



# The Brick & Mortar Board

*the newsletter of the HHS Alumni Association, Inc.*

[www.hobartalumni.org](http://www.hobartalumni.org)

Volume 2, Number 4

June, 2013

## BrickieFest Homecoming Picnic: An All-Class Reunion on September 28

Now you have one more reason to attend Homecoming in Hobart: there will be an all-class reunion at Deep River County Park on Saturday afternoon, September 28, from 12 noon to 3:00 pm. You are encouraged to bring your own picnic lunch, but we expect that there will be limited food and drink vendor options.

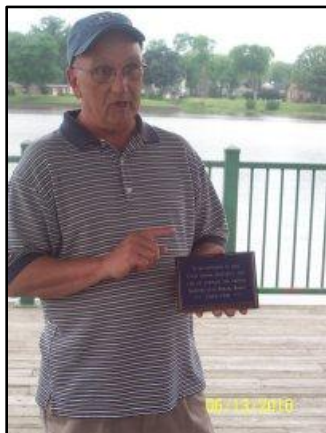
Talk to your class reunion coordinator, and make a weekend of it! Hobart plays its Homecoming football game on Friday, September 27, against Lowell. Many classes will be having a class reunion on Saturday evening. The BrickieFest Homecoming Picnic will fill the gap between those events, and let you meet with fellow Brickies you might not see on Friday or Saturday night.

Keep checking our website, [www.hobartalumni.org](http://www.hobartalumni.org), for the latest info on this all-class get-together. But mark your calendars now!

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### Alumni Spotlight

## HHS Alumnus Howard Oaf, Chronicler of Growing up in Hobart



Howard Oaf graduated from Hobart High School with the Class of 1965. He has written two books about growing up in Hobart, and he shares his story with us here.

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## HHSAA Awards Two Scholarships to Seniors, Welcomes New Student Members *(see page 3)*

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## Alumni Spotlight (continued from page 1)

*What are you doing these days? That is, how do you spend most of your time now?*

I retired from the Engineering Dept. of Methodist Hospital in Merrillville, IN, in September of 2007 (just days prior to my 60<sup>th</sup> birthday). Since retiring I have been able to spend much more time doing the things I have always loved; playing, recording and writing music and playing golf with my wife and youngest son during the golf season. I also enjoy reading, and during 2009 and 2010 wrote two books covering Hobart History, and donated the sales and rights to the books to the Hobart Historical Society.

*Could you describe your educational and career path from Hobart High School to the present day?*

Wow! This is not a great question for me. After HS graduation I attended Indiana State University majoring in music (vocal). I had hopes of becoming a HS music teacher. However, during the summer following high school graduation I ruined my voice singing in a rock & roll band all day on the 4<sup>th</sup> of July. I had sung on a float in the parade, at Mundell after the parade and during a dance at the tennis courts on 8<sup>th</sup> St. that evening. I couldn't even talk for weeks after that and, upon entering college that fall, was informed that I would not be able to major in music due to the damage to my voice. I switched my major to English the following semester.

After that one year, my parents had decided to move to Florida and were having a new house built there. I went down there after school was out and stayed with my Dad while the house was being completed. My mother and sister were still in Hobart, completing the sale of our house, and joined us once the house was completed.

The move to Florida and the fact that I could no longer pursue my dream of becoming a music teacher led me to make a very serious error in judgment. I intended to continue college in Florida but thought I would just take a semester off to enjoy Florida. Not a good decision considering the Viet Nam war and the draft. About two weeks after the fall semester began I got a welcome letter from Uncle Sam that ended those plans. That made my one semester off from school much more permanent than I had intended. That one semester off is still continuing. One of the poor decisions of youth!

After the military, I got a job, got married and soon had two sons, and another on the way (ended up with five sons). I had moved to Florida with my parents in 1966 and in 1972 moved back to Indiana. The move was based on the fact that I needed better health benefits and pay than were available in Florida at the time. Another big factor was that I realized that Florida would never really feel like home to me. Even though I made friends and was playing in a band, I always felt like an outsider, not having the same old shared memories, etc. as those with whom I had grown up. I found that I missed being around old friends that shared a common past and memories. There are those that say, "You can never go home again," and then there is Dorothy who says, "There's no place like home." I side with the latter. Hobart will always be home to me.

I got a job in the steel mill, in maintenance, and became a turn foreman. Once the steel mills slowed down in the late 70's I was laid off (permanently). I then got a job in the Engineering Department at Methodist Hospital as a supervisor, from which I retired. Not finishing college is my biggest regret, if only for my own satisfaction of having done so.

*What are your best memories while growing up?*

Mainly, just having been fortunate to have grown up in a small, friendly town like Hobart.

Many come to mind. Bike rides around with my mother, sister and groups of neighborhood kids. Sandlot baseball games, playing croquet and badminton in the yard with my parents, the neighborhood kids, and their parents. Ice skating at Kellen's Pond and Lake George, and hockey games at both. Winning the Babe Ruth League State Championship as fifteen year olds and playing in the Midwest Regional in Eau Claire, WI. At a minor league ballpark where Hank Aaron had once played. Playing in rock & roll bands through Jr. High and High School.

