

THE 1955 TROJAN Alumni PRINTS

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A Note from Bob Mohl

During the planning stage of Portsmouth's little art museum I suggested writing the Columbia into the plans for performing arts space. "We can't do that, the roof leaks." I contacted Katherine in Cincinnati (absentee property holders are a big problem for small towns) and asked permission to sheath the roof, at my expense, to arrest damage to all that plaster relief-work, until we could see if a two-site arts center was do-able. (You'll recall that the properties face one another.) Then, the proposal arose to carve out a small theatre space in the bank building itself (already short on square footage). Frankly I was worried; there seemed to be surprising myopia in the committee though not with the talented and diplomatic couple hired as project directors.

I advocated that if we had to have a name with geography in it, we choose one which wouldn't exclude the southern half of the community (South Portsmouth, Greenup/Lewis Counties)... a name like "Ohio Valley."

The response I frequently got was "Are you one of those people who think we're in Appalachia?"

I have grown fond of the museum's awkward in-house theatre space (it reminds me of a handball court) and the space given to exhibitions in the museum is reduced to jewelbox size. But the place works quite well: the shows are varied and there is (my goal) much kids-programming, both spectator and hands-on. Really, the operation is not a joke. (*Ed*-I have referred to it as a joke in the past because of its small space and lack of variety past the storage of the great paintings of Clarence Carter)

And from closer-up: the man who has turned the Columbia into something functionally incoherent is hardly a hero - if your piece isn't yet in print you might want to reconsider citing him as positive example. (*Ed*-I have referred to the renovator as a forward thinker for the city of Portsmouth, even knowing his somewhat shady background)

There's no lack of workable proposals for the PHS building, but none of them so far come with the eight-or-nine-figure nest egg the school board considers necessary for a go-ahead. *R.L. Mohl*

Jim Bodmer Retires

I have decided to try retirement once more. I have learned much from my last attempt at retirement and feel that I can be successful this time around. May 7th will be my last day here at Northrop. I expect to have work withdraw problems but will overcome them this time.

I am interviewing several new computers to replace my old one and will not be connected for a few weeks. When I do get on line at home my address is jameslbodmer@yahoo.com. e-mail: jameslbodmer@yahoo.com. I will stay in touch but if you don't hear from me by the mid-end of May send me an e-mail as that will mean that I lost your address when I shut my work computer down.

Yes I also was one of the safety patrol at Grant Grade School. I switched to flag duty my 8th grade year. We raised the flag every morning with much dignity and respect. Then reversed the procedure each afternoon, the flag had to be folded just right so it fit in the triangle box in the principles office. This duty had the same advantages and disadvantages except on rainy days the flag did not go up (I think).

As I remember these are the only duty's that I preformed and I did not get a strong sense of responsibility service, duty, and leadership. I guess that I was too immature to take my schooling seriously, I was having to much fun to realize that I should have been developing my character.

Jim Bodmer

Darone's Pizza

I often think of Darone's Pizza that opened on Gallia Street next to PHS. It was the first pizza I ever ate. I wasn't sure if I liked it at first - then I loved it. As I remember, it was the best I have ever tasted. There was something different about it and I am not sure but I think it was the cheese. I would love to have a big hot slice of it today. It cost 25¢ to 50¢ a slice as I remember.

Kaye Harris Hammond, PHS 1960

Ed: What was the name of the first pizza place on the West side of Chillicothe St. somewhere between 6th St. and 8th St.? 4 inch square slices were 10¢ each.

A Familiar Voice

Traveling back to Portsmouth has continued for some 45 years now. I wish I had a nickel for every time I drove Route 23 from Columbus - I'd probably have enough money to retire. My ninety-year-old mother sold the house I grew up in on Charles Street and moved into the Hillview Retirement Center on 28th Street several years ago. So, I still have a reason to come back to Portsmouth.

When I make the drive, I usually leave pretty early in the morning. About the time I reach Waverly I usually stop in the Bob Evans restaurant for a rest break and a cup of coffee. When I leave Bob Evans I tune my car radio to 1260 a.m. and pick up a friendly voice from Portsmouth to accompany me the rest of the way to my home town.

