



# The United States Air Force Band Diamond Anniversary Celebration

By Joe Tersero and Harry H. Gleeson



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# Preface

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The United States Air Force Band stands today as one of the most respected, versatile and accomplished musical organizations in the world. From the humblest of beginnings – with just three enlisted musicians assigned on October 6, 1941 – to today’s 184-member premier musical organization, this magnificent band continues the tradition of representing the United States Air Force and its over 491,000 dedicated Active Duty, Air National Guard, and Reserve Airmen to audiences at home and abroad.

Born out of a nation about to enter the Second World War, The USAF Band started off as just one of fifty-nine “Air Force Bands” activated on October 1, 1941. Between 1941 and 1945, over 1,500 musicians were auditioned and recruited from 32 major symphony orchestras and 38 famous dance bands. The Band’s unsurpassed professionalism, versatility, and location at the Headquarters for the Army Air Forces on Bolling Field in Washington, DC quickly earned it the designation as, “The Official Band of the Army Air Forces.”

Military leaders, audience members, and music educators around the globe know The USAF Band as among the finest concert bands in the world. When combined with the Singing Sergeants, the unit increases its flexibility and outreach ability to appeal to a much broader audience; in fact, it was these combined units which truly earned the band its title as, “America’s International Musical Ambassadors.” This monumental accomplishment was showcased via thirteen international goodwill concert tours “The Band” undertook between 1944 and 1969. During these tours, they proudly represented the citizens of the United States of America, the US Department of State, and the United States Air Force and have thrilled and inspired millions of music lovers around the world.

However, “The United States Air Force Band” is also the title of the Air Force’s premier musical squadron which includes not only the Concert Band and Singing Sergeants, but also the Airmen of Note, the Air Force Strings (Strolling Strings, String Orchestra, and Chamber Orchestra), Ceremonial Brass, Max Impact, and a myriad number of other ensemble combinations and show units.

This 75th Anniversary coffee table book is a pictorial history of this phenomenal organization. Due to the limitations of space, the photos included represent just a small fraction of the more than ten thousand photographs, artifacts, and documents considered for inclusion. Before your photograph fades, we invite you to consider researching the vast archives of The USAF Band’s Werle Library and to tell your own story via the Library of Congress Veterans History Project or by self-publishing your own unique Air Force Band story.

The photos selected are presented chronologically and represent some of the most historic moments of “The Band.” We invite you to join with us now as we take a pictorial flight into the past beginning in 1941 and ending with today’s generation of great Airmen Musicians.



**Dedicated to all the men and women who have served in the premier band of  
The United States Air Force in Washington, DC - past, present and future.**

## Credits:

The United States Air Force Band would like to express its appreciation to the following individuals and organizations for their contributions to this book:

American Bandmasters Association Collection, Music Library, The University of Maryland, College Park, MD – George S. Howard Collection

Collection of Frank Botsford (deceased) – WWII AAF Band uniform, map, diary and scrapbooks

Collection of William S. “Red” Brower (deceased) – photographs

Collection of Dr. Harold Copenhaver, Jonesboro, Arkansas – photographs, orders, and newspaper clippings

Collection of David E. Elliott, Lee’s Summit, Missouri – orders and Pipe Band photographs

Collection of Ivan Genuchi (deceased) – WWII diary, photographs, and orders

Collection of Oscar Gheblian (deceased) – documents and photographs

Collection of Harry H. Gleeson, North Ridgeville, Ohio

Collection of Alf Heiberg (deceased) – Founding Conductor, The AAF Band – photographs

Collection of Colonel George S. Howard (deceased) – photographs and documents

Collection of Garry C. Jerome (deceased) – former Historian and 1st Sergeant – documents

Collection of Phyllis Kohlenberg, Granger, Indiana – photographs and orders

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Collection of H. C. Miracle, Jr., Wetumpka, Alabama – orders

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Collection of Leslie R. Ticknor (deceased) – photographs and orders

Collection of Jari Villanueva, Baltimore, MD – photos

MGySgt Jane Cross, GySgt Kira Wharton, and the entire library staff of “The President’s Own” United States Marine Band

TSgt Matthew Dannan, Chief Music Librarian, The Werle Library, The USAF Band, Washington, DC

Michael Gabriel, Vero Beach, Florida – author of “The Force of Destiny,” the biography of his father, Col Arnauld D. Gabriel

Ron Hall, longtime Air Staff Photographer in the Pentagon

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John F. Kennedy Library and Museum

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National Aeronautics and Space Administration Image Library

National Museum of the United States Air Force, Wright Patterson AFB, OH

Loras John Schissel, Senior Musicologist, The Library of Congress

MSgt Jennifer Tersero, Historian, The USAF Band

USAF Drum & Bugle Corps photographs compliments of Robert N. “Joe” College, Warren Cooke and Bob Zarfoss





THE SECRETARY OF THE AIR FORCE  
CHIEF OF STAFF, UNITED STATES AIR FORCE  
WASHINGTON DC



On this momentous occasion, the 75th anniversary of The United States Air Force Band, we offer our best wishes for a truly memorable celebration. From the dawn of World War II and the legacy of Major Glenn Miller, Airmen musicians have raised morale at home, entertained troops overseas, honored those who have made the ultimate sacrifice and significantly influenced diplomatic relations through soft-power abroad. These vital missions continue to contribute to the Air Force's ability to provide Global Vigilance, Global Reach, and Global Power for America today.

On behalf of the entire Air Force community, please join us in congratulating all Airmen who have been a part of this remarkable organization. We eagerly look forward to the future as they continue their tradition of service, excellence, and innovation. Thank you for being a part of the world's greatest Air Force!

*Deborah Lee James*

Deborah Lee James  
Secretary of the Air Force

*Mark A. Welsh III*

Mark A. Welsh III  
General, USAF  
Chief of Staff





DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE  
THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE BAND  
201 McCHORD STREET  
WASHINGTON, DC 20032

On the occasion of the diamond anniversary of The United States Air Force Band, we are delighted to offer this amazing collection of photos and historic footnotes, presented for your enjoyment in this coffee table book. From the dawn of World War II, Airmen musicians have raised morale at home, entertained troops abroad and honored those who have made the ultimate sacrifice. On behalf of the United States Air Force Band, we humbly congratulate all Airmen who have been a part of this remarkable organization and eagerly look forward to the future as we continue the traditions of service, excellence, and innovation ALL of our alumni have left for us. Thank you for an amazing 75 years!

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Larry W. Lang", is positioned above the printed name.

LARRY W. LANG, Colonel, USAF  
Commander and Conductor  
The United States Air Force Band





Jonesboro, Arkansas  
May 10<sup>th</sup>, 2016

To the Men & Women of The United States Air Force Band – Past, Present & Future:

Congratulations to one and all as we celebrate the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of The United States Air Force Band. Without each of you, the exceptional accomplishments of the past 75 years would not have been possible.

I joined the (then) Army Air Forces Band on April 7<sup>th</sup>, 1942 as a French horn player. Over the years I was also one of the first two men selected to become members of the AAF Band Glee Club in 1942 (now the Singing Sergeants), was the Company Clerk during the WWII tours of Canada and then England and France, earned three degrees including my PhD at American University (1961), became a commissioned officer in 1950, and then served as Commandant of the USAF Bandsman School (Headquarters Command), Commander and Conductor of The Air Force Academy Band and finally as Chief of Bands prior to my retirement from the Air Force in 1964.

Those 22 years were filled with amazing challenges, exceptional friends for a lifetime, experiences beyond my wildest dreams, some fantastic music making and a tremendous amount of just plain old hard work.

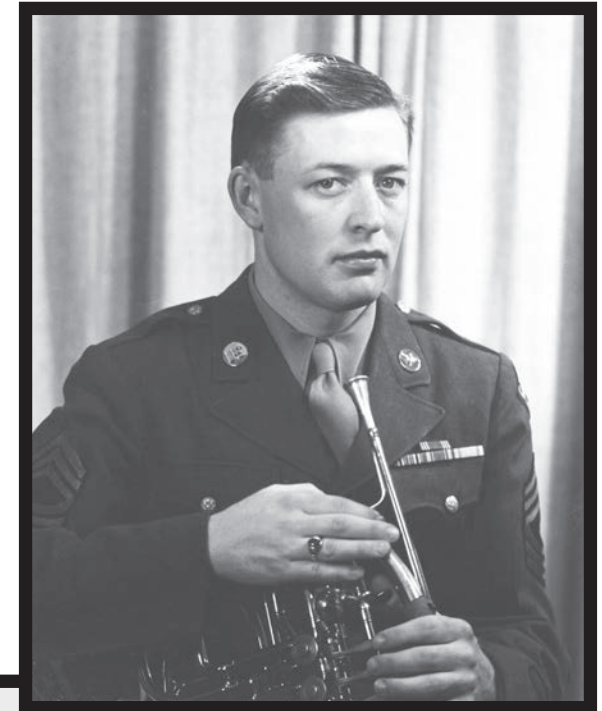
My fondest memory is of our tour of duty to England and France during World War II. From the time we boarded the Queen Mary on December 8<sup>th</sup>, 1944 to the time we returned on April 5<sup>th</sup>, 1945, the dangers were ever present, from German U-boats wanting to sink us, to buzz bombs, and the more than occasional strafings by German Messerschmitts. Despite the dangers, the appreciation and thunderous applause we received from the war weary British and French citizens is one memory that I will always treasure. We truly helped them to forget about the on-going war and lifted their spirits beyond measure.

The Air Force is a great way of life and I am forever grateful for all of the opportunities I had. Despite the dangers involved and the grueling travel schedule over the years, I would do it all over again in a heartbeat! Together we have been a part of the greatest military musical organization in history. Wishing all of you the very best in your respective careers as we enter the next phase of a proud tradition of being America's International Musical Ambassadors.

Sincerely,



Dr. Harold L. Copenhaver  
Major, United States Air Force (retired)



*CWO Harold Copenhaver,  
Elizabeth Ludwig-Fennell of  
Ludwig Music Publishing Co.,  
and Colonel George S. Howard.  
Betty was the first civilian  
woman to conduct The USAF  
Band during a rehearsal in the  
early 50's.*





## A Wartime Birth (1940-1945)

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During the fall of 1940 when “war fever” finally hit Washington DC, the leadership of the US Army reviewed the history books on “lessons learned” during World War I. Among the most significant line-items they noticed was the importance of military bands to the war effort. General John J. Pershing, Commander of all Allied Expeditionary Forces in Europe — stated “the band music of France and Great Britain was greatly superior to that of the United States” and he strongly believed “bands were essential to troop morale.” In 1919, Colonel Edward Lyman Munson, who developed the “field training manual for medical troops,” was promoted to Brigadier General and given the unprecedented responsibility to organize the Morale Section of the US Army. In the War Department’s “bible” on morale, General Munson noted a quote by Russian General Nikolai Petrovich Linevich, “Music is one of the most vital ammunitions of the Russian Army ... from music he (the Russian soldier) absorbs a magic power of endurance, and forgets sufferings and mortality.”

As early as 1938, two visionary leaders of the Army Air Corps (AAC) took the first steps necessary to construct the framework for an Air Force Band. AAC Generals Oscar Westover and Henry “Hap” Arnold recognized the value of music in the military and wanted a song to unify and lift the spirits of those serving in the Air Corps. Despite all of the bureaucratic “red tape” presented by the Army over funding issues, both were instrumental in getting a song written via a national “call for compositions,” sponsored by Bernarr Macfadden of “Liberty” magazine. After considering over 700 songs, a committee of “music minded” officer’s wives made their final determination and selected “The Army Air Corps” song, with music and lyrics written by the final contestant Robert M. Crawford. Like the Air Force itself, the song stood on its own, equal in drive and spirit to the other four service songs of the Army, Navy, Marines, and Coast Guard.

Now all that was needed was a truly great military band dedicated to performing “The Army Air Corps” with all the bravura and vigor the song demands. In order to do this and remain on par with the other premier service bands, the AAF band would require Airmen Musicians with all of the talent and skill necessary to represent the world’s greatest Air Force. With renewed invigoration, US Army leaders took a special interest in rebuilding the band program for the US Army and the Army Air Forces and so twenty prominent figures from the music industry were inducted into the US Army Specialist Corps, including: Howard Bronson, Glenn Miller, George S. Howard, Dr. Mark Hindsley, and Dr. Glenn Cliffe Bainum. Bainum would go on to serve as the US Army’s Chief of the Overseas Music Branch of Special Services and was responsible for all music in the European Theater of Operations. Bronson, Miller, Howard, and Hindsley were key figures in the formation and utilization of US Army Air Forces bands in support of the war effort.

*Major Howard Curtis Bronson  
Chief, Music Section,  
Special Services Division, US Army  
Washington, DC*



*Captain Glenn Alton Miller  
Assistant Special Services Officer,  
AAF Southeast Training Center, USAAF  
Maxwell Field, Montgomery, AL*



*Captain George Sallade Howard  
Executive Officer, Music Branch,  
Special Services Division, US Army  
Washington, DC*



*Captain Mark Hubert Hindsley  
Staff Music Officer,  
AAF Training Command, USAAF  
Atlantic City, NJ*



The United States Army Air Forces Band's official military life began with orders from the War Department, via AG 320.2, dated September 24, 1941. This document constituted and activated 59 Air Force Bands across the nation with an effective date of October 1, 1941. Of the 59 bands brought into existence only two\* of the original bands still exist today: Air Force Band, Langley Field, VA and Air Force Band, Bolling Field, DC.

Within two months following its official activation, The AAF Band would find itself in the midst of a war time mission. Highlights from 1941 to 1945 include:

- 1942 - designated as the "Official Band of the Army Air Forces"
  - presented its first "coast-to-coast" radio broadcast
  - welcomed its first collaboration with American composer, Irving Berlin
  - produced a short film, entitled "The Army Air Forces Band" with Bandmaster Lt Alf Heiberg
  - created and formed an official chorus
- 1943 - had its first performance with guest artist Marlene Dietrich
  - recorded its first 78 rpm recording, "Rhapsody in Blue"
- 1944 - was the first military band to fly to an engagement
  - went on its first international tour to Canada
  - as part of a "Lend-Lease" agreement, went on its second international tour via a deployment to a theater of war
- 1945 - documented its war time role via a second short film, titled "Serenade to Britain" with Capt George S. Howard, conductor
  - produced its first boxed set of Long Playing (LP) records, titled "The Army Air Forces Band"

By 1942, The AAF Band had the responsibility of providing music in support of Presidential Inaugurations, Presidential State Funerals, and honoring our nation's fallen Airmen at Arlington National Cemetery.

**Inauguration:** 1944, Because of the expense and impropriety of festivity during the height of war, Franklin D. Roosevelt's fourth inauguration was conducted without fanfare and only included an oath of office ceremony given on the South Portico of the White House.

