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Figure 1

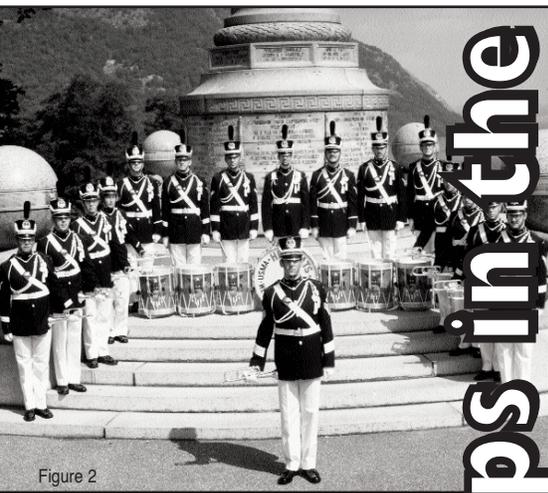


Figure 2

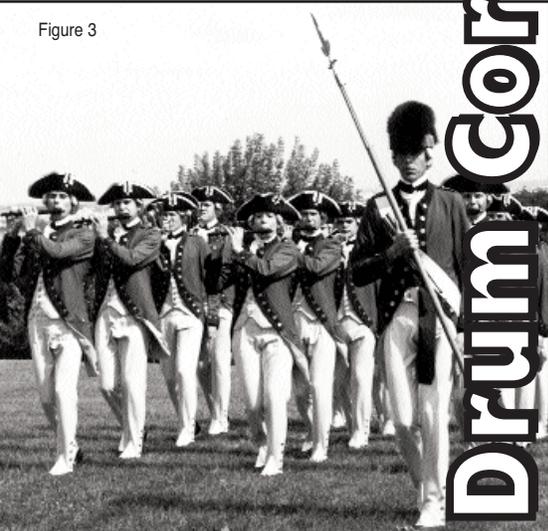


Figure 3

# armed forces Drum Corps in the

## Chapter 4

### by Ronald Da Silva

In the post-World War I era, the use of bugles and field trumpets by the U.S. military was still considered an important part of a unit's communications. Thus, most units retained their company buglers, who also acted as semaphore signalmen. However, most units no longer had company or regimental drummers.

When horse cavalry were done away with in 1943, the long and honored tradition of the mounted trumpeter was gone forever. Cavalrymen mounted on jeeps or armored vehicles now used radios, not field trumpets in 'G'. In the infantry and artillery, the radio or walkie-talkie would replace the company or battery bugler.

The Navy and Marines would continue the traditional use of buglers a bit longer, both on board ship and on land bases.

After World War II, bugles would only be heard on large bases, at training centers or at the service academies. Often the bugle being heard was a recording played over a public-address system. At bases where tradition or public ceremonies necessitated a live bugler, he was most often a member of the base's band playing a three-valve trumpet.

Even with this decline in the use of duty buglers, drum and bugle corps of varying size, status and quality would still be found in the armed forces of the United States.

#### Army drum corps

One would think the U.S. Army would have the most drum and bugle corps in the military, considering the fact that these musical units were born in the ranks of the infantry and artillery. However, after World War II, drum corps of any sort were virtually non-existent in the Army.

The Army did have, and still has, the oldest military field music in the armed forces, the "Hell Cats" drum and bugle section of the U.S. Military Academy Band at West Point, NY.

The West Point Band is the oldest military band in the Army, being authorized in late 1813. Its first members were professional musicians taken from the band of the 3rd U.S. Artillery.

Field music at the academy was supplied by fifers, drummers and buglers of the artillery and engineer companies based at West Point. These field musicians had been serving there since the Revolutionary War.

Early on, both the academy band and the field music wore the same red-coated uniform authorized for drummers and fifers of the Army.

The professional musicians of the band resented being confused with mere field musicians and pleaded for a different

uniform. The soldiers of the Field Music resented the fact that these non-combatant bandmen were wearing their uniform.

After several incidents and more pleas from the band, the Army finally authorized a very distinctive uniform for the academy band in 1820. This uniform (Fig. 1) was all white with scarlet braiding and facings, in the same style worn by the corps of cadets, and bears a remarkable resemblance to uniforms worn by drum corps a hundred years later.

While the band now had its own look, they still would be massed with whatever field music was based at the academy for parades and reviews. It wasn't until 1841 that the band was authorized its own field music, made up of six fifes and six drummers to be attached to the band as "boys learning music."

In later years, this Field Music would include buglers. The nickname "Hellcats" was given them by the Corps of Cadets, since it was the duty of the Field Music to awaken the Cadets each morning by playing *Reveille* at 6:00 AM. In addition to sounding all the duty calls, the Hellcats beat a cadence of Cadet drills and provided martial music at all formations and parades.

By the 1950s, the Hellcats mustered more than 45 members, divided equally between fifes, drums and single-piston, B-flat bugles. While they wore the same dress blue uniform as the academy band, they didn't wear music pouches, but cadet sword belts, and until recently wore the bugle collar insignia of field musician instead of a band man's lyre insignia. Over the years, its members were recruited from top fife and drum and drum and bugle corps, many becoming well-known drum corps instructors as well as judges.

During the 1970s, the members of the Hellcats tried to get the Army to enlarge the field music into a modern drum and bugle corps, using the Air Force Academy Band and Drum and Bugle Corps as a model. This proposal never got off the ground. Another attempt to organize a drum and bugle corps within the Corps of Cadets also was shelved.

In 1975, the Army disbanded or cut back the size of many of its bands. The Hellcats were cut back to 16 (Fig. 2) members and led by a bugle sergeant. While small in numbers, they still perform at many events on and off



Late 19th and early 20th century buglers (left to right): U.S. Navy on a battleship during World War I; U.S. Infantry field musician, 1898 during Spanish-American War; U.S. Infantry field musician, World War I -- note B-flat bugle (photos from the collection of Ron Da Silva).

the academy campus and are truly the last duty field musicians of the U.S. Army.

Another traditional drum corps of the regular Army is "The Old Guard" Fife and Drum Corps (Fig. 3) based at Fort Meyer, VA. While they give the impression of being the oldest drum corps in our armed forces, they are actually one of the youngest musical units in the military, being organized in February 1960.

The title "The Old Guard" refers to their regiment, the 3rd U.S. Infantry, that is the oldest active infantry unit in the Army. The fife and drum corps was originally designed to be an authentic "ancient"-style corps.

The inspiration for the corps came from George Carrol, then a drummer in the U.S. Army Band, who had been involved with



The U.S. Military Academy Hellcats Drum & Bugle Corps in 1997 at the United Nations, New York (photo by Ron Da Silva).

military corps in both the United States and Canada. However, a certain ranking officer with a love of bugles and sufficient authority insisted on the inclusion of a bugle section.

Members for this unique drum corps were initially volunteers recruited from the ranks of the 3rd Infantry. Their instructors were from the Army Band.

The corps performed using the instruments, uniforms and drill of General George Washington's Continental Army. The instruments used were as close as possible to the ones used in the late 18th century (Fig. 4): wooden rope tension drums, six hole fifes and copper British infantry bugles.

In 1973, the bugle section was given a



Figure 5 -- 18th U.S. Infantry, 1949-1953 (illustration by Milton Caniff, courtesy of the Company of Military Collectors and Historians from the collection of Ron DaSilva).



Figure 4 -- U.S. 3rd Infantry, "The Old Guard" Fife and Drum Corps, 1980 (photo by Ron Da Silva).

complete set of Olds G-F piston bugles and told The Old Guard would also have a modern drum and bugle corps. This additional musical unit had only one full rehearsal and the modern bugles were sent on to the Naval Academy and Marine Drum and Bugle Corps.

