



**SYLACAUGA HIGH SCHOOL
HALF MILLION DOLLAR BAND
ALUMNI ASSOCIATION**
Volume 3 – August 2008



Alumni President News

By

Henry W. Nunnelley (Class of 1974)

Thank you for your participation in the SHS Band Alumni Association.

As was mentioned in our previous newsletter, we are still getting our feet on the ground with this association.

For various reasons we were unable to produce our newsletter for the Fall Season so this newsletter combines the entire SHS School Year of 2007-08. We do appreciate your patience.

The good news is that we had a very successful Alumni gathering on September 14, 2007. We had approximately 25 alumni actually participate in the band with another ten or so members attending the social time. Since I participated in the band, I can speak for the group and say, it was really fun and our sound was (semi-surprisingly) relatively OK. You can further read below the experience of Chip McEwen, Class of 1974. He is enthusiastically supporting this alumni association.

We have included a few pictures from the gathering in this newsletter. For a more complete set, we invite you to visit the website, www.shsband.net, and view pictures of not only of the alumni weekend; but also the entire band football season.

For those that may not realize, I also served as Band Booster President this past year. This made me more involved with the students than would have happened otherwise. The reason for mentioning this is that it does make a difference with the students when they see involvement by the alumni.

The date for our Alumni Band night is October 3, 2008. This is a home game against Chelsea. Practice will be on Thursday night, October 2, 2008. Once again our 2 numbers will be "Hail to the Varsity" and the Alma Mater. Last year we also joined the rest of the band and played "The Horse" and "Beginnings." For out of town members that would like to play and are unable to attend the practice, please email us (hunnelley@shsband.net) and we will get you the music. If you do not feel like participating in the band,

please make an effort to attend the social function prior to the football game. We will also again have a section behind the band for the group to sit together.

As you read the member list at the end of this newsletter, these are the members who have actually paid their dues in 2007 and 2008, according to our records. While the dues notice was mentioned in the previous newsletter, we have determined that many missed the notice. We are still trying to determine the best way to distribute these dues notices. If you have comments or suggestions, we would like to hear from you.

DUES NOTICE

This newsletter will constitute your statement for dues to the SHS Band Alumni Association. Annual dues for the period July 2008 through June 2009 are \$15.00 per member or \$25.00 per family. This association is open to both SHS alumni and friends. If you would like to donate more, as many members have, we will gladly accept with a smile and a thank you. If you use the family membership, please make sure we know the full name of the spouse.

<i>2007-08 Officers</i>	
<i>President</i>	<i>Henry W. Nunnelley</i>
<i>Past President</i>	<i>Judy Ward</i>
<i>Treasurer.....</i>	<i>.....</i>
<i>Secretary</i>	<i>Sheri Smith</i>
<i>Director.....</i>	<i>David Simpkins</i>

Please mail your payment to:
Sylacauga High School Band Alumni Association
P. O. Box 2083
Sylacauga, AL 35150

Finances

Currently our fund has a balance of \$2,069.80 and is earning interest at a small amount, which is better than nothing. Based on recommendation of David Simpkins, we are holding this to help with uniform purchases in the near future, although we are also looking for other “special” ways to help the band also.

Fall Semester 2007

By Alesia Williams and Wesley Sims, Drum Majors

Fall semester of 2007 has been an exciting time for the Sylacauga High School Marching Aggie Band. Summer was nearly over. Students were dreading returning to classes, lockers, and school bells. Band students, however, were brimming with anticipation to get back into the band room and work on the new field and stand music they would be playing for the next few months. During the last week before the start of school, the band eagerly gathered for an intense band camp, with the seniors sadly knowing that this would be their last. With the aid of Mr. and Mrs. Simpkins, drum majors, section leaders, and dedicated clinicians, the band was able to fashion our Tribute to New Orleans, a jazzy show full of combos, dancing, eye-catching formations, and tons of fun.

After a tough but fun band camp, the Tribute to New Orleans show entertained crowds every Friday night at Aggie football games. When halftime finally arrived, our show opened with “Walking Down Basin Street” as Katelyn Hamilton, Baxter Bozeman, Clisby Wilson, John Bradford, and Wesley Sims started the song in a slow and resonant tone. Following the fun of “Basin Street”, the band sped up into Pardi Gras. The percussion and bells roared flawlessly through the percussion feature, and the band joined back in to challenge the other school with “Tiger Rag.”

With the “pardi” slowed and the auxiliary ready for another stunning routine, Wesley yelled the infamous count off to “When the Saints Go Marching In”. The crowd hushed as the band played almost funeral-like through the first few measures, but was ready for another party as the whistle blew and the tempo flew. The Darlin’ Devil Majorettes wowed the audience as the twirled their batons without a mistake and the Sylacauga Silks proved that perfection was possible. Alesia then descended the stand and took the field to play clarinet alongside Baxter, Clisby, John, and Travis Higginbotham. As the show drew to a close, the band marched off the field to the loud pulse of “Hail to the Varsity” and the thunderous applause of the audience. As any band member can tell you, there is nothing like feeling the blood pumping in your veins as you realize that you made the clapping and cheering of an awe-struck audience.

