

## HISTORY OF ADELPHI COMMUNITY BAND

Revised September 1994

### 114 YEARS OF CONTINUOUS ORGANIZATION ONE OF THE OLDEST COMMUNITY BANDS IN AMERICA

The band was organized in 1880 when it was called the Hallsville Band. The band marched in parades, festivals homecomings, fish fries, concerts in the park or under shade trees. The band became a very important part of the Community around that part of the State of Ohio. When the group of musicians got together in 1880 to form this band, Monte Long of Circleville was the first director. Other early directors were John Wittwer, Bill Patterson, Otis Larch, Vic Swinehart, Sol Reigle and John Gill who was also the director of the Circle City Band of Circleville in the early 1900's. Members of the Hallsville Band in 1890 were; Cliff Walker, Bryon Strawser, Ed Maag, Dennis Pontious, Ben Reed, Doug Walker, Frank Strawser, Ellersey Dresbach, Will Strawser, Cap Wall, Chauncey B. Pontious, Andy Wiggins and Luther Jones. The instrumentation of this group included 5 cornets, 5 baritone horns, 1 bass horn, 1 snare drum, and 1 bass drum.

According to the August 7, 1880 issue of the Chillicothe Gazette was the following statement: "The Adelphi Cornet Band went into practice to play for fairs, campaign meetings etc." So apparently there was also an Adelphi contingent in existence at that time, and due to the proximity of the two communities it is reasonable to assume that some of the members of the two bands were one and the same. Another mention of the Adelphi Cornet Band was found in an old program of the 4th Annual Reunion of the Bowsher-DeLong-Mowery- Reichelderfer Families held August 22, 1899 in the Stumpf's Grove near Adelphi. It stated that the Adelphi Cornet Band provided the music and Ida Mowery of Tarlton was the soloist.

It later changed its name to the Bowsher's Bunch around 1903. Apparently there were many persons by this name in the community and in the band. In 1924 the band changed its name and reorganized under the name of Adelphi Community Band.

The band played concerts and marched in parades in a time in history when a town and its folk were the world. It was a time before radios, television and movies offered an escape. A time when people worked hard - all day long, six days a week. A time when no one ventured too far from home.

The folk loved to turn out and listen, to forget about work and enjoy themselves for awhile. In the times of 1880 to the 1930's many communities had a community band.

The era of the community band has declined much in the time from 1940's to present time. However, the Adelphi Community Band has survived all these changes.

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In the last few years there seems to be renewing of the Community Band spirit. Various communities have organized community bands, orchestras and brass groups.

The Adelphi Community Band in recent years has been playing at many festivals and fairs within a 70 mile radius of Adelphi in Southeastern Ohio. The band has a membership of 35 men and boys. The ages of the band members ranges from the teens to some in their 80's. Two members that joined as teenagers in 1924 still play in band. David Pontious, 84, plays tuba and now lives at the Hill View Retirement Center in Portsmouth, Ohio. Herman "Bill" Hinton, 84, was a trombonist but now is the director of the band. Mr Pontious is the only member still playing whose father, Chauncey, joined the band in 1880.

The band makes about 25-30 appearances each year from April to October, practicing most Monday nights in their rehearsal hall in Hallsville during that seven month period.

The band has played at the Clarksburg Field Days and the Circleville Pumpkin Show every year for almost 70 years. In 1980 the band was invited by Congressman Clarence Miller to play a concert at the steps to the U. S. Capitol Building in Washington D. C. This was to celebrate the 100th Anniversary of the Adelphi Community Band.

A few years ago the Band played for events of the Governors Inauguration in Columbus, Ohio.

In July 1992 the band played a concert at the International AmeriFlora`92 Show in Columbus, Ohio.

The Adelphi band was honored at the 1994 Ross County Fair for playing at the Ross County Fair for over 50 continuous years. A banquet was held during the Fair and the Band was one of the organizations so honored.

The band plays most of the traditional marching music style music. Their library of music includes many of John Philip Sousa marches, Henry L. King marches and most of the popular marches written by many writers.

It has been said by many persons watching a parade even before they can be seen - "That is the Adelphi Band Coming". Their music has a unique and familiar sound.

It is the hope and wish of all the present band members that many other bandsmen will join this fine band and keep the spirit of the Adelphi Community Band alive forever.

Written by Dale DeLong