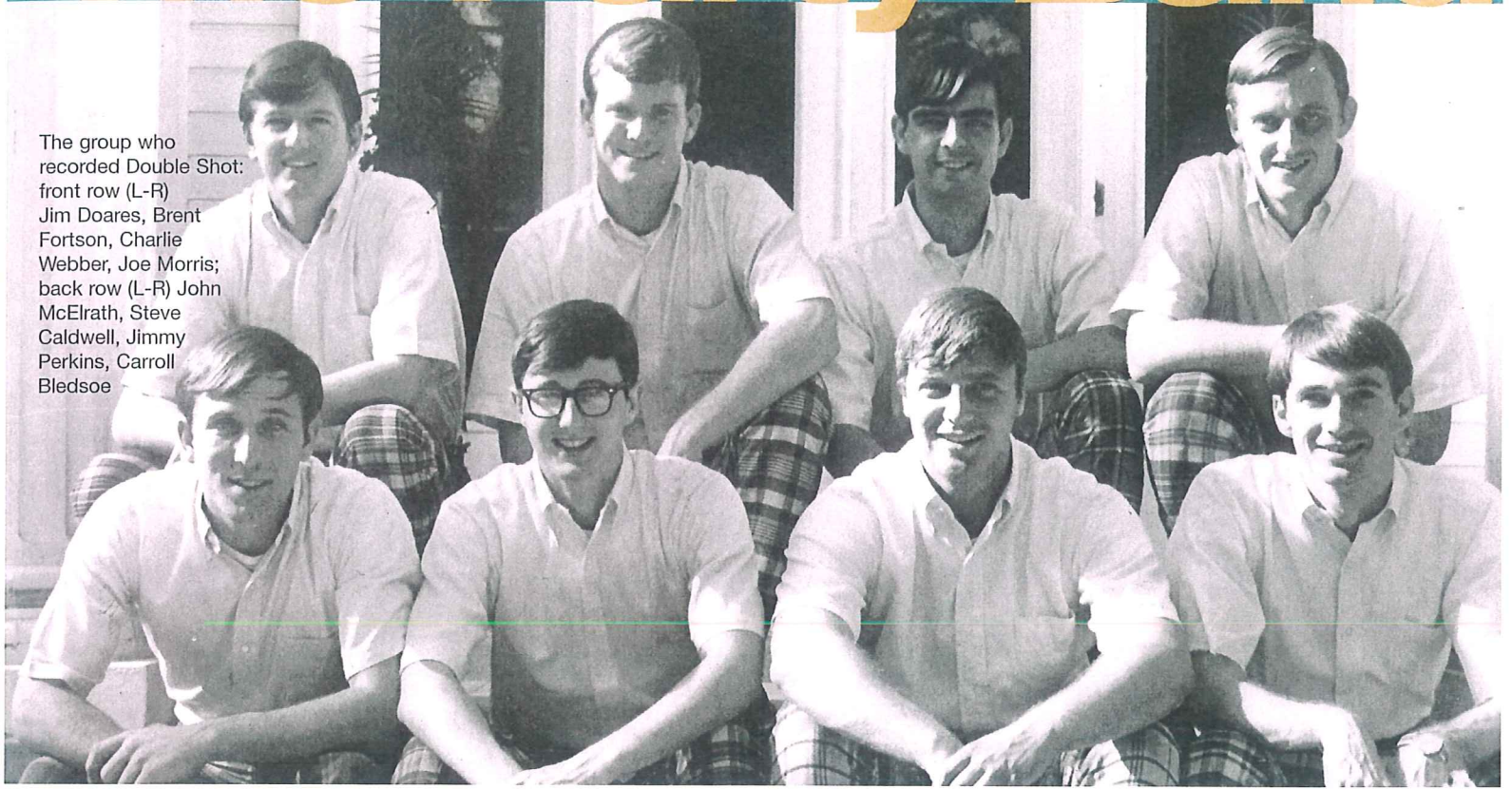


The Party Band

The group who recorded Double Shot:
front row (L-R)
Jim Doares, Brent
Fortson, Charlie
Webber, Joe Morris;
back row (L-R) John
McElrath, Steve
Caldwell, Jimmy
Perkins, Carroll
Bledsoe



of the South

Swingin' Medallions
Celebrate 40 Years of 'Double
Shot of My Baby's Love'

Elvis was on top of the charts with "Return to Sender," while "Dr. No" and Sean Connery's 007 thrilled packed movie houses. Jackie's new pillbox hats changed fashion while Marilyn blew out her candles for the last time. It was 1962.

