



The ungulate drum corps of the Pacific Northwest

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Anybody out there know what I'm talking about? Anybody?? Outdoorsmen? 4-H? Ungulates are hooved mammals; cows, goats, horses, and drum corps. What? Yes, drum corps. Today we're going to talk about Elks and Moose drum corps. What else, right??



The Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks (BPOE), a fraternal organization, was formed on February 16, 1868 in New York City. They have a long and detailed history of community services, youth programs and philanthropy that we honor, but will not delve into today.

The Elks' first drum corps competition was held at their 1904 National Convention in Cincinnati, OH. The last Elks national DC championship was in 1958 at New York where the Great Falls, MT, Lodge were champions for the final time. It is unknown how many Elks drum corps existed throughout the states. In the Northwest Elks Association, there were at least 21 drum corps that we know of between 1905 and 1978.



August 1915, Great Falls Elks (Montana)



October 1922, Butte Elks D&BC, Montana



1928 Tacoma Elks D&BC
Washington State Champions



1938 Idaho Falls Elks D&BC, ID

The first PNW Elks DC that we have been able to document was the **Anaconda, MT, Elks, Lodge #239**. Formed in 1905, one year after the first Elks National Convention drum corps show.

Another significant PNW Elks drum corps was the **Great Falls, Montana, Elks lodge #214**. They were the Elks National Champion drum corps 14-times between 1912 and 1958.

The Loyal Order of Moose, another fraternal organization, was formed in 1888 in Louisville KY. By 1923 there were 1,669 lodges spread across the U.S. with 60 lodges and 40,000 members within The Northwest Moose Association alone. That association was formed in 1915 and comprised Washington, Oregon, Idaho and British Columbia.

Out of those 60 Lodges, it is impossible to enumerate all of the PNW Moose drum corps that have existed from 1915 through the early 1960s. Our count is 29 drum corps minimum. I doubt we could make a list of all those 60 lodges either. The data is elusive at best.

The association itself was extant until approximately 1975 which coincides with the last known documentation of what we believed to be the last PNW Moose drum corps; the **Billings, MT, Lodge #558** (1927 – 1975).

The oldest PNW Moose DC that was not a life and drum corps was **Seattle's Lodge #211** which was founded in February 1910. Their then-famous drum corps was formed in 1915 and ran for 18-seasons. Look for the May 30, 1917 postcard of this unit in this article. They were a fine-looking bunch.

Fraternal organizations (*not just the ungulates*) helped the community in so many ways. The camaraderie they had within their post/lodge/aerie and the good-natured competition between rival units propelled their entire organizations forward to the benefit of their communities.

Lots of men working hard to lend a hand to those who needed it the most. The giving of time, talent and resources was immense. These organizations are still helping communities today; their drum corps are long gone, but not quite forgotten.

Gentlemen of yore, thank you for all you've done for our communities and for your rich drum corps legacy.

Long Live Drum Corps!

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Anaconda Girl Baton Twirlers



1938 Anaconda Elks D&BC, MT



1958 Great Falls Elks, MT
Elks National Champions



Seattle Moose DC May 30, 1917



1958 Anaconda Elks D&BC, MT



Seattle Moose Lodge ca 1910 - 1920



Victoria Daily Times

VICTORIA, B. C. SATURDAY, JUNE 9, 1923

1923

UNIQUE PANORAMIC PICTURE OF EIGHTH ANNUAL CONVENTION OF NORTHWEST MOOSE ASSOCIATION



Seattle Moose Lodge Drum Corps

1923



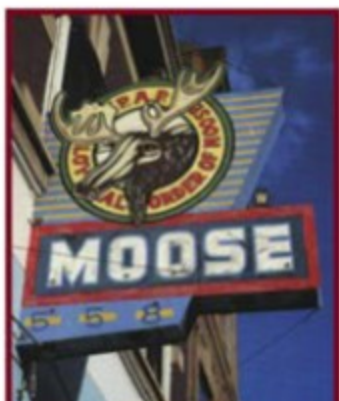
D. P. G. L. DRUM CORPS, BREHERTON, WASH. ca 1925



1961 Merrill All-Girl Elks D&BC, OR



1931 Tacoma Moose Heart



The Billings (MT) Moose had a Drum Corps for 25-years Between 1927 and 1975

1962 Seattle WA Moose Lodge #211

