

THE HISTORY OF ST. NICHOLAS SCHOOL by Phyllis Adams Herford '52

St. Nicholas School became an entity in the Seattle community when parents of six young ladies invited the Buddecke sisters from Baltimore to establish a school with the high standards of the best academies in the East. There is no record of the names of these parents, but several people have mentioned the G.W. Fischers as motivating forces. Certainly the Fischers must have been involved because the deed to the school property was mailed to their home. This old deed states that lot three, block six of Sarah B. Yesler's first addition to the city of Seattle was transferred from George B. Cole, Lily A. Cole, housewife and Mary C. Finch, widow, to Eda Buddecke on January 11, 1910. The purchase price was \$7600, and Miss Buddecke agreed to assume an existing mortgage of \$3500.

Architect Charles Bebb was hired to plan and construct a suitable "school house" at the corner of North Broadway and Roy Streets, 712 Broadway North, just around the corner from Harvard Avenue, one of the most fashionable residential areas in the city. This site, across Broadway from the Loveless Building, is now occupied by a Union 76 service station.

The Buddecke sisters named the school after St. Nicholas, patron saint of children who lived in Asia Minor in the fourth century. He became a great bishop in the early church and used his power to aid all in need, especially children. His kindly interest in young women is depicted in an old window in the little church of Saint Edward the Martyr in London which shows St. Nicholas throwing bags of gold through a window to dowerless maidens who, without his aid, could not marry. To honor this saint and the school's name, "St. Nicholas Day" was held each Christmas season as a celebration of the birthday of the school.

On September 21, 1910, St. Nicholas was formally opened with a short address by the Rt. Reverend F.W. Keator, Episcopal Bishop of Olympia. The occasion was noted the next day in an article on the society page of the *Seattle Times* which neglected to quote the bishop's speech, but did say: "Miss Eda Buddecke, who will conduct the school, responded". Exactly what Miss Buddecke's response was is also lost to history but the *Times* did report the following facts about this most important day in St. Nicholas' history:

"The guests were shown through the building. Miss Buddecke was assisted in entertaining by her staff of teachers and the patronesses. Tea and refreshments were served. The patronesses included Mrs. J.D. Farrell, Mrs. G.W. Fischer, Mrs. Cecil Bacon, Mrs. Joshua Green, Mrs. Thomas Green, Mrs. Henry Dickinsons, Mrs. George B. Horton, Mrs. A.S. Kerry, Mrs. William H. McEwan, Mrs. Alexander E. McEwan, Mrs. Richard Dwight Merrill, Mrs. Louis B. Peeples, Mrs. Fred S. Stimson, Mrs. Frank Waterhouse, and Mrs. Francis Guy Frink.

Classes will open September 29th. The course of instruction will largely follow that of the Bryn Mawr School of Baltimore.

The school house has two stories and a basement and is thoroughly modern, utilizing the latest scientific ideas for educational structures. On the first floor are classrooms for the primary pupils, a glass enclosed recitation room, gymnasium, dressing room and lavatories. On the second floor are the large study hall, the class rooms of the main school, a teachers' room and a roof room to be used for recitation and for play."

In an article on September 30th, 1910 the *Times* reported that St. Nicholas was a "college preparatory school" with a total enrollment of 83, that courses would be modeled upon those of Baltimore's Bryn Mawr Seminary and that teachers would be "interchanged between these institutions during the year." In addition to the Buddeckes, Miss Eda the principal and Miss Fanny, who taught French, the faculty included: Mrs. G. Zinn, graduate of University of Illinois, assistant in English; Miss Helen Binns, graduate of Wells College in New York, mathematics and drawing; Miss Marion Stone, Birmingham, Mass., Normal School, primary department; Miss Winifred Johnson, University of Washington, assistant primary; Miss Violet Gungan, University of Washington, gymnasium.; and Miss Edith Dabney, a graduate of Bryn Mawr who taught English. Miss Dabney was not an easterner however. In the Seattle Society Blue Book of 1910, she was listed under the name of her parents, Mr. and Mrs. Frank Dabney. The family resided on Queen

Anne Hill at 918 First Avenue West and later moved to the equally fashionable Capitol Hill area near Volunteer Park — a much shorter commute for Miss Dabney whose association with St. Nicholas was to last many years.

Before entering the halls of St. Nicholas itself, it is of interest to take another glance at Seattle, circa 1910. The 1910 edition of Morrison and Robinson's map of the city already showed a clear pattern of suburban sprawl which must have alarmed the city fathers who had foresight to see where that might lead. So it was decided that Seattle should have a system of public parks, and the sons of Frederick Law Olmstead were invited to plan one for us. In 1903, the city council accepted the Olmstead Brothers report, and over the next five years Seattle's citizens voted \$1,500,000 in park bonds to provide a system which would rank with the leading cities of America. Fourteen improved parks were planned from Woodland at 200 acres to small community parks of two to three acres. Woodland had already been acquired from the Phinney estate in 1900. The park idea was in its infancy then and its cost, \$100,000, was strongly criticized, but the zoo and its frontage on Green Lake quickly made people forget their opposition. The lake was very popular for boating and bathing, and band concerts were held on its shore every Sunday afternoon during the summer.

Volunteer Park, near St. Nicholas, had the highest vantage point in the city and offered a panorama of Lakes, mountains, suburban and rural scenes. It was to be a "modern metropolitan park" in keeping with its location which was described as "practically downtown."

The city was growing with a population of over 300,000. There were 1500 manufacturing plants employing 17,000 people with an annual payroll of \$15,000,000. The water and power systems were city owned, and the town had an area of 78 square miles with 191 miles of street car tracks and 91 paved streets.

The 1910-1911 Society Blue Books are surprisingly large and list many families who have long since left Seattle — each with an address and "at home" day after their names. Quite a few people lived in residence hotels while waiting for their homes to be completed. Mr. William Boeing resided at the Perry as did Charles Bebb, the architect who designed St. Nicholas. The only fashionable hotel of 1910 still standing is the Sorrento and Juanita Fisher Graham [15] told me she and her family stayed there when they first came to Seattle in 1906.

There were a number of personal ads in the blue books including one with a picture of Nellie Cornish stating that she was available for the "education of the child and beginners in music" at 1108 Broadway, Suite E. This was just down the street (north) from St. Nicholas which, in 1921, discussed "a tentative plan for utilizing the facilities of both SNS and Cornish, particularly relating to dancing and music." Miss Cornish had been a student at Holy Names Academy which was noted for its music department.

Holy Names also ran an ad in the social register in which it called itself "Holy Names Academy and Normal School". There is no mention of St. Nicholas in any way. The Seattle Symphony ran an ad. So did the Metropolitan Theater which was in its brand new, much praised location at Fourth and Union — now the automobile entrance of the Olympic Hotel.

