

# Bandstand

A photograph of the Brown University Band performing in front of the main entrance gate. The band members are wearing dark jackets, red scarves, and tan pants. They are playing various instruments including trumpets, trombones, saxophones, and drums. The gate is ornate with a crest in the center. The background shows a brick building with many windows and bare trees, suggesting a winter or early spring setting.

The Official Alumni Newsletter  
of the  
Brown University Band  
Summer/Fall 2015

# Bandstand

Brown Band Alumni Newsletter

Volume 7, Issue 1

Summer/Fall 2015



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## LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Greetings, Alumni!

Welcome to the Fall 2015 edition of your favorite Brown Band publication, the Bandstand! And, a particular welcome to the class of 2015, the newest members to join the hallowed ranks of our dear crusties. We will miss you dearly, but we expect to be seeing you back with us to visit and reminisce soon.

First, I wanted to take a moment to thank all of the Band alumni who came out to support the band for Commencement in May. Commencement Band is one of my favorite events of the year, and a large part of that comes from the great experience of inviting our alumni back to play with us and to share Band stories of yore. So thank you to those who made the journey out to join us with your music and your stories—your participation is much appreciated. For those of you who missed this year, mark your calendars for next year—May 29<sup>th</sup>, 2016!

If you're looking for an earlier date to reunite with the Band, our alumni game this season will be the home game against URI on Saturday, October 3rd. Keep an eye out for an email from our Alumni Liaisons, or ALs, as the date approaches to RSVP and to let us know what uniform sizes and instruments you will need us to bring along. If you



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have not been getting emails from our alumni account and would like to, check the page at the end of the newsletter for all the contact information, and they will get you set up and connected.

Finally, I want to take a moment to thank and recognize our Alumni Liaisons for the incredible work they have been doing. The current liaisons, Abby Muller '16, Caleb Hersh '17, Isabella Martinez '17, and Cassandra Cole '18 have shown an incredible amount of passion, creativity, and drive in their capacities as Band ALs. It seems like every month they have a new



idea on how to improve alumni relations, and I am incredibly excited to see how their work will improve the connection between current Band members and those that have come before us. These four have been working behind the scenes to reorganize the way emails are sent and received, keep the Facebook page updated with pictures from every event, increase our contact pool of alumni, make oral history recordings of Band stories from alumni, and revamp the Band Blog. So keep an eye out for the blog and some oral history posts in the coming months, and for now enjoy this newsletter that our incredible ALs have prepared for you!

Ever True,  
Sidney Karesh '16

Photo Credit: Sidney Karesh '16



The 2015 Band Board (faces from left to right):  
Corresponding Secretary Brooke Gasdaska '16  
Recording Secretary Max Urbany '18  
Vice President Chris Warren '16  
Head Conductor Charlie Moder '16  
Business Manager Charlie Gleason '17  
Assistant Conductor Kyle Myerson '17  
Assistant Conductor Daniel Muller '17  
President Sidney Karesh '16  
General Manager Hayley Siegel '17

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## On a Serious Note: New Alumni Initiatives Update

This summer, the Alumni Liaisons worked on several projects to better the relationship between the Brown Band and its alumni community. We sent you an email early in the summer detailing our renewed efforts to increase alumni-Band connections, foster a sense of community within groups of alumni living in the same region, and better our fundraising efforts. Below is a brief description of these new initiatives and our progress.

**Alumni Decade Representatives:** We discussed having alumni representatives to serve as advocates for their particular graduating class groups of alumni and to coordinate alumni involvement in Band events. After serious consideration, we decided instead to create a system of **Alumni Regional Representatives**. Each Representative will advocate for Band alumni in a particular region of the United States (with a Representative likely to be appointed for international bandies), and will help coordinate events in a particular region. *If you are interested in becoming a Regional Representative, please contact us ASAP at [friends.of.the.brown.band@gmail.com](mailto:friends.of.the.brown.band@gmail.com).*

**Alumni Get-Togethers:** We are currently working with the Band Board to begin a pilot program of free or low-cost meet-ups for alumni in particular regions. We are working out details of funding and logistics and will continue this conversation as the fall semester progresses. Stay tuned!

