

What were “Cornet Bands”?

“In that time before electric powered sound systems and studio pre-recordings, if people wanted music, they made it themselves. Bands comprised of area citizens provided the accompanying tunes to the various outdoor activities and celebrations of that era. One of the more popular of these bands in the years following the Civil War were the “cornet bands,” with the instrumentation of these groups consisting of varying types of brass instruments collectively referred to then as cornets. What served them well in those pre-electrical days was that the cornet band could be heard over a great distance without amplification ... Composed of farmers, merchants, ministers and school teachers, these early bands were mostly all-male entourages as women — with few exceptions in the late 1800s — were still relegated primarily to the duties of hearth and home. Many of the participants of these early bands also shared the distinction of having served in the late Civil War. ”

~From “When cornet bands made the music” By Jerry Eident, *Effingham Daily News*

