

TWO OF AMERICA'S PREEMINENT  
FIFE AND DRUM CORPS  
THE COLONIAL WILLIAMSBURG FIFES AND DRUMS  
AND THE U.S. ARMY OLD GUARD FIFE AND DRUM CORPS  
SHARE COMMON ROOTS AND LEGACY

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Over 50 years ago the Colonial Williamsburg Fifes and Drums made its first performance by two fifers and two drummers on July 4, 1958.<sup>1</sup> During the 1960's the CW Corps became one of the preeminent fife and drum corps in America, playing traditional historic music and wearing Revolutionary War uniforms. Over the years the CW Corps, which celebrated its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2008, has become an iconic symbol of Colonial Williamsburg itself.

From its earliest years, the CW Corps shared common roots and close contacts with the U.S. Army Old Guard Fife and Drum Corps, which also plays traditional historic music and wears Revolutionary War uniforms. The contacts between the two corps have continued for 50 years to this day. Indeed, in many ways, it can be said the two units are sister corps.

The U.S. Army Old Guard Fife and Drum Corps celebrates its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year. This corps is the only unit of its kind in the U.S. Military. It is part of the 3<sup>rd</sup> U.S. Infantry Regiment, "The Old Guard," which is the oldest active duty infantry regiment in the U.S. Army, stationed at Ft. Myer, Virginia. The regiment received its name from General Winfield Scott during a victory parade in Mexico City in 1847 following its valorous performance in the Mexican War.<sup>2</sup> The unit plays for parades, pageants, dignitaries and historical celebrations in Washington, D.C., and around the country.

In 1960 both corps received the same training in colonial drill, music and drumming, known as "Ancient Martial Music" or the "ancient" style. Individuals and corps that perform this style are known as "Ancients." This style most often is defined by authenticity of music, rudimental drumming, instruments, uniforms and drill for the colonial period and Revolutionary War, but also extending to the War of 1812 and shortly thereafter.

The cadence of the ancient style is slower than modern marching bands. The slower pace accurately recreates the marching speed of 18<sup>th</sup> Century armies, which would be marching to the beat of the drummers.<sup>3</sup> The slower tempo also reflects the "open" style of rudimental drumming authentic to the period, in which the rudiments (drum beats) are carefully and fully executed. Because drum beats were used by armies (from before the American Revolution through the Civil War) as signals to the troops, the drum beats had to have distinctive sounds so they would be understood by the troops. As a

result, distinctive rudiments were developed. Rudiments to the drum are like scales to musical instruments.

From their very beginnings both corps had similar missions that included hundreds of performances a year. The CW Corps plays for visitors to Colonial Williamsburg, the restored capital of colonial Virginia. The Old Guard Corps performs for U.S. Army ceremonies in and outside of Washington, D.C. Both units also perform for dignitaries and heads of state visiting Colonial Williamsburg or Washington, D.C., respectively, and both corps travel to events around the country. Unique to the Old Guard Corps is the additional mission of performing at the White House for arriving dignitaries.

Such performances and schedules demanded excellence and both units established rigorous training and rehearsal schedules. Unlike other fife and drum corps in the early 1960's, Colonial Williamsburg and the U.S. Army had the financial resources to equip and maintain their units and, significantly, the members of both units were paid musicians. The CW Corps musicians were high school aged boys employed part time to perform with the CW Militia and the Old Guard musicians were full time U. S. Army soldiers. Within a very short time, the two corps became prominent on the national fife and drum scene and joined leaders in the then re-emerging return to the ancient style of fifing and drumming in America. The modern post WWII re-emergence of the ancient style was centered in Connecticut and the adjoining areas of New York, Massachusetts and Rhode Island. In particular, the several towns along and near the Connecticut River were the epicenter of this traditional martial music, vestiges of which had remained in these areas since colonial times.<sup>4</sup>

At the center of the ties between the two corps in 1960, and the soon to be achieved success of both units, was SP5 George P. Carroll, a percussionist with The U.S. Army Band stationed at Ft. Myer, Virginia.<sup>5</sup> He was a 27 year old self-taught drummer who had acquired a special interest in American fifing and drumming. Carroll was born in Nova Scotia, Canada, and began his musical career as a bugler at the age of 12. Within a year he taught himself to drum and switched to the snare drum. At the age of 17 he joined the Royal Canadian Navy as a drummer and served on several ships. On one voyage Carroll's ship docked in Rhode Island where a fife and drum corps welcomed them. Carroll also saw a colonial muster. He recalls: "that's when I first got to hear fifes and it really grabbed my attention because it was a complete revelation to me on the American style of fifes and drums and, indeed, to have a country as modern as the U.S. to have such historic martial music."<sup>6</sup>

In 1955 Carroll joined the Black Watch Military Band. In 1957, while on a trip to Washington, D.C., to play for Queen Elizabeth, II, Carroll auditioned for The U.S. Army Band and was immediately invited to join. A year later his enlistment in the Black Watch ended and he enlisted in the U.S. Army as a percussionist in The U.S. Army Band at Ft. Meyer, Virginia.

Carroll, in his personal capacity, began researching colonial fife and drum music at the Smithsonian Institution and the Library of Congress. He collected hundreds of

period fife tunes and drum beats.<sup>7</sup> Carroll used his research to interpret and translate the old drum beatings into modern music scores. He also wrote authentic drum parts for many historic fife tunes that had none. In 1959, he formed the Continental Boys Fife and Drum Corps in Arlington, Virginia, that played this authentic music and he was helping to train a small fife and drum corps in Alexandria, Virginia, as well.<sup>8</sup>

In 1960, all of these factors came together to place Carroll at the center of creating a fife and drum corps for the U. S. Army and in the training of the then fledgling CW Corps.

In the last months of 1959, Carroll was approached by the commander of The U.S. Army Band, LTC Hugh Curry, to help form a drum and bugle corps within The Old Guard stationed at Ft. Myer, Virginia. According to Carroll, Major General C.K. Gailey, the commander of The Military District of Washington, D.C., wanted to hear a bugle call at Ft. Myer on payday. MG Gailey had sent word to The U.S. Army Band and The Old Guard asking if they could get a drum and bugle corps started in The Old Guard.<sup>9</sup>

At that time The Old Guard already had within its ceremonial Honor Guard Company a color guard that wore the 1784 uniform of the unit with blue coats faced with red on the cuffs and lapels. Thus, The Old Guard was the natural place for the new musical unit that would wear uniforms from the same era, but with the colors reversed. It was the 18<sup>th</sup> Century practice for musicians, who were non-combatants, to wear the opposite colors of the men in ranks. The opposite colors would help the enemy identify the musicians and avoid firing on them. Thus, the coats of the regimental uniforms of both the CW Corps and the Old Guard Corps are red faced with blue.

LTC Curry knew that Carroll had been researching colonial fifing and drumming and had just started a boys fife and drum corps in Arlington, Virginia. LTC Curry asked Carroll what would be needed to create a drum and bugle corps for the U.S. Army and to prepare a proposed TO&E (Table of Organization and Equipment) for such a unit. Carroll replied that “it would not be authentic to form just a drum and bugle corps because the 3<sup>rd</sup> Infantry dated to 1784, they would have played fifes and not bugles, and the Honor Guard Company color guard already was wearing the colonial regimental uniform from the period.”<sup>10</sup> Carroll prepared a proposed TO&E, but without bugles.

Carroll recalls, “The Colonel [Curry] sent the TO&E to General Gailey who said you can have a fife and drum corps with a colonial theme and still have bugles, and when a two-star general says he wants bugles, he gets bugles, but we were able to reinstate the fife back into the U.S. Army, and it’s still there and probably always will be, and that’s a nice thing to have”.<sup>11</sup> The activation orders were cut on February 23, 1960. The Old Guard Corps was authorized ten drummers, fifteen fifers, ten buglers and a drum major.<sup>12</sup>

1LT Henry G. (Glen) Watson, the Executive Officer of The Old Guard Honor Guard Company, was assigned additional duties as officer-in-charge of the new musical unit. Carroll was detached from The U.S. Army Band to The Old Guard, and he and 1LT Watson began to organize the new unit.<sup>13</sup>

At that time the American fife and drum community was relatively small and news spread rapidly. Soon after the activation of the Old Guard Corps on February 23, 1960, Colonial Williamsburg officials learned of its formation and of the role of Carroll.<sup>14</sup> Official contacts between the two organizations began just two and one-half months later on May 12, 1960.

Interestingly, Carroll already had become acquainted with Colonial Williamsburg. In 1959, Colonial Williamsburg was still developing its fife and drum corps, which had been created in 1958. For years, Colonial Williamsburg had been making contacts with and obtaining assistance from fife and drum leaders in the ancient style including Edward “Ed” Olsen, the President of the New York Fife and Drum Association, who later would become recognized as the foremost historian on the development of traditional American fifing and drumming.<sup>15</sup> To provide an example of a colonial period corps, Colonial Williamsburg had invited the Lancraft Fife and Drum Corps of New Haven, Connecticut, one of the oldest and best corps in the country, to perform in Williamsburg at the “Prelude to Independence” ceremonies in May of 1958 and 1959.<sup>16</sup>

In May of 1959, Carroll learned of the scheduled Lancraft performance in Williamsburg. He knew of their reputation so he traveled to Williamsburg to see them perform with the CW Militia.<sup>17</sup> Soon after his visit to Williamsburg, Carroll contacted William D. (“Bill”) Geiger, the Director of the Colonial Williamsburg Craft Shops. Geiger was a military historian and the supervisor of the CW Militia and its Fifes and Drums. In 1953, Geiger had been responsible for preparing the organization plan for the CW Militia. From the very beginning, these plans included fifers and drummers.<sup>18</sup> Geiger was determined to see Colonial Williamsburg have a fife and drum corps performing the ancient style. In a remarkable coincidence, MG Gailey, the originator of the Old Guard Corps, and Geiger, the organizer and supervisor of the CW Corps, had WWII connections. According to Carroll, Geiger was an operations sergeant on then Colonel Gailey’s staff during the Battle of the Bulge.

