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from 1963 thru 1971.**

**We thank him for his generous donation of Pacific Northwest Drum Corps history.**

### **PORTLAND MERRYKHANA PARADE/DRUMKHANA DRUM CORPS COMPETITION**

The Merrykhana Parade and the Drumkhana drum corps competition was the start of the summer season for northwest drum corps competitions (at least in 1964). The parade itself was a little wild at times, both for the viewers and participants (Portland's version of a Mardi Gras style parade). Most if not all of the drum corps participating at the drum corps show marched in the parade (parade was Saturday night, competition was next day early afternoon). The 1964 parade staged (started) at the northeast side of Memorial Coliseum, then marched directly inside and through the coliseum (over the basketball court) via large access doors on the north end (coliseum was full of people watching the parade from the seating areas) and exited through the south end access doors. Then went over the Steel Bridge - which was steel grated (not paved). You could see the Willamette River flowing 40 feet below your feet as you marched across the bridge. Parade then went up Broadway.

Most years, the drum corps in the parade were conventional (strictly drum corps style in full dress uniforms). But there were some years when corps dressed for the atmosphere. One large drum corps one year didn't wear their uniforms and performed in 1890's style pajamas with sleeping hats (think Ebenezer Scrooge). They still looked, acted and sounded like a drum corps, just wore pjs instead of uniforms.

The drum corps show was held at Madison High School that year - the same field used for the 1965 American Legion Nationals Prelims. June 4th was the beginning of the northwest drum corps season and lasted to the last weekend of August (sometimes to Labor Day). Then in January, the first indoor show was on about the 3rd week of the month in Salem (Optirama) and the second indoor show was midway thru March in Seattle (Thunderbirds show). Then a new season started in June with the Drumkhana competition again. The longest gap between drum corps shows was only 4 months. (Note - the indoor shows were considered "stand still" but you still marched to and from the standstill/concert position.)