That friendly voice is heard every morning on radio station WNXT in Portsmouth. The radio show is called Zeke's Country and Zeke is Zeke Mullins who plays country and western music. As far as I can remember, Zeke wasn't around on the radio when I was growing up in Portsmouth in the late 1940s and early 1950s. My earliest memories of radio began with station WPAY ("1400 on your dial"), which was located in the 1000 block of Gallia Street, pretty close to the old Selby Shoe Company. I can remember listening to the sonorous voice of Frank Balmert giving the news. I'll bet you remember the voice of Mr. O. T. Dresbach, the station manager, who played Santa Claus on the radio from Thanksgiving until the day before Christmas each year.

The voice I remember most, however, from those good old days of Portsmouth a.m. radio was Bill Dawson. Bill was a disc jockey and personality for WNXT from when they started in 1951, I think. WNXT, at 1260, with 5000 watts of power, was located on the fourth floor of the Masonic Temple Building on Chillicothe Street. I remember listening to Bill every morning before going off to PHS.

But, back to Zeke Mullins. As I listen to him coming down Route 23, I catch up on all the things that are happening in Portsmouth and get a good dose of old-style "hillbilly music" (if you will forgive the term--that's what we use to call it back in the 1950s). Zeke has a distinctive Southern Ohio folksy twang in his voice. And, his commercials are something else. They are in the style of Arthur Godfrey (remember him?). Zeke just talks to his listeners about his clients and, inevitably, ends the commercial with, "Tell 'em ole Zeke sent ya."

I've grown use to hearing Zeke over many years as I've driven back to Portsmouth. The city has changed much over the years, but there is still a very pleasant familiarity and warmth in hearing Zeke's voice over the car radio welcoming me home to the city where I grew up.

Blaine Bierley

Going, Going, Gone!





L to R: Martha Fitch Cook, Sharon Queen Blayney, Ginny Smith Wolfe, Connie Yuenger Keatley, GOOFY, Eva Strauss Izenson, Betty Bierley Holling, Karen Williams Fox

Florida Get-together

Karen Williams Fox invited us to her winter home in Vero Beach, FL to celebrate our third year on Medicare!

Day one...Wednesday, May 5, five of us somehow arranged individual flights into Orland arriving within a few hours of one another. The less than two hour drive took somewhat longer as we were laughing and talking (imagine that) and missed the turnoff by about 20 miles. Verbal instructions from Karen this time were closely monitored and we pulled into the gated community of John's Island without difficulty. Connie had driven without incident from Hilton Head by herself and she and Karen were waiting for us in the driveway. Gerry, Karen's husband, greeted us at the front door wearing formal chef's attire. We don't know why Karen has hidden him all these years. He was an excellent host...helped settle us in our rooms...poured our wine...prepared a scrumptious dinner and cleaned up everything!

Day two...the bridge table was set up before

breakfast and was in use from then on whenever four were available. We had lunch at an outdoor sandwich spot. Then it was back to Karen's to put on our bathing suits and apply the sun screen. We sat under umbrellas to read or nap after a long walk on the beach. Ginny sketched (she is taking art classes these day).

Day three...up early again...more bridge, more laughter! We had lunch with our feet literally in the sand at a place called Capt. Hiram's before we took a boat cruise on the Indian River Lagoon.

Day four...we packed up and headed for the Vero Beach Disney Resort where we had breakfast with "Goofy". We said our good-byes to Karen there. Connie drove back to Hilton Head and the remainder of us drove to Orlando to catch our flights that once again were pretty close together time-wise. Bob Cook was waiting for Martha. He was visiting his brother while we did our "girl thing"...it was good to see him before we went our separate ways.

Sharon Queen Blayney



Reunion in Arizona

Phyllis Scaff Purtee, Jane Dever Ramsey, both of class of "1955", Anita Taylor Reed, class of "1954" met recently with Shirlee Hackworth Ponce, class of "1955" in Sun City West, Arizona. The four friends went to McKinley school, then PHS. They enjoyed our trip so much they plan to go again next year.

