

A History of the Tuba-Euphonium Press

Ken Drobnak, 23 October 2021

There was a time in the not-so-distant past that finding original and transcribed music for tuba or euphonium was a challenge, if not nearly impossible. With the advent of home desktop publishing this is hard to imagine. In 1973, “Advocating for the growth of literature” was embedded in the mission and goals of TUBA. Specific goals of TUBA, as summarized by R. Winston Morris in 1971, included: “a major commission; sponsoring a tuba festival of international stature; solo festivals; contests; bringing pressure on manufacturers, publishers, conductors, and schools in the name of the tuba; exchange ideas via a tape library, literature research library, exchange of programs; and newsletters of what is happening.” Almost all of these items involve repertoire and literature.

In the 1973 Tuba issue of *The Instrumentalist*, Harvey Phillips described “MORE MUSIC!” as a major concern of tubists, writing, “While individual tubists have had some success in obtaining new works from their composer friends, a serious void continues to exist in many areas of solo and ensemble literature. There are still not enough works of sufficient quality to present more than three or four good recital programs. Composers are invited and encouraged to explore in-depth the possibilities of this instrument that offers a range of over one-half the piano keyboard, and is attracting a growing number of both college and professional players who have achieved levels of performing excellence that transcend the available literature.” In the same issue, Gunther Schuller wrote, “What the tuba needs now is the creative energies of today’s composers. We need to create a literature which exploits and capitalizes on the new tuba techniques and concepts. Having written prolifically for the tuba myself in solo, chamber and orchestral works, I can only exhort other composers to do likewise. Not only will tuba players be eternally grateful, but the musical rewards for the composer will be great indeed.”

The precursor organization, founded by Robert Rýker, also discussed and pursued repertoire at annual meetings during the Midwest Band & Orchestra Clinic. Midwest took place in mid-December and grew to be the largest gathering of music educators. The Getzen Corporation, through Charles Ford, sponsored TUBA meetings at Midwest in the late 1960s and early 1970s. These meetings were attended by tuba artists of the day: Don Harry, Floyd Cooley, Connie Weldon, Arnold Jacobs, Bill Bell, James Self, Sam Pilafian, and others. The primary topics included new method studies for tuba, new solo literature for tuba and new repertoire for tuba ensemble.

In 1971, R. Winston Morris announced the first distribution service exclusively for works featuring the tuba. This service was sponsored by Tennessee Technological University and the intended purpose was to make available literature to the tuba student, ensemble, teacher and performer. A nominal fee was charged primarily to reimburse production and shipping expenses.

New materials were accepted “for publication in manuscript form ... deemed of sufficient quality by the editor. Works should be of sufficient utilitarian nature to warrant their inclusion in the series.... Manuscripts accepted will be reproduced in manuscript form by the [Tennessee] Tech Printing Service. Each work released will

be carefully edited to insure the integrity of the series ... Purchase price for releases offered for sale shall be based on production expense plus a royalty/reimbursement based on 10% of the production cost for the composer plus a reimbursement for services rendered of 10% of the production cost for the editor plus the appropriate mailing and handling charges designed to reimburse the Department of Music for materials used and mailing charges." It should be noted that *Manuscripts for Tuba* defined "tuba" as "tenor through bass." Thus, works for euphonium could and were included in this distribution service. The December 1971 catalog stated, "The tuba (tenor through bass) has for some time been recognized as a legitimate solo instrument and is now on the threshold of demonstrating its versatility through the establishment of tuba ensembles in high schools and universities throughout the United States."

One positive reaction to the *Manuscripts for Tuba* publishing service came from Charles Ford in a letter to R. Winston Morris: "You are to be congratulated on your interest and action in doing something about having tuba music published or made available for those who have an interest in it. We must endeavor to create a demand for this music so that it will be worthwhile for a publisher or make it worthwhile for your efforts to make tuba music available." Charles Ford was Vice President of Sales for the Getzen Company. Mr. Ford planned to disseminate information on *Manuscripts for Tuba* in the Getzen Company Newsletter.

