

# THE 1955 TROJAN Alumni PRINTS

(& Mid-50s Classes)

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## Last Game At Old PHS Gymnasium

One by one, their names were called. At some point during the night, they looked up at the four state championship banners, now displaying four different shades of blue, and reminisce and smile.

Now, it will closed for good, making room for another facility beginning next year.

### TITLETOWN

Dick Hopkins talked about the 1978 team going for the state championship. The Trojans, had just come off a semifinal win against Ottawa-Glandorf but standing in their way were the defending state champions, Cleveland Latin. So to get the kids prepared, Hopkins did the only thing he could do - he sent them back to the hotel.

"When we won the semifinal game, I sent everyone home because if they saw Latin play, they would have never gotten on the bus the next day," Hopkins said. "They were bigger, they could shoot and they were the defending state champs."

Desperate times call for desperate measures. Mainly a run-and-gun team, Hopkins implemented a more methodical strategy against the high flyers from Cleveland. The idea was new to the players, but worked to perfection. He slowed the game down.

"It was really strange," said Jeff Lisath, who led the team in scoring that season. "Here we are feeling good about our chances, and coach wants us to slow it down. It was kind of tough and I got frustrated. The fans started booing and I put up a 25-foot jump shot. "But it was one of those things where you knew coach knew what he was doing." Two free throws by Jim Murray late in the game helped Portsmouth come way with the 63-62 win, the third title in the school's history.

The Trojans had just beaten the seemingly unstoppable Latin squad by choosing to slow the game down in the night before. "We drew up the game on the chalkboard the night before, and we couldn't have drawn up a better script."

With the ingenious last-second change, the team was coming home to celebrate. Just like Heller, Dick Hopkins remembers the team getting met at Lucasville by a horde of fans and students, welcoming home their heroes. In those days, Hopkins said, the town was enamored with the team and would do anything to help out. Even the team's Greyhound bus, a request by Hopkins when the team traveled more than 100 miles for a game, was a welcome suggestion. It was just like that back then, he said.

Good - the word almost understates the history of the school's program. Thirteen regional championships, 34 district titles, a slew of sectional championships, seven final four appearances, more than 1,270 victories - good for eighth all-time in Ohio history - and of course, four state titles. So who started this tradition of excellence?

Let's ask the white-haired man in the chair.

### The Golden Years

George Heller recalls the days of bounce passes, "traditional zones" and fundamentals. Though the 86-year old is probably not the originator of the success (that would go to Red Hopkins, coach of the 1931 championship team), Heller could be considered the modern-day father. He was the first coach to walk the Portsmouth sidelines after the team moved out of Grant gym in 1965. Under his watch for 17 years, the Trojans had some of their greatest accomplishments.

"We weren't thinking about (a state title)," he said. "We just wanted to win the GOL (Greater Ohio League). It wasn't until we got to the regional that we started thinking about it."

Sporting one of the tallest teams to date, led by 6-foot-4 Mike Haley and 6-foot-5 Clem Hartley, the Trojans slipped by tough teams like Chillicothe and Elyria before topping Urbana 50-44 for the school's first championship in 30 years.

When Heller left the bench in 1968, his successors did just that. Dick Hopkins was a chip off the old block, leading the Trojans to not only the 1978 title, but also to the state tournament in 1980, where the team finished second place, and claimed the No. 1 ranking in the AP poll in 1979.

The 1980s was the most fruitful decade for Portsmouth as the school went an astounding 197-50 during that time. It was also the decade of the school's final championship. That season, led by the brothers of some past heroes, Portsmouth rolled to a 27-1 record, the only loss coming to Russell, the eventual Kentucky state champion. With its up-and-down floor game, the Trojans outscored opponents by an average of 20 points and took out West Geauga 54-47 in the title game to claim, what seemed, almost a formality.

"I think the toughest game we had was against Cincinnati Forest Park in the regional, where it went two overtimes," Joe Suboticki (1988-91) said. "That was one of the best games I've ever coached and it was a privilege."

Though he only coached for three years at Portsmouth, Suboticki finished his stint with the Trojans 94-11, and with the highest winning percentage of any coach (90 percent).

"Suboticki was more the press you, run-up-and-down-the-floor type," he said. "He knew he had the horses in Dominique McKinley and David Tubbs, and dared you to beat him.

"Coach Hopkins was more the X's and O's man. He try to outsmart the other guy. He would come up with the perfect game plan."

"There was so much enthusiasm. The town really backed us," he said. "Everybody cooperated to get the job done."



