



PRESENTING

THE  
**EXCELSIOR**  
**CORNET BAND**



NEW YORK STATE'S

AUTHENTIC



CIVIL WAR



BRASS BAND



# THE **EXCELSIOR** CORNET BAND



## The Excelsior Cornet Band

is New York State's only authentic Civil War Brass Band. Founded in 2001, the band consists of a group of Syracuse-area musicians dedicated to the performance of original Civil War era music on actual instruments of the period.

Leading the band is one of Central New York's premier brass players, Jeff Stockham. The band utilizes instruments from Mr. Stockham's large collection of antique brass instruments. After consulting with several of the leading experts in the field of Civil War music and brass bands, he formed the **Excelsior Cornet Band** so that the music of that pivotal period in American history could be once again heard and enjoyed by area audiences.

The musicians of **Excelsior Cornet Band** are professional performers with many years of experience in a wide variety of musical genres. They perform with a polished enthusiasm that brings the music of the Civil War brass band era to life. The **Excelsior Cornet Band** presents an authentic Civil War appearance during its performances, wearing accurate reproductions of 1860s New York militia uniforms.

The brass instruments used by the **Excelsior Cornet Band** are period originals which date from as early as 1825 to approximately 1872. Several of them were undoubtedly used by regimental bands during the Civil War. They were carefully returned to playing condition by several of the nation's leading restorers of antique brass instruments. The mellow sound they produce is singularly appropriate for the music of the Civil War era.

All of the music performed by the **Excelsior Cornet Band** has been arranged for the band from original Civil War era scores. The band's repertoire includes many of the most popular melodies of the 1850-1870 period, including patriotic airs, operatic medleys, and popular songs by many of the most renowned composers and bandmasters of the Civil War era, as well as many lesser-known but equally exciting compositions.

During their more than nine years of performing, the **Excelsior Cornet Band** has presented concerts, parades, educational programs, and living history portrayals for a wide variety of organizations and performing arts in several states. These include the Great American Brass Band Festival, Danville KY; the Iron Heritage Festival, Danville PA; Genesee Country Village & Museum, Mumfordsville KY; the Friends of Mount Hope Cemetery, Rochester; the City of Syracuse; the Fabius Historical Society; the Western Monroe County Historical Society; University of Rochester's "Day of Brass"; the Tinker Museum, Rochester; Mohonk Mountain House Resort, New Paltz; the New York State Military Museum, Saratoga Springs; the 77th NY Balladeers' Civil War Music Gathering, Windham; the 149th NYS Volunteer Infantry, Syracuse; the Pompey Historical Society; the Village of Homer; historic Albany Rural Cemetery; Colgate University; Elmira College; the 155th NY Volunteer Infantry, Buffalo; the Village of Hamilton; LeMoyne College, Syracuse; Syracuse University; historic Capitol Theater, Rome NY; the Geneva Historical Society's Rose Hill Mansion; the Aurora Historical Society; HarborFest at Oswego NY; the Smithfield Community Association's Civil War Weekend at Peterboro; Sacketts Harbor Battlefield; and the New York State Fair.

The **Excelsior Cornet Band** recreates the glorious sounds and appearance of this fascinating and important era, and is available for concerts, reenactments, educational presentations, and other functions. For more information on the **Excelsior Cornet Band**, visit our website at [www.excelsiorcornetband.com](http://www.excelsiorcornetband.com) or contact Jeff Stockham at (315) 478-8731 or [info@excelsiorcornetband.com](mailto:info@excelsiorcornetband.com).







## CONTACT INFO

To book the Excelsior Cornet Band,  
or for pricing information, contact:

**Jeff Stockham, Bandleader**

Excelsior Cornet Band

P.O. Box 6733

Syracuse, New York 13217-6733

(315) 478-8731, (315) 450-8731

Website: [www.excelsiorcornetband.com](http://www.excelsiorcornetband.com)

Email: [info@excelsiorcornetband.com](mailto:info@excelsiorcornetband.com)



# THE EXCELSIOR CORNET BAND

## THE MUSICIANS



Jeff Stockham, Leader and solo E-flat Cornet, has been an in-demand freelance musician in the Upstate New York area for many years. He holds a Masters Degree from the Eastman School of Music and in addition to leading the Excelsior Cornet Band, has been a member of many of the region's best-known jazz and popular music groups.



David Driesen, B-flat Cornet, is University Professor of Law at Syracuse University. In addition to freelancing in the Syracuse area, he has played professionally in the Washington, DC region and in South America.



Lee Turner, E-flat Cornet, teaches music in the North Syracuse school district. He is a very active freelancer with popular and classical ensembles in the region and maintains a studio of private students.



Dickson Rothwell, E-flat Alto Horn, has performed professionally on French horn for many years, in the Upstate New York region and with regional orchestras.



John Laverty, B-flat Cornet, is Director of Bands at Syracuse University. He is in demand as a conductor, arranger, producer, clinician and performer. Several of recordings he produced have been nominated for Grammy Awards.



Al Thomson, E-flat Tuba, directs the Music program at Bishop Ludden Junior-Senior High School in Syracuse, NY.



Jim Spencer, B-flat Tenor Horn, is Associate Dean of Arts & Sciences at Syracuse University. He studied French horn and Composition at Crane School of Music, and is director of the Syracuse University Brass Ensemble.



Loyal Mitchell, Bass Drum, E-flat Tuba, and Ophicleide, is recently retired from teaching music in the Utica, NY Central School System.



John Allis, Snare Drum, is recently retired from Syracuse University and actively freelances as a percussionist with many regional ensembles, including the Syracuse Symphony, Utica Symphony and Glimmerglas Opera.



# THE EXCELSIOR CORNET BAND

## OUR INSTRUMENTS

All of the brass instruments used by the Excelsior Cornet Band are originals from the 19th-century brass band era. Some of them were undoubtedly used during the Civil War. Our collection includes 55 brass instruments dating from 1820 to 1875, and 8 rope tension drums. These rare

antique instruments were acquired from sources such as auctions, flea markets, estate sales, Ebay, and private owners. They have been carefully returned to playing condition by leading restoration experts. A selection of the instruments we use in performance is shown here.

E-flat over-the-shoulder cornet by John F. Stratton, New York, c. 1860. This instrument was salvaged from the parts bin of a closed instrument repair shop. It is the earliest known OTS cornet by Stratton.



E-flat cornet by Hall & Quinby, Boston, 1865. Presented to Amos Bangle, leader of the Brooklyn (CA) Cornet Band.

B-flat cornet by with G crook, by Martin, Pollman & Co., New York, c. 1872. This instrument is shown as found (typical of the condition in which we often find instruments), and after restoration. It is a superb player.



E-flat over-the-shoulder alto horn by Kummer & Schetelich, Baltimore, c. 1861. This instrument was used by a wartime band from the Binghamton, New York area.



B-flat over-the-shoulder cornet, unsigned, c. 1855. This instrument was built in Europe for the American market, and may have been originally sold by the firm of Klemm & Brother, Philadelphia.



B-flat tenor horn by Kummer & Schetelich, Baltimore, c. 1861. This instrument was acquired from a friend in a trade arrangement. Its history is lost, but it was undoubtedly used by a wartime band.