In 1975, TUBA (now ITEA) set up a partnership with The Brass Press for publication and distribution of new literature for tuba and euphonium called the *TUBA Publication Series*. This service was designed as a subscription service, at the suggestion of The Brass Press, based on the practice of the International Trombone Association (ITA). "The *TUBA Series* is a series of publications of interest to tubists and [euphoniumists] sponsored by TUBA and financed by The Brass Press of Nashville, Tennessee. The Series may include serious compositions or transcriptions for tuba or euphonium. Anyone may submit materials for consideration. Materials submitted will be screened by a committee consisting of Rodger Vaughan (composer/tubist, California State University – Fullerton), Roger Jones (composer/tubist, Northeast Louisiana University, Monroe), R. Winston Morris (Tennessee Tech University) and Stephen Glover, editor of The Brass Press." The first work released was *Beersheba Neo-Baroque Suite* by Alfred H. Bartles.

The Brass Press distributed music for all brass instruments and also sponsored composition contests. Many works they published in the 1970s are still available today.

A memo by Les Varner dated September 29, 1977, noted that there were 19 submissions to be reviewed by the committee. Some of these included *Designs and Patterns* by Sy Brandon, *Moods* by Barton Cummings, *Two Part Invention* by D. Nelson, *Suite for 3 Bass Tubas* by Thomason, *Suite in Low* by Friedman, and four works by David Uber – *Caricatura*, *Exhibitions*, *Explorations*, and *Duo Concertante*. Though the *TUBA Series* was able to release select new works for tuba and euphonium, overall interest in the subscription model was limited. The original vision for the *TUBA Series* was to publish no more than 3-4 works a year. The charge for the service was not included in the cost of TUBA membership. In 1975, R. Winston Morris wrote, "The Series (in order to maintain a cost of \$10 or less annually to subscribers) can only publish 3 to 4 (medium length) pieces a year – we

must be selective. Keep in mind the possibility of materials other than music, (i.e., papers, recordings, etc.).”

A 1981 R. Winston Morris memo displayed some frustration with the lack of growth in the *TUBA Series*. The review process likely contributed to the frustration, as works had to be passed from individual to individual for evaluation and this would take a great deal of time. The Brass Press suggested dropping the subscription model, which TUBA did, and Morris also recommended a “support effort through periodic announcements of the existence of the [review] committee and [its] purpose thereof and promotional announcements relative to the availability of new and previously released works.” Harvey Phillips came up with an idea for a new endeavor for the Press during a road trip to TubaChristmas 1982 with Jerry Young.

In 1983, TUBA began to explore a new concept, where there was “a central place composers could send in unpublished pieces, and individuals could order copies for the cost of copying the manuscript plus postage” (Aug 8, 2017 email from David Miles). The official announcement of an “Unpublished Manuscript Service” is on page 29 of the *TUBA Journal* volume 12, number 1. The use of “Resource Library” in the title is somewhat confusing, as a *TUBA Resource Library* had already been established at Ball State University. The purpose of the Kansas location was “to make unpublished manuscripts for the Tuba-Euphonium available to the members of TUBA.”

Scott Watson, Professor of Tuba at The University of Kansas, was appointed by the executive committee to develop the unpublished manuscript service for composer friends of TUBA (memo by Jerry Young, 1983). Composers could submit unpublished literature, retain ownership, while the library will be the coordinator. Photocopies of materials were available to members of TUBA at reasonable cost. All materials were non-circulating. Eligible compositions included those for the tuba or euphonium in a soloistic role, or in which the tuba or euphonium plays an integral role in the composition. Composers had to submit originals or professional copies, agree to temporary relinquishment of copyright in terms of photocopying and disbursement only, and could request return of materials at any time.

As can be seen by the 1989 *TUBA Manuscript Press* advertisement, about 50 or so works had been accumulated in the total library. If you are a composer or transcriber, you may have already noticed a flaw in the structure of the *TUBA Manuscript Press*. Namely, composers were asked to submit original copies and relinquish copyright privileges, thus they were not entitled to compensation for their creations. As a result, the growth of *TUBA Manuscript Press* was limited. Recent composition contest winners were often available through the *Manuscript Press*. Steven Kelly would serve a brief stint as editor from about 1990 to 1991.

