

The following was presented by Board Member, June Contini, at the Hall of Distinction Ceremony of the Dover Historical Society on Sunday, May 1, 2022

Fred Delphia

As we go through life we don't realize the impact we leave on others. Today I have the privilege of recognizing Mr. Fred Delphia for his contribution to our community and the positive impact he has made.

Many of you here have probably attended a Dover Friday night football game at one time or another. In the year 1969 with Fred Delphia as the band director a whole new dimension was brought to the half time shows at Crate Stadium.

Dover was a standard all around good band, but under his direction that all changed.

The band wasn't just good. It was OUTSTANDING!!!

Let me give you some history of how Mr. Delphia made his was to our town of Dover.

Fred came from a family of musicians...his father was a trumpet player... his mother a violinist and pianist... a great uncle was a music teacher in New York and a relative dating as far back as the 1800s was in the Roman Army Band where he was presented an ivory clarinet.

As a young child at family gatherings Fred would initiate the entertainment with overtures and pretending to be the director of a band.

Surprisingly though, Fred didn't start into music until his sophomore year when he took private clarinet lessons.

Fred attended Steubenville High School and was fortunate to have great instructors. One who stands out and helped him the most was Anthony Veeolee. He saw good things about Fred. Steubenville was known as BIG RED with a "swing" band that gave Fred the spark he tuned into. After his high school graduation in 1955 Fred joined the USA Navy Band of Music for four years. During that time he attended the Navy School of Music for nine months in Washington, D.C. where he had the opportunity to participate at President Eisenhower's inauguration.

Then Fred went to Ohio University majoring in music and education. This is where he met his wife, Carolyn, as she was also a music major.

Fred's first teaching job in 1964 took him to the birthplace of Thomas Edison, Milan, Ohio. He was their band, choir, and general overall director.

In the summer of 1966 Emmett Riley, Dover's Superintendent, interviewed Fred and that's the start of Dover's band and orchestra transformation.

Mr. Delphia made the halftime shows exciting and fun with crowds giving standing ovations.

He taught the students musicianship and showmanship techniques. This projected enthusiasm making every show special.

He was not only the band director, but also the orchestra director.

He strived for perfection and pushed the band to be perfect which instilled within them a strong character. His passion became theirs. Fred knew how to draw the best out of each individual.

Mr. Delphia served DHS as their music leader until 1981. Then through 1988 he was the assistant high school Principal. He retired in 2000.

His next passion took him to directing the historic Dominic Greco Band. This all volunteer band and director delighted many community events and developed a great following for over 30 years.

There are many highlights in Fred Delphia's life and career as DHS band and music director. To mention a few...They took part in NYC Macy's Thanksgiving Parade, They entertained at the Indy 500 race, playing for over six minutes on live TV. A special, true satisfaction for him was the superior concert rating Dove had for over nine straight years winning 1st place in Class B.

"If a concert band is good therefore a marching band is excellent"

And it was!

Thank you, Mr. Delphia, for your positive impact in our community.