

## The Junior Drum Corps of Windsor Locks

by Mel Montemerlo

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Windsor Locks had three junior (youth) drum corps in the 1950s and 1960s. All marched in local parades, and competed in nearby competitions. The first was the St. Mary's Drum Corps and Brigade Team, which was formed in October 1949 by Reverend Edward B. Conlon. "The Story of Windsor Locks: 1663-1954" says: "The organization has been aided by a series of top-flight trainers and musicians over the past five years, and has won many laurels. The misses Jacqueline Daly and Jane Pastamerlo are the present Majorettes in the Corps, and Miss Marilyn Barbieri is Majorette of the Brigade Drill Team." See the 1955 photo of the St. Mary's Drum Corps in St. Mary's Park, which is now known as Pesci Park.



*Fife & Drum Corps competition at St. Mary's Park, Windsor Locks, Conn.  
St. Mary's Drum and Bugle Corps forms living rosary, about 1955*

St. Mary's Drum Corps included fifes, drums and bugles. It was very active in the early 1950s, but no mention of them exists in local newspapers after 1958.

The Golden Lancers Drum Corps was a second Drum Corps in Windsor Locks. It was started in 1958 by a young couple, Al and Mary Weatherbee, who lived on Litchfield Drive, near Southwest School. The original funding to get the drum corps started was donated by Ray Roncari. It funded the purchase of instruments, uniforms

and a small, used bus. The bus was big enough for the group. It was reliable, and it got the group to and from Drum Corps “meets” (contests) in the nearby area. The group also marched in Windsor Locks parades. See the photo of five of the Golden Lancers members.



**Golden Lancers members.**

Al and Mary Weatherbee deserve a great deal of credit for forming and taking care of the Golden Lancers. The group’s members will never forget the practices, the trips to competitions, an occasional stop at Friendly’s for “Awful-Awfuls” and other ice cream treats. They even went on an excursion in the bus to the East Windsor Drive-in for a movie. Mr. and Mrs. Weatherbee were excellent leaders, teachers, and role models. Unfortunately the Golden Lancers Drum Corps only lasted from 1958 to 1961.

There was a third Drum Corps in Windsor Locks from about 1960 to 1965. It was called the Cavaliers Junior Drum and Bugle Corps, and was sponsored by the Gensi-Viola Post of the American Legion. Frank E. Merrigan was its director. There were 14 articles about it in Springfield Newspapers which cover Windsor Locks news. They dated from 1960 to 1964. A 1960 article said that they were going to raise money to pay for the annual costs of the group. The 1964 article in the Springfield Union said that it was going to be replaced by a “Marching and Maneuvering” drum and bugle corps which would be named the “Majestic Guardsmen Drum and Bugle Corps”. However further information on either the Cavaliers or the Majestic Guardsmen could not be found.

The three Drum and Bugle Corps of Windsor Locks provided youngsters with wholesome after-school and weekend activities from around 1950 to the mid 1960s.

If you would like to read any of my other articles on the history of Windsor Locks, you can download them from my website:

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