

# Oak Grove Band - one name for twenty brass bands across the USA

*Gavin Holman, 21 March 2025*

I first came across the Oak Grove Independent Band, from Michigan, in the form of a photograph of nine ladies in uniform standing next to a bass drum with the band's name on it. A note on the picture stated this was also the L.O.T.M.M. Band. Some investigations unearthed a number of other Oak Grove bands, which are documented below.

1. **Oak Grove Cornet Band** (Michigan) – founded in early 1885, with 14 players, conductor Solomon Kinsman. Active through to 1906.
2. **Oak Grove Independent Band** (Michigan) - active in 1903, playing at Oak Grove in July, Argentine, in October, Howell in July 1904, and Oak Grove in Feb 1906. It acquired new uniforms in June 1904.



*Oak Grove Independent Band*

3. **Ladies of the Modern Maccabees (LOTMM) Band** (Oak Grove, Michigan) – this was active around 1905 to 1910. It is not known what their connection with the Oak Grove Independent Band was.



*Ladies of the Modern Maccabees Band*

4. **Oak Grove Cornet Band** (Carlock, Illinois) - active in 1880, leader William Norris. It was reorganised in 1884. Leader Howard Brown in 1885, Professor Price in 1886. The band continued through to 1889.
5. **Oak Grove Cornet Band** (Bloomington, Illinois) - leader Benjamin Franklin in 1877, George L. Kirchner in 1878, J. Howard Brown in 1879 (with 10 players), William Norris in 1880. The band was reorganised in 1884 with leader Howard Brown. Director was Professor Price in 1886. Still active in 1889.
6. **Oak Grove Brass Band** (Greenfield, Missouri) – Active from 1874 to 1879.
7. **Oak Grove Cornet Band** (Missouri) – active from 1892. Leader W.E. Steck in 1905. Active through to 1916.
8. **Oak Grove Brass Band** (Juneau, Wisconsin) – active in 1885.
9. **Oak Grove Concert Band** (Juneau, Wisconsin) – active from 1907 to 1911.
10. **Oak Grove Band** (Frederick county, Virginia) – active in 1888 with 15 players.
11. **Oak Grove Martial Band** (Clairon county, Pennsylvania) – active from 1888 to 1891.
12. **Oak Grove Cornet Band** (Avis, Pennsylvania) - founded in 1903 with 30 members, and acquired new uniforms in July 1903. Active through to 1908.
13. **Oak Grove Band** (Starke county, Indiana) – active in 1898.
14. **Oak Grove Band** (Wheatland, Indiana) – active in 1898.

15. **Oak Grove Band** (Arkansas City, Kansas) - active in 1900.
16. **Oak Grove Cornet Band** (Red Cross, North Carolina) – active from 1910 to 1911.
17. **Oak Grove Band** (Oneida, Iowa) – active from 1914 to 1916.
18. **Oak Grove Silver Cornet Band** (Oklahoma) – active in 1916.
19. **Oak Grove Band** (Hood River, Oregon) – Active in 1924, with members: Mr Kresti, Charlie Savo (conductor), Aalto Annala, Mike Udelius, “Red” Cates, Bruno Hukari, Harold Dinsmoor, Fred Miller, Ormand Hukari, Arvi Annala, Laran Reed, Eino Annala, Ernie Annala, George P. Coe, Roberta Reed, Linda Undelius, Ralph Sherrill, Gene Annala, and Willie Hanahan.



*Oak Grove Band (Hood River), 1924*

20. **Oak Grove Girls Band** (Portland, Oregon) – founded in August 1910 by L.E. Armstrong and was initially tutored by Professor Ben F. Driscoll. Consisted of sixteen girls aged 7 to 15, also directed by E.C. Warren. In July 1912 the band was chaperoned by Mrs L.E. Armstrong & Mrs A.W. Ellis and the leader was Miss Elizabeth McArthur. They wore blue uniforms at the Rose Parade in Portland. The performed many engagements at local county fairs and festivals. In 1915 the band merged with a group in Portland.



*Oak Grove Girls' Band, 1911*

The members of the band in 1911 were: Hester Armstrong, Edith Griffiths, Ethel Higham, Ruth Worthington, Marjorie McLees and Jessie Spidell (cornets); Ada Starkweather and Mand McLees (alto horns); Katie (Kathryn) Oetken and Lutie Everson (trombones); Madge Ellis (baritone); Ellen Worthington (tuba); Frances Griffiths (snare drum); Gladys McAuley (bass drum). Their teacher was Professor Roy Searles. Other players were Jean Starkweather, Edith Turner and Bessie Vigles.



*Oak Grove Girls' Band, 1912*



*Oak Grove Girls' Band, 1912*



*Oak Grove Girls' Band, 1912*



*Oak Grove Girls' Band, Portland Rose Parade, 1912*



*Oak Grove Girls' Band, Portland Rose Parade, 1912*