There were other ads for corsets, veterinary hospitals, sanitary belts, detective agencies, foot doctors, lawyers, and something called "Malt Rainer — the pure malt tonic; a pleasure to take" from the Seattle Brewing and Malting Company. This was highly recommended for young mothers needing "extra nourishment." Juanita Fisher Graham remembers the main shopping district in 1910. It ran between First and Second Avenues; Yesler Way to the south and Pike Street to the north. Pioneer Square was the hub of electrified transportation from all parts of the city, and the Pike Street Market was bustling. So was Baillargeon's Store, Frederick and Nelson at Madison and Marion, the Bon Marche at Second and Pike, and a place that was very popular with the younger set — Stoke's Ice Cream Parlor. Mrs. Graham also remembers that Pike Street was wall to wall saloons and that she and her friends were forbidden to walk there.

The recent re-grading of the city and paving of many streets had made it much easier to move about, and automobiles were rapidly replacing horse-drawn carriages. Women were driving — whizzing around in all models, but especially the "Detroit Electric" a funny little runabout almost as tall as it was long. Photos from the era show lines of these cars parked in front of fashionable homes including the old Leary mansion near Lakeside's Middle School — the last home of St. Nicholas before the 1971 merger. St. Nicholas School began in this era.

Originally both boys and girls were enrolled in the kindergarten and first four primary grades; grades five through 12 were for girls only. Juanita Fisher Graham remembers the playground as a favorite place for eating brown-bag lunches with her friends. Frederick Collins remembers the playground too — especially the sandbox to which he and his male classmates

were often banished for misbehavior. This practice came to an abrupt halt when the teachers realized it was no punishment at all and made them stand in the corner instead!

Uniforms were not compulsory in the early days of St. Nicholas, but many layers of clothing were the custom of the day. According to Lois Bark, curator of costumes at the Museum of History and Industry, girls dressed in scaled down versions of their mothers clothes and started wearing corsets when they were about ten years old.

The stays constricted their rib cages to such a degree that the last rib often didn't develop. It's a wonder they could participate in sports, but they did. Tennis, riding and golf were all popular, as was the more serene pastime of croquet. Street suits, with skirts slightly above the ground, were fashionable in 1910 and were worn with elaborate hats anchored in place by huge hat-pins. Ads in the Society Blue Book indicate that these suits could be ordered to measure for \$35.00. And they were available at Helen Igoe's "Shop for Women" at 1522 Second Avenue. Miss Igoe provided exquisite clothes for Seattle women until after World War II when she sold the shop to their chief designer John Doyle Bishop.

Although women's bodies were still cruelly corseted in 1910, their minds and spirits were beginning to expand. Nationally, the women's suffragette movement was forging ahead. Locally, women had always been a force to contend with, standing shoulder to shoulder with their men folk in pioneering new territories. The strength that sustained them through the early years of physical hardship evolved into a subtle form of domestic power politics, and it was Seattle's women who formed the core of the community's cultural and educational life. Affluence brought increased leisure time which they used to increase the quality of life. Their demure Edwardian manners masked a lot of determination, and they knew how to "Walk softly and carry a big stick"!

The *Western Woman's Outlook* was the official organ of the Washington State Federation of Women's Clubs. A weekly journal devoted to social, educational and civic betterment, it was edited and managed by Helen Morton Stevens and an all female staff. A 1912 issue shows that the ladies were indeed interested in recipes, and there was one incredible article about "how to add life to an old suit" which involved hours of labor with wet rags and flat irons. But these kinds of homey hints were in the minority. The paper planned a series of articles by a leading lawyer to help women understand their legal rights. One of their reporters covered a meeting of the Woman's Home Consumer League where housewives took grocers to task for the high cost of "imported produce" and exhorted those merchants who were present to buy locally and pass the savings on to them.

In 1913 women's groups were pushing the state legislature to pass something called the "Iowa Law" which would make the owner of a property legally responsible if the building were used for "lewd purposes" — and no fair trying to claim ignorance or pushing liability off on the tenant!

When the city council passed the Griffiths Police Ordinance and effectively killed an experiment in protection and prevention on the part of the police force, the editors were up in arms. The paper had favored this measure as an adjunct to normal police duties of detection and punishment and mourned the disbanding of a group of five women who had been hired by the force to "police" shady areas and establishments which lured young girls into lives of sin.

This is a very lively paper reading much like modern feminist literature — except for one article — on chaperones and the need to perpetuate them! The story praises Seattle's Public School System for deciding that all school sponsored social activities be held on school property where they could be properly supervised. It sympathizes with parents who can't keep up the rapid pace of changing ideas, ideals and customs and mourns the "carnival."

It was also about 1914 that uniforms became the vogue at St. Nicholas. There is practically no difference between the first SNS uniforms and the one that finally gave way to jeans: white middie blouses, black ties, navy blue skirts. White skirts and aprons seem to have been worn in the early days too, and there are photos of light colored coat sweaters with a big SNS monogram on the left pocket. Long, light or dark stockings were the rule, and full navy blue bloomers which covered the knee were worn for gym. Tennis "pumps" were advertised in the yearbook with a choice of three styles: Cinderella, Mary Jane or Plaza, priced from \$1.25 to \$2.00. In the early years the dress code was not as rigid as it became later. One of the hardest restrictions for the girls to accept was the regulation on hair ribbons. The style then was to wear innumerable loops of three to four inch ribbon attached to a comb which gave the finishing touch to one's hair-do. It was a blow to be limited to a very short length of ribbon no more than a quarter of an inch wide!

Over the years the dress code tightened until there was finally a standard St. Nicholas

Uniform, required of all the girls from seventh grade through high school. Both the Bon and Fredericks stocked a supply, and there was a lot of passing down of whatever wasn't in shreds to younger friends and relations. Bloomers were out, but there was much complaining about not being able to wear lipstick and jewelry, and an equal amount of complaining about being required to wear flat-heeled oxfords with laces. The dress restrictions weren't all bad, however. Pretty or plain, everyone looked much alike, and nobody spent much time primping for school. The emphasis was on studies, friendships and school activities rather than on looks and wardrobe competition. Although there were always a few girls who got demerits for sneaking a bit of lipstick or an unauthorized piece of jewelry, most found they actually enjoyed the uniform: it was a great leveler and made getting ready for school in the morning a "no choice" breeze.

Student Government came to St. Nicholas during the school's third year, and the constitution of the "Self Government Association" was formally adopted in 1914.

The Preamble to the Constitution of Self-Government Association of St. Nicholas School, stated:

We, the pupils of the St. Nicholas School, desiring to create among ourselves a spirit of honor, unselfishness and self-control in order to maintain a better government, a deeper respect for our school, and a loyal acceptance of those duties assigned to us, do hereby make and ordain this constitution for the St. Nicholas Association of Self-Government.