E-flat over-the-shoulder tuba, unsigned, c. 1860s. The top photo shows the instrument as purchased, with severe damage and missing parts; the bottom photo shows its miraculous restoration into a beautiful, playable instrument.



Bass drum, unsigned, c. 1875. This rope-tension drum still retains one of its original calfskin heads and is our primary playing instrument. It was purchased at a Syracuse-area antique shop, and restored to appear as a typical regimental bass drum of the 1860-65 period.



# THE EXCELSIOR CORNET BAND

## ABOUT OUR CD



## CHEER, BOYS, CHEER!

### The Excelsior Cornet Band's Award-Winning CD

Winner of the 2006 SAMMY (Syracuse Area Music Award) for "Best Recording, Other Styles", the Excelsior Cornet Band's CD "Cheer, Boys, Cheer!" was recorded in late 2004 and released in February 2005. It contains 16 selections drawn from the band's repertoire of authentic Civil War era musical arrangements. Produced by Jeff Stockham, recorded live by SubCat Recording Studios and mixed and mastered by Ron Keck, the CD was funded in part by a Senator John DiFrancisco Individual Artist Grant through the Cultural Resources Council of Syracuse, New York.

On this recording you will hear music that was popular prior to the war, such as *Polonaise for Keyed Bugle* and *Hero's Quickstep*; songs to rouse the spirits of the boys in battle, like *Cheer, Boys, Cheer!* and *Battle Hymn of the Republic*; tunes that honor men and military units of the

era, like *Quickstep Ala Pike*, *General Birney's Quickstep*, *Maryland Guard Galop*, and *Third U.S. Infantry Quickstep*; sentimental favorites of the troops such as *Meditation:*

*Twenty Years Ago* and *Tenting on the Old Camp Ground*; marches that put spring in a tired soldier's step, like *Skyrockets!*; and tunes that were pure entertainment for the troops, such as the *Irish Medley* and *Manual of Arms Polka*.

Performed entirely on original Civil War era band instruments, this music sounds just as your ancestors would have heard it in the mid-19th century. The Excelsior Cornet Band breathes life into the old instruments and music, taking you on a musical journey back in time to the days when the

town band was the height of fashionable popular entertainment, and when brave young men answered their country's call to arms.






**THE EXCELSIOR CORNET BAND**  
**PHOTO GALLERY**  
 PAGE 1



- 1) At Mt. Hope Cemetery, Rochester, NY, where the band portrayed Newman's Cornet Band for a historic cemetery tour hosted by the Friends of Mt. Hope.
- 2) In the field at the 149th NYS Volunteers Encampment at Lorenzo Homestead, Cazenovia, NY, June 22, 2002. *Tintype by John Coffey.*
- 3) Performing at the Syracuse University Brass Ensemble's March Madness Concert, March 1, 2003.
- 4) Civil War Encampment at Rose Hill Mansion, Geneva, NY, August 8, 2004.
- 5) Fundraiser for the Genesee Country Village & Museum, University Club, Rochester, NY, February 2, 2002, with a most distinguished guest.



THE **EXCELSIOR CORNET BAND**  
**PHOTO GALLERY**  
 PAGE 2



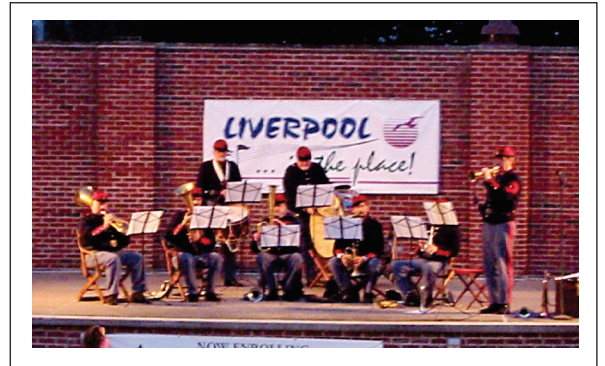
6



7



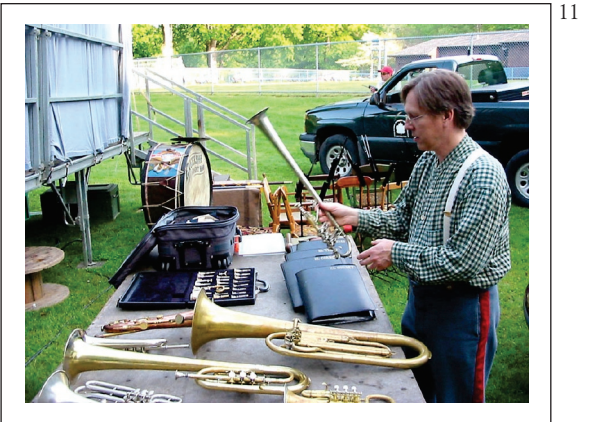
8



9



10



11

- 6) Concertizing for the troops and spectators at Genesee Country Village & Museum's 2006 Reenactment.
- 7) Mohonk Mountain House Music Week, June 29, 2007.
- 8) Five of our instruments were used for this scene in the filming of the motion picture "Cold Mountain".
- 9) An evening concert at Johnson Park, Liverpool, NY, June 19, 2006.
- 10) Portraying Schreiber's Albany Cornet Band at Albany Rural Cemetery's Civil War Heritage Days, Sept. 23, 2006.
- 11) Backstage preparing instruments and equipment for a performance at Letchworth State Park, May 27, 2006.



THE **EXCELSIOR CORNET BAND**  
**PHOTO GALLERY**  
 PAGE 3



12



13



14



15

17



16

- 12) At Hanover Square, Syracuse, NY Sept 2, 2001, for the rededication of the Clinton Square Soldiers' Monument.
- 13) Liverpool Public Library, Liverpool, NY, April 4, 2004.
- 14) Posing with the President at the Peterboro, NY, Civil War Weekend, June 13, 2004.
- 15) In concert at the 149th NYS Volunteers Encampment at Lorenzo Homestead, Cazenovia, NY, June 22, 2002.
- 16) On the steps of the historic Morgan-Manning House, Brockport, NY, July 4, 2003
- 17) Hanover Square, Syracuse, NY Sept 2, 2001.



# THE EXCELSIOR CORNET BAND REVIEWS



## EXCELSIOR SOARS

Music from minstrelsy and the military showcases pop music of 19th century

by Russ Tarby, Liverpool Review, April 7, 2004

About a hundred concert goers not only heard some marvelous music Sunday at Liverpool Public Library, they also received an education in what took place behind the scenes of the America's War Between the States.

"During battles, bandsmen often worked as stretcher-bearers carrying wounded soldiers to the field hospitals," said bandleader "Sergeant" Jeffrey Stockham. "They also worked as medical orderlies when they weren't playing music. For instance, one bandsman I know of worked with the surgeons, and had the job of piling up the amputated limbs." Luckily, making music was a welcome diversion from such grisly duty, but it was still hard work.