**Funeral:** 1945, Per the Roosevelt family's wishes and in consideration of the men and women fighting overseas, there was no official "State Funeral." However, The AAF Band did participate in the funeral services for the 32nd President of the United States of America, Franklin Delano Roosevelt.

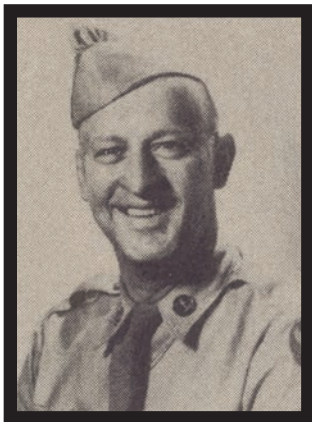
*\* Note: Air Force Band, Scott Field, IL was also listed on these orders; however, the original Scott Air Force Band moved to Camp Shanks, NY before heading to war-torn Europe, where it was re-designated as the 523rd Army Air Force Band. This band was deactivated in 1945, reactivated in 1947, and after several moves, eventually merged with the USAF Band of the Golden West, Travis AFB, CA.*



# SCHEDULE OF ACTIVATION

[a complete list of bands listed in the original order is available from the Historian, The USAF Band]

UNIT	STATION OF ACTIVATION AND PERMANENT STATION	SOURCE OF CADRE	CADRE
Air Force Band Langley Fld, Va.	Langley Fld, Va.	2d CA, HD of Chesapeake Bay	1 Stf Sgt 1 Sgt 1 Corp 1 Pvt 1 cl
Air Force Band Scott Fld, Ill.	Scott Fld, Ill.	11th Inf, Ft. Custer, Mich.	1 Stf Sgt 1 Sgt 1 Corp 1 Pvt 1 cl
Air Force Band, Bolling Fld, D.C.	Bolling Fld, D.C.	5th Engrs, Ft. Belvoir, Va.	1 Stf Sgt 1 Sgt 1 Corp



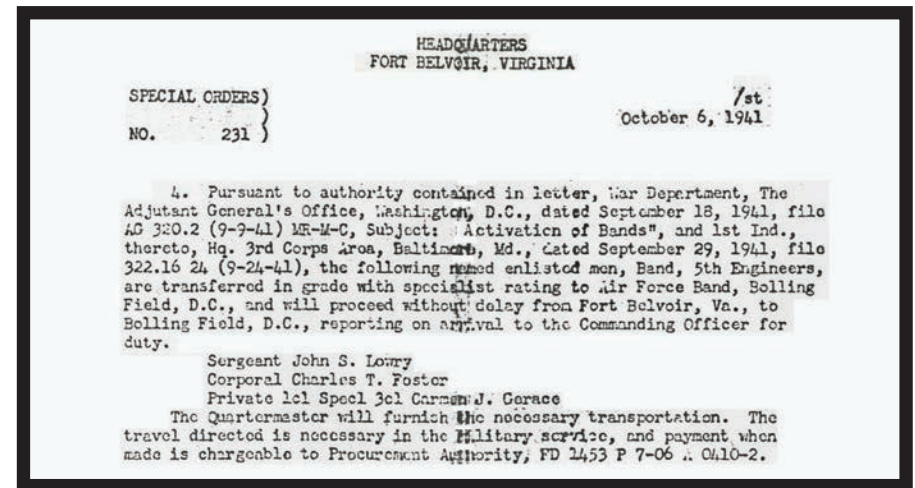
Sgt John S. Lowry,  
saxophone



Corp Charles T. Foster,  
clarinet



Pvt 1 cl Carmen J. Gerace,  
piano





*Almost a month later, on November 8, 1941, Special Orders No. 262 was published, appointing Staff Sergeant Alf Heiberg to the rank of Warrant Officer (junior grade) band leader.*



*The first known picture of The AAF Band, dated 1941 (courtesy of Charles Foster)*



*MSgt John Lowry, The Band's first Drum Major (1941-1959)*





*Marching the troops from the chow hall to the flight line. John Lowry is the Drum Major and CWO Alf Heiberg is on the right. Photo shows the old Bolling buildings used as quarters.*



*Rifle inspection, conducted by Sgt Don Hammond in front of The Band's building just north of building P-20, Bolling Field, DC. Note the large tent in the background to the left. Several of these tents were put up as temporary lodging quarters for the band.*



*1942, Saturday morning inspection*



# Flyers of United States Army Now Sprout 'Wings of Song'

Times Herald  
MONDAY, JULY 11, 1942



NO FATTIES—Lieut. Alf Heiberg leads slim and athletic members of his own instrument outfit in the Army Flyers.

## How the Colonel's Sax Sired a Band

By GLENN DILLARD GUNN

THIS is the story of that music, "the most, and, in point of personal merit, the most famous band in the armed services of the nation. It is the Army Air Force Band, a six months' old infant that, like the fabled goddess of wisdom who sprang full-grown from the brow of Zeus, cracked her skulls to emerge, today, most talked-of musical unit in the Army. It was inspired by Col. Leslie P. Holcomb, who wanted a symphonic group with whom he could play the saxophone. It was realized by Lieut. Alf Heiberg, who argued that this was the time to get a group of young and famous musicians into the assembly which he now conducts. Like most good stories, it began long ago, when Colonel Holcomb was a plebe at West Point, or perhaps even before that. For Colonel Holcomb was one of those numerous lads for whom the writing was an irresistible temptation. His father wanted him to play an instrument as his heart was filled with jangling harmonies.

In time, according to Mrs. Holcomb, this became a fixed idea. All through his plebe year at West Point his passion for the saxophone waxed immense. "Dad, when I had sax, he said home, an obvious injustice which he corrected as soon as he became a yearling. He recommended a sax from a plebe and kept it for six months, practicing whenever possible. Finally, his father relented, or he saved his allowance. One way or another he became the possessor of a saxophone. Before he graduated from West Point, in 1923, he was leader of the cadet orchestra. "The band at West Point is composed of enlisted professionals,"

COMMISSIONED, the young lieutenant promptly got himself a horn and took her on the conventional honeymoon; only this was not a conventional honeymoon because the saxophone waxed along and the conventional honeymoon waxed and waned. He had and he had watched her in the courtyard, he saw her with strange mingling as he stood in the square each day for an hour or so and with mailed sabots, and trod on his saxophone. She had and yet to the saxophone with the marriage vows, but why the concert? That, dear reader, was for artistic reasons. The playing wanted to hear himself and recognize surfaces of the wall angle gave him back the tone he heard and the saxophone, and



FATHER OF THE BAND—Mrs. Leslie P. Holcomb, Colonel Holcomb, and Corporal Victor Hugo, the band's mascot and no respecter of rank, listen to the concert.

He really found which of them were of draft age and had the rating 1-A. To them he spoke somewhat as follows: "These fellows want you. The men he wants, he takes. But he has no objection to making use of your talents. You can serve the nation better playing by the Army Air Force Band than by getting yourself shot." Then he probably quoted to each prospective candidate the words of the eminent Russian General Limanovich on the value of music in war. "Music is the soul of the Russian, the Greek, the German, the Italian, and the Chinese feel about war and music, so the instrument has single interest. It is as follows:

"Music is one of the most vital amenities of the Russian Army. Without music the Russian soldier would be dull, cowardly, and inefficient. From music he absorbs a magic power of endurance, and forgets suffering and mortality." The American Army subscribes to Gen. Limanovich's statement, and it is quoted by Brig. Gen. Edward Lyman Hession in the War Department's "Guide to Music."

Colonel Holcomb is too energetic to accept such an irritating condition passively. He promptly engineered the appointment of Lieutenant Heiberg as leader of this band of three, and together they set about making it a band of 60, which it now is.

Lieutenant Heiberg is a slim, 6-foot-2, Norwegian, from Minnesota, and who ever told you that the Norwegian are strong in the back but not alert to all the possibilities of a given situation. He is to be believed. The lieutenant has ideas about the standards of talent and maintenance of physical stamina, and of appearance of bandmembers which he promptly put into practice. For example, he wants a marching band and will have no fat men in it. With a wastefulness of his own broad approach, he demands the same of his recruits.



MORE EXPERTS—Sergeant Charles Arlington and Sergeant Joe E. Stabile, who left Dick Stabile's band to play for the Army Flyers.



EXPERT—Gordon Pells, who used to play for Stabile's and Oswald's in the Philadelphia Orchestra, is glad to be a member of the Army Air Force Band.

go home to mother. She stayed with him. He had only to teach them a few repetitions and fit them into his new ensemble. This he has done with the smooth skill of a veteran.

SPEAKING of repetitions, Heiberg she has ideas. He says that symphonic and operatic excerpts belong to the great orchestra and by no chance to the wind ensemble. "If you want to hear Wagner, go to the Water Gate," he says, being more interested in alliteration than accuracy, since there has been no Wagner at the Water Gate this season, and a good thing, too. But when he has played the legitimate excerpts of the military band, the great Sousa marches—and how his band can play them!—the gay, swinging, martial ones, the sentimental ones to exploit a mellow trombone, or that passion of Colonel Holcomb's youth, the saxophone, he picks a group

of 25 Sousa swingsters from the ensemble, features them as a dance band. Presumably, but realistically, he suggests that 90 per cent of the American public would rather hear Broadway's barely over-accommodated version of Negro music which may be true, but is a cultural estimate as depressing as the quarter million illustrations discovered by the draft. However, there is this consolation. You can't fight, or even march to swing and long-jockey, and no Broadway specialist in Negro music will compose a second Battle Hymn of the Republic!

However, Lieutenant Heiberg may be the jangling-jockey monkey, but only for novelty numbers, and none of these can be really amusing. He and the band do a quaint and colorful version of "Toby-Wally-Doobie" that's as funny as Charlie Chaplin, and wonder. So Colonel Holcomb got his band and is happy. He could bring his saxophone and sit in on rehearsal. He could fore-

The Band's humble beginning was covered in the Sunday, July 12, 1942 edition of the Times Herald and was written by Washington DC columnist Dr. Glenn Dillard Gunn.

Colonel Leslie P. Holcomb arrived at Bolling Field to be the Air Base Group Commander in the Fall of 1941. Col Holcomb, a graduate of West Point and a saxophonist himself, was excited about the possibility of coming by from time to time to sit in with The Band's sax section. Much to his dismay upon his arrival, the band only had three enlisted members. The article stated, "His saxophone made four in a completely unsatisfactory ensemble." Contrary to the popular impression that The Band had its start with a "saxophone quartet," The Band actually started with a mixed ensemble comprised of a saxophonist, a clarinetist, and a pianist (Colonel Holcomb's saxophone made four).

Fortunately, Colonel Holcomb found this condition "too irritating to accept passively," and so he promptly engineered the appointment of Lt Alf Heiberg to be the leader of "this band of three." By the time Colonel Holcomb left, the band was up to 60 members, which included six saxophone players from America's leading dance bands.

Note newspaper photo bottom left of Colonel Holcomb, his wife, and Corporal Victor Hugo (a French Poodle and The AAF Band's first mascot) enjoying the band in an outdoor concert.





*Dance Band No. 1 and Dance Band No. 2  
(photos from Frank Botsford's WWII scrapbook)*



*By March 27, 1942, The AAF Band was up to 36-members. Photo taken on the Bolling Field flight line.*







*In September of 1942, American composer Irving Berlin visits The Band to coordinate a project for raising funds for the war effort. Pictured are from left to right (L to R), Major Hugh R. Parks (the band's first commanding officer), an unknown drummer, Alf Heiberg (the band's first conductor), and Irving Berlin.*

*The AAF Band's first coast-to-coast broadcast was on the NBC radio network and originated in The Band's studio, Bolling Field, Washington, DC. Lt Alf Heiberg is shown "conducting" with NBC commentator Howard Chandler Christy (seated, white suit and tie), Senator Claude Pepper (D-FL), and Mrs. Pepper.*



*First "road tour" en route to a concert and parade in Staunton, VA in March 1942*



*First coast to coast broadcast on N.B.C. Howard Chandler Christy in white suit and Mrs. Claude Pepper, wife of Senator.*





*44-member AAF Band in front of Building P-20 on Bolling Field, circa 1942*





*1942 - As a means to identify band members in uniform and to establish a new distinctive Air Force image, Captain Heiberg and supply Sgt Walter Cox designed a new cap emblem using gold-toned pilots' wings with a superimposed silver-toned music lyre. Unlike the other major service bands which were already firmly established, The AAF Band's beginning with only three enlisted members meant that it could recruit an entire band made up of our nation's most elite musicians.*



*1942 - Enlisted Company Grade Service Cap, brown with band insignia. The insignia consists of a gold-toned lyre surrounded by a wreath and was a carry-over from the US Army Band.*



*1970s - Women's Air Force Service Cap with blue enlisted band and silver insignia (courtesy of Karen Erler)*



*1980s - Enlisted Service Cap, blue with silver band insignia; still in use today*



*1970s - Enlisted Service Cap, black with pewter-toned band insignia*





*By diligently taking a census of the draft eligible musicians who comprised our nation's major symphony orchestras and top dance bands, Lt Heiberg was able to recruit our nation's finest musicians and, as a result, achieved a unique blend of sound ... and so was born, as noted in several leading newspapers, The AAF Band's reputation as "the most versatile band in our nation's military." Captain Heiberg's choice in what to record first was the quintessential and distinctly American composition, "Rhapsody in Blue" by American composer George Gershwin and as arranged by another gifted American composer, arranger and pianist, Ferde Grofé.*



*On July 1, 1942, in the gardens of the National Red Cross Headquarters in Washington, DC, the government formally launched its campaign to recruit more nurses and to support American Red Cross benefit drives. Pictured here is First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt and Lt Alf Heiberg standing in front of the band. Mrs. Roosevelt appreciated the rousing music performed by the new Army Air Forces Band and was frequently overheard referring to The Band as, "my favorite."*





*The AAF Band, at 54-members, led by Lt Alf Heiberg, on the US Capitol Grounds in Washington DC, October 1942.*





1942 - The first Army Air Forces Band Chorus, SSgt Harold Tharp, Director



The AAF Band in a "Motorized Parade" on DC's Pennsylvania Avenue in August 1943. Concerts and parades were both popular ways of supporting the war bond drive.