You feel best after leaving the field, knowing the band was awesome, but the fun never ended there. Despite whatever numbers were on the scoreboard, you can be sure that everyone in the band section was showing their school spirit. The pep rallies never ended at 3:10 p.m. but continued every Friday in the notes of a trumpet or the dance steps to “The Horse.” The band was always the life of the football games; well, at least we all thought so.

With the sun of football season setting, the work of the Half-Million Dollar Band was far from over. A cold November arrived (actually, it was still hot). Christmas was in the air and in the bells of the horns. The Christmas parade always demands a lot from the band members, and Mr. Simpkins corralled us all into practice again. On December 1, the band proceeded down Broadway, all the while raising holiday cheer with “Frosty the Snowman” and fittingly, “Christmas Carols on Parade”.

Even during parade work, concert preparation was underway. The Christmas concert is the focal point of Christmas season in the band room. Weeks of concentration were poured into songs like “The Angels of Christmas” and “Swing Those Bells.” Mr. Simpkins drove us, encouraged us, and led us into quite possibly the best concert the band has ever given. The concert night rocked with holiday spirit thanks to the band and our “hip and happenin’” friends in the chorus.

The tireless hours and sleepless nights Mr. Simpkins devoted to the band made it the success it was this marching and Christmas season. If it were not for the dedication of him, “beautiful wife” Catie, Mr. Hall, the band boosters with Mr. Nunnelley and Mr. Parker, and countless others, then SHS would be a drab, boring place without all the fun and spirit the band brings.

Alesia Williams

Wesley Sims

Notes from the Band Director

Greetings from the Sylacauga Band Program! I’d like to say a special word of thanks to Henry Nunnelley and all of the officers of the Alumni Association for their work and persistence in getting this organization off the ground. This Alumni Association promises to be a vital link between the tradition of excellence that we have all shared and the building of that sense of pride and family with our current and future students. Thank you all for your involvement and support.

I would also like to say a special thanks to all of you who participated in our fall “reunion.” We had a wonderful time visiting, sharing old stories, breaking out our dusty instruments and playing “Hail to the Varsity” and “Alma Mater” during our Friday night Pre-Game Festivities. It was a lot of fun for the “old-timers” but it also left a fantastic impression on our current students. They still talk about how good we sounded! It is amazing how the simple involvement and presence of our alumni serves to encourage our teenagers! Thank you!

The High School Band had a great fall marching season. Our half-time show was titled “Tribute to New Orleans” and featured a number of great old jazz tunes that I’m sure my grandfather “Fess” would have loved. We were proud to be able to take our show to the Pride of the Valley Marching Band Festival in Pinson, AL and earn all superior ratings. After football season, the band was able to win the “Best Band”

award at the Sylacauga Christmas Parade and later performed at the Sylacauga High School Fine Arts Christmas Concert where we received a thunderous standing ovation. I will say that this has certainly been one of the most enjoyable bands I have ever been around. We enjoyed the leadership provided by an extremely gifted senior class and two fantastic drum majors in Alesia Williams and Wesley Sims. As an alumni myself, I am proud that this group represented my school this year.

Our Spring season consisted of a variety of challenging music. We had 2 concerts, one at First Baptist Church and the other at Central Park. We had approximately 40 students participate in the All County Music Festival and one student, Wesley Sims, was selected to perform in the All State Competition.

We are currently working with the 2008 band. Our theme for this season revolves around the music of Beethoven. It is truly exciting music that the students are learning to love. We hope you can attend some of the games. We especially hope you can either attend or perform in the Alumni Band meeting on October 3, 2008. If you need the music please call or come see me or contact Henry Nunnelley by email and we will be glad to help in any way.

Thank you again for being a supporter of the Sylacauga High School Band Program. We look forward to seeing you October 3, 2008.

Sincerely,
David Simpkins
Band Director

A Knowledgeable Walk Down Memory Lane

By Chip McEwen, SHS, 1974

How many times have you wished you could go back to your younger days with the knowledge you have now? Well for me, the opportunity presented itself September 13-14, 2007. The Alumni Band Association invited all alumni to come and play with the Band at the Talladega v. SHS football game.

