

Alaska Cruise Band
Norwegian Sun
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MUSIC TO CRUISE TO - The St. Albert Community Band recently took their music on board the cruise ship Norwegian Sun. Photo supplied

Band can't travel without their biggest fan

Sadie Adams, 90, has missed only two concerts in 37 years

BY SUSAN JONES
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In 37 years, Sadie Adams has only missed two St. Albert Community Band concerts, so she sure didn't want to miss the opportunity to follow the band all the way to Alaska.

The 90-year-old and her younger sister Irene Hosford from Sherwood Park sailed with the band members and their spouses on the Norwegian Sun on a seven-day cruise.

When the band members gathered on deck for impromptu concerts along with members of the Edmonton School Boys Alumni Band, Adam and Hosford were front row and centre.

"All told they played five times," said Adam.

Adam had cruised to Alaska twice before but when the announcement about the cruise was made at a band concert earli-

er this year, she and her sister quickly signed up.
"They asked if anyone cared to join them and, well, we cared," said the band's most loyal fan.

"The thing I'll remember is the music and kindness of everybody."

SADIE ADAM
Band fan

Adam and Hosford had plenty of St. Albert company in the audience and usually sat with the band members' spouses.

"Between the two bands, there were 75 people in our party and about 30 of them were community band members," said band founding member Gerry Buccini, adding that former band members came

from as far away as Portland, to join in the music-making.

Buccini is also a member of the Edmonton School Boys Alumni Band. Some months ago he talked to members of both bands to see if there was interest in travelling and playing together on a cruise.

The Norwegian Sun Cruise people arranged for the bands to rehearse together and to play for an audience on deck for a few hours almost every afternoon. The bands had not played together before but they had sheet music and played familiar pieces, such as Broadway tunes.

Every jam session began with the playing of *O Canada* and the *Star Spangled Banner*. Not surprisingly, people turned out to listen as community band conductor Laurelei Natrass and school boys band conductor Armand Baril took turns with the batons.

"It turned out to be an emotional experience, because though we hadn't played together before there was enough talent there to allow us to play reasonably well. I would say that over the duration of the cruise as many as 200 people heard our music," Buccini said.

Band percussionist Graeme Peppink was invited to play with the professional ship band and he won the amateur talent contest Adam and her sister toured the sights of Skagway, Alaska with the band, but Adam's best memories are of listening to those five deck-side rehearsals.

"The thing I'll remember is the music and the kindness of everybody," said Adam.