





The United States Marine Drum & Bugle Corps was formed on Nov. 9, 1934, to augment the U.S. Marine Band and provide music for ceremonial functions at Marine Barracks, Washington, D.C.

Though drum and bugle corps have a historic legacy in the armed services with more than 60 units at one time, The United States Marine Drum & Bugle Corps is currently the only musical unit of its kind serving on active duty in the United States armed forces today.

The history of the unit can be traced to the earliest days of the Marine Corps. All Marine musicians trace their heritage back to the Act of Congress signed in 1798 by President John Adams. This bill formally established the United States Marine Corps and mandated the enlistment of a drum major, fife major, and 32 drummers and fifers. These early musicians, called “field musics,” were used for recruiting, some served aboard ships and even fought alongside other Marines in times of war, while others were retained to form a military band of Marines.

By 1875, the formations of troops in the field changed, making it difficult to signal them with voice commands. In 1881, the fifes were replaced with bugles to signal the troops, but it wasn't until 1892 that the Navy ordered the bugle calls be standardized. Soon there were uniform calls for every kind of troop movement – from “Reveille” early in the morning to “Taps” at the end of the day.

The United States Marine Drum & Bugle Corps, comprised of a drum major, three snare drummers, three tenor drummers, two bass drummers, one cymbal and 16 buglers, was formed in 1934 to augment the United States Marine Band. The unit also provided musical support to ceremonies around the nation's capital and, during World War II, was tasked with Presidential support duties, accompanying President Franklin Delano Roosevelt on his many trips to Warm Springs, GA, acting as his personal guard and providing musical entertainment. In recognition of this service, he awarded the unit a distinctive scarlet and gold citation cord shortly before his death.

1775

The 1st and 2nd Battalions of the Continental Marines enlisted the first drummers and fifers to active duty.

1798

President John Adams signed a bill authorizing the Marine Corps to enlist a drum major, fife major and 32 drummers and fifers.

1804

Marine drummers and fifers valiantly served with distinction in the Battle of Tripoli.

1881

The use of the fife was discontinued and the bugle was adopted to signal troop commands.

1892

The Navy standardized all bugle calls. Prior to this, the captain prescribed the calls aboard his ship. Most remain in use today.

1934

An advanced school for “field musics” and drum and bugle corps was established at Marine Barracks, Washington, D.C.

1945

The drum and bugle corps was awarded the Presidential citation cord by Franklin D. Roosevelt at his retreat in Warm Springs, GA.

1956

The drum and bugle corps at Marine Barracks was designated The United States Marine Drum & Bugle Corps.

2006

General Michael W. Hagee, 33rd Commandant, formally named the unit, “The Commandant’s Own.”

2014

“The Commandant’s Own” marks 80 years of service to both country and Corps.

In the early 1950s, the unit gained considerable acclaim performing for an increasing number of civilian audiences. Music composed specifically for the unique selection of instruments helped establish their reputation for excellence during this period.

In 1956, the unit was designated the official United States Marine Drum & Bugle Corps, “The Commandant’s Own,” by General Randolph M. Pate, the 21st Commandant of the Marine Corps. In 2006, the 33rd Commandant of the Marine Corps, General Michael W. Hagee proclaimed that “The Commandant’s Own” would officially be the moniker of the The United States Marine Drum & Bugle Corps.

In the tradition of their “field music” predecessors, these musicians in “The Commandant’s Own” are Marines in the truest sense of the word. Every enlisted member is a graduate of Marine Corps recruit training and is trained in basic infantry skills. Prior to enlisting, each Marine must pass a demanding audition for service in the Drum & Bugle Corps. Following Recruit Training

and Marine Combat Training, the Marines are assigned to “The Commandant’s Own.”

The U.S. Marine Drum & Bugle Corps performs a variety of music from marches to jazz, patriotic, popular and classical favorites. Comprised of 80 Marine musicians dressed in ceremonial red and white uniforms, “The Commandant’s Own” performs for millions each year and is recognized worldwide as a premier musical marching unit.

This year, “The Commandant’s Own” celebrates 80 years of service to both country and Corps. It continues to maintain the proud traditions of the drum and bugle corps activity and Marine musicians, while continuing to expand the musical horizon with its unique instrumentation and talented performers.

During this anniversary celebration, it is not only appropriate to pause for reflection on a proud history, but also to anticipate the bright future for one of this country’s most notable musical and military organizations.





