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The LOUISBURG BRASS BANDS

William A. O'Shea





1. Cover: The Louisburg Citizens' Band, 1903 - 1907

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Dedication

Louisburg Brass Bands is dedicated to all the members of the three Louisburg bands. Talking to people about the Bands, reading about the Bands, and thinking about the enjoyment they gave to the community has given me many pleasant moments.

I have chosen the old-fashioned spelling of *Louisburg* because that's how the Town spelled its name when the Bands were active. That's how the bandmembers would have recognized it.

In 1901 the Town was incorporated as *The Town of Louisburg*. The Post Office converted to the present *Louisbourg* spelling on May 2, 1951. The Council took a similar step that same year. Unfortunately, the Town Hall fire of 1982, and the resulting destruction of the Minute Book for that period, means that the record of the Council's decision is lost. Still, the spelling was not actually altered officially, until E. A. Manson, MLA for Cape Breton West, introduced a Bill in the House of Assembly in the mid 1960's. Accordingly, on April 6, 1966, "An Act to Change the Name of the Town of Louisburg," changed the name to *The Town of Louisbourg*.



2. The Sydney and Louisburg Railway Station where many of the Bands' activities took place.

INTRODUCTION

The three Louisburg brass bands, organized between 1903 and 1935, were local expressions of a Citizens' Band Movement that developed in Europe and North America during the last half of the 19th century. Brass bands were composed of varieties of brass instruments with a small percussion section. They tended to be organizations of volunteer enthusiasts as opposed to professional bandsmen. This did not diminish the quality of the music of brass bands, but it did present special challenges in recruiting, continuity of membership, training and financial support.

The Brass Band Movement

A number of factors influenced the development of Citizens' Brass Bands. In Europe there was a solid tradition of military bands, combining brass and woodwinds, which provided a general familiarity with band culture. In addition, by the middle of the 19th century, there was a range of brass instruments readily available on the market. Among these was an ancestor of the cornet, a cornerstone of the brass band. There was also a newly-developed family of brass instruments invented, by Adolphe Sax, all of which used similar fingering. This similarity in fingering eased instruction, and permitted more flexibility in filling gaps in a band than had earlier, more specialized, instruments.

Of equal importance, was the active encouragement by employers and municipalities coupled with increased leisure time. These combined to provide a valuable impetus for miners and factory workers to become involved in local bands. The Salvation Army was another successful sponsor of band music, as were Temperance Societies, missions and various social and sporting events.²

In England, the first brass bands were developed before the 1840's. Access to printed music in band journals, and national contests, promoted the popularity and development of bands in Scotland, Wales and Southern England by the 1880's.³ In the United States, the Boston Brass Band and Dodsworth's Band in New York were organized by 1835. Brass bands were used as Regimental Bands during the American Civil War.⁴

Nova Scotia

In Nova Scotia there is a tradition, not yet fully studied, of public band entertainments provided by the various garrisons stationed here during the 18th and 19th centuries. The military bands helped to develop a local appreciation for band music and provided a source of professional instructors to the community. By the 1870's, the bandmaster sergeants in the British Army were graduates of the Royal School of Music, established in 1857, and were replacing civilian bandmasters.⁵ Still to be studied, as well, is the influence of British bandsmen who came to Nova Scotia to work in the collieries. Finally, we know very little about the impact of the Salvation Army bands in creating an appreciation for brass bands and providing instructional opportunities for future community bandsmen.

Brass bands were established quite early in Nova Scotia. The Stellarton Silver Band was founded before 1850 and survived to World War 1, when it became the Regimental Band of the 85th Overseas Battalion.⁶ There was also a brass band formed in Yarmouth in 1849.⁷

Cape Breton

In Cape Breton, there are newspaper records of a band in Sydney and Sydney Mines as early as 1845.⁸ Reverend A. A. Johnston writes, as well, of a Sydney Harbour excursion and a St. Patrick's Day parade in 1855 in which bands participated.⁹ These bands are only mentioned in passing, and it is impossible to determine whether they were true brass bands or a mix of brass and woodwinds. Still, it is obvious that an interest in band music was developing in the Cape Breton Community from an early date.

The first brass band for which we have direct evidence was organized in Sydney Mines in 1862 by Robert Wilson, the manager of the Low Point mine. Wilson later formed a band in Victoria Mines and, by 1870, had organized one in Sydney. The instruments for this band cost \$1700.00 towards which F. N. Gisborne, the promoter of the New Glasgow to Sydney Railway, contributed \$1000.00. The Sydney Brass Band lasted into the early 1880's. It was replaced by the Sydney Cornet Band which was formed in 1884.¹⁰ The short-lived St. Cecilia Band, established in Sydney in 1901, began life with mainly brass instruments, but was aspiring to a mix of brass and woodwinds.¹¹

The desire to move to a greater range of instruments was not surprising. In the United States, under the influence of bandleaders such as John Philip Sousa, the interest in all-brass bands had given way to military bands by the end of the 19th century.¹² Concerts given in Sydney by bands from the French naval ships, that visited the harbour regularly, or bands such as the Black Watch Band, which played in North Sydney in 1904, demonstrated the flexibility that could be had with a wider range of instruments.¹³ Some local bands managed, every now and then, to add one or more clarinet players. But not every community had bandsmen or band instructors with the interests or the range of skills needed to manage such a band, with the result that the all-brass bands continued well into the 20th century.



3. The reorganized St. Joseph's Band, Glace Bay. John T. Ryan is seated fourth from the left in the second row.

Outside of Sydney brass bands were organized in all major centres of the newly industrialized region. In 1890, the St. Joseph's Band was established in Glace Bay by Dan Hardy of Caledonia. Hardy was killed in a mine accident, in 1893, and the band ceased operation for a time. In 1903 it was reorganized by John T. Ryan who was an instructor for the first Louisburg band.¹⁴ Glace Bay was also attempting to organize a Citizens' Band in 1902. The Sydney Record correspondent pointed out that this would make the fourth band in Glace Bay, though the others were connected with some fraternal order or society.¹⁵ One of the early bands at Dominion #4 played at the opening of the Alexandra Rink in Glace Bay in 1903.¹⁶ There was also a band in Port Morien.¹⁷ A Catholic Mutual Benefit Association (CMBA) Band was organized in Sydney Mines in 1901.¹⁸ In North Sydney a Citizens' Band had been established by 1897, and a League of the Cross Band formed there several years later.¹⁹ The LOC Band was composed of members of the North Sydney Band who left that organization as a result of a community dispute centering on the North Sydney school.²⁰ Further afield, there was a brass band in Baddeck which served, for a time, as the Regimental Band of the 94th Victoria Regiment militia. This function was later passed on to one of the Glace Bay bands.²¹

Bands came and went for a variety of reasons. The first St. Joseph's Band dissolved on the death of its organizer, Dan Hardy. The Sydney Cornet Band disbanded in 1902, ". . . owing to the lack of interest shown both by the public and individual band members."²² And the Independent Ten Band, composed of some former members of the Cornet Band, transformed itself by a name change into the Citizens' Band of Sydney.²³

The various Cape Breton brass bands provided a public service for their communities and were a creative outlet for individual bandsmen. J.G. MacKinnon notes that the Sydney Brass Band took part in the laying of the cornerstone of the Courthouse. It also marched in the Blue Ribbon Temperance Procession, on October 24, 1877, which attracted 2000 participants.²⁴ The Cornet Band gave free concerts from the bandstand on the Esplanade,²⁵ and played at Sydney winter carnivals and Labour Day concerts.²⁶ One of the memorable events for the Cornet Band took place in Louisburg in 1895, when the Society of Colonial Wars unveiled a monument commemorating the French and English combatants in the 1745 siege of the fortress town.²⁷

In addition to the specific contributions made to public culture at a time before radio, movies or television, the bands could even bridge the gap established by religious differences. Father John Edwards, writing in 1963 about the North Sydney bands at the turn of the century, presented a positive, though possibly time-mellowed recollection. He noted that,

*"During the years of that time, in all the towns of Cape Breton, the Town Band was quite an institution in the area - an important item in the social life of the town. In all places it was a town band - not belonging to any group - Catholics and Protestants alike were members; all that was needed was some ability to play an instrument and a willingness to take part."*²⁸

Father Edwards' remembrances capture an essential value of Cape Breton community bands. Yet a letter written by local newspaperman S. P. Challoner, in 1904 at the height of community brass band popularity, reflects the practical problems facing all bands. Raising money to purchase uniforms and new instruments was a constant challenge for band organizations, as was convincing local businessmen and municipal officials that a band was a community asset. I am certain that many frustrated volunteer bandsmen, in towns all over the industrial area, nodded in agreement with Challoner, who wrote:

" A good band is one of the very first assets any community can have. A well-trained musical organization of this character giving free open air concerts once or twice a week during the summer months is one of the most attractive drawing cards a city can offer to outside people. And as these entertainments increase in popularity as they always steadily do, the businessman reaps a direct benefit through actual purchases made and an indirect return through the additional money that gets into circulation by the medium of strangers who come to town.

Sydney, in the past has always taken, in a general way, a great pride in the talent and achievements of its local bands, yet, at the same time, our businessmen and the city generally have failed absolutely to fully appreciate what such an institution could be made to accomplish for the business interests of the place. Hitherto, the Sydney Cornet Band, the Citizens' Band and the St. Cecilia Band have mainly supported their respective organizations from their private and individual funds. This, of course means no small outlay, for, in order to keep abreast of public necessity, new music means a constant outlay, besides which the time devoted to public service and to practise is really money expended.

In other places the civic authorities make an annual appropriation for the maintenance of the local band corps - for instance, the town of Amherst, votes \$400. This again, is supplemented by private contribution. Result: Amherst has a band of full military strength, which is deservedly, the pride of its citizens. Not so is it in Sydney. The civic government has never provided anything except a bandstand, and that was not a thing of beauty and joy for only a very short while. This shows very poor public spirit - we take all we can get for nothing and long for more at the same price."²⁹



4. The Catholic Mens' Benevolent Association (CMBA) Band, Sydney Mines, organized in 1901.

The widespread popularity of community bands, both brass and combinations of brass and woodwinds, continued up to the Second World War. In Glace Bay, the Ancient Order of Hibernians (AOH) Band was a regular feature at ice skating rinks, parades and concerts for over 25 years.³⁰ Other Glace Bay bands included the Black Diamond Band and the Passchendaele Band.³¹ In Sydney there was the City Band, Coronation Band and the The Veterans' Band. The multicultural nature of the city was reflected by the band of the United Negro Improvement Association and the West Indian Band during the 1920's and 1930's.³²

The only community brass band existing at present on Cape Breton Island is the Donkin Band, directed by Ken Reid. The Donkin Band is unique on Cape Breton in that it has operated without interruption since it was organized in 1919.³³ But there have been other efforts to keep community band culture alive, though not through the medium of brass bands. In Glace Bay, the Coal Town Band formed in 1954 lasted into the late 1960's.³⁴ Most recently, a new Glace Bay Community Band was formed in 1987.³⁵ The City Band in Sydney lasted until 1947. Another City Band was organized in the early 1960's and survived for several years. Gordon Elman, one of the organizers of this revival, writes that the Sydney band did not survive because of the expense and the fact that young people were not being trained.³⁶ In Sydney Mines, the Victory Band was organized circa 1944 to provide an organization to which former bandsmen, on active service in Europe, could return. This was followed in the 1950's by a Reserve Army Band associated with the Militia. The current Sydney Mines Legion Band, directed by Wilson Rowe, was organized in 1967.³⁷

The story of the three Louisburg brass bands reflects the general Cape Breton enthusiasm for community bands, while adding their unique contribution by reflecting the times and personalities in Louisburg.



5. The Sydney Cornet Band in Louisburg on June 17, 1895 at the unveiling of the monument erected by the Society for Colonial Wars.

THE LOUISBURG CITIZENS' BAND 1903 - 1907

The Louisburg Citizens' Band was a product of the enthusiasm of a new century in a growing town. Louisburg was incorporated in 1901 on the coat tails of the industrial age which was introduced by the Dominion Coal Company's railway and coal pier. It was an expansive time with dreams of a railroad from the Cochrane Lake coal mine and another rail line along the coast from St. Peters. People were moving into Louisburg from the surrounding communities. There was a major building boom, a new water system and a Marine hospital in the works. It was amid this energy and excitement that the Louisburg Citizens' Band was born.

The Band Is Formed

The Band was organized by John Murphy in the fall of 1903. Murphy, a former member of the Port Morien Band, had come to Louisbourg around the turn of the century to work for the Dominion Coal Company.¹ As a major contribution to the Band, he purchased the band instruments for \$100.²

The first meeting was held in the Town Hall on Saturday, November 14, 1903.³ At the meeting, John Murphy was elected bandmaster, W. W. Mann, secretary and F. W. Townsend the treasurer. There were 17 members and by December the new band was meeting weekly for practice and, "*progressing finely*," under Murphy's leadership.⁴

The Band and the Town Council

As with most bands, finding secure financial support was an ongoing problem for the Louisburg Citizens' Band. When the band was formed it was anticipated that the Town would be asked to give assistance.⁵ Some sort of formal agreement was reached with the Town to purchase the instruments and, presumably, John Murphy got his \$100 investment back.⁶

Relations with the Town were severely strained by a request from the Band in April 1904, for \$20.00 to repair some of the instruments. In response to the request, Councillor John N. Spencer stated that the young men of the band, "*. . . should have spirit enough to make a little money themselves.*" He felt that since Town had already contributed by purchasing the instruments and because work was scarce, the ratepayers could not afford the expense. Councillor Elias Townsend struck a more personal note when he said that, "*.. it would have been better had the town purchased a set of bagpipes.*"⁷

At the next Council meeting on April 28, Mayor W. W. Lewis referred to the matter of the Band and noted that there was a clause in the Agreement made between the Town and the Band stating

that, ". . . if the town was not satisfied after a time the members would take back the instruments and refund the town council their money." ⁸

It seems that some band members, upset by the very negative reaction to the request for help, had told the Mayor that if the Council did not want to cover the cost of repair to the instruments they would purchase them back.

Councillor Spencer reacted strongly saying, "... let them take them back by all means, this thing will only be a drag on the town." Councillor Townsend, broadening the base of the attack, felt that, "The members composing the council at the time of the purchase of this band, must have been a fine lot of musicians". The Council meeting concluded, "After some discussion wherein the band was scored by Councillor Spencer, (and) the matter was deferred until the next meeting when a representative of the band members will be heard". ⁹

At the Council meeting held on May 19, the first point of business concerned the Band. The bandsmen had sent a delegation to a previous meeting of the Council and confirmed the earlier suggestion that if the Town was not satisfied with the purchase of the band instruments the bandsmen would buy the instruments for \$100. A Council committee had been formed to look into the ownership of the instruments and reported that it was John Murphy who had purchased them not the individual band members. ¹⁰

By the June meeting of Council, the clerk had spoken with John Murphy about assuming responsibility for the band again. But Murphy would not consider doing so until all the instruments were returned. Councillor J. O'Toole asked who had been in charge of instrument distribution and was told that they had never been under the control of anyone from the Town. Councillor O'Toole expressed the opinion that the instruments were Murphy's responsibility. ¹¹

The clerk was directed by Council to proceed on the matter with Murphy. ¹² He was not successful since Murphy never did take over the direction of the Band again. Obviously, there was some sort of conflict between Murphy and members of the Band that remained unresolved. It is surprising, given the nature of local reporting, that none of the dissatisfied bandmembers are ever named in the newspaper articles. Nor does John Murphy appear to have been directly involved in the Band's reaction to the rather inflammatory statements of Councillors Townsend and Spencer. Unfortunately, the Minutes of the Council were destroyed in a fire in July 1982 and along with them the full story of the disagreement between John Murphy, the Band and the Louisburg Council.