**Bandstand Blog:** We are reinvigorating the Brown Bandstand Blog (Brown Blogstand??) by conducting regular interviews with alumni and publicizing, with permission, some of the alumni stories that were recorded at Commencement 2015. An excerpt from one of these interviews is included in this edition of the Bandstand! **Check out the blog at <https://brownband.wordpress.com>** for regular updates, and email us if you would like to be interviewed!

**Alumni Email:** We will now send a monthly email to all Band alumni, which will include both a list of upcoming events and updates to our initiatives. Please email us if you are not on our mailing list yet and would like to receive updates, as email is our primary method of communication!

We hope that these initiatives will help our alumni community feel included and continually welcome in the Brown Band family. Let us know if you have any suggestions or concerns!

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# Fall Football Season Preview

By Abby Muller '16

## Game 1, Brown vs. Bryant Saturday, September 19, 12:30pm

A recent news article about Brown's football team this season refers to Bryant as our "instate rivals." This is surprising to us, since we, y'know, already have a 97-year-old instate rivalry (#governorscup), but maybe "rival" is a new word for "team we've played once and hadn't heard of until then." But hey, we won that time—so odds are looking good that Brown will keep its lifetime claim on the Who-the-hell-ever Cup.

## Game 2, Brown @ Harvard Saturday, September 26, 7:00pm

This may not be a 250+ extravaganza—although that "+" is a beautifully vague and indefinite piece of branding, so Brown should keep the free stuff coming. It's a night game, so get ready to tell all your secrets. This is our first away game, so hopefully we'll have an enthusiastic class of 2019 (!?!?!?) in tow!

## Game 3, Brown vs. URI Saturday, October 3, 6:00pm **\*\*Alumni Game\*\***

Brown won every Governor's Cup for as long as Lincoln Chafee '75 was Governor of Rhode Island—but our current governor Gina Raimondo went to Harvard, so our win streak is protected only by the strength of our own conviction that URI still sucks and Harvard does too. Maybe Lincoln Chafee's presidential run has enough governmental sparkle that the magic will stick around and we'll win the Cup for the 72<sup>nd</sup> time out of 98. **It's also the Alumni Game**, so be prepared to tell us all your secrets (of life after Brown)!

## Game 4, Brown @ Holy Cross Saturday, October 10, 1:00pm

For some reason we aren't allowed at this one. The real crux of the tragedy is that we won't be able to sav(i)or writing a script that'll really knock 'em dead. Too much? Nah, I think I nailed it.



## Game F, Brown vs. Princeton Saturday, October 17, 12:00pm **\*\*Family Weekend\*\***

Our favorite Ivy band comes to visit! As I had to explain to a Princeton bandie my freshman year, no, they don't go in Brown's fountain after our home game (250+ funds take note: build us a fountain). But perhaps they will profit from the care packages Mom and Dad bring their student hosts when they come to this **Family Weekend** game. Only time will tell.

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**Game 6, Brown @ Cornell**  
**Saturday, October 24, 12:30pm**

Literally all I remember about this away game my sophomore year is that 1) I didn't think it was going to be cold enough to bring gloves and 2) that I bought like four cups of hot chocolate during the game to use as hand-warmers. Here are some things that will happen this year: 1) I will bring gloves, 2) we will win, 3) the Cornell band will further continue its descent into fascism, 4) Ann Coulter went to Cornell.



**Game 7, Brown vs. Penn**  
**Saturday, October 31, 12:30pm**

Happy Halloween! This will be our costume game. We'll see if, like last year, the Penn Band's clarinet section mysteriously replaces ours when it's time to don costumes. They still looked like the Brown Bandies we know and love, but the blue and red rugbies don't lie... At least we'll be on our home turf this time, and free from the Penn Band, flying toast, and R. Greer Cheeseman III. Except they're coming to the game, too. Drat. I guess it'll be a Halloween-y day of horrors after all.

**Game 8, Brown @ Yale**  
**Saturday, November 7, 12:30pm**

Here is a fun fact about the Yale Bowl: it made history when it was designated a National Historic Landmark in 1987, thereby becoming the first giant concrete toilet to earn the title. We are deeply thrilled to return to its smelly home. Yale, turn on the fan on your way out next time.

