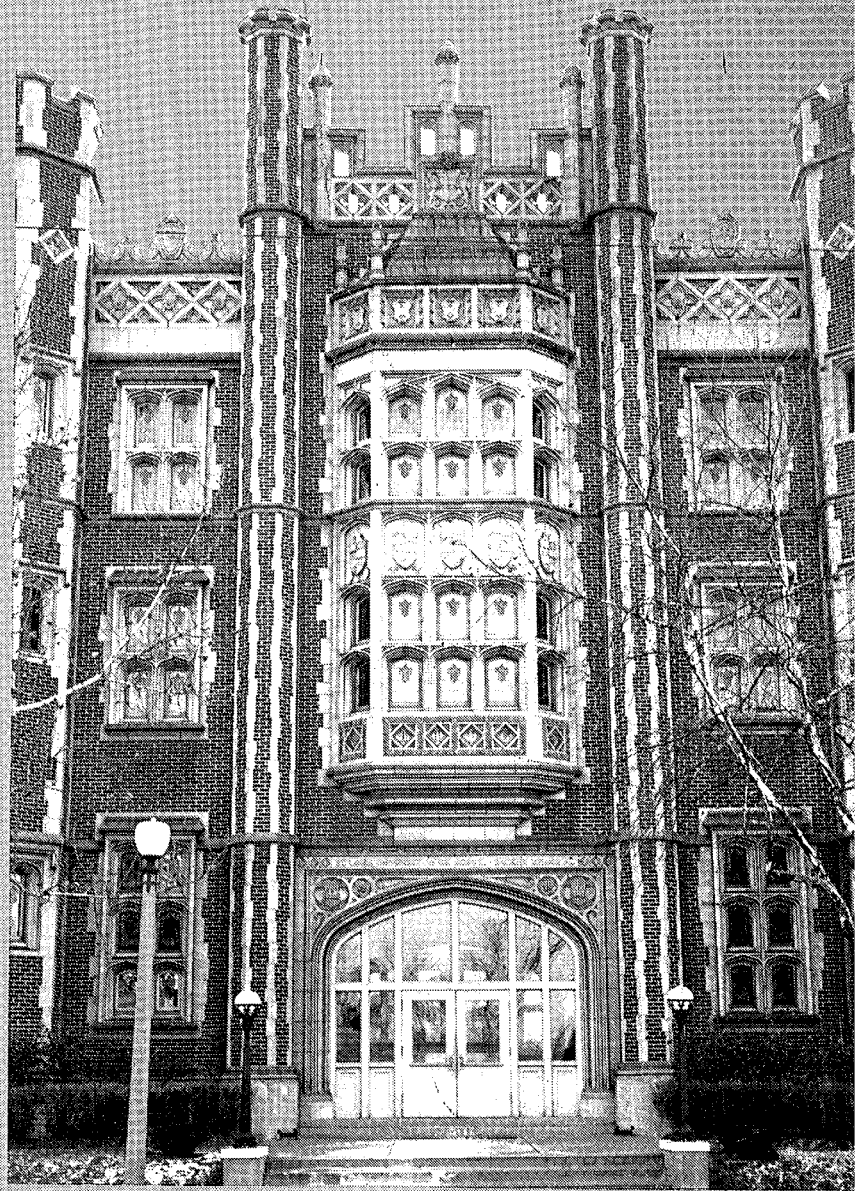


St. Louis University High School

50th
Anniversary



Backer Memorial 1924 - 1974

Message from the President

St. Louis University High School has been at its present Oakland Avenue location - the George H. Backer Memorial - for fifty years. During that time the objective of the school has remained constant: the training of intelligent Christians for positions of leadership within the community. If this goal has been largely realized, two factors have been particularly significant.

First, the Jesuit tradition of scholarship and intellectual inquiry has been a pervasive influence. The Jesuit and lay faculty have always tried to instill in the students of St. Louis U. High a love of ideas. Secondly, and no less important, has been the tremendous impact exerted by a faculty whose concern for the student has never been limited to purely academic affairs.

It is this unique combination of intellectual vigor and personal concern for the total development of the student - intellectual, physical, and moral - that has helped create the renowned St. Louis U. High "spirit." This spirit is manifested in a great many ways, but perhaps the most notable has been the constant striving for excellence in every field. Such striving has been the hallmark of St. Louis U. High in the past; it will continue to be so in the years to come.

Underlying the St. Louis U. High spirit is the religious commitment that motivated the founding of the school in 1818. Today, more than ever, the school seeks to provide an atmosphere in which each student can develop a lifelong familiarity with God and a determination to live not just for himself but for others. With His help we can look to the future with confidence.

Robert F. Weiss, S. J. '42
President

About this booklet . . . Classes began on Oakland Avenue in September of 1924. The following pages attempt to capture something of the flavor of life at Backer Memorial during the past half century. The booklet is meant to be both a modest expression of gratitude to George and Anna Backer and the hosts of other benefactors through the years and also a tribute to the nearly ten thousand alumni of St. Louis U. High. To the school's many devoted friends, especially the contributors and advertisers whose efforts made this publication possible, a sincere thanks.

Through the Years at Backer

In the fall of 1818, the Missouri Gazette carried the following announcement: "The Reverend Mr. Francis Niel, assisted by three other clergymen and under the auspices and superintendence of the Rt. Rev. Bishop, will open on 16 November next, in the house of Mrs. Alvarez, Church Street, an academy for young gentlemen."

This was the humble beginning of St. Louis University and St. Louis University High, the first community school west of the Mississippi. The house owned by Mrs. Alvarez was a stone building with a gallery and was located on the corner of Church (later called Second Street) and Market. Tuition was \$12 a quarter.

The school was originally called St. Louis Academy, but by 1820 it had become St. Louis College. In 1832 a university charter was received from the state of Missouri, and the name was changed to St. Louis University. The high school, however, continued to be referred to as the Academy, and remained identified in location and administration with St. Louis University until 1924 when it entered its own new building on Oakland Avenue and became known as St. Louis University High School.

The "new" St. Louis U. High was made possible by a gift from Mrs. Anna F. Backer. In the early years of her married life, Mrs. Backer had been active in the Altar Society at the College Church and had become acquainted with the pastor, Father Michael L. O'Connor. After her husband, George H. Backer, died in 1919, her admiration for the work of Father O'Connor and her realization that the Jesuits needed more adequate facilities prompted her to suggest to Father O'Connor a high school as a memorial for her late husband. The idea of a boys' high school had a strong appeal to Mrs. Backer because she and her husband had been childless. In the years to come, she would affectionately refer to the students of Backer Memorial as "my boys." In addition to the original donation of the school, Mrs. Backer left most of her estate to St. Louis U. High. When she died in 1936, the entire faculty and student body attended the services.

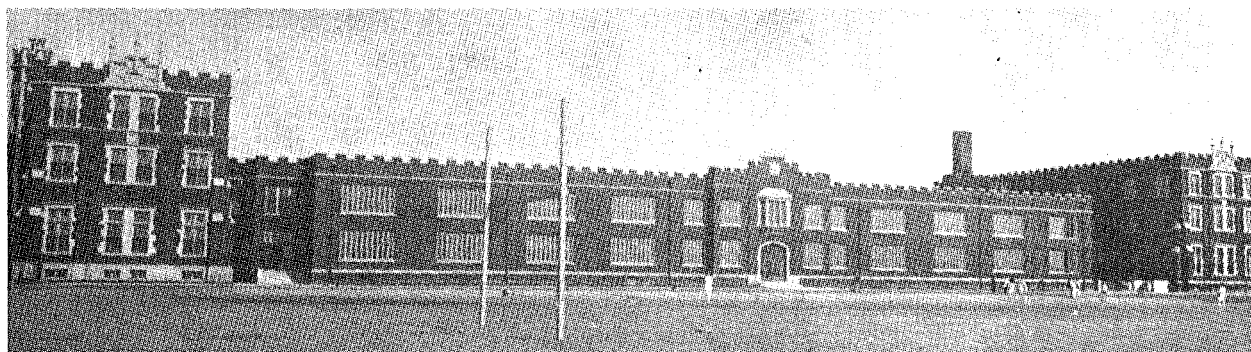
During the fifty years that St. Louis U. High has been at its present Oakland Avenue location, great



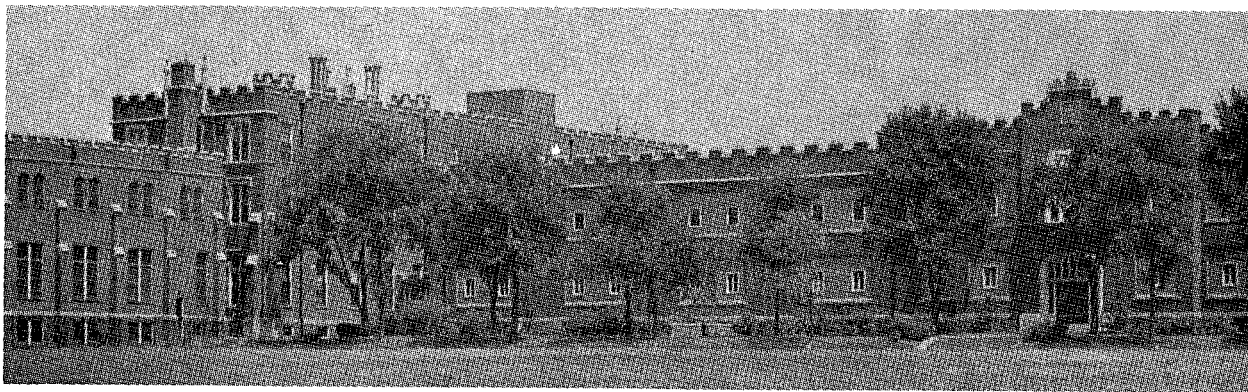
Mrs. Anna F. Backer sits surrounded by "her boys" at the cornerstone laying of the George H. Backer Memorial on April 15, 1923.

changes have been made in the school's physical plant. In September of 1927, just three years after the opening of Backer Memorial, a severe tornado struck the school. Large portions of the roof collapsed, and most of the building's windows were shattered. Particularly hard hit were the library and gymnasium (present auditorium). Although the tornado's fury struck the school during classes, no one was seriously injured. Damage was estimated at \$150,000.

Enrollment at St. Louis U. High during the twenties averaged about 500 students, and many of the unused classrooms were boarded up. The first large scale expansion took place in the mid-forties. A recreation room and locker facilities were excavated out of the previously basementless building, and in 1946 ground was broken for a new wing extending westward on Oakland Avenue. The chapel refectory and kitchen of the faculty residence were turned into



St. Louis U. High looks rather bleak in this early photograph of the west side of the school.



Contrasting with the barren appearance of earlier years, the west side in the late forties began to sport foliage and shrubbery.

faculty living rooms, and a chapel with nine altars and an enlarged dining room and kitchen replaced the former facilities.

In October of 1954, construction began on a fully-equipped gymnasium and activities wing to be located on the south side of the building. Completed in January of 1956, the addition provided space for four counseling rooms, three publications offices, an athletic office, locker rooms, a band room, a common room for lay teachers, and one of the finest high school gymnasiums in the St. Louis area. The year 1971 saw the completion of a magnificent new library containing over 20,000 volumes with space for an additional 20,000. It is fully equipped in every sense of the word: private conference rooms, innumerable carrels, typing rooms, microfilm readers, copying machine, etc.

The past half century has witnessed numerous changes of a very different sort at St. Louis U. High. At the time of the opening of the school in 1924, three courses of study were available—classical, scientific,

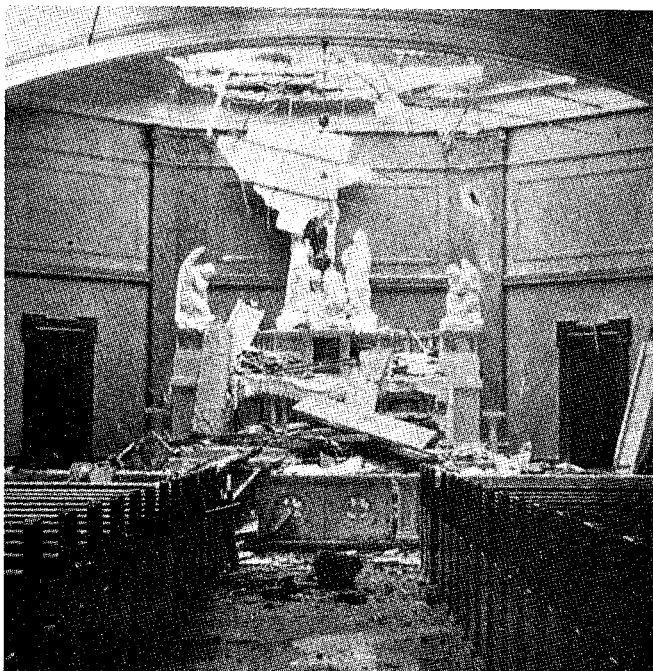
and special. The special program, similar in concept to today's 1-8-1-8 program, enabled participants to complete Third Academic and Second Academic (freshman and sophomore years) in a single year. Greek has given way to Chinese and Russian, and recent years have seen biology and physical science join physics and chemistry in the science department. Changes in the social sciences, fine arts, and religion have been equally significant. Advanced courses for college credit are available in the English, Latin, mathematics, foreign language, science, and social studies departments.

But a school is only as good as its faculty and student body. The final report of the North Central Association, an organization with members in eighteen midwestern states which evaluates member secondary schools, colleges, and universities, had this to say after a visit to the school last February: "It (St. Louis University High School) can rightly boast of an excellent faculty, from the standpoint both of academic background and personal interest in its students. The entire visiting committee was overwhelmingly impressed with the quality and academic seriousness of the student body and the fine professionalism of the faculty."

Regarding the academic achievements of the student body, the report states the following: "It is a school that has had a magnificent history from the standpoint of the accomplishments of its graduates. In the last five years it has produced 85 National Merit Finalists, and 216 of its graduates have received National Merit Scholarship Letters of Commendation. It has also produced three Rhodes Scholarship Fellows, an achievement for which any university would be proud. More than 99% of its graduates attend college, and 75% go on for graduate degrees."

But there is something else that makes St. Louis U. High the unique institution that it is. This distinguishing feature is the famous school "spirit." From the days of Mrs. Backer right down to the present, there has been a certain feeling of community among faculty, student body, and alumni. Although difficult to define with any precision, this spirit manifests itself in any number of ways. It's busloads of students journeying miles to attend a football game. It's all four classes working together to produce a

(Continued on Page 3)



Aftermath of the tornado which struck St. Louis U. High in 1927, just three years after the opening of Backer Memorial.