Over the years, the status of The Old Guard musicians has risen from volunteer infantrymen to special musicians. Since the late 1960s, most of the corps' members have either been former members of top drum corps or career musicians who must pass musical, fitness and appearance standards before enlistment.

With this musical professionalism, the corps is no longer a simple depiction of an 18th century field music, but rather, a military drum corps using traditional-looking, yet modern, instruments, including two-piece, 11-hole fifes and custom-made, single-piston, B-flat bugles.

Together with a tight rudimental drum line using deep-shelled, rope tension drums, the music of The Old Guard covers a wide range of patriotic, classical and popular pieces, done in a style all their own. They are unique not only among other drum corps, but among military and marching units worldwide.

These two traditional drum corps, The Old Guard and West Point Hellcats, are the only such units presently employed by the United States Army. However, a number of volunteer drum corps have existed in the Army during and after World War II, usually at training centers or divisional headquarters.

Records of their existence have often been lost because volunteer honor guards, drill teams and drum corps are not found on the Army's Tables of Organization.

One such volunteer unit was the Regimental Color Guard and Drums and Bugles of the 18th U.S. Infantry, 1st Infantry Division, the subject of a print (Fig. 5) by the noted illustrator Milton Caniff for the Company of Military Historians' series, "Military Uniforms in America."

The print depicts the color guard and drum corps when they were based at European Theater Headquarters in Frankfurt, Germany, circa. 1949-1953. The color guard was regulation, consisting of two colors, the

U.S. National Flag and Regimental Color, guarded by two infantrymen carrying M1 rifles.

The drum and bugle corps consisted of a drum major, four snare

drums, two Scotch tenor drums, a bass drum, cymbals and eight bugles. The drums were British infantry pattern with emblazed regimental crest and battle honors. The horns were straight G bugles with attached regimental tabards.

The uniforms were regulation "Ike" jackets, with trousers bloused into the boots. This drab outfit was brightened up with chrome Army helmets and white parade



Figure 6 -- U.S. Army Signal Corps School Drum & Bugle Corps from Fort Monmouth, NJ, Armed Forces Day Parade, May 1960 (photo by Ron Da Silva).

accessories such as scarves, shoulder cords, belts, gloves and boot laces.

Like most units of this type, a smart appearance and military bearing were most important; musicianship was often secondary.

During the mid-1950s, Bob BellaRosa penned a column in *Eastern Review* called "Your GI Reports" while he was serving in the 3rd Infantry, The Old Guard. The column did reports on armed forces drum corps and news of former civilian corps members serving in the military.

One report was about the 52nd Artillery Group Drum and Bugle Corps from Fort Sill, OK. The unit was made up of former corps members from all parts of the country. It had 21 members and was attached to the 7th Army Band. Its uniform was regulation, with white helmet liners. The instrumentation was also regulation -- rod tension field drums and valveless G bugles.

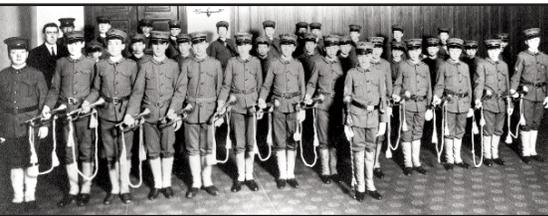
Other Army drum corps mentioned in BellaRosa's column were the 2nd Army Drum and Bugle Corps from Fort Meade, MD, the Fort Koble Drum and Bugle Corps based in the Panama Canal Zone and an Army Ordinance Depot drum corps based in Fontenet, France.

Another feature of this column told of many junior corps members, who while serving in the military overseas, were helping junior corps in England, Germany, Japan and

Hawaii.

During the 1960s, the Army Signal Corps School at Fort Monmouth, NJ, had a small drum and bugle corps (Fig. 6). It consisted of four snares, four tenors, two basses and cymbals in the drum line, and a dozen horns using single-piston bugles, along with some three-valve trumpets. Their appearance was made distinctive by the use of bright orange (the Signal Corps' branch color) ascots, shoulder cords, drum hoops and bugle tabards bearing the Signal Corps insignia.

There were probably many more such Army drum and bugle corps made up of enlisted volunteers from line units, headquarters detachments, training centers and branch schools. However, records of their existence are hard to come by. Occasionally old photos, bugle



(Above) A cadet drum and bugle corps wearing U.S. Army 1902-1907 regulation uniforms; (below) a New York National Guard drum and bugle corps, circa 1910-1915, taken at Camp Bluefields which is now Rockland County Park (photos from the collection of Ron Da Silva).



tabards or shoulder patch titles will identify such units, but most are forgotten and known only to the men who served with them. The same could be said of the Army Reserve and Army National Guard.

One unusual unit of the Army National Guard was the 26th (Yankee) Infantry Division Drum and Bugle Corps. This Massachusetts National Guard drum corps was formed in early 1975 and based at Boston's Commonwealth Armory. It had the same military status as a normal division band. Its personnel were all active National Guardsmen with prior military service who were either professional musicians or former members of various greater Boston drum corps and marching bands.

Besides performing at military reviews and parades, the corps also



Figure 7 -- U.S. Marine Corps Band and Field Music, 1880s. Note last three rows are bugles and drums. John Philip Sousa is in black, lower center (photo from the collection of Ron Da Silva).

gave exhibitions and concerts, both in and out of the state. The corps usually numbered between 24 and 30 playing members and used G-F valve-rotor bugles.

Music was a good mix of marches, movie themes and popular songs. The Yankee Division drum corps was probably the only authorized modern drum and bugle corps in the Army made up of full-time musicians.

### Marine drum and bugle corps

Like the Army, the Marines have always had drum corps. For more than a hundred years it was fife and drum corps. Then, in 1881, drums and bugles became regulation.

That was in the same era that John Philip Sousa was leader of the Marine Band

(Fig. 7). He would write quicksteps for drums and bugles as well as pieces for combined band, drums and bugles.

The one return to fifes was in 1927, when the American Company of the multi-national Shanghai Volunteer Corps presented the 4th Marine Regiment (Fig. 8), sent to Shanghai to protect its international settlement because of political upheavals in China, with



Figure 8 -- 4th Marine Regiment Drum and Bugle Corps, China, circa 1920s (photo from the collection of Ron Da Silva).

a complete set of fifes and drums known as the "Fessenden Fifes" in honor of Sterling Fessenden, chairman of the Shanghai Municipal Council.

Instruction on the fifes was graciously offered by the commanding officer and drum major of the 1st Battalion, The Green Howards Regiment of the British Army, billeted near the Marines.

In short time, 12 Marine buglers were parading with both fifes and bugles, becoming the only such unit in

the Marine Corps. The officers of the Green Howards also presented the 4th Marines a blackwood colors stand with a silver shield commemorating their service together in China.

The Marines reciprocated by presenting the British a beautiful drum major's staff entwined with a silver Chinese dragon. That staff, or mace as the British call it, is still carried by The Green Howards, Alexandria, Princess of Wales' Own Yorkshire Regiment, on special ceremonial parades to this day. It is carried by the youngest drummer in their Corps of Drums and, when possible, a

detachment of U.S. Marines take part in the ceremonies.

In 1934, the need for more competent buglers and drummers was

recognized by Headquarters Marine Corps and an advanced school for Field Music was established at Marine Barracks in Washington, D.C. Also, a drum and bugle corps was organized to act as a model corps (Fig. 9) and augment the Marine Band.