### Winningest Q-back

Back in the days before ESPN and USA Today, before black quarterbacks played in the NFL there was a quarterback from Portsmouth who won every game he started in high school and college.

He is Chuck Ealey, a 1968 Portsmouth Notre Dame graduate who started 35 games for the University of Toledo from 1969-71.

Chuck was eighth in the balloting for the Heisman Trophy, yet he wasn't one of 442 players drafted by the NFL. He wanted to play quarterback, but they wanted him for a wide receiver or a defensive back, not a quarterback.

Like he did with college recruiters, Ealey told the NFL teams not to draft him unless he would be given a shot at the quarterback job. "Toledo gave me the best opportunity to play quarterback,"

I was born in 1950 in Portsmouth Ohio. I lived in the North End of the town, which was distinguished by the fact it was 95% black. While it was not labeled a 'ghetto', most of the housing was low income called "The Projects".

Two major mentors from the community were Larry Hisle and Al Oliver. Larry later went on to play for the Minnesota Twins/Philadelphia Phillies/Milwaukee Brewers and also coached the Toronto Blue Jays. Al also went on to play Major League Baseball with Pittsburgh Pirates, Montreal Expos and Toronto Blue Jays.

While attending Notre Dame High School, I was coached by Ed Miller. Through his direction, we won all of our games in high school. We became State Champs in my senior year. Because of this record, I received a scholarship to the University of Toledo, where I was privileged to play football. I graduated from the University of Toledo in 1972 with a Bachelor degree in Business Economics.

My career in football continued in Canada when I was passed over in the NFL Draft. I chose to go to Canada as a quarterback rather than accepting another position in the NFL. I signed a contract to play with the Hamilton Tigercats. In my rookie year, we won the Grey Cup. I was voted MVP and 1972 Rookie of the Year.

## “Abstract Thoughts”

One of the most confusing moments in my young life occurred at Portsmouth High School in tenth grade English with Miss Anna Blazer. This was when she attempted to introduce us to “literary symbolism.” After years of believing what I read in books, suddenly Miss Blazer told us that a lot of what we read in novels actually stands for something else entirely that isn’t even in the darn book. The whale in *Moby Dick* isn’t really a whale! Everything in *The Scarlet Letter* is symbolic - the trees, the fields, and even Hester Prynne.

It was very troublesome for a young sophomore in Portsmouth to read Nathaniel Hawthorne and be told the true meaning of *The Scarlet Letter*. If a woman wore a big red “A” on her chest, it meant she was a sinner and an adulteress. If a man wore a big red “A” on his chest, I thought it meant he was playing for the Philadelphia Athletics.

Suddenly we went around asking questions like “Is all of life symbolic?” Did “foreshadowing” really mean something? Should I worry, the next time I got on the bus, if there was a guy with a black hood and a scythe standing at the bus stop?

Higher mathematics was another discipline that taught abstract thought. Practically every useful thing I learned in math I learned by the fourth grade, which gave me plenty of time to forget it in the years to come. Then, in the eighth grade at Wilson Elementary School, Mr. Thomas Stafford tried to teach us that there was more to math than just “Numbers.” There were Odd and Even Numbers, Negative Numbers, and there were even Real and Imaginary Numbers! There were Binary Number Systems where things tended to add up to apocalyptic totals like 100101001011100010 or worse. Had I known then how useful this stuff would be in adult life I would have paid more attention. I wonder if the Internal Revenue Service would accept it if you figured out your taxable income in imaginary numbers?

It was, unfortunately, the nature of “abstract thought” that it was not up to you to discover the virtue or value of learning it. It was too abstract for that.

*Blaine*

## NFL Rules Change

Like this season’s Super Bowl at Ford Field in Detroit, the 1932 playoff game was played indoors in a large Northern city with cold weather outside. The clash between the Chicago Bears and the Portsmouth Spartans was added after the regular season ended with the teams tied for first place.

When a snowstorm made Wrigley Field unplayable, the game was moved indoors. Bronko Nagurski, Mule Wilson and Ox Emerson did battle on a field that was widely described as being about 80 yards long. Portsmouth unsuccessfully argued that Chicago’s winning play, a touchdown pass from Nagurski to Red Grange, was illegal because Nagurski was not 5 yards behind the line of scrimmage when he threw.

The rule was changed the next season, making a forward pass legal from anywhere behind the line of scrimmage.



## The New Jail

Here’s a picture I took yesterday of the new county jail, of course built where the passenger station was. The main entrance was modeled after the depot, looks pretty good. Still a lot to do inside yet, word is it may open for the administrative offices in March, with the jail opening in April. Still looks strange without the station there!

