Dean Brand

Cyclone Marching Band Oral History Project

Interviewed by Jay Chapman

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Time stamps reference the video recording.

**DB**: Dean Brand

**JC**: Jay Chapman

[00:00:00]

**JC**: This is Jay Chapman, an interviewer for the Iowa State University, Special Collections and University Archives Iowa State University Cyclone Football ‘Varsity’ Marching Band Oral History Project. Today is Sunday, October the 29, 2023. I'm interviewing Dean Brand via Zoom. Welcome, Dean. I'll just get started with---can maybe tell me a little bit about you, your background, your early life, kind of where you grew up and all that kind of thing?

[00:00:37]

**DB**: Okay, I'll do that. Thank you, Jay. My camera is a little bit hinky on my computer, which is evidently acting up and so it may go in and out a lot. But Okay, anyway, I grew up in West Liberty, Iowa, which is over in Southeast Iowa. Kind of halfway between Iowa City and Muscatine. So, I was pretty much exposed as a Hawkeye the early portion of my life, if you will. Which is fine. I can still root for the Hawkeyes as long as they aren't playing the Cyclones. I grew up on a farm. We had two hundred acres that the folks farmed, and it was a dairy farm, and then we [raised] cattle [and] hogs. Well, that's much care. Well, the cows and the hogs. We had sheep while we were in 4-H and FFA, that went along with that and some chickens and whatever. [In] high school, I was involved in band, both concert and marching. West Liberty, it was---at that point in time was not a real big school, I suppose. I think there were about seventy-one or two in our graduating class. But--so, anyway, I was in band, and I was also involved on the vocal side. I sang in about anything I could sing in while I was in high school. That was a good experience. My mom was a schoolteacher before she married Dad. Probably less than a mile from our farm, if you went straight across the fields, that was probably a mile and a quarter mile [or] a mile and a half if you took the road and went the roundabout way. But she had a nice voice and actually--I think about it, you know, years and years later, so did Dad. So, Mom had a little musical talent. I had a brother, and he was also involved in the band and in some of the vocals, not as much as I was, but he was involved in the band but didn't bring his band talents to Iowa State [Iowa State University] when he came to the school here either. So anyway, from that standpoint, we kind of went two different directions, but it was all good.

[00:03:20]

**JC**: So, was it your farm experience or your musical experience or both that brought you to Iowa State? How did you come to be here at Iowa State?

**DB**: Well, I decided that I wanted to be a Vo-Ag [Vocational Agriculture] instructor. There were several guys in classes ahead of me that were going into Vo-Ag, and I had two different Vo-Ag instructors while I was in high school and FFA was one of my things [that] I really enjoyed. By going into Ag education, which was the title of the major at that point in time, it gave me such a broad base of education on the Ag side that you could go into about anything on some level, at least after you graduated if you decided you didn't really want to teach. We had to learn about everything across the board, pretty much. From soils to Ag mechanics to animal husbandry, so it gave you a lot of options. So that's really why I wound up at Iowa State, and obviously, you know, Iowa State is the Ag college for the state of Iowa. So, where else would you go?

**JC**: Exactly. So, your major was officially what then?

**DB**: I was an AG education major, and I started in the fall of 1967. So yes, that's when I started.

[00:05:09]

**JC**: Did you start marching band then? Right when you were starting as a freshman, I know not everyone does.

**DB**: I, yes, I, I did for whatever. And I had no intentions. I hadn't even thought about it. When I enrolled at Iowa State and then when we came up to summer orientation--- freshman orientation during the summer. My advisor at the time mentioned something about marching band, so I kind of wound up in marching band. The fall of 1967, the band was increasing their number from, I think, ninety-six to one hundred and twenty. There were no tryouts. Basically, all we had to do was show up, I think, and you got in the band. So, compared to today, getting into the band was pretty easy life at that shot in time.