The laws of the self-government association of the St. Nicholas School clearly stated school rules:

I.

There shall be no talking in the classrooms during study hours; no talking in the halls during interchange of classes; no talking on the stairs during school hours, and no loud talking in the lunch room to disturb the classes above.

Note I. The pupils may talk in their classrooms at the beginning of a class period before the teachers arrive.

II.

There shall be no passing of notes and no writing on pads, etc., which may be considered as notes.

III.

During recess no pupil shall pass the sidewalk facing Broadway, nor the sidewalk facing 10th Avenue. On Tenth Avenue the pupils shall go no farther north than the boundary of the school lot if extended through to Tenth Avenue.

IV.

It shall be the duty of every pupil to keep her desk in perfect order; not to leave her books or other articles in the halls and downstairs, and to respect the rights and interests of every other pupil.

V.

If a girl receives a demerit she shall be ineligible for office for the following term. If a girl holding office receives a demerit, she shall resign and another girl be appointed in her place.

It was the duty of the Council to give a warning to any student who broke rules. The students reported their misconduct to their councilor, who submitted a report at the next meeting of the Council. Failure to report to the councilor resulted in a demerit.

One demerit resulted in suspension of a pupil for one week from the Self-Government Association with the pupil placed under the charge of one of the teachers. Two demerits resulted in the suspension of a pupil from the Association for one month, and the pupil was not eligible for any Pennant given at the end of the school year. Three demerits meant the suspension of a pupil from the Association for the remainder of the year.

These are simple rules designed to foster self discipline, order, respect for the rights of others, and the personal safety of the students. Punishment was swift and fair and, with each girl admitting her own misconduct, all cases were open and shut. It is fascinating that the spirit of this constitution remained unchanged for so many years — through the fifties and into the mid-sixties

— before students rebelled against these traditional values and demanded greater freedom.

In 1915, St. Nicholas School published its first yearbook, a slim volume which tells us a great deal about the school and those who attended it. In five years time, the faculty had grown from seven to ten with only two of the original seven still on the staff. In addition to English, mathematics, French and drawing, the curriculum now included history, geography, Latin, science, domestic science and eurhythmies. Eurhythmies is a method of developing rhythm and concentration by giving the true feeling of music through rhythmic movements of the body. The method was developed by a Swiss musician, Herr Jacques-Delacroze. Miss Elsie McCoy studied with him in Germany and brought the discipline to St. Nicholas. As Anna Jarvis wrote in the yearbook, "The girls of this school are very fortunate in having Mrs. McCoy for their instructor and though we may not realize now the full importance of the work, we hope her splendid efforts have not been in vain?" At some point, eurhythmies disappeared from the curriculum at St. Nicholas.

St. Nicholas was accredited to the University of Washington, Smith, Mt. Holyoke and in 1916 would add Wellesley and Vassar to the list. Interesting facts, but by far the most fascinating aspect of the 1915 annual is its literary content. This was an era when writing was still a major form of communication, and the ability to produce a well-turned phrase was an enviable skill. St. Nicholas girls wrote extremely well on a variety of subjects both factual and fictional. Dorothy McEwan (Black) '16 contributed a story about the boxer rebellion which is gripping and sensitive. Margaret Ames Baillargeon '17, who had attended school in Paris the preceding year, wrote a shocking account of her war experiences while "vacationing" in Biarritz during the summer of 1914. This sheltered child of 13 or 14 was pressed into service as a nurse.

"Now Mademoiselle, please put to bed as many of these men as possible."

Surprised at such an order, I went to the regular nurse in charge of my ward and asked how I should put a man to bed.

"Begin by taking their shoes off," said she, and handed me a small, sharp pen-knife.

"And pray what is this for?" said I.

"You will see when you begin to take their shoes off," she replied.

She was right, for they had not had their shoes off for weeks and weeks, and it required a pen-knife to cut the leather in places where it stuck too hard to be soaked off. It took nearly three-quarters of an hour to take each man's shoes off, and before all could be removed, it was nearly three o'clock in the morning.

The report continues in this vein and ends with a plea for contributions to the St. Andrew's Iodine and Chloroform Fund. One wonders what became of Margaret Ames.

When the printing bills for the first annual had been paid, enough money remained to purchase a bust of Shakespeare, which found a home in the Senior English room of St. Nicholas School.

Graduation exercises for the Class of 1915 were held in a large room in the New Washington Hotel. The children of the primary and lower school were the first to walk down the aisle, followed by the upper school, and finally the senior class which consisted of only two young ladies: Anna Jarvis and Juanita Fisher. Anna Jarvis had been ill during most of the year and received only a certificate for those subjects she had completed. Juanita Fisher received the first diploma given by St. Nicholas School — an appropriate honor for a woman whose entire life would become a monument to the ideals of the school: personal honor and consideration for others. Juanita Fisher went on to Smith College giving St. Nicholas accreditation.

Awards made on Pennant Day included the Mary Louise Hoge ['16] medal for English, a Webster Dictionary for highest scholarship, the John A. Campbell scholarship medal (limited to Class II), the Virginia Lee Merrill ['20] medal for mathematics, the Jarvis silver cup for tennis and the Buddecke cup for basketball.

In 1916 German was added to the curriculum, taught by Herr Hans Poland from Augsburg. In view of the heightened feeling in the United States against German aggressions in the Great War, one would ask why. But then Russian studies became the vogue during the Cold War following World War II also.

St. Nicholas lost the annual basketball game with Annie Wright, 25 to 9 — a shock to our girls who were accustomed to winning. The report in the annual attributes the loss, to "younger, smaller girls" and to Mary Dudley's injured thumb.

The next important event in the life of the school was a Thac'e Dansant given by Miss Buddecke for the Upper Main School. It was reported as an enjoyable event whose most important feature was the strengthening of interclass spirit by the mingling of the Upper School classes. Miss Buddecke promised repetition of the treat in 1917.

1917 was a tumultuous year for St. Nicholas. The Buddecke sisters decided to move to Virginia to open a day and boarding school. St. Nicholas was sold to a group of Seattle businessmen and the school was incorporated on May 25th. The trustees included: R.D. Merrill, President; John W. Eddy, Vice President; Wallace G. Collins; Robert Snowdon, Secretary and Treasurer; George W. Fischer, Langdon C. Henry, Ernest C. Wagner, F.M. Padelford, and Cecil H. Bacon.

Miss Edith Dabney was hired as principal at a salary of \$1800 a year. The French teacher was given a \$100 raise to a salary of \$1500 per year, but for this to happen the Trustees informed Miss Dabney that she must cut \$100 from someone else's salary to obtain the money!