Stockham's Syracuse-based Excelsior Cornet Band performs some extremely difficult pieces. On Sunday, the authentic seven-piece military-style brass band played selections culled from the charts of small military bands from both the North and South. The music came directly from the 1860s, and so did the style of the soldier's uniforms worn by the seven musicians—Stockham on bugle, cornet and several saxhorns, David Driesen on cornet, Dickson Rothwell on alto horn, James Spencer on tenor horn, Allan Thompson on tuba, John Allis on drum, and Damian Allis on bass drum and cymbals.

The group led off with "The Star-Spangled Banner" which Stockham described as "one of our favorite national airs." In the 1860s, you see, Francis Scott Key's tune had yet to be officially adopted as the U.S.A.'s National Anthem.

In the mid-19th century, touring blackface minstrel shows constituted the heart of American popular culture, and that fact is made evident by the Excelsior repertoire. They played minstrel tunes such as the emancipation anthem, "Kingdom Coming," popularized by Christy's Minstrels. They also performed two of Dan Emmett's compositions, "Dixie" (made famous by the Bryant Minstrels) and its softer, more harmonious follow-up,

"I'm Going Home to Dixie."

Of course the Excelsior's set list also includes many military-oriented charts. Stockham described the origin of "Taps," for instance, and also presented background on the technically difficult tune "Washington Greys," which dates back to the American Revolutionary War. Not surprisingly, Sunday's audience recognized and responded warmly to the tunes "Battle Hymn Quickstep" and "When Johnny Comes Marching Home Again."

Authenticity is important to these musicians. The instruments played by the Excelsior bandsmen—saxhorns and keyed bugles—were actually from the 19th century. Even the drums they use have calfskin heads and rope-tensioners, just like the ones played during the Civil War.

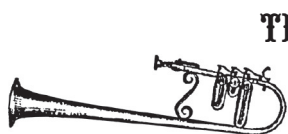
"More and more of these keyed bugles and saxhorns are coming out of attics all the time," Stockham said. "They're not easy to play, and they're difficult to keep in tune. They have a paler sound than modern brass instruments." And Stockham should know: he's the lead trumpeter in several Syracuse area big bands including the Stan Collella Orchestra and the Salt City Jazz Collective.

He's also an enthusiastic collector of antique brass instruments. In fact, Stockham's collection is so well-respected that the producers of the Academy Award-winning movie "Cold Mountain" rented several of his vintage instruments for use in filming last year. "They used five instruments," he said. "One was an E-flat cornet, two B-flat cornets and two really rare over-the-shoulder E-flat alto saxhorns."

Just as the instruments have received some long overdue attention, the Excelsior Brass Band itself has also shone brightly performing at various Civil War re-enactment festivals up and down the East Coast. "We formed the band back in 2001," Stockham said, "so that the music of that pivotal period in American history could once again be heard and enjoyed by audiences exactly the way these bands sounded in 1860."

Mission accomplished, with gusto!





# THE EXCELSIOR CORNET BAND REVIEWS



---

## A CD TO CHEER ABOUT

by Dr. Richard Schwartz,  
author of *The Cornet Compendium*

Recordings of Civil War Brass Band Music that are played with true sensitivity, warmth, and depth of musicality and feeling are indeed rare. Many great Civil War Brass Band recordings do exist and represent a fine selection of music played by bands on both sides of the war.

This recording, however, contains something very special indeed! Herein exists an opportunity to hear these pieces played with a rare depth of musicality, accuracy, sensitivity, and historical research! One knows as soon as the first track plays, Third U.S. Infantry Quickstep. The playing is musical, beautiful, clean, and the piece is played at a wonderful tempo that shows off all these great players! I knew that I was in for a treat!

The research for the information for each piece is

impeccable as well. There is so much good to say here, that I can only hit the highlights. First of all, the group is outstanding. Each section of the band is equally represented throughout the CD. The excellence of the research is further validated by the fact that not just (OTS) Over-The-Shoulder horns are used on this CD. OTS are, of course, here, but so also are rotary-valve cornets; cylindrical-valve lower horns; percussion; and keyed bugle played by the virtuoso Jeff Stockham.

Moving performances of patriotic airs, operatic medleys, and music that were played by bands on both sides of the war are represented on the recording as well. The last arrangement on this great CD, Tenting on the Old Camp Ground, ends with a touching and very poignant performance of the immortal Taps. A well-rounded and excellent recording is for the taking here. Do yourself a great favor and order a copy soon!

---

### "CHEER BOYS, CHEER!" The Excelsior Cornet Band (independent recording)

by Mark Bialczac  
Syracuse Post-Standard, April 10, 2005

Civil War buffs can toot their horns to the music of "Cheer Boys, Cheer!" And the way standout Central New York professionals Jeff Stockham, David Driesen, Lee Turner, John Laverty, Dickson Rothwell, James Spencer, Loyal Mitchell, Allan Thomson, John Allis and Damian Allis play the period saxhorns, named after inventor

Adolphe Sax, there's plenty to learn about that era.

Stockham, trumpet star for a handful of jazz groups around the area and a veteran of national touring bands, produces this labor of love with class. From the raw and energetic "Third U.S. Infantry Quickstep" to the silky and beautiful "Polonaise for Keyed Bugle" to the happy and jumpy "Hero's Quickstep," you can close your eyes and imagine what it was like when the men from the North and South took different sides.

**Catch a show:** The band plays at 2 p.m. today at the public library in Canastota, and at 7:30 p.m. May 7 at Christ Church in Manlius.