My very best memories are of walking along with my parents when I was about 11 or 12 and hitting golf balls while they played in a mixed league at Cressmoor CC. Also, playing golf with my dad and maternal grandfather during my teenage years. During my junior high and high school years we had a family membership at Curtis Creek CC in Rensselaer, IN, where we played often. During August, on weekends, we would often golf among, and talk with, the Chicago

Bears players, as they had their training camp at St. Joseph College in those days.

*You have written a couple of books about Growing Up in Hobart, and a lot of the material was contributed by Hobart alumni. Can you tell us how you got interested in those projects, and how you worked through the process?*

After retiring, I became very interested in Hobart history. I went to the Hobart Public Library and the Hobart Historical Society looking for information. I found a great deal of very interesting information. However, I found that all available material ended with my parents' generation. There was very, very little covering our Baby Boomer, post WWII, generation. I didn't want those years to become lost and forgotten. After all, we had seen the advent of TV, transistor radios, the Cold War and the beginnings of rock & roll music.

Being retired, I had the time (if not the writing skills) to take on the project. I researched, collected and wrote pages and pages of ideas, topics and facts on legal pads. The Hobart Historical Society's large amount of old newspapers, photos and old city directories was invaluable. The Internet was also a good source of info.

Once I began to organize and write the book I came to realize that my own experiences and info were not broad enough to cover the scope of the project. After all, I was a boy, so I knew nothing of the female perspective of the times. Having only grown up in one neighborhood limited my knowledge to only one area of town. Drawing on my own activities, interests and memories also limited my coverage of those times. I decided I needed far more input from people that had grown up with different interests, from different neighborhoods and with different recollections.

I decided to track down and ask my classmates, from the Class of 1965, for their information, anecdotes, recollections, etc. Nearly 70 responded and sent me their recollections, etc. For months and months I received letters and e-mails on a daily basis. Each day was like Christmas, the unopened letters and e-mails were like unopened and unknown gifts. The stories, anecdotes and memories of my classmates were amazing. I can never thank them enough for being what they always have been, great people and classmates. The stories were very open, honest and

insightful. Things were shared that we never could have shared during our high school days. Nearly every aspect of Hobart, and that era, were covered in that book.

After completing the first book, I was asked to do a second book, containing info from classmates not involved with the first book, as well as new stories from many classmates that had been involved in the first. I had so thoroughly covered the general background of those times in the first book that I decided to begin the second book with a very comprehensive section on the very early beginnings of the Hobart area and Hobart itself dating back prior to the first European settlers. After completion of the books (done non-profit), I gave copies of each book to the Hobart Historical Society along with the rights to sales and future reprints. There have been four reprints.

It ended up being a labor of love that occupied my time for nearly two years, far more hours per day than my working career had occupied (16 hours a day, seven days a week for the better part of two years). Thanks to my classmates, the books cover our years of growing up in Hobart and those times very well. It is nice to know that it has been now recorded. I have to thank Sherry Oswald Peterson for her amazing assistance with the books and for covering much of the general information from the female side. Barb Phillips Rowley, Janet Rosenbaum Will and Gail Zelenka Woods were also a huge help to us.

I have no plans for any further books concerning Hobart history, as it was covered very well in these two books and my goal was achieved. It was a very rewarding experience and has also served to reunite many old lost friends and to rekindle old friendships (a great bonus to have come out of it).

*Do you have any advice for high school students who might be interested in writing or local history?*

Don't let the fact that you were not a great student keep you from taking on the project. (Many of my old teachers would have been amazed, that of all their students, I was the one to have written historical books.) Get as much input as you can from old friends or classmates. Relying on only your own recollections will not give a broad enough view, and others will recall things you had either forgotten or things of which you were never aware.

# HHSAA Awards Scholarships, Welcomes New Members at 2013 Annual Meeting



*(Left) HHS Head Football Coach Ryan Turley speaks at the 2013 Annual Meeting  
(Right) Stephany Hill, Jordan Benton, Mathew Viator and Nathaniel Wilfong*

The second HHS Alumni Association Annual Meeting was held on Friday, April 19, in the Grand Hall of Hobart High School. Wolfgang provided entertainment, and the HHS staff provided a delicious chicken teriyaki dinner.

Seniors Jordan Benton and Mathew Viator were awarded scholarships, and both read their essays from their applications on "What it Means to be a Brickie". Jordan and Mathew were also recognized at the Senior Awards Program on May 28. Two students who will be seniors in the fall, Stephany Hill and Nathaniel Wilfong, were welcomed as new student members to the HHSAA Board.

Hobart High School Head Football Coach Ryan Turley was the featured speaker, and talked to the group about the teachers and coaches who influenced him growing up in the Hobart schools.