Miss Eda Buddecke sold St. Nicholas for \$10,000, subject to a mortgage of \$7500 upon which principle of \$1,000 had already been paid. There were 88 children enrolled and income from tuition amounted to \$12,012.

Eda Buddecke spent seven years in Seattle before returning east. She spent the last six years of her life as house mistress at Brown's Cottage, one of the residence halls at Rosemary Hall in Greenwich, Connecticut. There she died on July 11, 1926, a much loved member of the faculty in whose honor a memorial window was dedicated in St. Bede's, the school chapel.

1917 marked the advent of scholarships at St. Nicholas; one-half tuition granted to the children of "professors and ministers and the third or subsequent children in a family." Special scholarships could be granted at the discretion of the Board.

In 1919 St. Nicholas flirted with the idea of becoming a boarding school. With characteristic caution, the plan was subjected to a trial run, and the trustees provided for a temporary dormitory for girls at the home of a Mrs. Robb on Harvard Avenue. It was leased for two years at a cost of \$100 per month. Miss Julia Bailey was hired to operate the home, paying St. Nicholas \$75 per month and keeping the rest of what she charged the girls for herself. Response was minimal and the idea was abandoned.

In 1925, the trustees purchased the 10th Avenue property from Judge Manford for \$32,000. At a meeting of the Board held at the Rainier Club, a friend from the Washington Mutual Savings Bank announced that the bank would grant the school a construction loan of \$80,000 at an interest rate of 6 ½ percent. Architects Bebb and Gould designed a larger school which cost \$125,000. This facility permitted the school to expand to 200 pupils with 16 full-time and four part-time teachers. This area of the school, known as "Hollywood," had no paved roads.

The last students to graduate from the old building on Broadway North in 1925 were Catherine Deyette, Mary Hall, Jane Horsfall, Marjorie Rabel, and Marion McGrath. Important events that year were the St. Nicholas School annual dancing party at the Tennis Club on May 1st, the annual Mother's Club tea at Mrs. George W. Fischer's home, and commencement exercises at the Cornish Little Theater.

Between 1917, the year of incorporation, and the move to 10th Avenue in 1926, St. Nicholas grew from an enrollment of 78 to 200 with an average of ten girls per class. Edith Dabney had reorganized the school into 12 grades before departing in 1920 for a position as an English teacher at Milton Academy in Massachusetts. She was replaced by Miss Thomas Marietta Abernathy of Nashville, Tennessee who stayed only one year. It was 1921 when Katherine Caley took over as headmistress, a position she filled with distinction for 10 years. In addition to the Student Government Association, St. Nicholas had two other organizations to which all students belonged. Lambda Theta Upsilon was founded in 1919 to roll bandages for the war effort. Following the war, the society's charitable work became more community oriented. St. Nicholas students supported a bed for a crippled child at the Children's Orthopedic Hospital, sent Thanksgiving baskets to needy families, and held an annual Christmas party for children from the Social Welfare League "whose holidays were brightened by the gifts they received".

Later an annual bazaar was instituted. Held in the gym where each class, 7 through 12, had a place for its money-making project, there were booths for candy, cookies, and even hot dogs. On the stage there was a photography booth, where instant pictures were taken. A cake-walk was often held with homemade cakes for prizes. A one day event, the doors swung open as the final bell sounded marking the end of the school day. First on the scene were members of the Lower School who flocked en masse to the "fish pond", an ingenious contribution from Bob Brown, the school custodian. He constructed a "bridge" over which the students walked with fish-

ing poles in hand. Lower school faculty members (who sat under the bridge!) took turns putting prizes on the hooks. Lambda sponsored this bazaar as a fund raiser for charity and then decided how the money was to be allocated.

Each girl became a member of Lambda in her freshman year, and a mock initiation was held toward the end of September. At this time, the "pledges" braided their hair with rags, wore their uniforms backwards, clumped around in their fathers' shoes, and carried shoe-shining kits in buckets. The following day, initiates received their pins during a formal ceremony in the library conducted by the headmistress, who was assisted by the officers of Lambda. Afterwards, a tea was held honoring the new members.

The Athletic Association was the last organization to be formed. Its purpose was to promote interest in school athletics and good sportsmanship.

Sports were compulsory throughout the years; students played baseball, speed-ball, basketball, and tennis. Soccer was popular for a time, as was field hockey, golf, riding and archery. But everybody's all-time favorite was basketball. In the early years, the season's highlight was a trip to Tacoma by boat for a very competitive game with Annie Wright Seminary. By 1927, this tradition had been abandoned, and the basketball tournament was an intramural contest. Class competition was keen, and the sophomores won. Outstanding players were chosen for the Honorary Team after all the games were played, and their names were announced at the Father-Daughter basketball dinner.

Along with the basketball tournament and the Father-Daughter banquet, there were two more athletic highlights during the school year: the dance program and Activities Day. Activities Day was added to the school calendar in 1929 and was, from the beginning, an upper school gala devoted to championship tournaments in several sports, the presentation of cups and awards, and either a tea or banquet. The beloved yearbook, the Cantoria, made its debut, and everyone dashed around asking friends to autograph their copies, especially favorite seniors who would not return in the fall.

(A brief aside about the school annual: the first one, published in 1914, was called the NICKO-LAUGHTER, and the name was often changed until 1926 when CANTORIA was finally adopted. This name was taken from the replica of Donatello's Cantoria, the frieze of laughing children which adorned the colonnade outside the gymnasium of the new building on 10th Avenue.)

Dancing was added to the athletic program in 1936. Three types were offered, natural, folk, and tap, with students' efforts culminating in a recital program for parents. The 1930 program closed with a Virginia reel in which the parents, faculty, and girls joined in "the hilarious good time". The Cantoria notes: "The dancing was so enthusiastically accepted by the girls that it will probably become a permanent part of the sports program".

In the early 1950s, the students were still dancing; some rather well, others with what can be best described as "grim determination"! Gym time was also spent learning to walk and to sit gracefully. Students actually did glide around with books on their heads, shoulders in line with hips. They were taught to lower themselves gently into chairs, legs together and slightly to one side, hands folded and resting on one's thigh. No "plopping" was allowed and crossing of legs was discouraged although it was permissible to cross one's ankles! Sounds like something out of the Victorian era, but the mothers stood foursquare behind this program and diligently reinforced it on the home front. Students laughed or complained about the whole process, often both, but this cooperative effort is no doubt responsible for the fact that today, a woman who moves gracefully and with square shoulders is either a dancer, over forty, or — to give a nod to the younger generation — a lady Marine!

