

THE 1955 TROJAN *Alumni* PRINTS

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Dreamin' About 'Doo-Wop'

By Frank Lewis, PDT Staff Writer
Thursday, June 21, 2007 11:28 PM EDT

I have never been to a class reunion. I graduated in 1963, but never attended any of my class reunions because my high school years were not among my favorite memories.

However, this year I may crash my sister's class reunion.

Annette graduated in 1957, and these days I find myself obsessing over a music genre called "Doo-Wop."

I ride around with my CD player cranked up, playing The Flamingoes, Harold Melvin and the Blue Notes, and The Crests.

In an age in which the bass response is so loud on car CD players that it rattles the windows of every car and building for three blocks, people really look at me funny.

But back to the purpose of crashing the Portsmouth High School class of 1957 reunion.

Back then, there was a great group attached to Portsmouth High School and the Portsmouth community in general, the IV Leaguers.

I am an IV Leaguers fan. My brother Butch, or if you want to get real formal, Carlton, found four IV Leaguers songs for me, and I now listen to them over and over again. I even have worn one out and am on my second CD.

The IV Leaguers were in the classes of 1956, '57, '58 and '59.

In the class of 1956 was Tom "Flip" Phillips, arguably the best drummer ever from this area. Tom, who no longer is with us, was the one I was closest to.

Representing the class of 1957 were Charles "Chub" Bartlett, and Bob (Tosk) Destocki (pronounced Detoski, don't ask me why.) Bob went on to win an award as music coordinator for one of the great camp films of all time, "Fast Times at Ridgemont High." Every time Bob comes to town, we don't seem to be able to make a connection. If he comes this time, we will sit and we will talk.

Three members of the group were in the class

of 1958, Harry Cranston, Don "Dumbo" Stamper and Jim "Monk" Middlecamp.

Howard "Bud" Stockham represented the class of 1959.

Cranston and Stockham played the hottest guitar in rock 'n' roll, the Fender Stratocaster. You just have to hear the song "Jim Jammin'."

Their vocals were impeccable, the arrangements ahead of their time and their harmony was nothing short of perfection. Sure the lyrics were "moon, june, spoon," but in "Doo-Wop," all lyrics are "moon, june, spoon." The lyrics were about loving and losing the girl. That pretty much summed up life for guys in the '50s, so what more could you ask for in a song?

What makes this time period so significant is it was not only the end of a physical era, but it was the end of a societal era as well. There was a bigger change from 1959 to 1960 than ever occurred at Y2K. The whole world changed in one year.

In the '50s, the only thing political going on was running for president of the senior class. By the '60s, we were fighting a war, and people were marching in the streets. In essence, the age of innocence was over.

For example, the 1960s didn't have anything that matched the '55, '56, or even the '57 Chevy. The 1965 Mustang pales in comparison.

So these days, I find myself reminiscing about hot rods and duck tails, rolled up Levi's, T-shirts and dirty white bucks, walks in the moonlight and holding hands as you watched James Dean on the big screen at Eastland Theater.

I think it would be great to find a group of people who would like to get together on Saturday nights, put on a stack of oldies, dance a little and talk about the past a lot. Anyone wanting to form such a group should contact me. I think it would be fun.

But for now I'll be content to close my eyes, listen to "Ring Chimes" by the IV Leaguers and pretend I'm waiting on Pat Darone to fix my pizza.

"Hey Pat, throw some extra sauce on that!"

Frank Lewis

The Today Show

Did you watch The Today Show on WSAZ TV in the morning before going off to P.H.S.? I did. The current event information I garnered from it and from reading the good old Portsmouth Times came in very handy in my social studies classes - especially in Freda Burke's Current History and Joe Kegley's Civics classes.

As I recall, the show started on NBC sometime in 1952. According to the internet, it is the second-longest running American television series behind Meet The Press. It was the first show of its genre when it signed on with its original host and anchor, Dave Garroway.

The show was broadcast from a studio in New York City overlooking Rockefeller Center Plaza and its cameras always showed people standing outside looking in the studio window.

The show blended national news, sports, interviews with newsmakers, and other light news and gimmicks (such as the continuing presence of the chimpanzee, J. Fred Muggs, as the show's mascot).