[00:06:27]

**JC**: So, what instrument did you play, and what was your section like?

**DB**: I'm a sousaphone player, and I was out poking on the internet this afternoon trying to find some pictures because--we'll talk about the band uniforms a little bit later--I couldn't anymore remember what our uniforms looked like than the man in the moon. I found a couple of pictures from 1968 that are evidently hanging in the music room on campus right now. And so forth, but, so anyway, it. There were, I think, we marched. Okay, and with everything. There were eight in a rank. So, however, that divided up. Whatever the number was of ranks times eight was how we marched [in] that snapshot in time.

[00:07:30]

**JC**: Did you have just one rank of tubas and sousaphones, then?

**DB**: Yes, that's all that's all that picture showed was that one rank of eight sousaphones.

[00:07:41]

**JC**: Were the horns themselves the same or uniform or consistent, or was it kind of a hodgepodge of sousaphones at that time?

**DB**: Yes, we were all consistent then, it was all brass sousaphones. I can't tell you or remember--I think they were probably all purchased at the same time, so they were about the same amount of beat up or not beat up, whatever that was fifty-plus years ago.

[00:08:13]

**JC**: So, then, with that group--there's a reputation with sousaphones that they're kind of wild and crazy sometimes, what was your section like?

**DB**: We really weren't that crazy, I guess you would say. Again, that was a long time ago, [Chapman laughs], but I don't remember us being that crazy. We worked hard. We had fun. The band always has fun, regardless of how hard we work. But I think the last year we did some more inventive things because we were encouraged to. Jimmie Howard Reynolds [Jimmie Howard Reynolds, Director of Bands (1973-1980)] was the director my last year there, and he definitely took the band off into a whole another realm from where we'd been prior to that. We can visit about that later. We really weren't that wild and crazy, but we had a good time.

[00:09:15]

**JC**: You said it was it was fun but he also worked hard. Can you talk a little bit about how your learning process worked? What was a regular band practice like for you?

**DB**: Well. It's a lot different than it is today, for sure. At the beginning of a new program, everything was paper then, we had flip folders, and we marched with the flip folders. So, we didn't have to memorize music. We had paper charts like we used to have for Alumni Band to figure out how to get us from point A to point B or do whatever drilling we were going to do. We didn't do a lot then. We did some, but not a lot. It tended to be more--if we did any kind of drill, it was to get from this formation to the next formation to play whatever the number was. But it was all done on paper. We rehearsed, as I remember, five days a week from 4:10, 4:15. I think it usually ran till five thirty or maybe six if things weren't going extremely well and when we had a game the next Saturday and had to get it done. I remember more than once that it was getting really dark when we finished.

[00:10:52]

**JC**: When you practice indoors, like the music part of it, what building did you practice in on campus?

**DB**: We practiced in what we called [the] Music Hall, but I think it was called Exhibition Hall. It was kind of around the Marston Water Tower. The building isn't there anymore, I don't think it's been replaced with something else. It was kind of across the street from the tennis courts that aren't there anymore either I don't think from Beyer Hall. To the north--- towards where the golf course is or the armory, the cemetery on campus. We practiced right across the feet or across the street there, and it was all dirt. You’d come in in the fall, and it didn't look too bad, and about two weeks later, there was a grid laid out on it, the days that it was wet, why it was, it was a mess. Usually, Mondays after a ball game were devoted first to reviewing the game from last Saturday if we were at home, [seeing] what was right, what was wrong, pointing out this ranks out of line or these people are out of line. I think Monday tended to be a music rehearsal day to learn whatever the new music was going to be for the next show. Then pretty much the rest of the week was devoted to going out [and] learning all the drills and putting the music with it.

[00:12:56]

**JC**: Did you have a set pregame for every game, the same show for pregames, so to speak?

**DB**: I believe we did. I don't think we had to learn a new--it's pretty much like today, once you've learned the pregame at the start of the year, your pregame is the same unless maybe there was some special event that took place [where] we had to maybe play a separate number but usually because there's such a time crunch for pregame, then and now--anyways, that’s what I think, we were always the same pregame, but the halftime shows changed

[00:13:41]

**JC**: Was there any one particular halftime show that you can think of, throughout any of your years at Iowa State, that maybe stood out or was unique or special or maybe just what your favorite was?

