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"The Boys in the Band":

A Study in the Cultural Creation of Community

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Summary

This thesis examines brass bands as an aspect of Australian culture, and analyses their significance and function in a community context. It is principally concerned with what brass bands express through their music and how their members, as amateur musicians, pursue banding activities which are closely related to their lifestyles and social aspirations.

As a prelude to the descriptive ethnography the history of Australian brass bands is traced from its origins in pre-industrial Europe to the present day. As a traditional form of cultural expression and community organisation the brass band movement has developed into a sophisticated enterprise, and has an established place in national culture and popular celebration.

The method of research is participant observation, and is thus primarily concerned with the sociomusical aspects of brass bands from the perspective of those involved in its musical production. To achieve this the researcher became a member of a brass band, which is taken as representative of a typical town band involved in the competitive tradition of the brass band movement. The data collected is derived from the context and instance of musical production in order to maximise its relevance and specify its scope. Consequently the research concentrates on what the band did, and tried to express, as a cohesive social group when they were together.

Separate chapters consecutively deal with: teaching youth to become musicians, bandpractices, the political economy of community music, brass band contesting, Anzac Day ceremonies, carnival celebrations, club concerts, public playouts, and the private social expressions of banding as a distinct cultural form.

The thesis concludes that brass bands, like many other forms of amateur participant culture in Australia, are at the vital heart of community life. Their activities give voice to communal cultural expression and create cohesive social relationships which are of fundamental importance to Australian society.

"I hereby certify that the work embodied in this thesis is the result of original research, and has not been si^lMnitted for a higher degree to any other University or Institution."

Acknowledgements

To Vivien Johnson and Bob Connell of the Department of Sociology, Macquarie University, for their help and support.

To the Boys in the Band for their participation and comradeship.

And to many members of the brass band movement for sharing with me the pleasures of banding.

I wish for no snivelling about me
    (My work was the work of the land),
But I hope that my country will shout me
    The price of a decent brass band.
....

I ask not the baton or "starts" of
    The bore with the musical ear,
But the music that's blown from the hearts of
    The men who work hard and drink beer.
....

And we, the World-Battlers, go straying
    And loving and laughing along -
With Hope in the lead of us playing
    The tune of a life-battle song!

Henry Lawson,
"The Jolly Dead March."

Chapter 1

Introduction

This thesis is about brass bands in Australia, and is intended as a contribution towards the sociology of music, community, and the field of cultural studies. The empirical data upon which the ethnography is based was gathered over a three year period, between 1977 and 1980, as a participant observer in the Kotarah Bowling Club Brass Band, Lake Macquarie, Newcastle, New South Wales.[1]

"The Boys in the Band," as the players usually referred to themselves, were my fellow musicians and consequently became my close friends for the duration of the research. This study is principally concerned with the Boys as contemporary performing artists, with what they expressed in their music, and how they expressed themselves as amateur musicians enthusiastically pursuing "banding" as an after-work, leisure-time activity and lifestyle. The approximately forty members who passed through Kotarah Band during the study constitute the primary focus of research attention. As "bandies," their Band was only one example of approximately four hundred brass bands scattered throughout rural and urban Australia at the time of this research.

Brass bands did not exist in isolation from one another as the name bandie, used for a banding participant, implies. Banding was a national, and international, lifestyle to which bandies were attached and committed. The Boys described themselves as being part of what they affectionately called "the brass band movement," and were proud heirs to a cultural heritage called "the Australian town band tradition," of which they were the contemporary guardians.

"The movement" has been evolving since the mid-nineteenth century, when it simultaneously took root in the United Kingdom, and colonial migrant populations in Australia and New Zealand. It traces its origins even further back in time to a rich prehistory of sacred and secular folk music in the village and church bands of pre-industrial England. Both "the movement" and "the tradition" had reflections elsewhere in the world, and in many ways were comparable to similar expressive lifestyles found, for example, in cultures and countries as diverse as France, Germany, Japan, Turkey, Mexico, the United States of America, Tanzania, India and Nepal.

At the time of the research "the movement" was a very real social entity which constituted an inner social world of banding, little known or understood outside banding circles. Briefly, it could be described in terms of content as a loose amalgamation, comprised of: individual musicians; brass bands and their active supporters; regional, state and national brass band associations; composers, conductors and adjudicators; the links of community friendships and kin; interest groups such as music publishers, instrument manufacturers, and those associated with journals, newsletters, and broadcasts; as well as many others who actively and consciously contributed towards the means by which brass bands were maintained, and their music produced.

I see the brass band movement as a cultural form: an expression of brass band enthusiasts' commonly held beliefs about what the nature of human relationships should be. Not only did brass bands have their own distinctive musical styles, they also had their own language or argot, formal and oral histories, traditions and rituals, a preoccupation with democratic procedures and community service, and a collective consciousness which distinguished its members and their lifestyles

within the larger society. The saying in banding that "you can get a welcome in any bandroom in the country" was one which the research found to be true. There was an enduring social solidarity amongst brass band enthusiasts which was real in both emotional and material terms, and provided a strong sense of belonging and attachment. "The movement," as a cultural form, is the study's second major focus of research attention.

The Town Band has a traditional and historic place in Australian community life. Brass bands are to be seen and heard leading annual carnival and Anzac Day parades, playing in their purpose-built rotundas in parks, at ships' launchings and the opening of new public buildings and works, at university and college graduation ceremonies, at spectator sports such as football, cricket, and horse racing, on political and trade union demonstrations and rallies, at hospitals and homes for the aged, providing benefit concerts for national and local causes, and more recently, regular appearances in television adverts and Sydney's multicultural Channel O's closing national anthem. Almost whenever and wherever there are public and civic celebrations, and community gatherings, the Town Band is usually in attendance, a symbol of traditional community life in itself. The place and activity of brass bands within the community constitute the study's third major focus of research attention.

The prominence given in this study to the Boys in the Band as a social group consisting of individuals, rather than beginning with the brass band movement or the town band tradition, results in the first instance from a belief that social analysis should, if possible, endeavour to take individuals' definitions of their social reality into account. While this research is concerned with the group life of individuals who participate in a collective cultural tradition, and who share a body of intersubjective meanings, being close to the Boys and relating to them on

an individual personal level not only provided me with admission to their group as an equal, and hence access to the inner world of the brass band movement, but also, access to the Boys' views and opinions in a relaxed and informal setting. Such an approach is crucial to the understanding of artistic, cultural and social expression in brass bands, for while they exist and operate as social groups they do consist of individuals who are personally expressing themselves through their musical and social activities. In this sense the shared meaning in musical achievement and group life of the Band represented the fullest attainment of self expression for the individuals who participated in it. What the Boys' Band meant to them, and what they expressed through it, was entirely related to their individual and commonly held perceptions of social reality. How the Boys saw and interpreted the world about them provided their motivations for, and lay at the heart of, their musical creations and artistic intentions. A research project such as this which did not have a genuine involvement with brass bands, and was based only on observation without participation, would have excluded the researcher from personally identifying with the musicians' lifestyles and preoccupations, and would have denied this study its full scope and significance.

During the research I conversed with hundreds of brass band enthusiasts from throughout Australia. Most of these exchanges were made possible through my Band's participation in competitive festivals, and the friendships automatically extended to to me on such occasions as a fellow bandie. It was at band contests such as the "Regionals," "State," "Nationals," and the historic "Ballarat," under the scrutiny of hundreds of fellow bandies from rival bands and in the exacting judgement of the Adjudicators, that bands battled their way up and down "the movement's" league tables. Contesting more then any other banding occasion, demonstrated "the movement" as a pervasive and cohesive influence on bands and their members. The atmosphere on such occasions was a mixture of football spectator enthusiasm and intense social

solidarity. At contests "the movement's" traditions, organisational structure, language, and beliefs, were all ritually articulated, acted out, and reproduced.

The Boys in the Band were active members of a cultural form which went well beyond the limitations of their own Band. Contesting has over the passage of time, through its formal rules and adjudication, defined and standardised what a brass band should ideally consist of in terms of membership size, instrumental ensemble, the style of music played and the way it was best executed, how a brass band should appear in public, its uniforms, internal spatial dimensions, and performance decorum. But contest gatherings must also be seen as celebrations of the achievements of solidarity, and commonly-held beliefs about what brass bands expressed, and how they best expressed it. They were occasions towards which brass bands worked like athletic teams in training, and played at their performance polished best.

Like much of its music, the brass band movement was far from being just a contemporary creation. It consisted of all ages from young teens upwards, and banding was for many I met a life-long pursuit. One could not just become a bandie, it took years of musical education and practice. Banding has reproduced itself from generation to generation through its youth bands, school bands, community music education programmes, junior contesting leages, and band camps. It has continually and selectively adopted new musical styles, adapted to change within community life itself, and actively transmitted its tradition to younger generations. All of this is vital to understanding "the movement" as a dynamic cultural form. The fact that brass bands were both historic and contemporary phenomena had implications for the way banding was during this research, and what it will become in the future. "The

movement" had been built up and created over the course of more than a century. It consequently needs to be historically located in time, and its evolution as a social process explained as a precondition to the location of brass bands as a cultural form consisting of concretely situated social beings.

Although contesting and other channels of communications such as journals, association newsletters, recordings and broadcasts, as well as the less formal links of family, friendships and community, indicated the size, complexity, and scope of "the movement," most banding took place within the local community. It was here that the day-to-day reality of playing in a brass band took place and should be understood.

Brass bands were an amateur leisure-time pursuit from which individual musicians rarely received direct financial reward. This singularly important aspect distinguishes brass band musicians from professional musicians. As wage earners in a service industry (the entertainment business), professional musicians are economically constrained and limited by audiences, promoters, and professional critics, who have some say in what they wish to hear and experience. Brass bands are free from such economic constraints and influence, but they are still very heavily dependent upon the personal satisfaction of their members and constant local community support.

The relationships between the brass band movement as a cultural form and other groups within the community is all-important to understanding brass bands as a contemporary musical genre. I believe these relationships become very evident when we ask the most basic questions about banding; for why should brass bands exist at all? Why should ordinary working people devote so much time and effort to what often

becomes a life-long career of financially unrewarding endeavour with a musical form and organisation which is neither truly respected by wider society as a part of "High Culture," nor really appreciated for its contribution to the Australian community? (During the research I found that brass bands were often the butt of jokes from other musicians, artists, and those who laid claim to the pretensions of being "cultured.") The simple answer to such questions is that banding, as a lifestyle and musical expression, had such powerful meanings to its participants that these outweighed the sacrifice of time required for musical practice, rehearsal and organisation. However, if this were simply the case then the thesis would revolve around explanations of the Boys' lifestyle, and involve the systematic isolation of the social practices, material artifacts,and musical styles, which as symbols provided the meanings to which bandies were irresistibly drawn. But, much more than this, bandies were public musicians who actively sought out their audiences in quite specific circumstances and situations, and what they expressed and where they expressed it was immediately related to the sort of cultural institution "the movement" was. Brass bands could make feet march, stir emotions, call up nostalgic memories, and inspire determination. They could help to socially define situations, for example, as festive, solemn, patriotic, religious, or popular. Their robust and striking musical march style, close harmonic sounds, huge crescendos, sharp-edged attack, uniformed attire, choreographic marching routine, and traditional folk airs, all symbolised strength through unity and solidarity. Equally, the common ownership of the musical instruments, music and other equipment, free musical tuition, and the community bandroom, all symbolised mutual aid and cooperation. Brass band musicians' devotion to amateurism and community service stood their music and their "movement" in sharp contrast to the concerns of professional music making. In advanced industrialized capitalist society professional

musicians have become individualized artists, isolated from the community. Brass band musicians have not been marginalized in this way. In the wit so typical of a bandie, one explained his amateur status: "Bandies band together to make music. Musos (professional musicians) orchestrate a living. If we don't enjoy it, we won't do it."

Earlier, I outlined the sorts of events and occasions at which brass bands performed in the town band tradition. Most of these performances resulted from specific relationships that the band had developed with other community groups. Kotarah Band belonged to the local Bowling Club, and was a member of the local government Music Committee, Anzac Day and Carnival Committees. The band had representatives on local schools' parent-teacher associations, and service associations such as Apex, Jaycees and Lions. Many of the Boys were active trade unionists, others were active in the Labor Party, and a few went to church occasionally. Being part of a brass band went well beyond purely musical activity, and extended outwards through a web of family, associations, groups, and activities which make up what bandies described as "community life." From a whole network of official committees and informal relationships, the Boys negotiated from within their immediate locality with individuals, groups and organisations to perform music, and in return to receive community patronage. Brass bands exchanged their public music for community support and approval, and that was an ongoing process which was both dynamic and real. There was a political economy in which brass bands symbolised traditional Australian community life, and from which they received emotional, material, and symbolic reward for their efforts.

If brass bands are a relic of the past, an anachronism left over from a bygone musical style, redolent of a Victorian era, and without a future, as some see them, then this is in no small way connected to the

eclipse of much of Australia's traditional community life. The number of brass bands in Australia at the time of this research is but a mere fraction of those which made up "the movement" half a century ago. However, to the contemporary banding fraternity "the movement" was a large and engrossing social world. From the perspective of a bandie in the ranks of his or her tcwn band, "community" was a very demanding, alive and kicking reality in which the brass band had a very important part to play.

Chapter 2

Theoretical and Methodological Introduction

In the Introduction some indication was provided of the approach the study takes. The purpose of this section is to explain and define more specifically what is meant by the terms "music," "community," and "culture." Although Appendix I outlines in greater detail reasons for the choice, problems and advantages of the methodology, some points about it are dealt with below because they are inextricably bound up with the study's theoretical approach.

Briefly, the Introduction outlined the general idea that brass bands are a cultural form, and what they produce is part of, and symbolic of, traditional Australian community. This much was not immediately clear or apparent when the research project commenced. It only became obvious and supportable as a thesis after a great deal of research involvement, and empirical data had been collected and reorganized many times. In this respect the methodological approach was decided upon and set into motion well before the theoretical aspects, outlined below, began to take shape.

When I began the research enterprise it was my intention to produce a thorough descriptive analysis of the expressive amateur leisure time lifestyles of the Boys in the Band. One of the major reasons for embarking upon a participant observation research of brass bands was the influence of Becker's early research into dance band musicians around Chicago.[1] Similarly my research was to be a long term study of musicians. Of all the sociology of music I had encountered to that date, judged from the personal perspective of being a regular performing musician, the relevance of Becker's research to the human reality of

musical expression and production stood in a class of its own. Becker's dance band musicians were voices from inside music itself. Becker was uniquely able to gain an insider's perspective of these "outsiders" because he was a performing musician, and respected and trusted by fellow musicians as such. Had he not been a performing musician, earning his living in the same way, sharing the lifestyle of the professional dance band musicians, much about that style of music would still quite probably remain opaque. This, I believe, equally applies to the study of brass bands. Being there, and being part of the music, provides the researcher with a perspective impossible to achieve from outside the situation. My presence and my questions simply would not have been tolerated, or at least politely avoided, had I not been a bandie. Just being a capable musician would not have been enough. One had to be understood to be committed to banding. In this respect, I believe an outsider's view of brass bands, irrespective of its intellectual and analytical earnestness, would be certain to flounder as a research project.

Further comment than a simple acknowledgement of the inspiration Becker's work provided for this study is necessary to adequately situate and defend participant observation as a valid method of research in relation to contemporary methodological debates. Firstly, the appropriateness of the use of participant observation as a method of analysis in itself. The original and motivating intentions of this research were to produce a thorough descriptive analysis of Kotarah Brass Band, and through this to uncover the major meanings of banding to its participants. Participant observation aims to understand society from the perspective of those being studied by means of the researcher locating him or herself inside the social situation experienced by the research subjects. As a result of this intimate experience, and by constructing personal relationships of trust which will provide the basis for good rapport, the researcher will gain data about the social life of the

research subjects that would most likely have remained hidden, or would have appeared in a very different light, if a more distant stance had been maintained. Consequently participant observation has enjoyed considerable success as a sociological method in opening up, and portraying to a wider audience, segments of human life that are not readily accessible and therefore often badly misunderstood. It also provides the subjects of research with human dignity; they are seen as thinking people who act according to their interpretation of the situation. This is not, of course, to claim that other sociological methods do not respect the human dignity of their subjects, but rather to emphasise that the value of participant observation is to be able to garner the views of the research subjects by experiencing life as they do, "in the raw." As such, participant observation does have an element of voyeurism in it. Just as the intrepid explorer returns from distant climes to reveal his exotic discovery or capture, so the participant observer reveals a new world of social experience, often a little known microcosm of social life, for public display and interest.

Taking Becker as representative of the Chicago School of Sociology's interest in going out into everyday life and "telling it like it is," Alvin Gouldner has written some of the most trenchant critisism of Becker's research. Gouldner writes, it is "part of a titillated attraction to the underdog's exotic difference and easily takes the form of 'essays on quaintness'," and as expressing, "the romanticism of the zoo curator who preeningly displays his rare species."[2] Gouldner's antipathy to the nature of the Chicago School's research, and apparently to social deviance as a proper area of sociological study, is further evidenced when he deprecatingly writes, "theirs is a school of thought that finds itself at home in the world of hip, drug addicts, jazz musicians, cab drivers, prostitutes, night people, drifters, grifters and skidders: the 'cool world'. Their identifications are with deviant rather than respectable

society."[3] Gouldner appears to try and impute that because the subjects of research are not "respectable" that the interest of the researchers is also deviant, and that this is not "respectable" scholarship. Such innuendos are low mud slinging indeed, and not worthy of such an eminent sociologist. Becker's study of jazz musicians cannot simply be dismissed as a "titillated attraction" to the weird, exotic, and unrespectable. It differs from his other studies, and most other studies of deviance, because Becker was a jazz musician himself, and was one long before he became a sociologist of note. Becker's Master's thesis, his later articles and book chapters, not only on jazz musicians, but also on arts, and arts organisation, are largely autobiographical in nature. Becker's involvement with musicians and other artists was his occupation, lifestyle and personal means of cultural and artistic expression. Some of Becker's writings may display "a non-polemical and flacid style" that conveys a "sense of dispassionate detachment" as Gouldner accuses, but this is not so in his study of jazz musicians and in other work that makes a contribution to the sociology of music.[4] Quite contrary to Gouldner's claim of "dispassionate detachment," the extent to which Becker's whole life was influenced and involved as a performing musician is stated clearly in the Preface to Art Worlds.[5] Here Becker writes of the many years he spent as a musician in Chicago, how this taught him the importance of ordinary people in the production of arts and culture, and how this was inextricably bound up with his learning sociology in the Chicago School, and led to his scepticism about conventional definitions of the objects of sociological study. My major point then is that Becker's treatment of musicians, and the production of art, needs to be understood as being different from his other research work, for it is participant observation in the fullest meaning of the word, and the actual criticisms levelled at this particular and most influential area of work are very few.

The essence of Gouldner's critique of Becker, and the Chicago School, appears to be mainly based upon Becker's paper, "Whose Side Are We On?"[6] Becker's main failing, according to Gouldner, is to have asked the question but to have failed to answer it. He maintains that although Becker has tried to demonstrate through the specific focus of his research that he has a partisan commitment to the underdog he has not explicitly declared his partisanship for fear of being seen as anti-establishment, and therefore suffering the loss of access to research data, research funding and establishment approval. Crucially, Becker is accused by Gouldner of having a partisan attachment to the underdog, especially the deviant, but of being suprisingly complacent about attributing blame for the deviant's condition, that he concentrates upon the failings of middle level management and petty functionaries, rather than attending to the master institutions of society which create and are to blame for injustice. The problem appears to be Becker's particular manipulation of partisanship in itself, for Gouldner states:

> there was never any suggestion that partisanship impaired the 'validity' of research. There is also no doubt that partisanship does not necessarily impair the 'reliability' of a research. The validity and reliability of researches are matters quite apart from their <u>objectivity</u>.[7]

In Gouldner's opinion then, Becker's analysis is flawed through lack of objectivity. His work apparently lacks honesty and morality, paradoxically because "it regards the sociologists' value judgement as an inescapable fact of nature, rather than viewing it as a necessary condition of his objectivity,"[8] that, in fact, his partisanship is not committed enough.

Gouldner's critique, then, puts participant observation, at least as Becker prescribed it, and as practised by the Chicago School, into some kind of perspective. Partisanship is not something that sociologists should shy away from. Gouldner cites the case of the physician who has a

partisan commitment to the patient and against the germ, but "whose objectivity is vouchsafed because he has committed himself to a specific value: health."[9] In sociology partisanship should not be used to mask larger questions about social control, power, authority and responsibility, nor must it hide the true values of the research enterprise. Here then the potential yield of participant observation comes into focus, for while it can yield a great deal of sociological data about the lives of the individuals under study, and what their experiences mean to them, it can also easily lead to the neglect of the influences of the wider society, and how these relate to the research subjects, and place conditions and constraints upon them. This thesis is concerned with the inner world of banding, and what it meant to its participants. Organisations like arts funding bodies and schools tend to appear from the bandie's perspective as represented by neglecting bureaucrats and authoritarian teachers, in similar terms to Becker's middle management social caretakers and petty functionaries. This is a limitation of the data yield of participant observation, but one of which the researcher was cognisant, and while the research was approached with a committed partisan attachment to bandies and banding, there was also an awareness of the need to maintain a perspective on the wider society, and locate banding within it.

The rightful place of partisanship in sociological research has received further explication, validation and practical application by Johnson in "The Methodology of Partisanship."[10] Here the central theme is that orthodox empirical methods of research are "politically untenable forms of interaction." She develops and defends a "methodology of partisanship" in which "the oppressive roles of observer and observed...are dissolved into the general category of participant." In this case Johnson's use of "participant" refers to all parties to the

research enterprise, and clearly states she intends "no association with the orthodox technique of participant observation." She explains that the commonly cited methodological difficulties of applying the orthodox approach to a group study such as entry, membership, the effect of the observer, objectivity, exit and ethics, all "embody the assumption that the participant observer is an intruder in the social setting under investigation: it is in other people's natural life settings and not his or her own that the sociologist functions." Another conventional assumption she draws attention to is that the participant observer is only in her research setting in order to observe it, and "that she must accordingly disrupt this setting as little as possible."[11] This last point is especially relevant to small group studies such as Johnson's women's refuge, Becker's jazz musicians, and the brass band of this thesis, for how could the researcher have a presence without purchase on the situation and activities of the group if he or she is to genuinely participate and be truly admitted to the group? Moreover Johnson, like Becker, was not in an alien life setting, but on her own ground. Sociologists are concerned as women in women's issues, and women's refuges, just as some sociologists are performing musicians who have an expressive contribution to make to music as well as to sociology.

Johnson is rightly suspicious of the likely outcome of the traditional partipant observer's role, and its potential empirical yield. She discusses at length Reich's theory of the "artificial mask of self control," and equates this with the detached, supposedly value-free approach of the orthodox participant observer. The "compulsive insincere politeness" and "artificial sobriety" of "the mask" are seen as barriers to information. Such a false situation neutralises the researcher's moral or political responsibilities, and denies the research subjects

"the significance of their interactions with the researcher within their own action-oriented frame of reference."[12] Johnson's "methodology of partisanship" is a well argued case for active and committed participant observation. This was demanded by the nature of her research in a women's refuge, and a similar partisan methodology was demanded by the musical and social relationships within a brass band.

As the Methodological Appendix indicates, I was not in exactly the same position as Johnson or Becker in relation to my research subjects. Initially neither Newcastle nor Australia were my home ground, although I increasingly became a complete participant, in Johnson's sense, during the course of the research. I kept in mind the prescribed wisdom of participant observation, but eventually came to the conclusion that each research project demanded its own methodological variation, and that this could change as time passed. How I was socially accepted when I first gained entry to Kotarah Band, and how I was later accepted obviously changed, for social relationships are dynamic and not static, and effective sociological methodology and research must be responsive to this kind of dynamism. My research intentions were principally to provide an in-depth analysis of the day-to-day life experience of bandies. Such intentions could not be achieved by surveys or sampling, but could be realised through the vast personal data accumulated through participant observation, and extensive discussions and interviews. This study does not make any pretence to detachment or neutrality, and set out from the premise that brass bands were a valuable form of cultural expression and social organization that merited detailed sociological investigation.

Music and Sociology

The sociology of music is an underdeveloped field, yet it is virtually as old as sociology itself. Comte delineated it as a suitable field for sociological attention as a part of aesthetics.[13] The social philosopher Dilthey wrote about music, and Weber, Simmel, and Sorokin all wrote important essays on the subject.[14] These early writers demonstrated the richness and fertility of music as a research field, but it has somehow remained ineffable, seemingly difficult for many sociologists to grasp, and has received comparatively little attention in later years. Music has often been indiscriminately put with the study of other art forms, under the headings of the sociology of aesthetics or the production of arts and culture. This is all the more surprising as music is a major and very ancient form of human communication. Most of us at least learn some music during childhood and school. Music is a major part of adolescence, youth culture and courtship. Our sensibilities are daily bombarded with music from the radio, television, telephone, cassette and record players. In the cinema, at supermarkets and shopping centres, virtually wherever we go in contemporary urban Australia, music of some variety is not far off. Music, particularly since the advent of contemporary electronic media, pervades all aspects of life. Musical jingles have become a major part of consumer advertising, as well as being symbolic of political movements and protest.[15] For all of this, the number of sociological texts, research papers, conferences, and university and college courses on the sociology of music are few and far between. In the complete collection of the Australian and New Zealand Journal of Sociology there is not a single article devoted to the sociology of music at the time of writing this thesis, and most academic books and research papers concerned with Australian social history and contemporary society rarely mention music in any detail.[16]

The number of important contemporary contributions to the sociology of music are comparatively few. They include the works of Adorno, Becker, Silbermann, Denisoff, Peterson, Kofsky, Etzkorn, Stebbins, and more recently, Frith's Sociology of Rock and Shepherd's Whose Music? A Sociology of Musical Languages.[17] Despite the comparative dearth of specifically sociological research, there is a large body of knowledge dealing with the relationships between music and society which presents a veritable jungle of information and insight. Concomitant with sociology's slowly growing awareness of music there has been developing a voluminous body of works, drawn from a wide variety of cultural settings, explicating the general dimensions and specific forms of music. Anthropology, music, musicology, ethnomusicology, history, psychology, cultural studies, media studies, and music therapy are just some of the research areas to have made important contributions. They have all, to a greater or lesser extent, told us what some music can mean to some individuals and groups. However, very few have attempted to explicate a concept of music as a cultural product which results from the cultural practice of concretely situated social beings, and which has specific meanings to the individuals and groups involved in that music. While progress has been made in the area of the production of culture, treating art forms such as literature, drama, and fine art generally, music has been neglected. In fact the sociology of music itself has become bogged down around four much more elementary questions:

1. What, if anything, is immanent in music?

2. Is the social determination of a work's internal relations a valid concept?

3. Can it be accepted that music expresses emotions?

4. Is it legitimate to import totalizing schemes into music which owe their genesis to the study of other cultural practices, (linguistics, marxism, semiology) or not? Is that apriorism?[18]

Recently, the works of Shepherd from sociology, Bradley from the area of cultural studies and Keil from anthropology, have all gone some way towards developing a social theory of music. Whilst they are all open to criticism on various accounts, they have served to revitalise the sociology of music debate by calling into question existing explanations of music, and by proposing that music can only be understood through the investigation of its cultural and social milieu.[19]

As a sociological investigation of music this research is guided by the belief that any particular kind of music can only be understood in terms of the criteria of the group or society which makes or appreciates that music. Such an approach is based on an assumption that any significance assigned to music must ultimately and necessarily be located in the commonly agreed meanings of of the group involved.[20] Implicit in this assumption is the view that the meanings of music as a language are located in its function as a social symbol. By this I mean acoustic and visual phenomena, material artifacts and human behaviour all have meanings outside of themselves, but these symbolic meanings are conferred upon them by individuals and groups, and are not mysteriously immanent. One result of understanding art as being socially produced in this way is the necessity of explaining the ways in which various genres, styles and forms come to have value ascribed to them by certain groups in certain contexts.[21] This assumption about the lack of an immanent quality in music contrasts with much of the popular musicological approach to and concept of music which holds that a piece or item of music has some innate quality, something immanent, derivable and understandable from an internal structure, having some universal quality in itself. This is not a rejection of the contribution that musicology has made to the understanding of music, nor does it dismiss research into music from this perspective as irrelevant. Such contributions may well be profound, but being an accomplished musician rather than a musicologist, and hence

lacking the ability to make a detailed musicological analysis of brass band music, or come to grips with musicological analysis itself, I do not presume to know the validity of musicologists' claims. Rather, for the purposes and intentions of this thesis, research is limited to understanding meanings attached to music as socially and culturally devised. As Alphonse Silbermann argues in his Sociology of Music: immanence is a "useless" category since musical experience is the true object of sociological investigation--this being the shared aspect.[22] However, the debate typified by Silbermann and Adorno cannot be neglected even if the ability of this project to undertake a detailed musicological analysis is disclaimed. There is a great overlapping of knowledge between sociologists of music and musicologists, and the latter have done much to reform their discipline by incorporating a sociological perspective within it, and some sociologists have included musicological analysis in their research.

Weber, in The Rational and Social Foundation of Music, certainly used musicological analysis in his comparative anthropological approach.[23] Adorno, too, who was both a sociologist and trained musicologist, regarded musical material as "continuous with, and of the same origin as, the 'social process' itself."[24] Bradley writes in connection with this:

> The separation of 'art' from 'life' is for Adorno a particular historical attitude, reflected in the art of its particular period, but in no way a characteristic inherent to art as a whole. Thus any total heteronomy of art in relation to social life should be rejected by the investigator, whose task it is to discover their fundamental inter-relatedness, and indeed unity, while accepting that a 'relative autonomy' will exist.[25]

Adorno, then, accepted a "relative autonomy" of some music, and a "relatedness" of music and social life, but he also insisted music had "immanent laws." His interpretation of the connection between "art" and "life" was limited and ethnocentric. Misunderstanding developments in jazz and rock music, and failing to distinguish these from "light" and "popular" music which developed out of a European tonal system, he lumped

them together as inferior and appealing to regressed minds, as pulp music for a mass market.

Bradley correctly points out that Adorno believed "the autonomy of one's own preferred music to be the acme of musical autonomy as a whole."[26] While Etzkorn warns that despite Adorno's employment of Marxian terminology his bias is bourgeois, and that his abhorrence for the developments in music in mass society were to a large extent fuelled by his regret for the decline of the middle class as the bearer of culture in the face of the increasing commercialization of life. Etzkorn concludes: "Adorno represents the old guard of the bourgeoisie who, rather than welcoming it to the New World, tries to take 'Custer's last stand' against the barbarism of the New Age."[27]

Of course all musicological, and musicologically inspired approaches, do not share the shortcomings of Adorno's attitudes. Other research, such as that resulting from the incorporation of semiotic perspectives into musicology, and work from the field of ethnomusicology, which attempts to unite musicology and anthropology, have proved to be useful methods and have provided valuable insights. The work of Richard Middleton promises to be an important contribution to the sociology of music in respect to semiotics and musicology, but unfortunately it was not available in Australia at the time this research was concluded, and could not be acquired from overseas. Keil's work is an important available example. In Urban Blues notational and rhythmic structures, that is, the internal relationships and syntax of music, are included in his largely ethnographic description of the Soul Community. Again in "Motion and Feeling Through Music," Keil attacks Meyer's thesis that "syntax, and syntax alone," is responsible for a music's meaning. Keil goes beyond such internal relations of the music to examine the social behaviour attached to and resulting from musical performance; body language,

relative sobriety and kinesics are all introduced as variables in what meanings music communicates, in what situations, and for what audiences.[28]

Another example of the relationship between the musicological and the sociological in research is Whose Music? A Sociology of Musical Languages Here musical notation is analysed, and the authors, J. Shepherd and others, produce an Appendix on the Rudiments of Music for would-be future researchers. Clearly this sociology of music does not reject musicological analysis outright. As Bradley writes, Shepherd "is really a radical voice in musicology rather than a sociologist," but he goes on to admit that Shepherd provides "perhaps the most sustained attempt in existence to construct a theoretical view of the nature of music as a social practice."[29] Yet, such a mixing and incorporation of sociology into musicology and vice versa, and a confusing of the demarcation line between the two disciplines has been sharply attacked as "naive, illogical, and thoroughly unscientific," by Alphonse Silbermann, who writes:

> It cannot be too strongly emphasized that the sociologist of music must have nothing whatever to do with its technical aspects. It is not his job to concern himself with harmony, theory, form, style or rhythm, or to attempt to answer the question, 'What is music?' (assuming that any valid answer to such a question is possible)....Your musical know-all, of course, is delighted to engage in this kind of mumbo-jumbo since he claims to be able to interpret man (not only as a composer but as a listener) in terms of his music.[30]

Silbermann goes on to point out that we can actually learn very little about human society in the second half of the nineteenth century simply from the music of Brahms' German Requiem. Some deductions might be made about Brahms, but Silbermann enquires how much can even this reveal about the composer's contemporaries. Sociological enquiry must see the musical work in its social context in order to reveal the social and artistic condition of a society:

> The nature of the people living in a particular society can never be deduced from the music itself, that is to say without a knowledge of all its attendant circumstances and of the many social processes through which a society lives and creates.[31]

Silbermann's point is an important one, and one that is also made by Bradley in regard to Shepherd's work. Shepherd, admittedly does take account of the social context of music. "He insists that musical meaning can only be understood as social meaning, created in common by producers and listeners," but paradoxically, as Bradley points out, "he considers works containing this meaning in something like a fixed sense." The limitations of Shepherd's approach are found in his primary emphasis on the musical work in itself. He claims musical works "articulate the world-sense of their time," and this articulation is found in the music's technical aspects, "the very broad conventions of rhythm, harmonic system and melody." Shepherd's "world-sense" neglects questions of class and gender, and can only be very vaguely placed in time and space. His suggestion of an expression of an " industrial world sense" in eighteenth century classical music reveals an apparent "time lag" between music and history.[32] Shepherd's methods do not yield the sociological depth and insight they promise.

This is not to argue however that various musics do not have meanings to those not directly involved in them. Music is mediated and affected by its reception, and the constructive role of audiences is all-important. Under the influence of hermeneutics, semiotics, and reception theory, sociologists of the arts have increasingly abandoned the notion of the work of art as containing finite, single or uniform meanings. The variability of decoding by different audiences, differently situated, forces more than a simple account of music, which cannot be made in abstraction from its possible interpretation by potential consumers.[33] This is precisely why the music of some youth cultures is misunderstood, rather than not understood, by older generations. It is why the

seemingly disorganised banging, thumping and twanging of much tribal music is often so lacking in meaning to people from advanced technological societies that it is mistakenly described as "primitive." Becker discovered in his research on dance band musicians that they hated some of their own music, yet the audience loved it. This was because the musicians saw themselves as artists compromising what they had to express for financial reward, while the audience saw them as entertainment industry employees and there to produce music for a fee. If the sociologist of music wants to know what a particular genre of music is saying, what it is attempting to convey, what it means, or is intended to mean, he or she must begin in the first instance by learning the criteria of meanings which those intimately concerned with the music have conferred upon its parts.

By music, I am not simply referring to a structure of sounds comparable in value to some objectively conceived aesthetic criteria, as used in many musicological approaches. Rather, I see music as embedded in, and to a large degree constituted by, a system of cultural meanings. Some of these relate to the sounds themselves and the internal structure of the music, such as scales, consonance and dissonance, melodic interrelationships, instrumental and vocal techniques. Other meanings relate to the text, whether thought or sung, the deportment and costumes of the musicians, the spatial and social relationships of the musicians among themselves and with their audience, the programme structure, the performance context--occasion, place, audience composition, and variety of mediation such as broadcast, live and recorded music. All of these variables are interrelated, and while usually less then explicitly understood, they are none the less real.[34]

Brass bands had a highly sophisticated score which, as a movement, they had painstakingly devised over a century. Its design, in all except one instrument, was written in the treble clef. This had a specific meaning to bandies, and it came about for social reasons of ease of understanding and instrumental interchangeability. Similarly there was specific meaning in the characteristic brass band style of massively powerful crescendos contrasting in a mere fraction of a second with soft singing pianissimos, which used all the colouring of the sweet sounding Cornet (as opposed to the Trumpet), and of the high singing Euphonium which seemed to "fly" like the thin "hanging" sound of the Soprano Cornet over the top of the music.[35] These musical relationships, with their subtle nuances, were only understood and appreciated by the trained ear of the enthusiast. The distinctive march style, or deep feeling hymn tunes which made so much of "attack" and "release," as they were called, all had special significance. The Number One Contesting Position with Trombones behind Euphoniums and Baritones, who sat opposite the Cornets to the right of the Conductor, signified something other than the Number Two Contesting Position with Euphoniums and Baritones behind the Tenor Horns, but in front of the Basses. Bands wore uniforms--the colours, badges, braid, and medals worn for long service or solo contest victories, all had special meanings, as did the intricacies of marching style--Quick Step, Inspection, Slowmarch, Countermarch. Wherever the Band played, be it the music of Anzac Day at the cenotaph ("Reveille," "Rock of Ages," "The Recessional," Colonel Bogey"), or the music of the carnival ("Lily the Pink," "Dixie Doodle Rag," "The Cossack," "Waltzing Matilda"), all had particular, deliberate and different meanings depending upon occasion and audience.

The fact that the Band were amateur, local and "community" meant that they were judged by their audience accordingly, and therefore different meanings were conferred upon their music according to such immediate

criteria. Brothers, sisters, mums and dads, people from work, and from down the street, all cheered much more enthusiastically for "their" Johno or Mary when they marched down the street in "their" Town Band. Not only does the meaning of music vary according to individual and group construction, but it is also mediated by the context of the performance, and whether the audience's awareness context is open or closed to the band's situation and intentions in a variety of performance occasions.[36]

Culture and the Brass Band Movement

I see culture as being primarily, but also in the narrowest sense, a body of intellectual and imaginative work.[37] It is possible to understand brass band music, as music was defined in the preceding section, as part of culture in the same way as orchestral symphony music, literature, opera, drama, fine art and other aesthetic pursuits, which are commonly referred to as "the Arts." What makes brass band music different from these other examples of culture, as bodies of intellectual and imaginative work, is its generally lower order of importance or recognition on the cultural scale or ladder, the top of which is often referred to as "High Culture." One of the major reasons why brass bands are not regarded as "High Culture." is that as social organisations they have been deliberately created and uniquely adapted over the passage of time as an essentially amateur pursuit. Banding is primarily a participant culture, rather than a spectator one, and consequently has not easily availed itself of professional production. In this respect bandies have not been socially isolated and marginalised as artists as a result of the growth of capitalist industrialised society.[38] Banding has remained a folk music which still belongs to the folk, in the sense that Laing writes about the music of folk artists: "As well as its musical challenge, folk offered something else-- a sense of commitment, political

and otherwise, and a whole way of life apparently diametrically opposed to the world of...the leading television show of the era."[39] Being a good brass band musician means being good as an amateur. Whilst there have been a few isolated examples of professional brass bands, these have been short lived exceptions.[40] In other words, brass band music is "popular" in the sense that it is produced and controlled by ordinary people, but it is not "popular" in the commercial sense of mass distribution and audience.

The few researchers who have cast more than a cursory glance at brass bands, and similar traditional cultural forms, have described them as being part of, or a manifestation of, "working class culture."[41] There is a great deal of truth and accuracy in this description. Many brass bands had a long tradition of association with working class organisations such as trade unions, mutual benefit societies, sports and recreation clubs, and nonconformist churches. Most brass band musicians in the past, and during this research, were industrial wage earners, but it did not automatically follow that brass bands were "working class" because of these facts. Class cannot be reduced to small groups or individuals in this way. Rather a class description of brass bands had to come from what sort of organisation they were, and whose interests they served. It is vitally important therefore, in regards to culture, to diffentiate between brass band music itself and brass bands as a social organisation: the brass band movement.

Brass band music, like the vast majority of music encountered in Australia, is part of a common heritage, much of which extends back through many centuries. It is essentially Western European music, and has undergone a high degree of rationalisation, differentiation and specialisation of instrumental parts, standardisation and coordination of notation, in keeping with the movement towards rationality which typifies

Western society. Brass band music is recognisably Western in the sense that Weber describes orchestral symphony music. Its concise notation and well-tempered scale leaves it almost devoid of the spontaneity, inventiveness and improvisation which typifies tribal, or non-literate peoples' music.[42] The history of brass bands can be charted (as will be outlined in detail in Chapter 3) through the increasing rationality, specialisations and differentiations of its component parts, as it has developed from the non-literate village and folk bands of pre-industrial Europe into the contemporary "Contest Brass Band."[43]

By describing the music that brass bands play as part of a common cultural heritage, I mean that it has been built up over hundreds of years and many people from different walks of life have in various ways contributed towards it. The brass band has been a particular medium, giving its musicians access to a wide variety of musical compositions and styles, through classical orchestral, popular, jazz, sacred, folk and others.[44] For example, much of the brass band repertoire is derived from orchestral music, transcribed and shortened for brass band instrumentation and capabilities. Another large section of its repertoire is hymn music, which like most orchestral music is a common heritage, not belonging to or coming from one particular class. This is especially true of the sacred music of nonconformist religions, much of which was adapted from secular music in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. [45] Yet another large section of the brass band repertoire consists of the continual transcription of popular music, some of which is retained, and eventually passes into traditional folk music. Most, if not all, of this music is enjoyed and produced in the first place for a mass audience well beyond the narrow limitations of one particular class.[46]

Although most of the music referred to above is part of a common musical heritage, this does not detract from the fact that a great deal of

it is actually owned, controlled and mediated by a small minority through copyright, record production, distribution, broadcasting and educational advantage. Yet, to describe it as either "bourgeois" or "mass" music because of this fact would be to deny the majority of the people what is theirs, simply because they do not own its means of production. While the ownership and control of mediation needs to be pointed out, explained and even redressed, to describe most music as "bourgeois," or oppositely "mass" music, would be to set the researcher off on a fruitless hunt for an alternative "working class" music. This is not to deny that there is some genuine "bourgeois" and "working class" music, but these should be seen as small exceptional categories compared with the vast amount of music which is available and enjoyed by people throughout society.

Brass band musicians and composers have a great deal of original music of their genre. One cannot however describe this as "working class" because such specialized brass band music, "contesting music" as it is called in the Movement, is neither enjoyed nor understood by the majority of working class people, nor is it intended for a working class audience alone. It could be described as the music of a minority culture, which is also a working class institution, and has consisted mostly of working class people. It is in no way related to general popular taste in music, but has its roots in the evolution and development of a highly specialised minority style, one among many in contemporary society. Again, class cannot be reduced to individuals. Because certain individuals produce a piece of music that does not necessarily mean it is "working class," or indeed the music of any other class.

This brings us therefore to two important considerations about culture, defined as "a body of intellectual and imaginative work," and its relationship to the working class. Brass bands played a great deal of classical orchestral music, which both they and their largely working

class audience obviously enjoyed. As seen later in the ethnography, at almost all the locations in which brass bands played, the programmme of music would contain some transcriptions of classical orchestral music as standard fare. Although music has been described above as a common heritage, classical orchestral music would usually be associated with "High Art," but when transcribed for the brass band score and reproduced by the brass band, being an essentially amateur form of production at the community level, this "High Art" would meet with an appreciative response from a working class audience. While the classical symphony orchestra, even in its amateur form, was not a part of popular entertainment around the Workers' Clubs, in the public park rotundas, and in other community locations such as shopping centres and charitable playouts in Newcastle, the brass band was, and was playing the works of the Classical Masters among other music. This demonstrates the complexity of the relationship between the working class and culture, and that there is a danger in making assumptions that the "High Arts" are exclusively limited to one class, or that "popular" music is the cultural limitation of the working class. In this sense brass bands can be seen as articulating culture between classes.

The brass band movement, as a part of working class culture, has mirrored "High Art" music in the way it has developed its own particular musical style. Referring back to Weber's account of the rationalisation found in classical Western musical styles, brass band contest music as a distinctive, and almost privatised, part of the brass band repertoire has undergone a process of rationalisation very similar to that of orchestral music. Contest music, indeed the whole process of contesting, has been vitally influenced by the elements of institutional and artistic rationality. Banding's quite specific scoring method, orchestral composition, tuning, and the absolute importance placed upon the correct interpretation of notation, harmony and interlude, clearly show that the

characteristics of "High Art" music, as described by Weber, were not limited to the cultural development of one class. More, the actual style of contest music shares a great deal with classical music. Often it consists of transcriptions of orchestral work deliberately selected to bring out the fullest potential of the brass ensemble, and in terms of the purpose commissioned contest compositions, famous names of classical orchestral composers appear time and time again. To see working class culture in its imaginative and intellectual description as separated by clear cut differences from bourgeois culture is not helpful or tenable in terms of banding. While asserting that brass bands are a valid expression of working class culture, it should be appreciated that as a form of cultural expression they also represent an area of negotiation and exchange with other classes.

Besides being an intellectual and imaginative body of work, culture can also be seen as a whole way of life. This "social" perspective is most necessary and most fruitful to the analysis and understanding of a wide variety of minority cultural pursuits, and in the field of music to those genres that can be described as subcultures; brass bands, jazz, blues, bluegrass and Scottish pipe music, for example, can all be included in this category.[47] Such musical forms and their practice generate specialised social worlds, with exclusive areas of language, literature, history, social status systems, and social meanings.

In their study of youth cultures, "Subcultures, Cultures and Class," Clarke, Hall, Jefferson and Roberts take a broad approach to culture, and define it in the social context:

> 'Culture'...is the practice which realises or <u>objectivates</u> group-life in meaningful shape and form....The 'culture' of a group or class is the peculiar and distinctive 'way of life' of the group or class, the meanings, values and ideas embodied in institutions, in social relations, in systems of beliefs, in <u>mores</u> and customs, in the uses of objects and material life. Culture is the distinctive shapes in which this material and

> social organisation of life expresses itself....it is also the way those shapes are experienced, understood and interpreted.[48]

This approach rightly sees culture as active, constantly being made, changed, developed, and struggled for. The material objects of culture are given meaning as the products of an active social process. This indivisibility of material and social life, and the emphasis on the expression, in all shapes and forms, of group life are very relevant to the analysis of musical groups like brass bands in which musical production and social organisation are inseparable aspects of their part in the cultural process.

Obviously "culture" in advanced capitalist societies is not homogenous, but contains all the tensions and complexities of class structures in those societies. In many ways the power of ruling groups or classes extends beyond the economic sphere to the whole social-cultural order. Clarke et al. correctly points out that, "the dominant culture represents itself as <u>the</u> culture."[49] Yet, this culture itself is not unified or monolithic, but subject to conflicting forces within it, and in tension with subordinate cultures which exist, resist and negotiate with it, as well as infiltrate and influence it. These conflicting tensions in the cultural order are not simple oppositions, and in this sense,

> it is crucial to replace the notion of 'culture' with the more concrete, historical concept of 'cultures'; a redefinition which brings out more clearly the fact that cultures always stand in relations of domination--and subordination--to one another, are always, in some sense, in struggle with one another.[50]

Brass bands have already been described as part of working class culture, but the distinctive cultural experience of being in the banding movement is not typical of working class life itself. Banding is not representative of working class culture as a whole, but this is the "parent" culture of which it is a subculture. Clarke et al. rightly point out that while "class cultures" are the major cultural configurations in

modern societies, these "cultures" are heterogeneous:

> Relative to these cultural-class configurations, sub-cultures are sub-sets -- smaller more localised and differentiated structures, within one or other of the larger cultural networks.[51]

Seeing subcultures as sub-sets of a wider class configuration is important, for although those involved in banding have interests, concerns, practices, values, and all the other essential elements which constitute a cultural form and are different in significant ways in their focal concerns and activities, they also share common concerns, activities and social reality with a "working class parent culture." Brass bands in Australia can be conceptualized as a "respectable" (as opposed to "rough" or "deviant") subculture within working class culture, which is subordinate to the dominant bourgeois culture.

Given this cultural plurality, and the way in which cultures mix, contend and ally themselves with each other, questions remain. How is this very imperfect unity held together, and how is cultural domination perpetrated and perpetuated? Gramsci's concept of hegemony is important here, for he redefined it from its simpler understanding as political domination to a complex concept encompassing political, cultural, and ideological practices. Gramsci asserted that power was not maintained simply by force, but also by less obvious manipulation in areas such as education and culture that lent legitimacy and general consent to the leadership of the ruling class. Gramsci's analysis of the links between politics and culture added a great deal of sophistication to Marxist theory and firmly rejected the crude notion that culture is simply a direct reflection of the economic base of society. Hegemony goes beyond earlier concepts of "culture" and "ideology" in the notion of its complete pervasiveness in the whole process of living, to such an extent that, as Williams says, "the pressures and limits of what can ultimately be seen as a specific economic, political and cultural system seem to most of us the

pressures and limits of simple experience and common sense." Drawing from Gramsci, Williams goes on to define hegemony:

> It is the whole body of practices and expectations, over the whole of living: our senses and assignments of energy, our shaping perceptions of ourselves and our world. It is a lived system of meanings and values--constitutive and constituting--which as they are experienced as practices appear as reciprocally confirming. It thus constitutes a sense of reality for most people in the society, a sense of absolute because experienced reality beyond which it is very difficult for most members of the society to move, in most of their lives. It is, that is to say, in the strongest sense a 'culture,' but a culture which has also to be seen as the lived dominance and subordination of particular classes.[52]

The "dominance and subordination of particular classes" was central to Gramsci's formulations of the nature of hegemony, because for him the need for the working class to create an alternative hegemony, by the practical connection of many different forms of struggle which were not overtly political or economic, was a vital task. Although Williams writes that the sources of any alternative hegemony are difficult to define, he suggests the importance of cultural work and activity as being among the basic processes of the formation of hegemony.[53] In this sense the active experiences and practices of culture and its production, for example, those of leisure, entertainment and art, as well as personal relationships, can also be the sites of alternative or oppositional hegemony.

Reducing such an important area of contemporary Marxist debate to the subjectivities of a minor musical subculture requires some caution, however such arguments might serve to explain why brass bands appear to have such contradictory activities. Brass bands can be understood as a distinctive cultural group, musical genre, an art, and an aspect of leisure and entertainment; and in all of these they can be seen as an element in the process of hegemony. They occupy a location of hegemonic transformation in which hegemony is created and resisted, defended and opposed. On the one hand brass bands espouse pro-union, Labor Party and

community commitment, and left wing ideas and sympathies constitute the dominant political outlook among their members; in this sense they are a focus of protest and a source of oppositional hegemony. On the other hand, as participants in Anzac Day parades, performers at R.S.L Clubs (the leadership of which is avowedly right wing), and in their respectableness, their home-owning, non-bohemian, pro-royalty, anti-republican tendencies, they also appear as pillars of the establishment and upholders of the ruling hegemony. Brass bands can be seen as one of the "institutional solutions" which Clarke et al. say, "preserve the corporate culture of the subordinate class, but also negotiate its relations with the dominant culture."[54] To this extent they comprise working class culture, but this negotiating position and their complex role in hegemony, can sometimes also make their class identity appear ambiguous:

> Working class culture has consistently 'won space' from the dominant culture. Many working class institutions represent the different outcomes of this intense 'negotiation' over long periods. At times, these institutions are adaptive; at other times combative. Their class identity and position is never finally 'settled': the balance of forces within them remains open.[55]

In the following chapter on the history of the brass band movement in Britain and Australia, the predominantly working class membership of the Movement is described. While an exhaustive analysis of all band membership occupations is beyond the scope of this research, there remains absolutely no doubt from examining a geographical cross section of both contemporary and historical records of bands, such as availability has allowed, that the vast majority of banding's participants have been, and from current records still are, industrial wage earners. Miners, steelworkers, factory workers, service industry workers, tradesmen and lower clerical staff all figure strongly. There was at the time this research was written, as there has been consistently in banding's history, a collective consciousness that bandies as individuals, and their movement, were "working class" or "just ordinary," and these two terms

came up time and again in conversations with banding participants as a description of themselves. True, an examination of any particular band's membership list will probably show some variety in occupational status; the occasional professional occupation such as engineer, accountant, surveyor or small businessman, for example, will appear. This was certainly the case with Kotarah, for it had an engineer and a few teachers in its ranks.

To reiterate E.P. Thompson's point: "The finest-meshed sociological net cannot give us a pure specimen of class, any more than it can give us one of deference or love. The relationship must always be embodied in real people and a real context."[56] Further, the assignment of class on an occupational basis is problematic for class analysis itself. Here the work of Olin-Wright is an important guide. He points out that although sociologists have generally regarded "class" and "occupation" as occupying the same theoretical terrain,

> Marxist theory adopts a totally different stance towards the relationship between occupation and class. Occupations are understood as positions defined within the <u>technical</u> relations of production; classes, on the other hand, are defined by the <u>social</u> relations of production.[57]

Hence we have examples where highly trained professionals may be employed in positions of subordination with very little autonomy within the labour relationship of production, but conversely some skilled, semi-skilled, or even unskilled personnel might occupy a whole range of locations within production, ranging from managerial, supervisional, self-employed to subordinate. Occupational status, then, can only be a crude guide to class analysis, and within a schematized view of class, there are ancillary locations and positions which confuse any clear cut view of class structure. Olin-Wright points to the "contradictory locations within class relations," such as those occupied by managers and supervisors between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, or the position of semi-autonomous wage earners between proletariat and petit-bourgeoisie,

or again, that of small employers between bourgeosie and petit-bourgeosie.[58] He insists that, "In the broadest terms, then, classes are defined by their location within such relations of exploitation."[59] He further points out that:

> the relative sharpness of the status difference between white collar (or mental labor) occupations and blue collar (manual labor) occupations has led many sociologists to treat this division as a fundamental division between classes rather than an internal division within the working class.[60]

To return to the context of the banding movement, let us consider the position of the teachers who were members of Kotarah Band. They enjoyed a standard of living not noticeably different from the industrial wage earners in the Band, and there was no noticeable social schism or cultural divide between them and the other bandies. Within the Band, at least, the "relative sharpness of the status difference" to which Olin-Wright refers was in no way apparent. Certainly the white collar workers were not distinguished in relation to their fellows as superior musicians. More, they made equal comment about the "working class" and "ordinary" status of bandies, including themselves. I would suggest that the presence of some white collar workers in the banding movement, whether or not they are regarded as petit-bourgeois, does not mean that brass bands have ceased to be a part of working class culture.

Contrary to viewing intellectual workers a "contradictory location" within the working class as Olin-Wright does, Poulantzas attempts to theorize the class specificity of the new petit-bourgeoisie. In asking what difference it makes whether salaried workers are regarded as an "intermediate strata" or as a "specific class," he points out that "strata" as opposed to "classes"--"do not have specific and relatively autonomous class interests.[61] Arguing that even if we see salaried

workers as being different from the working class we "see them as being automatically polarized towards the working class; and we therefore treat them as if they do not have specific interests of their own."[62] Or, alternatively, if they are a specific class, "we must give proper recognition and attention to their specific and distinctive class interests." The problem here for Poulantzas is one of hegemony:

> So the problem of the hegemony of the working class presents itself as exactly how to organise people, the popular alliance. This popular alliance is made up of different classes with specific class interests. If this were not the case the problem would be reduced to an extremely simple one.[63]

Relative to both Poulantzas' and Olin-Wright's perspectives, Bennett insists that in whatever ways we choose to describe the new petit-bourgeosie, it "constitutes a relatively autonomous economic, social, political and cultural force"; and that:

> it is no longer enough...to theorize the petit-bourgeoisies as a rump, as what's left once the working class and the bourgeoisie have been defined, as if their constitution could be accounted for solely in terms of their contradictory location within the tendencies toward polarization which mark the relation between the two fundamental classes.[64]

Bennett also points out that the alignment of the new petit-bourgeoisie with the working class may in fact be a decisive force in the "popular alliance," and that any realistic contemporary conception of "the people" must take the new petit-bourgeoisie into account.[64a] In these terms we can see that what is "popular" is not necessarily synonymous with what is exclusively "working class."

Two important facts stand out in relation to class and contemporary banding. Firstly, brass bands are less purely working class, defined in terms of their membership consisting of industrial manual workers, than they have been in the past. Newcastle's bands had once predominantly consisted of miners' bands, shipyards' bands, steelworks' bands and workshops' bands, which were drawn essentially from occupational

communities of skilled manual workers; but bands, nowadays, contain a social mix in terms of the occupations and occupational status of their members, are attached to clubs and community associations organised around leisure activities, and are not particularly connected with the workplaces of their members. One reason for this is that there has been an absolute and relative growth of intellectual occupations in Australia. In Newcastle a decreasing percentage of the workforce are employed in the traditional industries of coalmining and steelworking, and the shipyards have closed down. Newcastle's commercial centre has grown and diversified. As a regional centre it now has a university, a college of education and a technical college, and the three civic councils have all expanded their range, scope and number of service staff.

The question is therefore, that if there has been a growth in the absolute and relative size of the petit-bourgeoisie, the new white collar intellectual workers, have brass bands and the banding movement managed to form a popular alliance which transcends this class division, and meets the needs and interests of both classes? Do the contradictions in banding today reflect the demands of such a popular alliance? This is difficult to theorize specifically, for brass bands are a dangerously small microcosm, with too many limits on potential membership, to draw many generalizations.

An important clue to understanding the social mix of brass bands, and to then explain some of the contradictions banding comprises as a part of working class culture, is a consideration of their location in the community. Newcastle has many socially mixed suburbs; whole areas, such as the one which Kotarah Band was drawn from, contained people from varied social backgrounds. Community principally consisted of networks of friendships, families and social organizations, and will be dealt with more fully later in this chapter, but here it can be theorized that

people of mixed social and class backgrounds shared a similar lifestyle and civic consciousness, presented overtly in their joint belief in the values of community and social respectability, which made it difficult to clearly distinguish what was middle class and what was working class. Certainly the Clubs in Newcastle, around which so much of band life took place, provided popular centres, accommodated both manual and intellectual workers, and catered for their jointly held tastes with popular entertainment.

In order to understand the class nature of banding it is necessary to consider the traditional and institutional nature of the brass band movement as a working class institution. What made brass bands different from other forms of amateur music-making that I came across during the research was their very strong commitment to community as an idea. Brass bands were essentially collectivist. The banding tradition, both implicitly and explicitly, proclaimed the ideals of cooperative endeavour, community involvement, volunteerism, and the joint pursuit of musical education through sharing. It pursued these beliefs as a conscious endeavour of working people of ordinary social status, and limited economic means, to produce music and community organisation free from the commercial relationships that govern everyday life. This is not to argue that such pursuits typify working class life in all Australian suburbs, for obviously they do not. Nor are these "ideals" on the other hand simply restricted to working class consciousness. Many of the social aspects of banding's subculture could be found in much less blatently class proclaimed endeavours. Amateur symphony orchestras, operatic societies, choirs, drama groups, recorder ensembles, madrigal groups, and other amateur leisure pursuits existed for many of the same reasons as brass bands, that is, to find joy and self fulfillment in cooperative music making, and the opportunity to transcend the routine of everyday life. For bandies, their sense of tradition separated them from

these musical pursuits. Banding appeared to be something older and more established. Brass bands were not an amateur version of an otherwise professional musical endeavour. There were no professional brass bands, and a "state of the art" brass band was an entirely amateur concern. There were, however, professional choirs, symphony orchestras, jazz bands, big bands and folk groups of which amateur groups were, by and large, a pale reflection. This is not the case in banding, because it has been shaped by a distinctly community centred cultural tradition.

Tradition was an essential aspect of the history, existence, and continuity of brass bands. Often referred to as simply "the tradition" in banding circles, it could be evoked to justify and rationalise current and planned activities, musical repertoire, methods of organisation, social alliances within the community, sites of performance, costume and deportment. New initiatives could be quickly dismissed as not being "part of the tradition."

The brass band movement was a "selective tradition" in the sense that Williams defines it:

> an intentionally selective version of a shaping past and a pre-shaped present, which is then powerfully operative in the process of social and cultural definition and identification.[65]

By selection it is meant that from the area of history, and the present, certain practices, meanings and experiences are preserved and revered whilst others are radically hived off to be neglected and excluded. Hence within the particular hegemony in which brass bands fulfilled the Town Band tradition, a selected history is made into "the tradition," the current example of the authentic past. It offers as Williams says, "a version of the past which is intended to connect with and ratify the present."[66] In practice what brass bands offer when they appear at the centre of community celebration and activity is a "sense of predisposed continuity" in both historical and cultural terms. The traditional

Australian Town Band, as a symbol of respectable community and stable civic life in contemporary capitalist society appears to ratify that order and its hegemony. Yet, "the tradition" also encompasses alternative representations of banding. Its largely working class membership and its established sympathies, both historical and contemporary, with working class movements, particularly unions and workers clubs, and its implicit beliefs and explicit demonstration through performances of cooperation, solidarity and mutual aid, could quickly place the individual brass band in opposition to dominant hegemony. Australian brass bands, like their British counterparts, had a distinguished history at the front of the trade union march, the protest demonstration, the May Day march, on the picket line, at the sites of "popular" resistance. Banding "tradition" had a contradictory role in the historic and cultural process. At one point, there they would be, playing for "King (or Queen) and Country," sponsored by industry, the very image of social peace and unity; and then in another instant, they would be leading striking miners, steel workers, or anti-war protesters through the streets. These contradictions were expressed both internally and externally, never simple, complete, taken for granted, or just occurring. Bands were always, by nature of their community and amateur basis, making, negotiating, and dropping alliances with other groups, institutions, organisations and traditions.

As we shall see from the ethnography, there was a debate in banding circles about what brass bands were symbolizing on the Anzac Day parade, particularly as the issues of women's role in military conflict became more contentious and a new generation of women took an active part in banding. Tradition could confirm that the Anzac Day parade was where brass bands should be, but in this aspect it was patriarchal and informed

by male centred assumptions about women's past and present roles. Another issue of hot debate concerning Anzac Day was the parading of Vietnam War veterans as heroes, not within the Band, but between the Band and the parade organisers. Anzac Day was not a clear issue for the Band, because it did not celebrate just one idea, and as a selective tradition itself had contradictions in its history and purpose.