The Band and the Community

The Band did not wait for long to find a new instructor after John Murphy withdrew his services. By July 1904, John T. Ryan was coming to Louisburg from Glace Bay twice a week to provide instruction in Peters' Hall. ¹³ Ryan was well qualified for the job. He had reorganized the St. Joseph's Band in Glace Bay in 1903 and was its treasurer and musical instructor. ¹⁴ Just how he was attracted to the challenge of the Louisburg Band is not known, but he proved to be a wise and practical choice.

Along with a qualified instructor, the Band had some encouragement by example. In August, the Salvation Army Bermuda Brass and String Band visited Louisbourg, paraded through the town and gave a concert. ¹⁵ And in September, Ryan's St. Joseph's Band from Glace Bay band played at the Stella Maris Catholic Church Labour Day picnic. ¹⁶

Ryan's instruction was successful, for on Friday, September 16, 1904 the Band gave its first public concert. Bandmaster Ryan was present with 11 of the 16 members. The Band met in Peters' Hall to practice, then marched west along Main Street to Warren Street, then south to Mayor W. W. Lewis' residence.

The local correspondent for the Sydney Record reported that, ". . . almost the whole population of the town turned out en masse last night to hear our bandsmen in their first public performance. Warren Street was last night packed with people, also a goodly number on Townsend street, besides the large yard adjoining, Mayor Lewis residence was filled, and the verandah of the Mayor's residence was filled with spectators who had been invited there to a seat by his worship."

The programme for the evening included the Two Step Princeton, Norma Serenade, Two Step Yorktown, Fairy Bell March, Sunshine Waltz and God Save the King. In his address to the band and assembled crowd, the Mayor noted that the bandsmen had acquitted themselves in a manner worthy of veterans. He made passing reference to earlier difficulties stating that he felt the Band had not been treated as well as it might have been by the Council. He mentioned that he had supported the Band in Council since the members were public-spirited citizens of which anyone might be proud.

The bandsmen at that first public concert included Duncan Lamont, baritone; Arthur Keefe, B flat bass; Guy Hiltz, circular bass; Murray Cameron, trombone; James Lamont, 2nd alto; Frank Keefe, 2nd alto; Norman Cameron, E flat cornet; Wiley Stacey, 2nd E flat cornet; J. W. Ryan, 1st B cornet; John O'Handley, bass drum; Ernest Dickson, kettle drum; Fred Curry, cymbals. Those who missed the opening were Fletcher Townsend, 1st B flat cornet; John Dillon, 1st tenor; W. W. Mann, 1st alto; Dan McDonald, 2nd B flat cornet; and Richard Cays, B flat clarinet.¹⁷

The only photograph of the Band has a slightly different cast of bandsmen. This picture was taken in front of Peters Store on Main Street, before John T. Ryan completed his term as instructor in April 1905. Murray Cameron, John O'Handley, Dan MacDonald and Richard Cays are not in the photograph, perhaps having left the Band, but new members included Walter Jewel, Jim Crowdis and Archie Hare.

An interesting point about the participants in the Band, discounting the younger participants, is that they were either businessmen, clerks or tradesmen. There were no coaltrimmers, fishermen or farmers in the Band. And though 5 were Roman Catholics, the membership also seems to have remained within municipal boundaries of the Town, there being no representatives from the Irish settlement of West Louisburg.¹⁸

The Busy Fall of 1904

The inaugural concert in September was the beginning of a busy fall season. Prime Minister Laurier had called a federal election for November 3, 1904 and the Band was in demand for the various rallies held in Louisburg.

On Tuesday, October 18 there was a meeting for the Conservative candidate, Doctor McKay. The Band led the speakers through the streets to Peters' Hall.¹⁹ Next, on Thursday the 21st,



6. The Louisburg Citizens' Band in front of Peters' Store on Main Street between July 1904 and the end of April 1905. The only item of uniform is a Band Cap with the letters *LCB* inside a wreath on the cap front. Extreme back row, l-r: Fletcher Townsend, James Crowdis, W. W. Mann. Remaining Bandsmen, l-r: E. Dickson, Ned Cameron, Fred Curry, Wylie Stacey, Walter Jewell, Frank Keefe, Archie Hare, John T. Ryan - bandleader, James Lamont, John Dillon (?), Duncan Lamont, Arthur Keefe, Guy B. Hiltz.

there was a meeting for the Liberal candidate, Alexander Johnston. A crowd of about 500 people, ". . . among whom, were several ladies", assembled to greet Johnston.²⁰ Mayor Lewis and County Warden Levatte escorted the speakers from the Louisburg Hotel to the Hall in a parade along with, ". . . scores of citizens and workingmen headed by the Louisburg Brass Band."²¹ As they paraded, the Band played "See the Conquering Hero Comes" and in front of Peters' Hall, "The Maple Leaf Forever".²²

The Candidate was the first to appreciate the presence of the Band, providing a perspective that the bandsmen would have appreciated. According to the Record correspondent, "He opened his speech by pointing out that the progress of Louisburg under Liberal rule (was) manifested by the presence of a brass band. Eighteen years of conservative rule found Louisburg without a brass band and without other comforts of life to say nothing of luxuries".²³

At the close of the meeting there were cheers for the King, Laurier, Johnston, Kendal and the Band. The evening ended with the Band playing "God Save the King".²⁴

The night after the election the victorious Liberals assembled in Peters Hall for "a smoker and general celebration". Alexander Bates presided and the Band played several selections. There were songs by J. T. Ryan and bandsman Duncan Lamont.²⁵

It is of passing interest to note that the Band does not seem to have been present at the meeting for the Labour candidate, Stephen B. McNeil, on Monday the 17th, though Mayor Lewis and Warden Levatte were present, in the Hall, to dispute certain issues.²⁶

Raising Money

At the first public performance of the Band in September 1904, the correspondent for the Sydney Record commented that while the it had received some financial support from citizens that there were those who could afford it who have not contributed a cent. He expressed a hope that the Council, ". . . will also assist the enterprising and public spirited men and boys who compose the Louisburg band by giving them a liberal donation."²⁷

The citizens of the Town demonstrated their appreciation by a social and concert that was held in Peter's hall on October 4. The Record noted with approval that, "Since securing the services of Mr. Ryan the band has make rapid improvement until today they can take their place alongside other bands."²⁸

The successful fall, and possibly the new bandmaster, caused the Council to modify its previously held negative opinion. In December, Arthur Keefe, Wiley Stacey and Guy Hiltz appeared before Council to explain that they had been to considerable expense obtaining instruments, giving entertainments and paying an instructor. They said that, "If the town council would see fit to give them a little aid it would be highly appreciated by the band members." Councillors Smith, McVicar and Townsend were supportive. Councillor Spencer said he would like to see the Band assisted but he did not like the idea of taking the ratepayers money without calling a public meeting. He did say that, "He was prepared to put his hand in his pocket and help the band personally, but to take the ratepayers money, he did not like it." Councillor James MacPhee, more realistically, noted that there was \$250.00 set aside for miscellaneous expenses and since none of the amount had been touched some might be given to the Band. No one followed through with this suggestion but, "All the councillors spoke in high terms and praise of the band members and it was decided to get up a special entertainment at the beginning of the New Year."²⁹ The Band promised to give free entertainment on the night of January 2 if the town paid for the Hall.³⁰ The evening of January 2, 1905 was a success. Peters' Hall was filled and, in addition to the Band programme, there were songs by Duncan Lamont and Ned Davis as well as short addresses by Mayor Lewis and Councillors McPhee and Smith.³¹

With this success under their belts the Band began a weekly series of dances to raise money. A typical programme consisted of a concert, by the Band, after which there was dancing and refreshments. For the dance held on January 9, in addition to the band music, Joseph MacDonald and Norman Campbell played the violin.³² There was another concert in March.³³ As in the previous one, there were selections by the Band followed by a general programme of vocal solos, instrumentals, dancing and refreshments. The turnout was excellent earning \$60.00. The Band's debt was paid off and there was a surplus to its credit.³⁴ In addition to this financial success, the Band earned a positive, if somewhat pompous, word of praise from Mr. George Dixon the steward on the SS Cape Breton. Dixon was connected in some way with the Chicago Marine Band and, reflecting on this concert, pronounced that, ". . . with a little more practice the band would be a credit to the town."³⁵ The Band was grateful for the community support and not remiss in recognizing the help received from fellow citizens. At the meeting in March the members passed a resolution, ". . . that a vote of thanks be extended to all those non-members of the band who

*by the gratuitous giving of their time and talents and the loan of musical instruments, contributed so greatly to the success of their late concert."*³⁶

On St. Patrick's Day, there was a particularly important local event involving the Band. That evening at a lecture in Peters Hall, presided over by Rev. Fr. Keily of Stella Maris, the Rev. D. McMillan of Calvin Presbyterian Church lectured on "King Saul and the Witch of Endor, or the Philosophy of Ghosts and that sort of thing". The lecture was a community event in support of Rev. Murdock Buchanan of the Presbyterian Church who had tuberculosis and had gone to Boston in hope of finding a cure.³⁷ The lecture lasted for over an hour and, "... proved most conclusively the absurdity of Spirit Rappers, mediums, etc., and in many instances accounted for such things on scientific principles." The Band played and there were solos by Mrs. Sutherland and Mr. Bullock with Mrs. O'Toole as accompanist.³⁸

At the end of April 1905, with the coming of more suitable weather, the Band moved outside. Melvin Huntington notes in his diary that it, "*Played on the street in the evening and put on a good programme for listening pleasure.*"³⁹ This was the last appearance with John T. Ryan as instructor.⁴⁰ He would be missed, but he had developed the Band sufficiently to permit it to approach the summer optimistically. Eventually the Band found a new instructor, Robert Lyons, though he appears to have only remained for a short time.⁴¹

The Band was very encouraged by a successful dance held on Monday, May 8. However the members were not as pleased by the results of an open-air concert given at the end of the month where the collection was only \$2.00.⁴² It was pointed out by someone present at the concert, "*that there was quite a crowd until the hat was passed around when they quickly dispersed.*"⁴³

Another concert and social held in Peters' Hall in June was reported to be well attended. Before the concert the Band formed up in front of the Hall and marched along Main Street to the Pharmacy at the Corner of Upper Warren and Main and back to the Hall.⁴⁴ But the concert was not a success since the Band was in financial straits by July. Fortunately, the Council was sympathetic and Councillor W. E. McAlpine moved that \$100 be paid to the Band to permit it to meet expenses.⁴⁵ This windfall was celebrated with an open air concert. The Band formed up in front of Peters' Hall and marched along Main as far as Hooper's Store, on the corner of Main and Strathcona, and back again.⁴⁶

More Community Events

There were three additional band events in July. On July 1, the CMBA picnic was held Slattery's Point. The Band met visitors arriving by train at the Sydney and Louisburg railway station and led them to the picnic grounds. It remained there all day making a positive impression on the crowd, many of whom came from towns outside Louisburg.⁴⁷ On July 12 the annual Orange Day Picnic was held and members of the lodges from Louisburg and Catalone were led in parade by the Band from the S&L station to services in Calvin Church on Strathcona Street.⁴⁸ Then on July 21 the Band played as part of an outing on the harbour with a few friends aboard the steam launch Cecil Rhodes.⁴⁹

The high point of the year for the entire town, took place in early August when Governor General Grey, Lady Grey and their daughter Lady Evelyn Grey visited Louisburg. This was a far cry from the visit by Governor-General Minto in 1902 when the Town Fathers refused to meet the visitors



7. Louisburg before 1910. Main Street looking east towards Warren Street.

officially. On this occasion, the Vice-Regal party was met at the S&L station by Mayor Lewis, Councillors McPhee and O'Toole and Captain D. J. Kennelly. The Band was on hand and played the national anthem and several other selections.⁵⁰

That month the Band ventured abroad when on August 10 it held a concert in Gabarus. The bandsmen were accompanied aboard the steamer Sea Bird by a number of young people from Louisburg. The outing was successful and everyone was loud in their praise of the hospitality of the people of Gabarus.⁵¹ Rounding out the summer, on the 1st of September, the Band serenaded Councillor Elias Townsend on his 57th birthday. The Councillor made a short speech in which he congratulated the Band on its progress and, " . . . stated that in the future any favour they requested from the Town Council would receive his hearty support as long as he remained a councillor".⁵² This was a remarkable change of heart from the Councillor who had a year earlier wondered whether the Town should have purchased a set of bagpipes.

The Band in Trouble

The money voted by Council in July 1905 slowed, rather than put an end to, the Band's financial difficulties for, by the fall it was facing problems once more. The concert that was to be held at the end of September was "*indefinitely postponed*".⁵³ There was a subscription ball held in early October at which 40 couples were present.⁵⁴ However, the ball was not a financial success because over ninety invitations had been sent out. According to the correspondent for the Record, "*Taking the expenses for refreshments and hire for the hall the financial proceeds if any must be a mere bagatelle.*"⁵⁵ Not to be deterred, the Band was planning for its monthly ball on

Wednesday, November 8, and sent out invitations to a number of Louisburg residents.⁵⁶ There is no record of the results of this event, but the Band played on, and in December was prominent at the concert and bean supper held in Peters' Hall by the Baptists to raise money to complete the interior of their church. The concert was an overwhelming success with standing room only available for latecomers. The Band was thanked by the ladies who organized the event.⁵⁷

The next band event was a Bandsmens Ball announced for February 15th 1906, but postponed until Friday the 23rd, when about 100 people were in attendance.⁵⁸ From then on, nothing more is heard of the Band until a brief note a year later stating, "*It looks as though the Louisburg Citizens Band has disbanded.*"⁵⁹ There was one last appearance by the Band on Labour Day in 1907. That day, awards for the Labour Day sports were handed out by Mayor W. W. Lewis at the S&L station and the Band played a number of selections.⁶⁰

Why The Citizens' Band Came to an End

There are any number of reasons why the Louisburg Citizens' Band faded out of existence in 1907. The central ingredient, a qualified bandmaster, had been missing since J. T. Ryan's departure in the spring of 1905. It had been hoped that Robert Lyons would fill the gap, but that hope had obviously not been realized. The interesting point is that the local community did not generate a bandmaster after John Murphy dropped out of the picture. This was not because there was no talent available. Both the O'Keefes and the Townsends who were in the band were considered "*musical*". But none had been involved with a band previously and they were probably not comfortable with the range of instruments and the organizational requirements.

Lack of money was a definite problem. The Band needed a regular income to cover the cost of the bandmaster, to pay rent on the Hall, to maintain instruments and to buy sheet music and uniforms. While there was some income from concerts and intermittent help from the Council, this was obviously not enough to meet normal operating needs, not to mention any special requirements. The Band never did purchase uniforms, being satisfied with band hats. Uniforms could be ignored, but the instruments were central to the activity and they were expensive to maintain. Shortly after the Band organized in 1903 the members had approached Council for \$20.00 to repair the instruments. The fact that Murphy paid only \$100 for them in 1903 suggests that they were already second or third hand and needed regular overhauls. New instruments were very expensive. The St. Joseph's C.Y.M.C. band in Glace Bay was anticipating a cost of \$900 for 19 instruments.⁶¹ And S.P. Challoner estimated a cost of between \$1200 and \$1500 for 25 pieces for the Sydney band.⁶² A close look at the picture of the Band in front of Peters' store reveals dents in almost all the instruments. The poor condition of the instruments is further suggested by the fact that the bandsmen had to borrow some of the instruments from people about town.⁶³

It is difficult to gauge the extent of community support for the Band. It is obvious that some Councillors questioned its value. While the Band was concerned with finding, in the Council, a financial backer, the Councillors were working out broader responsibilities in the life of the newly incorporated Town. In the enthusiasm of a political rally the significance of the Band, as an indicator of prosperity, might be stressed. But there is nothing that indicates this sentiment was consciously shared by the rest of the community. Band events seem to have been reasonably well attended, with the exception of the subscription ball in October 1904. Yet they never earned enough money to keep the Band ahead of its expenses. While the Band might have viewed

itself as a community asset, I suspect that the average person in Louisburg saw it as an interesting diversion and never though beyond that. With no leader, no money, and a public that was not overly supportive, it is not difficult to see the bandsmen begin to lose interest. For there were many other volunteer activities in the growing community to occupy an individual's free time. There were church choirs and several mens' organizations and fraternal orders. The Catholic Mens' Benevolent Association, for example, was organized in 1901 and both Arthur Keefe and Duncan Lamont were members.⁶⁴ In addition, by 1907, there was a yacht club in Louisburg with former bandsmen such as Wylie Stacey, Fletcher Townsend and Guy B. Hiltz deeply involved organizing events, racing and building boats.⁶⁵

But the fact that the Band disappeared does not mean that it was a failure. As a general phenomenon, it was reflective of the initial optimism and enthusiastic growth of Louisburg at the beginning of this century. It reflected, as well, new ideas that were being introduced to the town by people from the outside. By participating in political rallies, parades and fundraising concerts, the Band added a hint of sophistication associated with larger communities on Cape Breton Island. As Alex Johnston noted during his political address, in the fall of 1904, its very existence was reflective of the growth that had taken place in the town.