**DB**: Well, it all kind goes into the same thing. Again, it was our last year when Jimmie Howard came to be our director and he was very inventive. I guess we will put it that way. He was willing to try anything once. That year, I believe, was the first year that we had other females in the band other than the twirler. The first years, we only had a featured twirler, and that was the only female that we had in the band during my era. But we picked up a flag line that fall and he had the sousaphones do a can-can number. I think it was the last number of the program with the flag line. I can't tell you what the rest of the program was leading up to that. But that was fun, and people seem to really enjoy it. We wound up, I believe, doing that portion of it again at the Liberty Bowl that year.

[00:15:09]

**JC**: That can links me to the to the bowl games, not everyone got to go to a bowl game, was there something--- what was that experience like, particularly the show that you performed?

**DB**: We got to go to two bowl games. We got to go to the Sun Bowl, which is a--I recall Johnny Majors [Iowa State Head Football Coach (1968-1972)] was the coach at that point in time. That was the first bowl game I think Iowa State had been to in decades or ever, I can't remember which one, but it was quite the deal. Acton Ostling [Acton Ostling, Jr. Director of Bands (1968-1972)] was the director at that point in time and I can't tell you what year it was--may have been 1970. The weather was decent. It was a little cold one morning, we're talking low forties, but the sun came out and it turned out to be a pretty nice day. I think we wound up losing the ball game. I can't tell you a thing about the performance. The Liberty Bowl was my last year, and it was just flat cold the whole time we were there for the for that bowl game. I guess the thing that made that one different is that I was married then, and my wife Roddy was expecting our baby. It was actually supposed to come while we were in Nashville for [the bowl game]. So anyway--and I told Jimmie Howard, I said--when we got the bowl game bid, I said, “What do you want me to do?” The plan was that if she hadn't had the baby by Christmas, we were going to go in the day after Christmas, and they were going to induce her and have the baby. He said, “Don't worry about it, if she starts to have the baby, we'll figure out how to get you home.” So, I wound up going to the bowl game, and she didn't have the baby, and Russell was born on the 26th of December. We lost that ball game, too, so my attendance at bowl games as a marching band member for the winning percentage for the Iowa State football team is not good. [Chapman laughs]

[00:18:05]

**JC**: Well, that's, you know, not your fault necessarily, but was that--so did you all bus down to it--to the ball games?

**DB**: I think--I was trying to think about here earlier this afternoon and I think we flew to the Sun Bowl. I won't swear to that statement, but I think we flew. We did bus to the Liberty Bowl, though.

[00:18:32]

**JC**: That makes sense, distance-wise, etc. How did the band gel, how well did it get together? Were there conflicts between sections, or how well would you get together?

**DB**: I think the band always really did work together. Now the one incident that I kind of remember where--and it wasn't the sections. It was when we were getting ready for the Liberty Bowl, because Iowa State was still on quarters at that point in time, basically [at] Thanksgiving, your class schedule turned over, and as we were trying to get ready for the Liberty Bowl, we had people that had been in band in the fall--their schedule had them in class while we were rehearsing in the afternoon, because we still were rehearsing at like 4:15 to five thirty, but we rehearsed up in the old armory on the on the floor up there so we were at least inside. Pretty much, Jimmie put his foot down and said if you can't be a rehearsal, you aren't going to the bowl game. We had somebody in our Sousaphone section that couldn't, he had to be in class. So, they had a clarinet player they stuck into our section, and he had to carry a sousaphone. The poor kid, we pretty much beat him to death, I think. I mentioned earlier about doing some things that were, you know, a little more inventive than what we had done. When we were marching and doing a pivot point, like making a ninety-degree turn to wherever we had someplace in the program, we were doing two-seventy’s [degree turns]. So, trying to teach him to do a two-seventy with the sousaphone, he got verbally abused an awful lot. Trying to keep up with staying in line without his clarinet, but we got through it, and obviously he didn't play, but he was there to fill a slot like some of us in the Alumni Band at homecoming, we don't play very much but if we can get from point A to point B without falling down or getting too bad, it's all good then.

