

## 'Father Of Band' Looks With Pride At Brass Firemen

BY BETSY BAKER  
NORWOOD

When the Brass Firemen leave the U.S. for Sarajevo, Yugoslavia next month, the "father of the band" won't be along.

But in his heart, Fred Morgan will be playing every note with the band he founded as it provides traditional American music for the opening ceremonies of the XIV Winter Olympics.

A 1979 stroke ended Morgan's tuba playing days, but not his interest in the Brass Firemen. "I'm so disappointed I can't go on this trip," he said in an interview last week, "but I'm just so happy inside to think the band can go."

Morgan, who managed the band for nearly 35 years, founded the group that became the Brass Firemen during World War II, when he worked at Alcoa in Massena. The plant's labor-management group had a 40-piece orchestra and 60-member choral group that put on concerts and shows in towns around the county.

The shows were to be morale-builders to help the war effort and were designed to create good feelings between labor and management," Morgan said.

For the last show planned, director Robert Hoy wanted additional groups, with members from various localities, so Morgan gathered seven musicians — Harry Feickert, James McLennan, Jim Calnon, Leo Hickey, Sealy Buck, George Bixby and himself — and formed an "oom-pah" band.

"We called it a Dutch band. It was really a German band, but we were fighting the Germans then," Morgan said.

**Show Was Cancelled**  
That last show was never held. "VJ Day came and the show was cancelled," Morgan said. "What a night — we were out all night long, on the back of a truck, into every town, and I guess, into every bar."

The band stayed together, and in 1946 the Norwood Volunteer Fire

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Department took in under their wing. "Chief Leo French bought uniforms, music and a set of drums."

Morgan said. The band continued to perform for events in the region and to grow in numbers, from as few as 8-10 to the present 24.

**Fellowship, Good Times**  
Band members range in age from 16 to 65. They work at a variety of jobs; some are teachers and professional musicians, some are students. According to Morgan, whose father, also a tuba player, taught him to play, "a lot of the boys, all the music they've got is what they had in high school."

But the Brass Firemen all share the fellowship and good times that go with performing. Since 1946 the band has played each June at the Northern New York Firemen's Association parade, and since 1960 has attended each state firemen's convention. The band has performed at the Assembly in Albany, and twice in Washington, D.C., once for First Lady Nancy Reagan. Summers for the band are filled with performances at field days, county fairs, outdoor concerts and other events.

Until his nephew, Bob Haggett, became band manager a couple of years ago, Morgan was responsible for making all the band's arrangements and scheduling its appearances. "Some of them call me the

'father of the band' and some the grandfather," he joked. But he maintains that the band's "impromptu concerts" have always been the most successful.

"One time in Clayton, Morgan said with a broad smile, "we finished a concert at the fire station and started an impromptu parade. We were at the busiest corner downtown, and we made a circle and started to play. We had traffic tied up in all directions and people gathered around by the hundreds."

"Just then a police car pulled up, and I thought, 'Oh boy, we're in trouble.'" Morgan continued, "but the cop grabbed a girl standing in the crowd and started to dance."

Later on the band moved to a quieter street, and police closed a block to traffic so the large crowd could dance.

Another time, in Lake Placid, Morgan recalled how Chief Leo French led the band into a dance hall where another band was onstage performing. The Brass Firemen joined right in and spent an hour entertaining some 200 French of them in again.

And once during an unscheduled concert outside a popular nightclub, so many patrons left the bar to listen that the owner invited the Brass Firemen to perform inside.

"So many memories," Morgan commented. "Watching those boys on Monday (Morgan attended a recent rehearsal of the band) I couldn't help think, if those young fellows stick with it 50 years, what a happy life they will have had."

**Memories And Tubas**

Morgan keeps his memories of the Brass Firemen in voluminous scrapbooks. Photos, newspaper clippings, concert programs, membership lists, all tell the band's story.

Some of the clippings and photos, from newspapers in Texas, California and other parts of the U.S., as well as from northern New York, tell another story, that of Fred Morgan's tuba mailbox.

The mailbox sits inside the bell of a tuba, and the tuba sits beside Morgan's driveway. A sign atop the mailbox proclaims "Notes Come And Go." Open the door to the mailbox and you will hear the tones of a tuba — on a tape of nine songs performed by Morgan.

About eight years ago a photo of the mailbox drew national attention after it was picked up by the wire services.

Morgan and his wife, Rena, live in Norwood. They have three sons, Charles, Jack and Fred, all of whom performed with the Brass Firemen; and a daughter, Marilyn Joan Woodward. They have 14 grandchildren and three great-grandchildren.



AND ON TUBA — Fred Morgan of Norwood was a longtime member of the Brass Firemen and the band's manager for nearly 35 years. Above, Morgan plays his tuba during a performance of the band.



WITH THE 'KINGS' — Fred Morgan, far right, played with the "Kings of Rhythm," under bandleader Joe Calipari, in the 1930s. Shown from left are Willard Harper, John Steel, Dean Hart, now a local dentist; Joe Calipari (the late father of Mayor Joseph Calipari); John Morrison and Morgan.