The Citizens' Band provided a genuine, if not fully appreciated, service to the community. It also left positive memories that would lead a core of its members to form another band a few years down the road.

CANADIAN MEDLEY MARCH.

SOLO ^{Bb} CORNET. arr. T. BAUGH.

The score is written for a solo Bb Cornet. It begins with a *ff* dynamic, followed by *mf*, then a *SOLO* section marked *p*, and ends with *ff*. The Trio section starts with *ff*, then *p*, and *mf*. The lyrics "The maple leaf our emblem dear." are written above the Trio staff. The score includes various musical notations such as triplets, first and second endings, and dynamic changes. At the bottom, it is noted that the music was entered according to the Act of the Parliament of Canada in the year 1890, by Whaley, Royce & Co., D.C.

8. Canadian Medley March, Published by Whaley, Royce and Co., 1890. Music used by Wylie Stacey.

The Louisburg Brass Band 1913 - 1924

The Louisburg Brass Band was born on the eve of World War I into a town that had lost some of the enthusiasm of earlier years. The Marconi Receiving Station, built in West Louisburg in 1913, introduced a note of growth to the times. But in spite of this new addition to the community, the excitement of the turn of the century was waning. The Cochrane Lake mine failed and the looked-for railway between Louisburg and St. Peter's was not constructed. Louisburg's dream of becoming a major Atlantic port never materialized. Still, there was a settled and relaxed prosperity in the community, and there was regular work at the coal pier. When war came Louisburg responded patriotically, at home and at the Front, and experienced, along with hundreds of other Canadian communities, the trauma of losing young men in action. But the end of the War marked the end of economic stability. In 1919, after almost 25 years of year-round operation, the Dominion Coal Company pier became a seasonal employer.

The Band is Organized Again

In March 1914, Duncan Lamont and Wesley Townsend, representing the Band, approached the Town Council for financial help to buy new instruments and meet expenses. The Council was supportive and directed the Band to let the Town Clerk know the amount needed.¹

Band members were meeting twice weekly for practice and at one of these practices decided that \$100 would cover their immediate needs.² This was communicated to the Council and reviewed at the April meeting. Councillor Wylie Stacey, a bandsman, diplomatically suggested that the matter lay over until a future date. Councillor Fletcher Townsend, another member of the Band, agreed with Stacey. But after some discussion, on a motion by Councillor E. M. Dickson seconded by Councillor Jeremiah Smith, an amount of \$100 was placed in the 1914 estimates for use by the Band.³ This is the first and only record of the Band approaching the Council for assistance. And unlike the situation of the earlier Citizens' Band, there is no evidence of there ever being any conflict with Council.

The first Band concert was held in St. Bartholomew's parish hall on Thursday 30 April. The performance was well attended, enthusiastically reviewed and drew in \$75, a very respectable amount for 1914.⁴

There is no record of the complete membership of the Band at this time. Duncan Lamont and Wesley Townsend were obviously members since they approached the Council for help. Melvin S. Huntington also joined the Band for the first time noting his attendance at practice in his diary for 1914. And, based on the evidence of a photograph taken on May 24, 1919, it is almost certain that former bandmembers Fletcher Townsend, Guy B. Hiltz and Walter Jewell renewed their commitment at an early date. Wylie Stacey was involved, for his son, Charles, remembers seeing him in his band uniform.⁵ And it is probable that the Arthur and Frank Keefe, and Archie Hare, from the Citizens' Band, were also members.⁶

Just as there is no exact idea of the initial membership of the Band, there is no specific reference to the formal structure of the Band Association. If there was a president, secretary and treasurer there is no record yet discovered.

While the immediate cause for the revival of the Band is not on record either, it may have been connected with the last-minute attempt, in the fall of 1913, to organize a Bicentennial Celebration for the founding of 18th-century Louisbourg. The Sydney Daily Post for September 6, 1913 reported the arrival in Cape Breton of the author Beckles Willson who was planning to spend some time in Louisburg with Reverend T. F. Draper.⁷ In the interview, Willson chastized the Town of Louisburg and the residents of the Island for failing to have an appropriate celebration to mark the 200th anniversary of the taking of possession of Cape Breton by the French on September 2, 1713.

This comment sent minor shock waves through certain segments of the Cape Breton community. There was a hurried meeting held in Mayor Gunn's office, in Sydney, followed by invitations to Prime Minister Borden, Premier Murray and Sir Georges Garneau, the Chairman of the National Battlefields Commission, for celebrations planned for Louisburg on September 20. Once these meetings were held and commitments made in the press, the Mayor of Louisburg, W. E. MacAlpine, was consulted by the organizing committee for the event. MacAlpine agreed in principle with the proposal for a celebration and promised to bring the matter before the Louisburg Council. But it was obviously too late to do anything substantial and none of the hastily-invited guests were able to attend on such short notice. Nor does it seem that the Louisburg Council felt it was able to undertake a last-minute celebration.

To salvage a potentially embarrassing situation, a number of the Sydney citizens' committee, led by J. S. MacLennan, organized a branch of the Canadian Club in Sydney on September 19th to assist in the promotion of the Anniversary. The full extent of the Bicentennial Celebration, was an inaugural address to the newly formed Canadian Club delivered by J. S. MacLennan, before a gathering of 200 people in the County Courthouse the next day.⁸

While Louisburg was unable to respond to the event in any tangible way, it is possible that the "Bicentennial" did give rise to some activity in the Town. There is no specific evidence but Councillors Wylie Stacey and Fletcher Townsend may have taken the opportunity to rally the former members of the Citizens' Band in the event that activities would be held in Louisburg.

Most certainly, the revival of the Band was made possible by the presence in the community of a bandmaster and instructor, Allison Kelland. Kelland, who had come to Louisburg to work at the Marconi Station, filled this role from the fall of 1913. When he left Louisburg in December 1914 to return to his home in Newfoundland, Melvin Huntington wrote that he, ". . . proved himself a capable instructor (of the Band) and will be greatly missed by its members".

It is not known how soon a replacement was found. However, the frequent band practices, held in the Town Hall on Aberdeen Street, and the intensified involvement of the Band in community events, suggests the gap was filled almost immediately.¹⁰ The new bandmaster and instructor was probably John A. MacDonald, the bandmaster in a May 24, 1919 photograph of the Band. MacDonald had a familiarity with music and the band instruments, was capable of organizing and motivating the bandmembers and possessed the strong personality needed to ensure a disciplined approach to practice. He was an engineer with the S&L Railway and had moved to Louisburg from Port Morien where he learned how to play brass instruments in one of the early Salvation Army bands. According to his daughter, Mrs. Jean Scott, all the members of the MacDonald family played musical instruments and a brother, James F. MacDonald, was in a Glace Bay Band.¹¹

In addition to the possible Bicentennial enthusiasm and the availability of a capable instructor, the resurrection of the Brass Band in Louisburg might also be viewed as a predictable response to

the times. During the late 19th and early 20th centuries, as music historian Nancy Vogan suggests, there was a, ". . .conscious attempt to develop a sense of patriotism in the entire population".¹² The disturbing rumblings in Europe throughout 1913 and early 1914 could only encourage these sentiments and promote the growth of organizations that appealed to public spirit.



9. Louisburg between 1914 and 1918, looking east along Main Street from Aberdeen. A detachment of the 94th Victoria Regiment is marching in the direction of the Marconi Receiving Station, led by a piper.

The Band during the War Years

The Louisburg columnist to the Sydney Record wrote on August 7, 1914 that, "*The news of the declaration of war between Germany and England was received calmly in this town. There was none of that enthusiasm that is reported to have been apparent in some Cape Breton towns. The prospect ahead of the people if this war continues for any length of time as to means of procuring the necessaries of life and the paralyzing of commerce and trade, which will follow, is no great thing to enthuse over*".

In spite of this initial unenthusiastic reaction to the news of war, Louisburg responded quickly to the call to arms. Many of its young men volunteered for overseas service and seven lost their lives in Europe.¹³

The war years were an active time for community bands. A good band could play an important role in rallying the pride and patriotism needed to ensure support for the war effort. When the City Band gave an open air concert on the verandah of the Sydney Hotel in 1915, it was noted that, ". . . as the greater part of their programme was composed of patriotic and martial airs, the concert was a popular one."¹⁴ Providing public support to a band became a point of pride for the leaders of the larger Cape Breton community with the fundraising drive for the Regimental Band of the 185th Overseas Battalion (Cape Breton Highlanders). The 185th was mobilized at Broughton, in 1916, attracting recruits from all over Cape Breton.¹⁵ With a goal of \$2,500.00, the fund raising began on May 10, 1916 and continued, with regular updates and strong encouragement, in the Sydney Daily Post, until May 27. Donations came in from Dominion, Gabarus, Glace Bay, Inverness, Louisburg Marconi Station, Mira Gut, North Sydney, Port Morien, Sydney, Sydney Mines and Wycocomagh. When the drive closed there had been \$2383.90 donated to outfit the Regimental Band.¹⁶



10. The Regimental Band of the 185th Overseas Battalion (Cape Breton Highlanders) with instruments obtained as the result of the fund raising drive of May 1916.

The Louisburg Band was part of these patriotic times. It played its first role in the War when, on a cold November 7, 1914, it turned out at the Sydney and Louisburg railway station to send off Abe Wilcox who had enlisted for overseas service. This first celebration of rallying to the flag would be remembered, no doubt, when news reached the town in October 1916 that Sergeant Abraham Wilcox had been killed in action.¹⁷

Two weeks after seeing Wilcox off, the Band escorted 21 men of the 94th Regiment from the Marconi Wireless Station, in West Louisburg, to the S&L train station where they embarked for Halifax and the Front.¹⁸ Melvin Huntington describes the event on November 16 when the volunteers were formally escorted to the train by sixteen of their comrades with rifles and fixed bayonets. He notes that, "The soldiers were met at Jerrets Bridge by the Louisburg Band which

with the assistance of Alex Bowes, piper, played them to the railway station where they were given a rousing send-off by the citizens". Captain McKeigan, the officer commanding at the Marconi Station, thanked the Band and Bowes, for furnishing the music for the occasion.¹⁹

To complete the year, the Band was at the S&L station, on December 14, for Clifton Townsend who left for Fredericton, New Brunswick, to join the 24th Field Battery. With these three events the Louisburg Brass Band established for itself an important, though unofficial, ceremonial role in the community which would continue throughout the war.

In 1915, the Band continued actively supporting the War Effort by raising \$54.35 for the Patriotic Fund.²⁰ It was also prominent at recruiting meetings in August, September and December.²¹

An important contribution made by the Band throughout the War was the assistance given to the Louisburg Red Cross Auxiliary, which was organized in March with Mrs. Freeman O'Neil as the first president.²² In October there was a rally in St. Bartholomew's Hall in which the Band participated. The purpose of the rally was to conclude a special drive to raise money for British Red Cross Society. The total raised in Louisburg was \$424.35.²³

At the same time as it responded to the demands of patriotism, the Band addressed other community needs. As part of a rehearsal in the evening of Friday, September 17, it played a short public programme near the schoolhouse.²⁴ Later in September, October and November there were dances and a concert.²⁵ Before the October concert the Band paraded through the streets of the Town. Sponsoring dances and concerts was the main way in which the Band raised money. At these events, in addition to the band music, there was often other entertainment. Dances could have one or more local fiddlers providing the dance music, while concerts would involve singing and recitals. At the 11 October concert Huntington sang a solo - Mother Macree.²⁶

In early 1916, a major recruiting drive began for the newly-formed 185th Overseas Battalion (Cape Breton Highlanders). Prior to this time, local men wishing to enlist had to join regiments on mainland Nova Scotia or some other province. On February 23, Lt. Henry C. Verner of the 85th Overseas Battalion (Nova Scotia Highlanders), arrived in town to open a recruiting office.²⁷ Verner's home was in Louisburg and at the start of the War he had been an officer in the 94th Victoria Regiment Militia. Having him return to Louisburg was part of a consciously developed recruiting system in which officers were sent to their home districts to encourage enlistments.²⁸ On March 6, there was a recruiting meeting held in the Masonic Hall at which Lieut Colonel F. P. Day, the Commanding Officer of the 185th Battalion, spoke. The Band was present and supplied music appropriate to the martial enthusiasm of the event.

The recruiting strategy was a success in Louisburg. When the Band turned out, on March 31, along with piper Alexander Bowes, to see Frank Comeau off for Broughton, there was also an escort of thirty recruits for the 185th, commanded by Lt. Verner. On April 5 these recruits, now 40 strong, formed up near the Pier Crossing, at what is now Main Street and Huntington Avenue, and marched to the S&L station where they boarded the train for Broughton. The parade was led by the Brass Band and piper Bowes.²⁹

The Band continued supporting the Red Cross war effort by playing at a concert in June³⁰ and, at a Red Cross sponsored lecture in St. Bartholomew's parish hall on July 17. The speaker, Major John Pringle, talked about his experiences as an army chaplain. The Band also took part in the Red Cross meeting in October.³¹

A particularly happy occasion that fall was the return home of Lt. George Skinner.³² Skinner was the first local soldier to return from the Front and the citizens, along with the Band, turned out at his home on Milton Street to express their thanks. It was an evening of music, speeches by Town

dignitaries and many questions about what was happening across the ocean and whether there was any news of friends and relatives.³³

1916 was also a Provincial election year. On June 5, the Band marched to the S&L station where it greeted the the Conservative candidates and played several selections during the course of the evening in the Masonic Hall. Then on June 7, it played at a Liberal rally and on the 17th attended a Liberal meeting and Smoker in Peters' Hall. The Liberal government of Premier Murray was returned that year.

Even with all this activity the Band did not forget other civic duties in 1916. It was present at the Leap Year Ball held in the Masonic Hall on February 1, and in April it took part in the Methodist tea and fancy sale.³⁴ Then on the May 24 holiday, the Band paraded through the streets during the afternoon and held a concert in the evening. Melvin Huntington writes in his diary that he took part in the band concert but also sang a solo, "Love's Old Sweet Song," and, as an encore, "Hearts of Oak". Later in the summer there was one outdoor concert in front of Peters' store on Main Street at which the Band entertained for over an hour.³⁵ And on the afternoon of September 30 the Band turned out to send off Arthur Keefe, a friend and bandmember of many years, who was moving with his family to Glace Bay.