In South Carolina, in the small town of Greenwood, John McElrath and Joe Morris were starting a band to help pay their way through Lander College and perhaps attract the attention of some coeds. No one dreamed a legend began that year – one written in the annals of what is now known as *Beach Music*.

McElrath and Morris had an early group called the Medallions but, by 1963, the nucleus had become John on keyboards and lead vocals, Joe on drums, and Carroll on trumpet, and they were looking for a new band sound – one that would focus on R&B and the forbidden music blacks were playing, music with "soul." Scouting for talent, they found two high-energy saxophone players from the Greenwood High School band, Steve Caldwell and Brent Fortson. Next on the recruitment list was guitar player Cubby Culbertson, manager of a Greenwood music store but also a former member of the popular Swingin' Travelers. With a trumpet, two guitars, two saxophones, and a keyboard, the

Swings On!



six-member band would blend their sound into a high energy style that would soon catapult them to stardom.

McElrath learned a little trick from Dale & The Del Hearts, a Black band at Pawleys Pavilion in the early '60s that would set the Swingin' Medallions completely apart from their contemporaries. He taught himself to play bass on the keyboard in addition to the melody. A very rare ability, as he was also often lead singer as well. This led to the band producing bass from keyboards rather than employing a bass guitarist. They could have an eight-man band and still have five on brass. It also made John McElrath part of the band's legend.

From Greenwood to Ninety-Six, the band gained notice playing after high school football games and at a tobacco-warehouse turned nightclub called The Round Table. Fraternity men from Athens and Columbia came to Lander for dates and wound up having just as great a time listening to the sounds of a six-man band called the Swingin' Medallions. Soon, they were invited to play at frat houses in UGA at Athens nearly every weekend where "the party was always in session," according to Greg Haynes, author of the new book *The Heeey Baby Days of Beach Music*. They played all the fraternities, from Alpha to Omega, Haynes continues, and "they would eventually go on to get famous on a bigger scale. They were legends of the party years before they got around to recording the party song of the ages."

That party song, of course, was *Double Shot (of My Baby's Love)*.

Haynes retells how "Guitarist Cubby Culbertson first heard 'Double Shot' performed by Dick Holler & The Holidays at an Army/Navy club in Columbia, South Carolina. He liked it and was playing it on his guitar at the record store in Greenwood when Morris asked, 'What is that song you're playing there, Cubby?'"

"It's called 'Double Shot,'" replied Cubby. "I heard it just the other night. Pretty good, huh? I think it's a great tune for the shaggers down at O.D."

John McElrath recognized its potential and worked up a unique

organ intro, while the band upped the tempo from the slower R&B version of composers Cyril Vetter and Don Smith. From the moment they added it to their play list, the crowds reacted.

By 1964, the Vietnam War loomed. When the band had the chance to play outside of their stomping grounds at The Old Hickory down in Panama City, Cubby couldn't leave South Carolina since he was on active reserves. He selflessly encouraged the band to go on without him and Perrin Gleaton from Clemson took his place.

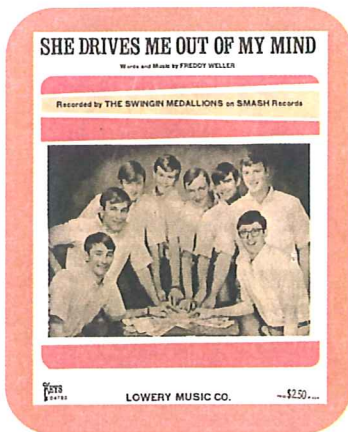
The epicenter of the Beach Music scene that summer, Panama City turned the Medallions into a full-blown party band. They refined 'Double Shot' and created their signature dance with a Farfisa organ accompaniment. No sax. No trumpet. Just a whole lotta keyboard, guitar, and screamin' going on.