Geiger invited Carroll to Williamsburg for a meeting at which they discussed Carroll’s interest in fifing and drumming, his research, and the CW Corps. Soon after the meeting Carroll inquired about Colonial Williamsburg publishing his music.<sup>19</sup> He also offered his services to help train the Colonial Williamsburg fifers and drummers. In a letter dated September 19, 1959, Carroll inquired about his offer and concluded by saying “of course I would not want anything for this [training] except the satisfaction of seeing Williamsburg with an authentic and proper fife and drum corps.”<sup>20</sup>

In a letter dated September 27, 1959, Colonial Williamsburg thanked Carroll for his offer but advised him the program of regular militia musters would end in October and concluded with “we could not impose on your kindness at this time. We will certainly keep this offer in mind and if you feel you can help us next year then we will get in touch with you.”<sup>21</sup> That statement would prove prophetic. Within months Carroll was at the center of creating the Old Guard Corps in the spring of 1960 and thereafter training the CW Corps.

Upon receipt of the activation orders for the Old Guard Corps in late February, 1960, 1LT Watson and Carroll needed to find musicians. Carroll recalls, "1LT Watson said we can't go with regular musicians because it would take too long because they would have to go through the Navy Music School. We were in a hurry because they wanted us to perform at a ceremony on May 1<sup>st</sup>, less than three months away. We were told that we could get anybody from The Military District of Washington. In other words, we could shanghai them, but we decided that would not work. Instead we decided to ask people to join, because only if they wanted to do this, would it work. So word went out. We advertised that the unit would restore the old fife, drum and bugle to the Army, would be wearing 18<sup>th</sup> Century clothing and would be playing obsolete instruments. And it worked. We ended up with 80 names."<sup>22</sup>

On March 24, 1960, the Old Guard Corps filed its first morning report, showing 16 men accounted for. By late April the number had grown to 34. Of the original 34 members only eight had ever played a musical instrument. The task of training the recruits, who were infantrymen, was assigned to three members of The U.S. Army Band: SP5 Robert Sheppard was assigned the fifes; SP4 Roland Lauziere was assigned the bugles; and SP5 George Carroll was assigned the drums and as technical advisor on music and drill. In just two months they had the Old Guard Corps ready to perform.<sup>23</sup> Carroll received the Army Commendation Medal for his work in creating the Old Guard Corps.

Soon after its activation, the Old Guard Corps ordered a set of hand-made wooden, rope tensioned drums from Charles "Buck" Soistman.<sup>24</sup> These drums were the same "Grand Republic" model drums Sanford A. "Gus" Moeller<sup>25</sup> had been making. Moeller was a master craftsman of handmade drums. The name was coined by Moeller to describe his drums that were 17 inches wide at the head and 21 or 22 inches long, which accurately replicate 18<sup>th</sup> Century drums. These drums, also known as "long" or "field" drums, produce a deep drum beat that can be heard for miles, a necessity on 18<sup>th</sup> Century battlefields because the drums were used to convey commands to the troops. Moeller also was a passionate advocate and teacher of rudimental drumming who once marched while drumming 245 miles from his home in Mt. Vernon, New York, to Boston to demonstrate the open rudimental drumming style.

Carroll knew Soistman because in 1959 The U.S. Army Band had ordered a set of drums from Moeller, but he had become ill so Soistman had to finish the set.<sup>26</sup> Carroll had picked up the drums from Soistman's drum shop, The Rolling Drum Shop, in Middle River, a suburb of Baltimore, Maryland. While the Old Guard Corps' drums were being made, Soistman loaned drums to the Old Guard Corps including several painted with a shield that had red and white stripes below a field of white stars on a blue background. These drums also were loaned to the CW Corps later in 1960 and they show up in the earliest photos of both corps.

Colonel Richard M. Lee, the commanding officer of the 3<sup>rd</sup> U.S. Infantry, was friends with Carlyse Humelsine, the President of Colonial Williamsburg. In May of

1960, Col. Lee contacted Humelsine to ask for a meeting between Colonial Williamsburg and 1LT Watson and Carroll. The purpose of the meeting was to seek aid from Colonial Williamsburg in developing the Old Guard Corps. Colonial Williamsburg, with its extensive research into the colonial period, could be a resource for the Old Guard Corps. Mr. Humelsine asked Geiger, the supervisor of the CW Corps and the natural choice, to attend the meeting on behalf of Colonial Williamsburg.<sup>27</sup>

On May 12, 1960, the meeting took place in Williamsburg. Among other things, the Old Guard Corps made a request to borrow four original Brown Bess Muskets to be used on their first trip to a New England fife and drum muster that July. The CW Militia had been firing original muskets from its collection of firearms on display in the Powder Magazine, the restored arsenal of colonial Virginia. To help debut the new unit nationally, the Old Guard Corps had chosen to attend the Deep River Ancient Muster, in Deep River, Connecticut, the oldest and largest muster of Ancients in the country.

In a memorandum written the next day, Geiger wrote that he had met with “Lieutenant Henry G. Watson and Sergeant (sic) George P. Carroll...who were in Williamsburg to seek our aid in developing their fife and drum corps.” The misnomer to “Sergeant” Carroll found its way into correspondence, press releases and newspaper articles in Williamsburg for years. Geiger gave LT Watson and Carroll advice on how to procure uniforms and they discussed “problems of mutual interest.”<sup>28</sup> The Old Guard Corps did not start out wearing the authentic colonial uniform of the unit. For the early performances they wore the Army tropical worsted or the “Class-A” green uniform. Soon thereafter, they were able to borrow colonial uniforms, which they wore until their custom made authentic dress “regimental” uniforms were procured later that summer.

Just as important as the discussions, Geiger reported that he was “tremendously impressed with Sergeant Carroll’s knowledge of fife and drum music of this period. He is without a doubt the best informed person in this area that I have met.” Geiger also reported that Carroll had “prepared a book, in draft form, on the music of this period, with fife and drum parts written for B-flat wooden fifes and wooden shelled rope-tied drums.”<sup>29</sup>

At the May meeting Carroll renewed his offer to help train the CW Corps. Although they had been performing for over a year with the CW Militia for visitors at weekly militia musters and at special events in Williamsburg, they had received no formal training in colonial music and rudimentary drumming. Geiger knew the CW Corps needed professional training to survive and he saw in Carroll the source of that training. He predicted “I am confident that his [Carroll’s] instructions would result in a high degree of authenticity which we presently do not have.”<sup>30</sup> Within months Geiger’s prediction became true.

The final topic discussed at the May meeting involved future joint performances to showcase the two upstart corps. Geiger reported that “both Lieutenant Watson and Sergeant Carroll are anxious to bring this 3<sup>rd</sup> Infantry group to Williamsburg.” Colonial Williamsburg already was planning a special “Colonial Militia Muster” in November for

the national meeting of the Associated Press Managing Editors. Geiger immediately recognized this muster would be perfect for a visit by the Old Guard Corps. He concluded his memorandum by stating, “the 3<sup>rd</sup> Infantry group will be ready by the time of the meeting of the AP Managing Editors...I strongly urge that we consider them for this program.”<sup>31</sup>

It appears both Geiger and the Old Guard Corps recognized the numerous benefits of cooperation between their organizations. Not only could they share research and advice but, as with any upstart endeavor, both needed to prove their worth with performances that would impress their audiences and the decision-makers in their chains of command.

In the spring of 1960 the futures of both corps were not certain. The young CW Corps fifers and drummers were self taught and had a repertoire of only a handful of tunes and no authentic rudimental drum beatings. They had successfully joined the CW Militia with its full schedule of militia musters and special events, which had delighted visitors to the restored colonial capital, but they were far from the unit envisioned by Geiger and Colonial Williamsburg.<sup>32</sup> The mission of Colonial Williamsburg to accurately portray the past eventually would require the CW Corps to improve. In addition, six of the first generation members of the unit would graduate from high school in 1961, thus requiring the corps to replenish its ranks.

The Old Guard Corps faced similar concerns. The corps was provisional, having been activated only on orders from MG Gailey. It was created using soldiers from within The Old Guard at Ft. Myer. As such, the soldier musicians remained on the roles of their originally assigned Old Guard companies, being detached for duty to the fife and drum corps.<sup>33</sup> To survive, the Old Guard Corps needed to earn its place. The music and drill would have to meet the highest standards, and the scrutiny of several critical audiences including other units in The Old Guard, the Pentagon and the U.S. Army itself. Even if the required proficiency was achieved, the Old Guard Corps, being the first unit of its kind and a novelty, needed to be accepted by the U.S. Army.

The key for both corps in 1960 would be to learn the authentic music and drill and then to demonstrate their skills with their performances. Also, obtaining recognition from the national fife and drum community would validate their achievements. Such recognition could come from attendance at fife and drum musters, the traditional and unique gatherings of fife and drum units. Thus, it is no surprise the Old Guard Corps planned to attend in July of 1960 the Deep River Ancient Muster, the premier gathering of ancient fifing and drumming in America.

The importance of such performances also was evident at the first meeting of the two units in May, at which the possibility of the Old Guard Corps attending a special muster in Williamsburg later that year was discussed. Both organizations recognized the publicity that would come from attendance at such events.<sup>34</sup>

The May 12, 1960, meeting in Williamsburg was a huge success and galvanized the relationship between the Old Guard Corps (through Carroll) and the CW Corps (through Geiger). The meeting resulted in accelerated contacts between the organizations and the continuing exchange of information and advice. Geiger and Carroll developed a close working relationship and became friends sharing their mutual passion for historical accuracy.

Soon after the May meeting, arrangements were made for the Old Guard Corps to receive training from the CW Militia on the Von Steuben Manual of Arms for the Brown Bess muskets they were planning to take to Deep River. A contingent of Old Guard Corps members spent several days in Williamsburg for the training. Curiously, they were quartered at the Coast Guard Station in Yorktown, Virginia.<sup>35</sup> If they thought the training would be easy, they very likely were surprised. The Captain of the CW Militia was Lloyd “Nick” Payne, a former U.S. Marine Corps drill sergeant and combat veteran.

