

History

The band program at Santa Cruz High School is one of the oldest in California. Since its inception in 1925, it has amassed a wealth of awards and accolades from eras-gone-by and times forgotten.

87 years and counting...

The program has endured countless budget cuts, changes in staff, student scheduling conflicts, fluctuating school spirit, declining student enrollment, a year of substitute teachers, and an endless bombardment of "band geek" jokes. It has witnessed the rise and fall of similar high school band programs statewide. Perhaps its greatest single achievement is that it continues to *exist*—even today—enriching the lives of students as it has done for nearly 90 years.

Background History:

- 1876 Santa Cruz Senior High and Junior High are taught under the same roof at the Mission Hill School.
- 1895 Santa Cruz High School is built. The wooden structure would burn to the ground 18 years later in 1913.
- 1915 the current Santa Cruz High main building is built, finally replacing the building destroyed in a fire 2+ years prior.

Band History:

- 1919 Instrumental music is offered as an official class.
- 1925 the marching band is established, under the direction of John Squires.
- 1946 the marching band makes their first appearance at the East West Shriners Game. They would return 60 times before the game moved to Houston in 2007.
- 1948 The First Annual Spring Concert is held, under the direction of Edwin Taylor.
- 1961 Perhaps the "Golden Age" of music education at Santa Cruz High School, three music teachers are employed at the same time: Norman Walters, Choral and Music chair and former band director; Merle Good, Beginning & Intermediate Band; Silvester McElroy, Varsity Symphonic and Marching Band.
- 1965 the current music building is built with a state-of-the-art "bandroom."
- 1970 (spring) the "Cardinal Band" marches at the Portland Rose Festival Parade. The morning after graduation (class of 1970), they chartered busses to the airport and flew to Portland to march the parade that same day.
- 1970 (fall) the band boosters and Mr. "Mac" McElroy establish the Santa Cruz Band Review.
- 1971 the band dons new RED uniforms.
- 1972 the band is officially nicknamed the "Big Red" Band. And it is, indeed.
- 1973 the band marches in the Chinese New Year Parade in SF.

- 1974 the band earns its first marching "Sweepstakes" award at the San Mateo Band Review in May.
- 1975 the band celebrates its 50th Anniversary.
- 1977 the band takes 5th Place honors out of 13 bands in Class D at the "All Western" Band Review in Long Beach, "placing" in its class for the first time in its history.
- 1980 the "I.D. Unit" debuts its signature snake move (more commonly referred to as the "Santa Cruz Wave"), at the Concord Band Review. Former Drum Major, Ron Salinas, is the choreographer & coach.
- 1981 the band receives the Grand Sweepstakes award at the Ukiah Band Review in May. They would retire the trophy 2 years later by winning it 3 consecutive years.
- 1982 the band marches in the Queen Victoria Days Parade in Victoria, BC, Canada. They receive 1st Place for small bands.
- 1985 the band marches in the Hollywood Christmas Parade. They would return to Hollywood to march in the nationally televised parade the following year.
- 1986 the band performs at the World's Fair Expo 86 in Vancouver, BC, Canada, and the Queen Victoria Days Parade in Victoria.
- 1987 the band marches down Main Street, USA, Disneyland, for the first time.
- 1989 the band returns to Victoria, BC to march in the Queen Victoria Days Parade. Director of 27 years, Silvester McElroy, retires from Santa Cruz City Schools.
- 1992 the band returns to their former black & red, adds a plaid & brooch, establishes a piping unit, and takes on a new nickname "the Cardinal Regiment." That same year they received the Showmanship Sweepstakes award at the Fairfield Tournament of Bands.
- 1993 Drum Major Jake Finley becomes the first to use a "mace" in competition in front of the band. He replaces a long line of award-winning "military" drum majors before him, and establishes a new line of award-winning "mace" drum majors to follow. A "signal" baton was used in the 30s, 40s, 50s, and early 60s.
- 1994 the marching band survives a challenging year of substitute teachers. After a controversial debate, the booster club officers suggest a name change. The students vote to keep "the Cardinal Regiment" nickname.
- 1995 the Santa Cruz Band Review celebrates 25 years.
- 2000 the band celebrates its 75th Anniversary.
- 2005 the band marches in the King Kamehameha Day Parade in Waikiki, Oahu.
- 2006 the band, under the direction of Christina Latham, is invited to apply for the Tournament of Roses Parade in Pasadena. That same spring they received the Grand Sweepstakes award at the Del Mar Band Review in San Jose, by earning the highest combined score in both Concert and Parade competition.
- 2007 the band accepts an invitation to march in the "Greek Heritage" parade in San Francisco.
- 2008 the band returns to Waikiki, Oahu to attend the "World of Pageantry" parade, concert, percussion and winter guard festival.
- 2012 the band's photos are featured in a national campaign for Disney's Magic Music Days, a program that brings thousands of students from across the USA to Disney Theme Parks for workshops and performances.

Directors of the band:

- 1920-34 John Squires
- 1934-46 John Farrar
- 1946-48 Norman Walters
- 1948-50 Edwin Taylor
- 1949-62 Merle Good
- 1962-89 Silvester McElroy
- 1989-91 John Burn
- 1991-92 Dean McNair
- 1992-94 Ray Lindsey
- 1995-98 Eric Wiltshire
- 1998-99 Teresa Jones
- 1999-present Christina Latham