The partying moved on to Alabama. Some shuffling of members that year led to the band expanding to eight members and adding Jimmy Perkins, Jim Doares, and Charlie Webber, specialists in SYWITUP (Screaming, Yelling & Whooping It Up). It's remained an eight-member band almost ever since.

In 1966, the magical recording of 'Double Shot' finally happened, but not in the usual manner. When Atlanta studio executives insisted on a "professional" production, complete with strings, John McElrath pulled out. This wasn't their sound, and he knew it. He took them to Arthur Smith Studios in North Carolina where the group recruited true SYWITUP folks to recreate the noise and frat party atmosphere inside the studio, and the decibel level went off the charts with Webber, Doares, and Perkins ramping it up. Only one take was needed, and it was

produced on the band's own label which they called *4 Sale*. As Cubby Culbertson would say later, "They done found themselves a hook. They put the party on the record!"

Selling their record at their own performances, they sold out in no time. Dave "Rockin'" Roddy, a popular deejay in Birmingham, got a copy and played it. Billy Smith in Marion, South Carolina, was first to play it on the radio, and Woody Windham in Columbia promoted it. The song's popularity



The Swingin' Medallions Reunion in Greenwood, SC. July 29, 2006



The Swingin' Medallions over the years...

Chirs Alexander
 Eddie Bailey
 Hack Bartley
 Carroll Bledsoe
 Sanborn Buchan
 Steve Caldwell
 Rick Constant
 Johnny Cox
 Vanessa Cox
 Scott Cox
 Robbie Cox
 Richard Crocker
 Bobby Crowder
 Cubby Culbertson
 Jim Doares
 David Eastler
 Steve Eddy
 Gary Elrod
 John English
 Brent Fortson
 Wayne Free
 Larry Freeland
 Jim Giles
 Perris Gleaton
 Rick Godwin
 Tim Goldman
 Ronnie Goldman
 Jimmy Graham
 Johnny Hancock
 Irvin Hicks
 Grainger Hines
 Grey Hines
 Michael Huey
 Chip Jennison
 Monty Johnston
 Campbell Josh
 Marvin Koerber
 Richard Loper
 John McElrath
 Jayne McElrath
 Shane McElrath
 Shawn McElrath
 Joe Morris
 Ron Nobels
 Al Pearson
 Jimmy Perkins
 Paul Perkins
 Gerald Polk
 Fred Pugh
 Jimmy Roark
 Larry Roark
 Robert Sigman
 Jerry Sims
 Howard Smith
 Alex Smith
 Taylor Stokes
 Ashby Stokes
 Ronnie Stone
 Dwight Styron
 Bobby Taylor
 Kos Weaver
 Charlie Webber
 Dale Williams

Behind the Scenes
 Russell Adams
 Carl Burns
 Brad Burton
 Dibble Cooper
 Rich Crabtree
 Stuart Driver
 Andy Ellison
 Matt Elrod
 Bob Hearn
 Pat Hindman
 Jeff Kubu
 Tommy Langley
 Herman Mitchell
 John Smith
 David Wright

throughout the South took it to number one on many local charts before the nation even heard the party on vinyl.

Singer James Brown, who lived in Augusta, Georgia, recommended Smash, a major label that was a division of Mercury. When it bought national distribution rights, "Double Shot" took off from coast to coast. As a result of its staggered release in the South, though, before national distribution, it ended its climb on Billboard at #14. Few doubt it would have gone #1 nationally if the release had been uniform.

A world tour followed, capped by a command performance by old blue eyes, Frank Sinatra, when he heard they were in L.A. and #1 on the local charts. His daughter, Tina, had a 16th birthday party planned and he surprised her with the Swingin' Medallions. The whole Rat Pack, as well as Milton Berle, attended and nerves were evident as the band tuned up. Realizing the situation, Milton jumped up and joined them on stage for their opening minutes, settling them down – and the party roared into gear!