Both these innovations were done under the direction of Maj. Gen. John H. Russell Jr., then commandant. Russell was said to be an admirer of the American Legion's top senior drum and bugle corps.

The 1935 "Manual for Marine Field Musics" that he authorized states that "the American Legion has organized drum and bugle corps in many of its posts and thus brought into prominence this stimulating type of martial music." This important manual has many similarities to the Ludwig and Slingerland drum corps manuals of the period.

In May 1938, the Marine Corps adopted single-piston, B-flat to F bugles in soprano, tenor and baritone models. These piston bugles placed an entirely new range of music at the disposal of Marine drum corps. Also, these B-flat bugles were used when playing in conjunction with the military band.

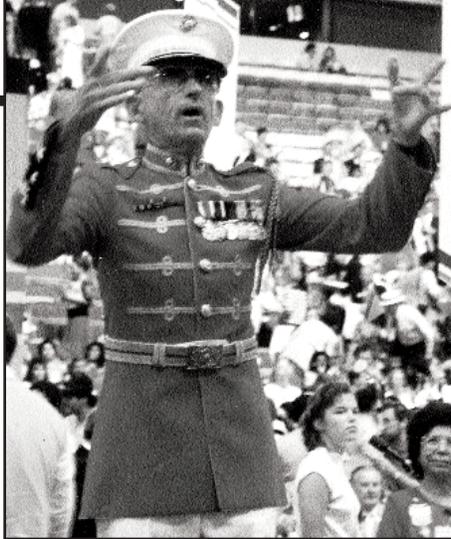
The School for Field Music was moved to Parris Island, SC, and this reinforced the fact that all Marine drummers and buglers are first and foremost combat-ready Marines and secondarily, ceremonial musicians. Even with this in mind, during World War II, the Marine Corps had more bugle calls, toot for toot, than any other branch of the service.

During the 1950s, there were 30 drum and bugle corps in the regular Marine Corps, ranging from the original corps in Washington to those at Atsugi, Japan, and Port Lyautey, French Morocco. The normal Table of Organization strength for these drum corps was 25 musicians plus a drum major.

The allowance for a 25-man drum and bugle corps included four snares, two tenors, two scotch bass, two cymbals, eight sopranos, three baritones, two bass and two French horns.

While the Washington, D.C., corps had an authorized strength of 30 members at this time, it actually carried 43. This allowed the busy capital-based corps to field a full unit, even when men were on other duties or leave.

These Marine drum corps wore standard dress greens and full dress blues. Drum



Col. Truman W. Crawford conducting the U.S. Marine Drum & Bugle Corps, Washington, D.C., in 1995 (photo from the collection of Drum Corps World).

1980s, the Marines lost more drum corps as well as bands, leaving only 11 musical units in the Marine Corps besides the Marine Band in Washington. Only three of these were drum and bugle corps. They were the Marine Drum and Bugle Corps at Washington's Marine Barracks; the Marine Corps Logistics Base, Albany, GA; and The Marine Corps

Air-Ground Combat Center, Twentynine Palms, CA.

All these units were up-to-date, modern drum corps, using G-F bugles in soprano, alto, mellophone, baritone and contra bass horns. Their drum sections included multiple tenor drums, tuned bass drums and

marching xylophone, always performing their music standing and from memory, never sitting or reading music like a band.

The Marine Corps Logistics Base corps was activated in 1972. In 1985, it numbered 39 members. It performed in many military and civilian parades and exhibitions from the Gulf Coast to New England.

The Marine Corps Air-Ground Combat Center corps had a unit strength of 45 members including staff. In their last years, they did almost 300 performances a year, mostly in the Western States. In December 1989, both these corps were disbanded.

Presently there is only one drum and bugle corps in the United States Marine Corps, the original model corps organized in 1934 at Marine Corps Barracks, Washington, D.C. The red-coated United States Marine Drum and Bugle Corps is also known as "The Commandant's Own." This 85-member unit represents the Marine Corps and the nation wherever they perform. In an average year, the corps takes part in more than 400 performances and travels up to 50,000 miles.

The title "The Commandant's Own" came about by accident one evening while

President Eisenhower and the Commandant of the Marine Corps, Gen. Randolph McCall Pate, were having dinner together.

The president jokingly commented that The Marine Band, "The President's Own," belonged to him. In quick-witted response, the commandant explained that he didn't mind, because the Marine Drum and Bugle Corps belonged to him. Since then they have been called "The Commandant's Own."

In 1957, under the direction of Col. Leonard F. Chapman Jr., the Friday Evening Parade at Marine Corps Barracks became more formalized, adhering to strict regulations and tradition.

Chapman wanted a ceremony to symbolize the pride, professionalism and esprit de corps of the United States Marines. Part of this tradition was to dress the drum and bugle corps in scarlet coats with black piping, reviving the 18th and 19th century practice of dressing military drummers and buglers in reverse-colored coats of their unit.

This move also made the corps blend in better when marching together with the red-coated Marine Band and set them apart from the navy blue-coated Marine Drill Team and Barracks companies, as well as other Marine drum corps that only wore dress blues.

The drum and bugle corps was under the direction of Col. Truman W. Crawford starting in 1967 when he was selected by the commandant for special assignment to the corps. From 1953 to 1963, Crawford was a member of the United States Air Force Drum and Bugle Corps, also based in D.C. at Bolling Field. He rose to the rank of master sergeant, non-commissioned officer in charge at the age of 23.

Crawford's fame as a performer, arranger and instructor was well-established after he left the Air Force. With his own musical business, over 150 drum corps used his talents. In 1965, every major corps title holder in the United States and Canada was either instructed by him or performed his musical arrangements.

His work with the Marines is best exhibited when the Marine Drum and Bugle Corps performed their "concert in motion" field show, which featured unique arrangements of popular, show, classical and jazz music while marching different drill movements and formations to highlight the musical production.

Crawford retired from the U.S. Marine Corps in 1999 after 32 years.

The concert in motion show was still an integral part of the Marine Corps Battle Color Ceremony, which also features the famed Marine Corps Silent Drill Team and a formal presentation of colors by the Marine Corps Color Guard carrying the national colors and the Marine Corps Battle Color, guarded by two rifles. The battle color is so called because it bears all the battle streamers awarded the Marines in campaigns from the American Revolution to Desert Storm.

The Battle Color Ceremony has been performed throughout the country, appearing before thousands at such places as the Texas



U.S. Marine Drum & Bugle Corps, Washington, D.C., performing July 20, 1985 at Giants Stadium in the Meadowlands, NJ, at a drum and bugle corps competition (photo by Ron Da Silva).

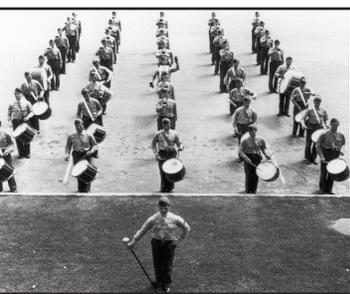
majors wore a white leather baldric with chrome insignia and miniature drum sticks. White leather gauntlets were regulation for drummers and drum major. The Washington unit also wore scarlet and gold breast cords. Bugles were chromed and at times carried scarlet tabards with a gold USMC insignia. Drums had scarlet shells with full color USMC crest and battle honors.

One of the better known Marine drum corps of the 1950s and early 1960s was the Fleet Marine Force Pacific Drum and Bugle Team based in Kaneohe, HI. In the spring of 1962, they toured the Far East, covering 18,000 miles, giving exhibitions in Japan, Taiwan, Korea and Australia. They were called a drum and bugle "team" because they marched with the precision of a drill team.