[00:21:15]

**JC**: Do you have any recollection of who your drum majors were when you were in band?

**DB**: Yes. Walley--was it Horn or Helm [Walley Newport]? I saw his picture and name this afternoon. Skip Ritz was, and I think his cohort’s name was Mark Hanson [Agricultural Business (1967-1971)]. I believe Mark was also in ROTC [Reserve Officers’ Training Corps.] part of the time because, as a freshman and sophomore, I was in ROTC, and then I decided I didn't want to pursue that to get a commission. That was during Vietnam [Vietnam War], and first lieutenants got shot a lot in Vietnam, so I was going to take my chances with the draft, there's a whole another story behind that could go on for a long time.

**JC**: So, do those drum majors ever make it back for Alumni Band at all?

**DB**: Skip is the only one that's come back a few times when I've been there.

[00:22:33]

**JC**: Are there any traditions of the band? Every group had their own kinds of unique things, things that they brought to the band, things that probably still exist in the band. Are there any things along those lines that you or your group, or your years of band brought in that added to the traditions of the band?

**DB**: Not that I can think of. The only one that I can remember, and that's because somebody brought it up in an interview I was doing with them a while back, was that we turned our hats around if the team won. Now, back in that era, there was not a lot of a lot of winning with the Iowa State football team, but that's the only one that I can think of that we really had. I know the band now has generated a number of them through the years. The one I had forgotten about, but as I have interviewed different folks for this project, they have mentioned it, and I go, “Oh yes, I know I see that when we go to homecoming or whatever,” and hadn't thought about it, but that's become a tradition in the way that they do things or what they do.

[00:23:51]

**JC**: Sure, sure. You mentioned turning the hat around, the shako [a tall, cylindrical military cap, typically with a visor]. You, as a sousaphone, I suppose, probably didn't wear one, but what were the uniforms like within your era, and did they have shakos? What was the style that you had?

**DB**: We actually did wear those for most of the time because the pictures that I saw were from 1968, and they were the black wool uniforms, which was the tradition then. Then the overlay, I think, was gold or white or some lighter color because they were black-and-white pictures that were on the internet. Then [they] had a red--the back of it was red, and I think it was a picture of Cy [ISU mascot]. From the distance, if you try to blow the picture up, it gets pretty fuzzy, but that's kind of what it appeared to be. Then we wore black shoes with white spats and the hats were red with the white plume or feathers on it, whatever the technical term is for that.

[00:25:09]

**JC**: So, what stadium did you then perform in, and what was that like? If you traveled to some away games, how does that compare, would you say?

**DB**: The whole time I was there we were on Clyde Williams field, which is no longer there. We’d say it was behind Helser [Helser Residence Hall], and I think from looking at Google Maps, that's all residencies right now. That was my introduction, if you will, to big-time football coming from West Liberty, where you had a couple is not real huge sets of bleachers on your football field for the home and the away teams. I don't remember what Clyde Williams held, but it was twenty to thirty thousand people, maybe. That might be a push to get to thirty. Anyway, as I recall, we got a chance to travel. I think we went to Kansas once and maybe to K State [Kansas State University]. I know [on] one of those trips, I think we spent the night in Kansas City and then got to play at the Chiefs game for their halftime [and] then the next day on the way back. So that was fun. I think we traveled to Missouri once. For those that don't know, Missouri used to be part of the Big 12 [college athletic conference] now, what was the Big 8 at that point in time. I think we went to Illinois once and played there. That's the four I remember.

[00:27:09]

**JC**: Did you play for any other special performances, like outside of a football game? Maybe something related to university or university events or parades or whatever, anything outside of just pure football games?

**DB**: I don't think we did at that point in time. Of course, the band does that a lot now, but I don't think we did any of the extra performances like the band does now, that I can recall.