*In April of 1943, The AAF Band presented an outdoor concert at Washington's National Airport in nearby Arlington, VA which featured German motion picture star and singer Marlene Dietrich. Marlene was a strong supporter of the US War Bond effort and may well have been The Band's first Guest Artist.*

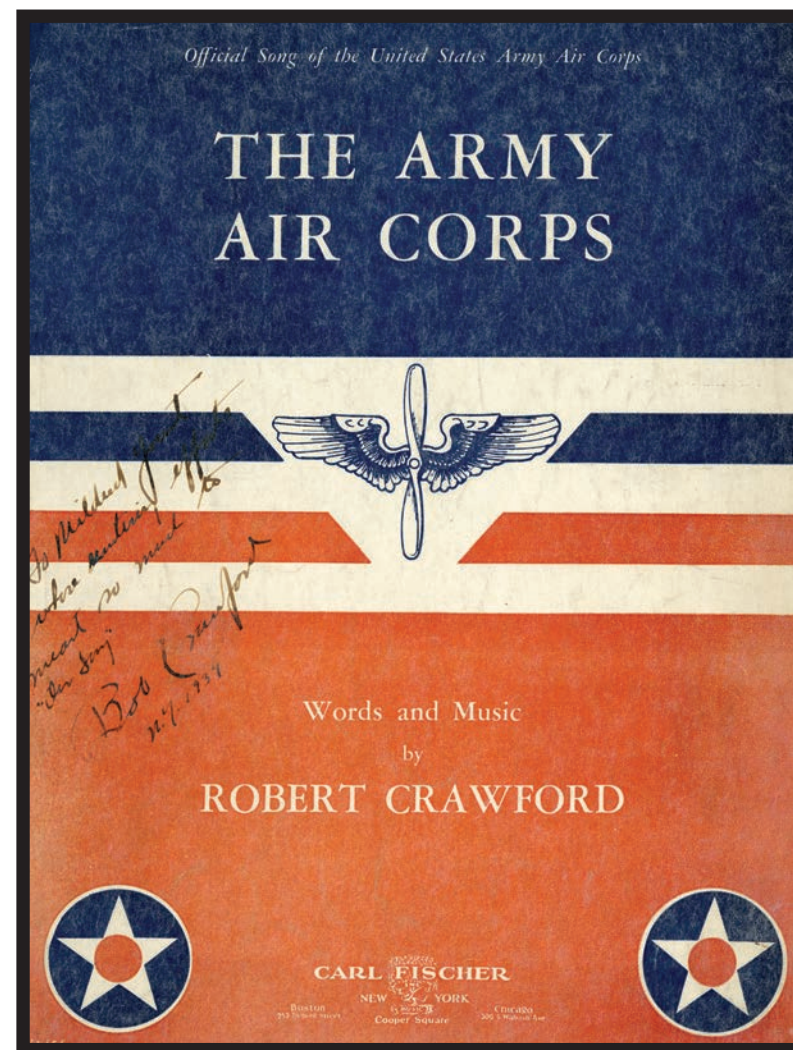
*Dietrich was noted for her humanitarian efforts during World War II, housing German and French exiles, providing financial support, and even advocating for their US citizenship. For her work improving morale on the front lines, she received honors from the US, France, Belgium, and Israel. In 1999, the American Film Institute named Dietrich the ninth-greatest female star of classic Hollywood cinema. (This LP was a gift from Marlene Dietrich to The USAF Band, circa 1952)*







Capt Robert Crawford (L), composer of "The Army Air Corps" poses with Capt Alf Heiberg (R), founding conductor of the AAF Band. Crawford, known professionally as "The Flying Baritone," sang his song with The AAF Band on one of its national NBC broadcasts in the fall of 1943.



1939 - This autographed first edition of "The Army Air Corps" was presented to Mildred Yount, the committee chairwoman for the AF song contest (photo courtesy, The National Museum of The USAF)





*Near the end of 1943 and as the 77-member AAF Band was nearing its authorized strength of 100, this is the last known group photo of The Band taken with Capt Alf Heiberg and Major Hugh Parks in front of Building P-20.*



ARMY AIR



The U. S. Air Force  
March

The Army Air Corp  
March

Solo Cornet  
(Conductor)

Music by  
MOORE  
ALL  
ITCH

1st CORNET

Tempo di Marcia







*Piccolos out front in The AAF Band's performance of John Philip Sousa's "The Stars and Stripes Forever" during a concert in front of the Parliament Building in Ottawa, Canada on May 8, 1944. This was a portion of a nine-day tour of Canada and was The Band's first international tour. This tour also represented the first time that any military band in the world had flown to a performance.*

*The "Five Kernels of Korn" performing for an audience on the Canadian tour. Sgt Harry Rantsch (the group's creator and former member of The Glenn Miller Band) standing on the chair, would always gain the absolute rapt attention of the audience. This was The AAF Band's first "specialty" performing "unit-within-a-unit."*



*The AAF Band posing for a publicity photo on the flight line at Bolling Field in Washington DC with its new commander and conductor, Captain George S. Howard. Just behind them are two B-25 medium bombers.*



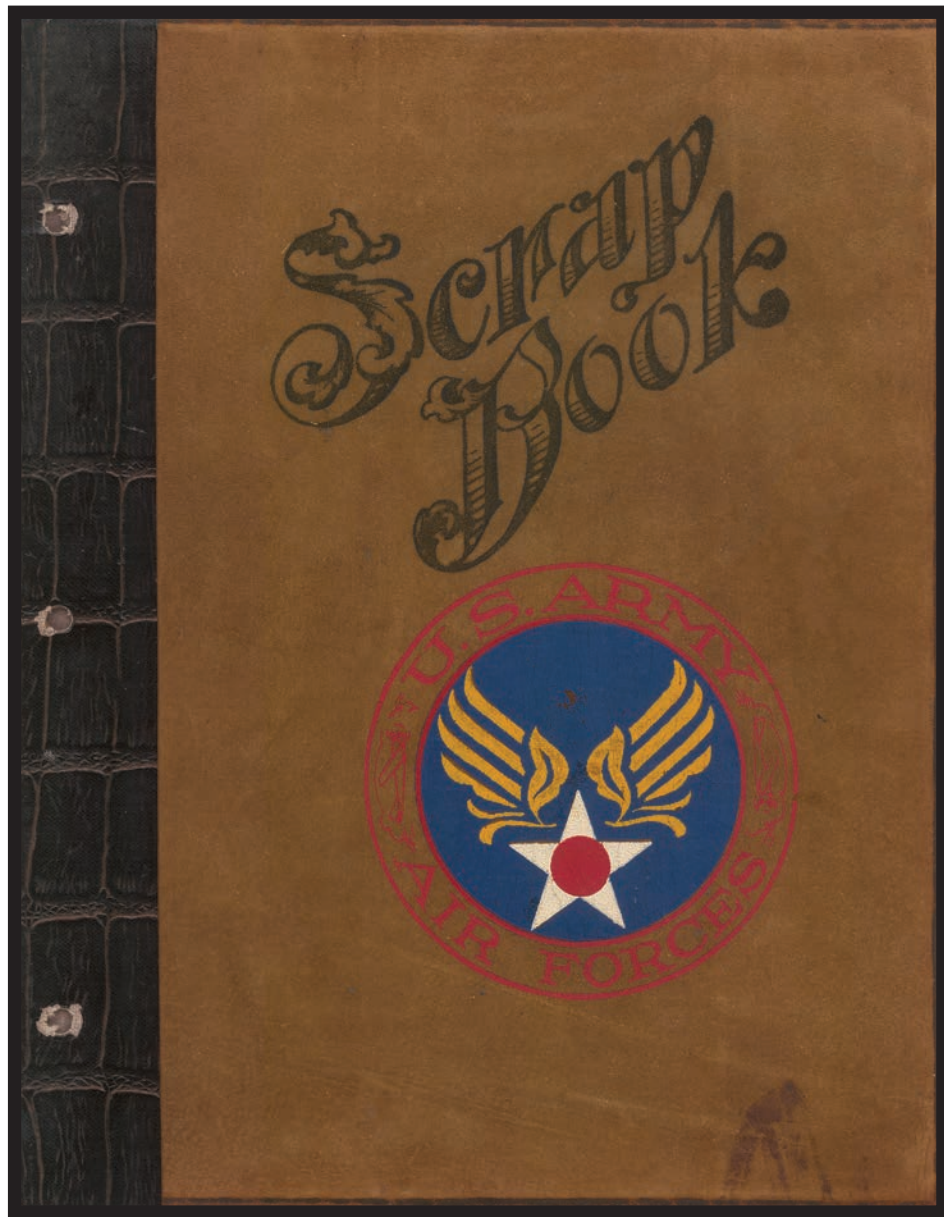


*Photo taken on August 13, 1944 in front of General Henry "Hap" Arnold's residence on Fort Myer, VA. While photographically it is not the best image, it may well be one of the most significant photos in The Band's history because standing on the porch with General Arnold was Sir Charles Portal, the British Air Marshal. The two men created the scheme for an exchange which brought the Royal AF Band to the United States for a tour while sending The AAF Band to Great Britain and France for the same purpose, thereby planting the seeds needed for The AAF Band and Singing Sergeants to eventually become known as "America's International Musical Ambassadors."*





The AAF Band was one of two Washington-based military bands to deploy overseas during World War II. During this time, The Band, led by Captain George S. Howard, participated in a theater of foreign combat operations in England and France from December 5, 1944 to April 5, 1945. The following photos include the front cover and excerpted pages from MSgt Ivan Genuchi's historic tour diary:



THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

TO MEMBERS OF THE UNITED STATES ARMY EXPEDITIONARY FORCES:

You are a soldier of the United States Army.

You have embarked for distant places where the war is being fought.

Upon the outcome depends the freedom of your lives: the freedom of the lives of those you love—your fellow-citizens—your people.

Never were the enemies of freedom more tyrannical, more arrogant, more brutal.

Yours is a God-fearing, proud, courageous people, which, throughout its history, has put its freedom under God before all other purposes.

We who stay at home have our duties to perform—duties owed in many parts to you. You will be supported by the whole force and power of this Nation. The victory you win will be a victory of all the people—common to them all.

You bear with you the hope, the confidence, the gratitude and the prayers of your family, your fellow-citizens, and your President—

*Franklin D. Roosevelt*

KEEP THIS CARD <sup>100</sup>  
SLEEPING QUARTERS

PROMENADE DECK  
STARBOARD GALLERY

SECTION P-17





The first concert in London's fabled Royal Albert Hall on December 23, 1944. Posing in front of the large poster are (L-R) Sergeants Carl Costenbader & Paul D'Antuono (cornets), Charlie Ford (clarinet), Harold Copenhaver (horn) and Ivan Genuchi (cornet). This turned out to be the first in a series of Royal Albert Hall programs presented by The AAF Band throughout the tour.



LONDON DAILY TELEGRAPH, JAN. 25, 1945.  
 "The ensemble was faultless, and the playing extremely brilliant."

LONDON STAR, JAN. 25, 1945. "Rhythm at its best. The USAAF Band has a vital rhythm unknown in British Bands."

SOUTHERN DAILY ECHO, JAN. 26, 1945. "The USAAF Band is one of the greatest bands in musical history."

PROGRAMME	
GOD SAVE THE KING.	
1. Overture—Il Guarany..... Gomez	7. Salute to the Services ..... arr. Gentile
2. American Patrol ..... Meeham	8. Il Lacerato Spirito ..... Verdi
3. Love Enchantment ..... Arthur Pryor	Vocalist : S/SGT. GLENN DARWIN.
Trombone Soloist : T/SGT. GORDON PULIS.	9. Rumanian Rhapsody ..... Enesco
4. American Salute ..... Marton Gould	10. Three Little Messerschmitts ..... Beittel-Layton
5. Valse Clintine ..... James Wilber	11. At the Gremlin Ball ..... Hay
Saxophone Soloist : CPL. JAMES WILBER.	12. El Relicario ..... Padilla
6. Russian Sailor's Dance ..... Gliere	13. American Fantasy ..... Victor Herbert
STAR SPANGLED BANNER.	



NOTTINGHAM JOURNAL, FEB. 10, 1945.

"Masters of music. The tenderest ear could find no fault with the quality of their playing."

Saturday, Feb. 10

Left for Uxbridge early this morning. It was a beautiful day. Four of us guys played pinochle most of the 125 odd miles. At one place along the way we saw Army trucks packed side by side along the road for three miles. There must have been at least 1500 trucks in that bunch. Evidently they were waiting to be shipped away. We ran into a hail storm just before getting back to Uxbridge. I saw a hailstone about  $1\frac{1}{2}$  inches in diameter. At one place along a narrow road we met a truck that had a canvas waving loose. It caught the rear-view mirror on our truck and broke it. A piece of the glass hit our driver in the ear lobe and bled like mad for a little. What that would have done if it had hit his eye or knocked him out and piled us all up! Got to Uxbridge about 5 PM.

Sunday, Feb. 11

Today makes 3 years in the Army for me. It seems like half my life. This morning about 5 AM we were all awakened when 3 V-bombs came down. The third one rocked our building like mad and really made a noise. The concussion from them is terrific. A fellow told us that he has seen children killed by V-bombs with not a mark on them

*Harold Tharp (the first director of the AAF Band's chorus), The Elizabeth Tower (the name of the famous tower of Parliament, aka "Big Ben"), and Ivan Genuchi.*



*From the time of their arrival to the time they departed, members of The AAF Band were almost always greeted by a Pipe Band.*





15  
Reserved  
GOLDEN DIVANS

Row **E**

Seat No. **6**

GUEST  
of the  
N.A.A.F.I CLUB  
Nottingham  
8/2/45

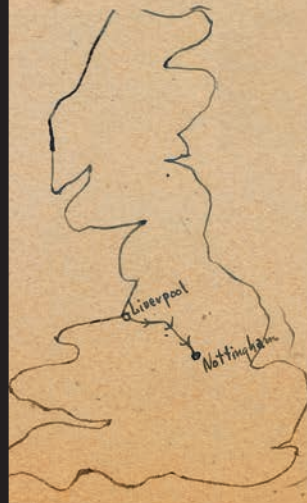
The RAF's "Best" "T" papers:

LIVERPOOL POST, FEB. 8, 1945. "Their playing is not merely sensational, it is musically a thrilling experience."

LIVERPOOL ECHO, FEB. 8, 1945. "Unsurpassed for sheer virtuosity."

The guys coming out of the mess hall - we asked what was for lunch, "Hot dogs & sauerkraut". We whooped for joy. They looked at us like they thought we were from Mars!

