

And the Bands Play On



*U.S. Military Bands Provide the
Armed Forces with More than just TAPS*



Music has been an integral part of our American heritage since the formation of the United States. It inspires the full range of human emotions, transcends cultural, linguistic, and generational boundaries, and motivates or inspires us. One major aspect of our American musical heritage involved the early establishment of military bands which were customary in Europe and other parts of the world. As people emigrated to the U.S., they brought their musical traditions with them.

The tradition of music in the American military began with the fife and drum corps of the late 1700's. The use of the corps was an essential part of battlefield communications. They relayed orders, signaled events, and provided marching music as battalions moved to new locations. The rhythmic music improved morale and kept soldiers moving during these often long and wearisome trips. In the eighteenth century, fifers and drummers were often boys, aged ten to eighteen. Advertisements calling for young musicians, (such as the one at right), were common during the period.

The importance of the role of fife and drum corps in any military organization was eloquently expressed in this excerpt from a speech given by Rudyard Kipling in 1915:

"I am not a musician, so if I speak as a barbarian I must ask you and several gentlemen on the platform here to forgive me. From the lowest point of view, a few drums and fifes in the battalion means at least five extra miles in a route march, quite apart from the fact that they can swing a battalion back to quarters happy and composed in its mind, no matter how wet or tired its

body may be. Even when there is no route marching, the mere come and go - the roll and flourishing of drums and fifes around the barracks - is as warming and cheering as the sight of a fire in a room. A band - not necessarily a full band, but a band of a dozen brasses and wood-winds - is immensely valuable in the district where men are billeted. It revives memories, it quickens association, it opens and unites the hearts of men more surely than any other appeal can, and in this respect it aids recruiting perhaps more than any other agency..."

"...Further, no one, not even the adjutant can say for certain where the soul of the battalion lives, but the expression of that soul is most often found in the band. It stands to reason that 1,200 men whose lives are pledged to each other must have some common means of expression, some common means of conveying their moods and their thoughts to themselves and their world. The band feels the moods and interprets the thoughts. A wise and sympathetic bandmaster - and the masters that I have met have been that - can lift a battalion out of depression, cheer it in sickness, and steady and recall it to itself in times of almost unendurable stress..."

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Alexandria, June 12, 1775
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THOMAS STERLING
THOMAS HOOKINS

THE MARINE BAND

John Adams established the first official military band through an act of Congress in 1798. As America's first professional musical organization, the Marine Band's specific mission was to provide music for the U.S. President and the Commander of the Marine Corps. Named "The President's Own Band" by Thomas Jefferson, the Marine Band performed at



Named "The President's Own Band" by Thomas Jefferson, the Marine band performs on the South Portico of the White House.

inaugurations and other events of National importance. Today, Marine Band musicians perform at the White House for over 200 events each year. The band also performs in hundreds of public and official performances annually throughout the Washington, DC area. Following a tradition begun by the band's 17th director, John Philip Sousa, the Marine Band tours a different region of the country each fall. From 1880 to 1892, Sousa was responsible for developing the Marine Band into an internationally renowned musical organization, and was the first organization to produce sound recordings. During this time Sousa wrote his most well known marches, and was dubbed "The March King."

The need for solo, chamber, and ensemble group performances requiring a wide range of musical styles demands great flexibility and skill from military band musicians. Today military band musicians are selected with as much scrutiny as they would be if auditioning for a major symphony orchestra. Many are graduates of prominent music schools and hold advanced degrees. The Marine Band, along with the other armed forces

bands, represent an excellent career opportunity for some of the best professional musicians in the U.S. They are recruited into the military specifically

for band duty, and many choose to stay for the duration of their careers.

In 1998, the year of its 200th anniversary, the U.S. Marine Band was inducted into the Classical Music Hall of Fame in Cincinnati, Ohio and continues its tradition of excellence today.

IN THE ARMY NOW

In addition to the U.S. Marine Band, the other three branches of the U.S. military sponsor music programs. The U.S. Army retains the largest number of musicians, totaling 114. First established in 1922, and commonly referred to as 'Pershing's Own,' the U.S. Army Band was founded by General John 'Blackjack' Pershing who became interested in the idea of music in the military after seeing European military bands perform during World War I.

First established in 1922, and commonly referred to as 'Pershing's Own,' the U.S. Army Band was founded by General John 'Blackjack' Pershing. In the 1970's, The Army's Blues Jazz Ensemble, The United States Army Chorale and the United States Brass Band were officially added.