Anzac Day brings into focus brass bands' complex relationships with nationalism and patriotism, and the very diverse ways in which they are perceived. Gramsci writes:

> the particular form in which the hegemonic ethico-political element presents itself in the life of the state and the country is 'patriotism' and 'nationalism', which is 'popular religion,' that is to say it is the link by which the unity of leaders and led is effected.

Gramsci also points out that terms like "patriotism" and "nationalism" undergo changes of meaning "as they are appropriated by different fundamental classes and articulated to different hegemonic principles."[67] Patriotism and nationalism are extremely powerful, but multi-faceted forces. They have fuelled fascism in Germany and Italy , Islamic fundamentalism in Iran, the aspirations of anti-colonial liberation in many countries in Africa, and radical revolutions in Latin America. Political parties of all shades and persuasions have attempted to harness these forces, and have, among other means, often used "popular" and community musical expression to this effect. In countries with a banding tradition, the band has appeared as an obvious vehicle in the ideological fight for hearts and minds. The community unity and solidarity represented by the brass band, which incorporates networks of friendship and relies heavily on the support of the family structure, can be translated on a larger scale to represent the unity of a nation, care for the community can become patriotic concern for the country. As the larger abstract concepts are derived from the specific and material unity of a band and its music, seen as solidarity and cooperation in action, so

too are the abstractions sustained and made meaningful by their reduction to smaller, identifiable and understandable social groups. The "popular" solidarity represented by the brass band evokes, in personal terms, the "local" community, which in turn means friends, brothers, sisters, wives and children--the only people for whom the majority of people could ever by motivated to fight. Whether this is reactionary or revolutionary "nationalism" or "patriotism" will depend upon the particular nature of circumstances, by which classes the terms have been appropriated, which hegemonic principles they are used to articulate, and which selective version of a tradition has gained dominance.

Throughout this research I stress the "popular" nature of the brass band movement. I describe it as part of working class culture, because as a social organisation and institution it embodies and advances an idea about the nature of social relationships that is quite distinct from the bourgeois view. I use the terms "bourgeois" and "working class" here in the context and sense that Raymond Williams describes them:

> 'Bourgeois'...marks that version of social relationship which we usually call individualism: that is to say, an idea of society as a neutral area within which each individual is free to pursue his own development and his own advantage as a natural right.

He contrasts with this,

> the idea that we properly associate with the working class: an idea which, whether it is called communism, socialism, or cooperation, regards society neither as neutral nor protective, but as the positive means for all kinds of development. Development and advantage are not individually but commonly interpreted. The provision of the means of life will, alike in production and distribution, be collective and mutual. Improvement is sought, not in the opportunity to escape from one's class, or to make a career, but in the general and controlled advance of all.[68]

The "provision of the means of life" is not simply economic, but extends to the production and distribution of culture, including music. The brass band movement whose members so often eschew the individual opportunity to make a career and "escape" their class through the musical ability

acquired in the bands, is in its collective and communal nature an admirable example of a significant aspect of working class culture.

When I refer to the brass band movement as being part of working class culture, of embodying or institutionalising a working class idea, I do not mean that all working class people possess it, for obviously not all working class people in Australian society are involved in brass bands, or any other working class organisations. I mean, rather, that this is the essential idea embodied in the organisations and institutions which that class creates and maintains in the process of history, the working class movement as a tendency over the course of time, rather than all working class people as individuals at any one time.[69] In this sense it is impossible to talk about an organisation as amorphous as the brass band movement as being purely working class.

The brass band movement came into being in the mid-nineteenth century and quickly spread in popularity throughout Britain's new urban industrial proletariat, and through colonial migration to both Australia and New Zealand. Due to their position as workers, brass band musicians were deprived of educational facilities, particularly in respect to "the Arts." Spare time, and the financial means to individually acquire musical instruments, manuscript music and other musical equipment, were extremely limited. Brass band culture in the narrowest sense of the term, as a body of intellectual and imaginative work, reflected this early deprivation. Early brass band music was frequently no more than crude transcriptions, presented in "pot-pourri" form, of orchestral and operatic work. As Marx says: "Men make their own history, but they do not make it under circumstances chosen by themselves, but under circumstances directly encountered, given and transmitted from the past."[70]

Whilst a small amount of early brass band music was both original and compelling, there can be no doubt that most of it suffered from, and reflected, the social, economic and educational limitations encountered by those early musicians. The brass band provided, perhaps, the only means to produce and enjoy music cheaply, and was truly a "poor man's orchestra." It has not been until comparatively recently that brass band music has been able to build and develop as culture in the narrow sense. Early brass bands developed and utilized an instrumental ensemble which was rational, durable, standardised, mass produced and consequently affordable, for which a large range of music could be easily transposed. It was technically the most suitable musical ensemble available in the mid-nineteenth century.

More important than this form of cultural production however has been cultural production as social action. Organisations like brass bands, and other working class institutions, if they are to be recognised for their worth, are to be seen as collective democratic institutions. Raymond Williams writes:

> Working class culture , in the stage through which it has been passing, is primarily social (in that it has created institutions) rather than individual (in particular intellectual or imaginative work). When it is considered in this context, it can be seen as a very remarkable creative achievement.[71]

The Australian brass band movement is one of the institutions of working class culture to which Williams refers, and which has been active in almost every town and city in Australia since the mid-nineteenth century. It is democratically based, provides free musical education, maintains a cooperative of community owned instruments, music and other equipment, all at the disposal of ordinary people who wish to pursue music for a common purpose. Its contests allow brass band musicians to aim for standards of musical excellence and, by any standard, are judged by strict, fair and open criteria. But, playing in a brass band was for most bandies primarily the pursuit of producing a good brass band, rather than the

attainment of individual virtuosity or expression. To bandies, what makes the best brass band music so outstanding compared with other forms of musical production is its high degree of group coordination and sectional technical excellence, and the fact that this is achieved under amateur conditions.

Brass bands do not exist in isolation. What bandies saw as good and worthwhile about their banding, they also saw as valuable for society as a whole. What the brass band movement as an institution of working class culture tried to create, and was heavily involved in, was community; this was nearest to bandies in the immediate sense, for it was the place where they lived with their family and friends.

Community and Music

In the preceding sections on music and culture references were made to groups in music, firstly, in relation to the elaboration of a definition and theoretical approach to music itself (that any particular music can only be understood in terms of the criteria of the group which makes or appreciates that music) and, secondly, in relation to groups, social organisations or institutions based around and committed to a specific form of cultural production, in this case brass band music, and the brass band movement.

In many studies of music and other art forms, the relationships of the particular organisation, group, institution, movement or sub-culture, with wider society has been analysed and explained through a "cultural production" perspective. Specific theoretical accounts and group analysis have been outlined for music and other art forms by Becker, DiMaggio, Hirsch, Peterson, Berger, Faulkner, Wolff and Bird.[72] In any of the particular forms of cultural production considered by these writers, all the component interest groups are reviewed and accounted for in terms of their productive relationships and/or their particular cultural conventions.

This "cultural production" approach has provided a successful and convenient tool of analysis in many important studies of music, both in terms of the base-superstructure debate, and the conditions of production and organisation of productive relationships, as exemplified by Frith's Sociology of Rock. Here the analysis was simply divided into three parts: Consumption, Production, and Ideology. In so far as Frith was researching a mass youth culture and a "mass media" it provides a revealing account of the professional "stars," and the economic and occupational dynamics of the rock business. However, it

almost totally misses the lifestyles and activities of the thousands of amateur rock artists and rock groups which are also a productive part of that culture, even if their music never achieves mass mediation. A too narrowly economic analysis of cultural production has led to many virtually depopulated accounts of musical and cultural production of all kinds, for example, Mike Hobart's "The Political Economy of Bop!" an historical account of North American jazz, and DiMaggio's "Cultural Entrepreneurship in Nineteenth Century Boston," a study of the formation of a symphony orchestra. While both take into account the historic processes involved in cultural production, cultural ownership, and economic determinations of how musical groups and cultures become socially located, they tell us almost nothing of the people, artists and others, involved in the productive relationships of these cultures, what their artistic intentions were and, more importantly, how they themselves interpreted events and social situations which gave rise to the conditions and value placed upon the music they produced.[73]

It was pointed out in the Introduction that this research was primarily interested in the amateur expressive lifestyles of individuals, and this raised a number of theoretical problems in relationship to the Boys, and their community. Bandies were not involved in a musical wage-labour relationship, and there was little direct profit to be made out of brass band performances, so what were its relationships with community in terms of cultural production? To be a part of a brass band cost money, time and effort. A great deal of labour was put into brass bands for no material reward, simply because bandies and other supporters believed in the intrinsic value of banding. In this sense Bourdieu (following Weber's contention that status groups vie with one another to monopolise scarce cultural resources[74]) is correct to criticise a too narrowly economic view of the interests involved in constitutive

cultural relations, which he describes as both dynamic and symbolic:

> Different classes and class fractions are engaged in a specifically symbolic struggle to impose the definition of the social world most in conformity with their interest. The field of ideological positions reproduces in transfigured form the field of social positions.[75]

My earlier section, "Culture and the Brass Band Movement," concluded by pointing out that bandies believed in what they were doing, that they were part of a social movement which saw itself as a valuable and progressive vehicle and institution of working class culture. A brass band's relationships in cultural production are only partly constituted by material relationships. In addressing the problem of determining the political economy of cultural groups, Bourdieu calls for a broader perception of cultural group relationships. He argues the need for a general science of the economy of cultural practices, "capable of treating all practices, including all those purporting to be disinterested or gratuitous, and hence non-economic, as economic practices directed towards the maximising of material or symbolic profit."[76]

Brass bands had a variety of cultural capital besides the simply material and symbolic capital of their music. This included scholastic, social, linguistic, economic, and credentialled capital which was exchanged and negotiated in a variety of complex ways. Brass bands would support local community groups, perform at sacred and patriotic ceremonies, provide musical education, argue for resources and negotiate relations with a variety of similar amateur and voluntary competing groups, with whom allegiances had continued, and changed, over the passage of time.

Most studies of contemporary Western music have chosen to focus upon professional musicians, and the political economy which surrounds the place of music within the community has been almost completely neglected. One of the reasons for this has been the degree to which amateur musical groups are integrated into larger economic and social structures.

> Folk artists (if we can speak of the community members who engage in these activities as artists at all) resemble canonical artists in being well integrated into a world in which the conventions of their art are well known and easily made the basis of collective action.[77]

To understand the political economy of a brass band, or indeed any genuine folk artists as they have been described by Becker above, the broader conventions and rationale for collective action of the whole community must be understood. A study of brass bands is one way of gaining insights and understanding of the nature of contemporary Australian community life as collective action.

The importance of music in community life has been widely written about by folklorists, ethnomusicologists and anthropologists. However, most of this research has been about so-called "primitive" or non-technological societies. This study is also cognizant of the conceptual developments of ideas such as "Soundscaping," and the "Acoustic Community,"[78] but they are of limited use in the analysis of socially interacting community, as opposed to a depopulated, ecologically conceived one.

More immediately relevant to this study has been the research work exemplified by Lomax in the development of his Cantrometrics

method. Briefly, Lomax proposes that music and dance has a chief function in expressing the shared feelings and moulding the joint activities of some human community; that each musical style is a way of experiencing, transforming knowledge, and expressing life in some special environment, and is related to a particular productive range, political level, class stratification, sexual mores, gender power relationships, and social cohesiveness.[79] Lomax's Cantometric methods and wide-ranging geographical research found that, "No branch of the human family, no matter how well- or ill-equipped technically, fails to symbolise its social norms in a suitable song style."[80]

By referring to Lomax at this particular junction, it is not intended to specifically comment upon the value of the Cantometrics Grid, or that sort of "scientism" as a means of cultural analysis, but more, to point out the extent to which community, particularly traditional community, and music are very widely interwoven and connected. Lomax's basic proposals really go no further than what researchers such as Merson and many other anthropologists and sociologists have long proposed, though not through such exhaustive research and scientific attempts at mass community music analysis as used by Lomax. Merson refers specifically to the idea of codes and encoding in respect to the socialisation of youth in cultural and community identity:

> Because of its effectiveness in maintaining cultural identity, social music, especially in preliterate tribal societies is an essential point of education. By encoding and transmitting social values music is a powerful means of preparing youth for adult life and community responsibilities.[81]

Although this study is not comparative, it is worth noting that there is some research and literature which illuminates very specific examples of the relationship between community life and band music.

O'Henry's "The Meaning of Music in a North Indian Village," Gold's "Enchantment of the Fasnacht," Helffer's "Fanfares Villageoises au Nepal," and Haanstra's film Fanfare, are all interesting examples of how band music can be shown to have very specific meaning within the context of community life.[82] Keil saw Soul music as being in the total service of the community, referring to a contemporary urban North American black community.[83] More specifically relevant to brass bands is Keil's regretfully short analysis of Polka Bands in the United States, and their relationship with and dependency upon the small Polish community. He shows how these bands encoded traditional Polish customs and culture in their performances, and how they, like other community bands, had become a repository of cultural meaning, or as sometimes said, a system of signification.[84] Specifically, the brass band's encoding of traditional community values in the context of contemporary Australian society is evident in Bradstow: A Study of Status, Class and Power in a Small Australian Town, in which Wild observes the significant presence of a brass band at the Australia Day ceremony at the R.S.L. club:

> The Brass Band resumed with 'Advance Australia Fair,' 'Sons of Australia,' and 'Waltzing Matilda' as people gradually dispersed. Such values represent so much of what Bradstow is as a community. They have become institutionalised in a community ceremony, that is almost an initiation rite into citizenship.[85]

The only sociological research to have paid any serious degree of attention to brass bands, Jackson and Marsden's Working Class Community, placed them centrally within the community. Jackson and Marsden studied what they saw as the institutions of working class community life in an industrial city in northern England: language and dialect, lifestyles, Working Men's Clubs, occupational community at the Mill, the Bowling Club, a Jazz Club, a riot, a school, and brass bands. They wrote of their first research encounter with the "bands:"

> at first sight, a study of Brass Bands looked a more exciting extension of community outside the circles of the clubs. The bands were a brilliant flash in a public rhetoric that had survived the first wave of television. They might still be part of the gay ceremonial of working-class life for a new generation which didn't surrender to television as a compelling novelty, but treated it as a common fact. Again the bands voice the latent idealism of the community, almost in terms of aspiration towards a musical commonwealth.[86]

In the Newcastle research the term "community" was used very regularly in brass band circles. It had two separate usages or meanings, which approximated to what in sociological jargon has been referred to as "empirical description" and "normative prescription"; the "community" as a thing, a place, a geographical entity, which actually exists in terms of material objects and people, different from "community" as an ideal, a system of human relationships and a way of life intrinsically worthy of social action and support.

The Boys would describe themselves as being "the community's Band," by which they meant they were attached to, and part of,the distinct geographical locality, the name of which was used to describe themselves: Kotarah Band. When they performed on the radio, at carnivals, and in contests they saw themselves as representing their community, and drew material and emotional support from the local residents on the grounds of narrow parochialism, as might the local football team.

However, when the band described themselves as being "a community band," as opposed to "the community's Band," this had a different and more emotive connotation which stood for more than simple geographical identity. They meant that they were a non-profit making organisation, working towards community as a somewhat intangible feeling derived from being part of a system of human relationships, and was not particularly related to the social relationships of occupation, professionalism and

commerce. They meant by being "community" that they were part of a large number of similar organisations and associations such as trade unions, recreation clubs, sports clubs, churches, youth associations, welfare orientated community support organisations, and voluntary service associations. They were referring by "community" to a network of essentially voluntary and amateur enterprises actively working, at least as they saw it, towards making society a better place to live in.

The sociology of community is a large and rambling body of research and theory which at best leaves the student with the impression that community is a very elusive concept indeed, with little potential for universal application. As long ago as 1953, George Hillery's paper, "Definitions of Community: Areas of Agreement," was easily able to list more than ninety separate definitions of community from which little in common could be salvaged.[87] Community, it would seem, has largely been whatever sociological research projects have delineated as their catchment area; a boundaried, geographically discrete area, or place, or population, which serves as a social test tube for the analysis of a multitude of human relations. The variety of communities which sociologists have written about is almost endless, and includes occupational and institutional communities, as well as musical ones.

In Community Studies, Bell and Newby sum up the efforts of thousands of community studies in their conclusion, and warn the researcher against foisting "normative prescriptions" of what community should be upon their readers under the masquerade of objective sociological research.[88] Bell and Newby are referring precisely to the notion of community, and the emotive support it is likely to receive from social scientists, as it was spent out by Tonnies, and what they describe as "the good life": a sense of belonging, something enduring,

consisting of close and warm human relations, Gemeinschaft as opposed to Gesselschaft (contemporary, anonymous, atomised, impersonal society).[89]

When I refer in the title of this study to "The Cultural Creation of Community," I am referring to "normative prescription," not an "empirical description." Brass bands were not consciously involved in building and working towards community as a geographical entity or locality, or towards understanding a unit of population for sociological research, frozen in time, and ahistorically understandable. Rather, they understood community as a place in which they and their families lived, as a system of human relations which touched them in the most immediate sense in their everyday lives, as a lifestyle in which mutual aid and benefit, belonging, status, and pride in cooperative achievement was constantly worked towards. The "normative description" of community in this study is not necessarily mine (although I cannot deny that I approved of the Boys' notion of community) but was that of the Band's, and was widely shared by those who worked within similar community organisations for the same ends, at the time of the research.

Bell, one of the authors who warned against the dangers of "normative prescription," reminds us in a later text that the idiosyncracies of person and circumstance are at the heart, not the periphery, of the scientific enterprise.[90] This was particularly pertinent to my position as a sociological researcher in Kotarah Band. I was at the time teaching and supervising students on a Welfare Course at the local "community" (as they described themselves) College of Advanced Education. What we as lecturers at the College saw as "community work," and what we hoped our students would achieve during their field practicum and following occupational careers as "community workers," was the making or

contribution towards a better way of life for all through the systematic and selective application of community skills.[91] In this sense community was something which supported individuals, gave them a better, more meaningful existence through helping to establish, maintain and expand all the organisations and associations which gave people some direct and immediate control over everyday life. "Community" may well be an elusive ideal, but "community work" is not. It is a profession, and the more experienced members of the Band, and others in similar community groups, were well-versed and sophisticated in their use of some community work skills.[92]

Needless to say we never, as lecturers, attempted to specify what the "good life," which would flow from the attainment of community, would finally consist of. Community is a historical process, and cannot be constructed overnight from the designs of town and social planners, as the Newtown investigated in Bryson and Thompson's study testifies by its almost total lack of community associations and activities.[93]

Community is ongoing and organic; it must be continually and consciously worked towards as an ideal, or it will eclipse and disappear. Sociologists of community often miss this very point, which social workers and welfare workers active in the community work field take for granted. Community is made by hard work and devotion, because people believe in it. If the organisations which consciously create community are not taken into account in terms of their activities, intentions and beliefs, then a community cannot be understood.[94]

A comment from one of the Boys in the Band vividly expressed what the Band meant by "community":

> If you give a bit of community, then you get a bit of community. It's really that simple. You've got to be in it to get some of it. It's just like Medibank.

Although this bandie felt that he was part of the "community," he was aware that his immediate neighbours might not feel this way, for a sense of community involvement and identity came almost exclusively from participation in one of the many voluntary organisations. As Wild points out: "Voluntary organisations are a central part of the status system of a small community in that they represent spheres of local interaction."[95]

What this study understands by "community" are the activities, aspirations and ideals of the Band as expressive artists in their neighbourhood, and in all neighbourhoods throughout Australia where brass bands are active, as part of a vast interrelated network of voluntary associations, calling themselves and their activities "community."

The relationship between the Band's music and the community was an important one. Music played in community settings such as playouts, club gigs, Anzac Day and carnivals (which are dealt with more fully in the ethnography), was music performed essentially in the service of the community. From its large repertoire the Band would select transcriptions which had been pirated from some other musical source, such as orchestral music, jazz, big band, radio, television, films, the record industry and so on, and where possible thematicize and periodize this selection within the limits of providing a varied programme for whatever the occasion demanded. An important point to note is that very little original brass band music was ever performed for the general public, for this was essentially reserved for band practices and contesting. A programme of public music was always selected with two important concerns in mind. Firstly, that the audience should be able to recognise the music, that is, it should at one time have been popular in the sense that it was well known, and its reproduction would evoke recognition in the

public consciousness. Secondly, as the older members would always remind the Band when chosing a programme's contents, "Give them music which makes their feet tap."

The search for certain characteristics within the Band's repertoire which embodied the distinctive cultural values of brass bands and their role within the community seems therefore to be an elusive one, which cannot be properly addressed without asking what makes any form of music popular in the sense that it becomes well known among the general public. In the community setting brass bands played what was, or had been, genuinely "popular" music, within of course the constraints of any particular item being playable by a brass band at all, or that the music itself without the lyrics constituted a recognisable musical item, which some popular music did not. Despite these limitations brass bands were a remarkably versatile musical ensemble when compared with ensembles such as jazz bands, Scottish pipe bands, bush and folk groups, which were also amateur and community based but were limited, for technical reasons, to a much smaller more specialised repertoire than the extensive range and diverse styles of that of the brass band.

To ask, therefore, why certain forms of music were chosen by the Band, and others not, is to ask why certain forms of music are popular at all, and why some are not. This is an issue that goes beyond the limits of this thesis, and is related to questions about the professional music industry and music policy in broadcasting, the recording and film industries. More specifically, why was the Beatles music always well received by all age generations of audience when performed by the Band, and therefore a common component of community oriented band programmes, and why was the music of lesser known musical stars, such as Sid Vicious and the Sex Pistols, never performed? The answers lie to a large extent in the nature of the popularity of a particular "popular" music, and in

its musical style. The music of the Sex Pistols, and similar "punk" musicians was an ephemeral cosmopolitan nihilistic protest, an interesting reflection of a passing cultural phase, the limited popularity of which cannot be measured against the sustained and long term musical contribution of the Beatles and its individual members, such as Paul McCartney, who after more than twenty five years as a popular musical celebrity still produces music which finds a place and appeal in the public consciousness. Apart from the virtual impossibility of transcribing most "punk" music into the brass band medium, it is not a music which can easily be separated from the fast-lane, short-lived outrage of its original exponents and still remain viable as music. Beatles' music on the other hand has been transposed not only for brass bands, but for many kinds of musical ensemble including symphony orchestra, jazz and big bands. Many of their tunes are simple, melodic harmonies which have an immediate appeal and can be easily sung, and their lyrics are often concerned with the joys and problems of everyday life, familiar and identifiable to a very wide range of the population. This does not of course mean that punk music will not retain a lasting following in the form of a minority following, or that it will not spring up again in popularity. Only time will tell.

It needs to be added that because the Band was at the service of the community, it would earnestly attempt to reproduce any music for which there was a popular demand, and the Boys in the Band, being musical pluralists, were always careful to solicit requests from organisers and audiences for special music. Nobody ever asked for Sid Vicious, or any other "punk" music, but had they, the Band would have done its best to serve the community, because that was how they saw their role. In this sense brass bands may be seen as different from the many other forms of amateur community music groups which I came across during the research. Most of the other groups had their style of music, be it jazz or folk, for

example, and rarely went beyond their preferred style of music. On a couple of occasions people did request some Rolling Stones music, "Paint it Black" and "Goodbye Ruby Tuesday." This was duly transposed and scored out by one of the Boys, but despite all attempts to make these tunes playable, "Paint it Black" sounded like an unrecognisable dirge in the brass band medium, and "Goodbye Ruby Tuesday" was only just tolerated by the audience.

The values embodied in the Band's performances then, lay not in any specific music of its own, but came from its musical service to the community and its very real physical existence. Here, music must be seen more broadly than just an arrangement of acoustic phenomena, as the previous definition of music has outlined, and aspects such as occasion and place of performance, costume and deportment, and audience composition must be taken into account. Brass band music as a typical and expected feature of any genuine community or civic celebration, was an enduring traditional symbol of community. The Band's known dependence upon community support, the idea that it was a "local" group, their amateurness, and their obvious collective activity, were all reflections of the essential values of community life.

Chapter 3

A Short Social History of the Brass Band Movement

Early Origins

One brass band historian, Arthur Taylor, describes brass bands as "a Victorian invention," and points out that "almost all of the elements we would recognise as typical of the Movement today were developed in the twenty five year span from 1853 to 1878."[1] This is the period when the brass band as a distinct instrumental ensemble was established, and when banding became an institutionalized social organization with distinct social and cultural practices. However, to say brass bands were "invented" is rather misleading, for they did not just suddenly happen under the direction of an omnipotent hand, or come into being out of a musical void. Rather, they were the result of a long period of development of wind ensembles, having their roots in village bands, which characterised the rural regionalized culture of pre-industrial England. The transformation of this culture in the eighteenth, and particularly the nineteenth century, is reflected in the development of amateur banding, which provides an interesting illustration of the ways in which new economic orders and changing technologies can shape the production and consumption of music, and is also central to an understanding of the history and origins of the contemporary brass band.

Historical records and contemporary research into rural English music provide an account of village band life in the eighteenth century. Galpin, MacDermott, Temperly, Gammon, and the revealing descriptions of rural life in the novels of Thomas Hardy, form a picture of a widespread popular traditional musical style which united both sacred and secular

life.[2] Gammon's research is important here because it throws into sharp focus the events and social tensions which influenced village band music in the period immediately preceding the Industrial Revolution, and the rise of the brass band movement.

Between the seventeenth century Puritan Revolution and the late eighteenth century, popular participant church music had been on the increase. These "musicianers" developed and stylised expressive musical performances, which flourished during a period of absentee clergy and neglect by Anglicanism of music in religious celebration. The result was an independently minded popular expressive style of musical production, which differentiated little between the sacred and the secular. It was as Gammon writes, "a thoroughly pervasive style used for secular songs and traditional dance music as much as for psalms in church."[3] Here we have a picture of the church at the centre of the village community, in which the songs and music, pageantry and carnivals of holy days and the changing seasons, all had a place in religious celebration.

The church bands were distinct institutions within village society, some of which had membership rules reminiscent of the Friendly Societies. Composed largely of tradesmen, journeymen and agricultural workers, they were self-taught amateur musicians recruited from amongst the ordinary folk, and deeply proud and committed to their musical achievements. Criticism of this musical theatre, which dominated church life, mediated religious meaning, and threatened the status and control of the clergy, had been growing since the beginning of the eighteenth century; first, in the theological debate over whether music properly had a place in worship, and later, over what sort of music this should be. It was not until the nineteenth century that matters came to a head, and within fifty years church bands with their "Babylonian performances" had been all but routed from the Anglican Church.

A concerted clerical movement to reform church music resulted in a conflict of interest that exposed a latent class struggle within Anglicanism. It represented not just a class struggle for the physical territory of the church as a centre for popular community and expressive culture, but also one about how and by whom religious meaning should be mediated and controlled. New developments in Organ and Voice music were important weapons in this struggle. The Organ, which after 1640 had been banished, smashed or fallen into disrepair (as a result of a Puritan edict because of its association with "popery"), found a new lease of life in the new, cheaply available Barrel Organ. It was at once able to replace the instrumental music of bands, and its introduction was strongly recommended by clerical reformers. According to Scholes, "it spread like chicken pox through the parishes of mid-nineteenth century England."[4] Church music reformers such as Bennet, Druid and La Trobe, used such means as the Society for Promoting Church Music, and the journal The Parish Choir to argue for Organ and Choral music, pushing their class bias under the belief that "nothing can be more certainly fatal to the good cause than placing the management of the music in crude and vulgar hands."[5] Modern church music was to be controlled by the clergy, with Organ instead of band, and Choir instead of songsters.

The events and results of these changes in church music represented a larger crisis between the "crude and vulgar hands" and the clerical representatives of the ruling class. As E.P.Thompson states, "above all the church lost command over the leisure of the poor."[6] It most certainly lost command over the popular village music of ordinary people. But such changes were slow, and were often accompanied by protracted localized struggles. Bands did not abandon their church music easily. Gammon portrays the widespread conflicts which led to violence, mass desertions to nonconformist religions, and Luddite activities which included the blowing up of a church Organ. The clerical victory over

Anglican music was symbolic of the class struggles which began to produce the patterns of dominance and subordination that were occurring in a wide range of work and leisure institutions throughout society, for there is a striking similarity in the chronologies and suppression of many traditional popular recreations in the early nineteenth century.[7] As Gammon points out, the expulsion of the old style bands was not uncontested, nor was it a complete victory. It was an institutional victory in which the hierarchy of the Anglican church rid itself of the embarrassment of a lower class form of musical expression. However, there were other religious movements and social institutions which were more concerned with the music of ordinary people, and thus began a new chapter in traditional banding.

With increasing migration from village to town, industrialization and factory work, new institutions of working class culture began to take shape. It was amongst these that banding was to flourish and find its means and reasons for existence. Although changes in style and instrumentation meant bands resembled traditional village bands less and less, expressive folk music persisted to become institutionalized within, and expressive of, industrial proletariat culture.

The rapid and dramatic social and economic changes that took place in England during the essential century of the Industrial Revolution, 1780 to 1880, through industrialization, urbanisation, improved transport, communications and technology, have long been discussed and stressed by numerous historians. However one aspect of this important period largely ignored by academic historians until the 1970s was the fact that "the Industrial Revolution affected leisure as much as it affected work."[8] The development of leisure activities as an accepted part of working class social experience is integral to an understanding of the development of the culture of the new industrial proletariat, in which amateur banding

was to have a significant place. Cunningham writes, "there is nothing in the leisure of today which was not visible in 1880. Thus for England the century 1780 to 1880 stands out as crucial in setting terms to the meaning and experience of leisure in advanced capitalist society."[9] The profound growth of banding and the establishment of the brass band movement during this period is equally crucial to the meaning and experience of the brass band as a continuing aspect of contemporary leisure.

Leisure, such as it existed in the eighteenth century, belonged to the "leisured class," the rich, while for the mass of the populace life was not clearly differentiated into discrete areas of work and leisure. Industrialization and factory work, with their emphasis on punctuality and discipline in the workplace, were to change this and lead to a general rationalization of the distinction between work and leisure. With this rationalization came a confrontation over the control of "spare" time, an attempt to extend this rationalization to the new-found freedom of leisure itself.

While the notion of popular leisure was new, there were of course old traditional recreations and customary sports. Many of these came under attack from authorities and reformers in the first half of the nineteenth century. Customs like the Stamford bull-running, when a bull was chased through the streets by the local populace, came to an end in 1840 after a protracted struggle involving the police, the army and the Home Office. Shrove Tuesday and Ash Wednesday football matches in Derby came up against fierce government opposition. Such public, improvised and inclusive activities, as Cunningham correctly points out, "offended against the privatisation of property, against the business life of the community, and any sense of the work ethic, and against notions of decorous behaviour."[10]

Blood sports, hunting and fairs were criticised on the grounds of public decency, but evidently land and its use were under dispute as well as behaviour. Urbanisation had caused conflict over the ownership and use of space which at one time had been considered public and common, and free for the purposes of community activity. In London alone large areas simply disappeared as common land, restricting the new urban proletariat. Urbanisation ushered in greater class segregation and eroded the customary sense of community as place. For example, the Municipal Corporation Act of 1855 was the culmination of radical changes in the traditional financial responsibilities for City Waits, City and Guild supported musical groups, which had accompanied civic celebrations for some five hundred years.[11]

Three important streams of culture can be identified in respect to the control and use of leisure in the first half of the nineteenth century: popular, secular radical and religious. The popular, discussed above, consisted of traditional and communal activities passed on from a previous era. In addition to these activities there was a tremendous growth in commercial entertainment as a form of popular entertainment. The circus gained a large following. Pantomime and theatre, both resident and travelling, grew and developed to meet new demands. Sports and athletics were also gaining popularity and attracting increasing numbers of participants and spectators.

Opposed to traditional popular culture as corrupt and undignified, and equally unimpressed with the crudity and frivolity of many developing popular entertainments, the religious movements competed for working class patronage and control of their leisure. It was in the nonconformist religious context that amateur music societies and banding traditions found a rigorous new lease of life. The Wesleys had attacked popular culture, and their attack on sinful practices was carried out by their followers through popular preaching. The Methodists did not attempt to

change the form of popular culture, such as singing, community gatherings, celebrations and parades, but they did attempt to change its content to focus on virtue, godliness and the hereafter. They took preaching out of the church and made it a public community show. Cunningham writes: "Open air speaking was deliberate spectacle--processions through towns might rival those of the showmen."[12] Methodism offered its adherents a new alternative form of recreation, but one which retained the sense of community, drama and participation, that had been part of the old culture. The Methodists identified the fact that religious congregational singing, banding and choirs, were significant and attractive leisure activities. John Wesley had said he wanted, "the people called Methodists to sing true the Tunes which are in Common Use amongst them."[13] Inspired by the hymns and preaching of John and Charles Wesley the Methodists placed special emphasis on musical education.

Realising the value of the collective activity and distinctive community nature involved in producing group music, the Salvation Army was another nonconformist religious group which at a later date in the mid part of the nineteenth century adopted brass bands and choirs as an important means of social organisation, religious mediation and recreation. It's founder, William Booth asked the famous question, "Why should the Devil have all the good music?" and used his bands and choirs as "Mobile Organs" to take the message of his largely working class Army into the streets and amongst "the lowest."[14] Like Wesley before him, Booth wanted people to sing the popular tunes, to keep the forms of popular culture, but to change its content from the secular to the sacred. For example, "Champagne Charlie is My Name," the popular music hall hit, became under Booth's revised lyrics, "Praise His Name, He Sets Me Free." Methodist Chapels, Christian Unions, Boys Brigades, Bands of Hope, missions of all kinds, and the Salvation Army, used brass bands to pursue religious conversion and social reform. While most of these religious

organisations lost their brass band connections by the mid twentieth century the Salvation Army in particular has made a lasting impact on the brass band movement, and its bands and composers have had an important influence on banding generally.[15]

Apart from these religious roots, the development of banding was influenced by secular radical ties. Wishing to provide alternative leisure venues to the church and the public house, secular radicals shared with religious reformers a disdain for traditional popular culture. Robert Colls writes:

> Those radicals who pushed for working class 'improvement' in all its guises, Teetotalism, Owenism, Chartism, Trade Unionism, Benefit and Education Clubs, they all had their own particular sincerities, but equally they all had the destruction of the old popular culture as integral to their ends.[16]

By 1825 middle class groups were attempting to create new public leisure activities which they called "rational recreation." They put enormous amounts of energy into the establishment of museums, public parks, libraries and musical life, in the belief that leisure time could more rewardingly be spent improving self and society. Rational recreationists believed that educational leisure was a recipe to uplift the working class. They were motivated by the fear of the rift between "two nations" and the violent confrontation that might follow, as already evidenced in the French Revolution, as well as by genuine guilt, and a positive humanitarian, if paternalistic, urge to see an improvement in the quality of working class life, at least in terms of access to "culture" and the development of finer spiritual and aesthetic feelings that might not be wholly provided by the church. Musical education was seen as a particularly suitable weapon in this struggle for cultural souls, for it was believed that music, of the correct kind of course, was an uplifting and civilising influence and a means of improving the moral values of the working class. In this respect, the work of middle class reformers like John Hullah, Kay Shuttleworth and John Curwin had an important influence

on musical education as a whole, and hence on banding and choirs.[17] Hullah's disciples taught the Tonic-Sol-Fa system through Sunday schools, choral societies, and state schools, where it was included as part of the compulsary musical syllabus in 1872.

The Mechanics's Institute, which also grew out of the rational recreation movement, was very influential in the development of amateur music making, and had a philanthropic concern for the working man and his education. Founded in 1823, there were over two hundred branches throughout England and Wales by 1841. They offered choral and musical education and facilities, and were associated with a large number of temperance bands which came into existence in the mid-century. It should be noted that Mechanics' Institutes attracted the lower middle class as well as the working class, and as their concern with education gave way to leisure, so their major purpose of providing scientific education for the working class failed. Exactly then, how did movements such as Hullah's choral activists and the Mechanics' Institute influence brass bands? This is difficult to assess. They did infuse literacy and knowledge, particularly musical knowledge, into the community, and the rational recreationists influence in the creation of public parks provided towns and cities with public bandstands, which have become the hallmark of banding's public-place in the community ever since. Cunningham writes:

> Books, museums, exhibitions, music, all these cultural goods from the middle-class repertoire were in a sense to be laid at the feet of a presumably grateful working class; but to the latter it was in many ways a poisoned gift, for it was tied with the strings of class. Along with the cultural good had to come an acceptance of middle class patronage.[18]

It is true that the rational recreationists believed that playing in a brass band or singing in a choir were intrinsically better ways of spending leisure time than going to the pub or the music hall, but these middle class reformers did not invent brass bands or choral singing, they only lent selective support and encouragement to existing traditions of

popular musical expression. They were simply one aspect of external influence on the musical education and development of the working class.

Early brass bands organised support and patronage from a variety of sources including community subscriptions, temperance associations, Friendly Societies, military associations such as the yeomanry, and nonconformist churches. Their members were usually artisans and tradesmen; self-taught musicians, literate, secure enough to be able to afford the time and expense of banding, they organised cooperatively to acquire musical knowledge, instruments and music manuscripts. Towns in northern England such as Queensbury, Coxlodge, Denton, Bolton and Straithwaite all had bands before 1820. Some of the earliest records, such as those of the Cleggs Reed Band, go back to 1780. By 1880 their membership was entirely composed of cotton mill workers. They were a twelve piece ensemble, playing a mixture of Reed, Brass and Percussion, and had their own distinctive uniform. In 1821 they were noted as band contestants at celebrations for the coronation of George IV. Still extant at the time of this research, they are now an 'A' grade brass band known as Besses o'th' Barn, and funded by community subscription. In the first half of the nineteenth century amateur bands were undergoing profound transformations, with new and different instrumentation, varied public performances including traditional carnivals, religious parades, and political demonstrations such as the infamous Peterloo massacre, and had patronage and affiliation ties with a broad range of organisations.[18a] The histories of individual bands show fickle changes from one form of sponsorship to another, displaying an apparently pragmatic attitude and a promiscuous relationship with the middle classes and their organisations.

The saying in the North of England that "Tha' sinks a pit and starts a band," still lives on. It refers to the fact that industry, factories, and mines in particular, were among the major sponsors of brass banding in

England. Black Dyke Mills Band, from Queensbury, probably the most consistently famous state-of-the-art brass band, has always had sponsorship, first from a local inn, but later and ever since, from Fosters, a manufacturing company. Similarly, General Universal Stores always maintained the G.U.S. Band. British Insulated Cables, British Imperial Metals, Fodens Motor Works, and Carlton Main Frickley Colliery are among the numerous industrial sponsors which have helped to maintain top quality "Works" bands over a long period of time. To argue that this employer patronage and sponsorship proves employer hegemony and the dominance of bourgeois cultural values and ideology in brass bands as a social group and cultural form is to simplify the issue. Obviously brass bands were good for employer-worker relationships in many ways in that they appeal to social solidarity and the sense of community, and in a "Works" band the workplace would figure strongly in this sense of identity. While this social harmony would be good for production and business, worker solidarity would obviously give the workers strength to defend their own interests. Brass bands have been, and still are, attached to Cooperative Societies,(the most famous example being the Manchester C.W.S. Band.), trade unions and workers' institutions. Joyce writes:

> The institutions of working class self-help, from the trade union to the co-op, represented a cultural autonomy and class identification that were in tension with the world of the factory. Similarly, the world of the factory was itself shot through by ambiguity and contradiction. No form of class hegemony is reducible to mere social control. Rather than the unilateral imposition of cultural uniformity from above, such situations always involve mutual constraints, boundaries beyond which neither side can trespass if the social relationship in question is to remain viable; and the hegemony the northern employer class exerted in the second half of the century was no exception.[19]

I would suggest that the "Works" brass band was indeed an area of the world of the factory which was particularly "shot through by ambiguity and contradiction," and that in terms of class culture and social relationships it was an area of extremely complex cooperation and

confrontation. The genuine popularity of brass bands, which were very often supported by voluntary contributions from the workers, in addition to employer sponsorship, suggests that they could not have been simply a bourgeois ploy foisted upon an exploited working class, unless we make the simplistic assumption that the workers were astoundingly naive and absolutely manipulated from above. The complex ambiguity of where brass bands stand in relationship to the establishment is one which remains a question in the contempory context. For example, Britain's current leading brass band, Grimethorpe Colliery, can be found in bastions of bourgeois culture like London's Royal Festival Hall, and accepting sponsorship from a multinational company, Utah, to tour Australia during the course of this research, but could also be regularly seen leading miners' demonstrations in Yorkshire in the hard fought Miners Strike of 1984.

"Works" bands, or community bands which received sponsorship from factory owners , were the most successful and lasting bands in northern England. Patronage might not have been enjoyed, but it was often necessary, for brass bands were expensive to maintain, and because of their numbers, very uneconomical propositions in the amateur commercial music market. Employers gained advertising from the bands, for where the bands went and played, the factory name went too. The band functioned as a community identification for all, but bandsmen also had an important allegiance and identification with the growing banding movement, through contesting with other bands, and jointly developing their own musical style. Players moved freely between bands, just as whole bands were prepared to drop one form of sponsorship for another.

It was only by the mid nineteenth century that a mature industrial

proletariat came into being, and it was at this time when factory based manufacturing became properly established in the north of England, particularly the areas of Cheshire, Lancashire and the West Riding of Yorkshire, which formed Manchester's industrial hinterland. This is the area which Joyce, in Work, Society and Politics, delineates as the cradle of factory production and the factory proletariat. This same area was also the cradle of brass banding, for from the mid nineteenth century it has produced more and better brass bands than anywhere else, and is contemporarily referred to in banding circles worldwide as "the Mecca of banding." While it is of course true that banding was popular throughout England and Wales, for Cornwall, South Wales and North East England all have rich banding traditions, the bands of the districts Joyce delineates have dominated the history of banding for the last one and a quarter centuries, having gained the heights in musical skill and expression, having high levels of participant activity, large popular followings, and a highly regarded place in the hearts and minds of local communities as an enduring part of their cultural identity.

Robert Gray argues that the mid decades of the nineteenth century were years of structural differentiation within the working class, marked by "wide cultural differences which had some discernable connection with the formulation of a socially distinct upper-artisan stratum."[20] In short, there was an emergence of a labour aristocracy. The social consciousness of this group, distinguished by "respectability," Gray sees as a modified perpetuation of the values of pre-industrial tradespeople, "the culture of the eighteenth century small farmers, self employed artisans, and small masters: God fearing, self-reliant, assertive of their moral independence, struggling to remain at a social level just above that of the 'labouring poor'."[21] Precisely the same social groups and milieu in which Gammond's research located village banding. In their new urban setting artisans became the upper strata of the new industrial proletariat, the

"respectable" working class. Not only did this result in trade and craft subcultures, it was also reflected in leisure pursuits. Music, particularly banding was an example. Bands were not only attached to industry in terms of sponsorship, they were also attached to trade and craft. Hence in the north of England and Wales, bands were connected to occupational communities such as coal miners, mechanics, steelworkers, mill workers, and weavers. Certainly the necessary literacy, cost and type of music, which included transcriptions from the classics, would suggest that brass band members consisted of better educated and responsible sections of the working class, and in this sense could well be described as belonging to the aristocracy of labour.

Accepting that brass bands were a rational recreation with middle class approval, they represent an area of leisure where middle and working class interests converged, but this does not necessarily mean that brass bandsmen had assimilated middle class norms and values. It was a means by which working class people came into contact with so-called bourgeois music, and it was a means by which this was disseminated among the workers through public concerts. But, as already noted, classical music, particularly choral works, already had a place in working class life. A banding movement that spread across church, factories, unions, political parties of both left and right, attached to mutual benefit societies and volunteer regiments, cannot be simply explained away as an elite working class assimilation of bourgeois values. The values of respectability, discipline, self-improvement and education, promoted in leisure activities such as banding, may at face value look bourgeois in content, but as Gray and Cunningham argue, "they were in fact invested with different meanings; in particular that they express the aspirations of a group rather than an individual."[22] In this sense respectability "is properly interpreted as a claim to status recognition and citizenship on behalf of skilled workers

as a corporate group."[23] Bandsmen. presumably were drawn from among the most articulate and talented members of the workforce, and therefore would be the least likely to be easily manipulated. Bands were organized and controlled by their members, and a study of band membership lists from this period shows that they were overwhelmingly drawn from the skilled working class, principally factory workers, mill workers and miners. Middle class involvement was essentially limited to financial contributions and audience appreciation at public performances. Unlike many choral societies, brass bands were not a recreation pursuit in which there was actual social mixing of the classes, for among the performing members of brass bands the presence of the middle class was negligible. It is in this sense that I describe brass bands as working class, and see banding as a social movement as as aspect of working class culture. Brass bands needed instruments, music teachers, places to practice, and these were, and still are, expensive items. Sponsorship of bands and the patronage of the rich, whether from industry, church or association, does not necessarily imply a submission to the sponsors' control or values. Working class bands, for lack of alternatives, were forced to accept middle class sponsorship, but not its ideology. Neither does the fact that some bandsmen in some ways represented a working class elite divorce them from the main body of the working class, or mean that their working class identity was destroyed, for quite oppositely they were able to provide a focus of class identity, especially demonstrated in their close ties with trade unionism, and a symbolic focus of community identity acceptable to both working and middle classes. Joyce writes:

> the application of a 'labour aristocracy' notion to the factory worker does not seem especially productive. A concentration on what is taken to be the elite in the working class not only diverts attention from the majority, but also fails to discern what people had in common is more important for an understanding of class relationships than that which is held to have divided them in work, and life that went beyond work.[24]

Towards the middle of the nineteenth century, when brass bands and their movement became established, England entered into a period of relative stability. Up to this point banding had undergone some technological development with the introduction of new instrumentation, and they achieved some measure of popularity and support. Growing up within a new industrial working class, banding developed along the same lines as many other forms of working class recreational activity. Like football it grew and developed according to cultural needs, displaying the hall marks of working class culture: team solidarity, community support and identity, struggle and confrontation. Involvement in contesting stands out particularly in this respect. Band contests had been regularly reported since the beginning of the century, but from the mid point of the century they not only became the central feature of banding experience, they were to reform, rationalize and consolidate the brass band as a distinct instrumental orchestra, and unite the huge variety of amateur wind bands scattered throughout the land into a movement. Banding became part of a wider cultural movement that affected choirs, poetry and other amateur cultural projects, the competitive festival.

One example of such a contest was that held near Hull in 1845 to celebrate the traditional Magdalene Feast.[25] Local bands came together to contest for a prize of £12. Established contest rules limited band size to twelve musicians, excluded drums, and stipulated formal adjudication. The Hull Flax and Cotton Band, The Holmes Hull Tannery Band, the Partington Band and a Yeomanry Band took part, playing a wide assortment of unstandardized brass and reed instruments. The winning Wole Band played Handel's "Hallelujah Chorus." The contemporary features of contest banding were already coming into shape: amateur bands supported by a wide variety of institutions and organisations, contesting to prescribed rules with specific band size, and some regulation of instrumentation.

The Industrial Revolution introduced technological changes into the manufacturing industry, providing the economic base for the new industrial society. The two most important technological changes to have influenced bands are exemplified by that symbol of industrialism, the steam engine. Firstly, manufacturing industry acquired the capacity to mass produce moving metal components, of which the steam engine piston valve is the prime example. Secondly, the rapid growth of a network of railway companies provided for both the transport and distribution of industrial products, and the means for mass communication. The mass production of standardized brass musical instruments based upon the piston valve system, the availability of mass distributed sheet music, and the large scale recreational social gatherings made possible by railway excursions, increased the success of banding enormously.

In Belgium and France an ingenious musical instrument maker, Adolphe Sax, began producing large numbers of standardized brass instuments, which have since borne his name as Saxhorns and Saxaphones.[26] At the Great Exhibition in 1851, in London, he won a medal for his display of a complete set of brass instruments with a piston-valve action which greatly increased their range and technical capabilities. What Sax had to offer was a complete band in standard pitch, with accurate tuning capacity, for which composers and arrangers could specifically score Sax, and other manufacturers, introduced a musical system which was the basis of the contemporary brass band. Robust metal instruments, simple to learn with their valve action, they were a significant technological improvement on the ad hoc combinations and technical capacity of earlier instruments. They were also cheap and readily purchasable. The Great Exhibition, which was itself an example of a new popular recreation, was attended by thousands of industrial workers from all over Britain, who arrived by cheap railway excursions, and saw in Sax's products a readily available, easily mastered, means of music making by precision manufactured metallic

instruments which strongly reflected the substance and mechanical logic of working class life. Like the Barrel Organ before them, and the Electric Guitar later, these instruments opened up a new dimension in the production of music.

Between 1850 and 1900 brass bands became popular throughout Britain, Australia and New Zealand. With their volume and capacity to entertain large open air audiences, the availability of a mass produced selection of sheet music, and their team-like and competitive approach to performance, they flourished in a new industrial age. If the new standardized brass band lost much of the traditional and regional compositions and styles of village music, this had compensations. A much wider range of music was now made available through printed music and standardized scoring. Conventional musical literacy opened up a new musical world for bands. Much culture had been destroyed without doubt, but a great deal was also shared, and as I have already noted, classical musical composition in rearranged forms from all over Europe was performed to popular audiences. Rearrangements of the classics, in particular, operettas, hymns, folk music, and vigorous marches, could be guaranteed performances in Manchester, Sydney and Wellington within months of publication.

Contesting, which was already underway at the beginning of the century, grew into an important form of popular entertainment. Along with choral competitions, competitive festivals themseves became institutions of musical development. Starting from such ad hoc arrangements described in Charles Dickens' journal as "A Musical Prize Fight," they soon became sophisticated performances capable of attracting huge audiences.[27] At first these were purely entrepeneurial affairs aimed at a mass recreational market and took place alongside exhibitions, circuses and showground activities, but later coming under the control of banding, they developed into the means through which banding rationalised

itself into a distinct musical style and cultural institution. One such entrepreneurial contest which took place at Belle Vue Gardens in Manchester in 1852 (and which has continued annually to this time), was programmed amongst fireworks displays and circus acts. Another similar contest took place at the Hull Zoological Gardens, to which bands bringing sufficient supporters on train excursions received free transport. The biggest and most famous contest of the period took place at Crystal Palace, London, in 1860. With special excursion trains arranged to bring bands and supporters from all over Britain, it lasted over two days and consisted of six league elimination rounds played simultaneously around the Palace. Admission was one shilling, and there were symbolic awards of trophies, and cash and instrument prizes. Some measure of the Contest's success was that it attracted more than sixty bands. It is important to note that the Contest Rules strictly specified amateur status, band size (eighteen) and stringent adjudication procedures.[28] The Crystal Palace Contest ended with a mass concert, reviewed in the London Times, in which 1390 brass band musicians accompanied by a "Monster" Drum rendered "Rule Brittania," Handel's "Hallelujah Chorus," part of Haydn's "Creation," and "God Save the Queen," to an undoubtedly deafened audience.

The picture we have of banding in the late nineteenth century is one of instrumentally standardized brass bands, functioning in almost every town and village in England and Wales. Its musicians were amateurs, able to afford the cost and time for playing, literate in conventional Western music scoring, and associated with a wide variety of organisations. But most importantly, it consisted of bands organising amongst themselves to create democratically controlled associations for the pursuit of music. Such a picture is in complete contrast to the experiences of church and village bands, dispersed and suppressed at the beginning of the century.

Popular musical culture and its tradition had adapted to, and taken on, the social and economic products of industrialized society. Changed, re-located, and rationalized, the banding tradition had struggled back to a position of pre-eminence at the centre of working class culture.

Of course banding in England did not develop in a vacuum, and the working class were also involved in other musical forms including military music, choral and musical societies, and forms of popular entertainment such as music hall and the circus.

Wind bands were not an exclusively amateur preserve. The tradition of military music in the British armed forces goes back to the fifteenth century, and together with village and church bands can be seen as an important influence in the development of banding and wind instrumentation. The Napoleonic wars saw military bands used on an unprecedented scale. Influenced by musical styles from Turkey and Asia attributed to the Janissaries (a military sect, and style of marching band performance), the conclusion of these wars at the turn of the eighteenth century left an important musical style, instruments and knowledge in both civilian and military hands.[29] As already noted Yeomanry bands were an ingredient in the amateur banding world in the first half of the nineteenth century. Their participation in the Hull 1845 Contest was by no means unusual. Similarly, with evolution of the Volunteers, banding became an important recreational activity which helped attract and hold membership. This remains true today, and is equally true of Australian banding.

A detailed outline of the historical development of military music has been provided by H.Farmer.[30] He points to the importance of Kneller Hall, which the British Army established as its own school of music in 1857. This facilitated the teaching of a large number of wind

instrumentalists to a very high standard, a great deal of research into instrumental techniques, and the definition and rationalization of the composition of military bands and their music. While the military band is a different kind of wind orchestra to the brass band because it contains woodwinds, there has always been a great deal of compositional overlap. Music suitable for one may usually, and especially in terms of entertainment music, be quickly transposed for the other. Like brass bands, military bands were to be seen in the public park bandstand, and at the seaside promenade. Military bands produced hundreds of musicians whose talents continued to find expression after military service in amateur and professional music.

William Weber, in his comparison of music in the three cities of London.,Paris and Vienna, overlooked the influence of military music and formal military training on the musical life of London.[31] Correctly, Weber points to the Band of the National Guard in France as producing many accomplished musicians from an artisan background who entered public musical life as professionals or amateurs after military service.[32] This was equally true in Britain. Most regiments and the navy had bands, and their training made them an influential ingredient in musical developments, particularly in the sphere of wind instrumentation.

Amateur choral societies, as already noted, were an important aspect of musical development in nineteenth century England. Cunningham draws attention to the fact that musical tastes were not necessarily class specific, and that Handel was reported to be popular among northern factory workers as early as 1788.[33] Certainly Haydn and Handel appear time and time again in both brass band and choral programmes from the beginning of the nineteenth century. The tremendous growth in choral singing, and its popularity is described by Weber. For example, he writes that in the 1845-46 choral season ten choral societies in London,

organised under the auspices of the Mechanics' Institute, performed at least forty eight events, which could draw audiences of between six hundred and a thousand.[34] This musical activity, and that of amateur orchestras, Weber claims brought together artisan working class and middle class in large numbers as participants and audience. Despite the strength of working class participation in these activities they were undeniably middle class in character, and dominated by the middle class in leadership and organization, quite unlike brass bands. The "concert" life discussed by Weber offered the lower middle class and upper working class access to a "low status" version of the "high status" musical concert life from which they were excluded. In this sense they can be seen at the bottom of a musical and social hierarchy within which they had upward aspirations. By contrast, the world of banding was much more self-contained. As seen in contesting, brass bands did aspire to become better bands, but top bands were top bands and not a low status version of something else. The banding tradition differed from the amateur orchestra and choir in the sense that it was working class, and did not simply occupy the lower echelon of a musical tradition that more strictly belonged to the ruling and middle classes. What must be borne in mind in relation to Weber's research is that it is limited to capital cities. South Wales and the north of England had musical activities as lively, if not more so, than London, and Manchester and Cardiff might well have revealed quite different patterns.

Research suggests that working class participation in choral societies in the north of England was extremely limited, but in Wales there were choirs in the north composed almost entirely of small farmers and agricultural workers, and in the south choirs composed entirely of coalminers, which occupied an analogous position to brass bands, had a similar relationship with union and chapel, still exist, and are still renowned for their fine singing.

The strongest point at which choral singing and banding in England can be seen as comparable experiences is that both were amateur and participant activities. They were endeavours designed to provide their members with the opportunity to take part in music making, rather than be spectators. They existed essentially for their members own cultural needs, rather than to entertain the public on a commercial basis. The importance of this point in regard to brass bands is vital. True, they provided community identity, drew community partisan support, much like football, but, despite the fact that they did receive some popular support as entertainment, they did not exist in order to entertain a fee-paying public. They were not professional musicians, and were freed to some extent from the demands which an audience can place upon a service industry such as professional music. Brass bands grew up in the nineteenth century amidst a widening working class interest in education and cultural experience, of which music was one example, and in which brass bands provided a cooperative means of achieving a leisure pursuit. When I make the claim that brass bands were a popular working class cultural expression I am referring to the fact that they had a broadly based dominant working class membership, and received popular support and following from the working class. As one historian of the Movement puts it, brass banding had "a cloth cap image," but again, this is more important in terms of participation rather than audience.[36]

Other musical forms which had a predominantly working class following such as "rough music" and the music hall are not directly comparable to the brass band movement in that they were "popular amusements" rather than "rational recreations." They were essentially commercial, and existed principally for their audiences and not for their performers. While there was a good deal of audience participation in these popular amusements the stress must be placed on the word audience. Such participation did not require discipline, practice, musical education or

commitment to a social movement. Growing out of "a deep-rooted tradition of popular pub-based entertainment" music hall culture of the second half of the nineteenth century became a "mass form of entertainment."[37] As such, it was part of profit making commercialised leisure and belongs to the history of the multi-million dollar entertainment industry which now exists in advanced capitalist countries. Of course, this is not to claim that brass bands were untouched by commercialism. Given their great popularity in the second half of the nineteenth century it was not surprising that entrepeneurs like Enderby Jackson sought to capitalize on them. As already discussed, the great contests of the day were showy spectacles and mass entertainments. The Belle Vue Manchester Contests in 1888, for example, employed fifty excursion trains. These were occasions when amateur participant recreation merged with capitalist entertainment. However, while entrepreneurs and associated industries made money out of brass bands, the bands in themselves were never profit making concerns for their individual members. Any money earned through performance as fee or prize was for the upkeep and maintenance of the band as an amateur musical group. This was the vitality and basis of banding, and, once their Victorian hey-day had passed, it was as amateur non-profit making concerns that brass bands survived.

While the traditional town band remained an essentially amateur participant pursuit, members of brass bands obviously constituted a pool of competent musicians who could easily meet the needs of touring entertainment groups, and provide a training ground for would-be professionals. Bandsmen did find occasional professional employment for their musical skills, for example, doing pit work for travelling theatres, music halls and circuses. The circus, developed during much the same time as the brass band, depended upon having at least a small brass ensemble for performances and parades. It is reported that ten members of the amateur Bolton Band used to tour the country with Cooke's Circus once a

year, and that Wormwell's had an impressive circus band.[38] (Interestingly, during the period of my research with Kotarah Brass Band, we were asked to provide six musicians to play with the band of the Moscow State Circus when they performed for two weeks in Newcastle.)

Apart from traditional brass bands, there were also some fully commercial musical performers, groups and individuals, who made use of brass instruments and did much to popularize brass music in the first half of the nineteenth century. The most famous of these were probably the Polish clown Popowitz, a French musician named Jullien, and the Distin family. Popowitz toured Britain with the Tournaires' Circus in the late 1830s giving virtuosi performances on the relatively new cornet-a-pistons. Jullien, and his troupe of musicians, were widely reported as touring the provinces of England, and playing at theatres in Hull, York and London in the 1830s. Jullien's stated aim was "to popularize music," and his programmes consisted of quadrilles, popular airs, and pot pourris from classical music.[39] Despite claims that he was overconcerned with showmanship, his musical troupe's virtuosi capacities were profound enough to influence military bands of the day, as Farmer notes in his history of the Royal Artillery Band.[40] Certainly Jullien impressed Enderby Jackson, who was moved to write, "Jullien did more to humanise and make happy the homes of the middle and poorer classes of England than any man of our time professing social reform...."[41] The Distin family, John Distin, his wife and four sons, played as a brass ensemble that gained commercial popularity in the 1840s. John Distin originally learned music with the military, first in the Devon Militia, and later in the King George IV Household Band. In 1844 he met Adolphe Sax in Paris and bought his instruments. The Distins performed that same year in Paris with Sax's instruments under the baton of Hector Berlioz, the composer, and for one of Jullien's promenade concerts at the Covent Garden Theatre in London. The Distins were reported to have received a "tumultuous" reception

whenever they appeared.[42] They seem to have raised brass instrument performance to a new level, and show that in addition to the popularity of the traditional amateur brass band, the brass ensemble also had a popular reception as commercial music entertainment. A mass entertainment industry was developing alongside rational forms of recreation, and inevitably music styles, popular airs and tunes passed between the two spheres of activity.

What then do we know of brass bands at the turn of the century? In 1890 England had more than fifty two brass instrument manufacturers, and brass band music was being published in a wide variety of regular journals. There were brass band magazines, clubs, associations and societies. One estimate put the number of bands at 40,000 in England alone. While this may be an exaggerated figure, there can be no doubt that a widespread vigorous institutionalized amateur musical style had taken root amongst working people, and had developed into an independently minded expressive cultural form. Nevertheless, bands mostly played transcriptions from classical music, popular and folk airs, marches and hymn tunes, and had little original music of their own. It was contesting that was banding's real preoccupation, and the means through which musical score, full band composition and membership rights were rationalized. Regular contests existed throughout Britain, and the brass band became a self sufficient musical style, as well as a social organization concerned with its own cultural pursuits, reflective of the working class society from which it drew its support, but independent and sophisticated enough to produce its own cultural movement. Frequent reports of contest violence reveal the fierce enthusiasm of banding's followers, and the thousands involved in such gatherings are evidence of banding's popularity, as are the monumental Victorian bandstands still found in many parks.[43] A popular song of the time, "Oh I Do Like to be Beside the Seaside," includes

the brass band as a major attraction— "where the brass band plays diddely om-pom-pom..." — and indicates the central position of bands in popular culture. In 1890 there were 222 competitive band festivals. Flourishing journals like Wright and Round's Brass Band News (1886), The British Bandsman (1887), and Musical Progress (1886), all provide fascinating glimpses into this thriving cultural scene. By 1913 the National Brass Band Contest was commissioning important test piece works by established orchestral composers, a tradition which later included works by Elgar, Percy Fletcher, Cyril Jenkins, Vaughn Williams, Arthur Bliss, John Ireland, Hubert Bath, and Granville Bantock.