↳ The meal

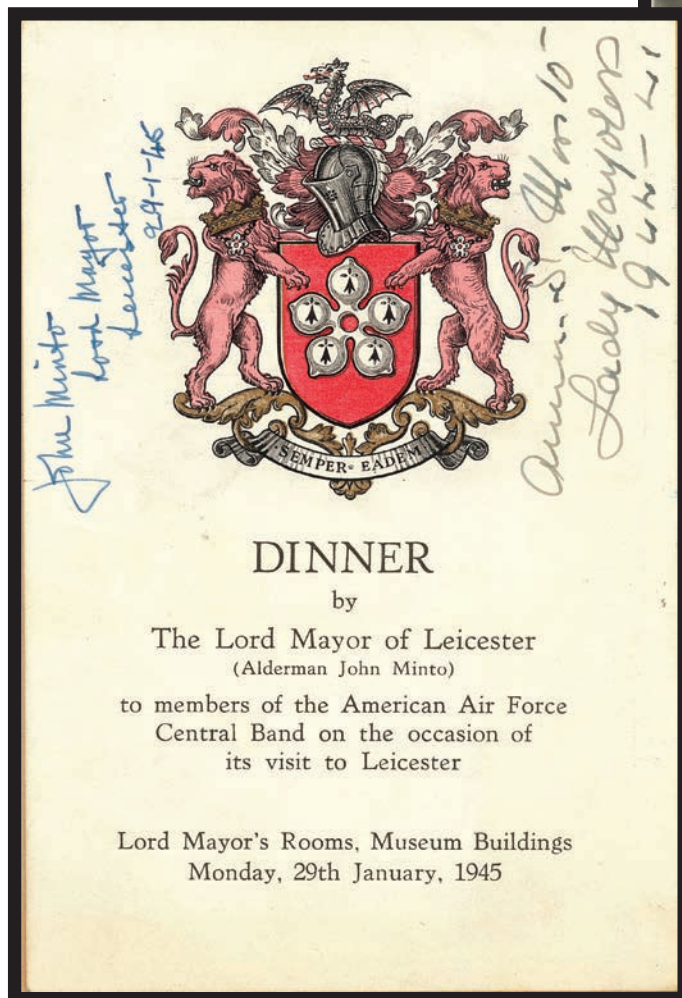


Wednesday, Feb. 7  
Left for Liverpool around 9 AM. We went first to an AAF station and were shown around. On the way we had to go thru a 2-3/4 mile tunnel under the Mersey River. This AAF station is one of the largest here in England--a big supply depot. We got our dinner and boy, was it good. The guys there said it was a stinking meal but it tasted swell to us. We got our PX rations too, then we had to hurry back to Liverpool Philharmonic Hall and rehearse. Some more shots of the movie were taken during rehearsal. We were served our dinner in the same building. This is only a 5 year-old hall and very beautiful, the best we have played in yet. Our concert was transcribed tonight for a broadcast later. During intermission we had tea and cakes and after the concert the Mayor also gave us a little party and took a few pictures for the papers. Coming back to our Station one of the busses ran out of gas and the guys had to carry their stuff about 2 miles.

1945, Finally reaching an AF Base in England, AAF Band members looked forward to having a good meal. As Harold Tharp and Ivan Genuchi approached the mess hall, they asked the GIs coming out, "what's for lunch?" to which they grumbled, "hot dogs and sauerkraut." The AAF Band members "whooped for joy" while the onlookers "looked at them as if they were from Mars!" Dr. Harold Copenhaver, a French Horn player with The AAF Band at the time, offers an explanation for the onlookers surprised reaction, "I remember eating Brussels sprouts, beets and bread without any salt in it for 45 days — the same meal every day, every meal!"



On extremely rare occasions, The AAF Band was treated to fine dining, reminiscent of the post-Edwardian era scenes depicted in the popular PBS mini-series *Downton Abbey*.



On January 30, 1945, the Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress of Leicester, England, invited some members of The AAF Band to a banquet given in the Band's honour. Pictured sitting (L to R) are Modesto De Santis, Lady Mayoress, the Lord Mayor, and Edward Halzedahl; standing (L to R) are Oscar McGregor, Dominic Passantino, Leo Lakritz, Paul M. D'Antuono, Albert Circosta, and Albert Goepper.



*Journal entry March 11 and 12, 1945, the US Army Band "Pershing's Own," The Army Air Forces Band, and the Major Glenn Miller Army Air Forces Overseas Orchestra all intersected in France on these two dates.*



Sunday, Mar. 11

Got up at 6:30 this morning to leave for Paris. The drivers got lost taking us to the airport so we didn't get to take off until about 11:00. It took us about an hour and a half to go to Paris, 25 minutes of that was spent over the Channel itself. We landed at an airfield in the city limits. Boy, had that thing been bombed. It had been wrecked from one end to the other. Several German planes and pieces were still laying around where they had been bombed and burned. We were driven by bus into a big hotel where the Red Cross had taken over--the Grand Hotel. I had a single room to myself. It must have been quite a place before the War. It was cleaned by civilians. Looked around downtown Paris tonight and went to bed fairly early. The U.S. Army Band played a concert tonight at one big auditorium but I didn't go.

Monday, Mar. 12

Went up to the Folies Borgere this afternoon. Cost 140 francs, about \$2.80. It was the best burlesque, by far, that I have ever seen. Had to cut the show a little early as we had to get ready for a concert tonight at another Red Cross Club. Just as we were playing one of the hot swing tunes, who should walk in but a bunch of Glenn Miller's Band. They had come over to listen to the concert. They certainly have a wonderful group.





The  
Eiffel  
tower,  
Paris



A  
wrecked  
GERMAN  
Tank  
on  
road to  
Cambrai

Tuesday, Mar. 13

We had to go clear up to Cambrai, about 110 miles from here and 20 miles from the Belgium border to play a concert tonight. We left about 1:30 and got there at 6 PM. Those GI drivers really rolled those trucks. Half the trip was the roughest I ever rode and the whole trip was the wildest I ever took. Towns wrecked by War were in evidence and burned



Wednesday, Mar. 14

Didn't get up until about 11 this morning. Just messed around town most of the day. At 6 o'clock we had to go to a base at St. Germaine and play a concert. Got a bunch of old letters that were written about Dec. 10. Don't know where they have been all this time.

Thursday, Mar. 15

We were supposed to go back to London today but were held over. At 10 AM we went out to the Arc D' Triomphe to take some pictures. Got quite a crowd that expected something, I guess. They looked a little disappointed when we just took a couple shots and came back to the hotel. Went on a sight-seeing tour this afternoon. We listened to Glenn Miller's band after I got back. They played in our dining room. We talked with some of them and found out they were making some recordings at 10 tonight so we went over then too. Gosh, but that band is good. I got a big bang out of them.

26



Cope and Ivan  
This is the picture  
that was like the  
other one without  
the GI in front

One of the first "photo bombs"  
by an American GI

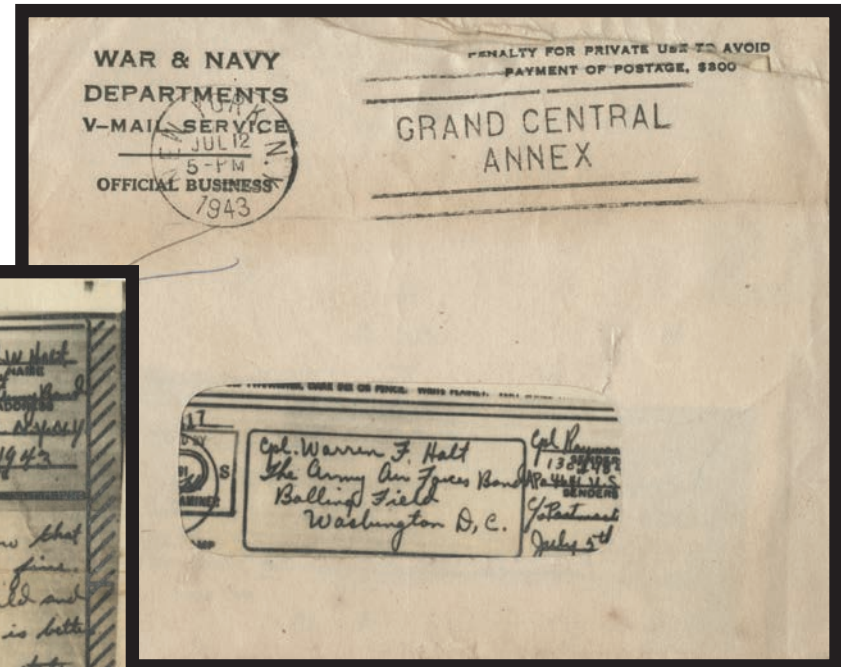




Thursday, April 5  
 We left Ft. Hamilton about 2:30 and caught a 4:50 train into Washington, getting to Bolling Field about 10:30. I never knew they both were so good-looking before even at night. The guys were like kids to get home again. We left just 4 months ago today, but it seems we have been gone a year.

- Finis -

Ivan's diary entry of Wednesday, March 14 complaining about receiving his mail more than three months late was not unusual. The War Department's solution to this problem was V-Mail. Short for Victory Mail, it was a hybrid mail process used during World War II as the primary and secure method to correspond with servicemen and women stationed abroad (and vice versa, to mom and pop back home). To reduce the cost of transferring an original letter through the military postal system, a V-mail letter would be censored, copied to film, and printed back to paper upon arrival at its destination. This system cut down delivery time from a month or more (as in the case of Ivan's mail) to a record delivery of 12 days. However, the cost was a whopping \$.25 cents.



317  
 PASSED BY  
 1943  
 ARMY EXAMINER  
 CENSORS STAMP

Col. Warren F. Halt  
 The Army Air Forces Band  
 Bolling Field  
 Washington D. C.

Col. Raymond W. Halt  
 1324482  
 NAME  
 The Army Air Forces Band  
 BOLLING FIELD  
 WASHINGTON D. C.  
 SENDER'S ADDRESS  
 Postmaster (please)  
 July 5th 1943  
 DATE

Dear Brother,  
 you probably know by now that I landed safely and everything is going fine. I am really getting to see some of this world and am enjoying every minute. The food here is better than anything I ever had back in the states at in Army mess hall.  
 They are really keeping us busy. We play Ruelle at 5:15 A.M. and about two concerts a day, then a parade then we play retreat at 5:45 P.M.

Sample V-mail found in the collection of Corporal Warren Halt. Warren's brother Ray Halt was serving with the US Army Band "Pershing's Own" which also deployed to the ETO during WWII.



# AAF Band Returns From Overseas Tour

## Makes Musical History In England and France

Despite air raids, V-bombs, the hardest winter in 15 years, and four broken-down buses piloted by four uncertain drivers, the AAF Band's good-will tour of Great Britain was a complete success.

Bolling Field personnel who said goodbye to Capt. George S. Howard and his 85 musicians in December have been listening to accounts of the lad's adventures abroad ever since the night of April 5th, when the travelers returned to their home barracks laden with souvenirs and 'rave' notices from British newspapers.

### Versatility Scores

Reported Captain Howard: 'This has been a history-making tour and has definitely succeeded in creating an even better understanding between the U.S. and her British Allies'.

The secret of the Band's classic triumph, according to the Captain, was due to the fact that 'this band being able to play all types of music, has given Englishmen a new conception of America's musical accomplishments.'

While the RAF Band was aiding the U.S. Treasury Department in staging bond rallies in most of the 48

states, the Americans were playing to packed houses in England for the RAF Benevolent Fund. Such phrases as 'there is no greater band in the world' became the daily diet of readers of the Empire's papers as the Yanks continued their victorious tour of the island. Critic after critic applauded the band, and civic

(Continued Page 10)

### NO PLACE LIKE HOME!



Cpl. Warren F. Halt, a flutist with the AAF Band, becomes re-acquainted with his infant son. For Mrs. Halt and other musicians' wives, last week's homecoming was a long-awaited event.

### AAF BAND - Contd. from p.3

delegations clamored for repeat engagements.

As it was the trip was extended from its original 60-day duration to an additional eight weeks. Not all of this time was spent in England, for the band played three engagements in Paris and then journeyed to within 15 miles of the front lines to play for the boys of the 9th Air Force.

Miscellaneous highlights: They were playing 'Three Little Messerschmitts' in a British town one night. Just at the point where the musical instruments imitate German planes, real enemy fighters bombed and strafed the opposite side of the street!

Evidence of the Yanks' tremendous drawing appeal is gathered from the fact that in 16 of 18 British cities, all seats were sold out a week ahead of time. In the other two places, capacity crowds greeted them.

Believe It Or Not: Until they got home, the lads had never heard 'Rum and Coca Cola' or any of the other current American song-hits.





*The AAF Band posing at the Arc de Triomphe in Paris, France on March 15, 1945.*





*Frank Botsford performed on both baritone and trombone with the WWII AAF Band. His estate donated two of his scrapbooks, diary, uniform coat, and a detailed map of the band's travels throughout the British Isles during the war.*

*Frank Botsford's map, marking the concert locations with numbers and mode of travel. Note the detailed view of the city of London, dots = travel by bus and truck; dashes = travel by train. (The map is courtesy of the Botsford Estate)*







1944 - Army Air Forces Wool Coat  
(long term loan from Jari Villanueva)

Army Air Forces Band  
WWII Uniform (On  
temporary loan from  
Jari Villanueva)



Detailed view of WWII AAF Band uniform



Army Air Forces Band Music Pouch: The pouch was originally intended to carry ammunition, The AAF Band modified the design and used it to carry up to 250 pages of march-sized sheet music. (donated by AAF Band member Norman Irvine, baritone horn)







*The AAF Band's second international tour was made during World War II and included appearances in 35 cities of England, Scotland and France. Their concerts were occasionally performed with the grim accompaniment of buzz bombs and Messerschmitts. Pictured here is Green's Playhouse, Glasgow, Scotland, at the time it was the largest cinema in Europe and still wasn't large enough to accommodate all those who wished to attend. Reports came in from Aberdeen, Scotland, that that city practically threatened succession when it discovered that their city was not included in the itinerary.*





## The AAF Band's Most Notable Musicians During the War Years



One of the most distinguishing factors that has influenced the appeal of AF music has been the original compositions and brilliant transcriptions by The Band's Music Production Staff. Pictured here are three of the AAF Band's composers & arrangers whose music was featured during the War Years (1942-1945): (L – R) Will Bietell, Mike Gentile, and Lou Busch.



Prior to the war, clarinetist Robert Marcellus performed with the National Symphony Orchestra (NSO). A year later, he enlisted into the AF where he performed with The AAF Band. Following the war, he performed as principal clarinetist with the NSO and was later appointed principal clarinet with the Cleveland Orchestra at the invitation of George Szell. During his tenure there, he was clarinet department head at the Cleveland Institute of Music and would later become the professor of clarinet at Northwestern University.

Gordon Pulis, the first in a long line of virtuoso trombonists The USAF Band has had over the years.

Pulis was assistant principal trombonist with the Philadelphia Orchestra prior to the war. From 1943 to 1945, he was principal trombonist with "The AAF Band" and after the war, he was principal trombonist with the New York Philharmonic.







