

High Society Jazz

The High Society Jazz Band, formerly the Athens Dixieland Jazz Band (ADJB), has been a long favorite of traditional jazz lovers in Southeastern, Ohio. Initially a standard six-piece Dixieland ensemble, it played regularly at various venues in the Athens area for many years. In recent years, a washboarder has been added to the group.

ADJB was founded in the mid 1970s by Gene Blocker, an Ohio University philosophy professor, who fondly referred to it as "Athens Oldest Living Band." Although Blocker no longer fronts the band, the Dixieland style that he imbued stemming from his Texas roots, and inspired by Jim Cullum, remains. Many an O.U. music student has developed some solid Dixieland chops as a result of playing with this group, O.U. faculty members are occasionally among its ranks as well.

In 1999, ADJB founded the High Society Jazz Association (open to non-players) which meets regularly for music at Abrio's Restaurant in Athens. The band has been featured at the Hocking College Inn Mardi Gras festivities for 35 years and has played at various wakes and celebrations throughout Ohio and West Virginia including the annual High Society Jazz Association "Riverboat Shuffle" buffet on the Sternwheeler Valley Gem in September.