In 1917 the Band attended a tea and fancy sale and a dance in the Masonic Hall.³⁶ There was street parade practice on two occasions,³⁷ a concert on the veranda of Mrs. Millie O'Toole's house, and another concert at the Crowdis Hotel.³⁸ There was also a dance in the Masonic Hall in honour of Miss Annie F. Kerr, a resident and teacher, who was leaving for the west,³⁹ and a farewell party and dance for the Marconi staff and censors who were dismissed or transferred when wartime security was imposed on the Wireless Station in West Louisburg.⁴⁰

Involvement with the Red Cross continued with a pie social in April, a tea and fancy sale in June and a Junior Red Cross card party and dance in October.⁴¹

October 8, 1917 was an emotional occasion for the entire community when it welcomed home Wilfred MacAlpine who had been wounded at Vimy Ridge on April 9. Over seventy years later it is difficult to appreciate the sense of pride in the Canadian victory at Vimy Ridge and its impact our sense of Canadian nationhood. But MacAlpine, and thousands of others like him across the country, served as a point of contact for the community in this significant event. The Band played for about an hour in front of the MacAlpine residence on Main Street. There were speeches by Warden Levatte, Major O'Neil and Mayor W.E. MacAlpine, his father.

The year ended with a Federal election in December. The Band was called on to play at a Liberal meeting on December 3, addressed by W. F. Carroll and G. W. Kyte. It also played at a Unionist meeting for R. H. Butts and J. C. Douglas on December 13th. As might be expected, with the Vimy victory behind it, the Unionist Borden government won the day.

The Band's social committment continued into 1918 with a round of dances in the Masonic Hall. On one occasion the Pipe Band held a box social and dance which the Brass Band attended.⁴² There was a concert in February and a parade and concert on July 1.⁴³ Support for the war effort had not diminished, for on July 8 there was a Red Cross Rally in St. Bartholomew's parish hall with both the Brass Band and Pipe Band in attendance. On August 4, the fourth anniversary of the beginning of the War, there was a public meeting in front of Major O'Neil's (Mrs. Eva Lewis' house) on Main and Upper Warren. There were speeches, band music and a resolution was unanimously adopted, "*expressing a determination to continue in the great struggle*".

In spite of the enthusiastic show of support there was, no doubt, a profound sense of relief when, on Monday, November 11, news of the Armistice reached Louisburg. Melvin Huntington writes

enthusiastically in his diary that the, " *Whistle in town and steamers in the harbor blew at 8:45 announcing that the armistice between Germany and the allies had been signed. Thus ending the War. One hour later congregations assembled in the various churches for a short service of praise. General holiday all places of business closed. At 1 PM parade of citizens headed by Brass and Pipe Band marched through town. After which an open air meeting was held in front of Major O'Neils where speeches were made*".

1919 - The Eventful Year

On February 9, 1919, Melvin Huntington writes that he attended the first general practice of the Band with the seven lady members present. The lady members had been receiving instruction apart from the regular practice of the Band - probably from John A. MacDonald. The first public parade of the combined male and female Band took place on May 20.

Six of the lady bandmembers were photographed on May 24, 1919. They were: Mary MacCormack, Bel Verner, Tina MacDonald, Florie Ley, Viola Burke, and Erna MacLean. Mary MacDonald, the seventh member and Tina's sister, did not remain long since she found playing the cornet gave her a headache.

The Louisburg Brass Band seems to have been the only band on Cape Breton Island to have lady members. Several things had prepared them for this involvement. An important factor was the War. Because of the requirement to undertake a more wide-ranging role in the community, with so many men Overseas, women became recognized as effective participants in life outside the home. It was now possible to participate in public activities that would not have been considered suitable several years earlier. Another point of great importance, I suspect, is that some of the lady bandmembers came to the Band armed with experience in music which had not been available to an earlier generation in Louisburg. Some of this training was supplied by Miss McQuarrie who gave music lessons at the Pepperrell House, owned by Erna MacLean's father. She started a singing school in the Calvin Presbyterian Church in 1904 where she gave vocal music courses every Monday evening.⁴⁴ Mr. Millidge Morrison of St. Peter's had also come to Louisburg to begin classes in vocal and instrumental music. The arrivals of Miss McQuarrie and Mr. Morrison were timely for it was recognized that, " *A competent Music teacher is badly needed in this town.* . . ."⁴⁵

Melvin Huntington was also an indirect source of encouragement. For a number of years he represented the Miller Music Company of Halifax and sold pianos and organs to a number of households in Louisburg. He also employed Erna Maclean and Jessie MacCormick as clerks in his store and, no doubt, encouraged their participation in the Band.

The most important community-based event in Louisburg in 1919 took place on May 24 when the Town officially welcomed the Louisburg Veterans home. It was a beautiful spring day with clear skies when the citizens of Louisburg gathered at the S&L station. From the station they were led by the Brass Band and Pipe Band along Main street to Riverdale and then back to the terrace in front of George Lewis' house for a civic reception. Mayor W. E. MacAlpine welcomed the Veterans and presented them with a framed certificate of recognition. There was a lunch provided by the Red Cross Society in St. Bartholomew's parish hall and music by both bands.⁴⁶

The photograph taken that day, in front of George Lewis' house, is the first pictorial record of the revived and integrated Band. Unfortunately they did not have uniforms for this important occasion.



11. May 24, 1919. The official welcome home for the Louisburg Veterans. The event took place on George D. Lewis' front lawn. The Veterans are seated to the right. The Band is playing in front of the large central window.



12. The Louisburg Brass Band on May 24, 1919. This was the first official appearance of the combined Band. Unfortunately, the uniforms, ordered in April, had not arrived. Front Row, l-r: Danny Ferguson, Harold Covey, 2nd Row, l-r: Mary MacCormack, Bel Verner, Tina MacDonald, Florie Ley, Viola Burke, Erna MacLean. 3rd Row, l-r: Melvin S. Huntington, Guy B. Hiltz, John A. MacDonald - bandleader, Duncan Lamont, Unidentified, Walter Jewell, Arthur MacQueen, Wesley Townsend, Fletcher Townsend, Harold MacQueen.

Uniforms had been ordered in April from the Crown Tailoring Company, but had not arrived in time for the celebration.⁴⁷

The only news that cast a pall on the events of the day was the notice, given a week earlier by the Dominion Coal Company, that the coal pier operation in Louisburg would be closing for an indefinite period.⁴⁸ There was a meeting of citizens in the Town Hall to protest against the decision and a committee was set up to consult with the Company management.⁴⁹ When the committee, along with a representative of the union local, met with Coal Company officials it was to no avail. Shipping ceased officially on Friday 23 May. This was a signal for the 20's. The coal pier would be operated seasonally from this time on.

The Band left Louisburg for the first time in 1919. On the 12th of July it departed on the 7:00 AM train for the community of Birch Grove to participate in the Orange Day Picnic. Arriving at Morien Junction, the Band led the procession through Birch Grove to the Picnic Grounds. Melvin Huntington told a story of one such parade in which the Louisburg Band was formed up behind King William's white horse. As the Band struck up its first march the horse, instead of leading the way, decided to back up into the parade.^{49a}

On July 19th, back in Louisburg, the Brass and Pipe Bands paraded through the streets and provided the music at a bonfire at Slattery's Head in the evening.

But the Band was on the move again in August. The Sydney Daily Post for July 19 carried a notice for Kamp Kill Kare on Sangaree Island indicating that there was to be a Masonic picnic with the Louisburg Ladies Band in attendance. No doubt the novelty of seeing a ladies band would attract a crowd. The advertisement was misleading since, on August 4, both male and female musicians left Louisburg on the early train for the Mira Gut station to play for the Port Morien Free Masons' Picnic. Arriving at Mira Gut the Band and the picnickers boarded the steamer and proceeded up the River to Sangaree Island for the day. The newspaper reported that, "*The members enjoyed a fine time and praise the liberality with which the Morien crowd rewarded their service.*"⁵⁰ It was outings such as this that provided the Band with the money to meet operating costs and purchase uniforms.

On August 14, in the afternoon, the Band left Louisburg once more. This time it departed for Port Morien to play at a Garden Party given by the Orange Lodge. After the party there were refreshments and dancing until a late hour at the Orange Hall. Sixteen band members travelled to Port Morien and all stayed over that night, returning to Louisburg the next morning.

The last major event of the year took place on September 17 when the Band went to Glace Bay to parade in the Great War Veterans' Association (GWVA) Peace Day celebrations.⁵¹ The Glace Bay celebrations followed the Sydney Peace Day parade in which the Colours of the 185th Battalion were delivered to the Cape Breton community, represented by Warden H.C. V. Levatte. In the Sydney Parade there were 50 floats and a number of bands including the CMBA Band from Sydney Mines, the Sydney Mines Town Band, the Citizens' Band from Sydney and a pipers band.⁵² The celebrations were equally elaborate in Glace Bay and very successful. The day began with a three mile road race, followed by the parade beginning at the GWVA Hall on Union Street, a baseball game, horse races and a Garden Party to cap off a celebration that attracted 5,000 people. The parade included the Mayors and Councils of Glace Bay and Louisburg and a large number of floats and decorated cars. The parents and sisters of John Bernard Croak, V.C. rode in one of the cars with Mrs. Croak wearing her deceased son's decoration. The Louisburg Band marched in the parade and attended the horse races at Black Diamond Trotting Park that afternoon where it played between heats.⁵³

Back in Louisburg, the Band held a Hallowe'en dance, another dance on 28 November and ended the season with a concert in the Masonic Hall on December 11. This concert featured Glace Bay talent, and was important to the Town because the people from Glace Bay had come to Louisburg to assist organizing a local branch of the Great War Veterans' Association.

The Band Gets Uniforms

By September the band uniforms had arrived. The first photograph of the fully uniformed Band was taken in Glace Bay on September 17. The uniform consisted of a cap, tunic and trousers for the men and cap, tunic and skirt for the lady members. Five uniform tunics have survived the years including those worn by Fletcher Townsend, Harold Covey, Viola Burke, one of the MacCormack ladies and the Band Leader's tunic worn by John A. MacDonald.^{53a}

The tunics were manufactured by the Crown Tailoring Company, Ltd. of Toronto. They are navy blue wool serge with stand-up collars. The front closes by means of hooks and eyes. There is a black ribbon lace 1 1/2 inches wide encircling the standup collar, continuing down both sides of the tunic front and completely around the bottom hem. There are vents at either side of the bottom hem and the black lace is mitred around these. The black lace also extends up both back seams to shoulder level. A thin gold metallic braid traces the inside edge of the black lace. At the mitred corners the gold braid is looped. On each sleeve there is a chevron of the black lace and above it a simple crowsfoot in the metallic braid. The mens' trousers were probably the same blue serge with a strip of black ribbon lace along the outside leg seam. The ladies' uniform skirts seem to be made of navy blue serge, but it is difficult to tell from the photographs if the black ribbon lace was applied.



13. The Band in Glace Bay for the Great War Veterans' Day Parade on September 17, 1919. They are wearing their newly-arrived band uniforms. Left-right: Melvin S. Huntington, Erna MacLean, John A. MacDonald, Mary MacCormack, Jack Verner, Duncan Lamont, Florie Ley, Danny Ferguson, Bel Verner, Harold MacQueen, Jessie MacCormack, Sadie MacCormack, Tina MacDonald, Walter Jewell, Arthur MacQueen, Guy B. Hiltz, Wesley Townsend.



14. Individual studies of Bandmembers in 1920. Top, l-r: Erna MacLean, Melvin S. Huntington. Bottom, l-r: Wesley Townsend, Archie Hare.

Though there are no band caps known to have survived, it is possible to provide a reasonable description based on the surviving tunics and photographs of the Band. The cap was a military forage cap design covered in material similar in colour to the tunic. It had a button on the top, a band of black ribbon lace and a shiny leather peak. On the front of the cap, above the peak, there was a brass wreath opened at the top with the letter "L" in the centre. There was a gold metallic cord across the front of the cap anchored by buttons at the temple.

Bandleader John A. MacDonald's uniform was slightly different. The tunic is navy blue serge with the standup collar and hook and eye closure as in the bandmens' uniform, though there is the addition of black braided shoulder straps. It has the black ribbon lace on collar, front and bottom hem. But there are also five double-width horizontal bands of ribbon lace across the chest. There is no gold braid as on the bandsmens' tunics. However, above the chevron of lace on each sleeve there is a crow'sfoot design in thin black braid. The cap is similar to the bandsmens' but with the word "LEADER" in brass in place of the wreath and letter "L".

The Band in the 1920's

In 1920, there were at least 40 band rehearsals. On May 24 the Band was in Glace Bay once more playing at the Trotting Park. In June the Lodges of the Brotherhood of Railway Trainmen arrived in Louisburg to take part in their annual memorial service. The Band met them at the S&L train station and led them to St. Bartholomew's Church where the service was held. After the service the parade formed up again and returned to the station.⁵⁴

On July 12, the Band boarded the schooner "M. O'Toole" for Gabarus where it would lead the Orange Day procession and join in the picnic. Later in the month there was a return engagement with the Port Morien Masons' picnic at Sangaree Island on the Mira River.⁵⁵ These opportunities to travel outside Louisburg are an indication that the Band had developed a solid local reputation for it's playing. But it also points to the interesting fact that, during this period at least, the Town does not seem to have organized events for public holidays to keep the Band employed in Louisburg. Even when the Band would remain in Louisburg, on May 24 or July 1, the parades and concerts were more self generated than participation in a celebration organized by the Town.

The most important event for 1920 was the visit by the Governor General, the Duke of Devonshire, on July 31. The Vice-Regal party was met at the station by an *"enthusiastic crowd of citizens"*. The Pipe Band played several patriotic tunes and the Brass Band concluded the welcome with, "God Save the King".⁵⁶ There were greetings from Mayor A. A. Martell who introduced members of the Town Council and, according to the Post correspondent, *"The town itself was gay with flags, bunting and streamers of red, white and blue. In the immediate vicinity of the station were the decorations most noticed. A large arch trimmed in Empire Colors stood across the street from the station and bore in large letters the word - WELCOME. The two bands at the station played a splendid programme of patriotic airs and none seemed to please the distinguished visitors more than, 'The Maple Leaf Forever'. The turnout of the musical organisations added materially to the welcome of the Duke and his party."*⁵⁷

Additional Band participation for the year included a Liberal political meeting in the Masonic Hall addressed by D.A Cameron, A. B. McGillivray and H. C. V. Levatte,⁵⁸ and a concert at Fletcher Townsend's house on Labour Day.



15. The Band in 1920 by C. W. Kelly of Sydney. Probably the Sangaree outing with the Port Morien Masons. Front Row. l-r: Arthur MacQueen, Harold Covey, Florie Ley, Erna MacLean, Viola Burke. 2nd Row. l-r: Walter Jewell, Mary MacCormack, Sadie MacCormack, Katie Morrison, Tina MacDonald, Jessie MacCormack. 3rd Row. l-r: Unidentified, John A. MacDonald - leader, Guy B. Hiltz, Wesley Townsend, Unidentified, Harold MacQueen, Duncan Lamont, Melvin S. Huntington, Danny Ferguson.