The 1970s reduced the number of drum and bugle corps in the Marine Corps to less than a dozen and most carried only 20 to 24 musicians. Among these were the Fleet Marine Force Atlantic, Norfolk, VA; 1st Marine Division, Camp Pendleton, CA; 2nd Marine Division, Camp Lejeune, NC; and the 4th Marine Aircraft Wing, New Orleans, LA.

With the military budget cutbacks of the

State Fair, Walt Disney World and Disneyland, the Marine Recruit Depot San Diego and the Hawthorne Caballeros' "Grand Prix" at Giants Stadium. It is also a regular feature of the



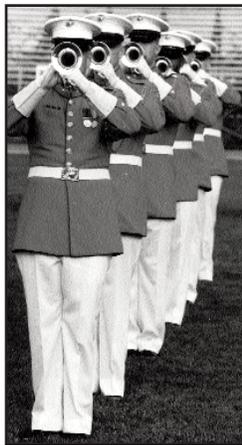
Sunset Parade given every Tuesday evening at the Marine Corps Iwo Jima Memorial in Arlington, VA.

The Marine Drum and Bugle Corps, together with the Marine Corps Band, is the musical feature of Marine Barracks' Friday Evening Parade. Both the Tuesday Sunset Parade and the Friday Evening Parade are free and open to the public. However, because of space limitations at Marine Corps Barracks, reservations are required. Both ceremonies run from mid-May until the end of August.



(Top to bottom) The U.S. Marine Drum & Bugle Corps, Washington, D.C., circa 1940s; Clarksville, TN, military base Marine Drum & Bugle Corps, 1958; 9th Marines in Vietnam, 1968; (photos from the collection of Ron Da Silva); 344th Air Cadet Training Corps at Oklahoma State University, 1944 (photo from the collection of William McGrath, Jr.).

Reservations may be obtained by writing: Adjutant, Marine Barracks, 8th and I Streets, Washington, D.C. 20390. Recently, videotapes of both ceremonies have become available from a number of sources.



U.S. Marine Drum & Bugle Corps, 2000 (photo by David Rice from the collection of Drum Corps World).



U.S. Marine Drum & Bugle Corps, Washington, D.C., in 2002 at the 30th Anniversary DCI Championships in Madison, WI (photo by Art Luebke).



The U.S. Marine Corps Silent Drill Team often performs with the drum and bugle corps, here in 2000 (photo by David Rice from the collection of Drum Corps World).

### Navy drum and bugle corps

Since the days of square-rigged sailing ships, the Navy has used trumpets or bugles to signal commands from the bridge to the crew, on or above decks. Other commands could also be given by a bosun's whistle or a marine drummer.

In the television documentary "Victory at Sea," one can see buglers sounding a call to arms at Pearl Harbor or playing calls into a ship's public address system. Navy buglers were still used on capital ships into the late 1950s and were referred to as "bugs." Ships' buglers were rarely, if ever, formed into drum and bugle corps.

Navy drum and bugle corps were an active part of every Recruit Training Center, whether at Brainbridge, MD; San Diego, CA; or the Great Lakes Naval Training Center just north of Chicago. All these drum corps were made up of recruits in training, or "boots," so called because of the white leggings worn by recruits. They were directed by cadre instructors.

From World War I to World War II, straight G bugles and wooden drums would have been the norm. After World War II, piston bugles in soprano, tenor and baritone were used. By the late 1970s, the San Diego RTC corps had piston-rotor horns, including contra basses. Their drum line included multiple tenors, or tom-toms, but they still carried a section of lyre glockenspiels.

The largest and finest drum corps in the U.S. Navy would have to be the Naval Academy's Midshipmen Drum and Bugle Corps, based at Annapolis, MD. The corps was formed in 1914 and made its first appearance at a Naval Academy versus St. John's College baseball game. It numbered only 16 members.

By 1915 the corps was increased in size to 21 (Fig. 10). These included 16 bugles and four snare drums, led by a lead bugler. In the following years, the drum and bugle

became more active within the Brigade of Midshipmen and numbered up to 50 members.

In January 1922, the corps was disbanded when then Superintendent Henry B. Wilson deemed the drum and bugle corps "a luxury, not a necessity" and abolished the bugle squad. Four years later, two Midshipmen persuaded

Adm. Louis M. Nulton, the Superintendent, and Capt. Sinclair Gannon, Commandant, to allow them, and whatever volunteers they could muster, to reform the Midshipmen Drum and Bugle Corps.

The corps was formally re-established in April 1926, with 15 drummers and 30 buglers. During the 1930s, the corps got bigger and better and was a major attraction at Midshipmen dress parades and sporting events. It was during this period the drum corps became known as the "Hellcats," a name given them by the Brigade of Midshipmen. They were known to be a cocky outfit, snappy on the field and comrades off it and ever proud of their musical organization.

With war on the horizon in 1941, Adm. Wilson Brown, then superintendent, decided that "the seriousness of the future life of the Midshipmen should be impressed upon the brigade." In keeping with his "strip-for-action-bill," the drum and bugle corps was again disbanded.

Also done away with for the duration of the war were dress parades and dressing for dinner five days a week. All training was geared for the war effort.

By September 1945, the drum and bugle corps was again in the process of

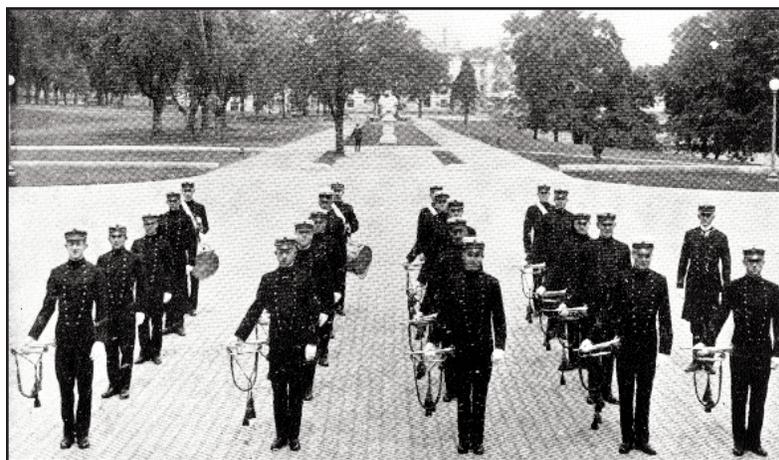
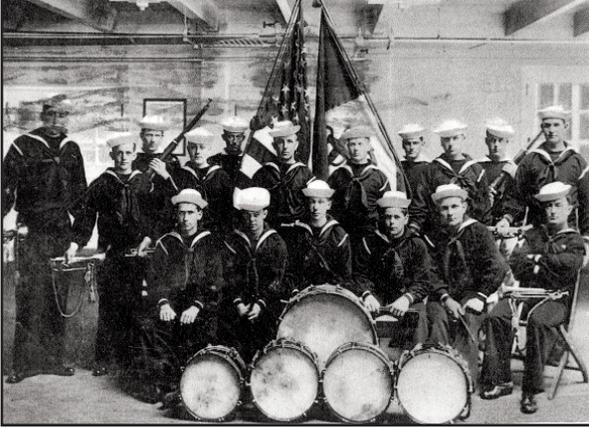


Figure 10 -- U.S. Naval Academy Drum & Bugle Corps, Annapolis, MD, 1915. R. W. Cary, Jr., its leader, is on the right (photo from the collection of Ron Da Silva).

reorganization and ordered 30 new tenor and baritone bugles, 10 field drums and two Scotch bass drums. The drum and bugle corps was officially incorporated as a unit of the Brigade of Midshipmen on March 16, 1946.

