

Salisbury Post
By Katie Scarvey

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Music makes David Dyer smile

David Dyer left Salisbury years ago – he lives in Raleigh now with his wife and two daughters.

He works as a salesman to pay the bills, but what David loves is writing songs and making music. David Dyer and the Crooked Smile Band have been together for about 7 years, touring and playing festivals around the Carolinas.

David works with some talented musicians. His pedal steel guitarist used to play with Reba McEntire, and his piano player has written music that appeared in the film "Pulp Fiction."

Dyer is lead vocalist and guitarist. More importantly, he writes all of the band's songs.

He's a poet, just like his grandfather, John Ellis Smith, who many years ago wrote poetry for the Salisbury Post as Big JES. (The pen name came from his initials.)

While David's father, Glenn Dyer, was in Viet Nam flying fighter planes, David was living in Salisbury on Maupin Avenue with his grandparents and his mother. Glenn Dyer ended up being one the first North Carolinians killed in Viet Nam.

Big JES died years ago when David was still a boy, but his uncle, Ellis Smith, still lives in the Maupin Avenue home where he grew up.

David has many fond memories of his grandfather.

"We spent many a day at City Park feeding the ducks and then going down to Roger's Store to get a treat," he says. "We'd also make the occasional clandestine trip to Eagle's Tavern where he was known to tip the elbow on occasion.

"He was an awesome guy who could make up the most incredible stories which would just leave me spellbound.

"As the story goes, he was a Duke grad in the food business and had an opportunity to get into Ralph Ketner's wholesale food business on the ground floor but thought the idea wouldn't fly - as they say, hindsight's 20-20."

David has written about his grandfather in a song titled "Big JES." A few weeks ago the song rose to the No.25 spot on the European Country Hot Disc Chart – see David's Web site at www.crookedsmileband.com/news.html for more information.

Big JES would be proud.

David and his band's bass player will be playing at 9p.m. at Las Palmas the Saturday.

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<http://www.salisburypost.com>