



A Newsletter for Serra Catholic & SHA Alumni

Vol.
04

December
2009

... sharing & re-connecting with ol' classmates

Feature Article:

Bill O'Brien '64 - From Serra Catholic to Opening for the Rolling Stones!

Bill O'Brien, Serra Catholic High School class of 1964, is best remembered as the energetic lead singer of "The Live Five."

This musical group included Bill on vocals, Joe Smith (Serra '66) on bass, Stan Steiner (Serra '66) on the keyboard, drummer Craig Martel (South Salem '66) and Jerry Meier (Serra '64) on lead guitar.

The group formed after another Serra musical group, The Che-Vels (which included Stan, Joe and Bill) disbanded. The Live Five came to be while Bill was a student at Oregon College of Education (OCE) (now Western Oregon University) and Jerry was studying at the University of Oregon. Stan, Joe and Craig were high school juniors. The group formed on March 20, 1965 and stayed together through November 15 of 1967.



Live Five in the old gym at Serra in late '66. From left Jerry Meier, Craig Martell, Stan Steiner, Bill O'Brien and Joe Smith.

The Live Five partnered with music promoter Ed Dougherty and quickly began performing throughout the Northwest. Only one member of the group, Stan Steiner, received formal music training but all were very musically talented and enthusiastic. Bill was a music aficionado from an early age and began his singing career in the St. Joseph Grade School choir during Mass. He continued singing throughout

high school, where Bill and his friends could be found singing in the bathrooms or stairwells because the acoustics were excellent. Bill also found time to play basketball while attending Serra, earning all conference honors in 1963 and in 1964 when the Sabers went to the state A-2 tournament in Coos Bay.

In the 1960's, the Salem Armory was the biggest entertainment venue between Portland and San Francisco. The Armory

featured many emerging rock n' roll artists in the 1960's

(continued on page 2)

and in August of 1965 The Live Five performed with a very young Mamas and Papas. Other ‘famous’ groups The Live Five performed with include the Lovin’ Spoonful, Everly Brothers, Shangri-Las, The Turtles, the Beach Boys and The Animals, the Yard Birds and Gary Lewis & the Playboys.

One of the most memorable evenings for The Live Five occurred on July 21, 1966 when they opened for the Rolling Stones at the Portland Memorial Coliseum. Bill vividly recalls meeting the members of the Stones and notes the differences between concerts today and in the 1960’s. There was little professional security at the Stones show and the members of The Live Five were able to talk one on one with the band members – no bodyguards or “handlers” were visible. The Stones popularity, however, forced them to leave immediately after the show so they wouldn’t be mobbed by concert attendees.

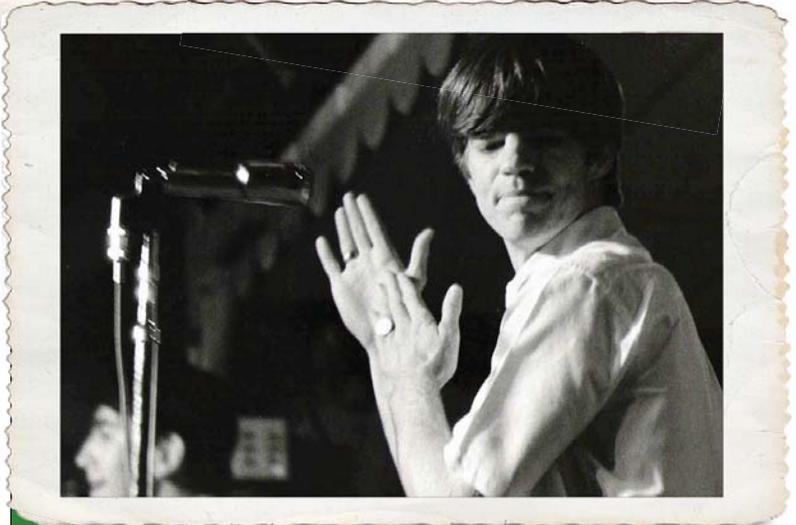
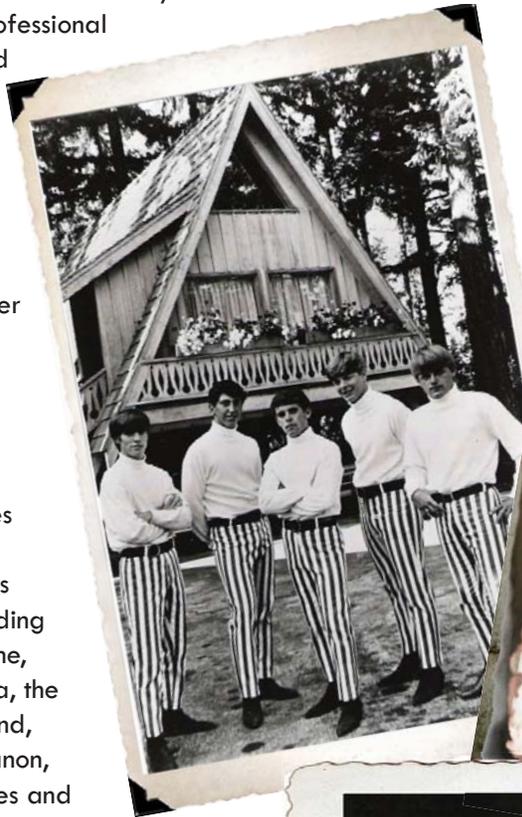
As exciting as it was meeting national recording artists, some of Bill’s favorite memories are performing for hometown audiences and at concerts throughout the Northwest including gigs in Seattle, Portland, Eugene, Vancouver Island, Walla Walla, the Tri-Cities, Lake Chelan, Redmond, Warm Springs, Medford, Lebanon, St. Helens, Kelso, in small venues and dance halls. The group also played fraternities at the University of Oregon, Oregon State University and at St. Martin’s University and OCE. Bill remembers the intimate setting at these colleges and how they would play in tiny day rooms with young college students dancing all around the band.