Don’t know if you remembered, but I work at the 9-1-1 for the sheriff’s office, so I’ll be moving into the new building along with everyone else. There will not be a day that goes by that I won’t think of the station or the many years dad worked there. Haven’t figured the exact distance yet, but our office should be about 50 or so feet from where Dad’s was. Strange.

*Jim Detty*



Classmate Bob Mohl serves up Thanksgiving Dinner to homeless

## Curt Gentry Awarded

Curt has been named as one of the Most Influential African Americans in Lake County, Illinois for the Year 2006. The awards ceremony was held on the 22nd of January and was given for his being one of the most influential African Americans in Lake County, Illinois.

Curt currently operates XBEAR Enterprises, is a Commissioner for the Round Lake Area Park District, is on the Board of Directors for the Alternative Behavior Treatment Centers, and is on the Board of Directors and Regional Coordinator for Dads Are Doing Something. DADS is a nationwide program that places responsible male role models in schools to enhance the educational experiences of our school children.

## A Found Billy Biggs

I wanted you to know that I was successful in locating Bill Biggs. I didn’t talk to him personally; but I wrote to him, he contacted his older sister for me, and she called me. So I feel very good about that.

I thought I would pass this along in case anyone would like to contact him. Apparently, he is retired and didn’t answer his e-mail. Perhaps he is like me and doesn’t check his work address very often. However, his home address is 5373 East Evans Creek Road, Rogue River, OR 97537. His phone # is (541) 582-8058. Thank you for mentioning him in your writing. Now I have a contact with the past that I thought was lost for good.

*Anita Biggs*



## Kathleen Battle

She has been called the world's finest soprano and one of the most beautiful women of the music world. Before last week that is all I knew about this lady from Portsmouth. Now she was to appear right across the street from my workplace here in Tampa. I just had to buy a ticket and hopefully I would get to chat with her. For that reason, I did not even take a date.

Seated high in the balcony, the only seat I could get, I was completely enthralled for over two hours. She had complete command of this packed house. She was singing perfection and completely charming. As her recital came to a close with 2 or 3 spiritual encores, I realized that I would not be able to visit with her. It was her night and who was I to try to take her back to her childhood roots. Perhaps some other day I will be able to talk to her.

## My mother, Norma Ray

It's been seven years since I lost my Mom to ALS. I have many memories of her illness and everything that went with it, but the ones that are most distinct are the funny ones.

Mom's form of ALS led to deterioration of her ability to speak and swallow, long before any limb-related symptoms.

As she became harder to understand, we employed a variety of speech aids and enhancers, ultimately settling on a portable keyboard-based device that could be programmed to produce synthesized sound. She had to learn to be brief in conversation (fingers are much slower than lips) but also found humor in her new tool. Day-to-day she used a smooth phone-system sounding voice but would occasionally surprise people by sounding like a man or using a gravelly voice (it made the machine sound like a chain-smoker). That last one was my personal favorite and the one that drew the most laughter - she loved the surprise of it. Using voices that didn't suit her gave people around her an opportunity to laugh with her and at the disease.

Mom liked to laugh, something that became difficult as her ALS progressed. She didn't shy away from humor though, in fact she incorporated the disease into her expressions of glee by laughing with her facial muscles (without making sound) and programming phrases like "don't

Curt Gentry told me he dated her older sister Carol. Her father worked at the mill and she was the youngest of seven children. She was born in 1948, which would put her in about the class of 1966. She sang in church and was discovered by PHS music teacher Charles Varney.

She is one of the most acclaimed singers of our time. In a repertoire that ranges from Handel to Richard Strauss, she has appeared on the stages of most of the world's leading opera houses enjoying close collaborations with most noted artists of our time. She has performed with the world's great orchestras in Vienna, Berlin, Paris, New York, Boston, Chicago, Philadelphia, Cleveland and Los Angeles.

A five-time Grammy Award winner, Miss Battle has made many recordings and television appearances that have brought her voice and musicianship into millions of homes worldwide. Her repertoire embraces jazz and spirituals as well as an uncommonly wide range of classical music, from the Baroque to composer André Previn's song cycle *Honey and Rue*, commissioned by Carnegie Hall for Miss Battle, with texts by Nobel Prize laureate Toni Morrison.