*Victor Babin, piano soloist with the AAF Band can be seen and heard on the band's historic video, "Serenade to Britain."*



*Vitya Vronsky and Victor Babin formed the duo piano team of Vronsky & Babin, once described by Newsweek magazine as "the most brilliant two-piano team of our generation." Vronsky & Babin were introduced to American audiences through their recordings of the piano music of Sergei Rachmaninoff, who became their friend and mentor. Despite a break from performance during World War II during which Babin served in The AAF Band and Vronsky worked with war casualties in Washington, DC hospitals, the duo still managed to perform over 1,200 concerts in North America alone. In 1961, Babin became Director of the Cleveland Institute of Music, where both he and Vronsky served on the Institute's faculty.*






*Arthur Berv came from a family of great horn players and was already a legendary figure before joining The AAF Band. Arthur had made a name for himself performing with the NBC Symphony and he influenced generations of students through his teaching at the Manhattan School of Music. He performed as principal horn with four of our nation's leading ensembles, including the NBC Symphony under Arturo Toscanini, the Philadelphia Orchestra, The Army Air Forces Band, and the Cleveland Symphony.*

*Throughout his various careers, Arthur Berv remained on the NBC staff and performed on the Tonight Show with Steve Allen under music director Skitch Henderson. His television credits include performing as principal horn on two of our nation's most popular television series, including: Victory at Sea, with music composed by Richard Rodgers, and the original Star Trek television episodes, featuring music by Alexander Courage.*



**Meet The Band**



**S/Sgt. Harry Rantsch**

Pictured above you see Glenn Miller's ex-arranger and first trumpet player. Some of you will remember Harry as the leader of one of the most popular swing groups in the Armed Forces, THE FIVE KERNELS OF KORN, others of you may remember this dapper chap as the composer of 'Washington Melodrama' and 'We're On Our Way,' or as the director of our glee club. A lot of you may remember Harry as the 'creme de creme' of promoters, but most of us remember him as one of the finest fellows we ever met.





*MSgt Glenn Darwin, distinguished American Baritone, belongs to the relatively small group of singers equally at home on the opera stage, in the concert hall, in the radio studio, or on the Broadway stage. He had a striking combination of voice and musicianship – of personality and acting ability. Glenn received his formal music education at the Eastman School of Music and at the Juilliard School. Prior to joining The AAF Band, he performed with the Metropolitan Opera Company and traveled as a soloist throughout the United States, Canada and Europe. Pictured here following a command performance at the White House for President Harry S. Truman and General Henry "Hap" Arnold.*

*At the end of the performance, President Truman and General Arnold were so thrilled with The Band's performance that they announced they would shake hands with every member of "the mighty Army Air Forces Band." [The use of the adjective "mighty" would be echoed by another American President years later.]*







*At 92, Dr. Harold Copenhaver is the last surviving member of the original AAF Band which deployed to the ETO during World War II. Copenhaver, who retired as the Dean of the College of Fine Arts at Arkansas State University, spent more than 20 years with the Air Force music program. He performed and conducted concerts on three continents and in more than 20 countries. He served as a musician, Commandant of The Bandsman School, Commander and Conductor of the Air Force Academy Band in Colorado Springs, CO, and as Chief of Bands and Music at the Pentagon, in which he was responsible for a total of 75 AF bands.*



*Captain Howard's first recordings included a 5-record set with the same music performed by The AAF Band during its deployment to the European Theater of Operations during World War II. WOJG John Barrows served as the assistant conductor and SSgt Glenn Darwin as baritone soloist. These recordings were sent to radio stations for nationwide broadcasting in order to promote public understanding and support for the war effort and to keep the American public informed on how their sons and daughters were doing overseas.*



The end of World War II marked the subsequent disbandment of the "Official Band of the Army Air Forces." By October of 1945, ninety-five of The Band's members received their discharge papers, donned civilian clothes, and resumed their positions with America's top orchestras and leading dance bands. Thus, with only five men remaining, the word "finis" was seemingly written to the remarkable record of this amazing organization.

Most of the musicians who served in the Army Air Forces Band during the war years were virtuoso musicians before they came in. All of them left as standard bearers of musical excellence having dedicated their immense talents (honed by decades of musical training and experience received prior to enlisting) to help win the war. In addition to returning to the civilian world as performers, most of them also went on to teach in our nation's premier music institutions. A short list of the known schools includes:

Curtis Institute of Music, Philadelphia, PA  
Julliard School, New York, NY  
Manhattan School of Music, New York, NY  
Peabody Conservatory-Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, MD  
Shenandoah Conservatory, Winchester, VA  
Berklee College of Music, Boston, MA  
Mannes College-The New School for Music, New York, NY  
New England Conservatory of Music, Boston, MA  
Eastman School of Music-University of Rochester, Rochester, NY  
Cleveland Institute of Music, Cleveland, OH  
Oberlin Conservatory of Music, Oberlin, OH  
Jacobs School of Music-Indiana University, Bloomington, IN

University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, Urbana, IL  
University of North Texas College of Music, Denton, TX  
Northwestern University, Evanston, IL  
University of Cincinnati, Cincinnati, OH  
Florida State University, Tallahassee, FL  
University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI  
Yale University, New Haven, CT  
Temple University, Philadelphia, PA  
University of Southern California, Los Angeles  
University of Texas, Austin, TX  
Carnegie Mellon University, Pittsburgh, PA  
Harvard University, Cambridge, MA



## The Golden Age of Radio (1946-1949)

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Within six months following the rapid demobilization of the US military, a "new" Air Force Band had taken shape. General Arnold had taken a personal interest in The Band's future and was determined to have it restored. This was especially true in view of the news that The Army Air Forces would soon become a separate service. Thanks to the coordinated efforts of Major George S. Howard, Lt Col Alf Heiberg and General Carl Spaatz, the newly constituted group was rebuilt in short order and would go on to merit even more wide-spread acclaim. As a result of an immediate tour in the United States, The Band received plaudits ranging from the Chicago Herald-American's "The nation's finest band," to the San Antonio Express' "It is the best band we have ever heard." Highlights during "The Golden Age of Radio" include:

- A new name in keeping with the establishment of a separate Air Force, as "The United States Air Force Band"
- A new concert uniform compliments of Mr. and Mrs. Cornelius Whitney Vanderbilt
- The establishment of the Band's first 90-member Symphony Orchestra
- The Band's Glee Club was renamed The Singing Sergeants
- A command performance at the White House featuring Kate Smith
- The Band's first fully staged production of The Mikado (Gilbert & Sullivan) at the Watergate Barge, Washington, DC
- Major Howard was assigned additional duty as Chief of the Music and Radio Production Branch at AAF Headquarters in the Pentagon
- The AAF Band, at least for a short time, was officially titled, "The AAF Band & Radio Production Unit"
- Major Howard was instrumental in securing commissioned officer ranks for all commanders and conductors of Air Force Bands

While Howard was the titular office head, the real work actually fell on the shoulders of three outstanding officers, producer-director Capt Robert "Bob" Keim, scriptwriter Capt Mark Meranda, and an exceptionally talented young announcer, Lt Cass Bielski. When Cass arrived at Bolling in 1946, the primary radio program was the weekly "This Is Your Country" series on the Mutual Broadcasting System (MBS), a show which saluted a different state each week, had a run of 18 weeks and was hosted by a civilian announcer. That last practice ended at the conclusion of the series when Cass became The Band's primary announcer. Then there was "On Wings of Song" which began its 13 week run on the MBS, and of course had a "killer" schedule — a five days a week live broadcast from The Band's studios at noon which was based on a United Nations theme. "Flight Into The Past" debuted on January 4, 1947 on MBS for a 26 week run. It was so popular that it was extended to January of 1948. The program was initially carried by 68 MBS stations. By the time it was over, 268 stations featured it.

The next series included broadcasts featuring the Air Force Symphony Orchestra and the Singing Sergeants in live programs from both the Department of Commerce Auditorium (now the Departmental) and George Washington University's Lisner Auditorium. Thus began the "Music in the Air" series on the Continental FM Network in 1947. Cass and The USAF Band hit the "big time" on January 18, 1948 with the first airing of "The Air Force Hour," a groundbreaking show which was carried eventually by 308 network stations, plus worldwide by the Armed Forces Radio Network. "The Air Force Hour" eventually transitioned, first into "Serenade in Blue" and then "Serenade in Stereo." The recruiting program lasted well into the 70s, making the combined radio series the longest running and most successful military radio program in history.

**Inauguration:** 1949, The USAF Band participated in its first inauguration parade for the 33rd President of the United States of America, Harry S. Truman





*Early photo from DAR Constitution Hall, dated March 27, 1946. Note the way the "lamps" were hung from the ceiling. Capt George S. Howard is on the podium. Assistant conductor WOJG Hugh Barrows is standing at the far left and baritone soloist and concert moderator Sgt Glenn Darwin is standing at the far right.*





No sir this is not just another ordinary march down Pennsylvania Avenue. This is your United States Air Force Band, its fine musicians who are answering your questions in this issue, lead by their eminent director Lieutenant Colonel George S. Howard in the Inaugural Parade January 20, 1949. This occasion is the supreme symbol of America's greatest freedom, the right to vote. Cherish that freedom, use it wisely, guard it well.





*"The Pennsylvanians" – One of the many opportunities to connect with the public when touring in the different states is to send a group photo of all the members from the respective states on the itinerary to the local newspapers. This is one of the first such photos taken on March 16, 1946. Band members in this photo include: Top row (L to R): Louis C. Kriebel, Julias Karner, William Ferguson, Unknown, Unknown, George Dietz, and Samuel Kurtz; Front row (L to R): Russell Mitchell, Glenn Valmont, Unknown, Nick Rossi, Joe Dituna, and General Carl Spaatz; and Col George S. Howard in the center.*



*Parade in Pottstown, PA June 1946*



# MY MISSOURI

GEO. S. HOWARD.  
ARR. F. KEPNER

Flutes Piccolo

Oboes English Horn

Clarinets 1-2-3

Bass Clarinet

Bassoons

1st Alto

2nd Alto

Tenor

Baritone

SAXOPHONES

Horns

Trumpets

Trombones

*Rit.*

*A*

*Soli*

*(tr.)*

*(tr.)*

**This is Your Country** was the first in a series of broadcasts featuring The AAF Band. The shows were designed to introduce the American public to the music of the different states. Capt Howard and Fred Kepner composed and arranged "My Missouri" specifically for President Harry S. Truman. The State of Missouri broadcast record was presented to President Truman by Charter Heslep, MBS Washington representative. Pictured (L-R) are Merle Jones, manager, WOL; Capt George Howard, Commander and Conductor of The AAF Band; President Truman; Mr. Heslep; General Carl A. Spaatz; and Brig Gen B. M. Hovey Jr., Commandant of Bolling Field.





*Major George Howard on the podium during a brief break in a broadcast concert in Chicago, IL on August 19, 1946. This was one of the "This Is Your Country" broadcasts carried over Chicago's WGN & nationally on the Mutual Broadcasting System.*



*(L-R) Capt Bob Keim, singer Kate Smith, President Harry S. Truman, and Major George S. Howard on the White House grounds the day that Kate Smith and The AAF Band premiered "The Red Feather Song," a song composed by Major Howard, with lyrics by Capt Keim.*





*"Red Feather Rally" in front of the Treasury Department in DC. The AAF Band is seated, with chorus on the left. Standing on the steps is a college cadet band.*





*The War Department Certificate of Appreciation is awarded to Edgar Kobak, president of the Mutual Broadcasting System, by General Carl Spaatz, Commanding General of the Army Air Forces, "for cooperation in presenting the AAF's sustaining network program, 'Flight Into The Past' over the Mutual Network since January 4, 1947." Pictured from L to R, are Captain Bob Keim, General Carl Spaatz, Capt Mark D. Meranda, Mr. Robert Swezey, Lt Cass Bielski, and Major George S. Howard.*



*1947 – The USAF Band's arranging staff, (L to R) William Pursell, Fred Kepner, and John Leffler*



*Modeling the new summer dress uniform, from L to R are Ken Eshelman, Ivan Genuchi and Louis Kriebel. The uniforms were bought and paid for by Mr. and Mrs. Cornelius Vanderbilt Whitney.*



*The sax section wearing their new summer dress uniforms at the Capitol Steps concert on July 11, 1948.*

*Rehearsing for a performance featuring soprano Eleanor Vanderbilt Whitney (wife of Cornelius Vanderbilt Whitney, then Assistant Secretary of the Air Force) in The Band's studio. According to Lt Col Howard, "she had a charming personality and was sought after in all echelons of Washington society because*



*of her love and support of the arts, especially music." The aria she chose to sing was "One Fine Day" from Puccini's "Madame Butterfly." Her performance at Lisner Auditorium with The USAF Orchestra was a huge success for her, the orchestra, and the United States Air Force.*



*Fully staged production of The Mikado (Gilbert & Sullivan) at the Watergate Barge in Washington DC, June 10, 1949 featuring the Singing Sergeants and the Air Force Orchestra. The stage was taken up by the set, designed by "Red" Brower, and was only used for stage action. A separate barge was floated between the stage and the shore for the orchestra. WOJG Robert L. Landers conducted and Capt Robert Keim was the producer.*







*The USAF Drum & Bugle Corps officially became a part of The USAF Band in late 1950. This photograph was taken on October 22nd, when the Corps appeared in Griffith Stadium, Washington DC prior to a Washington Redskins NFL football game. The Drum Major is Sgt Tony Lombardo.*



*1949 - The USAF Drum and Bugle Corps with 58-members, a year before they were assigned to The USAF Band.*



# America's International Musical Ambassadors (1950-1963)

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From 1950 to 1960 under the sponsorship of the Department of State, The Band went on nine international goodwill tours, presenting concerts throughout Europe, Asia, Latin America and the Middle East. The enthusiasm of the audiences and the interest with which the performances were received was without parallel at that point in history.

Not only did entire cities turn out "en masse" for the concerts, but on two occasions more people attended the performances than lived in the cities in which they were given. Attendances were so sensational that they gained for The USAF Band the reputation of being the "all-time prize crowd-gatherer," for it established attendance records in 40 of the 47 countries in which it appeared.

A few of the most notable of these attendances (at which The Band was the sole attraction) are: 60,000 in Santiago, Chile; 70,000 in Beirut, Lebanon; 80,000 in Naples, Italy; 130,000 in Berlin's Olympic Stadium (where an additional 50,000 had to be turned away); and a world record of 200,000 at Manila's Luneta Park. Sandwiched in between these foreign tours were semi-annual concert tours in the United States.

During the years 1950 to 1964, The USAF Orchestra recorded over 346 16" Transcription LPs for the original Serenade in Blue (SIB) Radio Broadcasts. The SIB recordings featured The USAF Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Captain John Yesulaitis, and the Singing Sergeants, conducted by Captain Robert Landers.

