



LOS ANGELES SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT BAND

By Dawn Anderson

Los Angeles Sheriff's Department Band

A TRADITION OF SERVICE THROUGH MUSIC

The LASD Band would like to extend our hope that everyone had a happy, healthy and safe holiday season. We continue to rehearse in small groups, and we are excited to report that even during these times, our band is growing its membership.

In an effort to be available for events, we have formed small groups. Our first smaller group is our Dixieland Band (a smaller version of our Swing Band — playing more of the early swing music written and performed in New Orleans).

Our second group, and the group highlighted in this article, is called the LASD Woodwind Quintet. It is a group of five wind players consisting of a flute, oboe, clarinet, bassoon and French horn, which is the common figuration. An interesting fact is that a French horn (a brass instrument) is not a woodwind, but is included in the woodwind quintet. The reason is that at the time when these smaller groups formed, there was no clear-cut definition of brass versus woodwinds. The trumpet was considered a noble instrument associated with the military, while the trombone was a sacred instrument performing in the church. The French horn then



became the instrument of the common people; therefore, chamber music composers included the horn when writing the woodwind quintet music. Chamber music for the woodwind quintet was popular in the early 1800s, but fell out of favor late in the century. But the 20th century saw a renewed interest and resurgence. While we formed our LASD Woodwind Quintet for different reasons, the quintet is a valued chamber ensemble appreciated for its versatility and variety of tones.

The LASD Band quintet members are: Eileen Collins (flute), Dr. David Fisher (clarinet), Dennis Robertson (oboe), Virginia Moore (bassoon) and Greg Cosner (French horn). These five talented musicians recently played on Veterans Day for the Royal Oaks community instead of the LASD Swing Band originally scheduled in order to keep the band small with the ability to social distance much easier.

I would like to introduce you to Eileen Collins, our newest LASD Band flute player and a member of our LASD Woodwind Quintet. She is a native Californian, born in Los Angeles. She is one of eight children. So, I'm guessing their family number exceeds the limit for approved social gatherings.

Eileen began her musical journey on the piano, like so many of us, then ventured to the flute. She did quite well and continued to play flute throughout high school and college, eventually earning a degree in music. After college, she spent two years in Europe studying music and claims that the experience was a time for personal and professional growth.

In addition to her flute playing, she can also sing. She spent much of her younger adult life performing with small opera companies in the greater Los Angeles area. She is a former member of the Los Angeles Master Chorale. Being a musician has been a defining component of Eileen's identity. She explains, "I couldn't imagine my life without being able to make music ... It gives me an opportunity to strive to create something beautiful. I consider music to be the highest of all the arts, and it is also just plain fun!"

Although Eileen has only been with us since the onset of the COVID-era, with the reduced number of musicians at rehearsals, she has contributed significantly to them and to our performances. She is thankful for the opportunity to participate and has met many nice and talented people who love to make music together. Eileen, we are happy that you have joined our LASD Band and contribute



your talent and expertise, especially during these unprecedented times.

The LASD Band was contacted again by the Veterans National Entertainment Workshop to use our recordings for their Veterans Day Special Concert, featuring the USS Iowa battleship. The concert, presenting many performers as well as music from the LASD Band recordings, can be seen at vnew.org. We are so proud that the members of VNEW continue to call on us for inclusion in their inspiring musical specials.

Please call us for your Sheriff's Department musical needs and/or events, such as retirements, celebrations or holiday/patriotic festivities. We are here for you!

If you play an instrument or previously played an instrument, it may be time to dust it off and join the LASD Band. If you would like to have one of our bands perform for an event, either the dance band or concert band (subject to Department guidelines), please contact me at Dawn.LASDBand@gmail.com. Please visit our website, LASDBand.org. ☆

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