**On the Internet:** The group's Web site is [www.excelsiorcornetband.com](http://www.excelsiorcornetband.com).



# THE EXCELSIOR CORNET BAND

## MUSIC REPERTOIRE



- Abraham Lincoln's Funeral March (Christoph Bach)  
 America (26th Massachusetts Regt. Band)  
 American Brass Band Journal Suites 1-4 (arr. GWE Friedrich)  
 American Hymn (M. Keller)  
 Annie of the Vale (19th Virginia Heavy Artillery Band)  
 Aria from "La Traviata" & Bolero from "Il Vespri Siciliano" (25th Mass. Regt. Band)  
 Astor House Polka (Patrick Gilmore)  
 Auld Lang Syne (Dodworth's Brass Band School)  
 Battle Cry of Freedom (G. Root)  
 Battle Cry of Freedom/Kingdom Coming Quickstep (1st Wisconsin Brigade Band)  
 Battle Hymn of the Republic (P. Gilmore/J.W. Howe)  
 Battle Hymn Quickstep (25th Massachusetts Regt. Band)  
 Big Thunder Quickstep (Claudio Grafulla)  
 Bright Hopes Quickstep (19th Virginia Heavy Artillery Band)  
 Bronze Bobtail Horse Quickstep (S. Foster, arr. D.C. Hall, Boston Brass Band)  
 Bugle Quickstep (Francis Johnson)  
 Canary Bird Waltz (26th North Carolina Regt. Band)  
 Cape May Polka (3rd New Hampshire "Port Royal" Band)  
 Captain Shepherd's Quickstep (1st Wisconsin Brigade Band)  
 Casta Diva from "Norma" (Bellini, arr. Manchester NH Cornet Band)  
 Cavalry Polka (25th Massachusetts Regt. Band)  
 Cheer, Boys, Cheer (Henry Russell)  
 College Galop (3rd New Hampshire "Port Royal" Band)  
 Colonel Meeker's Quickstep (8th Connecticut Regt. Band)  
 Come, Dearest, the Daylight is Gone (26th North Carolina Regt. Band)  
 Come Where My Love Lies Dreaming (Stephen Foster)  
 Come Where My Love Lies Dreaming Quickstep (Squire's Cornet Band Olio)  
 Commencement Waltz (A.T. Kennedy)  
 Cornflower Waltz (Squire's Cornet Band Olio #2)  
 Crystal Schottisch (American Brass Band Journal)  
 Damen-Souvenir Polka (Johann Strauss, Jr.)  
 Dance Medleys #1-4  
 Dead March from "Saul" (Squire's Cornet Band Olio)  
 The Dearest Spot on Earth to Me is Home (Stratton's Military Band Journal)  
 Dear Mother, I've Come Home to Me (Squire's Cornet Band Olio #2)  
 Detroit Schottisch (Squire's Cornet Band Olio #1)  
 Dixie & The Bonnie Blue Flag (26th North Carolina Regt. Band)  
 Dixie's Land Medley (4th New Hampshire/Manchester Cornet Band)  
 E Pluribus Unum  
 Ever of Thee (Foley Hall)  
 Fairy Waltz (19th Virginia Heavy Artillery Band)  
 The Fifers of the Guard Polka (Squire's Cornet Band Olio #2)  
 Fort Federal Hill Quickstep (7th Regt. New York National Guard Band)  
 Free & Easy (4th New Hampshire/Manchester Cornet Band)  
 Freischutz Quickstep (3rd New Hampshire "Port Royal" Band)  
 Funeral March  
 General Beauregard's Grand Military Polka (Squire's Cornet Band Olio #2)  
 General Birney's Quickstep (Alfred Squire)  
 George Hart's Quickstep (4th New Hampshire/Manchester Cornet Band)  
 Grafulla's Favorite Waltz (Septimus Winner)  
 Grand Fantasia from "Il Trovatore" (1st Wisconsin Brigade Band)  
 Hail Columbia (Philip Philo)  
 Hail to the Chief (25th Massachusetts Regt. Band)  
 Hero's Quickstep (Howe's Musical Companion)  
 Hurrah-Storm Galop (3rd New Hampshire "Port Royal" Band)  
 I'm Going Home to Dixie (Daniel Emmett)  
 Irish Medley (Squire's Cornet Band Olio)  
 Iron Clad Quickstep (David Downing)  
 Jenny Lind Polka (Squire's Cornet Band Olio)  
 Jessamine Waltzes (Josef Labitzky)  
 Jordan am a Hard Road ta Trabel (Manchester NH Cornet Band)  
 Joyce's 71st Regiment March (T.B. Boyer)  
 Jullien's American Quadrille (Louis Antoine Jullien)  
 Just Before the Battle, Mother (George Root)  
 Kathleen Mavourneen (F.N. Crouch)  
 La Traviata (Verdi)  
 Light of Other Days (25th Massachusetts Regt. Band)  
 Lilly Bell Quickstep (American Brass Band Journal)  
 Linda Quickstep (Donizetti, arr. C. Grafulla)  
 Lorena & Bright Smiles Quickstep (26th North Carolina Regt. Band)  
 Luto Quickstep (26th North Carolina Regt. Band)  
 Manual of Arms Polka (7th Regt. New York National Guard Band)  
 March for the Sultan Abdul Medjid (Rossini)  
 Martha Quadrilles (Squire's Cornet Band Olio)  
 Maryland Guard Galop (Charles Denstedt)  
 Meditation-Twenty Tears Ago & Ever of Thee (G.H. Goodwin)  
 Memories of Home (Stratton's Military Band Journal)  
 Mocking Bird & Twinkling Stars Quickstep (26th North Carolina Regt. Band)  
 Moonbeam Waltzes (Manchester NH Cornet Band)  
 My Maryland & The Old North State (26th North Carolina Regt. Band)  
 New World Galop (Edward Strauss)  
 No One to Love (4th New Hampshire/Manchester Cornet Band)  
 O Hills, O Vales of Pleasure (Mendelssohn)  
 O Summer Night from "Don Pasquale" (Donizetti)  
 Old Dog Trey March (American Brass Band Journal)  
 Old Joe Hooker (26th North Carolina Regt. Band)  
 Orleans Cadets Quickstep (26th North Carolina Regt. Band)  
 Our Country's Praises Let Us Sing (Ernest Held)  
 Patriot March (Stratton's Military Band Journal)  
 Polonaise for Keyed Bugle (Joseph Kuffner)  
 Polonaise: Last Rose of Summer (25th Massachusetts Regt. Band)  
 Port Royal Galop  
 Quickstep Number One (Ellsworth Maine Cornet Band)  
 Quickstep Ala Pike (Gaetano Daga)  
 Rebecca Waltz (Squire's Cornet Band Olio #2)  
 Remembrance (Mendelssohn)  
 Rock Me to Sleep, Mother (26th North Carolina Regt. Band)  
 Seventh Regiment Quickstep (7th Massachusetts Regt. Band)  
 Skyrockets (3rd New Hampshire Band)  
 Slumber Polka (26th North Carolina Regt. Band)  
 The Soldier's Return March (Gilmore's Band)  
 The Star-Spangled Banner (3rd New Hampshire "Port Royal" Band)  
 Sun Quickstep (Alfred Holland)  
 Sunny Hours Waltz (Peter's Saxhorn Journal)  
 Sweet Home (Dodworth's Brass Band School)  
 Tenting Tonight, with Taps (Walter Kitteridge)  
 Third U.S. Infantry Quickstep (Henry Yaeger)  
 Tu Che A Dio from "Lucia Di Lammermoor" (26th North Carolina Regt. Band)  
 Trovatore Quickstep (26th North Carolina Regt. Band)  
 Washington Greys (Manchester NH Cornet Band)  
 Watch Hill Polka (3rd New Hampshire "Port Royal" Band)  
 The Wearing of the Green (Stratton's Military Band Journal)  
 Wedding Schottisch (American Brass Band Journal)  
 When John Gets Home From de War (3rd New Hampshire "Port Royal" Band)  
 Wide Awake Quickstep (1st Wisconsin Brigade Band)  
 William Tell (Squire's Cornet Band Olio)  
 Woodman, Spare That Tree (Stratton's Military Band Journal)  
 Wood Up Quickstep (John Holloway)  
 The Vacant Chair (George Root)  
 Yankee Doodle (American Brass Band Journal)