**Game 9, Brown vs. Dartmouth**  
**Saturday, November 14, 12:30pm**

The Dartmouth show is always a rollicking good (read: nonsensical) time, and the last home game is always senior limericks. There'll be a lot of ups and downs, cheers and tears, and the football team will probably even play too. The downside to this being a home game is that we don't pass any liquor stores across the NH border on the way there (as per the song), but we're sure we'll figure something out.

**Game 10, Brown @ Columbia<sup>2</sup>**  
**Friday, November 20, 7:30pm**

Columbia (Columbia) is a nice ego boost of a last game, since the only thing in New York City worse than the G train is Columbia's football team. And in the city that never sleeps, the bands apparently don't either, since we've heard the CUMB has a tradition of pulling an all-nighter before this game and then sagging, zombie-like, onto the field. Manhattan, baby!

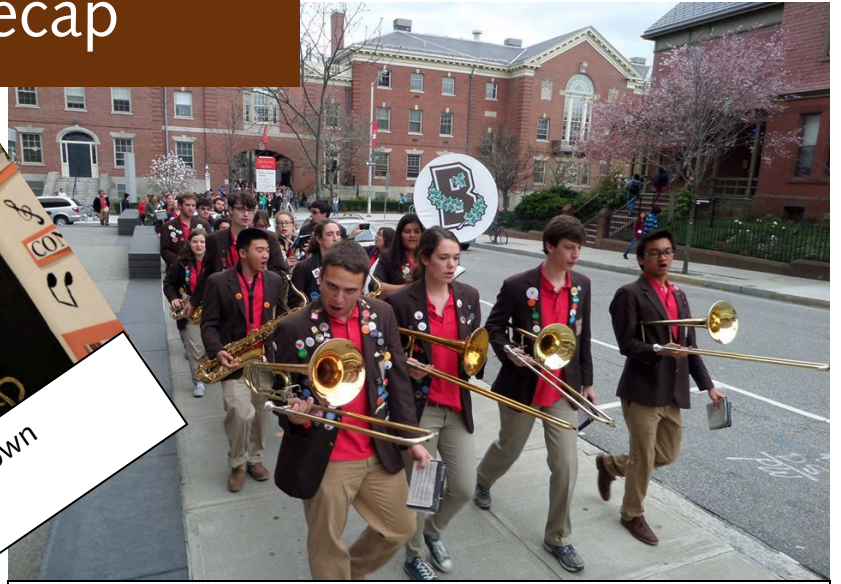
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# Spring Season Recap



Head conductor Charlie entices Brown students to join the Band.



The Band welcomes prospective students at ADOCH.



The Band celebrates the end of the year at Haffenreffer.