In 1921 Huntington mentions several dances and socials in the Masonic Hall.⁵⁹ Dominion Day was celebrated by the Band playing for an hour at the corner of Main and Warren Streets in the lot where the Post Office now stands. It was also a Federal election year. The Band took part in a Liberal party meeting in the Masonic Hall on 10 November, and was at the Conservative rally two weeks later.⁶⁰ But in keeping with the tradition of the earlier Citizens' Band, there is no mention of it being present at Labor Party meetings.⁶¹

Finally, on December 17 the Band was in Peters' Hall for a presentation to H.C.V. Levatte who was leaving to take up residence in Halifax. Levatte, longtime resident of Louisburg and Warden of Cape Breton County, had served the County for over 40 years and was a major political force in the Town during that period.⁶²

In 1922 there were dances in Peters' Hall and the Masonic Hall.⁶³ It was also in 1922 that band member Erna MacLean married the bandleader John A. MacDonald. The Band was at the S&L station to welcome them home from Boston where they had been married.⁶⁴

On July 12, 1922 the Orange Day picnic was held on the grounds at the north east end of Louisburg harbour. There were over five hundred "*orangemen and their friends*" from Glace Bay in attendance. They were met at the S&L station by the Band and, accompanied by the McDougall band from New Aberdeen, paraded through the streets. The Methodist Congregation served refreshments in the old Salvation Army Barracks which was located just south of the turnoff from Main street to Havenside Road. A photograph taken that day shows bandmembers and Orangemen dancing on the rough temporary dance floor erected for the occasion.

In 1923 Louisburg received a visit from Governor General Julian Byng. Lord Byng had commanded the Canadian Corps in 1916 and planned the successful attack by the Canadians on

Vimy Ridge. He was met at the S&L station, on July 27, by the Mayor A. A. Martell, Council and citizens and shook hands with soldiers. This was followed by a luncheon in St. Bartholomew's Parish Hall, a visit to the Marconi Station and the ruins of the 18th century Fortress of Louisbourg. The Brass Band played, "God Save the King," as Byng arrived and followed this up with selections during the luncheon, ending with, "O Canada," as the train pulled away from the station.

But life seems to have been slowing down for the Band in 1923, for Melvin Huntington mentions one dance in the Masonic Hall, and an October meeting in aid of the School for the Blind.⁶⁵

The End of the Brass Band

Unlike the Citizens' Band, there is no formal notice in the newspaper that the Brass Band had disbanded. But in 1924 Huntington records just 4 practices, the last one on April 29. There is no further mention of the Band in his diaries or local newspapers.

The Band did not come to an end because it lacked a competent instructor, the major reason for the demise of the Citizens' Band. John A. McDonald still lived in Louisburg and would direct the choir of First United Church for many years.

One reason has been suggested by Guy M. Hiltz, lifelong resident and former mayor of the Town. He remembers his father, Guy B. Hiltz, saying that there was some sort of political disagreement that contributed to the demise of the band. There is no record of the nature of any disagreement, but the period was politically volatile, and there were strong Liberal and Conservative sentiments represented by band members.

Of equal significance were a number of small changes which, taken together, contributed to the Band fading away, rather than coming to an abrupt end. Tina MacDonald told me that she thought people had just stopped coming to practices. This is probably true and there were quite understandable reasons for this. For example, events in Melvin Huntington's personal life put the Band in second place. On July 15, 1924 he married Emeline Townsend and set up a new home for the first time when he was 49 years old. Though he remained in his post as a Town Councillor and continued to take an active role in the Methodist/ First United Church choir, the Band was no longer a part of his social commitment.

Perhaps the most tragic event for the Band was the sudden death of 23 year old Viola Burke in June of 1922. Huntington attended the funeral in the old Stella Maris church at the western boundary of Louisburg and writes that it, ". . . was the most largely attended I have seen in this town."⁶⁶

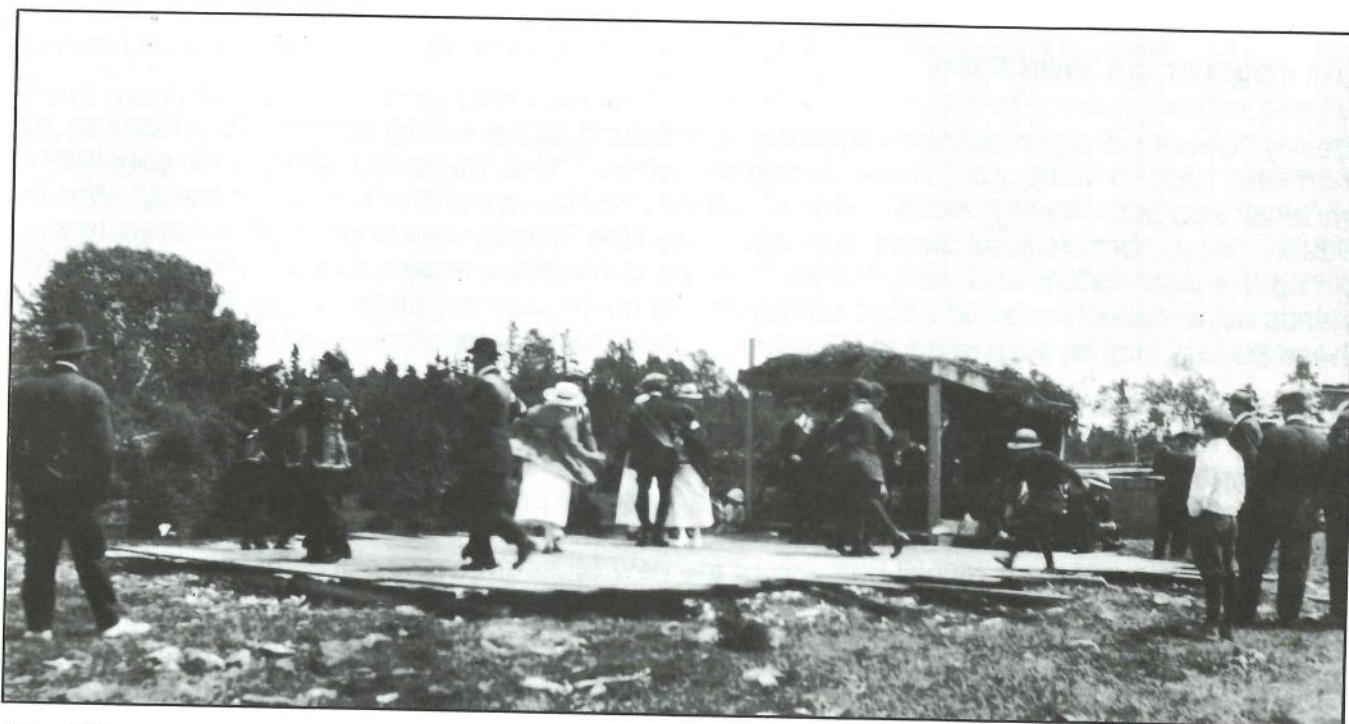
Other band members were moving into a new phase of their lives as well. In 1921 Erna MacLean left Louisburg and the Band to go to Boston. At about the same time Tina MacDonald and Bel Verner also took their leave. The reason Tina gave me for leaving, when I visited her in 1989, was that playing meant she wasn't free to dance.⁶⁷ In May 1922 Erna MacLean and John A. MacDonald were married and on April 10, 1924 their first child was born. In the fall of 1922 Mary MacCormick left for the United States, sent off by a band-sponsored dance.⁶⁸ On November 15, 1922 Harold MacQueen and Florie Ley married. In 1923 bandmember Archie Hare married,⁶⁹ and in the fall of 1924 Jessie McCormack married Malcolm Macleod.⁷⁰

Once the younger bandmembers married, particularly the ladies, their involvement in the Band came to an end. With the resumption of a pre-War conservatism, they were expected to turn their attention to the home and to more acceptable public participation like church choirs. With half

the Band gone by the fall of 1924, there were probably too few committed members left to continue the Band.

In addition to changes in personal circumstances, the end of the War removed a major reason for the Band's existence. Without the incentive of recruitment drives, Red Cross concerts and other activities associated with community patriotism, there were fewer calls on the Band's time. The participation outside the local community kept up the momentum for several years and provided the Band with a source of funding, but it was obviously not sufficient in the long term. In reality, the Band was a hobby. It was but one expression of a more global interest in music held by individual members who took part in other activities such as concerts and choirs in addition to the Band activities. Individual members gained new musical skills or honed old ones, found public acknowledgement and a sense of contribution to the wellbeing of the community. But the Band was never an official organization in Town life though its presence, during the War, was appreciated. There were no contractual responsibilities or formal roles in the Town social structure to keep it in place or ensure continuity once other priorities took precedence.

Still, though the Band came to an end, some former band members would direct their musical interests to participation in church choirs, while others, such as Danny Ferguson and Harold Covey, moved on to form or take part in small local dance bands.⁷¹ Some others would pass on instruments to the next Band in the mid 1930's, while Wesley Townsend, Harold Covey, Melvin Huntington, Walter Jewell and Arthur MacQueen would be actively involved in its revival.



16. July 12, 1922. The Orange Day Picnic held in Louisburg.

The Louisburg Town Band 1935 - 1937

The Louisburg Town Band, the last Louisburg brass band, was part of the town in the 1930's. Along with the rest of Canada, Louisburg was deeply affected by the Depression. One indicator, the 1931 Census, recorded a population of 971 as compared with the 1921 population of 1152. Mayor Melvin S. Huntington, in an article in the Halifax Herald, on January 2, 1931, wrote that, "*The unemployment situation has been more acute here than in any previous year and the fishing industry on which so many of our citizens depend was not a success owing to scarcity of fish and low prices which prevailed throughout the entire season. Consequently many of our citizens are much worse off financially than they were at the close of 1929.*" Still, Huntington was looking forward to a prosperity which he saw just around the corner. And there were efforts being made to construct prosperity. Work at the site of the 18th-century Fortress of Louisbourg resulted in a number of foundations of major buildings being stabilized, and a new stone Museum constructed and officially opened in 1937. Additional local initiative was shown by the Louisburg Broadbill Guides Association which tried to attract wealthy sports fishermen during the swordfishing season. The Board of Trade was active in encouraging town beautification, maintenance of roads and seeking ways to attract new industry. But it took another war and the L.H.Cann ship repair facility to get Louisburg's economy moving again.

The Origin of the Town Band

Wesley Townsend organized the Louisburg Town Band as an activity for the many local young men who had no work, particularly during the winter.¹ The Townsend family was considered "musical" and both Wesley and his brother Fletcher had been members of earlier bands. Wesley was also a member of a local dance orchestra, called the Syncopators, that played for area dances during the later 1920's and early 1930's.² Howard MacPhail recalls that he and a number of friends went to the Townsend house on Station Hill on Sunday evenings to sing. It was on one of these Sunday nights, according to MacPhail, that the topic of forming a brass band came up.³

There is no record of the date on which the Band was actually formed. Personal remembrances generally recall the mid 1930's. Reverend Neil MacLean, probably the youngest member of the Band, remembers a practice early in the Band's development during which Charles Stacey arrived to say that King George V had died.⁴ This would place the practice on Monday, January 20, 1936. Melvin Huntington provides additional evidence for a mid 1930's beginning. When writing to Dr. J. C. Webster, about the official opening of the new Museum at the Fortress site, he mentions the availability of, ". . . *the Louisburg Town Band which has reorganized during the past winter.*"⁵ Given that there were bandmembers unfamiliar with music, this would suggest that Wesley Townsend began developing the new Band as early as the summer of 1935. John MacAskill reinforces this by recalling that the Band probably practiced for about a year before going public.⁶

The inaugural appearance of the Band is described by Howard MacPhail. He recalls that, "*the first New Year's we had the Band we decided that we would play at midnight, New Year's Eve, under the place (on Main Street) where the coal pier ran across. We were up in the IOGT Hall, where the Library is now. We went up there in the evening, and about eleven or a quarter to twelve we went down to the Pier. I think we played Auld Lang Syne - I'm not too sure - but I think we did. But we also played two or three waltzes that we had learned. And when we were finished, Jerry Smith, a Councillor - he lived a way up off the tracks - came down to congratulate us. He*



17. Louisburg. Looking east along Main street in the 1920's or early 1930's.

made a speech. That was 1 o'clock on January 1st. That was our first appearance." Alex Smith remembers his father standing on a concrete abutment speaking to the Band. He says that before the event, while waiting in the IOGT Hall, the bandmembers had an amateur-hour contest to amuse themselves.⁷

The next public appearance of the Band was on Saturday, May 2, 1936. Huntington writes in his diary that he presided at a concert in St. Bartholomew's Hall, ". . . given by the reorganized Louisbourg Band which was, I think greatly enjoyed by a large audience. This concert was directed by Harold Covey in the absence of Wesley Townsend, the Band Leader, (who) was unable to attend on account of illness." According to the newspaper account, the programme for the evening consisted of duets and trios. There were also, no doubt, selections by the entire Band.⁸

Huntington recorded the names of the bandsmen taking part in the May 2 concert. They were: Harold Covey - director, Michael Kennedy, Freeman MacKenzie, Charles Stacey, Murdock MacLean, George MacLean, Neil MacLean, Ernest Skinner, John MacAskill, James Peck, Melvin Beaver, Walter Jewell Sr., Alex Smith, Danny Nicholson, Layton Coveyduc, Howard MacPhail, Henry Roberts and William Dearing.

These were not the only people who would play in the Band. Freeman MacKenzie remembers that Jack Johnson played the drum part time. Additional members included Tom Bates, Alex Burke, Oscar Harris, Lloyd Harris, Dan Kelly, Alex Leahy and Harold Wilson.⁹ Bud Bagnell, while never a member of the Band, remembers sitting in the Band Room with other youngsters during the practices directed by his uncle, Harold Covey. On occasion, he would stand in for Bill Dearing on the bass drum. "My uncle used to give me heck because I was off beat," he recalls.¹⁰ Tom Bates attended two practices before he decided not to continue as a band member.¹¹ Interestingly, there were never any lady members of this Band, though they shared equally in the hardships of the time.

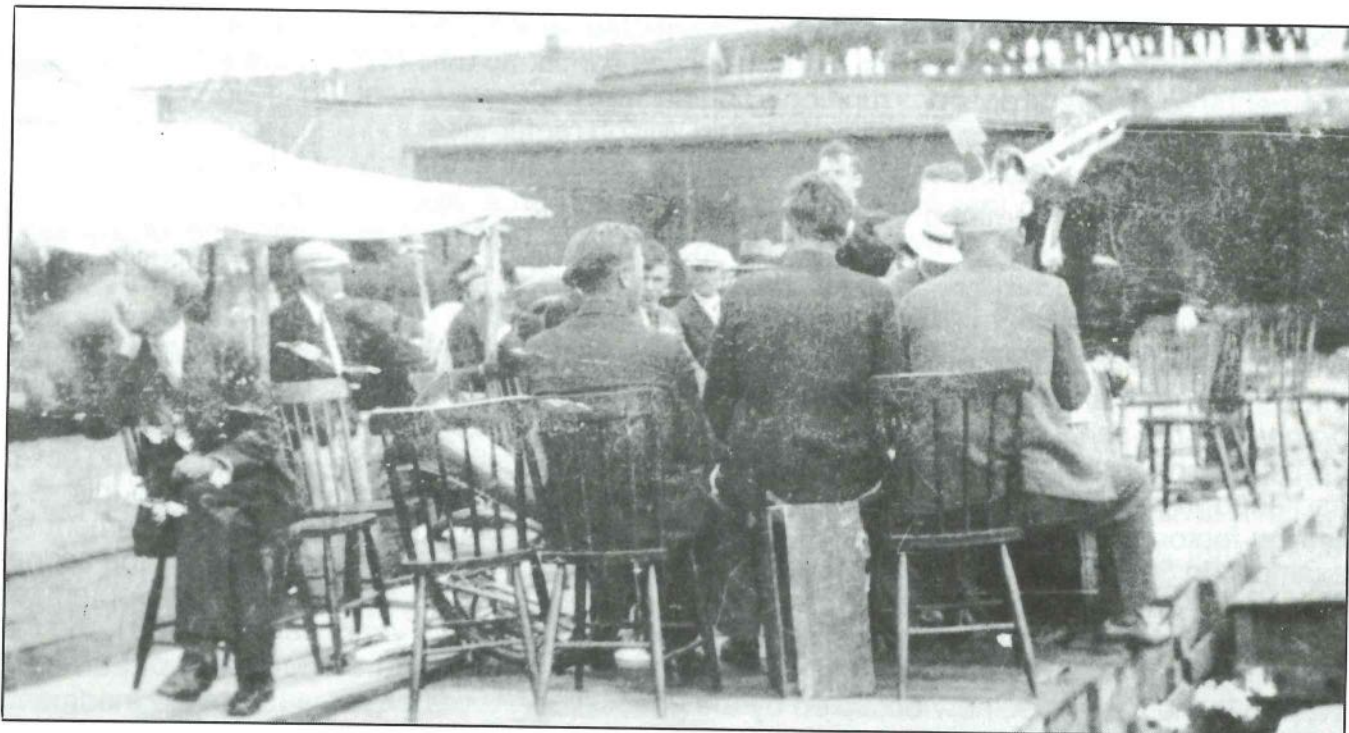
Wesley Townsend and Harold Covey were not the only 1920's Brass Band members who helped the Band. As noted above, Jack Johnson played the drums every now and then, and Walter Jewell, Sr., played in the first concert. Arthur MacQueen returned to Louisburg from Sydney on several occasions to help with instruction. He brought along friends who were members of the Sydney City Band. Other former band members gave or lent their instruments to the boys. John MaAskill used his step-father Guy B. Hiltz's bass and Ernest Skinner used the circular bass that had also been used by Hiltz. Jim Peck obtained his grandfather Duncan Lamont's baritone, Howard MacPhail played Melvin Huntington's baritone and Freeman MacKenzie used his Uncle Walter Jewell's tenor instrument.¹²

