



United States Military Academy Band
West Point, New York 10996



Concert Band

The United States Military Academy Concert Band is a direct descendant of the small *Band of Musick* that had assembled at West Point by 1817. The modest twenty-piece military band of that era has evolved into the 43-member symphonic band of today.

Over the years, the Concert Band has earned the reputation of being among the finest of its kind in the world. The band's events annually attract thousands of visitors to the academy to hear the finest in new and traditional concert band literature. The most popular of these events are the summer concerts at West Point's Trophy Point Amphitheatre, which was constructed in 1966. Annual 4th of July performances at the ruins of Fort Putnam (on the grounds of West Point) began in 1817 and more regular outdoor performances by the Concert Band occurred throughout the middle and later 1800's. By 1950, the summer concerts on the Plain (beside the cadet barracks) were very well attended by people from West Point and beyond. Tracing its start back to 1937, today's audiences enjoy winter concerts at West Point as well.

The Concert Band has a history marked with several world-class performances and close associations with renowned composers. Percy Grainger, one of the first composers to fully utilize the unique instrumentation of the wind ensemble (other than to substitute for orchestral instruments), often called upon the band at West Point to proofread his new compositions. Additionally, Mr. Grainger appeared as a soloist with the band on several occasions between 1937 and 1951. In 1940, the Concert Band premiered Mr. Grainger's work "Hill Song #2." The band also enjoyed its relationship with American composer and conductor Morton Gould. His 1952 contribution to the sesquicentennial of the United States Military Academy, "Symphony for Band," commissioned by the Concert Band, still stands as a widely performed selection by concert bands worldwide.