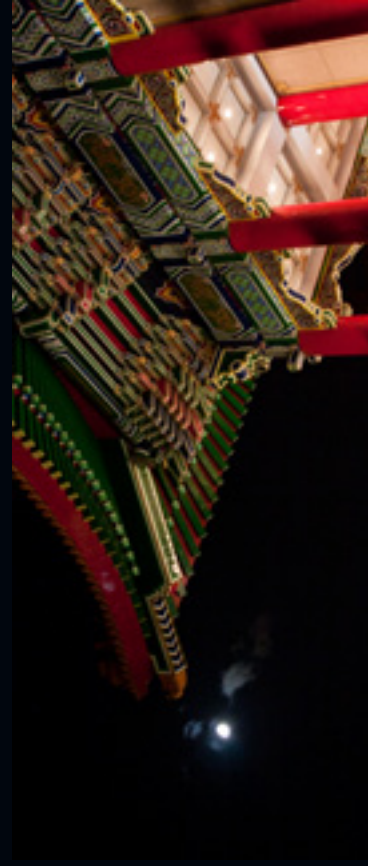




THE UNITED STATES
COAST GUARD BAND
Commander Kenneth W. Megan, Director



FALL 2011



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ON TOUR

ON THE COVER:

- MU1 Sean Nelson performs with the Dixieland Band in Chiayi City, Taiwan
- Exterior detail of the Taiwan National Concert Hall, Taipei
- MUC James Jackson signs an autograph at the National Concert Hall

Touring Taiwan, Take Two

MUC Leah Abbott

The United States Coast Guard Band arrived in Chiayi City (pronounced jeye-ee), Taiwan, on America's Independence Day after 42 hours of travel. We were in Taiwan to perform at the 15th conference of WASBE, the World Association for Symphonic Bands and Ensembles. The trip included one public outdoor concert, two performances and one presentation of new music at WASBE, and one concert in Taipei at the National Concert Hall. This tour was the second trip to Taiwan for some members of the band; the Brass Quintet and Saxophone Quartet performed there in January 2010.

At the outdoor concert we were overwhelmed by the appreciation of the people of Chiayi. Several thousand treated us like rock stars, cheering and raising signs of adoration in the air. In what must be a role reversal, MUC Josh Thomas took a photo of the audience from the stage, which was countered with vociferous cheering and peace signs. Ms. Huang Min-huei, the mayor of the city and an influential figure akin in power and prestige to a governor in the US, enthusiastically introduced the band and presented director CDR Ken Megan with an enormous bouquet of fragrant flowers. She particularly enjoyed the Dixieland band, dancing in the aisle with several other audience members, including the assistant director, CWO Richard Wyman. It was an interesting counterpoint to the typically staid and proper demeanor of politicians back home. As we departed the concert site, many locals asked to take pictures with us. Lots of young ladies adored trumpet soloists MU1 Tom Brown and MUC Gino Villarreal, who posed for numerous photographs and gave countless autographs. Also of note were the police escorts to and from the concert site. Perhaps it was because we were an American military band, but the police escorts also seemed necessary due to admirers packing the streets. We were humbled by such incredible enthusiasm.

Our first performance at the WASBE conference was a concert of chamber music. On the program was Richard Strauss' Serenade in E-flat, W. A. Mozart's C Minor Serenade, John Harbison's Music for Eighteen Winds, and Robert Kurka's Good Soldier Schweik Suite. Kudos to the bassoon section, MUC-Select Brooke Allen and MU1 Stevi Rehncy, who played in every piece; other musicians swapped parts so that almost everyone could perform at least once. The audience loved our playing, evidenced by a standing ovation and yet more bouquets of flowers. From our perspective, it was both challenging and rewarding to perform chamber music—where each voice is vital and no line is unnecessary—for such a discerning audience.



Rehearsal of Mozart's C Minor Serenade, K.388

The highlight of the week, and surely the most stressful part of the tour, was the full band performance at WASBE. WASBE is an organization of professional musicians of all sorts who support the wind band: conductors, composers, educators, performers, and publishers, among others. This audience is among the most discriminating and musically educated we encounter. We prepare to play wind ensemble classics by Ingolf Dahl and Donald Grantham with a performance in Leamy Hall in June, but jet lag and high humidity made the Chiayi performance unusually difficult. Despite the challenging circumstances, most of us agreed that we performed well, displaying expressive phrasing and technical expertise. CDR Megan was obviously proud of the ensemble and later would tell us that he has never heard the band sound better in his 36-year history with the group. Audience members enjoyed themselves tremendously and were effusive with their praise, ovations, and yet more bouquets. For a thousand people without admission tickets, a monitor broadcast the live performance in real time outside the concert hall.

Our final concert, not part of the WASBE conference, was in Taipei. While Chiayi is a smaller city with a somewhat urban feel, Taipei is a major metropolis. The capital—much like Tokyo or America's cultural capital, New York—is a vertical city where shops line the streets and people live above. Late model cars were more plentiful here than the ubiquitous scooters of Chiayi. The National Concert Hall where we performed is part of a magnificent plaza along with the National Theater and the Chiang Kai-Shek Memorial. Chinese aesthetics, such as a pagoda-style gold roof, mix elegantly with the sensibilities of a western-style concert hall. During the concert,



The United States Coast Guard Band at the Taiwan National Concert Hall in Taipei

CWO Wyman served as concert narrator, as is typical of concerts in New London; atypically, however, his narration was translated into Mandarin. Even so, frequent laughter before the narration was translated indicated a significant number of English speakers in the audience. The audience was so enthusiastic and appreciative that three encores were demanded, even after a two hour performance! Once again, both directors and each soloist—MUC Jackson, MU1 Brown and MUC Villarreal, and soprano MU1 Megan Weikleeng—received beautiful bouquets of flowers on stage.