[00:27:42]

**JC**: When you were just getting started in the band. You said it was [your] first time in a big stadium, was there something else that was surprising to you about what you saw when you kind of came into this big stadium of, you know, like you said twenty thousand or whatever, anything else that kind of stuck out to you on that?

**DB**: I guess not really, other than the fact that--you got the excitement of the first time you go in to perform in that kind of a venue, and it's kind of like, wow, and now you're trying to make sure you don't screw up. So, it was kind of concentration on that. I know we played some from the stands. We had some of the same cheers that the band still uses today, some have probably been put by the wayside. What went on then, I couldn't begin to tell you, but that's probably true. I don't think we played as much as the band does today. Either that or they didn't stop the ball games as much as they do today, one of the two, I don't know.

[00:29:01]

**JC**: Yes, maybe both. I don't know.

**DB:** Yes. [laughs]

**JC:** Good point. So, you kind of mentioned, some of the things that you feel [are] kind of different now for the band than what they were [then]. How would you say that the band is kind of evolved over time? [How] would you kind of compare where it was when you were in the band and where you feel it is today?

**DB**: Well, I think the first obvious thing is the size of the band, going from a hundred and twenty, that I started with to now, they're marching three hundred and fifty, having five hundred plus kids try out to get into the band. Then still having that three fifty plus another, what, sixty or so that are part of the State Storm. That is one obvious thing. The quality of the band, the performances, the music, just keeps going up. The harder it is to get into the organization, the more your quality is going to go up, at least in my opinion. They do so much more as far as extra performances because we’ve got two different basketball bands, a wrestling pep band, and then they use one for volleyball and gymnastics. Now the Storm covers a little of that, but then there's some other things that I think The Storm covers a little of that, but then the band also covers--they played at a couple of different marching band festivals or contests this fall, that I know of. Then they have Band Extravaganza, which wasn't a thing when I was in school. [I] love going to Band Extravaganza. So, I think just the whole quality of it--everything now is memorized. I think that most of it they start [electronically], then it's all memorized and, it's kind of like, *wow*.

[00:31:28]

**JC**: Based upon those things, what do you think maybe sets the Iowa State Marching Band apart from maybe other ones that you might see somewhere?

**DB**: Part of it, and I can't speak for other schools [that] I don’t know that well, but the vast majority of the band is not music majors. I would suspect that probably Iowa [University of Iowa] has a pretty high number of music majors in their Marching Band. Not a slam, it just is what it is. So, I don't know about other schools, how their bands are made up from the from the student body or [if] they have a quota or criteria, whatever it is they have to do. But so many of the band members are not music majors, they’re doing it just because they love marching in the band, and they're there to perform and have a good time besides taking on their major, whatever it happens to be. At Band Extravaganza, when they introduce all the seniors, there's probably, I don't know, maybe ten percent of the kids or music majors. Everything else is, you know--they’re engineering, they’re AG, they’re all the different majors we have at Iowa State.

[00:33:13]

**JC**: You were mentioning one of the things that's changed, you've got all of the different pep bands, etc., for different sports. Were there any other bands that you participated in besides just the marching band?

**DB**: I was trying to think if I played in concert band one year or not, but I absolutely can't remember if I did or not. I know we had a basketball pep band, but I don't think I played in that. Whether I tried out for it or not, I don't remember that either. It evidently wasn't something that really stuck with me [or] that really hurt my feelings [that] I didn't get into that band or not because I know I went to the ball games for basketball, and we only had men's basketball at the time. So that's the only thing I can remember. I was in marching band, and then that took care of that, I guess.

[00:34:20]

**JC**: I kind of asked the question before about where you practiced. Would that have been where concert band would have been as well? Would it have been that same building that's not there anymore?

[Talking over each other]

**DB**: Yes, that was that was the music building because there weren't any music majors at that point in time either. Iowa State didn't have that program.

[00:34:47]

**JC**: Yeah, that makes sense. So, there wasn't that major, so there wasn't a reason to really have it for that. What does it mean to you to be in the marching band? Where did that help you out long term? Besides just the great memories, what else did you think you take away from that?

