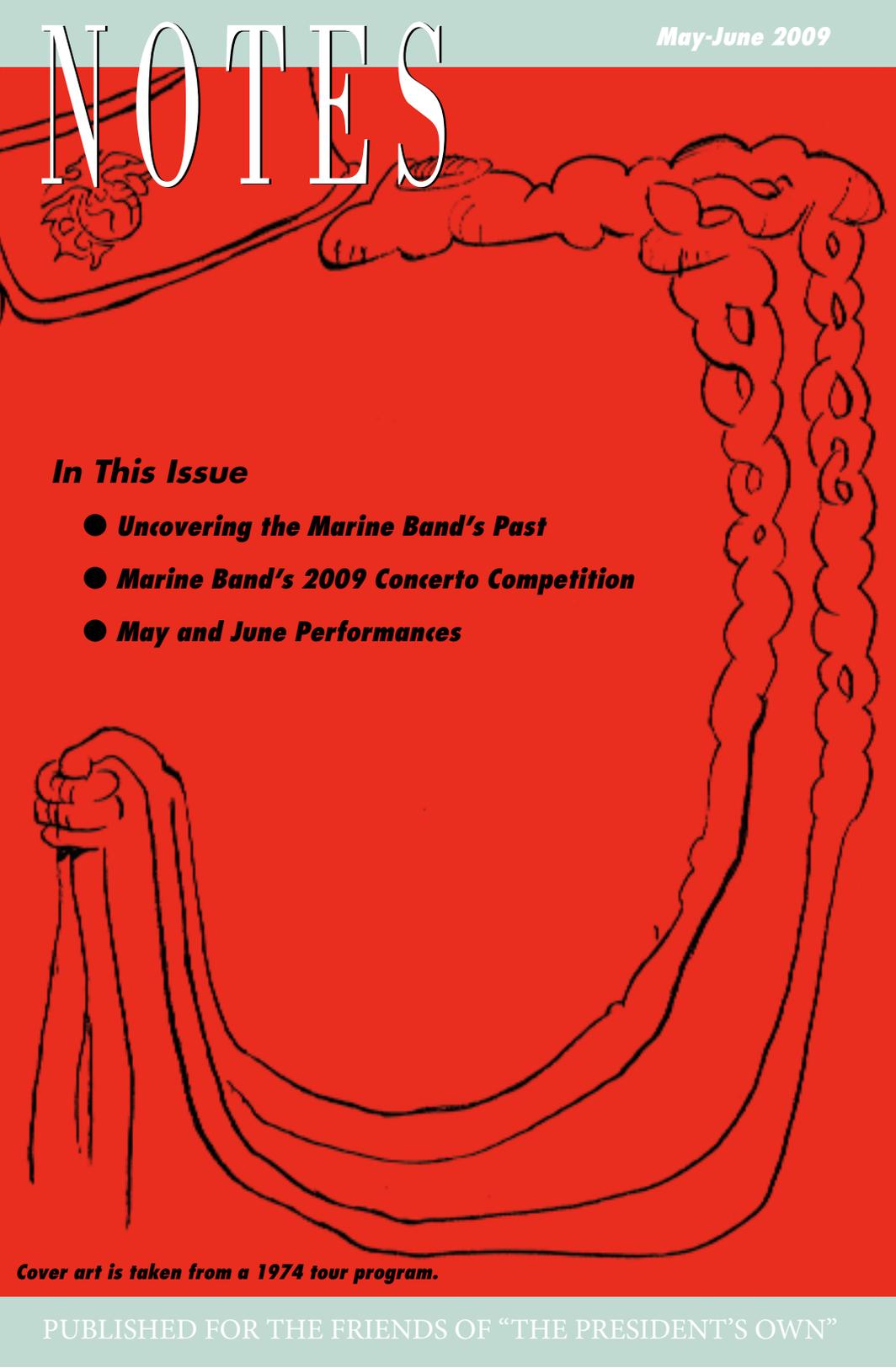


NOTES



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- *Marine Band's 2009 Concerto Competition*
- *May and June Performances*

Cover art is taken from a 1974 tour program.

