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Hello, and welcome back to Busy Kids Love Music, a podcast for music loving families.! I'm Carly Seifert, the creator of Busy Kids Do Piano, and a quick note before we get started. Tomorrow is January 1st – New Year's Day – and public enrollment to my online piano lesson programs is open from January 1st - 14th for anyone wishes to join my online piano lesson programs. You can learn about my online program for kids at busykidsdopiano.com/membership and my online program for adults at busymomsdopiano.com/membership and I will also link to those pages in the show notes as well. This episode is scheduled to air on New Year's Eve, so we're doing something a little special. Whether you're listening to this episode on New Year's Eve or New Year's Day or any other day, I'm so glad you've tuned in! Today's episode is all about New Year's Day Parade Music. We're going to dive into some famous New Year's parades, like the Rose Parade in California and the London New Year's Day Parade, and look at the important role that music plays in these colorful celebrations. So, grab your confetti, and let's jump right in!

Let's start with one of the most famous New Year's Day parades—the Rose Parade! This parade takes place in Pasadena, California, and has been a New Year's tradition for over 130 years. What's unique about the Rose Parade is its beautiful floats, which are covered in flowers, leaves, seeds, and other natural materials. But there's more to this parade than just the floats—music plays a huge role, too!

Each year, marching bands from across the United States, and sometimes from around the world, travel to Pasadena to perform in the Rose Parade. These bands include high school marching bands, college bands, and even professional and military bands. Some bands travel thousands of miles to be part of this amazing parade!

Another parade favorite is “Strike Up the Band”, a song by the famous American composers George and Ira Gershwin. This piece really sets the energetic tone of the parade.

Did you know that each band’s performance is carefully planned out? Bands practice for months leading up to the Rose Parade to make sure every step, every note, and every song is perfect. They need to keep the beat while marching along a five-and-a-half-mile route!

Now let’s hop across the Atlantic Ocean to London, England, where another famous New Year’s Day parade takes place! The London New Year’s Day Parade was first held in 1987, and it’s been growing ever since. Just like the Rose Parade, the London parade features spectacular floats and costumes, and of course, lots of music.

In London’s parade, you’ll see a mix of British and American marching bands. Bands from the United States are often invited to join in the festivities, giving it an international feel. In fact, I have to give a shoutout right now to the Jonesboro Marching Band in my home state of Georgia, who you’re listening to right now, because they will be performing in the London New Year’s Day Parade tomorrow! These marching bands perform everything from classical marches to pop hits, making it a really exciting mix of music.

One song you might hear at the London parade is “Rule, Britannia!”, a traditional British anthem that’s been popular for centuries. It’s a powerful, patriotic song, and hearing it performed by a full marching band is a treat.

Another popular tune in the London New Year’s Day Parade is “Land of Hope and Glory”, a song that’s often sung at celebrations across the United Kingdom.

The parade route in London goes through some of the city’s most famous streets and ends near Big Ben and Westminster Abbey.

Marching bands have to perform in all kinds of weather since it's usually quite chilly in London in January! But the cold weather doesn't stop these musicians from playing their hearts out.

Now that we've covered the Rose Parade and the London New Year's Day Parade, let's talk about some fun musical facts related to these events. Did you know that some marching bands are so large that they have over 200 musicians? That means lots of brass, woodwinds, percussion, and sometimes even dancers and color guard members, too.

Marching band members work hard to stay in step while playing their instruments. And here's a fun fact: to make sure they're all in sync, they practice what's called a "roll step" or a "glide step". That's when they roll their feet from heel to toe to create a smooth, gliding motion. This way, they can keep their upper bodies steady as their instruments produce a nice, even sound, even while marching!

Another fun fact is that certain songs are parade favorites for marching bands. For example, "The Stars and Stripes Forever", by John Philip Sousa, which you're listening to now and which we have discussed on the podcast before, is known as the "American National March" and is often played in parades in the U.S. The lively beat and strong melody make it perfect for marching!

In London, a similar favorite is "Pomp and Circumstance", which British bands often perform. These songs have a steady rhythm that keeps the marchers in step and brings an air of excitement to the crowd.

Marching bands also use a special type of sheet music called a "flip folder", which attaches to their instruments so they can quickly see their music while marching. And in case you're wondering, yes—these musicians are memorizing a lot of music. They usually only use their flip folders for backup!

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Whether in Pasadena, London, or any other city, parade music is special because it brings people together. When you hear a band playing a lively march or a familiar tune, it's hard not to tap your feet or clap along. And for the musicians, parades are a way to show their skills, connect with the audience, and be part of a memorable event that kicks off the new year.

The energy of the music, the excitement of the crowd, and the dedication of the musicians create a unique experience that many people look forward to each New Year's Day. It's a time to celebrate, be joyful, and share music with people from all around the world. If you head to this episode's show notes at busykidsdopiano.com/podcast/140 I've linked to performances from some of the parades and bands that you've heard in today's podcast episode. I hope you've enjoyed our tour of New Year's Day Parade Music! If you ever have the chance to watch a parade, pay close attention to the music and the hard work the bands put into their performance. Each step and every note they play is a celebration of the new year and a reminder of the joy music can bring.

Thanks so much for listening to Busy Kids Love Music. Don't forget to subscribe so you won't miss any upcoming episodes as we kick off a brand-new year of musical exploration! Wishing you a happy and musical New Year, and I look forward to connecting with you again in 2 weeks when our next brand new episode airs. Bye for now!