

# 2019 Special Appropriation Request for the St. Johnsbury Band 2019

Submitted by David Hare, Band Manager

January 14, 2019



The new lighting in the bandstand during the last concert of the season

The band requests level funding of \$770 for its Special Appropriation request for 2019. This funds a summer concert series of ten concerts (weather permitting) plus the band's performance at the Town of St. Johnsbury Memorial Day observance.

All concerts are free and open to the public and are "kid friendly." In addition, the band welcomes opportunities to support the Town with music at other public ceremonies in St. Johnsbury. Participation in the band by the citizens of St. Johnsbury is free and encouraged. All that is required is a basic ability to read music and a concert band type instrument.

In its current configuration, all of the band members and officers volunteer and only the Director and the Assistant Director receive an honorarium.

## A Brief History of the Band and its Funding

The St. Johnsbury Band is one of the oldest organizations in St. Johnsbury and the country (third oldest continually performing band in the United States). During the Civil War the band helped recruiting efforts at rallies and welcomed the veterans home with concerts afterward. It has had the honor of playing for two presidents and performed at the St. Louis Exposition in 1893.



The band's Director in his Bear Skin cap, circ. 1870

With the support of the St. Johnsbury community the St. Johnsbury Band has maintained a seasonal concert schedule for well over 150 years.

The special appropriation for the band by the Town of St. Johnsbury started in 1912 with \$1000 being allocated annually. (At that time the cost of a medium priced home was \$2750.) In the 1920s and 1930s the band organized and sponsored international band festivals which were very well attended by many bands and the public.

The funding level remained at constant at \$1000 for about 100 years. About ten years ago it was reduced to the current \$770.

The St. Johnsbury Band was one of the first bands in the country to play what has become one of the most famous marches of all time; 'National Emblem' written by EE Bagley whose nephew played in the band. It has an extensive music library containing many rare and out of print pieces of music.

The summer concert series take place at the bandstand constructed in 1986 by the Rotary Club and several familiar local individuals and businesses helped make this happen. Sean Duffy of Fairbanks Scales did the iron work and supervised the project, Murphy Electric did the wiring, Rodd Roofing the roof, Karl Armstrong Masonry did the brick work and the Rotary granite marker was donated by Anair Memorials. Durwood Ellis donated the paint, the Bandstand landscaping was done by Town Manager Dave Clark with oversight from Linda Garey of the Beautification Committee. Jim McGregor designed the ceiling for the best acoustics.

The State of Vermont improved the lighting to make it easier for the band to see the music and the gardens around the monuments and bandstand in Courthouse Park have been improved and are well maintained.

## Recent History



The St. Johnsbury Band at the Big E

Within the last 20 years, the St. Johnsbury Band has represented the State of Vermont twice at Vermont Day at the “Big E” (the Eastern States Exposition in Springfield MA) with a concert and a parade with over 150,000 in attendance. It performed the 1812 Overture complete with cannon from the Vermont National Guard, performed at the Lake George Band Festival in Lake George New York, at the Vermont State House for Farmer’s Night, and many concerts and parades in both New Hampshire and Vermont.

It has performed Civil War period music during the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Civil War at the Vermont History Expo and period music for the Vermont Historical Association’s centennial concert honoring Teddy Roosevelt, exactly 100 years after his campaign visit to Vermont, including St. Johnsbury, in 1912. Our Veterans Day concert this year featured music from World War I, including period compositions from the music library.

## The Summer Concert Series

In addition to the support from the taxpayers of the Town of St. Johnsbury, we are generously supported by local businesses who sponsor free ice cream socials at every summer band concert.



Passumpsic Savings Bank staff scoop ice cream

The free summer concerts series is an opportunity for residents to enjoy a new music program every week. The series consists of 10 concerts, weather permitting with the first one being performed at St. Johnsbury Health and Rehab.

All the concerts at the bandstand start at 7:30 PM. Each one offers a unique program of show tunes, historic marches and general concert band music, with an overture. All concerts are free and open to the public. So you will probably hear Sousa's 'Stars and Stripes Forever' during the concert season at the bandstand, but only once!

The funds from the Town's special appropriation are primarily used to purchase liability insurance required by the State of Vermont for using the Courthouse and its park.



A summer concert crowd as seen from inside the bandstand

Donations from individuals and the Sunset Home Music Fund help the band purchase new music every year. In addition, the extensive music library has many out of print pieces of music which enables us to play pieces other bands cannot offer.

Rehearsals take place inside the Courthouse Monday evenings almost year round. To see more history of the band and see the concert schedule just go to [stjohnsburyband.org](http://stjohnsburyband.org) then select Calendar, History, etc.

Plan on visiting the History and Heritage Center later this year to see the new St. Johnsbury Band display!

For more information contact

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