These broadcasts also displayed the virtuosity of The Band's robust composing and arranging staff including: Fred Kepner, Henry Gass, Robert Cray, Sammy Nestico, Ivan Genuchi, Alfred Lessner, William Pursell, Charles Granofsky, and Floyd Werle. In addition, many of The Band's iconic soloists are featured in this series, including Sammy Nestico (trombone), Tommy Morgan (harmonica) and vocalists Glenn Darwin, Ivan Genuchi, William DuPree, and Bill Jones.

Other highlights from 1950 to 1963 include the addition of several new ensembles:

- 1950, The Airmen of Note, under the direction of Fred Kepner, was formed to carry on the Major Glenn Miller tradition
- 1951, The US Air Force Drum and Bugle Corps and Pipe Band was reassigned from the Air Police Squadron to The USAF Band
- 1951, The 543rd WAF Band was activated at Lackland AFB, TX with an eventual name change to The US WAF Band
- 1952, Airmen Third Class Martha Chave was the first woman to be accepted as a full time vocalist into a premier service band
- 1953, The USAF Band was the first military band to perform at the prestigious Mid West Band and Orchestra Clinic
- 1954, The Strolling Strings was formed as a separate unit with twelve violins taken from The USAF Symphony Orchestra
- 1957, The Four Saints vocal and instrumental quartet was created and accompanied by the Top Hats
- 1961, The Griffiths Brothers were formed from The Singing Sergeants and featured as a vocal trio

**Inaugurations:** 1953, Inauguration for the 34th President of the United States of America, Dwight David Eisenhower  
1957, Second inauguration for the 34th President of the United States of America, Dwight David Eisenhower  
1961, Inauguration for the 35th President of the United States of America, John Fitzgerald Kennedy

**State Funerals:** 1963, The Band's first official State Funeral in Honor of President John Fitzgerald Kennedy













*July 10, 1951 – Domplatz, Salzburg, Austria – A portion of the audience estimated at 6,000. The following day The USAF Band and Singing Sergeants attracted 7,500 for a concert at the same location.*



*MSgt Glenn Darwin, baritone soloist, and The USAF Band performing in London's Royal Festival Hall. This was one of three "Festival of Britain" concerts The Band and Singing Sergeants presented throughout London between June 9 and 12, 1951.*



MAIDEN VOYAGE  
A WOMEN'S JAZZ BAND  
LOS ANGELES,

WAR DEPARTMENT FIELD MANUAL  
FM 22-5

LEADER  
MUSY  
DRILL

THE US WAF BAND

Waltham  
Waltham, Massachusetts

In Appreciation

This certificate is presented to the  
**United States Air Force**  
**WAF Band**  
a token of appreciation from the  
people and citizens of the city of Waltham  
on the occasion of the band concert given  
at Waltham University on Monday,

F. Rhodes





# First Bandswomen Invade Former Male Career Field

Another new field thought to be reserved for males has been successfully invaded by women at Lackland.

The formation of the 543rd Air Force Band, the first all WAF band in military history, will be the next step. The move means that Women of the Air Force have proved that they can successfully fulfill the duties of bandsman by actually trying out alongside seasoned male musicians.

At the start of the test program, WAF enlistees with instrumental experience were selected after interviews and auditions by the Lackland music supervisor, Chief Warrant Officer Samuel Kurtz. The selected WAFs were placed in the charge of Sgt. Mary I. Divine, designated as band first sergeant after her successful completion of the Air Force Band School.

As part of the Air Force indoctrination training, the WAFs were rehearsed and drilled to the marching and music requirements of a military unit. They were then placed in a regularly functioning base band. At times the 40 piece band had nearly one third WAF members. It was trained under the direction of Warrant Officer Vernon Proctor.

A week ago the mixed band of males and WAFs officiated at a formal retreat ceremony at the headquarters of the 3700th WAF BMTG. It was believed to have

been the first time in military history that woman musicians performed as regular members of a military band.

Since then the mixed band has been tried out at base parades, retreat ceremonies and other special occasions. The performance was pronounced satisfactory by General Lawrence.

There are no plans for the maintenance and use of mixed music units at Lackland beyond the training stage. The problem of billeting and administering the WAFs separately from the band squadron has proved something of a handicap in the packed school schedule.

As sufficient numbers of WAFs are selected and trained to military musicianship standards, they will be assigned to a basic all WAF band unit.

By means of this musical indoctrination the WAF Group at the Gateway to the Air Force expects soon to have its own all woman band.

22 MAR 1951

*Col Mary Jo Shelly,  
Director of WAF (L)  
and Col Howard (R)  
welcome newly minted  
WAF Band, Commander  
and Conductor,  
Captain MaryBelle  
Nissly into the USAF.*



*The US WAF Band  
(1951-1961)*





*WAF Band members A1C Vonda Peterson and A2C Barbara Faut pose with a veteran of WWI at Tucson, Arizona's VA Hospital.*

*WAF Officer's Uniform (Nissly Hat courtesy of B. J. Krady; Thomas WAF Uniform courtesy of Lt Col Audrey Thomas, Deputy Commander, The US WAF Band)*



*A3C Martha Chave, The USAF Band's first female vocalist and the first woman to be assigned to a premier service band as a vocalist. Pictured here with (L to R) Col Robert Miller, Deputy Commander, MPPS, First Army; John Cashmore, President Borough of Brooklyn, NY; vocalist A3C Chave, and Col Howard. They met just prior to a concert by The Band featuring Martha as soprano soloist, at Prospect Park on August 20, 1952.*



345 248 - SERENADE IN BLUE  
ARR. F. KERNER

Flutes Piccolo  
Oboes English Horn  
Clarinets 1-2-3  
Bass Clarinet  
Bassoons

SAXOPHONES  
1<sup>st</sup> Alto  
2<sup>nd</sup> Alto  
Tenor  
Baritone

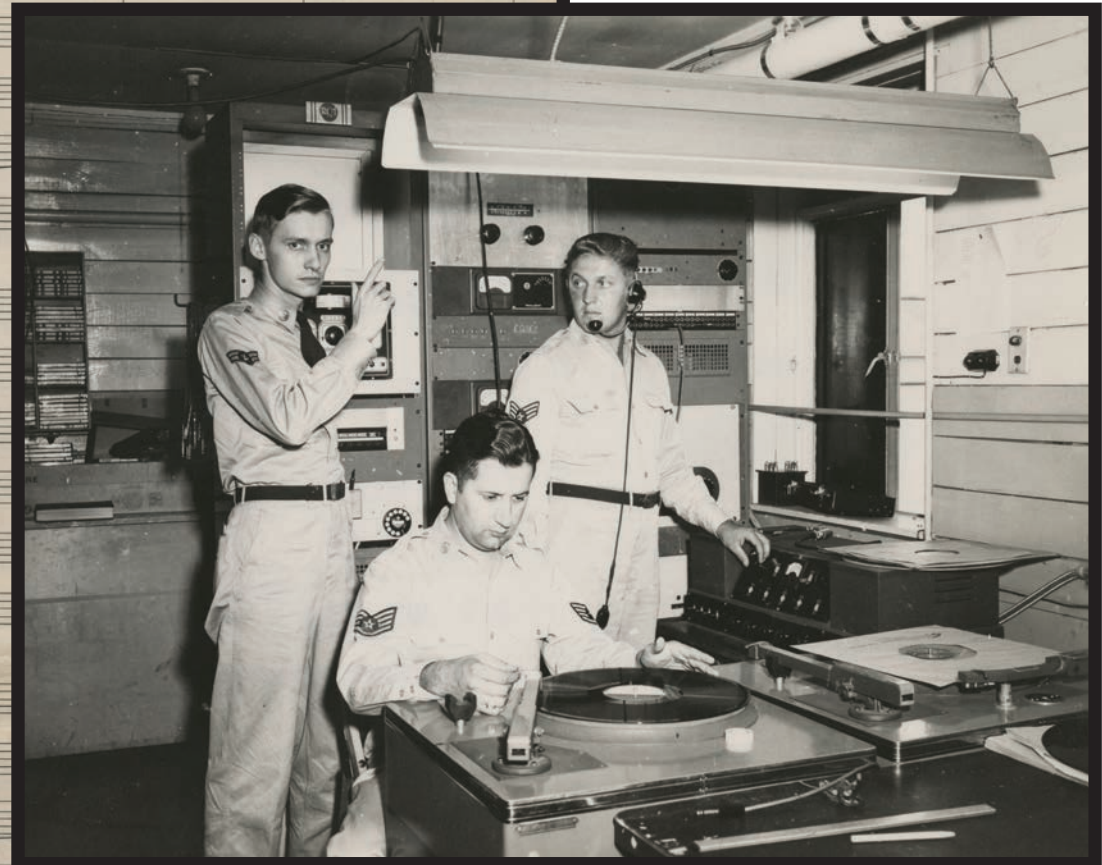
Horns  
1 & 2  
3 & 4

Trumpets  
1 & 2  
3 & 4

Trombones  
1 & 2  
3 & 4

Violin-1  
Violin-2  
Violin-3  
Viola  
Cello  
Bass

The Band's audio shop on July 31, 1952. When The Band recorded, the sound went via cable from The Band's studio over to the Audio Shop which was located in Building 425. The sound was captured on one of the



large recording lathes (in front of the audio engineer seated) and a master vinyl disc was cut directly from the transmission.





*The first known photo of the Strolling Strings taken at a luncheon in Baltimore, MD on March 5, 1954.*



*On July 14, 1954 The USAF Band and Singing Sergeants presented their second consecutive concert in Paris to an overflow audience during an expanded European tour.*





*View of The USAF Band performing at the Michigan State Fair, Detroit on September 5, 1955. In the 40s through the mid-60s The Band played a number of county and state fairs in the US and several different "exhibitions" (similar to large regional fairs) throughout Canada. While these performances reached countless thousands, they were always close to vendors like the one in the photo, which usually proved distracting to both the musicians and the audience.*





LEOPOLD STOKOWSKI

11th January 1954

Col. Howard  
Air Force Orchestra and Band  
Washington D.C.

Dear Col. Howard

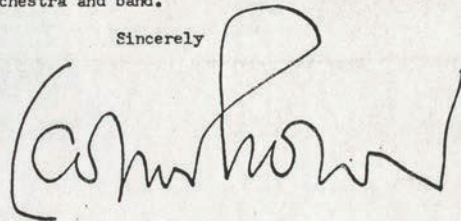
I was deeply impressed by your orchestra and band. Not only by their skill and fine playing, but with the way they combine both military discipline with the flexibility, individuality and impulsiveness of the artist. I cannot imagine how you have achieved this, but it seems to me that it is ideal. The string players were all first class, and the military band equally fine. I particularly like the combining of the cellos and basses with the tubas and baritone. I think this is the only place in the world where that is done, and it is a great idea because they blend perfectly and give fullness of tone to each other. I cannot imagine your kind of work being better done than you are doing it.

We are looking for the scores of the band music, and will send them to you soon.

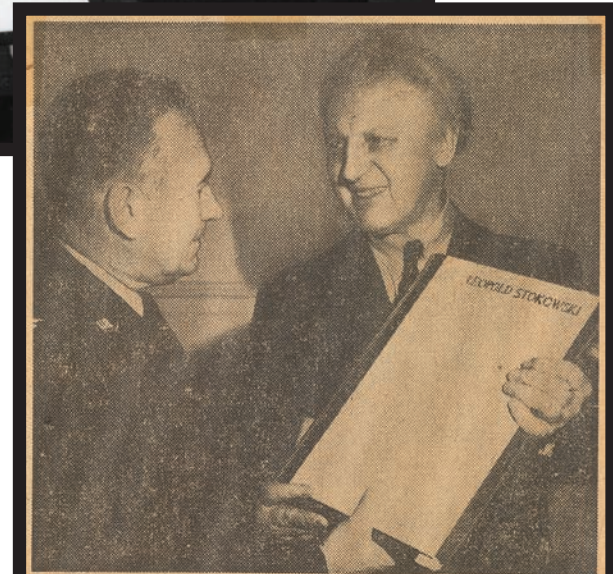
Separately I will send you the score of Bach WIR GLAUBEN, which I have orchestrated for band, but with which I am very dissatisfied. If you like, we can work on this together the next time I am in Washington, and I will try to improve the orchestration, which is out of balance in some places. I think all we need to do is to add instruments at certain places where some voices are relatively weak.

Looking forward to the pleasure of hearing you conduct again your splendid orchestra and band.

Sincerely



10 Gracie Square  
New York City 28



The Washington Post

**A Gift From a Guest**

Col. George S. Howard, conductor of the Air Force Band, accepts a portfolio of music from Leopold Stokowski yesterday, as it was announced the famed orchestra leader was giving his extensive collection of band arrangements to the Air Force. Later, Stokowski guest-led the Air Force Band.

Leopold Stokowski, one of the leading conductors of the early and mid-20th Century, presenting his personal collection of band arrangements to Col Howard in 1954. Stokowski is best known for his long association with the Philadelphia Orchestra and for appearing in the Walt Disney film animation, Fantasia.





*Fifth international tour to Europe, North Africa, and the Near East – while performing at Wheelus AFB, Libya, The Band was presented with a camel by several Arab sheiks who enjoyed The Band's performance. Due to clearance issues with customs, the camel had to remain behind; however, the saddle was allowed and is stored at the National Museum of The USAF, Wright Patterson AFB, OH.*





Sgt Tommy Morgan was the featured harmonica soloist with The USAF Band from 1954 to 1958. This military promotional photo was taken on May 23, 1955. After serving in the Air Force he returned to Hollywood and resumed his career as a successful studio musician, performing the harmonica parts for numerous motion picture and television soundtracks.





