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SADDLE BROOK HISTORICAL SOCIETY – FEBRUARY 2015

HIGH SCHOOL CHOIR ANNIVERSARY

The Saddle Brook High School 50th Anniversary Choir Concert was held on November 29, 2014. The highlight of this event was performances by the choir alumni. It was a wonderful all-day reunion which included rehearsals, a lunch, the concert and a party. It was a great tribute to Chuck Broadhurst, an enthusiastic and talented teacher, who conducted the choir since its inception and Cindy Verost continued the choir's tradition of excellence. Our thanks goes to Lynne Van Wyk Wojick who provided pictures and served as a liaison and teacher Cindy Verost who organized the event. Also, the Historical Society is indebted to Andrew Trento, martial arts expert, who provided the very insightful and comprehensive history of the choir.

Jack Wasdyke: Township Historian.



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Original article can be found at:

<http://beingthecandle.blogspot.com/2014/09/the-choir-rehearsal.html>

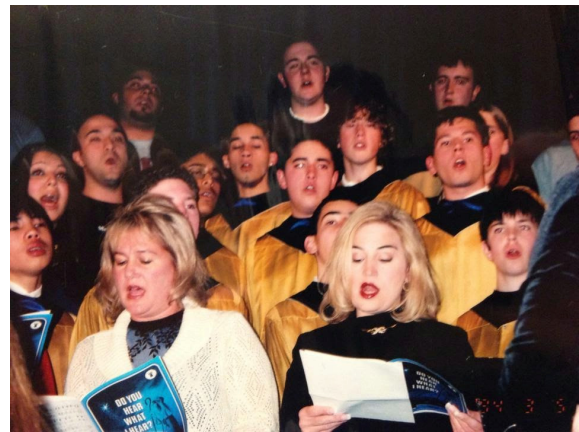
Back in 1964, Saddle Brook High School established its choral program where vocal music would be taught to the students of the high school. The school itself was only in its first few years of being established at the time. A man named Charles Broadhurst, originally from the mid west, had come to teach the vocal music department. The program began with eight or nine students in the choir. Two years later, there may have been eighty or ninety students in the choir.

By the seventies, the choir itself could be anywhere from 100-200 people. The choir was then split into Boys Glee Club where the boys sang their own pieces, the Girls' Glee Club which the girls sang their own pieces, the select choir known as the Choraleers, and of course the full choir sang together. The Choral department would have its own concert in the winter and in the spring. Also incorporated in the school were the Spring Musicals which were known to be so professional and Broadway like at the time. To this day, no director would ever touch *Fiddler on The Roof* because you just can't compare it to the 1978 class production.

For 30 years, Mr. Broadhurst ran the choral department. What better legacy than to have an alumnus continue the school traditions and build the program in itself. Mrs. Cynthia Verost, class of 1975 became the SBHS Choral Director. Along with her own twenty years experience in teaching music and from the things she learned from Mr. Broadhurst, she continued to keep the Saddle Brook spirit alive in the music department.

Let's face it, times have changed and Mrs. Verost has had roadblocks that did not exist in the 1970s and 1980s. But no matter what roadblocks she has had in continuing pushing for an art program such as vocal music, she has created a choir for middle school, taught piano and drums, brought the choir to music festivals in Jacksonville, NJ by Six Flags and Virginia Beach, and several times to the Christmas Candlelight Processional at Walt Disney World (which they will be going to this year and donations to help would be greatly appreciated-- she can be contacted at Saddle Brook High School).

However, some of the staple traditions are still alive such as the Choraleers which Mr. Broadhurst established in 1966. The Spring Musicals still go on each year. And at every Holiday concert, the concert ends with alumni in the audience joining for the final three pieces *Carol of the Bells*, *Do You Hear What I Hear?*, and *The Hallelujah Chorus*. This is a tradition that my mother, my aunts, uncles, and close friends of us all who graduated through all the years look forward to each year.



In 1978, 1990, 1994, and 1999 Alumni have had reunions to get together and celebrate and sing, and enjoy. It is now 50 years since the Saddle Brook High School Choir has been established. So this November, a reunion concert will be held in honor of the Choir that has been going strong for 50 years! Conducted by Mrs. Verost, who is still the choral director, alumni from 1964-2014 will be coming together for a magnificent reunion!

Recently, a group of local alumni got together to rehearse a few pieces of music just to get familiar with the music ahead of time, which may help when all of the participating alumni for our day reunion for the 50th anniversary. It was really so nice to be in that room again, and I think everyone who was there felt that way. Some alumni, I know feel bittersweet, knowing Mr. Broadhurst will not be there (it's been ten years since his passing), but they all know he will



be there in spirit. I know alumni, such as myself, look forward to once again being taught and directed by Mrs. Verost.

We may not all know each other, some never met before. But we all share a common bond: music. It was a gift that has been passed down like an art. We share a love for the directors and the people we have met. It is a spirit that has been strong for fifty years and we are all excited and honored to be a part of it. And we hope if you're local that you can be a part of it as well.