In a Brigade order announcing this event, the executive officer said the drum corps' duties were to participate in Brigade functions. These included playing the Brigade into Bancroft Hall for noon and



A Navy drum and bugle corps at Yerba Buena Island, San Francisco, CA, 1905 (photo from the collection of Ron Fierriera).

evening meal formations and to supplement the Naval Academy Band (this band was made up of full-time Navy bandmen, not Midshipmen).

These new duties also included playing for the Brigade prior to chapel services, furnishing music in Brigade parades and parading the Midshipmen in events away from the academy.

This post-war renovated corps started out with 40 members, all experienced players, many of whom were war veterans. In this way, they were not much different than the many new and re-formed senior drum corps of the American Legion and VFW. Over the years, the corps would grow to a 100-man unit and be sought after nationwide for major parades, exhibitions and concerts.

In 1973, the Midshipmen dressed up their uniform for field shows by using their full dress dark blue jackets over summer white pants, regardless of season, and adding gold satin waist sashes with two-pointed drops. Before this, the only addition to the corps' uniform was a gold bugle insignia worn on the lower right sleeve of both dress and full dress jackets.

The addition of 16 blue and gold flash flags the same year gave the corps the look of a civilian drum and bugle corps in very military uniforms. In later years, at indoor



The U.S. Naval Academy Midshipmen Drum & Bugle Corps, Annapolis, MD, circa 1970s (U.S. Navy photo from the collection of Ron Da Silva).

standstill shows or concerts, the Midshipmen would wear their formal dark blue mess uniforms, complete with white dress shirt, bow tie and gold satin cummerbund.

During most of the 1970s, the corps was under the direction of Petty Officer Michael J. King, who became their chief enlisted instructor, while serving in the Naval Academy Band. King had been active in drum corps since 1964 when he joined the Knightsmen of Millis, MA. While in college, he marched with the Wilmington Crusaders of Massachusetts.

In 1976, while still in the Navy, he was part of the world champion drum line of the



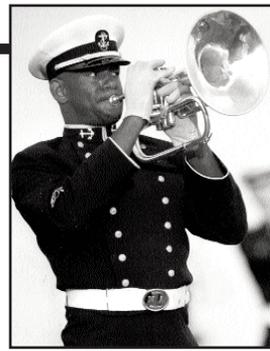
The U.S. Naval Academy Midshipmen Drum & Bugle Corps at the Hawthorne Caballeros' standstill on February 18, 1978 -- note the evening mess uniform (photo by Ron Da Silva).

Baltimore Yankee Rebels and the following year became assistant drum instructor for that corps. In 1978, he served as drum major and assistant horn instructor for the Westshoremens of Harrisburg, PA; that year they were American Legion Champions.

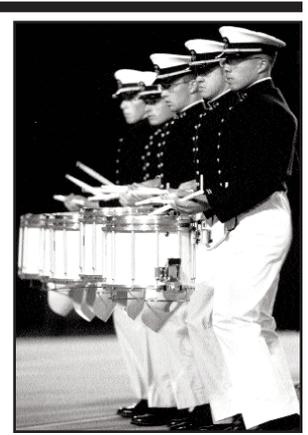
King's experience and passion for drum corps had a marked effect on the Naval Academy Corps. He formulated policies and procedures that improved significantly the professionalism and musical ability of the Midshipmen and brought them national recognition.

In 1979, he was awarded one of the Navy's highest non-combat medals, the Navy Achievement Medal, for his dynamic leadership, musical ability and dedication to the Midshipmen Drum and Bugle Corps.

In recent years, government cutbacks to the military have done away with full-time enlisted bands at the service academies, with the exception of the Military Academy at West Point. Therefore, the Midshipmen Drum and Bugle Corps has become, in effect, a collegiate band,



(Above and right) The U.S. Naval Academy Drum & Bugle Corps, Annapolis, MD, at the Inter-Academy competition in 1999 (photos by Dale Eck from the collection of Drum Corps World).



using instructors from the Marine Drum and Bugle Corps or civilians.

Also, in the last two years, the Midshipmen have not used a color guard or flag section with their drum corps. Whether this is a comment on the current state of civilian drum corps, flag sections and dance troupes, or simply a lack of volunteers, is not known. However, in all other aspects, the Midshipmen are a modern drum and bugle corps using the most up to date piston bugles, field drums and pit percussion.

### Coast Guard drum and bugle corps

The smallest military service, the Coast Guard, like the Navy under whose command they come in time of war, has a long tradition of buglers on ships and land bases. Their rating badges for buglers were exactly the same as the Navy.

Besides duty buglers, they also had drum and bugle corps at their recruit training centers, but smaller in size. Photos of their Alameda, CA, Recruit Training Center Corps taken in the early 1950s show a unit numbering 22 members: eight buglers using single-piston sopranos, eight snare drums, a bell lyre, a bass drum, a cymbal player, a drum major and a guide-on.

Uniforms were Navy sailor suits with only a small shield badge worn on the right sleeve to tell the viewer they were Coast Guard.

Presently, there is only one drum and bugle corps wearing a Coast Guard uniform. They are the Windjammers Drum and Bugle Corps, made up of cadets from the U.S. Coast Guard Academy in New London, CT.

A drum corps at the academy dates back to at least the end of World War II. During the 1950s and early 1960s, they were a typical small military school drum corps, marching with 30 to 36 playing members. Their horn line consisted of single-piston bugles in soprano, tenor, baritone, French horn and bass models.

Drums were

The U.S. Coast Guard Academy Windjammers Drum & Bugle Corps, New London, CT, in 1999 at the Inter-Academy competition in Annapolis, MD (photo by Dale Eck from the collection of Drum Corps World).



snare, tenor and bass, with a pair of cymbals. At times bell lyres were used. Their drum major was traditional military, using an American-style baton or mace. In off-academy public parades, the corps was often fronted by the academy's five-man color guard.

In 1972, the Cadet Drum and Bugle Corps was reorganized into a military band, since government budget cutbacks had lost the Academy the use of a full-time enlisted band. The Cadet band used the standard brass and woodwind instruments plus a percussion section.

To make the band bigger and better, its director, Chief Robert Brule, a former trumpet player in the Coast Guard Band, got the status of the Cadet Band elevated to a varsity sport. Since all cadets are required to participate in two sports activities, the band's membership increased in size and talent.

It was in the fall of 1976 that the Coast Guard Academy Windjammers Band took part in the Inter-Academy Drum and Bugle Corps Competition at Annapolis, competing against the much larger Air Force Academy Cadet Wing Flight of Sound and Naval Academy Midshipmen Corps.

They competed as a traditional marching band and scored a disheartening 33 points, well below the other two academies. They returned to New London determined to improve their results and went about changing from a traditional marching band to a corps-style band with bell-front horns.

Unable to attend the 1977 competition at the Air Force Academy in Colorado because of economic considerations, the Windjammers spent their time preparing for the competition's return to Annapolis in 1978.

That contest saw the Coast Guard Cadets improve their score from 33 to 62 points. While they didn't beat either of the larger corps, they gained a great deal of respect and self-esteem for their efforts.

In these competitions, the Windjammers wore their full dress: white caps, dark blue jackets and white pants. Since this uniform is almost identical to that of the Naval Academy, the Coast Guard Cadets added large white gauntlets to their uniform.

Taking a hint from the Navy Midshipmen's wide gold satin sashes with two drops on the left side, they wore a Coast Guard Academy blue (a light silver-blue) satin waist sash with a blue and gold drop worn on the right side.