## Heart Clinic Notes 10th Year

The monthly cardiac clinic cosponsored by the American Heart Association and the Canton-Potsdam Hospital is celebrating its tenth anniversary. During the ten years, approximately 750 area residents have received free consultations from cardiologists, and local physicians and health professionals have benefited from formal and informal teaching sessions by the cardiologists.

Currently conducted the first Friday of each month in the Hospital In-service Education area, the clinics serve 10 to 12 patients each month. Each patient is seen by a cardiologist from the University of Vermont Medical Center at Burlington.

"This is a teaching day," pointed out Dr. Robert Rogers II, overall coordinator of the program. Physicians, coronary care nurses, physician assistants, and physical therapists sit in on the consultations between patient and cardiologist, and following each clinic session there is a short formal talk on a specific topic. Physicians receive continuing medical education credit for attending.

The local physicians increase their knowledge of heart disease and gain insights in detecting possible heart problems. For example, if a patient has an unusual heart murmur, each physician will listen to the sound for future references. All physicians are eligible to attend the sessions.

An example of the clinic's assistance occurred last Nov. 11 when a Potsdam man was spared a massive heart attack by a treatment approved for use at Canton-Potsdam Hospital at the previous day's clinic.

After discussion at the clinic with Dr. Walter Gundel, associate professor of medicine at the University of Vermont College of Medicine, use of streptokinase, an enzyme that dissolves blood clots, was approved.

The treatment was used the following day on 40-year-old Donald Van Ater and was successful.

There is no charge to the patient, who avoids the need to travel out of the area for a consultation with a cardiologist. All patients are referred by a local physician who presents the patient at the clinic and gives the medical history.

Referrals are made by a physician who has diagnosed a possible cardiac

abnormality and desires a second opinion. The cardiologist will determine what further testing or treatment is recommended, if any.

Appointments are scheduled through Dr. Rogers' office. Social Services Director Elizabeth Blood and Physician assistant Joanne Scott of Dr. John Shields' office coordinate activities on clinic day, while the Hospital maintains medical records on the patients.

From 1974 to 1978 clinics were held quarterly, with physicians from Upstate Medical Center. In 1978, the monthly clinic with Burlington physicians began.

Costs are shared by the Hospital and the Northern New York Chapter of the American Heart Association. Current participating cardiologists are Chief of Cardiology Dr. Arthur Levy, Dr. Walter Gundel, and Dr. Daniel Raabe.

The cardiac clinics are part of an increasingly close relationship between the Hospital and the UVM Medical Center cardiology services.

## Illusionist At SLU

CANTON — As part of the 1984 winter term, St. Lawrence University will sponsor a series of evening programs of entertainment that will be open to the North Country community without charge.

All events will be held in the E. J. Noble University Center auditorium. On Jan. 12 at 8 p.m. Denny and Lee will perform illusions of levitation, dismemberment, disappearance — and the infamous "bullet catch."

Dr. Charles Brunsworth, professor of music at SUNY College at Oneonta, will present a music/slide tribute to the Beatles entitled "The Beatles: From Liverpool to Abbey Road" Jan. 20 at 8 p.m. The program features high quality sound reproductions and photographs depicting the history of the musical group.

The final event will be the 10th annual North Country Fiddling Festival to be held Jan. 26 at 7:30 p.m. Featured will be the New York State champion Donnie Woodcock.

Further information may be obtained from David Howison, director of the Noble Center, 379-5757.



HEART CLINIC — Dr. Walter Gundel, left, associate professor of medicine at the University of Vermont College of Medicine, congratulates Dr. Robert Rogers II, chairman of the department of medicine, on the 10th anniversary of the Canton-Potsdam Hospital Heart Clinic. Joanne Scott, who works in Dr. Shields' office, and Elizabeth Blood, director of social services, both shown above, also assist with the clinic. (Mike LeBoeuf photo)

## Fight Looming Over Federal Grant?

CANTON — The St. Lawrence County Office of Economic Development, and the county planning office may find themselves battling it out before the legislature for authorization to apply for a federal Community Development Block Grant.

Under the CDBG rules, the county can only submit one application. It will be up to the legislators to decide whether the county will seek \$750,000 for a public facilities grant or \$50,000 for industrial economic development.

County planning director Mary Verlaque brought the conflict to the attention of the planning and conservation committee Monday. Chairman Lloyd Moore agreed to set up a joint meeting with the economic development committee to hear presentations from each department.

"I'd rather not assign my staff to do the paperwork," Mrs. Verlaque said, if the county decides to go with the economic development proposal. "I'd like you to meet jointly or discuss it as a full board," she said.

"There's time on the February agenda for a resolution" authorizing the application, "but it's too late to tell us which application you want to go with," Mrs. Verlaque said.

**'Umbrella Grant'**

The county planning office would

like to apply for an umbrella grant which will provide complementary funds for smaller communities who are experiencing water or sewer problems. Some of them have applied for grant funds previously and were turned down, Mrs. Verlaque said, but would stand a better chance of receiving funds if they were grouped together in much the same way as the successful \$750,000 CDBG housing grant was written last year.