## Stand Alone Specialty Ensembles



*Four Saints (1957-1961)*



*The Griffiths Brothers (1961-1962)*



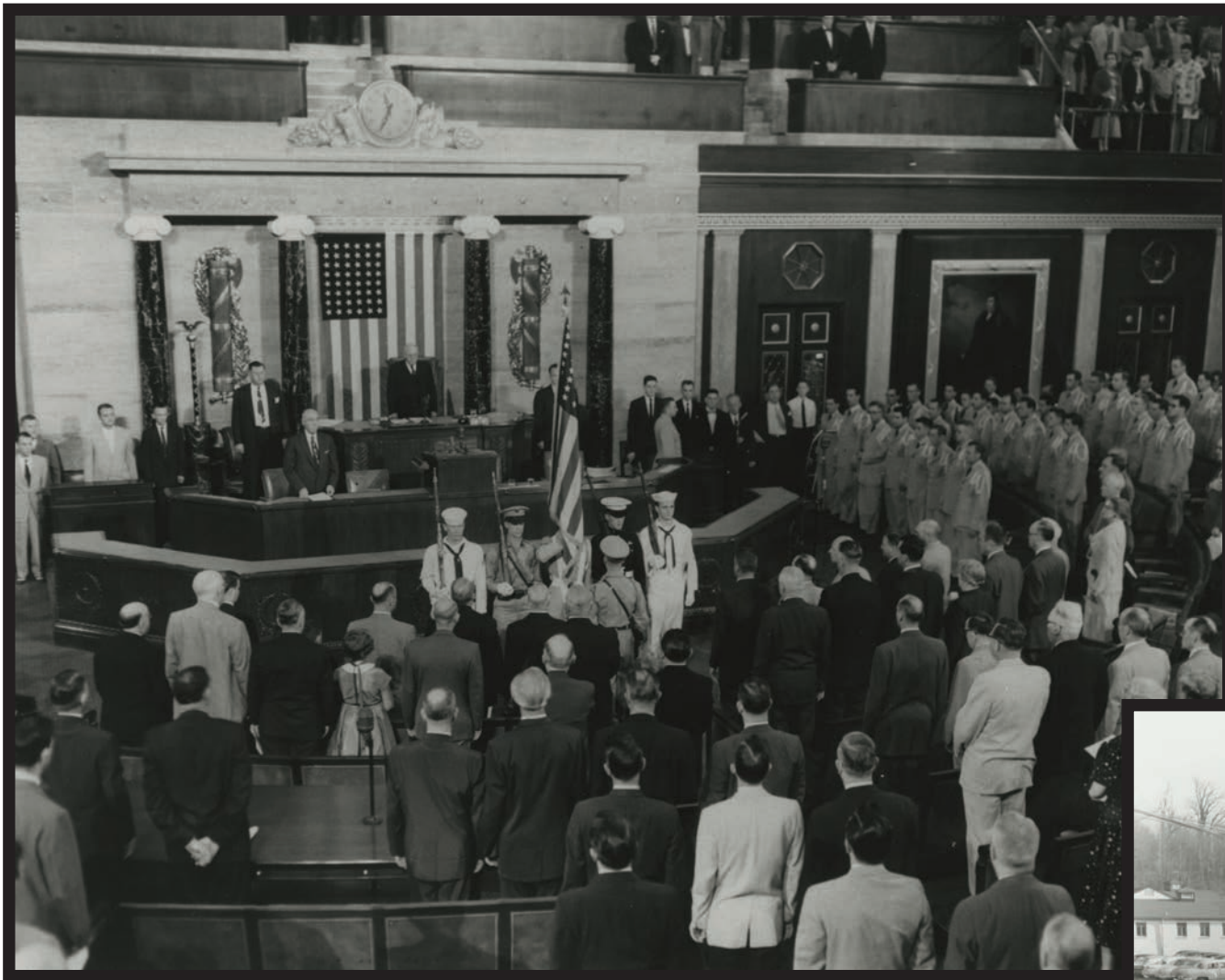
*The Top Hats were formed to accompany the Four Saints; however, they stayed on awhile after the Saints left.*





*The Singing Sergeants on the Ed Sullivan Show "Toast of the Town" (CBS), August 1955. Capt Robert L. Landers, the conductor, is front row left.*



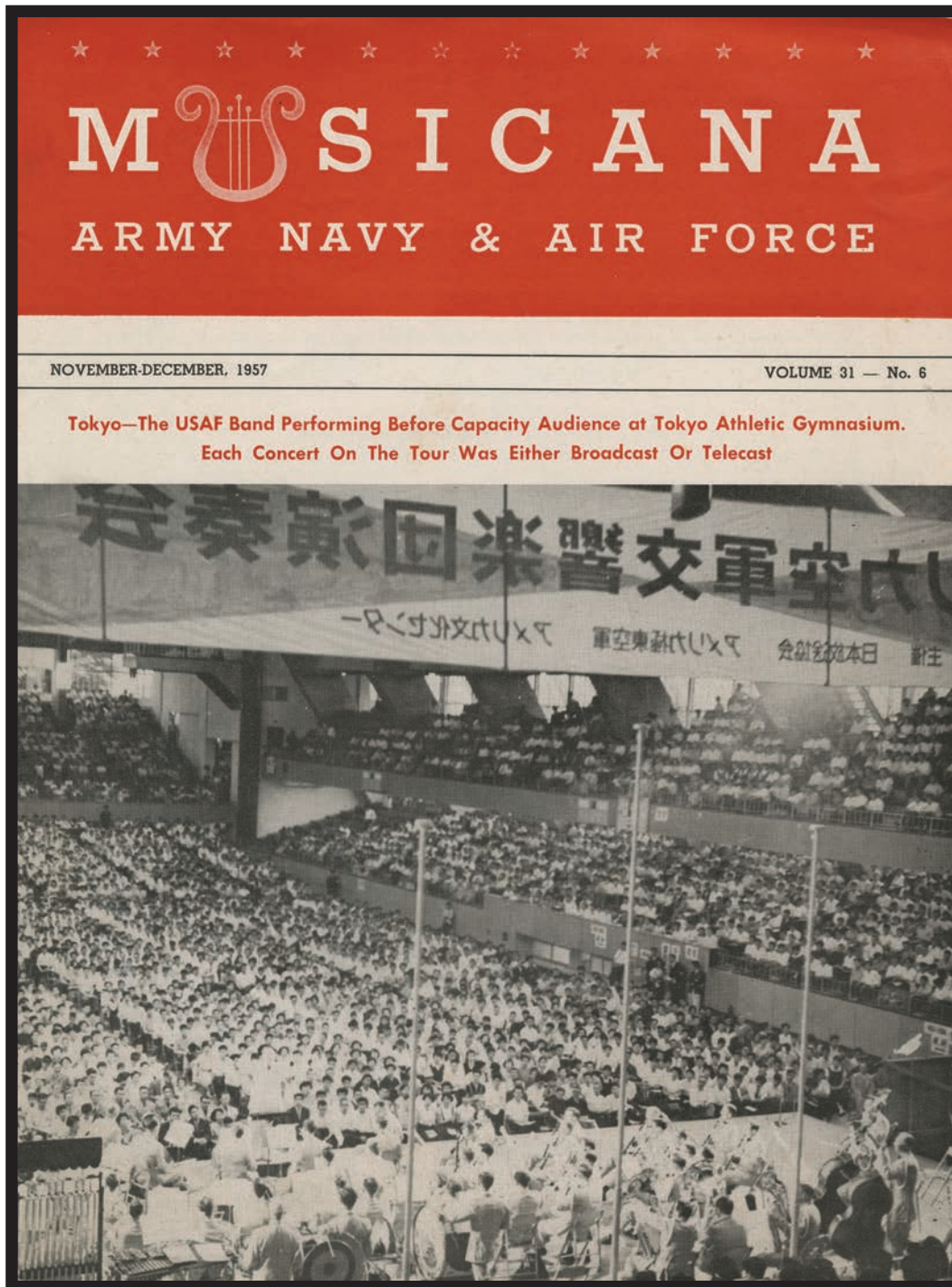


*Bolling AFB, Washington, DC – January 1957:  
The USAF Band in “marching formation” pose in  
preparation for the second inaugural parade for  
President Dwight D. Eisenhower. The Drum Major  
is MSgt John Lowry and the officers in front are  
Captains John Yesulaitis (L) and Harry H. Meuser (R).*

*The Air Force Singing Sergeants in the US House of Representatives floor (right hand side)  
in Washington DC getting ready to sing a new musical setting of the Pledge of Allegiance  
by composer Irving Caesar during Flag Day ceremonies in 1955.*







*The Band's "loading crew" for the 1957 Far East tour, all of whom were performing members of the Singing Sergeants. Standing on the runway is The Band's long-time equipment manager, William S. "Red" Brower. Standing (L-R) Roger Ardrey, Howard Ruff, Jim Wheeler, Fred Viehweg, Wayne Galbraith, Al Wilber and Armand McLane.*

*The front cover of the November/December 1957 issue of Musicana magazine showing the first of two concerts presented by The USAF Band and the Singing Sergeants in the Tokyo Athletic Gymnasium on June 20, 1957. The concert was a part of The Band's first tour of the Far East which took place between June 1st and July 16, 1957.*

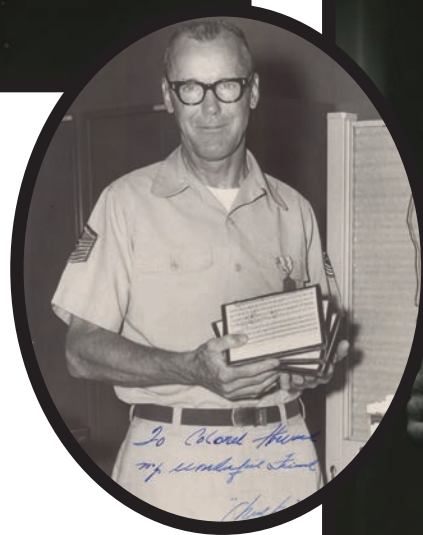




*Sgt John Lowry, one of the original cadre of three instrumentalists in The AAF Band (a saxophone player) in 1941. In addition to being The Band's first Drum Major, he was also its first, "First Sergeant."*



*Sgt Charles T. Foster, one of the three original members of The AAF Band, he was The Band's principal clarinet for many years and was then appointed as the first "full-time" librarian in The Band's history.*



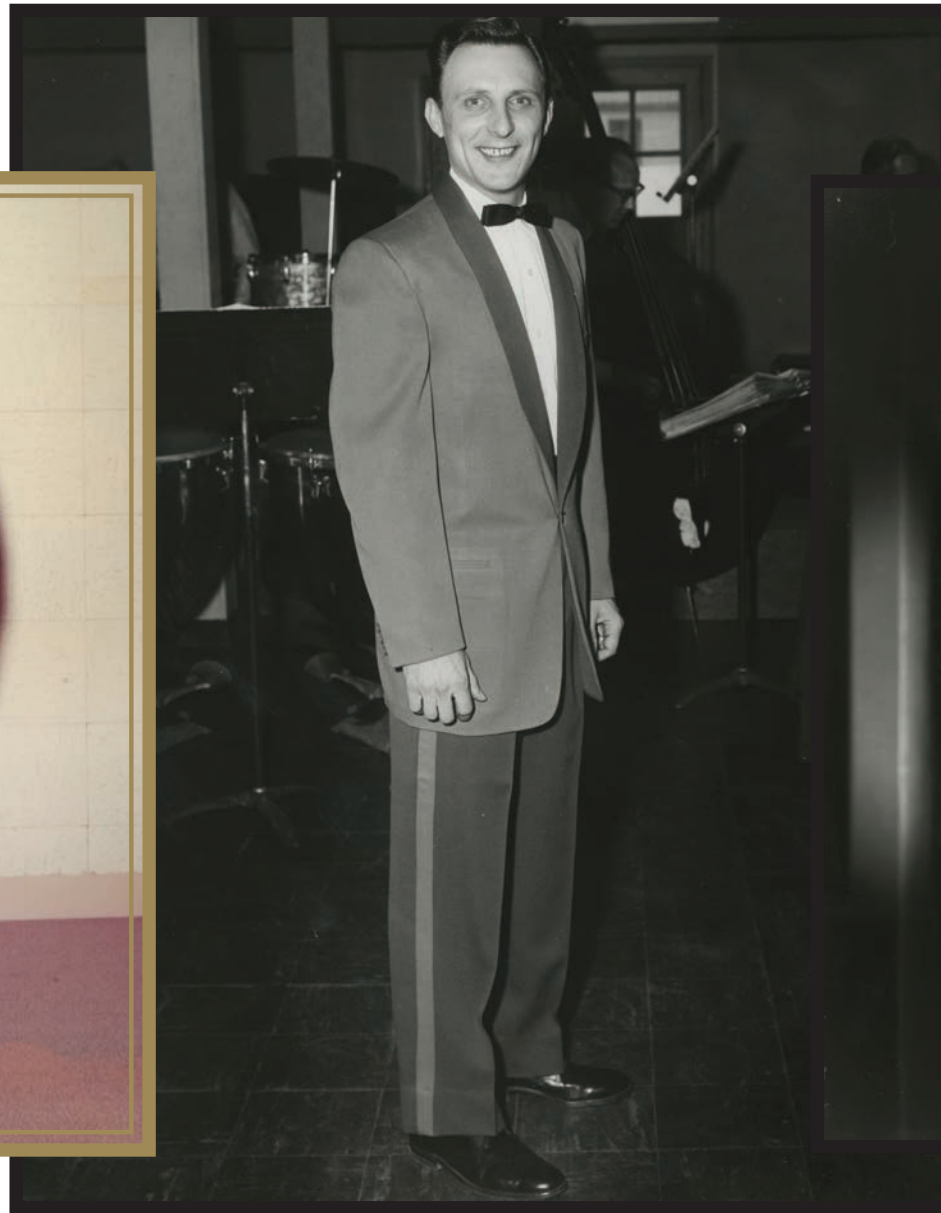
*One of the most legendary and influential instrumentalists in The Band's history, Sgt Arthur R. Will, principal cornet. He had prior service in WWII, joined The USAF Band in 1946 and retired in 1971.*







*CMSgt Ronald R. "Roy" Cloud, The Band's second Drum Major (1959 to 1976)*



*The ranks of Chief Master Sergeant and Senior Master Sergeant were created by Congress as a part of the Career Compensation Act of 1958 and are a direct by product of the explosion in technology that took place during and immediately following World War II. In 1958, John Osiecki became the first to be promoted to E-8 in The Band's history and was the long-time leader of the Airmen of Note, both as an enlisted man and later as an officer (reserve commission).*



*Sgt Boleslaw D. "Bill" Zukowski, principal cello. Pictured here with MSgt stripes, Bill Zukowski became The Band's first E-9 in December 1959. Ironically, as a cellist, he was also the first NCOIC of the Concert Band.*





Setting up The Band's speaker system somewhere in South or Central America. Note that the crowd has gathered simply to watch the set-up for the concert. The Band's audio reinforcement manager, Les Ticknor, is on the right. The Band's equipment manager, Red Brower, is the individual hoisting the speaker to the top of the stand. The Band carried its own amplification system on all foreign and stateside tours from the late 1940s on.



Charles "Charley" Granofsky was the first NCOIC and leader of the Strolling Strings (1954 to 1963). He also arranged a large quantity of musical selections for the group, many of which remain in the repertoire today.





*"I have always regarded our Air Force radio broadcasts as a strictly military operation whose objective of public understanding and support is just as vital as a mission in a theater of war."*

*– General of the Army, Henry "Hap" Arnold*



The radio broadcasts of The AAF Band and the Major Glenn Miller Army Air Forces Overseas Orchestra had a profound impact on lifting the morale of US servicemen and our Allies during World War II. The music performed on these broadcasts kept the Soldiers, Sailors, Marines, Coasties and Airmen connected to personal memories of an idealized perfectly ordered and secure home front.