Bill’s favorite venue was Salem’s own VFW Hall. Bill describes nights where “Over 500 teenagers were packed into the VFW like sardines.” As an entertainer, Bill’s biggest thrill “was seeing people dance – to watch people react to our music, to witness their enthusiasm and young people having a good time was amazing.” Other favorite performance venues including the Lake Oswego dance hall and locations in Lebanon and Seaside where virtually the entire local youth population would show up.

Another difference Bill noted between the concert scenes of the 1960’s and today was the relative safety of the concerts and dances. While Bill remembers his mom (and other mothers of the band) confiscating a few bottles of alcohol at the door (at the VFW Hall), the concerts were “good, clean, fun not unlike what was showcased in the movie American Graffiti.” There were not fights or serious trouble. Kids went home at 11:30 p.m.

The Live Five recorded several albums at Jerden Studios in downtown Seattle. They had several hits including “Yes, You’re Mine” which sold 20,000 records and was a #2

[Continued on next page]



Top left: a publicity photo; Top right, this page: EJD poster
Bottom, this page: Lead singer Bill O'Brien; Top right, next page: Bill with MICK JAGGER!! Far right, next page: Bill & Patty at Restaurant Bouley in New York City in October '09.

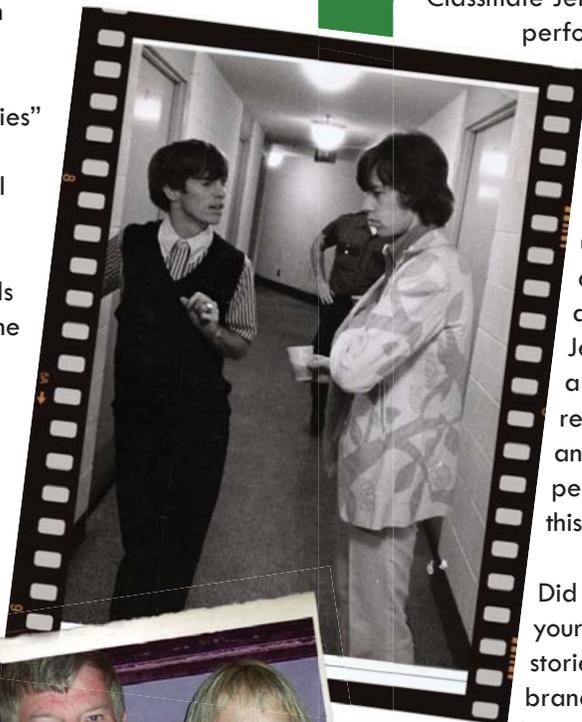
record on Portland's KISN radio station, "Shake-A-Tail-Feather," "Move Over and Let Me Fly," and "Hunose." The group consisted of college and high school students, so they performed mainly on weekends and holiday breaks. They were their own "roadies" and became experts at hauling, packing and setting up their musical equipment. Bill remembers sitting around with Jerry, Joe and Stan for hours repeatedly listening to records in order to memorize and perfect the harmonies and instrumentation.

The young men in The Live Five "had a lot of fun and made some money," according to Bill. They were working-class boys from Salem that had to maintain their full-time student status to avoid being drafted. In between studying and performing they worked each summer at seasonal jobs around Salem, mainly at local canneries.

Bill is appreciative of Ed Dougherty (EJD Enterprises), who provided the band with "fabulous opportunities. We were booked into successful and positive gigs. Ed had a fantastic reputation and brought the group a lot of offers. We often were booked several months ahead, due to his aggressive and results-oriented management style."

The desire on the part of some of the band members to try new things and the Vietnam War led the group to amicably disband in 1967. Bill went on to serve thirty years in the Air Force retiring as a Chief Master Sergeant. He met his wife, Patty, in the Air Force and she is a retired Lt. Colonel. Their jobs allowed them to travel around the world and they currently reside in Texas. They have two children: daughter Shannon (Notre Dame '01) and son Cory (Texas A&M '07).