To further visualize their Coast Guard image, the bands' flag section carried white flags with a diagonal red and blue stripe. This stripe is painted on the white bows of all Coast Guard vessels. Together with their name, Windjammers, which is an old seafarer term for sailing ships and its crew, the Coast

Guard Cadets distinguish themselves from the other sea-going service.

In 1982, the corps-style band converted itself into a legitimate drum and bugle corps, again under the direction of Brule. With this, two major goals were established: first, they wanted to increase participation in the program from a football



The U.S. Coast Guard Academy Drum & Bugle Corps, New London, CT, April 1962, at a Cherry Blossom parade in Belleville, NJ (photo by Ron Da Silva).



U.S. Coast Guard Academy Drum & Bugle Corps, New London, CT, at the 2001 Inter-Academy competition, Annapolis, MD (photo by David Rice from the collection of Drum Corps World).

season activity (August to November) to a full-year course of study, including beginner, intermediate and advanced instruction on all bugle and percussion instruments, designed to increase the quality and continuity of the Windjammers from year to year.

Second, they wanted the corps to compete annually instead of semi-annually in the Inter-Academy Competition and be competitive enough to justify their trips to Maryland and Colorado.

The drum and bugle corps provides an outlet for musically talented cadets to explore and expand their skills while providing

musical support for the entire Corps of Cadets at parades, reviews, concerts and sporting events. They also host their own "Windjammers Invitational" marching band competition in mid-October for school bands.

Always in demand for major parades and festivals, the Windjammers say it all in their corps motto, "Pride in Performance," which is evident both on and off the field.

### Air Force drum and bugle corps

The newest military service, the United States Air Force, has a tradition of drum and bugle corps that goes back to the days of the old Army Air Corps. During World War II, the Army Air Force had drum and bugle corps at its training centers and flight training schools. These drum corps were made up of trainees or aviation cadets who played regulation G bugles and field drums.

A 1943 photo of the 344th C.T.D. Army Air Force Drum and Bugle Corps shows a 23-member unit using eight snare drums, two bass drums, cymbals, nine G soprano bugles and two G bass bugles. The corps was led by an aviation cadet lieutenant drum major with a signal baton.

Another war-time photo shows a cadet bugler sounding *Call to the Colors*. He has a small tabard attached to his bugle bearing the wings and propeller insignia of the Air Force. Officially, it should be ultramarine blue with insignia and fringe in golden-orange, the Air Force branch colors (Fig. 11).

With the formation of the United States Air Force in 1947, the new service would continue to have drum corps at its training centers. These were modern, up-to-date corps, using single-piston bugles and, later, piston-rotor bugles in all the voices used by competitive drum corps. Among these were the Lowry Air Force Base, CO; Lackland Air Force Base, TX; and the "Blue Knights" of Kessler Air Force Base, MS.

However, when one thinks of outstanding and progressive Air Force drum and bugle corps, three special units come to mind: The United States Air Force Drum and Bugle Corps of Bolling Field, Washington, D.C. (1949-1963), the U.S. Air Force Academy Drum and Bugle Corps (1959-1973) and the U.S. Air Force Academy Cadet Wing Drum and Bugle Corps (1971-present).

Founder Brig. Gen. Sidney "Rosie" Grubbs had always dreamed of having his own drum and bugle corps. In December 1949, he recalled to active duty Capt. Herbert J. Gall, who was



The U.S. Coast Guard Academy Midshipmen, 1999 (photo by David Rice from the collection of Drum Corps World).



Figure 11 -- An Army Air Corps Aviation Cadet sounding *Retreat* (photo from the collection of Ron Da Silva).

dedication both leaders shared with the troops, knowing the United States Air Force Drum and Bugle Corps would have never been born without their capable leadership and devotion.

The United States Air Force Drum and Bugle Corps was formed in 1949 as the Field Music section of the U.S. Air Force Bands, Bolling Air Force Base in Washington, D.C., the same base that was home to the famed Glen Miller Army Air Force Band of World War II. The most unusual thing about the corps is that it included a 12-man bagpipe section, added to its 18 drummers and 30-plus buglers.

As the "official" Air Force drum corps, the unit literally performed all over the world, from giving exhibitions at Scotland's Edinburgh Tattoo to Berlin's Olympic Stadium and Miami's Orange Bowl to doing parades in New York City, Manila and Tokyo.

The corps was very modern, like the Air Force itself, and not tied down by tradition. One performance in 1958 of its modern field show was at London's Horse Guards Parade, a large parade ground where the British army performs its most traditional

ceremonies, such as the Trooping of the Color, done on the Queen's official birthday. After the Air Force's jazzy performance, the British press criticized the drum corps' exhibition as degrading and undignified for such a noble parade ground. However, the British public loved them, just as they had loved the Glen Miller Air Force Swing Band during the war.

The music used in the 1958 field show that toured Great Britain included an opening fanfare, *Washington and Lee Swing*; *Coronation Fanfare*; *Oh, You Beautiful Doll*; *Two to Tango*; *Americans We*; *If This Isn't Love*; *Are You from Dixie*; *Mambo Jambo* and *Air Force Fanfare*.

In 1952, a young Truman W. Crawford

witnessed a performance of the corps and shortly after his graduation from high school, auditioned for, and was accepted into, the unit in February 1953 as an instrumentalist.

In the 10 years he was involved with the Air Force Drum and Bugle Corps, he distinguished himself not only as the corps' music director and arranger, but also as a drill designer.

The Air Force Drum and Bugle Corps was always in great demand and had a rigorous schedule that would put most military bands and drum corps into an aid station.

On Memorial Day in 1962, the corps played four engagements in one day in Connecticut. Two were recorded by Richard I. Blake for Cadet Records: their morning exhibition at New Haven and their fourth

given the assignment to organize the finest drum and bugle corps ever assembled.

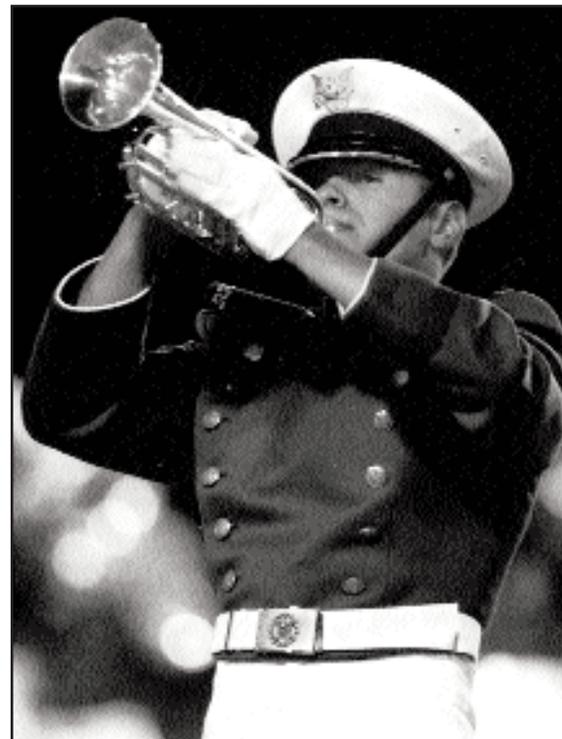
Grubbs was eventually transferred to Ramey Air Force Base in San Juan, Puerto Rico, to become base commander, handing over the reigns to Gall. Drum corps old-timers fondly remember the love and



exhibition later that afternoon in Milford (*Fleetwood CSLP#1001, illustrated above*).