Things to Remember

Reverend Raymond M. Tully, S.J. '26

Several events stand out when I recall my four years at St. Louis U. High. Perhaps the most vivid recollection I have is of the visit paid to the school by the Sioux Indians of the St. Francis Mission of South Dakota. It was during their stay that we decided to give our only Japanese classmate, Freddy Sakata, his first horseback ride.

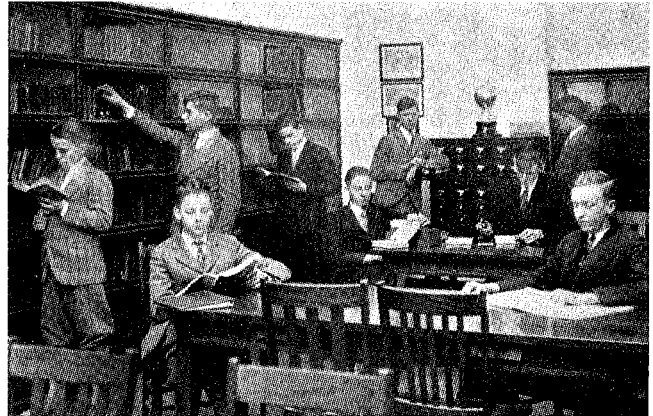
Freddy was boosted onto the horse without a great deal of trouble and was doing just fine until one of the students decided to give the horse a friendly slap on the rear. The startled animal immediately bolted away with Freddy clinging to the reins for dear life. Jesuit scholastics poured out of the school and finally



Ready, aim, fire! The 1938 Camera Club poses for their own photograph in front of Backer Memorial.

(Continued from Page 2)

successful Spring Carnival. It's students and faculty giving up precious free time to work on the Fall Frolics. It's seniors spending three weeks among the city's poor and less fortunate as part of their Senior Project. It's students and faculty sitting down together and discussing anything at anytime. Above all, it's everyone—students, faculty, alumni, and friends of St. Louis U. High—giving generously of their time and talents to make this a better school. That is the essence of St. Louis University High School.



SLUH students gather in the library in this 1927 photograph. Though its location has changed over the years, the library remains a focal point for intellectual activity at Backer Memorial.

managed to corral the horse, but not before Freddy Sakata had been taken for a ride he would never forget.

That same evening the St. Louis U. High basketball team played the Indian team before a large crowd in the school gymnasium. The Junior Billikens led from start to finish, and after it was obvious that victory was only a matter of time, the visitors were applauded on every occasion. Halftime entertainment that night included a Sioux ceremonial dance.

Basketball provided another highlight of my stay on Oakland Avenue. In 1925 St. Louis U. High participated in the National Catholic Prep Tournament in Chicago. After winning our opening two games against teams from Lima, Ohio, and Pueblo, Colorado, we lost to Marquette University High which went on to the finals. I can still remember the headlines in the Chicago newspapers after our opening game victory, "St. Louis wins a hot one, 21-19."

Over a hundred students accompanied the team to Chicago where we stayed at the Edgewater Beach Hotel. We were bunked two to a room and had an 11 o'clock curfew which was ignored on more than one occasion. The members of the team were allowed to keep the blue sweaters with the initials "SL" on the pocket as a memento of their trip to the Windy City.

Another vivid memory I have is of the oratorical contests held among the students of St. Louis U. High. One stands out particularly well. The St. Louis University Law School auditorium was packed, and the three judges cast three different first place ballots. Jim McClellan eventually emerged victorious by capturing the most second place votes.

Reverend Lucius F. Cervantes, S.J. '32

Then, as now, it was "the" high school. Other students may have been from Soldan or Roosevelt, Ladue or C.B.C., but we all knew that "the" high school was located at 4970 Oakland Avenue. Perhaps we never questioned why we referred to St. Louis U. High as "the" high school, but the passage of time has made it easier to see why we considered ourselves to be the most fortunate students in town.

Throughout its history St. Louis University High has been closely linked to one of the finest Catholic universities in the land. In 1932 the curriculum was classical, and the "profs" were the last word — so we thought then and still have reason to believe. There

and violations were met with swift and proper punishment.

Hand in hand with discipline went a genuine concern for the spiritual development of the students. "What does it profit a man if he gains the whole world but suffers the loss of his immortal soul?" These words from our freshman retreat were the focal point of our education. The cross in the classroom, the yearly retreat, daily Mass, and the prayers before class were constant reminders of this fact.

None of these factors, however, completely explains why St. Louis U. High students and alumni have



A photograph of the 1943 St. Louis University High orchestra. The '43 Dauphin noted that the orchestra played such favorites that year as "That Old Black Magic," "Moonlight Becomes You," and "For Me and My Gal."

was Mr. Cal Alexander who used his classes to discuss materials for his renowned work on the Catholic Literary Renaissance. There was Father Hendrix of "Basic English and Rhetoric" fame. There were Mr. Perk and Mr. Miller, both outstanding in the physical sciences for more than a quarter of a century. There was Father Dolan completing his doctorate at a time when doctorates were extremely rare.

A strong academic program alone, however, did not make the school the unique institution that it was and is. Discipline was a St. Louis U. High tradition. Whether in the classroom, the chapel, or jug (where pages of poetry were to be memorized before offenders could leave school in the evening) one knew what was expected of him. Regulations were explicit,

always felt so close to the school. I personally feel that the Jesuit scholastics have played the key role in the development of the St. Louis U. High "spirit." When I was at Backer, the scholastics played handball with us, ate hamburgers with us, talked with us about girls, cars, the future, everything. Just a few years older than the students, the scholastics were not old enough to be "squares," but were still advanced enough physically and intellectually to command our respect and admiration.

Many years have passed since the class of '32 left the hallowed halls of Backer Memorial. I can honestly say, however, that I have never met a graduate of St. Louis U. High who does not pride himself on the fact that he spent four years of his life at "the" high school.

Bob Hyland '36

When I first attempted to write these reminiscences, the memories were hazy, lost somewhere in the years between 1936 and 1974. But then the memories began to flood back with surprising sharpness and clarity—and what pleasant memories they are.

First and foremost, I remember the great Jesuit teachers. The memory of Father Leahy, with his wisdom and compassion, is particularly vivid. There were many others, however: Father Keno, who so diligently schooled us in the mysteries of algebra . . . Father Hendrix, master of geometry, who took unerring aim at the inattentive with small pieces of chalk . . . Father Dismas Clark, leader of our choir, who urged us to sing out loud and clear. "The good lord won't mind if your voices aren't great," he told us, and sing out we did.

It is not easy to forget the chilling glance of Father Roche, the toughest disciplinarian this side of a Marine drill instructor. The slightest infraction or slacking off on studies brought time in the "jug," our schoolboy slang for being kept after hours. I remember, too, the patience of Father Benoit as he led us through the maze of French conjugations and Mr. Miller, our chemistry teacher, who endured endless laboratory failures, resulting in either the rotten egg effect or shattering explosions. Each had much to give the restless and energetic group of boys that made up the class of '36.

Extracurricular activities also stand out in my memory. The 1936 varsity baseball team was one of the greatest in the city's history. I well remember the long hours of practice, the planning of strategy, the joy of victory, the pride in being a starting outfielder. This was a special thrill for me since my father, Dr. Robert Hyland, Sr., was then the "surgeon general" of major league baseball.

Nor will I ever forget the advertising staff of the Dauphin, the school yearbook. It was my first venture into the magic world of the media, a world I have made my life's work. I caught the fever there, on the Dauphin staff.



Scene from the Dramatic Guild's 1948 production of *The Man Who Came to Dinner*. Left to right: Lou Tucci, Frank Cabrilliac, Don Connolly.

Drama was another unforgettable experience. As a callow teenager, I struggled to portray an elderly judge with the aid of a cane and a fine job of makeup and hair whitening. The Science Club, the Elocution Society, the Debating Team all made my years at St. Louis U. High something special.

But there was another dimension to those years beyond that of the classroom, the baseball diamond, and the activity room. That dimension was spiritual and was the focal point of all activity. Both the Sodality and the Alcolythical Society played major roles in our spiritual development, and membership in both was considered quite an honor.

When all is said and done, however, we learned most of all from our exposure to the great Jesuits who guided us through every day and who taught us so much more than what was assigned in textbooks. The impact of Jesuit training, discipline, and principle proved to be the most important legacy of my years at St. Louis University High. Its influence has far transcended that of the printed page and the spoken word of the classroom. The Jesuits taught us more than how to learn. They taught us how to live.



Pictured in this photograph are the 1948 state debate champs. Left to right: Herson, Dowling, Rebholz, McMahon. St. Louis U. High speech and debate teams have won numerous awards on both the metropolitan and state levels.

Jake McCarthy '43

The first thing an old grad might remember on the 50th anniversary of Backer Memorial is that the locker room always smelled older than the rest of the place. When I first walked those halls in the fall of 1939, I had no idea the building had opened only fifteen years earlier. Pictures of previous graduating classes lined the walls, and alumni ten years older than myself seemed ancient then. I don't know if there's enough wall space on which to hang the pictures of all 50 graduating classes, but if the class of '43 is still there, I can imagine how old we must seem to a freshman class born in 1960. After all, there was no television to distract us from our two suggested hours of homework every night; we did it to the Lux Radio Theatre. It was so long ago that we went to school by streetcar.

When I went to my 30th class reunion last year, however, none of us felt particularly ancient. Why should we — we're just cresting at 50. Some of the old grads couldn't drink as well as they once did at Candlelight House. Not many could still fit into their old sailor suits, and some didn't need a comb anymore. But we remembered each other and the old school.

Students are a lot different now. Some say they are hipper. We had to wear a tie. I use the singular because most of us wore the same one all year regardless of its appearance. Guys who went out with girls were called "hot dogs." Some of them have now been married for 30 years, but a Jesuit education trains a man for heroism.

I was a little bashful in those days; the fact that I was an eighth-string end may have had something to do with it. The highlight of my athletic career occurred when I got leg cramps and dropped out of the 880 in my

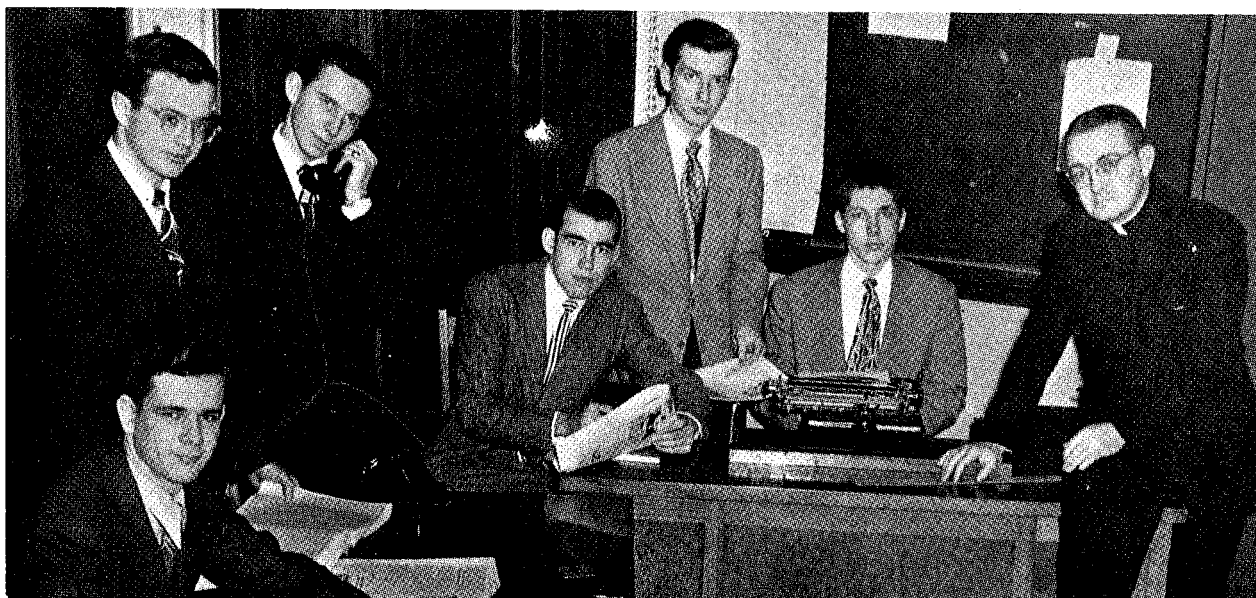
only varsity track meet. Nobody seemed to notice, however, because the rest of the runners were so far ahead.

While I was at St. Louis U. High, I set a still-standing world record of 29 consecutive refusals for a date. At 6-foot-4 and 147 pounds, I would have been ideal for modern jeans and hair, but the style was considered tubercular then. Nature later over-balanced my proportions.

Places called "Viz" and St. Joe's seemed to be full of unattainable creatures who were somehow different from boys and, judging from religion class, demaging to one's immortal soul via something called "necking." I was so ignorant in those days that for the 1942 Junior Prom, I called a girl over the Christmas holidays to get a date in May. By the time I called her the second time in April, she had forgotten who I was so I sandwiched with a friend who needed the use of my mother's 1936 Ford.

I wasn't very active during my high school days. The only entry after my name in the yearbook is "Sodality." I never worked for the school newspaper or joined the debating team. I was a very shy and uncertain kid, and when I was asked to write the class story for our junior yearbook, I was astounded and grateful.

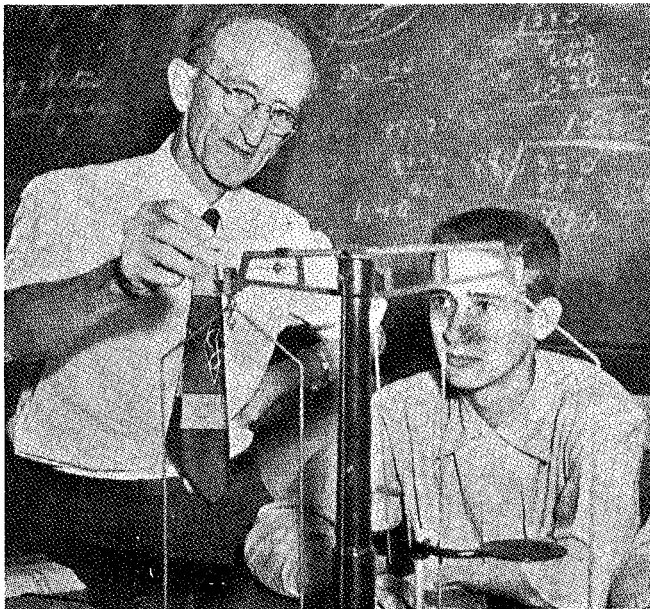
Being "out of it," however, was something my years at St. Louis U. High helped me overcome. The men who taught me and the classmates who supported one another — jock or poet, hot dog or basket case — shaped the outlines of my later life. You couldn't get that personal, human element very many other places in the world. The good solid life foundation that brought the class of 1943 through World War II and through the various struggles of finding a place in life,



Pictured here is the staff of the 1949 Prep News. Seated: Tom Rauch, George O'Sullivan, Ed Higgins, Fr. John J. Divine, S. J., Moderator. Standing: John Flavan, Bob Bardgett, Leo Fitzmaurice. The SLUH Prep News has often been cited for its imaginative design and thorough coverage of student events.

raising a family, and ultimately figuring out most of what was going on in the world around us — that is the real story of St. Louis U. High and its fifty years on Oakland Avenue.