School Safety Patrol

Did you serve on the School Safety Patrol when you were in elementary school? In my era at Wilson Elementary School in Portsmouth, membership in the School Safety patrol was open only to boys. I think a few years later girls were allowed to join and promptly took control of the entire organization. As I recall, you had to be at least a third grader and have the recommendation of your teacher that you were "a responsible school citizen" to join the patrol.

The Portsmouth AAA sponsored the School Safety Patrol (and, I guess, that the National AAA sponsored the program all across the country). We were furnished with snappy, white, cross-chest Sam Browne belts and nickel-plated badges with an eagle atop. While the majority of us were lowly patrolmen, several of the eighth graders were officers. Lieutenants had a red badge and the captain had the prestigious blue badge.

As I reflect back, I guess it was a pretty good experience serving on the Safety Patrol. It instilled students with a sense of responsibility, service, duty, and leadership as they protected their classmates going to and from school each day. There were certain advantages and disadvantages of serving on the patrol. On the negative side, there was no reprieve from carrying out your responsibility—which meant standing in the hot sun and the cold rain (Do you remember those black, school-furnished, rubber rain coats?). On the positive side, you got out of class early to go on patrol and you were allowed to be late to class when off duty.

Of course, there was always someone who let his authority go to his head—like the guy who would make the kids wait five minutes at the crossing until a car came along and then stop the car to allow them to cross the street. Or the kid who would let his girlfriend J-walk and not report her.

The choice assignment were close to the school building—you didn't have far to walk. I can remember being assigned to the crossing on Jackson Avenue and James Street, the farthest crossing from Wilson School—it was kind of like being exiled to Siberia.

Although I never rose any higher in the ranks than patrolman, I have positive memories of serving on the School Safety Patrol in the late 1940s. Even to this day I can remember fondly the singsong cry of "OFF DUTY" when we would quit our post at the end of the day and head for home—having done our best to protect our classmates from the perils of traffic.

Blaine Bierley

Plan to Attend Our Florida Winter Reunion

All readers are invited this year. If interested, please contact me (Frank) at the address atop this letter or Lois Wallace.

Also, if anyone is interested in a group Carnival cruise to Mexico (or wherever) this Fall/Winter, let me know. They are lots of fun for the price and a great way to get together. Some of us have already enjoyed this great way to relax. I can email cost info, etc.

Frank

Our Great 1955 Basketball Team

The year we were supposed to win it all. We almost did. We did not play across the town teams, but as a member of the Greater Ohio League, we played all over the state. Our opponents that year were Middletown, Hamilton, Springfield, Greenfield and Ironton whom we defeated both home and away. Ashland, Dayton Dunbar, Lancaster, Cincinnati Roger Bacon, Cincinnati Western Hills, and Lima South. Tournament play brought on Minford, Chillicothe, Athens, and Tecumseh and on to the Regional finals where Cincinnati Hughes ended our season with a last second tip-in 59-57. Our record was 20-4, losing only to Columbus East, Mansfield, Lima Central and of course, Cincinnati Hughes who lost in the state finals to Zanesfield.



Front row: Milton Parker, Donald (Duck) Frazier, Jerry Higgins, Bill Clifford, Curt Gentry, Coach Dick Hopkins.
2nd row: Coach George Heller, Larry Sunafrank, Mike Williams, Jim Duncan, Bill Spinks Coach Charles Lorentz.
Back row: Mgr Ken Amick, Bob Copley, Chet Corbitt, Bruce Johnson, Charles McKelvey, Mgr.

WLAC

Back in the 1950s, when white teenagers were just beginning to discover that Pat Boone's version of "Ain't That A Shame" was not the original, a radio station in Nashville, Tennessee, was beaming rhythm and blues and gospel music to millions of young listeners, each discretely tuning his dial to 1510 on the AM dial late into the evening hours.

