

HISTORY OF THE DOANE BAND PROGRAM

The Doane College Band formed more than 120 years ago, as a means to “add inspiration to the military drill” and encourage the study of cornet. Fifteen players made up the first band, founded in 1891 by music conservatory director **H. Bert King**.

The band easily fulfilled its original purpose. The inspiration it provided has lasted more than a century, through world wars and both prosperous and turbulent times. Today, it is as beloved a symbol of Doane as the college mascot. Its history spans more than 18 band directors and thousands of alumni.

The original band followed a glee club established in 1880 and an orchestra established for ensemble violin practice in 1888. King remained as first band director until 1897. Student leaders maintained the band until the next director, **Robert Lithgow Dick**, took charge while still a student and upon graduation in 1904, joined the conservatory faculty as music instructor and band director. He remained until World War I.

In the years before the war, the band was highly regarded, as attested by an article in “The Junior Bug,” published by the junior class in 1904:

“A good band is an organization which does much to enliven college life and arouse spirit. Doane has such a band. Indeed, it can, with little fear of contradiction, be said that Doane has the best college band in the state. It numbers 16 members, every one of whom is a player of no little experience. The success of the organization is, in large measure, due to the faithful, enthusiastic work of the leader, Robert Dick. Throughout the year, two hours a week have been spent in practicing high-grade music, and enjoyable evening concerts are being given on campus again this spring, as they were two years ago.”

After World War I the Doane band appears to have had a series of student leaders until 1923 when **W.S Huxford**, a physics professor who had come to the college the year before, took over the band. Huxford was followed in 1925 **C. Burdett Wolfe**, the most innovative director to date. In 1927 Wolfe founded the Doane Tiger Band to provide “spirit and pep” at the schools athletic events. This band still exists to this day – 100 strong! In 1931 Wolfe created the Girl’s Drum Corps which was immensely popular and remained so until the late 1950s.

If it had not been for Crete High School band director **Lumir Havlicek**, there might not have been a band during World War II. Havlicek led the organization through the war years. Havlicek was a well known band director of the time having conducted the 110th Medical Regiment Band in the 1920’s and 30’s (which became the 43rd Army National Guard Band). He also was a composer of some renown composing several local favorites including *On the Big Blue*, *The Pride of the Prairie*, *Sky Pilot*, and *Trailblazer Overture*.

Post-war directors include **Anthony Perrella** in the late ’40s, **Eugene Stoll** and **Larry Havlicek** (the son of Lumir) in the ’50s, **Dr. Paul Whear** in the ’60s (also a well known composer), and James Mabry in the early ’70s. **Dr. Hubert Brown** then led the Doane Band from 1974 to 1988. During Brown’s tenure the Doane band program hosted a Jazz festival that featured many great artists, including Clark Terry, Ed Shaunnassy.

In 1988, **Doug Stotter** became band director and immediately brought innovations to the band program. He rearranged the school songs, created a wind ensemble and recruited a number of talented students. By 1991, the concert band had 65 players, who performed for the Nebraska Music Educators Convention. When Stotter left to pursue doctoral work, **Rob Franzblau** arrived as visiting assistant professor and sought to continue the program and the high standards it had reached. The band performed for the NSBA Convention in 1992.

In 1993, **Dr. Jay W. Gilbert** was appointed director of instrumental music. He too sought to build on the traditions of the program. The band has participated in both NMEA and NSBA conventions and toured throughout the region. During Gilbert’s tenure, the Tiger Pep Band revitalized and, in 1999, was cited by the *Lincoln Journal-Star* as the most entertaining band in the conference.

In 2000-2001, Gilbert redefined the band program to allow for greater flexibility in participation. The Symphonic Wind Ensemble (SWE) was created to provide students with the opportunity to perform serious wind-band repertoire

at a high artistic level. Since its inception, SWE has appeared multiple times at the Nebraska Music Educators and the Nebraska State Bandmasters Association conventions. The Concert Band allows students to participate in band with a minimal time commitment. The Tiger Pep Band and Jazz Ensemble continue to play important supportive roles in the band program.