History's Mysteries

When did the Marine Band make its first recording? What changes did John Philip Sousa implement as Director of the Marine Band? What music was played at the dedication of the Jefferson Memorial in 1943? What kind of uniforms did the Marine Band wear during the Civil War? This is just a small sampling of the types of questions presented by researchers, band directors, and the media from around the world to the Marine Band's newly appointed Historian Master Gunnery Sgt. Michael Ressler.

Master Gunnery Sgt. Ressler has always had a fervent interest in the Marine Band's history but only recently received the opportunity to make it his primary focus. He enlisted in the Marine Corps in 1974 and currently is the longest-serving active member of the band. His career spans eight different presidential administrations, most of which was spent in the Marine Band library.

Master Gunnery Sgt. Ressler's passion for music began at age 10 when he started playing trombone. His interest intensified in high school when he began to study the euphonium.

Upon graduation from Garden Spot High School in New Holland, Penn., Master Gunnery Sgt. Ressler attended West Chester University of Pennsylvania to study music education, but spent a considerable amount of time in the practice room working on his playing. At age 22, Master Gunnery Sgt. Ressler auditioned for the Marine Band euphonium section. After a second place finish, he was offered and accepted a position in the library. He had already obtained a basic knowledge of library procedures from working with the reputable New Holland Band, his local community band. After serving several months in the library, Marine Band Director Lieutenant Col. Jack Kline moved

Master Gunnery Sgt. Ressler into the euphonium section. This time he placed first. During his four years in the section, he had many memorable experiences ranging from the band's tour during the country's bicentennial year to participating in President Jimmy Carter's inauguration.

Although Master Gunnery Sgt. Ressler loved making music in "The President's Own," he knew it was not his destiny. "I made this switch [back to the library] because I felt that I could make a bigger contribution to the band working in administration than I could as a player."

Master Gunnery Sgt. Ressler returned to the library in 1978. His role in preserving and maintaining Marine Band history began to take shape in 1982 when the Marine Band accepted the John Philip Sousa collection, originally maintained by the Marine Corps Museum, located at the Washington Navy Yard at that time. This extensive collection includes sheet music, Sousa's book collection, photographs, personal business papers, clothing, batons, artwork, medals, trophies, tour trunks, and press clippings.

"When you are the recipient of a collection of such great significance as the Sousa collection, you have a responsibility to maintain the materials and make them available to others for research," noted Master Gunnery Sgt. Ressler.

Upon receipt of the collection Master Gunnery Sgt. Ressler, then one of six librarians, began devoting a portion of his time to this effort. Until that point, the band only practiced basic record-keeping by maintaining files of photographs, log books and programs.

As the library staff expanded in the 1990s, more time became available to work with and seek out the band's material

HISTORY *continued on page 2*



"One of my first projects as historian was researching the band's participation in presidential inaugurations," Master Gunnery Sgt. Ressler said. "Our biggest discovery was finding the band in a photograph of Abraham Lincoln's 1861 inaugural. We had seen the image before, but had been unable to locate the band." After further research, Gunnery Sgt. Kira Wharton, assistant chief in the library, discovered a March 5, 1861, article in the New York Times that described the exact location of the band. A closer look at the image confirmed the band's position on the platform. To see how "The President's Own" honored Abraham Lincoln during the bicentennial of his birth, please visit www.marineband.usmc.mil/learning_tools/our_history/lincoln.html.

White House Highlights

Recent appearances by “The President’s Own” at the White House include:

- Inaugural Reception
- Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act of 2009 Bill-Signing Ceremony
- Children’s Health Insurance Reauthorization Act Bill-Signing Ceremony
- “Sweet Honey in the Rock” Event
- Governors’ Dinner
- U.S. Conference of Mayors Reception
- Fiscal Summit Reception
- WETA’s “In Performance at the White House” Reception



need for a full-time historian.

“Although our *Living History* concert series showcased much of the Marine Band’s past, it also revealed that there is quite a bit we still don’t know, especially regarding the first century of our existence,” Marine Band Director Colonel Michael J. Colburn said. “I can’t think of anyone more qualified than Master Gunnery Sgt. Mike Ressler to lead the effort to uncover our past, and I know that his indefatigable intellectual curiosity and boundless enthusiasm for historical research will yield fantastic results.”

