

June 12, 2007

Mr. Greg Haynes
203 Townsend Place NW
Atlanta, Georgia 30327

Dear Greg and Nora,

Several weeks ago my bride of thirty-three years made me accompany her on a shopping trip over to Lexington, SC. I decided to kill some time while she shopped in BooksAMillion and it was there I ran across The Heey Baby Days of Beach Music. I didn't buy it immediately, but after pondering it for a few days, I decided since I was getting two beach music CD's it might be worth it. Needless to say, I had NO idea what I had lucked into.

I was amazed to find out that I am a living, breathing member of the The Heey Baby Days of Beach Music and didn't even know it. After I started reading your book, I couldn't put it down as it brought back memories I hadn't thought about in years. I grew up in a small rural SC town (Saluda), which is about 25 miles south of Greenwood, SC. I grew up listening to the great national radio stations like WNOX (Knoxville), WLAC (Nashville) and when conditions permitted WAPE. Locally, we tuned in WBBQ (Augusta), WCOS (Columbia) and other local AM stations. We went to Teen Towns on the weekends in Saluda as well as surrounding towns where there would be an occasional live band, though I don't recall any of consequence. Of course, we had the usual record hops and school dances, but unfortunately, we didn't have a Civic Center like Waycross or a Greg Haynes.

I do recall, however, a date in the summer of 1963 or 64, when The Swingin Medallions came down and played a dance/party at the new country club. This was before "Double Shot" so they weren't quite as famous as after it hit it big. I remember it being a great party and since I was only 14 or 15 and didn't have a Drivers License, my mom had to drive me to pick up my date and take us home. Unfortunately, I believe this was only time I ever saw The Medallions in person.

After high school, I matriculated to the University of South Carolina in Columbia in the fall of 1967. We began our entertainment education at Jack's Palace (later to become The Copper Door and The Music Box), which featured all the TOP Beach Music acts like The Tams, Maurice Williams and the Zodiacs, The Georgia Prophets, The Showmen, The O'Kaysions, The Sensational Epics, The Charms, plus many others. This was a club crowd, usually Chockablock and very much a Heey Baby crowd.

During my Freshman year, I roomed with my cousin who was also from Saluda and he was more into music than I was, but he got me hooked. I remember we found a small black-owned record shop on Assembly Street from which we were able to buy almost any beach music 45 you could think of—we amassed quite a collection, though I have no idea what happened to them. Later I joined the Lambda Chi's and he became an ATO. He

also had cousin (Bill Deloache) who played with The Epics and was friends with the great Johnny Few, when he was with The Charms, so we followed each as much as possible. Obviously, we both became ingrained in the Fraternity scene during our four+ years in Columbia and I remember many wild parties. Unfortunately, then all USC Fraternity Housing was University controlled and on campus, so all our parties had to off campus, so it was difficult to hear other bands at other houses. One that does stick out as giving a dynamite for a LXA party was Black and Blue, which you featured in your book. I also Fraternity brothers from Cheraw and Bennettsville, SC, who turned me on to The Coachman and Four-what a great beach music venue!! I still remember seeing Billie Joe Royal there-great show, but I don't remember who backed him up. It may well have been one of the great bands mentioned in your book. Sadly, in 1975, my cousin/roommate passed away, but I'm sure he now has a ticket.

We at USC were like most colleges/universities during the late 1960's and early 1970's from a cultural standpoint. I began college wearing high-water pants, starched shirts, alpaca sweaters and Bass weejuns and came out Tee-shirts, bell bottom jeans, head bands and boots or sandals. Came in listening to Elvis, The Tams and The Tempting Temps and came out listening to Dylan, BS&T and Jefferson Airplane-what a TRANSFORMATION!!

After college, I cruised along building a career, getting married (1974) and musically following the great Southern Rock bands and gradually some C&W and Bluegrass sounds. I don't think it ever occurred to that beach music still existed. I mean I would still hear some Motown-type R&B on the Oldies stations, but NO Tams, Willie T., etc. Then one day in the late 1990's, I'm driving around Columbia at work and accidentally pick up a new local radio station playing exclusively beach music. They were playing the REAL STUFF-all the old favorites plus the newer stuff. I was Totally Blown Away. I was instantly hooked and recharged. It turns out the station was owned by the infamous Wyndham brothers (Woody and Leo) and originated from Charleston, SC, and included other DJ's like Gary Bass and Eddie(EZ) Zomerfeld, before he passed away. Sadly, the station only lasted about a year or so, but I was HOOKED and bought every beach CD I lay my hands on. It's like I never stopped listening-it sounds better than ever.

In closing, I've got to tell how delighted I was to read the article on the Georgia Prophets by my great friend, Jerry McElveen. Jerry and I worked together in the 1990's and became good friends, but until reading THBDOB, I never knew he was one of the original MB Lifeguards and Cecil Corbett's right hand man. I do remember him telling me the last time we talked that he was booking some shows in Augusta.

Greg, in all honesty, I never dreamed that I would spend \$60 for a book I could hardly tote out of the store, but it exceeded my wildest expectations and I THANK YOU for dredging up many great old memories. It is truly GREAT to be a part of The Heey Baby Days of Beach Music-STILL!! I now have your Web site in my Favorites File so I will be keeping up with schedules and updates. Look forward to meeting you and Nora in person if you are ever back in South Carolina.

Sincerely,
John (Bubby) Coleman
Saluda, A. C.