When we had that 30th anniversary reunion last year, it amazed me how close I felt to the school that took me from a seedling, implanted good ground around me, and sent me off to grow. Time I still have, perhaps, being not yet 50, to practice what the old school taught me: to respect each man for what he is, to strive to be yourself, to be friends to brothers walking different roads. It was The High School that first taught me that, and that's the best thing there is to remember.



Pictured in this 1953 photograph are Larry Perk and one of the thousands of students he taught during his long tenure at Backer.

William Einspanier '48

Entering St. Louis U. High as a freshman in 1944, you were greeted by the Honor Roll listing alumni serving in the war. For someone just out of grade school, it was hard to comprehend that those with the gold stars beside their names had left by the same door just a few years earlier. Some of these men we would meet four years later in college classes, but now our primary concern was the completion of the basement recreation room.

At the risk of omitting many who gave this period at St. Louis U. High its particular character, I would have to mention the following: Father Maurice Van Ackeren, a strong but soft-spoken and sympathetic principal . . . Father Richard R. Rooney, the kindly president whom Mrs. Backer probably had in mind when she gave her money to the school . . . Father Tom Kelly, who taught equally well on the guitar and in the classroom . . . Father Michael Hindelang, a tough Latin teacher affectionately known as "Black Mike" . . . Father John J. Divine, who could turn a pep rally

into a religious experience . . . Carl Miller, who invented chemistry . . . Lawrence Perk, whose patience matched his knowledge of physics . . . James Robinson and Charles Conway, who are teaching the sons of former pupils even today.

Faculty members, however, are not all that come to mind when I look back upon my four years at Backer. Among the more vivid memories are the following: daily Mass followed by doughnuts and milk; the last morning class followed by a stack of leathery hamburgers; proms in the gym when they still played "Good Night, Sweetheart;" the Forest Park streetcar that stopped in front of the school; the outdoor handball courts; the building of a float for the Homecoming parade.

Extracurricular activities involved almost everyone. If you weren't practicing a sport, giving a speech for the Bellarmine Forensic Society, writing a story for the Prep News, rehearsing a play, attending a club, sodality, or student council meeting, you were down in the new recreation room trying to sink the ten ball in the corner pocket. Few parents expected their sons home much before dinner.

Athletic success has always been a St. Louis U. High hallmark, and the class of '48 experienced some of the school's finest moments. In 1945 Ed Macauley became Backer's first All-American basketball player. The following year saw the Junior Billikens win their first state basketball championship. A district championship in football and a 46-0 win over C.B.C. were other highlights of the period.

The class of '48 held its 25 year reunion last fall, and a great many members returned to spend a couple of evenings renewing friendships and reminiscing. Father Van Ackeren, now President of Rockhurst College, celebrated Mass in the old chapel, and "the coach," George Hasser, addressed us at the closing dinner. As George rose to speak, the class of '48, including almost all of the members of that year's football team, gave him a standing ovation. George had lost none of his charisma. Suddenly we were back at a bonfire rally listening to George explain why the pride of St. Louis U. High encompassed much more than touchdowns.



The Senior Sodality of 1954. Standing: Mr. O'Flaherty, L. McKeown, Ahearn, Fr. John Doyle. Seated: Raymond, B. Roy. Spiritual growth has always been a goal of SLUH.

Stephen Darst '50

A reminiscence — "Your own impressions of SLUH" — sounds like an assignment to write one of those monthly roundups (Ritenour Rappings . . . Soldan Scuttlebutt) that cluttered the pages of the old Prom Magazine. To wrap up four years which ended almost a quarter of a century ago, to hit even the highlights in 700 to 800 words, is not easy.

You look up old Dauphins, years 1946-50, but instead of refreshing your memory, they distort it. My own record was one of really stunning underachievement, mediocrity on the grand scale. The sheer lack of weight of the accomplishments is brought home by a glance at the yearbooks, and self-reproach comes back along with the pleasant memories. If academic and athletic honors were beyond reach, I could have at least taken more of an interest in the gun club, stamp collecting, the literary club, or the sodality.

"Ceiling Zero" was the theatrical production of my senior year, and I hoped to supply at least a line in the Dauphin with a walk-on role. To be precise, I



A SLUH institution: the smoker.

played the role of "Sparks," the radio operator who was on stage virtually throughout the production, tinkering with a radio and throwing off mood lines like, "I can't seem to get Passaic." For some reason, not a single member of the cast ever memorized his part. I kept a copy of the script on stage at all times at my radio operator's desk. Whenever someone forgot his lines, he would throw off a remark like, "Wait a minute, let me go see if Sparks has gotten through to Lefty in his plane over Passaic." While at my desk he would search frantically for his next line.

Lists of names with brief identifications would take up more than 800 words: Father Benoit

Eight

(jubilarian, late-movie accent, hands that trembled badly except when holding a pool cue at which time they became surgically steady); Father Tom Kelly (booming 50-yard punts, powerful retreat talks); Salvatore Gallo ("Today, we will discuss Henry VIII. This particular individual. . ."); Father Mongahan (heavyweight wrestler's bearing, old school oratorical style); George Hasser (incredible coaching record, faculty for sounding pessimistic about the team's chances at pep rallies, even when the upcoming opponent was a dog).

Looking through the yearbooks, I find it impossible to resist one last multiple choice test. I pause at each name to recall those who did well in school and in later life; those who did well in school, not so well later; poor in school, well later; poor in school, poor later — one answer only, blacken the space between the parallel lines with a number five pencil.

Unfortunately, there are so many I have lost track of and a great number that I don't remember at all. This should not be surprising since it is not a small school. Later, at St. Louis University, students who had gone to other high schools were constantly annoyed when we talked of having attended "the" high school. But that's exactly how we viewed it.

Jim Hitchcock '56

One of the notable (but seldom noted) things about St. Louis U. High in the 1950's was its ability to attract a cross section of at least the white Catholic population of the metropolitan area through its central location and its relatively low tuition (\$180 per year, as I recall). The image of the school was elitist, but this was only partially true. Entrance requirements were high, and a heavy percentage of the student body might be classified as upper middle class. On the other hand, there were few students from truly wealthy families. Youths from working class families relied on intelligence and hard work to lay the foundations for distinguished careers in a wide variety of fields. The atmosphere of the school was bracing because it was an institution where ability was recognized and rewarded.

This is not to say that social distinctions were unimportant. They were rarely, if ever, publicly adverted to, and the official philosophy of the school denied their existence. Still, the usual tangibles and intangibles of social groupings (dress and hair styles, the right kind of slang, dating girls from the right schools) did tend to define an inner circle of students whose members recognized each other. Here the meritocracy of the institution was only partially influential. Athletic prowess was sufficient to overcome the lack of the right social attributes; mere intellect was not.

Although there was little, if any, conscious snobbery involved, the style of what might be called

somewhat unfairly the "West End Crowd" did tend to be accepted as normative, even by some of the faculty. The ideal St. Louis U. High student of the 1950's was not a grind, which was what upwardly mobile boys from north and south St. Louis tended to be. One year a scholastic attempted to reduce the membership of the Sodality to the really "serious" students, who turned out to be primarily West Enders. On the whole they appeared to be the most personable and "well-rounded"; perhaps they were.

St. Louis U. High students were disliked then as well as now for their cockiness and boastfulness. These faults were not without benefit, however. I have never encountered an institution so capable of instilling in its members a sense of their own importance. In an age of uncertainty, this is no small achievement.

Frank Weyforth, Jr. '58

It is impossible to drive down Highway 40 without periodically being jogged into the past by the sight of the huge reddish brick fortress on Oakland Avenue. I can almost hear the screams emanating from the gym, and occasionally my tongue gets a little dry as I recall the hot summer afternoons the football team spent eating the dust of the practice field.

Somehow it doesn't seem very long ago, that day when my dad dropped me off for the first time and I walked into the building and felt a presence of something larger than myself, not really frightening, but something that I really couldn't explain. How could I forget that first class? The black-robed demon bellowed out in almost challenging rage, "Whatever you thought you knew before today, you can forget because your learning starts today."

It wasn't very long before I was to meet Father Henle. How was I to know what Henle's language would do to me? About that time a fellow named Lou pushed a pencil in my back, and a new friendship was made. Freshman football practice began, and the constant fear of being cut from the team became a powerful unifying force among the class of '58. A broken arm kept me on the sidelines most of that first season, but working around the cage with a big redheaded scholastic named Gibbons somehow eased the pain.

The first semester was almost over when class changes sent some of us to other homerooms. For a while it seemed as though our whole world had been ripped apart, but this proved to be only one of many challenges we were to meet and overcome. Soon it was spring and time for track. I can still remember C. J. Taylor, the varsity football coach, coming into our homeroom and asking everyone who had played football to raise his hand. "We'll expect to see all you boys out for track tomorrow," he said, and left the room. Pretty soon the year was over. We had made some friends, learned a little, and found a new way of life. We were beginning to feel we belonged.



Homecoming '55. The king crowns the queen in the presence of the court.

It wasn't long until football practice rolled around again, signalling the beginning of our sophomore year. By this time we'd learned the meaning of words like "Sodality," "Bellarmine Club," and "Dauphin Players." We were about to learn the meaning of another — geometry. Somehow we had survived algebra, but this only served to make us a little too cocky for our upcoming encounter with Father Conroy. I'm not sure whether it was his recurring rage or the triangle's hypotenuse that made it seem so tough, but we knew we were in for a long year.

All the while our sophomore football team was struggling. Finally Father Tom, then the scholastic Mr. Swift, decided it was time to separate the men from the boys. He pulled two dummies together just close enough to allow one person to squeeze through and put half of us on one side of the dummies and half of us on the other. He then quietly said, "We are going to see what this football team is made of."

It seemed as though we spent the next four days running through that little hole. Although we got angrier with each successive trip, we knew we had it coming. One reason I'll never forget that day is that Big Mike Metzger was in the hole every time it was my turn to run through the tackling dummies. I still shudder when I think about it. These drills must have

had some benefit, however, because we gave the varsity all it could handle in a scrimmage a few days later — a scrimmage, alas, in which yours truly was injured again.

Geometry with Father Conroy was tough enough, but we hadn't seen anything yet; it was time for our mid-year retreat. The very first day, in the middle of one of our sessions in the student council room above the old gym, someone dropped a coin. In a flash Father Conroy leaped upon it, dashed over to the window, and threw it down into the gymnasium. As it fell to the ground, he bellowed, "I'll be damned if a half a dollar will come between you and God." The silence was deafening. We have laughed about that day many times since, and I don't think I'll ever forget that retreat.

That spring we spent many an afternoon in philosophical discussion with Mr. O'Brien, Mr. Hersen, and Mr. Swift, three scholastics very close to our class. I still remember some of the discussions about God, sin, right and wrong, and what makes the world go round. This was the first time that many of us had ever had our beliefs challenged.

With the arrival of our junior year, each of us began to chart his own course, whether it was to see the face that launched a thousand ships or follow the critical path of advanced trig with Mr. Conroy. It was a year of highs and lows. Football was a low, but basketball was a high as Cochran, McGinn, and Nordmann led us into the semifinals of the state tournament for the first time in several years.

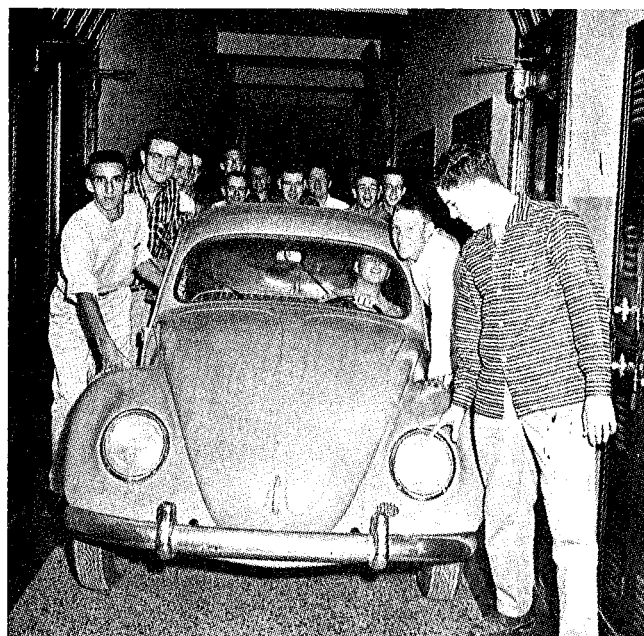
Senior year arrived almost before we knew it, but we were ready to make our mark. The summer had been spent reorganizing the student council, putting plans together for a student teaching program to help those who needed it, and writing skits for the Fall Frolics. Our football team upset unbeaten powerhouse East St. Louis on the way to a respectable 6-2-1 record. Naturally I was injured again in the Assumption game and paid \$6.00, \$3.50, and \$1.00 in the senior pool.

Still, the highlight of our senior year had to be the performance of the basketball team. After a come-from-behind early season win over Chaminade, the team gathered momentum as the season progressed and swept to an unbeaten state championship. We were No. 1, no doubt about it!

During our final days at St. Louis U. High, Fathers Kellett and Doyle took us in hand to produce our senior play, "My Fair Laddy." Although I didn't think about it at the time, the theme of the play could easily have been applied to our class, perhaps any class. No one will forget Thad Strobach's emergence from the crowd to play the lead, the dance of the Jesuits by Jack Miltman and Jack Pohrer, or Rick Loman and Denny McDaniel's portrayal of two bums.

Graduation was now at hand, and I was salutatorian and Tony Sestric valedictorian. Tony, a four-year Bellarman, did his usual outstanding job. I am not quite sure how mine turned out because, much to Father Curry's chagrin, I tore up my speech while we were getting dressed. Somehow it didn't say what I wanted it to. I just wanted to thank the school for four

great years — thanks for preparing us not only for college but for the many demands we were to meet in later life.