I remember both Jim Flemming and Frank Blair as being principal newsmen and a guy named Jack Lescoulie (I had to look up the spelling for his name.), who was the announcer and reported the sports news. Dave Garroway, the host, was an easygoing guy who wore horned-rimmed glasses and a bow tie. He was pleasant, serious, and scholarly-looking. He was one of the first broadcasters who introduced a conversational tone to TV. You usually believed that you were sitting there in the studio with him. He selected the program's theme music, which was Les Brown's Sentimental Journey, which reflected his relaxed style. You might remember his trademark on the show was signing off by saying, "Peace," and extending the palm of his hand.

The show was broadcast live from 7 to 9 a.m. each weekday morning. I can remember the multitude of clocks on the wall behind Garroway which showed the various time zones around the world and the window where people congregated to be captured by the cameras and to wave to the folks back home. Often the program broadcast four or five minutes of nothing but the crowd outside while music played. But, remember, life generally moved a bit slower in the fifties. And, keep in mind, that only about one in ten households had a TV set then. Looking live at people standing on a street corner in New York City was truly a genuine technical marvel!

Would you like to return to those simpler times?

Blaine Bierley

Priscilla Stamper

Priscilla L. Stamper, 62, of Portsmouth, died Wednesday, March 21, 2007, at a Columbus hospital. She was born Dec. 3, 1944, in West Virginia, a daughter of the late Travis Grimmitt and Rheba McGinnis Grimmitt. She is survived by her husband, Donald Stamper; daughters, Tami Pinson and Julie Stamper; brothers, Travis Grimmitt and David Grimmitt; four grandchildren; and one great-granddaughter.

Changes Update

My retirement has not happened yet. That is why the newsletter retains the same look. The next issue will have that different look however. I will be moving to Orlando to be with Joy as soon as I can sell my home and subsequently retire from here. While I asked that photos submitted after the last issue be sent as attachments to email you may send them otherwise until further notice.

I would like to thank those of you who use our web site for your travelbookings. www.my-travelhunter.com uses the search engine of travelocity. Joy and I receive a percentage of the commissions.

Frank

City Wants to Sell Museum Building

By JEFF BARRON, PDT Staff Writer

The city has owned the building that houses the Southern Ohio Museum by the Roy Rogers Esplanade for the past 30 years. But the museum board of directors has decided to buy the building upon approval by the city Planning Commission and Portsmouth City Council.

"The biggest benefit to the sale is that the museum stays in the city," City Council President Howard Baughman said. "It is a treasure for a city of our size to have a museum like that. I wouldn't be in favor of selling it to anyone who wouldn't keep it a museum."

The city has owned the building since July 1977, the same stime the museum moved into it.

Before that, the building housed the Security Central Bank, which later became Bank One. Baughman said he didn't know the terms of the sale yet.

But museum president Bill Tackett said the board will probably pay a token \$1 for it.

"We couldn't really afford to buy it," he said. "It's a stretch for us to take over operations."

While the museum has taken care of day-to-day maintenance, the city has been responsible for maintaining the building's roof, elevator and heating and air system.

The Planning Commission will discuss the sale at its June 19 meeting. Should it approve, the issue would then go before City Council. City Council would have to pass an ordinance to approve the sale.

NEWS about DUES!

Many of our readers have not paid their yearly dues. Please send \$7 to Gene Lucas at 1419 Second Street, West Portsmouth OH 45663.

Fireflies

Do you remember catching fireflies in the Summer? When I was growing up on Charles Street in Portsmouth it was a very popular activity in the summertime for boys and girls in elementary school. Now, I have to confess, I don't ever remember calling those blinking insects "fireflies." We weren't that sophisticated in the 1940s. They were always called "lightning bugs" in my neighborhood.

I can remember spending hours, both with other kids and by myself, on warm Summer nights running barefoot through the dewy grass attempting to catch them. I usually used an empty Kraft mayonnaise jar for my lightning bug safaris. Of course, you had to punch holes in the jar's lid with an ice pick so the insects could get an ample supply of oxygen - that was the only humane way to incarcerate them.

I remember how we would eagerly await the coming of darkness. That was the time that they magically appeared - slowly rising from the grass. The lightning bugs were relatively easy to catch. The real trick was getting the new ones in the mayonnaise jar without letting any of your previous captives escape.