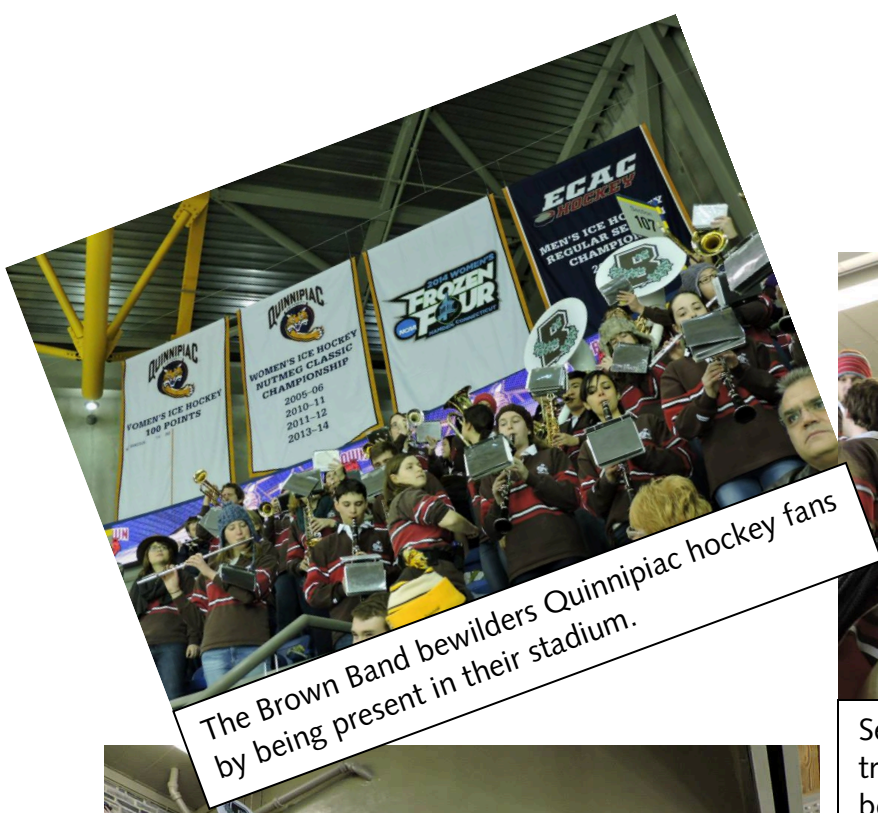


The Band fails at setting a tree-hugging record, but succeeds at providing great music.





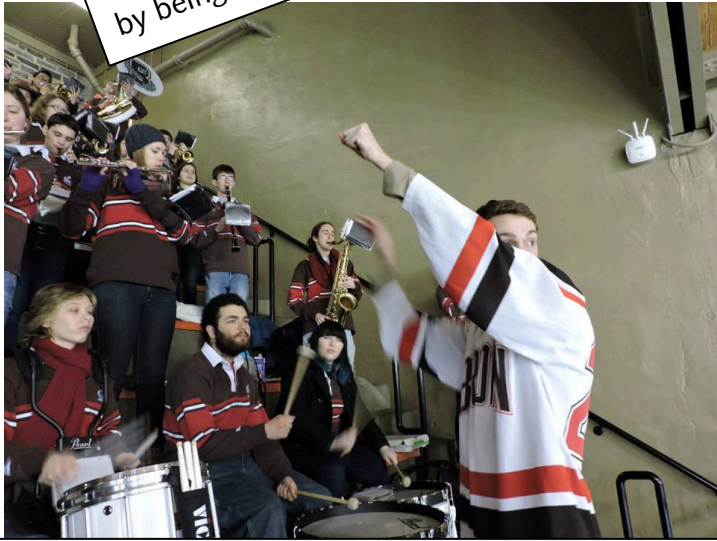
# Winter Trip



The Brown Band bewilders Quinnipiac hockey fans by being present in their stadium.



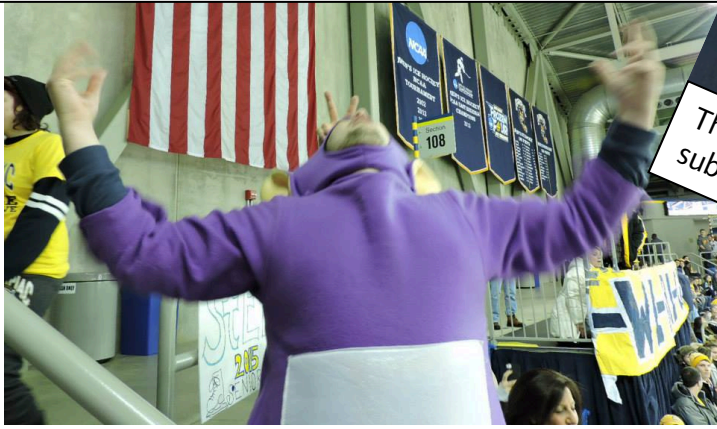
Seniors Elaine and Zoe enjoy their last winter trip. Junior Abby looks on, alarmed that this will be her next year.



This February, intrepid bandies braved cold weather and aggressive hockey fans to make the daunting trek to Princeton and Quinnipiac. Princeton welcomed us with open arms; Quinnipiac, on the other hand, may have made us fear a little for our safety. We certainly learned a lot about ourselves on this trip—including the crucial fact that we are *all sandwich girl*.



These Brown bandies are braving the NYC subway for the first time!