The most important document on the development of brass bands was published in 1936, Russell and Elliot's The Brass Band Movement.[44] This thoroughly researched and substantial book sensitively outlined the immense achievements of brass bands over the course of a century. Drawing a great deal of scholarly reference to advances in instrumentation and performance skills, Russell and Elliott went to great lengths to explain that banding could only be understood as a social phenomenon; not simply a style of music, composition, and instrumental ensemble, but a social organisation based in working class experience which had struggled to reform and advance its music from its own energies. From the village bands smashed up by the advent of the industrial revolution to a contemporary institution well-established within working class community, banding was essentially something created by the efforts and struggles of the musicians themselves. It had evolved along a separate musical trajectory in keeping with the needs and experiences of its members, taking what it needed from other musical forms, adapting to changes in community life, but serving the interests of its members first. Back in 1936, when the National Contest could attract audiences of 55,000, Russell and Elliot wrote of banding's separate musical development and isolation within working class culture:

> It is both strange and regrettable that the brass band, not withstanding the degree to which it has succeeded in raising its own artistic standards during recent years, should still be looked down upon by musicians and music lovers as a whole—the interest shown in brass bands is still a trifle perfunctory and patronising in its character, and the traditional cleft between brass band activity and that of the musical world remains a wide one.[45]

While these authors recognised the size and importance of banding as a part of popular working class culture, they missed the whole point of the brass band movement's existence. Their references to the "raising" of "artistic standards," the "regret" they felt at the way brass bands were looked down upon, and their "world of musicians and music lovers," are evidently class biased statements. Bands obviously had their own standards set by contesting, not against any objective artistic criteria, but a rational one set by a standard of comparison. Evidently Russell and Elliott felt looked down upon, but were they looking down at bands themselves, and who and which class constituted their world of "musicians and music lovers?" If the bandsmen felt they had limited artistic merit or were looked down upon they certainly didn't show it, and the sheer size of their popular support itself vindicates their position among music lovers, even though they might have been mostly working class.

Russell and Elliott's book came at the end of an era, for a new media revolution was about to undermine banding's popularity. The coming of talking cinema, radio, records, electrical amplification, changing courtship patterns in regard to music, and later television were all to reduce banding activity, rather than marginalise it. The emphasis of popular culture changed from participant to spectator, and the need for the kind of live performance provided by the brass band was absolutely reduced.

Since about the 1930s brass bands in Britain have continued to flourish as a minority culture, pursuing the excellence of the contest stage as their primary goal,but also seeking and earning support within the community as an educational institution, a symbol of social solidarity and popular expression in the union processions, carnivals, civic celebrations, and other popular gatherings which make up traditional community life. Nowadays brass bands produce their own records, broadcast their contests and concerts on radio and television, receive Government Arts Grants, and occasionally figure in popular music. One band record, "The Floral Dance," achieved a number two rating in the popular sales charts in 1979. Other recordings have been made with stars such as The Beatles, Paul MacCartney, Wings, Peter Skellern and Pink Floyd.[46] There are even television comedy series in Britain, Sounding Brass and Oh Happy Band!, which tell of the life and times of brass bands in the Pennines and East Anglia. A recent deluge of books from within "the movement" portray its history, role in community development,and auto-biographical accounts of banding over the years.[47] One of the most important means by which brass bands have developed their own cultural form is through books, journals and the recorded contesting tradition. At present there are approximately 100,000 brass band musicians playing in more then 3000 bands in Britain, and once again they are experiencing a sharp upturn in interest and participation, particularly amongst young people.[48]

Brass Bands in Australia

British brass bands have now received considerable coverage in a number of popular books and magazine articles, which have charted their development and contemporary style. New Zealand's bands have recently received detailed attention by Newcomb.[49] The full history

of Australia's banding has not yet been told either in modern scholarly work or in the popular media.[50] This is only one of the reasons why British banding has been discussed in some detail above. Australia, as a migrant colonial population, cannot be understood without reference to European culture and traditions. The story of Australian banding begins in those village bands broken up by the industrial revolution, and has since developed in keeping with developments in "the movement" in New Zealand and Britain. Banding stands at once for a brilliant example of how colonial culture has been successfully grafted onto a conquered continent on the other side of the world; not simply a traditional ruling class culture, but one which has pervaded most areas of social life, from the local community association to being part of the international network of cultural production. Bands' activities and their music exemplify through civic functions, religious and patriotic performances, the thoroughness of Australia's conquest. But banding, as noted in the Introduction, took place on a community level where the immediate struggles and experiences of its musicians have moulded and provided its meaning.

Banding began in Australia when British troops landed in 1787, a time during which traditional banding was being uprooted and changed in Britain. Military bands furnished most of the Colony's musical experiences during its first fifty years. True, the prisoners who first arrived in the continent brought with them their own tunes and ballads, and undoubtedly developed and stylized them within their own community,[51] but band music was a central part of civic and military occasions. As the official music of the Colony it was given pride of place, and was most fully reported.

Covell, in his historical outline of Australian music, describes the influence of military bands as dominating what little expressive culture there was in the young Colony:

> Music in Australia wore a frilly bonnet and a crinoline dress, and a military uniform...Military and Ships' Bands of one kind or another continued to be the staple of public music making in the Colony of New South Wales for its first forty or fifty years.[52]

In 1800 the 57th Regiment Band is reported as giving a concert at the Royal Hotel, Sydney.[53] At about the same time Macquarie Governor's Regimental Band was playing on solemn occasions, and at dances and balls. In 1810 the 73rd Regiment Band performed at the "races."[54] Two composers who were active at this time, Bandmaster Reichenburg of the 40th Regiment and Bandmaster Kavanagh of the 3rd Regiment, both composed and sold original band music, quite possibly the first formally composed music in Australia.[55]

The military bands became the popular music of the Colony, performing quadrilles, waltzes, military marches and traditional British folk airs and hymn tunes, playing at grand balls, society receptions and outdoor gatherings. In April 1828 the South Asian Register reported military bands from the 39th and 57th Regiments performing public concerts at Macquarie's Place. One observer wrote of these concerts:

> A band of one of the Regiments, around which a well dressed audience had gathered, was playing in the Barracks Yard, and every object that presented itself favoured the impression that one had come amongst a gay and prosperous community.[56]

Clearly banding and bands, irrespective of their military nature and the real condition of the populace beyond that "gay and prosperous community," early became a major part of social recreation and leisure.

Later reports show that military music became an integral part of community life. In 1834 the 4th Regiment Band played at the First Sydney Regatta. Two years later the same Band played a concert at a "Mrs Cameron Benefit Night" at Putney Hotel.[57] Clearly, as the new Colony did not have its own traditional town bands to provide community music, military bands were used to fill this role. Whether or not they consisted of professional soldiers, amateur Volunteers or professional musicians is uncertain. Evidence suggests that all of these were possibilities. What we know certainly is that many of Australia's first town bands did organise and establish themselves through Volunteer Regiments, and because most military bands at the time of this research were amateur Volunteers, we must understand the armed forces to be a major and persistent musical institution in Australia.

By the 1830s time was running out for the military monopoly of music. Free migration from Europe had begun, and with it came the traditional forms of community culture, amateur banding included. Melville writes of the army bands' performances at the Sydney Domain (1830-40) as being:

> not so well attended as they were in former times, for the military and the inhabitants are on anything but good terms with each other. There is likewise a city band, all the performers are native youths, or what are sometimes called "currency lads"; these young men perform in an excellent style, and on public festivals they willingly offer their services.[58]

By 1840 in Melbourne amateur bands were being formed in connection with the Philharmonic Society and Temperance Societies, and were giving regular promenade concerts.[59] Their activities received regular coverage in the Port Phillips Press from 1841 onwards. The Australian brass band movement dates its origins from the Launceston St. Joseph's

Temperance Band formed in 1845.[60] Elsewhere in Australia amateur banding was being reported. A brass band played at the Adelaide Agricultural Show in 1850, and in the same year that city raised £400 to start a "Band of Music" for public recreation and entertainment.[61] At about this time German Lutherans, fleeing religious persecution in Europe, settled in the Barossa Valley and brought with them a distinct tradition of amateur banding which was well established by 1860.[62] Further north in Wollongong and Newcastle, Welsh migrants brought with them a tradition of choral singing and community bands which were well established by 1880. By 1890 we can say certainly that amateur banding and town bands had become an established part of popular entertainment in all Australian states.[63]

What sort of bands were these and who made up their numbers? Due to the uneven pattern of colonisation and population, banding's development was inconsistent and varied. While in 1860 it had been possible to organise a National Band Contest in London (drawing competing bands from throughout Britain by a nationwide railway system), this was, and still is, almost impossible in Australia. The problems of communications and community development impeded an early banding identity. In Newcastle at least, which is the geographical focus of the research, amateur bands first began in association with the Volunteer Infantry in 1870, and quickly spread amongst the mining communities.[64] The suburbs which now make up the Newcastle District were in the 1880s small townships based around coal mines. They attracted migrant settlers, particularly from South Wales and North East England, where there were indigenous mining communities with well established banding and choral traditions. Hamilton, Lambton, Cardiff, Swansea and Wallsend were all examples of townships where brass bands, choirs and competitive music festivals took hold in

popular culture.[65] In 1876 eighteen choral and brass band concerts were reported around Newcastle. Six were benefit concerts, one was a sacred service, and others were simply examples of the strong movement in participant expressive culture. In the 1880s Wallsend Brass Band, Wallsend and Plattsburg Musical Union, the Choral Society, Lambton Choral Union and Burwood Brass Band were all active; consisting of tradesmen, miners, artisans and their wives, they became important institutions in community life. Some bands were connected to industry, such as the "A.A." Borehole Band, and the Fire Brigade Band. Others, such as the Hamilton Band, were supported by the local government. Amateur bands seemed to attach themselves to whatever organisations were available. That they constituted an established and respectable pursuit is evident by the fact that by 1880 both Hamilton and Cooks Hill Schools had brass bands.

Contesting was already an integral part of banding by the 1880s. In 1882 Lambton Band and the Great Northern Band from Newcastle contested marches, hymns, and selections from the classics, to an audience of more than 2,000 at the Crystal Palace Gardens in Waratah for a Challenge of £50. At this time the Lambton Choral Union was winning prizes at Eisteddfod competitions, and boasted of more than one hundred voices. Writing of the cultural life of Lambton in 1880, the Newcastle Directory and Almanac reported:

> There is also a large Musical Hall where amusements are frequently held, a Druids' Hall where Druids, Oddfellows and members of the Coal Miners' Mutual Protective Association hold their meetings, an efficient Fire Brigade, two Brass Bands, a Band of Hope, two Lodges of Good Templars, and fifteen Hotels.[66]

Brass bands grew in popularity throughout New South Wales in the last two decades of the nineteenth century, and there were few settled townships of any size which did not support one. Local histories and

newspaper reports of this period continually refer to their activities, and many Australiana books include photographs of such bands.[67] Besides the occupations of these musicians, what is known of the economic and institutional setting which threw up banding tells us a great deal about community life at this time. A typical story is found in the origin of Nowra Band, which was established by the Crystal Springs Division of the Shoalhaven Sons of Temperance, after being entertained by the Kiama Brass Band at their Annual General Meeting in 1871. Impressed by what they saw and heard, £70 was set aside for their own brass band. In the following year this newly created band gave a Grand Concert at the Harmonic Society, and after playing at the Easter Sports Day and Regatta, gave a Grand Concert of Entertainment to an audience of 450.[68] Founded from a Temperance Friendly Society, consisting of "well thought of" artisans and tradesmen, Nowra Band adopted the motto "Love, Purity and Fidelity." Eminently decent and respectable, Nowra were representative of many brass bands. Clearly these working men had the available collective funds, organisational abilities, literacy and spare time to take an active part in community events.

Amateur bands wearing military style uniforms, leading parades, civic occasions, religious ceremonies, and attached to well organised institutions became the very symbol of established European community in Australia. Popular recreations, including picnics, outings, train and river boat excursions, were not complete without the essential ingredient of a brass band. Lane Cove Resort and Chowder Bay Excursions both advertised cricket, quoits, swings and "First Class Brass Bands."[69] Contests were popular attractions which could draw thousands, and the band rotunda in the public park became a popular entertainment venue.[70] In 1888 a Sydney Centenary Celebration Band Contest drew bands from as far away as Melbourne and Newcastle. In 1890 the "Historic Ballarat,"

perhaps Australia's most important annual national band contest, was begun and came under the direction of the Royal South Street Eisteddfod Society. By the change of the century a widespread popular banding movement in Australia had established its own State-wide associations, had its own journals, composed and published its own music, and received broad community sypport.[71] Contests were governed by Band Association Rules, and both State and local government financed banding activities. A government subsidy of £250 established the Sydney Exhibition Hall Contest in 1896, which operated in three grades of merit, attracted entrants from as far away as Tasmania and Queensland, and founded the New South Wales Band Association.

Newcastle, with its settled mining and industrial communities, became a focus of banding in Australia. In 1898 an Alderman Lock recognised the popularity of brass bands and proposed the financing of a Citizens' Band belonging to the Council. Speaking on the merit of banding he referred to the "elevating influence of music on the people." Civic entertainment and the need to furnish bands for public parks and civic occasions was an important community concern.[72] Certainly there was a lot of public interest in brass bands in Newcastle, and its bands won the "Historic Ballarat" Contests in 1901, 1902 and 1903. In 1907 the City Band was so well organised that it travelled to New Zealand to contest. If the newspaper reports and the concerned debate in the chambers of the City Council are any guide, Newcastle's failure to win at the Christchurch Exhibition was an important local issue.

As the New Zealand Contest indicates, banding was more than a local Australian phenomenon. Wind bands were also popular in the United States, Canada and Britain. For example in 1906 the British Besses o'th'Barn Band went on a world tour, visiting Australia in 1907.

Their popularity can be measured by their large audiences, 11,000 in Adelaide, and 25,000 when they performed at the Sydney Cricket Ground. Newspapers of the time eulogised their performances.[73] Such a reception was not unexpected or unusual, for even the Sunday Afternoon Beach Concert in Newcastle would regularly attract between three and four thousand people. As the only musical ensemble capable of sufficient volume to entertain large crowds in the open air, with locally produced compositions from such men as Alan Lithgow from Tasmania, Percy Code, T. Bulch and W. Barkel, banding was moving towards its apogee as popular entertainment. Bulch and Barkel were particularly important characters in "the movement" being both composers and conductors, and Bulch's Brass Band Journal published marches, solos and arrangements by himself and others. By 1910 Newcastle had at least twenty five brass bands, supported by local community subscription, unions, industry, fire-brigades, Volunteer Military Associations and the Salvation Army. At this period brass bands are reported to have led union demonstrations, pit-head stike meetings, civic, religious and patriotic celebrations, benefit and popular recreation concerts, and always the routine of contest engagements which decided the status order amongst them.

Brass bands, as institutions of working class culture, played a dynamic role in popular class struggles throughout Australia. In Stokes' United We Stand:Impressions of Broken Hill, the local brass band is featured as an important community based organisation which provided benefit concerts to raise money for those in need. The book has photographs of the brass band "Playing the Pickets in" in 1909, and in the police and picket clashes which followed the brass band are there at the head of the fighting unionists. Again when Tom Mann visited Broken Hill it was the brass band which proudly marched him through the streets.[74] Connell and Irving have particularly noted

the very direct connection between regional and localized class mobilization and working class culture. They point to the fact that the "Lithgow riots" of 1911 were sparked off by scabs who had the cheek to stop and dance to the music played by the town's brass band as they stood on the picket-line.[75] They also draw attention to the "critical strikes" of 1890 and 1917, which significantly "spilt over into the community":

> In these strikes, the crucial development was that workers in such places as Broken Hill, Townsville, and Wonthaggi, took the opportunity to lead their defensive organisations of the workplace into the cultural sphere. Often it began as a matter of sustaining a strike, but afterwards those who had been on strike, their families, other workers and eventually the businessmen of the town began to feel the presence of the union in their everyday lives. The union's brass band, the workingmen's club, the union hall, and the cooperative store were the most common signs of a union town.[76]

Newcastle was such a union town, and one of the brightest jewels in its oral and popular history was the famous Newcastle Steelworks Band.[77] This band, like the Wollongong Steelworks Band and the Maryborough Foundry Band, had an arrangement for players to receive time off work for practice. By the 1920s the choirs, bands and distinctive Welsh culture of the coalfields was in decline. In a cosmopolitan international harbour, with an urban working class employed in the heavy industry which accompanied steel production, banding took on a more ambitious task. In March 1924, supported by public subscriptions and bid farewell by the Mayor and a crowd of six thousand, the Steelworks Band sailed on the Moreton Bay steamer to compete in the great British band contests in London and Belle Vue (Manchester). Representing their company at the Newcastle Steelworks stand at the British Empire Exhibition, they were an immediate popular success. Playing personal performances for King George V, Queen Mary, and the King and Queen of Romania, touring the length of Britain and snatching the Two Thousand

Guineas Challenge Shield at the Belle Vue Contest with their performance from Frantz Liszt, winning the British Empire Contest in Halifax, and coming third in the Crystal Palace National Championships in London, the Band established itself in a position of excellence in banding circles. They had succeeded as no other brass band had done before. After being the Head of Bill for the Moss Empire Theatres, they were recorded by Aco Records, and this stands as an important record of popular brass band music of the day. It includes:

"The Cossack March"—W.Rimmer
"Ida and Dot"—F.H.Losey. (Cornet duetists, A.P.Stendar and D.Taylor).
"La Russe"—W. Rimmer
"Because"—Gay and Hardelot. (Cornet soloist, A.P.Stendar).
"Besses O'th 'Barn March"—J.Clements.
"Honest Toil"—W. Rimmer
"Charlie is my Darling"—Shipley Douglas.
"Tatiana"—W. Rikmer.
"Zelda"—Percy Code. (Cornet soloist, A.P.Stendar).
"D'Ye Ken John Peel"—Greenwood.

If recording and broadcasting provided band music in the home, it also signaled the decline of musical participation and the popularity of locally produced amateur music. Within a few years of the Steelworks Band successful tour of Britain they were disbanded. In 1927 another brass band led by the Steelworks' Bandmaster, Arthur Baile, set out on a world tour again, this time as a fully professional group called the Commonwealth Band. They toured Europe, Canada, New Zealand, Hawaii and the United States of America. Although one brass band in Australia, and another in England, St Hilda's, sustained a professional profile for a few years the days of professional brass bands were very short. The Commonwealth Band could secure dancing, radio, rodeo and exhibition engagements in the United States and Canada, but like America's own brand of Souza-style bands, their popularity was already diminishing. Baile himself gave the reason for his return, and subsequent disbanding, as the coming of the "talkies." In fact, many of the band were to find employment as musicians in American film studios.

Cinema, records, radio, dance bands, electrical amplification, and changing courtship patterns, all changed the way music was produced and mediated. They demolished the need for locally produced live music, and brass bands were one of the first casualties. From the banding heyday of the first quarter of the century, brass bands as a social movement contracted in both size and popular appeal. Much like the reorganisation in Anglican churches which inflicted a territorial and institutional defeat on Church bands a century earlier, new means of musical mediation caused "the movement" to reorganise itself. One of the most important ways in which this occurred was in "the movement's" inward looking pursuit of excellence, and development of composition and style through the contest performance. Another means has been through its own broadcasting and record production.

The contraction in banding was neither dramatic nor swift, but a slow process in which individual bands adapted on an ad hoc basis to community changes and the needs of popular recreation, or slowly perished. Interestingly, the changes opened new opportunities for women, who became involved with banding as musicians for the first time in the 1930s. As well as all-female ensembles like the women's band of the Sydney Salvation Army, and the Sydney Ladies Band (brought to an untimely end when they heroically donated their brass instruments to the war effort in the early 1940s), brass bands generally became less segregated. Women moved beyond being simply the supportive tea-making Ladies Auxiliary.[78] On the negative side, the process of change was filled with fluctuations caused by the Depression, wars, and in many cases industrial and community decline.

Brass band musicians do not look back to a "golden era," they are not a static cultural form nostalgically ageing with its membership.

Most bandies are young and they see a bright future for banding. They see its past in terms of local tradition and community life. Their band is a channel through which essentially local history has flowed. Kotarah Band had once been a Fire Brigade Band, a Municipal Band, a Steelworks Band and a Union Institute Band, before becoming a Bowling Club Band, and these changes tell the story of the day to day struggles, community based negotiations and organisational skills of the Band as a social group. The banding tradition is there in the ageing Cups, Shields, Trophies, photographs, newspaper cuttings, discarded uniforms, battered instruments and brown faded music sheets, which litter almost any bandroom. These physical reminders, accompanied by local oral history, are for bandies the essential features of a dynamic history in which they are the present actors. The existence in banding journals of so many local histories is more than evidence of how bands respond to and experience social changes through essentially local events.

Reading old band journals and contest programmes provides a revealing account of how this preoccupation with local history is an essential part of banding cultural production. The Intercolonial Banding News, The Australian Bandsman, and The Bandleader were all rich in cameos about the bygone bands which founded the town band tradition. More recently during the research the contemporary popular banding magazine, Ozoompah, held a local band history writing competition. Most of the hundreds of entries were so similar in style that the editor invented a typical band history which he felt would tell the approximate story of most brass bands in Australia. It was at once a brilliant satire on the pointlessness of accounts abstracted from locally understood events, and a historical paradigm of banding. In it one sees the familiar sequence of events, from attachment to early Volunteer

Military Associations, unions, municipalities and communities, the bygone great contest victories, the civic and community celebrations, to the problems of survival and adaptation in dynamic community development:

HOMETOWN BAND

An Official and Authentic History

Hometown Band was formed in 1946, as a merger of the Hometown Shire Band and the Hometown District Band, after it became obvious that neither of them could fully recover from the ravages of World War 2. The Hometown Shire Band was formed in 1933 from the Hometown Miners' Band and the Hometown Workers' Band, and the Hometown District Band was formed in 1927 from an amalgamation of the Hometown Prospectors Band and the Hometown Town Band, formerly the Hometown Pioneers Band, formerly the Hometown Rural Band in 1919, from the war-time remnants of the Hometown Fusileers Band and the old Hometown Rural Band, which was formed in 1901. This was made up of the members of the Hometown Miners Band which dates back to 1880, and is not the same as the Hometown Miners Band which amalgamated with the Hometown Workers Band (formerly the Hometown Mineworkers Band) in 1933. So you see the Hometown Band has a proud history, going back 100 years, or perhaps more.

There have been many famous conductors over the years, some of whose names are remembered and others forgotten. The Band has won many contests, including one in 1910 and another in 1935. Some of the trophies are missing but there are some others in the band room which were won by bands which have since amalgamated. There are also some wonderful old photographs, and the Band would be grateful to anyone who can identify them.

The Band went to Melbourne in 1921 and to Renmark about 1934, and got second in another contest in 1957. It was a good marching band all through the 1950s. It played for the Duke of York and Queen Elizabeth, but the train did not stop. It will be in the next Royal visit.

The Band is very sound financially. Last year it raised $1087.16 by its own efforts, the Council gave it $200, and the Ladies Auxiliary

> raised another $2268.29. It has never missed an Anzac Day or a Cup Day, and plays at the Lions Day, the Rotary Day, the Jaycees Day and the Apex Day. Last year the Lions raised $17,343 with the help of the Band at their annual Carnival. Channel 4 was there, and the Band was on television.
>
> The Band is thinking of going Concert, at the suggestion of the local High School music teacher. The two bands could then amalgamate and solve many problems. Meanwhile there are vacancies for three good cornet players, a tenor horn player, two baritone players and a BBb bass player. It would also welcome donations of high-pitch instruments.
>
> The Band sees a great future in the years ahead.[79]

Lastly, a small but important point needs to be made about Australian brass bands in terms of their style of musical expression. Until comparatively recently, brass banding as a distinct movement only really existed in three countries, Australia, New Zealand and the United Kingdom. Communications between these geographically separated groups has consisted of occasional visits by bands to Europe or Australasia, a shared consumption of published music, recordings and critical literature, and the continued migration of bandies to Australia and New Zealand, some of whom have been sponsored by brass bands searching for increased membership.

Although banding in each location uses locally composed music, often reflective, if not imitative, of more broadly consumed popular music, television or radio themes, the vast body of brass band compositions are shared equally between the three groups, and composers from all of the locations have contributed to this shared pool of music. This is particularly the case with contesting music, banding's most original and purposeful compositional style.

In terms of music, instrumental composition, expressive style and social organisation there seems to be very little difference between the three branches of the brass band movement. If one is, for example, a bandie in England, it is possible to come to Australia, join a brass band, and the differences in musical style and band organisation will be negligible. In many ways this is quite remarkable, for Australia has had a varied pattern of migration and development, and is itself an enormous geographical area. Some of its brass bands, for example those in South Australia, claim a German cultural heritage, yet these bands are essentially the same as their British and New Zealand counterparts. Critical expert adjudication does claim that the New Zealand band sounds "brittle," the Australian band "sonorous," and the British "bellish," but these finer points are only discernible to the discriminating ear of the brass band enthusiast after many years of familiarisation. Other finer points would include the fact that marching, particularly competition marching, is much more highly developed in Australia and New Zealand than it is in Britain, where it is a little regarded performance style amongst brass bands. Another minor point would be that Australian brass bands tend to be slightly larger, often using four Trombones, rather than three, four Tenor Horns rather than three, and three E Flat Basses rather than two, but these differences must be regarded as tendencies rather than constants. Again, the remarkable fact about contemporary brass banding in Australia is not only that it has remained almost uniform throughout the whole country in terms of musical style, instrumental composition, and social organisation, but that it is so very similar in all these ways to the banding movements in Britain and New Zealand.

Fig. 1: The Newcastle City Band (Conductor W. Barkel), Australian Champions and three times Winner of the "Historic Ballarat" in 1901, 1902 and 1903.

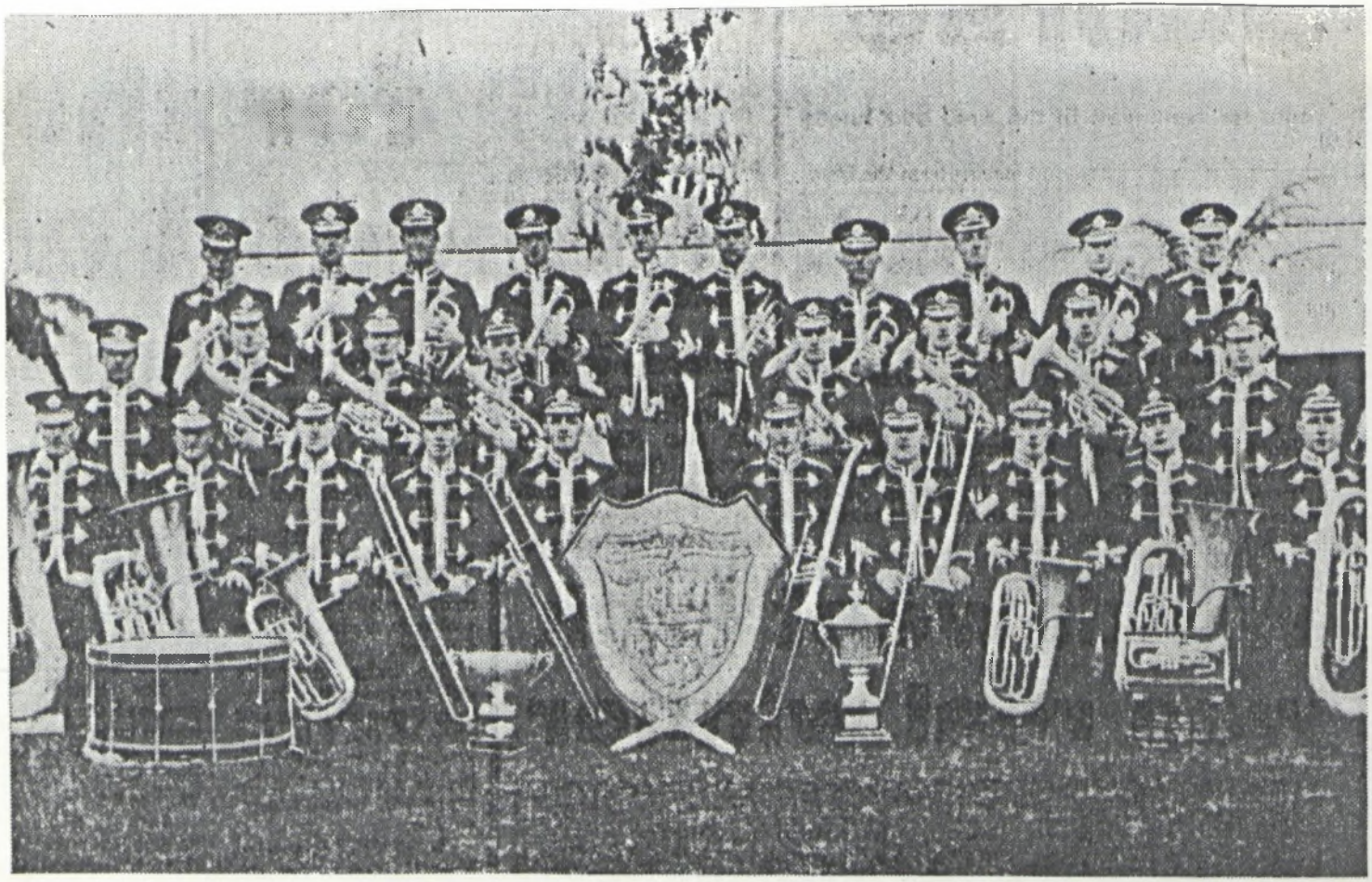


Fig. 2: The Newcastle Steelworks Band (Conductor A. Baile), displaying the Gold Challenge Trophy which they won at Belle Vue (British Open Championships) in 1924.

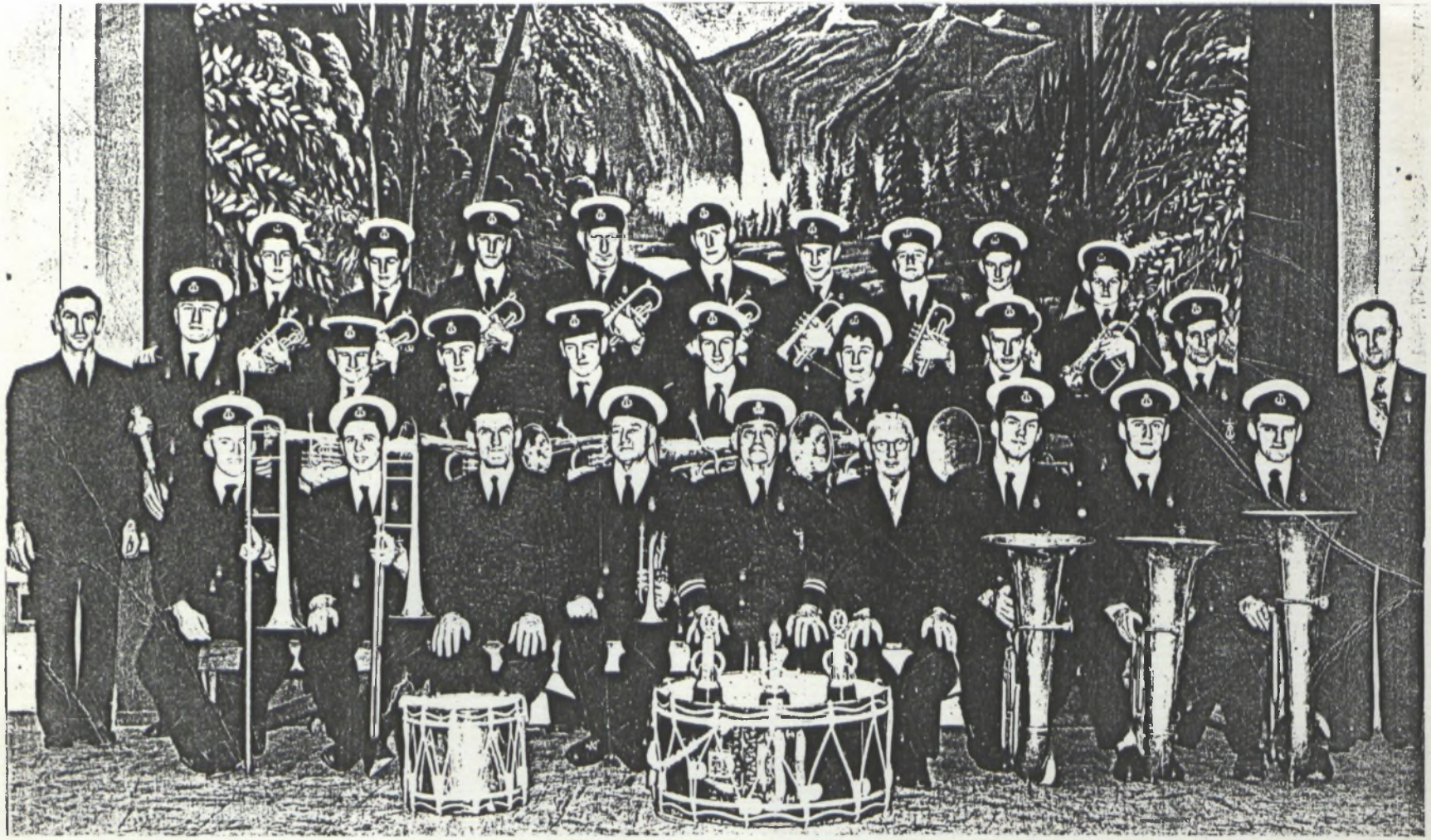


Fig. 3: The Newcastle District Transport Institute Band (Conductor J. Reilly), Winner of the 1960 State D Grade Aggregate, Hymn Tune and Waltz, Runner-up in the D Grade Diagram March.

Fig. 4: Kotarah Bowling Club Brass Band in 1980, Winner of the 1976 State B Grade, and Runner-up in the 1977 State B Grade.

Fig.5: Kotarah Junior Band after winning the Junior C Grade State in 1978.

Chapter 4

Introduction to the Boys

The preceding chapters have provided some introduction to the sorts of individuals and activities which made up the banding life-style. Here the object is to focus more specifically upon who played in Kotarah Band, how they expressed themselves as performing artists, and provide an account of how the research material has been collected, organised and presented.

Table I: Dramatis Personae: the Boys in the Band, March 1980.

Name	Age	Family/ Tradition	Occupation	Instrument/position in the Band
Bill	93	FT2	Retired	Retired
Chas	60	FT1	Miner	Cornet
Mrs Frith	60	FT1	Retired	Linkman
Rob	55	FT	Steel Worker	Linkman
Harry	53	FT1	Porter	Tenor Horn
Mal	52	FT3	Railway Driver	E Flat Bass
Tom	52	FT2	Porter	E Flat Bass
Bram	51	F	Public Servant	President
Claud	46	F	Mechanic	Linkman
Bluey	44	FT1	Steel Worker	Cornet
DT	42	FT	Insurance Worker	Supporter
Giles	41	F	Teacher	Bandmaster
Jim	40	FT3 B(A)	Rigger	B Flat Bass
Reg	38	FT	Ambulance Driver	Drum Major
Larry	37	FT1	Truck Driver	Cornet
Henry	34	FT2	Teacher	Cornet
Les	32	FT	Engineer	Tenor Horn
Bern	31	FT1	Student	Cornet

name	age	family/ tradition	occupation	instrument/position in the Band
Buck	31	-	Teacher	Drums
Dick	30	F	Decorator	E Flat Bass
Serge	30	-	Teacher	E Flat Bass
Dan	30	-	Teacher	Trombone
Norma	28	-	Teacher	Tenor Horn
Stan	28	FT3 B(A)	Boiler Maker	Soprano Cornet
Os	21	FT BS	Clerk	Cornet
Cat	21	FT	Fitter	Cornet
Tec	21	FT	Student	Cornet
Sally	21	FT S	Nurse	Tenor Horn
Clive	21	F	Engineer	Euphonium
Pat	21	F	Bank Clerk	Trombone
Nick	21	FT2	Student	Trombone
Hans	21	F, B(C)	Electrician	Flugel Horn
Barry	20	FT2 B(B)	Rigger	B Flat Bass
Wally	20	F	Electrician	Bass Trombone
Pete	19	FT2 B(B)	Laboratory Technician	Baritone
Fritz	18	F B(C)	Labourer	Drums
Brian	17	F	School	Tenor Horn
Anne	16	FT1 S	School	Cornet
Mary	14	FT BS	School	Percussion
Stew	14	FT	School	Cornet
Donga	14	FT	School	Trombone
Rosy	14	FT	School	Cornet
Surf	14	F	School	Tenor Horn
GM	--	--	Sociologist	Euphonium

From Table I it can be seen that there were many more Boys than the thirty players required to form a brass band. There were always some who existed on the periphery of activities, whose involvement varied over time. Shift work, family commitments, sickness, study, involvement in conducting other junior bands, were all problems which temporarily marginalized individuals. DT was an important marginal character in a number of ways. He played in another local brass band, Toronto, and had founded and conducted a new band called West Lakes. He was also the Secretary and leading activitist in the Mid North Coast Group, the regional banding organisation. DT was one of the dedicated super enthusiasts I occasionally came across in "the movement." In addition a few other bandies passed through during the study. The Boys listed above are those who stayed together as a group, or came into the Band from the Juniors, during the three years of the research project.

One of the most striking features of the Band was its age span. It was a four generation organisation, and from Table I it can be seen that 14 year old school children played alongside men in their sixties. Even younger were the dozens of youth associated with the Junior Band and Learners' Groups, and by contrast, older still, were some of the retired bandies who frequently seemed to be around. Bill, for example, the eldest at 93 years of age, just could not stay away. Clearly, banding was for many a lifelong career.

How relationships between age groups were managed had an important bearing upon what sort of group the Band was. Older and more experienced bandies had a well recognised status within banding, and were formally deferred to, especially by the seven Band members who were under 18 years old, as well as members of the Juniors and Learners. Until "Kids," as they were called, reached 18 years of age (the legal age for drinking in the Club), they were not full social participants

in the Band. They did not go Shouting, at least not with the Boys, or take part in committee work, community organisations, or teaching. Despite this, they were full musical participants in the Band as a performing group, and what they had to say in that context was regarded as relevant and serious. They had a valued opinion in bandpractices, and on the performing stage what they did was vital. Beyond that, being an adult started at eighteen, and until that age, probably a "nice kid" and "a brilliant musician" maybe, but still a "Kid" and referred to as such by the mature Boys.

The "Boys in the Band," as the members of Kotarah Band called themselves, was a title that had for some years been something of a misnomer; four of the "Boys" were female, and the group often included wives and girlfriends. A large number of the brass bands in New South Wales had, from my observations and from the records of the New South Wales Banding Association, a higher proportion of female performers than Kotarah Band. Although women had always been involved in brass bands as supporters, and as musicians had formed some remarkable all female bands, the decade preceding this research saw women playing alongside men as full performing members in in very many bands. In Kotarah Junior Band and in the Learners' Groups girls had come to outnumber boys, and some other local bands had become evenly mixed. A few bands in Australia had rigidly remained all male preserves, but most were giving way to an increasing number of female musicians. Such changes in the gender composition of bands were beginning to have an important impact, and bringing women to a position of much greater prominence within the brass band movement. I cannot recall a single incident or comment during the length of the research which suggested that the arrival of women as equal musical participants was considered as any other than a welcome and positive trend, but women's higher profile in banding did mean that some

customs, taken for granted in a traditional male preserve, were having to be reconsidered.

Traditionally, wives, mothers and girlfriends had formed the Ladies Auxiliary, a tea-brewing, Lamington-baking, fundraising cooperative, supporting their men in the band. Nowadays, however, few bands had a Ladies' Auxiliary since the entry of female musicians into brass bands as a permanent feature rather than an odd exception. Since the late sixties the division in banding along the lines of gender, of musical men and tea-brewing supporting women, had become increasingly blurred. The Ladies' Auxiliaries became Supporters' Clubs and involved both men and women. Questions of gender within the musical ensemble did give rise to some problems in the Kotarah Band, but they did not come as a crisis in which the masculine dominance of banding was challenged or directly attacked. Rather, changes in group identity came about as the result of subtle negotiations based upon single issues, such as how the Band was to be addressed as a group, what sort of uniforms were to be worn, on what occasions the Band should play, and the rights of women in Clubs.

The issue of how the Band was to be collectively addressed was being tackled just as the research was commencing, and remained the subject of the odd Shout session joke thereafter. The titles, "Men," "Fellahs," or "Boys," had always been appropriate enough before the arrival of women. After complaints from the female members that this did not take them into account, and a further rejection of the title, "Girls," the Band formally decided that as a rule they would adopt the custom of the Bowling Club, which being mixed, had long referred to female members as "Ladies of the Club." Henceforth, the Band was always addressed in the formal situation as, "Fellahs and Ladies of the Band." Informally, however, both male and female players referred to their associates as "The Boys in the Band," and this included men and women alike. Each member of the Band was one

of "the Boys" in so much as this referred to their full inclusion and equal status in the group, and over this point there was no fudging. One either was, or was not, one of "the Boys," and the Band had a definite "esprit de corps," as one of them claimed.

The issue of title instantiated the piecemeal way in which issues surrounding gender were renegotiated as women increasingly made their presence felt in the Movement. Another issue which the Band confronted during the research centered upon uniforms. Previously the Band had managed for some years on a rather splendid set of recycled uniforms purchased cheaply from the Fire Brigade; their high collars, peaked caps, brass buttons, braided lapels, epaulettes, and piped breast pockets, had served the image of an all male traditional Australian Town Band well. The newly arrived women had remodelled these uniforms to make them fit, and blended imperceptibly into the Band. Unexpectedly (to the men, that is), the Ladies of the Band announced at one weekly bandpractice that they were no longer prepared to look like imitation men. Various suggestions that trousers could be replaced by skirts, or that breast pockets could be removed, were rejected outright by women. "We don't want to look like men, like females in disguise," was how one of the Ladies expressed their position to the Band. The Ladies, using their resourcefulness and dressmaking skills, duly presented themselves in bright crimson full length evening gowns, complete with long sleeved bolero jackets. Suddenly the men in the Band were confronted with the fact that an essential, taken for granted, feature of the Band's costume presentation had been dramatically changed. The chapter in the ethnography dealing with contesting discusses in greater detail the importance of style in costume for the traditional identity of any individual band. Kotarah had always prided itself on its "smart traditional Digger look," but the women's action marked a decisive turn against this militaristic style. For most playouts, apart from those which involved marching, the bright

crimson female presence in the Band would be very evident, and the men, wearing black trousers, white shirts, and black bow ties, would look more like smart barmen than soldiers. Gender had broken the visible unity and imagery of traditional costume attire. An increasingly common compromise for many bands was to acquire a more "civilian" and unisex look by wearing colourful tailored blazers with slacks for men and shirts for women, which was the course Kotarah eventually took once they had sufficient money for such an enterprise.

A third important issue involving gender centered on where, and for what occasions, the Band was to perform. The debate in the Band over participation in Anzac Day ceremonies was the nearest the Band ever came to an internal confrontation over the presence of women, and this is more fully dealt with in Chapter Nine. It particularly illustrated the fact that at the time of this research the Band was in a state of flux, and was quite possibly changing forever. No longer an all male preserve but a mixed group, it would have to take account of both male and female perspectives. Male orientated social practices would now be open to question, and no longer simply accepted as the norm.

Interestingly, language as a cultural practice was an area in which the presence of women appeared to have comparatively little effect, apart of course from the question of title discussed above. It was a long standing customary rule in banding that during bandpractices so called "foul language" was not used because children, and Learners and Juniors, were in attendance observing and reading the music. In the Club, in the exclusive company of adults, the Boys would use "foul language" freely during the Shout sessions, particularly in personal descriptions and in humorous tales and jokes. A common word used was "cunt." What effect did this have on the Ladies of the Band? From my observations and enquiries one must presume little; they themselves used it occasionally,

and said that they did not consider its use sexist. Along with many other swear words derived from anatomical descriptions such as "prick," "tit," and "arsehole," almost all men and women in the Band said that they had never considered their meanings or associations in any depth, and to them they were "just words" used to express strong feelings, and were not weapons in the battle of the sexes.

Although the female members of the Band did not regard the use of words like "cunt," or "tit" to be sexist, this is not a reason to gloss over the fact that there was an issue of language and gender here, although the Ladies of the Band might not have been aware of it. While this is not the place to explore in depth the issues of gender and language, some recognition of current theoretical debates are worthwhile considerations in assessing the social position of the Ladies of the Band, relative to the male members.

The work of anthropologists Shirley and Edwin Ardener, and feminist theorists Dale Spender, Cheris Kramarae, and Deborah Cameron provide important insights into the problems women face as users of a language created by the dominant group, in this case males.[1] In the context of the women's advancing position in a previously all male group, they were trapped, or at least compelled into using a dominant language. Spender, Kramarae and Cameron all incorporate the Ardeners' proposal of a "dominant/muted" model as an important analytical perspective, which, while accepting that "every group in society generates its own ideas at a deep level," they are still not necessarily able to express themselves fully at a surface level of language because the "mode of specification," which is the communicative channel, is controlled by the socially dominant group.[2] The proposal is then, that because women are in a less articulate position, they are a "muted group," and their reality is underepresented. The Ardeners go on to argue that not only is women's

reality simply muted by their relationship to the dominant male language model, but also that this relationship inhibits the generation of alternative, more representative, models.[3] Clearly then, the women in the Band who had come to accept, at least for the present, a new role in banding, and fully utilised a male dominant language in the Shout sessions and musico-descriptive debates without objection, were linguistically disadvantaged compared to the men. While a conscious challenge from the females in the Band to the dominance of a male centred mode of expression might well develop in the future, there was as yet no evidence that this had begun to happen.

On the whole women's entry into increased active musical participation in brass bands appeared to have been accomplished with very little confrontation. Within Kotarah obvious items such as uniforms, titles, and performance occasions were sympathetically discussed and negotiated, not simply to take women into account, but to produce a band which truly represented their presence in it. On more deeply entrenched practices, such as relaxed conversations and banding humour, the Ladies had apparently fitted into a traditional male culture as honorary men. Another instance which showed the women in the role of honorary men, and the men's insistence that women should have an equal role in banding, came about as a result of the Club's maintenance of a "Men Only" section. After the Ladies of the Band had complained that they were being excluded from part of the Club, and that this seemed to be in contradiction to the entitlements of Band membership which guaranteed full access to all Club facilities, the Band confronted the Club's management on the issue. Whilst unable to change the Club's general rule on their sexist discriminatory policy (they claimed that their collection of Playboy magazines and other "girlie" literature kept in the "Men Only" section would cause offence to "Ladies"), the management said that they considered the Ladies of the Band to have honorary male status, and

proposed that they, but no other females, could have exemption from their general rule. For the Ladies of the Band, and for the men who supported them, this was some kind of victory for equal rights, which paradoxically added formality to the women's desire not to be regarded as just honorary men.

The religious affiliation of the Boys was a sociological variable that was neither very revealing nor surprising. All of the Band members claimed, at least nominally, to be Christians, although most only ever attended church for strictly formal celebrations, such as christenings, baptisms, marriages, and funerals. Even of the seven who maintained formal church membership, only two attended church on a regular basis, and one of these claimed that his wife made him do so for the sake of the children. A breakdown of nominal affiliation showed that there were three Roman Catholics, three Anglicans, and all the others claimed some sort of nonconformist background such as Methodist, Baptist, Presbyterian and the Salvation Army. Of the nonconformists the Salvationists constituted the largest denominational group, there being six of them. Although all of these had ceased to be active Salvationists, mainly because they had ceased to feel such a rigorous commitment to religious belief and practice, and had made a personal rejection of puritanical ethics and codes of behaviour, they still regarded the Salvation Army with affection. All had learned to play music during their Salvationist days and it was to this legacy that they were eternally bound. They had rejected the religious trappings, but were still drawn to play in a brass band in a secular setting. This was not peculiar to Kotarah, for ex-Salvationists were represented in relatively high numbers throughout the banding movement. As the history shows, since the nineteenth century, the Salvation Army had maintained brass bands in high profile as an important means of collective musical participation, and hence community activity, and for evangelical ministry. Although their brass

bands did not contest, or belong to the various State Banding Associations, many were highly regarded in the brass band movement as having "crack" (state of the art) status, and their individual members were regarded as fellow bandies in banding circles. Certainly the Salvation Army's contribution to the development of the contemporary brass band, its music, and its distinct existence in terms of education, composition, musical recordings, broadcasting, publishing and international communications should not be undervalued.

The Salvation Army operate on a worldwide basis in more than eighty countries, and may be regarded as by far the biggest single publishers of brass band music. In some countries Salvation Army brass bands are the only brass bands in operation. Some categories of their music have been used widely outside Salvation Army circles, for example, their prodigious selection of over seven hundred hymn tunes which are fully scored for the brass band, and their Christmas carol selection, constitute some of the best collected sources in this field. Major contributions to the brass band repertoire have been made by Salvationists such as the composer Eric Ball. His most famous compositions, "King of Kings" and " Resurgam," are artistic works which capture the full potential of the brass band. They can be played only to their proper effect by "crack" bands, and are widely regarded in banding circles as amongst the greatest pieces ever composed for the brass band medium. Salvationist and ex-Salvationist composers have dominated brass band music in terms of original compositions. In addition to Britain's Eric Ball, Frank Wright from Australia, Dean Goffin from New Zealand, and Eric Lietzen from the United States of America are all legendary giants of the brass band movement. In more practical terms, Salvation Army music education courses, through distance teaching, and short term residential courses, have been a major contribution to brass band music as a distinct musical field. In addition, their tutorial guides and practice manuals are a frequent feature of most brass

band libraries. The Salvation Army journal, The Musician, which specialises in brass bands and choral singing, was regularly circulated in Kotarah Band and read with interest. The two major Salvation Army brass bands in the Newcastle district were regarded by the Boys as part of the banding scene and their activities were often a feature of banding conversations. Interestingly, while secular brass bands often had closely associated marching girls teams and drum majorettes, the Salvation Army had timbrel brigades, a type of artistically stylised group formation expression in music and movement with its own highly developed aesthetic, which although unique to the Salvation Army, bore obvious similarities to the tradition of female display performance found in marching teams amd drum majorettes.

Apart from confirming the historic and continuing influence of the Salvation Army on the banding movement as a whole, religious affiliation and belief were issues that were rarely discussed by the Boys. In fact, as we shall see in Chapter Five of the ethnography, one young bandie was excluded from the Band, principally because he was regarded as a "God-squadder," and the Boys considered this to be a disrupting influence. The Band was a secular institution that in many senses took the place of a church in the lives of its members, demanding personal commitment and providing fulfillment, social sharing and security. Given the time demanded by the Band, and its frequent Sunday engagements, it would probably have been impossible to be both a dedicated church-goer and bandie. The increasing entry of young people to banding through the schools, quite regardless of religion, would in future most likely make the role of the Salvation Army less significant, and religious belief and affiliation of less importance.

Occupation was always something up for a joke in typical banding humour. There were "Workers" and "Wankers," so the jest went, describing the majority of the Boys who were skilled manual workers, and the rest who were professional and salaried. But it was just that, a typical labelling joke, for the Boys saw education and occupational advancement as important, intrinsically valuable, and a means of "bettering yourself." Banding was an intellectual and educational pursuit, and in keeping with its aspirations it was hardly surprising that bandies had taken up formal education and professional occupations. Nevertheless, there was always a prevailing working class consciousness in the Band, and, as the research consistently reveals, the Boys generally saw the brass band movement as "working class," and the social status of the bandie as being "just ordinary." From Table I it can be seen that twenty of the Boys were skilled manual workers. (Harry and Tom had been skilled tradesmen, but had found lighter work in their later years.) However making generalisations about class solely on the grounds of occupation and Band membership was impossible. Whatever banding might have been in the past, many of its contemporary members were now well educated. One of the engineers in the Band had a Ph.d., two other members had become Fellows of Trinity College (London) in music, another had a Degree in Music Education, four had Diplomas in Education, and one went on to became a professional musician in the Sydney Symphony Orchestra.

The problems of assigning class to any particular individual or social group, and the empirical chances of unearthing a pure specimen of any particular class were dealt with more fully in Chapter Two. If sociological description according to class is problematic, then description according to class antecedents is even more difficult, but it may be noted that of those members of the Band who had acquired higher educational and professional qualifications, most came from families in which the father was a manual worker. Only two came from families in

which the father had professional qualifications, and more interestingly perhaps, these were musicians who had learned to play in other than a banding enviroment, and were both regarded by the other Boys as having a suspicious banding pedigree.

Along with many more women coming into brass bands, and an absolute increase in the number of "educated bandies" (a term I often heard used), banding was generally looking less and less like the old photographs of hardy working class Diggers, which had epitomized its tradition and popular image. Local banding was founded upon the exploits of the coal mine bands, the Steelworks Band, the Railway Workshops Band, and the Union Institute Band. This working men's perspective still had a place in contemporary Kotarah, even though things were definitely not what they once were. Despite "educated bandies" there was little outlandish in banding. The Boys were not bohemians, or members of an "arty," ephemeral or deviant group. Nearly all came from the same home-owning, respectable, settled families in the same neighbourhood, and shared with equal enthusiasm a common cultural pursuit.

Not only were "banding families" spread throughout the Movement, some of the Boys could prove with considerable pride a fourth generation family banding tradition. Having banding "in your blood," and having learned to play "on father's knee," were claims to status. The Boys with a family tradition have been subscribed T^n, according to generation in Table I. Some banding families had virtually become institutions and legends in themselves. Bluey and Henry, it was comically reported, had a brother or cousin in every band in the state of New South Wales. It was true that they both had at least five close relatives playing in brass bands. Boys belonging to banding families (not necessarily playing in Kotarah) are subscribed F. Within Kotarah Brass Band there were

in fact three sets of brothers, a brother and a sister, and two sisters; these are subscribed B (A), (B) and (C), BS, and S, in Table I. Many of the Boys had children and other relatives in the Juniors, and most had some family members who were ardent and active Band supporters. It can be seen from this that the institution of the family and family networks were very important in making banding work.

Some of the Boys were not performing musicians, like Bram, Mrs Smith, Claud and Rob. They had a long and respected personal history of involvement with banding and community affairs. They were the people who spoke for the Band in the community. They were called "Linkmen," and negotiated for and represented the Band in dealings with other community groups. How these relationships were mediated was an important issue. The Boys could not be isolated as an exact specified population to the exclusion of other groups around them. Banding was after all a part-time amateur pursuit, and other organisations, families and activities such as work, union, club life and church, ran through their group and soundly cemented the Band into the structure of community life in a very permanent way. Whilst it was true that banding was a widespread, highly sophisticated social movement in its own right, the Boys depended heavily upon local support and close communications with a broadly based community network to maintain their activities.

Formally the Band belonged to the Bowling Club, and was managed under a constitution which made it a Sub-Committee of the Club Management Committee. Therefore the Boys, and the fate of the Band, were intimately involved in the political in-fighting and intrigue which made up a good deal of Club life for many of its more involved enthusiasts. Whatever they did as a Band had to take into consideration loyalties to the Club, and the joint cooperative effots and ambitions of

the approximately twelve other major groups which kept the Club going. Bram, who was elected by the Club Management Committee as President of the Band Committee, ran annual general meetings at which all the posts in the Band (Bandmaster, Deputy, Secretary, Treasurer, Librarian, Quartermaster, etc.), were elected by the Boys. In addition, correct looking financial statements and committee minutes were produced. Most significantly this formal bureaucracy was actually of little consequence. Formal committees and reports were what the current community setting for the Band's survival depended on, and that was therefore supplied. Meanwhile, in the age old banding tradition, decisions affecting music and organisation were settled openly through discussion in the informality of bandpractices and shout sessions; this was how the Band really managed its affairs, and was an important point. The Boys had developed a loathing for formal committee work, and the means to which they had gone to present the facade of formal organisation, and to keep the true state of their finances and the long term legal ownership of the Band's instruments, library and equipment concealed, had reached subterranean, if not criminal, proportions. The Band had a much longer tradition to bear in mind than the Bowling Club to which they were currently attached.

Beyond the immediate problems of Club life the Boys were connected to a myriad of local associations and committees, such as Carnival, Anzac Day, Trade Union, Parent-Teacher School Band, and Church, not to mention a vast variety of other organisations based around amateur participant expressive culture, involving theatre, dancing, marching girls, jazz groups, big bands, and bagpipe bands. Yet, for the Boys, the most important community group was the Band Supporters. Largely composed of parents organised around the Junior Band Committee, relatives, and an odd mixture of retired bandies and

other individuals who would always turn out to hear, help and contribute to the Band, they numbered about two hundred, and constituted a widespread community association whose ill-defined network of influence fixed the Band as a staple ingredient in community life.

Of central importance to the Boys was their "movement," and what was going on in the wider world of banding. The Band's ranks could swell considerably when, on occasions, visitors from other bands would come around for a blow or a shout. Bandies from the nearby suburb of Cardiff, the North Lakes Band, Toronto Band, Mayfield Salvos, Waratah-Mayfield Band and Maitland City, together formed a nucleus called the Mid-North Coast Band Group, a formal organisation which arranged an annual regional contest, and like many of the individual bands, published a regular newsletter. Amongst other activities, it had helped to organise a regular community band programme on the local radio (2NUR-FM), called Mainly Brass. The Group also organised annual summer music camps for young bandies, and the annual Bandathon, a bandies' picnic. At another level of organisation the Boys had to be represented on the State Banding Association. Being a bandie, as we shall see later, was as much an organisational task as it was musical. More than being simply performing musicians, the Boys were also community and cultural activists.

Banding Activities

The principal focus of the research is "the Boys" as a social group, and their experiences and artistic intentions within the banding lifestyle. It is therefore, more concerned with what the Boys did when they were together, than with their separate lives and how

these seriously influenced and were influenced by banding, as important as this may be. For this reason, most of the material used in the descriptive ethnography was gathered on location, and is not based on interviews abstracted from the context of occasion or place. It is about what banding meant to the Boys when they were together as a Band, being bandies, and what they were trying to jointly express through their activities. This research perspective has the intention of deconstructing from within the social world of the contemporary Australian brass band musician, taken as a cultural form consisting of many parts.

Most of the data used was gathered from informal group discussions with the Boys, but individual commentary has been used extensively in the study to explore and portray specific issues, frequently alongside descriptive and explanatory commentary. Generally description is important because the variety of social contexts in which the Band participated could include such diverse situations as the colourful events of carnival marching, and the fears and apprehensions of performing on the contest stage. Each chapter has lent itself to a slightly different approach. Throughout, the major intention has been to portray what the banding lifestyle consisted of, and to delineate and explore the issues to which the Boys attached importance.

Being a bandie was an enormously busy experience, considering that it was a part-time amateur pursuit. Often the Boys would play together as frequently as three times a week. During the banding "season" (March to November), the busiest time of the year, they would work at breakneck pace through a routine of concerts and contests which depended upon regular bandpractices. Just what this meant in terms of individual time commitments, bearing in mind that home practice

was also vital for bandies, was an important indicator of the seriousness with which the Boys took themselves and their music.

One of the advantages of a longitudinal study was that in the three years a clear pattern of events and occasions took shape on the calendar. Banding was a cycle of events which revolved around traditional activities such as Anzac Day, the Mattara Carnival and the State Contest. Commitment to the Band was seen as a "seasonal" one, at least, and during this time the Boys would plan for musical and organisational objectives. Largely, the major events and occasions in one season, shown in Table II, constitute the divisions and separate chapters of the ethnography, around which other material such as survey data and observations have been based.

Table II: The Brass Band Season

This is a breakdown of the 1978 "season," which varied little from the other two years of the study.

Occasion	Number of times
Bandpractices	62
Community Concerts (Playouts)	16
Contests (3 performed, 5 visited)	8
Group Practices or Teaching	34
Committee Meetings and Community Organisation	8
Anzac Day (2 Concerts, 3 Commemorations)	5
Carnival	1
ABC Concert Recording in Town Hall	1
Shouting Sessions	70

The most important figures in Table II show that the Band played together on at least eighty eight different occasions in just nine months, and they gave twenty six separate public performances, an average of more than one a week. In addition there were the thirty four occasions of group practice or teaching, and the eight committee or community venues. Banding for a working person with a full time job and a family was not a commitment which could be taken lightly, and required enthusiasm and dedication.

Organisation and Presentation of Material

The chapters which constitute the descriptive ethnography are not sequential, but have been grouped into two sections, which deal with background and actual performance activities respectively.

Chapters Five, Six and Seven are concerned with the activities which took place in and around the bandroom as a focal meeting point, and the Club as a community centre. They can each be regarded in less than an absolute way as various modes of production which transformed the raw materials of band music (instruments, individual commitment, and community support) into a performing brass band.

"Becoming a Bandie" is concerned with how the Boys became musicians, and why they spent so much time and effort teaching Learners and maintaining a Junior Band. It looks at the reasons why bandies must start young, and what the Boys thought they achieved and expressed through this traditional form of community based education.

"Weekly Bandpractice" can be seen as an extension of this community based education. Here, the Boys produced and perfected their music. This chapter is concerned with how the Boys achieved musical and organisational satisfaction through dialogue and discussion within the dynamic context of a socially and physically structured group setting, what these intensive group situations meant to the Boys, why they pursued the music they played just for the joy of it, and how playing new music was a way of participating in popular culture.

"At the Club" concludes the first section of the ethnography. This chapter looks at how the Boys organised and financed their Band. It asks how they exchanged their music for community support, and how they managed the intricate committee relationships upon which that depended. It examines why the Boys pursued community support and local financing as opposed to government cultural grants, and what the Boys thought of the bureaucratization of cultural support.

Brass bands have a wide range of performing styles, and audiences and occasions can vary greatly. The Annual State Contest was the most important occasion on the brass band calendar, and was at the heart of the meaning of banding, socially, musically and symbolically. As the Boys would consistently repeat, "Contesting's what banding's all about." Chapter Eight looks at "the State" and why it has assumed such central importance in banding. Taken as an expression of "the movement" as a cohesive and dynamic cultural phenomenon, one day's events are broken down into separate explanations of how social meaning has been encoded and woven into a traditional occasion. Aspects examined include why the Boys wore uniforms and medals, contested for shields, endured the psychological stress of the contest stage, had a specific relationship with the audience, and were developing a

specialised musical composition in contest music. What these different artefacts, social practices, and modes of expression meant to the Boys as individual musicians, as a group, as community representatives, and as members of a national movement, are questions which are also discussed.