Bill attended the 45th reunion of the Serra class of 1964 in Salem this summer, hosted by his friend of over 50 years, Paul Ferder (Serra '64) and his fabulous wife Carla, both prominent Salem attorneys. He enjoyed reuniting with many of his classmates and he looks forward to frequent trips to Oregon to visit the coast – his all-time favorite destination.



Classmate Jerry Meier lives in Salem and continues to perform with JT & the Tourists. Bill has lost touch with Stan. Joe and Craig both reside in Salem. Craig is a nationally recognized potter.

Bill has never lost his love for music, or his urge to perform. He was regarded as quite a showman on stage – an early Mick Jagger according to some – and after talking to Jerry this summer at the reunion is considering a return to his musical roots. Bill says he is ready to "reconstitute The Live Five – anytime, anywhere!" Watch for more information about performance dates in an upcoming edition of this newsletter.

Did you watch The Live Five live? What is your favorite memory of the group? Send your stories to Brandy at Blanchet Catholic School – brandy@blanchetcatholicschool.com. Also, we'd love to hear from other members of The Live Five and The Che-vels for future articles. §

[Serra's Story, continued from page 9]

was to build a combination gymnasium and auditorium and to add eight more classrooms to the boys' wing. Already in 1956 there was concern about the future development of the campus. The Franciscan provincial, Fr. David Temple, observed: "After study of the problems of Serra Catholic High School, I am convinced that expansion of the present facilities is imperative." Archbishop Howard's view was that despite "the serious financial problems involved," it was necessary "to offer a complete curriculum for girls as well as boys." The three Salem parishes agreed to a fund-raising campaign to support additional construction. On completion the boy's wing would have a capacity for 400 students and the gymnasium for 1000.

In September of 1954 Serra opened with 78 students. Each year another class was added. By the school year of 1957-58 Serra had reached its four year goal. Freshmen girls were admitted. With the establishment of a minor seminary near Troutdale, the seminary on-site was closed. The twenty seminarians were sent to the new facility, to St. Anthony's in Santa Barbara and to San Luis Rey. When Fr. Kevin was appointed Rector for the new seminary, Fr. John became the new principal. He remained until the closure.

[Our story continues in our next issue with the construction of the gymnasium.]

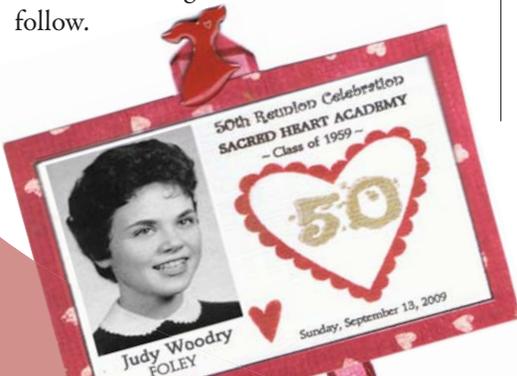


Saturday, September 12, 2009 – Bob & Betty Taggart’s Home – Salem, Oregon ~ SHA WOMEN. Front Row (l-r): Judy McKay Smith, Mary Ann Meyer Santana, DeEtta Lefor Kryger. Second Row (l-r): JoAnn Weigel Long, Sheila Caldwell Caragol, Bev Polensky Maxwell, JoAnn DeFrancesco. Third Row (l-r): Joan Korn Carney, Judy Woodry Foley, Susan Hamstreet Couch, Shirley Weissbeck Baxter, Margarite Schmidt Schnitzer. (Photo contributed by Jim Eckerman) * SERRA MEN ~ Front Row (l-r): Ken Rupp, Roger Seifer, Gary Bigler, Tom DeSantis. Second Row (l-r): Jim Eckerman, Jim Madden, Doug Thompson, Paul Kennedy. Third Row (l-r): Jerry Brown, Ron Bender, Bob Taggart, Frank Fery, John Schmitz, Dick Carney, Bill Gentzkow. (Photo contributed by Jim Madden)

It was a night to remember on Saturday, September 12, 2009 when fifty Serra and Sacred Heart Academy alums and their guests met for great food and conversation at Bob and Betty Taggart’s beautiful home south of Salem to celebrate their 50th high school reunions.

On Sunday, September 13th, thirty-seven spirited Sacred Heart ladies from the Class of 1959, spouses and guests gathered for a festive progressive luncheon at Pringle Creek Community, Serra ’61 alum Tim Meyer’s eco-leading site in SE Salem.

With many to thank and so much to be thankful for, some personal sentiments commemorating these two occasions follow.



