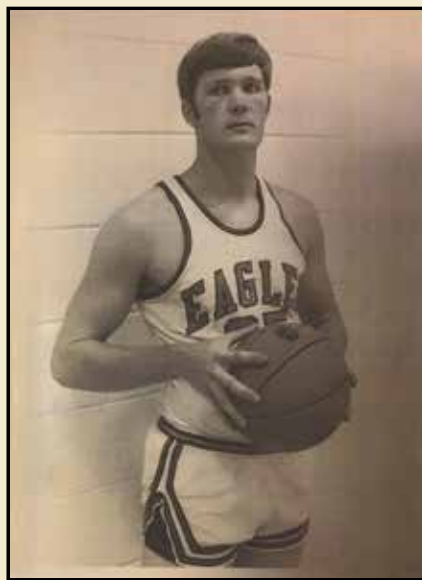


— 2018 —

# Forsyth-Monroe County Sports Hall of Fame

## *Steve Melton*



Steve Melton, a 1968 graduate of Mary Persons High School, was an outstanding basketball star for the Bulldogs. While at Mary Persons, Steve was a member of what are arguably the two greatest Bulldogs basketball teams ever which were the 1966-67 and 1967-68 teams. Both teams were coached by the late Johnny Waters. For fifty years, the 1966-67 team held the season record for most wins with 21. The record was lost to the 2017-18 Bulldogs who won 22. The 67-68 team placed second in the Region 3-B sub-region with a 57-49 win over Taylor County and a narrow 56-52 loss to Pike County. The team moved on to Region 3-B tournament play with Steve scoring 22 points and grabbing 14 rebounds in a 76-63 upset win over top-seeded Bowden, who had suffered only one loss all season. The Dogs then defeated Heard County 63-53 with Steve scoring 22 points and grabbing 29 rebounds, which was the single game rebound record at that time. Mary Persons placed second in Region 3-B after losing to Pike County in the title game 54-45 with Steve scoring 19 points and snagging 24 rebounds. Steve averaged 21 points a game and 22.3 rebounds a game during 3-B tournament play. This second-place finish earned Mary Persons the right to compete in the state tournament the following week in Macon. The State Class B Tournament was held for the last time at the Macon City Auditorium where Steve scored 13 points and grabbed 15 rebounds as Mary Persons got off to a strong start by upsetting Banks County 72-54. Banks County, 27-0, was the only remaining undefeated team in any classification in the state. In the semi-final round Wilcox defeated the Bulldogs by four points and went on to win the Class B State Title the next night with a two-point win over Vienna. Steve closed out his high school career scoring 21 points and snagging 10 rebounds against Wilcox. The Bulldogs ended the season at 19-7 with a final Class B state ranking of third. Steve was

the leading rebounder all three years he started for the Bulldogs. In his career he had 809 rebounds over 68 games for a career average of 12 rebounds a game. This 1968 team, losing in the semi-finals of the State Class B Tournament was the highest level ever obtained by a Mary Persons Boys basketball team. Five seniors played on this team for the Dogs including Hugh Cromer, Dennis Cole, Eddie Smith, Bill Howard and Steve. Steve was selected to the Class B All-Tournament Team and Honorable Mention on the All Classification, All State Team. Steve and Hugh Cromer were captains for the 67-68 Bulldogs. Steve was recruited by Georgia Tech Coach Whack Hyder and ultimately signed a scholarship and played with the Georgia Southern Eagles. Steve averaged 15 points and 16 rebounds a game his freshman year for the Eagles before injury complications ended his basketball career early in his sophomore year. After beginning his legal and banking career in Forsyth, Steve is currently General Counsel for Ameris Bank, the fourth largest bank headquartered in Georgia. Steve is a graduate of Georgia Southern University and the University of Georgia School of Law. He and his wife, Faye, reside in Columbus, Georgia. They have three children: Blake and his wife Jensen live in Columbus with grandchildren Finley and Asher; Laura and her husband Nate live in Brooklyn, New York; and Will and his wife Rebekah live in Columbia, South Carolina.

