

In Endicott there lives a man, Whose fame is far and wide;  
For making shoes he leads them all, For kindness, too, beside;  
The 13,000 under him Look up to him as guide,  
And swear by the man Who treats them fair.

Or these lines:

You say there's no dissension and that trouble is unknown  
Then you folks must be living in a small world of your own;  
What's that? No strikes or agitators screeching out their lies?  
You say the name is Endicott; I'd call it Paradise.  
You shake my hand and mean it in this little spotless town,  
And every smiling face is just a stranger to a frown;  
George F. can't get you into Heaven, but I tell you what,  
He did as much when he brought Heaven here to Endicott.

Or a band march dedicated to George F. Johnson under the title *Industrial King*. Or as late as the 1950s, a popular song was adapted to plug a new line of superior, scientifically designed shoes promoted and sold under the trademark "Guide Step."

Most employees, however, performed the music and listened to it less to praise George F. Johnson or promote their company's product than to enjoy inexpensive, easily accessible popular entertainment. Thus most of the songs that the band played and the chorus sang were sentimental oldies, some dating to the nineteenth century and Stephen F. Foster, or then popular Tin Pan Alley tunes made famous by the likes of George M. Cohan, Al Jolson, and Eddie Cantor. In the winter holiday season, the Chorus sang traditional carols and such popular seasonal tunes as *White Christmas*. During the 1920s, EJ



## SHOE TUNES AND FRIENDS



The **Shoe Tunes** and friends are pleased to offer songs from vintage EJ Workers Chorus repertoires and today, to simulate a Sunday concert in En Joie Park (Tracks 6 -14), and to showcase the nationalities drawn to the Triple Cities by the Endicott Johnson Corporation (Tracks 20 - 25).

The **Shoe Tunes Chorus and Band** talent comes from across the Triple Cities. The musicians range in age from 17 - 88; one-third have relatives who worked for EJ; and four sang with the EJ Workers Chorus "in the day." Ken Turner, retired District Director of Music for Johnson City Schools, orchestrated the Shoe Tunes effort, arranging archival music, conducting the Shoe Tunes, and supervising post-production of the Shoe Tune tracks. Jen Chudacik, Director of Vocal Music, Johnson City High School, brought the energy and depth of many youthful voices to the Shoe Tunes' harmonies, as well as a recording venue. The **Johnson City School District's** music program has been recognized multiple times by the National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences as a *Grammy Signature School*. [www.jcschools.com/music/](http://www.jcschools.com/music/)

Everyday at the **Johnson City Senior Center**, we celebrate the lives of our members; through educational programs we celebrate the mind, through health and exercise classes we celebrate the body, through recreational activities we celebrate the spirit and through volunteer opportunities we celebrate the soul. We offer programming throughout the year and continue our commitment as a trendsetter in programs and services for adults. [www.johnsoncityseniorcenter.org](http://www.johnsoncityseniorcenter.org)

The **Center for Technology & Innovation's** mission is to *document and present in context the inventions & industrial innovations of NY's Southern Tier*. Our *History Works!* project collects the stories and sounds of local industry. The 2009 *History Works! EJ Shoe Tunes* CD presents the music of the largest shoe company in the world before WW I. Proceeds will support development of the *TechWorks!* museum of upstate NY industry & invention in downtown Binghamton. [www.ctandi.org](http://www.ctandi.org)

**Al Hamme's Music Unlimited** was founded in 1974, bringing together musicians with local roots to play modern big band jazz. The Little Big Band is one of various groups that play venues across the Northeast.

The **Binghamton Theatre Organ Society** is dedicated to the preservation and promotion of theater organs and automatic musical instruments, esp. the Robert Morton organ at the Broome County Forum Theater. Member Richard Van Auken, retired professor of music, Moravian College, recreated the *Industrial King March* from archival sources. [www.theatreorgans.com/btoc/](http://www.theatreorgans.com/btoc/)

The **Carousel Harmony Chorus**, based in Vestal, NY, is a chapter of Sweet Adelines International, a worldwide organization of women singers committed to advancing the musical art form of barbershop harmony through education and performances. [www.carouselharmony.org](http://www.carouselharmony.org)

The **Endicott Performing Arts Center**, under the direction of Lou Ligouri, provides an affordable and high quality venue to local, regional, and touring artists, enabling them to present, develop, and improve their artistic efforts. [www.endicottarts.com](http://www.endicottarts.com)

The **European Brass** repertoire included music from the EJ Workers Band, as well as from traditional celebrations across Europe. Recording musicians: Accordion - Rick Sedlak; Clarinet - Bryan Dalton, Tony Diorio; Drums - Nick Timko; Euphonium - Dr. Bob Carman, Lou (Luciano) Rizzi; Trombone - Diane Wickham, Chuck Louden; Trumpet - Del Cobleigh, Rob Rizzi; Tuba - Joe Zapach. For European Brass CDs, write 1893 Daniel Dr, Johnson City, NY 13790.

employees performed in minstrel shows that featured the ethnic and racial stereotypes common during that decade. Many performers appeared in full blackface; others came on stage in exotic Oriental costumes; two employees appeared as the comedians "Pat and Jake," stereotypical Irish and Jewish immigrant characters. As the decades passed, the band and chorus continued to integrate the latest popular music into their repertoire. Over time, however, as first radio and later television offered a more diverse and higher quality of music, band and chorus concerts lost their appeal to local audiences.