Some of the communities being considered for the public facilities grant are Lisbon, Morristown, Edwards, Russell, Pierrefield, Wanakena, Louisville, Unionville, Norfolk and Stockholm, Mrs. Verlaque said.

Thomas Plastino of the economic development office said director Ed-

mund Russell is interested in applying for money to be used as a revolving loan fund for economic development purposes. The money would be used, Plastino said, to assist one or more specialized industries on a loan basis, similar to the Jobs Bill application the department recently submitted.

The money would be paid back to the county and "over the years it would build up into a significant tool for the county to use," he said.

Although Plastino said Russell had already arranged to meet with certain industries to discuss the proposal, he refused to disclose which ones. Russell could not be reached today (Tuesday) for comment. "The interest certainly seems to be there," Plastino said, for the idea.

## Hydrant, Alarm Tests Recommended

BY MIKE LEBOEUF

Potsdam school officials are looking into the possibility of installing a fire hydrant on school property. At the school board meeting last Tuesday, results of the fire inspection report also determined that the school will test their fire alarms weekly.

Though the school was not in violation of the current laws, these items were recommended by local fire department representatives. "We never felt testing was needed since the alarms go off when something is wrong anyway," said Superintendent Kenneth Daniels.

"But it's not a real problem," Daniels added. "We'll have to do it when the kids aren't here."

The fire department also recom-

mended that an automatic fire extinguishing system be installed in school cafeterias over hoods and frying areas. Daniels explained that since the school's meals are not prepared in this manner, that system would not be needed.

A fire hydrant on high school property was recommended because the hydrant which serves the school provides too little water pressure and is some distance away from the school.

The department also recommended that vents in the school automatically be turned off every time the alarm goes off. But Daniels said the move would be very costly.

In other action, the board accepted the resignation of Carmen Gilliland, a math teacher at the high school.

## Clean Bill Of Health For Potsdam Finances

The Village of Potsdam has received a clean financial bill of health for the 1982-83 fiscal year from a New York State Comptroller's report, including a limited approval of the village's internal auditing system.

The audit, according to the report, showed that the village's financial statements presented "fairly the financial position of the Village of Potsdam at May 31, 1983."

However, "the failure to present general fixed assets accounts results in an incomplete presentation."

On the village's internal auditing system, the audit "disclosed no condition that we believe to be a material weakness," although the comptroller's "study and evaluation was more limited than would be necessary to express an opinion on the system of

internal accounting control taken as a whole."

The comptroller's office studied the internal auditing system only to the extent necessary to fully evaluate the village's financial statements, the report said.

"The objectives of a system," the report states, "are to provide management with reasonable, but not absolute, assurance that assets are safeguarded against loss from unauthorized use or disposition and recorded properly to permit the preparation of financial statements in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles."

"Because of inherent limitations in any system of internal accounting control," the report continues, "errors or irregularities may nevertheless occur and not be detected."



MAILING TUBA — Fred Morgan's tuba mailbox is an eye-catching sight, and it plays nine tunes recorded by Morgan. (Betsy Baker photo)

## Village Offices Head

Into Electronic Age;

Word Processor Okayed

The Potsdam village administrator's office is heading into the electronic age.

On Jan. 3 the trustees approved the purchase of a \$3,054 word processing system to be used primarily by Village Administrator Victor Bor-nick's secretary, Margaret Robinson.

The system, which is expected to arrive this week, is made by Olympia and will be purchased through the Ruddle Business Machines Company of Black River. The trustees also approved a \$572.50 annual service contract for the equipment.

According to Mrs. Robinson, the equipment purchase is accompanied by 16 hours of formal instruction which should prove sufficient to teach her to use the machine.

Mrs. Robinson said that prior to recent demonstrations of various word processors by salesmen, she hadn't operated anything more computerized than an electric typewriter.

The word processor, she said, should eventually help her handle the large volume of paperwork that goes through the administrator's office.

However, she added, the time it will take to learn how to use the system will at least temporarily increase her workload.

The Civic Center offices are currently using a computer for billing and payroll work, although the new machine will be the village's first word processor.

## Feeding Of Horses is Seminar Topic

CANTON — Proper feeding of the horse will be the topic of a special seminar to be held from 7:30 to 9 p.m., Jan. 11, at the Cooperative Extension Office Conference Room, University Shopping Center, Canton.

Guest speakers for the meeting include a Blue Seal Feeds company representative, and Ellie Sullivan-Stripp, Cooperative Extension agent. They will be discussing such items as the uses for commercially prepared feeds, good pasture, and the nutrients horses need for long healthy, energetic lives.

People are often reminded of human nutritional needs — for carbohydrates, protein, minerals and vitamins, but not so often for the needs of their equines. These nutritional needs vary surprisingly from one class of horses to another.

Although free of charge, there is a sign-up requested from those planning to attend. Sign-ups can be made with the Cooperative Extension Office in Canton at 379-2311, but walk-ins will be squeezed in, too.