On June 15, 1960, Geiger sent to Carroll “...information you requested on the drum beats. The source of this information is the MILITARY GUIDE 1776.” The Old Guard Corps was learning the various colonial duty calls and was planning to make them part of their performance at the Deep River Muster in July. Geiger also advised Carroll that the request for a loan of four muskets for the Old Guard Corps’ trip to Deep River had been sent to the Colonial Williamsburg Collections Department for approval,<sup>36</sup> which approval was granted a short time later.

On July 8, 1960, Carroll and several members of the Old Guard Corps began instructing the CW Corps in Williamsburg.<sup>37</sup> For the next several months Carroll continued to make weekend trips to Williamsburg to train the CW Corps. The CW fifers and drummers were trained exactly as the Old Guard Corps members were being trained, including a heavy dose of military discipline that understandably was met by the teenagers with some resistance. Carroll’s research into colonial fife tunes and drum beatings had produced a body of music that became the repertoires of both corps. His music and insistence on authenticity of drill, music and rudimental drumming was the common mold from which both corps were formed.

On July 16, 1960, the Old Guard Corps attended the Deep River Ancient Muster. Their performance showcased the authentic music and rudimental drumming the Ancients had been promoting. The Old Guard Corps also put on a demonstration of the manual of arms using duty calls to fire the original Brown Bess muskets borrowed from Colonial Williamsburg. The muskets had been flown from Williamsburg to Ft. Myer on an Army helicopter and they were returned the same way.<sup>38</sup> The Old Guard Corps’ Deep River performance was a total success and received the acclaim and recognition of the Ancients.<sup>39</sup> A contingent of the Continental Boys Fife and Drum Corps also attended the muster and received praise for their performance.

A week later, on July 23, 1960, these two corps traveled to Williamsburg to perform at a ceremony marking the first reading in 1776 of the Declaration of

Independence in the colonial capital. It was the first performance in Williamsburg of the Old Guard Corps, just five months to the day after its activation.<sup>40</sup>

Sometime in the summer Colonial Williamsburg ordered its first two snare drums from Soistman. These were the same “Grand Republic” models just purchased by the Old Guard Corps. The deep sound of the rudimental drum beatings played on these drums gave the CW Corps and Old Guard Corps a commanding presence whenever they performed. Soistman also loaned two “Shield” drums to the CW Corps. These were two of the same drums loaned to the Old Guard Corps a few months earlier. The CW Corps played these drums into 1961, when they were replaced by two more new Soistman drums ordered by Colonial Williamsburg.<sup>41</sup>

The training of the CW fifers and drummers progressed rapidly and, at Carroll’s suggestion, Geiger decided to enter the CW Corps in the Southern Atlantic Regional Fife and Drum Muster in Arlington, Virginia, scheduled for November 5, 1960.<sup>42</sup> It was hoped the winning of medals at this muster would provide valuable publicity for the unit that had improved so well under Carroll’s instruction. In numerous letters and memoranda, Geiger and others in Colonial Williamsburg recognized Carroll’s responsibility for the improvement of the CW Corps.<sup>43</sup>

In 1960, Carlisle Humelsine, the President of Colonial Williamsburg, also was friends with Wilbur M. Brucker, the Secretary of the Army. Humelsine knew Secretary Brucker when Humelsine worked in the State Department prior to accepting the presidency of Colonial Williamsburg. On September 9, 1960, Humelsine invited Secretary Brucker to a “special eighteenth-century Militia ceremony in Williamsburg” to honor him.<sup>44</sup> Although Secretary Brucker could not attend, the CW Corps most certainly would have performed at the muster and it is very likely the Old Guard Corps would have been invited to perform as well.

In a letter dated September 14, 1960, Geiger and his family were invited by Col. Lee to attend the Organizational Day Ceremonies of The Old Guard on September 21, 1960.<sup>45</sup> Geiger could not attend and he so advised Col. Lee in a letter dated September 15, 1960. In the letter Geiger also advised Col. Lee that The Old Guard could borrow for the second time “four 39-inch Brown Bess Muskets for this performance.”

Colonial Williamsburg also loaned two spontoons to The Old Guard for the Organizational Day ceremonies.<sup>46</sup> One of these very likely was used by the Drum Major of the Old Guard Corps. To this day the Drum Major of the Old Guard Corps uses a spontoon, rather than the traditional mace, to issue silent orders to the unit. In 1961 Colonial Williamsburg gave a spontoon to the Old Guard Corps.<sup>47</sup>

In the September 14<sup>th</sup> letter, Geiger also formally asked if the Old Guard Corps could perform at the November 16<sup>th</sup> special muster for the Associated Press Managing Editors, which performance had been first raised back in May. With a bit of bravado Geiger asked that the Old Guard Corps bring only its fifes and drums, stating “we do not feel the bugles would be appropriate for this program.”<sup>48</sup>

Although Geiger could not attend the September 21<sup>st</sup> Organizational Day ceremonies, he was invited to bring members of the CW Corps to see a performance of the Old Guard Corps on September 24, 1960. Geiger and five members of the CW Corps made the trip, which was the first visit by the CW Corps to the Old Guard Corps,<sup>49</sup> and may have been the first official visit by any fife and drum corps to the Old Guard Corps.

On October 19, 1960, the Old Guard Corps and the CW Corps actually performed together at the Yorktown Day ceremonies in Yorktown, Virginia, commemorating the surrender of the British on that day in 1781. A photograph shows members of the CW Corps marching and playing in the ranks with the Old Guard Corps.<sup>50</sup> This was the second joint appearance of the two corps in 1960.

On November 5, 1960, the two corps appeared together for the third time at the Southern Atlantic Regional Muster in Arlington, Virginia.<sup>51</sup> The 1960 muster saw several New England corps attend, including the Mt. Vernon (N.Y.) Colonial Greens, in which Moeller had been a member.

Another member of the Colonial Greens, who attended the Arlington muster, was Patrick (“Pat”) Cooperman.<sup>52</sup> Cooperman was a drummer and part time wood turner who made drumsticks that he sold at musters. Carroll had met Cooperman at a New England muster in 1959 and had purchased some drumsticks for the Continental Boys Fife and Drum Corps. Within a short time Carroll and Cooperman became friends. In the years to come Cooperman expanded into making fifes and hand made wooden, rope tensioned drums in the tradition of Moeller and Soistman. Cooperman’s company became a supplier of fifes, drums and drumsticks for both the CW Corps and the Old Guard Corps, and remains so today.

While at the Arlington muster it is quite likely the CW Corps and the Old Guard Corps rehearsed for the November special muster in Williamsburg.<sup>53</sup> At the Arlington muster the CW Corps won numerous medals that received the press coverage and support in Williamsburg that Geiger had hoped for.

Just 11 days later, on November 16<sup>th</sup>, the CW Corps and the Old Guard Corps performed together for the second time at the “Colonial Militia Muster” in Williamsburg for the Associated Press Managing Editors, which first had been discussed at the May 12th meeting. It was the two units’ fourth joint appearance in four months. This muster was important to both corps because of the press coverage that would result. At the time this muster was the biggest such event ever staged by Colonial Williamsburg. A press release publicizing the muster said “some forty costumed fifers and drummers will provide authentic military music while thirty militia men fire volleys from their 200-year-old Brown Bess muskets in a variety of formations.”<sup>54</sup> The “massed fifers and drummers” of the two corps played Three Cheers, God Save Great Washington, and On the Road to Boston.<sup>55</sup> The muster was a huge success and further solidified the close relationship of the two corps.

Geiger invited Carroll to visit Williamsburg over the 1960 Christmas holidays to perform with the CW Corps.<sup>56</sup> By that time, at Carroll's suggestion Geiger had implemented a rank and point system for the CW Corps, which was growing from a fledgling group to a proficient and disciplined unit. Within six months Geiger offered Carroll the position of Drum Major of the CW Corps and in June of 1961 Carroll left the Army and moved to Williamsburg. In July of 1961, the CW Corps attended the Deep River Ancient Muster and received the same acclaim the Old Guard Corps had received a year earlier.

During the next several years, contacts between the two units continued. In 1962, Carroll hired Gene Crane, a fifer in the Old Guard Corps, to be the CW Corps' fife instructor. Crane was one of the Old Guard Corps members who trained the CW Corps in July of 1960. In 1966, Carroll hired George Kusel, also a fifer in the Old Guard Corps, as the fife instructor.

The CW Corps also gave to the U.S. Military in the form of alumni who served on active duty. Beginning in the mid 1960's, CW Corps graduates began enlisting in the U.S. Military and six of the "first generation" served in the U.S. Military including five who served in Vietnam: a Seabee; an Army helicopter pilot; an Army spotter pilot (forward air control); an Army forward observer<sup>57</sup> and an Army Green Beret with the Special Forces, Talmadge Alphin, who was awarded the Bronze Star and who died in combat in 1968.<sup>58</sup> Over the years dozens of CW Corps alumni have served in the U.S. Military, including several who have served in the Old Guard Corps.<sup>59</sup> Presently, two members of the Old Guard Corps, MSG William E. White, Jr., and Specialist William Parks, are alumni of the CW Corps.

In 1966 Colonial Williamsburg hosted its first Field Musick Day, a fife and drum corps muster for units from around the country. The Old Guard Corps had a conflict but still sent a fifer and drummer.<sup>60</sup> In 1967, 1968 and 1969, the Old Guard Corps sent a full corps to the Colonial Williamsburg Field Music Days.<sup>61</sup>

In April of 1967, the CW Corps joined the Old Guard Corps, the United States Marine Band and the U.S. Air Force Pipe Band for a "Great Tattoo" presented by the Smithsonian Institution on the Mall in Washington, D.C. Carroll was largely responsible for preparing the detailed operations plan for the Tattoo. Included in the program were several performances by "massed fifes and drums," during which the CW Corps and the Old Guard Corps performed and marched together.

Earlier in the day the CW Corps had visited Ft. Myer for a rehearsal and lunch. Rehearsal was necessary to prepare for the combined performances during the Tattoo that included playing The Harriott, The Road to Boston, and a drum solo, The Downfall of Paris.<sup>62</sup> The two corps also practiced a series of combined marching maneuvers on the Ft. Myer parade grounds. This was the CW Corps' first appearance on Summerall Field. The Tattoo was a huge success and marked a milestone for the CW Corps that had progressed to be able to play as an equal with the premier musical units in the U.S. Military.