The fun part was the competition with your playmates to see who could catch the most. Then, when it was time to go in, the other pleasurable part was putting the jar on the table beside your bed. The bedroom would glow with tiny twinkling lights throughout the night. I can remember pondering the mystery of how these bugs made their light and wondering (in my naivete) what was its purpose.

Another thing that I remember about this activity was the strange odor that the lightning bugs had. It was slightly unpleasant and you had to wash your hands thoroughly to get rid of the smell after an evening of handling them.

I really have some difficulty in remembering what we did with the lightning bugs after enjoying them all night. Some of them, I'm sure, would be dead in the morning. I guess that I would like to think that I did the ecologically-correct thing and took them outside and set them free so we could enjoy the activity again another night.

When she read this little remembrance, my wife, who also grew up on Charles Street, reminded me of one aspect of the lightning bug saga that I left out. That was the practice of smashing the abdomens of the lightning bugs and smearing them on your faces or arms so that your body parts would glow in the dark. I had wanted to leave this cruel part out of the story - especially for those who might be a bit squeamish - but she insisted that everyone did it. And, of course, she was right.

Blaine Bierley

A Note From Gene about our Class of 1955 Picnic

The PHS Class of 1955 annual picnic has been scheduled to begin promptly at noon September 22nd 2007 at the Portsmouth Shrine Club shelter on Rt. 52 west. The class will furnish the food as usual (fried chicken, baked beans, potato salad, rolls and soft drinks). Local residents are to bring a covered dish or desert. The picnic is free but we do take up a donation to cover some of the cost.

There will be a football game on Friday, the night before the picnic with a get together after the game at the Brewery Arcade on Second Street for drinks and snacks. Please plan to arrive in Portsmouth on Friday for a memorable time.

We need to know who is planning to attend (number of people) each event in order to determine how much food to provide by 9-1-07. If you need more details please let me know.

Gene Lucas
1419 Second Street, West Portsmouth, OH 45663. E-mail genelucas@verizon.net
Home 740-858-5489 Cell 740-352-5198

On another note, Curt Gentry was home for July 4th and he, I, and Bill Clifford got to play golf. I am heading for Hawaii next Sunday. I will send pictures to Frank when I get back.

Concert to benefit Spartan Stadium

By JEFF BARRON (abridged)
PDT Staff Writer

Some city officials recently have talked about tearing Spartan Stadium down and replacing it with light industry. Whether that happens or not remains to be seen. But the stadium has fallen into a state of disrepair.

In order to raise money for the city-owned stadium, the city is co-sponsoring the Community Concert for Spartan Stadium on Saturday, July 24th at 1 p.m., at the stadium.

Tickets are \$3, and all proceeds from ticket sales, concessions and T-shirts will go toward restoring the city-owned Spartan Stadium.

Spartan Stadium once was the home of the Portsmouth Spartans, who went on to become the present-day Detroit Lions.

The Portsmouth High School and Notre Dame High School football teams now use the stadium. But the city schools system plans on building a downtown stadium, which would put Spartan Stadium's future in doubt.

ED... Then of course, why leave Branch Rickey Park standing?

Roy Rogers Exhibit Gets Art Donation

abridged from 6-7-07 SCIOTO VOICE

During last week's 24th Annual Roy Rogers Festival the local Roy Rogers Hometown Exhibit received a donation of artwork from Bill and Sandy Wilburn.

The artwork, by the late Robert (Young) Learned Hand one of the top Native American artists who was from Portsmouth (w/d-PHS '55), is entitled "Saturday Matinee" and depicts the likeness of three of the western movies top stars, Roy Rogers, Hopalong Cassidy and Gene Autry.

The Roy Rogers Hometown Exhibit is located in the lower level of the U. S. Post Office Building. A spokesperson for the exhibit said, "We are pleased and very grateful for this donation as one of the subjects is Roy Rogers and the artist, Robert, is another famous native son.

Rick Hopkins to coach at Notre Dame

Richard E. (Rick) Hopkins, III (PHS '72) will coach Notre Dame H. S. basketball next winter. Hopkins, a 31-year coaching veteran, the last five at PHS, is a member of a prominent basketball family in Scioto County.

