

PICKAWAY QUARTERLY



SPRING 1986



PUBLISHED BY
**PICKAWAY COUNTY
 HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

FOUNDED 1960
 CIRCLEVILLE, OHIO

Regular meetings of the Society are held on the third Sunday in March, May, September, and November. The Annual Meeting is on the third Thursday of November.

DUES SCHEDULE

Regular Member - \$12.00 per year. Any part-year membership shall be at \$1.00 per month or portion thereof for the remainder of the calendar year.

Affiliate Member - A fraternal organization, club or society, \$15.00 per year.

Life Member - An individual becomes a Life Member of the Society on payment of \$200.00.

Business or Industry Patron - Any business, firm or industry which contributes \$25.00 or more annually to the Society may be designated as a Patron of the Society. All Patrons' names shall be listed annually in the *Pickaway Quarterly*.

Send all dues payments, as well as inquiries and changes of address to: Marguerite Brokaw, 51 Bortz St., Ashville, Ohio 43103.

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IMPORTANT DATES TO MARK ON YOUR CALENDAR — 1986-87

Regular meetings of the Historical Society members are held in the meeting room of the Clarke-May House at 2:00-4:00 except for the Annual Meeting which is a carry-in dinner meeting, with the location chosen by the Arrangements Committee.

September Meeting	September 21
Annual Meeting	November 20, 1986
January Meeting	January 18, 1987
March Meeting	March 15, 1987
May Meeting	May 17, 1987

Details of the time and place for the Annual Meeting will be announced in the *Circleville Herald* and by Radio Station WNRE.

All copy for the *Quarterly*, including reports from the officers, departments and committees, as well as articles and announcements for publication in the *Quarterly* must be received by the editor by the following dates: the editor by the following dates:

Summer '86	July 20, 1986
Fall '86	October, 1986
Winter '87	January, 1987

It is very important that these deadlines be observed. Our second class mailing permit can be revoked if we do not meet the deadlines set up by the Post Office Department.

COVER PICTURE

The cover picture of this issue shows the Hallsville Band in 1890 with the following members; L-R, front row, Cliff Walker; Byron Strawser; Ed Maag; and Dennis Pontious. Back row, Ben Reed; Doug Walker; Frank Strawser; Ellersey Dresbach; Will Srawser; Cap Wall; Chauncey B. Pontious; Andy Wiggins and Luther Jones. The instrumentation of this group included 5 cornets, (trumpets were horns without valves in those days) 5 baritone horns, 1 bass horn, 1 snare drum and 1 bass drum. In the background can be seen the bandwagon with driver and horses.

THE HALLSVILLE-ADELPHI BAND

(The Band that played on and on and on)

by Ned W. Harden

Many communities in our area were blessed with bands that were sponsored by the community, a local fraternal organization, churches and schools etc. These musical organizations furnished entertainment for residents of the local community and those villages and towns nearby.

Long before the advent of television, radios or movies, and at a time when the modes of transportation were such that travel of any great distance was both time-consuming and arduous to say the least these musical organizations were called upon to offer to their friends and neighbors some relief from the long and hard and weary tasks of working long days and six day weeks, sometimes from daylight to dark. Sundays and holidays were usually the only times that the families could get together, mostly after Sunday church services, to enjoy the pleasures of picnics, reunions, holiday celebrations, parades, chautauquas and political rallies. These events were invariably honored with a performance of a local or nearby band in concert.

Some of the more familiar cities and villages in our area that had such musical groups were Circleville, Ashville, Stoutsville, Yellowbud, Hallsville, Laurelville and Adelphi. The only survivor of all of the above units is the Hallsville-Adelphi Band, and as these two communities and their bands are so historically entwined, they become the basis of the story to be told in this article.

The roots of this organization go back to the community of Hallsville to the year of 1880 when a group got together, with Mont Long of Circleville as the director, and formed the Hallsville Band. 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. The cover picture of this issue shows the Hallsville Band in 1890 with the following members; L-R, Front row, Cliff Walker; Bryon Strawser; Ed Maag; and Dennis Pontious. Back row, 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, (trumpets were horns without valves in those days) 5 baritone horns, 1 bass horn, 1 snare drum and 1 bass drum. In the background can be seen the bandwagon with driver and horses.

According to the August 7, 1980 issue of the Chillicothe Gazette in the 100 years ago section was the following; "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.

The next photo that came to my attention was of "Bowsher's Bunch" of Hallsville, taken in 1903 and this is more than likely the next phase of the Hallsville Band as several of the "Bowsher's Bunch" musicians were a part of the original Hallsville Band.



