

NHSP Drill Team Continues to March On!

*By Trooper Robert Lima
Troop B NHTA Representative.*

The New Hampshire State Police Drill Team continues to march on nearing the twentieth year of existence. According to the 1987 annual report, the State Police Drill team was created for the 50th anniversary celebration. With the guidance of former members of the United States Army's "Old Guard" and the United States Marine Corps Silent Drill platoon, the sequences were formed and are still in use today. The Drill Team trains once a month to stay proficient in basic drill, rifle manual of arms, and military color guard and funeral protocol. Looking at the photo from this event, there was a twelve-member drill team at the time with then, a young Trooper Colitti at the lead. For the last five years, I have been a member of the Drill Team under the Command of Lieutenant LeLacheur. During this time, there have been a number of Troopers who have departed as well as those accepting the added responsibility to be a member of this high profile unit. Over the past five years, the following Troopers have moved on to other assignments and promotions within the division. Sergeant Bruce Mathews has retired, Trooper First Class David Gagne of Troop D, TFC Kathleen Lord has retired, Trooper Paul Hunt is now a Sergeant in Major Crime, TFC Kevin Leonard of Troop A, TFC Scott Phillips assigned to the State House, Trooper Christopher Scott is now a patrol Sergeant in Troop D, Trooper Richard Spaulding is assigned to Special Investigations and Narcotics, and Trooper Keith Carter has been



NHSP Drill Team marching into the cemetery for the burial of Officer Mike Briggs.



resented on the Drill Team. These eight Troopers are called on a routine basis to represent the Division of State Police at high profile events throughout the year. With the normal requirement for a minimum of a four-man color guard, the ability to fulfill all of the requests is at times a daunting task. A five-man color guard is ideal in order to properly display the United States

United States Attorney's Office conference at the Mount Washington Hotel, New Hampshire Police Association conventions, the New Hampshire Troopers association Black and Gold hockey game where Troopers play against past members of the Boston Bruins, Sporting events at the Verizon Wireless arena in Manchester for the Manchester Monarch hockey and Manchester Wolves arena football games. The color guard has also stood before thousands at the Merchants Auto.com baseball stadium here in Manchester for the Fisher Cat baseball games, University of New Hampshire Collegiate Hockey and Football games, New Hampshire Special Olympics events, numerous Town and City parades across the state, especially the City of Manchester's St. Patrick's day parade. Drill Team Color guards have also been utilized for funerals of retired Troopers, and other law enforcement officers throughout the state. We have represented the State Police at out of state funeral services in the last few years after the tragic loss of Sergeant Michael Johnson, Vermont State Police, killed by a fleeing suspect as he attempted to deploy stopsticks in the center median. We have traveled to the Commonwealth for the services for Massachusetts State Police Troopers, Vincent Cilia who was killed in a motorcycle crash and Trooper Paul Barry who was killed in a cruiser collision. And with the Murder of Officer Michael Briggs right here in Manchester, we paid our respects at his services here in New Hampshire. Being a member of the Drill Team for tragic events like those mentioned above reiterates the importance of this unit and the ability to staff and respond to these requests for services.

activated with the U. S. Army since 2003.

As the Commander of Troop B in Milford, Lieutenant LeLacheur has remained the Unit Commander for the Drill Team and the current unit is made up of the following:

Trooper Steve Cooper and Trooper Christopher St. Cyr of Troop A, Trooper Robert M. Lima of Troop B, Trooper Phil Gaiser of Troop C, TFC Patrick Curran and Trooper Eric Shirley of Troop D, and Trooper Dennis Wade and Trooper Seth Cooper of Troop F. Currently, no Trooper from Troop E is rep-

flag, State of New Hampshire flag, and the Division of State Police flag, along with the two riflemen. This has to be one of the most identifiable units with the State Troopers representing the granite state at many events attended by thousands.

Of the most notable events, the State Police Drill Team represents the division with a color guard on a yearly basis for the following: Law Enforcement Officers Memorial services during police week in May, New Hampshire Police Academy graduation ceremonies, United States Congressional awards,



PHOTO: AMANDA LELACHEUR

At Fenway: Tpr. Chuck Johnston, TFC Pat Curran, Tpr. Bob Lima, Tpr. Eric Shirley, and Tpr. Seth Cooper

Over the past few years, the Drill Team has lost our presence at a number of events where we used to have a constant presence. We are no longer requested or assigned to represent the Division at the New Hampshire State Police D.A.R.E. road race, or the two NASCAR races in Loudon. Other events

PHOTOS: AMANDA LELACHEUR



In the Luxury Box at Fenway, left to right: Lt. LeLacbeur, Tpr. Lima, Red Sox President/CEO Larry Lucchino, Owner/Partner Martin Trust, Owner/Partner Sam Tamposi Jr., and Tpr. Callinan.



After the NH Day at Fenway game, left to right: Lt. LeLacbeur, Tpr. Callinan and Tpr. Lima in the Red Sox Dugout.

are no longer held due to logistics such as the Law Enforcement expo hosted by the Nashua Police Department at the Budweiser plant in Merrimack, and the Ted Williams museum benefit dinner in Bedford.

The highlight of my tenure and all members of the Drill Team is the trip to Fenway Park in Boston for the Red Sox game as the present ownership has graciously honored fans across New England by hosting a "day" for each of the states. "New Hampshire Day" at Fenway Park exposes the New Hampshire State Police Color guard to 34,000 fans and allows the chance for New Hampshire Troopers to stand tall representing the division.

This year, on August 13th, 2006, a great friend of the State Police here in New Hampshire, Chuck Steedman allowed the expansion of our presence by getting the New Hampshire Police Association Pipes and Drums to participate in pre-game ceremonies. This was truly an awesome display of New Hampshire law enforcement as the pipes and drums played at a number of locations, including Yawkey way, a parade behind the Green Monster on Ted Williams way, and of course, the field of Fenway Park. Governor Lynch was in attendance and Mother Nature allowed for a beautiful day with a close game through the ninth inning and an

11-9 win against the Baltimore Orioles.

In closing, I would like to personally thank Colonel Booth for authorizing the purchase of new black clarino and brass flag holders, flag poles, Class A blouses, and white gloves from Neptune's in Haverhill, Massachusetts. The drill team had the same white, cloth flag holders since 1986 and they were in less than serviceable condition. The division definitely got their money's worth out of them and the new equipment has improved the appearance and morale of the Drill Team. □



Compare this 1942 version of the NHSP uniform (worn here by Tpr. Bill Smith) with the proposed new drill team uniform honoring the 70-year tradition of the NHSP.



Proposed change to Drill Team uniform: A reflection of history and tradition. Breeches and Boots along with traditional uniform ubistle to reflect on the 70th anniversary of service by the NHSP.