The invitation came a couple of months before the event. I wisely went to my attic and got out my trombone. Now the last time I can remember actually playing it was just after my college days so let's just say it had been over 25+ years. I knew how to put it together and still had music from my old SHS days. In fact I had the songs we were to play, Hail to the Varsity and the Alma Mater. I remembered how to read the music, where the slide positions for the notes were located, how to lubricate the slide, and how to hold the horn. With all that knowledge and remembering how to blow it I tried. I had all the knowledge, but the most important item, the LIPS, were gone. Here I was feeling like I was back in 7th grade learning how to play except I knew everything I needed to play but the Lips were letting me down. I practiced for a month before the event and the LIPS started to come back.

Finally, the real practice with the band came on Thursday the 13th. It was good to see some old friends that evening. When Buddy Simpkins took the podium with all of us alumni interspersed within the band, He probably wondered if we were going to give the current student members something to remember as they laughed us out of the bandroom. Well, the baton went down and the music filled the room and you could really feel a warm energy flowing as we, both young and old, warmed up the scales together and it actually sounded good!

The next night at the game was another memorable moment as we were able to take the field at halftime and play with the Band. As an old alum, standing on the field, looking at the crowd, and playing two songs so tied to SHS, I shivered as the moment brought chills all over my body. It reminded me of all the old times and inspired me regarding the legacy the current student members will have just like us alumni. If you are an alumnus of the Band, be sure to join the SHS Band Alumni Association and take the opportunity to go back with all your knowledge to the days of your youth when the invitation comes during Football season in 2008!!

Band Seniors from the Class of 2008



Pictured from Left to Right - Clisby Wilson, Landon Wakefield, Nola Bowling, Baxter Bozeman, John Bradford, Wynn Campbell, Matthew Hall, Matt Jennings, Jerry Saylor, Wesley Sims, Alesia Williams, Clint Wright

Not Pictured - Jessica Kelley, Lora Parker, Ajike Player, Tara Williams

Alumni Band Night October 3, 2008

The date for our Alumni Band night is October 3, 2008. This is a home game against Chelsea. Practice will be on Thursday night, October 2, 2008 with a tentative time of 6:00 p.m. Once again our 2 numbers will be "Hail to the Varsity" and the Alma Mater. Last year we also joined the rest of the band and played "The Horse" and "Beginnings." For out of town members that would like to play and are unable to attend the practice, please email us (hunnolley@shsband.net) or call David Simpkins at the band room and we will get you the music. If you unable to participate in the band, please make an effort to attend the social function from 5:30 to 6:30 at the picnic tables close to the practice field prior to the football game. We will also again have a section behind the band for the group to sit together during the game.

Email Addresses

If you received your newsletter via regular mail and have an email address and easy access to a computer, we would appreciate you updating your information for future newsletters.

SHS Band Website

Please check out the band website, www.shsband.net, for current information on the band.

Scenes from the 2007 - 2008 Season



Photo Descriptions
SHS and Comer Band with the National anthem
SHS Band Halftime Show
Christmas Parade 2007
Alumni Band 2007 – 2 Pictures
Winter Concert – First Baptist Church
Spring Concert – Central Park

Alumni Band Members July 2008

This is the membership list as best we can determine at this time. It includes all members who have paid from July 2007 to the present plus the past 2 graduating classes of band students. If some names are misspelled or inadvertently omitted or the class years are incorrect, please let us know and we will be glad to correct in the next newsletter.