One-way hall: SLUH students solve the parking problem in this 1957 photo.

Reverend John F. Kavanaugh, S.J. '59

I've often thought about what really went on at St. Louis U. High during the late fifties, not so much in terms of events or personalities, but rather through the filters of social and cultural patterns which we all duplicated and in some ways quietly, almost surreptitiously, began to call into question. An undefeated season for a basketball team that was nationally ranked, a triple overtime game in Effingham where skin crawled, national honors for a rifle team as well as the Dauphin Players — these things once thought so spectacular, what is their true importance when placed next to the thought of what might have been lastingly done to us? The rivalries between the North Side and the West End (and those from the South who wanted to be thought of as "West End"), the forging of friendships and lady loves, most of which would not withstand the distance of a year — all the relationships which were invested with importance have yielded to the unrelenting demands of newness.

But where are the continuities? There was a period of time during these last fifteen years when I thought the only continuities of our lives as ex-SLUH students were the values most wholeheartedly embraced by our culture. It was the second and perhaps most significant step through our educational factories. One thing most of us knew how to do was compete. After all, we had been told our first day of school that we were lucky to be there, sitting in those

seats that were desired by so many others. We fought each other and, together, fought others each day — not necessarily to achieve spectacular excellence, but certainly to survive, get by, and even be known. The battlegrounds changed (from Henle's grammar, to Caesar, to the gym, to the number of friends that might be mastered, to the girls' schools which were considered acceptable, to dance floors and parties, to student council meetings), but the pattern was remarkably stable. Achieve. Be not unwanted, unproductive, and most of all, unmarketable.

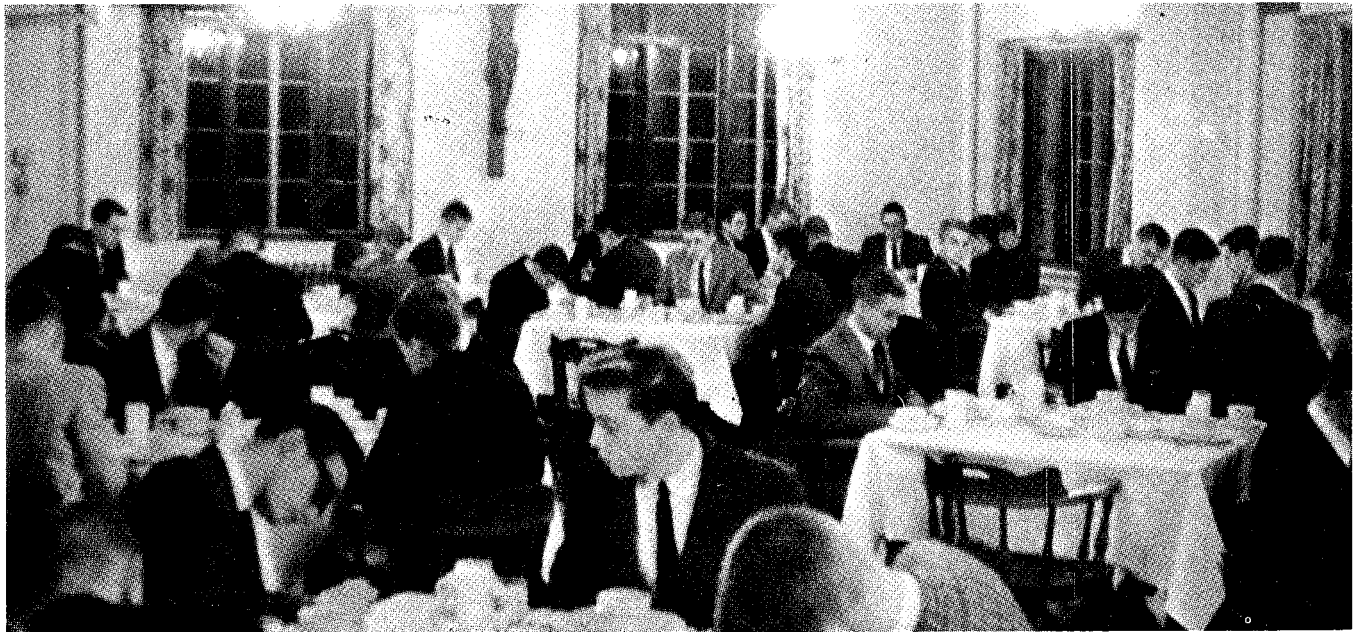
Even our faith so often found its expression in these terms, not just with rosaries and football games, but with the overtones of "elect" in the sodalities and the drawing power of Catholicism in the marketplace. To what extent had we learned to measure the efficacy of believing in terms of its utility or quantity? Had we believed in the power of numbers in retreats, confessions, and communions rather than in the power of the God we supposedly professed? The questions linger, but the answers are not forthcoming. One certitude, however, seems to prevail. To the extent that fidelity, that integrity, that commitment to the truth have lost or never had their grip on our lives, our continuities were not essential or even human things.

Yet things were never that simple, especially at this school. It was not only an institution that tried to do special things but, more importantly, it was one that had special people. Beyond the lectures, the competitions, the games, and the achievements there were the men and women who walked the school's halls. Their lives were soft-spoken, but they were thunderous opposition to the cultural gospel which had made its way even into our classrooms. There were Divines and Distlers, Coyles and Doyles, Campbells and Harts, Conways and Kelletts. It was the continuity and substance of their lives which has prevailed in the end.

In the culture which I later encountered, a culture which for the most part revealed men and women as mere replaceable machinery, which tells our children that the death of man has followed upon the death of God, and which proclaims that family, commitment, hope, and community are unattainable goals, these men and women who taught us by their very living, provided us with massive data to the contrary. They were there, with their families and children, in their single and singular lives, in their community of religious men working together, quite simply, for us and for what they believed. They were doing what many people had deemed impossible. They were able to set out on the long haul and proclaim a future for their own lives as well as ours.

In the past fifteen years, change has almost become a metaphysical principle. We never dreamed of a Catholic president or an English liturgy. We never conceived of a Watts or a My Lai. We never contemplated the possibility of assassinations, scarcity of natural resources, demonstrations or riots. We were dancing to Mathis and Presley. Some thought that the perimeters of our problems were Adlai or Ike, alcohol, petting, and hitchhiking.

Things changed, however. Some of us have already tasted the dust of competing and achieving. Many of us have discovered that lived Christianity is a minority religion in 1974. This merely makes our options clearer. We are able to choose the risky and delicate values of fidelity, hope, and love which will enable us to withstand the tremors of future shock. Having been through a certain place at a certain time of our lives, we find ourselves among the most privileged — those who need no proof that men and women might lead good lives, lives of integrity. Despite the shortcomings of the place and its time, we had experienced the redemptive power of such people.



A SLUH tradition: senior retreatants eating in silence at the White House. A memorable experience for all SLUH graduates, the senior retreat has played a key role in the religious development of Backerites for decades.

Dave Hume '63

Putting 205 guys, four years, and thousands of memories into eight hundred words is like trying to read and recall the *Odyssey* in a single night. I'm sure it can be done, but I'm not so sure I'm the one that can do it. With apologies all around, I doubt if I will be able to present the happiest, funniest, or most moving events that make up the memories of the class of '63.

The class of '63 was a one-year phenomenon, conceived during the glory of the "Hungry Huns," nurtured for several years by the inspiration of faculty members such as Father Jack and Fathers Kellett and Doyle, and culminating in a unit that exists in the archives of Backer Memorial simply as the Class of '63. But in September of 1959, two hundred individuals, most of us glad to be away from nuns, scared to death of the black-robed Jebbies, and hoping to meet some girls from different parishes, came together in the rooms 1A, 1G, 1E, etc. Finding out which homeroom



Carl Miller supervises SLUH chemistry students in 1966 photo. A veritable institution, Mr. Miller taught over 5,000 students during his four decades at Backer.

one was in academically was the first hurdle. It took a couple of days to figure out that 1A was not tops, but third, that 1E, then 1F, were the "bright" homerooms. (It was a silly game played annually at SLUH as the tract system which didn't exist caused the inevitable changes each year in homeroom designations).

What transpired to turn the individuals into a class is difficult to pinpoint. I'm sure the alumni before us and the present inheritors of our school would assign the word "spirit" to that class chemistry. The transition may have resulted from a simple combination of dedicated teachers and maturing students. Whatever the cause, by senior year barriers and cliques were gone. Geographical, intellectual, and social differences were unimportant. It became common knowledge that we lacked individual stars but were pretty damn good as a group.

On the athletic field we lacked brilliance but not guts. Steve Esslinger and Jim (Snurd) Godsil, John

Rataj and Ed Frank, never did fit the image of "high school hero." We managed to improvise, like John Sugrue turning into an all-state center or Bill Hollo taking center stage as Billy Budd. All of this is not to say that there weren't some fine accomplishments. John Kissel and the Bellarmine Club, the Fienups and Huckers of the rifle team, the cast of "Hatful of Rain" — all added to the traditional school honors.

There was no lack of leadership as senior year rolled around. It seemed to come from every quarter, from the top of the line officers Jim Barry, Ed Yoch, Jerry Cusumano, and Jerry Snodgrass to the core like Eric Stackle, Jim Harbaugh, Bob Seitz, or (place your own leader here).

Memories abound, mostly good, and there are legacies. The Aardwolfe Invitational Tournament (AIT) was a laughable thing to begin with, but it is still an intramural happening. Our movie for the Fall Frolics, SLUH perman, starring Tom Coffin, was a pretty humble affair, but the idea has often been repeated.

The class was loose and humorous. Guys like Frank Pawloski, John Hummel, Jerry Anselmo, and Pat Glynn were typical—witty, satirical, and able to avoid becoming Too Terribly Serious.

Who would have believed that Mr. Durso and Mr. Houlihan would become capable principals of two Jesuit high schools in St. Louis or that Paul Martel, starting with us in '59, would still be turning out undefeated football teams? I remember how happy a lot of people were when Snodgrass finally scored a touchdown . . . and guys joining glee club to get out of Mass . . . and Schrick and Chettle . . . and girl school reps who quickly dumped guys after Coronation . . . and Denny



Let's hear it for the Jr. Bills! The 1959 cheerleaders whoop it up.

Mulcahy and D.J. Morrison dressing up in the Follies . . . and (fill in your favorites here).

But it was a one year phenomenon, a fact which was sadly driven home at the 10-year reunion. Names, faces, and incidents no longer are easily called to mind — just an image, a certainty that '63 was a helluva good year with a bunch of damn good guys. But while the memories fade and friendships pass, there is still a warm feeling when driving down Oakland Avenue, a personal interest when SLUH is written up in the papers, and a great deal of pride in saying, "Yeah, I graduated from The, I mean, St. Louis U. High, Class of '63."

My decision to attend St. Louis U. High greatly pleased my parents who still believe that it was *their* influence, not Mike Bashwiner's, that delivered me to the halls of Backer. Lest I swerve from my chosen path and elect instead to attend DuBourg or, God forbid, Affton, they would remind me from time to time that St. Louis U. High was indeed a "special" school, and that a "special" education awaited my arrival.

It has now been sixteen years since I decided to attend St. Louie, and I still don't understand what they were talking about. Not that they were wrong, mind you. I remain a firm believer in the uniqueness of the



The SLUH entry in the 1973 Scholar Quiz. Front row: G. Suszko, G. Telthorst, Kucharski, Krussel. Back row: M. Conway, Dr. James Robinson, B. Kleiner. Dr. Robinson has been a fixture at SLUH since 1940 and is currently chairman of the social studies department.

Mark Abels '68

I don't remember if anyone ever asked me exactly when I decided to come to St. Louis U. High. It is, therefore, with some gratitude that I acknowledge this gift of column inches to ask the question of myself.

I made this momentous decision when I was but six years old. It came to me one afternoon in the parking lot of Seven Holy Founders elementary school in Affton, Missouri. Several of my first-grade friends and I were being picked up from school by our neighbor, Mrs. Ruth Bashwiner (the mother, incidentally of Tom Bashwiner, who later taught us high school Spanish). But that's a digression, and Mr. Treloar warned me never to digress. This was a happy afternoon for Mrs. Bashwiner as she brought news to her number three son, eighth-grader Mike, that he had been accepted at St. Louie. Upon hearing the news, Mike fairly danced out to Gravois Road and back in jubilation.

The effect on me was profound. I had never even heard of St. Louis U. High, but I decided then and there that if it was good enough to provoke that kind of reaction from Mike Bashwiner, whom I greatly admired, it was good enough for me. For the next six years or so I patiently waited my turn and filled the spare time by finishing grade school.

place, but I have yet to figure out the famous St. Louie "spirit" which made it so different from other schools. I suppose it was largely a myth, lovingly cultivated and perpetuated from the days of Mrs. Backer right up to the present. But myth or not, going to St. Louis U. High made us feel like pretty hot stuff.

Giants of the gridiron? Of course. Thanks to classmates like Walsh, Klosterman, Kinsella, and others considerably larger and more agile than myself, we had little practice at losing. We weren't really bad losers; we just couldn't comprehend the experience. While other schools were happy to place second or third in the Post-Dispatch poll, we would attribute such a dismal ranking to the well-known conspiracy among the sports writers and opposing coaches.

Artists *sans pareil*? You betcha. Surely few college troupes could match our dramatic excellence. (We did not compare ourselves with other high school players; it would have been pointless). And what group of 16-year-olds could match our senior movie? Bob Guignon pratfalling into a mud puddle, Tom Ryan skidding down the freshman hall on a camp toilet, the clever fast motion effects — it was almost too professional to believe.

Master entrepreneurs? No doubt about it! After all, what good is great art if it doesn't make a few

bucks? While other teenagers held car washes and spaghetti suppers, we turned away hundreds from our soul music dances. Our Senior Follies played to packed houses (made up mostly of parents and relatives, but they all paid in American money). And what of our Fall Frolics, that masterful commingling of mirth and money which, under the skillful guidance of Father O'Brien, annually drew thousands of St. Joe and Viz girls eager to give us their cash?

This was only natural. Uncertain as we may have been in our one-to-one confrontations with the other sex, we knew that, as a group, that blue and white jacket said it all. Of course there were a few young women whose plebeian tastes ran to the purple and gold, but they were hardly worth trifling with.

Yes, we were hot stuff, all right — young men of incomparable scholarship, deep conviction, and sparkling wit (certainly our pranks on beleaguered Mr. Short alone were enough to make the Marx brothers appear dour).

