

Here's a delightful tale from the corps' early days back in 1958. This is an eye witness account by Phil Hennings who was right in the thick of the action. If you have an anecdote about the corps that you'd like to see here, please write it up and send it along (including photos, if possible).

## The Strange Case of the City of Toronto Flag

by Phil Hennings



In the Fall of 1958, after winning the Canadian National Championships, we were invited to march up Bay Street to the Old City Hall and meet the then Mayor of Toronto -- Nathan Philips, for whom, incidentally, the new City Hall square is named.

Marching up Bay Street in a parade was usually limited to Stanley Cup Hockey Team winners and Football Champions. Therefore, it was a privilege to be honoured in this way. The Toronto Optimists Executive and the Mayor gave a congratulatory speech and the mayor presented the corps with The Toronto Flag (as far as I know this flag was never given to any other corps).

This flag was carried by the colour guard to represent Toronto. It was black with a gold fringe and in the centre was the City's Coat of Arms. As Drum Major, I greeted the Mayor and he presented the Toronto flag to me in a canvas bag. Reporters were asking the Mayor and myself to show them the flag but (very quietly) Mayor Philips leaned over to me and whispered in my ear, "Don't open the bag, son."

I asked, "Why?"

And he said, "There is no flag in the bag. It's still being made."

The reporters were very puzzled because they wanted to take pictures of the presentation of the flag.

This is one of my proud moments with the Corps. We paraded up Bay Street many times after that 1958 appearance, having won the Canadian Championship for 12 years.

P.S. DOES ANYONE KNOW WHERE THIS FLAG IS TODAY?

A little bit of history from a long time corps member.