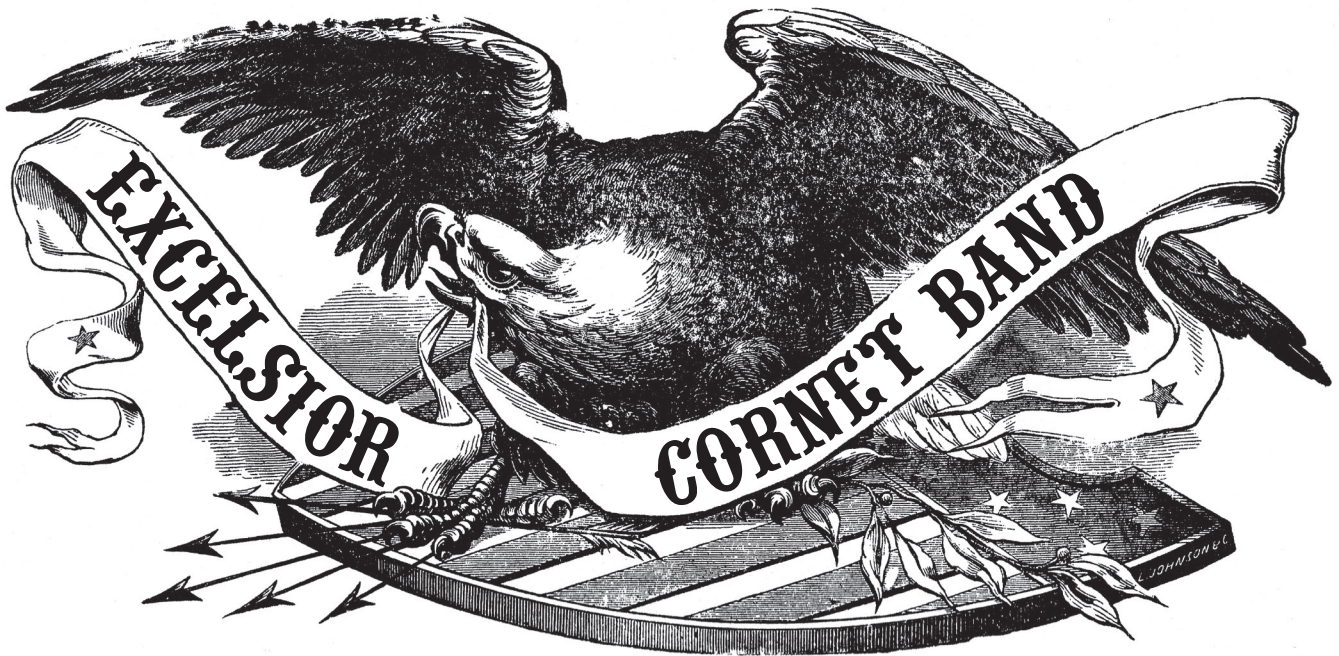
The Excelsior Cornet Band can provide Posters and Programs for your event.



# GRAND CONCERT!



TO BE PRESENTED BY THE



NEW YORK STATE'S AUTHENTIC CIVIL WAR BRASS BAND

FEATURING

POPULAR MARCHES, QUICK-STEPS, OPERATIC AIRS,  
BALLADS, DANCE MUSIC, AND PATRIOTIC THEMES



CONCERT TO BEGIN AT

9:00 PM

IN THE

DOWNSTAIRS PARLOUR





# Of HISTORICAL NOTE

living  
NEWSPAPERS AND CHRONICLE  
Thursday, July 3, 2003



Original ferrotype by John Coffey, photo provided by Jeff Stockham

## Civil War re-enactments don't stop at the battle line; regimental bands revive the music of our past.

BY STAFF MUSIC CRITIC  
**JOHN PITCHER**

**N**ow here's a real battle-of-the-bands story for you.

On June 8, 1864, at Cold Harbor, Va., as the armies of Ulysses S. Grant and Robert E. Lee engaged in one of the bloodiest slugfests of the Civil War, the regimental bands of the North and South were locked in a combat of their own. The Confederates opened with a ferocious fusillade of notes, sending renditions of "Dixie" and "My Maryland" across Union lines. The band of the 13th New Hampshire regiment responded with withering volleys of the "Star Spangled Banner" and "Old John Brown."

It was a musical contest that included plenty of taunts between songs (though you have to wonder about the actual lethality of a 19th-century musician's insults — "You call that a B-flat, rebel boy? I'll play you a B-flat!"). Both armies, of course, were comprised of young Americans who knew the same tunes. So as often happened during the war, the players ended their skirmish with a joint performance of "Home Sweet Home," a sort of wistful serenade of heartache and homesickness.

In a decidedly more peaceful setting, the Excelsior Cornet Band will recreate that kind of musical life when it performs Friday on the lawn of the Morgan-Manning House in Brockport. The septet, all professional musicians from the Syracuse area, performs in accurately reproduced uniforms and plays authentic

period brass instruments, including one keyed bugle that dates to 1820. Its repertoire is equally faithful, consisting of arrangements made from the original books of the mid-19th century.

"The brass band was extraordinarily popular around the time of the Civil War," says Jeff Stockham, a Brockport native and the Excelsior Cornet Band's founder. "There was hardly a town, village or hamlet in America that didn't have a brass band, because in the 1850s and '60s that was just about the only way people got to hear music."

Rochester, known as a music city today, was already enjoying a rich and varied musical life by the 1850s. Opera star Jenny Lind ("the Swedish Nightingale") and pianist Sigismond Thalberg (a competitor of Liszt who was known as "Old Arpeggio") both performed at Corinthian Hall, a venue once located near Main and State streets, the Eastman Theatre of its day.

Naturally, band music also loomed large. The city's premier band was led by Capt. Alexander Scott, a musician of national renown who left the city in 1858 to direct the Chicago Light Guard (brass aficionados still rave about that group's most famous tune, "The Chicago Light Guard Quickstep"). Scott's men remained in the city and reorganized as the Perkins Cornet Band. Their performances were always a big draw, especially on the Fourth of July.

In his delightfully informative book *Rochester: The Flower City* (Harvard University Press; out of print), Blake McKelvey writes that July 4th celebrations in

*The Excelsior Cornet Band, photographed in September 2002. Founder Jeff Stockham is second from right. The band wears accurately reproduced military uniforms, plays authentic period brass instruments — and was photographed using an original 1860s camera.*

### Excelsior Cornet Band

**What:** The authentic Civil War brass band performs an old-fashioned Fourth of July concert.  
**Where:** Morgan-Manning House lawn, 151 Main St., Brockport.  
**When:** 1 p.m. Friday.  
**Admission:** Free.



## Band

FROM PAGE 1C

Rochester during the late 1850s would begin at sunrise with the pealing of church bells. Soon, all of the major avenues leading to the city — dirt roads and cobblestone streets — were experiencing a kind of 19th-century gridlock as the country folk began streaming into town on horseback and in wagons.

There were church and family picnics, steamboat excursions, baseball games at Franklin Square and horse races at Union Course. The day climaxed with the Perkins Cornet Band marching in a military parade and fireworks after sunset.

Those were the halcyon days of band music in Rochester, and they proved to be short-lived. After the attack on Fort Sumter in April 1861, many of the country's best bands (including the Perkins) signed up for battle.

"Band musicians were highly skilled craftsmen, and the best were considered the pride of their regiments," says Jari Villaneuva, a leading expert on Civil War bands who performs with the Federal City Brass Band in Maryland. "Having a great band in your regiment could actually be an inducement for people to enlist."

For the most part, band musicians didn't serve in the direct line of fire. They would serenade the officers with waltzes and polkas, and they often marched the troops into battle. But during combat they generally worked as orderlies for field hospitals. Like all musicians, they spent much of their off hours practicing.

