

# The Five Periods of TBA History

**Dr. Steve Shoop**

## **Introduction**

The Texas Bandmasters Association was formed in 1920 by a small group of Texas bandmasters to organize band contests and promote bands. Since that time, the association has evolved into the largest state band organization in the world. The clinic session is an outgrowth of the presenter's doctoral dissertation entitled *The Texas Bandmasters Association: A Historical Study of Activities, Contributions, and Leadership (1920-1997)*. The presentation is an overview of the five periods of TBA history from 1920 to date.

## **Brief Discussion of the Dissertation**

The historical timeline—five periods of TBA history.

Primary sources of information: (1) *Southwestern Musician* combined with the *Texas Music Educator*, *Minutes and Proceedings of TMEA*, Theses and dissertations (and interview tapes); (2) Artifacts and archival materials house at the TMEA headquarters in Austin; (3) Information, artifacts, and memorabilia collected for the 50<sup>th</sup> TBA Clinic-Convention celebration in 1997; (4) Information collected from personal interviews and correspondence.

Leadership. Predominant leaders for the five historical periods were identified.

Content analysis—qualitative measurement of “leadership.”

## **Period 1- Texas Bandmasters Association (TBA), 1920-1924**

The original Texas Bandmasters Association was formed in 1920 in Waxahachie. The association's primary activity was to organize and promote an annual band contest. The primary leader during this period was Waxahachie bandmaster James E. King.

### General State-of-Affairs

Bands were town/municipal bands. The director was what we would consider to be an independent contractor-self promoter as personified in *The Music Man*. These individuals would also teach private lessons and sell instruments. It was rather common for bandmasters to conduct more than one band—and move from town to town.

### Highlights

According to Ralph Beck (a charter member of the organization), the association had two main purposes: (1) to work for the betterment of band teachers and band conditions in the state; and (2) to create more interest in bands by organizing an annual band contest for amateur bands on San Jacinto Day.

### Primary Leader for Period 1

James E. King—credited with founding the Texas Bandmasters Association in 1920.

## **Period 2- Texas Band Teachers Association (TBTA), 1924-1936**

The name of the organization was changed to the Texas Band Teachers Association in January, 1925 to reflect the movement from town/municipal bands to public school bands. The primary leaders during the period were Colonel Earl D. Irons, D.O. Wiley, Richard J. Dunn, and Everett McCracken. It is interesting to note that all four of these individuals were college/university band directors and members of the prestigious American Bandmasters Association.

### General State-of-Affairs

Bands experienced movement from town/municipal bands to public school bands. Issues surrounding director training and certification surfaced, as well as controversy involving band contests.

### Highlights

A committee was appointed to draw up a Code of Ethics and a certificate of membership in an effort at raising standards of bandmasters. The item was passed in 1930.

The first summer band camp for directors was organized by the TBTA and was held in Lampasas during the summer of 1931. The subject matter under discussion at the camp included rudiments of music, elementary harmony, psychology of music, acoustics as applied to music, tuning the band, conducting, and ear training. The school was under the leadership of R.J. Dunn.

1929—A group of South Texas band directors received into the membership as a group.

1932—Standardization of band instruction—the first step in getting “Band” into the school curriculum for credit.

1932—Panhandle Band Association affiliates with the TBTA.

1933—Band and Orchestra enters the public school curriculum.

1934—The name “Texas Bandmasters Association” appears in several articles consulted by the researcher. (I believe going back to the name “Texas Bandmasters Association” is connected to the intentions Earl Irons and others had for organizing state versions of the American Bandmasters Association).

1934—A group of band directors joined the association forming the Northern division.

1935—Dr. L.A. Woods, State Superintendent of the State Department of Education was working for a unified music program in the state—unifying band, orchestra, and vocal music. These efforts eventually led to the formation of the Texas Music Educators Association (TMEA) in 1938.

1936—The year 1936, Texas’ centennial year, was important in the history of the band association for two important reasons: (1) Orchestra directors were officially admitted to the organization and the name was changed to the Texas School Band and Orchestra Association (TSBOA); and (2) the first real All-State band clinic was held at the clinic-convention. The clinician was of national repute—William Revelli, Director of Bands at the University of Michigan.