It was 10:00 pm in the East, bed time for many a schoolboy. But, if the weather was cooperative and the tuner sensitive enough, wonderful sounds soon began to issue forth. Not Perry Como, not the Chordettes, certainly not Pat Boone. No, here streaming directly into our bedrooms or car radios were the strange, new, and wonderful tones of Chuck Berry, Jimmy Reed, Lowell Fulson, Lightning Hopkins, Muddy Waters, Little Junior Parker, The Spaniels, Sonny Boy Williamson, Howling Wolf, and Etta James.

Nothing characterized the WLAC listening experience more than the nightly program sponsored by "The World's Largest Mail Order Phonograph Record Shop" - Randy's Record Shop in Gallatin, Tennessee. They must have done a heck of a business. No street address, no post office box... just Gallatin, Tennessee.

During the mid-'50s, Randy's sponsored what may have been the most listened to disc jockey show in the country. Introduced by the nostalgic tones of "Swanee River Boogie" by Albert Ammons, "Randy's Record Hi-Lights" was broadcast on clear-channel WLAC at 10:15 pm Central Time, six nights a week-and at 11:00 pm on Sunday. And 50,000 watts of power insured that it could be heard all over the East, South, and Mid-West, probably in Canada and Mexico as well.

"Randy" was Randy Wood, a successful entrepreneur whose catalog boasted that his shop was "The Home of the World's Largest Stock of Recorded Music." He was also President of Dot

Records. Ironically, it was in this capacity, in 1955, that he met with Hugh Cherry of WMAK (Nashville) and was introduced to an aspiring 20-year old singer named Charles Eugene Boone. Wood was impressed and signed the young man to a contract. In November of that same year "Pat" Boone had his first hit on Dot: "Ain't That A Shame." In addition to Boone, Wood's label featured other white artists such as Sanford Clark and yes, Nervous Norvus.

During the hours not sponsored by record shops, WLAC featured a whole slew of wonderful commercials for such things as live baby chicks, Royal Crown Hair Dressing and White Rose Petroleum Jelly. The disc jockeys used to have a lot of fun mentioning creative uses for that versatile substance, many with double entendre meanings. Indeed, if one could believe the announcer, certain, more active, members of the listening audience were ordering the stuff in the 50-gallon drum size. And, yes, you can still buy it today.

Note from John Cook

Joan and I have been staying with our daughter and son-in-law, Debbie and Arnie, since September while she has been receiving her chemotherapy treatments. This week she started back on chemo with a smaller dosage of the cancer drug, Taxol, as a precaution. All her blood work has shown improvements and we are thankful for that..

I am doing just fine with my checkups, trying to keep my weight down and lose a few more pounds.

On March 20th, with the help of our sons, John and Gary, and a few very good friends, we were able to move our furniture and belongings from Hillsboro to a beautiful apartment here in the Cumberland area to be near the hospital and doctors for Joan's chemo treatments. We have listed our home in Hillsboro with a realtor and are setting up residence here in Cumberland.

Our new address and phone number will be:
John R. & Joan A. Cook, Sr.
12916 North Cresap Street, SW, Apt. # 5
Cumberland, MD 21502
(301) 729-5575

John R. Cook, Sr.

Joyce Goodman Foster

Joyce passed away at her home Sunday, May 2, 2004. She was born October 24, 1937, in Portsmouth to the late Lee and Ann Warden Goodman. Mrs. Foster graduated from Portsmouth High School in 1955 and earned a bachelor of science in education from Ohio University with post graduate studies at Ohio University and Miami (Ohio) University. During her 30 year career with the Portsmouth City Schools, she taught at Harding Elementary and Grant Middle Schools, was a member of the OEA, NEA, and Portsmouth City Teachers Association. She also worked with the D.A.R.E. program and served on various committees including the Bicentennial Committee. In retirement Mrs. Foster was an avid freelance photographer, a member of the Scioto County Historical Society, Shawnee Nature Club, and Scioto County Chapter of the Ohio Genealogical Society. She was an active volunteer at the 1810 House and Meals on Wheels and regularly attended Christ's Community Church. She is survived by her daughter, Cayce Nikola Forrester, of Sanford, Florida.

Joyce was completing a photo documentation of Grant, when she died.

Robert L. Mohl

Historical Photo?

Found this picture of "The Deadend Kids" in a box of old photos. Enjoy.