Seriously, though, there was a special feeling of some kind, the product of a lot of little moments and ideas shared. It came from hanging around after school to paint the world's longest pep rally sign; from getting together in Father O'B's office at noon rec; from working hard on a football team or a Fall Frolics and seeing it succeed; from being in a classroom where the teacher expected you to be able to think before you answered. It came from all of these things and more. I worked to produce a sense of brotherhood and camaraderie, a sense of belonging, a feeling of confidence and accomplishment not quite like any other I have ever known.

That was it, the famous spirit. Mostly mythical? Sure. The product more of memories mellowed than realities experienced? Maybe. But it's my myth and my memory, and I'm happy with it. I know quite a few other people who are, too.

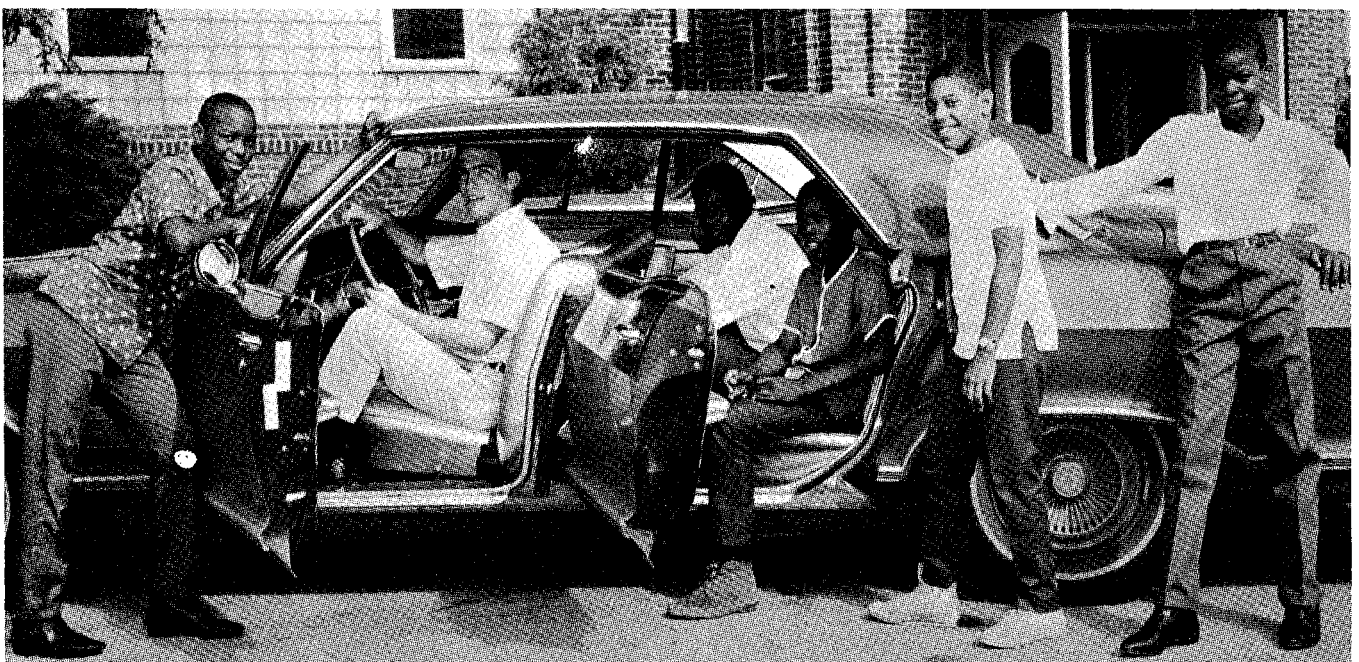
Joseph Castellano '71

I guess you could say that we were the beginning of the generation that put barber shops out of business. At least that was how the older folks liked to refer to us. They scoffed at what they called our "Yeah, yeah, yeah" music. While long hair sent crew cuts out with white socks, and the music of SLUH students in the late 60's and early 70's mellowed from "Yeah, yeah, yeah" to "You've Got a Friend," we just pleaded to be listened to as adults. It was this struggle against the stigma of our youth that marked our high school years. It was a struggle to be recognized.

We remembered John Kennedy. He was the good-looking, funny-talking Catholic president who spoke of things we could understand though we were barely ten years old. We never got a good explanation why he was taken away from us. We were SLUH students when Martin Luther King, Jr. and Bobby Kennedy were killed. Maybe it was these tragedies that thrust us into the world of concern and involvement.

We became attuned to the message of hope, love, and brotherhood. We knew nothing of the complexities of government and very little about the complexities of human relationships, but we understood hope and concern. With an enthusiasm and naivete so typical of youthful idealists, we tried to understand the problems of the day.

Napalm bombs wiped out thousands of Southeast Asians as the so-called war for peace raged in Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia. Biafran children starved to death in Africa while black inmates and their hostages were killed at Attica. A man called Nixon assumed the leadership of the world's most powerful nation after defeating Hubert Humphrey and a disorganized and confused Democratic Party whose convention was



St. Louis U. High has always been committed to the future of the City of St. Louis. Pictured in this 1968 photograph are participants in the school-sponsored Upward Bound Program.

marked by riots and police brutality. Many of the rioters were college students just three or four years our senior.

Two years later, four protesting students at Kent State University were killed by National Guardsmen. We at St. Louis U. High took in this tragedy with a lot of concern and even more confusion. We were comfortably removed from the violence, but were uncomfortably denied the commitment. We wanted to yell "Stop!" to the injustices. We wanted to be recognized.

Frustration often blocked the paths of our idealism and enthusiasm, but we were not to be denied. Rather than ignoring the Other America, as we were advised, we begged to experience it. In 1971, we rallied the willing younger Jesuits and convinced or bulldozed the older ones into initiating the St. Louis U. High Senior Project. Essentially a three week taste of how the other side lives, the project provided seniors with the opportunity to talk with and listen to the poor of St. Louis. It was a major triumph in our struggle for recognition, and it enriched our high school experience considerably.

Through it all the feeling of friendship rose to the top of most SLUH students' priority lists. While academics often became little more than esoteric exercises and the problems of the world were too mind-boggling for easy solutions, the tender exchange of thoughts and emotions never ceased to bind us together. Friendships we felt then and have realized now were more important to us than anything else.

One final note. In looking back over the St. Louis U. High experience, it's hard to ignore the contribution of the Jesuits. Some former students say they are the best teachers going; others say they're not bad, for cheap help. Some say they stray too far from accepted procedure; others say they stick too rigidly by it. Some honor and respect them while others ridicule and berate them. None, however, can honestly say that they are not a dedicated group, to a man. They've accepted a commitment that demands long, hard hours for very little material reward. One of my SLUH religion teachers once said, "As a Jesuit priest, I'm either the world's biggest saint or its biggest fool."

As time passes, I hope all my former classmates will remember this dedication and remain receptive

to new friendships and sensitive to the problems of the less fortunate. This is what I remember most about St. Louis U. High.

Jerry Dwyer '75

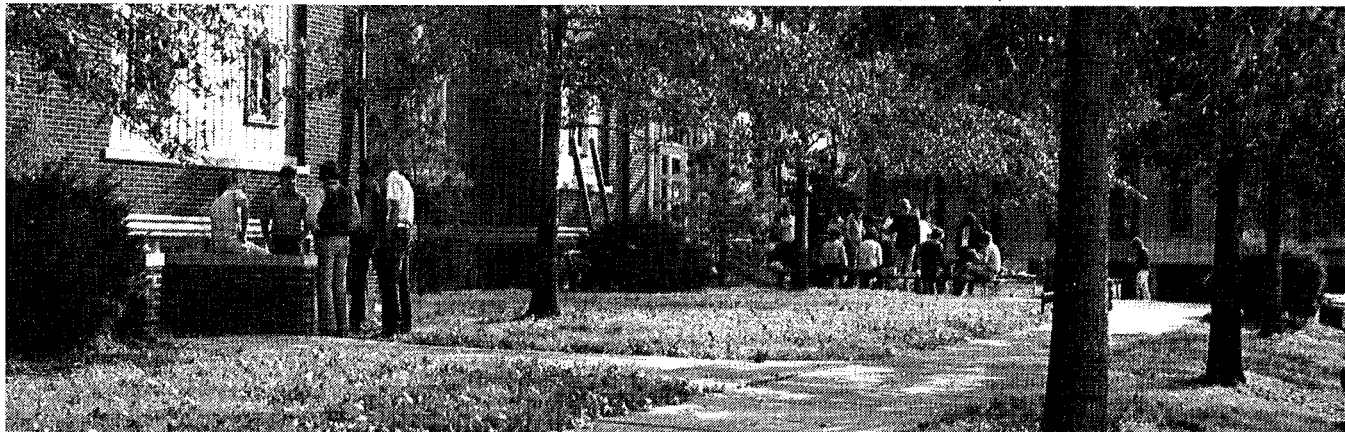
St. Louis U. High, SLUH, St. Louie, "the high school." By whatever name it's called, 4970 Oakland Avenue is a home-away-from-home for nine hundred boys from all over the St. Louis metropolitan area. Drawn from vastly different social and economic backgrounds, St. Louis U. High students are given four years of intensive training in college preparatory subjects. The final product is a student body equipped to meet the intellectual, social, and moral demands of the times.

St. Louis U. High and the Jesuits have been part of my vocabulary since I was four, when my oldest brother graduated from SLUH and entered the Society. No act of God prompted him to attend a Jesuit high school; my father simply encouraged him to get the best education possible. When both of one's parents are graduates of Fordham University, there is just no escaping the Jesuits.

Excellence has been the hallmark of St. Louis U. High. The list of accomplishments in academics, sports, and other extracurricular activities is virtually endless, but it takes more than this to make a high school truly great. That something extra at Backer Memorial is the spirit of community which permeates the school's walls.

This spirit manifests itself in many ways. It's a teacher staying after class to help a student. It's ten busloads of students going to Columbia for a football game. It's the various classes working together on the Fall Frolics or the Spring Carnival. It's the entire student body participating in the weekly Mass.

It all adds up to what Father Kellett meant when he addressed a pep rally before the C.B.C. football game in my freshman year: "We have each other. We have to achieve only one goal — the love and devotion of a family working together." It was this same love and devotion which Mrs. Backer undoubtedly had in mind when she donated the present school as a memorial to her late husband. Hopefully this spirit will remain as strong in the coming fifty years as it has been in the past fifty.



The west side of St. Louis U. High as it looks today.

A Word of Thanks

St. Louis University High School would not be the institution it is today without the efforts of a great many organizations on the school's behalf. While it is impossible to thank everyone individually, this booklet provides an opportunity to express sincere gratitude for the outstanding service rendered over the years by the school's principal organizations: the Mothers' Club, the Fathers' Club, and the Alumni Association.

The St. Louis U. High Mothers' Club was founded in 1927 to help raise funds to repair the damage caused by the tornado which struck the school that year. The primary functions of the club are summarized in its constitution: (1) to unite interested women in the general welfare of St. Louis University High School; (2) to enlist as many St. Louis U. High mothers as possible in actively participating in the particular projects sponsored by the club; and (3) to establish and maintain close cooperation and cordial relations among the following St. Louis U. High groups: the members of the faculty, the members of the Mothers' Club, and the members of the student body.

Through the years this organization of devoted mothers has more than lived up to its constitution. As a result of the efforts of the Mothers' Club, scholarship funds have been established, band and athletic equipment has been purchased, and the present school cafeteria was furnished. Over the past five years, the

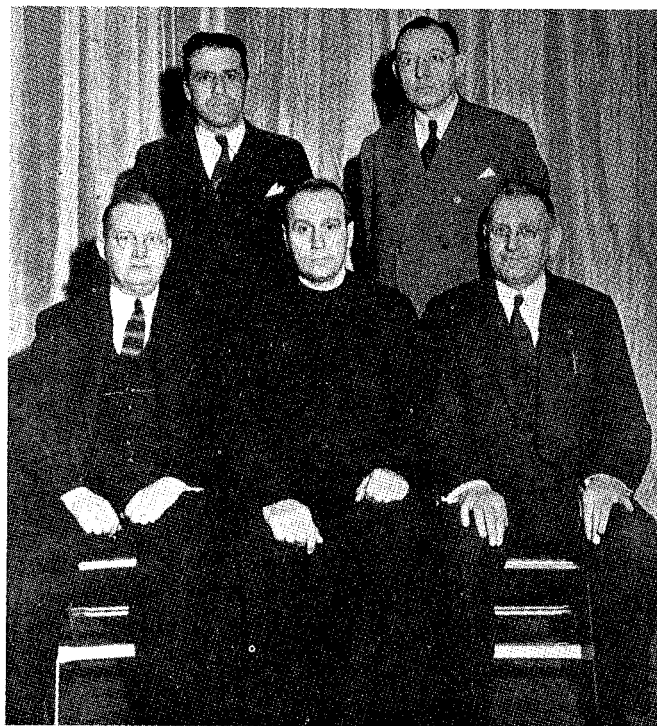


Photograph of Mothers' Club Card Party. The annual card party is a highlight of the Mothers' Club activities calendar.



Photograph of the 1939 Mothers' Club meeting. The 1929 Dauphin had this to say about the Mothers' Club: "What they have accomplished in the way of bringing a more home-like and human touch into school life and school relationships is beyond present estimation." Forty-five years later, these words still ring true.

club has contributed over \$30,000 in direct contributions to St. Louis U. High and is responsible in large part for the success of the Cashbah, the annual dinner-auction which last year netted the school over \$50,000. In addition, the Mothers' Club sponsors an annual card party and organizes the Mass and buffet breakfast for graduating seniors and their parents, as well as the party following graduation. The mothers play a large role in promoting such other functions as the Parent Fun Night and assist with the open house for grade school graduates and their parents.



Forerunner of today's Fathers' Club: 1939 St. Louis High Club. Standing: C. Kiely, L. Nouss. Seated: A. Eberle, Fr. Cahill, J. Weiler.

The St. Louis U. High Fathers' Club dates from 1938 and was originally known as the "St. Louis High Club." Always an enthusiastic supporter of school activities, the Fathers' Club played a large role in the construction of the basement recreation room, the first major addition to the school's physical plant. Over the past five years, the club has raised over \$80,000 on behalf of St. Louis U. High, highlighted by the 1973-74 Fathers' Club Project which netted over \$20,000. Among the specific improvements they have helped bring about are the parking lots, the locker room renovation, and the library.