L-R Front Row; Charley Harrel and Charley Gildersleeve. Center Row; Ellersey Dresbach, Gordon Withrow, Jesse Bower, Hanson Jones, and Fred Gildersleeve.

Back Row; Eugene Gildersleeve, Otis Gatwood, Dent Pontious, Francis Bowsher, Albert Snyder and Homer Hawkins.

Records do not reveal how long this group performed and was in existence but a reorganization took place in 1924, which was the beginning of the present Adelphi Band that was sponsored by the Knights of Pythias Lodge of Adelphi and had 35 members with Fred Powell, of Circleville, as its director. I have been unable to acquire a photo of the band in 1924 but the following picture was taken at Logan Elm Park between 1924 and 1928.

The members at that time are identified as L-R; Front; Charley Harrel, Charley Gildersleeve and Gene Gildersleeve (drum section). Second Row; Damon Pontious, Curtis Hinton, Earl Patterson, Wayne Dresbach, Clyde Bougher, David Pontious, Arthur Hinton, Dent Pontious, Clyde Huffer and Francis Bowsher. Back Row; O.S. Mowery, John T. Hinton, Ellersey Dresbach, Amos Bowsher, Perl Hinton, Wayne Luckhart (soloist), Chauncey B. Pontious, Orval Pontious and Herman Hinton.

Adelphi Band Continued...



There are still three members of the original 1924 band still playing with the Adelphi Band as shown in the following photo.

On the bass horn is David B. Pontious, (son of Chauncey B. Pontious, one of the original 1880 band members) formerly a trumpet player before switching to bass horn; Herman Hinton on the trombone; and Curtis Hinton (a former clarinet player) now the bass drummer.



Adelphi Band Continued...

It was told to me that when the 1924 band was formed the father of the Hinton boys (who were in their teens) decided that in order for the boys to have something to do to keep them busy and out of trouble, went to Chillicothe and purchased them each an instrument and saw to it that they learned to play them. His logic must have worked as two of the boys are now in their 70's and still playing.

The first conductor of the band was Mont Long of Circleville and by 1924 the director was Fred Powell, also of Circleville. These two men were followed by Frank Hickman and Charles Proxmire of Lancaster and then Roderick Shaw, also of Lancaster. Shaw was a former member of the University of Michigan marching band and also a former member of the Cleveland Symphony Orchestra.

Following Roderick Shaw in the conductor's role was Raymond Connett of Piketon, Ohio who continued as director until he was 95 years of age and retired in 1984. Mr. Connett (according to a newspaper article) started the Ohio University Band and taught music in public schools in Ohio until his retirement in 1970.



In addition to the conductors and directors the unit has had several special members, such as, majorettes, drum majors and vocalists. Five of the majorettes were Mary Sue Clark, Sally Hinton and Nancy, Christine and Elizabeth Gildersleeve. Three of the drum majors were Charles Davenport, George Rihl and Dick Tootle. Dick Tootle served as drum major in 1938 and was a former Pickaway County Commissioner and is now serving as Assistant Director of Agriculture for the State of Ohio. One of the vocalists with the band was Wayne Luckhart.



The Adelphi-Hallsville Band makes between 25 and 35 appearances throughout the area from April to October each year and is then inactive during the winter months. The roster has consisted of from 13 in the original organization as shown in the cover picture, to a high of 45 and at the present time is made up of about 25 members. There were 33 members of the band in 1966 and most are still living.

The following are some of the stories related to me in my interviews with the Hinton brothers and David Pontious. David Pontious, one of the three members still playing with the band after 60 years is the son of Chauncey B. Pontious, who began playing with the original band in 1880 at the age of 14, and is the only descendant of one of the original band members still active in the band.

Adelphi Band Continued...

Mr. Pontious stated that on Armistice Day 1918, his father took the dinner bell down from the pole it was mounted on behind the house and mounted it on his spring wagon and after rounding up some of the band members went from community to community ringing the bell and playing patriotic music until long after darkness had set in.

Mr. Hinton tells the story about the time they played for a social at Rockbridge. A part of the activities of the social was a foot-race and knowing that one of the band members, Delano Haynes, was extremely fleet of foot, talked him into entering the race. Since he did not have any running gear with him he borrowed a pair of running shoes, took off his band jacket, rolled up his band uniform trousers and proceeded to win the race over all the contestants.

