Wantagh American Legion Pipe Band

http://www.walpb.com

One of Long Island's premier marching pipe bands.

For many years, Wantagh American Legion Post #1273 talked of forming some sort of band to lead its members as they marched in parades. In the summer of 1992 Legionnaire Steve Ruggles offered to finally act where others had only talked. Steve spread the word that the Post would be forming a pipe and drum band, and needed volunteers to fill its ranks. He then located a young bagpipe instructor, Jim Ryan, to teach the band¡s recruits how to play the pipes. In October of 1992, an initial group of eighteen potential students began their chanter instruction. This group soon evolved into a core of six intrepid students who dedicated themselves to learning how to play the pipes. This small group soon expanded as new students joined and in May of 1993 the transition from chanters to bagpipes began. The band decided that it wanted to debut in Wantagh¡s Memorial Day parade in 1994. The successful completion of four prerequisite goals was required for their target debut date to be realized. First, the novice pipers would have to invest a great deal of their time in the mastery of their new instruments. Second, a drum core would have to be formed and trained. Third, uniforms would have to be decided upon and purchased. Additionally, funds would have to be raised to pay for the band¡s new uniforms. The first goal was achieved through dedicated attendance at weekly practices and participation in many informal ad hoc practices. The pipe corps was aided further with the addition of its first experienced piper, John Puvogel, who became the band¡s first Pipe Major. A drum corps was formed under the instruction of NYPD Emerald Society snare drummer Jay Levey. The dedication of the drum corps paralleled that of the pipe corps, resulting in the achievement of the band¡s second goal. The band¡s affiliation with the American Legion led to the decision that a military-style uniform would be appropriate. It also led the band to decide that the kilt¡s tartan should contain the red, white and blue of the American flag. After reviewing several tartans that met this criterion, the American Bicentennial tartan (also known as the American St. Andrew¡s tartan) was selected. Suppliers were contacted and the uniform parts were ordered for delivery in time for Memorial Day 1994. Fund raisers and financial support from band members provided just enough money to cover the costs of the uniforms, the last pieces of which were delivered almost literally on the eve of the 1994 Memorial Day parade! The band was ready for its debut! Debut: On May 30, 1994 the Wantagh American Legion Pipe Band made its first-ever public appearance when it marched in Wantagh¡s Memorial Day parade. While it certainly still had a long way to go, the band had reached this historic milestone as the result of intense desire and hard work on the part of each and every one of its members.

Grouping: Pipeband
Address1: 180 Massachusetts Avenue
City: Massapequa
State: NY
Zip: 11758
Country: US
Phone1: (212) 845-4111
Year-Joined: 2012
UL Rank (1 is highest, 4 is lowest): 4

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