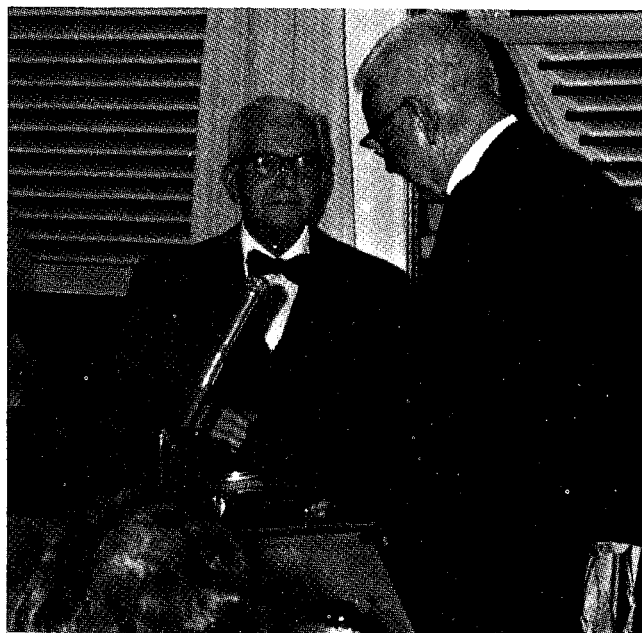
But the Fathers' Club has contributed much more than money to Backer Memorial. The number of activities engaged in by the club last year alone is indicative of its effort on behalf of the school. In addition to the Fathers' Club Project, the club sponsored a "get-acquainted" fish and chips dinner early in the

year; promoted the Fall and Winter Sports Awards Nights; joined with the Mothers' Club to produce a Parent Fun Night; participated in a Father-Son Recreation Night and a Father-Son Bowling Tournament; and organized the Father-Son Banquet. The Fathers' Club also played a major role in the success of Cashbah '74, which has become the most successful fund-raising event of the year.

The Alumni Association has been a part of St. Louis U. High since 1928, but it was not until 1941 that it was organized on a formal basis under the direction of the Reverend John J. Divine, S.J. It would be difficult to overestimate the contribution of the Alumni Association to St. Louis U. High over the years — a contribution that has taken both tangible and intangible forms.

On a very practical level, the alumni have been increasingly generous in their financial support of St. Louis U. High. The most striking example of their loyalty and dedication was shown in the contribution of almost a million dollars to help build a second Jesuit high school in the St. Louis area — DeSmet. Currently alumni support is channeled primarily through two funds, the Living Spirit and the Canisius Club.

The Living Spirit Fund has provided the school with some \$75,000 over the past six years in general annual support. This contribution has played a significant role in reducing the school's operating deficit, in enabling St. Louis U. High to keep tuition among the lowest among private schools in the area, and in maintaining the plant in good condition.



In this 1971 photograph, Father Kellett presents Dr. Charles Doyle with an award in recognition of his 25 years of service as team physician. This was just one of many activities sponsored by the Fathers' Club in its 37 years of service to St. Louis U. High.

Of no less importance have been the alumni contributions to the Canisius Club Scholarship Foundation. Named in honor of Jesuits and laymen for their outstanding service to St. Louis U. High, Canisius Club scholarships annually provide financial assistance for over thirty students. The generosity of Canisius Club members has been instrumental in enabling St. Louis U. High not only to provide a first-rate education for all qualified students, but to make it possible for boys whose parents cannot afford the tuition to attend SLUH.

But the contribution of the Alumni Association has by no means been limited to fund-raising efforts. Through the years the alumni have given freely of their time and talents to make successes of innumerable school projects, from the Fall Frolics to Cashbah to the class reunions to annual White House Retreats and, most recently, a career day. They have been indispensable to the St. Louis U. High "spirit" — attending athletic events, sending their sons to Backer, recalling their own experiences at St. Louis U. High class reunions, and generally putting in a good word for their alma mater whenever possible. In short, St. Louis University High School would be a much different place today were it not for the financial and moral support provided by its loyal alumni whose affection for the school is almost legendary in this part of the country.



Everyone took part in Cashbah '74



Old grads gather in the cafeteria at one of the class reunions held during the school year. The reunions are one of many activities sponsored by the St. Louis U. High Alumni Association.

SLUH Athletics: A Winning Tradition

"Go, Bills, go!" Through the years St. Louis U. High teams have responded to this chant to a degree matched by few schools anywhere. Versatility has been the hallmark of the Junior Billikens; ten team state titles in seven different sports provide ample testimony. Numerous league and district championships have created the pleasant problem of a chronic shortage of space in which to store the myriad trophies won by Backer athletes.

Interscholastic athletic competition at St. Louis U. High dates from 1916. That fall the first Junior Billiken football team failed to win any of its four games; it was not until 1919 that the school enjoyed its first winning season. From 1916 through 1936 St. Louis U. High football teams managed an aggregate record of only 59-62-12.

The arrival of Frank Staab as head coach in 1937 ushered in the golden era of SLUH football. Since that time the Junior Billikens have reeled off 37 consecutive winning seasons and won 80% of their games. Five Backer teams of this period ('42, '52, '55, '59, '72) have gone undefeated, and the 1970 team won the Missouri Class AAAA state title.

Under present head coach Paul Martel, SLUH teams have amassed a 110-25-7 record (through 1973). In addition to the 1970 state championship, Martel's 1959 and 1972 teams were undefeated. Six consecutive Bi-State Conference titles have been won by the Junior Billikens and ten of Martel's players have been first team All State selections. Martel-coached teams have finished in the top ten of the St. Louis Post-Dispatch Prep Poll in 12 of the 14 years that the poll has been in existence — a truly remarkable record.

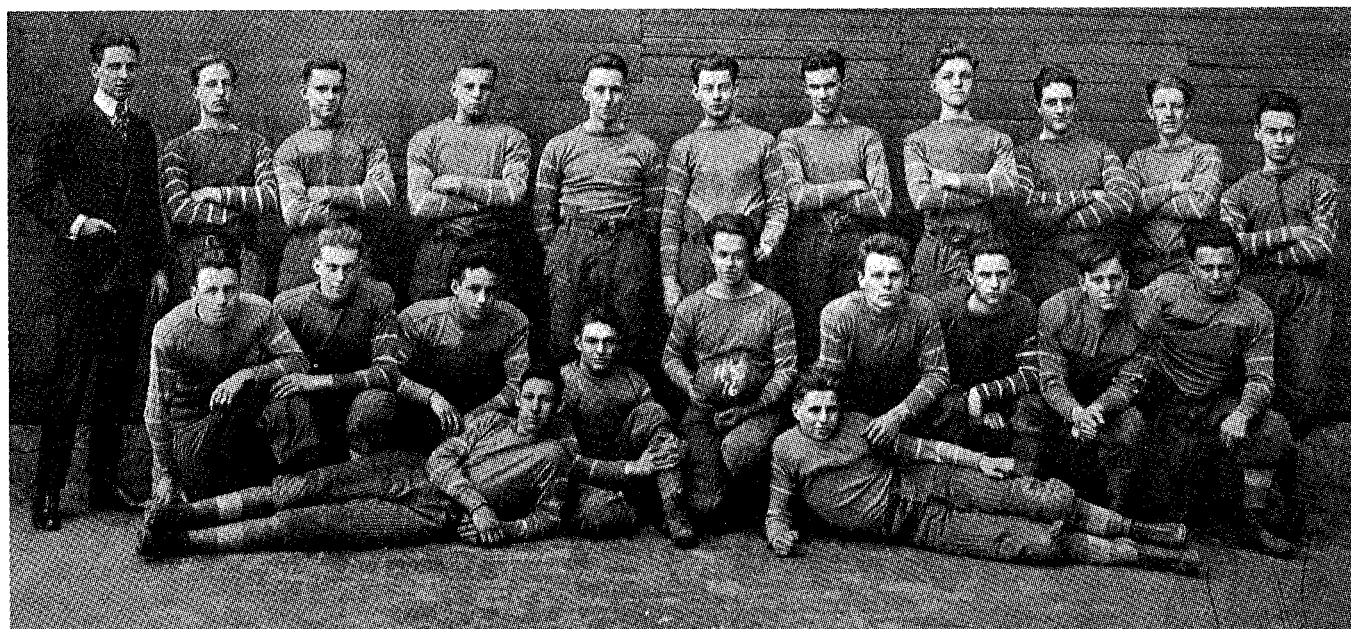
If St. Louis U. High football is steeped in tradition, the school's basketball heritage is equally rich. Since

No one can help but be aware of the rich tradition that is associated with St. Louis U. High and its athletic teams. There are alumni too old now to go to games who remember wearing the blue and white jersey, men for whom St. Louis University High School has great meaning. There are youngsters who are still too young to be left around the playing fields who would like one day to wear this same jersey and be a part of St. Louis U. High. That is tradition, and it is something which is very important and very much a part of SLUH.

In many ways this tradition can be a burden. To have a tradition like ours means that you can't quit; to have a tradition like ours means that you can't lose your "cool"; to have a tradition like ours means that you always have to show "class," even when you are not quite up to it; to have a tradition like ours means that you have to do some things that you don't want to do and some things you don't even think you can do. On the other hand, tradition is the thing that sustains us. It allows us to prevail in seemingly hopeless situations.

I'm convinced that greatness in any field has to come out of some kind of tradition. Our job is to make certain that the tradition of St. Louis University High School means as much and stands for as much for those who are yet to come as it has for us and those who have gone before us.

Paul Martel
Director of Athletics



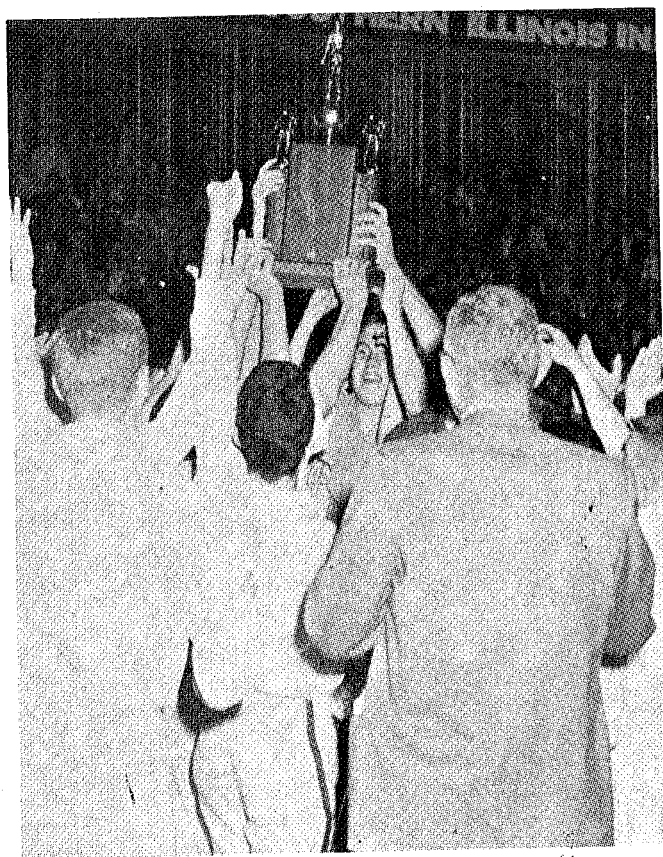
The first SLUH football team (1916).

1935 Backer basketball has produced only two losing seasons.

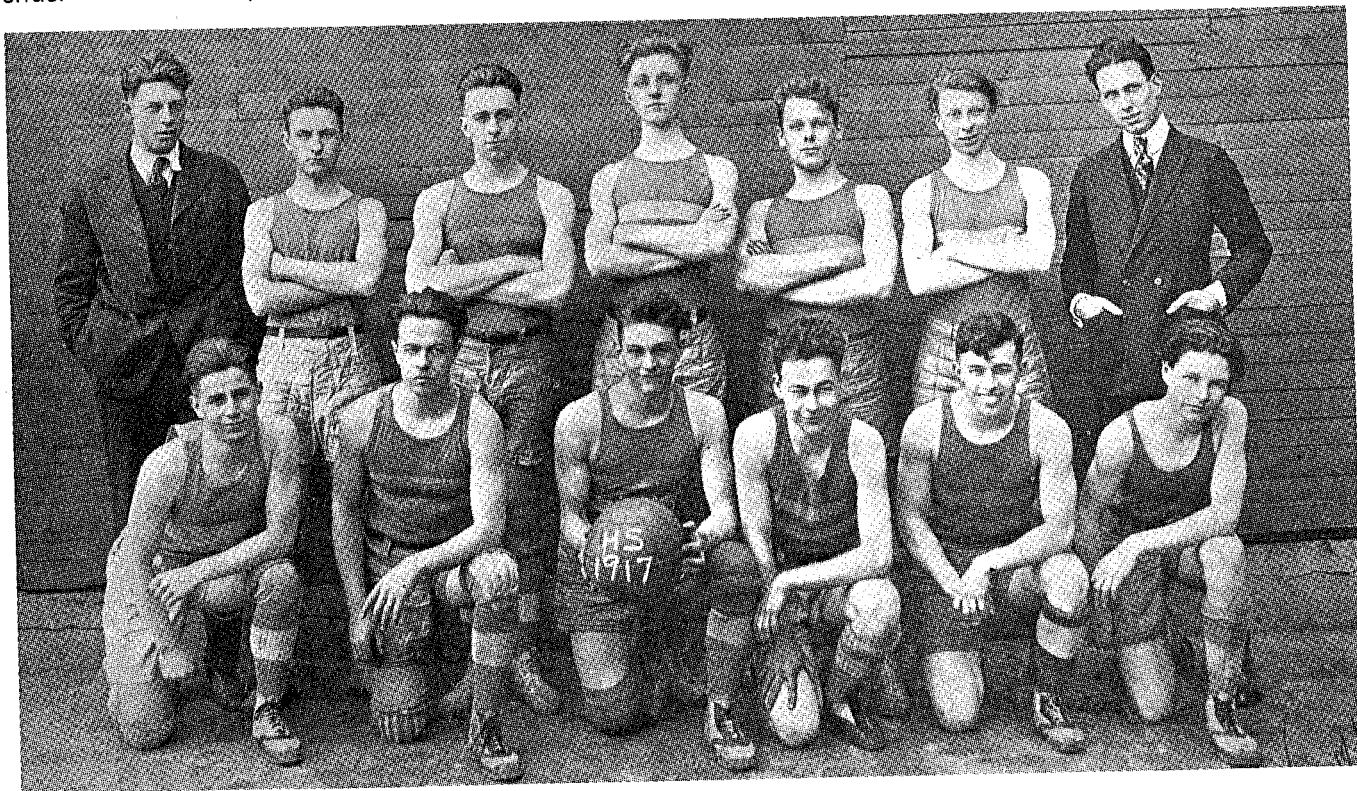
Junior Billiken teams have appeared in the state championship game a record nine times, winning it all in 1946, 1952, 1958, and 1961. Sometime within the next five years St. Louis U. High should post its 1,000th all time basketball victory.