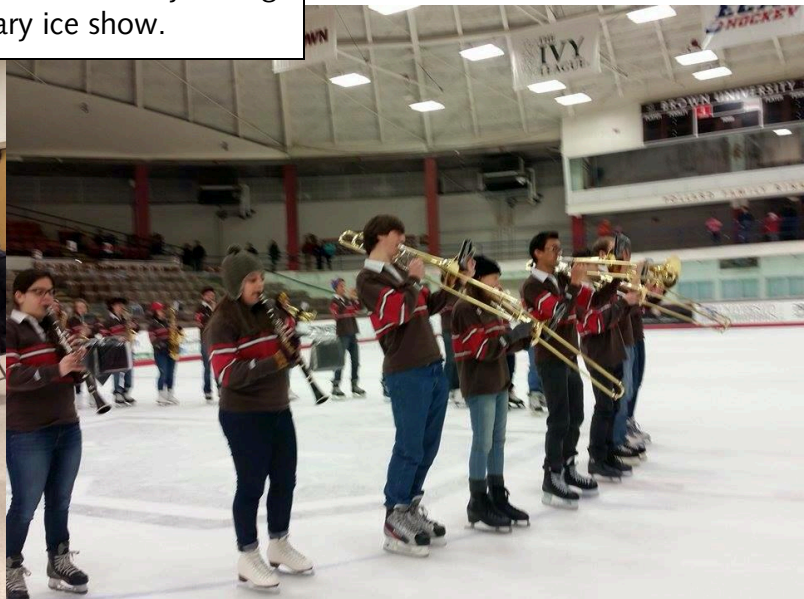
# Ice Shows



In January the Band took to the ice under the guise of various "sidekicks and second fiddles." Our costumes may not have been the heroes of the day, but our music and skating were second to none.



In February the Band welcomed back its highly esteemed alumni for a night of skating, music-making, hockey cheers, and general tomfoolery during its 45th anniversary ice show.





# Commencement in Pictures



Band seniors enjoy their last trip to Haffenreffer.



The Band takes a break on the world's driest beach: the RISD Beach.



The Band looks their snazziest in preparation for campus dance.





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## Letters to Elrod

*Back by popular demand, Letters to Elrod is a regular section including alumni updates about their continued interactions with the Band.*

Dear Elrod,

I was eating rabbit for the first time a few weekends ago—as one does in Beijing, P. R. China—and chatting with my male dinner companion about our personal histories. He is an avid football fan. I was an avid football game attendee, but by no means a fan. I explained that I actively participated in eight consecutive years of football not as anyone remotely interested in the game, beyond those intervals in which I could play music.

"Ah, marching band?" he queried.

"Well...sort of," I replied, with a sideways glance. I explained: "In high school we only had pep band, so we played in the stands. In college...we didn't march so much as run across the field screaming."

"Wait," he said, raising an eyebrow and spitting out the tiny slivers of bone from which he had nibbled all tasty morsels. "Where did you go to college?" His quizzical look and tone suggested a vague familiarity with what I had described.

"Brown," I replied.

"YOU WENT TO BROWN, TOO?!" he exclaimed, flinging spicy oil flecks and crispy bunny bits everywhere. As it happens, we were four years apart at Brown, and he was certainly familiar with the Band's antics. Surprisingly (then again, maybe not so surprisingly as he is a true football fan) he had never attended a Brown football game. Not even versus Hahvahd. At the end of the evening, he made an attempt to make a Brunonian reference beginning with "Ever." It was so nonsensical that I cannot now recall exactly what he said.

"Ever True?" I asked, trying to catch his meaning.

"Yeah, that," he shrugged.

"YOU DON'T KNOW OUR FIGHT SONG?!"

"Uh...no."

We have not dined together since.

Much love from the red East--but I'll be back in the USA and visiting Providence faster than you can dismember and dry-fry an adorable creature. Well...maybe not that fast.

Ever True, K. Sarah "K. SASS" Ostrach '10

Dear Elrod,

Knock Knock.

Ever True, Wilson Baer '13



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## From the Archives

*The following is a special reprint of an article published in the Brown Alumni Magazine in 1975, the 50th anniversary year of the Brown Band, by Band alum Dr. Edward Guiliano '72.*

### *"You don't miss halftime"*

Student formed, student run, and student financed, the Brown Band has been one of the most spirited, popular, and—in recent years—controversial groups at Brown. Always visible as well as audible, the band has been over the years a unique part of the "Brown experience". It's difficult to imagine an undergraduate spending any sustained period of time on campus without seeing and in some way being affected by the band. One can graduate from Brown without ever going to a football game, or even without using a University library. But never encountering the Brown Band? Highly unlikely. The band won't permit it.

