

# Mike Duffy -- A Pacific Northwest original

by Carl Latchaw, Drum Corps World staff (latchman44@yahoo.com)

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and Pacific Northwest Drum Corps.com -- specializing in PNW drum corps of the 1960s and 1970s

[Publisher's note: I first met Mike Duffy in 1978, the only time I have ever been in Seattle.

I was there for a drum corps meeting that involved the potential

for a DCI tour to the Pacific Northwest and eventually the DCI

Championships. Unfortunately nothing came of the plan. Mike is a friend, a great arranger and deserving of his DCI Hall of Fame recognition.] He passed away May 5.]



In May's issue of *Drum Corps World* there was an article about this year's inductees into the DCI Hall of Fame. One of the inductees is Mike Duffy. That article concentrated on his national accomplishments.

What we're going to do today is cover his Pacific Northwest origins and his impact to this region.

Mike started his drum corps career right here in the Pacific Northwest in 1957 at age 12 when he joined the Pasco Junior Legion Drum

& Bugle Corps (AKA, the Tri-City Columbians, WA) as a soprano. He lived across the street from the practice site and his dad helped get him an audition with the corps. The rest is history as they say. Mike stayed with the Columbians through the 1960 season. (Far right, Mike with his wife Sherry)

In 1961 his family moved to Portland, OR, where he joined the Hawthorne Hawks All-Boy Drum & Bugle Corps (AKA, the Portland Hawks, OR) for the 1961 season. In 1962 at age 17 he joined the Leathernecks Senior D&BC also from Portland. The corps were formed in 1955 at American Legion Post #169. At the time of formation, all

members were former Marine Corps members, hence the name Leathernecks.

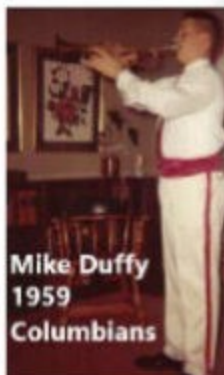
In 1963, he traveled north to Seattle and joined the Thunderbirds as a soprano / horn instructor. In 1964 he returned East of the mountains to march with the Columbians once again. Lastly, in 1965 he came back to Seattle and played with the Seattle Shamrocks where he aged-out.



Members, 1959 rehearsal during state drum contest in a three-day contest at the Pacific Center (Seattle) where Mike Duffy and other corps members are seen.

Mike placed in the top three in solo soprano bugle individual competitions at the 1963 and 1964 VFW National Conventions in Seattle, WA, and Cleveland, OH, respectively, and the 1965 Legion Nationals in Portland, OR. In every corps where he played, he was a lead soprano.

During his time around the Northwest, he wrote / arranged music for the corps he marched with and instructed their horn lines as well. Other local corps he wrote for were included the Marksmen (Seattle-Bellevue), the Whatcom County Brassmen (WA), the Vancouver (WA) Spartans, the Seattle Imperials and the Alberta Girls of Edmonton, Alberta, Canada. I'm positive we've missed a few corps in this list, but you get the idea. ■





1951 Hawthorne Hawks All-Boy D&BC  
Portland Oregon  
Mr. Duffy Front and Center



Mid-late 1960's  
Mr. Duffy in Uniform  
Instructing a Seattle  
Shamrock



## Marching Tri-City Unit Seeks National Spotlight

By LINDA HARRINGTON

Tri-City's marching band is seeking national attention and a place in the history books.

The band is made up of 100 members and is the only one of its kind in the Tri-Cities.

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- 1) 1957-1960 Tri-City Columbians
- 2) 1961 Portland Hawks
- 3) 1962 Portland Leathernecks Sr.
- 4) 1963 Seattle Thunderbirds
- 5) 1964 Tri-City Columbians
- 6) 1965 Seattle Shamrocks

**70**

**Mike Duffy**  
Mr. Drum Corps  
enough said

1953 1967 1962 1963

2015

Seattle Thunderbirds Tribute to Mr. Duffy  
Complements of Jerry Logan



ca 1977 with the Alberta Girls