HISTORY continued from page 1

history. Demand for historical information also increased from both external parties and members of the band who required information for programming. In 2008, research for the band’s special Living History season unearthed many new findings about the band, and clearly demonstrated the

HISTORY continued on page 3

Flutist Thrills Concerto Competition Judges and Places First

Flutist Jennifer Zhou of Columbus, Ohio, won the Marine Band’s second annual Concerto Competition for High School Musicians with her performance of Theobald Boehm’s Grand Polonaise in D, Opus 16. The competition finals took place Feb. 21, 2009, in the John Philip Sousa Band Hall at the Marine Barracks Annex in southeast Washington, D.C.

After winning, Zhou received a check for \$2,500 presented by Lieutenant Gen. G. R. (Ron) Christmas, USMC (Ret.), president and CEO of the Marine Corps Heritage Foundation. Following the recital, Zhou said, “I was shocked, but it felt good to know I had proven to the judges that I can perform exceptionally well on my instrument.”

Zhou applied for the Marine Band’s inaugural Concerto Competition in 2008 and was selected as one of the seven finalists. Although she did not win last year, she was once more chosen as a finalist out of a pool of more than 140 applicants this year.

“I felt extremely happy and satisfied,” she said after finding out she was a finalist. “I had doubts about the quality of my recording, so I was happy that I got in.” Soon after, Zhou began a rigorous rehearsal schedule including mock recitals in front of

her family almost every night. The day before she left for the competition in Washington, she played the piece in front of her high school band. “There’s a saying that if you can get by playing in front of your family and friends, it’ll be much easier to play in front of total strangers,” she said.

As winner of the competition, Zhou returned to Washington, D.C., in April to perform her solo with the Marine Band during the Young People’s Concert titled “The Fantastic, Elastic, Gymnastic Concert Band” on April 26, 2009, at the Rachel M. Schlesinger Concert Hall and Arts Center in Alexandria, Va.

During the concert, musicians highlighted the musical ranges of each instrument, and Zhou was the featured musician for the flute demonstration. About her performance with the band, Zhou said, “It was such an honor to perform with one of the greatest bands in the world. I actually

felt a bit intimidated because I wanted to perform well—the best I had ever done.”

Information and applications for the 2010 Marine Band Concerto Competition are available at www.marineband.usmc.mil/whats_new/concertocompetition.htm. The deadline for applications is Nov. 14, 2009.



Jennifer Zhou was accompanied by pianist Staff Sgt. Russell Wilson.

CONCERT HIGHLIGHTS

The Art of Melody

Saturday, May 2 at 2 p.m.

Marine Chamber Orchestra

Coolidge Auditorium,

Library of Congress

Washington, D.C.

Captain Michelle A. Rakers, conducting

*Music by Aaron Copland, Samuel Barber,
and Franz Schubert*

Summer Blast-Off!

Sunday, May 24 at 8 p.m.

Marine Band

Filene Center,

Wolf Trap National Park

for the Performing Arts

Vienna, Va.

Colonel Michael J. Colburn,

conducting



Soloist Spectacular!

Sunday, May 10 at 2 p.m.

Marine Band

Rachel M. Schlesinger Concert Hall

and Arts Center,

Northern Virginia Community College

Alexandria, Va.

Colonel Michael J. Colburn,

conducting

For complete
concert information,
please
announcements
at
www.marineband.org
Program
to

String Serenades

Sunday, May 17 at 2 p.m.

Marine Chamber Ensembles

John Philip Sousa Band Hall

Marine Barracks Annex

Washington, D.C.

Tribute to Stan Kenton

Sunday, May 31 at 2 p.m.

Marine Jazz Orchestra

Rachel M. Schlesinger Concert Hall

and Arts Center,

Northern Virginia Community College

Alexandria, Va.

Jim McFalls, guest conducting

Summer Fare

Marine Band

Wednesday, June 3 at 8 p.m.

U.S. Capitol, West Terrace

Thursday, June 4 at 8 p.m.

Sylvan Theater

Washington, D.C.

Colonel Michael J. Colburn,

conducting

HISTORY *continued from page 2*

In September 2008, Ressler made a permanent move to his position as historian to completely dedicate himself to researching, writing, maintaining collections and organizing archives. Managing the archives will prove to be one of Master Gunnery Sgt. Ressler's largest endeavors.