During the 1960's the CW Corps and the Old Guard Corps made significant contributions to the return of the ancient style of fifing and drumming in America. After World War II fifing and drumming in America had begun a comeback. The number of fife and drum corps in New England and around the country increased. Many of the corps made progress toward the ancient style. Efforts were made to play more authentic music and rudimental drumming in particular, metal drums were replaced with hand made wooden, rope tensioned drums, and uniforms more accurately portrayed period or actual colonial units. But progress was slow and resources were limited, and the Ancients had to compete with modern corps and styles. To some degree, the ancient style was being defined and promoted by leaders and corps as they appeared at fife and drum musters that included competitions.<sup>63</sup>

By the summer of 1961 the existence of the CW Corps and the Old Guard Corps had become known to the fife and drum community, as both units had appeared at the Deep River Ancient Muster, as well as other events. The authenticity and skill of both units in the ancient style delighted and, to some degree, awakened the ancient fifing and drumming community. The emerging efforts by fife and drum corps to return to the ancient style were aided by the examples provided by these two corps.

In 1961, Ed Olsen wrote an article that best summarizes the impact of the CW Corps and the Old Guard Corps, as follows:

*Too much can not be said about the fantastic developments in the State of Virginia – nor can too many laurels be directed toward the man responsible for the Drum Corps Revolution therein.*

*While a member of the U.S. Army Band, George Carroll chanced to witness a demonstration; given by the Lancraft FD Corps of New Haven, Conn.; and realized that this was the type of military musical aggregation for which he had always been searching. Figuring importantly in the organization of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Infantry – Old Guard FD Corps, he was released to this unit, on detached service, and soon produced amazing results. The newly organized Corps was an outstanding success at the 1960 Deep River Ancient Muster and astounded Corpsmen and spectators alike, with a never forgotten exhibition of Revolutionary War calls and selections, unheard for years. The Continental Boys of Arlington, that joined the Old Guard, during the show, was equally impressive with its strictly veracious approach. Mr. Carroll's current charge – The Colonial Williamsburg Militia FD – is, if anything, the most uncompromisingly authentic of the lot. It is this unswerving devotion to historical accuracy that marks our brethren from the Old Dominion and which might, one day, topple the State of Connecticut from its long uncontested position of dominance. Rarely, if ever, have such recent additions to the ranks of time honored institutions, been the cause for so many cases of reflection and soul-searching.*

*The purely authentic display, more or less neglected by the Ancients to date, may well hold the key to our future. If so – blame, or thank, New England’s old Revolutionary War co-conspirator --- Virginia.<sup>64</sup>*

Over the years both organizations have provided advice and assistance to existing and new fife and drum corps around the country. Both units have hosted workshops for the fife and drum community. Records and CD’s cut by both units have added to the country’s historic music heritage.

Significantly, both corps have performed for more people and appeared in more parades and ceremonies than any other fife and drum corps in the country, thereby exposing historic fife and drum music to millions of Americans. No other fife and drum corps in the country can match these achievements.

This year the two corps will host each other at musical events. On May 14-15<sup>th</sup>, the Old Guard Corps will participate in the Colonial Williamsburg Drummers Call weekend, an annual muster in Williamsburg of fife and drum corps from around the country. On June 19<sup>th</sup>, the CW Corps will perform in the Old Guard Corps’ 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary Tattoo at Ft. Myer, Virginia. In addition, on July 16-17<sup>th</sup>, the Colonial Williamsburg Alumni Corps and the Old Guard Corps will both perform at the Deep River Ancient Muster in Deep River, Connecticut.

For the past 50 years the CW Corps and the Old Guard Corps have been two of America’s preeminent fife and drum corps. Both units remain preeminent in American fifing and drumming.<sup>65</sup> The two organizations share a common legacy and remain closely connected to this day.

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## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

William H. “Bill” Casterline, Jr., was a fifer in the Colonial Williamsburg Fifes and Drums from 1965 to 1968. After graduation from high school in 1969, while attending college and law school, he continued to work part time for Colonial Williamsburg until 1974 as a costumed interpreter in the exhibition buildings and in the CW Militia. From 1976 to 1980, Bill served on active duty as a Captain in the U.S. Army Judge Advocate General’s Corps. Since 1980, Bill has practiced law in Fairfax County, Virginia. In 2008, Bill researched and wrote a history of the first 25 years of the CW Corps for its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary, during which research the materials for this paper were obtained.

## ENDNOTES

Referenced documents are found at the tabs that follow.

All references to “Colonial Williamsburg Archives” refer to materials in the Colonial Williamsburg Archives and contained in the General Correspondence folders, 1955-1974, “Colonial Military Unit.”

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<sup>1</sup> The Colonial Williamsburg Fifes and Drums was formed in 1958 as part of the Colonial Williamsburg Militia, representing the Virginia Regiment, first raised by Governor Robert Dinwiddie in 1754, and later commanded by Colonel George Washington in the French and Indian War. Initially the CW Corps wore a variety of colonial costumes representing citizen soldiers in the militia. In 1965, the CW Corps adopted the regimental uniform of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Virginia Regiment dating to 1775. This uniform had white breeches and waistcoats and red regimental coats faced with blue, very similar to the Old Guard Corps’ full dress regimental uniform. In 1974, after research by William E. White, the CW Corps adopted the uniform of the Virginia State Garrison Regiment, which is known to have had a detachment in Williamsburg in 1781. This uniform also has a red regimental coat faced with blue, but the breeches and waistcoat are buff. This is the uniform still worn by the CW Corps to this day.

<sup>2</sup> The 3rd U.S. Infantry Regiment is the oldest active duty infantry unit in the U.S. Army, having first been raised as the First American Regiment in 1784. The Old Guard is the only unit in the U. S. Army authorized to march with fixed bayonets. This tradition dates to the Mexican War when the 3<sup>rd</sup> Infantry led a successful bayonet charge against the enemy at Cerro Gordo, Mexico.

The Old Guard’s current missions include conducting funeral services for fallen soldiers, performing Sentinel duty at the Tomb of the Unknowns and performing reviews in support of historical occasions and senior Army leaders.

Today, Company A of the 4<sup>th</sup> Battalion of The Old Guard includes the Commander-in – Chief’s Guard, which replicates the personal guard of General George Washington. They wear colonial uniforms with regimental blue coats, powdered wigs and tricorne hats, and they carry Brown Bess Muskets and halberds. Also within the 4<sup>th</sup> Battalion is the Old Guard Fife and Drum Corps, which wears a uniform from 1781 with regimental red coats, powdered wigs and tricorne hats.

<sup>3</sup> The cadence of early drum beatings was mandated by the circumstances on the field and the commander's decisions as to how fast and how far he wanted the unit to march. The standard marching cadence was about 80-90 beats per minute. The pace could be increased to 120 beats per minute, or faster for shorter periods of march. There also was a “slow march” of about 60-70 beats per minute, used for ceremonies such as “trooping the colors.” Using calculations based on the cadence and an average distance of a soldier’s step, commanders could calculate how far a unit could march in a given time, thus mandating precision in the cadence beat by the drummers.

<sup>4</sup> In 1961, Edward “Ed” Olsen, the President of the New York Fife and Drum Association, wrote an excellent essay on the then emerging return to the ancient style.

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The essay, A Prospect of Americana, was published in The Drummers Assistant, Vol. I, Number 1, January 1962. The entire article reads as follows:

*A PROSPECT OF AMERICANA*  
By "A New England Fifer"

*With the nation becoming ever more conscious of its heritage – taking an increasing interest in our distinguished history, both Civic and Military – new vistas are opening to the "Ancients."*

*Perhaps this wonderful new awareness is indicative of a national maturity or, possibly, it is only a normal by-product of the increased leisure time allotted us. Whatever the reason, we now have the opportunity to contemplate our national origins and, rather than continue to accept all things at face value, many demand to know the reason why. Once apprised of the development of, and background behind, our traditions, the enthusiast often finds that he has to do something. He endeavors to take part in one of the many movements designed to perpetuate and commemorate some of the more important, or colorful facets of our early development.*

*This is manifest in myriad ways – in groups and societies beyond number. Where once found only among professional Historians, cranks and Genealogical – cultists – today there are many groups bound together by a national pride that impels them to seek new means of historical expression.*

*While the present observation of the Centennial, of our Civil War, has contributed, in no small way, to this new awareness – conversely – the "Centennial" could never have come into being had the time not been ripe for it. Were it not for the vast undercurrent of devotion to what, for a better term, we can dub - - - Americana - - - - this all important commemoration would never have materialized.*

*Swept along with this new found love of the old, is the cream of Military Folk Music – the Ancient Corps. Obviously, this trend did not create the Ancients. They have been ever with us. Perhaps not always as seemingly note-worthy as today, nonetheless, never have we known a time when the crowd did not rise, screaming, at the sound of the long drum and the "wry necked Fife."*

*The instruments, and type of musical group, that inspired the Patriots and answered every subsequent emergency, had remained virtually unchanged among the many villages and hamlets of New England, and more specifically the State of Connecticut. This, then, was both limbo and staging area – the place where countless Ancients marked time waiting for the re-awakening.*

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*Wooden Nutmegs, notwithstanding, Connecticut's greatest contribution, to our National Folk-Heritage, was, and is, in successfully resisting the blandishments of the perennial "Modernists." These temptors run concurrently with the four seasons. Their philosophies are no less ephemeral.*

*Today's interest in things "Folk" and historical has helped bring about a veritable explosion of Ancient, and traditional, Corps throughout various sections of the country. Many of these areas, we might add, had not heard the Fife in generations – others did not know it at all.*

*Where, a few short years ago, the true Ancients seemed in the twilight of their essence – unable to pit their measured tread against the frenetic step of more flamboyant chrome-plates – we now hear of the movement journeying with the four winds, broadcasting seeds of Americana in shamefully barren territory.*