Treasurer Debra Opolski reported that the assets of the HHSAA are growing, and President Paul Addison announced that there will be an All-Class reunion and picnic on the Saturday of Homecoming weekend (September 28) at Deep River County Park. He led the singing of the HHS fight song to close the meeting.

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## Life Memberships Now Available!

We now have lifetime memberships available for the Hobart High School Association for \$100. Regular yearly memberships are \$10 a year. Join or renew as a life member, and you won't have to pay dues again! The HHSAA raises money for scholarships and teacher grants.

Remember that registering on our website is free. Visit our website at [www.hobartalumni.org](http://www.hobartalumni.org), and register by finding your name and creating a profile with your email address and contact information. If you don't find your name, click Contact Us, and send us a message, asking to be added to the roster. Be sure to include your class year.

***The Brick & Mortar Board*** is a publication of the Hobart High School Alumni Association, Inc., a non-profit, 501(c)(3) corporation. It is an electronic publication, delivered by email to members of the Association. Make your check payable to: **HHS Alumni Association**, and mail it to: HHSAA, PO Box 68, Hobart, IN 46342. Our website is: [www.hobartalumni.org](http://www.hobartalumni.org). The editor of *The Brick & Mortar Board* is Paul Addison.

# HHS Alumni Association Board

The Hobart High School Alumni Association was officially incorporated on July 17, 2010. The members of the Board of Directors whose terms end in July 2014 are:

## OFFICERS

Paul Addison, Class of 1970.....*President*  
Lynn Hasza-Heintz, Class of 1967 ..... *Recording Secretary*  
Debra Broker Opolski, Class of 1970 .....*Treasurer*

## AT-LARGE MEMBERS

Brent Martinson, Principal, Hobart High School  
Holli Smith Kostbade, Class of 1998  
Lynn Sheets Kostbade, Class of 1966  
Dawn Briney Krull, Class of 1968  
Tracy Estabrook McCullough, Class of 1978

Sherry Oswald Peterson, Class of 1965  
Michael Trammel, Class of 1967

## STUDENT MEMBERS

Stephany Hill, Class of 2014  
Nathaniel Wilfong, Class of 2014

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## Mission Statement

The mission of the Hobart High School Alumni Association is to develop and maintain a close relationship between Hobart High School, its constituents, and its alumni for their mutual benefit. The Association is committed to, and involved in the support and well-being of Hobart High School and its alumni.

## OUR GOALS

- To assist Hobart High School in communication with its alumni
- To convey to Hobart High School the views, attitudes, and needs of the alumni in seeking to preserve, advocate, and promote alumni interests
- To strengthen alumni activities and programs
- To support educational programs through teacher grants and student scholarships

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## Let Us Help Publicize Your Next Class Reunion!

The HHS Alumni Association website, [www.hobartalumni.org](http://www.hobartalumni.org), has a section titled Class Reunions. One of the main activities of the HHSAA is to help you publicize your class reunion.

Whether you are planning a reunion for a “round number”, like your 5<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, 20<sup>th</sup>, 50<sup>th</sup> or higher, or whether you want to join with some other classes, or for whatever reason, if you are planning a get-together, please email us here, with the information about your reunion, at [info@hobartalumni.org](mailto:info@hobartalumni.org), or me, Paul Addison, at [paddison@alumni.indiana.edu](mailto:paddison@alumni.indiana.edu).

We can not only post the information on the website, but we can send emails to everyone in your class (and the surrounding classes, if you wish), letting them know the date and time for your reunion, and how to RSVP.

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## Don't Confuse Us with AlumniClass.com

There is a website for high school alumni, which has a special section for Hobart High School. The address is <http://www.alumniclass.com/hobarthighschool>. They sell merchandise, and they have a nice website for communicating with other HHS alumni. HOWEVER, that is not the site for the Hobart High School Alumni Association. You'll see a line at the bottom of their website that says, “AlumniClass.com is not affiliated with and is independent of any school, school district, alumni association or any other websites.”

The address of the REAL Hobart High School Alumni Association is [www.hobartalumni.org](http://www.hobartalumni.org). Thanks!



## Membership Application Hobart High School Alumni Association, Inc.

Check one: New member \_\_\_\_ Renewal \_\_\_\_

Check one: One-year (\$10) \_\_\_\_ Lifetime (\$100) \_\_\_\_

First Name \_\_\_\_\_

Last Name (in high school) \_\_\_\_\_

Married Last Name \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Email address \_\_\_\_\_

Home phone \_\_\_\_\_

Cell phone \_\_\_\_\_

Work phone \_\_\_\_\_

Your class graduating year at HHS \_\_\_\_\_

*"Once a Brickie, Always a Brickie!"*  
Thank you for your support!

Membership is \$10 per year (proceeds go towards scholarships and teacher grants)  
Lifetime memberships are available for \$100 per person

Make your check out to: HHS Alumni Association

Mail to: HHSAA, P.O. Box 68, Hobart, IN 46342

Our website is: [www.hobartalumni.org](http://www.hobartalumni.org)