



Alton Native to Participate in the Inauguration of Barack Obama as a Member of “The President’s Own” U.S. Marine Band

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WASHINGTON - Master Gunnery Sergeant Charles Willett will perform in the 57th Inauguration of the President of the United States on Jan. 21, 2013, as a member of “The President’s Own” United States Marine Band. Willett, a clarinet player in the U.S. Marine Band, will perform at the swearing-in ceremony and march in the inaugural parade. This marks the Marine Band’s 54th consecutive inaugural appearance and Willett’s sixth.

The Marine Band provides music for the Inauguration swearing-in ceremony at the U.S. Capitol, leads the second division of the parade down Pennsylvania Avenue, and will perform at the Commander in Chief inaugural ball in Washington, D.C. as well as the inaugural prayer service the following morning. “The President’s Own” is the only musical unit to participate in all four events. The band will provide accompaniment for Kelly Clarkson and Beyonce during the swearing-in ceremony.

On March 4, 1801, the Marine Band performed for Thomas Jefferson’s inauguration and research suggests that the band has participated in every presidential inaugural since. An accomplished musician himself, Jefferson recognized the unique relationship between the band and the Chief Executive and is credited with giving the Marine Band the title, “The President’s Own.”

To arrange an interview with Master Gunnery Sgt. Willett, please contact Staff Sergeant Rachel Ghadiali, Marine Band Public Affairs Specialist at rachel.ghadiali@usmc.mil, (202) 433-5810 or visit www.marineband.usmc.mil.

The Marine Band is America's oldest continuously active professional musical organization. Founded in 1798, the band has performed for every U.S. President since John Adams. Known as "The President's Own" since the days of Thomas Jefferson, the Marine Band's primary mission is to provide music for the President of the United States and the Commandant of the Marine