*The re-awakening has been neither simple nor sudden. It has been slowly, and painfully, developing for close to thirty years – a full generation. It was in 1935 that the Union-Endicott High School Corps, and 1938 that the Long Island Minute Men, were organized in New York State. The impact, and consequent influence, of these two Corps, can never be underestimated. Corps members of the New York State Fife and Drum Corps Ass'n. (a competitively oriented Federation second only to the Conn. Ass'n. in age, size and activity) were finally able to feel themselves a more integral part of the thread of pure tradition that has always run thru' the fabric of the Drum Corps movement. The reaction was such that both units – orphans in their class – were soon the pride of Ancients and moderns alike, throughout the N.Y. Ass'ns. sophisticated sphere of influence. If we were to pursue a Darwinian pattern of investigation, New York would, undoubtedly appear as the single, most important, link between our burgeoning race of current Ancients and the common progenitor – Connecticut.*

*Temporarily suspended by the Second World War, the Ancient Movement received another thrust forward with the organization, in 1947, of the Sons of Liberty of Brooklyn, N.Y. Here was a unique unit boasting "New sounds in Ancient music" and all but standing the ultra-conservatives on their collective ear. Two things were now obvious – (1) no longer was the field of Ancient activity to be confined with the borders of one state and (2) never again would "The Road to Boston" be the indication of the Ancient's ability.*

*With the removal, also, in 1947, of the Noah Webster Fife and Drum Corps from West Hartford, Connecticut to South Dakota – another vernal territory was given a wondrous new – albeit too brief (5 years) experience. For a while the adjoining South Dakota towns, of Hill City and Custer, boasted an Ancient Corps apiece and rivalry ran*

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high. Things are quiet now, but there is ever the chance of renewed activity – the equipment and enthusiasm are still there.

*The largest obstacle in the path of Universal acceptance was hurdled by the Ancients in 1950. This was the year the Monumental City Fife and Drum Corps of Baltimore, Maryland, gave the city – once noted for its fine Regimental fifers and Drummers – another glimpse of past glory. The Mason Dixon Line was breached with the successful penetration of the South by a Corps-style husbanded in the North, tho' indigenous to all points of our compass. The dogged determination of the dedicated few, preceding their official organization with countless field trips to Connecticut and environs, made an ineradicable mark in the Ancient panorama – both local and national.*

*To describe, in detail, the growth of our Ancient Renaissance was not and is not our purpose at this time. However, there are other units that cannot be overlooked, if the entire picture is to appear in its proper perspective.*

*The magic of the Fife and Drum, nearly dormant in the State of Michigan, since the days of the Grand Army of the Republic, was rekindled and channeled into the Ancient idiom when, in 1955, the Spirit of '76 Fife and Drum Corps was inaugurated in the modest community of Berrien Springs. Some thirty years ago, as the name implies, there had been a three man personification of Willard's immortal painting. This, however, was only a "special occasion" affair. Consequently, it was not until 1955 that a genuine Ancient unit emerged – to push the frontier back just a little further.*

*The Albany district of New York State has been colonized by the Village Fire Fifers (org. 1956), while the Metropolitan area – partly in reaction to the Hydra-headed chrome-plates -- has become one of the strongest areas of Ancient activity. Even adjacent Hoboken had its fling, in the form of the ill-starred Colonials.*

*Too much can not be said about the fantastic developments in the State of Virginia – nor can too many laurels be directed toward the man responsible for the Drum Corps Revolution therein - .*

*While a member of the U.S. Army Band, George Carroll chanced to witness a demonstration; given by the Lancraft FD Corps of New Haven, Conn.; and realized that this was the type of military musical aggregation for which he had always been searching. Figuring importantly in the organization of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Infantry – Old Guard FD Corps, he was released to this unit, on detached service, and soon produced amazing results. The newly organized Corps was an outstanding success at the 1960 Deep River Ancient Muster and astounded Corpsmen and spectators alike, with a never forgotten exhibition of revolutionary War calls and selections, unheard for years. The Continental Boys of Arlington, that joined the Old Guard, during the show, was equally impressive with its strictly veracious approach. Mr. Carroll's current charge – the Colonial*

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*Williamsburg Militia FD – is, if anything, the most uncompromisingly authentic of the lot. It is this unswerving devotion to historical accuracy that marks our brethren from the Old Dominion and which might, one day, topple the State of Connecticut from its long uncontested position of dominance. Rarely, if ever, have such recent additions to the ranks of time honored institutions, been the cause for so many cases of reflection and soul-searching.*

*The purely authentic display, more or less neglected by the ancients to date, may well hold the key to our future. If so – blame, or thank, New England’s old Revolutionary War co-conspirator - -Virginia.*

Ed Olsen would later become recognized as the foremost historian on the development of traditional American fifeing and drumming. He became the Archivist-for-Life and Curator of The Museum of Fife and Drum. The following is an excerpt from Fife and Drum in America, also written by Ed Olsen, in which he summarizes the return of the “Ancients.” The entire article appears on the website of the Company of Fifers and Drummers.

*In New England, and more particularly the state of Connecticut, the older, more primitive systems remained popular due to the conservative nature of the inhabitants. “Quicksteps,” rather than modern marches, with the fifes vying with full, heavy lines of open rudimental snare drummers and “two-stick” rudimental bass drummers... this regional style came to be known among the participants themselves as “Ancient.” Following an almost terminal decline precipitated by WWII, the Ancients went on to experience a slow resurgence, first in Connecticut and soon in neighboring states. Then, with the advent of our country’s Bicentennial Celebration, Ancient fife and drum corps were springing up throughout the country. Interestingly enough, most of the once popular modern fife and drum corps had long since fallen into oblivion.*

*Following WWII, Ancient corps started getting together fairly regularly for purposes of fifeing, drumming and sundry revelries. These gatherings eventually developed into (and by 1953 were being called) “Drum Corps Musters.” The gatherings at the small town of Deep River, Connecticut, became the largest and most popular. By 1976 it was drawing as many as 80 participating units from many different states as well as from Basel, Switzerland, a musical community in which American Ancients have formed an extremely close association.*

*The year 1965 witnessed the founding of The Company of Fifers & Drummers and the organization now enjoys a membership of more than 120 fife and drum corps stretching from Switzerland “on the east” to the Pacific coast in the west. On July 12, 1987, The Company had the official grand opening of its Headquarters and Museum of Fife & Drum in Ivorytown, Connecticut, the first, and only, such edifice we know of.*

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*Several of the fife and drum corps are quite old, with some claiming organizational dates of 1767, 1869, 1868, and the styles played often vary in sound, tempo and choice of music. The uniforms embraced by the Ancients are usually of the 18<sup>th</sup> Century variety although the dress of the late 19<sup>th</sup> Century (American Civil War and following) is also popular.*

*While many units insist that they are authentic reproductions of our earliest fife and drum groups, most are satisfied in the knowledge that theirs is the logical development of the sounds that heralded this country's earliest history and, in that sense, they are really folk musicians in uniform.*

References in 1953 to the ancient style provide insights into the passion of its promoters to preserve this historical style. In a 1953 letter to Colonial Williamsburg, from the Institute of Early American History and Culture, obtained from the Colonial Williamsburg Archives, the author says,

*Enclosed is a copy of a letter about the dozen or so fife and drum corps still existing in various small New England towns that specialize in playing colonial and revolutionary music in the 18<sup>th</sup> century style... These bands, some of which are organizations dating directly back to colonial time without a break, are bitterly competitive and put on a series of musical battles in which they demonstrate their repertoire of ancient tunes, marching up and down in authentic colonial costumes. Clearly if Colonial Williamsburg was interested in providing a dramatic and genuine touch to such celebrations as May 15 or the Fourth of July, these fife and drum corps offer such an opportunity. So far as I know, there are none specializing in ancient music closer than Baltimore. Nevertheless, because these groups are so fanatical I don't feel it would be too difficult to get one or two of them to come all the way down from New England. And certainly if you publicize some sort of prize, particularly if you called it "the National Championship" for ancient fife and drum corps, I have a feeling that they would swarm like bees into Williamsburg and fife and drum you to death.*

The announcement for the 1953 Deep River Ancient Muster, the oldest fife and drum muster in the country, provides another insight, perhaps with a bit of jest, into the "Ancients." In large part it reads:

*The Committee of Twelve for the fostering and organization of Ancient Martial Music takes pleasure in announcing The 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Deep River Ancient Muster Sponsored by THE DEEP RIVER DRUM CORPS.*

*For years now, our type of musical organization, the ANCIENT CORPS, has been fighting a losing battle against the inroads of modernism. So much so, that today we find the ANCIENTS a minority in the society of drum corps.*

*That our units are unique, is indisputable—that they are martial music, in its purist form, is self-evident—that they be perpetuated, is a necessity.*

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*The only hope for the continued activity of the ANCIENTS is a reawakening of the warm spirit of fraternity once so closely associated with them. We must meet and throw down past prejudices in order to survive.*

*For that reason, we should like to invite you and/or your corps to participate in the “convention of Americana.” No admission is requested, only your interest.*

*A complimentary collation will await all corpsmen, following the field demonstrations, and we hope the ANCIENTS will take this opportunity to get together, with one another, and further the cause of ANCIENT SOLIDARITY.*

*The Committee of twelve for the fostering and organization of Ancient Martial Music takes pleasure in announcing The 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Deep River Ancient Muster sponsored by The Deep River Drum Corps.*

*This is our opportunity to present a united front to the scoffers who delight in announcing, “The ANCIENTS are through.”*

*NO COMPETITION . . . . NO JUDGES . . . . NO UNKIND WORDS*

<sup>5</sup> George Phillip Carroll was born in Nova Scotia, Canada, where a rich “Highlander” heritage included an abundance of parade and ceremonial music. At the age of 12, he joined the Canadian Sea Cadets as a bugler. He had wanted to play drums but he was too short so he was given a bugle. While performing as a bugler, he continued to practice drumming on a coffee can with a pair of chair rungs. He was able to obtain Gene Krupa’s book, Science of Drumming and V.F. Safranek’s Manual for Field Trumpet and Drum and practiced the rudiments out of those books. There were no drum teachers in his hometown, so he taught himself. After a year as a bugler, he switched to snare drum and at 15 he joined the Pictou Highlander Pipe Band. At 16 he joined the 22<sup>nd</sup> Reconnaissance Regiment Military Band in Windsor, Ontario, as a drummer. He also logged over 1000 hours of aircraft spotting during World War II while in his early teens.

