

Sgt. Daniel Bissell Ancient Jr. Fife & Drum Corps Records

Finding Aid

Windsor Historical Society
96 Palisado Avenue, Windsor, CT 06095

Creator: Officers of the Sgt. Daniel Bissell Ancient Jr. Fife & Drum Corps, Windsor, CT

Dates: 1975-1986

Extent: 3 linear feet

Accession #: 1987.24.21

Organizational History

The Sgt. Daniel Bissell Ancient Jr. Fife & Drum Corps was founded in the fall of 1974 as a United States Bicentennial project sponsored by the Civitan Club of Windsor, CT, Inc. The local civic group raised the original funds to organize and equip the Corps and maintained an advisory and supporting role until the group disbanded in 1986. The new organization was a member of the Connecticut Fifers and Drummers Association and the Company of Fifers and Drummers, two regional fife and drum associations.

The Corps was named for Windsor's Sgt. Daniel Bissell, a Revolutionary War spy for Gen. George Washington. The group took its signature colors of purple, burgundy, and gold from Bissell's honorary Badge of Military Merit. Children aged between ten and eighteen were eligible to join the Corps. The weekly practices included instruction in playing the fife or drum, marching manoeuvres, and the role of the color guard. An active parent group organized fundraising projects, chaperoned the frequent performances and camping trips, and served as officers in the administration of the fife and drum corps.

The size of the group ranged between 35-50 members, with more in the earlier years when enthusiasm for the Bicentennial was high. They performed in dozens of parades, musters, and competitions throughout Connecticut and southern New England, winning numerous awards for their appearance and music. In 1976 they invited other regional corps to a muster held on the town green in the center of Windsor. The muster became an annual event and attracted upwards of thirty units each year.

Unfortunately, late in 1984, a schism developed in the corps. As a result, Director Francis Dillon established a new group, the Windsor Fife and Drum Corps, with about half of the active members. The remaining Sgt. Daniel Bissell Corps members continued for two more seasons and disbanded at the end of 1986.

Scope and Contents

The records of the Sgt. Daniel Bissell Ancient Jr. Fife & Drum Corps span the years 1975-1986, providing at least partial coverage of the entire decade of the group's existence. Administrative records include bylaws, board minutes, financial records, rosters, correspondence regarding

parades and musters, uniform and equipment inventories, and the weekly informative bulletin provided to the participating corps members and their families. Yearly performance notebooks contain schedules, maps, transportation details, and correspondence regarding the group's performing and competition calendar. Similar notebooks were maintained to plan and organize their annual muster held in Windsor, CT. Handwritten fife and drum music and instructions for teaching marching and drilling manoeuvres complete this collection of records. The Society also has two drums, a fife, flags, banners, rifles, the drum major baton and a uniform from the Sgt. Daniel Bissell Ancient Jr. Fife & Drum Corps.

Arrangement

Series I and II are arranged chronologically.

Series I. Administrative Records

Series II. Performances and Musters

Series III. Music for Fifes and Drums

Series IV. Drill Manuals

Box and Folder Lists

Series I. Administrative Records

- 1.1 Bylaws, 1977-1978
- 1.2 Bylaws, Rules, Regulations, Duties of Officers, 1981
- 1.3 Bylaws, Rules, Regulations, Duties of Officers, 1981, continued
- 1.4 Board Minutes and Financial Records, 1976-1986
- 1.5 Correspondence, 1976-1981, 1985-1986

- 2.1 Equipment and Uniforms
- 2.2 Rosters
- 2.3 Fundraising Events
- 2.4 Bulletins and Weekly Announcements, 1975-1981

- 3.1 Bulletins and Weekly Announcements, 1982-1986

Series II. Performances and Musters

- 3.2 Performances, Master File
- 3.3 Performances, 1975
- 3.4 Performances, 1976
- 3.5 Performances, 1977
- 3.6 Performances, 1978

- 4.1 Performances, 1979
- 4.2 Performances, 1980
- 4.3 Performances, 1981

- 5.1 Performances, 1982
- 5.2 Performances, 1983
- 5.3 Muster Planning, 1976-1984

- 6.1 Muster Booklets, 1977-1983, 1985
- 6.2 Florida Trip, 1979

Series III. Music for Fifes and Drums

- 6.3 Fife Music, Master File
- 6.4 Fife Sheet Music
- 6.5 Drum Music, Master File
- 6.6 Drum Sheet Music

Series IV. Drill Manuals

- 6.7 Instructions for Marching
- 6.8 Baron von Steuben's Regulations, 1966 ed.
- 6.9 Baron von Steuben's Regulations, 1976 ed.

Related Materials

Clubs and Organizations Collection, Poquonock Drum Corps

Subject and Family Files:

Bissell, Daniel

Organizations and Clubs – Fife and Drum Corps

Museum Collection Acc.#1987.24

Subject Terms

Fife and drum corps – Connecticut -- Windsor

Fife and drum corps music

Custodial History

The collection was processed by volunteer Sandra McGraw in January 2013. During processing she found that there was extensive duplication in the boxes of administrative files. These were placed in chronological order and weeded to one copy. Other materials that were removed include equipment catalogs, vehicle insurance records, equipment and uniform sign-out card files, and fundraising files. The Corps was a member of two regional fife and drum associations; the minutes, bylaws, mailing lists, and other records from these organizations were transferred to their respective archives. The finding aid was created by librarian Barbara Goodwin in February 2013.