There was also a Band Committee. Reverend Neil MacLean remembers that Jim Peck, and later George MacLean, held the post of president. Danny Nicholson was secretary and Henry Roberts, the treasurer. But the Band never had a great deal of money. There were no band uniforms, not even caps. There was some music from earlier bands and Wesley Townsend ordered, and presumably paid for, additional music. Jim Peck recalls how Townsend had hoped to have the Band sponsored by R. J. Logue, a Sydney car dealer, who had a business in Louisburg.¹³ But, probably due to his illness, Townsend was never able to follow up on this. The first practices were held in the IOGT Hall on Upper Warren Street. But the Town eventually provided some support in the form of a room in the Town Hall in which the Band could practice and store its instruments. Reverend MacLean remembers the practice sessions and the order of the instruments during practice - the band was in a circle and from left to right came cornets, alto and tenor horns, followed by trombone, baritones, bass and drums. Harold Covey provided the formal instruction. However, Murdock MacLean taught his brothers Neil and George some of the basics. MacLean was a talented musician playing along in a local orchestra called the Super Five. But some of the bandsmen had previous experience with music. Neil MacLean played the piano, Ernest Skinner the trumpet and John MacAskill and Alex Smith the guitar. There was help from the outside as well. Howard MacPhail remembers instances in which four or five of the Band would go travel into Sydney to practice with the City Band.

The Band and the Community

Melvin Huntington was sufficiently impressed by the band concert in May 1936 to recommend its participation in the official opening of the new Museum at the Fortress, planned for the summer of 1936.¹⁴ The opening was postponed for a year and by 1937, when the ceremony took place, the Band was no longer active.

A month after the May concert, the Band travelled to Gabarus where it played at a concert and dance in the Orange Hall. The members travelled along the shore road through Kennington Cove in Beaver's truck and Danny Nicholson's car. Reverend MacLean remembers being in the car along with Melvin Huntington, Reverend H. D. Townsend and Jack Johnson. Murdock MacLean directed the Band that night. The newspaper coverage of the Gabarus outing notes that, ". . . the concert was comprised of *instrumental solos, duets, trios, quartets and full band numbers all of which was well received.*"¹⁵ Melvin Huntington contributed to the concert by singing two solos. Reverend E. D. MacKillop thanked the Band and, ". . . congratulated them on the *degree of excellency reached by the members in the short time since their reorganization.*" The evening was continued when several members of the Band formed an orchestra for dancing.¹⁶



18. The Louisburg Town Band at the Regatta in July 1936. The bandstand is located at the foot of Lower Warren street near the Government Wharf, the official starting point for the Regatta. Seated on far left, Jack Johnson. With backs to the photographer John MacAskill, Ernest Skinner, William Dearing. Over MacAskill's shoulder, Howard MacPhail. Standing and playing r - I, Neil MacLean and George MacLean.



19. The Louisburg Town Band at the Regatta in July 1936. The Band is seated on a platform constructed of swordfish boxes. Seated I-r: Howard MacPhail, Ernest Skinner, John MacAskill, William Dearing, Melvin Beaver. Standing, Murdock MacLean. Seated under Maclean's trumpet, is Danny Nicholson and to the far right of the picture is Layton Coveyduc.

The next time the Band played was for the Fishermen's Regatta in July. These races, sponsored by the Fishermen's Union, were first run in 1932 and continued until 1939. There were 30 or more boats entered in several divisions running a course from the Government Wharf down the harbour towards the Fortress and back again.¹⁷ Harold Wilson remembers the Band forming up outside the Town Hall and parading along the street to the waterfront at the foot of Lower Warren Street. The photographs taken that day show the Band seated on a raised platform constructed from swordfish boxes. Wilson remembers that the bandmembers also operated one of the food concession booths. Wesley Townsend directed the Band though, because of his illness, he directed while sitting on a chair.¹⁸

While the Band paraded to the site of the Regatta that day, it never did have much practice marching. Freeman MacKenzie reports that, "*It was difficult to watch the music and look out for potholes at the same time.*" John MacAskill also remembers parading, on at least one occasion, from the Band Room to the Calvin Hall before one of the Christmas concerts. But the Band never had enough practice to develop its marching abilities and Howard MacPhail points to this as a limiting factor in its taking part in special events. Still, the Band got some encouragement by example. In September, the Sydney Band came to Louisburg and held a concert on the school grounds.¹⁹ This was not the first occasion of the Sydney Band coming to town. On September 3, 1933 it performed on the school ground for two hours. And two years earlier, in 1931, the the Salvation Army Band from Glace came to Louisburg and performed at the corner of Main and Warren in the vacant lot, now occupied by the Post Office.²⁰

As Christmas approached, the members of the Band felt that they had to do something tangible for the Town. According to John MacAskill, ". . . we were supposed to be a Citizens' Band, a community band, and we thought it was a nice idea to put up a Christmas Tree." The Band held several concerts to raise money and obtained donations from businesses in town. MacAskill remembers that the concerts were held in the old Calvin Hall on Strathcona Street. During the concerts the Band would play several selections and then have an intermission when local ladies sold fudge. Huntington records one of these concerts and community "sing song" in the Calvin Hall, stating that there was, ". . . fairly good attendance of people of the town who appeared to enjoy the programme. I sang two songs, *When the Bell in the Lighthouse Rings Ding Dong and the End of the Road.*"²¹ MacAskill remembers a practical joker plugging the horn of his bass instrument with a bottle which he did not discover until it was time to resume playing.

At the end of November Clifton Townsend gave a presentation, in Calvin Hall, describing his trip to Vimy Ridge, in July, to be present at the unveiling of the Canadian War Memorial there. Townsend was one of the First War volunteers which the Louisburg Brass Band had escorted to the S&L Station in 1914. The Band was present and played a few selections.²² Then, in December, the Band went to the homes of Duncan Lamont and Wesley Townsend, both men being too ill to take part in any of the Band-sponsored events. Alex Smith remembers the Band playing in front of the Lamont house with Duncan Lamont sitting inside the porch listening to the music.

By Christmas Eve, the Band had achieved its goal for there was a tree, complete with electric lights, standing in the vacant lot, on the corner of Main and Lower Warren Streets, now occupied by the Post Office. Alex Smith remembers that he and Howard MacPhail strung the lights. Huntington writes that the community Christmas Tree, ". . . was dedicated tonight when the Louisbourg Brass Band under the direction of Harold Covey gave an hours programme of music in the presence of a large audience. Carols were also sung by members of the Band and others. During the concert bags of candy were distributed to the children. . ." Huntington goes on to note that, ". . . the tree was gayly lighted with coloured electric lights and presented a very handsome appearance, the first of its kind in the town of Louisbourg . . . the tree is upwards of 20 feet in height."²³

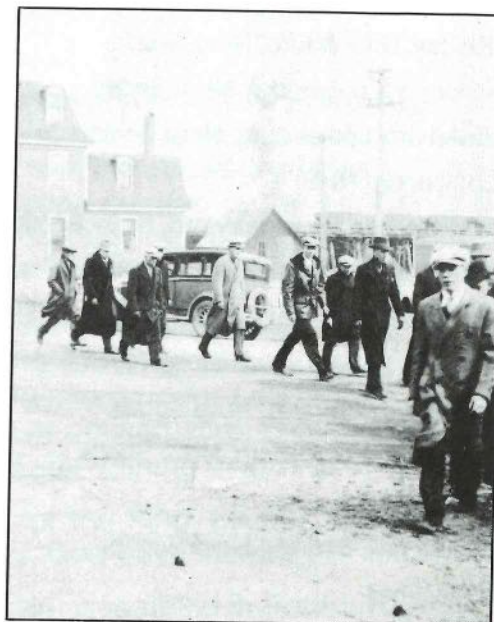
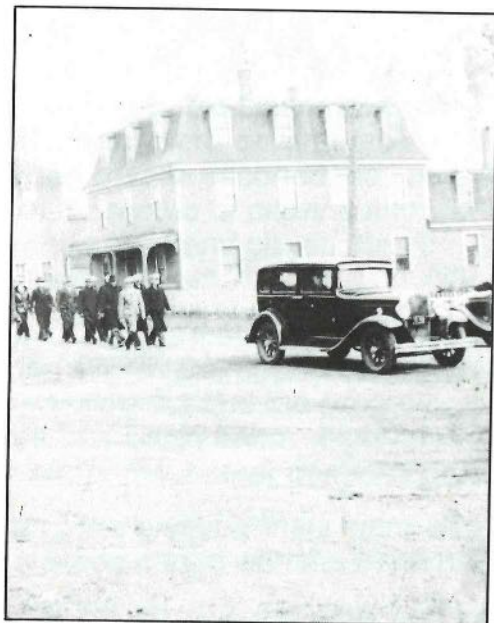
The End of the Band

Wesley Townsend was ill for almost a year before he died on April 12, 1937. John MacAskill remembers a number of the band members going to his house the night he was waked and spending the night there. The Band also took part in the funeral procession. Melvin Huntington wrote that, ". . . the members of the Louisburg Citizens' Brass Band of which Wesley Townsend was the reorganizer, paraded in a body to the church and grave - without instruments."²⁴ Townsend was buried in the former Methodist Cemetery on Clarkes Road. His gravestone, a simple red granite marker, has a musical note carved above his name.

The Band did not last much longer, though it is possible that it played for the Regatta in 1937. Howard MacPhail notes that Harold Covey's interest became more focused on his dance band and that he moved to Sydney in 1937 or 1938. Murdock MacLean took over responsibility for the Band, but he left for school in Halifax in 1937. MacPhail remembers five or six members of the Band playing at the new rink on Strathcona Street after it was opened for skating in January 1938. He says, however, that by that time the Band had come to an end.

All the bandmembers interviewed felt that an important reason for the Band coming to an end was that the members went away for work or education. While this may have been true, John MacAskill identified the central cause of the demise of the Band when he said, " *That's what ... happened to our band. There was Wesley Townsend, he died. Harold Covey came to Sydney (to work). And then Murdock MacLean, he was the next bandmaster, and he took up his trade in Halifax, x-ray technician, in the hospital. So when they went we had nothing. There was nobody good enough to direct the Band.*"

The memories are good, however, and every one of the remaining members of the Louisburg Town Band looks on that short period of time with fondness. Thinking back over fifty-four years, Howard MacPhail recalls, " *It's an amazing thing about this Band. Here's a bunch of fellows, ninety percent of them wouldn't know a note from a lump of coal, no idea of music . . . And they took them all and they taught them how to play.*"



20. The Louisburg Town Band walking in Wesley Townsend's funeral cortege as it proceeds along Main street to the First United Church, April 17, 1936.



21. Louisburg Harbour.

Picture Credits

1. Canadian Parks Service, Fortress of Louisbourg National Historic Site, Louisbourg, Nova Scotia.
2. Louisbourg Heritage Society, P. O. Box 396, Louisbourg, Nova Scotia.
3. Beaton Institute, University College of Cape Breton, Sydney, Nova Scotia.
4. Beaton Institute, UCCB.
5. Louisbourg Regional Library, Louisbourg, Nova Scotia.
6. Fortress of Louisbourg NHS.
7. Fortress of Louisbourg NHS.
8. Mr. Charles Stacey, Louisbourg, Nova Scotia.
9. Mrs. Donald Skinner, Louisbourg, Nova Scotia.
10. Mr. Todd Rudderham, Louisbourg, Nova Scotia.
11. Fortress of Louisbourg NHS.
12. Mrs. Alice (Ley) Fischer, New Waterford, Nova Scotia.
13. Mrs. Jean (MacDonald) Scott, Middleton, Rhode Island, USA.
14. Top, left: Mrs. Jean (MacDonald) Scott; right: Mrs. Eleanor Huntington, Sydney, Nova Scotia
Bottom, left: Mrs. Eva Lewis, Louisbourg, Nova Scotia; right: William A. O'Shea, Louisbourg.
15. William A. O'Shea, Louisbourg, Nova Scotia.
16. Mrs. Donald Skinner, Louisbourg, Nova Scotia.
17. William A. O'Shea.
18. Mr. Howard MacPhail, Sydney, Nova Scotia.
19. Mr. Howard MacPhail.
20. Mr. Howard MacPhail.
21. Louisbourg Regional Library.

ENDNOTES

In order to reduce the number of footnotes I have taken two shortcuts. In some instances the source and date are quoted in the body of the text. In other instances, you will find just a date and month. These refer to entries in Melvin S. Huntington's *Diaries* which are found on microfilm at the MacConnell Memorial Library in Sydney, Nova Scotia, The Beaton Institute of the University College of Cape Breton Sydney, N. S., and the Public Archives of Nova Scotia, Halifax.