Chapter Nine, "The One Day of the Year," is about the Band's participation on Anzac Day. It is concerned with how the Band's music was used to help define social situations as solemn, military, nationalistic and patriotic, and what participation in these events meant to the Boys. It goes on to examine why the activities of the Anzac Day March were becoming unacceptable to some individuals in the Band, and why the traditional values associated with Anzac Day were being challenged.

"Carnival Marching" was in complete contrast to the stern military style of Anzac Day. This chapter looks at why town bands have become central to this traditional community celebration and how carnivals, as a dynamic form of popular expression, created new forms of cultural movement and modes of expression which were challenging the Boys' perception of the identity of a bandie, and of the proper activities of the traditional Australian town band.

Chapters Eleven and Twelve are concerned with the sort of regular concerts the Band gave around the community. "Club Gigs" specifically inquires into why the Boys liked the informality of clubs and how they felt about the diet of popular music and transcripts that they performed there, which was in such contrast to their "serious" and contest music. It further examines how the Boys felt they were genuinely popular at such venues, why the changing structure of

popular entertainment and leisure was drawing them into conflict with the professional musicians and trade unions, what these changes meant to the Boys, and how they intended to deal with them.

While club gigs were rare, requests for playouts were overwhelming. Chapter Twelve inquires into why there is still popular demand to have a town band at a variety of community and civic functions, and what this traditional activity of providing "occasion" music meant to the Boys. It examines what they believed they achieved through such community service, and how they managed their programmes in what they understood, as amateur musicians, to be a "do-it-yourself" cultural experience.

Finally, Chapter Thirteen is concerned with the Boys' cultural expression as a group when they were not playing music, examining why and how they had developed an intricate and sophisticated comedy routine, based on popular media personalities, which had become their own means of oral history and a subversive surrealistic form of social criticism.

Chapter 5

Becoming a Bandie

The vast majority of bandies that I met had learned to play music with a brass band when they were youths, and exceptions to this were rare indeed. Only three of the Boys in Kotarah had initially learned to play music through other channels, and they were regarded by the others as unusual. Their performance style, even after many years in banding, was often cited as suspect and resulting from a bad "Pedigree." The idea, then, of coming through the ranks of the Band Movement was an important one which led to the possession of a distinctive stylised ability which the Boys claimed they could recognise.

The production of Pedigree, banding's own particular musical style, resulted from an important aspect of the banding lifestyle itself, namely that of combining performing musicianship with teaching responsibilities. How the Junior Band was managing, and what sort of progress was being made in the Learners' Groups was always high on the agenda during discussions amongst the Boys. Most of them were actively involved in proving musical education in some sort of way, and during the course of the research twelve of them taught music on a regular basis. All of them would at least spend some time with the Kids, helping them solve musical problems, or demonstrating how to "play the dots."

In addition to dealing with the organisational, financial and musical problems of maintaining a fully equipped Junior Band capable of performing at contests and concerts, the Boys taught music from its rudimentary beginnings in Learners' Groups. Teaching Juniors and Learners, and having

a commitment to musical education, were seen by the Boys as a very important part of their banding activities. They could be involved in individual musical tuition, teaching small groups, conducting junior bands, or simply helping young people to play music through spending time with them and taking a deliberate interest in them.

Since its earliest days the brass band movement has been an educational institution, and the importance of this aspect of banding must be taken into account as a major part of its cultural reproduction. The fact that so many of the bands in Australia had age ranges spanning more than forty years was evidence that a constant process of community education was the very lifeblood of the Movement. The existence of the Junior Band and the Learners' Groups was taken by the Boys as an indication of the Band's future success, fully understanding that this future would depend greatly upon the current level of commitment to their form of community based musical education.

The Boys' teaching commitment varied enormously from individual to individual, and changed over the passage of time. It was complicated by the fact that some of the Boys were school teachers, five conducted other junior bands, and some gave private music lessons on a commercial basis. However, all of this activity was regarded as quite distinct from the Band's collective commitment towards the provision of musical opportunities for youth. On almost any night of the week, and often right through the weekend, some sort of musical lesson was in progress in the bandroom. Part of being an accomplished brass band musician, which was what the Boys described as having "Pedigree," also meant being a teacher, that is, passing on instrumental skills, musical knowledge, and the social behaviour and values of banding, in the same way as they had been passed on to most of the Boys.

The ongoing teaching and learning process in brass bands was obviously crucial in terms of what it meant to be a "bandie" and in the making of new "bandies." This chapter examines how the Boys derived meaning from, and expressed themselves through, their teaching activities. It also looks at what it meant to them to them to be able to successfully transmit their instrumental skills, musical knowledge and modes of banding behaviour, that is, how they felt about their organisational achievements in reproducing their culture, often in the form of dozens of young musicians, and in seeing the product of their labour mature into successful musicianship.

During the course of the research approximately one hundred and twenty young people passed through the Junior Band and various Learners' Groups. The Boys were never able to satisfy the demand for musical education by young people, either in terms of teaching time, or the provision of instruments and equipment. For about a third of the luckier youths who were admitted to the Learners' Groups it was the beginning of a career as a bandie, which is examined in this chapter. The term "career" is used here quite specifically to refer to the passage of events through which a youth will pass, from introduction to a Learners' group en route to becoming a bandie with Pedigree, and one of the Boys with "a face that fits."

Employed frequently in a variety of social research, the concept of career has been used to describe a series of social events which take an individual from one particular social status to another social status. Such an analytical framework has been successfully applied in the study of deviance (Matza,1964), alcoholism (Bahr,1973), drug use (Young,1972), and medical careers (Hall,1948).[1] In the case of musical careers, but of an altogether different kind to brass bands, Becker's treatment of the deviant occupational career of dance musicians provides another insightful

guide for this research.[2] Becker was concerned with the ways in which an ideal successful career may be categorised into stages of status attainment, and how social influences such as family relationships and friendship networks can impinge, and enhance or frustrate such a career.

An ideal description of a brass banding career could consist of the following stages: Firstly, entry into a learner's group where the rudiments of music would be learned (this stage could commence as young as seven years of age). Secondly, promotion into a junior band, where a young person would gain Pedigree. Thirdly, entry into a senior band, where a player would learn to acquire a "face that fits." Fourthly, admission to the close system of social relationships , which in the case of Kotarah was to be "one of the Boys," and dependent upon the prerequisite of having a "face that fits." In essence then, a successful banding career involved the acquisition of musical status (instrumental skills and expressive styles) known in banding terminology as Pedigree, and gaining and maintaining social acceptability within the prevailing social network of any particular brass band, known in banding terminology as having a "face that fits."

Passing It On: The Banding Commitment to Community Education

Transcripts From a Group of Boys Planning a New Learners' Group

GM: Is it absolutely vital to keep the Junior Band functioning?

Jim: If you can say one thing for brass band musicians, it's that they don't grow on trees. All bands are short of good players--it's part of it. If you want good players then you've got to train them young, and train them yourself.

GM: Do you get a lot of satisfaction from working with the Juniors?

Tom: I like it, you know, when you see them up there playing their little hearts out--and I think--that's because I taught him or her, and it makes you feel sort of proud--very proud of your own efforts.

Jim: Yeh! You know, like I think, shit, someone did it for me-- and now it's up to me to pass it on too. Old Billy Dee--he spent hours with me. I used to make the old cunt cry. But if he hadn't persisted I wouldn't be playing now. I think of that when I'm teaching. Where else does a working fellah learn proper music--you tell me that?

Harry: Yeh!--it's like Hans there on Flugel. He's right on top of it now--but he was a very weird kind of kid--little shit in fact. I went up and down the fucking scales with him--and one day that was it--he was off and spitting. Now he's teaching that little Sally kid, just the same as I did for him. It's passing it on, and it's a wonderful thing to see.

Henry: You pass it on, it's all part of it. Banding is both young and old for that reason. It's all Cowboys and Indians really, you just have to learn what the others are doing. Look, there's only a few different Tutor methods, and they're all variations on the Arbans method, and as long as you can sing the dots to the kids, and beat time--it's all they need--they'll do the rest. If they value music and bands they'll make it happen, and if they don't think it's worthwhile--they won't do it.

Jim: I've taught eighteen bandies playing in this Valley. It's not all my own work 'cos others taught them too. But when I hear them play--I think--that's me playing. It's like old Billy Dee from Westy, who taught Dad and me, used to say, 'You's Boys will be dragging some youngsters through Arbans Tutor one day.' He said, and I can hear the old cunt now: 'You can't be a good bandie if you can't pass it on!' Newspaper reviews won't make you good in this game. If you can play, get up there and crack the whip, show us how it's done, or shut up. That's why contesting and teaching has come to be the way it is--either you can do it, or you can't.

GM: Do you mean that teaching in banding is dependent upon performance skill?

Bern: Most of us teach by demonstrating--you know--singing out the dots, or just playing it. That's why the kids like it--because it's real. You ask these kids in the Juniors if they like music lessons at school, and they'll all groan in agony. Yet here they all are at six o'clock at night , prime TV time, all dying to learn music. It's because it's voluntary I think. I'm a musician, not a teacher. You understand that because you've been there. It's got to be fun for the kids or it's no good. That's why most schools can't go very far with bands. They've neither got the Pedigree nor the Tradition to hold the kids.

The many junior and school bands in New South Wales, and the persistence of banding for over a century, are evidence of the success of the brass band movement's involvement in community based musical education. Teaching music, as part of a bandie's lifestyle, was understood by the Boys to be part of an ongoing inter-generational relationship and duty. The preceding transcripts cited the way the Boys were themselves taught music as an important reason why they should personally teach music, and "pass it on" in their turn. Most of the Boys clearly understood that they had received free music lessons, instruments, sheet music, uniforms, and equipment, and consistent encouragement to be musicians. They believed that these facilities should be "passed on" because they valued the musical skills and the banding lifestyle as intrinsically worthwhile.

However, as one of the Boys above explained, although they felt an obligation to education, they did not derive a great deal of satisfaction from the act of teaching itself, which was seen as a fairly functional task more or less relying upon the student's self-motivation, and dependent upon the two main skills of "singing the dots" and "making it fun." Rather, they derived most satisfaction out of seeing young people mature as musicians and successful bandies. The Boys saw "part of themselves" when they heard musicians that they had taught performing. They saw this as expression of their commitment to banding, in the same way as their own musical ability, as they recognised, was an expression of their teachers' earlier efforts.

Few of the Boys believed that the educational skills employed by school teachers were important in musical education. In fact, school music was popularly derided throughout the Band for its total lack of relevance, and the Boys were always quick to point out that although many of the secondary schools in the district maintained some sort of school

band, their Kotarah Junior Band remained popular and the most successful youth music association in Newcastle. The inferred quality of most school music teachers remained a standing joke, and the subject of invidious comparison in banding throughout this research.

Early Socialization: Getting Pedigree and a Face that Fits

Transcripts from a Small Group of Teenagers (14-16 years old) in the Junior Band Discussing School Music

GM: Why do you like coming to the Band?

Jono: I hate music at school. 'Go there!' 'Come here!' 'This is good music...that's rubbish music.' She makes me as sick as a dog that Miss Blake! Zat and Doggie came in late on Tuesday--'Late again today Zat! You'll have to see the Principal...jaw...jaw ...I suppose you're going to tell us all about harmonic interludes this morning...' It's sick, that woman--what can she play anyway?

GM: So you think the Band is quite different from learning music at school?

Doggie: Zat and I won't go anymore. We come here and play , and blow all night. But at school it's 'Stop talking--watch the baton,' it gives you the dreaded lurgy. None of us hardly play in the school bands now, bunch of clones and sick heads--they all are.

GM: Is that just Zat's opinion?

Marsha: I think Zat and Dick are silly to have gone in the first place. If bands are good, like it's fun to be in them, then that's impossible at school. Teachers would stop all that. If you don't do things the way they want it--it's violence, or disobedience, or stupid. They'll just heavy you.

Roger: Yeh, you know, clones don't know very much. You ask them how the music goes, and it's 'Well Roger, how many crotchets make a quaver?' Or some shit, when all you want to know is how the music goes. When you're in the Band, you just ask someone, and let them blow it out or sing the dots.

None of us in the Juniors really like music at school very much, although we've just got to do well. We all stick together from the Band at school, and don't worry too much about the other kids and the clones. They're always begging us to join the school band.

These members of the Junior Band shared a very negative opinion of the music education that they received at school. They were quite frankly sceptical of their teachers' musical abilities. Although some of them belonged to school bands, they did not see these as being their bands in the same way as they identified with Kotarah Juniors. They were unhesitatingly enthusiastic and loyal members of their Band as a social entity. "We all stick together now," was how one described the strength of relations which had developed as a distinct social network amongst these youth. Because the Band and the Boys provided musical education by demonstrations, free from the usual authoritarian relationships of school, young musicians were actively denying their talents to the school band as a form of resistance to their school music teachers.

One school music teacher who played in Kotarah Senior Band had difficulty maintaining enthusiasm and numbers in a band that he conducted at his school. His association with Kotarah did not however deter his school students from participating. A few who were promoted from the Junior to the Senior Band took particular delight in the levelling effect of finding themselves as equal Band members, playing next to their teacher, and often able to outshine him, for like many school music teachers his practical playing skills did not match his theoretical knowledge. Promotion to the Senior Band was for almost all the Juniors an ambition and an incentive, which placed their own activities in the context of the "real" adult world, rather than simply "Kids' stuff."

Transcripts from the Boys Discussing "Becoming a Bandie"

GM: How long does it take to train a good bandie?

Tom: It's a slow process, that's why you've got to get them when they're young. I've got a dozen Juniors in this Valley--still playing, and it's not just reading the dots. It's, er--how do

you say, er, the Routine--the self discipline is what counts. I once saw some fellah--good Trombone--no doubt about that--but not a bandie you see. Well first contest he was right in the pooh--no Pedigree you see, couldn't take the pressure. You see there's playing it good, and there's playing it right. Well, they're not necessarily the same thing.

GM: Do you mean that there's much more to becoming a bandie than being able to play music?

Henry: Yeh, that's right, but Tom's only got part of it. In banding your face has got to fit--otherwise you'll be on the outside looking in. We don't have any magic men to solve our problems--we have to work on it ourselves. That means discipline, cooperation and understanding. It's how they learn all about it at the Juniors. It's not that we just teach them to blow, no. It's that we learn them how to participate in the Band. Making it their Band is the key. That's why the Kids have a democratic vote and discussion about everything. It's learning to solve problems as a group themselves is how it's done.

GM: So besides teaching music, you teach participation and cooperation?

Giles: Well, more than that I think. Musically, it's the same. When we get up for a regular gig or playout anything can come up. Being a bandie with real Pedigree means that you know one hell of a lot of music. You've got experience. All the transcriptions of the classics, the marches, the folk tunes, hymns and popular pieces that have been all but forgotten. That's when you learn them--in banding in the Juniors.

Paul: It's really funny what Giles is saying. I was in a train in Sydney once, and I was humming to myself, one of the exercises from Arbans--you know quietly to myself, and behind me, like when I stopped, this other fellah carried on, with a big grin on his face. He then just said, 'Exercise 201 Arbans,' and we just burst ourselves laughing. In banding you can tell who's a bandie.

GM: Do you mean that going through Juniors gives a Kid a special identity?

Norm: Yeh--who else today can play 'Colonel Bogey,' 'Honest Toil,' 'Rock of Ages,' 'Resurgam,' 'The Vikings,' 'Carnival of Venice,' --that's all our stuff-- and it's what the Juniors learn too. We like, how can I say it, we own that music. Nobody else plays it regularly--and so we pass it on, like the way we pass on the rest of the Tradition--you know the friendships and understanding.

When I heard the Juniors last week my hair stood on end--there they were, thick into it, into 'The Pharoahs'--whooping it out. I mean, if we didn't pass it on like it is--then it's gone, gone for good.

The Boys understood that becoming an accomplished brass band musician involved the early adoption of regular practising habits, coping with the pressures of contesting, and perfecting music as part of a group. In this sense bandies saw their musical skills as intrinsically different from other musicians. As one of the Boys commented, a Trombone player was recognised as a good musician, but because he was unused to contesting he clearly did not qualify as a bandie. The Boys recognised and acknowledged real bandies not simply from musical performance, but also from their behaviour in a group, and a particular breadth of musical knowledge. All of these characteristics contributed to the notion of Pedigree, the distinctive musical identity of a bandie. Through their teaching activities the Boys were passing on an accumulated body of musical knowledge. Certain types of music were seen as theirs, as belonging to brass bands, and the Boys saw themselves as the contemporary guardians of this tradition, with a duty and responsibility to maintain and develop it through the next generation. As Norm deliberately pointed out "if we didn't pass it on like it is--then it's gone, gone for good."

In addition to the strictly musical aspects of their teaching the Boys clearly saw their activities with the Juniors and Learners in the wider context of the brass band tradition and movement, for it was also a means of inculcating the social values of participation and democratic decision making which are so central to banding. These values were more closely related to achieving the status of having a "face that fits." Whilst an individual might have Pedigree in the sence of the achievement of status as a brass band musician in the broad sense, he or she might not have a "face that fits" in terms of being accepted into the closely knit friendship network which governed the Band's activities through collective decision making and discussion during the Shout sessions in the Club bar. The Boys found it difficult to define the exact nature of Pedigree and the

even more nebulous concept of having a "face that fits," but they could identify if a player had achieved these stages in a banding career. They knew that neither status could be gained instantly or automatically, but were shaped and acquired during youth in junior bands and after promotion in senior bands. One fact was certain, if you did not have Pedigree you would never have a "face that fits."

Becoming One of the Boys

Elevation to the Senior Band from the Juniors was a complex issue. It depended firstly upon there being a vacant instrumental position in the Senior Band, secondly upon musical competence, and thirdly upon social acceptability amongst the Boys. Because Kotarah had a strong Junior Band and teaching commitment many more youth were trained than the Senior Band could accommodate. Ideally a brass band has a fixed size and instrumental composition, and a consequence of this was that many Kids from the Juniors left to join other bands in the Newcastle district once they were skilled enough and mature enough to play in a Senior Band. In addition, because Kotarah was a "crack" band, (i.e. one of the best in the country and certainly the best in contest attainment in the district), instrumental positions required a high degree of musical skill, and when they fell vacant were often given to accomplished and proven players wishing to join from other bands. Nevertheless, a strong Learners and Juniors tradition at Kotarah did mean that capable Juniors were allowed to play with the Seniors during some gigs, playouts and contests. However, while being "promoted" to play in the Senior Band was a status sought after by the Kids in the Junior Band, it was only one stage in a complex series of initiations en route to becoming one of the Boys, and a fully fledged member of the Band. As already pointed out in the previous chapter, Kids

were Kids, and called so by the Boys, until they reached the age of eighteen. This was the age when they were allowed to drink alcohol in Clubs, and without being able to Shout with the Boys you could not be one of their number. Also, promotion to the Seniors was in itself an apprenticeship when the novice would be on trial. It was a period when the ability to have a "face that fits" was fully developed and refined, and this status and title bestowed on the successful, or withheld in some cases from the unsuccessful. It was the final stage in the career of becoming a bandie in Kotarah. The length of this process could vary considerably. For some Kids it was only a matter of one year, while for others it could be several years. The Band had, for instance, a particularly brilliant young Tenor Horn player who was promoted at the age of thirteen. For him the apprenticeship in the Seniors would be at least five years. By contrast, for me, a mature outsider with a respectable Pedigree, it was only a few months before I was accepted as one of the Boys and had found a "fit."

The Night Pete Became One of the Boys: Confirming the Elite Status

Pete had Pedigree in every sense. He had learned to play on his proverbial "Daddy's knee." His grandfather was one of the "Giants" who had toured the world with the great Newcastle Steelworks Band. "It ran in his blood," they said, and nobody could deny that he was an excellent musician who had all the credentials for being one of the Boys, and that very week he had turned eighteen years of age. After bandpractice one night he was taken up to the Club bar, plyed with enough free beer to render him completely drunk, and then had his trousers publicly dragged off and thrown out of the window. This was not necessarily an initiation rite, but it did, the Boys assured me, happen to most Kids coming up from the Juniors, except when they were female. It was an

incident that was never mentioned again, but from my observations of this and other similar occasions it was for the individual concerned a complete break from the past which signalled social success and acceptability as an adult. Pete was not a Kid any more, and nobody treated him as such. His mother did make a formal complaint to the Band about the crudity of being publicly debagged, but they reminded her that in their days it had been a "boot polish job" (after debagging, the genitals would be covered with a liberal amount of black boot polish). Pete certainly never complained and just seemed to fit in as "one of the Boys" from that time on. For another youth who was less popular, and had only recently been promoted, and was said to be "a bit of a God-squadder," there was never an invitation upstairs for a Shout. Rather, as it was latter explained to me, a "nice seat" was found for him in one of the other local bands which was "fighting its way back up." The decisions to confirm Pete as having a "face that fits" and to exclude the other youth were not cut and dry issues that were ever voted on, but like so many other important decisions in the Band they were arrived at through long, often repeated, discussions in which concensus was slowly attained. It was evident that you could be the the finest brass musician in Australia, and be quite prepared to work long and hard for the Band, but unless the Boys could feel confident that you would be a good and loyal friend, and take part in the mateship rituals of the beer drinking ceremonies in the Club, then your face wouldn't "fit" and there would be no admission to the Band. The Kid mentioned above, who did not "fit" in Kotarah was not publicly rejected, and was not rejected by the Movement for he did take up a seat in another band, although his outspoken and dogmatic religious views would probably have remained a social handicap. My personal opinion, shared by most others in Kotarah, was that Pete was not the better musician of the two. Here then, perceptions of friendship, social image, and social acceptability were the governing forces which determined the membership of "the Boys in the Band."

Stevo and the Case of the Face that Ceased to Fit

The basic requirements for becoming one of the Boys have already been discussed: having both Pedigree and a "face that fits." These two qualities were gained through social interaction and the slow process of becoming a bandie. Once acquired they had to be maintained, for it was also possible to lose Pedigree and cease to have a "face that fits." On one occasion a group of Boys confronted one of their number in the Club and told him outright that they believed that his secondary involvement with a jazz band was affecting his musical style to the detriment of the Band, and that he should think seriously about where his musical abilities lay. In that case there was no hesitation, and the musician involved gave up jazz. Stevo's case was different primarily because he had lost a "face that fits" rather than simply gaining a deviant Pedigree, and this led to his sad and much regretted parting with the Band.

Stevo left the Band soon after I joined it, or more accurately he was eased out of it. He came from a well known family in banding circles, steeped in tradition. He had come up through the ranks of the Juniors, and at one time had a good Pedigree and a "face that fits." As a newcomer to the Band it seemed to me that he was being pushed out (a fate which also befell another Band member during the course of this research). Although new and an outsider at the time, I did understand the difficulties of acquiring or training a suitable replacement with the ideal bandie credentials that Stevo apparently possessed. It seemed to me that the Boys were behaving in a rash, unfair and wasteful way. My early inquiries as to why Stevo was being victimized and eased out were at first met with a guarded reply that "his face didn't fit." Later, when I was more thoroughly taken into the Boys' confidence, I pursued the issue of Stevo's departure more forcefully in order to try and establish more exactly what was a "face that fits," and why some individuals were

collectively judged to have one, while others were not. Research aside, it was an important issue for me because I had personally enjoyed Stevo's company, and had a high regard for his friendship. My understanding of events, until I entered into a dialogue about this particular issue with the Boys, was limited by the fact that Stevo had refused to talk about leaving the Band with me.

Transcripts from a Discussion with a Group of the Boys about Stevo

GM: You lot gave Stevo marching orders. I think you forced him to leave the Band by not keeping him up to date about gigs, and by accusing him of bad tuning when that plainly wasn't the case.

Several of the Boys: His face didn't fit.

GM: What do you mean 'his face didn't fit'?

Clive: Well--y'know, er, --if your face doesn't fit, --well, well your face doesn't fit, and that's the way it goes.

GM: Oh, come on--that's not an answer and you know it.

Henry: Look, Stevo was always a bit weird--right. But, OK, one of the Boys right enough, but, er, he, er, he began to go a bit funny.

GM: Funny?

Stan: Oh fuck now, er. How do you put it? Nuts and fucking raisins.

GM: Nuts and fucking raisins?

Harry: First it was brown rice and meditation. So, OK, he eats brown rice and starts head banging. Nothing wrong with that, --it's not a sin to be a weirdo poofter.

GM: Go on, go on.

Henry: Well, then it was pyramids. Pyramids in the instrument case, pyramids in the car, in his house, silly cunt even built one in the garden. Pyramid badges, pyramid rings, pyramid necklace--fuck man--you know--Nuts. Pyramid madness struck the poor bastard down in his prime. The silly cunt used to put his horn in a pyramid at night because he reckoned that it lined all the molecules up correctly, --he not only began to talk shit, he thought shit too.

Jim: What was that mob called now--. Oh yeh, the Rosifuckwits or something. Stevo became a Rosi-pyro-fuckwitter.

GM: Yeh, but he was still a good musician and did his bit for the Band.

Jim: Well it went on and on. He used to come up here, and he stopped Shouting with the rest of us, --sitting there in the corner as white as a ghost, er, miles away in his head and he started talking weird. You know, that sort of soft creepy accent.

GM: Talk weird?

Jim: All that shit about 'The Force' and 'Vibrations', cosmic crap, y'know. Sitting there in the corner bubbling his beard through his orange juice like a fucking poofter.

GM: I still don't know what's wrong with that, 'cos you said yourselves that it's not a sin. I mean, being a bandie is a pretty weird thing too.

Pat: Hit the cunt! Hit the cunt! You just can't walk in here and say that we're weird just because it's true! (laughter).

Tec: No, look, --people were begining to talk. Parents--y'know--worried about who's teaching teaching their kids. It was the wrong sort of image. Y'know, he went weird and people in the community began to notice. He lost his Pedigree--the social things--and so his face didn't fit any more. Look, even the Kids in Juniors were beginning to crack jokes about him, --calling him 'Creepy Stevo.'

GM: Did you all sit down one day and decide he'd have to go?

Larry: No, but we did discuss it quite a bit. It's a slow process 'cos he was one of our mates and we know him very well. Don't want to cause any ill feelings or friction in the Movement because he comes from a fair dinkum banding family. We, er, we sort of gave a bigger and bigger hint. Old Billy there, he told him once, when Stevo came up the Club wearing a big flower in his button hole. He said, 'Matie--your're asking for the push, fit in or they'll ask you to fuck off. I've seen it before,' he said, 'fellahs lose their Pedigree, and you've lost yours somewhere in one of those fucking pyramids you've got. Your face can't fit any more.

GM: But, did all this affect his music?

Stan: Yes and no. He certainly lost his attack, er, and his clip went all soggy, he, er, sort of developed a spongy sort of sound, and couldn't pump with the rest of the machine. Y'know, er, he sounded like a Military Band--understand?

GM: Yeh, yeh.

Stan: So, we stopped telling him where and when the gigs were, and, er, complained to him all the time that his tuning was across.

GM: You cruel bastards!

Mal: He'll be OK. Look he's learning to play one of those Indian guitar things, a whatsit, er, --Sitar. He's OK, probably be back one day when he's got over it all, and his face fits again.

GM: So, you do consciously as a group, organise to kick players out if their face doesn't fit.

Several Boys: No.

Mal: We're not a bunch of arse'oles, and solidarity and mateship is a big thing in this Band and in banding everywhere. They kick themselves out, we just provide the means by which they can leave without causing embarrassment or friction. See?

GM: Yeh. Got it.

Clearly, in the Boys' eyes, Stevo had become "funny" or gone "nuts." His presenting personality, both to the Boys and to the community, had undergone such a change that he was no longer the person to whom the Boys had previously given admission as one of their number. His face had ceased to fit, and this was seen as more important than his Pedigree, which although judged to be not as good as it was, was never cited directly to me without prompting as one of Stevo's major problems.

Stevo's rejection by the Boys was not a ruthless act which cut him off suddenly, nor was it taken without much thought, discussion, or concern for his well-being. He had, after all, been one of the Boys, and as they said, "we're not a bunch of arse'oles, and solidarity and mateship is a big thing in this Band." Neither was Stevo's rejection simply dependent upon his relationship with the Boys. Community interests, because the Band drew its support from the community, and the concern of parents of Kids in the Learners were strong considerations in the Boys' views. As Tec pointed out, parents were beginning to ask questions, and "people in the community had began to take notice." Here, image was all important. Parents needed to be sure about who they trusted their children with, and in an industrial working class city like Newcastle (which had, for example, at a previous time outlawed public performances by exotic religious groups such as Hare Krishna) displayed deviant images were not lightly tolerated.

Stevo had been given a fair and open warning by one of the oldest and most serious men in Newcastle banding circles, Old Billy. Stevo had at least discussed this with some of the Boys, but chose to continue along his own direction. Consequently he was eased out of the Band. Few people in banding do not have family links of some kind (see Table 1). A consideration in the manner of Stevo's exclusion (by keeping him underinformed about events, and by continual complaints about his tuning) was, as Larry put it because the Band did not want "to cause any ill feeling or friction in the Movement" and Stevo came "from a fair dinkum banding family." The Band, and the way it as a social group, treated individuals must be seen as dependent not only upon a highly developed set of mateship relationships which bound the Boys together, and a collective presenting image to the wider community from which it drew its support, but also upon the Band's relationship with the banding movement itself. Ill feeling and friction in such an organisation, so thoroughly tied together with family bonds, was something which the Boys believed had to be avoided at all costs.

Of great importance was what the Boys thought of Stevo after his departure. True, they had been calling him a "weirdo" and a "poofter," but I never heard a malicious statement made of him, even after he was gone. The Boys genuinely wished him good luck, were interested in the fact that he was pursuing music still, by learning the Sitar, and thought, deep down, that he would get over it all, and "be back one day when he's got over it all and his face fits again."

Brass Band Widows and Boys Who Can No Longer Be Boys

Playing in a brass band is an arduous and exhaustive lifestyle which places heavy demands on personal time, family life and financial resources. For some of the Boys banding was a family recreation with their kids playing in the Juniors, and their wives participating at various organisational levels and in social activities around the Bowling Club. Nonetheless, a brass band could easily take a player away from his wife and family on several nights of the week and could require an absorbing dedication to a daily routine of loud musical practice at home.

There were many things which took Boys away from the Band and banding. One was the need to re-locate associated with finding a new occupation. The closure of Newcastle's shipyards, for instance, not long before this research commenced, had taken many fine players out of the district and away from the Band. Another reason for leaving the Band would result quite simply from a change of interest in life. New pastimes, hobbies and other musical concerns could mean that, like Stevo, one's face ceased to fit, although rarely did it reach such a dramatic conclusion as being eased out of the Band. Again, the demands of family, domestic life, or part-time study, meant that some of the Boys had to occupy marginal positions in the Band, playing when and were they could be usefully incorporated until their spare-time situation improved again.

A major reason for Boys leaving the Band, or at least having to occupy a marginal position for a temporary period, was the phenomenon referred to in brass band circles as the "Brass Band Widow": a wife or girlfriend who felt that banding came between her and her partner. Not all the Boys had the full support of their wives and girlfriends in their banding activities, and often Boys, particularly during courtship, claimed that they had been faced with a straight ultimatum of "it's me or the

Band." A popular joke was frequently made to the younger Boys once it was known that they had established a steady relationship: "Tell her your priorities from the beginning--the Band must come first!" The pressure on female members of the Band was even greater in this respect, and during the research only one of the Ladies kept a steady boyfriend, who was a dedicated bandie himself and was therefore very sympathetic.

Dan had a problem with his wife. He was a music teacher, and had given long years of service to the brass band movement. His wife, who was not popular at the Club and whom the Boys always referred to as "Lady Muck," thought banding was socially and artistically below Dan, and wanted him to go into jazz or orchestral music.

Transcripts from a Discussion with Dan

GM: How's the wife these days?

Dan: Oh gee, I don't fucking know. If banding's going to cause all this fucking shit night after night it can't be worth it. I mean I'd like to say to her that there's no choice, but there is and we all know it....She doesn't like bands as yous very well know, and particularly not you Boys, and it's all a bad scene getting worse. I think I'll have to give it away to be fair to her.

GM: Do you mean she's given you a choice, banding or her?

Dan: Oh, no, at least not like that. I mean, I know what the Boys say and think of her, but she is my missus--I mean she is my wife, and I can well understand that banding means different things to different people.

GM: And?

Dan: Well, it's night after fucking night --'All you think about is that Band....Those Boys are a bunch of losers....You'll never get on in music while you waste your time with brass bands...'

GM: Is it time, or the image?

Dan: Both really. But I think it's more the time.

GM: The Boys say it's the image.

Dan: Well, you know her--House and Garden--Grace Brothers. She wants to become something I suppose--but it's time too. She wants to go away weekends, and go socializing with people from work, so--there's a, er, clash of interests involved.

GM: Are you in a position where you've got an interest which your wife feels she can't be part of it, and therefore you must choose?

Dan: That's about the size of it, but if it happens I'll do the right thing by the Band and give yous fair warning I'm giving it away. It happened to both Jacko and Ron last year,--it's a genuine brass band widow case I'm afraid.

Dan's problem was a well known one in banding, and always received much sympathy from the Boys. Not only did bandies change their interests and leave banding to pursue other paths, temporarily or forever, spouses and lovers also had to be taken into account. They could grow tired, if not even jealous, of the possessing demands and social relationships placed on a bandie's spare time, and come to demand a joint leisure pursuit which catered more for a shared interest and involvement.

In Dan's case, it was well known that his wife had always considered banding to be "rough music" and "common". To her an educated man with well developed musical skills should pursue a more glamorous musical style which conformed more to her perceptions of what was "art" and "culture." The Boys, who always called her "Lady Muck" when beyond Dan's hearing because she so clearly displayed her feelings that banding was uncultured and "ocker," were dismayed at Dan's predicament. While they could well understand the legitimate demands of family and domestic life, or even the emergence of a new interest taking a fellow away from the Band, Dan's problem was seen as something different, as more than this. Dan's wife was perhaps right to demand more of his time, but she accompanied this demand with an assault on the value of the Boys' music and this was seen as class based dismissal of their artistic endeavour.

The Band could not provide a satisfactory social life for Dan's wife, and she resented the fact that Dan's Band activities took him away from the social life she favoured and could not fully participate in without him. As Dan had "made it" to being a teacher after coming from a working class background, his wife seemed determined that they should secure their foothold in the middle class, both financially and culturally. For her the working class ambiance of the Band and the Club was a threat, representative of a life she wanted Dan to leave behind, and an obstacle to enhanced social status.

The Importance of Family to a Successful Career in Banding

Exactly who became a bandie and who became one of the Boys are interesting questions which introduce a number of social variables such as general educational attainment, occupational stability and good physical health. These questions however, depend ultimately upon there being some connection made between young people and banding. Banding is not part of mass culture in the same way as football is for example. It is not something that most men participate in during their youth. On the contrary, it is a minority pursuit, and only one of a range of possible formal associations such as sports, scouting, churches, and other interest groups which are active in the commnity and seek to recruit young people.

Many young people came forward as a result of family ties with banding, others came as a result of a close community friendship with connections to the Band or the Club. Still others came forward as a result of their parents having determined that a musical education was a valuable acquisition and that the Band provided one free of cost. Still other youth came forward and were presented by parents who informed the Band that a teacher had proclaimed that their child had musical talent.

Teaching these young people the rudiments of music was, provided they genuinely wanted to learn and were prepared to do the home practice required, a relatively simple task for the Boys. It was the next stage in the banding career when differences between youth became apparent. Here in the Junior Band much more depended upon family than simply being introduced to Learner's class at the local bandroom. Having a parent who played, or had played in the past in a brass band was obviously a significant influence upon a youth's progress, and the banding saying, "learned to play on Daddy's knee" was one that so often seemed to make a great deal of difference. Having music played in the home, having musical instruments in the house, and the priority and institutionalization of regular daily practice times were all important factors which helped to determine musical progress and maintain and stimulate interest in music. The idea of cultural capital is an important one here. It may be handed down as a gift, not in the sense that it is some innate genius which falls upon certain individuals, but a gift of knowledge and value for musical experience transmitted from parents to children in the home socialization experience. Youth needed, if my experience as a bandie and hence as music teacher are a guide, to receive continual encouragement and praise if they were to succeed and their interests develop. While all the Boys provided this for youth in their belief in "passing it on," generally much more was needed than this weekly contact with a musical environment. A sense of banding tradition in the home, parents who could talk the language of banding and tell stories of banding history, seemed to make a great deal of difference to a youth's musical progress and the development of an identity with banding. However this researcher would strongly stand by the claim that no youth, whatever his or her background, would experience prejudice or unfair treatment in an attempt to rise up through the ranks of the Band, but as Table 1 in the previous chapter does show a large proportion of the Boys did come from banding families and were heirs to a family banding tradition. There are examples, many and famously so in

banding circles, where this is not the case, but for most a banding family was a vital stimulus towards the attainment of Pedigree and the status of gaining a "face that fits" in achieving a successful career as a bandie.

Lastly, a note needs to be made in respect to the elusive status of "being one of the Boys." Much of what was required to reach this final status as a career stage in Kotarah depended upon being familiar with a particular style of story telling and brand of humour, and knowing banding's history, legends and folk stories, particularly those of the Newcastle district. What this specialized form of humour and story telling consisted of and involved is dealt with more thoroughly in Chapter 13, "Being One of the Boys: Art and Expression in Social Relationships."

Fig.6: "Reading the dots"--Teaching and learning in the brass band tradition.

Fig. 7: Kotarah Junior Band after a Playout

Fig. 8: The Young Ladies of the Junior Band

Chapter Six

Weekly Bandpractice

Weekly bandpractice was the single most constant event in banding. It was where the Band played most of its music, and spent most time together. It was the constant organisational hub at the centre of Band activities. Bandpractices were remarkably similar events in all the bands visited during the research. They provided an opportunity to see the bands at home, in their own musical workshops, transforming the raw materials of music into a performance reality.

Sitting in "contest positions," that close semi-circle of approximately thirty musicians gathered around the Bandmaster, was an intense experience. With their well-ordered spatial structure, and with all attention aimed towards the centre, these two hour periods were an intimate forum which followed the well-practised rules and conventions learned by the Boys as Juniors in their youth. These occasions consisted of a planned series of events which systematically provided an educational forum in which new music was learned and perfected, and through which musical and organisational problems were resolved through discussion.

In the previous chapter of the ethnography attention was drawn to the Boys' expectations of what a Junior bandpractice should provide besides musical education. Democratic discussion and responsibility were among the most significant traditions that the Boys believed had to be passed on in banding. Weekly bandpractice provided a regular example of what they meant by banding behaviour and values. The

following transcripts show how the group learning situation was organised, how discussion was used to solve both musical and organisational problems, and finally why these occasions were more than just a practice for forthcoming public events, but also important musical events in themselves.

Transcripts from a Bandpractice

Bandmaster: Right, now that we know that we can go from top to bottom without collapsing—let's take it apart.

Cornets! It's double-tonguing all the way through section C. Think of the beat—TU-KU, TU-KU—you'll need a tongue like a lizard. Horns—after the first repeat, these runs—see them—groups of five—DA-DER-DI-DI-DAR—and then the Bass end comes in—WOMP-WOMP-WOMP. If we can't get these little things right by now we'll end up as X grade at the State. Now come on, wake up! Right, from section B.

(The Band plays the section.)

Bandmaster: Double-tonguing Cornets! Where was it?

Anne: I can't get the right beat. The Horns are dragging or something—I don't know—but we can't get our TU-KU, TU-KU in.

Bandmaster: Right—look—it's six eight time, and I'm doing it two in a bar. Look, the Horns come in on the beat of the bar—DEE-DEE, and off you go. Cornets and Horns by themselves please, from B.

(Cornets and Horns play the section.)

Stan: You know at the rall there, I've got a top D that goes on like forever. Well, I can't hang on like forever while the rest of you's all go sentimental about it.

Bandmaster: Yeh, OK, right—um—I'll hang it on for four normal beats, just after the Cornets come in with the Horns and Baritones, you let it go, and then down to the A flat—right? So it's DEE-DEE, TU-KU, TU-KU, and you're down there on the A flat. Right Band—all sections again—straight in.

This is a short example of the standard routine question and answer forum in which the Bandmaster and players search for inconsistencies and mistakes in the music. It was through this searching, and the discussion of musical problems, that the Band polished and perfected their music, often note by note and phrase by phrase. If necessary, music would be dissected, put slowly back together again, and then through repetition brought back up to the correct tempo, all under the direction or chairmanship of the Bandmaster. In this sense brass bands were different from professional ensembles in that, while both read music, brass band musicians rarely sight-read with accuracy. Bandmasters often had to do much more than place their interpretation on the music being practised. Frequently they had to explain, correct and coordinate individual interpretations in detail. In the above case the Bandmaster could be seen as a teacher, knowing more about music than most of the Band, and filling an elected role which reflected the Band's confidence in his ability. What the Bandmaster asked for from the Band was never fundamentally disputed by the players. One of the rules of bandpractices was summed up in a regularly quoted saying, "The Bandmaster is always right, even when he's wrong." However, such a student-teacher relationship amongst adults in the Band had limits. While the Bandmaster could explain and demand what he wanted, in the context of the discussive and explorative approach to learning or perfecting music, these views were often taken as advice and guidance rather than final instructions.

Transcripts from the Boys Discussing Bandpractice during the Smoko

Nick: Well, we can tie in with the Basses right up until the Horns come in. If we go much slower then we'll grind to a bloody halt on top of the Horns and Baritones. It's from that nasty little C sharp onwards that the Horns lose the beat and chaos sets in.

Harry: OK—we'll have a little section practice and you'll see whether it can be done or not. If we can't go it that fast, well we can't go it that fast—and that's a fact—so go slower, or play some other fucking music!

Bandmaster: Look, I have to wave the stick in the middle of all this. I've told both of you where it went wrong, and how it should be, so it's up to you's to stick it all together. The rest of the Band is waiting for you to get your act together.

Norma: Well what the bloody hell do you expect us to do about it? We're all practising it—it's getting better—but it's like the rest of it, we're still just learning about the piece.

Jim: Shit. Look, we've played harder pieces than this before. It's a small fucking problem, nothing at all when you think about it. Horns will practice a bit more, Cornets will slow down, and it'll be OK—we just have to work it out.

Chas: Look—remember 'Blackfriars'—what happened? We could play that years ago, perhaps our best ever B grade contest number. Well, last week we suddenly discovered we couldn't play it anymore—could we? You bloody lose it, you see, and then we have to build it all back up again, bit by bit, like a giant jig-saw. It's, er, like that Fugue tonight. We just have to put our fingers on what's wrong—discover the problems—and out she comes. It's not a question of Cornets and Horns so much as the whole Band getting down to it.

The career of a musical composition from its crude first run through to its polished contest ready performance, resulted from a group effort in musical production. As the Bandmaster pointed out, he only "waved the stick" in the middle of the Band. The musicians themselves, as an organising group, translated musical notation into a group musical performance. Finally, despite the explanations and criticism from the Bandmaster, it was the players who would fit the different sectional parts together as a whole piece of music.

This actual process of fitting the music together as a joint effort made bandpractices very social events. While the Bandmaster could explain what he thought was correct, by argument or by "singing the dots," and despite the fact that his conducting controlled rhythm and beat, the final product resulted from an ongoing dialogue between

the players about the relationship of their musical parts and the solutions of the problems this could involve. The discussion in these cases was rarely theoretical, in the sense that it would refer to the basic laws of classical music notation, for that could always be quickly resolved. Rather, it was mostly about performance ability in the technical sense. The transcripts above typify the line of discussion used. The consensus of Band opinion was that the Horns were moving too slowly. In contrast the Horn section argued that they were "doing their best," and emphasised that they were practising to improve their performance skill. Ultimately the players always compromised. While the Bandmaster and the group could place demands upon individuals and sections, negative sanctions could not be imposed. The Horns reminded the Band that they could always play some other music if they did not appreciate their contribution. In the end such problems and confrontations were always resolved by reference to how the Band had always managed to overcome musical problems in the past, that if every one "got down" to the problem then it could be fixed. In this particular case the Horns were playing as well as they could manage at the time, and the Boys resolved the conflict by referring to previous group experience. It was accepted that the Bandmaster's intervention was of limited use.

This kind of group cooperation, the dialogue which dominated bandpractices, extended beyond musical interpretation to the organisational behaviour of the Band. Maintaining an amateur group of musicians as a regular performing band year after year was a major organisational achievement, and the forum of discussion at bandpractices was important. Typically at bandpractices, between different pieces of music and during the Smoko, all the coming business of the Band would

be raised for discussion. All forthcoming concerts had to be agreed by all the Band. All programmes had to receive unanimous approval. In a quiet, well-rehearsed way, the Bandmaster, as chairperson, would schedule the events of these musical-organisational workshops. Serious arguments rarely arose, discussion always found a compromise and arrived at decisions which would not strain the relationships between the individual musicians beyond the limits of the intimate Band group. Voluntarism and amateurism simply prevented the development of coercive group relations. The Boys played in the Band because they enjoyed it, and disagreement was seen as something to be avoided.

The extent to which the Boys could change a confrontation situation around into one of solidarity and group cooperation, at the slightest hint that one of them felt upset at the solution of musical or organisational problems, was an evidently well-practised group skill.

Transcripts from a Bandpractice Discussion on a Proposed Performance

Giles: Right! B.H.P. Recreation Club have given us a definite date. It's a good financial arrangement—but, it's in the holidays, so will it suit everyone?

Henry: I thought we all reached an agreement—no more holiday gigs, except for contests. What am I supposed to tell my missus?

Cat: Well let's do it with a few players short—stuff it—we're not supposed to be a bunch of musical cripples. It's a really beaut gig.

Henry: That's the point. If the Band's playing, then I want to play with it. That's why I've been in the Band for the last God knows how many years—to be an effing part of it. We agreed, no more gigs during holidays.

Dick: I'd like to do her myself, cos I know if we turn this one down we won't get another invite again. It's a freebee, not a kick-back in the real sense. But you know—it's not right on those that made other arrangements. We agreed on no more holiday gigs, and everybody had the chance to speak out about it, so we have to be fair to each other.

Les: But we can do a good concert, and if Henry and Norma can't come, then it's no hard feelings. I mean, it's a really good little number, let's not turn her down.

Dick: Stuff it Les, we're a good Band because we're all in it together. Fuck all that. I mean, leaving people out—like that we'd end up with no Band at all. If Henry's made plans on one agreement, then it's stick by Henry—we'd be a lot worse without him. We've not been sticking together fellas, ladies.

Giles: All right then—all agreed—we defer the B.H.P. job till later, and I can take it that no more 'holiday gigs' is a definite arrangement? Yeh, that's right Henry, I forgot about your holidays—sorry.

In the Transcripts above an organisational problem over whether or not the Band should do a concert during the school holidays was typically resolved by discussion. As with the musical problem, resolution of the conflict was in terms of group solidarity. As a group they did not leave individuals out of their activities—"we have to be fair to each other." Again reference was made to past experience. The Boys realised that Henry's contribution to the Band had been large, as one put it, "we'd be a lot worse off without him." In both the solutions to these musical and organisational problems solidarity was expressed as "sticking together" or "getting down to it."

The solution of such problems was only one part of bandpractice. As I have already stressed bandies played music for the sheer joy of it, because they wished to express themselves musically. A great deal of bandpractice time was spent simply playing music the Band knew well, playing for themselves, free from the constraints of audience and occasion.

Transcripts from a Discussion on what Made a Good Bandpractice

Dan: I come to bandpractice for a good blow—and unless I get it the practice is not satisfying. You know, some Bandmasters like to concentrate the whole practice on one piece of music. We don't do that. We play a lot of new music, and just decide if we like it, or it's shithouse. If it's OK we'll put it up one day, and give it a try. If it's crappy—well, at least we gave it a go. We've done it so to speak.

GM: Is doing lots of music important to you?

Tec: Look at tonight, for instance. We did two marches, rehearsed some hymn tunes, did some contest work—'Plantagenets'—and finished up on that jazzy folk number. Well that's fine for me. Playing new music is like reading a new novel—you work your way through it, and then it's just another book you've read, some more music you've got, you own, so to speak. It's just that some are better than others. I play in the Band because... cos...er...I want to play music. Y'know—sometimes when you hear a tune on the radio or TV, and you find yourself trying to hum it. Doing new music in a band, and keeping up with the traditional gear, makes that come true—you can make music!

Dan: Yeh! He does go on, doesn't he? I see fellahs at work, you know, around and about. Sometimes they're whistling tunes or humming—TV tunes or some pop or something they've picked up. And I think—give me the music, and I can play that for real. Playing in a band's like being able to read when other other people can only listen. You know another language.

GM: Is this the same for all of you?

Tom: That's what's been important in band music this last decade I reckon—they publish lots of TV tunes, popular numbers and film themes—as they come out. We can get them when they're still popular. But we store most of them up. Look, we all love playing the 'Theme from James Bond,' or that little march in whatsit from 'Dr Finlay's Casebook.' As far as I'm concerned one of the best small pieces we play is that 'Beatles Melody, Number Two.' It's got it all in there.

GM: Is a large part of being in a brass band the range of different music you play?

Os: Yeh, it is really. As far as contest music is concerned—it's only after you've done a few that you feel as though you've been places musically. But that's only part of it—the final product so to speak. It's the whole range of music that keeps us going. It starts when you're in the Junior Band with all the old marches and favourites, the solos, and the regular gear. It's a slow learning process. One day you realise you've played a fair slice of music—you've done it—like saving up, or reading a lot of books—something you've achieved and enjoyed. It's a bit like seeing lots of movies, is coming to bandpractice and having a blow.

Clive: That's what I like about playing with Toronto Band. The BM up there gets a real lot of stuff out. Oldies and newies, and we just blast our way through them—love it. Shithouse band mind you, but they do do the musicals. River Boat, South Pacific, Oklahoma—Christ, they're stuck on it.

Larry: That's the good thing about playing in a brass band as far as I'm concerned—playing lots of different music, all the popular tunes, transcriptions from the classics. The blokes at work will never play 'the 1812'—but I'm effing sick of it.

Harry: It's funny how all the Old Favourites keep coming up—but there's always plenty of new stuff about. I like to play the music I hear around me. The pop tunes and the movie tunes, hymns and classics—I just can't resist them. That's what a brass band is when you think about it. It's a musical club for reproducing other people's music. Playing music that outsiders can only listen to, but not touch, sort of thing.

GM: You sound as though you're addicted to it.

Bern: It's fucking amazing sometimes. Last week we blasted our way through that 'Theme on a G String' like a tank going into battle—it was fucking amazing—absolute crucifixion. But we just can't leave that piece of music alone—it's pure addiction for brass bands. Then we did some Fred Astaire, Al Johnson, My Fair Lady, and ended up with 'The Graduate Theme.' Where else could you get it—week in, week out? Banding's—er—selfish like that. It plays what it likes—and works out who the audience should be later.

GM: How do you feel about spending so much time reproducing other people's music, as opposed to purely brass band stuff?

Larry: I've played with a few mobs, I can tell you—jazz, dance—some big band shit, amateur orchestra. It's only really in banding that you find this continual stealing of other people's music. I remember when I first heard 'Don't cry for me Argentina.' Those big creamy Horns falling down the scale in the middle. Lovely stuff I thought—bandies will love it, and they did. It was exactly like the Star Wars tune—DUM-DUM, DU-DU-DU, DUM-DUM! —a certainty for band freaks. Look at the Monty Python tune, 'Liberty Bell,' it was all but dead and buried until the Monty Python Show. Now it's best favourite.

Cat: It all reminds me of Monty Python, Dads' Army, Keystone Cops. Oh, I sometimes wonder why a fitter and turner is part of this weird musical world!

Sometimes I get really elevated—as high as a kite on Test Pieces. You know I've had Litzen's 'Symphonietta' going around my head like a pea in a can since last week, and then tomorrow it'll be 'Way Out West' or 'Rawhide'—and then the next day I'll be getting off on jazz or something. Bands give you the opportunity of living out fantasies. It's like the whole Band gets strung out along a dream pattern that joins all the Band together. It's, er, a sort of cooperative-amateur-musical-dream-machine—except you have to sit on committees and sell raffle tickets and lamingtons as well.

The intricacies of the music of the "dream-machine," and the more mundane tasks of fund-raising were the constant subject of debate in the Band, but the paramount criteria for deciding whether or not a bandpractice was good was having "a good blow." The Band would consume music from a wide variety of styles and origins. A typical bandpractice would cover in its first hour such different pieces as: "Man of La Mancha," "Jamaican Rumba," "Cherry Ripe," "Star Wars," "Eine Kleine Nacht Musik," and "Hawaii-Five-O." As the Boys clearly put it, they were musicians because they liked playing music: "Being in the Band is about wanting to play music—lots of it—at least compared to most other people."

The two most important aspects of the weekly consumption of music at bandpractice were first, that the music was played primarily for the Boys own enjoyment, and second that it replicated, and allowed them to participate in, the music they heard around them, most of which came from the popular media. In the Transcripts above, although the Boys stressed the importance of contest music, they all liked playing a wide range of styles. They constantly compared the pleasure of playing new music with reading a new novel, and the effect of having played a lot of music with having read "a lot of books." The process was seen as accumulative, "like saving up," for the more music they played the more they were able to appreciate music in general. Banding in this sense must be understood as a pursuit of intellectual enrichment, and the acquisition of music as cultural capital. As one of the Boys described a brass band: "a musical club for reproducing other people's music."

Much of this "stolen music," as the Boys called musical transcriptions and "O.F.s" (Old Favourites), was played in a style distinctly free from the constraints of audience or occasion. Playing for themselves

in a small bandroom, the music was experimental and daring. A delicate piece of music like "Theme on a G String" could be "blasted...through... like a tank going into battle." The Band had their favourite styles of music, which they would often "crucify," as one player described the "G String" rendering, and went on to stress that banding was "selfish": "It plays what it likes—and works out who the audience should be later."

The replication of music initially heard on the popular media was important to bandies. Transcriptions of television and film theme tunes, and of popular music in the broadest context, were eagerly anticipated by the Boys. As one said, he knew that "Don't Cry For Me, Argentina" and the "Star Wars Theme" would be irresistible to bandies. The deliberate re-creation of popular music, and the resulting ability to participate in the productive act of making the codes and symbols which make music meaningful, was a skill of which most of the Boys were proud. They could take an active and expressive part in the "cooperative-amateur-musical-dream-machine." In playing popular music they proved to themselves that they were competent musicians, at least compared to their workmates who might only be able to whistle or hum tunes. The Boys' musical accomplishments, gained through personal dedication and regular attendance at bandpractices, encompassed a broad range of musical experience and a fairly high level of technical virtuosity.

Chapter 7

At the Club

After bandpractices and playouts the mature members of the Band would usually gather in the Bowling Club bar above their basement bandroom. These regular beer drinking sessions were an important part of the banding lifestyle. As the Boys would always remind visitors to such sessions, it was one of the oldest shouts in Newcastle. At least as far back as anyone associated with the Band could recall, they had always gone for a regular shout. About a dozen of them could always be found on these occasions sitting around a few beer-laden tables, taking turns to shout their round of beers, telling jokes and Irish Limericks, and "raving on"—as banding stories were called. The Boys enjoyed this enthusiastic "in" talk of bands and banding, which was all heavily stylized by their own distinct form of humour.

By any description the Band was a beer drinking club in its own right, and for the regulars this could easily amount to eight hours of swift beer drinking weekly. This part of banding was central to an understanding of the Boys' activities in two important ways. Firstly, these were times when the Boys verbally expressed themselves, and because of this must be considered as part of banding's cultural production. Banding could not be fully understood by just simply investigating purely musical production. (What the Boys said on these occasions, and how they had developed their own expressive humorous style is given fuller attention in Chapter Thirteen.) Secondly, shouting with the Boys was the time when they transacted their business with the rest of the community. Here the Club could be seen as a focus and meeting point within the community, where many distinct activity groups negotiated, and organised local community events.

Transcripts from a Group of Boys Explaining how they Negotiated Concert Engagements

GM: Do you fix up most of your business up here in this way?

Stan: This is how it works. If we do, say for instance, a fund-raising picnic for the Lions in King Albert Park, then they'll fix a two hundred buck concert gig at a bowling club—with drinks for the Band.

GM: Is that a firm contract?

Stan: Well, it is as far as it goes. Everything's got to work out right on the day—so to speak. It's not a legal contract or anything—it's more of a er—firm understanding—if you get my meaning.

Les: Yeh! Let's take the Motor Drome Playout for example—that was a classic. Somebody—Jaycees I think, or some other charity mob, held a benefit Motor Drome—so the Band went and marched a bit before the 'Off.' Well, that got us a gig at Hexham Bowling Club—all part of the understanding you see.

GM: Does this mean that most of the Band's performances are tied to community trade-offs in this way?

Jim: Les and Stan are right mostly, er, I mean—I even worked it out once to see how much we averaged per performance. Playing on the Anzac Day Dawn Service gets us club gigs at the Speers Point Ars'oles. Playing on the big Anzac March in Newcastle gets us another two club gigs at Newcastle Ars'oles. Another two jobs from the Lions and the Jaycees, and a couple from picnics or whatever, will get us seven or eight club jobs a year at two fifty bucks each—see—simple.

Stan: Now that ordinarily means, say, er, that—disregarding holidays, sickness and contests, and effing carnivals and Anzac—we do a performance every two weeks at least.

GM: People in the community just come into the Club and negotiate with you do they?

Giles: No, no, nothing's that easy. It can take years and years to discover all the connections. Last year for example, it was—we wanted to stop doing the Bus Depot Morning Anzac Service. Well—all kinds of things started to happen. 'Did we know that so-and-so was on this or that fucking committee?' We got a rude letter from the Union and a priest saying that a firm arrangement had been struck back in the fifties. In the end our Linkmen renegotiated the deal and we ended up with a gig at a real slum bowling club full of alkie wogs for a kick-back, but they have to come up with something you see.

GM: How are the deals and kick-backs negotiated?

Nick: That can be really tricky, and I don't suppose anyone here really understands it all. Mostly it's sort of traditional—they're just situations which exist—and seem to have always existed. But it's always moving and changing. What happened to Stan tonight was typical. Derby, the Club Secretary came across and said that he had a telephone call from the Bishop—no fucking less. 'Could the Band ring back!' Well, it turns out that his nibs is giving his annual fete soon, and would like the Band to be in 'attendance.' Now then, we all know the kick-back in that will be a half-page review with photies in the newspaper. How he organised his end of the deal—fuck knows. But that's where we really need our Linkmen like Bram to nip round and guarantee the deal—got it?

GM: Do you consciously work out an economy—so many concerts for so much return?

Stan: It's not planned like that—although I see what you mean. Let's say if one of us gets a call like tonight, we, er—discuss it—and do it if it seems right. It's all ongoing anyway, and some kick-backs can take years to mature, and all kinds of all-Aussie-fuck-ups can occur. We only do the jobs we want to do, by democratic decision, but a good kick-back can encourage us a lot.

Pat: Yeh! A little time back we played at the opening of a new High School for Special Purposes. You know—for kids who are mentally retarded. Well—everyone who was anyone was there—the Mayor, State and Federal Ministers, Unions, Industry, Churches, the fucking lot—all up on the stage chirping away like a bunch of cockies. Well the Band played at that because it was a good idea and we felt we were contributing to a real good cause—and we're the Community Band. Playing at things like that's important because that's where brass bands should be. We even returned their Honorarium from the Parents' Association. But we will get a kick-back sometime. We'll just ask for it one day—and they'll do us a favour in return—that's one way it works. We don't want their money—but we want their cooperation to get things organised around town for the Band.

The concept of an economy within the community, in which the Band exchanged its music for various rewards, was understood in most of its complexities by the Boys. While kick-backs could come from firm understandings, or simply as rewards for community service, the Band knew certainly that it could place a value on its services. Some of the kick-backs could be purely symbolic, such as the case of the Bishop's Fete. A photograph and a praising review in the local

newspaper was reward enough for the Boys. To this extent newspaper and media coverage was almost always a prerequisite for the Band performing, and an analysis of newspaper articles and reports of banding is evidence of the degree to which the Boys worked at what they called simply "P.R."

From November 1977 until June 1981, local brass bands were the subject of at least ninety articles, reviews and reports in the two major local daily newspapers, and about half of these carried photographs of the brass bands concerned. Many were simple reports of contests and concerts. However others were full front page photographs and reviews, such as when the Kotarah Junior Band won the State Contest.[1] There were also two occasions when the Newcastle Morning Herald printed two page special articles on the history of Kotarah, and the Toronto Band, complete with ancient photographs and interviews with some of the Boys.[2] Media coverage was an important symbolic reward for the Boys for it meant public recognition of their achievements. Photographs and stories praising their activities and exploits legitimised the social value of their Band in public eyes.

In most cases where the Band negotiated a concert and subsequent newspaper reportage, they did so through a series of intermediaries, respected community personalities who would negotiate on their behalf, and whose personal reputations in the community would guarantee the Band a return for their activities. These individuals were referred to as "Linkmen."

Transcripts from a Discussion on Band Organisation with Three Established Linkmen: Bram, Alf and Mrs Thrift.

GM: How long have you been community Linkmen?

Bram: I've been Chairman of this Band for years now—and I've been doing for bands and other community groups for over twenty years in this valley one way or another. I don't profess to be an expert, I can't even blow a note—but I do know how to keep a band out of debt and on the road. I know the Boys like doing club gigs, so that's what I go for.

GM: How do you fix these up?

Bram: Well this depends upon your reputation in the community, but I'll give you an example. Let's take Anzac for instance. A few weeks or so after Anzac I just bring the matter of the Band's contribution to the day's events up on one of the committees—and they chuck us a gig. But it's not professional like, 'cos the Musos' Union raises hell about it 'cos they're against amateur music and the like. We say it's a 'Club Exchange,' and the Band gets its Honorarium for being there—a gift so to speak—to cover expenses.