In the early days of the band each member would contribute 10 cents for each practice and this money was used for the purpose of paying the conductor and buying music. Each member was responsible for buying his own uniform and instrument.

Gene Gildersleeve went with his father as a young boy to the band practices and at the age of 14 started marching with them and has been playing drums with the band for almost 60 years.

One former director was so proud of the band that he requested that he be buried in his band uniform.

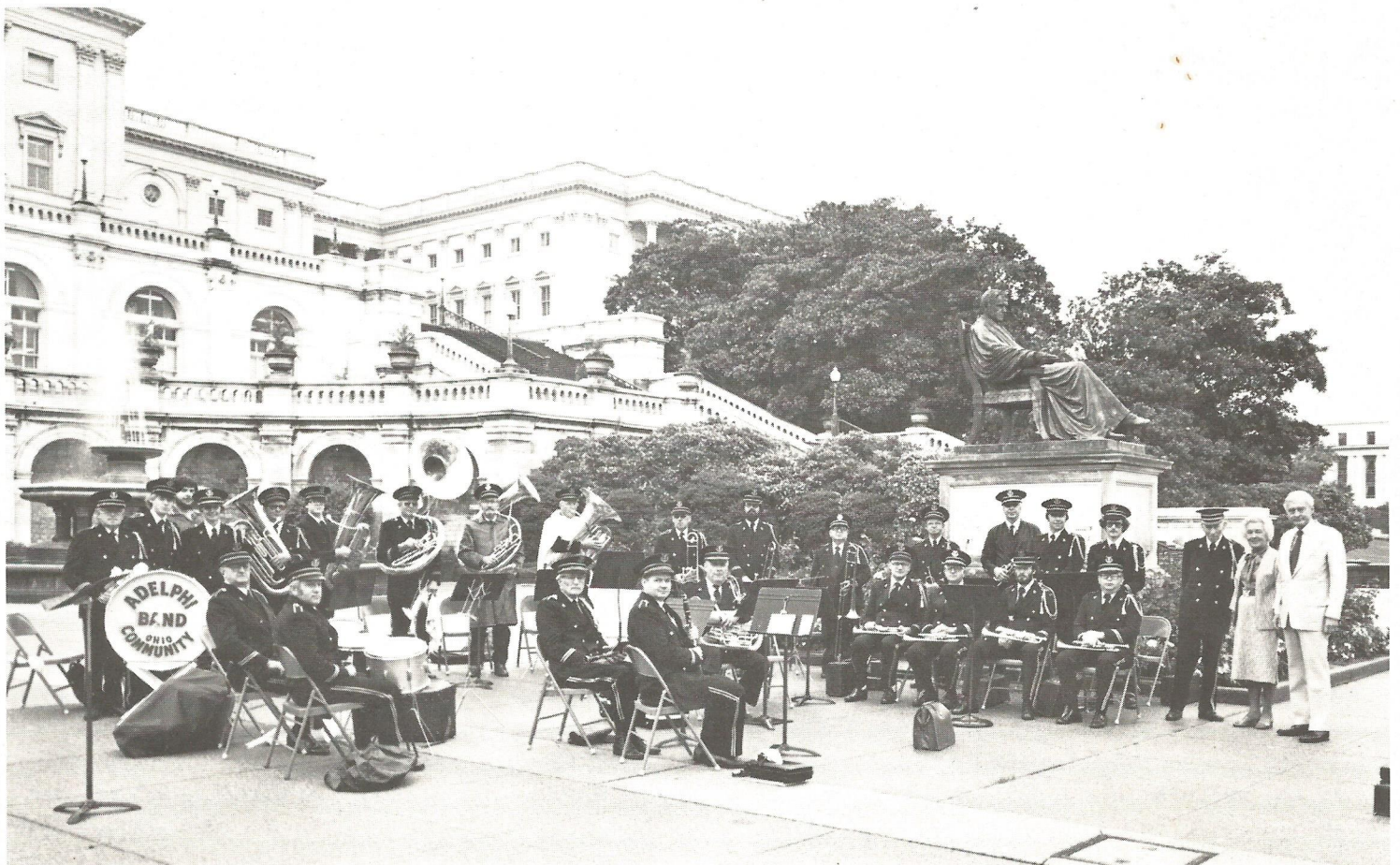
Another of the stories of the band's history is that while the band was performing at the Circleville Pumpkin Show furnishing music for the free acts, a man walked up to the director, Mr. Powell, and asked if he might sit in and play with the band. The conductor agreed and the man, Frank Hickman, later a conductor of the band, pulled out from under his overcoat a trumpet with him as Roderick Shaw and he pulled out a clarinet and both played with the band for the rest of the engagement.

