



With the departure of lead vocalist, Mike Rogers, The Dixie Melody Boys have been searching for the last few weeks for a new lead singer. After receiving over 300 resumes and audition tapes from throughout the US, as well as three foreign countries, Ed O'Neal has announced the name of the quartet's newest member. He is 18-year-old Birmingham AL native, Austin Foster.

"We listened to each demo and prayed that God would send us the right fit for where the group is headed. There were so many great singers, and many already established names in Gospel music, so it was hard to narrow the list," stated DMB tenor, Matt Felts. "We thank Josh Garner, who filled in for the group during that process. Having Josh made things so much easier for us. It allowed us the freedom to take our time in making the decision. We narrowed the 300 applicants down to 10 and met with the final group. Each one brought something completely different and special to the table. We took a different approach than usual and had the men spend the day with us and all go to lunch together. It was a great way to get to know them a little better."

Group leader Ed O'Neal says one of those particular young men just seemed to be the perfect fit. O'Neal had met the young man during last year's National Quartet Convention in Louisville. "He just stuck in my mind. I had a great feeling about him, so we invited him to audition. His voice was powerful and anointed, but his personality instantly fit right in."

Foster is a young man quite familiar with Southern Gospel Music. His dad is well-known promoter and radio host, Ron Foster. The younger Foster has been singing for years and has enjoyed appearances on stage with numerous popular Southern Gospel vocalists. O'Neal says he is delighted to have this talented, young man a part of The Dixie Melody Boys. "We are excited to have Austin with us. I know the fans will love him. He is a true Southern Gospel singer and a great young man. His ability to sing the great songs of the past, as well as the newer songs we do make him a unique talent," the veteran Hall of Fame member shares.

Likewise, Foster is looking forward to being a full-time member of the Southern Gospel Music ranks and the Dixie Melody Boys. "I am super excited to sing with The Dixie Melody Boys. I have been listening to these guys all my life, and it is an honor to share the stage with them," Foster stated.

Foster joins a long list of Southern Gospel Music's popular names who began their music careers with The Dixie Melody Boys. Unlike any other, Ed O'Neal has had an eye for talent and has introduced names such as McCray Dove, Rodney Griffin, Devin McGlamery, Harold Reed, Ernie Haase and so many others to Gospel music fans. "It's truly amazing how Ed has the ability to maintain one of the top groups year after year, while launching the career of so many young men," stated Song Garden Music Group's David Staton. "While others look for singers in other groups, Ed gives new faces a chance and cultivates Gospel music for years to come. That is an incredible legacy to leave behind. Austin is sure to add to that rich tapestry. "

Dixie Melody Boys Announce New Lead Singer

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Staton and executives with Song Garden Music Group are excited about the future of The Dixie Melody Boys. The quartet will be back in the studio in June to finish their new album which will feature new members Aaron Dishman and Austin Foster. The recording will be released by Song Garden Music Group later this year.

Additional information regarding the latest happenings with The Dixie Melody Boys, as well as a complete tour schedule is available online at www.dixiemelodyboys.com.