Alf: I'll tell you—I've done more benefits for the Lions than anyone on the Coalfields. Jim came tonight—he said 'The Little A's,' you know the kids' athletics people, they came to me and asked could they hold a benefit at the Club with the Band,' see. So he gave her a hard luck story, and told her all about poor Lamington cake sales. You see we can't get much for the Band from them 'cos they've got no pull. Couple of inches in the newspapers maybe, but for the Band there's not enough in it—they've got no kick-back to offer. However, a bigger organisation, a mob like Telethon, or even doing a picnic concert for oldies, I can then ask a Club to chuck us a gig to recover expenses and so on.

GM: I see. Is this the way you organise things Mrs Thrift?

Mrs Thrift: Don't bloody ask me son, everybody wants hard yakka for nothing these days. I've been in banding all my life. Women's Auxiliary, the lot, from way back. It's always the same old story with bands—everyone loves a brass band but nobody wants to pay for it—so you have to keep reminding the community for support. When this Band belonged to the Transport Institute Club years ago there was a weekly subscription paid from the transport workers' wage packets for the Band. Alf will put you right here—but I think it was a zac. Well—things move on and times change. Now it's clubs and kick-backs, and when I was a little girl it was unions and hotel subscriptions. A town can't have a brass band if it's not prepared to put its hand in its pocket now and again to pay for it.

GM: But is it as rational as that?

Alf: No, of course it fucking isn't. Where do you come from? Cloud-cuckoo land, mate?

Look—right now the local Council gives banding in this Shire about two grand—that's the lot for school bands, concert bands, pipe bands, brass bands and whatever. Well then, it just sort of asks us to do one or two freebees around town like—in parks and places. Well that makes it very dodgy—because if we don't do it they say they'll cut off their donation, and all that stuff. You have to keep a sharp eye on all these sorts of things. You see it's not the money so much, it's that they'll put the bad word out on us.

GM: But there are firm economic relationships at work here?

Bram: It is economic if you see it like—er—we're the Town Band and we do the Town Band things around town, and the community have to contribute towards it in some way—but it's hard to plan like that because commitments in this community can go back donkeys years. Every year after the Carnival, off I go and start pissing in people's pockets—'Did you like the Band?'—'Yes.'—'Good, we were wondering...' and so on—and I always try to put the price up a little—but finally brass bands just aren't economical. They can never earn enough to stay afloat—it's like its reward is "Thanks we like you."—But not much hard cash.

The Band's Linkmen, who operated as go-betweens among community groups in the Club, negotiated most of the business for the Boys. Because they had a long-standing respected profile within a large number of organisations and associations they could not only place an exact value on the Band's activities, but could also guarantee that firm undertakings would be honoured. The Linkmen's personal reputations were at stake for they represented the Boys' interests on many committees and, through well-established status related friendship networks, campaigned on their behalf. The means by which such formal and informal negotiations were achieved, and the language used in them, had a distinctive style. For example, the Band was not paid a concert fee for their contribution to a day's community events such as a carnival or Anzac Parade. Rather their participation would be brought up on the committee and an "Honorarium" would be "contributed" to the Band.

Most of the time the Band was inundated with requests for performances but, as Alf recognised, the Band had a value which had to be maintained for their survival. Although the Little A's might well have been a good cause, Alf did not believe they could repay the Band suitably—they had "no pull." As a skilled and experienced community Linkman he could easily list the sorts of associations which could help the Band, and know precisely the sort of performance they could provide a "kick-back" for.

Like the Boys, Bram, Alf and Mrs Thrift all recognised that there was an economic system behind the Band's performance schedule, but preferred to describe it in terms of community responsibilities: "We're the Town Band and we do the Town Band things around town, and the community have to contribute towards it in some way." As Bram went on to say, "commitments in this community can go back donkeys years." Consequently, after the Band played publicly well-rehearsed social manoevres would be initiated in order to gain the Band rewards for their services in the community—or "pissing in people's pockets" as Alf called it. The most common and convenient way of repaying the Band in the Newcastle district at that time was the offer of club gigs.

Mrs Thrift explained the dynamic nature of the economic system of maintaining a town band. She could recall when the transport workers made a wage packet subscription to the Band. She could also recall trade union and hotel subscriptions in more than fifty years of involvement with banding. For her, as for all the Linkmen, "everyone loves a brass band but nobody wants to pay for it." The Linkmen's job in the Band was to continually remind other community groups of the need for mutual support. However they realised also that some forms of reciprocation were inadequate and unfair, as exemplified by their relationship with the local Council.

The problem of maintaining formalized links with the community was difficult, time consuming, and a constant source of complaint among the Boys. The contemporary dependence on bureaucratic structures for support from the community had eroded the job of the Linkmen. It also meant that they had to keep a "close eye" on all that was going on in the community so that the "bad word" did not go out about them.

Transcripts from Discussions on the Work Load of a Bandie

GM: These committees—it all seems to be a lot of hard work even before you begin playing.

Pat: Sometimes I look at my calendar and think I'll never stop. Two bandpractices a week, teaching a Learners' Group, and I go to the Tech. It all works out as a lot of time. I never worry about it when I'm playing—just when I'm sodding around trying to get the date and time of this job or the other.

Wally: On Thursday I have to go to the Council's Band Committee. Now if I didn't go, that means we lose a quorum, and the committee folds and we don't get two thousand bucks. Now that's all for about eight bands in the Shire, so we have to go and talk about banding for an hour or so—complete waste of time.

GM: What is the Band Committee for?

Wally: Well it's, er, part of the Council's Recreation and Leisure Budget I think. They've got a couple of fellahs in these huts behind the old Council buildings. Well, they run all the swimming pools, Community Arts Centres, and so—one of them is in charge of banding I suppose, and gets overtime for running the committee. To get the grant we have to send someone to these meetings.

GM: You seem to suggest that they're a waste of time.

Serge: They're not completely ridiculous, just rather stupid. They're designing a new Concert Shell for the Park, and arranging Support Your Community Band stickers, and a Bandathon—a sort of Bandies picnic. It's all very good you know—it' s just that I'm in the Band to play music, not fuck around on Council committees earning some bleeder overtime for him.

GM: Although you have members on three or four community committees, plus the Band Management Committee, you don't seem to get a lot of return for all this effort. This is a great deal of work. To what extent do you see it as constructive? If brass bands and the other community groups didn't participate what would change?

Larry: It's the same with all bands. Our George plays with the R.S.L. Pipe Band. They go through all the same organisational cock-ups and hassles. It all basically boils down to the fact that if you, as a Band, don't get it together to be on the Carnival Parade Committee, and the Anzac March Committee, or whatever, then you won't be there on the day. You won't be the Town Band—things just won't happen. That's the problem of being a community set up. It's do-it-yourself culture.

GM: So, if you want to be part of local events you must help organise them yourself?

Chas: Sure. Take my word for it. I've been in bands for fifty years. There's only a certain number of engagements in the community that are really financially rewarding. Brass bands are absolutely limited by the fact that we're amateurs. But, some bands are extraordinarily good. The band has to suit the needs of amateur musicians. If it's an improving band—like contesting well, playing concerts—then the community will support you—always has—but that's all we can expect out of it—support, not complete financing. The satisfaction of playing good music regularly and being part of what's going on, that's the important part.

Hans: He's right as I see banding. It's just not going to happen like it does on TV. Thousands of fans screaming for Kotarah—Oh, I can see it now—a brass band with groupies! But it's not going to happen. No way is a town band going to tour the concert halls of the world's capitals. Banding really is do-it-yourself music like Larry said. If you want to go and hassle up a concert—you'll get some support for it—sure—but it doesn't get done for you. Town bands—you do it yourself.

GM: Does this lack of material support dampen your enthusiasm at all?

Norma: It's when I'm sitting in the middle of it all at a club gig, or a contest. Just sitting in the spotlight—a sweating and trembling soul, just before the baton comes down—that's when it's all worth it. Last night we played in the City Hall—and it was packed—and I was right in the middle of the stage—with a crack A Grade band—and I know it's worth it then. More than a thousand people all listening to me and my Band play—and as long as it's good—doesn't matter if it's a bleeding Hymn or a Jamaican Rhumba—people will like it and that's that. I'm an accomplished musician—the evidence is in front of me. Three cheers I don't have to make it a bloody profession. But, and this is the big <u>but</u>, we have to do a lot of hassling around to make sure we get in on these things. You know—take part in the nitty-gritty organisation. It's hard yakka—very hard yakka.

The large amount of committee organising work that banding involved was not a popular activity with any of the Boys. It was "hard yakka" that could regularly take up one or two evenings per week, and this was in addition to the time spent practicing, playing out, and the other demands of further education and family life. To this extent the Boys realised the complete "waste of time" of sitting on many of the committees, because they principally existed to provide some local government officials with the means of earning a living. But they also knew that such community committees had to be attended. It was not the loss of revenue that they feared most from failing to attend the Council Band Committee, but the risk of acquiring a bad reputation. They understood that if the Band's members did not involve themselves in community activities then they would simply cease to be a community band. As Larry explained it: "if you, as a band, don't get it together... then you won't be there...You won't be the Town Band...It's a do-it-yourself culture.'

The amateur participant nature of banding meant that few engagements in the community could be really financially rewarding. Primarily the Band had "to suit the needs of amateur musicians," which were the satisfaction the Boys received from playing music regularly, and being part of what was going on in their community by participating in its expressive culture. As Chas revealed in his contribution to the discussion the older Boys knew from experience that as long as the Band performed the functions traditionally expected of a town band, and was making reasonable musical progress, then the community would always support it to some extent.

Nevertheless the Boys had few illusions about the rewards that could be expected from banding. Hans made the point that "Band" life bore no resemblance to the popular images of rock bands seen on television. There were no "fans screaming for Kotarah." Making jokes about "stardom," "groupies," and "worldwide concert tours" were regular humorous conversational currency amongst the Boys. They realised that the success of their Band depended on "do-it-yourself" techniques, that their music had no place in the professional music industry, and they had nothing to do with the bohemian or high social status lifestyle of professional musicians. Despite this, in the Boys' eyes, amateur status did not diminish the value of their music or their own artistic expression. They were enormously proud of their organisational and musical achievements. Of all the bandies that I spoke to very few aspired to professional status, and most ridiculed it. At band concerts the question of status was not at stake, but the satisfaction and high excitement derived from the experience of public performance. On stage the Band members were momentarily "stars" and the centre of attention. As Norma said: "Just sitting in the spotlight—a sweating and trembling soul—that's when it's all worth it."

The Band would regularly play in front of audiences which amounted to thousands, and generally took the attitude that if "it's good...people will like it and that's that." The Boys realised that they were accomplished musicians, in many cases far better than some professionals. For Norma the "evidence" was there in the audience in front of her. She did not have to make her music into a "bloody profession" to prove it. Lack of status as musicians did not worry the Boys. What they really resented was the non-musical activity involved in organising a band, which they all regarded as "hard yakka," and which brought so little recognition and financial support.

Although the Band derived some income from Honorariums for Club concerts and other performances, this was not sufficient for the funding of all their activities and other requirements. Additional money was provided by a small regular monthly subscription of one dollar, and other fundraising activities which included raffles, Supporters' Cards, Hundred Clubs and Cabaret Nights. The Boys always seemed to have tickets for sale for one purpose or the other, and it was a standing joke that "even our best friends run away when they see us coming." Yet, fundraising was one of the ways the Boys kept in direct communication with the community. Rather than the anonymous systems of government cultural grants or donations from organisations, when the Boys asked their workmates, neighbours and other friends for assistance they represented the Band in a very personal and active way through relationships within the community they claimed to be a part of, and to be working for.

Transcripts from a Discussion on Fundraising

Sally: Right, this is how it works. We've bought five hundred Band Supporters' Membership Cards. Membership costs two dollars each. If everyone sells ten, Juniors and Seniors, we'll raise over a thousand dollars for the Uniform Fund—OK.

Clive: Hang on. Hang on. Let's get this straight. What do they get for the two dollars besides a Membership Card?

Sally: They can come to any two club gigs absolutely free of charge.

Clive: But, all our club concerts are free of charge—you don't pay anything to go into a bowling club or Ars'ol Club.

Sally: Yeh—it's an absolutely brilliant scheme! People not only pay two dollars—but actually come to our concerts as well. They can also come to bandpractice, and—this is the good one. If they can sign up another ten members, we'll make them a Life Member of the Supporters' Club.

Clive: Fucking Hell! You should be in banking with a criminal brain like yours!

(laughter)

GM: Does much of this sort of thing go on?

Harry: Oh, you's young fellahs haven't seen the half of it. Er—we used to have a good one up at Westy before the pit closed—fucking beaut she was. We used to raffle the tickets for a Band Draw at the Hotel in the Diggers Bar. Well, the raffle was never drawn—not in ten years. It was just that the few quid, zac a ticket from the pub, became an essential part of the Band's income. Nobody used to think of it. The money just went straight into the fund. Well one year we got a new Super at the pit—Pommie bastard, and he said—I'll never forget the cunt, I can see him now—he said, 'there's no bleeding draw!' Well you know that big sheila behind the counter—well she was spunky alright in those days. She said, 'it's shit stirrers like you that ruin a good community like ours'—and she chucked the cunt out. That Draw went on for years.

GM: But, all of this takes up a lot of time, and quite obviously some of you are sick of it.

Pete: I'm just sick of selling flaming tickets. Even my closest friends are telling me to piss off. That's all we seem to do in bloody banding—sell tickets. Look--we do a One Hundred Club Draw, Cabaret Draw—it's the same fucking thing everywhere. Anyone who's into community is selling flaming raffle tickets now. And you've got to buy theirs, else they won't support your mob. It's time we all called a truce.

Anne: It's gone too far now, and people are getting sick of it all. Mum was making lamingtons last week for the Little A's. Dad's running a Barbie for the Scouts. I'm selling Band Raffle tickets, and our little kid's joined the school's 'Friends of the Earth,' and is selling little 'Save the Whale' badges for some ridiculous price.

GM: But isn't this fundraising absolutely necessary?

Jim: This Band has to spend about six grand a year. A big chunk of that will go on travelling to concerts and buying new music. Look—a new set of stands, unless Joe can flog them from the Steel Works, will rush us fifteen hundred bucks easy. We can't earn it all, 'cos er people just don't expect to pay to hear their own Town Band. That's not because they don't like us—it's because we're amateurs and we play 'cos we like it—so we have to support it in the same—er—way you know, as the public want to hear us—in the community setting.

GM: Could you change the money raising techniques perhaps?

Les: I've sold just about everything for this Band—pens with the Band's name on, combs with the name on, Band badges, car stickers, Raffle Tickets, One Hundred Club, Cabaret, Concert tickets. I sometimes just wish it wasn't this complicated to play in a brass band. I don't mind the kick-backs for getting a gig in a club—but other fundraising events are a sign of poverty. Fuck draws and raffles and all that stuff! I'm a fucking musician, not a ticket tout!

Giles: Here are the economic realities. We need to involve all our supporters in selling tickets, and coming to our fundraising events. Otherwise we won't get Jim his new Bass in time for the State. He's been waiting fifteen years for it—and we can only afford that Japo shit anyway. In addition the Band doesn't own its own Timpani. Band membership subs shouldn't be higher—after all we do all the playing and travelling as well. So if the community wants a brass band it's got to pay for it—period. Raffles, kick-backs—if the people think we're good they'll give—they always have in the past.

GM: Are the public getting fed up with all these tickets?

Dan: Every time a fellah buys a ticket—he's invested in the Band—he's committed. He thinks—I support that Band—it's mine, and it is in a way—that's how you involve people—get them on side. If somebody asks, er—like—is Kotarah Band any good? He'll say 'yeh'—'I support them—they're the Town Band.' How fucking else do you involve the community and get them interested—remind them what we're about—people think from their wallet pocket mate.

For the Boys playing in a brass band meant being constantly involved in fundraising activities. Most of these were under the guise of some possible reward for the payees in the community. However such methods as raffles, draws and supporters' clubs, were thinly disguised conventions for traditional fundraising activities. In all the clubs around Newcastle, draws and raffles were an integral part of entertainment and social life. When advertising their weekly programmes of dancing, music and cabaret in the newspapers, most clubs would also include raffles and draws as an added attraction. This small-time gambling, like the Pokie machines, was a part of leisure and relaxation for the clubs' largely working class members and participants. In most cases the prizes would be contributed by local businesses or shops. Bram, the Chairman of the Band and an important Linkman in their affairs, explained this support to me.

Bram: If we decide on a raffle or a draw I'll go down the Shopping Centre—ask one of the butchers to contribute a meat tray. When the prizes are given out I'll announce at the Club which shop made the gift and say—'So don't forget to support so-and-so for their kindness.' I suppose it must come back to them or they wouldn't do it. Sometimes

> we get a kids' bicycle, or a small telly, or a toaster—anything—and we put it up on the bar—on show with a big advert for the shop. You see people like a little flutter on something, just for fun—it's all part of a night out at the Club—and it's all part of supporting the community.

Despite the apparent success of such fundraising activities, many of the Boys had grown tired of continually having to sell tickets, and complained that there was now too much fundraising going on in the community. Nevertheless they accepted the point Dan made that this personal selling was a vital means of gaining the allegiance of the community: "Every time a fellah buys a ticket—he's invested in the Band—he's committed."

Over the years the Band had developed a full range of fundraising activities such as those mentioned above. Because of previous experience they largely rejected any alternative means of raising finance, such as government cultural grants, on the grounds that a greater reliance on these would sever the constant links with the community forged by more traditional fundraising. They also felt that the process of applying for government money involved them in bureaucratic problems over which they had little control, and with the tedious task of filling in prying offical forms which were both irrelevant and insensitive to the realities of community economics.

Transcripts from the Boys Discussing Cultural Grants

GM: Why don't you put more effort into getting cultural grants and other money from the Government?

Tec: I really don't reckon it's worth the trouble. It takes a full committee meeting and night after night of form filling. Then there's the letters of recommendation from the politicians. We're supposed to be fucking musicians.

GM: Are they really that much trouble?

Tom: This time they had the cheek to say the grant was conditional upon us changing our Constitution. What do they want for two hundred lousy bucks—the Rolling Stones or something?

Giles: It makes me sick—it's as though it's charity. You have to fill in dozens of forms, tell them every last detail, all that codswallop for just two hundred bucks. It's a joke.

GM: Symphony orchestras, and all other kinds of groups, get large subsidies. Do you think what you get is unfair?

Clive: How it works is like this. They divide the money up into groups—music, theatre, arts, wogs, etc.. Then within each group—say music—it's divided again—symphony orchestras, singing, jazz, and somewhere down the line there's brass bands and pipe bands. Well, they set aside so many thousands for bands, and that looks good until you realise that it's then divided between hundreds of bands. Two hundred dollars per band, if we're lucky. Are they subsidising the audience or the music when they give big bucks to orchestras? What if it were done on a one-to-one basis? With the numbers we play to each year we'd get millions.

Stan: It's not a question of whether it's enough or not, or whether it's fair—it's just these ridiculous forms, for equally ridiculous people, that we have to fill in. I mean, they're rude to us. It could go any way. If you're a successful band you need support, or because you're a struggling band you need support, so we just put down any old garbage on the forms—you only get two hundred bucks anyway.

GM: It all seems very unfair that you don't get a bigger share out.

Jim: You know it's funny—I sometimes think, what if the Government stopped supporting all the orchestras, and ballet, and all that, and all that mob at the Conservatorium. Banding is the biggest musical organisation in the state, and it gets next to nothing from the Government. They don't give a stuff for community music.

GM: Do you feel that government grants threaten your independence?

Giles: It's better to be self-supporting as an organisation than to be attached to a government grant. That doesn't mean I'd say no to more government support for banding—but that must be to support banding, rather than to produce a few great bands.

Cat: I still don't reckon cultural grants are worth bothering about. Up theirs too! Why don't they come and visit us, tell us how much we're worth. I'd rather the Band earned its own money from playing and going around the community. If you want to be funded like a professional mob—that's how you'll end up—I don't want a free ride off the tax payer.

Giles: Cat's right. Just concentrate on making the Band a good band. Playing cultural grants and all that balls just confuses the issue. Working hard in the community and winning contests is what makes a good band. If you're in demand around the community the money will come in.

GM: But isn't it wasting a musician's time?

Dick: Can you imagine it! We won the B Grade Contest, played at a hospital, marched on Anzac Day, played at the Carnival, done a freebie for the Methodists, been on the radio twice, and then some prick wants you to actually prove in black and white on his form that you really are a brass band! And then the silly cunts want us to change our Constitution to their official 'Model Constitution.' I mean, how much do these public servants get paid for all of this stuffing around? It's a racket, like these geezers at the Council who run the Band Committee.

GM: At least the State Government recognise banding in their policy. Do you think it's only a matter of time before bands get more financial support?

Stan: I think, honestly, if you went out there in the street and asked ordinary people whether they preferred to support their local town band out of tax revenue or through community support initiatives, they'd run away from you in horror. All this paper work! Cultural grants, the Council Band Committee, the Anzac Committee, it's balls. Who wants to join a brass band to sit on a committee, or be a secretary? Who the shit's supposed to be playing the music with all the paper work going on.

The process of applying for cultural grants from the Government seemed to the Boys to be both disproportionately hard work and time consuming compared with the possible financial return. In addition, the Boys felt the government instrumentality (in this case the Premier's Department) responsible for financial allocations to arts and culture was insensitive to the nature of community relations. This was exemplified by their condition that the Band change its Constitution, and by the fact that the Boys knew only a pre-set sum of money was available irrespective of the quality of the band concerned,and its proposals for sponsorship. The Boys felt that it was an insult to them and their music to have to specify in such legalistic detail to a distant means-testing public servant that they were in fact a valid organisation.

As Giles understandably protested, "It makes me sick—it's as though it's charity."

When I pointed out that other cultural groups received grants the Boys demonstrated a sound knowledge of why brass bands received so little. Because nearly every town in the State had it's own town band, despite a proportional financial allocation going to brass bands, once this was divided up amongst them it amounted to very little for each separate band. For this reason the Boys believed that the Government didn't "give a stuff for community music," and consequently questioned the fairness of government spending on orchestras, ballet and conservatoriums. They wanted to know just how such examples of the high arts would survive if they had to rely on their own, and the community's, support.

The consensus of opinion in the Band supported Giles' contention that, "It's better to be self-supporting than to be attached to a government grant." The Boys took some pride in their self reliance, to the extent that they suspected that receiving Government money was getting a "free ride on the tax payer." They saw the public servants involved in cultural grant assessment in the same light as the Shire employees who organised leisure activities. Both contrived a situation in which there was an obstacle course between the allocated money and the Band, and other similar groups, who were entitled to claim it. Just as they saw their activity on the Shire's Band Committee as earning overtime for one of the Shire's administrators, so they saw public servants in the State Government as earning a living by making cultural grants deliberately difficult and hard to get. The manner in which such bureaucracy operated produced negative reactions among the Boys, who were led to ask just "how much...these public servants

get paid for all this stuffing around?" Instead of seeing them as legitimate agents for cultural funding, the Boys saw them as running some kind of "racket."

Chapter 8

The State

"Contesting's what it's all about," was how many bandies described "the movement's" major activity. During the research I played with the Band in three State contests: Wollongong Town Hall in 1977, Tuggerah Lakes High School in 1978, and Sutherlandshire Civic Centre in 1979. At the first of these Kotarah competed in "B" grade. At the latter two, following the Band's promotion, we were in "A" grade.

These contests were huge social occasions, lasting for up to ten hours, and "the movement" turned up for them in their thousands. Although many different State, National, Regional and Solo contests were visited around Australia during the course of the research, I have chosen to concentrate the descriptive analysis of contesting upon the New South Wales "State" because of the overriding importance vested in it by the Boys, one of whom explained its significance in the following way:

Serge: The State is definitely different to the Nationals in many ways. It can be anyone from anywhere at the Nationals—even Kiwis—and you might not ever get to see or hear them again. Look, if the Nationals are in Perth next year, then not many of the eastern bands will be in it—too far to go—and much too much big bucks to get there. If it's in Tassie, then it's out for the Queenies and Sandgropers. The State's important to us, er—because—you know all the bands in it, and most of the individual bandies too—who's going up the contest ladder, or going down. Look—we've been neck-and-neck with Gosford for years—and that's our old rival band from as far back as anyone can remember. You only know what you've achieved this year if you know what the other bands have done—a sort of ongoing comparison. The State is definitely the big one for us—it's what we really concentrate on.

The Last-Run-Through and Tune-Up

The "State" was the high point in the Band's calendar, and the Boys would train and plan for it with the enthusiasm of athletes preparing for a decisive race. In the four or five weeks before the contest, bandpractices would be increased to two or three times weekly, in addition to the group sectional practices which contesting required. The "Test" piece, chosen by the Adjudicators, the "Own Choice" and "Selection," chosen by the individual bands, would be perfected in detail and rehearsed again and again.

Finally, after months of preparation, the Contest Day would arrive. The Band and its supporters would meet early in the morning in the bandroom for the final practice, called the "Last-Run-Through" and "Tune-Up." These occasions had an unmistakeable atmosphere about them which would last throughout the day. It was a combination of intense group solidarity, common purpose and nervousness. Instruments were highly polished, uniforms neatly pressed, everyone was keen and excited. Contest days were the culmination of months of practice and planning; and like any such occasion there was something very exciting about them.

At eight o'clock in the morning the Band would play its three contest pieces. A final effort was made to correct and eliminate persistent mistakes, and spot potential difficulties. The "Last-Run-Through" was, as the Bandmaster explained, "to add the best dash of colour to a perfect rainbow." Half an hour or more was always spent in "Tuning-Up" across the Band with the aid of an electronic tuner in a final effort to get all the instruments into "contest pitch." Nervous lips would seek out, in long-blown notes, to perfect "across-the-band" chords, and instrument tuning slides would be

pushed apprehensively in and out to find the best blend. Eventually the Band Chairman would arrive to give his traditional pre-contest address to the Band and its supporters:

> Now Fellahs, Ladies of the Band, this contest is of the utmost importance to all—the Club and the community. We all know how hard you've worked for this day—and this year is the year that's going to take us to the top.
>
> We've come a long way together, and many have given freely of their time and efforts to build this Band into the great musical force it is today—and has been for well over a hundred years. Now Fellahs, Ladies of the Band, let me just say this—it's not the most important thing to win—it's more important to know you're taking part in this great historical event—getting in there amongst them, and doing your best for the community and the working class movement. That's what really counts. Newcastle has a great banding tradition—and today you're going out there to keep more than a century of good music and the challenging brass tradition alive.
>
> Good luck!

This speech was much the same on every occasion that I heard it. It was only one of a number of ritual speeches, which would be heard throughout the day, to lay stress on the ideas of community, tradition and participation.

Psyching Up

Finally, when everything was ready, the Band and its supporters would load up their instruments and board the coach. For the next few hours as they sped on their way to the Contest, the Band would be in a happy mood. In the isolation of their coach the conversations and jokes would revolve around banding, sex, and more banding. The close interaction, the feeling of excitement and togetherness, as the coach took the Boys out of their community and into the wider world of banding gave the journey a wider feeling of purpose and destiny.

I asked many of the Boys about these coach journeys, and they all confirmed that they had a particular effect upon the Band as a group. Some referred to it as part of a process they described as "Psyching Up" for the coming Contest.

Cat: It's like we're all together—armed to the teeth, everything absolutely in order. It's like we're going away to do battle. When you think of it, it's like that—a battle of the bands. Er, um—we say we can get up on the stage and do a good band, and someone else says they can do a better band, so we spend fucking weeks sharpening our crotchets and smelting our quavers—and we're going to walk in there and pin the cunts to the wall—and this is how we get all "Psyched Up" for it. An army of musicians riding out to battle for banding in Newcastle. I like it.

At the back of the coach the younger players would sing what were simply called "dirty songs," descriptive solo verse and group chorus songs of sex and toilets. Between these scatological renditions, "dirty jokes" and Irish Limericks would be recited and exchanged as the younger musicians threw themselves about and collapsed in gales of laughter. One of the Boys explained this youthful singing to me:

Jim: It's funny you know—whenever you've got a group of teenagers in the Band, or you're taking the Juniors out—they sit in the back seats and sing these dirty songs. And y'know—they haven't changed at all. They're the same old goddamn dirty songs that I used to sing over twenty years ago. Isn't it amazing—I wonder if anyone ever thinks to write them down. Puberty Blues and Wet Dream Polkas. Last week me and Ted were at the crossing by the shopping mall-and a school bus carrying their band pulled up—and there they were—a whole coach load of the little bastards singing their hearts out—'Roll Me Over,' 'Mrs MacGinty,' 'Invarell.' Exactly like we used to. Nothing's changed really.

These "dirty songs" were part of an unwritten folk music, an oral heritage of adolescent verse, passed on from generation to generation. They were the last songs of childhood, and were illicit and unofficial.

They were songs of resistance, meant to prod and try the patience and tolerance of the adults in the Band. At the same time they taught a vocabulary, if not a theory, of sex and sexual relationships. After each song the youths would collapse in fits of mocking laughter until the inevitable and sought after response from the adults in the front of the coach received its equally inevitable cheeky response:

Adult: Look you lot—there's Ladies on this coach, so you's young 'uns quiet down and watch your language—so shut it up a bit—OK.

Kid: That's not a Lady—that's my sister!

(laughter)

At the front of the coach very little attention was paid to the singing. As long as it did not get too loud most of the Boys thought it funny, remembering that they too had once been part of that youthful choir.

The coach ride was a social group process. At the back of the coach the younger players created solidarity and group identity through their expressive call-and-response, verse-and-chorus singing. In the front of the coach, during the course of the journey, the Boys would slowly circulate from seat to seat for a chat. Sometimes it was just to talk about a particular part of the contest music, but more often they talked about previous contests, or other bands and their potential performances. Relationships between the Boys would be refreshed and given new meaning in the solidarity of the joint purpose of the coach journey. The reliance of the Boys upon each other to produce jointly created music dictated the need for personal understanding and closeness within the group. The intimacy of the coach

journey was an important part of the "Psyching Up" process which was necessary for a good contest performance.

Tec: It's always been the same y'know—everybody's a little bit scared and worried, and sort of excited too. So we all sort of chat with each other. It kind of reminds us all that we're all good mates and pulling together—sort of brings us close together and makes it personal—like so everyone feels they're important and an essential part of the team.

At the Contest

Representatives of each of the contesting bands had to be present at the beginning of the day's events for the Draw, which decided the order of play in each of the contesting sections. By ten o'clock dozens of band coaches would be seen pulling up outside the contest venue, each one displaying a band logo in its back window, with symbolic initials elaborately woven into a pattern: KB—Kotarah Band, WM—Willoughby Municipal Band, St:M—Saint Marys Band, TD—Toronto District Band.

The arriving bandsmen would turn the entrance and foyer of the contest hall into a moving collage of bright uniforms and shining silver and brass instruments. Unloading instrument cases, carrying music stands and percussion sets, viewing trade stalls, greeting fellow bandies they would meet perhaps only on these occasions, a mounting hub-bub and hive of activity would create an atmosphere reminiscent of a village bazaar. Uniforms of red, yellow, blue, brown, black, green and maroon, with bright buttons, epaulettes, badges, caps and cuffs, the musicians presented a very colourful spectacle. Most were young, between fifteen and thirty years of age; but there were older, and visibly very old, men and women present. About a

quarter of the musicians were female, but there were no middle-aged or older women in uniform.

The first question everyone asked at any contest was, "who has scratched?" Bands would always pull out of contests rather than embarrass themselves publicly. It is understood in banding that "scratching" can frequently result from such unforseen circumstances as sickness, accident and disagreements within individual bands. One Bandmaster whose Band had "scratched" explained to me the problems which could beset any contesting band:

> Thirty-odd fellahs is a fair few to hold together as a team over the months before a contest, and it's just not possible to use reserves like you could for Footy. Well now—first off, one of my 'corner men' moved with his job, then the Troms fell foul of each other, but we patched that up. Then last night two of the Cornets decided to roll their car—fucking 'scratched'—months of hard yakka down the drain—all for nothing. It happens to all bands at one time or another, and you've got to take this into account when judging any bands performance over the years.

As more players and supporters arrived the contest atmosphere began to build up. People wandered around meeting friends and exchanging greetings as the social life of the occasion gathered momentum. For the bandies this social mixing was an important part of contesting. It was a reaffirmation of banding as a real living movement, and stood in sharp contrast to the often self-contained social life of banding in individual communities. One bandie I interviewed at the Tuggerah Lakes Contest explained his love of contests in terms of this social mixing.

GM: Bluey, why do you come contesting? What do you get out of it besides the music?

Bluey: Well, I suppose really it's one big, er—social gathering, er, a sort of meeting of the tribes, so to speak. It's a great day when we all get together. You see banding as something big and important.

GM: Do you think of it as a social occasion rather than a purely musical one?

Bluey: Oh yeah—er, sort of both like. You renew old acquaintances that you only see I suppose, at, er, um, contests. Get all the gossip and scandal—who's playing for who—and what's going on in other bands. It makes you feel that you're part of something important and much bigger than your own little mob.

GM: Why the uniforms? Are they so important?

Bluey: Silly fucking question—of course they're important. That's what it's all about really I suppose. It's part of the Tradition you see. You see Willoughby there—they're maroon, so if you want to know how Willoughby's doing, and who they've got blowing for them, stop a 'Marooney,' as we call them, and have a good yatta. It's part of your identification—you become proud of your colours.

GM: Is there any real animosity between bands in contests on account of the consolidation of individual band identity?

Bluey: How do you mean like—not being friendly?

GM: Yes.

Bluey: Oh, no! One of the great things about banding is that you can walk into any bandroom in the country, and they'll put your bum on a seat and give you a blow. It's all friendly like—like one big happy family.

GM: But, at the contests?

Bluey: Well, er, rivalries do exist of course. That's why we're always contesting. Bands do struggle and that's what brings out the best in banding—forces the standards higher—how can I say it, er, neck-and-neck—sometimes for years just to get the edge, and it's often all about settling old scores. There's a great deal of pride and loyalty involved in banding. But there's no nonsense, it's all one movement, and there's a place in it for everybody. It's not a case of being no bloody good if you don't win—it's about being the best you see. That's what we call 'good and <u>good</u>' in this game. In over twenty years of banding I never ever heard a band described as bad or useless. You get, so to say, er, nine points for playing, and one point for winning.

Uniforms

Band uniforms were, as the bandies claimed, a traditional part of banding in the sense that they were worn in order to consolidate a joint identity. Bandies became proud of their "colours," but this still left room for innovation and change in uniforms over the years. A review of photographs of Newcastle's brass bands from the 1880s to the present shows just how much band uniforms have changed with the times. Marine helmets and Prussian-style military uniforms were popular at first. Then came the Digger fatigue styles, which later gave way to serge uniforms and peaked caps, navy style, as it was called in the 1930s. Later during the post-war years, heavily braided jackets and white helmets of lion tamer styles gave way to blazer and dinner jacket uniforms. Bill Wannan's general review of brass band uniforms describes a similar pattern of change, from mole skin trousers and cabbage tree hats in the 1860s to the modern day day slacks and jacket.[1]

Brass bands share with other musical styles creative costume as a part of expression. The dress clothes of the symphony orchestra, the bowler hats and silk waistcoats of trad jazz, the cowboy clothes of country and western, and the dungarees of bluegrass, are all examples of the specific use of costume as a part of musical expression, used to identify performers and transmit meaning.

The competitive team nature of contesting has meant that uniform styles have developed in the same way as competitive sports such as football. Bands, like football teams,distinguish themselves by their colours. But band uniforms are kinetic rather than static, and unlike

football gear their uniforms are expressive in their own right, rather than being primarily utilitarian. They are added to and changed over the passage of time. One of the contesting bandies explained the mechanics of this to me, when I asked him why many bands had military style uniforms.

Fred: It takes a long time for a band to buy a new set of uniforms, and of most that I know of, they have to keep an ongoing uniform fund. Today it costs about five thousand bucks to completely outfit a band, if they want caps as well—and that's big dollars for your average band—and that's a lot of brass tubing if you know what I mean. I must have sold a million lamingtons to get ours together. So as time passes, people leave, new faces arrive, and new uniforms have to be continually made up, and old ones get remodelled. After ten years or so they're getting to look tired again, so you add some new brass buttons—stuff like that, and lots of new braid and piping just to cheer them up a bit—and sooner or later you find your uniforms look half new and half old, and none of them really fit well. So the cheapest thing to do is to get half a new set like the old ones—and that's why we all look like we've just escaped from the Siege of Stalingrad—but that's what the public expects its town band to look like. There are some styles here today that I saw before the war—but most of the high collars are gone now.

The extent to which uniforms were important to bandies cannot be overemphasised, and they constituted a major topic of conversation at the contests. Other bandies explained their significance, as they saw it:

Os: I like wearing a uniform 'cos it feels great to belong to a band—it's er, your identity. You're a musician, yes, but a particular kind of musician—a bandie. If you know a band you know its colours and its players. Look there—Willoughby, they're all North Shore types, they never did speak much, and still don't. Y'know, sort of bad smell under their noses. Well, they're Maroon. Now St. Mary's, they're a brass band with their own social club out in the Western suburbs—and they're the Boys— always friendly—salt of the earth and fair dinkum mates. So you're OK with St. Mary's—Blue. But Maroon, forget it. You know a bandie by his band, and you know a band by their colours.

Giles: Crap! That's completely stupid. Bands wear uniforms for three reasons. First, it's like school uniforms, it provides a common identity. Second, if we didn't it'd be all colours of the effing rainbow up there on the stage—a fashion parade. Free for all. Thirdly, uniforms set us apart from the audience. It's like Kings, Bishops, Police, University types and Ticket Collectors. If you want people to know you're different you've got to wear a funny hat.

The Trade Stalls

Inside the contest hall foyer there was always the atmosphere of a market. A servery at one end struggled to keep up with a mounting queue for hot pies, chiko rolls, tea and soft drinks. The smell of reheated food and stewed tea would fill the air. Around the walls were the trade stalls. One had brass instruments from around the world: Japan, America, China, Holland, Germany and Britain. Rare instruments such as Marching Mellophones and Piccolo Cornets always attracted a great deal of attention. Above one stall a large glossy poster proclaimed "Boosey and Hawkes 'Sovreign' the Choice of Champions—'The Best of British'" with a large photograph of the previous year's National Champions. Next to it, in bright red, another poster advertised "Yamaha Brass-Championship Material." Other stalls exhibited percussion instruments, music stands, mutes, mouthpieces and instrument cases. Further along another stall was laden with sheets of music manuscripts: recently published sets for brass bands, tutorial books, practice exercises, diagnostic methods and contest Full Scores. Another stall had brass band records from New Zealand, Australia, Canada, Britain, Fiji and Sweden. Further along still were photographs of bands in their newly tailored uniforms. A salesman stood ready with material samples, badges and braid, ready to take orders and negotiate terms. This part of the occasion demonstrated contesting was much more than simply a musical event;

it was also a social occasion, with obviously clear business interests.

The importance of considering all the interest groups involved in the production of music has been widely recognised by sociologists of art, and this should rightly include instrument manufacturers, music publishers, record producers and uniform tailors. The international music publishing and musical instrument manufacturing industries are a multimillion dollar market, and the Australian brass band movement is just one lucrative area.[2] To this extent many brass band contests received very modest manufacturers' sponsorship, which rarely amounted to prize money in excess of a few hundred dollars. Contest sponsorship is an old part of banding and goes back to the last century. The "State" had in its time been sponsored by the Royal Agricultural Show, Wills Tobacco, Gillette, Benson and Hedges and N.B.N. Television. As a photograph and personal letter from the head of a Japanese instrument manufacturer, Nippon Gakki Co. Ltd., announced in one contest programme:

> My company is committed to the expansion of Musical Education and participation through the medium of our Yamaha Music Foundation, which sponsors education programmes and music festivals throughout the world.[3]

As this company has discovered through its domination of the world's musical instrument trade, they have every reason to be committed to amateur music making. Yet, apart from donating small amounts of money for prizes and organising costs in exchange for remunerative advertising, and the occasional trophy, such commercial organisations stayed well away from the Banding Association as a social organisation, at least as far as this research was able to ascertain through involvement in contest organising committees and banding associations. Some sociological research into the production of music, such as that

by Frith in The Sociology of Rock, has shown that commercial interests such as the recording industry controlled which music and musicians received mediation and public acclaim by acting as "gate keepers" between artists and audience.[4] In banding such media control simply did not exist. This fact alone is an important feature which separates banding, as an amateur music, from professional music forms. Contesting was where the very best brass band music was played, and financial and commercial interests had been pushed to the periphery in the development of "the movement's" own particular performance style.

The Contest Programme

A programme, in booklet form, was produced for all contests and was an essential part of the day's proceedings, for without it the audience and the players could not fully participate in contest events. A review of all the State contest programmes in Australia from the 1950s to the present showed them to be a highly developed and stylized media in themselves. Usually a glossy booklet of about forty pages, they began with a clear official statement of what the contest was, and then went on to list the State Banding Association's Officials: President, Secretary, Treasurer, Organiser, Contest Committee and Adjudicators. This was followed by a statement of the Contest Rules and Conditions, and then a list of the bands which had entered "The Contest Field." There was usually a photograph and a letter of welcome from the local Mayor. Similarly there were photographs and resumes of the Chief Adjudicator and Assistant Adjudicators which specified their experience in brass bands, contest victories they had conducted, music composed, formal music qualifications, and previous adjudicating experience. Usually in such programme booklets there

would be a short history of the local host band, complete with ancient photographs dating from the change of the century. In some programme booklets there were often quite trivial essays and humorous poetry about brass bands, and often also, there were commemorations and obituaries of banding figures who had recently died. All of this was interspersed with advertising, some from the music trade, but mostly from local shops and businesses. It was through this advertising that most of the cost of the programme was covered. As local advertising it was obviously ineffective for most of the readers would only be in the locality for the one day of the contest. Rather than being serious attempts to attract trade these local adverts were really community contributions towards banding.

Such contest programmes constitute a substantial historical guide and record of "the movement." In them can be traced exactly when individual bands first entered the "Contest Field," and their relative progress over the years is spelt out in hard contest results. Their photographs are graphic displays of how band uniforms slowly alter over the years. The actual style and presentation of the programmes varies from year to year, but their tone remains remarkably constant. A Mayor's greeting in 1980 would be virtually the same as in 1950. Contest programmes are reminders of "the tradition," the community based organisational strengths and amateur lifestyle of "the movement." They demonstrated to the bandies involved that what they were doing on any one contest day was part of a historical process in which they were playing a central constructive part.

The Score Card in the programme was of the utmost importance. Against each competing band were three columns (four if Marching was included), one column each for the Test, Own Choice and Selection.

It was the total of the marks for the Test and Own Choice which finalised the overall positions and decided the Champion Band. What each band scored in each performance would be entered into the Score Card by most of the audience. It was essential for any band entering the State to research its opponents "form" from such records.

The Audience

As the contest day moved on from the morning Draw, which decided each band's order of playing in the separate contesting grades, and as the different bands mounted the contest stage to perform, so the audience was in continual ebb and flow from the auditorium to the foyer. For the best "crack" bands the auditorium was packed to capacity. For the "bottom graders" it was left half empty, filled only with the performing bands' own supporters and near rivals. Between each performance the Door Marshals would swing open the doors for the constantly changing audience. On the first Adjudicator's Bell, the auditorium door would be locked and on the second Bell there would be complete silence.

In the audience men and women could be seen scrutinizing the Full Score of the music being performed, audibly gasping and tutting as the competing band erred or faltered from what they considered to be the correct interpretation of the music. After each performance they entered their own mark into the programme Score Card for later comparison with the Adjudicator's results. Elsewhere in the audience relatives and supporters enthusiastically cheered and applauded as they mounted and left the contest stage, irrespective of the merit of their performance.

One older man, typical of many in the audience with a Full Score of the music and a Score Card, explained to me what he was doing.

Doug: You see, you can't understand the music by just listening to it—because it's not being played just for entertainment. Hear now--what Gossy have just done down there. Well that would be fair dinkum alright if you were just listening for fun in a concert programme—but it's more, much more than that in the Contest Field. I've discovered that they're piss weak in the Basses. One of them can do it OK, but the other three, particularly the little E's, they're just passengers. Those runs with the Euphos, he's flucking them—just waggling his fingers and aiming for the top 'cos he can't handle the accidentals—they're not properly articulated chromatics. Well now, you see, a finger waggles no bloody good in this grade—'cos the others have really got down to the business of developing a dexterous relationship between second and third valve with proper utilization of compensation in the fourth valve. That's how you tell good from good. You must interpret the music from the dots.

This commentary fully describes the commitment of the audience to contesting as a distinct musical performance. They were not there to be simply entertained, but rather, to be both critical and supportive, and most of all to be involved. The audience was intimately connected through personal relationships and knowledgeable musical judgement to the performance of the music.

A survey of audiences conducted at the three State contests during the research bears out this observation. Out of five hundred people questioned on each occasion an average of three hundred and eight were friends, supporters or relatives of the competing bandies. An average of fifty one were retired bandies, and an average of four hundred and five were or had been bandies themselves. An average of thirty only were casual visitors to the contest. On all occasions more than four hundred and fifty had been to two or more

band contests previously. The results of this survey show that it was the audience more than any other factor which made up the special atmosphere which prevailed at contests. As bandies, supporters, or relatives, most of the audience fully understood the amount of work involved in getting a brass band to a contest, not simply the preparation of the music, but the fundraising enterprises, the community committees, and the training of young musicians. They understood the psychological pressures of the contest stage, and the criteria by which a band would be adjudicated and declared, as they would say, "good or good." They were not seeking casual entertainment, but rather, they were committed to contest music and the brass band movement. They were an audience who were making distinct critical judgements, firstly in terms of the band's relationship to the composition, and secondly, but perhaps no less importantly, of the efforts and endeavours of people they knew and understood to get a band on to the contest stage in the first place.

Contemporarily the term "folk music" has two meanings. One meaning refers to the style of a particular music, and this is now a commercial enterprise, but "folk music" more fundamentally refers to a performance in which there is a strong relationship between musician and audience, that is, a musical performance in which the audience in some way contributes towards or shares in the production of the music. In the immediate sense a contest audience does not clap or sing along with the performance, but it is none the less deeply involved with the production of the music before it reaches the contest stage. The musicians and audience are all part of the one movement, and have arranged the day's events, raised the necessary money and helped organise the bands to make their appearance. The Score Cards and the publication of the Full Score music manuscripts

allow them to participate through immediate critical involvement. The contest audience in this sense is very much a "folk" audience, and the very best of brass band music is essentially "folk music."

Going On

After what seemed like an eternity of waiting, the time came for the Boys to mount the contest stage. This was far from being a straightforward operation. Outside the stage exit one or two other bands in blue and red uniforms waited in line, warming their instruments by furiously blowing air through them. "Warming up" is absolutely important because the critical temperature of a brass instrument has a large bearing upon its tuning. When Kotarah Band had assembled, instruments and music manuscripts at the ready, it was time for another ritual contest day speech. The Bandmaster stood in the middle of the group and began:

> Now troops—gather round for a few words. Fellahs, Ladies of the Band—we've had plenty of time to prepare for this one, and as we showed them all last year—bands from Newcastle have a long tradition at the top of banding and can't be dismissed lightly. Now—there's no need to feel nervous if you breath correctly—which you should do at all times. Diaphragmatic breathing causes relaxation—believe it or not. Watch me—watch me—watch me! I can't say it enough. Don't sit there with your heads down blowing your hearts out. Remember we're a band, not a collection of soloists—so that means we're as strong as our weakest link. We've done it before, and we'll do it again. The community is expecting a victory this time—so let's not let the folks back home down. Cornets lead on, Horns, Euphos, Troms, Heavies and Labourers—sorry, Drums! Remember we've got a big tradition to keep alive and everybody at home is right behind us.

At last the Band was called by the Stage Marshal. Adrenaline was running high, and everyone kept reminding everyone else to "keep calm" and "relax." After what seemed like an eternity of time, during which nervous figures adjusted music stands, chairs and instruments, the Band settled down into silence under the glare of hundreds of bandies with critical ears at the ready. I can recall very few occasions in my life which have induced a similar sensation; on the starting blocks in a track athletics event, waiting for an examination to commence, or receiving very unfortunate news, these are all possible, yet inadequate, comparisons. The contest stage just before the Adjudicator's Bell sounds had something of all of these experiences, and an expectant excitement that was stifling.

Like other very tense situations, the initial moments on the stage created the impression of time distortion. "The Stretch," as the Boys called it, was a short period of time in which the events which have led up to the contest performance flashed vividly through the mind. It was as if every committee meeting, band practice, every note, phrase, interval and tone colour, were jointly untangled and meticulously reassembled. All of this seemed to happen as the Bandmaster mounted his conductor's platform, and opened the Full Score in slow motion. One of the Boys attempted to explain this "Stretch" phenomenon, which so many bandies told me they had experienced.

Clive: It's like drowning—the life of the music slips before your eyes in absolute clarity. I once read about drowning in a book, so I think it's the same sensation. Stretch is when you finally must come to terms with what you've personally done about the situation. This is it—bullshit over—no more wanking—this is the stuff of champions, and it really shakes you up.

> I once had a dream down on Redhead Beach, honest, no mushrooms. I saw the Band all around me in contest positions surrounded by millions of audience that went on for fucking miles and miles as far as I could see, and we were all in the Stretch before the 'Off'—waiting for the Bell—shitting ourselves with fright. Then a big voice in the sky said 'Kotarah Band...can you play the Test?' I woke up sweating and shaking, and the old lady kept on saying to me, 'Do you want your ice cream now—or are you going surfing again?' Freaky, isn't it?

The Stretch was a group experienced psychological phenomenon which quite obviously had emotional manifestations for the Boys, and many told me that it recurred in their dreams. It was in itself an important part of the contesting experience.

This State Contest's particular "Stretch" was terminated by the clanging of the Adjudicator's Bell when the audience fell silent. The Bandmaster raised his baton and beat two bars to set the tempo. Then with a flick of the baton twenty nine instruments were raised in unison. "Two bars in" he whispered, and with the appropriate movement of the baton the Band launched dramatically into its music; so much depended on the introductory bars being "clean," positive and correct. What followed consisted of an exercise in complete mental and physical exhaustion. For the fifteen minutes of the performance nervous eyes flicked quickly from the conductor to the music manuscript, to the other players, as the themes, chords and passages were passed around the Band. For the Boys it was more than the sound of their own music. Violent gaspings of breathing in unison, and the deep diaphragmatic breaths required to produce the notes and volume added to the growing psychological sensation of fatigue as the Band blasted its way towards the waiting applause. At last the Band finished, its nervous energies and anxieties purged by the physiological breathing

exercises and the anticlimax of a completed competition. Then, reminded by the applause that it was no longer alone with its music, but in a large hall packed with people.

After the contest performance some of the Boys volunteered to explain the physiological effects of the contest stage to me, while near the stage exit mature adults from rival bands were crying, some with excited joy at having played much better than they had hoped, and others in self disgust at having "froze" at a vital stage in the music, or simply "flucked" their notes.

Bern: It's difficult to describe, but you always know what it is when you're up there. You start off by shitting yourself—just about—with terror and fright—but then when the Machine starts pumping and its all going up and down around you—everyone feels as if they're part of the same instrument—like an organ—and you can relate like in your head, er, right across the Band. That is of course if it's all going OK out there. It's like being one person—a huge head trip and completely unreal. You're all in the same bar, on the same note, on the same stage, breathing at the same pace—and you feel everyone firing together. One band, one person, if you get my meaning.

GM: Do you feel that this physiological and psychological experience is important?

Stan: Yeh! Sure—look what happens if the Machine breaks down sort of, or you lose a dot, or the wheel drops off. Look at those poor cunts across there. Half of them's crying 'cos it worked, and the other half 'cos the wheel dropped off.

Dick: Yeh! Stan and Bern are right—I mean like—the head trips all sort of, er, magnified by the anxiety. You know it's funny. The whole Bass section is cued together in the finale—big fat bottom D's—fat big bastards that make the stage rumble. So we take huge gasps together at the same time. It's like sitting in a room full of vacuum cleaners sucking in the air. But because we're all doing it together and you can't see the dots for the spots in front of your eyes, but because we've all practised it together we hang in there—lips in rags and lungs aching—dizzy in the head—but we hang on in there—it's fucking terrific!

GM: Just how important is this contest stage feeling to your banding overall?

Stan: The most important, I'd say, 'cos you can't get it elsewhere can you? You see—we're up there saying we can do it—we're not talking about it—studying it—or making money from it. We're there because we can do it—and do it good. As a group of people we've got it together in the head you see—so there's like, er, a lot of psychological investment getting interest up there on the contest stage.

The contest performance must be seen as more than just a musical performance of excellence. It is the culmination and climax of months of intensive group practice, as well as the years of contesting experience which have placed the Band in its relative contesting status and have built up the tradition it must uphold. It is at once a climax of emotion generated and fuelled by the physiological demands of brass instrument musicianship which will end a whole passage in the Band's history, and begin another. For the Boys, it stood in complete contrast to the monotony of work, suburban life and the reality of everyday life in consumer society. It was something they could not "get elsewhere." It provided the opportunity to aspire, to be "the stuff of Champions," and to have these aspirations measured against criteria which the bandies saw as fair, rational and logical. It provided a group experience, psychological, physical and material, in producing the music which bandies love to experience. One of the Ladies of the Band actually compared the contest performance to love and sex.

Norma: You work on a relationship like you work on the different parts of the music. Trying always, to, er, to get them to fit together so they feel good—to match—to establish—y'know, something in common. Then when that's all done—there comes a time—that twinkle in the eye, if you know what I mean—it's the same as the Stretch as we call it. Well OK—so that's the, er, chemistry that goes through the air when you know it's on. So—we physically and mentally work ourselves off to an orgasmic climax in the music. Just like rooting.

The Results

When contests closed with "the Results" the auditoriums were packed to capacity. The different bands stood grouped in bunches around the walls. After a long speech by the Band Association President, who on all occasions when this speech was given reminded the audience of "the movement's great tradition," its "outstanding community service," and its "great future." All the bands were congratulated for taking part, and lectured to on the values of "participation" as opposed to winning. These speeches always made mention of the increasing number of "Ladies" and young people coming into "the movement," and the diversity of ages present. On one occasion long service medals were presented to players who had given more than twenty five years of service to one of the bands. This presentation at Sutherlandshire was a potent reminder of the President's remarks about the age span of "the movement."

Standing next to each other on the platform, along with the Mayor and the Association's Officials, were an old bandie in his seventies and his twelve year old great grand daughter, the youngest participant in the contest, both dressed in the same navy blue and white epauletted and braided uniform. Family, tradition,

community, respectability, and the progressive changes that were bringing more women into banding, were symbolized by that particular stage cast, which was completed by a rotund Lady Mayor in large hat and gold chain of office.

Next the Adjudicator was introduced to read his commentary. In an authoritative speech he dwelt upon the merits and flaws of that year's contest performances, and on any significant changes in style and presentation. "Bands demonstrated an increased capacity to tackle complex 'key signatures'," and "poor tuning was a constant recurring feature of all performances," were typical of a string of comments that were borne restlessly by the audience until at last the sealed envelope containing the results was duly passed to the Master of Ceremonies for the formal announcement. From one corner of the auditorium came a shriek of joy as thirty uniformed bandies leapt about, overcome by the excitement of winning, and of being that year's State Champions. This was accompanied by general applause, some of it politely restrained from the other bands. Next came the Scores, what mark each band gained for each of its performances was read out, and written down by many of the audience on their individual Score Cards.

After this the Lady Mayor was introduced. In a speech which again congratulated all for taking part, and dutifully thanked "the movement" for choosing her Shire as that year's contest venue, she, like the Band Chairman in his morning speech, the Bandmaster in his pep talk before mounting the contest stage, and the Association President's speech, ritually and emphatically referred to "tradition," "community," and "participation." At last she presented the Grand Shield to the Champions. Every band received a trophy pennant for

taking part, and there were certificates for second and third places. The cash prizes which went with the winning tropies were small, at about two hundred dollars, and little mentioned compared with the symbolic reward of receiving the Boosey and Hawkes Challenge Shield, and having the band's name engraved after the many previous winners.

For the winning band the symbolic award of the Challenge Shield was not simply for being the best musicians of the day. It was also understood to be a reward for the years of community work, musical education and group organising which had enabled them to present the best band at that contest, as one of the winners explained to me.

GM: John, you've just won the State for another year running. How do you feel about it?

John: Great, absolutely great. When you're inside the Machine and she's pumping away you know that all these practices every night for the last three weeks were worth it. I mean, just not, er, to win only, kind of thing, but to be able to do it just like that—so you look around the other bands and say, 'well we did it, 'cos we did it right.' It's not that we're brilliant or anything, it's that this contest was won at the fundraising barbecues and picnics six years ago when we were a C grade concern—that's when we won.

GM: And what about the future?

John: Well—who knows—you know somebody's always shooting through for a new job, or dropping out 'cos of a sheila. Right now we'll be losing two Cornets and a Trombone to the Melbourne Symph. How the hell do we replace Cornermen like that? Everyone will have to move up, and we'll start pushing again to expand the Juniors. Not for next year, but for six years on. It always happens—you get so good, and then your Cornermen have to go pro-Muso, or simply can't take the pace at the top any more.

Going Home

After the Results, the bands quickly packed and began their coach journeys home. This too was an important part of "the State." Contesting was one of the few brass band occasions free from beer drinking, that is, at least until the journey home when the tinnies would be given out. The Boys could finally relax after a very tense day, and look forward to a heroes' welcome from dozens of friends and relatives who would be waiting at the bandroom to congratulate them, and to continue the celebration in the Bowling Club bar. Still, on the coach, the seriousness of the occasion was not yet over, for the Band would do a group autopsy on their contest performances while they travelled home.

Until recently the Adjudicator was required to produce just a written report on the playing of each band. This has been largely superseded in importance to bandies by cassette recordings of each contest performance with an on-going critique from the Adjudicator's desk. These tapes would be played over and over again as the Boys listened to their individual parts, and received the Adjudicator's interjected praise and criticisms. After a crackling first bar or two, a voice boomed in, "Good confident opening—well tuned." Later in the next section, "Basses dragging on the beat—Horns, good entry...Baritones missing accidentals." Later the voice broke in again, "Cornets not without blemish, although bad tuning in the bottom register for Troms...Oh! Missed entry for Euphoniums—not at all balanced—Sop!—Sop and Flugel well executed," and so on through the recording. The Boys would nod in agreement and occasionally describe the disembodied voice as a "deaf cunt," but they did listen intently as their music received this expert commentary.

A great deal of importance was attached to the Adjudicator's recorded reports. Above all else, as the contest programmes revealed, the Adjudicators were the most important arbitrators of what was good in brass band music, and equally what was not. Just like law Judges, Adjudicators became known for their likes and dislikes, and just knowing who the Adjudicator would be at a contest could have a lot to do with how a band interpreted the Test piece, and which particular compositions were chosen for the Own Choice and Selection.

An Adjudicator explained to me the problems that he faced. He first acknowledged that adjudication was always a controversial issue and, without fail, banding journals and newsletters would assiduously debate his judgements for months to come. However, he insisted that an Adjudicator's authority was based on his reputation as a bandie and this, more than any other quality, would determine the reception that his adjudication would receive.

> Knowing music isn't enough. You must know what it is to have sat in a Contest Band, and in time, to have waved the stick to a few victories. In the comments—the Adjudicator's Report—you have a duty to comment on the merits of the performance, not just the errors. They want to know what was good as much as what's shabby. To tell thirty odd people who have worked their guts out that they fouled it all up isn't my job as I see it. They can understand that themselves. They need a critique in terms of what their attempt at the music means to them personally, not according to my preferences. That's why they look up to us with reverence—we personify through our reputation all that is good in brass band music. We stopped playing musical Gods fifty years ago, and started talking about musical problems which have their roots in the bandroom.

This commentary on adjudication was typical of many that I heard. It explains why reputation was so important. The judgements that Adjudicators made only stood up to close scrutiny if the bandies

trusted the Adjudicator's experience and knowledge of banding itself, rather than just his musical knowledge. The overall mark awarded to any band at a contest was a complex assessment which took into account artistic interpretation, technical skill, and the relative efforts involved in bringing the band to a certain level of performance; it could not be simply deduced from a dispassionate calculation of errors. A well-established wealthy band, used to winning all the honours, might turn in a slick musical performance after only a few weeks practice, while an up-and-coming band in the same grade might practice and sacrifice for months in order to appear at the contest and achieve similar musical standards. In such a case the merits of improvement and effort would usually be rewarded, and would win out over the reigning champions. Complacency and smugness were deeply disliked in "the movement."

There were several reports in banding journals during the research on the attempts of Adjudicators to compare, and make consistent, their systems of marking, but vast differences in rankings and opinions made this extremely difficult, if not impossible. Adjudicators were often referred to as "High Priests of the Movement" and as such they were trusted to know what a good brass band performance was, because they, in their time, had performed in "crack" bands. Like the high priests of many religions they held secrets, in this case of banding, and aspirant bands received their blessings to a greater or lesser extent. Although the decisions of "the High Priests" could not really be disputed on the grounds of the technical interpretation of the musical score, adjudication was not entirely autonomous and beyong question. It was influenced in various ways, and the democratic structure of the band associations was most important in this respect.

At one contest in Newcastle an Adjudicator criticised some of the players in Kotarah for performing with their uniforms unbuttoned and for looking "scruffy" on stage. At another contest, the Band were criticised for tapping their feet to keep the beat. Both of these remarks received angry retorts from banding committees and banding journals. This did not change the results of the contests, in which Kotarah fared badly, but it did stimulate the never-ending debate in banding about what constitutes a good band, and where "the movement" was heading musically. Because Adjudicators were part of banding, and were selected by banding associations for their reputation amongst bandies, their opinions reflected to a large degree what "the movement" as a whole believed was good brass band music. In the case of the criticisms about the untidy uniforms and foot tapping, a furious response from banding circles about the fact that the two Adjudicators had dared to look beyond "the dots" and had penalised a band on such petty grounds, severely damaged their reputation as Adjudicators. The Boys, and the rank-and-file of "the movement," had exercized their right to protest against such judgements and had publicly censured their High Priests. As the Boys explained:

Mal: Only Adjudicators who really know what banding's about survive. The shits stick their feet in the pooh doing C and D grade stuff before they get too far. This cunt at Wagga—says we were tapping our feet—well I mean to fucking say—when I play at least, my feet tap—and I know just about everyone else's fucking does too. So we put the bad word on him, y'know, just made a stink and said we wouldn't come next year. I mean, it's a democratic movement isn't it? So we fucked him up good and proper so that he never gets another Adjudicator's booking.