**DB**: While I haven't really kept up with any of the folks, being involved with Alumni Band, you see some [people] from kind of the same era in band as we come back for homecoming or, you know, around the--it was fun, obviously. I've got a lot of pride in the Iowa State Band. We had from West Liberty--we had three or four kids that are about the same age as our children who are now in their late forties or fifties that were in the marching band and that's how we got turned on to Band Extravaganza. We had a really good friend [and] their son was in the marching band; they were coming up for Band Extravaganza invited us to come along. So that's been something that we've always really enjoyed going to when we can get to it.

I think there's a huge amount of pride in the band. We had the opportunity in 2016 when the marching band went to France to represent the United States for the D-day celebration. We went on the shadow tour, the parents tour-- however, you labeled it. I was out of the military by then, but I was working with the military funeral honors program for the Iowa Guard then, so I was interested in World War II history. But Normandy or Omaha Beach is just huge in history, and us having a chance to go and watch the band, and what they did, and how well they were represented Iowa State University was just amazing. The last day we had gone, we were in Paris, and the band was supposed to do a performance, kind of a parade around a big park they had there in Paris. Then they did kind of--I guess what we call the step show. Kind of that type of program they did. I was kind of following the band around, they had a lot of people that were following the band during the parade, not everybody did. So, I got to talking to a couple, I think they were from Sweden, but they came to the United States a lot on business. They were in Paris for some reason I don't recall, but they had been in the same restaurant that the band was eating in the previous evening, and [they] were just amazed that--because I think it was two hundred and some band kids that were able to go on that trip--and were amazed at how well behaved they were. If they hadn't seen them all there--if they would have had their back to me, you would never have known that there were two hundred college students sitting in the restaurant. They went over and talked to them before they left and found out that the band was going to perform at this park that afternoon [and] that's why they were there. They came specifically to listen to the band. The wife made the comment at the time after the band was done that she was pleased or surprised or whatever that not all the females weighed one hundred twenty pounds. There were, you know, all kinds of body shapes and sizes, and everybody performed the same. So, that was kind of a fun observation from somebody that was outside of our organization quote, unquote. That was just a--even though there [were] plane issues and we missed the first day in France, that was a great trip. We met some great friends along the way that [we’re] friends [with] today from that trip. A set of parents that their daughter was part of the flag team that year.

[00:40:32]

**JC**: Do you want to talk a little bit more about your involvement with kind of the band after you've been out of band and Alumni Band, some of the things that you've done there?

**DB**: When we first started the Alumni Band, I was still a full-time soldier in the Iowa National Guard and so we have drill weekends. When you're full-time, it's not necessarily just drill weekends or--a lot of times [we have] other things we got to do on weekends, so you have trouble being able to commit to coming back for a football game, but I did get to two or three of the first ones. Then we started to--we had conflicts, wars that started, and when you work full-time at the state headquarters, then we were working weekends and sometimes around the clock. After I retired in 2006, I think I've been back to just about everyone. I know I've left early for a couple we had--I was the funeral honors coordinator for the Army Guard, and I remember, it hasn't been very many years ago, we had the MP company had been deployed to Cuba to Guantanamo Bay. There was a young soldier that drowned swimming in the ocean. They were bringing his remains back at like ten thirty at night on Saturday night, we had a night game. So, I talked to the band directors and got one of my nephews---he and his wife both play in the Alumni Band--I got him to take my sousaphone, to be able to return that after the game. So, as soon as we got done with a halftime show, my wife and I beat feet to the truck and drove to the Des Moines Airport so we could be there with my funeral honors team to receive his remains and go on about the business of honoring his life later on down the road. I think I served four years as a member at large on the board of directors. So that was an interesting experience. That came about--- when I was there is when the band--- when Stephen, what was Stephen's last name?

JC: You mean Smith?

DB: Yeah, yeah, it was the the most recent Stephen.

JC: Yeah, I think that's the one you're thinking of. Maybe.