The Athletic Association maintained its strong influence in the life of the school until the late 1960s when St. Nicholas abandoned many traditions in its attempt to adjust to changing times. Among many good things that fell by the wayside was the honor of winning the "S" Award. In 1949, Barbara Johanson presented the school with a plaque on which the name of the "S" girl of each year was to be engraved. To win the honor, a student had to be the most outstanding participant in all sports. Today, the plaque itself is missing. It would be nice to see it properly displayed in Fix Alumni Center with other memorabilia from the school's golden years.

March 15, 1926 was moving day for St. Nicholas. Ground for the new school had been broken the previous July and the cornerstone laid on October 16. At the cornerstone ceremony, the girls sang "America", and Dr. Edward Lincoln Smith gave the invocation. Dr. Herbert Gowen spoke for the students; Dr. E. Weldon Young spoke for the faculty, and Dr. Frederick M. Padelford, a member of the Board of Trustees, gave a most enlightening talk on the progress of

female education in America. Copies of the daily papers, some small coins, a history of the school, and a list of the faculty and students were sealed in the cornerstone by Mr. Elfendahl, President of the Board, which had grown from nine members to 13. These included: Gerald Frink (father of current Lakeside School trustee Phillip Frink), Vice President; Robert B. Snowdon, Secretary/ Treasurer; R.D. Merrill; John W. Eddy, Ira Bronson, Mrs. George W. Fischer; Langdon C. Henry; John H. Hewitt, Frederick M. Padelford, Mrs. Reginald H. Parsons, Mrs. David E. Skinner, and Reginald H. Parsons.

The new facility allowed room for new courses. Chemistry was one, and the chemistry lab, home of teacher Belle Stevens, was a place of numerous mysteries. Many graduates will remember the "Chemistry Cat" who was almost six feet tall and made his first appearance in the chemistry class's mystery show at a bazaar the year after the school moved. Most of his time was spent lurking about in either the attic or on the top shelf in the stock room. But he did appear often during the 1930s for the state chemistry contest, in which St. Nicholas participated, and on other rare and unexpected occasions!

In 1927 St. Nicholas was booming with 202 students, 10 full-time teachers, four part-time teachers, and an average of 10 girls per class. The uniform was well established by this time and, except for the long silk stockings and bloomers for gym, didn't change at all over the next thirty years.

Twelve assemblies were given during the year with guest speakers, who spoke on a variety of topics ranging from French anecdotes to conditions in China to something called "The private life of a crab".

Among the nine graduates of the Class of 1927 was Audrey Wurdemann, who was already an accomplished writer of both prose and poetry. In that same year her book of poems, entitled *The House of Silk*, was published. In a tribute to her, the 1929 annual notes: "In 1928 Audrey was admitted into the National League of American Pen Women. Several of her poems have been published in the following magazines: *The Forum*, *Plain Talk*, *Poetry*, *Commonwealth*, *Bookman*, *College Humor*, and *The New Yorker*. We are proud to have her receive national recognition so quickly and predict that the future will bring Audrey continued success." And this was indeed the case. In 1934, Audrey Wurdemann was awarded a Pulitzer Prize for the best American volume of verse published during that year. She was 25 years old. Lakeside School recognized her unique accomplishment in the field of American letters by naming her a Distinguished Alumna in 1975.

From 1921 to 1931, St. Nicholas was guided by Katharine Caley, a wise, large-spirited woman who managed to maintain the essence of the school's ideals and standards in the midst of striking changes in feminine social behavior. The horrors of the Great War had made innocence impossible, and passage of the 19th Amendment gave women political as well as social power. They ventured forth in short skirts, sexy shoes, bobbed hair, and makeup. Marriage and motherhood were still popular, but so were jobs, traveling without chaperones, drinking cocktails, doing the Charleston, and even smoking in public! This was a genuine revolution, and it is to Miss Caley's credit that her school remained intact and retained its identity with uniforms, sensible shoes, clean faces, sports and studies, emphasis on noble personal ideals.

Once they graduated, St. Nicholas girls were free to whirl into the eddies of "The Jazz Age". Their characters had been molded during their formative years by Miss Caley and her staff, who were, in turn, supported by parental influences. This psychological pressure is best illustrated by quotes from Miss Caley's essays to the students published in *Cantorias* from this period:

On "Generosity"

"Today I should like to speak of that generosity, which has no connection necessarily with tangible gifts or money. It is that broad attitude of mind and thought which all may cultivate and make into a habit. This generosity is tolerance and will prove a blessing to the one who bestows as well as to the one who receives.

It is the girl with a generous nature who thinks and feels that others' have motives the same or similar to her own, who understands temptations, knows the strength and weakness in others, and does not permit herself to feel "different" or superior. In such a girl a generous spirit is equivalent to a spirit of nobility.

We shall be blessed when a spirit of generosity — sensitive, unprejudiced, and sympathetic, is so prevalent in our school that we may call

it the "St. Nicholas Spirit" and warm ourselves in its glow."

In 1931, her last essay to "her girls", Katharine Caley said this:

"It is through seeking and assuming responsibility, it is by making mistakes and correcting them, it is by experience that you gain more appreciation of yourselves and of others. It is a wonderfully fine thing to have a well thought out purpose and to stick to it in spite of untold hardships and difficulty. And if you have met your school problems with valiant courage and solved them with some measure of success, you will not only be prepared to meet the more complex situations of womanhood but also be filled with an incentive to make something of your fine selves.

Your equanimity in accepting consequences has come, I hope, from your belief that privileges follow upon responsibility and that you should forfeit the first if you fail in the latter. You assume your share of an obligation or trust, and back to you comes growth and self independence. Through student participation in government, regulation of sports, plays, banquets, school assemblies, publications and student conferences you are learning to give to your school steadfastness and loyalty; while all the time you are freeing yourselves from timidity, prejudices, and self depreciation, in the same measure you are developing your faith in your best selves and increasing your love and consideration for your fellow students. As a great teacher says, 'Isn't intelligent morality just that — an intelligent purposing which means creative initiative, resourcefulness and strength of character?'"

The kind of speech that makes kids turn off their minds and groan? — certainly! A hard creed to follow? — definitely! But the fact is many students did leave the school imbued with this "St. Nicholas Spirit". They went on in life to become generous, spirited, tolerant, resourceful, loyal, and responsible members of their communities.

During the ten years Miss Caley served St. Nicholas, she took the school through the construction of the new building and an expansion in curriculum. The Cantoria of 1926 was dedicated to this beloved headmistress: "who, because of her continuous inspiration, love and guidance, as well as her tact, executive ability and knowledge of girls, has endeared herself not only to the girls, but to all the friends of St. Nicholas."