GM: Does this sort of control really exist?

DT: Yeh! What he says is perfectly true. I don't practice my guts out to, er, be told my tunic's undone or I'm doing footsy under my Horn. I want to know where the music was wrong, and where it was good—it's got to be instructive and educational or it's fuck all use. So we got rid of him, finished the silly old sod off.

Transcripts from the Boys Discussing Contest Music

GM: Obviously contest music is much technically harder than the other music we play. Is this what's so special about it?

Barry: Contesting's what it's all about! The other music is real Aunt Sally by comparison. I mean, er, we like playing it and all that, but it's only fun music. Contesting is the serious stuff which makes brass bands great.

GM: So you see contest music as being in a class of its own, and having a special influence on banding?

Nick: Right. Doing the playouts and stuff is great—good fun, but you have to get down to contest music—sort it out, wrestle with it for weeks on end. That way it's a real challenge—it's written by bandies, for bandies, for that reason.

GM: Does nobody else appreciate contest music?

Wally: If we, say, went to an Ars'oles Club and laid some contest music on them—nobody would know what we were doing. You see, contesting's proper band music for bandies.

Jim: Like Nick says, it's the challenge. When you first see the Test it's just a mass of black dots—and you think 'fucking impossible.' But, er, then you practice it, work it out bar by bar, and she slowly comes out, she comes real good. It's our music and it's only us that can really come to terms with it. It's our music—just for us.

GM: Why do you think public audiences wouldn't like it?

Giles: Oh they'd like it, in its proper time and place—probably. Look, it's very specialised stuff—complete symphonic works sometimes—they only make real sense to bandies. People generally don't want to know about double and triple tonguing and hi-fid tuning—they want to be able to tap their feet to something like a Rhumba or Aunt Sally.

GM: Does everyone in 'the movement' feel the same about this?

Barry: Well it's not a point you can really ignore. If it wasn't for contesting and contest music bands wouldn't be what they are today. Contesting forces the standards up. It gives bands a chance to play really brilliantly, and to receive expert recognition for it.

GM: How do you mean?

Barry: The exact contest band size, and the complicated music. It's er, contests which have made brass bands specialised, and it's contest music which has driven the standards up so high. We work on it as a group for months just to get it right, and you think, is it worth it? Then when you hear it on contest day there's no doubt about the value of

your own efforts. You know that because you can never repeat that performance. It's a once-and-for-all thing.

Chas: Twenty years ago—I don't know how long—anyway I remember playing Howell's 'Blackfriars.' Now that was top A Grade stuff—and the crack bands would fall to pieces on it. Look today—it's a C Grade Contest piece—I've even heard junior bands do it.

GM: But isn't that just searching for more difficult work, you know, a cult of virtuosity?

Henry: Virtousi balls! Yeh, it's virtuosi stuff-that's what makes it great—but it's your word for it—not ours. Technical brilliance is the only thing which can really sort bands out. Special music is written with contests in mind, it's even commissioned for that purpose sometimes. Well that's our own music, never mind transcriptions and TV tunes—this is brass band music for brass band musicians—and nobody else really understands it. Why should they?

GM: Do most bandies think this?

Giles: I mean, Henry's right, but it is quality music, not just a Chinese puzzle. Oh yes, there's some good stuff, so good in fact that a lot of it's been transposed from band music to orchestral scoring. The 'Severn River Suite' by Elgar is the best example. He was a bandie you know. Now that's very brilliant stuff, but it's not entertainment gear—it's serious music.

GM: What do you mean by serious?

Henry: Well, that's another question. It's serious because you've got to work on it to be able to play it, and it's serious because it requires thinking about to appreciate fully. But that's not what people want or expect from a town band is it? I mean we can't play it out in a gig, even if we wanted to.

GM: Well why is mastery over technical difficulty so important to you?

Clive: Look at 'Rhapsody in Brass' by Dean Goffin. When we're all in there triple tonguing away and charging up and down the scales—it's totally exhilarating just to know you're inside of it—it makes shivers go up and down your backbone. It's been a concerted effort to do it like that just the once.

Pat: Clive's right. I mean who can't play a few concert numbers—that's no challenge—but contest music, it's specialised to bring out the best in a brass band. Specially written with bands in mind to, er, draw on all our special qualities and technical capacity.

GM: So contesting requires a different attitude towards the music?

Stan: Yeh. It's a funny thing really, Mike and I went to hear the Sydney Symph. the week before last. Slack fucking playing for professionals—disgraceful in fact—just knock-it-out stuff—'we're the artists, you're just the audience shit.' You just couldn't get away with it, or even hear that sort of playing, at a contest. There's too much social drama invested in it. Contesting's important, the most important, because contest audiences are bandies, and they know what's good. Good has got to be good—not just flash and thunder, or plucking at the heart strings. A contest audience plays it—knows the music inside out. It's musicians' music, if you like.

GM: So the result of this continual drive to conquer harder music improves general performance standards in bands?

Henry: Yeh, sure it does. It makes demands—makes you tackle musical problems you otherwise just put to one side—tests the second and third sections—makes you strive to improve yourself—as thingy said, it makes brass bands what they are today.

GM: But, should music be contested?

Giles: Oh that's a load of old fanny! All music is competitive in a competitive society. Look, concert pianists have international competitions. Choirs contest. What on earth are the Pop Charts for if they're not a sort of league table. Yeh, what the fuck is wrong with striving to be a better musician? Besides there'd be no movement without contesting, would there? And there'd be no brass bands without the movement—period. Contesting is what it's all about.

Despite the complexities of State contests as festive occasions involving social mixing, trade stalls, uniforms, results and trophies, undoubtedly their principal significance lay in the contest performance with its special conditions and distinct musical composition. The most important thing to say about this performance is that brass bands played at their best at contests, almost unrecognisably so. With the months of preparation contestmusic required, and with compositions specially scored to draw upon the peculiar orchestral structure, instrumental capacity and player capabilities, the bands

played in a way that would be unlikely to be heard elsewhere. The occasion, the composition and the contest conditions all contributed towards this special brass band style.

Mention has already been made of the physiological and psychological experience of mounting the contest stage. Here I want to draw particular attention to contest music, the reasons for its development as a distinctive style, and what it meant to bandies as a distinct expressive enterprise. Its most important feature was that it was much more difficult to perform than most other music played by bands; so much more difficult that it was only very rarely played on other occasions. Contest music was seen as part of a performance that "you can never repeat," because it had such a lot of "social drama" invested in it. It was written at a level, depending upon which of the contesting grades it had been selected for, which would challenge the performing ability of a band in a number of ways: instrumental range, stamina, group coordination, tuning, interpretation, and the merits of different sections and individuals. The word "challenge" was used continually by the Boys to explain the impact and resulting involvement that a new piece of contest music would have upon a band. It described what the music did for them as a group. It referred less to the competitive nature of banding as a status system within "the movement."

As the central object of months of group activity the contest pieces were considered to be an intellectual and imaginative project which would draw upon and test all the skills of the bands, a cultural experience with the clear object of first mastering, and then adding their own expression to a new idea. Consequently a winning band was seen as having "conquered" the music; as having successfully challenged what the Boys saw as "a mass of black dots," and been able

to interpret and articulate the music score through their individual and group skills, making it into an object of expression.

When bands played at their climactic best on the contest stage they were essentially expressing something about themselves as a group. They were saying through the medium of the contest performance how they as a group of individuals, operating from the same amateur conditions, had through economic, educational group activity, and solidarity, manufactured a musical product that was intrinsically valuable, and could stand up to critical comparison. Contesting then was a system which "the movement" had gradually devised to provide a channel, or institution, for brass bands to pursue artistic development free from the constraints of public audience.

The Boys well recognised its specialised nature, and the reasons contest music was so different. They compared non-contest music to it as "fun music" and "real Aunt Sally." For them contest music was "the serious stuff which makes brass bands great." Great in this case because it has been written "by bandies, for bandies," and forced them to "sort it out—wrestle with it for weeks on end." That was the real challenge that bandies talked about.

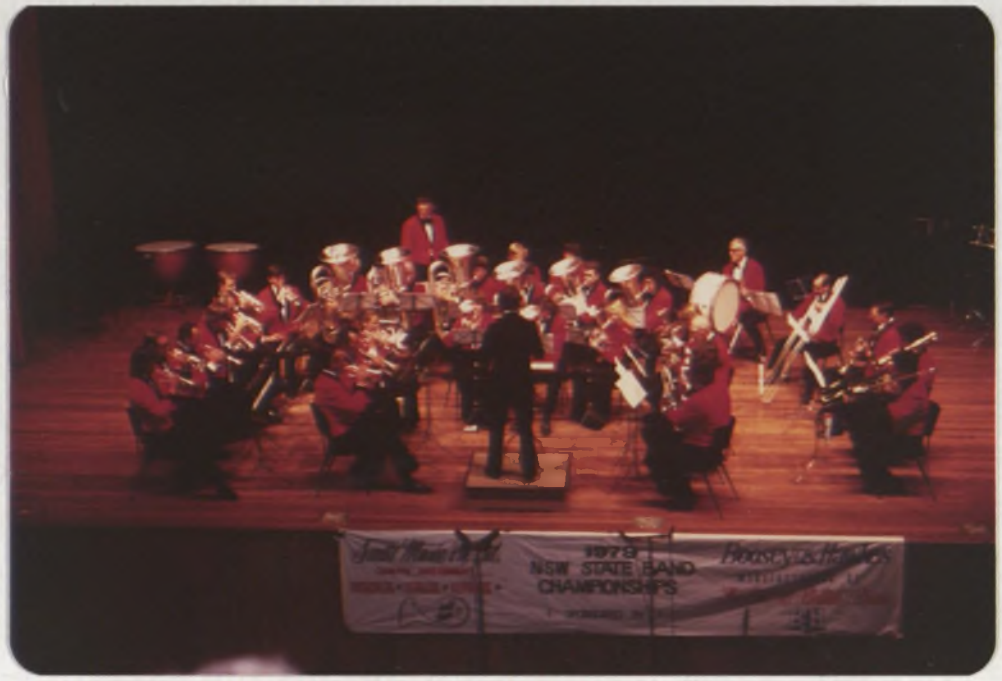
However bandies did not look down upon the other music that they played. In fact they enjoyed and expressed themselves through it. As the research shows elsewhere (Chapters 6 and 11), "fun music" or "Aunt Sally" was an integral and important part of banding, but it was not "serious" in the same ways. To this extent they did not despise their public audiences because of their preference for "fun music." Rather, they did not see why an Ars'ole Club audience should know anything about contest music, or hold it in special esteem. For this

reason the Boys saw contest music and its performance as being "our music," uniquely of their own creation, and consequently understood that it was only they who could "really come to terms with it," because it involved them as a group in the challenge of transforming a "fucking impossible mass of black dots"into the one cathartic contest performance.

The continual demand for music that would present a new challenge had led to the composition of the most sophisticated and technically demanding work in the brass band repertoire, but the Boys dismissed the suggestion that this was just a blind pursuit of virtuosity for its own sake. Contest music was not for them a "Chinese puzzle." Rather, they saw such compositions as artistically satisfying works which stood up to comparison with classical symphony orchestra compositions. They could name the famous composers who had written for contesting, and risen to fame through this medium. They saw this, the relative sophistication of their music, as being the logical and important outcome of the contesting tradition. Not only did it provide "bands the chance to play really brilliantly," but it had "forced standards up" in a number of important ways. As Chas pointed out, the sort of contest music such as Howell's "Blackfriars" which had made "crack bands fall to pieces" twenty years earlier, was now D Grade and junior band stuff. Special performance conditions, exactly specified instrumentation and pitch, a fully developed full score unique to brass bands, and the educational impact of adjudication as a learning method, had all in the Boys' eyes made contest music "serious" in the sense that they had to "work on it to be able to play it," and that it required "thinking about to appreciate fully."

Adjudication has been all important in this process of producing "serious" music. Adjudicators cannot be considered simply like sports referees, even though they too in similar ways must have the respect and authority which bandies bestow upon their "High Priests." Adjudication is a more complicated process. Although they can penalise bands for musical "fouls" and ultimately arbitrate according to a commonly agreed set of rules between the competitors as to who will be the winner, and their consequent relative status, they also have an immediate educational impact. They must report to bands not only on their musical shortcomings as areas for possible improvement. They, as one Adjudicator explained, tackled "musical problems which have their root in the bandroom," rather than simply informing bandies "who have worked their guts out for months that they've fouled it up." They were expected to say not only what was good or bad, but why it was so in terms of what needed to be changed or retained. The contest commentary at the Results, the Adjudicators' reports, cassette recordings, and the continual debate in banding journals about adjudication procedures, were all important instruments in this educational process of adjudication. "Good has got to be good, not just flash and thunder, or plucking at the heart strings," was how Stan saw the effect of adjudication on his performance. For him, "a contest audience plays it, knows the music inside out," and consequently it required a different approach to that attributed to the Sydney Symphony Orchestra with its, "we're the artists, you're the audience shit." Contesting forced the Boys to "tackle musical problems" they might otherwise just put to one side, and made them "strive to improve themselves." It was a process which was essentially aspirant, and, for the Boys at least, "what the fuck was wrong with striving to be a good musician?"

Figs. 9 and 10: Bandies "warming up" for the Contest Stage at the State



Figs. 11 and 12: Contest Positions for "crack bands" at the State

Fig. 13: Kotarah Band "inside the machine" on the Contest Stage at the State

Fig. 14: Young and old from Sutherland Shire Brass Band receiving presentations during "the results" at the State. To the right, the Grand Challenge Shield.

Chapter 9

The One Day of the Year: Anzac Day

Anzac Day was the traditional Australian national holiday to commemorate its war-time heroes. In religious ceremonies, parades and parties, patriotism and nationalism was celebrated in odes, prayers, hymns, marches, and nostalgic popular music. Australian town bands played a traditional part in these celebrations, and it was a big day for the Boys.

The Dawn Service

For many brass bands the Anzac Day celebrations began before sunrise, and continued until the late evening. On the three Anzac Day celebrations when I played with the Band, we assembled in full uniform outside the Municipal Shire Buildings in darkness at five o'clock on a cold morning. Except for about ten Boy Scouts in uniform carrying a large Australian flag, and about the same number of ex-servicemen in their best suits, ties and war medals, the Band was alone in the sleeping suburban street.

To the thud of the Bass Drum the Band shuffled off in its marching formation, torches cellotaped to the music lyres, the Drum-Major out ahead warning of pot-holes in the road. Then as the Drum-Major raised the Mace above his head and blew his whistle, the Bass Drum signaled "two bars in," and to the characteristic rattle of the Snare Drum, the Band blasted its way into the march "Colonel Bogey," used as a theme tune in the patriotic war film, Bridge over the River Kwai.

Our robust sound rose and stumbled as successive street lights illuminated, and then cast shadows across, our music manuscripts. Every dog for miles around seemed to howl and bark its response to the Band's unsuspected double forte back into the morning darkness, and the Boys broke down in laughter. I was assured that this situation had occurred every Anzac morning for as long as anyone in the Band could remember.

Eventually the Band led its small column down the road to the local war memorial, an austere and imposing stone and concrete construction, situated in its own garden by the lakeside. Around the memorial were gathered a few hundred men, women and children, who stood aside as the Band intricately counter marched in formation to a central position next to the memorial, and opposite the raised ceremonial plinth. The Dawn Service had begun with marching and march music, a ritualized celebration in music and motion.

On the raised plinth, behind the row of microphones and the draped Australian flag, stood three old, high-ranking, medalled soldiers, three local politicians in dark suits, and two ministers of religion ready to address the congregation. At each of the four corners of the memorial a young soldier stood, still as a statue, head bowed to attention over an upturned rifle.

The service that followed was the traditional Order of Commemoration of Anzac. The same service was being performed in thousands of similar locations throughout Australia as the sun rose that morning.

After the Prologue was sternly read by one of the ministers of religion, the Band accompanied the congregation as they sang "The Recessional," a traditional interdenominational hymn, which has the

refrain "Lest we forget, lest we forget." This was followed by prayers offered for Thanksgiving, the Queen, and the Nation, which were read from the plinth by another minister of religion. Again the Band accompanied the congregation in the hymn "Lead Kindly Light," which stresses the idea of God on our side, leading us against "the endangering foe." Then a different speaker from the plinth read the Commemoration Address, an "Oration on the Theme of Anzac," and another prayer followed, "A Commemoration of the Fallen," in which the "defenders of our Commonwealth" were stated to have "fallen in the cause of truth and righteousness," and to have been "found worthy of the crown of everlasting life." Next, the Principal Cornet marched smartly forward to the flag pole, and standing rigidly to attention sounded "The Last Post," a military signal played with all the clarity and sweetness of a Cornet (rather than a military Bugle), to a totally silent head-bowed audience. After "The Last Post" had ceased to resound across the lake a solemn voice from the plinth recited, to the accompanying Kipling's refrain of "Lest we forget," "The Ode: A poem of remembrance." Then, once again the Cornet struck out with another military Bugle call, "Reveille." As the flag was raised in the clearing morning light, around the congregation old men in their best suits, shining medals and traditional sprigs of rosemary, for rememberance, pinned to their jackets, stood straining to attention, some quite visibly shaking as unashamed tears rolled down their cheeks.

After a signal, following the Silence, wreaths were brought forward and laid at the foot of the Cenotaph, as the names of the community organisations and associations making their presentation was read out. The whole wreath laying ceremony was accompanied by the lament of Bagpipes from a lone kilted Scottish band musician.

Each wreath layer, whether child, woman or man, performed the ritual three steps backwards from the Cenotaph and saluted it before returning to the congregation.

Immediately after the wreath laying, the Band accompanied the congregation as they sang the traditional hymn, "Abide With Me." This was followed by the playing of "Advance Australia Fair" and "God Save the Queen." As on all occasions when I attended this Service, when the speaker announced that "we will now sing the National Anthem" it seemed that half the congregation began with "God Save the Queen" and the others with "Advance Australia Fair," producing a cacophony of sound which the Band was used to, and prepared for.

The unification of marching music, hymn songs, poetry, musical recitals and national anthems, and the re-enactment of traditional dramatised actions such as the wreath laying, standing to attention, the raising of the flag, and the bowing of heads, in a solemn service of less than one hour is a well rehearsed ritualization of Australian cultural identity. Historical events which are identifiably Australian such as the Battle of Gallipoli, and the other military battles of Asia and Europe, were all linked through the medium of music, drama, prayer, and ritual to "Godliness" and "Righteousness," as though divinely inspired. The marching feet of soldiers was connected to religious worship, and the battle signals of the Bugle Call were linked to the nostalgic memory of those who had died "for God and Australia," for those who had been found worthy of the "crown of everlasting life." State, religious and military dignitaries were all present, erected high above the congregation on their plinth draped with the national flag, to confirm that the evocation of the memory of "the glorious dead" and the use of patriotic, nationalistic and religious themes

were not only related to the same historic causes, but socially condoned by representatives of the nation's most important institutions and highest authorities.

After the Dawn Service most of the congregation drifted back to the nearby Returned Servicemen's League Club, where a traditional Proof-Rum and Trench breakfast was freely served up for anyone. Within an hour, rum and beer were being liberally passed around, and drunken laughter, in complete contrast to the solemnity of only one hour previously, was heard everywhere at just six thirty in the morning. Nostalgic and racy tales of war and the battlefield trenches, of prostitutes in Paris and other foreign capitals, and the darkest jungles of the Pacific, were the order of the day. All around, almost staring down from the walls of the Club room, hung a display of elaborately framed photographs of young men in military uniforms. They were the local lads who had made "the ultimate sacrifice."

To the ageing ex-servicemen just beginning their day of ritual indulgence in nostalgia the bandie was the hero of the moment. Shining brass instruments tucked neatly under the arms of our military styled uniforms, shoulders of braid, epaulettes and brass buttons, the Boys were heartily congratulated for their music and marching by all. Their youthfulness and disciplined response were strong symbolic reminders of the Anzacs bygone war-time days, and more proof-rum was passed around between backslapping, shouldergrasping and handshaking, as all were reminded to be happy on "the One Day of the Year."

Meanwhile the Ladies of the Band stood quietly in one corner, with no rum or beer. Their part in events seemed quite ignored, forgotten or unappreciated by this very male celebration. Like the ex-servicemen's wives who had prepared the Trench breakfasts in the Club kitchen, and would later drive their drunken husbands home, they did not have a recognised part in this male warrior rite.

By seven o'clock that morning the Bandmaster was rushing frantically around, desperately begging the Boys to "go easy on the grog." Anzac Day for the Band was only just beginning. By nine o'clock the Band was assembled outside the Bus Station Cenotaph for the Transport Workers' Anzac Commemoration Service. Opposite the Band a motley group of mostly young bus drivers, wearing an assortment of redundant battered peak caps, stood holding large wreaths, struggling to stand to attention. A local priest, whom everyone described as "a real Socialist," led the same service as before, except his address to the congregation laid special emphasis on the "working man," and the "role of unions in peace." After this, those few young motley uniformed bus drivers rushed quickly away to their waiting cars, packed with the family, eager to begin their day on the beach. Too young to remember the war, the Service was an obligatory ritual, almost devoid of meaning for them. Their Union leader came sorrowfully across to the Band at the conclusion of events:

> It's no good fellahs. Nobody cares any more, and all the young 'uns don't really remember. Twenty last year, thirteen this year—and all the wogs the Transport's taking on can't really be in it. I think we'll say this is the last—come and see us at the Club in a few weeks, and we'll put you right on your Honorarium. Boys—I can remember when we would get hundreds, maybe thousands, here.

The Main March

Straight after the Bus Station Service the Band pushed on to the city centre for the Main March and Service. In the back streets behind the City's commercial area the March participants argued and negotiated for their positions on the parade.

The music would be provided by brass bands, military bands, and Scottish pipe bands. Groups of ex-servicemen were forming up behind their flags, banners and emblems. Groups of uniformed civilians from the police, fire brigade, ambulance services, nurses, girl guides and scouts all prepared for the "Off." There was a continual flow of men backwards and forwards between the assembling march and the bars of nearby Clubs and Hotels. Already a lot of alcohol was being consumed, and between the passing around of pocket bottles, the occasional ex-serviceman was already to be seen staggering in the street. Down the length of the waiting march small groups were still arguing and debating for their correct positions, whilst others rushed frantically around in the chaos, searching for their contingent. The March, of at least three thousand participants, was always in complete disarray before the "Off." That year, as in other recent years, some of the Boys were heatedly arguing with the Officials and March Stewards about its organisation.

Tom: We are definitely not marching in front of that Vietnam contingent, and that's final. We've all decided—and we bloody well told you so last year. Any other contingent's ok, but not that one. It's personal and the Band have discussed it.

March Steward: I really don't know what it is about you fucking lot—the Bagpipe fellahs are exactly the bloody same. I can't see what's wrong with the Viet Vets for the life of me. I'll have to fit you in with the nurses.

Tom: Can't understand it. Look fellah—see that geezer over there, the one with the scar across his face—well, what's that on his lapel? Well I'll tell you's now, it's a bloody Rhodesian Cross—fucking mercenaries mate—that's what they are—kick the fuckers out!

After more rearranging, and the acquisition of a troop of ageing Red Cross nurses, the Drum Major raised his silver-coned Mace and called the Band to attention. To the swirl of Bagpipes from the front of the March, and to the flat thud of our own Bass Drum, the Band moved off in formation—the pace, "military time." Between the start of the March and its termination a few miles later outside the City Hall, the Band played "The Cossack," "Invercargill," "Colonel Bogey," "Newcastle," and the "Ravenswood" Marches. The same music which has led Australian servicemen on the march for many years.

Through the thinly lined streets of mostly middle-aged and older people who would clap each contingent, down past the War Memorial and on to the City Hall where a high ranking military officer stood on a plinth "Taking the Salute," rows and rows of marching men, and a few less well disciplined women stamped their way in straight lines through the echoing streets of the built-up city centre to the sound of marching music. Heads held high, bodies taut, desperately trying to re-live the marching of their war-time youth. Already many were drunk, and the occasional ambulance rushed away the fallen casualties of the March. In acting out their war-time experiences, and with the deliberate evocation of the memories of their lost brave comrades, many were caught up in a highly emotional state. In the front and behind I could hear the other brass bands thumping out their patriotic

music, above the swirl of the Bagpipes and the rhythmic crunch of Diggers' marching feet.

Back at the Federal

After the marching, the bands made their way to a nearby hotel: the Federal. Here the visiting military band, the local regimental band, two or three brass bands, and as many as six Scottish pipe bands, held their own Anzac celebrations. Beer was free, shouted on by grateful ex-servicement from the March, and the players settled in for a few hours of band talk and entertainment. All the funny stories of the March, plus embroidered yarns of previous Anzac Days, were exchanged among a few hundred bandies. In the middle of the floor a bagpiper played a comical lament, that he announced as "Don't march behind the cavalry without your big boots on." Then to the rattle and tap of a Scots Snare Drum, he broke into a dancing jig, and the Federal became alive with clapping and foot stamping. Amongst the melee of uniforms, instruments and beer glasses a Cornet player broke into a solo. With beer, band folklore, and parodies of their own musical skills, the bands made their own expressive complement to another successful marching performance. Here in the privacy of their own celebrations, in the exclusive company of other musicians, the Anzacs became the butt of many jokes. For the bands, Anzac Day was above all else a performance of their music, and that is what principally gave it meaning to them. It was their music and their marching as much as it was a patriotic ritual for the Anzacs.

Anzac Day was not simply an exercise in nostalgia. For the musicians involved it was a live performance to a very responsive and grateful audience. Most importantly the Boys derived from it the

pleasure of being successful and accomplished musicians, despite the broader interpretations of the day's events by the other participants. As one Band member explained:

Reg: I wouldn't really come if it wasn't for the Federal afterwards. It's a real banding scene you know, with all the Pipes and the Service Bands—and when a few of you get together like this—after a fucking good blow—it makes you realise that if it wasn't for banding none of this bullshit would be going on. It makes you feel, er, you know—that at least if we're not popular, we are at least needed—they just couldn't do it all without us. It seems a strange excuse for a marching performance to me—when you think about it all. But it does bring all the bands together for a good blow—never mind the war heroes.

Back at the Bowling Club: Exclusive Patriotism

Next the Band returned to its Bowling Club and repeated yet another Anzac Day Commemoration Service, the fourth that day, but this time in the exclusive surrounds of its own Club. This was for "Members Only," as the sign on the front gate reminded any would-be visitors. Outside on the prestigious "Social Green," around the flag pole stood the Club's hierarchy: the President, Chairman, Secretary and other members of the Management Committee, flanked by state and local politicians, and a uniformed representative from the Army. An Anglican priest stood by, shuffling his sermon notes nervously. Opposite him, we, the Club's own brass band, sat waiting in contest formation, with the strains of heavy beer drinking obvious on many of the Boys' eyes. Around the flag pole and Band, a semi-circle of men and women in their white Bowlers' uniforms and Club hats stood wafting away the flies in the hot dry afternoon sun. Down the road from the Club wailed the local R.S.L. Pipe Band to the tune of

"Scotland the Brave." Another Anzac Service had started with music and motion, and would end after the due ritual solemnity in alcoholic indulgence.

In the afternoon sun all looked in its place on the manicured lawns of the Bowling Club. The Church, the politicians, a few young soldiers in uniform, two community bands, and the well-attired Club members in their white and blue blazers, all symbolized good order and prosperity.

Despite the snigger which passed through the congregation as the minister of religion stumbled across the phrase "and in that unhappy land of Vietnam," as he recalled a list of Australian battle victories, and despite muffled mocking laughter from the Band and a small group of youths when he warned of moral decay, drugs and sex, the Service continued on its way interrupted only by two drunken Band members who decided to waltz to the hymn of "Abide With Me." The congregation seemed very content, even conceitedly so, with its own exclusive little Anzac Service.

After the Anzac rituals were dispensed with there was free beer in the Club, and the serious drinking and celebrations of Anzac day got underway as the Band prepared for its annual Anzac Concert.

The Club's Anzac Concert

In a one hour concert of two brackets the Band performed a flood of nostalgic music. Striking up with the "Dam Busters' March," played with all the strident gusto and contrasting song melody that its introduction and theme allows, the Band knew that it was playing to an intoxicated audience, bent on remembering their war-time days. On each refrain of the March theme, lips could be seen wording the lyrics, "We who have made our story part of our country's glory...."

Next on the programme was an arrangement, a typical brass band "pot pourri" of war-time popular songs. To the tunes of "It's a Long Way to Tipperary," "Pack Up Your Troubles in Your Old Kit Bag and Smile, Smile, Smile," and "Hello, Hello, Who's Your Lady Friend," the audience of middle-aged and older men and women sang and clapped along with the Band. There were about three hundred sitting and standing in the Club's Auditorium. From the background behind them came the continual roar of Pokie machines. Trays of beer were continuously passed around, and a long line of quite obviously drunken men stood, bodies bent,hanging quietly on to the side counter rail, their eyes glassy, their minds obviously far back in time in some distant battle field.

For the high spot of the Concert, the Band came in with a few introductory phrases, and from behind the stage curtain, in the glare of a spotlight, emerged the Band's singer—a young pristine girl looking less than twenty, posing shy, and dressed in the stage fashion of the forties—a long, thin shoulder dress and V-back hairstyle. Taking the cue from the Bandmaster as he whispered to the Boys, "quietly now, this'll break their hearts," the Band entered with a

few bars of "There'll be Blue Skies Over the White Cliffs of Dover," and the audience roared back in approval. With her arms outstretched to the audience she broke into the melody, her young soprano voice projecting in Vera Lynn style through the applause. For the next few minutes she gained complete silence until she brought the audience into singing the refrain.

So the programme continued along its nostalgic journey back in time through the popular music of the Second World War, with the Boys doing everything possible to "break their hearts." After more drinks the Band finished with a popular encore, "The Can Can," as the theme from Orpheus in the Underworld was always called when requested by audiences.

Finally the Band pushed on to its last engagement of that Anzac Day, to a downtown Bowling Club, which the Boys described as a "real slum alky wog Bowlie." Here, much the same performance was played to a semi-paralytic audience. Eventually the local Scottish Pipe Band arrived. A semi-improvised version of "Amazing Grace" played with a young piper standing in the middle of the Band, and several verses of "Waltzing Matilda" and "Maoris Farewell," in which the Pipe Band marched up and down in front of the stage, brought a conclusion to the Boys' performance. By this time the Band had been on the move for sixteen hours of "the One Day of the Year," and they drove drunkenly home.

The Musical Meanings of Anzac Day

The marching and music of the Anzac Day celebrations are only part of a much larger occasion in which military, religious, political and nostalgic symbols are all influential. In the above descriptive analysis of the events in which the Band played such an important part, the research was mainly concerned with showing how band music, in which I include the marching, the uniform costumes, and disciplined deportment of the Boys, was continuously used to define and redefine the social and emotional context of the celebration. Mostly this was deliberate and understood, as the Bandmaster's on-stage whisper, "this'll break their hearts," showed. Rees and Vera, in "Soundtracking Everyday Life: The Use of Music in Redefining Situations," proposed that:

> music represents an artifact subject to manipulation; music can be introduced or withdrawn in a variety of social occasions to produce varied results, and, perhaps more important, music can be used to manipulate the behaviour, moods, and attitudes of others.[1]

The use of nationalistic music, particularly in the form of National Anthems, has been widely dealt with by Nettl in National Anthems, in which he details how nationalistic music symbolizes the supposed historic superiority of one nation above others:

> Men's preoccupation with the origins of their people, and the pride they take in the heroic descent of their clan have a close correspondence in the idea that the nation to which one belongs must have a special mission in the life of all mankind.[2]

Specifically, this use of music has been recognised and used in recording Australian history. For example, in The Anzacs, Patsy

Adam-Smith provides a photograph of a war-torn city in which a brass band is seen leading in the victorious Diggers.[3] The recent popular film, Breaker Morant, a story of heroic military adventures, and eventual court martial and execution of three Australian soldiers caught up in the trauma of the Boer War, opens up with a scene of a brass band playing in a park rotunda. The film's soundtrack utilizes the music of the Tanunda City Brass Band to evoke the nationalistic and militaristic sentiments of that era.

So it was with the Band's marches on Anzac Day. They summoned up, from deep in the ex-servicemen's minds, the pictures, movements and emotions of heroes fighting for national pride. Similarly Anzac Day's use of religious music, in the form of hymns which emphasised immortality and reminded participants not to forget, is another example of the way meanings encoded into band music are used to define and redefine situations. In this particular case, that the Anzacs who died and suffered, did so for God as much as for Australia. Again, in the Club concert, the Band's music was used to soundtrack the war-time youth and courtship days of the audience. Other research, such as that of Walker's "The Soundtrack of Their Youth," has provided rich descriptive detail of how popular music does not so much pass out of fashion, but rather, ages with its followers.[4] To many of the audience at the concert, the war-time popular songs were their songs, and memories of their youth were encoded into the sounds and lyrics.

The Boys were only too well aware of the effects and purpose of their music for their Anzac Day audiences. This was obvious from both the pride they took in their performances, and from their cynical comments. The conversations and jokes at the Federal Hotel were evidence of their ability to be detached from their audiences, but not however from the situation.

Anzac Day performances led to frequent arguments and disputes within the Band. While it was true that they all enjoyed a full day of banding together, and deeply appreciated the attention and affection their audiences paid them, the strains which were evident at the Bus Station Service where youths and new migrants felt uninvolved with the ceremonies, also existed in the Band, and many had become increasingly hostile towards its unquestioning involvement in recent years. Anzac Day had not lost its meaning, but like the popular songs which thrilled its participants, it belonged to a passing generation. It was mostly the younger members of the Band who voiced their objections to continued participation, one of whom emphatically explained "their" position to me after one of these heated arguments.

Cat: I fucking hate it, to be honest mate—most of us younger ones do. Yeh, yeh—the music's good and all that, and oh! sure there's lots of grog and cheering, but all these speeches and hypocritical ministers, and those fucking cunts raving on about killing each other makes me sick to be honest. Fair go—did you hear him out there? That Anglican vicar, just—for those who died here, there, and every fucking where—and then the 'unhappy land of Vietnam'—shit! Makes me sick, oath, it'd make a dead dog sick!

However when I enquired why the Band continued to do these performances, Cat explained the traditional and economic basis for the Band's involvement.

Cat: Well, it is traditional. Brass bands have always done it. It's like Band caps—if you don't wear them, then, er, you're just not a town band—period. The Band earns a lot of good will on Anzac Day, and without it we'd lose a lot of money and favours. Next month we'll start tapping that lot for our Honorarium. But us—huh! We—how do they say—'youth'—we just get stoned and cruise through. I just don't know why we have to make such a big

deal out of war. All these Ars'ole Clubs are a fucking nightmare. You've just got to be off your face to cope.

Jock: (from the Pipe Band):
'Just pack up the Bong with the Queeny Purple, and suck boys that's the style.'

(laughter)

Cat's explanation of how he felt about the Anzac Day celebrations typified what many of the players born since the Second World War thought about the day's events. Although they appreciated the opportunity to perform to such a receptive audience, and they realised that the money and good will earned by the Band were desperately needed, they were suspicious of what they would often describe as the "glorification of war," if not outright hostile.

GM: Do you feel the same as Cat, Barry, about the "glorification of war" bit?

Barry: All that marching out there. Well, I can er, understand it. But that's got nothing to do with me being a musician—and I really love a good marching band. We're um, er, basically imitating soldiers out there—and we're marching as if it was war, rather than a musical performance—and that's a real bummer as far as I'm concerned.

Cat and Barry's discomfort about the Band's involvement in a blatant militaristic ceremony was not shared, however, by the older men in the Band, who felt quite differently towards Anzac Day. This was because they could positively identify with what the Anzac celebrations were commemorating in terms of their personal experiences. One of them explained his feelings after listening to the complaints from the younger Boys.

GM: You've heard Cat and Barry, and the others. How long have you been playing on Anzac Day, and what do you feel about it?

Tom: Er, um, twenty five years now, and I don't think I've missed one yet. How should I put it now? I see the lads' point of view—just don't paint me into a corner—if you like. An Anzac Day is when a brass band just can't be done without, us and our music—if you see what I mean. It's when we're heroes and they, er, really need us. Brass bands marched many of the fellahs through the war, and they remember it too.

GM: But what about the military image? Brass bands have got little to do with war.

Mal: Well, er, they have really. It was brass bands that led the 'Cooee!' Recruitment March back in 1915. All Regiments had their own band, until ten years ago, when they went Yankie. They were all brass too, proper bands instead of all this tin whistle and squeeky shit—so they're not what they used to be either, I'll admit. That's what bandies do when war-time comes, join the Regimental Band. I'd rather be shooting top 'Cs' than bullets. But, er, it's not indiscriminate, and I'd like the young 'uns to appreciate that point. Those fellahs out there did fight, and fight hard, in the Second World War—and they lost their mates, brothers and fathers out there. I fought, and I saw and did things with me trumpet in the kit-bag which I'd rather not say or think about. So, we, er, made a promise—a solemn oath, like—that we would remember them—'lest we forget,' as we keep repeating—and we do just that on the One Day of the Year. Anzac Day is when we keep our promise—in the style that they'd have liked it.

Tom: But, it's those Vietnam Vets that piss me off.

GM: Why is that Tom?

Tom: You heard us getting amongst them this morning. Last year I think it was—they lined up behind us. Some were wearing that Rhodesia Cross. I reckon you never saw such a bunch of fucking mercenaries and thugs. Well, I know that I didn't march on Vietnam Demos, and many other brass bands didn't either, just to lead that bunch of mercenaries through the streets as heroes. There's been a lot of trouble over that, I can tell you. Brass bands are a respectable part of the working class Movement. If we, er, fight and die out there for democracy, freedom of speech, y'know, against Fascists like Hitler and the Japs—well OK!—it needs celebrating. But Vietnam Vets. Oh shit no! We demonstrated and the Band played on the self same street against that shit.

Dick: I disagree with Tom. And I mean, sure, a lot of good fellahs got their balls blown off out there for the right cause, but brass bands are for people of all ages—young 'uns and old soldiers like Tom. I mean, Christ! Is this what we want our kids to think is right—having a good old war now and again?

Mal: You's fellahs are just lucky you haven't had to choose, that's all. I mean—you didn't have to make the promise all covered with shit, blood and mud, and with your balls tied up with barbed wire—I envy you.

As the transcripts show, the Boys had a lot of mixed feelings about Anzac Day. All of them realised the traditional part brass bands played in redefining the emotions and social situations of the day. However, a younger generation of bandies who had not fought, or been enlisted, or called upon to "choose" as Mal put it, could not identify with the symbology of the occasion, despite the fact that "a lot of good fellahs got their balls blown off out there for the right cause...." Further complications in the players' attitudes towards Anzac Day came from events of the Vietnam War. Whilst the Second World War seemed just and correct in their views, the presence of Vietnam Veterans illuminated a contradiction in the meaning of the celebrations. Tom, who supported the idea of Anzac Day, pointed out that brass bands led many Vietnam demonstrations. Now that they were expected to lead Vietnam's Veterans through the streets like a "bunch of heroes," this further weakened the older Boys case for future participation in Anzac Day celebrations. In addition to all of this, the vast amount of alcohol which was consumed, the very maleness of the occasion, and the bawdy talk of prostitutes and easy women, infuriated many of the younger members of the Band, in particular the women.

GM: Ladies! Steam's been pouring out of your ears all day. Tell me all!

Sally: O come on—leave it out—give us a break Graham! You know what's going on. That's all Anzac is about—big men and little girls. It's about getting drunk and breast beating. I read this book, women do you know, that half of these fellahs came down with VD in the war. They come down here, and just get blotto and touch each other up. Of course women didn't do anything in the war, did they? There were no nurses, or Land Army, or widows. Jim Murphy down there—did you hear him just?—'Aw—Captain said to fuck every Fraulein on the way to Berlin.' And he's boasting about it. How do you think we feel about that!

The emergence of women in the brass band movement, and a younger generation of musicians, were placing such strains upon the Band's traditional commitment to the Anzac Day celebrations that it seemed unlikely at the close of the research that the Boys would play as a Band on many more Anzac Days, despite the loss of revenue and community support this would incur. For the Ladies of the Band at least, it seemed like a blatant affront that stories of rape and prostitutes should be so loudly laughed about in a celebration which scarcely recognised women's role in Australian history, and apparently cared even less for their presence and contribution to the day's celebrations.

Fig. 15: Kotarah Band marching down Newcastle's high street on Anzac Day.

Fig. 16: Bandies drinking at the Federal Hotel after the Newcastle Anzac Day March.

Chapter 10

Carnival Marching

Carnivals were traditional popular events in which town bands played an important part. During the research the Band performed on three local Mattara Day Parades in central Newcastle, and two important wine festival parades in the Hunter Valley. Although essentially marching performances, they were in stark contrast to the militaristic and religious celebrations of Anzac Day.

The Mattara Day Parade was the finale of a week's celebrations, involving concerts, exhibitions, competitions, and a fun-fair. Performing music on the 1979 parade were three local brass bands, two military bands, and six or more Scottish pipe bands. Almost the same combination of musical groups had performed for the Anzac Day March. In addition, for Mattara, a few jazz bands were mounted on the back of trucks.

The Newcastle Mattara Day Parade looked very much like many other carnival street processions held in towns throughout Australia. There were brass bands, bagpipe bands, large motorised floats, masked and painted clowns, display groups promoting clubs and companies, and a beautiful young woman who had been made "Queen" of the moment. By noon on Mattara Day the streets of central Newcastle were lined with thousands of people of all ages, but dominated by parents with young

children waving balloons and bunting. Meanwhile all the participants in the carnival parade were assembling under the direction of uniformed military personnel, seconded by the Mattara Day Committee for the occasion.

Behind Kotarah Band stood a Cub Scout Pack, further back were a marching girls' team, then a dingo owners' club sporting a few dozen prize dingos on leads and a banner proclaiming "Dingos are Real Dogs." In front of the Band was the Mattara Queen and her entourage, displayed on flashing neon-lit thrones, suspended on a billowing float of paper flowers and purple satin drapes. Further along still a jazz group dressed as clowns were warming up, and frantic March marshals tried to keep the Roller Skating Club in a fixed position. Dozens of small groups, mostly from amateur community associations, mixed in amongst the large commercial advertising floats, waiting impatiently for the parade to set off. As on all similar occasions I attended we were late beginning, and there was a scene of complete bedlam with last minute disasters and disorder. A mass of strangely costumed people milled around fantastic floats, looking more like a scene from Disneyland than the industrial city of Newcastle.

Eventually word came down the line that we were "Off." Far in the distance the thumping Drums and blasting Trombones of the Navy Band could be heard, along with the swirl of Bagpipes and the rattle of Snare Drums. Kotarah's Drum Major blew his whistle, and raising the mace high above his head, shouted "Band." The Boys shuffled into their five abreast marching formation: five Trombones at the front, followed by five Basses, Euphoniums, Baritones, Horns and Cornets. At the rear a Bass Drum and Side Drum prepared to pick up the beat.

As the parade stretched out the Drum Major cried, "Band, attention. On the Beat. Two Bars in. Left—left—left." Thirty five musicians moved off in unison. Instruments were held uniformly under the arm, each instrument lyre crammed with the five marches of the day. To the rhythmic left beat of the Bass Drum the exactly positioned rectangle of players moved along in formation, down the waiting corridor of clapping adults and cheering children. The carnival performance had begun.

The mood and style of the parade was unmistakeably happy and festive, in complete contrast to the marching of Anzac Day. Instead of being a symbolic reminder of a military past, the Band was now a musical dance team celebrating the present, a time of peace and prosperity, by entertaining a light-hearted audience with a frivolous visual-acoustic spectacle. Two of the marches played on route, "The Cossack" and "Newcastle," could also have been heard on the Anzac Day parade. However the other music was much lighter and based around tunes which have popular comical associations, such as "Lily the Pink" (a humorous hit song of the late sixties by the group Scaffold), the "Liberty Bell" (now more commonly known as the Monty Python theme tune), and "Yellow Submarine" (the title tune of the film, in which The Beatles appeared in cartoon animation as Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band, a symbolic community brass band). The first few bars of any of these marches were usually enough to bring a smile of recognition to more than a few faces. Most of the other bands on the carnival march were playing light American Souza Marches, and quickstep transcriptions such as "Dixie Doodle Rag."

Blasting into a loud and lively "Lily the Pink" the Band proceeded along the High Street in Quickstep pace, with its retinue

of dingos, clowns, Cubs, and a team of bare-footed karate devotees in pyjama suits. As the Band reached the end of the carnival route, and rounded the last corner in counter-march formation, balloons and streamers flew through the air. On the imposing steps of the City Hall, the Lady Mayor stood, wearing her gold chain of office, giving a final regal wave and blessing to the proceedings.

It was both physically and mentally demanding to play music with any confidence whatsoever whilst marching. It was after all a strenuous choreographic routine, which required a memorised series of steps and formation positions. Although rehearsed and practiced, in some cases according to marching manuscripts, it was still a precarious exercise in the High Street. Particularly so on a carnival march, where rows of exuberant people would spill off the pavements, bringing the audience unnervingly close. There was no raised sanctuary of stage or band-stand here. This was music on the streets and people pressed in on all sides. I felt, more than on any other performing occasions, intimidated and distracted by our audience. Other hazards which beset us included pot-holes in the road, flying bunting and the continual dodging in and out of clowns on roller skates. Warnings passed down the Band from the Drum Major, "pot-hole, line two," "parked car, far left," as we continued our choreographic display down the street. By the time the Band had finished its routine most were completely exhausted from the strenuous activity, and retired to the Federal Hotel, where members from other bands would also gather. As on Anzac Days this exclusive bandie congregation was a significant social aspect of the annual parade.

Transcripts from a Discussion on Carnival Marching with the Boys at the Federal

GM: Do you enjoy doing this sort of marching performance?

Pete: It's all a bit of a joke really—but very good fun. Back in 1961 the City Council decided to revamp the old traditional Carnival again, and it's been going well ever since. I, er, do like a good street march when everyone's having a good time—that's when we can put in all the fancy marching and we're not constrained, er, you know, not held back by the rigid military drill, so we can do all the fancy footwork and swagger a bit. It's, er, as if people expect something silly to happen, you know, as if they're all keyed up to laugh. Once we all get swaying together on a short step, so the beat's really tapping, it's great—a real good laugh. Look how we did Monty Python's 'Liberty Bell' out there.

GM: Do you mean that the festival mood on Mattara Day helps you march differently to, say, Anzac Day?

Barry: Oh well, I mean it's not exactly a Mardi Gras from Rio—but sure, yeh—people come down here to the parade and the fairground to enjoy themselves. And you can't beat a good band on the march—people love it. Did you hear them cheering us? It really feels good y'know, especially when the swagger sets in, and the Trombones are getting some bounce back off the buildings—you'll see all of the other groups getting into a quickstep foot tap with us.

GM: Do you mean that once you've added brass band music to the festival atmosphere this changes the way people behave?

Barry: Yeh—look at those karate fellahs in the pyjamas. They started the march back at the start looking like the Hulk—you know—all stiff and growling, until we blasted a bit of 'Lily the Pink' into them, and a few bars later they were dancing along man—right up behind the Marching Girls.

GM: Do you mean that you can actually see and hear your marching music changing people's moods—making things more fun?

Wally: Well sure, yeh—sort of. I mean we just wouldn't be here otherwise. They all prefer a brass band to the military bands because they just thump along in strict precision like soldiers. Er—they can't

improvise their step and throw in a bit of the old freestyle and fancy footwork. Last year it was—er, we came down to the Darby Street junction and the Army Band did a perfect left wheel in front of us. Fucking perfect it was. Well when it was our turn, the front row all did a side step—and it just spread down the Band—it was great—no rehearsal needed—just being able to get into the mood together. Everybody knew we were taking the piss out of the Army Band—and they all started cheering because they knew that we were mucking about and having a laugh and a joke.

GM: But you still take it very seriously. Marching has to be learned and rehearsed. I'm completely lost out there.

Stan: Oh Yeh! But not so much, I mean not like the playing or the contesting. Actually this is a contest this March is, and the best band gets a prize—not us of course—but that's because the silly old fucker from the Army likes all that military bullshit. People can't really identify with all of that sort of thing on a Carnival Parade—can they? They like to see their local town band out there, and not the armed forces. But it's us that gets the cheering and applause because they know who we are—and we can, y'know, er, like Wally says—have a bit of fun and a joke with the crowds as we go past.

GM: So there's a large visual and acting component in the performance as well as just the music?

Henry: Yes, but, it's only mucking around, and y'know, that sort of thing. Frankly I find it as embarrassing as hell out there. It's sun glasses and my cap down for me. Just what are thirty odd fellahs, dressed in ridiculous clothes, doing prancing down the main drag like a bunch of poofters? I know it's traditional and expected, and everyone loves it—but it can be very embarrassing. Marching is—strictly for the Birds.

GM: But you do put a lot of work into the choreographic style, and you do enjoy it all.

Tec: Yeh! Right, even you, Henry, have to admit that when the old machine starts pumping away and you're getting your feet on the beat—you love it. Go on, admit it—don't you? See the silly cunt's smiling. It's like—you don't like it because some of your mates will take the piss out of you at work—not 'cos you don't really feel it big when the swaggering sets into the step.

Henry: True, true, I don't deny it's all good fun and I enjoy it—but it's more than stage fright—sorry, street fright. Sometimes I think I'm in a Keystone Cops movie.

GM: So this kind of marching is definitely a comedy routine, a theatrical performance to the music?

All: Yeh! (laughter)

Larry: There's one kind of marching for, say, Anzac—y'know it puts them in the soldiering mood—and there's another for carnivals when everyone's mucking around—it's to make people happy, to entertain them—to make it a carnival atmosphere.

GM: Well, you don't all seem that keen on marching. Some of you think that it distracts from serious music.

Giles: Yeh, it does. But it's what the public really want from its town band.

Pete: It's not an old thing really—this sort of fancy marching anyway. It came in during the fifties—it's Yankie influence—and I don't think the older fellahs like prancing around like a bunch of poofters.

GM: But you still think it's important to banding?

Tec: Look, marching is when the public sees us most. That's when we're on display, so we've got to get stuck into the spirit of the thing. Bands rely on the general public for their support. That's what the general public want from brass bands—they love the marching. It's no good bands locking themselves up in their bandrooms practicing for the next contest if we want the movement to get ahead.

GM: Do I understand that there is a general feeling of division amongst bandies as to the importance of marching?

Stan: Yeh, there is, at least a feeling, not a conflict. But that's how most of us feel, like Tec says. Bands are doing themselves a great disfavour by not developing all the new marching styles like you see coming out of the States and Europe. Look, we could be booked out for months ahead, just for marching—everybody likes a marching band because it's a live performance—something you can't get on a record or hear on the radio. It's a music and dance routine, isn't it, with the movement and colour, and sound, and patterns—isn't it?

Chas: Oh—this is a lot of balls if you ask me. You can either be a good brass band or a good marching band, one or the other. I mean, when it comes to all this fancy gear we're lost—I mean compared to the marching mobs. We should leave all this crap out. Like Henry says, it's strictly for the Birds.

GM: Do many people feel the same way, Jim?

Jim: It's not so simple. Look. It's a real community run thing. Nearly everybody out there, except the big commercial floats, is from an amateur group—y'know, it's all community, and we have committees, all amateur so to speak, to fix it all up. They plan this all fucking year. Well, what I mean to say is sure—we should be in it—central to it—in fact we are an important part of its organization and planning—not to mention the performance. It's a real community thing.

GM: And?

Jim: Well, we used to just turn up at them and do a march—simple—straight forward march, no fancy stuff, bit of fun and laugh with the audience—y'know, just mucking around—we're the Town Band enjoying ourselves, sort of thing. Well, now we have to do all the fancy gear—counter marching pattern displays—and it's all getting out of hand, and using up valuable contest practice time—y'see—we got to choose—are we ballet dancers or bandies?

"Ballet Dancers or Bandies?"

March music was the music most readily associated with brass bands by the general public. The marching performance, as the Boys realised, was where they were most popular and entertained their largest audiences. As a distinct compositional and performance style, the march was in a class of its own, much like the contest music and hymn tunes which were discussed in Chapters Eight and Nine respectively. As an integral part of the brass band repertoire, and in a similar way to contest music and hymn tunes, the march too had been developed and stylized in an identifiably brass band way, ever since its overriding importance to banding during the movement's formative years. In its performance could be heard a distinctive approach, not necessarily obvious from the music manuscript, which characterized what the Boys called "the brass band sound." This included such interpretational qualities as "attack and release," "clean trio," "good middle" and

"fine beat," for example. Virtually no brass band performance was complete without the rendition of one of these gusty traditional style marches. They had acquired the force of a signature tune, and constituted the largest single category of music composed and published for the brass band score.

The march as a compositional style, and marching as a performance style, were however quite distinct from each other, even though the latter almost always depended on the former. A march actually played while marching would be executed differently from a seated stage performance of the same piece of music. On stage the major channel of expression was in the sound produced by the Band, the tempo of which the Bandmaster could direct and control. By contrast, marching was music on the move, led by the Drum Major; group spatial configurations, unity of body movements, and deportment were much more important as expressive qualities. Consequently I see marching as an art form in itself. It is a visual group performance in which motion and music are set together in a distinct choreographic style which has separate applications, many according to the context of the occasion of its performance. For example, the strict military marching of Anzac Day can be compared with the more free style quickstep of the carnival parade. Each marching style conveyed different meanings to the audience, and in turn solicited a different response. There were other styles also, such as formation, display, and drill marching which some brass bands contested, and for which a large body of music and choreographic routine was composed and published. Brass bands were marginally attached to, and shared in, this art form along with a large diverse and mostly amateur expressive cultural enterprise which included among others, marching girls' teams, marching bands, drill bands, drum majorettes, Scottish pipe bands, military bands, and pageant

groups of all descriptions. There were manuals and manuscripts for flags, drums and tambourines, for example, which were all separate manifestations which had sprung out of marching as an art form.[1]

The Boys in the Band had one basic marching style, with a few newly devised variations and routines, which they would use according to the occasions on which they performed. How the Boys viewed marching varied according to such occasions, and what these meant to them personally. Unlike the contest performance with its enthusiastic group commitment, marching was always viewed in some quarters with disquiet, and frequently seen as an activity more suitable for young women in short skirts and high boots. It was consequently never something which the Band did with whole-hearted enthusiasm or thorough preparation. Although there was no actual dissension about whether or not the Band should perform on carnival parades, because the Boys believed in the very traditional community based activities of which they were a part, and in which the town band had always quite literally played a leading part. However what they did on the march, exactly how they expressed themselves choreographically, and the degree of commitment such an artistic pursuit should involve, were the subjects of a continual debate which, much like the Band's contentious participation in Anzac Day celebrations was drawing to a crisis among the Boys.

The previous chapter pointed out that the older Boys generally supported the activities of Anzac Day. This was because they personally identified with the Day's symbolic meanings. The audiences on these occasions belonged to their age group, being largely middle-aged or older, and much of the music surrounding the occasion was the popular music of their war-time youth. Oppositely carnival marching was most

popular amongst the younger Boys in the Band. The reasons for this included the fact that the carnival audience was much more heterogeneous in age, and contained a greater proportion of young people. The predominant music of the occasion was also much more contemporary, had become popular and acquired particular associations during the younger Boys' lifetimes, and this was also important. Rather than being a solemn nostalgic ritual, the carnival was an amusing light-hearted fancy dress show, and was a festival which had more meaning for a younger generation.

The new free style fun marching and display choreography, which had emerged and achieved popularity in America and Europe, was eroding the stricter military style march performance which many of the older Boys understood as "marching." Their participation in the new marching styles was causing them some embarrassment, and placing new demands on their traditional banding skills. For most of the younger Boys it was all "a bit of a joke," which they enjoyed. As Pete put it, "we're not constrained...not held back by the rigid military drill." He, and others, saw it as a means of expressing themselves, often as the situation demanded by improvised "fancy footwork." But, for most of their maturer colleagues, it was all "a lot of balls" and "strictly for the Birds."

All of the Boys seemed to realise the extent to which their very public expressive marching performances, as on Anzac Day, could fashion and define the mood of their audiences. They understood too that people came to carnivals to have a good time, and there was general agreement that they needed to act up to this situation in order to be part of these bizarre and imaginative community events in the full sense of the occasion. One of the Boys pointed out that carnival audiences

preferred brass bands to the military bands because they were more entertaining. The military bands, by contrast, "just thump along in strict military precision like soldiers, they can't improvise their step and throw in a bit of free style." The fact that Kotarah were a community band, as opposed to a military one, meant that they could not only provide comical antics because, as Stan said, "they (the audience) know who we are," but could also reinforce that identity and draw considerable public attention and approval through their carnival performance. This was an important argument in the pro-marching lobby.

In carnival marching the Band found that they could relate to a popular audience, who knew them as their Town Band, in a relaxed and socially integrated folk situation. As one of the Boys pointed out "everyone just started cheering because they knew we was muckin' about and havin' a laugh and a joke." This kind of performance had considerable appeal for many of the Boys, who not only believed that the Band should provide the audience with what they wanted, but also personally enjoyed having their "foot on the beat when the swagger sets in." They could see and feel that their music was influencing events in a festive way. Barry's description of the Karate Club's change of mood, from "the Hulk...all stiff and growling" to "dancing along man, right up behind the Marching Girls" after the Band had "blasted a bit of 'Lily the Pink' into them," was evidence of this, and most of the Boys agreed with him.

The carnival parade, with the addition of new free style marching, provided new expressive possibilities for brass bands which many younger Boys felt they, as a Band, should pursue. Stan, for example, related how he felt bands were "doing themselves a great disfavour by not developing the new marching styles like you see coming out of

the States and Europe." Carnival marching employed dance, movement, colour, sound and pattern. It had a wide appeal because it was a very "live" performance, the effect and atmosphere of which was created through a combination of these facets, and could not therefore be adequately captured simply through a sound recording.

Counter to the younger Boys' enthusiasm for the pursuit of new marching performances, which held the promise of increased popularity and engagement bookings, many of the older members of the Band argued that they were "serious" musicians who should leave such "fancy" marching to marching girls and similar drill teams. Many found the carnival marching performance socially embarrassing, and agreed with Henry that "thirty odd fellahs dressed in these ridiculous clothes...prancing down the main drag like a bunch of poofters" was really going too far. They felt such behaviour was insulting to their perception of manhood. The renowned practitioners of the art of "fancy" display marching were marching girls' teams, and the older Boys viewed their participation in this activity as demeaning and improper as it seemed to them to be a feminine accomplishment. It made them feel like "poofters," and they obviously feared the ridicule of friends and workmates who would regard their part in carnival marching in this light. Interestingly, many of the Boys who disagreed with "fancy" marching did admit that they enjoyed themselves when they were actually out in the street doing it.

In addition to the social embarrassment, the second major objection to carnival marching and its new developments came from many of the Boys who felt that such a "comedy routine" mocked their status and self-esteem as good and serious musicians, and did so at the expense of traditional brass band music styles. Chas, one of the loudest critics of the new marching, frequently pointed out this dilemma, and called

carnival marching "a lot of balls." He insisted that the Boys could either be a brass band or a marching band. In previous years the Band simply tuned up and did a "straight forward march—no fancy stuff." Providing the Band could have a "bit of fun and laugh with the audience" that was fine, but Chas and others believed that carnival marching was "getting out of hand, and using up valuable contest practice time." They argued that the Band had reached a critical point, and now had to choose whether they wanted to be "ballet dancers" or "bandies."

The carnival parade was an important event for brass bands in a number of complex ways. Firstly, it was a traditional popular annual event in which they had always figured prominently, and at which they performed to large enthusiastic audiences. Secondly, it was a community based festival into which many essentially amateur organizations put a great deal of preparation and planning throughout the year. Brass bands were among these organizations, and the support they would receive for their efforts would be important to them in their community activities. Thirdly, the carnival parade provided the opportunity to perform a choreographic audio-visual spectacular, in which brass band music could significantly help to define the social situation as being a festive one.

Most of this was appreciated by the Boys who remained strongly committed to participation in carnivals. The major problem for them lay in the changing nature and enterprise of their traditional marching style. The cost of adopting such new styles was however a challenge to the Band's traditional musical commitments. New marching routines had to be learned, drilled and practiced, probably at the expense of time spent on straight forward music practice and rehearsal. It was this problem which principally divided the Boys, and which they had to confront during the research.

Music and performance styles are in a continual state of flux, always marginally changing, sometimes quickly, other times slowly, according to interpretive developments, social sanction and demand, and according to variations in the context of the performance occasion. In the previous chapter mentionwas made of the change in attitude of both bandies and the public towards the music of Anzac Day. Audiences were getting smaller, older, and less committed. Many of the younger musicians were in revolt against a performance that they saw as "a glorification of war," and belonging to a passing generation. Here ritual and its music were caught up in, and were a part of, dynamic cultural changes and adjustments. Similarly, with carnival marching, although in this case the challenge was from something new and innovative, rather than old and traditional. New performance styles and expressive dimensions had become a reality of marching, and a new art form offered an opportunity to reach appreciative large scale public audiences.[2]

The "ballet dancers or bandies" debate was finally resolved in bandpractice discussion, following a debate over what was thought to be a decline in the Band's ability to tackle serious music. Contesting was what banding was all about for most of the Boys, and they decided that "fancy" marching should be dropped. Their usual commitment to carnivals would continue, they decided, but "straight forward marching and a bit of mucking about" would be the limit of their involvement. "Fancy" marching was to be left "strictly for the Birds."