A native of Portsmouth, Ohio, Kathleen Battle earned both her Bachelor's and Master's degrees from the College Conservatory of Music, University of Cincinnati. She made her professional debut at the Spoleto Festival, and her Metropolitan Opera debut followed only five years later. Miss Battle is the recipient of six honorary doctorates from American universities and, in 1999, was inducted into the NAACP Image Hall of Fame.

*Frank Hunter*

make me laugh." I laughed every time she reacted they way - I couldn't help myself. That would just set her off again.

But by far, the funniest memory I have is of a specific incident. Mom had a doctor's appointment and we were running late. It had the makings of a somber day since we could tell her lung function was getting worse. She had decided to stop having tests - we knew the results weren't going to improve. As we get into the car, we realized that we were both wearing red shirts. Same shade of red. Virtually identical knit fabric. Collar styles were different though. Perhaps no one would notice?

We sat down in the doctor's office. At her request, I started the conversation, but I could see that he had something else on his mind. As he looked at Mom, then me, then back at her, his expression changed from serious to questioning to amusement. The first words out of his mouth: "Do you always coordinate your outfits?"

After Mom died, I had hoped that I would forget about her illness and that all my memories of her would be from when she was well. I now see that for the fantasy that it was. I feel fortunate that we had so much fun and laughter and found so much humor in the situation. It helped me then, it helps me now. It helped the people around us and it must have been good for her

*Cheri Kopp*

## Shumpie's BBQ

The question was asked if I knew anything about Shumpie's BBQ in Portsmouth. I don't know the location. All I know is that Mrs. Marion Shump's obituary in the SCIOTO VOICE newspaper (12-01-05) said that she and her husband, Glenn E. Shump, co-owned Shumpie's Bar-B-Cue in Portsmouth and Christie Ann's Restaurant in Gallipolis. I'll send a copy of this e-mail to Jim Kegley. He has a 1950s Portsmouth City Directory and maybe he will look it up for us.

Jim's reply:

Mrs. Shump, 96, was the mother of our 1955 classmate, Susan Shump Howard of Miamisburg, Ohio.

Shumpie's Bar-B-Cue, was located at 733 Third Street, Portsmouth, across from the old Kendrick Hotel, at 734 Third St., where the Lewis Furniture parking lot is now. William and Mary Mirman, 2140 Dorman Drive, ran the Kendrick in 1957.

I have written about Shumpie's Bar-B-Cue in earlier High Notes columns, but for the edification of all, Glen and Marion Shump co-owned the popular downtown restaurant from 1957 until 1961, when they moved to Gallipolis, where they operated Christie Ann's restaurant. I called Bonnie (Shump) Johnson, PHS 1960, and she gave me more information re: her family.

Janice (Jan) Shump Spires, (Ernie Spires' wife,) PHS 1951, and Susan Shump Howard, PHS 1955, are her sisters. Bonnie is married to K. B. Bruce Johnson (PHS '56). Bonnie said Shumpie left as manager of Huck Foehr's Turkey Shoppe Restaurant, Scioto Trail and 30th Street in 1957. Many of our classmates will remember Mr. Shump from that experience. He had a sort of "grouchy" demeanor, but was really a nice man who reminded one of the comedian Joe E. Brown with a tighter smile. In 1957, he and Marion bought the Bar-B-Cue restaurant from another operator. "They had two bar-b-cue pits in the kitchen, and they cooked whole hams, pork roasts, and beef briskets. They sometimes cooked a whole pig and they were only open for breakfast and lunch, except for Friday evenings, when all the stores in downtown Portsmouth were open," Bonnie said.

Bill Glockner, former owner of Pop's Restaurant, Wheelersburg, remembers the Bar-B-Cue restaurant well. Bill said, "When the Glockner Chevrolet Company was still on the corner of Second Street and Chillicothe, we use to take a lot of lunch and coffee breaks at Shumpie's." And, Bill remembered Glenn from Shumpie's Turkey Shoppe days.

We all remember The Turkey Shoppe, and how about The Rainbow Inn? It was a tavern located across the street from the Turkey Shoppe?

*Jim Kegley*

## Jim Gardner's Mother

Helen Gilbert Gardner, 94, a former Portsmouth resident died January 20. She was a long time resident of Portsmouth. She attended the Portsmouth schools and Miami University and taught in the Portsmouth School System. She was preceded in death by her husband, James "Radio" B. Gardner, who died December 26, 1993 and by her son, Robert Gardner (PHS-1957).



Coach Hall and Sam Kegley

## Coach Hall- Minford

Coach Hall coached Minford when they had the big upset of Portsmouth at Athens. Ed Hall is a basketball coach who pretty well dominated his competition in coaching Minford High School to fabulous records for nine years, from 1948 through 1956.