When she left, the Board of Trustees had some difficulty deciding what to do. The minutes of their meeting on June 9, 1931 reflect this indecision. After formally accepting Miss Caley's resignation, the consensus was that further consideration should be given to "some kind of amalgamation or merger" with Miss Bush's school. But in the meantime, Miss Fanny C. Steele, the Latin teacher at St. Nicholas, was offered the job of Headmistress for a "period of no more than one year as this is simply a temporary measure".

The talk of a merger and the temporary nature of Miss Steele's appointment are the first signs of the Depression's impact upon St. Nicholas. During the Trustees' meeting in January 1932, Education Committee chairman Frederick M. Padelford reported that "certain individuals interested in Miss Bush's School approached our Board and suggested possible consolidation of the two schools." A conference was held, and the problem was then referred specifically to the education committee, which reported:

We have endeavored to approach the problem from every angle and it is our unanimous opinion that the amalgamation should not be attempted, certainly for the present. We believe that there is a place for the two schools, and that our lower school can be built up to the point where it will be self supporting.

On the 26th of January 1932, Fanny Steele's appointment as Miss Caley's successor became permanent. Hired at a salary of \$4000/year, she too was a strong executive who met the problems of the Depression head-on.

Enrollment dropped to 141, a trend which continued until 1944 when the school had only 120 students. The financial statement for 1932 showed a net loss of \$7,986.72, and salaries were cut 30% in order to provide for mortgage payments. In April, 1934, Washington Mutual Savings Bank agreed to postpone two principal payments of \$2500 each until the maturity date of the loan

in October 1936. By this date, St. Nicholas still owed Washington Mutual \$35,000 but was able, to convince the bank to lower the interest rate to 5%. Over the next four years, the school and the bank had regular correspondence concerning the mortgage and payments. But in April 1941, despite a request from the school for a further reduction in the interest rate, Dietrich Schmitz wrote the Board with a firm rejection, reminding the Trustees that his bank was not in the business of giving away other people's money!

Throughout the Depression, Board minutes reflect the financial woes of the school. But under the leadership of Victor H. Elfendahl, President from 1926 to 1943, St. Nicholas survived. After operating at a loss for years, the financial forecast for 1938 finally showed an estimated excess of cash receipts over disbursements, and by 1944, with a rise in prosperity, school enrollment once again rose to 200. It is unfortunate there wasn't a little extra cash lying around in 1937 when the Board learned that the school's neighbor "might be willing to sell her property for \$12,000 or \$13,000." Negotiations were begun in April to obtain an option at \$12,000, but the matter apparently died, as there is no further mention of it.

In spite of the financial difficulties of the Depression years, the school's programs and activities continued, and the *Cantoria* reflects an active schedule. Twenty-two girls graduated in the Class of '32. In 1933 the seniors gave two plays whose combined titles are interesting . . . *Intimate Stranger* and *Sleeping Beauty*.

Throughout the thirties, humor played a big part in the life of the school — much of it irreverent. Scattered about in *Cantorias* of the era are questions and quotations which strike a familiar chord in all who attended the school — no matter when.

FAMOUS QUESTIONS

Miss Sinclair: "Florence, have you EVER cleaned your desk?"

Mrs. Adams: Can't you sing without flattering?

Ann Ferguson: Do we HAVE to change for gym, Miss Hess?

Margaretta Smith: Will you stand in front of me so Mrs. Adams can't see my Latin vocabulary?

Mrs. Bolster: Will you run an errand for me?

Miss Steele to photographer: Will you take the feet?

Photographer: Well, I could cut them off — just as you like.

Famous Last Words: I wonder if I dare go back for seconds before they say grace?

This won't mean much to anyone who has forgotten the lunchroom routine so here is a reminder. After everyone was served, students sat at tables of ten: nine students and a faculty member. The student to the right of the teacher seated her and brought her lunch. Eating was permitted until Miss Steele rang a bell, then everyone stood while grace was said. Nobody ever went back for seconds before grace!

In 1934, senior privileges, which were to last for many years, were already firmly established: the stairs, early dismissals, tea or coffee at lunch, studying in the library, candy sales, finals a week before the rest of the school, street clothes during senior week, senior rings, and special tables at lunch during second semester. A great fundraiser for the *Cantoria* was the pound for lost articles located in the property room. It cost five cents to redeem various things found lying around "out of place", but the fee for forgetfulness didn't seem to improve memories. Pupils just grinned and paid.

Miss Caley returned for a visit on the fifth of January and on the 17th, a faculty tea was given for Betty Anne Frink and Phyllis Ann Dearborn, who were presented with corsages for honor grades at the University of Washington.

In 1934 the Building committee of the Board was asked by Miss Steele to look into the possibility of adding a recreation room for use in rainy weather either by excavating under the south end of the building or finishing part of the third floor. A permit to expand upward had already been denied by the city in 1930 on the apparent grounds the building must be fireproof. No excavating occurred, and the school had to wait almost twenty years for the south addition.

Tuition in the thirties: Kindergarten — \$125; high school \$400; lab fee — \$10; tutoring upper school — \$2 an hour; lower school — \$1.50 an hour. Hot lunch cost \$65 a year, and a midmorning snack of crackers and juice was ten cents. At their meeting on April 18, 1933 the Trustees voted: "That it is not deemed feasible to introduce the teaching of German at this time"

...

At the end of the year the school received some much appreciated gifts from students and friends: Alumna scholarship from the Alumnae Association; Physics apparatus from the physics class; check for the *Cantoria* from the Mothers' Club; spotlights from the student government association; an oriental rug from the Class of '34; and a pair of silver candelabra and a tray from the Burke collection presented by Mrs. D.E. Frederick. The silver is housed at the Jane Carlson Williams '60 Archives at Lakeside School.

The alumnae notes in the '36 *Cantoria* mention the births of several girls who would eventually attend St. Nicholas. Their mothers were Marian Bates Scripps '28, Katherine Jaynes Powell '29, Mary Oldham Scripps'30, and Betty Calvert Henry '30. It is regrettable that succeeding issues of the annual do not single out girls who were daughters of alums carrying on the school's traditions. Over the years there were many whose mothers, grandmothers, aunts, and cousins who were part of the St. Nicholas community. It continues today, only now the name of the school is Lakeside.

From 1932 until her retirement in 1952, Fanny C. Steele ruled St. Nicholas with an iron hand. She had the advantage of looking like a Headmistress — tall, imposing, hawk-nosed, with piercing brown eyes which missed nothing. Most of the girls were in awe of her; a few realized she had a sense of humor, all were respectful, but no one knew her very well. She spent little time circulating amongst the students and no time at all socializing within the community. Nevertheless, she was well informed about everything that was going on and knew the names of every one of her students. Miss Steele headed the school during the Depression, worked tirelessly to increase enrollment, and believed in quality education. She was not an innovator, however, and viewed those who learned in that direction with suspicion. Conservatism was her byword — not surprising for a woman who grew up in Cherokee, Iowa — the daughter of the town banker. Helen Bush School was her particular *bete noir* and just knowing Bush was experimenting with some new trend in education was enough to make Miss Steele disapprove of it. She was four square behind the basics and so were the trustees and parents. For 20 years, St. Nicholas was almost suspended in time.