Clayton Howerton



L. to r.: Nelson Barker, Dave Boehm, Jack Johnson, Sam Winters, Lee Lansing, George Kegley and Harlan Davis.

Beer Days

The year is 1956. "Hey Clarence... 4 more Burgers!" No, I am not talking about hamburgers. I (we) have just ordered 4 more 3.2% beers from Clarence Evans, owner of the Park Shoppe. He will bring them to one of the booths in the back room and collect a quarter for each beer. If you recall, there were two kinds of every beer then. 3.2% for those 18 to 21 years of age and 6% for those over 21. I don't remember which way it was, but one had red caps and the other had blue caps. If you went to a bar where the beer was on tap, a glass or mug would cost 20¢. We also bought it by the keg at Stockham's Ice House for as little as eight dollars.

There were many brands to choose from, but most of the "Park Shop Gang" drank Burger. They tell me you can still buy one today in Cincinnati, but it is brewed in Wisconsin. That just doesn't make sense to me, because local water determines some of the distinct flavor of each brand.

Burger, Burger Light and Hudy Delight in cans are produced today under contract by City Brewing Co. in LaCrosse, Wis. Perhaps they truck Ohio River water up there. Hudepohl-Schoenling was the last of the large regional brewers from Cincinnati's heyday as a brewing center. It sold the former Schoenling brewery on Central Parkway to Boston Beer Co. (Sam Adams) in 1996. The only other Cincinnati brand from that era still on the market is Wiedemann, which is now brewed in Pittsburgh.

Following is a listing of beers found in the Portsmouth area in the forties, fifties and sixties.

From Cincinnati

Burger and Burger Tap - *Burger Brewing Co.*

Weidemann - *Geo. Weidemann Brewing Co.*

Red Top - *Red Top Brewing Co.*

Hudepohl - *Hudepohl Brewing Co.*

Schoenling and Schoenling Little Kings

- *Schoenling Brewing Co.*

Bavarian's Old Style - *The Bavarian Brewing Co.*

From Columbus

Augustiner, Gambrinus and Mark V

- *August Wagner Brewing Co.*

From Cleveland

Carlings Black Label and Carlings Red Cap Ale

- *Carling Brewing Co.*

From Detroit

Pfeiffers and Wurzbürger - *Pfeiffer Brewing Co.*

Strohs - *Stroh Brewing Co.*

From Milwaukee

Pabst Blue Ribbon - *Pabst Brewing Co.*

Schlitz - *Joseph Schlitz Brewing Co.*

Blatz - *Blatz Brewing Co.*

Hamms - *Theo Hamm Brewing Co.*

From Findlay Ohio

Old Dutch - *Krantz Brewing Corp*

From Pennsylvania

Duke - *Duquesne Brewing Co.*

Iron City - *Iron City Brewery*

Rolling Rock - *Rolling Rock Brewing Co.*

From Louisville

Falls City - *Falls City Brewing Co*

Oertel - *Oertel Brewing Co.*

From St. Louis

Falstaff - *Falstaff Brewing Company*

"The Fender Skirt"

When I was a kid, I considered that such a funny term. Made me think of a car in a dress. Thinking about fender skirts started me thinking about other words that quietly disappear from our language with hardly a notice.

Like "curb feelers" and "steering knobs." Since I'd been thinking of cars, my mind naturally went that direction first. Remember "Continental kits?" They were rear bumper extenders and spare tire covers that were supposed to make any car as cool as a Lincoln Continental.

When did we quit calling them "emergency brakes?" At some point "parking brake" became the proper term. But I miss the hint of drama that went with "emergency brake." I'm sad, too, that almost all the folks are gone who would call the accelerator the "foot feed."

Here's a phrase I heard all the time in my youth but never anymore - "store-bought." Of course, just about everything is store-bought these days. But once it was bragging material to have a store-bought dress or a store-bought bag of candy.

"Coast to coast" is a phrase that once held all sorts of excitement and now means almost nothing. Now we take the term "worldwide" for granted. This floors me.