The uniforms worn by the corps were regulation dress, in Air Force blue or silver tan, highlighted by white ascots, shoulder cords and spats.

In the summer of 1960, the bagpipe



U.S. Air Force Academy Drum & Bugle Corps, 1999 (photo by Dale Eck from the collection of Drum Corps World).

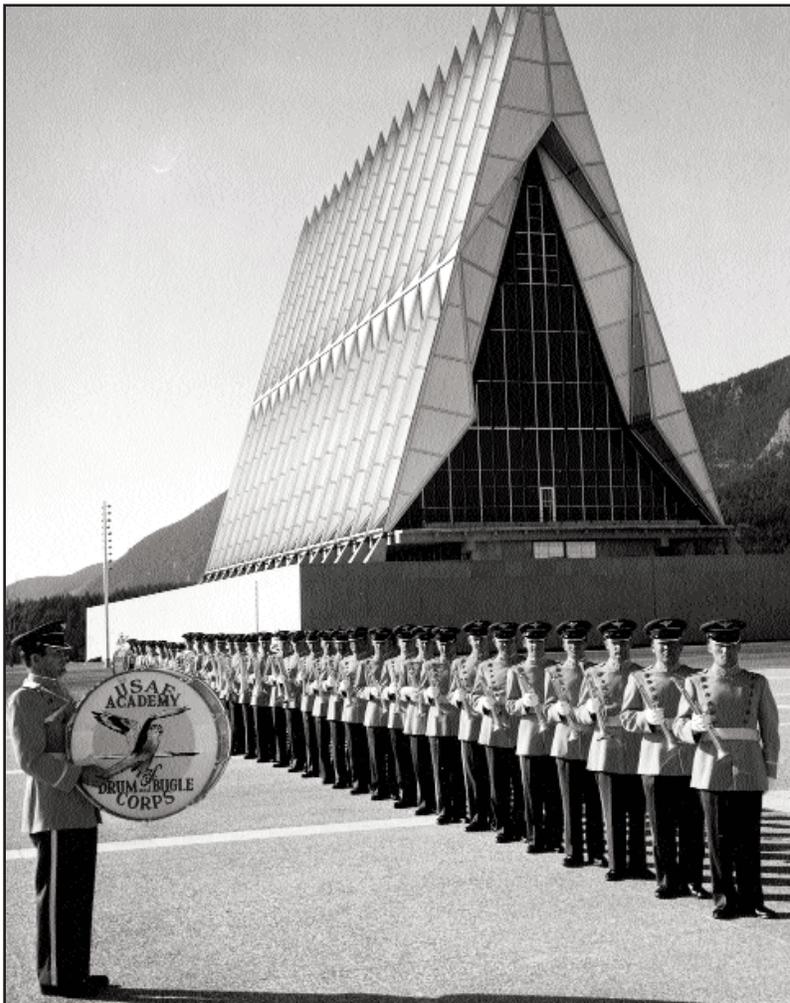


Figure 12 -- U.S. Air Force Academy Drum & Bugle Corps, mid-1960s, in regular academy band uniforms (photo from the collection of Ron Da Silva).

section was put in complete Highland uniforms imported from Scotland; this included a dark blue Glengarry cap, a dark blue doublet with white trim and silver buttons, black leather waistbelts and baldrics with silver fittings.

Their kilts, plaids and hose were made in the Mitchell tartan, in honor of Gen. Billy Mitchell who had championed for an independent Air Force. The tartan's predominant colors were a medium green and dark blue, with scarlet and white lines.

All sections of the drum corps and pipe



U.S. Air Force Academy Flight of Sound from Colorado Springs, CO, at West Point, NY, on November 8, 1980 (photo by Ron Da Silva).

band wore the same cap badge: silver Air Force wings and propeller with a music lyre superimposed on the propeller.

From 1960, the Bagpipe Band performed as an independent unit of the Air Force Band as well as with the drum corps. In 1963, the Air Force Drum and Bugle Corps was disbanded due to manpower reductions in armed forces bands.

The Bagpipe Band would remain active as a special unit of the Air Force Band until June 1970, when it also was disbanded for unknown, but hotly debated reasons.

Some members of the drum and bugle sections were sent to other Air Force drum corps, most notably an enlarged drum and bugle section of the U.S. Air Force Academy Band in Colorado Springs, CO, that would take the place of the Washington, D.C., corps.

### U.S. Air Force Academy Drum and Bugle Corps

The U.S. Air Force Academy Drum and Bugle Corps was formed in June 1959 as the Field Music section of the United States Air Force Academy Band. It originally consisted of eight soprano buglers and nine drummers.

As such, they acted as duty buglers, sounding the calls that regulated the daily routine of the Cadet Wing. They also played at all cadet formations and parades, either

independently or as part of the Academy Band.

With the demise of the original corps at Washington, D.C., late in 1963, some of the members were reassigned to the Air Force Academy Corps at Colorado Springs.

The Air Force, realizing the public relations value of a top-flight drum and bugle corps, enlarged the Field Music into a modern corps, so that by 1966 the academy corps was ready to do both parades and field exhibitions off the academy campus with a horn line of 25 and a drum line of nine. By

1968, the corps was performing with a drum line of 12 and 33 horns.

The corps was composed solely of enlisted men, as with the old Washington-based corps, selected for their musicianship, military bearing and fine character.

The draft and the war in Vietnam also helped recruiting.

Volunteers came from civilian drum corps throughout the country and the Academy Drum & Bugle Corps would enlist the cream of the crop.

Thus, it wasn't surprising to find young men who had marched with the Blessed Sacrament Golden Knights, Boston Crusaders, St. Kevin's Emerald Knights, Kilties, Cavaliers, Garfield Cadets, New York Skyliners, Hawthorne Caballeros or Casper Troopers marching in their ranks.

While the corps' primary mission was to support the Cadet Wing by playing for meal formations, cadet parades and academy football games, invitations to perform at professional sporting events, music festivals and major parades came in from all over the country. It wasn't uncommon to see the corps on national television during half-time at an NFL football game or marching in a Bowl Parade.

The Air Force Academy Drum and Bugle Corps was the first military unit to be invited to New York City's Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade and also took part in presidential inauguration parades. The corps even exhibited at several Great Plains Association competitions in Kansas during the mid-1960s.

At academy parades and reviews, the drum and bugle corps was massed with

the Academy Band. A unique feature of this formation was that the drums and bugles could play in unison with the band. This was accomplished by using special musical arrangements written by both corps and band musicians.

The dress uniform (Fig. 12) worn by the academy's musicians was a special parade uniform designed for the academy band. It consisted of indigo blue cap with silver trim on the band and visor. The cap insignia was the Air Force wings and music lyre in silver.

The parade dress coat was double-breasted with a standing collar in a pale sky-blue. It had two rows of pewter Air Force buttons and silver trim on the cuffs. Trousers were indigo blue with a silver braid stripe.

In 1966, the drum corps got permission to wear a "corps-style" uniform when performing their modern field show or parading on their own. The modified uniform had the band's coat cut down to a waist-length jacket, which was worn with a white sash and tassels. The corps' drum major was distinguished by his British-style baldric with silver crest and trim, and the wearing of white leather gauntlets.

Even though the U.S. Air Force Academy Corps was unique, colorful and very popular, it was ordered to deactivate on December 16, 1973. This came about after the Pentagon ordered the service academies to trim their bands down to under 100 members.

"It was a very difficult decision," said Lt. Col. Richard Thurston, band commander. "After careful thought, the superintendent decided that in order not to reduce the professionalism of the Academy's concert band, the corps would be disbanded."