It was Miss Steele's custom to make detailed reports to the Board. It says a great deal about the school and could easily have a 1940 or 1950 dateline. In 1939, she noted that "A tea was given on a Saturday afternoon, and a series of teas were given in the school library throughout the year. The last, mainly with the idea of giving the girls the confidence that comes in knowing the right thing to do." It is comforting to know "the right thing to do", and St. Nicholas girls were noted for their social graces.

Miss Steele loved the school and devoted her life to it. She was in the right place at the right time and left her mark on many Seattle women who remember St. Nicholas as a safe and steady haven. Fanny Steele's credo is expressed very well in a message she wrote for the '38 *Cantoria*:

From the Bridge to all sailing aboard good ship *Cantoria*
"May our bark be trustworthy. May we pass safely the shoals of indifference, the rocks of criticism. May we weather the gales of willfulness, the storms of petulance and the stress of self-aggrandizement and enter upon the spreading deeps of self-control and find port in the harbor of achievement."

While Miss Steele and her staff struggled to keep the school afloat financially, the girls bobbed along through each year's activities calendar. In 1938, two new groups were formed: the Camera Club held teas and dinners to discuss photography, and a play reading club studied the writing styles of George Bernard Shaw, George Kauffman, Eugene O'Neil, and J.M. Barrie. Some acting was done too although no formal performances were given.

The performance of the year was the Senior Play, "The Art of Being Bored" by Edouard Pailleron. Certain lines taxed everyone's ability to maintain a straight face: "St. was speaking: can one say more?" or "Protect that little tooth, bicuspid or incisor". But no beards fell off, and the girls with feminine parts looked very elegant in their 1930s evening gowns. The comic highlight of the evening — unplanned—was Achsah Moore Hiscock's grand exit. Bursting with suppressed mirth after a steamy love scene she tripped and took a flying gainer off the stage into the arms of her audience!

The Athletic Association was easily the busiest group, responsible not only for games, but also fun in a social sense. Activities Day was an organizational tour de force beginning with badminton and tennis tournaments in the morning, continuing with baseball in the afternoon, and going on to an evening banquet during which awards were given, songs were sung, and Miss

Steele toasted the departing senior athletes. Earlier in the year, the girls had put together a memorable Father-Daughter Banquet — the best ever. It began with a welcome song in the library, followed by word games at dinner, and more singing, old favorites and school songs. Somehow, the girls still had energy for "The Game", after dinner and on full stomachs!

The thirties came to a close with two special events. The Junior High girls sponsored an exhibition of teachers' hobbies which displayed an interesting array of talent and proved revealing to students who can often picture their teachers only as bodies behind a desk. The second event was the Senior Tea Dance which was held in the gym and began with a formal receiving line — Miss Steele, Miss Sinclair and Miss Mulhern, the senior sponsor. It was many years before St. Nicholas girls managed to break out of the gym and into the clubs and hotels for their dances. The argument that "other schools were doing it" made no difference to Miss Steele and, in fact, probably made her even more determined to keep the girls properly controlled within the familiar confines of the school building! The receiving line was an ordeal and added to the school's starchy, uniformed image — a picture of ambivalence, to all. In retrospect however, this really was excellent training.

The early forties at St. Nicholas reflected the major concern of the country — World War II. Rondeau Evans, who began teaching history at the school in 1941, remembers that the girls went on much as before except for war efforts and the "same consciousness of wartime as everyone else in town". This meant blackout curtains, neighborhood air raid wardens, a sand bucket in every closet, "meatless Tuesdays", and ration books. Local boat owners participated in the Coast Guard Auxiliary, the Government Locks were closed to visitors, and all pleasure boating was sharply curtailed by fuel shortages and government restrictions in coastal areas. There were submarine nets scattered around in strategic locations, gun emplacements on Magnolia Bluff and servicemen everywhere. Seattle's port facilities became vital to the war effort, and Boeing Aircraft Company took off like a rocket. Women who had never worked became military chauffeurs, assembly line whizzes and USO volunteers. The boredom and austerity of the thirties was exchanged for the excitement and austerity of this major conflict which was to alter forever America's position as a nation.

At SNS, bomb drills were held, and all windows in the school were taped to prevent flying glass in the event of an air attack. The U.S. Army occupied St. Mark's Cathedral, doing nobody knows what, because the grounds were off limits to all but military personnel. The occupying army proved a boon to the church which had gone bankrupt during the depression. Government rent money enabled them to start up again after the war.

In 1942 Viola Shields was in charge of the school's ration books, a year's worth of lunches cost \$75, and parents were urged by the Board of Trustees to share rides and come to the school's annual meeting.

Skiing was becoming increasingly popular, and the *Cantoria* is full of pictures of girls in baggy pants, bulky jackets, and hats with bills and earflaps — the last word in stylish clothing for the slopes. To modern eyes they look pretty frumpy, but what an improvement over those who pioneered this sport in the Northwest in the late twenties. They ventured forth in everything from shooting jackets to riding boots — whatever was hanging around that looked like it might be warm!

The Class of '43 dedicated the *Cantoria* "to our armed forces of the land, the sea, and the air". "Until victory, a day, an hour of virtuous liberty is worth a whole eternity of bondage." In an article titled "Second Front", St. Nicholas war time activities were reviewed.

Wartime is worktime for St. Nicholas girls, not only in the field of study, but also in the fields of war-work. As we come to the end of a busy school year, we can look back on the completion of several wartime services.

The first weeks of school found the Seniors resuming their Tuesday War Stamp Sales of last year. The Juniors contributed a service to the war effort by completing one hundred hand knitted squares for a Red Cross Afghan. They also collected over two hundred recent phonograph records which were turned over to the committee distributing records to the soldiers throughout the nation. The Sophomores sponsored a book drive for servicemen.

The entire school collected many small gifts including hard candies, cigarettes, writing paper, pencils, small games, fruitcakes, etc. for our fighting men's Thanksgiving treat. A similar drive was conducted at Christmas time. Cookie drives were held once a month to help make U.S.O.'s and similar organizations seem more like home to servicemen...

Paper shortages made it necessary to decrease the size of the *Cantoria* during the war years and literary sections and alumnae news were eliminated completely for a time. The girls still managed to publish *The Jinx* though and even expanded it to include fashion hints, a French corner, and creative writing section.

