



Photos by ROBIN TRIMARCHI, *Ledger-Enquirer*

Former high school band director Oliver Boone walks through the National High School Band Directors Hall of Fame with George Corradino, far right, and Judge John Laney. Corradino leads the Cavaliers Orchestra and the Bob Barr Band, and Laney played clarinet in the 1957-1960 Columbus High School band.

March to fame

High School Band Directors Hall of Fame now in Columbus

By LARRY GERRER

Staff Writer

He's at home watching the movie "Drumline" when he sees something that makes him suddenly sit up straight. "I know that kid," he shouts, pointing to a member of the cast portraying a college musician.

Oliver Boone's family doesn't seem impressed. The former high school band director rises and takes a photo off his wall. "See, that's him."

Indeed, it is one of his past musicians. He finds out later that about five of his past players are in the popular film.

"I like that movie," he says, smiling.

The truth is, Boone would like any picture with someone banging a drum or tooting a trumpet. As he speaks, the Columbus resident is strolling down a hallway in the National High School Band Directors Hall of Fame, now located at One Arsenal Place on Front Avenue.

The much-honored Boone, who directed bands at Kendrick High School for nine years and Shaw High School for two, was an Hall of Fame inductee in 1992 and is now the executive director.

The Hall of Fame has been around since 1984 when it opened in Daytona, Fla. When founders Waite Pickens and Bobby Lee Cude decided to retire, they began seeking someone to take it over in a new location. A strong contender was Mason City, Iowa — the actual River City portrayed in the Broadway hit "The Music Man" and home to a multimillion-dollar complex honoring Meredith Wilson, the show's creator.

Boone made contact and told the founders, "It's got to come to Columbus, Georgia."

He noted that John Phillip Sousa — yes, he was a high school band director, too — had played at the Springer Opera House, and that several Hall of Fame members were from Georgia.

Columbus got it.

But for about two years, Boone didn't have any place to put the memorabilia.

Work in progress

Columbus State University saved the day, donating about 2,800 square feet in a building across from the Columbus Convention & Trade Center and next to its new



Marching band photos, instruments, sheet music and other memorabilia are part of the newly opened National High School Band Directors Hall of Fame at One Arts Place.

RiverPark Campus. CSU and some businesses have of the building as well.

CSU is also in partnership with the High School Band Directors National Association, founded in 2005 by Boone to offer courses for school band directors looking for teacher certification renewal. The association has a site, www.hsbdna.com, with useful links for band directors, as well as information about the Hall of Fame members.

The Hall officially opened here during the Columbus Invitational Music Festival on April 27, an event part funded by the Columbus Municipal Arts Council and Bradley Turner Foundation.

Although the public is invited to come free of charge to the Hall of Fame during any weekday — it's best to e

See BOONE, Page C3