Last November 2, the day of the football team's 17-13 victory over Princeton, the Brown Band celebrated its fiftieth anniversary with a reunion. Band alumni from all over the country came back to Brown to play one more time and attend an evening banquet. Irving Harris '28, the founder of the band in 1924, was there. Joe Strauss '28, his roommate and a member of the original band, flew in from Chicago for the reunion.

I was there, I suppose, for generally the same reasons as the other alumni. The band was important to me and I have only good memories of the time I spent with it. As Andy Eisenberg '71 put it, "The band was the source of many of my most fun times during college." No one disagreed. I wanted to see old friends, to remember old times, and if I could, to recapture my past for a moment. I was curious to know more about the band's history and to meet other band alumni. The reunion was also a good excuse to make an "official" trip back to campus. It gave some band alumni with children at Brown (Walter Axelrod '40, Robert Gosselin '41, and Paul Frontiero '54) a particularly good excuse to invite themselves for a weekend. (Interestingly, none of their children are in the band; and one wouldn't even go to the game.)

***"One doesn't belong because one enjoys football. The band is an end in itself."***

The band, I learned, hasn't changed much in fifty years. Not even the uniforms. Joe Strauss identified easily with the current members because he remembered wearing white duck pants and a sweater over a white shirt and bow tie in the twenties. Today a single brown turtleneck has replaced the shirt and sweater. Irving Harris wore his original sweater at halftime when he led the band through "Stars and Stripes Forever," one of the band's early standards. He also brought along his original drum major's whistle, but no longer had the drum major's baton. The original baton? It was a mop-handle with a brown bathrobe belt wrapped and tacked around one end, making a convenient brown cord and tassel.

More significantly, what hasn't changed over the years is the band's spirit and pride. One doesn't belong because one enjoys football. The band is an end in itself. The organization is and has been a very close-knit group. Jeffrey Hanzel '65 pointed out that in some ways it is similar to an athletic team or fraternity. Members share a very powerful and unifying common denominator beyond love for Brown and pride in the group: music.

A testimony to the band's spirit is its record of attendance at away athletic games. Despite the fact that the games are of secondary importance to most members and that most band alumni remember the football team to be, as Paul Frontiero put it, "typically atrocious," the band has rarely missed a game in fifty years. For years members have taken pride in the advice that upperclassmen give freshmen: "If you want a hot dog during the football game, go during the game so you don't miss halftime."

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Pride precipitated the two genuine changes in the band's status over the years. In 1968, the ranks had dwindled and the halftime performance at the Columbia game ending the season was poor. In an effort to recruit more members, the band went coed the next spring, scooping the first official "experimental" coed dorm by five months. Members also began to pressure the administration and the music department for a full-time director. (Walter Axelrod remembered that even in the late thirties, the music department wanted nothing to do with the band and the only "professional" advice received was during a visit one day a week by a musician from the Providence area. In those days forming a "B" on the field was a significant accomplishment.) In 1970, the University hired John Christie to serve as the band's musical advisor and faculty liaison, as well as to direct the Wind Ensemble, a serious concert group whose ranks merge with the band's for some University functions. Anyone who has been to a game in the last few years knows the positive results of hiring a director.

***"[Irving Harris] partially solved the shortage of instruments by recovering an old bass drum and several marching drums used by the Brown Naval Reserve unit in World War I."***

The speaker at our fiftieth anniversary banquet was, of course, Irving Harris. He recalled his initial disappointment and bewilderment upon learning that the closest thing Brown had to a band was an informal and unreliable group of musicians who occasionally showed up at rallies. He talked about organizing the original band of twenty-five and solving problems as they arose. For instance, he partially solved the shortage of instruments by recovering an old bass drum and several marching drums used by the Brown Naval Reserve unit in World War I. He recalled the band's first appearance in 1924, when it led a "tremendous turnout of students" to the train station to see the football team off to an important game. The team's destination was Chicago and the opponent, the reigning Big Ten co-champions, was the University of Chicago Maroons.