In 1950, at age 17, and already an accomplished drummer, Carroll enlisted in the Royal Canadian Navy. After basic training he attended the Canadian Navy School of Music in Victoria, British Columbia. After graduation he remained for a few months as an instructor and then he was transferred back to Nova Scotia where he played for numerous bands ashore and afloat. During this time he became the youngest Petty Officer in the Canadian Navy. On one occasion, he played for a visit of then Princess Elizabeth of England. In 1953, Carroll received the Coronation Medal for organizing a drum corps of 16 drummers that was featured during a combined musical performance of Canadian Military massed bands – Army, Navy and Air Force - that played for Queen Elizabeth’s Coronation ceremony in Ottawa, although she did not attend. The Lieutenant Governor of Canada stood in as her proxy.

Carroll first became interested in the history of drumming when he was in the Canadian Navy. He recalls:

*We were taught the lore of the British Navy, which was a lot...all the way back to Nelson. I was on a number of ships, including the HMCS*

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*Quebec, the HMCS Ontario and the HMCS Magnificent, an aircraft carrier.*

*I was on the Magnificent for a year and they tied us up for a three month radar refit in Portsmouth, England, right next to the HMS Victory, Nelson's ship at the battle of Trafalgar. All that Navy lore opened my eyes to history and I started digging and researching where the drum traditions came from. It wasn't fife traditions because the fife had gone away in Canada...so I started to research what a fife was and how it sounded, and what role it played, but I couldn't find anything because all the fifers in Canada had died.*

*While I was still on the carrier we visited Quonset Point, Rhode Island, and there was a little fife and drum corps from Norwood, Massachusetts, playing on the jetty as our ship came in. While on shore duty I also saw a colonial muster at Apponoo, Rhode Island. So that's when I first got to hear fifes and it really grabbed my attention because it was a complete revelation to me on the American style of fifes and drums and, indeed, to have a country as modern as the U.S. to have such historic martial music.*

In 1955, after five years in the Canadian Navy, Carroll joined the Black Watch Military Band, where he served as Drum Sergeant. In 1957, the Black Watch Band was designated to be the official Canadian musical organization for the visit of Queen Elizabeth II. The Band was flown to Washington, D.C., to play before Queen Elizabeth in person. During that trip Carroll auditioned for The U.S. Army Band at Ft. Myer, Virginia, and he was immediately invited to join. In 1958, his enlistment in the Black Watch Band ended and Carroll enlisted in the U.S. Army as a percussionist in The U.S. Army Band doing field, dance and concert work.

As a member of The U.S. Army Band, Carroll also played in John F. Kennedy's inauguration parade in 1961, playing the wooden, rope tensioned drum he had purchased from Charles "Buck" Soistman. This drum was painted with an eagle similar to the eagle design originated by Sanford "Gus" Moeller, the legendary drum instructor and drum maker. Carroll says his drum actually was painted by Melvin Doxin, a master drum maker himself, and an organizer, with Soistman, of the Monumental City Ancient Fife and Drum Corps of Baltimore, Maryland, formed in 1950 and one of the earliest corps promoting the ancient style.

While in The U.S. Army Band, Carroll was a member of the Presidential Herald Trumpets and he played for such visiting heads of state as Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev and French President Charles De Gaulle. Recognizing that The U.S. Army Band needed a standard drum beat for funerals, Carroll utilized his research to furnish one, which was adopted as the standard by 1960. It was the "slow beat" that was heard around the world in the widely televised funeral for President Kennedy in 1963.

While in The U.S. Army Band during 1958 and 1959, Carroll continued to research fifing and drumming, including trips to the Smithsonian Institution and the Library of Congress.

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Carroll says, “I was amazed at the wealth of materials which were available on the subject, and the importance fife and drumming played in the armies of the colonial period. Not only did they regulate army activities in the camps, such as the bugle does today, but they also had an important role to play in commands and maintaining morale on the battlefield as well.”

In 1959 and 1960, Carroll found himself at the center of creating the Old Guard Fife and Drum Corps and training the Colonial Williamsburg Fifes and Drums. Based on Carroll’s research and instruction both units quickly became preeminent in the country playing the ancient style, and Carroll quickly rose in prominence as a leader in the return to the ancient style.

After ten years with Colonial Williamsburg, Carroll went to Walt Disney World for eight years where he established its fife and drum corps. As Senior Show Coordinator, Carroll created programs, scripted pageants, and served for years as bandleader for their orchestras, appearing with Julie Andrews, Meredith Wilson, Mel Tormé, and Shari Lewis, among others. While in Florida, he also taught at Jacksonville University and played with the Jacksonville Symphony Orchestra, eventually becoming its chief percussionist. He recalls starting four or five other corps in Florida.

After working at Disney World, Carroll returned to northern Virginia to work at the Pentagon for the National Guard Bureau in its museum’s heraldry and history division. The 1980’s saw him transfer to become the Bandleader of the Virginia National Guard’s 29<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division. He was the founder and editor of a newsletter of history, heraldry and museums, and the author of the Army National Guard Regulation for Museums. In 2007, he wrote a book on the history of military drums, American Drums of War: 1607-2007, which was published in 2008.

Carroll lives in Alexandria, Virginia, where he has a drum shop and gives drum lessons. He also makes wooden, rope-tensioned drums under the company name Carroll’s Drum Service. Carroll has authored numerous books and articles on drumming and fife. He is a Fellow of the Company of Military Historians, a percussionist with the National Concert Band of America, a member of the Percussive Arts Society, and Director of Music for the Civil Air Patrol’s only recognized music program

<sup>6</sup> Interview, George Carroll, December 10, 2007.

<sup>7</sup> Id.

<sup>8</sup> Id.; Colonial Williamsburg Press Release July 21, 1960. The members of the Continental Boys Fife and Drum Corps were boys ranging in age from 10-16 years old. They were sponsored by American Legion Post 139 in Arlington, Virginia, which was located very near Ft. Myer.

<sup>9</sup> Interview, George Carroll, December 10, 2007.

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<sup>10</sup> Id.

<sup>11</sup> Id.

<sup>12</sup> Old Guard Fife and Drum Corps by Pvt. Richard L. Penelton, originally published during the last week of April, 1960, just prior to the first performance of the Old Guard Corps. The article was republished in The Drummers Assistant, Vol. V Number 1, Spring, 1966.

<sup>13</sup> Interview, George Carroll, December 10, 2007.

<sup>14</sup> Memorandum, Mr. Riley (Colonial Williamsburg Director of Research) to Mr. Geiger (Director, Colonial Williamsburg Craft Shops and Supervisor of the Colonial Williamsburg Militia and Fifes and Drums), April 12, 1960, Colonial Williamsburg Archives. According to the memorandum, Riley reports that Carroll had become known to Harold L. Peterson, the Chief Curator of the National Park Service and Founder and Governor of the Company of Military Collectors and Historians (now known as The Company of Military Historians). Riley quotes from a letter from Peterson:

*The following paragraph from a letter of Harold Paterson to me may be of some interest to you:*

*On another subject which may be of some interest. The United States Army Band has recently recruited a drummer who is a specialist in 18<sup>th</sup> century military music. In addition to his regular duties with the Army Band, he has been assigned to organize and train a fife and drum corps for the 3<sup>rd</sup> Infantry, which is believed to be the oldest regiment in the United States Army. They will be equipped with revolutionary-type instruments and wear uniforms of the period. George Carroll, the drummer, is a stickler for authenticity of details in playing music and in drill. In his spare time, he has organized a local fife and drum corps, trained in the same manner. They are becoming quite adept, and the Company of Military Collectors & Historians has arranged for them to play at its annual meeting at Quantico next month. We were quite intrigued with the audition we heard. Mr. Carroll was asking the other day if Williamsburg ever had any need for such a corps, and remarked that he had seen one down there, which had been imported from Connecticut, and which had only a limited repertoire of 18<sup>th</sup> century pieces, and did not do the drill. I told him I did not know what your desires and needs were for special events, but suggested he might write to Ed Alexander.*

<sup>15</sup> Edward "Ed" Olsen was a fifer who first played with the Sons of Liberty Corps, of Brooklyn, N.Y., in 1936. Olsen was a passionate promoter and supporter of the ancient style. In 1965 he was an organizer of The Company of Fifers & Drummers. The Company has recognized Olsen as the foremost historian on the development of traditional American fifing and drumming. He was Trustee-for-Life and Archivist-for-

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Life of the organization. He was named Curator of The Museum of Fife & Drum in 1986. A fifer since his youth, he performed with many drum corps and remained active in fifing and drumming until his death on July 9, 2009.

<sup>16</sup> Letter, William D. Geiger to John Moriarity, Lancraft Fife and Drum Corps, May 6, 1958, Colonial Williamsburg Archives. Virginia Gazette photograph, May 15, 1958; Virginia Gazette article and photograph May 1, 1959; Letter, John P. McGuire (Major, Lancraft Fife and Drum Corps) to William Geiger, May 27, 1959, Colonial Williamsburg Archives.

<sup>17</sup> Interview, George Carroll, December 10, 2007. Carroll recalled “Colonial Williamsburg was very impressed by the Lancraft Corps....They were a great corps, and still are one of the best corps in New England. Their drumming was so accurate that if you had a pistol and you shot off one of the tips of the drum sticks you’d get all of them because of their great placement.”

<sup>18</sup> Proposal titled Colonial Military Unit (Virginia Regiment), approved by the Colonial Williamsburg Board of Directors, December, 1953, Colonial Williamsburg Archives.

<sup>19</sup> Letter, George Carroll to Mrs. Cabell (Colonial Williamsburg Craft Shops), July 14, 1960, Colonial Williamsburg Archives.

<sup>20</sup> Letter, George Carroll to Mrs. Cabell, September 19, 1959, Colonial Williamsburg Archives.