On a smaller scale, "wall-to-wall" was once a magical term in our homes. In the '50s, everyone covered their hardwood floors with, wow, wall-to-wall carpeting! Today, everyone replaces their wall-to-wall carpeting with hardwood floors.

When's the last time you heard the quaint phrase "in a family way?" It's hard to imagine that the word "pregnant" was once considered a little too graphic, a little too clinical for use in polite company. So we had all that talk about stork visits and "being in a family way" or simply "expecting." Apparently "brassiere" is a word no longer in usage. I said it the other day and my daughter cackled. I guess it's just "bra" now. "Unmentionables" probably wouldn't be understood at all.

It's hard to recall that this word was once said in a whisper - "divorce." And no one is called a "divorcee" anymore. Certainly not a "gay divorcee." Come to think of it, "confirmed bachelors" and "career girls" are long gone, too.

Most of these words go back to the '50s, but here's a pure-'60s word I came across the other day - "rat fink." Ooh, what a nasty put-down!

Here's a word I miss - "percolator." That was just a fun word to say. And what was it replaced with? "Coffeemaker." How dull. Mr. Coffee (and Joe D.), I blame you for this. I miss those made-up marketing words that were meant to sound so modern and now sound so retro. Words like "DynaFlow" and "ElectraLux." Introducing the 1963 Admiral TV, now with "SpectraVision!"

Food for thought - Was there a telethon that wiped out lumbago? Nobody complains of that anymore. Maybe that's what castor oil cured, because I never hear mothers threatening their kids with castor oil anymore.

Some words aren't gone, but are definitely on the endangered list. The one that grieves me most - "supper."

More Safety Patrol

Garfield had six sets of traffic scouts on patrol every school day.

Gallia st at the terminal restaurant which was Rt. 52, Gallia st in front of school, Gallia and Mabert Rd., Mabert Rd at rear entrance to Garfield school, Mabert Rd and 17th St. and 17th and Thomas Ave.

Each squad consisted of a minimum of six members, 1 lieutenant, 1 asst. lieutenant, 4 patrolmen. The total number of "traffic scouts" at Garfield included as many as 30 patrolmen, 6 Asst. Lts, 6 Lt., 1 Asst. Captain, 1 Captain.

I served on the patrol six years, third through eighth. in all capacities listed. Working my way up from patrolman in third grade to captain eighth grade. Rank was designated by the color of your patrol badge. Chrome badges for patrolmen, Chrome with Red Interior for Lt. and Asst. Lt., Chrome with Blue Interior for Captain and Asst. captains.

It was deemed an honor to be a traffic scout. It was an important job with responsibilities in preventing students and vehicles from tangling within the school zone. During my six years on patrol, we had some near misses but no injuries to students or patrol members. The squad in front of the school had large long gates they lowered from each side of Gallia St to stop traffic. There were times that cars failed to stop causing damage to the gates and the car, but fortunately none ever harmed a student. All such occurrences were reported to police who handled paper work, and the school had gates repaired immediately.

Other squads normally had either a bamboo pole with a red flag on the end which was extended out into the street from each side allowing students to cross at the point or some crossings were without the poles and would place a patrolman on each side of the street facing traffic with their hands extended to stop traffic. This would normally occur at the least traffic flow intersections and if a pole had been broken while awaiting a replacement for same. At Garfield only boys served as traffic scouts.

Allan Oxley

Dr. Obrist Murder

I had a call from Dick Burdett (Class of '53) a couple of nights ago. He is a reporter in Lexington, KY and is reinvestigating the murder of Dr. Obrist. He heard about the article in one of our newsletters and would like to know more about it. His number is 859-255-0537.

Re-starting Life

After nine years working for Mickey Mouse, I have decided to retire at the end of May. I will be living in Gulf Shores, Alabama, about ten minutes from the beach and right in the middle of five golf courses. I plan to get involved in local and state politics (never mind which brand) and also in volunteer work.

I am also very much involved with a wonderful lady. This has given me a very real new lease on life. Sixty-six years old and starting out all over again. I do love a challenge.

My e-mail address will not change. I'll send along address and phone numbers when that gets finalized.
John Stetzing