Mattara was a contemporary example of the ancient carnival tradition, having its roots in religious and seasonal celebrations, and found almost worldwide.[3] Bakhtin's writings on medieval European carnival see it as subversion and liberation, highly politicised and satirical.[4] Carnival in some countries has been a form of protest against religious and social oppression, and a kind of limited personal liberation during which the normal constraints on social behaviour could be ignored. Rio de Janeiro's fabled annual carnival is still the occasion for an orgy of excessive behaviour, and its fantastic and colourful spectacle is accompanied by thousands of arrests and injuries, and high numbers of murders, rapes and robberies.[5] Evidently very little of this kind of "carnival" spirit and license was to be found in Newcastle's Mattara, which was well-ordered and absolutely inoffensive, having few accidents apart from a few roller skaters grazed knees and half a dozen lost children. Although still largely a community organised event, involving local community groups, there was also considerable commercial participation from local businesses which seized the opportunity for some cheap and showy advertising. The Bakhtinian "world turned upside down" was only present to the extent that people were wearing "funny" clothes and doing "silly" things in the street that they would not normally have considered suitable for public behaviour. A "fake" policeman/clown would probably have been the most subversive element in the Parade. The Band's response and decision not to take carnival marching "seriously" and just stick to being themselves was in some sense perhaps true to Bakhtin's notion of the spirit of carnival, and the Boy's own particular sense of humour which was very much based on the conception of a topsy turvy world.[6] Also, the humour of the Band's "mucking about" on the Mattara march was accentuated by the contrast with their "serious" appearance on the Anzac Day street parade, so the carnival occasion could be seen as a mild mockery of the military occasion. A community town band like Kotarah could make a joke out of the

militaristic image of the brass band in a way that the actual military bands participating in the Mattara Day Parade could not possibly consider doing in public.

Fig. 17: Kotarah Band doing "fancy footwork" on the Mattara Carnival Parade.

Fig. 18: Marching at Mattara, Kotarah Band on the Carnival Parade.

Fig. 19: One of Newcastle's Scottish Pipe Bands passing the City Hall on the Mattara Parade

Fig. 20: A typical Marching Girls Team on an Australia Day Parade in Sydney

Chapter 11

Club Gigs

Club gigs were a major form of financial revenue for the Band. They usually came about (as outlined in Chapter Seven) as a result of "kick-backs" for the Band's involvement in community activities, such as charity playouts, Anzac Day, carnival parades, and other local performances.

During the course of the research I played with the Band on more than twenty club gigs, and they took me closer to community life in Newcastle than any of the Band's other activities. Club concert performances were extremely popular with the Boys because they gave the Band direct and central access to what constituted the largest entertainment and recreational industry in New South Wales.

The "clubs," as they were simply called, grew into importance as community organisations in post-War New South Wales frcm a variety of associations such as the Returned Servicemen's League, Workers' Recreational Associations, Rugby League, Bowling and Sailing Clubs. By the time of this research they were a wide network of generally well-appointed community leisure centres, which had been largely financed from the profits made on Pokie machines, generous tax concessions, and the sale of alcohol in comfortable drinking lounges providing respectable dancing and cabaret entertainment for men and women.

In some cases clubs had grown and expanded through the very professional provision of popular dance music and stage cabaret into

huge establishments catering for thousands of members and guests. One such club in Newcastle city centre, the Newcastle Workers' Club (known more colloquially as "the Workies"), was able to run three separate music and dance performances simultaneously, alongside a choice of two restaurants, film shows, and hundreds of mechanical gambling devices spread throughout its many bars. Clubs as large and successful as "the Workies" were however the exception to the rule, and most had more modestly sprung up within, and were closely identified with, one of Newcastle's residential suburbs. These smaller clubs more truly represented an active membership from the local community. They, more than any other organisation or institution, could genuinely be described as "community centres." They represented so much of what ordinary suburban working class life was about that any description of community in New South Wales would be inadequate without their inclusion. The Band itself was part of a bowling club, typical of the clubs found in many of Newcastle's suburbs. Similarly, other clubs sponsored a variety of sports and cultural activities such as sailing, fishing, yoga, tennis, Scottish pipe bands and dancing, which were not directly connected with the original reasons for the clubs' establishment. The clubs had simply provided a focus, or centre, to which many small recreational, sporting and social groups had gravitated over the previous twenty years.

Under the Cooperative Clubs Act of New South Wales the clubs were democratically organised, with the formal annual election of Officers to a Management Committee. This however did not mean that they were democratic organisations in the fullest sense of users' control. Most clubs had a form of dual membership: Full and Social. Only Full members had a vote, and hence control in the actual management of a club. Full membership was usually restricted in size, and

potential applicants were strictly reviewed, vetted, and consequently tightly controlled. Women were only eligible for Social membership in most clubs. Never the less, most of the clubs' profits went directly back into the provision of club facilities, and they were entirely dependent upon attracting a regular clientele for their economic success. What they offered in the way of bars, recreational activities, food and entertainment was usually cheaper, superior, and available for longer hours than facilities offered by commercial enterprises such as hotels. As the Secretary of one suburban "Workies" would always announce when he eulogised the success of his club at public meetings, "We in New South Wales haven't yet achieved workers' control of industry, but we sure got workers' control of the pubs."

The most substantial manifestations of suburban Newcastle's social and cultural life happened in and around the clubs. It was not surprising that the Band felt at home and in their right element playing and organising within them. This section of the descriptive analysis is principally concerned with what club performances meant to the Boys, why they enjoyed playing such a variety of music (typically not brass band compositions in origin), and the constraints and limitations placed upon the expansion of club gigs as an important form of popular entertainment by the local branch of the Professional Musicians' Union.

The Club Performance

The Band's club gig performances usually took place at weekends, in the late afternoon or early evening, and followed a fairly regular pattern of events. They consisted of two or three thirty-minute brackets of light popular music, which would feature local amateur

guest artists and singalong numbers. On all such occasions during the research the Band attracted a packed house of two or three hundred, who would sit around tables consuming alcohol. During intervals, as before and after the performance, the Boys would mix and drink with the audience in the club. There was never a large division between artist and audience in that respect, for this was genuinely "folk" music. Similarly, the music performed was aimed at a sympathetic audience concerned essentially with relaxation and entertainment. For example, "serious" or classical music in the form of transcriptions from orchestral works or purpose-written music for contesting was rarely included in these programmes, unless it had received popular mediation through film or television. Although "serious" music had been performed by the Band at clubs in the past this had been largely unsuccessful, and the audiences had left no doubt that they preferred light popular music which they knew well, could "tap their feet to," and have a "singalong" with. Below I have set out three typical club gig concert programmes:

Kotarah Bowling Club Brass Band

Programme for Newcastle City R.S.L. CLUB..... SUNDAY AUGUST 13th 1977

SEGMENT A:

1) NO BUSINESS LIKE SHOW BUSINESS (from "Annie Get Your Gun")

2) THEME FROM "THE PRISONER" (T.V. Series starring Patrick McGoohan)

3) THE FLORAL DANCE (as played by Brighouse & Rastrick Band recently on Top 40)

4) GUEST ARTIST: LYNNE WALKER....a) I DON'T KNOW HOW TO LOVE HIM (with Band)
b)
c) PUPPET ON A STRING (with Band)
d)
e) CLIMB EVERY MOUNTAIN (with Band)

5) IL SILENZIO

6) BLACK AND WHITE MINSTRELS SINGALONG (No. 2)

. . . . . .

SEGMENT B:

1) MARCH OF THE HERALD (request from a club member)

2) JAMES BOND THEME (from the movie "From Russia With Love)

3) SQUARE DANCE (bright Hoe-Down style number)

4) GUEST ARTIST: ANDREW WALKER.....Magician

5) BARNACLE BILL

6) JOLSON MEMORIES (SINGALONG)

. . . . . .

SEGMENT C:

1) COLONEL BOGEY MARCH (Theme from the movie "Bridge on the River Kwai")

2) A WALK IN THE BLACK FOREST (Horst Jankowski)

3) AMPARITO ROCA (Spanish Paso-Doble)

4) PIANO SOLOS & BAND:
   a) ROMEO & JULIET LOVE THEME
   b) MAIN THEME FROM "EXODUS"

5) VOCAL SOLOS & BAND:
   a) SONG OF THE VAGABONDS
   b) OLD MAN RIVER
   c) (Encore) GOODBYE SONG

6) HOOTENANNY!!!!

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KOTARAH BOWLING CLUB BRASS BAND

CONCERT AT SPEERS POINT R.S.L. CLUB.....SUNDAY AUGUST 12th at 2.30 p.m.

P R O G R A M M E

1) Band.....COCKLESHELL HEROES (March Theme from the Film)

2) Band.....STRAWBERRY FAIR (New arrangement by Derek Broadbent of old English folk song)

3) Band (featuring Principal Cornet) .....THE LAZY TRUMPETER

4) Band.....WAY OUT WEST (Bright Western style number by Brian Crookes)

5) Showcase of Younger Talent
   a) Honour & Arms (Handel)
   b) Long Long Ago (H.Round)

6) GUEST ARTIST: LYNNE WALKER (Vocalist)

7) Band.....A BRIDGE TOO FAR (Theme from the film)

8) Band.....I'D LIKE TO TEACH THE WORLD TO SING

9) Vocals with Band Accomp....a) You'll Never Walk Alone
   b) Song Of The Vagabonds

10) Audience Singalong.....BLACK AND WHITE MINSTRELS MEDLEY

I N T E R V A L

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1) Band.....IN THE MOOD (famous old number from the Glenn Miller days)

2) Band.....IN AN ENGLISH COUNTRY GARDEN (Rock beat arrangement of the old English folk melody)

3) Band (featuring the Bass Section)..... GROUND BASS

4) Band.....THE LINCOLNSHIRE POACHER (another Derek Broadbent arrangement)

5) Showcase of Younger Talent
   a) Mira (Vander Cook)
   b) Jenny Jones (Molenaer)

6) GUEST ARTIST: ANDREW WALKER (Magician)

7) Band.....THE FLORAL DANCE (as made famous by the Brighouse & Rastrick Band) (Request)

8) Band.....JAMAICAN RHUMBA (Arthur Benjamin)

9) Vocals with Band Accomp. a) The Fishermen Of England
   b) Battle Hymn of the Republic

10) Audience Singalong.....WARTIME MEDLEY

(Encore : Can Can)

KOTARAH BOWLING CLUB BRASS BAND

CONCERT AT RAYMOND TERRACE BOWLING CLUB.....6th July 1979

SEGMENT A:
1) DIXIEDOODLE RAG
2) YESTERDAY
3) STRAWBERRY FAIR
4) GUEST ARTIST.....

5) A BRIDGE TOO FAR
6) WAY OUT WEST
7) BLACK & WHITE MINSTRELS (No. 1 Selection)

SEGMENT B:
1) MUSKRAT RAMBLE
2) BRIDGE OVER TROUBLED WATER
3) THE FLORAL DANCE
4) GUEST ARTIST.....

5) SWAY
6) STAR WARS
7) SALUTE TO JOLSON

SEGMENT C:
1) TIJUANA TAXI
2) LOVE STORY
3) ENGLISH COUNTRY GARDEN
4) VOCALS WITH BAND:
   a) DELILAH
   b) YOU'LL NEVER WALK ALONE
   c) MY WAY
   d) BATTLE HYMN (encore)

5) NEVER ON SUNDAY
6) THE LINCOLNSHIRE POACHER
7) HOOTENANNY !

(Encore: Can Can)

These programmes contain the typical brass band concert repertoire. Gusty traditional brass band marches, such as "Cockleshell Heroes," "A Bridge Too Far," "Colonel Bogey" and "March of the Herald," recognised as brass band signature tunes, were always used as a rousing introduction to each new bracket. Most of these march tunes had been made popular through patriotic war films, and were consequently well known by audiences. The largest section of the music played at club concerts came from films, television shows, and popular musical stage shows. "No Business Like Show Business," "Romeo and Juliet Love Theme," "Exodus," "Black and White Minstrels Melody," "Star Wars," and "Way Out West" were all examples of music which had strong visual connections.

These transcriptions of music were aimed at an audience who would not only be familiar with their melody, but would also recognise a larger imaginative link. This music brought popular media imagery and values back into life. It expressed genuine popular sentiments as the audience had experienced them at home in front of the television, or at the cinema. Another important category of music included in the performances were transcriptions of "pop" music. Tunes such as "The Floral Dance," "Puppet On a String," "I'd Like to Teach the World to Sing," "Bridge Over Troubled Waters," and "Delilah," all brought music which had been essentially mediated by recordings and broadcasts into live reality. Thus, commercial popular music themes were genuinely popularised through participation and amateur expression. Many of these transcriptions of popular music were dated, yet still held a place in people's consciousness. They were not "popular" any more in the sense of sales and a rank on the "Charts," but they were still liked by the audiences who had originally appreciated them as "hit" songs. They had aged with their audience, and in the process were transformed. In this sense brass band concerts and their large catalogue of transcriptions

acted as a reservoir of popular culture, in which once popular music was incorporated into a musical tradition and kept alive long after its original "popular" performers had faded from public view.

Transcripts from Discussions with a Group of the Boys on the Concert Programme at the Hexham Bowling Club.

GM: Much of this music is real pulp, which you and any brass band can play all too easily. It seems so distant from the very technically demanding music for contests. What do you get out of it?

Giles: Well, first off, we couldn't play contest music on a regular basis anyway. It's something you study and work towards, to do your best at a few times a year. Secondly, I like playing lots of music--all kinds of it--look, I'm a teacher and where else do I get the opportunity to play regular music in front of an audience? Thirdly, that's what people want to hear--they've had a hard week at work, and they're down the Club for a few beers and a good time--they don't want to flaming think about it all. But anyway most of us all enjoy it--I'm a performing musician--so I like performing.

GM: But don't you think all this Aunt Sally music lets down the serious music image which the Band is so keen on?

Tec: Yeh, but! That's not the first time we've been asked that question you know--usually by musicians who couldn't get an audience if they tried. I'm like Giles, a performing musician--and I'm in a brass band precisely for that reason--I'm a musician, not necessarily a good one, but I do love performing. You see, within, er, reason, in the end it doesn't matter where we play, or who the hell the audience is, providing it doesn't offend you, as long as we play lots of different music, and people--well, enjoy it all.

GM: So what's important to you is that you have a responsive audience, and the opportunity to play lots of music live?

Larry: Look, put it this way. Giles and Tec are quite right. I'm a Truckie, and I drive fucking coal around all day. But, I'm also a musician--but, er, it's not much good playing on your own, all by yourself. That way you only think you're a musician. So every month or so I get to walk on to a club stage in front of a large clapping audience and play some popular stuff.

Maybe it's 'Tijuana Taxi,' maybe a few Beatles' numbers, or some ancient Al Johnson gear, and then a March--or look--or some popularised classical number--look--'A Walk in the Black Forest' for instance, and they love it--they really do. I mean, that's why. I can play it. They love to hear it, and this gives me the opportunity to prove to myself, so to speak, that I'm an artist, so to speak--fuck those that say it's pulp music--I'm glad it's not a concert hall packed with big pricks in suits. I'm glad it's me mates from work down there having a good time. They really dig it all.

GM: So in the final analysis, you actually like playing a lot of music which is often ridiculed by so-called serious musicians as 'stolen' or 'pulp'?

Mal: Well fuck that! Who does ridicule certain music as rubbish? You don't often hear performing musicians shitting on other people's music--mostly only armchair culture types that can't play sod all. Yeh, I hear this music on the telly, or the radio, first, and then I get to like it--and this way I actually get to play it out--and the audience gets a hold of it in the raw. Er--we'll do you some serious music if that's what you want--no fucking worries--y'know that's better than most you'll hear--but, look, who will come and listen? For myself, and I can't speak for all club gigs--I, er, think they're a measure of the acceptance brass bands can still achieve as popular live music.

GM: So apart from the marching and the special occasion playouts, do you think that club gigs are a good example of how brass bands have a popular appeal?

Chas: Yeh, they do. We always get a good turnout at club gigs--not just because it's a community thing, but because they enjoy it--you know--the old Singalong and the local artists. They're all out there singing along and knocking down the grog--they love it because they can take part, y'know, participate and talk to the Boys. They see us as the same as them--and we are.

GM: Just how important is the community aspect?

Chas: Well like Mal was saying just earlier--they like to see whoever's up-and-coming, like that young girl that we've got singing. She's going places, and they've all seen her in the papers, and they know she's the Kid from down the road. It's exactly the same with the boy that's learned to do the magician's act, the silly little fucker. Now he's not all that good--but he's like us--er, local talent, and people will support it 'cos they can identify with one of their own kind--not a stranger or professional.

GM: So why don't the Band, and all the other brass bands, do much more club work?

Harry: Well now—shit! Now you've put your finger right on it. We used to do lots of jobs in the parks—in rotundas—every Saturday and Sunday in the old days, and couples and families would go out for a walk in the park, meet their mates and listen to the Band. But now it's clubs. Since the clubs, this is where they all come to relax and meet their mates. That's why we like playing here—they are—er, how can I put it—our people, and we're right at home with them.

GM: Well, I can see the connection between the Band and clubs after the decline of park and rotunda concerts as a form of popular entertainment. But why only a few club gigs a year?

Harry: Well that's the Musos' Union, isn't it? Things might well change for the better. But you see there's real money involved, er, big dollars tied up in it all—so the Musos' Union have put a stop to it, and put the heavies on amateur music.

GM: Go on, I still don't understand it all.

Giles: Look—every time we play and give a concert in a club, a group of professionals, y'know—Musos, don't get the job. So the Union said a few years ago that we were depriving their members of an income, and put a stop to it all. We can only do about eight club gigs a year, and have to beg the Musos' Union for permission first—and the cunts don't always approve.

GM: But, if the clubs want you to play—then what's the problem?

Nick: Christ! Because they'll put the Black on—call out the bar staff—get you into the shit at work. That's fucking why. Christ almighty! Where do you come from?

GM: Can't you fight that? It seems very unfair to me.

(Laughter)

Les: Newcastle is a Union Town, and it's all part of the political machine. You oppose the Union—and accidents will fly. They'll be big trouble.

GM: So there's no way around it?

Les: Look mate, if we could we'd do a club gig every week. There's certainly no shortage of requests. But that would mean the clubs would have to pay us the Union rate per person. Now, with thirty in a brass band, and as you know a brass band just won't work with much less than twenty, we'd be just too expensive. So the Unions, at least the Musos' mob have pushed us out—the greedy little fuckers.

GM: Well how do you feel about it all? I take it that playing in parks is mostly out these days.

Wally: Oh no! We do the odd few park playouts, but years ago the Council used to pay good money as part of the Civic Entertainment--but they don't now, so it's not really economic to go to them. We only get thirty bucks for a park performance, and we've got to supply our own chairs—just for playing to the pigeons.

GM: Yes but--how do you feel about naked Union power pushing around an organisation like yours, one which you all describe as being part of the Working Class Movement?

Chas: Oh shit--we've been over this time and time again. They're not interested in that. The Musos' Union is run by a small group of full-timers, and every job they get for their fellahs is money for the Union. They don't give a shit about us, or the Working Class Movement for that matter, not a monkey's fuck.

GM: You seem to imply that it's all hopeless.

Tom: Well, as Eric says, we've been over it, and if we don't toe the line we'll be in even more shit than we are now--get your car tyres slashed, lose your job. Look, I'm a Union man--everybody in the Band is Union. We're all solid Labor Party supporters. This is a working class community, and the only way we've got the good times and the big money is by union solidarity. Now I, and most other people around the clubs, know all this Musos' Union shit is as bent as ars'oles. But, they're just employing the same tactics as the other unions in Newcastle have done in the past. They've put their members wage packets first--and fuck the rest. Now we can't say--we did it at the Steel Works, or the Shipyards or the Coalfields, but you can't do it. Well we've got a compromise of sorts, er, a few jobs a year as a kick-back, and not for a fee either. We're a visiting bowling club, that's why we get an Honorarium, a gift for expenses and stuff, and have to play the kick-back game.

GM: Could you fight it, the Union I mean, if you think it's doing the Band wrong?

Giles: We're a Band, not a political campaign. If they put the Bad Word out in Newcastle we won't have what we've got now, and there might be, as I said, an accident. The Musos' Union aren't a proper mob in that sense--they're a bunch of out-of-town thugs carving up the entertainment industry. We can't fight it--we're all flat out playing and working for the Band.

GM: So what do they say about your argument about the changing recreational structure from parks to clubs?

Barry: Fuck all, why should they? What can we do? They chuck us a few hundred bucks each year as a donation and say, 'See, we support the Band!' It's not the money--it's the access to the audience we want. As Giles says, we can't go around organising campaigns--we can only just manage to keep the Band on the road.

Club Gigs, Popular Audiences, and Union Censorship

Some account has already been made of the Band's relationship to club life in Chapters Five and Seven. Clubs were important to the Band in many ways. Not only did they constitute the organisational network through which community activities took place, and in which the Band had developed its community service kick-back arrangements and other forms of financial support, they were also where the people with whom the Boys identified most went for social life and entertainment. The Boys felt "at home"in clubs, describing their patrons as "mates from work" and "our people."

Even though banding, at least in Newcastle, shared in and was part of club life, this was not where brass bands played their purpose-composed "serious" or contest music. It was not where the highest or most sophisticated expression of brass band music as a cultural project was performed, for this was reserved almost exclusively for banding company. Rather, as the programmes show, the Band provided at the clubs a diet of light popular music, virtually all of it transcribed from some other media, such as orchestral, folk, jazz, or dance band music. The Boys referred to such music as "Aunt Sally." Over the years the Band had learned what club audiences liked to hear, and had few qualms about providing just that. To some extent the Boys enjoyed playing this kind of music. As we have already seen in Chapter Five, it provided them with the opportunity to participate in popular music. It was for them the basis of being a musician, and the Boys regarded new music like new novels, to be read and appreciated, and enthusiastically looked forward to new transcriptions "pirated" from other media.

The light music of club concerts, easily played and easy to listen to, was in complete contrast to the highly specialised, technically

difficult, long-term project of contest music, with its once-and-only climactic performance. When challenged about this contradictory attitude, and division of their music, the Boys were quick to point out four important facts. First, that contest music could not be performed on a regular basis. Second, that club gigs provided a regular audience. Third, that people wanted entertaining and, fourth, that they were performing musicians. These were all important considerations in understanding what club gigs meant to the Boys.

Giles stressed the relationship between Aunt Sally music and his position as a performing musician, for where else could he "get the opportunity to play regular music in front of an audience". As a teacher he liked to play "all kinds" of music, but more than simply playing he liked performing. He considered himself a "performing musician," and for him the attraction of club gigs was the chance to fulfill himself in this way before an appreciative audience. Tec, similarly, said that he was in a brass band because he was a musician and loved "performing." The same was true of Larry, the Truckie. The Boys enjoyed being performing musicians because it provided an experience not generally found in the everyday course of their working lives. Playing on a club stage with the Band "in front of a large clapping audience" was totally different from Larry's job, "driving fucking coal around all day." Musical performances gave the Boys a pride in themselves and a special place in their culture. Playing at concerts gave Larry, as he said, the opportunity to "prove" to himself that he was "an artist." Just being able to perform music to a receptive audience was then a major reason for the Boys' interest in club gigs.

The Boys were critical of my suggestion that the sort of light music that these gigs involved was in some way unbecoming of them as "serious" musicians. They realised that club audiences were like them, enjoying themselves after a week at work, and that they came "down the club for a few beers and a good time" and not for any erudite intellectual or aesthetic purpose. As long as the Boys were enjoying performing, and the audience enjoyed it too, then that was sufficient justification. The Boys frankly resented criticism of this style of music, especially as they felt it originated mostly from would-be musicians who did not actually have the skill to give any kind of public performance at all, those "who couldn't get an audience if they tried," or "armchair culture types." There was no respect or place in banding for the passive sideline critic (hence the participant orientation of this study). The Australian adage of "put up or shut up" was strictly adhered to. So much of what being a musician meant to the Boys was found in public performance and participation, and in the fact that people would come and hear them play. Their interpretation of art was ultimately social for in their opinion the individual playing music alone and in private did not constitute musicianship; as Larry said, "that way you only think you're a musician." For the Boys, club gigs were an important measure of the acceptance that brass bands could still achieve as popular live music.

Yet, precisely who the audience were did have a strong influence upon what the Boys thought about club gigs. Whilst Tec said that he believed it did not matter "who the hell the audience is" as long as they "enjoy it all," this in fact limited an appreciative audience to being one who enjoyed themselves as Tec understood enjoyment, as being a "good" night down the club. The Boys were glad club concerts were for their "mates from work" and were not played in concert halls "packed

with big pricks in suits." Performing for a club audience was significant to the Boys, "not just because it was a community thing" at which they could get a "good turnout," but also because of other local artists, and the singalongs which ensured a high degree of audience participation. "They love it because they can participate and talk to the Boys. They see us as the same as them--and we are," --this was how Chas explained the importance of the Band to the club audience. The Boys believed a major reason for their popularity at the clubs was because they were "local talent" and the audience could identify with them as their own kind.

Despite this seemingly ideal situation for a group of performing musicians, of a ready receptive audience who enjoyed and participated in locally produced music in a community setting, the Band's access to clubs was severely limited by outside constraints, the most important of which was the activity of the local branch of the Professional Musicians' Union.

The rise of the clubs as centres for working class recreation and entertainment had been accompanied by the demise of public parks as places for community social life. Before the clubs, local government had financed town bands to perform regular park concerts. The popularity and frequency of these performances is strongly suggested simply by the large number of exquisitely constructed park rotundas which are still in existence. Now neglected and rarely used they stand as monuments to a bygone recreational pursuit in pre-war Australian community life, in which brass bands had a secure position. As outlined in the History in Chapter Three, Band Park concerts would draw audiences of thousands in the days before broadcasting and clubs. The fact that many town bands in Australia continued to belong to local

councils is a strong reminder of the degree to which town bands and open air civic entertainment were joined as an ongoing arrangement.

Because the clubs provided evening entertainment, with dancing, catering, and a range of professional music, park concerts had completely lost their popularity, and with their demise had vanished a traditional brass band audience, which was now to be found in the clubs. However, this new sophistication of popular entertainment had implications for traditional relationships between town bands and their audiences. Not the least of these was the fact that local councils now paid considerably less money, far less frequently, for brass band performances. Still more important to the Boys was the fact that union organisation had come into conflict with traditional folk entertainment and music.

Previously I have discussed folk music in terms of the lack of structural difference between performer and audience; how in folk music, the audience in some way participates in the creation and mediation of the music. The coming of professional music, and a Professional Musicians' Union, had more clearly divided performer from audience, structuring one as the professional or wage earner, and the other as the consumer. Live music had been turned into a service industry, and town bands, as undoubtedly many other forms of traditional folk, or amateur music, did not fit happily into this new division.

The relatively large size of a brass band, compared to a dance band, meant that they were not economically viable even if they wanted to join the Union and charge professional rates. The demise of local government and community support for park concerts, and the change in venue for popular audiences from park to club had placed brass bands

in a beggar's role, despite the fact that they could draw relatively large enthusiastic audiences. The Boys resented the fact that they had to ask permission to perform from the Union, and that this was closely monitored and restricted, for it was allowed only if a professional band would be hired immediately after the Boys had completed their performance.

The Band and most of the clubs' management committees felt completely powerless against this kind of musical censorship. Although the Boys saw the Professional Musicians' Union as a "small group of full-timers," who did not "give a shit about us, or the Working Class Movement," they did understand how the Union system worked in Newcastle because they were part of it. Most of the Boys were full-time workers and active trade unionists themselves. They genuinely feared, as the preceeding transcripts showed, losing their jobs, having an "accident," or getting their car tyres slashed. Despite the unfairness with which they had been treated by the Musicians' Union, and the menaces posed for their active rebuttal of union conditions, the Boys did not deny that the professional musicians had the right to organise in the way they did. Instead they saw the case of brass bands and other amateur music groups as an anomaly, which would in due time be settled favourably. They were certainly not prepared to campaign against unionism. As Tom stated specifically, "I'm a Union man, everyone in the Band is Union. We're all solid Labor Party supporters....This is a working class community, and the only way we've got the good times and the big money is by union solidarity." He and the other Boys well understood that their unions had had to organise to protect their labour markets, and although the Professional Musicians' Union was understood to be corrupt, "as bent as ars'oles," they were after all only "employing the same tactics as

the other unions in Newcastle..." The Boys believed that for the present at least the expression of union solidarity would count more than the Band's active objections to the scheme of things.

In questioning the Boys about what they could do about the Union's position on club gigs, they replied that a campaign against the Union would be detrimental to the Band's future. Like many proposals and ideas I heard floated around the bandroom during the research, the suggestion of organising to fight the Union was rejected because it was seen as taking up too much time at the cost of playing music. The Boys' principal objective, as members of the Band, was to perform music, and they responded in almost knee-jerk fashion to any proposal which deviated from this commitment. As one of the Boys pointed out, they could not fight the Union because "we can't go around and organise campaigns—we can only just manage to keep the Band on the road." A campaign against the Union, like any other organisational activity, would always finally detract from playing music and organising the Band.

The negotiated compromise which the Bands and the clubs had reached with the Union was not entirely unsatisfactory. The Band was allowed limited access to the clubs, and the Musicians' Union (like many of the other Unions in Newcastle) gave the Band a regular financial contribution. In addition the Boys felt that by maintaining solidarity with the Union movement they would be, in the final analysis, safe from complete financial collapse and retained as a valuable asset in community life. As Les pointed out, "Newcastle is a Union Town, and it's all part of the political machine." So, although the Band had not ended up with a complete financial loss as a result of the changes in recreational and leisure activity that had moved concert

venues from parks to clubs, it had however been deprived of a large part of its potential audience. The Boys continually reiterated that they played in the Band because they were "performing musicians," and the Band provided them with just that opportunity. Club gigs were especially important because the audience were the Boys' "work mates," their own people, who came from the same community as themselves. In the club gig context artists and audience identified with each other. The club audience liked to support "local talent," which the Band undeniably were. Any of the Boys playing on the stage could quite literally have been the boy from next door or from down the road. The restrictive action of the Musicians' Union, undertaken in the spirit of protecting members' jobs, pay and working conditions, with which none of the Boys could disagree in basic principle, paradoxically constituted an attack by a professional group on traditional working class community relationships and activities, and was the biggest obstacle to the Band gaining a larger audience and greater financial security.

Fig.21: The Basses of Kotarah play a Quartette at a Club Gig in Newcastle

Fig. 22: The Band playing above "the roar of the pokies" at a Club Gig in Newcastle

Chapter 12

Playouts

The many various outdoor performances which the Boys gave around Newcastle were described by the term "playouts." They constituted the majority of performances given, and were the run-of-the-mill activity of banding when there were no club gigs or contesting to be done. Requests for the Band to perform at a wide variety of community and civic functions were overwhelming, and in one typical year, 1979, the Band received just over three hundred such requests. Consequently the Boys were free to pick and choose which engagements they preferred, and which ones it was in the Band's interests to support.

As Chapter Seven outlined, these playouts were part of an intricate system of community service based upon an economy of "kick-backs," which would obtain for the Band more remunerative performances, mostly in the form of club gigs, and other forms of community support for the Band at a later date. Opening school and government buildings, launching ships, playing at hospitals,old folks' homes, fetes, picnics, parades, country shows, military tatoos, wine festivals, sports events, air displays, and horse racing, were among the diverse venues for playouts, some of which resulted in the most unlikely and unforseen circumstances. Participation in these events constituted the weekly contribution banding made to community life in and around Newcastle.

Mostly these performances would consist of the same sort of music provided for club gigs. Playout programmes relied on light

popular music which audiences could recognise. However, each playout was different to some degree, and usually benefitted, so the Boys believed, from the use of specialized music according to the type of occasion. This use of specialized music could range from the performance of Sea Shanties and Navy music when the playout was for a ship's launching, to traditional folk airs at fetes, patriotic and solid traditional marches at civic functions, or Scottish music at military tatoos and Highland Games. The Band even had a small selection of "Cowboy Music" for country shows, and a special selection of "Evergreen Music" which they kept for performances at old folks homes.

One of the most impressive features of the Band, and brass bands generally, was their enormous repertoire. Almost whatever the circumstances of a playout, the Boys could produce suitable music for the occasion, which was either owned by the Band or could be quickly borrowed from another brass band. With a constantly acquisitioning Band library containing manuscripts dating back to the change of the century, an amateur interest within local banding for transcribing or "pirating" music, and more recently the advent of cheap photo-copying facilities which enormously assisted in distributing manuscripts from and between all the brass bands in the Newcastle district, the Boys could draw upon a massive variety of musical compositions.

Providing suitable music for a public occasion was then a major interest for the Boys, and often a playout would be chosen simply on the grounds that some of the Boys thought it would be good to "do some Cowboy Music" or "get stuck into the Evergreen gear." As on Anzac Day and carnival parades, the Boys would consciously use their music to help define a social situation in a particular way by the use of appropriate music.

Playouts, because of their absolute regularity, the wide variety of music they entailed, and their intrinsic involvement in community life, were consequently a major part of banding. They were important to the Boys because they confirmed that there was a genuine demand for brass bands in general, and for theirs in particular. Playouts showed that banding still had a recognised significant function in civic and community events. Musical participation in such performances also took the Boys, as a group, upon expeditions to a wide, and often unfamiliar, variety of social situations.

Transcripts from the Boys Discussing Playouts in the King Edwards Park Rotunda during a Rainstorm which Washed Out a Lions Charity Picnic

GM: Don't you get sick of these playouts week after week?

Jim: No, not really--although we definitely should give these fuckers a miss next time. Playouts are ten-a-penny, take your choice, everybody in the community who's got a do going on would like a town band. We don't plan it much, just turn out as best we can--nothing special.

GM: Well, you obviously do a lot of playouts, just about every weekend in fact. They must be important to you and the rest of the Boys.

Jim: Yeh. Well they are. That's what town bands are for--er, and this is the regular stuff of banding, er, how can I say, er, the whole fucking idea.

GM: How do you mean?

Hans: Well that's what's good about being a bandie, being out there doing things for the community, you know, helping people who have got the same ideas as us. But, er, well, every different playout is special in some way or another. Like say, er, launching a ship--we do some sea music, you know, Nick will get up there and do 'Barnacle Bill the Sailor,' or we'll all get stuck into 'Blow the Wind Southerly'--great stuff. It's a way of playing all kinds of music in live performance, which sort of makes social occasions better--don't you think?

GM: So almost whatever the occasion you can lay on something special?

Hans: Just about. Look at the Bishop's Tea Party--it's all very upper upper stuff, y'know, er, in a nice little garden in the Bishop's Court. So we, er, did them 'Elizabethan Serenade,' 'English Country Garden,' 'Lincolnshire Poacher,' 'Floral Dance,'--all that sort of nicely-nicely stuff with a hefty dose of Gilbert and Sullivan--just right, they love it. The music makes the occasion just right, y'know, as it should be. It kind of puts people in the right mood.

GM: Do you think the people like the music as such, and take an interest in it?

Stan: Well it's not as if we give concerts in that sense at playouts--where people come just to hear us exclusively. We're part of a bigger scene, like that Wallpaper Music and Musak you hear in shopping centres. We kind of make, or help to make, the occasion, give it a certain feeling. But it's good fun--er, and anything can happen--absolutely anything.

GM: So the playouts are not just good as musical performances, you obviously enjoy the occasions yourself.

Norma: Well the music is important to us obviously, and we just wouldn't go to all of these doings if it wasn't for the Band. But they are a laugh and a giggle--and something always goes wrong or, er something ridiculous happens. It's nice to be in the town band doing what town bands should do--being out in the community playing that sort of music. We don't have to think about playouts, or do any planning--just turn up, see, and do our thing for better or for worse--er, and something always causes a catastrophe. It's like a trip out with your mates--we aim to have a good laugh, and usually manage to do just that.

GM: Why do they always turn out to be such hilariously funny experiences, playouts?

Cat: Yeh, well that's the, er, how can I put it. It's the special sort of view of the situation which you get from the bandstand. Look at the Bishop at his Tea Party. That was a typical situation. There we were, a few of us having a quiet puff behind the jacarandas next to the Nunnery. Well, we were off our faces as you could expect, two or three of us, on Stevies Queensland Purple, nothing special about that, and then came back to do 'Hawaii-Five-O' with Murph the Surf on the drums--y'know--dug-a-dug-a-dug-a-dug, di-di-dum-di-da-da. Well the Bishop came across in his poofter gear and stood in front of the Band and

said, well y'know we were playing on the main lawn, he said, 'I hope you don't find it too difficult playing on grass.' Well we just cracked up and couldn't stop laughing. Y'know, get it--'playing on grass'--fucking hysterical we got, and all the silly old cunt could do was laugh with us, and then all the audience started laughing too--all those silly old dears in floral dresses and pearls. He thought he'd cracked a funny, but couldn't understand why half the Trombone section were rolling about in the dahlias bursting their guts with laughter. Silly old cunt.

GM: OK, so it's a real enjoyment thing doing the playouts. Your special perspective as a Band gives you the chance to see the funny side of things.

Pete: Yeh--look--er--we're all mates and we all go out together for a good blow at a playout--to have a good laugh. And always something happens, or we make it happen, that makes it all worthwhile.

GM: But what do you think the public make of it all?

Giles: Well, obviously they don't see it like us--you know. 'Nice Band,'--er--'There's Kotarah again--don't they win all the contests,' or 'Aren't they the Band that's always in the papers,'--that sort of thing. It's where we are, and where we should be, so I don't think people give the actual music itself too much of their thoughts. Mind you, people are always coming up out of the blue, saying 'Nice Band,' or 'Lovely music fellahs.'

GM: How important are such playouts to banding?

Paul: Geez--you do fucking go on mate. It's sort of very important, in that we're a town band, and that's how we get local community support. We, er, don't just, er, contribute to local events, we <u>are</u> a local event, and that way we do a lot of good for the community. Say, er, when we do a charity job or some benefit, or something like that, well y'know it's not all take is it? We're doing our bit in the best way possible. We help make a good scene don't we? Help the old cause along a bit, er, whatever the cause is, er, and have a good blow with the Boys. What more can you ask this side of the professional curtain?

GM: Do you think there is sufficient public recognition of what brass bands contribute to community life?

Les: Well--we're always in the papers or on the radio, and there's just no let up in the number of requests--but people don't think about us that much I reckon. To get the Band here in the first place takes a lot of

petrol money, and the instruments and the music must be bought and maintained. No, in that sense people really don't take us into account. Look--last Monday the fellah from the Charlestown Shopping Centre rang up--he said, 'We're trying to fix a bit more trade, get the Band down on Saturday and I'll chuck you's sixty bucks.' Well, fucking hell, you know--it'd cost us more than that in petrol for our cars. He just hadn't thought about it. So I said no--not for a commercial venture. If it had been a community doings, or a benefit, well OK, no problems, we'd go anywhere because it is community, and, er, even if there's no kick-back--well OK, it's a good thing, right. But sixty bucks just to play outside the Shopping Centre--shit--just to help the trade. 'Try two-fifty bucks' I said. 'What, two-fifty for a Band!' You see he doesn't understand the economics of it all. Nice fellah, just a fuck-wit though.

GM: But people are grateful for your efforts, don't you think?

Norma: I don't think the local Council is fair dinkum about it all, not when you consider the actual size and regularity of the contribution we make to the community. They'd give us thirty bucks to play in a park. And they say we have to provide our own chairs and things. Well that's no good. Chas says they were giving that much when he was a kid, and that was a very long time ago, eh Chas? Oh yeh, they're full of praise, the politicians and all--'For the Band's long service to the community,' and all that stuff. But it stops there--just words--no real financial support. That's why most of the playouts are for charity, or just community things. That way we can help make things better, get a bigger spread in the newspaper, and we can draw on a bit of support from another organised community group when we need it later.

GM: Are there ever conflicts over doing playouts?

Mal: Oh, not often. It's a good blow and an audience we want. That Military Tatoo job--well all that military marching about inside a huge cardboard castle--and letting the cannons off, and soldiers dropping out of the sky in parachutes--well--that's all shit-house military stuff which I don't think any of us really like. Very distasteful really. But you see, they took a big gate for the Lions, or Jaycees, or whatever. A real big bucks gate, so I guess it makes it OK 'cos that money bought a special therapeutic swimming pool for crippled kids. So it's a good thing, but only sort of, 'cos we don't really like too much of that military image stuff. Playing at social functions, fetes or country shows--that's a better scene as far as I'm concerned.

GM: Are you satisfied with the sort of kick-backs and media coverage you get at playouts?

Bram: Well no--not really, but these things have to be negotiated. Take for instance the newspaper coverage. We get something in just about weekly. However it doesn't just happen. We have to write the story or give the facts, and then get it on to the reporter's desk--they won't come to us for it. We have to create the news--and get it all to them. It's like all the community organising groups. Things just don't happen in community affairs, just like that. If you want to be part of it all--you've got to muscle in there and do-it-yourself, sort of thing, even if you personally don't like it, or necessarily agree one hundred per cent. Look, er--it's like these young girls at the last playout, the Scottish dancing mob. Well, we didn't invite them, they just muscled in on the show--and good fucking luck to them. That's the way it's done as far as I'm concerned.

Clive: Yeh, er, excuse me butting in, but this is so true of the kick-backs. We have to remind everyone in no mild manner sometimes that a favour is due--they don't just chuck it around, it has to be argued or spoke for.

GM: So being a happy town band and playing around the community is just not that simple.

Stan: Right--but it doesn't matter fuck all really, I mean, I know a lot of playouts are hard yakka, out in the sun sucking in flies, and all your tuning slides dropping out, and music blowing away. But it's fun all the same, or we just wouldn't be doing it. You see, that is banding--finally it's an amateur mob, and we, well I'm like most of the Boys, just another peasant and me pleasures are simple. You know--if you don't think it's all fair dinkum--don't do it--go sailing--get pissed--whatever. And besides all that, it's good--y'know--saying or thinking y'know--we've done our bit in the community--making things happen--helping some charity mob or good cause. Playing at the Shopping Mall, making a scene right with our music. Yeh--who would want to change it all, and perhaps if we did, or should I say could, it wouldn't be banding would it? It would be a professional Musos carry on.

Playouts: A Duty and a Pleasure

The vast majority of the Band's public performances were playouts, and it was at such open air events where the brass band was most suitable as a musical medium. The Band was cheap, if not free, attracting its own supporters, able to create a large volume

of sound, mobile, not needing electronic amplification, and able to provide a wide variety of music for all sorts of occasions. Playouts were where most people experienced a traditional brass band concert programme. They were occasions which placed the Boys in the centre of most civic and community functions.

For the Boys, playouts were "ten-a-penny" and "nothing special," for which little planning and organisation were required. They were the "regular stuff of banding," and the "whole fucking idea" of being a town band musician. By this term Jim was referring to the community commitment which the banding identity involved, an intrinsic belief that community participation was in itself good and valuable. Hans also affirmed this belief: "Well that's what's good about being a bandie, being out there doing things for the community, you know, helping people who have the same ideas as us."

Beyond this absolute commitment to the idea of community service there were other important aspects of playouts to be taken into account. Firstly, playouts provided the Boys with the opportunity to perform a large variety of purpose-oriented music. Secondly, the Boys, as performing musicians, could gain a large measure of public appreciation for their artistic endeavours, and thirdly, that they were group social events at which the Boys had "a laugh" and enjoyed themselves.

It was clear, as already shown in the examination of bandpractices and club gigs, that the variety of music which the Band played was important to the Boys. It provided them with the opportunity to participate in music which otherwise they would just consume. Playouts allowed them to put their very varied repertoire to public use, and they realised that their musical performances were able to make "all

sorts of social occasions better." For example, at the Bishop's Fete the Boys knew that pieces like "Elizabethan Serenade," "English Country Garden" and "The Lincolnshire Poacher," were "just right" for this Anglican "upper, upper" occasion. Appropriate music would be appreciated, create atmosphere, and put people "in the right mood." In this respect the Boys saw themselves as ancilliary to the major cause for playout occasions. They were not the major or sole attraction, but part of a "bigger scene." Stan went as far as comparing the function of the Band's music with "that Wallpaper Music and Musak you hear in shopping centres." It was seen as essentially mood-making music which helped "to make the occasion like it should be."

Another important reason for the Boys' pursuit of playouts was the enjoyment that they derived amongst themselves from such performances. They were seen as "good fun," events at which anything could happen, and by "anything" they were usually referring to some sort of organisational catastrophe. Playouts were a "trip with your mates," and, as Norma emphasised, "we aim to have a good laugh, and usually manage just that." More often than not this was at the expense of someone else's bad luck or embarrassment. The comical incident with the Bishop became a frequently cited and increasingly elaborated event which was the subject of continual humorous re-telling. It was a private joke understood only by the Boys, and was only reaped from the larger social occasion because of the special perspective on social events which sitting in the Band provided. The Boys readily admitted that they would conspire to make something funny happen, although humorous mishaps frequently occurred without their active connivance.

Apart from the enjoyment the Boys derived from their unique perspective on events at playouts, they also appreciated the audiences' positive response to their music. The Boys were quite vain, perhaps like most public performers, and people coming up to them to say "what a nice band" they were, or how much the music was enjoyed, obviously gave them pleasure and satisfaction. All such compliments were immediately shared and passed around the Band enthusiastically.

Despite the extent of the Boys' commitment to community participation, and the high degree of enjoyment they got out of having "a laugh and a giggle" when they were out with their mates, as well as the vain delight of public praise, not all playouts were to their complete liking. The reasons for this were that the Boys did not believe that the public fully appreciated the effort and expense necessary to keep a brass band performing, and that some playouts, despite the eventual good that would come out of them, were not doing the banding image much good in the eyes of some sections of the public.

The Boys saw themselves as "doing a lot of good for the community." They thought that they should do their "bit in the best way possible" because, as Paul said, "it's not all take, is it?" But, as Les pointed out, reciprocation was often slow in coming, and far too often people simply took the Band too much for granted. He cited the incident of the shopping centre manager who wanted to "chuck you's sixty bucks." This was an insult to the Boys, considering the commercial nature of the engagement. They would rather have played for any community concern, "even if there's no kick-back--well, OK, it's a good thing, right."

In this respect Norma summed up the general attitude of the Boys towards the local Councils' derisory payment of thirty dollars per park performance when she commented on the lack of substance in the loud praise so often given to the Band by local dignitaries. "For the Band's long service to the community" was a phrase "politicians and all" repeated parrot-fashion on numerous occasions where the Band was performing. But, as Norma rightly said. it was "just words--no real financial support." For this reason the Boys tended to choose playouts for "good causes," because that way at least, they could "help to make things better," as well as negotiate for a "big spread in the local newspaper," and could "draw on support from another community group" when necessary at a later date.

The strategy of organising playouts for "good causes" whenever possible was not entirely without problems. For example, on one occasion a local community service group organised a Military Tatoo in which the Band was to figure prominently. This disgusted the Boys. They were not soldiers, and resented the frequent confusion of their music and activities with those of the military. After a long debate in the Band, they were persuaded to take part in the Tatoo because of the "bug bucks gate" which would go to worthy charitable causes. The Band decided to participate for the good of others, despite the fact that they considered the Tatoo reflected badly on their public image, and involved them in the "shit-house military stuff" which they so fundamentally disagreed with. Yet, even in these circumstances community and public reciprocation was not readily forthcoming. As Bram explained, if the Band wanted to be part of things then they had to "muscle in on events." They had to write up newspaper coverage themselves, and get it on the reporter's desk. In supporting what Bram said, Clive pointed out that as far as kick-backs were concerned,

"they don't just chuck it around, it has to be argued or spoke for," often in "no mild manner."

Despite all the complaints about the problems of putting on regular playout performances and the lack of reciprocity from politicians and the community as a whole, the Boys still thought it was "fun all the same." This was a major motivation, and as one of them said, otherwise "we just wouldn't be doing it." Playing out in the open air for a variety of public community events was an activity that stood at the heart of traditional banding. The Band were finally "an amateur mob," and their criteria for judging the value of playouts were relatively simple. If the Boys did not think an engagement was all "fair dinkum," then they felt that they should not take part, and would be better off following their own pleasures and amusements, "go sailing--get pissed...whatever." For a genuine community-based playout the satisfaction of participating and knowing that they had helped "some charity mob or good cause" was reward enough. The Boys felt that if they did not "do their bit" in this way, then it wouldn't be banding: "it would be a professional Musos' carry on." To most of the Boys that would be a travesty of everything banding stood for, and of everything that community events should be.

Figs. 23 and 24: The Band playing at the Bishop's Garden Party

Chapter 13

Being One of the Boys: Art and Expression in Social Relations

One of the most important aspects of banding for the Boys was the warmth of human relationships which came from playing in a brass band. This went further than the general feeling of solidarity derived from being part of banding and the brass band movement, which provided common cause with thousands of bandies throughout Australia and meant a welcome in any bandroom. Being a member of a particular band meant belonging to a small close-knit group, and this entailed a special intimacy of social relations. The Boys were always quick to point out to me, and particularly to outsiders and strangers, that they were "all good mates." For the majority of them this was very understandable. At least seven of the Boys, at any one time during the research, had come from second, third and even fourth generation banding families; for them banding was inherited, or as they would say, "in their blood." Coming, as most of the Boys did, from the same cluster of suburbs around Kotarah, many had attended the same schools together, passed through the same Juniors together, and consequently spent their childhoods and adolescent years becoming bandies in each other's company. For others, like myself, who had come into the Band from other localities or musical backgrounds, the immediate intense involvement in a small group organisation, the committees, teaching Juniors, the never-ending routine of bandpractices, contests and concerts, all quickly cemented us into an intimate "mateship" system of relationships, which demanded a high degree of loyalty and active participation. I knew that in the Boys' eyes I had a slightly "sus-pedigree," and I often felt slightly

embarrassed by the intensity of their support for my research project, but they always assured me: "If you're a bandie--you're OK. And if you're a bandie and your face fits--then you're one of our mates." This was not a privilege lightly bestowed on anyone by the Boys.

The production of culture was not therefore simply confined to community involvement and the preparation and performance of music. Rather, cultural production went on all of the time whenever a group of the Boys were together. This included shout sessions at the club, going to and from and during performances, beach days when some of us would go surfing and fishing, and the regular telephone calls and house visiting which made up the substance of, if not the reason for, the group's relationships.

This informal cultural production had a significant bearing upon how the Boys saw themselves in relation to others around them who were not bandies. Being performing musicians, creative artists, and contemporary examples of a traditional social movement, who made an issue out of expressing themselves publicly, made them different from their workmates, neighbours and relatives in a number of important ways, not the least of which was that they had aspired to, and achieved, the skill and expertise of competent musicianship and membership of a highly selective social group.

An important consequence of acquiring a banding identity was that the Boys were accomplished, well-trained performers who could act out, show off, and in other ways command public attention with some degree of expertise and self-confidence. They were not just "stage struck," as the Boys called the attraction of becoming a performing musician, but also stage competent, and were irresistably

drawn to perform whenever the occasion arose. In this respect one of the biggest problems at the outset of the research project was getting the Boys to make serious replies to many of my questions. At first they would rarely pass over the opportunity of making a pun, cracking a joke, or if possible spinning a funny yarn. Any question which was eventually seriously answered would then continue on and on in elaborately embroidered detail, if allowed to. The Boys were articulate, and rarely short of explanations, metaphors and comparisons. They loved to perform and express themselves, in words as well as in music.

The ongoing informal cultural production of the Band had a number of implications for the Boys' social life. Although they saw themselves as part of their community, in fact central to community life, and "ordinary" or "just working class," as they would frequently describe their social status with some pride, their accumulation of banding's distinctive argot and behavioural norms differentiated them in many ways from their workmates. Whilst their banding activities received broad public sanction, if not praise, and they were well liked, respected and fully integrated within the community as a whole, the Boys understood only too well that they saw the world differently to the majority of people who did not share the specialized perspective of the bandie, with all its rich humour and rarefied "bandtalk." They knew that they could only really share their banding experiences with other bandies, and this had the effect of increasing group solidarity and social cohesion.

One of the major results of possessing the bandie's perspective on social experiences was that the Boys spent most of their recreational and leisure time in each other's company. So-called "Brass Band Widows"

and "Brass Band Orphans" were an outcome of this, to the extent that marriage and family relationships would be frequently jeopardized, and would sometimes actually break up, over a Band member's excessive dedication. "Nipping up to the Club for a shout with the Boys," or "popping down to the bandroom for a quick blow with the Boys," were an almost daily routine for many of the Band. Only among banding enthusiasts would they find people who could fully appreciate their brand of humour, their love of Irish Limericks, dirty jokes, and exclusive style of "Raving On," as their particular conversational style was called. While banding in basic structure was constituted by the same factors which made up the occupations, union activities, family life and entertainment of the rest of "ordinary" or "just working class" suburban Australia, and revolved around the same cultural axis, it was different and specialised enough as a cultural form to make the Boys feel and behave slightly deviant when compared with outsiders to banding.

Only when the Boys were in their own company would their own particular form of cultural production really get underway. The best examples of this were the sessions around the Band Table (as one particular table in the Club had come to be known), in which I was heavily involved. During such beer shouts the Boys would wander in and out, for the proceedings could go on for hours, often until early morning.

Below I have divided the content of these sessions as an expressive performance into two categories of analysis. The first, "Understanding the Ridiculous," deals with the styles and methods, and the second, "Raving On," deals with the subject and content of the Band's own social identity.

Understanding the Ridiculous

If it was at all possible to locate or label the Boys particular style of humour with any accuracy, it could be described as being an offshoot of the Goon Show and Monty Python's Flying Circus styles. The first of these brands of popular humour commenced its career in the early nineteen fifties as a radio show produced by the British Broadcasting Corporation, and has been rebroadcast intermittently as a weekly series on Australian radio ever since. Its most important inventors and exponents were Spike Milligan, Harry Secombe, and Peter Sellers, who were joined by various other comedians and musicians.

The Boys believed, or so the story went, that these comedians and musicians met up during the Second World War, and had played together, and had refined their humorous style whilst serving in a military services entertainment band. The relative truth, or not, of this fact was unimportant. What was important to the Boys was the Goon Show's continual reference to brass bands, and the humour attached to public music performances from the perspective of the performing musician.

In addition, the famous film, in banding circles at least, starring Peter Sellers as the clumsy detective, The Mukkinese Battle Horn, and the equally famous Goon's radio show, Dreaded Lurgy Strikes Britain, had lived on and on, and had been reproduced and applied by bandies to local events for decades after their first performance.

The tale of Dreaded Lurgy particularly well illustrates the Goons highly stylized sense of the ridiculous, and their attachment to brass bands. This episode is especially coloured with typical

brass band musical refrains, interludes and cliches, for a strange disease had struck Britain causing the population to irresistably and continually scream "Yaka-yaka-doo." The only known cure and protection from the Dreaded Lurgy was, it appeared, to play in a brass band. The only way the simpleton hero of the plot could bring aid to the disease ridden population was to bomb the north of England with thousands of brass instruments. The villains of the plot, who had misled and made a "Charlie" out of our simple brass band hero were Messrs. Hoosey and Bawkes, a parody on the internationally renowned British brass band instrument manufacturers, Boosey and Hawkes.

The Boys knew all of the Goon Show performances, and cassette tapes and records of them were enthusiastically circulated around the Band. It was a style of humour which they had taken on, and adapted to their own particular localized needs. Perhaps the most memorable performance I can remember the Boys giving, as a social group rather than a performing brass band, was one night at the Club when four of them sang in improvised Barber Shop Quartet style, "I'm walking backwards to Christmas across the Irish Sea." Originally this was sung by the Seagoon, Harry Secombe, who undoubtedly folded up his "Leather Euphonium" before diving in. On the occasion at the Club it was sung in "honour" of a local politician, a Member of the State Legislative Assembly, who had the reputation of not being very clever. At the time he was campaigning amongst Club members for re-election. If he had understood the full implications of the song and its original conception he would undoubtedly have received this impromptu serenade with much less pleasure. This was a typical example of the Boys privatized jokes, an exclusive "in" group means of making fun out of a man well known for his sense of self-importance.

Voicing out Goon Show personalities had become a highly developed technique amongst the Boys, one of whom was always most favourably Bluebottle, another was Min, and several competed for the best imitations of Eccles, Major Bloodnok, Grytpype-Thynne, Moriarty and Neddy Seagoon. These hilarious characters would all be evoked and brought into life to describe and deal with particular situations and individual behaviour. The Boys had recognised and responded to the essential chemistry of Goon humour, which Spike Milligan once defined as "critical comedy":

> It is against bureaucracy and on the side of human beings. Its starting point is one man shouting gibberish in the face of authority, and proving by fabricated insanity that nothing could be as mad as what passes for ordinary living.[1]

The Boys' cultivated zany sense of humour was similarly a means of dealing with social reality and a form of resistance. They made the serious appear ridiculous, and thus made it bearable.

It was this sense and articulation of the ridiculous, this ability to transform the realities of playing in a brass band into a humorous unpredictable affair, that had made a more contemporary comical style appeal so much to the Boys. The television and film productions of Monty Python's Flying Circus with their "Now for something completely different" approach, were in the tradition of the Goons and firm favourites with the Band. Monty Python's television programmes always began with a brass band playing the march "Liberty Bell." This theme tune set a tone with which the Boys immediately identified, and was a prelude for disasters which always overtook events whenever they became too serious, or alternatively too silly. The Monty Python pastiche typified for the Boys the mishaps and foolishness of pretentious characters and situations as they saw them at parades, carnivals, and playouts in the community.

The significance of the Boy's incorporation of these comic styles into their own humorous style was not that they were just humour, but humour of a particular kind. This was a form of surrealistic art.[2] The supposedly serious was portrayed as stupid, and the important as unimportant. The order of social reality was challenged, turned upside down, and mocked for its pretensions. In this sense the Boy's humour was in the tradition of folk humour described by Bakhtin, it was a "carnival" form which played heavily on "an inversion of binary opposites" in order to produce a comical representation of a topsy turvy world in which official and established hierarchies were inversed.[3] I do not wish to imply that the Boys saw themselves as subversive, or as organising or performing for subversive ends; clearly they did not, although the mocking treatment accorded to the local politician , described earlier, shows there were times and occasions when they would do just that. This kind of comedy and its reproduction in banding was in essence socially critical through its play on the imagination, by taking ordinary incidents and toying with all the possible imaginative constructions on them. Consequently important people were made out to be buffoons at least, and at worst to be plain wicked. Important and serious social occasions were reconstructed as ridiculous, fouled up and misorganised follies. The celebrated tale of the Bishop's Garden Party, related in the previous chapter, was a good example of the Boys' sense of humour. Its enthusiastic and repeated re-telling showed the irony and absurdity of the situation was much appreciated. The Bishop and his guests had no idea of the double meaning which the Band had read into his remarks about "playing on grass," and their forced laughter only made them appear foolish. For a moment the Boys had turned the tables and had become masters of a social situation in which they had been cast as socially inferior. His eminence and the flowery-hatted ladies were placed in a comic perspective in which they were not fully aware of what was really going on, and had therefore lost any social advantage they might have had.

Another example of the Boys' sense of humour was found in the fact that some of the younger Band members would smoke marijuana, before the Anzac Day March commenced. To them, the events in which they participated were such a ridiculous spectacle that the full gravity of their comedy could best be appreciated in an "off yer face" condition. On the surface of things they acted out their part as soldiers for the day, but in truth they were in rebellion, mocking the occasion's respectability and seriousness through a hidden and disguised deviant perception of reality.

The Boys saw so many politicians and local dignitiaries give self-congratulating "just talk" speeches as they performed around the community. They saw the blunderings of community organisation, union and civic activities (exemplified by the way in which the Professional Musicians Union had barged them out of reach of their own audiences), which usually ended up serving small interest groups, despite proclaimed grander intentions. They were therefore without illusions about the nature of power and the powerful, and much of their interpretation of social events was based on the idea that life often did assume comical proportions, and that the established order and perception of social reality could be undermined by surrealistic elaboration.

While much of the Boys' humour was directed at others, they did not excuse themselves from comical and cynical comment. That they wore uniforms, had to search out and often negotiate for an audience, would never receive popular acclaim as artists, were accomplished musicians famous only within the narrow confines of the brass band movement, belonged to an ancient backwards looking tradition and movement which awarded medals and shields for musical excellence and "victories," and divided its Bands into divisions like football

teams, were all factors which were the subjects of jokes and mutual derision. The Boys understood and coped with their situation by laughing at it in similar style and fashion as the Goons and Monty Python.

By taking on the one hand what was a most serious lifelong career and community commitment, and contrasting it with a lifestyle which was outwardly "just working class" or "ordinary," the Boys did see themselves as genuinely doing "something completely different," as the Python saying goes.

Banding had taken classical music, television music, military uniforms with badges, braids and medals, and sports style contesting, and adapted them to its own use as a means of expression. In a similar way the Boys had incorporated popular comedy show styles and used them to enrich their culture, as a means of critical social comment, of reinforcing their group identity, and of producing new movement in their cultural form.

Raving On

When any of the Boys were said to be "Raving On" this referred to the recalling of past instances and situations in banding which constituted episodes in the Band's oral tradition. Through this humorous retelling of banding events the Boys had developed a system of constructing their own tradition and passing it on to contemporary and future generations of bandies, although this did not appear to be a deliberate strategy or consciously planned endeavour. While the Goon Show and Monty Python techniques of explaining social reality

constituted the Boys' style, banding's own past was the subject of Raving On.

During the research I sat and shouted with the Boys on hundreds of occasions, hearing stories told over and over again, as the more accomplished Ravers, usually the older Boys, regurgitated these comical tales and embroidered accounts of banding experiences to the accompaniment of beer drenched laughter, and competitive follow-on story telling skills.

