

October 4, 2020

A Short History of Drum Majoring Associations in the Western U.S.
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The Pacific Coast Alliance of Scottish Drum Majors (PCASDM) was formed in 1986. Its major objective, stated in the bylaws, was to “establish and maintain a fair and consistent set of standards that can be applied to all Drum Majoring contests held at Scottish events.” As a letter from John Hatherill, first President and one of the organizers stated at the time, “In the past , competition judging was performed by a variety of individuals ranging from expert to ignorant; thus chaos, inconsistency and many unhappy feelings.”

The organization adopted a set of rules based on those of the Royal Scottish Pipe Band Association, and proceeded to lobby the Scottish festivals on the west coast to adopt these rules, use PCASDM approved adjudicators, and be sanctioned by PCASDM. The group also published a newsletter and reached out to drum majors in the western U.S.

According to an undated list issued at the time, the PCASDM-approved adjudicators included: Rod MacKay, Del Rey Oaks, CA; John Hatherill, Tustin, CA; George Brown Simi, CA; Alasdair Harding, Berkeley, CA; John J. Smith, Palisades, CA; John Lorimer, Arvada, CO and Monte Morgan Provo, UT.

Rod MacKay is still living in California. He was very active for many years, supporting festivals all over the western U.S. and I believe that he also organized the Monterey, California Games.

The PCASDM dissolved in August of 1990 and amalgamated with the North American Scottish Drum Majors’ Association (NASDMA). Bryan Pratt from West Hills, CA was elected President. Vice President was John Lorimer, Arvada, CO; Treasurer was Diane Pratt, West Hills, CA; and Dik Low, Longmont, CO was Secretary as well as the newsletter editor. The objectives were the same as in the PCASDM; set high standards for drum majors in North America and ensure consistent, fair contest rules.

The NASDMA existed for about five years. Rod MacKay and Mickie Lujan (a world-champion drum major) lobbied the WUSPBA to recognize drum majors, finally achieving success in 1995. As stated in a letter from Susan M. Thornton, President of WUSPBA, welcoming all drum majors; “At the 1995 AGM of the WUSPBA, member bands voted overwhelmingly to include drum majors in the WUSPBA family.”