Rick's father is Richard E. Hopkins, Jr. (PHS '45) who coached basketball and taught P.E. at PHS for many years. His grandfather was Richard E. Hopkins, Sr., who coached basketball at PHS and was principal of U. S. Grant Elementary School for many years.



Guess Who?

A recent photo of Eddie Haskell, the Beaver & Wally

“1954”

In my Portsmouth High School American History class we were taught by Miss Mary Krausz to think of history in terms of decades - the '20s, the '30s, the '40s, and so on. We also learned that American history is usually triggered by Presidential elections. Calendar dates will remain important only if the new President uses his leadership and power to change the direction of events.

It seems to me that the strange, fluid decade of the nineteen fifties did not begin until about halfway through President Eisenhower's first term--in 1954, to be precise. We were juniors at PHS at that moment of time.

That particular decade incubated not only the problems, but the abundances, the vitality, and the passion that exploded for us later in the tormented sixties.

If we consider the year of 1954 as the opening of an era, the next twenty years (as we settled into our careers) of American history were to fall clearly away from several sharply defined peaks. But the two most spectacular peaks thrust up within seven weeks of each other in the spring of 1954. On May 7, far away in Vietnam, the French army, surrounded at Dienbienphu after eight weeks of siege, was forced to surrender by the Vietnam Communists. On June 29, at a conference in Geneva, Switzerland, the French gave up, dumping the protection of a “South Vietnam” on a willing U. S. Secretary of State, John Foster Dulles. Dulles' decision at Geneva would, even twenty years later, be causing the deaths of young Americans of our generation. But within that same month, on June 17, the U. S. Supreme Court outlawed segregation by race in all American public schools. By its decision in Brown versus the Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas, it set a domestic revolution under way. The Supreme Court decision would change the

Temptation to Travel

As many of you know, I am retiring in August and one of the things that Joy and I will occupy ourselves with is travel. We have our on-line travel site (www.mytravelhunter.com) which we encourage you to use for travel planning and then if you decide to go, book on it. I will be sharing some of the travel bargains and/or just plain fun travel we have done with you. So far this year, I have been to Puerto Rico 2 times, the most recent with Joy and her aunt and uncle, Branson Missouri, Bristol Tennessee and Las Vegas. We are fans of the 4 or 5 day or weekend trips. They can be fun and economical and I will write of them with recommendations. Here is what we did:

Puerto Rico

4 nights - Air and Hotel - from Orlando Spirit Air (the Southwest Airline of the Caribbean) We originally booked the San Juan Beach Hotel in the Condado section as a package with Spirit Air on our website. \$133 a night. Upon arrival, we decided it did not suit us, so we opted for The Beach House on Isla Verde Beach (same management - same price). A short description: The Beach House is Puerto Rico's beach

color and character of American cities, alter the nature of American society, free millions of black people, but hammer into categories other millions of Americans previously unaware of their differences. Youngsters still sucking their thumbs in the summer of 1954 and dangling their knobby knees from the couch as they watched “Howdy Doody,” would grow up to fight, to riot, to march, to protest, and to die because of these two watershed spring events.

1954 also opened a great political threat to the American system. And, it came from within. Senator Joseph McCarthy of Wisconsin was unleashing the hounds of hate. By midsummer, the U. S. Senate had passed a Communist Control Bill, outlawing membership in the Communist Party. Yet, by the fall, McCarthy had passed his power point; the Senate was debating his censure; and by December McCarthy had been censured. The political year of 1954 closed on an event of importance--the Congressional elections in November. That was the last time for the next twenty years that Republicans would enjoy control of both houses of the U. S. Congress.

Other events great and small were to make 1954 a monumental year. Dr. Jonas Salk had begun to inoculate school children in Pittsburgh with his anti-polio serum; it worked. A hydrogen bomb had been tested by Americans at Bikini Island in the Pacific Ocean; it also worked, but no one yet knew its full reach. Ernest Hemingway won his Nobel Prize. Bruce Catton won a Pulitzer Prize for *Stillness at Appomattox*.

And, we were getting ready to graduate from Portsmouth High School, not even within a whisker of knowing the ramifications of what was yet to come.

