

WILLIAM FREEMAN

William Freeman, born in 1925 in Iowa, grew up an only child in Depression-era Bismarck, Missouri. Graduating from high school in 1942, he enlisted in the United States Army, served as a medic on the European front in World War II, and received a purple heart during the Battle of the Bulge. Honorably discharged in 1945, he pursued advanced education thanks to the G.I. Bill. He graduated from Washington University with a Bachelor of Science degree in Education and a minor in history. He then completed a Master's Degree in Education from the University of Missouri. During college, he married Laura Vishino who was his wife for 48 years; in her career, she was a teacher and librarian at Herculaneum.

In 1950, Mr. Freeman signed on as principal, half-time teacher and part-time janitor for an annual salary of \$2,000 at the Taylor Elementary School in the Herculaneum R-5 School District. He ultimately became Director of Elementary Education at both the Dunklin elementary and middle schools. He gave 35 years of service to the Herculaneum schools, retiring in 1985.

As a principal, he was a strict disciplinarian. All of his elementary students remember him as a strong authoritarian figure, roaming the hallways and inspiring personal responsibility in his young students. But more than that, Mr. Freeman was known for his love of history. He thoroughly enjoyed sharing his enthusiasm for the subject; he greatly inspired his students with passionate lectures on American and World History.

William Freeman made a lasting mark on the Dunklin School District. He instilled in his students important lessons about responsibility, hard work, respect, and the love of learning. He passed away on December 17, 1995. His eulogy was given by his dear friend and superintendent, Gerald Gastineau. Mr. Freeman is buried in Strawberry Hill Cemetery, Crystal City, Missouri.