DB: Okay, okay. Anyway, because [Stephen Smith, Marching Band Director (2011-2017)] come to the board and said--by this point in time because the band always went out, or the leader or the director, and they recruited across the nation for band members up until this point in time, but we were starting to get a lot of people that were wanting to try out for band. So, he--can't remember whether it came to us first to ask or if he was just telling us--anyway, they went to the band leadership and said, “Hey, this is just a proposal, and it's up to you what you want to do. It can either be like it's quote, unquote always been where if you were in the last year, you have a spot this year already. Don’t have to try out, no nothing, or we can make it like you would [have it] on a on a sports team. [Where] you've got to earn your spot back. You’ve obviously got the institutional knowledge about what's going on, but you've got to earn that slot back.” The band leadership said, Let's do it. Everybody has to earn their spot back. So, from that snapshot on, that's the way it's been. Obviously, every section kind of rotates every year as to how many seniors were actually in that section and how many are going to need to be replaced that incoming year. So, I was on the on the board at the snapshot that that happened, and that's about all. We didn’t really have anything to do with it, but he told us that's what the band leadership had decided. That's pretty cool, when you've got enough people that are wanting to be in the Iowa State University Marching Band, and your quote, unquote overpopulated with people wanting to be in it. What better way than [to] do that to increase the quality of your musicians.

[00:45:53]

**JC**: Certainly, and how do you feel that has shaped the band where they are at today with that change?

**DB**: It’s made it just a much better organization that--it was already a good organization, but it just continues to drive up the quality of the music and the performances and the things that they can do. Christian [Christian Carichner, Marching Band Director (2017-present)] now is doing. They're doing a lot of really neat things that--dinosaurs are kind of his thing. The band can get a lot of publicity on social media with dinosaurs. Everybody seems to really enjoy it. It's just overall helped the quality of the band, I believe to do that.

[00:46:50]

**JC**: Is there anything special about any Alumni Band performances? What do you like most about Alumni Band, maybe?

**DB**: Well, of course, you get to see old friends, it's probably a one once-a-year occasion [where] people will travel back to Iowa State and get together. Especially Friday nights, where we've got some time to sit down at our social time and visit with folks that we haven't seen since last year or maybe two years for whatever the reason is. I guess that's the thing I enjoy most. Being on the field is still fun. I don't play well, but I can still march. So, it’s fun, although I don't like the cold any better than I did when I was a kid, and having a borrowed instrument really is kind of a pain, and I kind of beat Christian about that. For those that are freezing to death and have a borrowed instrument, can't we figure out a way other than taxing somebody else to carry your sousaphone back to the truck after the game? Can't we figure out a way to do this after halftime? They need to know that we're going to leave, but can't we send a couple of the equipment guys out and get them back in because I'm sure they're on a free pass to get back in, unlike the spectators. But it's fun. I’ve got a lot of folks we really enjoy seeing every year, and once in a while, you run into them here and there around Central Iowa or someplace else.

[00:48:40]

**JC**: You mentioned that Skip, one of your drum majors, made it back. Are there others that were in band at the exact same time as you that have come up for Alumni Band?

**DB**: I'm not sure. I think Brad Cook [ISU 1980], who's another sousaphone player, is in this era. I can't remember if he was part of when I was actually there or not, he’s one that I really know. I know Mark Ferguson [Architecture, 1973-1978], who marches--who came the year after I graduated. But his wife is a master gardener here in Polk County. And so--- She not--- so we've kind of know, and Mark marches with the sousaphones during alumni band because he plays a baritone sax. They don't write marching music for baritone sax, so he winds up with a sousaphone part, they march him with the sousaphones during Alumni Band performances, so I’ve---

**JC**: Gotten to know him a little bit more?

**DB**: Yes, he was actually the first interview that I did as part of this project. I mean, he lives not too far away, so that was good because he helped with the technical pieces of this that I didn't know anything about.

[00:50:06]

**JC**: Yeah, technology is great when it works, and I think, as you mentioned, early on, the video is a little bit off and on sometimes, which is too bad, but technology is great when it works. As we kind of wind it down here, are there any questions or subjects that you think are very important that we want to make sure that we get as part of this oral history that maybe I haven't yet touched upon?