However, a new drum and bugle corps made up of cadets was already organized and being instructed by members of the old corps, still enlisted in the Academy's Band.

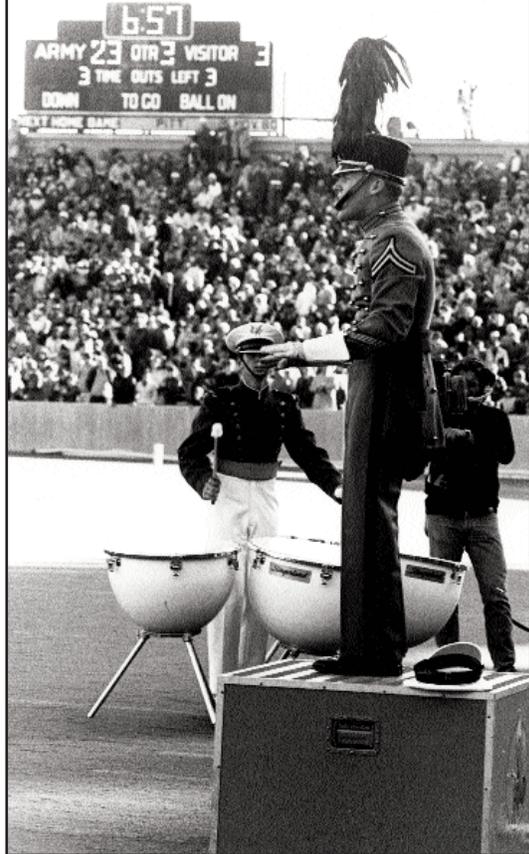
### United States Air Force Academy Cadet Wing Drum and Bugle Corps

The U.S. Air Force Academy Cadet Wing Drum and Bugle Corps was formed in 1971 as a cadet club. Its instruction came from members of the academy's famed enlisted drum and bugle corps. After the enlisted corps was disbanded in 1973, three of its members, members of the Academy Band, continued to instruct the cadet corps, now known as the "Flight of Sound."

Having instructors who had extensive



U.S. Air Force Academy Flight of Sound Drum & Bugle Corps at the 1999 Inter-Academy Competition in Annapolis, MD (photo by Dale Eck from the collection of Drum Corps World).



U.S. Air Force Academy Cadet Drum Major Dik A. Daso (left) wore a complete West Point uniform to conduct the Air Force Flight of Sound on November 8, 1980 (photo by Ron Da Silva).

backgrounds with both civilian and military drum corps would give the Cadet Wing Drum & Bugle Corps the edge, which would be evident in their drill and musical presentations. They would also go on to become one of the largest drum and bugle corps ever in the armed forces.

In 1973, the Cadets had 13 drummers, 58 horns, a drum major and a military color guard consisting of a U.S. flag, Air Force flag and their Flight of Sound corps flag. These were guarded by two sword-bearing cadets.

By the 1980s, the corps had a regulated size of 135 cadets; of these, 110 would travel and perform in their field show. This broke down to a 60-member horn line, 24 percussionists, a 24-member flag line made up of women cadets, and two drum majors.

The Flight of Sound's uniform was visually outstanding. It was the academy's spring parade dress, designed by film director Cecil B. DeMille in 1956. This order of dress consisted of a white cap cover and a royal blue, high-collared, double-breasted, waist-length jacket worn over white trousers and black shoes.

The cadet drum corps was also given permission to embellish this uniform with a corps-style baldric and sash in a bright powder blue trimmed in silver. Their twin drum majors were further distinguished by wearing white leather gauntlets, golden-yellow cadet officer's sashes and wide drum major baldrics of royal blue with golden-yellow trim -- one bearing a large metal crest of the U.S. Air Force, the other the crest of the Air Force Academy.

In 1980, the female flag line was wearing white culottes and knee-high black boots.

Their field show utilized music and drill

made famous by top junior corps in Drum Corps International. This was done under the direction of their director and musical arranger, Senior Master Sgt. Rod Stewart, and drill and percussion instructor, Master Sgt. Ken Tyler.

The Flight of Sound performed the Phantom Regiment's "An American in Paris," complete with a traffic cop, the Bayonne Bridgemen's "Civil War Fantasy," which included a battle sequence using Union and Confederate flags, and a finale of *Battle Hymn* that always brought a resounding standing ovation from audiences, both military and civilian.

Not just copying DCI corps, the Cadets did some trademark moves of their own. In their 1984 show, the horn line formed a large circle, did a domino-like fall into a push-up position, then did a set of GI-style push-ups, all during a rhythmic drum solo. The Cadets closed that show with *American Fantasia* that featured their excellent flag line and a traditional color presentation, again bringing the audience to its feet.

Stewart once used an old drum corps description that appeared in contest programs as far back as the 1950s to describe his corps: "The U.S. Air Force Academy, Cadet Wing, Drum & Bugle Corps combines the precision of West Point, the musical blend of a well-directed band or orchestra and the showmanship of a Broadway production." That statement could well describe all our remaining armed forces drum corps:

- *The U.S. Marine Corps Drum & Bugle Corps*
- *The U.S. Naval Academy Midshipmen Drum & Bugle Corps*
- *The U.S. Air Force Academy, Cadet Wing, Flight of Sound Drum & Bugle Corps*
- *The U.S. Coast Guard Academy Windjammers Drum & Bugle Corps*

#### Afterward

On November 8, 1980, the Air Force Academy Cadet Wing Drum and Bugle Corps performed their field show at the Army vs. Air Force football game at West Point's Michie Stadium. Leading the corps was Cadet Drum Major Dik A. Daso, dressed in a complete West Point Cadet uniform (see photo above).

When I later asked him why he wore the Army cadet gray uniform and plumed shako, he said since West Point did not have a corps, his action might spur interest within the Corps of Cadets and officers staff to organize a cadet drum corps at the Army's military academy.

Sorry to say, it has never been formed. When one thinks of all the junior corps whose name included the word "Cadets," or all the junior and senior corps that wore "cadet-style" uniforms, wouldn't it be great to see the Long Gray Line marching into the stands with colors flying, drums beating and bugles aimed high, performing in our uniquely American form of military showmanship and precision pageantry?

Most of the material for this chapter came from various armed forces fact sheets, official press releases and photo captions. Additional

material came from feature articles, reports and photographs that have appeared in the following publications:

- *ARM* -- Army Reserve magazine
- *Army Digest* -- U.S. Army magazine
- *ARMY Magazine*
- *Drum Corps America* -- Racine, WI-based magazine published from 1971 to 1976
- *Drum Corps Digest* -- Glenview, IL-based magazine published from 1965 to 1973
- *Drum Corps News* -- Boston, MA-based newspaper published from 1961 to 1985
- *Drum Corps World* -- Chicago, IL-based magazine published from 1950 to 1966
- *Drum Corps World* -- Madison, WI-based newspaper published from 1971 to present
- *Eastern Review* -- drum corps magazine, Brooklyn, NY
- *Leatherneck* -- magazine of the Marines
- *Musicana* -- U.S. Army, Navy & Air Force Association magazine, New Haven, CT

The above material covered more than 40 years of information, some collected in scrap books, where clippings were sometimes trimmed of publication name and date.

Other material was complete in plastic sheet protectors and bound chronologically. However, much of the material was loose, original items or photo copies sent to me. Also, most of the official armed forces fact sheets were undated, except for a government printing office printing date.

I therefore apologize for any omissions or inaccuracies and would welcome any additional information or corrections: Ron Da Silva, 269 Chestnut Street #204, Nutley, NJ 07110-1656

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For a photo and bio of Ron Da Silva, see page 55.