Minford moved from Class B to Class A in 1952/1953. They didn't participate in county B tournaments then, but went straight to Sectional A tournaments. "In 1951-1952, Minford averaged 79 points a game to their oppositions 49.4 and had a 29-5 record. In 1952-1953, we were 25-2 and averaged 78.3 points a game..

"We played in Ohio's smaller school Class B of the A/B Classes before the 1952-1953 season. To play in Class A required more than 150 boys in the upper three grades and we got into it by only three or four boys. Portsmouth High School had always been in the largest school class and was a perennial power in Ohio basketball. They were ranked # 6 in the state when we met them in the District A tournament in Athens. The Portsmouth media coverage indicated that the Minford boys would have to milk the cows before going to school and that was true, but their reporting it gave us extra incentive to win the game. The Minford community and the school and the team couldn't have been more charged-up for a ball game. It was a hard fought game and we won out, 75-70, for one of the biggest upsets in Ohio high school history."

*Sam Kegley*

## Coaches Heller and Hopkins at the Last Game

The last game at the old PHS GYM wasn't about the score. It wasn't about wins and losses. In fact, years from now, the final score of the last Saturday night game at the Portsmouth gym will be a footnote in a celebration that meant much more than records.

Hundreds of people came to the Trojans' game with Rock Hill to watch the present, but also honor the past at the school's Alumni Appreciation night. Before the game with the Redmen, more than 150 players, coaches and cheerleaders spanning the 41-year history of the gym stood on the hardwood floor one more time in unison, getting one more standing ovation from the appreciative crowd.

As the group, which was split up by decade, shook hands and caught up with the people, old

friends some hadn't seen in years, all the names from the past teams were read aloud, ringing one more time through the microphone.

Before the reading of names, former coaches George Heller and Harry Weinbrecht, the coaches on the 1961 title team, Dick Hopkins, head coach of the 1978 championship squad and Bob Doll, Hopkins' successor, were honored at center court. Heller, the first coach to walk the sidelines after the team moved out of Grant gym in 1965, was given a piece of the Grant gym floor as a memento.

The four championship trophies were also on display, all polished for the big day. Once the celebration was finished, there was still a game to be played. Unfortunately, the Redmen spoiled the party beating Portsmouth 72-62.



George Heller, Trojan basketball coach from 1951-68, acknowledges the crowd after being presented with a section of old Grant School's gym floor. Dick Hopkins, 1978 Championship coach, applauds at right.



## Judge "Moose" Retires

Zel (We knew him as "Moose") Canter, is at the end of his highly successful career as an attorney and Superior Court Judge in California. Zel is a 1959 graduate of Portsmouth High School, and his parents, Marc and Elsie Canter, were prominent local business owners, who founded and operated the Kopy Kat Inc., a women's clothing store on Chillicothe Street.

I received a copy of an article regarding Zel's retirement via the internet, which appeared in the Santa Barbara News-Press, January 11th edition. Here's is an excerpt from the story by-lined, Chuck Schultz, staff writer: "After a quarter-century on the bench, Santa Maria Superior Court Judge Zel Canter is retiring at the end of this month, clearing the way for his replacement to be appointed by Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger rather than be decided at the ballot box in June, Court and election officials said Tuesday

"Judge Canter, 64, was appointed to the bench in 1981 by Gov. Edmund "Jerry" Brown. "Judge Canter is a fine jurist and has been a valuable member of the court,' a fellow judge said in a written statement. 'His intellect, wit and zeal will be missed. I congratulate him on a distinguished career and wish him success in his retirement.'"

Canter was in the national spotlight in 2002-03 while presiding over a civil trial between pop singer Michael Jackson and concert promoter Marcel Avram. At the conclusion of that trial, a jury found that Jackson reneged on a performance contract with Avram and ordered him to pay \$5.3 million.

*Jim Kegley*

## What a Difference...

Compare our 1954-1955 PHS basketball schedule with the 2005-2006 one.

1954-1955	2005-1006
Greenfield	Logan Elm
Ashland	Wheelersburg
Hamilton	Chesapeake
Dayton Dunbar	Piketon
Lancaster	South Webster
Springfield	Minford
Middletown	Adena
Cincinnati Roger Bacon	South Point
Ironton	Hillsboro
Lima South	Northwest
Mansfield	Gallia Academy
Lima Central	Belpre
Minford	Chillicothe
Athens	Jackson
Tecumseh	Rock Hill
Cincinnati Hughes	Nelsonville-York