Introduction

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5. Douglas N. Anderson, "78th Highlanders Ross-Shire Buffs 1869," Historical and Descriptive Notes, Portfolio B2, 1988, p. 12. Located in the archives of the Halifax Citadel National Historic Site, Halifax, Nova Scotia.
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8. Kenneth Donovan, " May Learning Flourish," in K. Donovan, ed., The Island: New Perspectives on Cape Breton History 1713 - 1990 , Acadiensis Press & University College of Cape Breton Press, 1990, pp 89 - 112.
9. Reverend A. A. Johnston, A History of the Catholic Church in Eastern Nova Scotia , Vol. II, 1827-1880, St. Francis Xavier University Press, Antigonish, Nova Scotia, 1971, pp. 348-349.
10. J. G. MacKinnon, Old Sydney, Originally published in 1918 by Don MacKinnon, Sydney, C.B., Republished in 1989 by the Old Sydney Society, pp. 129-134.
11. Sydney Daily Post, Sydney, Nova Scotia, 14 December 1901. In 1904 the St. Cecelia Band and Prof. Liscomb's Orchestra amalgamated and became known as the Sydney Band and Orchestra. Sydney Daily Post, 3 June 1904.
12. The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians, p. 210.
13. Sydney Daily Post, Sydney, Nova Scotia, 6 August 1903 & 7 October 1904.
14. St. Joseph's Band photo in "St. Joseph's & A.O.H. Bands - Yesteryear's Attractions," Coastal Courier, Glace Bay, N. S., 16 November 1977. Also, "The Bay Shall have Music Wherever She Goes," Newspaper Article c 1965. Both articles found in Scapbook #91, Music & Dance, Beaton Institute, UCCB. Also the Beaton picture file - Bands.
15. Sydney Record, Sydney, Nova Scotia, 14 October 1902.
16. Sydney Daily Post, Sydney, Nova Scotia, 22 December 1903.
17. Sydney Record, 13 November 1903. This article notes that John Murphy, who organized the Louisburg Band had been a member of a Port Morien band. There is also a photograph of Port Morien Band from a later period in Beaton Institute, UCCB, #78-162-1912.
18. Sydney Daily Post, 9 December 1901. There are also two excellent photographs of this band in the Beaton Institute Band photo file. The executive of the CMBA band according to the SDP article included: Chief - Albert Somers, Sergeant - William Raymond, President - Bernard Francis, M.D., Secretary - David McDonald, Treasurer - A. C. McCormick. Executive Committee - B. Francis, David McDonald, A. C. McCormick. " *The band consists of 18 pieces and was purchased from Whaley, Rayell & Co., at a cost of \$630.00. The services of A. C. Henderson, musical director of the North Sydney Band have been secured as leader.*"

19. North Sydney Town Band, 17 March 1897, Photo with Caption, Beaton Institute, photo file, Bands 76 - 6.
20. Letter from Rev. John Edwards to Sr. Margaret Beaton, 12 December 1963, Beaton Institute, UCCB, Band File 77-555- 689, also photo. Father Edwards notes that normally being Catholic or Protestant did not matter when it came to belonging to a town band. There were still tensions under the surface, however, and the incident which resulted in the creation of the LOC band reflects these tensions. Fr. Edwards wrote, "At the time of the particular event with which we are concerned, the parish priest of the time attempted to hire Sisters to teach in the parish school. As you can well imagine, this effort generated quite a bit of opposition. Eventually the matter was decided in a Town Council meeting - with the Protestant Mayor, Jim Purvis, casting the deciding vote in favour of admitting the Sisters; the Council had split three-three. As you can likewise imagine, this close vote did not still all opposition and controversy by any means. In the heat of all this, the Annual Town Winter Carnival took place - a big social event of the day and one at which the town band made it's big appearance. They were there and the costumed skaters appeared as per usual. However, in the midst of all the fun - two young ladies from two of the leading families opposed to the Sisters- appeared dressed as Sisters; the implication of this of course was lost on on one- including the Catholic members of the band and they quietly folded their instruments and walked out- together with one Protestant - Adam Ross - whose name you see in the picture. From these objectors was formed the LOC Band.."
21. W. L. Chirgwin, "The 94th Argyll Highland Regiment," Weekly Cape Bretoner, 10 May 1958.
22. Sydney Record, Sydney, Nova Scotia, 26 November 1902.
23. Sydney Daily Post, Sydney, Nova Scotia, 25 April 1903.
24. J. G. MacKinnon, Old Sydney (1989 reprint), pp. 72 and 125.
25. Ibid., p.133, and Sydney Daily Post, 14 August 1901.
26. J. S. Stephens Collection. Programme/Notices, Beaton Institute, UCCB., no date, MG 12/206/7, and Sydney Daily Post, 3 September 1901.
27. Report of the Committee on Louisbourg Memorial, Society of Colonial Wars, New York, 1896, p. vii.
28. Reverend John Edwards to Sr. Margaret Beaton, 1963.
29. Sydney Record, Sydney, Nova Scotia, 29 August 1904.
30. Coastal Courier, Glace Bay, Nova Scotia, 16 November 1977.
31. "The Bay Shall Have Music Wherever She Goes," Scrapbook # 91, " Cape Breton Music & Dance," Beaton Insitute.
32. Gordon Elman, " A Century of Band Music in Sydney," 12 November 1962, Beaton Insitute, MG 12/38. A good summary of Sydney band activities.
33. " Schooner Pond, Alias Dominion No. 6, alias Donkin," Scrapbook #15A, Beaton Institute, UCCB, and from notes of a telephone conversation with Ken Reid on 31 January 1991.
34. "The Bay Shall have Music Wherever She Goes," Scrapbook #91, Cape Breton Music & Dance, Beaton Institute, UCCB.
35. Notes from telephone conversations with June Martin, bandmember, and Barbara Stetter, Band Director, 1 February 1991. Stetter is responsible for the Glace Bay secondary school music programme. She envisions the newly revived Galce Bay Community Band providing an opportunity for graduates from the school programme to continue their involvement with music in the community. Should this prove successful the Town of Glace Bay can look forward to a vibrant community band into the next century.
36. Gordon Elman, " A Century of Band Music in Sydney," 12 November 1962, Beaton Institute, UCCB.
37. Notes from a telephone conversation with Les Rowe and Wilson Rowe on 31 January 1991. The Sydney Mines Legion Band has the advantage of receiving an annual budget allocation from the Sydney Mines Branch of the Royal Canadian Legion. The Bands take advantage of the Provincial Department of Culture and Recreation funding during the summer.

The Louisburg Citizens' Band 1903 - 1907

1. Sydney Record, Sydney, Nova Scotia, 13 November 1903.
 2. Ibid., 23 May 1904.
 3. The first meeting of Council was in the living room of W. W. Lewis' home on the west side of Lower Warren Street. Later meetings were held in the County Building on Main Street. This building was located at the point where Aberdeen Street meets Main, and was moved when Aberdeen Street was constructed. It ended up on the west side of Aberdeen on the location presently occupied by the old Catalone School which moved here several years ago and now used as Rovie's Pizzeria and a Toning Salon. The County Building served as a Town Hall, a jail and later the Firehall. It was torn down in the 1960's
 4. Sydney Record, Sydney, Nova Scotia, 18 November 1903 & 1 December 1903.
 5. Ibid., 13 November 1903.
 6. Ibid., 30 April 1904.
 7. Ibid., 16 April 1904.
 8. Ibid., 30 April 1904.
 9. Ibid., 30 April 1904.
 10. Ibid., 23 May 1904.
 11. Ibid., 4 June 1904.
 12. Sydney Daily Post, Sydney, Nova Scotia, 4 June 1904.
 13. Sydney Record, 21 & 28 July 1904. The Peters Bros. building, located on Main Street a bit west of the Irving Gas Station, was completed in June 1902. The upper part was used as a Hall and the lower as a meat market and general grocery store. See Sydney Record, 16 June 1902.
 14. "The Bay Shall Have Music Wherever She Goes" and " St. Joseph's and AOH bands - Yesteryear's Attractions" The Coastal Courier, 16 November 1977 in Scrapbook #91, CB Music and Dance, Beaton Institute, University College of Cape Breton. Sydney Daily Post, 6 October 1905.
- The St. Joseph's Band in Glace Bay was first organized in 1890 by Dan Hardy of Caledonia. Hardy lost his life in a mine accident in Caledonia #1 in 1893 and the band languished. In 1903 Ryan reorganized the band and it operated for 9 years. In 1914 St. Joseph's band joined with bands from Dominion and Bridgeport to form the A.O.H. band which performed for 24 years. (Beaton Scrapbook # 91)
- The St. Joseph's Band executive for 1905 was Joseph Guthro, President; John Cameron, secretary; John T. Ryan, treasurer; Daniel McPherson, property manager; John T. Ryan, musical instructor; Alex Curry, band sergeant. (Sydney Daily Post, 6 October 1905)
15. Sydney Record, 6 August 1904; Sydney Daily Post, 8 August 1902.
 16. Sydney Daily Post, 7 September 1904.
 17. Sydney Record, 19 September 1904; Sydney Daily Post, 19 September 1904.
 18. Louisburg Band photograph, Fortress of Louisbourg NHS; McAlpine's Nova Scotia Directory, Halifax, 1908; 1891 Census of Canada, District 28 Cape Breton County, Louisbourg Nova Scotia; Conversation with Mr. Guy M. Hiltz at the Sydney & Louisburg Railway Museum, July 1, 1990. It was with Guy's help that some of the possible political affiliations were established. Of the 11 adult bandsmen, there were probably 8 Liberals and 3 Conservatives. Of the 15 members in the Band there were also 5 Roman Catholics, 6 Church of England, 2 Methodists, 1 Presbyterian and 1 Baptist.
 19. Sydney Record, 21 October 1904. The Liberal-Conservatives formed a branch executive for the area south of the Mira River in October 1904. Dr. D. A. Morrison was president, Wm. Burke, vice-president; James McPhee, secretary. Captain R. H. Cann was chairman of the Louisburg committee. See the Sydney Daily Post, 12 October 1904.
 20. Sydney Record, 25 October 1904.
 21. Ibid., 22 October 1904.
 22. Ibid., 25 October 1904.

23. Ibid., 22 October 1904.
24. Ibid., 25 October 1904.
25. Ibid., 8 November 1904.
26. Ibid., 19 October 1904.
27. Ibid., 19 September 1904.
28. Ibid., 6 October 1904.
29. Ibid., 17 December 1904
30. Sydney Daily Post, Sydney, Nova Scotia, 19 December 1904.
31. Sydney Record, Sydney, Nova Scotia, 5 Jan 1905.
32. Ibid., 12 January 1905
33. M elvin S. Huntington, Diaries, 6 March 1905, Louisbourg Library.
34. Sydney Record, 8 March 1905.
35. Sydney Daily Post, 9 March 1905.
36. Ibid., 17 March 1905.
37. Ibid., 15 March 1905.
38. Ibid., 21 March 1905. The concert was a rousing success raising \$42. This was supplemented by \$10 from the Sampson Lodge of the P.W.A. and \$10 from the C.M.B.A. (Sydney Daily Post, 21 March 1905), an excellent show of support for someone who the community obviously admired. Unfortunately Reverend Buchanan did not recover and his body was returned from Boston to Louisburg in May 1905 where funeral sevicees were held. He is buried in Big Hill Baddeck beside his mother and other relatives (Ibid., 4 May 1905, 6 May 1905). Buchanan was born in 1869 and attended Sydney Academy, Dalhousie University and Pine Hill Divinity College. He was inducted into the Presbyterian Congregation in Louisbourg in 1899 (Ibid., 1 May 1905).
39. M. S. Huntington Diaries, Friday 28 April 1905.
40. Sydney Daily Post, 1 May 1905.
41. Sydney Record, 15 February 1906. Lyons was from Glace Bay. He married Miss Katie McAuly of Peppet (Pepperrell) Street, in Louisburg (Ibid., 15 February 1906).
42. Sydney Daily Post, 11 May 1905. Monday seems to have been the popular night for the band entertainments.
43. Sydney Record, 1 June 1905.
44. Ibid., 14 June 1905.
45. Sydney Daily Post, 29 July 1905.
46. Sydney Record, 31 July 1905.
47. Sydney Daily Post, 4 July 1905; Sydney Record, 4 & 5 July 1905.
48. Sydney Daily Post, 13 July 1905. An arrangement was reached between the CMBA and the LOL which allowed the LOL to use the Slattery Point grounds for the picnic on the 12th. In return the LOL paid half the costs of materials used for construction of booths and tables (Ibid., 10 July 1905).
49. Sydney Record, 24 July 1905.
50. Sydney Daily Post, 2 August 1905.
51. Sydney Record, 10 & 12 August 1905.
52. Sydney Daily Post, 7 September 1905.
53. Sydney Record, 27 September 1905.
54. Ibid., 4 October 1905.

55. Ibid., 5 October 1905.
56. Ibid., 7 November 1905.
57. Sydney Daily Post, Sydney, Nova Scotia, 5 & 7 December 1905.
58. Sydney Record, Sydney, Nova Scotia, 10, 19 & 26 February 1906.
59. Ibid., 9 January 1907.
60. Sydney Daily Post, 5 September 1907.
61. Ibid., 3 September 1904.
62. Sydney Record, 29 August 1904.
63. Sydney Daily Post, 17 March 1905.
64. Ibid., 10 October 1901; Sydney Record, 12 December 1905.
65. Sydney Daily Post, 18 September 1907.

Louisburg Brass Band 1913 - 1924

1. Sydney Record, Sydney, Nova Scotia, 7 March 1914 and 25 March 1914; Sydney Daily Post. Sydney, Nova Scotia, 7 March 1914.
2. Sydney Record, 25 March 1914.
3. Sydney Daily Post. 7 April 1914.
4. Sydney Record, 5 May 1914. St. Bartholomew's Parish Hall, usually referred to by Melvin S. Huntington in his diaries as the "Parish Hall" was constructed in 1909 (Sydney Record 3 July 1909 and 18 September 1909) and torn down in 1989.
5. Interview with Charles Stacey, Louisbourg, 1989.
6. The Keefes or O'Keefes were a musical family. Their sister Mrs. Millie O'Toole (later Tucker) was for many years the organist at Stella Maris Roman Catholic Church in Louisburg. Both Arthur and his younger brother Frank were members of the earlier Louisburg Citizens' Band. The supposition that they were part of the later Brass Band is based on the fact that the Band turned out to see Arthur off when he moved to Glace Bay with his family on September 30, 1916. And the proceeds of a dance, held in the Masonic hall on April 4, 1918, went to Frank Keefe.
7. Draper received the appointment as Archdeacon in succession to the late Archdeacon Smith in April 1914 - Sydney Daily Post, 7 April 1914.
8. Sydney Daily Post, 6 September 1913, 9 September 1913, 10 September 1913, 12 September 1913, 15 September 1913, 16 September 1913, 18 September 1913, 20 September 1913, 22 September 1913. Sydney Record, 9 September 1913, 11 September 1913, 20 September 1913, 22 September 1913.
9. Melvin S. Huntington, Diaries, 9 December 1914.

Allison Kelland returned to Louisburg to work at the Marconi Station in West Louisburg. He also married Laura Lewis the daughter of the former Mayor W.W. Lewis. Kelland worked in North Sydney and Canso. He later returned to Louisburg and ended his days in the old Louisburg Hotel on Main Street, owned by his nephew Harvey Lewis. Kelland was an accomplished organist and played for St. Bartholomew's church in Louisburg for many years. Conversation Harvey Lewis, Lewis & Company Store, Main Street, 8 January 1991.

10. Using Huntington's Diaries as the source, the following is an overview of the number of band practices. The figures are qualified by the fact that Huntington did not join the band until April of 1914. He may not have recorded each and every practice. Nor are there any records for the practice by the lady members of the band before they combined with the mens' band in 1919. Practice in the early years was in the old Town Hall on the west side of Aberdeen Street. In the 1920's and possibly earlier the practices were in the Band Room of the new Town Hall located in the school house, on the south side of Main Street at the end of Pepperrell Street. The building is now used as the Church of God.

1914 - 24, 1915 - 37, 1916 - 52, 1917 - 29, 1918 - 23, 1919 - 37, 1920 - 40, 1921 - 20, 1922 - 20, 1923 - 15, 1924 - 4

11. Telephone conversation with Mrs. Jean (MacDonald) Scott of Middleton. Rhode Island in December 1990, also a letter from Jean Scott to Jean Kyte in Louisbourg dated 23 April 1990, W. O'Shea band file. Mrs. Scott thought that

her father might have played in a Salvation Army Band in Morien. There was a brass band c 1912 as evidenced by a photograph in the Beaton Institute of the University College of Cape Breton File 78-162-1912. John A. MacDonald also conducted the Calvin Church choir and later the United Church Choir in Louisburg.

12. Nancy F. Vogan, " Music Instruction in Nova Scotia before 1914", in John Beckwith and Frederick A. Hall eds, Musical Canada, University of Toronto Press, 1988, pp 71-78.(p.78).

13. History of Modern Louisbourg 1758 - 1958. Louisbourg Branch of the Women's Institute of Nova Scotia, 1958. Reprint 1988, Louisbourg District Planning & Development Commission, p. 43.

14. Sydney Daily Post, Sydney, Nova Scotia, 25 May 1915.

15. M.S. Hunt, ed., Nova Scotia's Part in the Great War, The Nova Scotia Veteran Publishing Co., Ltd., Halifax, Nova Scotia, 1920. pp. 123 - 124.