"You didn't have great music schools back then, so most of these guys had taught themselves to play from scratch," says Mark Elrod, co-author of *A Pictorial History of Civil War Era Musical Instruments and Military Bands* (Pictorial Histories, \$12.95). "But a lot of these guys eventually acquired enough skill to play anything, including opera transcriptions."

Stockham, an Eastman School of Music graduate who usually plays with the Thelonious Monk Jr. Big Band, became interested in Civil War bands after he began collecting vintage instruments



Provided by Jeff Stockham

*Jeff Stockham, seated at right, plays a saxhorn built in the 1860s by renowned instrument maker John Stratton.*

more than a decade ago. He now has more than 200 instruments that take up two rooms in his three-bedroom house.

"I found them at auctions, flea markets and antique stores," he says. "I also got them on eBay, which is where I met a lot of the guys in the country who specialize in this stuff."

His collection includes instruments by some of the finest makers of the day, most notably the first known E-flat cornet built by John Stratton, which dates from around 1860. He also owns an authentic Civil War tuba and an amazing 1820 keyed bugle that was crafted by the noted English instrument maker Thomas Purcival.

Stockham's authentic instruments are primitive versions of their contemporary counterparts (various kinds of trumpets, bugles, horns and tubas), and primitiveness means they're harder to play in tune. Since they are constructed differently and are no longer in common use, Stockham had to master them the old-fashioned way.

"I simply put it up to my face and started to blow until I could play it in tune," he says.

He also had to learn a different

sound. Unlike the brilliant, pungent sound of contemporary instruments, Civil War brass sounded sweet and mellow. It was a timbre ideally suited to the Civil War repertoire, which included everything from sentimental songs and patriotic marches to opera arias and symphonic transcriptions.

Stockham founded his band in 2001 and decided from the start to give it an authentic look, which included dressing in wool tunics and period eyeglass frames designed to hold modern prescriptions. But he declined to model the design of the uniforms on a specific New York regiment, opting instead for a generic Union style.

That was probably necessary given the politics of the current Civil War re-enactment scene, with so-called "hardcore" re-enactors all vying to be the most authentic. Being unaligned means the Excelsior is welcome at encampments everywhere, and there's plenty of business.

"I hear about new groups forming all of the time," says Elrod. "We have an extraordinarily lively subculture going on here." □

E-mail address: [jpitcher@](mailto:jpitcher@DemocratandChronicle.com)

DemocratandChronicle.com









The Excelsior Cornet Band provides Civil War Era music at the Morgan Manning House in Brockport on July 4. Submitted photo.

## Band adds to Old Fashion 4th celebration

On Sunday, July 4, the annual Old Fashion Fourth of July will see the return of The Excelsior Cornet Band as part of holiday events on the Morgan-Manning House lawn in Brockport.

The Excelsior Cornet Band, Central New York's only authentic Civil War Brass Band, was founded in 2001. The band consists of seven Syracuse-area professional musicians who are dedicated to the performance of original Civil War era music using actual instruments of the period. All of the music in the group's repertoire has been arranged for seven musicians from original Civil War era scores, including "When John Gets Home from the War," "Battle Hymn of the Republic," and "Listen to the Mocking Bird." The musicians wear authentic reproductions of Civil War militia uniforms. Leading the band is one of Central New York's

premier brass players, Jeff Stockham, a Brockport native and a 1976 graduate of Brockport High School. He is also a graduate of the Eastman School of Music.

The celebration, also marking the 175th anniversary of the village of Brockport, is sponsored by the Western Monroe Historic Society and is free and open to the public. The Morgan-Manning House is a Victorian Era home located at 151 Main Street, Brockport. Besides a display of live steam train replicas and peddle tractors, other scheduled attractions are: 11 a.m. - Brockport High School Band; 11 a.m. refreshments begin; Noon - John Izzo guitar and folk music; Noon to 2 p.m. - children's games; 1 p.m. - The Excelsior Cornet Band; 2 p.m. - presentation by N.Y. State Senator George D. Maziarz; 2:30 p.m. - Cake Walk.



"The only paper in the world that truly cares about Canastota."

# BEE-JOURNAL

www.cnylink.com  
CANASTOTA



April 6 to 12, 2005

Vol. 85, No. 14

## Civil War band to play

### 'Sandwich In' series begins April 5

The Canastota Public Library will present a concert featuring the Excelsior Cornet Band Sunday, April 10 at 2 p.m. Founded in 2001, the band consists of a group of Upstate New York musicians who are dedicated to the performance of original Civil War music on actual brass band instruments of the 1860s period. The Excelsior Cornet Band is New York state's only authentic Civil War brass band.

Recreating the sounds and appearance of this pivotal period in American history, the band performs the most popular melodies of the 1850-1870 period, as well as patriotic airs, operatic medleys, marches, and dance music by the era's most renowned composers and bandmasters. All of the band's musical arrangements come from the bandbooks of Civil War era bands, or are arranged from the original Civil War era sheet music.

The musicians of the Excelsior Cornet Band, appearing in period uniforms, are professional performers with many years of experience in a wide variety of musical genres. They perform with a polished enthusiasm that brings the music of the Civil War brass band era to life. Their uniforms authentically and accurately represent those of a typical early-war New York state Militia band.

Jeff Stockham is the leader of the Excelsior Cornet Band and is one of Central New York's premier brass players. He has performed with many of the region's most notable ensembles, including the Stan Colella Orchestra, the Central New York Jazz Orchestra, Salt City Jazz Collective, Atlas and the Bearcat Jazz Band, which has played annually at the library for more than 15 years.

Stockham is a solo E-flat cornetist with the Federal City Brass Band of Baltimore, one of the nation's leading recreated Civil War bands. He has backed up stars such as Tony Bennett, Don Rickles, Harry Connick, Jr., Frank Sinatra, Jr., Natalie Cole, Johnny Mathis and Anne Murray and toured the U.S., Europe, West Africa, and Israel with Thelonius Monk, Jr.'s Big Band, Chicago blues guitarist Jimmy Johnson and as a member of the orchestra on the national tour of Les Miserables.

His collection of antique brass band instruments provided the impetus for forming the Excelsior Cornet Band.

The Excelsior Cornet Band has presented concerts, educational programs and living history portrayals for a wide variety of organizations across New York state, including the Genesee Country Village and Museum; the Tinker Museum; Rose Hill Mansion; the 155th NY Volunteer Infantry; the dedication of Civil War Monuments in Syracuse, Buffalo, and Fabius; Wells College; the 149th NYS Volunteers; Syracuse University; the Aurora Historical Society; the Western Monroe County Historical Society's Morgan-Manning House in Brockport, the Peterboro NY Civil War Weekend; the State Fair; and for concert series in Sacketts Harbor, Liverpool, Cazenovia and Homer.

The band is unique in recreating the splendid sounds and appearance of the Civil War brass band era with impressive authenticity. The concert is free and refreshments will be served.



The Excelsior Cornet Band will perform at the Canastota Public Library 2 p.m. April 10.