<sup>21</sup> Letter, Earl Soles (Colonial Williamsburg Assistant Director of Craft Shops) to George Carroll, September 29, 1959.

<sup>22</sup> Interview, George Carroll, December 10, 2007.

<sup>23</sup> Old Guard Fife and Drum Corps, by Pvt. Richard L. Penelton.

<sup>24</sup> Charles “Buck” Soistman was a famed fifer, drummer, drum maker and musician from Middle River, a suburb of Baltimore, Maryland. He was a true icon in and promoter of the ancient style. He died in 1977 at the age of 93. The following are excerpts from an article in the Baltimore Sun published in 1963, reprinted in the Drummers Assistant, Vol. II, Winter, 1963, Number 4:

*Mr. Soistman was a professional drummer since he was 15 years old and he is the fourth generation of his family to work on the instruments. His great-grandfather made drums for the Union Army in the Civil War, his grandfather made them for other organizations, and his father repaired them.*

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*Mr. Soistman's interest in Colonial drums was aroused in 1946, when he went to a convention with fellow members of the 5<sup>th</sup> Regiment Veterans Corps. There he met men of the Noah Webster Ancient Fife and Drum Corps of West Hartford, Connecticut, who used rebuilt drums. "That was all it took to get me started."*

*Before he could equip his own first corps with drums of antique types, however, he had to learn the details of both their construction and their use, and this turned out to be a five-year task. Every two weeks or so during this time [late 1940's] he went to New York to see Sanford A. (Gus) Moeller, another maker of such reproductions.*

*Old music that was needed, and other items of interest, was found on trips to the Library of Congress. By 1951 Mr. Soistman had turned out his first drums, and formed the Monumental City Ancient Fife and Drum Corps, which marched in Colonial costume in many Baltimore parades...*

*About the time this corps took its first steps at a Colonial cadence, more than twenty steps a minute slower than the present-day rule, Mr. Soistman received his first outside order, from the 2<sup>nd</sup> Army Pipe Band. Its leader asked Mr. Soistman to make a set according to the old design.*

*His Colonial snare drums are about 21" deep and 17" across the head – about 9" deeper and 3" wider than modern drums. Another obvious difference is the system of cords and leather "ears" around the sides. Their function, to keep proper tension of the drumheads, is now generally performed by metal rods. The snare, snubbed tight across the bottom by brass fitting, is heavier on the old drums, too.*

*Mr. Soistman makes only one concession to the development of modern materials; he uses birch plywood in place of solid ash for the drum's midsection. Bent in a machine that melts the glue between the layers of wood and then allows it to dry again, the plywood has fewer tendencies to crack than do solid boards.*

*Mr. Soistman hand-paints the decorations on the drums, - eagles, bands of royal red and blue, regimental insignia complete with battle decorations. Sometimes he paints the owner's name in a decorative scroll on the portion of the drum that will hang next to the body.*

*The old-style drums have a deeper, heavier sound than most of those made today, Mr. Soistman says, due in part to their size and in part to the heavier snares. They also*

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*require a different playing technique – a movement of the whole arm rather than a flick of the wrist.*

<sup>25</sup> Sanford A. “Gus” Moeller was a drummer and passionate advocate of the “open” style of rudimental drumming, which dates to the time of the American Revolution. During the 1920’s, Moeller interviewed many Civil War drummers. He observed how they held their drumsticks and the motions and techniques they were using. Moeller also was influenced by George B. Bruce’s drumming techniques set forth in The Drummers and Fifers Guide published in 1862. Moeller incorporated these observations into his teaching and in 1925 he compiled and wrote The Moeller Book: The Art of Snare Drumming. His instruction became known as the “Moeller Method,” which remains today one of the premier instruction methods for rudimental drumming.

Moeller also was a master craftsman of authentic wooden, rope tensioned drums, known as “long” or “field” drums. He called his drums “Grand Republic” drums. These drums were 17 inches at the head and 21 or 22 inches long. Moeller died in 1960 and many of his drums are still being played today. Moeller’s tradition of making superior drums was carried on by Charles “Buck” Soistman, William Reamer and Patrick Cooperman.

<sup>26</sup> Interview, George Carroll, December 10, 2007, Colonial Williamsburg Archives.

<sup>27</sup> Memorandum, W.D. Geiger to Mr. Goodbody (Director of Project Planning, Colonial Williamsburg), May 13, 1960. The memorandum reads in large part:

*Yesterday Mr. Humelshine called me and asked that I meet with Lieutenant Henry G. Watson and Sergeant George P. Carroll, both of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Infantry Regiment, who were in Williamsburg to seek our aid in developing their fife and drum corp. The aim of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Infantry and the commanding officer of the Washington Military District is to make their unit as authentic as possible. They are fortunate in having complete information on the proper uniforms of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Infantry, whose Honor Guard Company’s color guard is already uniformed. This unit dates from 1784 and is known as the “Old Guard.” The fife and drum group has been in existence only some three months.*

*I made a number of suggestions which I hope will help them in securing uniforms on a rather restricted budget (\$10,000 to secure instruments and uniforms for 36 men).*

*In discussing problems of mutual interest, I was tremendously impressed with Sergeant Carroll’s knowledge of fife and drum music of this period. He is without doubt the best informed person in this area that I have met. His job with the new corps is to train the drummers. He is only 27 years old, but has been in the Canadian and American armies for eleven years. He was selected to form a drum group for Canada’s participation in the Queen’s coronation. He has prepared a book, in draft form, on the music of this period, with fife and drum parts written for B flat wooden fifes and wooden shelled rope-tied field drums. In addition, he is well versed in the history of the more than 1,000 songs he has*

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*collected. His enthusiasm is unlimited and his skill, according to Lieutenant Watson, unmatched...*

*Sergeant Carroll is familiar with the ancient fife and drum groups of New England and particularly Lancraft who he regards as the best in that area. He points out, however, and we have been aware of this, that all such units are limited in their pre-Revolutionary repertoire. The Sergeant in his spare time has organized the "Continental Boys Fife and Drum Corps" in Arlington whose reputation is excellent.*

*Sergeant Carroll offered his services on his free weekends to work with our fife and drum group. We would reimburse him for his travel expenses from Washington and pay him something for his time. I am confident that his instructions would result in a tremendous improvement in the skills of our group, and introduce a high degree of authenticity which we presently do not have. This can be achieved with an expenditure of about \$400, which I strongly urge be approved.*

*Both Lieutenant Watson and Sergeant Carroll are anxious to bring this 3<sup>rd</sup> Infantry group to Williamsburg. Sergeant Carroll would also like to bring his boy's group down. I was once asked to find an appropriate musical group for our May 15<sup>th</sup> program. The result of this search was Lancraft, and I believe that they were tremendously successful and well-received. The 3<sup>rd</sup> Infantry Group will be ready by the time of the meeting of the AP Managing Editors [in November], and I strongly urge that we consider them for this program.*

<sup>28</sup> Id.

<sup>29</sup> Id.

<sup>30</sup> Id.

<sup>31</sup> Id.

<sup>32</sup> The first performance of the CW Corps, then just two fifers and two drummers, was July 4, 1958. During the remainder of 1958 and the early part of 1959 the unit joined the CW Militia for numerous events including musters, special events and parades during holidays.

In the spring of 1959 the CW Militia started a regular schedule of militia musters twice a week for visitors. In these musters the CW Militia fired original Brown Bess muskets using the Von Steuben Manual of Arms. They also fired original cannons. This schedule ran from April to October. The CW Corps, which had grown to ten members by April, was included in these musters, as well as special events for historical ceremonies and visiting groups and dignitaries.

The CW Corps members were high school students and most were high school band musicians. They played a few traditional tunes but lacked original music and training in

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rudimental drumming. Nonetheless, they brought a significant contribution to the CW Militia by providing costumed musicians and traditional music that delighted visitors.

<sup>33</sup> The organizational status of the unit has evolved. Today it is a separate company with its own rolls.

<sup>34</sup> Letter, John C. Goodbody to Colonel Richard M. Lee, November 30, 1960, Colonial Williamsburg Archives. In the letter, Mr. Goodbody reflected on the importance of the press coverage the two units received from the special muster in Williamsburg for the Associated Press Managing Editors:

*“Dear Colonel Lee:*

*As Lieutenant Mullins or Sergeant Carroll doubtless has reported, the Old Guard visit to Williamsburg for the special performance for the Associated Press Managing Editors was an outstanding success. I would hope that the presence of so many distinguished newspaper officials was both important and satisfying to members of the Old Guard, as well as to members of our whole staff.”*

<sup>35</sup> Interview, Peter “Pete” McDermott, February 15, 2010.

<sup>36</sup> Letter, William D. Geiger to Sgt. George P. Carroll, June 15, 1960, Colonial Williamsburg Archives.

<sup>37</sup> Williamsburg News article, July 1960; Dailey Press photograph July 24, 1960.

<sup>38</sup> Interview, George Carroll, December 10, 2007.

<sup>39</sup> A Prospect of Americana, written by “A New England Fifer”, published in The Drummers Assistant Vol. I, Number 1, January 1962. The “New England Fifer” was Ed Olsen.

<sup>40</sup> Virginia Gazette photograph and caption, July 29, 1960; undated photograph taken at Ft. Meyer showing the Old guard Corps in borrowed uniforms.

<sup>41</sup> Letter, William D. Geiger to Mr. Charles Soistman, October 6, 1960, Colonial Williamsburg Archives; Letter William D. Geiger to the Rolling Drum Shop (Soistman’s drum shop), February 7, 1961, Colonial Williamsburg Archives.

<sup>42</sup> Memorandum, W.D. Geiger, September 29, 1960, Colonial Williamsburg Archives. Geiger reported that “our recent efforts to raise the standards of this organization [the CW Corps] have been gratifying. The group has reached a point where I anticipate entering them in the South Atlantic Regional Fife and Drum Corps Muster in Arlington, Virginia, on November 5, 1960. The Corps instructor, Sgt. George Carroll, has indicated they have an excellent chance of winning prizes in both junior and senior corps competition and an equally good chance in junior individual competition.”

