

A uniform proposal

SOMETHING HAS BEEN MISSING in Dufferin's parades, be they next Wednesday's Remembrance Day marches, the Santa Claus parades coming sooner than some would like, or Shelburne's famous Fiddle Parade.

That something is a local marching band.

Half a century ago, most Ontario towns and villages boasted a citizens' band. Shelburne had one until the early 1960s, and even Hillsburgh had one back in the mid-1950s. Orangeville, for some reason, had a band only sporadically, perhaps because the town couldn't find a bandmaster who stayed at the job more than a few years.

But today, thanks largely to the efforts of two men, Orangeville has a Community Band with more than 50 players, who this week demonstrated an amazing ability to perform some truly challenging works flawlessly and wound up their Remembrance concert Sunday with a rousing rendition of John Phillip Sousa's Liberty Bell March.

The band's performance was truly spec-

tacular for a group that wasn't even in existence three years ago.

Although the achievement clearly reflects many weeks of rehearsing, much of the credit must go to conductor John Wervers, who over the years has trained bands at Dufferin's three high schools, and the band's president, trumpeter Stan Elliotson.

At one point in Sunday's program, emcee Rev. Harvey Self asked Mr. Wervers, perhaps rhetorically, when the band was going to go out on parade.

Although there's no question that most, if not all, the players could oblige, no one should expect them to parade without uniforms, the cost of which would be far beyond reach for such a volunteer organization.

In the circumstances, we think Dufferin County and the Town of Orangeville ought to step up and offer to match contributions to a public fundraising campaign, with the objective of having the band in a position to march down Broadway on Remembrance Day 2010.