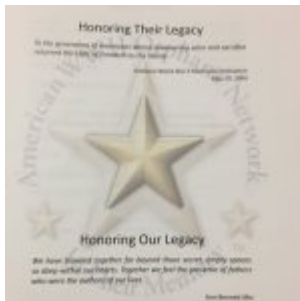


Delaware State Police Pipes & Drums Help Honor World War II Orphans and Their Families





Washington D.C. – On Saturday, September 29, 2018 the Delaware State Police Pipes and Drums had the extreme honor of taking part in a wreath laying ceremony held at the **National World War II Monument**, located on the National Mall in Washington D.C., as part of the **American World War II Orphans Network (AWON), 2018 Annual Gala Gathering**.

AWON is a national organization dedicated to locating sons and daughters of Americans who died or are still missing from World War II, honoring their fathers' service and sacrifice, and educating the public about the impact their fathers' deaths had on the children they left behind.

This year AWON gathered in Washington D.C. to honor the legacy of their fathers, grandfathers and great grandfathers, who made the ultimate sacrifice for their country and for freedom, as well as honoring their own sacrifice and legacy as orphans of **"The Greatest Generation"**.

Being familiar with DSP Pipes & Drums and their appearances at

local memorial services and events, Delawarean, and AWON Board of Directors member, **Ms. Billie Myers Meeks**, invited the band to appear at this year's Gala. While the band has a standard repertoire of tunes appropriate for various occasions, Ms. Meeks had a special request for this specific event, which was not part of this repertoire. The request was for **"Highland Laddie"**, which is a tune that was played by a lone, kilted bagpiper, who walked the beaches of Normandy as Scottish troops landed on D-Day. The band quickly got to work on learning and perfecting this new tune, in order to appropriately honor AWON's wishes as well as the memories of the fallen.

As the ceremony began the DSP Pipes and Drums played Highland Laddie for the first time in public, for what was basically an international audience. The band then played Amazing Grace during the wreath laying ceremony, followed by the playing of Taps, by Delaware State Police Honor Guard Bugler, Sgt. Jonathan Packard.

In the weeks leading up to the event the band understood that this appearance was special, but it wasn't until we were in formation on site at the monument, just prior to playing, that we truly appreciated the significance and gravity of the ceremony. Standing in the shadows of the Washington Monument, Lincoln Memorial and U.S. Capitol, and surrounded by those loved ones who lost their fathers, grandfathers or great grandfathers, it was only then that we truly understood what an honor it was to be allowed to pay tribute to those who lived and died by the motto: **"Duty, Honor, Country"**.

For the Orphans, For the Public, For Our Fathers – www.awon.us

The Delaware State Police Pipes and Drums was established in

2001, and is currently under the leadership of Captain Matthew Cox. The lead bagpipe instructor for the band is Grade II piper Robert Galloway and the drum instructor is Grade I drummer John McKinnon, both of whom emigrated to the U.S. from Scotland. The band is comprised of 21 members – 10 bagpipers, ten drummers and one drum major, each of which have a full time assignment with the Division outside of the Pipes and Drums. The primary purpose of the band is to provide musical solace at funerals and memorial services, and to pay respect and honor to public safety and military personnel. The band also represents the Delaware State Police in parades, charitable events and public functions when possible. To date, the band has conducted nearly 800 performances in its 17 year history. The band continues to serve as a centerpiece, displaying the professionalism and pageantry of the Delaware State Police, as it strives to further its mission of outreach in the community.

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Presented by Public Information Officer, Master Corporal Michael Austin

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