The decline of interest in amateur musical entertainment paralleled the decline of Endicott Johnson as a successful corporation. From its postwar peak in the late 1940s, the company steadily lost market share to domestic and especially foreign competitors. The company responded by cutting back production and discharging employees, an ongoing process that led to EJ falling behind IBM as the area's largest single employer. As the 1950s passed into the 1970s, the Johnson family withdrew from active company management to be replaced by non-family professional managers, all to no avail.

Today all that remains of the EJ heritage are memories, the old headquarters building in Endicott converted into administrative offices for the UE school district, many of the parks and playgrounds donated by the Johnson family to the local communities, the arches erected on Main Street in Johnson City and Endicott welcoming visitors to the "Home of the Square Deal," the En Joie golf course, and the company-built homes scattered about Johnson City and Endicott.

This is a CD that everyone who has fond memories of Endicott Johnson and its place in the Triple Cities will want to have. It recalls a time long past when Binghamton was the "Parlor City" and the larger metropolitan region was the "Valley of Opportunity."

The **Goodwill Theatre Arts Center** and Professional Training will be a state-of-the-art multistage facility which will enrich the lives of Southern Tier residents and visitors through education, events and performances. The historic Goodwill Theatre and surrounding EJ buildings will be rehabilitated. The Schorr Family Firehouse Stage, in the 1895 Municipal Building, presents over 65 shows each year. In all endeavors, Goodwill Theatre will create a challenging professional environment for a multi-generational audience that captivates, inspires, and illuminates. [www.goodwilltheatre.net](http://www.goodwilltheatre.net)

The **Kopernik Society of Broome County** was formed in 1973 to commemorate the 500th anniversary of the birth of the Polish astronomer, Mikolaj Kopernik. The Kopernik Observatory in Vestal, NY, is a living memorial, where visitors explore the wonders of the universe. [www.kopernik.org](http://www.kopernik.org)

The **SouthernTiersmen** are the Binghamton chapter of the Barbershop Harmony Society. The 54 members of the chapter, founded in 1943, perform four-part *a capella* in the barbershop style at regional and international competitions. [www.southernTiersmen.org](http://www.southernTiersmen.org)

2010 marks the **Summer Savoyards'** 50th season of producing late 19th c. operettas, where students learning about musical theater rub elbows with seasoned performers such as Steven Nanni, heard on this recording. [www.SummerSavoyards.org](http://www.SummerSavoyards.org)

### The EJ Shoe Tunes project acknowledges with thanks the generosity of Adopt-A-Tune contributors:

Kyle & Patricia Brown, Barbara & Chuck Goodwin, Stan Hayes, Sr., Johnson City Rotary Club, Robert C. Johnston family, Everett & Katherine Kimball, Paul & Teri Komar, Naima Kradian (2), Pat & Mark Kriebel, Donna A. Lupardo, Michael & Nancy Sherwood, and the Vanuga family.

### Archival sources of EJ history, music, and vintage images:

Broome County Historical Society, 185 Court St, Binghamton, NY, holds a run of *EJ Workers Review* (1919-25), papers of Frank Tei, conductor of EJ Workers Band from 1930s-1963, and newspaper clippings.

Carousel Music - vintage organ music. <http://music.carouselstores.com>

Endicott Visitor Center, 300 Lincoln Ave, Endicott, NY, maintains a museum and collection of EJ and IBM artifacts and archival material.

George F. Johnson Library, 1001 Park Ave Endicott, NY, Director Ed Dunscombe, whose collection includes the *EJ Workers Review* and a 1950s-60s vintage EJ Chorus members' songbook.

George F. Johnson Papers, Special Collections Research Center, Syracuse University Library. Index to this collection available at Broome County Historical Society and Four County Library System libraries.

James Mead, collection of vintage cars (with horns), Owego, NY.

U. of New Hampshire Library Digital Collection of early topo maps.

Gerald Zahavi, Documentary Studies Program, University at Albany-SUNY. [www.albany.edu/history/ej/](http://www.albany.edu/history/ej/)

Private document collections of Wayne Beddoe, Nancy Berry, Robert E. Hunt, Sr., Megan Lindsay, Donna A. Lupardo, and Sal Poliziano.

### Musicians:

All performances were donated to the EJ Shoe Tunes project.

### Sponsors:

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