1941	J. Henry Moseley	1955	William E. (Bill) Handley
1944	Morris W. Hollis	1956	Earl Lewis
1945	Charles S. Crowther	1956	Penny (Atkinson) Young
1945	John L. Fulmer	1957	Patricia (Pat) Hagan
1945	James M. (Jimmy) Hare	1957	Syble R. (Rowe) McBryde
1946	June Lessley (Lessley) Atkinson	1958	Gloria H. (Hendrix) Allison
1946	Jimmy T. Davis	1958	Janelle (Blackmon) Cadenhead
1946	Glenda V. (Vinson) Ivey	1958	B.E. (Sonny) Riggins
1946	Mary Sue McLain	1959	William M. Ferguson
1946	Betty Ruth (Jones) Piette	1959	Roberta T. (Tomlinson) Jordan
1946	Thomas Douglas Riggins*	1959	Charlotte S. (Stallings) Strickland
1947	Mildred L. Campbell	1960	Janice (Blackmon) Menzies
1947	George Richard Johnston	1960	Betty T. (Thompson) Morgan
1947	Mrs. Doug Riggins	1960	Nan E. (Wooten) Morrow
1948	Harold J. (Jack) () Morris	1960	Travis Wesson
1948	Edwin McCoy Ray	1961	Barbara B. (Barnes) Johnson
1949	Paul V. (Deke) Deason	1961	George C. Stewart
1949	Peggy R. (Robinson) Fitts	1962	Jane (Coler) Glasser
1950	Jeptha V. Greer	1962	Josephine (Tomlinson) Hall-Blackwell
1950	Donald E. (Don) () Merkel	1962	Bettye (Carroll) Krehling
1950	Patrick W. (Pat) () Newby	1963	Sherry N. (Bonner) Arnold
1951	June (Simmons) Matthews	1963	Ernie W. Teaford
1951	Sara Jean (Stuart) Russell	1963	Averiett (Holly) Wesson
1951	Dorris G. (Gentry) Stone	1964	Sheryl D. (DeCoudres) Barkalow
1952	O. Dewitt Dodd*	1964	Jean G. (Gaitten) Covington
1952	Catherine G. (Grice) McEwen	1964	Joe Serviss
1952	Ann (Simmons) McMillan	1965	Betty (House) Aarhus
1952	Marie H. (Harris) Morgan	1965	Marjorie M. (Mungall) Haigler
1952	Berkley L. Rish	1966	Marilyn H. (Holt) Hardy
1952	Margie P. (Patterson) Sanford	1966	Jan S. (Serviss) Wallis
1953	Jill P. (Parker) Gillum	1967	Jean B. Reed
1953	Robert W. McMillan	1967	H. Howard White
1953	Betty D. (Davis) Ward	1967	Danny L. Williams
1954	Donald H. Allison*	1969	Bill Hatcher
1954	Elaine (Caldwell) Mitchem	1969	E. Gail (Lusk) Posey
1954	D. Deon (Oswalt) Neighbors	1970	James M. (Matt) Hare
1954	Jamie E. Price	1970	William H. Runge
1954	Gilbert V. (Gib) Stewart	1970	Alice Smith (Smith) Tylander
1955	Peggy M. (Murphy) Caldwell	1970	Jane (McKinnon) Vaughn
1955	Robert E. Grice		

1971	Gloria K. (Knight) Campbell	1993	Kacie (Orton) Bratton
1971	Doris E. Chandler	1993	Amanda (Rumsey) Higginbotham
1971	Carol (Horton) Sprayberry	1994	Scott Williams
1972	Andrea K. (Kidd) Taylor	1994	Leslie Williams
1973	Sue Ellen Johnston	1995	Melinda W. (Wadsworth) Neal
1974	George (Parky)Allen	1995	James C. (Chad) Reams
1974	Louise (Vaughn) Gambrell	1996	Cammie D. Snowden
1974	Vernon O. (Chip) McEwen	1997	Cheri (Williams) Cunningham
1974	Henry W. Nunnelley	1998	Mandy A. (Thompson) Reams
1974	Sheri (Dodd) Smith	2000	Joshua L. Barnett
1974	Cheryl (Large) Van Wagner	2001	Casey L. House
1974	Judy (Murphree) Ward	2007	Aasia Anne Stone
1975	Jeff N. Patterson	2007	Laura "Ashley" Miller
1975	Doug Sawyer	2007	Steven Levi Ellison
1975	Mark Whitehurst	2007	Julie Annah Conley
1976	David Cochran	2007	Lauren "Ashley" Blocker
1977	Teresa B. (Bishop) Conville	2007	Joseph Lane Barnett
1977	Maury D. Gaston	2007	Raymond DeVaughn Bailey
1978	Karen (O'Kelley) Allen	2007	Morgan Anders
1979	James K.(Jimmy) Schell	2007	Whitney Kristen Wesson
1979	Tina (Killgore) Wagnon	2007	Haley Michelle Ward
1979	Kelley (Sawyer) Wassermann	2007	Meghan Marie Shingleton
1982	Scott E. Collins	2007	Darius Kentrell Owens
1982	Lisa (Barnett) Strong	2007	James T. Olden
1983	Karen M. (McDonough) Blocker	2007	Nichole Melanie Mitchell
1983	Mary Beth Kromer	2008	Nola Bowling
1983	Carliss McKinney	2008	Baxter Bozeman
1983	Alice (Carter) Ruf	2008	John Bradford
1983	Joe Ruf	2008	Wynn Campbell
1983	David Simpkins	2008	Matthew Hall
1983	Katie (Howell) Simpkins	2008	Matt Jennings
1984	Jeffrey C. (Jeff) Cleveland	2008	Jessica Kelley
1985	Lynn (Arnold) Batten	2008	Lora Parker
1985	Kim Johnson	2008	Ajike Player
1986	Donna (Bowden) Jones	2008	Jerry Saylor
1986	Dawn Shenell Williamson-Ashley	2008	Wesley Sims
1987	Leslie W. (Winters) Steele	2008	Landon Wakefield
1988	Tracey A. (Arnold) Baker	2008	Alesia Williams
1989	Martha A. (Hurston) Gautney	2008	Tara Williams
1989	Patricia G. (Gilbert) Massey	2008	Clisby Wilson
1991	Rebecca Dawn (Loftis) Atkinson	2008	Clint Wright

*Known deceased