

THE CONDUCTOR'S CORNER

Dear Bandies,

Can you believe it? An undefeated football season... and the team won too! It was exciting to be part of a "perfect" season and to see life come back to Soldiers Field. Please permit me to share some special personal highlights. This season marked a special occasion for me, my thirtieth with the Harvard Band (and I still don't have a Harvard degree!!). Two events took place that were complete surprises. At the all-important, home Penn Game, Stud Con Jenn Doxtader handed me the baton during the pregame show as the Band was completing its entrance to "Our Director." Traditionally, the Band "bangs" to an "H," the Stud Con conducts a Harvard Song, and I conduct the "Banner." I asked Jenn, "Why aren't you conducting?" She smiled and said, "I think you should... just get up on the ladder." As I looked at the Band, I saw one of the strangest looking H's it has ever formed! (and you know how extreme that can be!). The cross bar was too high and the right side of the H looked like it was meditating!

John Morris, Drill Master and announcer, boomed throughout the stadium "Mentoring Harvard students for 30 years... Tom, this one's for you." I climbed the ladder (you know it gets taller and takes longer every year) and finally saw the formation... "TOM." It was a wonderful moment that I greatly appreciated.

The following week at "The Game," the Harvard and Yale Bands combined during pregame to form a red, white, and blue American flag while performing "God Bless America" in a symbol of national unity following the events of 9/11. Tom Duffy (who this year celebrates his 20th as Yale Band Director) then stepped down from the ladder and motioned me over to the 50-yard line. Once again, the announcer, this time a Yale, echoed "for 30 years of collegial rivalry, the Yale Band would like to acknowledge Professor Tom Everett... and invite him to conduct the combined bands in our National Anthem." I was quite moved, not only because of the rare moment, but to Yale students' credit, they were respectful and cooperated with our band.

Following a leave of absence between mid-April and September

2001, I returned to 74 Mt. Auburn St. to join a Senior Staff that had admirably taken on extra duties during the spring and summer, as my absence had been unexpected. I'm delighted to announce that as of September 1, 2002, Harvard University hired the first full-time Assistant Director of Bands at Harvard, in the person of Nat Dickey.

Although not a "Harvard Man" as such, Nat did spend six years at 9 Prescott St., taking private trombone lessons with me from 6th grade through high school. A Lexington resident at the time, Nat remembers 9 Prescott as a dark basement, always full of student activity. Now with an office upstairs in the "cozy" Crow's Nest at 74 Mt. Auburn, Nat has settled in to the Assistant Director position and has been an invaluable colleague: sharing Band responsibilities, leading the Sunday Jazz Band, co-conducting the Wind Ensemble, and helping with the ever-increasing administrative duties. He also oversees most of the new percussion equipment the University has recently purchased. Please give Nat a warm welcome when you meet him.

As anticipated, Harvard is changing rapidly in the new millennium: a new University President; a new Dean of the Faculty; a new Athletic Director; a new Director of the Office for the Arts; a new Assistant Director of Bands; and much discussion about a new campus being developed. With an eye (and ear) to the past as well as the future, members, Band staff, and the Band Foundation have met several times in "Strategic Meetings." The following list indicates the priorities and concerns of the "Strategic Committee:"



Tom sings in the rain at Commencement 2002

1. Recruitment – evaluation and extension of contact with prospective, new, and returning students.

2. Retention – research on the reasons for attrition and strategies for better retention.

3. Performance quality – continued focus in rehearsal on developing sound, sonority, execution, and projection.

4. Perception/reputation – evaluation of the Band's role in the Harvard community, expectations of various constituencies (including Band members themselves), and development/revision of public relations strategies.

5. Group spirit – evaluation of internal pride and camaraderie and the Band's ability to affect campus-wide spirit.

Thank you for your communications this past year. It's an exciting time for the Band as we are taking time for consideration of our future.

INC,
Tom Everett