

The Seattle Cascades Thunderbird Drum Majors

By

Pacific Northwest Drum Corps.com

Specializing in PNW Drum Corps of the 1960s and 70s

All the information below has been gleaned from documents on this site and from conversations with really old dudes that were around in the 1960s and 70s.

Background

The Seattle Cascades were born out of the Thunderbird Cadets Jr D&BC, which was the feeder for the Thunderbirds A-Corps. Twenty-five of the TB Cadet members (63%) became the nucleus of the new Cascade Cadets D&BC in June of 1966.

The Seattle Cascades (est. 1966) history is so intertwined with the Seattle Thunderbirds (1958 – 1970), that the first four drum majors for the Cascades were either former Thunderbirds (TB) or TB Cadet members.

Read-on...



1967 Cascade Cadets D&BC. Paul is in the front row, left end

1966 - The Cascade Cadets

The first Cascades drum major, Paul Langdon, was in the TB Cadets drumline from 1963 thru 1965 when the TB Cadets splintered, and re-emerged as the Cascade Cadets in June of 1966. To the best of our research, he was the Cascades' drum major for five non-consecutive seasons starting in 1967, with the last season in 1973.



The second Cascades drum major was Curtis Carroll, a Thunderbird soprano from 1963 thru 1968 and the Cascades' drum major in 1969 (the Thunderbirds did not field a corps in '69). In 1970, he was the Cascades' horn instructor.

Left - Curtis Carroll in his Thunderbird uniform in 1965

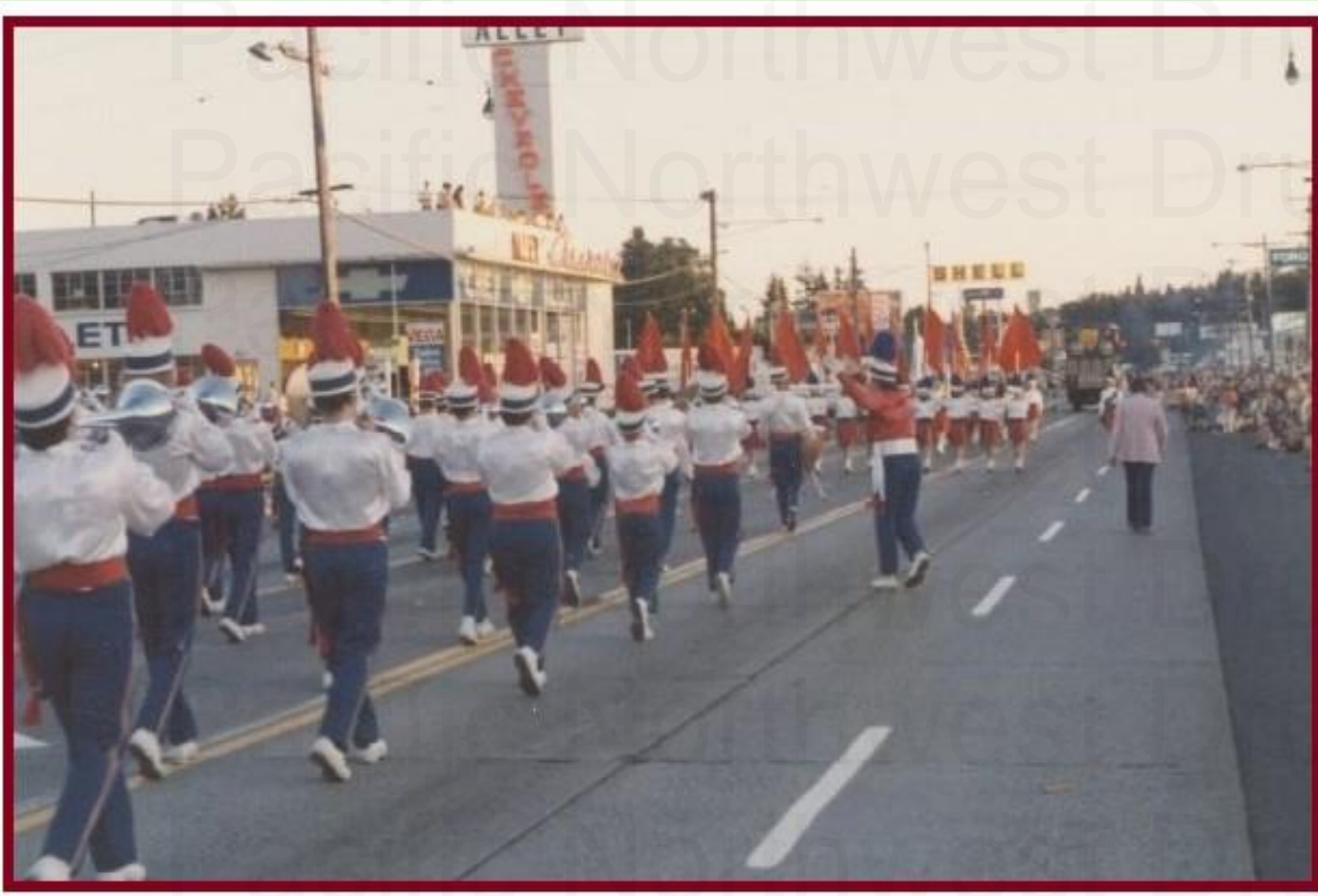


The third Cascades drum major, Darlene Booth, started in the Thunderbird Cadets color guard in 1965, then moved to the Wilson Jr High color guard in 1966. Wilson Jr High (Seattle) is where the Thunderbirds, the TB Cadets, and the Cascade Cadets all practiced. She was in the Cascades color guard (rifle) from 1967 thru 1970. She was the Cascades drum major in 1971.

[The color guards based at Wilson Jr High were a PE class option at that school. The A-Guard was called “Wilson”, and the B-Guard was called the “Thunderettes”. They existed in 1966 and 1967. “Wilson” became the Cascade Cadets A-guard after their appearance at Optirama in January of 1967, and the “Thunderettes” became the Cascade Cadets B-guard before the Thunderbirds Mid-Winter Competition in April of 1967]

Left – Darlene Booth in the 1967 Cascade Cadet photo

(Front row, third from the right)



Above – 1972 Cascades and DM Phil Madden, Lake City Parade

The fourth Cascades drum major, Phil Madden, was also in the TB Cadet drumline in 1965, migrated to the Renton Blue Angels in 1966, then to the Cascade Cadets drumline in 1967, and stayed until 1972 when he was the drum major. In 1973 he marched with the Kilties like many other locals did at the time.

Seemed like a lot of folks in the PNW joined the Norwood Park Imperials (IL) in the 60s, and the Troopers (WY) or the Kilties (WI) in the early 70s. It was not uncommon in the 60s and 70s to leave the PNW and march your last year of eligibility with a national-level corps. He was an instructor for the Cascades until 1980 and has been a DCI and WGI (Winter Guard International) judge for many years.



The fifth Cascades drum major, Bruce Bock, is the first one to originate from within the Cascades' ranks. He was a lead soprano that joined the corps in 1970 and became drum major in 1974. His sister Carol was color guard captain the same year ('74).

He was very surprised when we told him in February of 2022 that he was ***the first*** home-grown Cascades Drum Major. That little factoid was dropped on his lap 48-years after the fact. No wonder he was surprised.

Left - 1974 CDC with Bruce at the helm

There you go. The first eight years of the Seattle Cascades existence was “directed” by drum majors that started their drum corps careers in either the Thunderbirds or the Thunderbird Cadets. Two drummers, a gal from the rifle line, and a soprano from the horn line. A nice distribution of talent.

Long Live Drum Corps!

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