Throughout our weeklong stay, we enjoyed the tremendous hospitality shown by Canon Huang, president of Canon Art International and his staff of translators: Jennifer, Ja Rae, and Joseph. They worked tirelessly to ensure that each of us enjoyed ourselves thoroughly, particularly at meals in restaurants and outdoor cafes around town for lunch and dinner. Traditional Taiwanese meals were served family style, which encouraged a sense of camaraderie and easy conversation as we discussed what might be in each dish. More unusual dishes included roasted goat, pig's knuckles, and prawns served with the head intact. Several meals were more western-style, such as deep-fried pork with mustard-pesto sauce and risotto with vegetables. Delicious vegetarian options were provided for the band's herbivores. Each tasty repast expanded our waistlines in addition to our awareness of authentic Chinese food.



Taiwanese-style prawns



Chiayi City night market

The translators were also busy arranging for transportation from the hotel to the conference site so that we could attend master classes by trumpeter Ole Edvard Antonsen, tubist Oystein Baadsvik, and clarinetist James Hinson. The band's principal euphoniumist, MUC James Jackson, soloed in Gordon Jacob's Fantasia in the main WASBE performance and gave a master class of his own, with students from Taiwan and Thailand performing. We were also able to attend outstanding concerts by the world-class Tokyo Kosei Wind Orchestra and others. Additionally, the trio of translators arranged for tours of the bustling night markets—chock full of young people on scooters, food vendors, and clothing stalls—and temples near Chiayi.

Gracious hosts, enthusiastic audiences, and the hospitable Taiwanese made this experience a journey we will not soon forget.

photographs by MU1 Bonnie Denton, Erich Chu, and MUCS Joel Flunker

Please direct comments or questions to:

Public Affairs
 U.S. Coast Guard Band
 U.S. Coast Guard Academy (pb)
 15 Mohegan Avenue
 New London, CT 06320
 (860) 701-6826

Concert Band

Musica Italiana

Sunday, October 9, 2 pm, Leamy Concert Hall

In honor of Christopher Columbus's discovery of the New World, the band performs favorites by Italian and Italian-American composers. A highlight of the afternoon, soprano MU1 Megan Weikleeng sings beloved opera arias.

The Annual Morgan School Performance

Friday, October 28, 7:30 pm, The Morgan School, Clinton, CT

Thanks to host Clinton Chamber of Commerce, the USCG Band has performed at the Morgan School annually for over twenty years. Again this year, band classics old and new share the program with magnificent soloists and patriotic marches. This performance is free and open to the public. However, tickets are required. Call the Clinton Chamber of Commerce at (860) 669-3889 or email chamber@clintonct.com for ticket information.

A Tribute to Veterans

Sunday, November 13, 2 pm, Leamy Concert Hall

CDR Megan and the band honor our nation's veterans with plentiful patriotic selections, including a medley of service songs.

Happy Holidays!

Sunday, December 18, 2 & 7 pm, Leamy Concert Hall

Rejoice in the holiday season with either the hour-long matinee or the full-length evening performance bursting with festive musical selections.

Movie Madness XV

Sunday, January 22, 2 pm, Leamy Concert Hall

By design, some of the most dramatic music ever written derives from film. This matinee performance is filled with popular cinematic scores.

Unless otherwise noted, performances are free and open to the public. No tickets are required.

Chamber Players

Sunday, September 25, 2 pm, Leamy Concert Hall

Sunday, October 23, 2 pm, Leamy Concert Hall

Sunday, November 20, 2 pm, Leamy Concert Hall

Sunday, December 11, 2 pm, Leamy Concert Hall

Sunday, January 29, 2 pm, Leamy Concert Hall

The United States Coast Guard Chamber Players Recital Series was established in 1977 to present classic to contemporary chamber music performed by members of the United States Coast Guard Band. The Chamber Players offer several concerts each season in Leamy Concert Hall. They have also presented performances at Evans Hall at Connecticut College, Harkness Chapel at Connecticut College, St. John's Church in Niantic, CT, The Noank Baptist Church, von der Mehden Recital Hall at the University of Connecticut, Thorpe Hall at Central Connecticut University, and at the Norfolk Chamber Music Festival at the Battell Stoeckel Estate in Norfolk, CT. The 2010-2011 season marked the first performances at "The Kate", the Katharine Hepburn Cultural Arts Center in Old Saybrook, CT, and at the New London Maritime Museum and Customs House. Several prominent guest conductors, including Richard Pittman, Tibor Puzsai, James Sinclair, Heather Buchman, and Paul Philips, have led special programs and many of New England's most talented and versatile performers have appeared as guest artists and accompanists. With dramatic performances of masterworks by Bach, Beethoven, Mozart, and Brahms, and exciting explorations of the works of today's composers, the Chamber Players bring great music to life.

Recitals are free and open to the public. No tickets are required.