A large measure of the school's basketball success has come under the direction of current head coach Emmet Hanick. The 1974-75 season will be Hanick's twentieth at Backer, and in that time he has compiled a fine 348-152 record. His teams have won two Bi-State Conference titles and seven regional championships and five consecutive seasons (1957-61) advanced to the semifinals of the state tournament, winning it all in 1958 and 1961. The 1957-58 team, one of the greatest in Missouri history, compiled a perfect 28-0 record and is the last large school in the state to go undefeated. Nor is all of Backer's roundball glory in the past; St. Louis U. High has averaged 19 wins a season over the past four years and has captured two regional titles in that span. With the nucleus of last year's fine 21-6 team returning, the future of Backer basketball looks bright indeed.

If football and basketball have necessarily received the lion's share of publicity over the years, the "other" sports at St. Louis U. High have more than held their own. None have been more successful than Junior Billiken soccer teams which have compiled an enviable 334-116-76 record in 29 years of competition. Most of St. Louis U. High's soccer success has come under the leadership of current head coach Ebbie



SLUH players hold championship trophy aloft after 1958 win over St. Joseph Central in the state finals. The win gave Coach Emmet Hanick and the Junior Billikens a perfect 28-0 record — the last large Missouri school to go through a season undefeated.



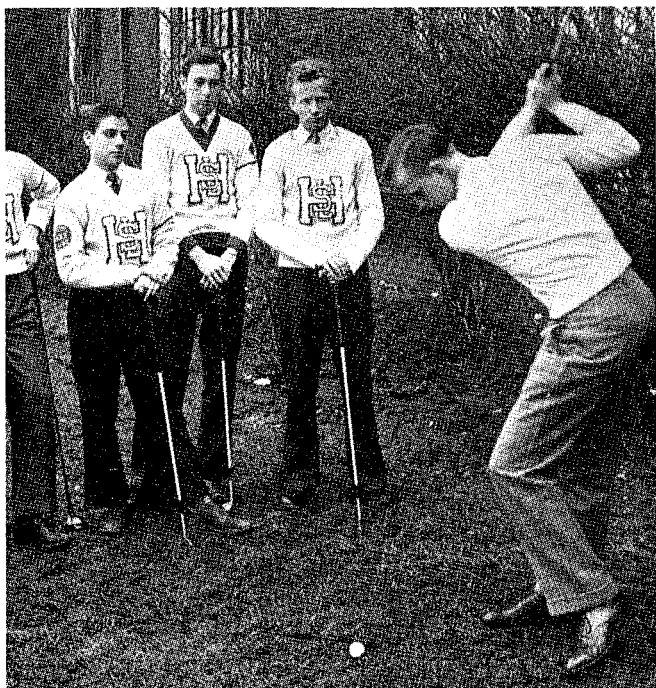
The first SLUH basketball team (1917).

Dunn whose 19 year-record of 267-88-50 speaks for itself. Dunn-coached teams have won nine St. Louis High School Soccer League titles, two CYC Christmas tournaments, and reached the summit in 1973 with a classic seven-overtime victory over Rosary in the state finals.

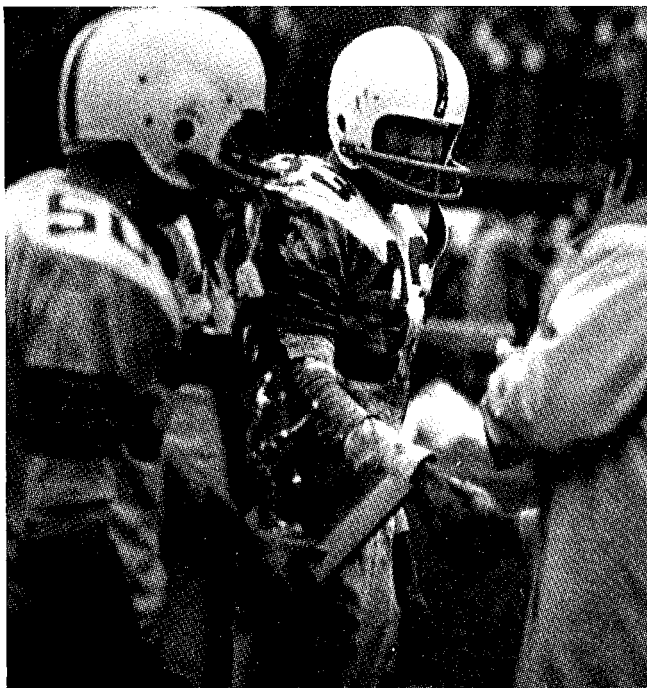
Although St. Louis U. High has never won a state title in baseball, the Junior Billikens have enjoyed more than a modest amount of success in this spring sport. The 1936 Backer squad was proclaimed "city champions," and the 1949 team completed a perfect

16-0 season. Since the inception of the state tournament in 1950, Junior Billiken nines have captured nine district championships and in 1962 advanced to the state finals before bowing to Cape Girardeau Central. Most of St. Louis U. High's baseball accomplishments have come under the direction of Dr. James Robinson who completed his coaching career at Backer in 1967 with an outstanding 203-86 record.

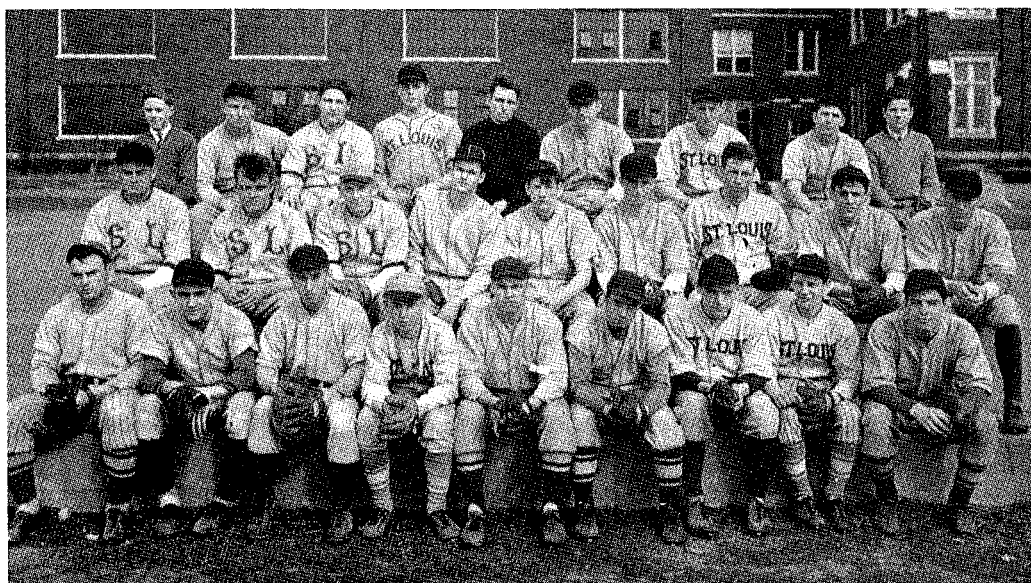
Golf, tennis, swimming, and cross country have all brought state championships to Oakland Avenue. Led by medalist Charles Fawcett, the 1952 Junior Billiken golf team won the state title. In addition,



Demonstrating the swing that won three state titles is SLUH's greatest golfer, Gene Fehlig. Fehlig won three consecutive state titles in 1937, 1938, and 1939.



SLUH captains accept first place trophy from former University of Missouri football coach Dan Devine after 28-19 win over Kansas City Center for the 1970 Class AAAA state title.

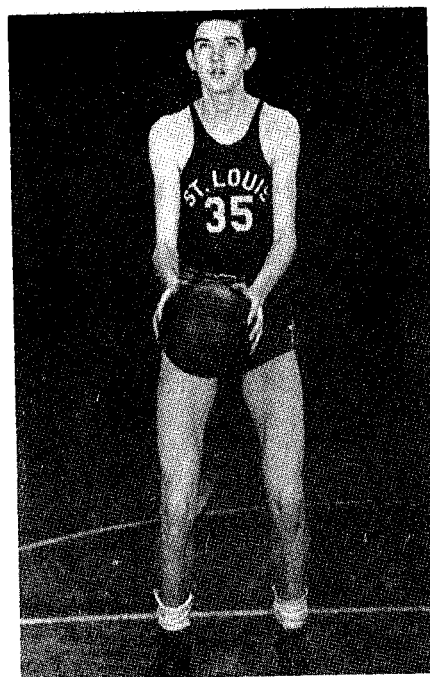


SLUH's great 1936 baseball team. Pictured here are Joe Schultz (back row, second from left) who later became a major league coach and manager, and Bob Hyland, (back row, fourth from left), general manager of KMOX. The 1936 Dauphin characterized Hyland as a "genial and dependable outfielder and high-averaged batter."

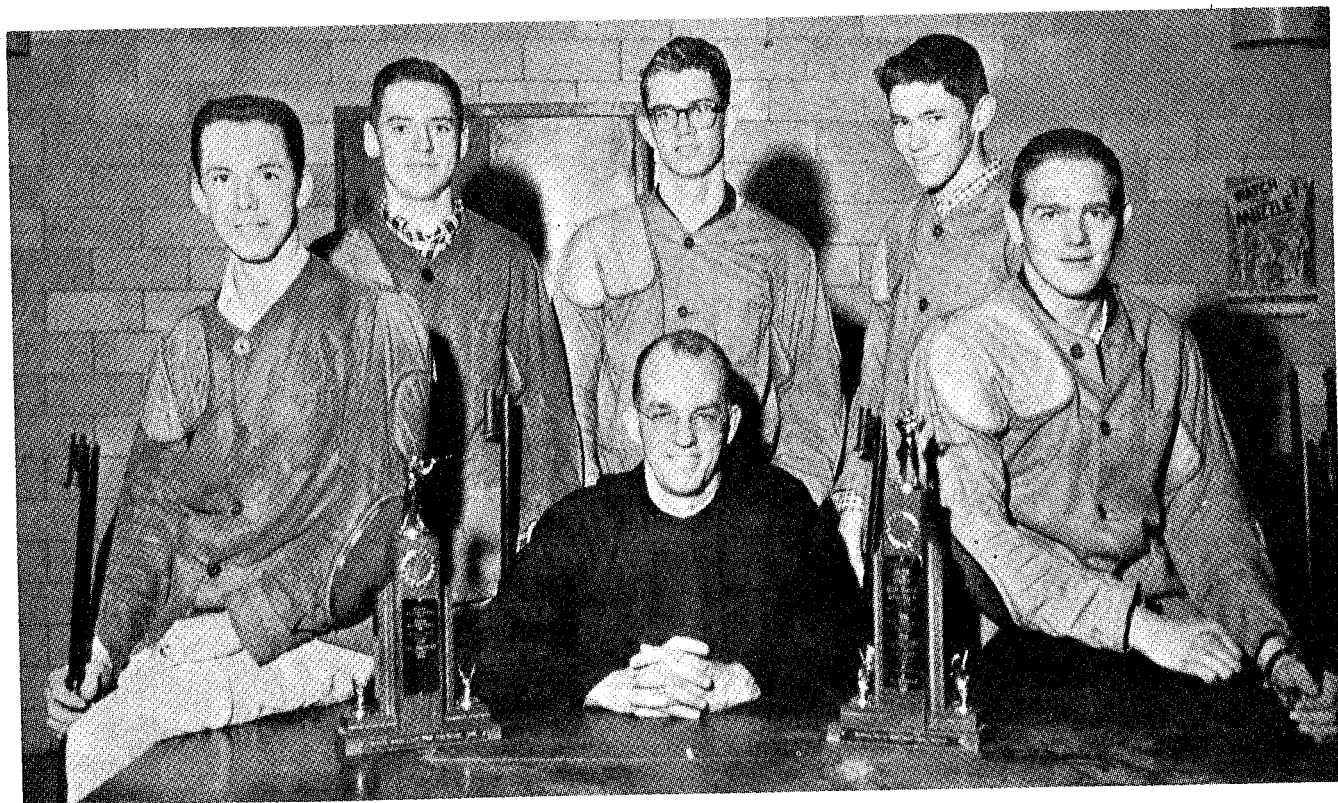
Julius Rotter was medalist in the 1941 state tournament, and Gene Fehlig won three consecutive state titles in the late thirties. In tennis, the 1970 St. Louis U. High team won the state championship with Ken Brightfield taking first place in the singles competition and the Backer entry of Brightfield and Mark Guignon capturing the doubles title. Other notable accomplishments of SLUH netmen over the years include the state doubles title won by Don and Gordon Pfeifer in 1951 and the state singles championship won by Ed Frank in 1963.

Swimming, water polo, and cross country have been other St. Louis U. High strong points. The 1956 swimming team won the state championship, and the school has produced nine individual winners in state competition. Three-time state champions include Jim McKenna (1943, '45, '46), Tom Guignon (1961-63), and Bill Voigt (1965-67). The Junior Billikens have traditionally been outstanding in water polo, and the 1966-67 and 1969-70 squads captured district championships. In cross country, St. Louis U. High harriers have four times finished among the top ten in the state meet, with the 1961 team, led by Jerry and Larry Dirnberger, winning the state title.

Though no state championships have been won by Backer wrestling and track teams, the school has produced outstanding individuals in both sports. Nine Junior Billiken wrestlers have advanced to the semifinals of state competition, and the 1963 team finished eighth in the state meet. Backer trackmen have captured a total of nine individual cham-



The youthful-looking gentleman pictured here in a 1944 photograph is none other than "Easy Ed" Macauley, SLUH's greatest basketball player. Ed later went on to become an All-American at St. Louis University and a star in the National Basketball Association.



SLUH's 1959 national championship rifle team, the school's first. Left to right: Jim Keene, Jack LeBarge, Joe Murphy, Bill Bradburn, Phil Gundlach, with moderator Father Hagan seated. Under the able direction of Father Hagan, SLUH rifle teams won the national championship in 1959, 1961, 1962, 1963 and 1964 — a truly remarkable accomplishment.