<SHA Class of 1959 Commemorative Namebadges> by Judy Woodry Foley & Mary Ann Meyer Santana ‘Go Red for Women’ red dress pins from the American Heart Association

Serra & Sacred Heart Classes of 1959 “Rock” Their 50th

... Time speeds up when you have just five hours to visit with dear friends you haven’t seen in fifty years. It was like a ‘SOCK HOP’ of old when we danced to the Diamonds. The din of laughter and conversation went on the whole time. It would be great to have another occasion to see everyone again and talk to the people we missed at this reunion.
— Paul Kennedy - Spokane, WA

... Gone are the days of impressing each other with perhaps material things. The reunion was a renewal of friendships that began as far back as before the first grade.
— Ron Bender - Portland, OR

... It was such a nice time for me. I really enjoyed seeing old friends. Although I went to North Salem, I had a lot of friends at Serra & SHA and married Ron, so we all go back a long way. It’s been fun to reunite!!
— Diane Bender - Portland, OR

... Details were above and beyond at both events - everything was fabulous!
— Margarite & Arnie Schnitzer - Gresham, OR

... That was one terrific weekend!
— Susan Couch - Redmond, OR

... We really enjoyed visiting with everyone and getting to hear the old stories again.
— Betty & Bob Taggart - Salem, OR

... There were hugs, toasts, cheers and tears and a general feeling of camaraderie...there was nostalgia, reminiscing, show and tell with the family pictures and what was a nice comfort zone for all the attendees... Long live the classes of ‘59!
— Jim Madden - Salem, OR

... Regretfully I won’t be able to attend this year’s reunion. I had such a good time seeing all of you last summer that I was looking forward to making the trip back to Salem again this year. Our reunion planners have put together what looks to be a great weekend. Wish I was there. Best to all
— Mark Wallig- Mesa, AZ.

... I really enjoyed our reunion and looking at these pictures again has been fun - I wish I’d taken more photos!
— Jim Eckerman - Fair Oaks, CA

In our August 2009 Connections featuring Sacred Heart and Serra classmates of 1959 about to celebrate their 50th anniversary reunions in September, it was disclosed that while planning the SHA event and sharing stories about the olden days, several ladies wondered if anyone knew what happened to their 1959 senior class bench which suddenly went missing just before Homecoming festivities in October 1958.

Theories circulated and suspects were mentioned, and on September 13, 2009, the facts of this cold case mystery were finally revealed to SHA women gathering for their 50th reunion ... and another surprise appeared to welcome them on this special occasion!

At long last, the case was cracked by investigator JoAnn Weigel Long, SHA '59, who reported that junior Jeanne Stone, SHA '60, had confessed to fencing the bench to the Serra boys with the help of her younger brother, a Serra '62 freshman. She further admitted to leaking the "Homecoming Hi-Jinks" story details to the Oregon Statesman where she spent time as a reporter for her 4-H Club, and also ended speculation that she was the longtime unidentified person laying on the bench also pictured in the Serra '59 yearbook.

But was the bench ever returned to SHA after being seen chained to a post in front of Salem Fire Dept. Headquarters, or was it used to help stoke the huge Homecoming bonfire at Serra the evening before the big Friday night football game win?

Curiosity intensified and the answer was soon to be revealed by Judy Gruenfelder, SHA '59. It seems that Mary Gruchalla Stein, SHA '59, recalled the stolen bench

Epilogue: Cold Case Solved Missing Class Bench Reincarnated



had been returned to SHA where it was decided a drawing would be held to award the bench to a senior class member. Judy tells us she was the amazing winner and vaguely remembered her father transporting the bench to their North Salem peach farm, and how nice it was because he had also been the bench builder.

During Judy's visit home in July 2009, she asked her brother Gordon to check their property for the bench, but it was not to be found. When the article about the bench mystery appeared in the August '09 Connections newsletter, she spoke about it to her brother David and they searched the

property again.

At this point Judy, feeling overworked and under appreciated, exclaimed "Can't you guys take care of anything?" and Gordon said it would be easy to make the bench again and when did she need it. She replied "by our reunion which is a week away!" Since they were at the height of the peach season and Gordon was extremely busy, she didn't think it was possible. But that night he drew up plans based on the picture in the newsletter, and the next morning it rained so peaches had to wait to be harvested. He took advantage of this down time to get the lumber and had the new bench completed and painted in a matter of days.

Everyone who came to visit heard the story from Gordon and commented on his sparkling bench which exactly replicated the one his father, Walter C. Gruenfelder, built and donated to Sacred Heart Academy fifty years ago. He asked Judy and David to deliver it to the SHA 2009 reunion site at Pringle Creek Community Saturday evening where they secretly placed it in full sight to welcome surprised classmates arriving on Sunday.

At a class meeting during the reunion luncheon, ladies of the Class of 1959 decided by unanimous vote to extend the Gruenfelder family's thoughtful legacy and 'pay it forward' by presenting this special SHA remembrance to Blanchet Catholic School where it now resides awaiting a formal dedication to kick off Homecoming festivities 2010 a happy ending & a new beginning! §

Note: *The new bench photo included with story was contributed by Brent Barnett - <http://www.osiphotography.com>*

... Our reunion was extraordinary right down to the last little details -- truly a fond memory.