In 1991, The TUBA Executive Committee decided to expand the scope of the *TUBA Manuscript Press*. The expansion made more music available to tuba and euphonium players by paying an annual royalty to composers and arrangers, which motivated them to write more music. The name was changed to *TUBA Press* and David Miles became the editor.

Steven Kelly penned an article in the Summer 1991 edition of the *TUBA Journal* titled, “The TUBA Press and You.” He wrote, “What is the Press? The

purpose of the TUBA Press is to provide tuba and euphonium players a source of music written or arranged especially for them. This music is not available through any other outlet... Compositions [range] in style from solo instruments to solo with piano accompaniment, tuba/euphonium ensembles, duets of all instrumentations, and solo instruments with band, string, and other chamber ensemble accompaniments ... Increasingly, more composers are becoming interested in the Press. This is in part due to the recent Euphonium Etude Contest sponsored by the organization. Almost 40 different composers submitted works to this competition... Next year, TUBA will sponsor a tuba etude competition that is sure to attract composers from across the country. *The Press is for you!* [emphasis added]. Steven Kelly was Chair of the Fine Arts Division at Brevard College in Brevard, NC, as well as Director of Bands and Instructor of Low Brass.

In 1991, David Lewis (Treasurer of TUBA) picked up materials from Steven Kelly and transferred them to David Miles. Everything was able to fit in the backseat of David's Toyota Corolla. In 2008, when materials were transferred to Baltimore, it took two large moving trucks to move about 5 tons of printed music and other equipment. During David's tenure, the catalog of music grew to over 2500 works and annual gross sales rose from \$2000 to over \$100,000.

TUBA Press added new compositions that are regarded as standard works in the repertoire today, "including music by Jan Bach, James Curnow, David Gillingham, John Stevens, Gail Robertson, Jim Self, David Uber, Rodger Vaughan, and many others. New composers and arrangers were introduced to the Tuba-Euphonium world, including Stephen Bulla, Barbara York and Elizabeth Raum. Many out-of-print pieces were reclaimed and made available again. Milestone works by Boccalari, Harold Brasch, Arthur Lehman and many others were preserved and made available."

"Composers did maintain all rights to money from performances and recordings. And they had the right to withdraw their pieces from publication with Tuba-Euphonium Press at any time and for any reason, so they could shop around for a bigger/better publisher if they liked, we just wanted to keep the music in print." One of the few composers to withdraw their pieces was James Curnow, who consolidated all of his works under his own big publishing company.

When the Tubists Universal Brotherhood Association became the International Tuba Euphonium Association, *TUBA Press* became *Tuba-Euphonium Press*.

Monica Althouse became the next editor of Tuba-Euphonium Press. The library had grown so large that management by the Association became difficult. In 2012, Bryan Doughty took over management of Tuba-Euphonium Press and purchased the catalog in 2018. Materials published by Tuba-Euphonium Press are still available today on the Cimarron Music Website (search for "Tuba-Euphonium Press" at www.cimarronmusic.com).

In summary, the progression of efforts by TUBA and ITEA to publish music for tuba and euphonium can be broken down into six steps: 1) R. Winston Morris advertises a *Manuscripts for Tuba* service, 2) a subscription service with distribution by The Brass Press, 3) the *TUBA Manuscript Press* with distribution through The University of Kansas Library, 4) the formation of *TUBA Press* with David Miles as editor, 5)

name change to *Tuba-Euphonium Press* and finally 6) stewardship of *Tuba-Euphonium Press* by Bryan Doughty through Cimarron Music.

“In the last 50 years TUBA/ITEA has done an amazing job building on the visions of our early pioneers and founders. If you go back and look at all the various goals laid out in the early years, I think the progress in making a wide variety of quality literature for our instruments readily available has been perhaps our most profoundly successful achievement.” (David Miles email: March 21, 2021)