Blaine Bierley

front sanctuary of relaxation in the middle of the world's most exciting cities. Located in Isla Verde Avenue only five minutes away from the International Airport and fifteen minutes away from the Historic Old San Juan. A small boutique hotel nestled amid the top hotels on the island - it now has a fresh new face and has become the must-be-seen gathering place for San Juan's social set. Fabulous outdoor French cafe restaurant (Cafe la Plage) and personalized Beach Club service. I would highly recommend and book any young couple or single here. It is impressive. However, it did not fit Joy's aunt and uncle, so we moved to the Holiday Inn further down the street for \$10 more per night. The best deal by far on our site (like almost 1/2 price of others) was Thrifty Car Rental (never rent anything larger than a compact in Puerto Rico) \$127. We drove a total of some 300 miles visiting The Arecibo Observatory, the rainforest, old San Juan and the Bacardi rum distillery. A great trip in so little time. Call or e-mail me if you would like more info or need help navigating www.mytravelhunter.com

Junior/Senior HS Receives Top Honor

from July 12, 2007 SCIOTO VOICE newspaper

Portsmouth Junior/Senior High School is the recipient of the Grand Prize from School Planning & Management's 2007 Educational Design Showcase. The project was funded by the Ohio School Facilities Commission.

The Grand Prize is awarded annually to the K-12 school design that displays “excellence in design and functional planning directed towards meeting the needs of the educational program.” Jury members cited the building for its “effective site plan,” as well as the “good use of daylighting,” and the way it “ties the old in with the new in a very nice way.” In addition to being recognized, the school district received a \$1,000 scholarship.

PJ/SHS is envisioned as a 21st Century educational facility that supports the district's mission: “to provide the highest quality of education for all students.” The new 182,624 square-foot facility accommodates up to 1,147 students in grades 7-12.

According to Superintendent Jan Broughton, “This building has absolutely everything. You can't help but feel good walking into it.” According to Superintendent Broughton the impact of the new school is being felt within the entire community of Portsmouth. “There is a change in the whole environment of this city,” she says. “We have revitalized the community.”

PHS Band Book

Blaine sent me a really interesting book. It is a history of the bands of Portsmouth High School with yearbook photos of each year. It's written by Dr. William E. Daehler (class of 43). To purchase a copy, send \$15.00 + \$2.00 postage to Dr. Daehler at 2125 Timlin Road, Ports., OH 45662

From Columbus Ohio to San Juan round trip example

Lv Sept ?? American Airlines - comparable hotel as above- rental car as above - return Sept (4 days later). \$1130 appx total incl tax for 2 senior citizens. If you want to eat, take enough \$\$ for either any stateside fast food or eat well in any of hundreds of restaurants. (they are all there: MacDonalds thru Subway)

I strongly suggest that you rent a car and that you not be intimidated by stories of traffic conditions. A two hour drive will take you to the Arecibo Observatory where you will marvel at the sheer size of it. Within a 30 minute drive is the huge Camuy (camway) cavern system. Do not attempt to visit on Mondays. Monday is kind of a holiday in Puerto Rico and some attractions are closed. Monday would be a good day to visit El Yunque however. This is the only sub-tropical rain forest in the United States (yes, I said the United States - Puerto Ricans are U.S. citizens). It is one of our National Parks and is only an hours drive East of San Juan. There is no passport required to travel to Puerto Rico. Just show your driver's license.



All that remains is the T&I Building



The site of the old McKinley School

Portsmouth City Schools Auctions Properties. Wilson Sells, Roosevelt, McKinley Unsold

BY RYAN SCOTT OTTNEY PDT Staff Writer Thursday, July 19, 2007 10:23 PM EDT

Portsmouth City Schools had an auction Thursday in the district's administrative offices on Findlay Street to sell properties that formerly contained Wilson, McKinley and Roosevelt schools. Portsmouth School District Treasurer Paula Butler said a minimum selling price had been set for each of the three properties, based on their appraisal values, and they wouldn't be sold if they could not reach that figure. The buildings were appraised for \$104,500 (Wilson), \$400,000 (McKinley) and \$513,000 (Roosevelt). Of the three buildings, the district only was able to sell Wilson, which was sold to Seventh Street Christian Baptist Church for the full appraisal value of \$104,500. “We've run out of room at our church. We're averaging close to 170 people and our goal is to build a larger church,” said Pastor Darren Lore. “We have a strong ministry mission to reach out to the community.” The newly purchased land is two blocks from the current church's location, and Lore said he hopes to complete the new building in three to five years. Butler said the money from the auction would be put into the Capital Improvement Fund.