— Judy Gruenfelder - Atlanta, GA

... We thank you, Lord, for the many gifts you have given all of us during these past fifty years and the joy of this day.

— an excerpt from the special Blessing given at the SHA'59 50th Luncheon Celebration by Marilyn Schroeder, SNJM - Salem, OR

... Our 50th reunion was a successful event and will be long remembered.

—JoAnn DeFrancesco - Silverton, OR

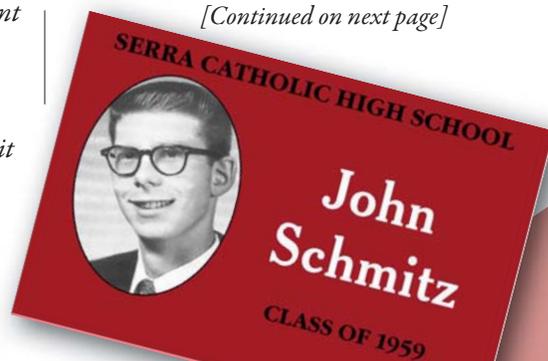
... I'm sorry I was not able to attend but it was really nice seeing all the pictures.

— Kathleen Schlieski Smitha - Mesquite, TX

... Sorry we can't make it. Everybody have a good time and enjoy your time together.

—Judy & Bob Guidott - Henderson, NV

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*Serra Catholic & Sacred Heart Academy Class of 1959
<50th Commemorative Namebadges>
by John Schmitz & Office Depot, Liberty Rd., S.*

"The reunion was a renewal of friendships that began as far back as before the first grade."



SHA '59 ~ 50th REUNION CELEBRATION on Sunday, September 13, 2009
Pringle Creek Community – Salem, Oregon
Front Row (l-r): Paula Hayes Hanel, Alice Reinwald Coleman, Pat Jones Davis. **Second Row (l-r):** JoAnn Weigel Long, JoAnn DeFrancesco, Sherril Amort Martin, DeEttra Lefor Kryger (behind Pat), Judy McKay Smith. **Third Row (l-r):** Marilyn Schroeder-SNJM, Anne Meusey Eyford, Joan Korn Carney, Elaine Schaffers Perko, Jeanette Edwards Moore, Judy Schneider McCreight, Bev Polensky Maxwell (behind Judy Smith), Ginger Riley Gander, Sheila Caldwell Caragol, Mary Ann Meyer Santana, Margarite Schmidt Schnitzer. **Fourth Row (l-r):** Susan Hamstreet Couch, Peggy DeJardin Barnett, Aggie Bischoff Gescher. **Fifth Row (l-r):** Shirley Weissbeck Baxter, Arlene Sisson Kluting, Judy Gruenfelder, Jeannie Cullen Balzer, Judy Woodyry Foley. *(Photo contributed by Brent Barnett, <http://www.osiphotography.com>)*

(Class of '59 continued from page 5)

... To the present: In gratitude and appreciation of relationships and contacts of those here today because of dear old SHA.

— an excerpt from the special toast given at the SHA'59 50th Luncheon Celebration by Shirley Baxter – Gaffrey, SC

... Thank you for the Blanchet "Connections" August newsletter. Wish we could have been there for the reunion

— Ruthie & Steve Caldwell - Chandler, AZ

... Thank you to everyone who worked so hard on the reunion. It was very nice and a big success

—Ginger Gander - Salem, OR

... I read the email version of "Connections" and was very impressed with the reunion coverage. Both reunions were great fun. My only regret - not enough time to visit with everyone
 —Bev Maxwell - Camano Island, WA

... I had a wonderful time at both events - thank you so much for including me! It was inspiring and I was very touched by the wonderful, positive memories you have of your schools and how the classmates have stayed in close touch over the years
 —Brandy O'Bannon, Blanchet Catholic School - Salem, OR

:: thanks!

We thank the following alumni who recently made monetary donations to help underwrite the newsletter and to support our on-going efforts to re-ignite those "happy days" of our not so distant past.

- Josephine Long, SHA '59
- Karen Jandera, SHA '61
- Kathy Watson, SHA '62
- Sandra (Dunigan)Lawson, SHA '63
- Bill Simpson - yearbooks
- Harold Kraemer

There are many ways to support *Connections* and the efforts of the Legacy Alumni effort. You can contribute articles and ideas, share your memorabilia for our trophy case and/or help out with any of our upcoming "gatherings." Also, we welcome your financial support. Most important, you can spread the word. If you want to help, please call Brandy at 503.391.2639 or you can indicate your donation online at: www.blanchetcatholicsschool.com/legacy.

At this time it also seems especially meaningful to remember † Sister Michael Maureen, SNJM with fond gratitude for this commencement blessing given in 1959 which carried us into the future and safely brought so many Sacred Heart and Serra classmates back together to share these moments in 2009.

May God bless & guide this Class of 1959 !"

