

## The Canadian Staff Band of the Salvation Army

The Canadian Staff Band, in its earliest form, existed as a Territorial Band in the early 1900s. On May 29, 1914, most of the band perished during the sinking of the Empress of Ireland in the St. Lawrence River. While attempts were made to restart the band shortly after, it was not until 1969, under the territorial command of Commissioner Clarence Wiseman and leadership of then Captain Norman Bearcroft, that the band was reformed. Since this early beginning, the band has served under four other Staff Bandmasters: Robert Redhead; Brian Burditt; Kevin Hayward; John Lam (current BM).

The Staff Band sets the example for all aspects of Salvation Army banding in the Canada and Bermuda territory. The band members are dedicated to the primary task of winning souls for Jesus through a motivation of musical enjoyment and an honest desire to witness for Christ. Throughout the past four decades, the band has both led and participated in countless worship services, special Territorial occasions such as Commissioning events, congresses, and concerts, whether on stage or in the street. In addition to monthly corps engagements, the band has represented the Canada and Bermuda Territory by conducting various international tours which include the USA, England, Holland, Germany, Italy, Switzerland, Norway, Brazil, and Australia and New Zealand.

The band rehearses weekly and strives to display musical virtuosity by using a diverse repertoire including traditional symphonic works, selections based on well-known hymn tunes and contemporary Christian music, as well as marches and brilliant festival arrangements.

The band is comprised of men and women from various corps around Ontario who form a unique fellowship of support, and effective ministry and strive to stay relevant in a changing musical world.