“Any renovations the district would make as a capital improvement ... that does not depreciate in less than five years,” she said. The funds might end up being used to build a new maintenance building behind the current high school to house the district's grounds equipment. All allocations would have to be approved by the school board. The buildings that did not sell still can be purchased at their original prices, but cannot be sold for any lower amount without the district publicly advertising its availability at that price.

The school district closed its schools on those properties to move students into the newly built high school and junior high school buildings on Gallia Street at the start of the 2006-07 school year. Butler said the school board was expected to discuss and vote on the property sales at Thursday night's school board meeting

Tom Armstrong

Tom Armstrong passed away yesterday afternoon, July 28th, at 1:49pm. It was unexpected as we had plans to move him home this Friday and thought we had a couple of months left together. I was with him the last 10 minutes of his life and held him in my arms and whispered how much we all loved him over and over. He was very peaceful at the end and I would like to be selfish and say I wish it hadn't happened...but he was in so much pain that I know he is better off now.

If I can provide you with any other information, don't hesitate to contact me at (727) 560-5151.

Sherry

Don Frazier Inducted Into Hall Of Fame

Don “Duck” Frazier was inducted into the Long Beach California Softball Hall of Fame on June 24, 2007. The induction ceremony was held at Blair Field at 3pm, with the unveiling of the Hall of Fame plaques.

Duck Frazier was an infielder on five International Softball Congress world champions, including a unique run in which he played for a different winning ISC world series team three straight years. He played for the 1971 Nitehawks where he was named All-World, the 1972 team representing Burbank and was named All-World and the 1973 Lakewood Jets and again was named All-World.

He was inducted into the International Softball Congress Hall of Fame in 1995.

PHS Time Capsules

From the Portsmouth Times Nov. 5, 1954:

Band Ready For Big Game

The Portsmouth High School Marching band will use the theme of “Say It With Music” when it takes over the gridiron tonight at half-time in the Trojan-Mansfield football game.

The band will enter the playing field from the 20-yard lines and move to center field. With the playing of “Across The Field” the band will form the letter “M” as a salute to Mansfield.

The trumpet trio, Frank Hunter, Alan Oxley, and Robert Neal, will play “Say It With Music” while the band forms a musical note. PHS bandsmen will then form a bugle to the tune of “Bugle Call Rag,” featuring the entire trumpet section. In the second chorus of “Bugle Call Rag,” Robert Neal, cornetist, will have the solo.

To toast the Trojans, the musicians will form the traditional “P” as they play “Let's Win This Game.” The playing of the “PHS Alma Mater” will conclude the band's half-time show, Richard T. Sunderland, PHS band director announced.

From the Portsmouth Times Sept 8, 1954:

Schools' Chief Stresses Need For Service

H. W. McKelvey, superintendent of Portsmouth public schools, rang in the new school year Tuesday at 12:30 p.m. with a traditional old fashioned hand bell at the opening of the teachers' luncheon and business session for the 1954-1955 school year. Of the 268 teachers in the Portsmouth system, 259 were present for the meeting at Second Presbyterian Church.

In his talk during the business session Mr. McKelvey stressed the importance of meeting the many difficult problems facing teachers and the entire school system this year because of increasing enrollment and the building renovation program.

“This year presents the greatest challenge for service that we in the Portsmouth schools have ever known. We must e ready to meet the challenge,” Mr. McKelvey said.

The greatest problem of finding space for pupils is at Roosevelt Elementary School on Cole's Blvd. More than 70 children, a recent survey showed, are to enter the school from the Forest Heights Addition, north and west of the building.

Where Roosevelt formerly had four classrooms on the first floor there are now seven and plans are set up for two grades of each of first, second, third, and fourth grade pupils.

What was used as a gym has become two classrooms with a partition installed by school board employees in the last week. The school library was pressed into service last year as a classroom.

The enrollment this year is expected to be around the 400 mark.

For some relief, Anderson Trailer park children were ordered to report to Garfield School and children of Scioto Terrace Manor apartments were instructed to enroll at Lincoln School, with both locations in the Roosevelt district.

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