§ § §

SPECIAL GUESTS ALSO ATTENDING: Serra & SHA Reunion at Taggart's House: Dick Baxter, Diane Bender, Tony Caragol, Carol Taggart Daks, Linda DeSantis, Mary Fery, Jane McKay Flood, Jerry Foley, Norma Weissbeck Fordyce, Susan Kennedy, Dave Kryger, Shelley Burrell Lewelling, Nancy Madden, K.K. Burrell Monaghan, Karen Artz Morris & Vern Hamilton, Brandy O'Bannon, Leslie Rupp, Dave & Sheryl Schmidt, Arnie Schnitzer, Erika Schoell, Karen Seifer, Betty Taggart, and Candy Thompson. **SHA Reunion at Pringle Creek:** Dick Baxter, Brent Barnett, Randy Coleman, Rex Davis, Jane McKay Flood, Jerry Foley, Norma Weissbeck Fordyce, Brandy O'Bannon, Jim Perko, and Arnie Schnitzer.

How did this all begin?

Join us on for a rare peek into the fascinating history of our two alma maters.

by Dr. Robert J. Kovarik
Archivist, St. Vincent de Paul Parish

Sacred Heart Academy, 1834

The history of Sacred Heart Academy began with the origin of Salem. In 1834 the Methodist missionary, Jason Lee, arrived in the Oregon Country with a band of missionaries "to educate and moralize" the Native Americans. The first outpost, the Willamette Valley Mission was established on the east bank of the Willamette River near Gervais.

Almost immediately the missionaries faced the unpredictable. They came to convert but found very few Native Americans due to the onslaught of epidemics. What they found were children to save. Jason Lee established a trade school that would train boys in farming and girls at cooking and sowing. In 1840 a decision was made to move the Mission headquarters to higher ground some ten miles south at a location known by the Kalapuyans as Chemeketa, a "Place of Peace." One of the lay missionaries, Josiah Parrish, oversaw the building of a mission headquarters along a creek to be known as Mill Creek. A temporary trade school was begun several miles east of the headquarters, arriving on the Oregon Trail, were settling in the Willamette Valley. They too had children. To meet that need the Oregon Institute was established. Meanwhile a three-story Manual School was being built west of the temporary school.

By 1843, the Methodist Mission was in difficulty. There were not sufficient Native American youth to justify the \$10,000 trade school. Jason Lee was recalled. A new mission head closed the trade school and sold the permanent structure to the Oregon Institute. In time this school evolved into Willamette University. After the closing of the Mission, several of the lay missionaries acquired land as donation land claims. Married couples had to split such claims between husband and wife. William Wilson acquired 615 acres along and extending east from the Willamette River. His wife, Chloe received half of the claim north of the State Street. On his part of the claim William Wilson plotted the City of Salem.

(continued on Page 8)

Sacred Heart Academy 1846 - 1984

In 1853 Fr. James Croke, the pastor of Portland, was sent by Archbishop Francis Norbert Blanchet on a journey down the Willamette Valley to determine the number of Catholics. Arriving in Salem in August, he rented a room in the Griswold Store on Commercial Street for \$5 a day. There he said the first Mass. Reaching Jacksonville in September he reported to the Archbishop that he had found some 113 Catholics. Later in Salem a large room was rented in a former Masonic Hall. In September of 1858 Fr. Croke acquired for the Archbishop of Oregon City two lots at Chemeketa and Cottage from Chloe Wilson. The price was \$1000 and the deed stated that the land was to be used "forever" by the Roman Catholic Church for the expressed purpose of erecting a house of worship. This property became known as Piety Hill. In 1863 Fr. Leopold Dieleman, a Belgian priest was sent by Archbishop Blanchet to found a new parish in Salem. He planned not only for the church, but a school. Here the Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary entered into the picture.

On October 21, 1858, twelve sisters of the Holy Names arrived in Portland from Canada. Their goal was to establish schools. St. Mary's Academy was opened in Portland. In 1863 an opportunity came for the Holy name Sisters to expand their educational endeavors south into the Willamette Valley. With the building of a church still in the planning stage, Fr. Dieleman requested Mother Theresa of Jesus, Superior of the Holy Names, to consider opening a convent and school in Salem for the purpose of educating "young ladies." In July she visited Salem and saw an opportunity despite some opposition, mostly from the Methodists. Deciding in favor, she informed Fr. Dieleman. In August she received a "Spartan message." "Alright come."

On August 17, 1863 Sister Mary of Calvary, Sister Mary Florentine and Sister Mary of the Sacred Heart, who had been appointed Superior, arrived. The former two-story Masonic Hall and two lots had been



purchased for \$1,500. An observer noted: "the work of transforming the Masonic Hall into a convent caused great curiosity among the inhabitants of early Salem." On August 22 Sacred Heart Convent was dedicated "with much holy water." Fr. Dielmann was quoted as saying: "The devil had that day danced his last polka in this building." It appears that Sister Mary of the Sacred Heart influenced the naming of the convent/school. Such was the humble beginning of the Academy.