Some of the stories concerned events which happened in the first quarter of the century, before most of the Boys were born, and in some cases originated from an even earlier date. They must therefore have reached their present tellers second or third hand. However, most stories were based on much more recent events, and were ways through which the Boys could relive and share again their own collective experiences as a Band. Individual Boys had perfected and stylized their own stories or "Raves," as they were called, which were understood to be theirs, not because they were particularly, or were even about them as individuals, but like their favourite musical solos, they were invested with their own interpretation and expression. "Tell them about the Wagga Contest, Stan," or "What about the Valve Trombone, Les," or "Remember taking the Souzaphone on the Mattara, Jim," were typical common requests which acted as cues for the performances of familiar tales. When the Boys indulged in Raving On, as these regular comical safaris into the Band's past were called, being able to do a good Rave, one's own special piece, was an important element in the banding identity.

The principal reason for the inclusion of Raving On in the thesis is not simply that such sessions were regularly recurring events, but that they were an important part of banding culture. Raving On was an art form in itself through which the Boys could express themselves in a well practiced and appreciated way, which had its own distinctive aesthetic and system of meaning. Lacking a relevant written history, Raving On constituted banding's oral history, and as such was central, relevant and meaningful to the social and cultural world of the bandie. It provided a tradition, a sense of history and purpose which was grounded in the daily problems and experiences of banding, and served to reinforce the Boys individual and collective identities as bandies. Raving On essentially consisted of orally transmitted stories, which made sense of banding in the past, and provided it with a reason and motive for its contemporary and future existence.

The Band, like banding generally, had been largely ignored by scholarly accounts of the history and culture of music in Australia, although banding had been going on as an organised social movement and cultural enterprise in Newcastle and Australia generally for well over a century. Such records and accounts of banding which did exist (newspaper cuttings, diaries, programmes, journals and other historical data) were dry lifeless sources which revealed comparatively little, and stood in stark contrast to the substance of the contemporary banding experience, which the Boys took part in and Raved about.

An attempt during the research to record, collect and chronologically systematize the Raves proved relatively futile. Specific dates, and their relationships to the major political and social events of the period were mostly blurred and forgotten, with only a few vague historic milestones such as the Pit Strikes, the Great Wars, and the

Depression remaining intact. However these sorts of relationships meant little to the Boys in the context of their Raves, for they were living stories and not factual historical accounts. They built on what had been handed down, and as tradition represented an active process of continual re-creation, not a static formula from the past. Similarly as history they were far more concerned with Geschite, the dynamic process of history which includes past, present and future, than with Historie, the detached, specific past.[4]

Raves were concerned with the development and interpretation of an art form, and as such are part of banding as a cultural form. Like much specialised brass band music, they had their own internal system of values. Meaning and significance were encoded in nuances and subtleties which, as in contest music, only the initiated and schooled could decode and appreciate. Raves had to be understood according to the criteria of those who participated in them, and in the context of the bandie's musical and social world. The reactions of other Club members to Raves confirmed that outsiders to banding did not find them particularly eventful or funny. In themselves, divorced from their performance context, they would be relatively meaningless. For these reasons actual Raves have not been included as part of the text, (and for similar reasons neither has an analysis of brass band music manuscripts been included). However, I have analysed the essential characteristics of the stories and their symbolism in an attempt to interpret the specific and transmitted meanings which they contained for the Boys.

Using twenty two of the Raves, which I heard on more than four occasions, consistent patterns and themes became clear. Raves were about banding, but more specifically they were about the actual context

of live performances. They almost always centered on the adventures or plight of an individual bandie, as hero or victim. An accident, unforeseen circumstance or event, or villain (more often than not a wolf in sheep's clothing), would usually emerge as part of the plot. This would precipitate group solidarity and collective action to assist the hero-victim, and would lead to a happy ending which contained a pun, joke or double meaning.

Such stories reflected both the expressive role and function of the lifestyle of the contemporary suburban Australian bandie in a very clear and positive way. Firstly by being about banding itself, secondly by their focus on an individual with whom the Rave participants can personally identify--an amateur musician all too likely to make mistakes and encounter problems, thirdly by the exemplary moral explication of the tales in which the protagonists's mates come to his or her aid with understanding and cooperation, and keep the Band going, and finally by the implicit faith in the Band's continuity, suggesting that the Band has a future because it has a successful past. Raves presented in a symbolic, and entertaining, form the collective experiences and ideals which made banding worthwhile to its participants and followers. They were characterised by a strong sense of community responsibility and the belief that group solidarity would win the day for individuals. Selectively recollected and stylized as part of the Boys' contemporary cultural experience, the Raves constituted a body of oral tradition, in which future bandies would read the essential values of banding, and add their own particular flourishes of style and interpretation. Like the material artifacts, such as musical instruments, music manuscripts, Challenge Shields, trophies, uniforms and other paraphenalia, and like the tuition provided to young musicians, and the Boys' commitment to the idea of community,

Raves were just one of the many raw materials out of which future banding culture would be forged.

Fig. 25: The Boys having a "Rave" during a Shouting Session at the Club

Fig. 26: The Ladies of the Band in Concert Dress

Chapter 14

Conclusion

When I first embarked on this research project and discussed it with fellow sociologists, friends and other colleagues, its subject tended to raise eyebrows and induce bemused smiles. Many people were not sure what a brass band was, and uncertain whether they had actually heard one play. Perhaps they recalled, often from dim recollections of childhood outings, that they had seen one on an Anzac Day March, in a carnival, or in a park. However once alerted to the presence of brass bands, and my special interest, I was constantly getting reports of sightings in the street, on television, in the newspapers, and in films. They are there at the Prime Minister's garden parties, and at charity walkathons. They are used, in caricature, in all kinds of television adverts, from the promotion of second-hand car dealers where their image mixes flash showmanship with trustworthy service to the community, to the "Four X coming on" of Queensland beer in which they are able to signify a combination of good honest working class sweat and toil and the joys of mateship. Brass bands are a favourite with local newspapers, being a photographic spectacle, and a worthy endeavour of the local community, often involving special human interest stories about the achievements of young people and the long-suffering dedication of the old Aussie battler, like Arthur Collins who in 1982 was awarded the Order of Australia Medal for seventy years service to Australian brass bands.[1] In films, brass bands are a particularly well-used device for creating naturalistic continuity between sound and vision, appearing in as unlikely and varied productions as Gone With the Wind, Octopussy, and Breaker Morant. Many film-makers

have certainly not missed the point that brass bands are indeed everywhere, and are so useful because they are unobtrusive. Brass bands are such a taken for granted aspect of social reality that they can pass virtually unobserved until special attention is drawn to them. Paradoxically it may be that brass bands' pervasiveness has contributed to the lack of sociological research on their contribution to Australian culture and society. In addition, as a subject of research, brass bands do not have the attractions of being fashionable, shocking, or a topical social issue. They are not a deviant sub-culture full of dangerous folk devils. They challenge no proprieties, nor constitute any sort of threat or social problem requiring immediate investigation for the "social good." So, why then are they important? The answers lie both in their existence as a distinct musical style and cultural form, and in their existence as a social organisation.

Brass bands merit investigation and explanation if only to make an addition to the list of what we know about music and culture; to rightfully include them alongside classical orchestras, jazz, blues, rock, and the many thousands of other expressive projects which together make up the world of music. To some extent this has been achieved during the course of this research by an unprecedented flood of new books coming from the heart of banding itself, which quite typically has drawn upon its own "do-it-yourself" resources and energies to document, develop and reproduce itself as a culture. Bainebridge's Brass Triumphant, the Brands' Brass Bands, Newcombe's Challenging Brass and Taylor's Brass Bands, are all brilliant examples of the ways the cultural depth, social complexity and the significant artistic, educational and organisational achievements of the brass band movement can be illustrated and presented.

One of the most striking aspects of banding, which is very evident in the above mentioned books,is its durability. It has persisted and continues as an important example of popular culture. It is not of course popular in the sense of domination of the musical media, nor a form of culture which is appreciated by the majority of people in society, but it is popular culture in the sense that it is "culture actually made by people for themselves."[2] The participatory nature of brass bands as a musical form is of primary importance. Brass bands are about making music and not about passive consumption, and their music-making activity has a significant social effect. Brass band music is not at all an expression of "art for art's sake," but is art for the community's sake. As a cultural form brass bands make very little sense if they are extracted from their social context. An analysis of their meaning within that context is the basis of this sociological investigation.

In the introductory chapters to the descriptive ethnography a case is made, to be later substantiated by empirical evidence, that the significance of brass bands lies in the fact that they are one of the social practices which create and maintain community life, not only as a close-knit unit of social organisation in themselves, but as a symbol of social unity, solidarity and cultural identity. As a form of popular culture brass bands are a repository of social meanings and a system of signification which can tell us about the nature of Australian society generally, and more specifically about the working class communities from which they are drawn, and upon which they depend for their relevance and very existence.

Brass bands are a very traditional aspect of community life. For culture to be traditional, rather than just historic, means that

it has persisted through time and endured social change to say something which has both contemporary meaning and historic purpose. Traditional cultural forms are those which persist, as Banding has done, because they are subject to social transformations. Banding has not been stuck in time to stand as an empty echo of the past, but has moved with vitality along a dynamic historical trajectory and been able to represent community life and working people today as it did in previous historical periods. I use this term "transformations" very specifically here, in the sense proposed by Stuart Hall.[3] Banding is one of the cultural grounds upon which social transformations are worked. By this I mean that they are an area of social life upon which changes are constantly worked and reworked, so that they are adapted and assimilated, and become a source of strength and continuity.

The confrontations and struggles which brought pre-industrial English banding to a close, discussed in Chapter Three, precisely illustrate this point about transformations. Those "independently minded musicianers" of rural village life lost one struggle for the church as an institution for expression and community life, but all the same, banding still persisted. Instead of being crushed under the weight of technical innovations in musical instrumentation resulting from the new mass production processes, or by the advent of widespread literacy and of mass circulated printed music manuscripts, or indeed by the eclipse of traditional community life and the formation of new urban industrial proletarian associations, banding took on board and became part of these changes with skill and enthusiasm, salvaging the best of the past, yet being transformed to meet what was new and relevant to the lives of ordinary folk.

Some musicologists might argue that brass bands today do not sound, or appear to be, like those church bands of old. There are indeed obvious differences, but as a contemporary bandie I am continually impressed by the familiarity of much re-created medieval and pre-industrial band music. The harmonic, notational and instrumental relationships sound so similar, understandable and comfortable. But, these are questions concerning the syntactic analysis of music rather than its social analysis, and interesting as they may be, they are not what the sociologist of music should be properly concerned with.[4] Rather, concern should be aimed at the social relationships involved with the production and consumption of music, and the criteria of meanings implicit within this.

Yet another chapter of the history of banding came to a close with the advent of electrically mediated musical production and the coming of the 1930s depression. Radio, recordings, electronic amplification, cinema and much later television, all spelled an end to the relevance and absolute need for those large, loud, open-air, mobile organs represented by brass bands. Poverty and unemployment greatly restricted the people's access to any means of musical production and popular celebration. Yet banding persisted, reduced in absolute numbers, impoverished by lack of popular demand, but brass bands were still there and this time pursuing more fervently their own cultural directives and vigorously building the "contest field." Historically, if we are to mark the beginnings of purpose written brass band music of importance, then it began to be played in 1919.[5] Gone, of course, were the great subsidised "works" bands from the coal mines, steelworks, foundries, and engineering

workshops, but instead banding became more community based and self-reliant than for a long period of time, and much more relevant to the educational needs and aspirations of working class amateur musicians.

This contemporary study of banding covers a period in which there was a degree of revival and growth in the numbers of brass band players and bands, although in absolute terms it was still a pale shadow of the halcyon days of the twenties when Newcastle could boast of more than twenty five brass bands. How important the transformations I observed were, and what they meant in terms of the history of popular culture, only time will really tell. Contrary to common conceptions of suburban Australia as an anonymous cultural wasteland full of "out-of-it" Norms, the descriptive ethnography shows a community life which was dynamic, demanding, and culturally vital. The Boys, like the members of many other community organisations with which they were associated, were engaged in rigorous real struggles, consuming in their complexity and social moment, to maintain their activities and promote their ideas about the implicit values of community life. How then did the Boys create community and what was the nature of these struggles?

Brass bands were an institution for community based education. The bandroom was not just a place where people simply learned to play music, but one where the values of participation, discussion, and democratic decision-making were taught in a practical relevant way. This was not education by authoritative paid professionals, but by "mates" in a demonstrative situation. No financial returns or social status were involved, but ordinary men and women could see their teaching labours rewarded as youth matured into performing musicians, and they could see the continuity of their culture in a very real way.

By contrast the growth of school bands, which had ushered in American-style concert bands, was seen in opposition to the community based education of brass bands. School banding was regarded with suspicion, as something imposed from above by educational experts, in which youth were to be told and made to behave and conform, rather than to cooperate, participate and learn through musical expression. In this sense school banding threatened to debase and ultimately destroy the particular brass band "Pedigree" of style.

To understand banding, "Weekly Bandpractice" was a vital perspective. In the bandroom the Band could be seen as a musical cooperative, where group activity and pooled contributions had built up and produced a community-owned store of musical instruments, manuscripts, uniforms and other equipment. It was a social collective of musical knowledge and facility which acted as a store of cultural capital for today's and future generations, and it spoke in a very immediate way about the educational and cultural rights of amateurs. Here the tensions between individual needs and group solidarity came sharply into focus. To make progress the Boys had to stick together and work as a team concerned with the betterment of all its members at the sacrifice of individual wants. Both in the purely musical as well as the organisational tasks, well practised group strategies were aimed at social inclusion and understanding rather than exclusion and dismissal.

The social organisation and community commitment of the Band was closely tied to its involvement with the Bowling Club, in which it was one of many social projects which contributed towards and made up club life. The clubs were an important expression of the achievements of community life, quite literally in a solid bricks and mortar sense. In them the means of entertainment, recreation, and political direction,

were socially owned and controlled. It was here, through informal familiarity, trust, and the traditional relationships of neighbourhood, mateship and family where the mechanics of community life came into focus. At the Club the Boys organised their social and financial support, and negotiated "kick-back" arrangements. It was consequently where the Boys most loved to play, among their mates from work, for their "own kind of people," who understood them as "local talent." As opposed to this informality were the trials and problems of local government committees with their formal structure and official representatives. Against the background of club life and informality the Boys had learned to reject, and even despise, the State Government Cultural Grants system with its bureaucrats and means-testing formalities, which insulted the Boys' organisational achievements rather than subsidized them.

But, all was not well in the Club. The Band was a Labor Band, and unionist through and through, yet they found themselves in a situation where their very existence placed them in opposition to union interests. Professional musicians were keeping them off club stages in a very real way. Still the Boys continued to put their trust in unionism, postponing an immediate conflict, in the belief, perhaps naive, that they could not finally be denied their rightful position and access to their preferred audiences, and that solidarity should count more than division. This was a struggle which was not concluded during the research, and opened up many complex questions of loyalty for the Boys and other club members.

In a much broader perspective the Band was very much at the service of the whole community. The popular social gatherings and expressions of carnivals, Anzac Day and the many playouts where the

Boys performed music, not as stars or famed individuals, but in a contributory manner, musically helping to fashion occasions according to circumstances and using the power of music to define and make situations solemn, patriotic, festive, nostalgic or whatever the gathering demanded of them. All of these occasions were dynamic and changing. Anzac Day had changed its meaning and had grown old and irrelevant to youth and women. The changing gender relationships in the brass band movement and a youthful rejection of "the glorification of war" placed the Boys in a new struggle for identity, as did the dictates of what was festive at carnivals. New social needs and expressive directions such as "fancy marching" meant the Boys had to struggle with ideology, self perceptions, and reputation as a group, to decide where to culturally go, which expressive direction was good, relevant and honest.

In many ways brass bands and bandies represented community leadership and the best aspects of working class life. Tradition, community and participation were the lynch pins of the banding ethos, and were very evident in the reiterated ritual speeches of the State Contest. As a form of culture banding was active, self-critical and enterprising, and contesting showed this to be so in a very dramatic way. As competitive festivals and celebrations of achievement contests were the means by which bandies could aspire to achieve musical greatness, as they understood it, according to criteria which they had themselves meticulously fashioned over time, and were therefore democratically controlled. Contesting stood at the heart of banding, for it was the exhilarating and nerve-wracking testing ground for individuals, bands, and "the movement" itself. Everything depended upon effort and endeavour, not just in the musical sense, but in the activities in the community which had made it possible to raise a

band to championship class and get them onto the contest stage. Bandies had built up and developed contesting according to their needs. It united them and gave them a joint purpose on a national and international level, and it stood as blatant evidence of the success of community musicians in producing cultural movement and artistic advance. It was an achievement which placed brass band music in a class of its own, tested, tried and judged according to merit. Contesting symbolised the trials, sacrifices, and struggles of banding in the community in an immediate and very obvious way.

Another facet of the inner workings of the brass band movement is portrayed in "Being One of the Boys: Art and Expression in Social Relationships." Here mateship, not just as blind loyalties, but as constructive encounters which reinforced, elaborated and applied the ideas central to banding, was articulated and used as a tool to define the Boys' culture and analyse the nature of wider society. It was a way in which they could fashion social identity and group purpose by mocking the powerful and the pretentious through sheer cultural ostentation. Through their "Raves" and their sense of the ridiculous they had constructed a stylised sense of their own history, an oral history which was theirs, and could only belong to them. They had developed an instrument for carrying community history forward, which threw past experiences into contemporary relevance, and gave their struggles meaning, vitality and validity.

Compared with cultural pursuits such as television, films, "pop" music, cricket and football, brass bands appear as a form of minority rather than majority culture in Australian society. Even so, they are part of popular culture in the sense that they have their roots in the lives, struggles and aspirations of the ordinary people,

and in their participatory nature. If we were to add together all those performing and directly involved with brass bands then they would constitute the largest form of participant musical production in Australia. Why then are they neglected, and why is what they produce so undersubsidised by government cultural funding instrumentalities compared with other non-commercially viable minority forms of cultural production such as classical symphony orchestras, ballet and opera? One reason, proposed in the introductory chapters, is that as an essentially participant musical style brass bands are not so easily open to commercial production and exploitation. Another reason I would propose is that they are simply not regarded as "High Art," that these ordinary folk cannot be vaunted and held up as exclusive artists to be funded as culture which civilises and uplifts the mind. This point was not lost on bandies and jokes on this theme, if not well articulated critiques of the nature of arts sponsorship and its relationship to social class struggle, were commonly made by the Boys.

A debate amongst Marxists and cultural theorists conducted in the pages of Arena as this research was drawing to a close, appears very relevant to the position of brass bands, popular culture and working class community.[6] Contributions from two contending schools of thought argue over what is valid, valuable and relevant to any debate on Australian culture. On the one hand, those of the "left pessimist" persuasion, as they had become labelled, reiterate much that had been proposed a long time ago by writers from the Frankfurt School of Marxist thought, in particular the ideas of the sociologist of music and musicologist, Adorno. They contend that the working class are the mere recipients of commercially manufactured pulp, and the easily manipulated targets of sentimentalised cultural garbage; that in terms of hegemony dominance is all but complete, and the working class are

devoid of cultural inspiration, creativity and expression, lacking the institutions in which to formulate and construct their own perspective of social reality. Opposed to this pessimistic view are the "left optimists," exemplified by John Docker. He calls for a broader understanding of hegemony, in the sense that it has two aspects, "domination and resistance to domination," and that even these terms are "too polarising, too bloc-like, too unsupple as categories," for the forces in both may be "multifarious and contradictory." In regards to popular culture, Docker points out that there are particular problems because of its ideological fluidity: "Perhaps we should think of 'domination' and 'resistance' not as alternatives, but as the defining poles in a continuum." He further draws attention to the fact that much Marxist analysis of popular culture has floundered over the concept of relative autonomy, tending "to elide popular culture's necessary degree of 'autonomy,' and to stress too much how 'relative' it is to production and/or consumption," leading to "wide, sweeping, and all too easy generalisations."[7]

I would argue that brass bands, and the many other forms of working class culture in which the Boys were involved, did have a great deal of autonomy, and that this autonomy was relevant to the needs and aspirations of working class people. Brass bands cannot be explained, or even conceptualized, in terms of their location in the market forces of capitalism. The research showed that in those aspects of culture which are often described (somewhat derisorily) as "popular," its recipients were far from passive. People in the clubs and the Boys in the Band did not just passively receive manufactured cultural pulp, but were discriminating, selective, and did things with it; they changed it, adapted it, and used it as raw material for intellectual, imaginative and constructive pursuits.

In short, they manipulated and reworked a lot of mediated culture, particularly music, implementing their own experiences into it, for their own emotional needs.

It appears that many theorists who profess an interest and concern for ordinary people find themselves in collusion with those who really look down upon the working class and believe their cultural endeavours to be valueless. They cannot bring themselves to trust culture in those "rough and ready hands" any more than those Tory Anglicans at the time of pre-industrial banding. We have come to a situation in which, as Docker aptly says, "left-wingers, radicals, marxists, pit themselves culturally in opposition to the working class," and are engaged in "collaborating with the professional middle class in culturally despising the 'lower classes'."[8] Why is this so, and how has it come about?

One answer I would suggest, which comes out of this research, is the absolute lack of empirical research into working class life in Australia. That in fact we have not yet begun to unearth, let alone document and explain the ways in which ordinary people express themselves and organise their social relationships. We simply do not yet know or understand what is going on out there in suburbia, and rather than constructing a culture map with all its rich contours and social promise have simply bemoaned a supposed barrenness. We would be very aware of our racial prejudice if we assumed that the folk cultures of Africa and India, for example, were not worthy of investigation and lacked real artistic value, but we fail to perceive our class prejudice when we make the same assumptions about our own "folk culture."

"Ocker" is a word I have heard frequently used in intellectual and academic circles. It is a term of class insult used to describe

those who do not share middle class pretentions of what is culturally valuable. The Boys were very "ocker." They loved their big Holden cars, loved to go drinking with their mates, and did crack racist, sexist and anti-migrant jokes. They liked to listen to popular music, and to watch sentimental and violent television series. But they were, as I discovered as a performing musician, excellent practitioners of their art by any formal musical standard, and as the descriptive ethnography shows they were concerned citizens, intellectual vital, hard-working for important social values such as solidarity, educational opportunity, cultural pluralism, and the rights of those less fortunate than themselves. The point is, of course, that the Boys were not alone, but belonged to a community of others with similar values. Down the road from the Club was the local Scottish pipe band, with its own history, traditions, rituals, and expressive styles. Equally important, and nearby, was a marching girls team. Then there were the many church choirs from a whole variety of denominations, the amateur jazz bands, bush bands, a big band, and the various dancing associations, such as ballroom, Scottish, square, and barn. They too were all amateur, contesting, locally supported organisations, in which artistic expression and cultural endeavour took place and welded individuals into the groups which made up the very substance of community. As well as these more traditional Australian cultural forms, there were German bands, Lithuanian and Latvian choral associations, Greek and Yugoslavian dance groups, and a Chinese dragon dance team. If we regard sports associations as expressive culture, there were also scores of these.

Far from being lifeless and uncultured, I would claim that empirical research can show that Australian suburban existence is quite alive and vital. When the "left pessimists" decry Australian popular

culture I suspect that they mean most community culture does not conform to their versions of what culture should be, and that the working class do not organise or express themselves through institutions or associations they can personally identify with, or participate in, because they do not share the same social values.

For the Boys, Kotarah Band, Kotarah Juniors, their town band tradition, and their "movement," were real achievements. They show that cultural expression and social relations built on trust, solidarity, mutual acceptance, and united struggle in the face of adversity enrich life, for through playing music the Boys also played a vital symbolic and practical role in the creation of community.

Fig. 27: The author playing Euphonium at Newcastle Beach.

Appendix I

Research Methodology

As Silbermann notes the literature of the sociology of music reveals a striking multiplicity of approaches. This is hardly surprising given the variety of social forms the production of music can involve, the different styles of music which exist, and the many uses to which music has been put. Approaches to the sociology of music have come from the point of view of social history, the sociology of knowledge, culture, aesthetics, deviance, community, and occupation, among others. Such epistemological diversity is evidence that no particular approach is the single correct one, for all of them have contributed something towards our knowledge and understanding of society and music. In addition there is now a large degree of overlap between what is taken as the legitimate concern of the disciplines of ethnomusicology, musicology, and the anthropology and sociology of music.[1]

This study adopted Silbermann's approach to music, rejecting the analysis of notation, harmonies, and other internal technical details (as interesting as these are), as unlikely to contribute much towards the understanding of man in his sociomusical aspect, and has attempted in the study of brass bands to:

i) Identify and accurately define relevant sociomusical problems.

ii) Through sociological research techniques, collect and organise reliable sets of specific factual data.

iii) Draw attention to gaps in our knowledge of specific sociomusical problems.

iv) Identify, analyse and interpret the interrelation and interdependence of common problems which previously appeared isolated and unconnected to one another.

Many texts on research methodology provide good outlines of various methodological procedures. But, as Bell and Encel have pointed out, social research is much more complex, varied and messy than students are led to believe by most standard methodological texts, which they claim, "abound in prescriptive, normative statements about how research should or should not be done," when in actuality the researcher confronts a complex empirical world where individuals, groups and organisations have vested interests, and degrees of commitment to the problem that is being examined.[2] How then was I to achieve my aims? What, for example, were the appropriate sociological research techniques by which to collect and analyse sets of specific factual data in the case of brass bands?

From the initial intentions of this research to write a thorough descriptive analysis of the expressive lifestyle of contemporary Australian banding as a selected portion of everyday life through naturalistic research, I was immediately presented with the problem of just how natural my position with the Boys could ever be. Some guide towards participant observer strategies has been provided by Gold, who developed a fourfold classification system of approaches.[3] In being a "complete observer" it would have been possible to have observed the Band from the outside, without interacting with them personally, and without their knowledge of my interests. Given the fact that they were a closed tightly knit social group, this approach seemed unlikely to yield much penetrative data. Alternatively, in the role of "observer as participant," I could perhaps have made

occasional visits to the bandroom, performances, and shout sessions and conducted various interviews, but I doubted whether this would have yielded that much information, given that banding as a cultural form had developed like any other distinctive social unit, with a different and definite set of common understandings and a language of its own. Here participation would have been specific and limited, and dependent to a large degree upon my predetermined notions of the particular sociomusical problems of brass bands and their relative importance to the Boys. In the role of "participant as observer," presumably I could have just hung around the Boys, tried to minimise any role pretence and grasped what was possible through interaction. But brass bands are highly structured groups in which individuals have a specific part to play, and a well defined role which leaves little room for casual interaction. Some "participant as observer" studies have been particularly successful and fruitful in terms of descriptive data about small community groups, and their consideration provided a rich procedural guide. Liebow's Tally's Corner, Patrick's Glasgow Gang, Whyte's Street Corner Society and Ned Polsky's Hustlers Beats and Others are important examples, but they all had their problems.[4] As Whyte noted, Doc, his most important informant and the leader of the gang told him that his presence "slowed him up" by making him a collaborator in the research. Whyte's presence resulted in subject conditioning which resulted in a "control effect" which marginally changed the behaviour of the subjects of the research. Perhaps that was inevitable given the nature of the group under study. Whyte could not be expected to become a young Italian migrant, no more than Liebow could be expected to change from being a Jew into being an American Negro, and Patrick become a street youth and go stealing "cats eyes."

I decided that becoming a "complete participant" was a sound strategy for two major reasons. Firstly, I knew from previous experience as a performing musician that musical groups, particularly if they work together as a group over a long period of time become very cliquey, that is, they develop highly sophisticated sets of common understandings, linguistic nuances, and highly stylistic behaviour, because joint expression depends upon emotional understanding, sharing, and coordination. Secondly, that banding is a part-time career, that it was not an isolated social form, but strongly connected through all of its participants to the activities of everyday life. There was little chance of "going native" as some anthropologists have termed the kind of over-involvement which has led to accusations of research losing its scientific objectivity. In any case, complete participation turned out to be most suitable. I, like the other Boys, had a full-time job with all the pressing demands this entails, and this accounts for the longitudinal nature of the study. I was then, like them, involved in a part-time and amateur pursuit, and it provided me with the opportunity to experience in the raw what it meant to be tired after work, subject to other family, social, and community commitments. It forced me to experience the degree of dedication, loyalty and reliability that is required of a bandie, and this was important in more ways than one. Sacrifices of social life were required, involvement in community organisations often brought personal interests into conflict. The redevelopment of my "sus-pedigree" in the attainment of a particular musical and interpersonal style of character had to be achieved. As I was later to learn, one could either be a bandie and one of the Boys in the fullest sense of the word, or not a bandie at all.

Deciding then, to jump into banding "boots and all" I entered the group by first telephoning the Bandmaster of my nearest brass

band, which was Kotarah, explained that I was a brass musician with some previous banding experience overseas, and was invited to turn up at the next weekly bandpractice. After an audition and a few shouts with the Boys a new Euphonium was handed to me, with current music, and a reconditioned uniform. I was as it turned out a more than welcome and timely arrival as the "Bumper Euph" seat had been vacant for some months, the "State" was only weeks away, and I could "handle the dots." More important even, was the fact that my "face fitted" and I had a partiality for the Goon Show style of humour. Only a few months later did I mention in bandpractice my intentions of "writing a book" on brass bands as part of my research at the University. What they envisaged it would be like and contain I have no idea. They did however decide through discussion that it would be "a good thing for banding," but insisted that all names must be fictionalized if I was to receive their assistance. Apart from occasionally cracking jokes about academics, and sometimes hiding my research notes for fun, they let me proceed as I chose. Providing I was an enthusiastic member of the Band and shared their commitments they seemed only too pleased to leave things at that position.

Early in the research, and guided by what I had read from the experiences of previous participant observer studies, such as those by Carter and Festinger, I decided upon two major strategies.[5] Firstly I would behave as naturally as possible and join in as many aspects of the banding lifestyle as I possibly could. In short, I would attempt to become a good bandie as the Boys understood it, by attending as many activities as anyone else did, and by trying hard to improve my musical performance to gain a measure of respect amongst them for my musicianship. Secondly, to avoid taking on any direct leadership activities. I decided to help whenever this was possible, and this in the end

resulted in me becoming Band Secretary for a period of time, which in turn provided me with an enormous insight into the Band's "kick-back" system, and the bureaucratic workings of the Club and "the movement." But, I attempted to stay well clear of any decision-making or organisational responsibilities. If the Boys wanted minutes and letters typed up, and made formal, then I would be their stenographer. I was to be of service rather than directive, to alter the content of the group by my presence, but not to alter its form, as far as this was at all possible.

As already outlined in the "Theoretical and Methodological Approach," a major stimulus for the need and validity of a participant observer study of brass bands came from reading Becker's "Dance Musicians." It still stands after thirty five years in a class of its own, and is quite possibly one of the most important and incisive examples of a full participant observation study of a musical group currently available. As a guide to this research, it was rich in suggestions and immediate relevance. True, works exemplified by Keil's Urban Blues, and Frith's Sociology of Rock were also valuable and instructive participant observer studies. But, Frith was a journalist of rock rather than a musician, and Keil, whilst being a bluesman, was not a performer, at least for the purposes of the research; they appear always to have been on the periphery of events, rather than at the heart of the music, to have been receivers and audience, rather than creators and performers. By comparison Becker's "Dance Musicians" were voices from the inside, and ones which I instinctively recognised as valid and entirely relevant.

Such a participant position of course has implications for the scientific objectivity of this particular research project. Could it

be repeated by another sociologist with the same sorts of results forthcoming? The answer I believe is yes, but a yes with some qualifications. Firstly, the researcher would need to acquire a reasonable proficiency in brass musicianship. Secondly, they would need to be prepared to spend much time and show a high level of commitment to such a small group activity. Thirdly, and this is quite an imponderable, their "face would have to fit," to use a banding metaphor to describe social acceptability.

Another important implication for the research is what sort of community study it actually was. It certainly did not set out to be a community study as such, and was not a study of Kotarah and its environs as a distinct geographical area or suburban district. Rather, it was a study of a musical group which just happened to be one small group within that geographical community; one which described itself as a "community association," and which saw itself as working towards and symbolizing community as a system of human relations. More important still was the fact that this view of community was from the inside looking outwards, and therefore was not, nor was it intended to be, an impartial study of the relations the Band as a group had with other groups, organisations and associations. For example, much could quite possibly have been gleaned from investigating exactly how the Musicians Union and the Cultural Grants authorities viewed the activities of the Band. As it happened, in both cases cooperation with me was refused, and anyway, it was not that sort of study. Employment and union relations, and cultural policy, are diverse and involved subjects in themselves which merit a different research undertaking and strategy. Rather, this was a study of one brass band as an example of banding in Australia generally, and was concerned with the lifestyles of its members as performing musicians, and what

they intended to express through their activities. Without deeply immersing myself in the social life of the Band I strongly doubt whether it would have been possible to have gained a real knowledge and understanding of such things as the psychological pressures of the contest stage, really understood the Boys sense of the ridiculous, realised the importance of "psyching up," or gained an insight into the pride bandies felt in their "colours," for example.

However, such an "inside" study of banding did have objectivity and relevance to banding as a widespread movement. Contesting introduced me to the wider milieu of "the movement," and being a bandie made me acceptable and welcome to other members through a widespread geographical area. During the course of the study I played with other brass bands in three different States: Queensland, Victoria and New South Wales. I visited over twenty eight bands in their bandrooms during practice sessions, and went to about twice as many different shout venues. Whenever time and acceptance permitted I sat in observation on Regional and State Banding Association executive committee meetings, and on Contest Committees. In addition, the collection and study of the many local individual band newsletters and magazines which are produced for members and supporters, and the study of the national banding journal Ozoompah, all of which provide a rich network of information and communication within "the movement," broadened and informed the study. Apart from purely localised differences such as each individual bands' relationship with its local affiliate organisations such as clubs, local council arts committees, and separate carnival traditions I had no reason to suspect that the Boys and their activities and beliefs were in any important and significant ways different to those found in brass bands generally in Australia.

The strategy for becoming a participant observer in a brass band and the acquisition of a banding identity, of "Pedigree," has been outlined above. Other important considerations of research strategy, particularly those relating to the collection of material, its classification, and validation requires some explanation. Further to Becker's research cited above, Becker's and Geer's "Field Methods and Techniques, Participant Observation and Interviewing: A Comparison," provided a useful guide.[6] In describing participant observation as the most complete form of sociological datum, they define it as "that method in which the observer participates in the daily life of the people under study, observing things which happen, listening to what is said, and questioning them over some length of time." In this paper they illuminate four problematics which informed my study: "Learning the Native Language," "Matters Interviewees are Unable or Unwilling to Talk About," "Things People See Through Distorted Lens," and "Inference, Process, and Context." All of these propositions had some parallel in my research, and were overcome to a large degree by actually being a bandie, spending a great deal of time with the Boys and gaining their respect and confidence.

Some mention of how the research data was collected, documented, verified, and systematized is necessary. Most of the time I was with the Boys I kept on me a series of large ledger books. On one sheet I would record as accurately as possible the conversations which took place, or at least as much of its substance as was possible at the time, or as soon after as it was convenient. On the opposite sheet I recorded observations pertinent to place, company, occasion, date. and whatever observable data came to attention and mind. Then once weekly I would systematize this information according to subject, person and persons, and occasion. From these notes I would attempt

to abstract the sociomusical problems which seemed most relevant and important to the Boys. This having been done I would then bring up these problems again for discussion, sometimes with individuals, but mostly with groups, to test their lasting importance and relevance. If I noted on this second enquiry that importance was attached to my understandings I would then stimulate further discussion and debate on the issues involved. These further discussions were intended to confirm or deny tentative hypotheses about their behaviour and beliefs. Only themes which were consistently found worthy of discussion were included in the research. When I had formulated a hypothesis about behaviour, or a sociomusical problem, I would then report this back to groups of the Boys, usually at shout sessions to confirm if this was in fact what they meant, or had anything else to elaborate on the subject.

During the research a cassette recorder was used occasionally, but never with a great deal of success. The Boys could never resist cracking their latest dirty jokes, poems, and Irish limericks into the microphone. On one occasion, when they noticed that my questioning was becoming intense, they sang back to the microphone obviously practised answers to the tune of "Why Was he Born so Beautiful." I found that using the recorder was both inhibiting, with the Boys never fully relaxing in its presence, or over stimulating, for in their own particularly vain performing musicians' way, they always wanted to hear what had been recorded to know if they sounded "good" or not. I must however admit to using the recorder secretly at contests and a few other occasions, however, I did always admit this to those concerned later on, and played the contents back to them.

Finally some mention of other material. Local newspapers provided a large base source of contemporary and historic material on banding. Getting into the press was a constant endeavour of the Boys, and it seemed this had been so as far back as local newspaper records went. This not only provided the Boys with verification that their activities were worthwhile, but also stands as the most accurate historical record of banding in Newcastle. In addition, a number of surveys were attemped to measure audience composition and commitment. These were of course very difficult to handle. One cannot be performing, interviewing and surveying at the same time. Further, such large, usually open-air, audiences consisting of the thousands that turn up to carnivals and similar occasions would have been impossible to sample with any great deal of accuracy. The one survey of any importance which was included in the research, that of the contest audience, I believe had some accuracy, and for this I have the members of Kotarah Juniors to thank, on whose honesty and reliability I know I can rely.

Appendix II

Musical Repertoire

The Band played a vast variety of music, some of which was borrowed from other bands as the occasion demanded. What follows is the Band's public catalogue of music, which given sufficient notice, they would be prepared to perform publicly. It is not a complete list of the Band's Library, for they had in addition stored boxes of much older manuscripts dating back to before the change of the century, which were not catalogued, but known only through memory. Also the Band Library was a constantly acquisitioning one with new material arriving almost weekly. In addition to the "Hymn Tune Section" below, the Band had available to it, The Tune Book, and its Supplements published by the Salvation Army. This contained in excess of seven hundred hymn tunes, including the many to be found in Hymns Ancient and Modern of the Church of England. It also needs to be mentioned that transcriptions, or "pirating" as it was called, was a popular banding pursuit, and if a request was made for them to play some particular music which was not scored or otherwise available for brass bands, one of the Boys would score it for the occasion. Such arrangements already produced by the Band are underlined below. In the section "Contest Music," the Contest Grade for which the composition was deemed suitable is marked A, B, C, D, or subfixed J, for Junior Grades. In the "General Music" section some compositions are marked (W), to indicate Waltz, or (S), to indicate Selection. An asterix (*) indicates a Full Score was available. Titles marked (Pipes) were also scored for Bag Pipe accompaniment, whilst other compositions indicated (Vocal) could also be used for that purpose.

Other indicators such as (Ct.), (Hn.), (Sop.), (4 tet.), (Euph.), (Ov.), (Pno.), (Tbn.), indicate Cornet, Horn, Soprano, Quartet, Euphonium, Overture, Piano, Trombone features respectively. Additional Vocal, Piano, and Pipe and Brass Band music pirated during the research are placed in a special section.

CONTEST MUSIC

Academic Festival Overture (Brahms/Wright)	(A/B)	
A Joyful Noise (Gordon Jacob)	(A/B)	
Blackfriars (Cundell/Wright)	(A/B)	*
Belmont Variations (Bliss)	(A)	*
Ballet Russe	(C/D)	*
Carnival Romaine (Berlioz/Wright)	(A)	*
Comedy Overture (Jenkins)	(A)	*
Celebration (Ball)	(A/B)	*
Conquerors (Ball)		
Call of The Sea (Ball)	(B/C)	
Carnival Overture (Dvorak)	(B/C)	*
Croatian in Egypt (Berlioz/Ord-Hume)	(D)	*
Diadem of Gold (Bailey)	(A)	
Downland Suite (Ireland)	(A/B)	
Diamond Cross (Greenwood)	(J)	
Entertainments (Vintner)	(A/B)	*
Embassy (Street)	(A)	*
Essay for Brass Band (Gregson)	(A)	*
Egmont Overture (Beethoven)	(B)	*
Everybody's Child (Ball)	(C)	*
English Suite (Ball)	(D)	*
English Maiden (Ball)	(D)	*
Euranthe (Weber)	(D)	*
1812 Overture (Tchaikovsky)	(B/C)	
Echoes of Rossini	(D)	
Eugen Onegin (Tchaikovsky)	(D/C)	
Eine Kleine Nachtmusik (Mozart)	(B)	*
Fantasy for Brass Band (Malcolm Arnold)	(A)	*
Festival Music (Ball)	(A)	*
Frogs of Aristophanes (Bantock)	(A)	*
Froza Del Destino (Verdi/Wright)	(A)	*
First Suite in Eb (Holst)	(C)	*
Four Preludes (Ball)	(C)	*
From the New World Symphony (Dvorak/Wright)	(C)	*
Fowey River Suite (Ball)	(C/D)	*
Four Little Maids	(D)	
Faust (Spohr)	(D)	*
Faust (Gounod)	(D)	*
Gallions Reach (Peter Yorke)	(C/B)	*
Glastonbury	(C)	*
Galantia	(D/J)	*

Haydn's Works

Homage to Pharoah (Rimmer)	(D/J)	
Indian Summer (Ball)	(D/J)	*
Ivydene (Greenwood)	(j)	*
Impromptu for Brass Band (Ball)	(C)	*
In Days of Old (Leduc)	(J)	*
Joddrell Bank (Peter Yorke)	(B)	&
Journey Into Freedom (Ball)	(A)	*
James Cook	(D)	*
King Lear (Rimmer)	(B/C)	*
Kaleidoscope (Johnson)	(J)	*
Les Preludes (Liszt/Wright)	(C/B)	*
Land of the Ever Young (Bantock)	(D)	*
Lorenzo (Keighly)	(A)	*
Lustspiel (Bela)	(D)	*
L'Africaine (Meyerbeer arr.)	(D)	
Labour and Love (Fletcher)	(B)	
Main Street (Eric Ball)	(B)	*
Moments with Wagner	(D)	*
Magic Flute (Mozart)	(D)	
Mastersingers suite (Wagner/Wright)	(D)	
Old Westminster	(C/D)	*
Pageantry (Howells)	(A)	*
Plantaganets (Gregson)	(A)	*
Pride of Youth (Jacob)	(A/B)	*
Pacemakers (Gregson)	(C)	*
Pride of Race (Wright)	(D)	*
Parsifal (Wagner arr.)	(D)	*
Pride of the Forest	(D/J)	*
Quo Vadis?	(B/C)	*
Rhapsody in Brass (Goffin)	(A)	*
Resurgam (Ball)	(A)	*
Robin Hood (Ye Little Guest) (Geehl)	(B/C)	*
Rufford Abbey	(C)	*
Rural Suite	(D/J)	*
Rhapsody No. 2 On Negro Spirituals (Ball)	(D/C)	*
Saga of the North (Jenkins)	(A)	*
Salute to Youth (Vintner)	(A/B)	*
Symphony of Marches (Vintner)	(A)	*
Spectrum (Vintner)	(A)	*
Sinfonietta (Wilson)	(A/B)	*
Shipbuilders (Yorke)	(B/C)	*
Suite in Bb (Jacob)	(C)	*
Seasons (Carr)	(C)	*
Scheherazade (Rimsky-Korsakov)	(B)	*
Sinfonie Concertante (Boedijn)	(D/J)	*
Spirit of Progress (Rimmer)	(D/J)	*
Scena Sinfonica (Geehl)	(B/C)	*
Symphony No. 1 (Beethoven)	(B)	*
Symphony No. 9 (Beethoven)	(B/C)	*
Symphony No. 8 (Schubert) (Unfinished)	(B/C)	*
Symphony in C (Gossec)	(J)	*
Undine (Lorzing)	(C/D)	*
Undaunted (Ball)	(B)	*

Variations for Brass Band (Vaughan-Williams)	(A)	
Viszcaya (Vinter)	(B)	*
White Company (Richardson)	(B)	*
White Rider (Wright)	(C/D)	*
Wuthering Heights (Rayner)	(A)	*
Yorkshire Ridings (Wood)	(D)	*
Young in Heart (Ball)	(J)	*

MARCH MUSIC

The Australasian
Action Front
Argandaub
Army of the Nile
The Aboriginal
Along The Mall
Avanti (J)
Allendale (J)
Advancement (J)
Across the Seas (J)
Army, Navy & Air Force
B. B. And C.F.
Belphegor
Boccacio
Beattie
Blue Devils
Blaze Away
Boys of the Old Brigade
Broudaire
British Mouthpiece
Belda (J)
Brilliant
Beaufighters
Castell Coch
Castell Cardydd
Colonel Bogey
Caractactus
Constellation
Commonwealth
Coronel
Cossack
Castell Caerffili
Crown & Commonwealth
Champion March Medley
C.I.V.
Dunedin
Death or Glory
Dignity
Dead March in Saul
El Abanico

Flag of Freedom
Fountain Lake Fanfare
Flame of Olympus
Franconia (J)
Fodens' Own
Farewell My Comrades
Flying Arrow
Flying Squad
Flying Eagle
Great Little Army
Gladiator March
Guards Colours
Gallipoli
Gill Bridge
Gleneagle
High School Cadets
Honest Toil
Holyrod
Heroic Defence
Hail to the Spirit of Liberty
Invercargill
It's a Long Way to Tipperary
Indomitable
Implacable
Ingomar
King of the Road
Knight Templar
Liberators
Land of Hope and Glory
Liberty Bell
Long Long Trail
La Russe
March of the Herald
Mickey Mouse
Marching Sergeants
The Middy
Magnificent Men
Machine Gun Guards
Newcastle
Namur
1914
North Star
New South Wales
Old Comrades (Rimmer) (J)
Old Comrades (Teike)
Officer of The Day
On the Quarter Deck
Our Town Band
On The Mall
Onward Christian Soldiers
Our Director (J)
Orion (J)
Punchinello
Palmer House
Punjaub
Pack Up Your Troubles
Postman's Parade
Ravenswood

Red Cloak
Roll Away Bet
Royal Standard
Royal Eagle
Slaidburn
St. Kilda
Senator
Semper Fidelis
Swashbuckler
Sons Of The Brave
Steadfast & True
Skywriter
Soldiers of The King
Scipio
Stars & Cross
St Margarets
Summit
Sambo's Birthday
San Marino
Spitfire
Sabbath Echoes
Thunderer
Thin Red Line
Under Allied Banners
Under the Double Eagle
Under the Banner of Victory
Vimy Ridge
Victoria
Victors' Return (White)
Victors' Return (Rimmer)
Vedette
Voice Of The Guns
Viva Rimmer
Washington Post
Washington Greys
Waltzing Matilda
Waratah March
Wings Over The Navy
With Sword & Lance
Wellington
Wairoa (J)

GENERAL MUSIC

Around the World (J)
Abanda
Aquarius
Alicante
Amparito Roca
Anchors Aweigh
Au Revoir
Ave Maria
American Patrol

Autumn Evensong
Amina
Australia (Ct.Solo)
Atholl Highlanders (Pipes)
Amazing Grace (Pipes)
All Through The Night (J)
Alpine Echoes (Ct. Solo)
Auf Den Alpen (Ct. Solo)
At Dawning (Ct. Solo)
Ave Maria (Schubert) (Ct. Ballad)
Air on G String (Bach) (Hn. Trio)
Aberystwyth (Hymn)
Autumn Leaves
Andante Cantabile (Tchaikovsky)
Beguine for Brass
Bridge Over Troubled Water
Ballerina
La Ballerina
Boogie in The Bandstand
British Mouthpiece
Britolodia (S)
Bouquet De Paris (S)
Black & White Minstrels (No. 1) (S)
Black & White Minstrels (NO. 2) (S)
Beatles Medley (No. 1) (S)
Beatles Medley (No. 2) (S)
Bohemian Girl (S)
Bohemian Girl (Overture)
Boombang-A-Bang
Big Spender
Betty Dear
Best Of The Seekers (S)
Bless This House
Bold Gendarmes
Battle Hymn Of The Republic (Vocal)
Brass Tacks
Bitter Sweet (S)
Barber of Seville Overture
Blues On The March
Brass Band Bounce
Bless 'Em All
Bells of St. Mary's
Berenice (Handel)
By The Swannee River
Baa Baa Black Sheep
Buglers' Holiday
Buy a Broom
Bonnie Dundee (Pipes)
Butterfly (Xylophone solo)
Bowery Waltz (S) (J)
Brass Band Primer (J)
Barcarolle (J)
Because (Ct. Ballad)
Besses Of The Barn (Ct.Duet)
Bostonian (Ct. Polka)
Bouncing Ball (Ct. Polka)
Brass Band Sketches (Siebert)
Bells Across The Meadows
Bronze Horse Overture (Auber)

Bonne Nuit
Bouquet De Paris
Bohemian Girl Overture
Calcutta
Chitty-Chitty-Bang-Bang
Coloney Bogey On Parade
Chi-Chi
Cossack Patrol
Comedians Galop
Chit-Chat Polka
Carousel (S)
Cat On Hot Bricks
Cock O' The North
Cock O' The North (Pipes)
Circus Capers
Carman (S)
Carnival Variations (Ct. Trio)
Chu Chin Chow (S)
Champagne Galop
Chanson Indoue (Hn/Sop. Solo)
Congratulations
Consider Yourself
Can-Can
Climb Every Mountain (Vocal)
Chorus Of Soldiers (Faust)
Caramba
Cappriccio Italien
Crooked Mile
Concerto Pastiche
Cuckoo Waltz
Carnival Is Over (Vocal)
Captain Scarlett
Caledonian (Ct. Solo)
Dixieland March
Dixiedoodle Rag
Danny Boy (Ct.Flug. solo)
Delilah (Band and Vocal)
Dambusters' March
Desert Song (S)
Dixie
Delores
Diamonds Are A Girl's Best Friend
Drink To Me Only
Donauwellen (W)
Dutch Dance
Day In The Alps
Dream On The Ocean (W)
Dorothy (W) (J)
Charmaine (Ct. Ballad)
Caliph Of Bagdad Overture
Cavalleria Rusticana (Intermezzo)
California Here I Come
C'Est Si Bon
Coronation March (Meyerbeer)
Casino Tanz (W)
Chanson Triste (Tchaikovsky)
Chant Sans Paroles (Tchaikovsky)
Caledonian Melodies (S)

Espagna
Escapada
Estudiantina
Excelsior (Bb duet)
El Pico
Espanolita
Entry Of The Gladiators
Exodus
Eye Level
Entertainer
Eternal Triangle (Triangle Solo)
Elizabethan Serenade
Emperor (Trom. solo)
Edelweiss (Ord-Hume)
Easter Hymn (Berlioz)
Emira (S)
Fandango
Fiddler On The Roof (S)
Fishermen Of England (Vocal)
Facilita (Ct. Solo)
Flourish For Brass Band
Four Indian Love Lyrics (S)
Flame Of Desire
Fabulous Forties (S)
Forth Fathoms (Bass Solo)
Freedom Come Freedom Go
Four Cavaliers (4-tet & Band)
Firefly (Trom. solo)
Felton (W)
Farewell Symphony (Haydn)
Fascination (W)
Four Numbers Of Old Masters (S)
Girl In Satin
Gershwin For Brass (S)
Grieg Piano Concerto (Themes from)
Grieg Piano Concerto (1st Movt. (Pno solo)
Granada
Galloping Major
Gipsy Love (S)
Gay Postillion (Post Horn solo)
Gopak
Godfathers (S)
Ground Bass (Bass quartet)
Gay Senorita
Green Eyed Dragon (Vocal solo)
Gold & Silver Waltz
Guardmount
Good Old Nineties (S)
Gay Gallantry (W)
Green Hills of Tyrol (Pipes)
Gemini (Trom. duet)
Grandfather's Clock (Euph. solo)
Guantanamera
God Save The Queen (& Rule Brittania Fanfare)
God Save The Queen
Glow-Worm
Gavotte From Mignon
Gems of Melody (Liszt) (S)

Hans Christian Anderson (S)
Hello Dolly
Hey Look Me Over
Hawaii Five-O
Harlem Nocturne
Hootenanny (S)
H.M.S. Pinafore (S)
High On A Hill
Hailstorm (Ct. Solo)
Holy City (Ct. Solo)
Hunting We Will Go
Happy Days In Dixie
Hungarian March
Hava Nagila
Hungarian Dance
Humming Birds (Ct. duet)
Harmonious Blacksmith
Huldigungsmarsch (Processional)
Highland Gems (S)
Hasta Manana (J)
Happy Wanderer (J)
Homeward Bound (J)
Irish Tunes (S)
Il Silenzio (Ct. solo)
I Don't Know How To Love Him
I'd Like To Teach The World To Sing
In The Mood
In A Monastery Garden
In The Soudan (S)
Irving Berlin For Brass (S)
Intercontinental Gathering (Pipes)
I Hear You Calling Me (Ct. solo)
Impossible Dream (Vocal)
Il Bacio (Ct. solo)
If I Loved You (Vocal)
Ida & Dot (Ct. Duet)
Isle Of Innisfree
(*) Instrument Demonstrations
In A Persian Market
In A Chinese Temple Garden
Il Trovatore (Rhythmic Selection)
Irish Music
Irish Selection

James Bond Theme
Jolson Memories
Jenny Lind Polka
Jingle Bells
Jamaican Rhumba
Jesu Joy Of Man's Desiring
King and I (S)
Kelly's Kalie
Keep On Truckin'
Kings' Rhapsody (S)
Knight Errant (W)
Long Long Ago (Euph. solo)
Lily The Pink
Lullaby of Broadway
Love Story
Lili Marlene

Longest Day
Light Cavalry Overture
Love Is Blue
Los Merimberos
Lisbon Carnival
La Sorrentina
Lament Of The Captive Jews
Larboard Watch (Ct. duet)
La Mascarada
Largo (New World Symph.)
Largo (Handel)
Lohengrin (Prelude to Act 3)
Lilac Time (S)
Little Drummer Boy
Loch Rannock (Pipes)
Lucille (Ct/Euph. solo)
Londonderry Air (Ct. solo)
Love's Last Word Is Spoken (Ct. ballad)
Little Serenade
Lonely Mill Overture
Love's Greeting (W)
Little Donkey (J)
Liberty Bell (Monty Python Score)
Muskrat Ramble
Man Of La Mancha (Vocal)
Mame
Mexican Hat Dance (arr. Siebert)
Mexican Hat Dance (arr. Golding)
Mood Indigo
My Fair Lady (S)
Marching Trumpets (Ct. trio)
Magnificent Men In Their Flying Machines
March Of The Slide Trombones
Mary Poppins (S)
Merry Jesters (Trom. duet)
Manzanillo
Messiah Overture
Mancini Magic
Maple Leaf Rag
Merry Widow (S)
Marching Through The Classics
My Way
March Of The Bowmen
Memories Of Erin
Music From The Movies (S)
Motor Ride
Musical Switch
March Of The Toys
Maid Of The Mountains (S)
Match Of The Day
Morgenblatter (Waltz)
Maoris' Farewell
Mac & Mort (Ct. duet)
Maritana Overture
Memories of Ireland (S)
Medallion (Concert March)
Morning, Noon & Night
Minuet In G (Beethoven)
Minuet (Boccherini)

My Polly (W)
Moonlight
Marta
Melody In F (J)
My Lady Greensleeves (J)
Musical Bouquet
Moment Musicale
My Syrian Maid (Idyll)
Man In A Suitcase
Mickey Mouse Theme
Poet & Peasant Overture
Pride Of Texas
Pendine
Post Horn Galop
Pineapple Poll Ballet Suite
Pirates Of Penzance (S)
Puppet On A String
Prisoner Theme
Peter Gunn Theme
Parade Of The Tin Soldiers
Pack Up Your Troubles
Perfect Day
Panis Angelicus
Popcorn
Preliminary Band Book (J)
Progressive Band Book (J)
Palings National Airs
Plaisir D'Amour
Prelude (Rachmaninov)
Pathetique Sonata (Beethoven)
Queensland Centenary March
Queen of Erin (S)
Radetsky March
Riders In The Sky
Rosamunde Ballet
Roses From The South
Romanza (Tbn. solo)
Romeo & Juliet Theme (Pno. solo)
Rhythm of Life
Running Bear (Vocal)
Reflections (Waltz)
Rose of Castille (S)
Reign of Beauty (Waltz)
Road To The Isles (Vocal)
Riff Song (Vocal)
Rosary (Ct. Ballad)
Rose Of Tralee (Ct. Ballad)
Rendezvous (J)
Rococo (J)
Romanesque
Rose Garlands
Rose Marie (S)
Ruby (W)
Send Forth The Call (Trom. solo)
Savoy Xmas Medley (S)
Spanish Gipsy Dance
Spanish Harlequin
Spanish Flea
Spanish Eyes

Stardust
South Rampart Street Parade
Salute to Jolson (S)
Sabre Dance (Khatchaturian)
Superstar Theme
Sway
Seventy-Six Trombones (Tbn. Trio)
Sound of Music (S)
Skaters' Waltz
Student Prince (S)
Spacemen
Swedish Polka
Sehnsucht (Bb solo)
Santa Lucia
South Pacific (S)
Some Enchanted Evening (Vocal)
Stage & Screen (S)
Songs Of Stephen Foster (S)
Song Of The Vagabonds (Vocal)
Scottish Waltz Medley (S)
Scotland The Brave (Pipes)
Scotch On The Rocks (Pipes)
Showbiz For Brass (S)
Slumberland (Waltz)
Stephen Foster Fantasy
Scipio March
Slavonic Rhapsody No. 2
Songs of Wales (S)
Scottish Garland (S)
Shadow Of Your Smile
Scotch Medley (Vocal)
Scotch Songs (S)
Switchback
Suppe on Parade
Square Dance
Simoraine
Serenade (Drigo) (Eupho solo)
Serenata (Toselli)
Silver Trumpets (Processional)
Silent Night
Sound Of Music (S)
Silver Spurs (J)
Student Days (J)
Skye Boat Song
Slavonic Dances (No.s 7/8:Dvorak)
Showboat (S)
Senta (W) *
Sing With The Band (S) (J)
Song Echoes (S)
Serenade (From 4-tet in F;Haydn)
Spanish Dances (Moskowski)
Smithy In The Wood
Swallow Dance
Silver Moonbeams (W)
Tales From Vienna Woods (Waltz)
Trombones In Triplicate (Tbn. trio)
Tie A Yellow Ribbon
Trumpeters' Lullaby
Thunder & Lightning Polka

Three Blind Mice
Trombones To The Fore
Trumpet Voluntary
Trumpet Vol. & Silver Threads
Tenderly
They Call The Wind, Maria (Vocal)
Tzena (Hn/ct. trio)
Terra Australis
T.V.For Brass
Tijuana Holiday (Ct. trio)
Tijuana Brass (S)
Tijuana Taxi
Trumpet Fiesta (Ct. duet)
A Trumpet Fiesta
Titlarks (Sop. & ct. duet)
Tenor Trombone Rag (Tbn. solo)
Tenderfoot Trail
Trumpets Wild
Tancredi Overture
Two Jolly Boys (Ct. duet)
Troubadours (Tbn. solo/duet)
Troubadours (Ct. duet)
Three Negro Spirituals (J)
Try A Little Kindness (J)
Tie A Yellow Ribbon (J)
To A Wild Rose (Eupho. solo)
Two Little Finches (Ct. duet)
Tyrolean Tubas
Tannhauser (S)
Three Hungarian Waltzes
Tchaikovsky (S)
Tootsie-Wootsie Polka
Up Cherry Street (Ct. duet)
Valiant Years
Venus On Earth (Waltz)
Vienna City Of My Dreams
Valencia
Village Carnival
Vilia (Ct. solo)
Valse Septembre (W)
Walters of Kylescu (Pipes)
Waltzing Bugle Boy
Waltzing Bells (Ct. trio)
West Leagues Club Anthen
Waltzing Matilda (March)
Waiata Poi
Waltzes From Vienna
Wartime Medley
Wand'rin' Star
Walk In The Black Forest
White Horse Inn (S)
West Side Story (S)
When The Saints Go Marching In (J)
Winifred Waltz (J)
We'll Remember (J)
Water Mill (Ct. ballad)
Winter Roses (W)
You'll Never Walk Alone (Vocal)
Yesterday
Yeomen Of The Guard (S)

Zelda (Bb solo)
Zanette (Bb solo)
Zampa Overture
Zamora
Zanette (Ct. Eupho solo)
Zelda (Ct. Eupho solo)

HYMNS

Wrights No. 1 Sheet
Wrights No. 2 Sheet
Cornet No. 2 (Xmas)
Cornet No. 4 (Xmas)
Palings Hymns
Sacred Masterpieces
Deep Harmony
4 Xmas Carols
Hymns For The Seasons
In Memoriam
Old Rugged Cross
Lead Kindly Light
When I Survey The Wond'rous Cross
The Reason
The Roseate Hues Of Early Dawn
Jesu Joy Of Man's Desiring
Xmas Day
Bach Chorales:
    Lamb Of God
    Blessed Jesu
    Oh Blessed Jesus
    Oh Head All Bruised
Horbury
Aberystwyth
Felton

VOCALS WITH BAND (+-Baritone)
(*-Sop/mezzo)

Battle Hymn of the Republic	(+)
Consider Yourself	(+ *)
Climb Every Mountain	(+ *)
Carnival is Over	(*)
Delilah	(+)
Fishermen of England	(+)
Green-Eyed Dragon	(+)
Goodbye (White Horse Inn)	(+)
If I Loved You	(+ *)
I Don't Know How To Love Him	(*)
Impossible Dream	(+)
Lili Marlene	(*)
Man of La Mancha	(+)
My Way	(+)
Old Man River	(+)
One Alone	(+)
Riders in the Sky	(+)
Riff Song	(+)
Running Bear	(+)
Song of the Vagabonds	(+)
Some Enchanted Evening	(+)

They Call the Wind, Maria (+)
This Nearly Was Mine (+)
Wand'rin' Star (+)
You'll Never Walk Alone (+ *)

PIANO WITH BAND

Exodus Theme
Grieg Concerto (1st Movt.)
Romeo & Juliet Theme

PIPE BAND & BRASS BAND

Atholl Highlanders/Bonnie Dundee
Amazing Grace
Cock O' The North
Green Hills Of Tyrol
Loch Rannock/Waters of Kylescu
My Faithful Fond One
Scotland The Brave
Scotch on the Rocks
Maoris' Farewell
Wooden Heart
Earl of Mansfield

Notes

Chapter 1

1 The name "Kotarah" is fictional, as are the names of the Boys. This convention has been used to protect the real identities of all those involved as they requested at the outset of the study.

Chapter 2

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