When Irving Harris graduated he left behind a well-organized, well-trained, spirited, and extremely popular organization. In recognition of his achievement the band annually awards the Harris Trophy "to the member who has contributed most to the spirit of the Brown University Band." Band members and alumni alike regard the award as a very high honor. At the banquet, the 1974 award was presented to Paul Hanson '75, the current band president, organizer of the reunion, and producer of the fiftieth anniversary record album.

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## Bandstand Blog Excerpt

*"He was there because he needed the ride...not because he was thrilled to be with a group of obscene, sometimes very drunk students."*

*"There was a musical responsibility to and from the stadium, but there it was just the running around and doing stupid things."*

*"A lot of students didn't go to the football games but they wanted the buttons."*

*-David Muller '81*

Like these quotes? Visit <https://brownband.wordpress.com> for more. They are excerpts from the first in a series of alumni interviews being conducted (pun definitely intended) with Brown Band alums. If you yourself would like to be interviewed, please send us an email!

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# "69 Seconds Left"

## 2015 Band Board

<b>Sidney Karesh '16</b> President Sidney_Karesh@brown.edu	<b>Chris Warren '16</b> Vice President Christopher_Warren@brown.edu	<b>Hayley Siegel '17</b> General Manager ("Mom") Hayley_Siegel@brown.edu
<b>Charlie Gleason '17</b> Business Manager ("Money God") Charles_Gleason@brown.edu	<b>Brooke Gasdaska '16</b> Corresponding Secretary Brooke_Gasdaska@brown.edu	<b>Max Urbany '18</b> Recording Secretary Maximillian_Urbany@brown.edu

## Appointed Leadership

### Brown Band Alumni Liaisons

Abby Muller '16.....abby\_muller@brown.edu  
Caleb Hersh '17.....caleb\_hersh@brown.edu  
Isabella Martinez '17...isabella\_martinez@brown.edu  
Cassie Cole '18.....cassandra\_cole@brown.edu

### Conductors

Charlie Moder '16.....charles\_moder@brown.edu  
Daniel Muller '17.....daniel\_muller@brown.edu  
Kyle Myerson '17.....kyle\_myerson@brown.edu

### Public Relations and Retention Chairs

Katie Hay '18.....kathleen\_hay@brown.edu  
Carol Medina '18.....carol\_medina@brown.edu  
Zach Woessner '18....zachary\_woessner@brown.edu

### Webmasters

Ben Weedon '16.....benjamin\_weedon@brown.edu  
Sarah Cowles '17.....sarah\_cowles@brown.edu

### Scriptwriters

Abby Muller '16.....abby\_muller@brown.edu  
Amy Andrews '16.....amy\_andrews@brown.edu

### Historians

Ben Weedon '16.....benjamin\_weedon@brown.edu  
Sarah Cowles '17.....sarah\_cowles@brown.edu  
Peter Kirschner '17.....peter\_kirschner@brown.edu

### Librarians

Matthew Finn '18.....matthew\_finn@brown.edu  
Dana Leichter '18.....dana\_leichter@brown.edu  
Sammy Perez '18.....samantha\_perez@brown.edu

## Giving

[Insert obligatory plea about how much your donation helps fund items not covered by our Undergraduate Finance Board funding, such as our beloved buttons, how much your donation is appreciated, and how far it goes, here]. To donate, please visit [gifts.brown.edu](http://gifts.brown.edu) and select "**Brown University Band**" from the dropdown list under "**Annual Donations to Athletics (Sports Foundation)**". Please contact the Alumni Liaisons or a Band Board member for questions or if you would like your donation to be used for a specific purpose.

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**Thank you for reading this issue of the Bandstand,  
and congratulations to the Class of 2015!**

**Ever True,  
Abby Muller '16, Caleb Hersh '17, Isabella Martinez '17, and Cassie Cole '18  
Brown Band Alumni Liaisons**

**For all inquiries please email: [friends.of.the.brown.band@gmail.com](mailto:friends.of.the.brown.band@gmail.com)**

Photos by:  
Isabella Martinez '17, Iuliu Balibanu '18  
(in order of total contribution)