On September 7 the Academy opened with 80 students, including 7 boarders. Briefly boys were admitted from September to December. Sister Mary Angel Guardians, despite her lack of English, was assigned to teach the boys. Fr. Dieleman was provided a residence and used the convent's chapel for Sunday Mass. Meanwhile a wooden church was completed that would have a capacity for 300 at the cost of \$3,000. St. John the Evangelist Church as dedicated in April of 1864 by Archbishop Blanchet. In June Fr. Dieleman was transferred to Astoria. Fr. Sebastian Goens was assigned as the first permanent pastor.

The school year began on September 1 and ended in mid-July. It was divided into four terms, each being 11 weeks. Studies included algebra, mathematics, English and catechism along with art and music. No

tuition was charged for lessons in ornamental needle-work, such as crochet, embroidery and knitting. By 1865 the number of sisters had increased to six with 118 day students and 14 boarders, mostly from Albany and Eugene. Progress "of the pupils are regularly tested by written examination." Bulletins, showing progress, were sent quarterly to parents and guardians.

Needing more space a 1-1/2 story building was built, adjoining the Academy. Each June the Feast of the Sacred Heart was especially celebrated. In December of 1867 Fr. Goens was informed he had to vacate his residence in the school. Reacting badly, "he pronounced a kind of schism." The Academy was incorporated and authorized by the State of Oregon to confer academic degrees, consisting of diplomas and gold medals. By 1868 the enrollment had increased to 26 boarders and 131 day students with eight sisters. In July of that year the first graduation as held. Oregon's Governor, George L. Woods, participated. In his remarks he noted that "the school of the sisters is a great success. . . It stands first not because of its sectarianism or its location, but simply because people are aware that it is the best female academy in the State." § § §

[Our story continues in our next issue and begins with the building of the permanent school.]

Serra Catholic High School 1946 - 1968



Serra Catholic ~ 1946

While the bittersweet tale of Serra High School began in 1952, the roots can be traced back to 1946 when the pastors of St Joseph's, Theodore Bernards, and of St. Vincent's, George O'Keefe, purchased a 17-acre tract of land for a future new co-educational high school. Their vision was not to be realized for another seven years. Negotiations began in 1952 between the Franciscan Fathers of California and Archbishop Edward D. Howard for a new high school in Salem. In August of 1953 the Franciscans accepted an "invitation" from the Archbishop to establish the school. Already Sacred Heart Academy had a long history, dating back to 1863, of providing education. Concerns were raised by some Salem Catholics, fearful of competition between two Catholic high schools.

These were ignored and a contact was signed in which the Franciscans agreed to finance the purchase of land and construction of the complex and to staff the school. The agreement called for the school to be co-instructional with boys and girls attending separate classes. A 33-acre tract

was purchased from Thomas Roen, east of Lancaster Drive at the end of "D" Street. The plan was for a two million dollar campus for one thousand students. The first phase called for the building of eight classrooms and a friary for fifteen priests and brothers. An existing house would be remodeled into a temporary convent. A minor Franciscan seminary would be included. The total cost for the land, buildings, equipment and furnishing came to around \$300,000. With some help from twelve Salem families, the Franciscans of California bore the burden for the initial cost. Those questioning a second high school were told that the high school would begin "without cost for Salem."

The high school was named after Junipero Serra, who found the first missions for Native Americans in California in the 18th century. His motto of "Always Go Forward" was adopted. The Sisters of the Holy Names were invited to teach, but turned down the invitation due to established commitments. In their place a contract was reached with the Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration from La Crosse, Wisconsin to provide teachers for the girls program. Two Franciscans were transferred from California, Fr. Kevin Murphy and Fr. John Francis de Paemelaere. In August of 1953 they took up residence

at St. Mary Parish in Shaw with Fr. Kevin as pastor. Fr. John assisted at St. Joseph's. While acquiring their teaching credentials at the University of Portland, they taught courses in latin and history at Sacred Heart Academy.

In January of 1954 ground was broken. The "clover field" became the new campus. Opening was planned for the fall of 1954, beginning with freshman and sophomores. Once a four year program was realized, girls would be admitted. Serra was dedicated by Archbishop Edward D. Howard on September 26, 1954. Fr. Kevin became the first principal. Fr. John was the Vice-Principal and Athletic director. The first faculty included Fr. Christian Mondor, Sister May Gerardine, Sister May Francis Xavier and Leo Crosjacques, as the coach. For the next fifteen years some forty Franciscans, priests and brothers, would be assigned.

Since much of the land was swampy, providing an athletic field was a challenge. The amount of \$160,000 was raised by the Serra Booster Club for the building of the football field and field house. Volunteer help ensured that Taggart Field was ready by October of 1956. The next challenge

(continued on Page 3)



Sources

For SHA Story:

Sisters of the Holy Names Provincial Archives, Marylhurst; Kevin Mannix & SCS Foundation Archive; St. Vincent dePaul Archive; *Catholic Sentinel* and *Statesman-Journal*; Salem Directories for 1871-1986 by Patricia Brandt & Lillian A. Pereyra (2002).