16. Sydney Daily Post. May 10, 11, 12, 13, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 22, 23, 25, and 27, 1916

17. Melvin Huntington would write in his diary on 23 October 1916 of hearing that Sergeant Abe Wilcox had been killed in action.

18. Sydney Daily Post. 19 November 1914.

19. Melvin S. Huntington, Diaries. 16 December 1914.

20. Sydney Daily Post. 12 January 1915. The total amount collected for Louisburg came to \$356.99.

21. Melvin S. Huntington, Diaries. 18 August, 30 September, 16 December and 23 December 1915.

22. Melvin S. Huntington, Diaries, 3 March 1915. Later in the war the president of the Auxiliary was Mrs. A. L. Bates. see Nova Scotia's Part in the Great War Halifax, 1920 p. 365. Dr. Freeman O'Neil was a local doctor and Major attached to the Regimental Headquarters of the 3rd Brigade, Canadian Field Artillery in Sydney. For many years he had been associated with the 17th "Sydney" Battery. See Peter Moogk, "From Fortress Louisbourg to Fortress Sydney," in Kenneth Donovan, ed., Cape Breton at 200, University College of Cape Breton Press, Sydney, Nova Scotia, 1985, pp.127-182 (p.142).

23. Melvin S. Huntington, Diaries. 20 and 21 October 1916.

24. The school house was on the south side of Main Street at the junction of Pepperrell. It was used as a Town Hall from the 1916 - 1920 period to the late 1960's. It was a restaurant called the Potager in the early 1970's and in 1991 the, Pentecostal, Church of God.

25. Melvin S. Huntington, Diaries. 23 September and 22 November 1915.

26. Other than the fact that at a dance people danced and at a concert people listened, there is no record of a complete program of either sponsored by the band. We know from the earlier band that a dance could include a violin player for the actual dancing with the band entertaining intermitantly with a few solo pieces. Concerts could involve band selections, other musicians and solo pieces. Huntington was called on to sing on a number of occasions.

27. Verner transferred from the militia, the 94th Victoria Regiment (Argyll Highlanders), to the 85th Overseas Battalion (Nova Scotia Highlanders). He is mentioned in Nova Scotia's Part in the Great War as "Hell Fire" Verner for his exploits at Vimy Ridge - see p. 105. He was wounded in France - Huntington, 18 April 1917.

28. Nova Scotia's Part in the Great War. p. 123.

29. Verner went back to Halifax and Lt. Fraser took over command of the Louisburg volunteers. Included in the contingent were 9 from Gabarus who had arrived in Louisburg on 31 March according to Melvin S. Huntington.

30. Melvin S. Huntington, Diaries. 29 June 1916.

31. *ibid.*, 31 October 1916.

32. *ibid.*, 6 October 1916

33. Skinner later moved out west and his family lost track of him according to a nephew, Donald Skinner of Louisbourg, in a conversation in the fall of 1990. In the Sydney Post Record obituary of 26 January 1956, for John Hugh Skinner it is mentioned that he had a brother, George, in Vancouver.

34. Melvin S. Huntington, Diaries, 25 April 1916.

35. *ibid.*, 15 August 1916.

36. *ibid.*, 11 May 1917, 2 July 1917.
37. *ibid.*, 22 June 1917, 29 June 1917.
38. *ibid.*, 20 July 1917.
39. *ibid.*, 24 July 1917.
40. *ibid.*, 8 August 1917, 10 August 1917. The stations at Port Morien and Louisburg were closed to public service on 17 August 1917 as a temporary war measure. See Mary K. MacLeod, "Whisper in the Air, Marconi: The Cape Breton Years 1901 - 1945," in Kenneth Donovan ed., Cape Breton at 200, University College of Cape Breton Press, Sydney, 1985, p. 121.
41. Melvin S. Huntington, Diaries, 13 April 1917, 8 June 1917, 18 October 1917.
42. *ibid.*, 14 January 1918.
43. *ibid.*, 12 February 1918.
44. Sydney Daily Post, Sydney, Nova Scotia, 28 July 1904.
45. Sydney Daily Post, 19 October 1905. Morrison arrived and stayed for a number of years. Huntington notes on 24 June 1906 that he, Angus McIntosh, Duncan Crowdis, John A. MacDonald and H. A. Douglas spent the afternoon with Morrison who played the piano while they sang.
46. Sydney Post, Sydney, Nova Scotia, 27 May 1919.
47. Melvin S. Huntington, Diaries. 10 April 1919.
48. *ibid.*, 17 May 1919.
49. *ibid.*, 19 May 1919.
- 49a. Conversation with Miss Eleanor Huntington, Sydney, Nova Scotia, 8 February 1991.
50. Sydney Post, 7 August 1919.
51. The Great War Veterans' Association (GWVA) came to Louisburg to organize a branch on 11 December 1919.
52. Sydney Post, 27 August 1919 & 29 August 1919.
53. *ibid.*, 4 September 1919, 17 September 1919.
- 53a The tunics were discovered in the house on Upper Warren formerly owned by John A. MacDonald, but since 1945 owned by the Rudderham family. Todd Rudderham made the discovery after W. O'Shea suggested the possibility of Band memorabilia being stored in the attic. O'Shea had been following a lead given him by Erna Jean (MacDonald) Scott, daughter of Erna Jean and John A. MacDonald. Larry Rudderham, of Ingonish, has most kindly consented to donate the tunics to the Louisbourg Heritage Society.
54. Melvin S. Huntington, Diaries, 27 June 1920.
55. *ibid.*, 19 July 1920.
56. Sydney Post, 2 August 1920.
57. *ibid.*, 2 August 1920. Huntington for some reason fails to mention the participation by the band in this event - though he records the practice the night before.

There is no complete record of the Band's repertoire. However, Charles Stacey of Louisbourg has some of the music used by his father, Wylie Stacey, who played in the first two Louisburg Bands. All the music is for the Solo Bb or 1st Bb Cornet, the instrument Stacey played

Whaley, Royce & Co. Toronto - Canadian Medley March (including The maple leaf our emblem dear), Red White and Blue, Bonnie Dundee.

Geo. Southwell, Publisher, Kansas City Mo. These pieces were copyright between 1889 and 1901. Our Favourite Hymns (America, Nearer My God To Thee, Lead Kindly Light), Scottische "Viola", Overture "Musical Gem", Tourist Club March, Funeral March - Flee As A Bird, Grand Waltz "Give Me A Kiss And Take One", Mexican Waltz "Over The Waves", O.P.E.R.A Waltz, Brass Quadrille "High Flyers", George Southwell's "Great 4" Sextettes, In The Shadow Of The Pines. Some or all of these pieces were purchased from Thos. Claxton's Music Store, Yonge Street, Toronto.

H. N. White, Cleveland, Ohio - Union Maid and Funeral March (Rock Hill). This was purchased from Thos. Claxton's Music Store, 197 Yonge Street, Toronto.

Carl Fischer, New York - Nearer My God To Thee, Lead Kindly Light, Happy Day.

Wurlitzer Dance Band Book, published by The Rudolph Wurlitzer Co., Cincinnati and Chicago, c 1904 (MCMIV) by the Rudolph Wurlitzer Co. The music includes: Encouragement March, Alberta Waltz, Advancement March, Ivera Waltz, Eureka March, Vendome Schottische, Winona March, Adelaide Waltz, Algonquin March, Marion quadrille, In a Minute Galop, Tonawanda March, Coon Capers March, Red Clover March, Find and Dandy, Japonica Polka, Kyringia Mazurka, San Saba Spanish Waltz, Monticello March, Golden Rod March, Eldorado March, Granite State March, Arona Waltz, Nevada Overture, Ambrosia Waltz, Crescent City March, and Our Heroes Dirge.

Advertised in this book were the Wurlitzer Patriotic Band Book, Wurlitzer's Progressive Band Book and Wurlitzer Operatic Band Book. The price was 25 cents per book, with lots of 10 or more of the Patriotic Band book selling for 20 cents.

58. Melvin S. Huntington, Diaries, 23 July 1920.

59. *ibid.*, 1 February, 7 February, 28 March, 2 September 1921.

60. *ibid.*, 23 November 1921.

61. *ibid.*, 7 November 1921, 14 November 1921. McLaughlin and Doyle were speakers.

62. H. C. V. Levatte. Henry Charles Verner Levatte was born at Main a Dieu in 1858. He was educated there and at Port Morien. While a young man he moved to Louisburg and worked for W. MacAlpine's company. He was elected to the Cape Breton County Council in 1878 and was reelected every year until the fall of 1925. He was elected Warden in 1899 and remained in that post until 1925. He was appointed a member of the Legislative Council of Nova Scotia from 1912 to 1921 when he resigned to accept the position of Purchasing Agent for the Province. He remained in that position until the Liberal government was defeated in 1925. He died suddenly in his home in Halifax shortly after returning from service in All Saints Cathedral. His body was returned to Louisburg where he was waked at the home of Capt. Thomas Townsend on Lower Warren Street. The funeral service was from St. Bartholomew's Church with Ven. Archdeacon Draper presiding. See Halifax Herald, 26 April 1926, 1 May 1926; Sydney Record, 29 April 1926, Sydney Post, 28 April 1926 and Melvin S. Huntington, Diaries, 25 April 1926, 27 April 1926 and 28 April 1926.

63. Melvin S. Huntington, Diaries, 21 April 1922 and 23 June 1922.

64. *ibid.*, 16 May 1922 and 25 May 1922.

65. *ibid.*, 23 October 1923.

66. Melvin S. Huntington, Diaries, 15 June 1922.

67. I was fortunate enough to be able to interview Miss Tina MacDonald at the Cove Guest Home in Sydney shortly before her death in 1989. She was the last remaining member of the 1913-1924 Brass Band. (2 March 1989)

68. Melvin S. Huntington, Diaries, *ibid.*, 8 September 1922.

69. *ibid.*, 13 November 1923.

70. *ibid.*, September 1924.

71. *ibid.*, 9 November 1924.

The Louisburg Town Band 1935 - 1937

In an effort to cut down on endnotes in this section I have cited former bandmembers interviewed during research for the booklet only once. All other instances in which they are cited directly, refers to these previously cited interviews.

1. This was the common reason given by all the former band members for the start of the band.

2. The Syncopators included Wesley Townsend, saxophone; Mrs. Millie Tucker, piano; Jack Skinner, violin; Moses Ballah, xylophone; Danny Ferguson, drums; Harold Covey, trumpet. (Donald Skinner and Charlie Stacey, Louisbourg, February 24, 1989 and John MacAskill, Sydney, January 2, 1991). The list from all these sources was similar. MacAskill said that he remembered that one of Ballah's songs was called, *Get Out and Get Under the Moon*. Another orchestra called the Super Five included at various times, Harold Covey, Murdock MacLean, Danny Nicholson, Ernie Skinner, Howard MacPhail, John MacAskill, Laura Wilcox and Alex Leahy. According to John MacAskill this group formed shortly after the Louisburg Town Band came to an end (John MacAskill, January 2, 1991). Harold Covey had another

band, probably a permutation of the Syncopators and the Super Five in 1936. An advertisement in the Sydney Post-Record for February 11, 1936 it notes that Harold Covey and His Merrymakers will perform at the Firemens' 7th At Home in the Masonic Hall.

3. Howard MacPhail, Sydney, Nova Scotia, Notes from discussion, January 5, 1990.
4. Reverend Neil MacLean, Notes from telephone conversation, January 3, 1991.
5. Melvin S. Huntington to Dr. J. C. Webster, 12 May 1936 concerning Webster's letter of May 1936 about the official opening of the new Museum at the Fortress site. Louisbourg Heritage Society files, and the Archives, Fortress of Louisbourg, National Historic Site.
6. John MacAskill, Sydney, Nova Scotia, Notes from discussion, January 2, 1991. MacAskill also provided me with a list of those he remembered in the band and the instruments they played. Band Masters: Wesley Townsend, Harold Covey, Murdock MacLean. Bandsmen: Ernest Skinner, bass; John MacAskill, bass; Bill Dearing, bass drum; John Johnson, kettle drum; Howard MacPhail, baritone; Jim Peck, baritone; Oscar Harris, alto; Michael Kennedy, tenor; Lloyd Harris, tenor; Charles Stacey, alto; Freeman MacKenzie, alto; Henry Roberts' slide trombone but he moved to alto, Alex Smith, tenor; George MacLean, valve trombone; Murdock MacLean, cornet; Neil Maclean, cornet; Harold Covey, trumpet; Dan Kelly, cornet, Layton Coveyduc, cornet.
7. Alex Smith, formerly from Louisbourg but now residing at Breton Bay Nursing Home, Sydney, Nova Scotia. Notes from conversation, February 13, 1991.
8. Sydney Post-Record, Sydney, Nova Scotia, 14 May 1936.
9. Tom Bates, Sr., Louisbourg, Telephone conversation, January 4, 1991. Reverend Neil MacLean, interview and Harold Wilson, Louisbourg, Notes from conversation, February 6, 1991.
10. C.E. "Bud" Bagnell, Sydney, Nova Scotia, Notes from telephone conversation, January 7, 1991.
11. Tom Bates, Sr., Telephone conversation, January 4, 1991.
12. Evelyn MacKenzie and Freeman MacKenzie, Letter received March 18, 1989. Freeman notes that he played the tenor horn - see above # 6. Also Howard MacPhail and John MacAskill interviews.
13. James Peck, Louisbourg, Notes from conversation, January 2, 1991.
14. Melvin S. Huntington to Dr. J. C. Webster, 12 May 1936. Louisbourg Heritage Society files, also the Archives of the Fortress of Louisbourg NHS.
15. Sydney Post-Record, Sydney, Nova Scotia, 27 June 1936, p. 13.
16. Ibid., 27 June 1936.
17. See Melvin S. Huntington Diaries for the months of June and July from 1932 through 1939 for details of preparations, participants, officials, the course and winners in each event.
18. Harold and Jessie Wilson, Louisbourg, Nova Scotia, Notes from conversation, February 6, 1991.
19. Melvin S. Huntington, Diaries, 6 September 1936.
20. Melvin S. Huntington Diaries, 3 September 1933 and 16 August 1931. Freeman MacKenzie photographed the open air concert from the tower of First United Church, across the street. original snapshot, Freeman MacKenzie, Louisbourg, copy Louisbourg Heritage Society.
21. Melvin S. Huntington, Diaries, 12 December 1936.
22. Ibid., 21 November 1936.
23. Ibid., 24 December 1936. It was about this time that Huntington changed the spelling of Louisburg to Louisbourg in his diary entries.
24. Ibid., 14 April 1937. Also Sydney Post-Record, Sydney, Nova Scotia, 17 April 1937.

A special thanks to former bandmembers who shared their memories

The Louisburg Brass Band

Tina Macdonald

The Louisburg Town Band

Layton Coveyduc

John MacAskill

Freeman MacKenzie

Reverend Neil MacLean

Howard MacPhail

James Peck

Ernest Skinner

Alex Smith

Charles Stacey

Harold Wilson

&

Bud Bagnell

Tom Bates

Thanks as well to

Harvey MacLeod for telling me about the pipe band.

Marjorie MacDonald and the Louisbourg Regional Library.

Melvin S. Huntington for having the foresight to keep his diaries.

Larry Rudderham and Todd Rudderham for finding the tunics.

Helen, Patrick and Kevin O'Shea for listening to my talk about the Bands.

Helen O'Shea for asking sensible questions about the text.

Harvey Lewis for the various band instruments.



The

LOUISBURG BRASS BANDS

William A. O'Shea

216A
1120



The

LOUISBURG BRASS BANDS

William A. O'Shea

216A
1120



RS. BROS.
GNERIES

