Seattle drill teams

by Carl Latchaw, Drum Corps World staff (latchman44@yahoo.com) Specializing in PNW drum corps of the 1960s and 1970s and Pacific Northwest Drum Corps.com

as corps members in the 1970's, we marched a lot of parades; I mean we marched an easy seven or eight parades a year. It was an avenue to raise cash and sometimes it was a prerequisite for entering that evening's show. Sometimes on the Fourth of July we marched three parades. Gotta make that money.

I believe the longest and definitely the hottest parade was the Water Follies parade in Pasco (Eastern) Washington, with a length of 4.5 miles and a temperature of 90-plus degrees. Brutal,

The parade I liked the best was the Seattle Torchlight Parade. Always held at night with throngs of people watching, Wiki says there are roughly 300,000 attending the parade these days. It was definitely a big deal.

We'd always vie to see who'd march on the left end so we'd be seen on TV. Our parents saw us on the tube many times. (Uh, does anybody call it the "tube" anymore? You know, the

"boob-tube"?

The Torchlight and Water Follies parades were literally night and day. The Torchlight, in Western Washington, with several hundred-thousand spectators during the coolness of night, with only a 2-mile trot down the street:

juxtaposed to the Water Follies parade in Eastern Washington with the blistering heat of the day and absolutely no spectators until you hit the reviewing stand. And let's not forget those 4.5 miles of foot-burning, heatreflecting pavement.

We always saw drill teams at parades and knew them by

sight. Their uniforms were every bit as unique and colorful as ours. They looked sharp and their

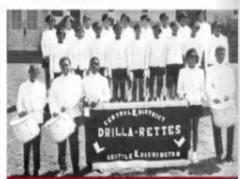


Seattle Chinese Community Girls Drill Team

Seattle Drill Team Association

Filipino Youth Activities





1969 Drill-A-Rettes







complicated and superbly executed. We have 16 teams listed in our 1969 Seattle Drill

marching drills were

Team Association handbook. The association itself was founded in 1929.

> drill teams and their sponsors included Bethel #54 sponsored by the International Order of Job's Daughters, the West Seattle American Legion Drill Team, the Filipino Youth Activities of Seattle Drill Team. the North Queens. sponsored by the Lynnwood Elks Lodge #2171. the Ballard Eagles (Seattle)

sponsored by the Ballard Eagles # 172, St. John's Elementary School drill team and the only boy's drill team, the Blue Devils, founded in 1966 and sponsored by the Seattle Moose Lodge #211.

Renaissance Junior Team drill team in 1969 was the



The oldest association Seattle Eagles Auxiliary No. 1, formed in 1953. Those are some real oldtime sponsors, folks.

A few of these teams are still around in the 21st Century. The Ballard Eagles, the North Queens and the La Señoritas are still rocking it. The Seattle Drill Team Association is still extant, too. Like drum









corps, the association membership has shrunk, but they are still in the fight.

Drill teams have long-standing traditions and hard-fought victories like drum corps do. They have experienced the ups and downs of competition and the camaraderie that those experiences bring.

Drum corps and drill teams were cut from the same cloth. We grew up in the same neighborhoods, attended the same schools and we all strived to be the very best. If you are out there girls (and boys), we salute you!

Long live drum corps! @Pacific Northwest Drum Corps.com 2024.