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<sup>43</sup> In a letter dated September 16, 1960, to Colonel Lee, Commanding Officer (Old Guard), Colonial Williamsburg Archives, Geiger wrote:

*Dear Colonel Lee:*

*Sergeant George P. Carroll of the Third Infantry Regiment has for some time been giving his services to the Colonial Williamsburg Fife and Drum Corps., As you know, Sgt. Carroll is a member of the United States Army Band at Fort Myer and organizer of the Old Guard Fife and Drum Corps. Sgt. Carroll has been working with our group on his free Saturdays since July. His services have resulted into a tremendous improvement in the quality of our Fife and Drum corps. His enthusiasm for his work seems to be unending and we feel that he is by far the most informed person on fife and drum corps music of the 18<sup>th</sup> Century in this area.*

*We feel fortunate to be associated with Sgt. Carroll and we know that his enthusiasm and skill is felt as much in the Third Army Band as it is here.*

<sup>44</sup> Letter, Carlisle Humelsine to Secretary Wilber M. Bruckner, September 9, 1960, Colonial Williamsburg Archives.

<sup>45</sup> Letter, Colonel Richard M. Lee to Bill Geiger September 14, 1960, Colonial Williamsburg Archives.

<sup>46</sup> Letter, Earl Soles to George Carroll, September 7, 1960, Colonial Williamsburg Archives.

<sup>47</sup> Letter, 1LT James A. Conley to William Geiger, August 18, 1961; Letter, Catherine Callis (Colonial Williamsburg Craft Shops) to Lt. James A. Conley, August 22, 1961, Colonial Williamsburg Archives.

<sup>48</sup> Letter, W. D. Geiger to Commanding Officer [Col. Lee], 1<sup>st</sup> Battle Group, 3<sup>rd</sup> Infantry, September 15, 1960, Colonial Williamsburg Archives.

<sup>49</sup> Memorandum, W.D. Geiger to Mr. Grattan, October 21, 1960, Colonial Williamsburg Archives.

<sup>50</sup> Daily Press article, October 18, 1960; interview John Evans Harbour, the founding member of the CW Corps, December 7, 2007; undated newspaper photograph with caption showing CW Corps members marching in the ranks with the Old Guard Corps identified by Harbour as having been taken at Yorktown Day, 1960.

<sup>51</sup> Undated newspaper article showing photos of CW Corps color guard and Old Guard Corps.

<sup>52</sup> Patrick H. "Pat" Cooperman (1928-1995) was a snare drummer from Mt. Vernon, New York, also the home of Sanford "Gus" Moeller. Cooperman served in the U.S. Navy on an aircraft carrier during World War II, and joined his hometown VFW Post 596 when

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he returned from the service. Post 596 had a fife and drum corps, the Colonial Greens Fife and Drum Corps, and Pat joined in as a rudimental snare drummer.

Pat Cooperman was a fireman, but also a woodworker and furniture maker, and he began to make his own drumsticks. Soon other corps members were asking for sticks. Cooperman's father-in-law was a fifer in the Post 596 corps and he and the other fifers encouraged Pat to experiment with fifes as well. By the late 1950's Cooperman was making and selling handmade drumsticks throughout the New York and Connecticut area. George Carroll recalls meeting Cooperman in 1959 at a New England muster and purchasing drumsticks for the Continental Boys Fife and Drum Corps, which Carroll had just started in Arlington, Virginia. In 1960, Cooperman attended the Southeastern States Ancient Muster with the Colonial Greens, at which both the Old Guard Corps and the CW Corps also attended.

As the years went on, an increasing number of drumstick models and different woods were tested and introduced. Cooperman also was making fifes for friends. In the spring of 1963, he made his first set of fifes, which had been ordered by Colonial Williamsburg. These early fifes were b-flat pitch. They were a straight cylindrical design and made of rosewood or cocoblo. The earliest fifes did not have ferrules, but after some of the ends were damaged, it was decided to put on short, stamped brass ferrules. Cooperman then began selling these fifes on a commercial level throughout New England, as well as to Colonial Williamsburg. In 1964 Cooperman was asked by Carroll to copy an original colonial fife in the Colonial Williamsburg Collection. This fife swelled at the blow hole and then it tapered slightly down the finger holes. It also had longer brass ferrules that were machined out of brass tubing, and recessed finger holes. The design produced a beautiful fife; however, by copying the original CW fife, the distance from the first finger hole to the mouth hole was shorter than the traditional b-flat fifes, so the new model played at a higher pitch than the traditional b-flat fifes. But Colonial Williamsburg wanted the more authentic fife and thus was born the model that became the standard issue for the CW Corps, and remains so to this day. Because the pitch is higher than the traditional b-flat fifes, the Colonial Williamsburg fifes became known as "old pitch."

In the 1960's Cooperman also began taking in repair work on drums and he developed ideas how rope drums could be improved. In 1975 Cooperman began making drums and he delivered his first set of drums to the CW Corps in 1980. Cooperman continued to work on new designs and improvements for his instruments until he passed away in 1995. In 2008, to commemorate its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary, the CW Corps purchased a full set of drums from the Cooperman Fife and Drum Company. Just like the 1964 fife designed after the CW original, the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary drums were modeled after an original 18<sup>th</sup> Century drum in the Colonial Williamsburg collection.

<sup>53</sup> Letter, William D. Geiger to Lt. Mullens (Old Guard Corps), October 31, 1960, Colonial Williamsburg Archives.

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<sup>54</sup> Press Release, Colonial Williamsburg, November 8, 1960, Colonial Williamsburg Archives.

<sup>55</sup> Program, Colonial Militia Muster, November 16, 1960.

<sup>56</sup> Letter, W. D. Geiger to Sergeant George Carroll, December 9, 1960, Colonial Williamsburg Archives.

<sup>57</sup> Dallas Hodge (bass drummer) was the Seabee; Jack Reitz (fifer, bass drummer, drum major) was the helicopter pilot; Ernie Johnson (snare drummer) was the spotter pilot; and Stetson Tinkham (fifer) was the forward observer. John Evans Harbour (fifer, founding member) also served on active duty with the Army.

<sup>58</sup> Talmadge Alphin joined the CW Corps in 1959 as a bass drummer. He graduated from high school in 1961 and attended two years of college. He enlisted in the U.S. Army Reserves in 1963 and completed Basic Combat Training (BCT) and Advanced Individual Training (AIT) and served on active duty in the Reserves until October 1965 when he enlisted in the Regular Army and volunteered for the Special Forces.

Alphin completed Basic Airborne Training at Fort Benning, Georgia. He then completed the Basic Medical Corpsman course at Ft. Bragg, North Carolina, and the Advanced Medical Corpsman course at Ft. Sam Houston, Texas. His last training was the Communications Course (Special Forces) at Ft. Bragg, where he became a communications specialist and earned the Green Beret.

Alphin arrived in Vietnam on November 16, 1967, and was assigned to the headquarters company of the 5<sup>th</sup> Special Forces Group. In May of 1968, he was transferred to the Forward Operating Base (FOB-4) in Da Nang that housed the Command and Control North (CCN) of the top secret Military Assistance Command Vietnam – Studies and Observations Group (MACV-SOG). He was promoted to Staff Sergeant (E-6).

On August 23, 1968, Alphin was killed in a night attack on his base by three North Vietnamese sapper companies. Alphin and two other radio telephone operators (RTO's) were on duty in the tactical operations center (TOC) of the base during the attack. The "radio bunker" was one of the first targets of the attack, and it was hit with satchel charges, killing Alphin and the other two RTO's. The Green Berets were hit hard losing 17 killed in action (KIA), the most Green Berets killed in a single day during the entire Vietnam War. Alphin was the first CW Corps member to die.

According to the National Archives and Records Administration, Alphin received the following decorations and awards:

Expert Badge w/Rifle Bar, Sharpshooter Badge w/Auto rifle Bar, Parachute Badge, National Defense Service Medal, Vietnam Service Medal, Combat

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Infantryman Badge, Bronze Star Medal, Good Conduct Medal, Republic of Vietnam Gallantry Cross Unit Citation w/ Palm

<sup>59</sup> Presently, MSG William E. White, Jr., and Specialist William Parks, both fifers and graduates of the CW Corps, serve in the Old Guard Corps. White's younger brother, Charles, also served in the Old Guard Corps as a snare drummer. White also is the son of a CW Corps graduate, William E. White, who remained with the CW Corps after graduation from high school in 1971 as the music instructor and drum major, and later became the supervisor of the CW Corps.

<sup>60</sup> Virginia Gazette article, September 11, 1966.

<sup>61</sup> Daily Press article, September 1967; Virginia Gazette photograph, September 1968; Dailey Press article, August 31, 1969; Operations Plan, Militia Musick Field Day, September 30, 1967, Colonial Williamsburg Archives.

<sup>62</sup> Operations Plan and Program for the "Great Tattoo", April 27, 1967.

<sup>63</sup> Fife and drum musters began soon after the Civil War as veterans got together for reunions and to play their music. Drum and bugle corps also were started and gained in popularity. The gatherings of drum and bugle corps developed into competitions after WWI, and fife and drum musters followed suit. After WWII the fife and drum musters continued, primarily in New England, and they became the focal point of the return to the ancient style, vestiges of which had remained in New England since colonial times.

<sup>64</sup> A Prospect of Americana, by Edward "Ed" Olsen, published in The Drummers Assistant, Vol. I, Number 1, January 1962.

<sup>65</sup> While both corps have been leaders in the ancient style, both corps have made modern concessions that have enhanced their ability to perform for their respective audiences. From its foundation, The Old Guard Corps included bugles, necessary to get the unit started and a concession to the Army's 19<sup>th</sup> Century musical heritage. Currently, they also play 10-hole fifes that break apart for tuning. These fifes are based on the model designed by John J. McDonagh in the late 1950's, and they can play in a wider range of keys than six-hole fifes that are authentic to the colonial period. Both corps also admit women (girls in the CW Corps). Finally, both corps have seen evolutions in their music and drill that may offend purists in the ancient style. Nonetheless, both corps remain prominent among the ancient fife and drum corps in the country.