The Navy Band is recognized by many as “The World’s Finest” and is staffed by some of the nation’s best musicians. Established on March 4, 1925 by an Act of Congress, the Navy Band has participated in 19 presidential inaugurations and presents honors at White House ceremonies and memorial services in Arlington National Cemetery.

Early on, the band gained national recognition and critical acclaim for its network and radio broadcasts. National and international tours were scheduled after World War II, and the U.S. Army Band began to form specialty groups within the organization to respond to growing demand. The U.S. Army Chorus, Ceremonial Band, and Herald Trumpets and Strings all became available for special performances. In 1963, U.S. Army Band bugler Keith Clark performed Taps at the graveside service for John F. Kennedy’s funeral at Arlington National Cemetery.

In the 1970’s, the Army Band’s state of the art training and performance facility,

Brucker Hall, was built in Ft. Meyer Virginia. It consists of two rehearsal and performance studios, houses The Army Band’s music library, and contains recording facilities, offices, and storage facilities. The Army Blues Jazz ensemble, The United States Army Chorale, and The United States Army Brass Band were officially established as regular performing ensembles during this time.

The Army Band has performed at numerous national historical events, including the Bicentennial celebration in 1976, the 1984 Summer Olympic Games in Los Angeles, and the 1990 Desert Storm Victory Parade. In 1997, the band celebrated 75 years of musical

professionalism, international tours, and national service with a concert at Carnegie Hall in New York.

FROM THE SEA

The U.S. Navy has a similar tradition of musical excellence. Music aboard Navy ships was originally used as a way to relieve the daily rigors of shipboard life. These simple expressions soon evolved into a more formal use of music for sounding calls, giving orders, and for ceremonial purposes. Shipboard trumpeters, drummers and fifers gave way to full bands existing on Navy ships

as a separate part of the crew with specific duties.

The Naval Academy band was created in the 1800's and grew dramatically during the Civil War. During World War I, many private symphony orchestra musicians joined the Navy to 'play their part' in the war effort.

In 1925, President Coolidge officially established the U.S. Navy Band, and the band embarked on their first tour that same year. The Navy Band has performed at such historical events as the return of Charles Lindbergh's trans-Atlantic flight, and Admiral Byrd's return from the South Pole.

The band has responded to national ceremonial needs such as daily funerals at Arlington National Cemetery during World War II, presidential inaugurations, national holiday observations, diplomatic arrivals, and the United in Memory memorial service at the Pentagon in 2001.

Four specialty groups within The Navy Band organization help to fill the demand for diverse music. The Sea Chanters Chorus, the Commodores Jazz Ensemble, the Country Current Country-Bluegrass Group, and the Cruisers Rock Ensemble all perform for specialty events as needed. Several chamber groups are also available upon request.

ON THE AIR

The youngest of the armed forces bands is the U.S. Air Force band. It was established and embarked on its first tour in 1941. The Air Force Band has earned a distinguished reputation as America's international musical ambassador. The band has sponsored 17 international tours, visiting more than 50 countries and numerous world capitols.

After its inception, George S. Howard, commander and conductor from 1944 to 1963, sought and obtained commissioned officer ranks for all commanders and conductors of Air Force bands. This action set a precedent for all military band organizations, and the Army, Navy and Marine Corps soon followed suit.

In October of 1945, the Bandsmen Training School was established and

Howard was named leader, in addition to his band duties. From 1954 to 1963, the band endured repeated downsizing and many reorganizations, but in 1964, the organization stabilized under the command and direction of Arnold D. Gabriel. The band resumed its touring schedule performing in different parts of the U.S., and in 1966 began a guest artist series first featuring local talent, and later, prominent celebrities. Musicians and conductors, such as Doc Severinsen and Aaron Copeland, appeared as guests of the Air Force Band. The program is still in existence today and the guest list tops 300 to date. The U.S Air Force band continues to act as America's musical ambassador to the international community and remains a highly respected organization enjoying critical success around the globe.

Like other military band organizations, The Air Force Band has a number of

The flagship musical ensemble of The United States Air Force Band is the Concert Band. This 65-piece, world-class symphonic wind ensemble presents over 100 concerts annually.



diversified groups that perform in a wide variety of musical styles. The Singing Sergeants, Airmen of Note, Air Force Strings, Ceremonial Brass, High Flight, Silver Wings, and Chamber Players combined have performed live for over 100,000 people, and have reached millions more in radio and television broadcasts.