JANUARY

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
"The Commandant's Own," The U.S. Marine Drum & Bugle Corps marches during the Inaugural Parade for President Ronald Reagan on January 20, 1981. <i>U.S. Marine Corps file photo</i>			1	2	3	4
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FEBRUARY

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
The Drum & Bugle Corps stands at attention during a "Music in Motion" program while on tour in Southern California. <i>Courtesy SSgt Oscar L. Olive IV</i>						1
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MARCH

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Major Brian Dix, Director of “The Commandant’s Own,” signals the saluting battery of cannons to fire, ending a stirring performance of Beethoven’s <i>Ode to Joy</i> at Marine Barracks, Washington, D.C. <i>Courtesy MGySgt Andrew Linden</i>						1
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APRIL

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
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27	28	29	30	"The Commandant's Own" performs a concert at the historic Fort Henry in Kingston, Ontario, Canada. The Marines and the members of the Fort Henry Guard have performed joint ceremonies for over 50 years, both at Fort Henry and at Marine Barracks, Washington, D.C. <i>U.S. Marine Corps file photo</i>		



MAY

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
A joint color guard presents the colors as the national anthems of Norway and the United States are played during a special ceremony performed by His Majesty the King's Guard from Norway and the Marines of Marine Barracks, Washington, D.C. <i>Courtesy SSgt Oscar L. Olive IV</i>				1	2	3
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NEW GEORGIA BOUGAINVILLE IRAWA NEW BRITAIN 1944 MARSHALL ISLANDS MARIANAS ISLANDS IJULU 1945 IWO JIMA OKINAWA * KOREA 1950

UNCOMMON
VALOR
COMMON
COURAGE

* REVOLUTIONARY WAR: 1775 - 1783 * FRENCH NAVAL WAR

JUNE

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
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29	30	The Marine Corps War Memorial, one of the most iconic landmarks of our nation, towers above as the United States Marine Drum & Bugle Corps marches onto the parade deck during a 2013 Sunset Parade. <i>Courtesy Marine Barracks Washington, D.C.</i>				



JULY

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Percussionists perform on the steps of the United States Capitol during a national broadcast of "A Capitol Fourth" concert on PBS as part of Independence Day festivities. <i>Courtesy GySgt Clayton Young</i>		1	2	3	4	5
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AUGUST

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
The finale at the Drum Corps International World Championships is highlighted by “The Commandant’s Own,” who play fanfares while the finalist corps march onto the field before tens of thousands of fans. <i>Courtesy of Drum Corps International</i>					1	2
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SEPTEMBER

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
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14	15	16	17	18	19	20
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28	29	30	The National World War II Memorial in Washington, D.C. plays host to a summer concert series each year. "The Commandant's Own" has performed at the Memorial each year since the monument opened. <i>Courtesy SSgt Oscar L. Olive IV</i>			



CARROLL R
WATSON
LT COL
US ARMY
WORLD WAR II
KOREA
VIETNAM
JUL 22 1926
AUG 21 1986

METRO
MARTIN
2LT COL
US AIR FORCE
WORLD WAR II
KOREA
SEP 23 1917
AUG 11 1982

JAMES P
KEATY
1ST LT
US ARMY
WORLD WAR II
AUG 28 1914

EDGAR W
MOODY
1ST LT
US AIR FORCE
WORLD WAR II

JOSEPH H
BAUGH
1ST LT
US ARMY
WORLD WAR II
AUG 1 1912

ER H
TER
1ST LT
US AIR FORCE
AUG 15 1911
AUG 1 1992

EDWARD
BUN
ESBURG
1ST LT
US ARMY
WORLD WAR II
AUG 1 1912

OCTOBER

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
LCpl Mason Petty performs final honors at Arlington National Cemetery. Among the most cherished and hallowed traditions of the U.S. Marine Drum & Bugle Corps is the honored duty of performing <i>Taps</i> for fallen Marines. <i>U.S. Marine Corps file photo</i>			1	2	3	4
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NOVEMBER

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Lincoln Center's Avery Fisher Hall is home to the New York Philharmonic. "The Commandant's Own" joined the internationally-acclaimed orchestra in a joint concert series in New York City. <i>Courtesy Chris Lee</i>						1
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DECEMBER

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
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28	29	30	31	Major Brian Dix conducts the New York Philharmonic and “The Commandant’s Own” as they perform patriotic selections in Avery Fisher Hall. <i>Courtesy Chris Lee</i>		

2014