To know the full tale, get Greg Haynes new book, *The Heeey Baby Days of Beach Music*, with a wonderful introduction by John McElrath. Hear Hack Bartley, Grainger "Brother" Hines, and Joe Morris recant their priceless memories of a period in life that will forever seem like Endless Summer.

Forty years of entertaining without veering from the band's early sound and style is an accomplishment few can match. Almost eighty musicians have

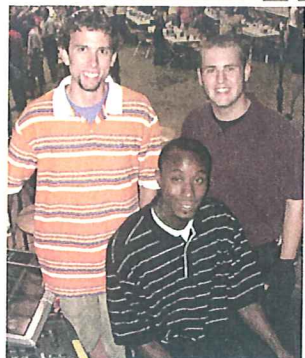
WQQX I TOP 30 SURVEY

LENOX RECORD CENTER
 3393 PEACHTREE ROAD, N. E.
 Cedar 3-7417 ATLANTA 5, GA.

THIS WEEK	TITLE	ARTIST	LAST WEEK
1.	DOUBLE SHOT	DRIVING MEADLIONS	6
2.	MEDLEY MIGHTY	THE SWAIN'S & PAPA'S	14
3.	WANG WANG	CHER	1
4.	GOOD BYE (THIS IS YOUR LAST)	THE MELLOWS	9
5.	WALK WALK	THE TONG REGALS	2
6.	WHEN AN ANGEL A WOMAN	FRANK SINATRA	12
7.	PLEASE DON'T STOP LOVING ME	OLIVER PRESTLEY	8
8.	PLEASE DON'T STOP LOVING ME	ROBERTA'S SISTERS	11
9.	PLEASE DON'T STOP LOVING ME	MIKEY GALLAGHER	11
10.	THE	THE	
11.	SECRET	PAUL ANDERSON'S BAND	5
12.	SECRET	SHARON OF EXETER	16
13.	SLEEP	CONROY SISTERS	4
14.	FRANKIE AND I	BEACH BOYS	26
15.	FRANKIE AND I	ELVIS PRESLEY	22
16.	FRANKIE AND I	THE FOURTOPS	25
17.	WALK WALK	BOB AND BOB	24
18.	HOW'D YOU GET TO GAIL	BOBBY HINTRA	(C)
19.	SHALING WAVE	THE BEANS	13
20.	I CAN'T LET GO	THE BOLLIES	(C)
21.	LET ME BE BORN TO	ROCKA THUMB	3
22.	YOUNGSTER MOON	CHARLES	27
23.	BRASSARD IN THE AIR	THE MELLOWS	21
24.	REAL BONDING	THE MELLOWS	19
25.	I'LL TAKE GOOD CARE OF YOU	DAVID MORRIS	15
26.	A SIDE OF THE TIDE	FRANK SINATRA	23
27.	ELDERA	FRANK SINATRA	(C)
28.	TRY TOO HARD	FRANK SINATRA	18
29.	MESSAGE TO MICHAEL	FRANK SINATRA	18
30.	LET ME BE BORN TO	FRANK SINATRA	18

QUINCY COME

- 31. BRAND NEW THING
- 32. I CAN'T GRIN FRAGLES
- 33. ONE TWO
- 34. A GROOVY KIND OF LOVE
- 35. NOTHING'S TOO GOOD FOR ME BOB
- 36. BOB SINCLAIR
- 37. BALDY DAY WOMEN



Frank Sinatra engaged the Medallions to play at his daughter Tina's 16th birthday.

been associated with the group over the years, and a reunion performance held each year in Greenwood allows fans to see 60-year old Johnny Cox still perform his unbelievable rendition of Shotgun while being held upside down.

The Swingin' Medallions, all 80 strong, credit just one man for keeping the Medallions afloat through all the change we've seen in music styles. Father of today's group leaders, Shawn and Shane McElrath, John McElrath can rightfully be called, with no dissent, the godfather of the Swingin' Medallions.



John McElrath still entertains with the group today. His sons, Shane (left) and Shawn lead the Medallions' current group.



Bruce Springsteen said that "Double Shot" was the greatest frat song ever!