## Fourth of July celebrations light up Morgan Manning House

Brockport's historic Morgan Manning House was the setting for the celebration of the birth of the country and the 175th Anniversary of the village.

Senator George Maziarz joined the celebration and presented Mayor Josephine Matela and Village Historian Jackie Morris with a plaque in honor of Brockport's anniversary.

Entertainment for the afternoon was provided by the Brockport High School Band and the Excelsior Cornet Band. The cornet ensemble is central New York's only authentic Civil War brass band. Founded in 2001, the band is dedicated to the performance of original Civil War music using actual instruments of the period.

At right: Mayor **Josephine Matela** (left) accepts a proclamation from State Senator **George Maziarz** while Village Historian **Jackie Morris** (right) and the **Excelsior Cornet Band** look on. Photograph by Rick Nicholson.





# ARTS and LEISURE



**Period brass: Performing Civil War-era music on authentic instruments, the Excelsior Cornet Band will continue this season's Ke-Nekt chamber music series at SUNY Oswego at 7:30 p.m. Nov. 8 in the Sheldon Hall ballroom.**

## Excelsior Cornet Band brings Civil War tunes, instruments to Oswego

Music from the Civil War era will return to life when the Excelsior Cornet Band performs Nov. 8, as part of SUNY Oswego's Ke-Nekt chamber music series.

Appearing at 7:30 p.m. in the Sheldon Hall ballroom, the brass band will play patriotic airs, operatic melodies and period dance music on authentic instruments from the 1800s.

The instruments, which were professionally restored by master craftsmen, are more primitive than contemporary bugles, horns and tubas, which makes them harder to play in tune, bandleader Jeff Stockham said.

"What's difficult is switching from modern instruments to historic ones," Stockham noted. "You can tune those old instruments but not as much as a modern instrument. You have to 'lip it into tune.'"

The band's image is authentic as well, as performers sport Yankee militia uniforms, swords and eyeglass frames from the 19th century. Even the drums have calfskin heads and rope tensioners, like the ones played during the Civil War.

Stockham's collection — so respected that several instruments were rented by the producers of the Academy Award-winning movie "Cold Mountain" — exceeds 200 instruments. His passion began when he started collecting instruments at garage sales, flea markets and music stores. The one-time hobby now helps the Excelsior Cornet Band, founded in 2001, keep Civil War-era music alive.

All band members have a deep respect for the self-taught musicians who went to the battlefield playing the live soundtrack for history in the making, said Stockham, an Eastman School of Music graduate, college instructor and member of the Thelonious Monk Jr. Big Band.

"During battles, bandsmen often worked as stretcher-bearers carrying wounded soldiers to the field hospitals," he explained. "They also worked as medical orderlies when not playing music." Regardless of the ravages of war, Stockham said, "Having a great band in a regiment could encourage enlistments."

The Excelsior Cornet Band includes Stockham on bugle, cornet and saxhorn; David Driesen, Lee Turner and John Laverty on cornet; Dickson Rothwell on alto horn; Jim Spencer on tenor horn; Al Thomson on tuba; Loyal Mitchell on bass drum and tuba; and John Allis on snare drum.

Billed as New York state's only authentic Civil War brass band, the group recently earned a Syracuse-Area Music Award for its CD, "Cheer, Boys, Cheer!"

SUNY Oswego music faculty member Terry Cavinness will host the show. WCNY Classic FM 91.3 provides media support.

For information or reservations, contact Tyler box office at 312-2141 or tickets@oswego.edu, or visit [www.oswego.edu/ke-nekt](http://www.oswego.edu/ke-nekt).



MONDAY  
May 26, 2008

104th Year, No. 184  
Newsstand price 50 cents

Final Edition

T H E  
**POST STAR**  
Your life. Est. 1904 Your newspaper.

## Parade adds Civil War band

By LYDIA WHEELER

[lwheeler@poststar.com](mailto:lwheeler@poststar.com)

GLENS FALLS ♦ In the 1800s, one way to remember fallen soldiers was to dress headstones with flowers and flags.

In the 21st century, some dress themselves and re-create the traditional sounds of military music.

This is Glens Falls' centennial year, so the 142nd annual Glens Falls-Queensbury Memorial Day Parade will have some additional components, said Neil Akins, city Centennial Committee chairman. And one of these additions, Akins said, is the Excelsior Cornet Band, from the Syracuse area.

"We're New York state's



COURTESY EXCELSIOR CORNET BAND

**Civil War-era military musician re-enactors the Excelsior Cornet Band will march in the Glens Falls-Queensbury Memorial Day Parade today.**

only authentic Civil War band, and we play on real instruments from the 1850s," said band member and Syracuse University chemistry professor Jim Spencer.

Spencer said band direc-

tor Jeff Stockham, who is a professional jazz trumpet and French horn musician as well as jazz professor, took the band from a tradi-

*Please see BAND, Page B7*

## Band members had other duties

### ♦ BAND

*Continued from B1*

tional regal brass quintet to a Civil War regimental band.

"Jeff was interested in collecting antique brass instruments — not just collecting them, but restoring them. So we had this unique availability," Spencer said.

Stockham has 250 authentic instruments from the 1800s.

"As collections go, that's not, by a long shot, the largest," Stockham said. The added bonus, Stockham said, is "they are actually playable."

Stockham said the switch to a Civil War cornet band came in 2000, at a brass band festival where he had his quintet demonstrate the historic instruments, playing a few tunes from the 1850s.

"We all said, 'Gee, that was fun, we should keep doing this,'" he said.

After some research and the purchase of military uniforms from the time period, Stockham said, the group became the only re-enactor Civil War band in the state, and one of about 30 in the nation.

To re-create the typical size of a cornet war band of that period, Spencer, who plays baritone horn, said they had to add a few players to make a seven- to nine-member band.

During the war, band members had extensive duties beyond entertaining.

"They were medics detailed to assist surgeons (and) retrieve the wounded from the battlefield, stretcher bearers and medical orderlies," Stockham said. "When they weren't

in battle, they had ongoing performance duties."

Stockham said musicians were often called on to serenade officers and entertain troops and local civilians.

"During marches, the band generally marched with the colonel in front of the troops," Stockham said.

At today's parade, spectators may notice some of the musicians appear to be playing their instruments backward.

"The bells are turned backward towards the troops so that they could hear their favorite tunes," Stockham said, "to give them a bounce in their step and boost morale on those 20 to 30 mile forced marches."

The band members share a common interest in preserving historic music.

"In the 1800s, there weren't orchestras or recordings. The way you heard Bach and Mo-

zart was from a brass band," Spencer said. "We take these orchestral pieces and transcribe them. So we're all interested in rejuvenating a part of American history musically."

In front of the War and Peace Monument at Crandall Park, 244 simulated headstones will be placed, bearing the names of all the citizens from Glens Falls and Queensbury who have fallen in battle from the Civil War up through the Vietnam War, said Neil Akins.

The parade will begin at 10 a.m. and will proceed from Maple Street north on Glen Street to Crandall Park, where a memorial service will be held at the War and Peace Monument.

In case of rain, the ceremony will be held at the Recreation Ice Center, 1 Fire Road.