When The AAF Band performed, there was a nostalgic glow that was just as important to the boys on the front lines as it was to the American public back home, a promise of future togetherness when the war would be over. At home, these broadcasts kept the nation informed and the music selections broadcasted helped alleviate the stresses of war through the warmth of radio. The broadcasts also had another effect which was not entirely anticipated ... that of endearing our former enemies to the American way of life, especially American music.

The musical selections performed by The Army Air Forces Band during these broadcasts created a new wave of interest in concert band, orchestra, and dance band music in country after country, most notably in war torn Japan. It's not surprising, the international language of music helped bridge the deep cultural divide between the US and Japan. In an effort to rebuild their country and lift the morale of its own citizens, the empire of Japan incorporated American music into its own culture. This new interest in western music, especially the music of Glenn Miller and John Philip Sousa, spurred the economy of Japan by generating an entirely new industry.

This new western-styled music industry in Japan created new job opportunities, to include employment as music educators, composers, arrangers, publishers, and music instrument manufacturing companies. Major Howard Bronson and Edwin Franko Goldman, one of America's most prominent band composers of the early 20th century, took several trips to Japan to help set up these emerging industries. In addition, Col George S. Howard embarked on eleven international tours, three of them to the Far East in 1956, 1957, and 1960. During the first Far East tour, Colonel Howard was invited to conduct the Boy's Band from Hiroshima, Japan. With childhood memories of the two atomic bombs dropped 12 years earlier, Colonel Howard and The Band were instrumental in helping to restore and build a new alliance between the United States and the youth of Japan.

In 2004, the John Philip Sousa Society of Japan visited The USAF Band as part of their efforts to celebrate the 150th birthday celebration of America's "March King." While leading a tour of Hangar II, The Band's Chief Music Librarian noticed one of the Japanese visitors had tears streaming down his cheeks while looking at one of the displays. The Japanese translator stepped in and relayed, "he sees himself in this photo and is surprised and extremely honored, wonderful!"





1956 - Colonel Howard conducts a Japanese Youth Band from Hiroshima, Japan.



*The USAF Band performing Sousa's "The Stars and Stripes Forever" led by Col George S. Howard on the rear deck of the Japanese Self Defense Force destroyer which ferried the group from Hiroshima to the city of Matsuyama on March 13, 1960. At that time, Matsuyama did not have an airport large enough to accommodate The Band's planes.*





*The USAF Band Drum and Bugle Corps and Pipe Band pose in front of the Jefferson Memorial*





*A concert by The Band and Singing Sergeants on the main stage at the National Music Camp in Interlochen, Michigan on August 8, 1961. Capt Robert L. Landers is conducting and Sgt Harry Gleeson is at the announcer microphone.*



*The Singing Sergeants posing on stage at The George Washington University's Lisner Auditorium in Washington, DC in conjunction with the Air Force Music Festival in the fall of 1961. Of the 34 singers shown, 19 were exclusively singers while 15 were instrumentalists in The Band who "doubled" in the chorus. Several years later the chorus was authorized an increase to 40 singers, but managed to bring on board only 38 when the drastic reductions of 1964 reduced the chorus to 12 singers and an accompanist.*





*Nationally known radio and TV personality Arthur Godfrey and his ukulele on the back patio of Air House on Fort Myer in Arlington, VA. Air Force Chief of Staff Gen Curtis E. LeMay is on the right, and members of the Air Force Strolling Strings are in the background, circa summer of 1962. Photo credit – Ron Hall*



*Although wind quintets had been previously formed on an "as needed basis," The Band's first permanent official wind quintet was created by Capt Harry Meuser on December 13, 1963. Members included TSgt Kirk Barrett, flute; TSgt Donald Hiltz, Oboe; TSgt William Hilferty, clarinet; TSgt Larry Bowen, French Horn; and SSgt Larold Ragland, bassoon.*

*The "Hawaiian Aliis" a new USAF Band entertainment unit recruited into the Air Force to replace the Four Saints who left the service in 1960. This promotional photo was taken at the Officers Club, Bolling AFB, DC in 1962.*







*Tenor soloist Sgt William DuPree (standing left) receiving applause during an official party given by Air Force Chief of Staff Gen Curtis LeMay & Mrs. LeMay at the Air House in 1962. This was typical of soloists from the Singing Sergeants who would appear as the entertainment portion of official events at the Air House, the Department of State, in the White House and throughout Washington, DC.*

*Photo Credit – Ron Hall*



*President John F. Kennedy stands in front of the members of The Band during a rehearsal for a welcome ceremony on the White House grounds in 1962.*



*Silver Plate presented to The Band in appreciation for its participation in the Pre-Inaugural Review for the upcoming inauguration of John F. Kennedy.*



**This is  
DYNAGROOVE**

The following is an appraisal of RCA Victor's new Dynagroove recording system. It was written by one of the most respected writers in the audio-musical field.

by Hans H. Fantel  
Proof of any new recording process is in the listening. The first few measures of music I heard on an RCA Victor Dynagroove record left no doubt that a major technical advance had been achieved, for the sound from this disc was more like that normally heard only from master studio tape; the bass rolled out with astonishing richness, the highs were clear and crisp, and even heavily scored passages were transparent in every musical detail. Ferociousness seemed undiminished while the softest passages lost none of their presence. What's more, the sound retained clarity and spaciousness all the way to the end of the record, even at the innermost grooves where a certain amount of distortion and "cramping" of the sound used to be unavoidable.

No single innovation can take credit for improvement of such magnitude. The Dynagroove record reflects advances on many fronts, correlated by RCA engineers into a consistent technical process extending all the way from the recording studio to the final steps of manufacture. At the heart of the process are new techniques and equipment. Computers—"electronic brains"—have been introduced to audio for the first time. Together, new concepts and new machines have at last solved some of the oldest and most obstinate problems of disc recording. All this adds up to what is, in my opinion, a remarkable degree of musical realism. The technique is ingenious and sophisticated, but its validation is simple: the ear confirms it.

Recorded at Crampton Auditorium, Howard University, Washington, D.C.  
Manager of Recordings: Don Richter.  
Recording Engineer: Lew Layton.  
Facilities Engineer: David Philhower.  
Recording Engineer: Ernie Oelrich.

**Other RCA Victor albums you will enjoy:**

- The United States Army Band LPM/LSP-2685
- The United States Marine Band LPM/LSP-2687
- The United States Navy Band LPM/LSP-2686

The National Cultural Center Presents  
THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE BAND and The Singing Sergeants  
Produced by Herman Diaz, Jr. Mono LPM-2686  
Stereo LSP-2686



**Coming—  
The National  
Cultural Center,  
an "official"  
showcase of the  
performing arts.**



An exciting project now under way will place our nation's capital in the top ranks of world cultural centers. In 1958, the Congress passed an Act authorizing the creation of a national center for music, drama, opera, ballet and poetry.

The architect, Edward Durrell Stone, has designed a building comprising three halls under a single roof: a 1,200-seat playhouse, a 2,750-seat symphony hall, and a 2,500-seat hall for opera, ballet and musical theater. The Center will stand in a park-like setting on the banks of the Potomac River. President Eisenhower signed the Act, and both he and President Kennedy are strongly supporting the campaign to make the Center a reality. Mrs. Kennedy and Mrs. Eisenhower serve as Honorary Co-Chairmen.

Congress has authorized for the first time a nationwide voluntary campaign to raise the building funds—\$30 million. The National Cultural Center will be an object of pride

for all Americans, and all Americans are being asked to help build it.

This unique recording is a part of the fund-raising effort since the manufacturer's normal proceeds and the composers', arrangers' and publishers' royalties are being contributed to the Center.

The United States Army, Navy, Marine and Air Force bands and choruses have each, for the first time, made a separate recording of wonderful American marches and patriotic tunes. We are especially grateful to the Department of Defense, the American Federation of Musicians, the American Federation of Television and Radio Artists, and to the excellent musicians and choruses of these bands for their contributions in making these recordings possible.

By buying this never-before-available record, you are also helping to create a national center for the performing arts that our country's artistic attainments so richly deserve.

By Special Arrangement with the U. S. Department of Defense

**FIRST AVAILABLE LP**

"It played like a military band, like an orchestra, like a brass band, like an organ. A glorious band. When comes there such another?"  
TORONTO EVENING TELEGRAM

"The USAF Band is about the best thing of its kind in the world."  
LONDON DAILY MAIL

"Incredible."  
THE SCOTSMAN

The United States Air Force Band is a scant twenty years of age, but it has written a history of extraordinary musical accomplishment. In the early days of World War II, the fast-growing Air arm felt it needed an official musical unit to take its place beside the Army, Navy and Marine Bands. Commanding General H. H. (Hap) Arnold selected Colonel George S. Howard to head the new organization.

Colonel Howard auditioned more than 1,400 players from which he gleaned 100 members from such diverse groups as the Philadelphia Orchestra, the Boston Pops, the Tommy Dorsey orchestra and Arthur Pryor's concert band. Here was a band that could play "longhair" or "jazz" with equal facility!

At war's end, demobilization reduced the band to a five-man nucleus almost overnight. However, the Air Force was able to get Colonel Howard to remain in the service and rebuild the unit. This recording is a dramatic proof of his success.

The band has appeared in fifty-five countries on five continents as one of America's ambassadors of good will. It has played to more than twenty million people and has traveled over a million and a quarter miles!

Side 1

- The U.S. Air Force (Carl Fischer, Inc., ASCAP 3:22)
- American Salute (Mills Music, Inc., ASCAP 3:27)
- Boys of the Old Brigade (3:27)
- Oh, Men Who Fly (unpublished 2:30)  
Vocal Solo: Master Sergeant William DalPre
- Fairest of the Fair (3:25)

Side 2

- Seventy Six Trombones (Frank Music Corp., ASCAP 3:32)  
Vocal Solo: Staff Sergeant Ken Carter
- Liberty Bell (3:21)
- U.S. Air Force Blue (3:00)
- Bullets and Bayonets (G. Schirmer, Inc., ASCAP 3:30)
- Falcons' Victory March (Southern Music Pub. Co., Inc., ASCAP 3:37)
- Star Spangled Banner (3:29)

DYNAGROOVE RECORDINGS ARE MASTERED ON RCA MAGNETIC TAPE

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**DYNAGROOVE**  
THE MAGNIFICENT  
NEW SOUND  
Developed by RCA Victor

The National Cultural Center  
presents



**The  
United States  
Air Force Band  
and  
The Singing Sergeants**

LPM-2686

At Crampton Auditorium, Howard University, Washington, DC, December 9, 1962 during a recording session with RCA by The Band and Singing Sergeants for a commercially available LP intended to raise funds for the construction of the National Cultural Center in DC. With the sudden death of President Kennedy all too soon thereafter, the LP was re-issued as a fundraiser for the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. Captain Robert L. Landers, who conducted all of the selections featuring the Singing Sergeants, is on the podium. Note the number of microphones used in the "new RCA Dynagroove" recording process.







*The USAF Pipe Band*

*1963 - The Airmen of Note in a PR shot taken in the Pan American Union in DC. Lt Johnny Osiecki (stage spelling O'Seekee) was a newly minted Second Lieutenant when this shot was taken.*



## The USAF Band's First Official State Funeral

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One of the most poignant moments in our nation's history was the announcement of the assassination of President John F. Kennedy on November 22, 1963. All performing units of The USAF Band were immediately recalled to begin preparations for what would be The Band's first official State Funeral.

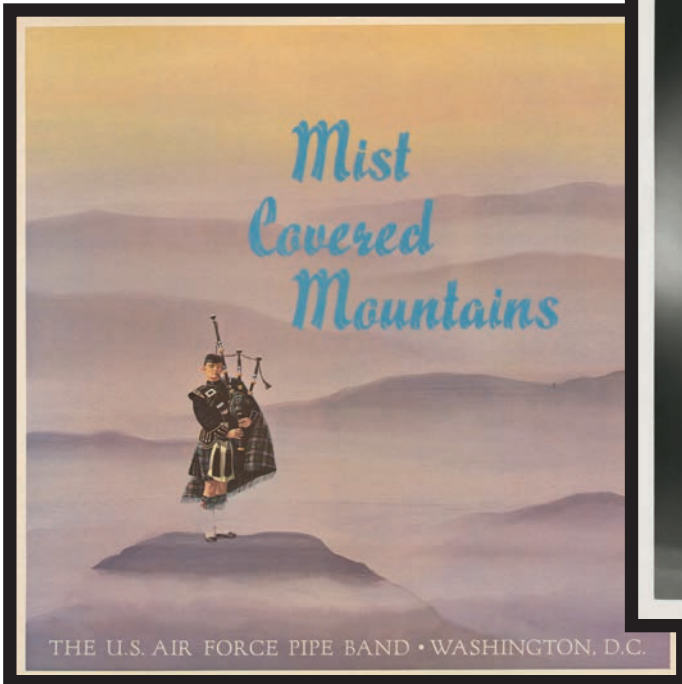
Accompanying the casket as it moved on a caisson from the White House to the Capitol on Sunday, November 24, was a joint service drum corps. In the eighteen-man corps were members of The USAF Band's Drum and Bugle Corps, including sergeants Harold Ludwig and Rodney Goodheart and Airmen Bill Mojica and Jim Dinkins. To this day, the sound of their drums with their somber muffled beat is still etched in the minds of many.

Monday, November 25, turned out to be a bright, sunny, but very cold day. The Pipe Band reported to Arlington in the early morning for a run-through of the graveside ceremonies to take place later that day. "We rehearsed in our full outfits," (kilts with the special Billy Mitchell tartans designed for the band) recalled Frank Bosworth (lead drummer for the Pipe Band), "and it was cold as hell." After their dry run, The Pipe Band moved to an area near the Old Amphitheater to run through the music and marching one more time to ensure perfection.

Meanwhile, the President's remains were moved from the Capitol to Saint Matthew's Cathedral for the funeral mass. At 11 a.m., The USAF Band was the third service band to join in the procession to the church performing Chopin's "Funeral March," "Vigor in Arduis" (Hymn to the Holy Name), and "America the Beautiful."

At the cemetery, shortly before 3 p.m., the Kennedy family, accompanied by ninety-two heads of state, prime ministers, and United States officials, gathered by the grave site as the casket was borne to the grave accompanied by the strains of "The Mist Covered Mountains," performed by The USAF Pipe Band, who slowly marched by the grave and onto the street led by Drum Major Seamus (Jim) Neary. Overhead, fifty jet fighters flew in formation followed by Air Force One, piloted by USAF Col James Swindal.





*Sgts John Bosworth, lead drummer;  
Sandy Jones, Pipe Major; James Neary,  
Drum Major*