The music that began on campus so long ago has reached audiences nationwide. The Doane Band program has toured throughout the United States and performed in Arizona, Colorado, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, New Mexico, New York, Oregon, Pennsylvania, South Dakota, Texas, Washington, Wisconsin, Wyoming and The District of Columbia. The band has also toured Nebraska extensively, playing for thousands of high-school students.

The Doane Bands have played for every major campus event, including the dedication ceremonies for the Lied Science and Mathematics Building, Hansen Leadership Hall, the Chab Weyers Education and Hixson Lied Art building and the George and Sally Haddix Recreation and Athletic Center. The band was there for the inaugurations of Doane Presidents Jonathan Brand and Jacque Carter, decades of opening convocations and commencements, and a special program on Veterans Day that featured prominent military and government leaders in Nebraska.

Dr. Jay W. Gilbert is the longest serving band director in Doane's history. He has also served as the Chair of the Music Department since 1994. In April 2016 the Symphonic Wind Ensemble was selected to perform at the National Sousa Festival held at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington D. C. The Ensemble opened the gala concert with a Sousa's arrangement of the *Star Spangled Banner*. President Carter and several distinguished guests attended the concert. SWE had the pleasure of working with Director Emeritus of the United States Air Force Band, Col. Arnald Gabriel.

The concert program included, Truimphal Ode by Nebraska's most famous composer Howard Hanson and Slava by Leonard Bernstein, composed for Mistislav Rostrovovich and premire in the main concert hall of the Kennedy Center in 1977.

Additionally, the program now includes several outstanding applied faculty teaching each of the wind and percussion instruments. Among these are **Tom Kelly**, principal trumpet and leader of the Plymouth Brass, and **James Krutz**, a percussionist from Seward. Both of these colleagues have taught with Gilbert for nearly 20 years. Much of the success can be attributed to the strong working relationship amongst the members of the full and part-time faculty, including **Dianne Ferguson**, professor of piano and director of academic studies; **Kurt Runestad**, director of choral activities, and **Kathy Ohlman**, who was hired in 2007 to bring fresh perspectives to the music education program. Her success allowed the college to hire **Lance Nielsen** a second music education faculty member in 2012. Dr. Nielsen sought to create a viable marching program but left to become the Supervisor of Music in the Lincoln Public Schools before he was able to fully implement the marching program.

In 2015, **Dr. Danni Gilbert** replaced Dr. Nielsen to teach instrumental music education and conduct the Tiger Pep Band. The Tiger Band Band returned to it pep band roots and Dr. Gilbert made several innovative changes, including Bring a Friend to Band, and the High School Invitational. She left Doane in the Spring of 2018 to teach at the university of Nebraska in Lincoln, leaving the Tiger Band in excellent shape.

In the fall of 2018 Dr. Jay Gilbert again assumed direction of the Tiger band after a five-year break. The Tiger Pep band will continue to be a focal point for school spirit.

The Doane Band still respects its long history, continues to be a vital part of the overall artistic, ceremonial and school spirit life of Doane, and hopes to proudly represent the college for many more years to come.

Succession of Doane Band Directors 1891-present:

H. Bert King	1891-1897
Student Leaders	1897-1904
Robert Lithgow Dick	1904 -1917
Student Leaders	1917-1923
W. S. Huxford	1923-1925
C. Burdett Wolf	1926-1936?
Dana Cecil Carter	1936-1940

Byron Darnell	1940-1942
Lumir Havlicek	1943-1946
Anthony Perrella	1946-1951
Gene Harding	1951-1952
Eugene Stoll	1952-1956
Larry Havlicek	1956-1959
Phillip Coffman	1959-1960
Dr. Paul Whear	1960-1969
James Mabry	1969-1973
Dr. Hubert Brown	1974-1988
Dr. Douglas Stotter	1988-1991
Dr. Robert Franzblau	1991-1993

Dr. Jay W. Gilbert 1993-present

Dr. Lance Nielsen	2012-2014 Pep Band/Marching Band
Terry Rush	2014 (Fall) Interim Director Marching Band
Dr. Danni Gilbert	2015 – 2018 Pep Band