I believe that Revelli was a primary influence in adopting the new name—Texas School Band and Orchestra Association (TSBOA). Even though a motion was made to affiliate with the National School Band and Orchestra Association (NSBOA), and a committee was appointed to review the matter, plans to officially affiliate never materialized. Even so, a spirit of cooperation with other organizations, like the NSBOA, has existed throughout much of the history of TBA.

On a humorous note, at the meeting in 1930, a letter was read by Secretary-Treasurer Ralph Beck aimed at Colonel Earl D. Irons, questioning the ability and lack of ability of some of the members of the association.

#### Primary Leaders for Period 2

Richard J. Dunn—Director of Bands, Texas A&M University.

Everett McCracken—Director of Bands, Baylor University.

D.O. Wiley—Director of Bands, Texas Tech University.

Earl D. Irons—Director of Bands, North Texas Agricultural College (U.T.A.)

### **Period 3- Texas School Band and Orchestra Association (TSBOA), 1936-1938**

Although Period 3 only covers several years, a great deal of change took place during this brief time frame. Period 3 begins when, at the 1936 clinic-convention, the name of the

organization was changed from the Texas Band Teachers Association (TBTA) to the Texas School Band and Orchestra Association (TSBOA), and ends when, in 1938, the association admitted choral directors. The name chosen at the 3<sup>rd</sup> time was the Texas Music Educators Association (TMEA). That organization exists to the present day.

This organization extended membership to orchestra directors in 1936. After a great deal of discussion, the name was changed to the Texas School Band and Orchestra Association. During this time period, efforts were made to establish affiliations between state band associations (like the TSBOA) and the National School Band and Orchestra Association. It is interesting to note that these efforts never materialized. Vocal directors were admitted to the association in 1938 and the name was changed to the Texas Music Educators Association. That organization exists to the present day.

### General State-of-Affairs

Conflict between two related philosophical ideals—band (performance focus) and music education (academic focus).

### Highlights

Orchestra directors were admitted to the association. (Many orchestra directors were primarily band directors).

The association began organizing clinic-conventions with nationally renowned clinicians.

### Primary Leaders for Period 3

Lloyd Reitz

Ward Brandstetter

### Related Activities

The National and National-Regional band contests sponsored by the National School Band Association.

Amalgamation and eventual demise of the National School Band and Orchestra Association.

## **Period 4- Texas Bandmasters Association (TBA), 1940-1948**

After several years of the TMEA many of the state's bandmasters wished again for an association exclusively for band directors. At a called meeting during the TMEA convention on February 1, 1940 in Mineral Wells, a group of these directors reactivated the Texas Bandmasters Association. The primary leader of this effort was Colonel Earl D. Irons. During the early 1940s, TBA activities were limited to a Thursday night

“meeting” held during annual TMEA conventions. Since TMEA meetings were cancelled in 1943, 1944, and 1945 because of travel restrictions due to the war, TBA did not meet at all. At the annual meeting in 1946, definite plans were made to organize a separate TBA clinic-convention centered on marching band techniques and new music.

The fact is that the modern TBA was organized in 1940 because of the inclusion of choral teachers at the annual conventions. The bandmasters felt that their “life style” at conventions was being curtailed and that they did not want to lose their identity as “he men.” They felt that the influx of so many choral people could cause the bandmasters to lose their leadership role in Texas music. At the time, they pledged their allegiance to TMEA professionally but reserved the right to meet as bandmasters at a different time. The first meeting WAS in the summer of 1940 in Waco, Texas. (Letter from Jack Mahan to Jim Jacobsen dated November 27, 1998. This letter is included in its entirety in the Shoop dissertation).

### General State-of-Affairs

Activities were halted, altered, and “scaled down” due to efforts involved in World War II.

### Highlights

1940—Reactivation of Texas Bandmasters Association at the TMEA clinic-convention at Mineral Wells on February 1, 1940.

There seemed to be three “philosophical camps” during this time period: (1) bandmasters who were in favor of TBA (rather than TMEA); (2) those in favor of TMEA (rather than TBA); and (3) those who supported the existence of both organizations.