**DB**: Well, I had, I think, four different directors while I was there. The fall of my freshman year, Frank Piersol [Director of Bands (1948-1967)] [had] left that summer to go to the University of Iowa. So, I believe that Gary Behm was the quote, unquote fill-in director that fall. When I was looking for pictures, the name Arthur Swift [head of the Music Department (1972-1992)] came up along with Gary. So, they may have tag teamed--I don't remember. But they had that first year. And where did I write that down? Joseph Messenger had us for, I think, a year, and then Acton Ostling was there, I think, from 1979 [1969] through 1971. [He was] a good concert band person [but an] awful marching band person.

**JC**: Different skills, I've heard.

**DB**: I didn't march the fall of 1971 because I'd enlisted in the reserves. My basic training was supposed to have happened that spring. Well, it didn't. So, I dropped out of school spring quarter of 1970 and didn't get back from training until the first part of February of ‘72. When I came back in the fall of ‘72, Jimmie Howard had taken over. But from what I--whoever told me--the band had dropped to eighty-some people, I think, that previous fall because Ostling wasn't--he was a good concert person, not a hugely great people person. So, you had to have pretty thick skin sometimes to kind of deal with him, which was unfortunate because, just [from] what I've heard, musically, he was very good, but people skills were not so good. Where Jimmie Howard was just ton of fun all the time. You had to work, but he was just a ton of fun and always looking for something new to try out.

**JC**: Yes, that sounds like quite the interesting thing to deal with, different directors over that course--

**DB**: Yes, a lot of folks from my era and back, if you will, a lot of them had Uncle Frank [Frank Piersol] as they knew him. So anyways---

[00:53:57]

**JC**: What other worries do you have about your time [in marching band]?

**DB**: I don't think a lot of them--you know, the band has changed so much for the good through the years. We have a great nephew that made the marching band this fall as a trombone player and a freshman in engineering. Which a lot of the band folks are. So, we're thrilled for him. I think we're going to have another Alumni Band--his dad also played in the marching band and has never been back for Alumni Band. So, I think he was kind of over the barrel this time to march, and so Mike will be--at least the plan--I know he’s signed up to be in Alumni Band this fall, and then Mike's younger brother and his wife, Jennifer, have marched in the Alumni Band for years. The other two brothers--I don't think either one of them ever been back for Alumni Band, but they both marched, and they’ve been pretty much in central Iowa, but you know everybody has their own thing.

**JC**: You have an opportunity for a big family reunion maybe.

**DB**: Yes, and it's always fun to see Aaron and Jennifer because they just live down in Huxley, so they aren't very far away, but we don't see him in person very often, but once in a while, we do. Yeah, it should be fun.

[00:55:38]

**JC**: Yes, well, anything else you wanted to add?

**DB:** Not particularly. A couple of weekends ago, we went to the Des Moines Symphony concert, and there was a young man that sat in front of us, and Roddy [Dean’s wife] got to talking to him. Well, he was a freshman at Iowa State, he's a music major as a trumpetist, and is in the marching band and probably in every other band that he can get into. I think you said he was in Jazz II, and I think he's playing wind ensemble in the concert band. But he was there that night. His trumpet instructor is the first chair player in the Des Moines Symphony. So, he was there to quote, unquote, listen to him that evening. So that was fun just to run into him and he had his marching band shirt on.

**JC**: Oh yes! Nice to kind of connect multiple generations.

**DB**: Yes. In one of the other interviews I did, somebody made the comment about--especially while they were still students on campus--if you had a marching band shirt or jacket or whatever on as you walked around campus and met somebody, while maybe you didn't know them, you had something in common because you were still wearing that band garb. So, you had that connection that you wouldn't have otherwise, maybe. We'll put it that way.

**JC**: Sure, something unique. Well, great! I appreciate your time doing this, and if there's anything else that you like to add later on, just feel free and let us know.