

## Don't Rain On My Mummers Museum Parade

The Mummers Parade has been a cultural institution for Philadelphians since 1901. The tradition itself dates back even further, to the late 17th century. It started as a way of ushering in the New Year with masquerades and noise making, and has grown to an organized parade of elaborate costumes, dancing, and live music. The Mummers of today number over 20,000, and the parade attendees number over 125,000.

The parade, now a competition, is divided into four divisions. They include: Comic, Fancy, Fancy Brigade and String Band. The Comic division satirizes social and political themes. The Fancy division performs with floats and props while adorned in elaborate costumes. The Fancy Brigade division is also adorned in ornate costumes, but performs intricate dances and drills with props. The String Band division combines the elaborate costuming with musical performance and drills. Each of these divisions is made up of numerous clubs which then compete in each division during the parade.



The exciting history of the Mummers Parade and the Mummers themselves is well documented in the archives of the Mummers Museum, which is located on "2 Street" in South Philadelphia. This museum collects and displays the costumes, music, and history of the

parade for future generations.

In case you missed the parade, the winning costumes of the year are put on display in the museum's "Winner's Circle." If you have never been, it is worth the trip to 2nd and Washington Streets, not only to learn the history of one of our city's most lively folk festivals, but also to support a local institution that works to preserve an aspect of our cultural heritage that is uniquely Philadelphian.

If you are as big of a fan of the Mummers as we are, you should also check out [SaveTheMummers.com](http://www.savethemummers.com/) [1]. They are an organization dedicated to preserving the tradition of the Mummers Parade for future generations. You can "like" them on [facebook](#) [1] or follow them on [twitter](#) [2] to learn more.

You can find descriptions of the collections at the Mummers Museum on the [PACSCL finding aid](#) [3] website.

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#### **Links**

[1] <http://www.savethemummers.com/>

[2] <https://twitter.com/#%21/SaveTheMummers>

[3] [http://dla.library.upenn.edu/dla/pacscl/search.html?fq=top\\_repository\\_facet%3A%22Mummers%20Museum%22](http://dla.library.upenn.edu/dla/pacscl/search.html?fq=top_repository_facet%3A%22Mummers%20Museum%22)