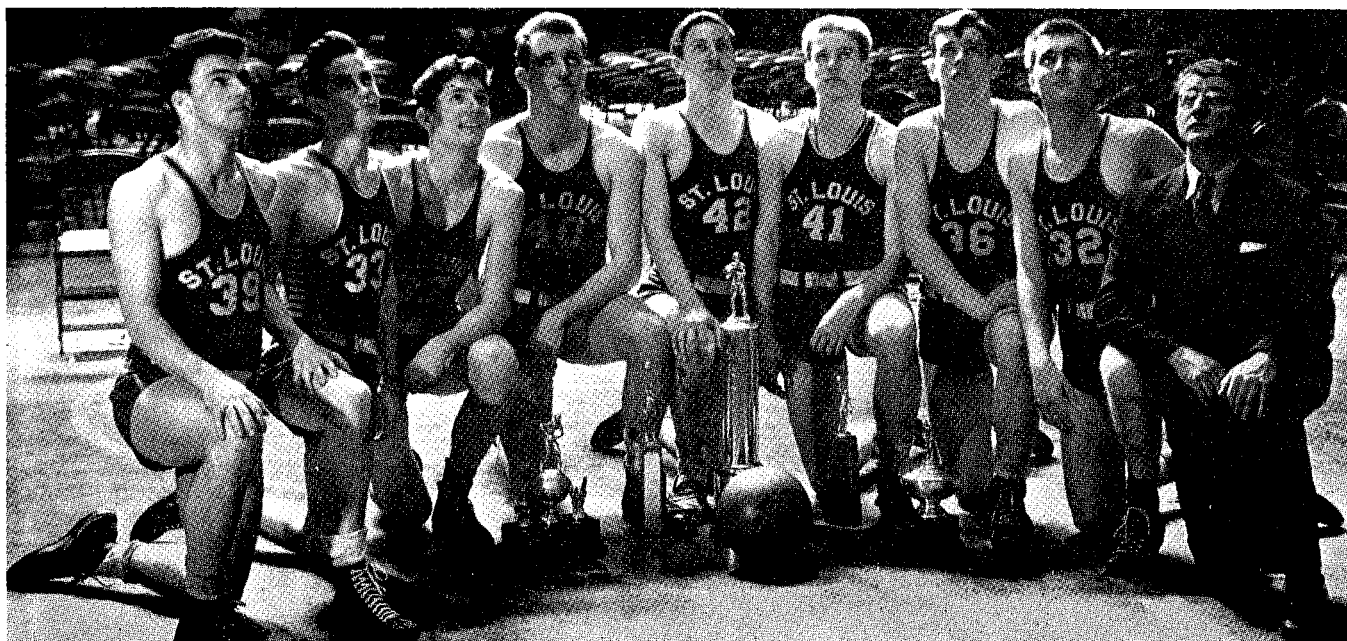
pionships in the state indoor and outdoor meets, with the 1947 team finishing second in the state indoor meet and the 1956 squad capturing fourth place in the outdoor event.

But league titles and state championships are only part of the St. Louis U. High athletic story. Of even

greater value are the lessons learned from participation in the sports program: the importance of discipline and dedication; the ability to subordinate individual achievement to a common goal; the necessity of placing winning and losing in their proper perspective. This is the most enduring legacy of athletics at St. Louis U. High.



The 1956 SLUH state championship swimming team. Standing, left to right: Fred Laufketter, Roger Miller, Dan Bakunas, Charley Ehrhart, John Lee, Burn Tinker, Bob Craig, Bob Becherle, Lucien Roy, Louis Wilson, Mike Bracy, Fr. Thomas J. Kelly, S.J., Dave Lynch. Kneeling, left to right: Bill Freschi, Bob Burdeau, Bob Cassidy, Mark McKenzie, Carl Reis, Pat Reinhardt.



SLUH's first state championship team, the 1945-1946 Junior Billikens and coach George Hasser. Left to right: Kehoe, Klingler, Cordia, Scheetz, Young, Wrape, Kavanaugh, Cary, Coach Hasser.

Rick Koster '53

I can't honestly say that I remember the details of any one victory or defeat during my years at St. Louis U. High, but I do remember sports. I remember and define them as an essential in that primary block of my teenage experience. They were a perspective which became one of life's movable feasts.

From Lambeau Field to the Orange Bowl, from Yankee Stadium to the L. A. Coliseum, my adult career has placed me in the presence of highly-publicized winners and losers: Lombardi and Shula and George Allen, Mickey Mantle and Bill Russell and Bobby Orr. None of their performances, however, nor their professional platitudes have been able to eclipse the St. Louis U. High perspective, the image that I believe to have been the essence of sports when I was there. This image is quite simple but extremely vivid: a long line of boys in sweat socks and football pads treading silently over the waxed corridors from the chapel to the locker room.

I watched that scene scores of times after the football games of my junior and senior years. Win or lose, the team always went from the stadium to the chapel. While each player certainly had his own view of the practice, and did or didn't participate in the prayer, that image has survived all the touchdowns and scoreboard tallies. That perspective of sports seems valuable because it has diminished or is at least less visible now. Many priorities have changed in the

past two decades, but for me SLUH sports remain a reference point.

I watched the school's athletic teams for about twice the normal duration because I had a brother who preceded me. He confirms that in his time Junior Bill football players went first to chapel and then would sit on the low wall in back of the school and lace up their cleats before walking down the hill to old Walsh Stadium.

The best I ever saw was Bob Rooney who played for St. Louis U. High in 1946-47. He was small, fast, and mean; frankly, he didn't play as if he had come from or was going to chapel. I'm told that Ken Wild was more talented and versatile, but that would have made SLUH invincible in his era — and that wasn't the case.

The names and games are really not important except when placed in context. In my time, four years of football and basketball success, the leaders were Ed Gaus and Tim Dolan, Bill Murphy and George Shaffrey, Art Demmas and Les Hohl, Bob Klostermeyer and Bob Brangle, Vince Hovely, Dan Cummins, and Hank Luepke.

Because we won so consistently during those years, SLUH athletes perhaps reaped more honors than rivals at other schools. None of our "stars," however, ever amounted to much on the college level. That may be attributed to a number of factors, but it is



St. Louis Globe-Democratsports editor Bob Burnes presents District Championship trophy to Coach Gene Hart and the Junior Billikens after 1953 win over Southwest.



Another state title: Zuchowski and Zinselmeyer hold first place trophy after thrilling 52-51 final game win over Bill Bradley and Crystal City in 1961. Also pictured, left to right: Curran, Grawer, Steube, and Cradock.

my own belief that the best of the Junior Bills were not very outstanding individually. The teams won because of numbers, attitude, and coaching.

And perspective. Perspective which flowed throughout the entire student body. Perhaps it's ignorance or prejudice, but I don't think I ever knew a kid at St. Louis U. High who wouldn't have liked to have played; neither, however, did I know of any who felt he was cut unfairly, who believed he should have had a place someone else was occupying. Competition was open, clean, and fierce, and those without uniforms were generally very much a part of the effort. Sports, like the school itself, was a collective, dependent, interrelated experience — not an individual one.

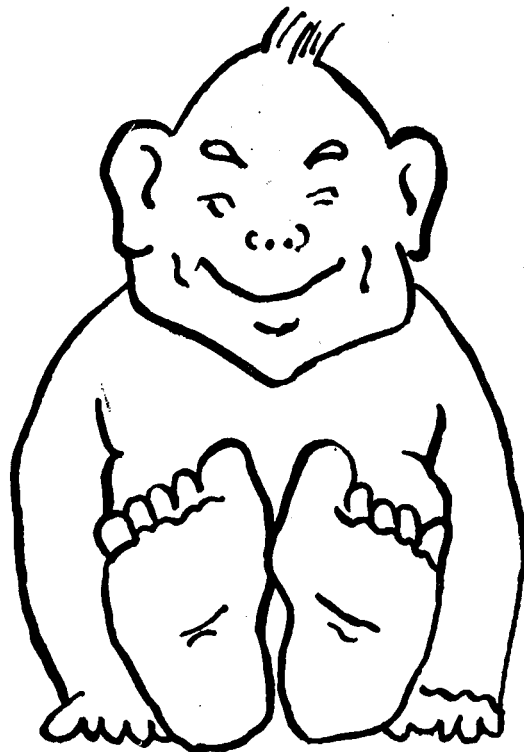
Looking back, I can recall one incident in particular which seemed highly unusual at the time, but now seems to be indicative of the breed of athlete produced by St. Louis U. High. The 1952 football team was undefeated late in the season, and victory was the expected weekly result. It reached the point where one of the players spoke openly of the benefits of defeat for the student body. At the time, there was considerable debate over whether he was a heretic, a subversive, or simply a traitor. It was obvious even then that he didn't speak from ignorance for Vince Hovely went on to become a Jesuit himself — and to most of us the real pride of an accomplished class.

To have experienced sports at SLUH is not to have to dwell or even reflect on them. They are a resource to draw on, to lean on. I don't believe that any experience is total within its time frame, and athletics at St. Louis U. High were in no way completed by graduation. It takes years to find the proper prism through which to get the sharpest view.

Like most SLUH graduates, I would like to see my sons at the school and participating in the sports

program. The benefits are many, but perhaps the greatest is a perspective not reflected on any scoreboard or restricted to any stadium or court of the past. It is a perspective that I hope will continue to thrive during the coming fifty years.

The plump, smiling figure pictured below has been the symbol of St. Louis U. High athletic teams since the early part of the twentieth century. The "Billiken" is an Eskimo god who represents "things as they ought to be." Designed and patented by a Kansas City woman in 1909, the Billiken became as much of a craze in its day as "Snoopy" is today. St.



Louis University adopted the name in 1910 when two writers from the St. Louis Post-Dispatch noticed a resemblance between the Billiken and St. Louis University football coach Charlie "Moonface" Bender. It was only a matter of time before St. Louis U. High became the "Junior Billikens," a unique symbol for a unique institution.



A familiar sight at SLUH athletic events, Father Phil Kellett sits on bench during 1966 SLUH-CBC football game. Backer's biggest booster, Father Kellett was an integral part of SLUH athletics until his death in 1973.

St. Louis U. High All-District Soccer Players (1951-74)

Leo Asaro '72	Dan Leahy '61
Mike Barbaglia '70	Joe Lange '61
Don Berra '51	Jim Lovinguth '68
Gene Bischof '61	*Tom Lovinguth '71
Mike Blassie '66	John Mahoney '60
Bill Brown '62	Bob Malone '58
	Jim Marstall '62
*Steve Cacciatore '72	Gary McBrady '64
Jim Checkett '59	Pat McBride '61
Mel Checkett '57	Kevin McGinnis '56
Denny Church '68	Duke McVey '53
Jim Cochran '51	John Michalski '58
Bill Cody '53	*John Milford '74
*Tim Conway '72	Jim Miller '56
	Gerry Mitchell '68
	Jim Murphy '63
Art Demling '67	Mike Murray '65
Mark Demling '70	
Jim Devereaux '63	Tom Nickel '61
Tom Donovan '53	
*Tom Donovan '74	Bob O'Connor '61
*Tom Dooley '74	Steve Ohmer '72
	*Dan O'Sullivan '73
Tom Eckelman '60	
Bob Endler '57	Don Range '53
George Endler '56	Mike Richter '61
Roy Evers '57	
	John Sanders '69
*Dan Flynn '73	Ken Sanders '59
*Neil Flynn '72	Bill Schaefer '70
	*John Schaefering '73
*Frank Gallo '71	Dave Schlitt '64
*Tony Giamanco '73	John Simon '60
*Tim Gibbons '73	*Mike Smallwood '72
Austin Gomez '60	John Sugrue '63
Pete Good '57	
Steve Grace '68	
	*Roy Thee '74
Joe Hamm '68	*Jim Tierney '72
Jim Hannon '67	Bob Trigg '59
Bob Helmbacher '69	Steve Twellman '68
Gregg Hilker '59	*Tim Twellman '73
John Houska '67	Tom Twellman '70
Gene Huck '63	
Ray Kalinowski '65	Dave Walsh '67
Russ Kappesser '62	Don Watkins '51
Mike Kavanaugh '64	Charlie Welek '66
Tom Kavanaugh '60	George Westfall '62
Tom Kellett '69	Joe Westhus '63
Bob Kerber '63	George Wilson '60
Don Kettelkamp '52	Dennis Winter '67
Denny Klosterman '68	
Steve Korbecki '68	
John Kurusz '71	Bill Ziegler '71

Asterisk denotes an all-state selection. An official all-state team was not selected until 1971.

Past Presidents of St. Louis U. High

Rev. William T. Doran, S.J.	1924-30
Rev. John A. Weiland, S.J.	1930-36
Rev. Richard A. Cahill, S.J.	1936-40
Rev. Richard R. Rooney, S.J.	1940-48
Very Rev. Thomas J. Sheehy, S.J.	1948-53
Very Rev. Leonard M. Murray, S.J.	1953-56
Very Rev. Gregory H. Jacobsmeyer, S.J.	1956-62
Rev. John C. Choppesky, S.J.	1962-68
Rev. Richard L. Bailey, S.J.	1968-72
Rev. Robert F. Weiss, S.J.	1973-

Past Principals of St. Louis U. High

Rev. William J. Ryan, S.J.	1924-26
Rev. William F. Parry, S.J.	1926-31
Rev. John A. Weiland, S.J.	1931-33
Rev. William S. Bowdern, S.J.	1933-37
Rev. Neil P. McManus, S.J.	1937-41
Rev. Frederick L. Zimmerman, S.J.	1941-44
Rev. James G. Hogan, S.J.	1944-46
Rev. Maurice E. Van Ackeren, S.J.	1946-51
Rev. Ralph H. Schenk, S.J.	1951-53
Rev. James B. Corrigan, S.J.	1953-55
Rev. Gerald R. Sheahan, S.J.	1955-67
Rev. Richard L. Bailey, S.J.	1967-71
Rev. Michael H. Durso, S.J.	1971-74
Rev. Ralph D. Houlihan, S.J.	1974-

Past Presidents of St. Louis U. High Alumni Association

Francis A. Dooling '27	1942-44
Bernard W. Nordmann '31	1944-46
Joseph A. Weber '28	1946-48
John P. Tierney '29	1948-50
Julius Meyer, Jr. '51	1950-52
Dr. James F. Robinson '32	1952-54
Robert L. Gund '36	1954-56
Robert X. Holloran '26	1956-58
William H. Reis '44	1958-60
Philip H. Reither '41	1960-62
Dr. Robert E. Ryan '34	1962-64
Dr. Joseph M. Grana '37	1964-65
Paul L. Watson, '46	1965-66
George G. Callahan '43	1966-67
Aloysius J. Disch '39	1967-68
Charles F. Pollnow '51	1968-70
Francis P. Dorsey '41	1970-71
Leo P. Cremins, Jr. '53	1971-72
Robert F. Chickey '50	1972-73
Lou J. Liebermann '49	1973-74
Joseph P. Bannister '56	1974-75

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