

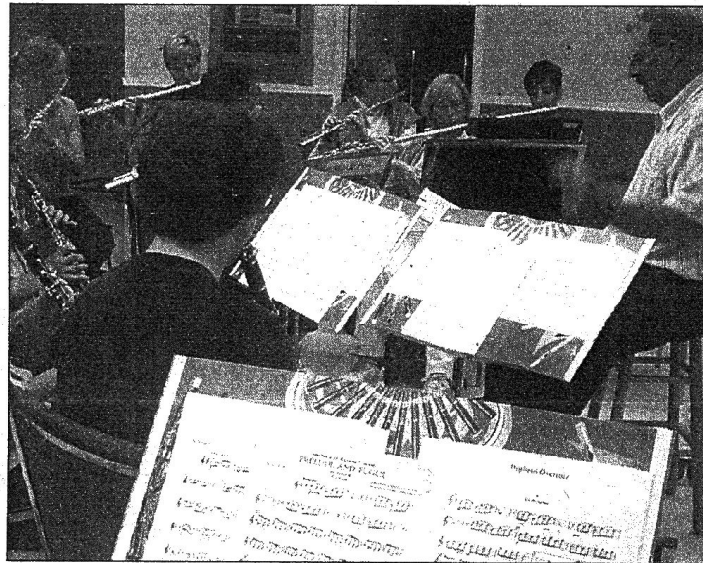
# Community band takes music to youth

By **ERIC SPARLING**  
Banner Staff Writer

The Orangeville Community Band (OCB) is on a mission to instill a lifelong love for music in Orangevillians, and their education outreach initiative aims to start with some of our youngest citizens.

Stan Elliotson is a former teacher and current music instructor. He's also one of three founders of the OCB's current incarnation. Elliotson informs The Banner that Orangeville has a long history of hosting a community band — more than a century. In fact, back in 1886, the band played for a visiting prime minister: Sir John A. himself. But with the passing of Bill Morrow some three decades ago, the band disappeared, only to be rekindled this past fall by Elliotson, conductor John Wervers, and finance guru Dave Lewars.

The new OCB's first mission was to provide an outlet for adult musicians. But their second mission is to foster the next generation of players. That mission may not be



Banner File Photo

The Orangeville Community Band has a plan to get young people fired up about playing musical instruments. Their education outreach initiative will see about 100 elementary school students performing with the adult group at two concerts.

accomplished at concerts held May 8 and June 5, but it will be off to a good start. At those two performances — held at Westside — elementary students from schools with instrumental music programs will sit in with the OCB to play a few numbers. May 8, guest musicians will come from Credit Meadows and Princess

Elizabeth. At the June 5 performance, it will be students from East Garafraxa, Orangeville Christian and Manchester Montessori schools.

The students, which collectively may number around 100, will practice with the OCB prior to the concerts. The jointly performed numbers will be

selected from the elementary students' repertoires.

"They have a dual experience," says Elliotson — they get to see the adults perform as well as participate in the concerts. Reiterating the purpose of the outreach initiative, he says "[it's] to reach out — to foster — instrumental music among youth...through the adult example of a community band."

The trumpet player stresses that the band has no illusions of achieving "instant mania" — "We're looking for long-term results," he says. But while his short-term ambitions for the program may be modest, his long-range forecast is bold: he says increasing the profile of music playing in the community can change that community. Elliotson believes arts instruction is a refining activity that develops the "human spirit" and learning to play music can provide joy and teach discipline to young people.

The public is welcome to attend the concerts; both will be held at 7:30 p.m. in the Westside secondary school gymnasium.