For Serra Story:

The newspapers: *Capital Journal*, *Statesman* and the *Catholic Sentinel*; Serra publications *El Serrano*; The Serran Year Books; 1957-68; *Book of Memories* by Tracy Epping; archival material from the Kevin Mannix & SCS Foundation and St. Vincent dePaul archives.

This is the author's reconstruction of events based on available information.
The interpretations are the author's.

:: upcoming events



Did you know that Blanchet Catholic School is celebrating its 15 year of operation this year?



Check our schedules online and come watch some great Cavalier basketball action!
www.blanchetcatholicschool.com

Save the Date -
Blanchet Blarney
Bash, Wednesday,
March 17 - 6 PM
Come celebrate
St. Patrick's Day at
Blanchet. The event
will feature live
music, Irish dancing,
bagpipers, great
food, and more!



January 31, 2009 - Mark your calendars for Blanchet's annual open house, its Preview Day held on January 31 at 2:00 p.m. Know of anyone who may be interested in sending their child to Blanchet? Encourage them to attend this information session. Blanchet educates over 400 students annually from throughout the Mid Valley in grades 6-12.



:: sponsorship

We are offering sponsorship advertising for a very reasonable \$25/year to help support our printing costs. That covers 4 ads on our website and in our newsletter and may include your company's name and contact information. Email or call Brandy to signup. §

:: alumni happenings

Deaths:

SHA '57 - Sue Ann Watson Evenhees died January 3, 2008.

SHA '68 - Bernadette "Bernie" (Kreft) Trefethen died August 21, 2009 in her home in Salem with her husband, Terry, by her side. Bernie was the daughter of Mary (Kreft) Zenger from the SHA Class of '46, still living in Salem.

Serra '62 - Willette Marie Sutter died October 23, 2009 in Gresham, Oregon.

In the News

SHA '52 - Kelly Gill Holland (maiden was Dolores Gohfried) recently published "Poetry" a book of poetry available on Amazon.com and on Borders.com. She also has a new art show. Here are few of Kelly's poems:

Call
Telephone
the click of flint
Our voices
fan the fire;
Raging now
the flames consume
A continent
of wire.

and exerpts from another:

Fresh Fruits in Season
We dine together;
for dinner
a perfect half-slice
of ice cold moon.

Check out the article entitled "Golden Gallery gives senior artists a venue for expression" by Stover E. Harger III online in the **Beaverton Valley Times**.

Congratulations, Kelly!

What Are You Up To? If you would like to share the latest going on with you and your family, email us the details or use our online update form. Use "Alumni Happenings" to announce a memorial service, wedding anniversary party, and so much more. §

:: reunion plans

Jean Watson-Blanchard is wondering if anyone is planning a 1955 SHA reunion?

Linda (Nelke) Hoxsie, now in Carson City, Nevada emailed us to say that the Class of '68 did have a reunion recently and she has photos which she wants to share in upcoming issues.

Al Smith, Serra '70, would like us to put out a notice in the newsletter to see if anyone from this class is working on a reunion. It would be the 40th this coming year. See his letter below.

October 29, 2009

Hello Brandy,

It would be appreciated if you could investigate whether anything is brewing with the class of '70. As alluded to in my previous message, our class was cast adrift as seniors when Serra closed rather unexpectedly in 1969. So we don't really have the typical conventions classmates have to fall back upon (ie. class president, awards, sports, etc.). However, we were all there for three years together and I think most of us still feel more connected to our Serra counterparts than to the associations we made in that single final year when we were dispersed into the public school system.

Unfortunately, I'm the last person to know where everyone has gone in that I've been living here in California for the past 25 years. I just got curious because my nephew (Jackson Smith) is currently attending Blanchett and his dad (my brother) sent me the link to your website with so many wonderful photos of the good old days. It got me thinking that all these kids from the class of '70 are probably still out there but don't even know that Blanchet is trying to give them back a piece of their missing history.

As our class approaches 40 years out of high school, I just thought it would be kind of neat to build on the good feelings I got from looking through those photos. If it doesn't happen, I still very much appreciate the effort you at Blanchet have made and are making to reach out to the alumni.

Thank you so much,

*Al Smith
Associate Landscape Architect
San Jose, CA*

Contact Brandy if you can assist with any of these reunion ideas.

Blanchet

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:: alumni update form

Share with your classmates what's new in your life . If you'd like to share the latest news with us, you know of someone who isn't getting this newsletter, or you need to update our data files, fill this out today!

Name:

Maiden:

Address:

Phone:

Email:

Serra or SHA? Class Year:

News you would like to share with us: (attach if more)

Mail to the LASC or use our online update form at
www.blanchetcatholicschool.com/legacy.

About Connections

This newsletter and our webspace are supported by volunteers and Blanchet. We welcome your suggestions. We also accept donations online or by mail. You may contact us at the following:

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