The title, "Battle of the Bands" is certainly not a new one as another story tells about the fierce rivalry between the Laurelville Band and the Adelphi-Hallsville Band. These two organizations were led by Charles Proxmire and Frank Hickman, and they both played at the Pumpkin Show, at different locations on the street, however, as soon as one band would strike up a tune the other one would try to play loud enough to drown out the other.

The Yellowbud Band was playing for the free acts and when they gave up this task the Adelphi-Hallsville Band took over the assignment and furnished the accompaniment for the four days of the show. Later they assumed the task of furnishing the music for the baton-twirling contest.

In 1985 the Adelphi-Hallsville Band was presented a plaque for 60 years of continuous appearances at the Circleville Pumpkin Show, a truly unbeatable record.

In June 1980, in commemoration of the 100th anniversary of the Adelphi-Hallsville band, Congressman Clarence Miller, of the 10th Congressional District, invited



Adelphi Band Continued...

the band to appear in the nation's capitol. During their 100 year history they had played for various presidents but this was their first opportunity to visit Washington D. C.

They left on two chartered buses with 82 people making the trip. In addition to the two busloads, Merrill Junk flew to Washington from Lake Charles, La. and John Cryder drove all night from Joliet, Ill. in order to make the early morning performance. The band members making the trip were, Ray Connett, director, J. Brown, D. Waliser, J. Tootle, J. Matthews, Jake Matthews, N. Tomlinson, M. Junk, J. York, G. Wamsley, H. Hinton, H. Hinton Jr., H. Clark, T. Pardin, B. Hansley, E. Bennett, D. Pontious, G. Gildersleeve, J. Fletcher, G. Hinton, C. Hinton, J. Bennett, D. Poling and L. Savage.

The group left the motel at 7 am for the Capitol Building and were given a short tour of the building before their scheduled concert on the west steps of the building from 9:30 until 10:30 am. After the concert at the Capitol Building they went to Alexandria Va, for another concert from 12:15 until 1:15 pm. the rest of the day and the following day was spent touring the nation's capitol and although they were very tired, left for home feeling a great sense of pride and lasting memories. A fitting tribute to the 100th anniversary of the band.

I would be remiss if I did not include a little information about a man by the name of Will Huff, as his name kept popping up during the interviews. David Pontious loaned me a copy of a book "Halleluja Trombone" the story of Henry Fillmore, published by Paul E. Bierley of Columbus, to whom I am indebted for some of the background information. Henry Fillmore was considered to be one of the greatest band directors and composers of band music in the United States and some of his music was published under the name of Will Huff. How, then, did Fillmore choose this pseudonym? According to the story in Mr. Bierley's book, as Henry's father was in the music publishing business in Cincinnati as Fillmore Brothers Co.,

and as Henry had written a march and wished to have it published, his father agreed to publish it if the name of Fillmore did not appear as the composer. so in searching for a name to use for the composition, he recalled that as a youngster he had made the statement to one of his boyhood chums that "I will huff and puff on my trombone" and Will Huff became the ghost-writer.

There was also a band director and music composer by the real name of Will Huff and when Henry Fillmore (Will Huff) finally met the real Will Huff he promised not to use that name in the future. The real Will Huff lived in Chillicothe and had organized and directed the Mead Paper Co. Band and on several occasions sat in with the Adelphi-Hallsville Band and was its guest conductor.

Back to the Adelphi-Hallsville Band; With the small community it represents, recruiting new members has been a distinct problem and especially the young people of today have such a wide range of interest to take up their time it has become more difficult to secure replacement members. The group now practices at the Adelphi School Building from March until the last appearance of the band in October. They offer an invitation to attend their rehearsals and if anyone is interested in playing with them they would welcome them.

Has it all been worth it? I believe an excerpt from a letter written by a lady in South Euclid, Ohio concerning a concert that was held in the City Park in Chillicothe on August 4, 1974 lends itself to illustrate the point. "On July 28 we had a reunion in the Chillicothe City Park and it was the most enjoyable weekend we have ever spent. My congratulations to your band and its director. We did not expect a free old-time band concert and needless to say the 200 mile trip home was considerably shorter because of the fine music. The band's closing number of "Abide With Me" was like an evening prayer. Such bands are much too few anymore."



Adelphi Band Continued...