### Related Activities

1939—Founding of Phi Beta Mu International Bandmasters Fraternity by Earl D. Irons.

1946—Takeover of band contests by the U.I.L.

### Primary Leaders for Period 4

Earl D. Irons—North Texas Agricultural College (U.T.A.).

Raymond T. Bynum

## **Period 5- The Modern Texas Bandmasters Association (TBA),**

### **1948-Present**

The modern TBA began with the first TBA clinic-convention at Alamo Heights High School, in San Antonio, on September 2, 3, and 4, 1948. The organizer and first president was Pat Arsers. These annual events have taken place ever since and have all been held in San Antonio. Initially, the clinic-conventions centered on marching band techniques and new music. Over the years, this general concept has been expanded and now includes virtually every aspect of public school band work.

Planning that began in 1946 led to the first annual TBA clinic-convention in 1948.

#### General State-of-Affairs

The past fifty plus years has been a long period of tremendous growth and development.

#### Highlights

Initially, the primary focus was on presenting clinics involving new music and the marching band.

Other activities added include:

Jazz ensemble.

Family activities.

Luncheon and barbecue.

Discuss informal and formal educational and social activities.

Mention other associations that meet during the TBA clinic-convention.

#### Primary Leaders for Period 5

Pat Arsers- Executive Secretary of TBA (1951-1959).

Pat Patterson- Executive Secretary of TBA (1960-1985).

Al Sturchio- Executive Secretary of TBA (1986-date).

### **Conclusions: What Will the Future Bring?**

Dealing with change—reacting to internal and external factors and circumstances.

## Selected List of Bibliographical Sources

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#### Selected List of Taped Interviews

Bynum, R.T. Tape recorded interview with Gary Barrow, Abilene, Texas, March 13, 1981.

Jacobsen, James, Tape recorded interview with Stephen Shoop, Fort Worth, Texas, June 13, 1997.

Tatum, Alto. Tape recorded interview with Stephen Shoop, Longview, Texas, June 10, 1997.

Tatum, Alto. Tape recorded interview with Jim Hagood, location and date unknown.

Note: Interested persons are invited to read Dr. Shoop's doctoral dissertation entitled *The Texas Bandmasters Association: A Historical Study of Activities, Contributions, and Leadership (1920-1997)*. The document may be accessed free-of-charge on the internet through the University of North Texas Library website.



## Steve Shoop

Dr. Steve Shoop has been teaching band in the Texas public schools for 21 years. Steve graduated with a Bachelor of Music Education degree from Texas Christian University in 1978. He completed his Master of Music Education degree from Indiana University in 1984. In 2000, Dr. Shoop graduated from the University of North Texas with a Doctor of Philosophy in Music Education degree. His dissertation is entitled *The Texas Bandmasters Association: A Historical Study of Activities, Contributions, and Leadership (1920-1997)*.

Steve has taught band in Cedar Hill, Richardson, and Ennis, Texas. During the year of his residency at the University of North Texas (1993-1994), Dr. Shoop served as Excellence of Teaching Fellow, where he taught band in the public schools of Krum, Texas, and supervised student teachers at the University of North Texas.

Dr. Shoop teaches at several summer music camps and has presented clinics at Baylor University, the University of Texas at Arlington, Valdosta State University, Texas Christian University, Mid-West International Band and Orchestra Clinic, and for the Texas Music Educators Association. He has over 30 published compositions and arrangements for low brass, as well as articles in *The Instrumentalist*, *Southwestern Musician* combined with the *Texas Music Educator*, and the *International Tuba-Euphonium Association Journal*. In March 2004, Dr. Shoop was awarded a historical research grant by the Harvey Phillips Foundation for the work he is doing documenting the artistic contributions of early tuba and euphonium players.

Steve is the primary coordinator for annual Merry TUBACHRISTMAS concerts in Fort Worth and Dallas, Texas.

Dr. Shoop holds memberships in a number of professional associations including Texas Music Educators Association, Texas Bandmasters Association, Phi Beta Mu, and the International Tuba-Euphonium Association.

Steve lives in Ennis with his wife Donna and stepdaughter Samantha in their historic home built in 1905. Since 2001 Steve has served on the city's Historic Landmark Commission.