# MADISON NEIGHBORS

CARRIE ANN PEREZ, 470-3250

The Post-Standard

THURSDAY, JANUARY 22, 2004



**YOUR NEIGHBOR:** Julie Anderson, a graduate of State University Institute of Technology at Utica/Rome, recently was appointed director of Human Development at Holy Family Church in Fairmount. **Page 2**

## HOMETOWNS

**TAKING A TRIP:** Rep. John M. McHugh, R-Pierrepont Manor, travels to Israel and Jordan as part of the Defense Aerospace Homeland Security Mission of Peace. **Page 5**

**HONORED:** The Canastota Area Association of Churches holds the 24th annual appreciation dinner for Canastota volunteers Saturday. **Page 6**

**EXHIBIT:** The town of Lincoln is the subject of a Madison County Historical Society exhibit. **Page 6**

## SCHOOLS

**LIBRARY TOUR:** BOCES students and preschoolers tour the J.D. George Elementary School library in Verona. **Page 9**

## COMMUNITY

**GUEST COLUMN:** Children and parents should be aware and wary of the flood of alcohol messages in Super Bowl ads. **Page 15**

## Index

Community calendar .....	7
Achievers .....	9
High school sports stats .....	10
Police blotter .....	11
Births .....	11
Letters .....	15

# 'Challenging Times' For Madison County

Rocco DiVeronica, chairman of the county board of supervisors, gives his annual State of the County address.

■ Page 3



Li-Hua Lan / Staff photographer

**STRIKE UP THE BAND:** Excelsior Cornet band member David Driesen (left), of Syracuse, watches Jeff Stockham, of

Syracuse, warm up before a performance Friday at the Cazenovia Public Library. The band plays Civil War-era music on period instruments.



# ALUMNI Gazette

Review Point • Class Notes • Books and Recordings • After Words



**YANKEE BRASS:** Jeff Stockham '82E (MM) (second from right) and members of the Excelsior Cornet Band aim for authenticity in re-creating the era of the Civil War. That commitment is captured in a ferrotype (reproduced above), a photographic process used in the 1800s.

## 'Period Rush'

"It's like you're transported back in time."

That's what **Jeff Stockham** '82E (MM) experiences when he performs with his Civil War-era ensemble, the Excelsior Cornet Band.

"Sometimes, if there are no modern distractions like planes flying overhead, and you close your eyes, you get what's called a 'period rush,'" he says.

Stockham, who studied French horn at the Eastman School of Music, is a freelance trumpet player by trade, but for the past two years, he has been performing music from the mid-1800s on antique instruments from the same era.

"I started picking up these instruments at garage sales, flea markets, and music stores," Stockham says.

With help from Civil War reenactment groups, the band outfitted themselves with authentic Yankee militia uniforms, swords, and even eyewear—the frames holding the band members' prescription lenses are from the 1800s—to complement the original instruments.

Although Stockham plays with the Excelsior Cornet Band, and occasionally with the Federal City Brass Band based in Baltimore, he is not trapped in the past. He also teaches jazz trumpet at Hamilton College and Colgate University, plays in Thelonious Monk Jr.'s band,

Monk on Monk, and has toured with the road company of *Les Misérables*.

It's not hard to make the transition from brass band to jazz to stage music, he says. What's difficult is switching from modern instruments to historic ones.

"You can tune those old instruments but not as much as a modern instrument," Stockham says. "You have to 'lip it into tune.' Some part of it will always be out of tune, and it's up to the musician to get it to play as in tune as possible."

But it's worth it, he says, to make the experience as authentic as possible.

"And every day is Halloween," he says. "We get to dress up and have fun. What more could you ask for?"





The Excelsior Cornet Band, Central New York's only authentic Civil War Brass Band, performs in Brockport. Submitted photo.

## **“An Old Fashion Fourth of July” at Brockport’s Morgan Manning House**

July 4 will see the return of popular holiday events to the Morgan-Manning House lawn in Brockport: music by the Brockport High School Band and The Sweden Singers, refreshments, a cake walk, and a clown and games for children. Throughout the event, Dr. Tom Bowdler will display his “Gage 1” live steam trains, replicas of trains that ran in the late 1800s and early 1920s.

Featured this year will be The Excelsior Cornet Band, Central New York's only authentic Civil War Brass Band. Founded in 2001, the band consists of seven Syracuse-area professional musicians who are dedicated to the performance of original Civil War era music using actual instruments of the period. All of the music in the group's repertoire has been arranged for seven musicians from original Civil War era scores, including “When John Gets Home From the

War,” “Battle Hymn of the Republic,” and, “Listen to the Mocking Bird.” The musicians wear authentic reproductions of Civil War militia uniforms. Leading the band is one of Central New York's premier brass players, Jeff Stockham, a Brockport native and a 1976 graduate of Brockport High School. He is also a graduate of the Eastman School of Music.

The celebration is sponsored by the Western Monroe Historical Society and is free and open to the public. The Morgan-Manning House is a Victorian Era home located at 161 Main Street, Brockport. The schedule of events is: 11 a.m. - Brockport High School Band; 11 a.m. - Children's games until 2 p.m.; noon - Sweden Singers; noon - “Mr. Beau” the clown; 1 p.m. - The Excelsior Cornet Band; 2:30 p.m. - Cake Walk.



# Civil War brass blast in Sackets

**EXCELSIOR CORNET:**  
Authentic instruments  
set for Sunday's concert

**SACKETS HARBOR** — The Sackets Harbor Historical Society continues its 23rd season of the Concerts on the Waterfront on Sunday, July 1, with a performance by Excelsior Cornet, New York state's only authentic Civil War-style brass band. Founded in 2001, this group of Syracuse area musicians uses actual instruments of the period, collected by band leader Jeff Stockham, and delivers a lecture along with its concerts. All of the music performed by the Excelsior Cornet Band is transcribed from original scores. The repertoire includes popular melodies of the mid-19th century, including marches, operatic medleys and patriotic airs.

The brass instruments, called saxhorns, were invented in the 1840s by Adophe Sax, and have been carefully restored to excel-



**Excelsior Cornet plays instruments called saxhorns, invented in the 1840s by Adophe Sax, which have been carefully restored.**

lent condition. The sound is more mellow than modern brass, and the calfskin heads and rope tensions of the drums also produce a distinct sound. The professional musicians who make up the band wear authentic reproductions of New York State Civil War militia uniforms, recreating the look and music of the era.

The Concerts on the Waterfront is a free

program of the Sackets Harbor Historical Society. Major sponsors for the series are the Watertown Savings Bank, Davidson's Auto Sales and National Grid Foundation, the village of Sackets Harbor and the Town of Hounsfield Committee for the Advancement of Tourism.

Additionally, this series is made possible, in part, by the New York State Council on the Arts Decentralization Program, ad-

ministered in Jefferson, Lewis and St. Lawrence counties by the North County Library System. Other support is by businesses and organizations throughout the north country and the tradition of "pass the hat."

All concerts are held from 3 to 5 on Sunday afternoons at the Battlefield State Park in the village. Bring a blanket or lawn chair; picnics are welcomed. Rain site is the United Presbyterian Church.