GSA is pleased to support these extraordinary organizations by offering a full range of musical instruments and accessories through **GSA Schedule 78**, entitled **Sports and More**. Under Special Item Number 192-41, GSA has a number of vendors from which these

organizations can supply their personnel with the tools they need to complete their musical mission.

Apart from military bands, GSA vendors provide parts, accessories and new instruments to a vast array of organizations here at home and internationally, including music schools, recreational centers, military bases and hospitals. The benefits of experiencing music in our lives is fully realized by these organizations, and GSA is proud to support them.

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Sources for *And the Bands Play On*:

U.S. Air Force Band:

www.bolling.af.mil/band

U.S. Army Band:

www.army.mil/armyband

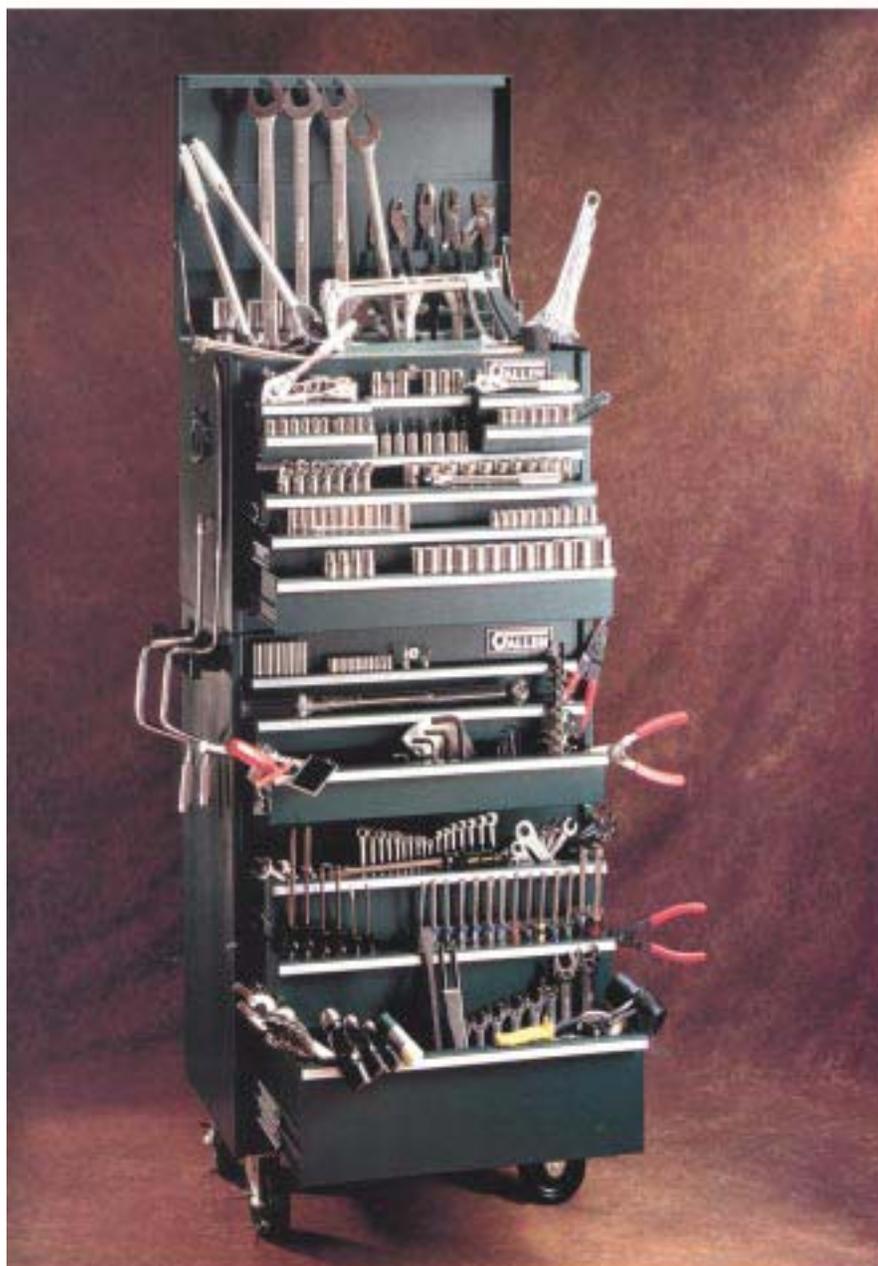
U.S. Navy Band:

www.navyband.navy.mil

U.S. Marine Band:

www.marineband.usmc.mil





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