The official archive is constantly expanding. The oldest artifacts are march books used by the band during the Civil War. The recording archive dates back to 1889 and includes wax cylinders, "Dream Hour" radio broadcasts, and the educational discography. The "jewel" of the archive, however, is the Director's log book, a tradition that dates back to 19th Director William H. Santelmann in 1916.

Though now a computerized venture maintained primarily by librarians and operations personnel, this daily diary of performances and ceremonial commitments is complete with weather and anecdotal accounts, as well as program, uniform, personnel, and ensemble information. The Marine Band log from Dec. 7, 1941, has a detailed account of when Japan began its attack on Pearl Harbor. The Marine Chamber Orchestra was at the White House when Assistant White House Usher Wilson Searles informed then Leader William F. Santelmann of the attack. Similar personal accounts were registered by Master Gunnery Sgt. Ressler on Sept. 11, 2001, and he continued recording the band's role in the days that followed.

"These log books have proven especially essential when working with the media," Public Affairs Chief Gunnery Sgt. Kristin Mergen said. "For the 2009 inauguration we received numerous calls from media claiming that they had been directed to contact

Evening Parades

Marine Barracks Washington's Evening Parades will resume at 8:45 p.m., Fridays, May 8 to Aug. 28. The popular weekly summer tradition features "The President's Own," "The Commandant's Own" United States Marine Drum and Bugle Corps, the Marine Corps Silent Drill Platoon, and Marine Barracks' mascot, English bulldog Lance Cpl. Chesty XIII.

Reservations are recommended.

Call (202) 433-6060 or visit www.mbw.usmc.millparades.



Summer Fare

Marine Band

Wednesday, June 17 at 8 p.m.

U.S. Capitol, West Terrace

Thursday, June 18 at 8 p.m.

Sylvan Theater, Washington, D.C.
Colonel Michael J. Colburn, conducting

Complete program, information and event weather announcements, please visit webband.usmc.mil. Plans are subject to change.

Summer Fare

Marine Jazz Combo

Wednesday, June 10 at 8 p.m.

U.S. Capitol, West Terrace

Thursday, June 11 at 8 p.m.

Sylvan Theater Washington, D.C.

Summer Orchestra Series

Marine Chamber Orchestra

Saturday, June 20 at 7:30 p.m.

Rachel M. Schlesinger Concert Hall and Arts Center, Northern Virginia Community College Alexandria, Va.

Captain Michelle A. Rakers, conducting

Summer Fare

Marine Band

Wednesday, June 24 at 8 p.m.

U.S. Capitol, West Terrace

Thursday, June 25 at 8 p.m.

Sylvan Theater Washington, D.C.

Major Jason K. Fettig, conducting



Marine Band because we had the best records. We were able to assist many of our contacts with shaping their stories by providing facts about the musical program, anecdotal information and photos from these historical events.”

Master Gunnery Sgt. Ressler hopes to continue locating and interpreting photographs that exist in the collection, which contains more than 2,000 prints. In this collection is an image of the band in front of the Commandant's home at Marine Barracks Washington that is believed to be taken by famed Civil War photographer Matthew Brady in 1864. The collection also includes soloist photography from the 1880s, and countless images from tours, concerts, dedications and presidential events. In 2004, the Marine Band Public Affairs Office began utilizing digital photography which has exponentially increased the archive.

Over the past year Master Gunnery Sgt. Ressler's relationship with the National Museum of the Marine Corps in Quantico, Va., has continued to grow. He has been deeply involved with the production of the Marine Band Exhibit, slated to open in spring 2010. It will include a life-sized Drum Major figure, artifacts, historic instruments from the Military Music Collection and an interactive display of the Marine Band performing Sousa marches.

“I have had a wonderful career as both a playing member of the band and as a member of the administrative staff,” Master Gunnery Sgt. Ressler said. “In my current role as historian, I look forward to discovering new things about the Marine Band's past.” Research may be conducted by appointment only. Please contact Master Gunnery Sgt. Ressler at david.ressler@usmc.mil.

