

WAMSB HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

WAMSB is a volunteer-based, non-profit association. Its development has been rapid; from the concept of a few band directors, to becoming a large worldwide association. It has members on six continents from 32 nations representing 24 band associations, their bands and band members. The majority of the membership is involved with school and community youth bands. Through its volunteer support base, it supplies membership services including publications and training. It maintains a website, classifies events, sanctions regional events, and operates an Annual World Championship for Marching Show Bands in a different nation around the world each year.

The early beginnings started with informal open meetings held by band directors whose bands were participating at international marching show band competitions. On an international basis they discovered they had common interests, requirements, and concerns relating to marching show bands. There was an obvious need to increase interaction and communication between band directors, bands and band associations worldwide.

If this could be accomplished, the activity would be enhanced for persons of all ages who participated in marching bands around the world. It was recognized that the majority of band members in the world were school-aged youth, and these youth would be the prime benefactors.

An initial base of volunteers was established to investigate the development of forming an international association to address the issue. It was agreed interested directors who could come to the International Midwest Band Clinic in Chicago in December 1991 would meet to assist in the planning of a World Championship for Marching Show Bands and in the development of a World Association for Marching Show Bands.

The International Midwest Band Clinic was chosen as the meeting site because it is the single largest gathering place for band directors and band associations in the world. There is an annual attendance in excess of 10,000 delegates.

In December of 1992 another meeting was held at the Midwest Clinic, where plans were developed further and then put into volunteer action units. It was decided to formalize the plans by registering the Association as a legal entity as soon as the requirements were identified and met. The Association was to be called the World Association of Marching Show Bands.

Additional meetings were scheduled December 1993, 1994. Regional meetings around the world were to be established at international events to develop and expand the Association's potential membership base. The legal registration of the Association was completed in the State of Delaware, USA, as a non-profit Association in July of 1995. Subsequently, the Association was also registered as an Extra-Provincial Non-Profit Corporation in the Province of Alberta, Canada in July of 1997 where its office is maintained.

The jurisdiction of the Association is worldwide, viz.: The Association is organized exclusively for charitable and educational purposes. The purpose is to engage in any lawful act or activity for which associations may be organized under the general Corporations Law in the state of Delaware as a non-stock, non-profit corporation to promote the international development and communication of marching show bands worldwide.

Encouraged by national and regional band associations, different potential hosting cities around the world apply to bring the World Championship to their nation. Currently, a sanction to host the annual event is granted three years in advance of the event being held. Because of the large number of nations vying to host a World Championship, potential host organizers have been encouraged to apply five years in advance to allow for a detailed examination of their plans.

The first sanctioned World Championship for Marching Show Bands was held in Canada in July of 1996. Since then, sanctions have been granted to host the Championship in Australia, Brazil, Germany, Italy, Japan, the United Kingdom, USA, Taiwan and Canada. Requests to apply for sanction have come from several other nations of the world. Thailand, Singapore, Malaysia, Korea, Poland, and Austria are currently vying to host future Championships.

To be awarded a sanction, the base requirement is that WAMSB standards, rules, regulations and officials are to be utilized. Consideration is given to a rotation of the location of the Championship which will provide access to a quality event for all Marching Show Bands on a worldwide basis. The event is to be operated on an affordable basis for bands coming from around the world. The inclusion of local volunteers and organizations is required. The potential for increased interaction of various band organizations in the hosting nation is also taken into consideration.