

VIRGINIA INTERNATIONAL TATTOO HISTORY

Our Tattoo - Established in 1997, the Virginia International Tattoo, a signature event of the Virginia Arts Festival, is an annual celebration of patriotism and international goodwill. Every year, the Tattoo welcomes over 1,000 performers from all over the world in a display of military bands, drill teams, massed pipes and drums, Celtic dancers, choirs, and more. It is the largest tattoo in the United States, drawing an audience of nearly 40,000 people each year, and was listed as American Bus Association's Top North American Event for 2016.

"Tattoo" Origin - Historically, tattoos stem from a 17th-century European tradition of military drummers alerting soldiers that it was time to return to their barracks for the evening. After hearing the call of the local regiments' fifes and drums, the Dutch Low Country innkeepers would call "Doe den tap toe!" – "Turn off the taps!" The "tap too" evolved over time, and the word "tattoo" now refers to a ceremonial performance of military music by massed bands.

Education - An important central component of the Virginia International Tattoo is its accessibility to local youth. Each year, nearly 18,000 area students have the opportunity to experience the Tattoo through in-school performances and student matinees. In addition, the Tattoo opens the final dress rehearsal to families of special needs patrons to accommodate those who might not be able to attend a public performance due to their unique circumstances.

Diverse Performance - For over 25 years, the Virginia International Tattoo has been offering a unique opportunity to gain insight into different countries' culture, language, military traditions and more. A showcase of remarkable talent and tradition, and now the home of the annual Virginia International American Pipe Band Competition, the Virginia International Tattoo has presented performers from...

Albania
Australia
Belgium
Bermuda
Canada
Czech Republic
Denmark
Estonia
Finland
France
Germany

Italy
Jordan
Netherlands
New Zealand
Norway
Oman
Republic of Ireland
Republic of Korea
Romania
Russia
Singapore

South Africa
Spain
Sweden
Switzerland
Tonga
Trinidad and Tobago
Turkey
United Kingdom
United States

Norfolk, Virginia also serves as the North American Headquarters for NATO, and the Virginia International Tattoo is presented in cooperation with NATO and the Norfolk NATO Festival.

For more information, please visit www.vatattoo.org

PAST EVENT PHOTOS



David Pelston 2015







Heiko DeWees