STAFF LINES

SSgt Elisabeth Plunk**Flutist****Birthday:** April 29, 1979**Hometown:** Moline, Ill.**Family status:** Married**Child:** Virginia Anne (Ginny), 7 months**Pets:** Basie, lovable bulldog, and Peanut, mean kitty**Education:** BM from the Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music in Ohio, MM from Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh**Joined the band:** June 2004**Self-portrait:** Fun-loving, but brutally honest**Favorite saying or motto:** You gotta be in it to win it.**Greatest accomplishment:** Being part of "The President's Own"**Pet peeves:** Loud neighbors and knuckle cracking**Walter Mitty fantasy:** Being a Supreme Court Justice for a day**Most memorable moment in band:** Coming out of the Capitol to play for President Obama's Inauguration and seeing nearly two million people on the National Mall.**Inspiration:** Salmon swimming upstream**Favorite movie:** *Juno***Who would play you in a movie:** Ginnifer Goodwin**Best-kept secret:** I really wanted to play the oboe, but my mom said the flute was prettier.**Favorite foods:** Goldfish crackers and anything from Ambar Indian in Cincinnati**Hobbies:** Reading, anything crafty**Bad habits:** Pointless internet surfing, procrastination**Three things always found in your refrigerator:** Heinz ketchup (thanks for my Carnegie Mellon scholarship!), Coke Zero, and an unopened bag of baby carrots**Most influential teacher:** Jeanne Baxtresser, former principal flute of the New York Philharmonic**Professional experience before the band:** Guest principal, São Paulo State Symphony Orchestra (OSESP) in Brazil, and Youth Orchestra of the Americas based in Arlington, Va.**Luxury defined:** Having someone to do all the laundry**Books at bedside:** *Twilight* by Stephanie Meyers, *Baby 411* by Dr. Ari Brown**Favorite piece of music:** *Daphnis and Chloe* Suite No. 2 by Maurice Ravel**Place you'd most like to be stranded:** Paris**Last words:** See you on the other side.**In Memoriam**

Master Sgt. Oliver "Ollie" Zinsmeister, USMC (Ret.), formerly the oldest retired member of "The President's Own," passed away on Nov. 2, 2008, at the age of 97.

Master Sgt. Zinsmeister was from Rochester, N.Y., and studied at the Eastman School of Music at the University of Rochester. He was one of the first percussion students when he began his studies in 1933 and roomed with classmate Frederick Fennell. In 1935, Fennell encouraged him to audition for the Marine Band. Master Sgt. Zinsmeister won the audition and served 20 years.

He was frequently featured as a xylophone or marimba soloist in Washington, on numerous national radio broadcasts, and on tour. One of his fondest memories was performing for President Franklin Roosevelt and Prime Minister Winston Churchill at the White House.

"Ollie was a true gentleman who always had time to speak with band members about the organization he loved," said Marine Band Historian Master Gunnery Sgt. Michael Ressler. "He was a valuable link to our past and a good friend who will be greatly missed."

New Member**Violist Staff Sergeant Sarah Hart**

of St. Louis earned a bachelor's degree in biology with minors in music and chemistry from Truman State University in Kirksville, Mo. In

2008, Staff Sgt. Hart earned a master's degree in viola performance from Indiana University in Bloomington. Prior to joining "The President's Own," Staff Sgt. Hart performed at the Pacific Music Festival in Sapporo, Japan, and as a member of the Columbus Indiana Philharmonic and the Terre Haute Symphony Orchestra in Indiana.

**Promotions**

To Master Sergeant: Percussionist David Murray of Shreveport, La.

To Gunnery Sergeant: Assistant Chief Librarian Kira Wharton of Grand Ledge, Mich.

Retirement

English horn/oboist Master Sergeant Mark Christianson of Winthrop, Mass., retired in February after 21 years with "The President's Own."



“The President’s Own”
Public Affairs Office
Marine Barracks
8th and I Streets, SE
Washington DC 20390-5000

PRESORTED
First Class Mail
U.S. Postage
PAID

Featured Downloads

May

March of the Month
President Lincoln’s Inaugural March
(The Union March) (1861)
Francis Scala*/ed. Patterson*

Featured Soloist

“We are Coming, Father Abraham,
300,000 More” (1862)
Stephen Foster/trans. Bulla*
GySgt Kevin Bennear, soloist

June

March of the Month
Funeral March from
Don Sébastian (1843)
Gaetano Donizetti/ed. Patterson*

New Music Corner

A New Birth of Freedom (2009)
Randol Alan Bass
Dr. Allen Guelzo, narrator
* Member, U.S. Marine Band

For more information, visit www.marineband.usmc.mil