Athletics, popular music and the Glee Club — with Mrs. Almada Jones as director — were all highlights of the 1940s. Mrs. Mary Wright, who later taught physical education at the Lakeside Middle School, joined the faculty in 1945. The emphasis on sports increased with her arrival. Volleyball became the game for the Father-Daughter Banquet, but basketball remained popular as did tennis, badminton, baseball, and shuffle board. Students loaned the school phonographs and records which filled the gym every day with fans who sang along with and danced to the latest popular music — Glenn Miller, the Dorsey Brothers, Artie Shaw, Benny Goodman ...

For nine months St. Nicholas promoted itself on KOL Radio with a 15 minute weekly musical program. Spanish was added to the curriculum only to disappear in the fifties. Foreign languages had a way of coming and going with French the only consistent note. Much of the credit for its staying power must go to Laure Nichols who came to this country as a World War I war bride, began teaching through economic necessity, and devoted her life to several generations of little girls to whom Mme. Nichols was France.

In 1945, the last year of the War, Miss Steele sent the seniors on their way into a still uncertain world with these words: "Could I teach you one lesson in living, this is the one I would have you learn past any forgetting; to realize that advantages given us entail obligations, to know that the more we have, the more we owe, to remember that our days should be spent not just in receiving but mostly in giving, to understand that talents not used have a way of disappearing. For life does not owe us; we are the debtors."

World War II came to an end. Conversion to a peacetime economy surged forward. There were advertisements everywhere for new radios, cars, refrigerators, furniture, and clothes which prosperous Americans rushed to buy. While much of the rest of the world lay in ruins, we were bursting with vitality; physically unscathed, well-fed, clean and healthy. Wartime shortages and rationing in the United States were just an annoyance compared to the very real deprivation and suffering experienced by those whose countries were battlegrounds.

World leadership had been thrust upon America. World War I had been fought in the hope that Europe would leave us alone. Now, with another war behind us, many seemed to realize that self-interest was involved with what happened over there. America entered into an ideological conflict with the USSR which has continued, essentially unchanged, for 35 years.

The "Cold War" and our national paranoia about Communist infiltration led to the establishment of the House Un-American Activities Committee which gained a lot of support from people who believed that government had the right to determine what Americans should be able to say, read, write or think. Others were not so sure about that and voiced their belief that the right of dissent was fundamental to the existence of a Democratic society. These were usually the individuals who came under suspicion and were labeled "commies" or "pinkos". Many were scared frightened into silence. Too few Americans seemed to have heard Adolph Hitler when he said, "The great strength of the totalitarian state is that it will force those who fear it to imitate it".

Certainly this national climate affected education. St. Nicholas students were not encouraged to read Hitler, Marx, Lenin or any other political author who might be considered "controversial". Rondeau Evans remembers that teaching of history became very difficult during the McCarthy era.

Parents who supported his crusade passed their beliefs on to their daughters who, in turn, brought them to the classroom. Traditional American principles like freedom of speech — the whole Bill of Rights — were still taught, but those doing the teaching found themselves treading a fine line. Within the climate of McCarthyism, it became dangerous for educators to speak out for the old ideals. They might "incriminate" themselves. Many lost their jobs. Fortunately, no one was fired at St. Nicholas. But the atmosphere there was, nevertheless, one of restraint and apprehension. It was everywhere.

St. Nicholas students were aware of world and national concerns. They read newspapers, and spent one half hour a week gathered in the study hall while Miss Evans lectured us on "Current Events". Within that short space of time, she was limited to providing little more than a headline service — enough to save them from total ignorance, but enough to stir minds into deeper thought or to question national leadership or formulate new ideas.

During the late forties and early fifties, young people were content to lead sheltered lives

untroubled by the problems of the world. They were the perfect audience for "Howdy Doody", Uncle Millie, Sid Caesar and Imogene Coca! And viewed on the nation's first black and white television sets.

By 1950, St. Nicholas had twenty-two faculty members and a graduating class of eighteen. Lunches were up to \$90 per year, the mortgage was paid in full, and Board member Claude Bekins was asked to look into the feasibility of a transportation system. One of his possibilities was Far West Cab Company, but their fares of \$2.50 to Queen Anne Hill, \$1.20 to Madison Park, and \$2.00 to Mt. Baker were considered too expensive. Finally, Bekins said, "Unless the need is great for transportation, certainly St. Nicholas's problems are kept to a minimum by not having to arrange for it." Students continued to arrive at school by a variety of means: public buses, on foot, carpools, and even taxicabs. Some of the girls had cars of their own or permanent use of a family vehicle.

Lambda activities for 1950 included not only a bazaar but also fundraising campaigns for the March of Dimes, the Community Chest, The Red Cross, and the Orthopedic Hospital. Many students were members of Junior Orthopedic Guilds — JOG — and donated time after school or on weekends as candystripers at the old hospital on Queen Anne Hill. A small brick building, it was devoted almost exclusively then to the treatment of bone diseases in children many of whom were Alaskan Natives suffering from tuberculosis of the bone.

In 1952, Miss Winifred Sinclair retired. Teacher, friend, academic head of the high school, she taught Latin at St. Nicholas for 21 years after taking Miss Steele's place in 1921. Teas and dinners were given in her honor, but the respect and affection of her girls is best expressed in two tributes written by students. In the *Cantoria*, Jill Bekins, President of Student Government, said

After 21 years, Miss Sinclair is leaving St. Nicholas. She will be missed by the faculty, by the girls, and by her many friends in Seattle. Miss Sinclair will always be remembered as the guardian angel of the high school. Her patience and tolerance have never wavered from their strong foundation. She has demanded and obtained a certain standard in all of her classes, yet her ready wit and sense of humor have made working with her a pleasure.

Understanding and wonderfully kind, she holds a beloved and respected place in every heart.

Judy Callison said it with poetry in the year's last issue of the *Junior Jinx*:

Miss Sinclair, Our Guiding Light

A guiding light
Shines in the darkness
Of youth.
So bright that it blinds
The false
And leads on eternal
Truth.

Unsure minds and hearts
Have felt
The power of
Its rays,
And pass on enlightened,
Wiser, and prepared
For future days.

And though a silver thread
Spins its web o'er
The lamp ... still
The light shines through
Ever bright, and strong, and true.

Now we see the sunset
Of another year.
And like the setting sun

Which fades over our hill
To warm those on
The other side...
So goes our guide. Farewell

Although no one realized it at the time, Miss Sinclair's departure created the first break in the wall of habit and tradition that sustained St. Nicholas School. The second break came the following year when Miss Fanny Steele retired. She had been Headmistress for 22 years, the longest tenure in the history of the school. With these words the class of '55 dedicated that year's *Cantoria* to Miss Steele: "With wisdom she has led us; with charity judged us; with sincerity cherished us. We therefore express our heartfelt gratitude for her guidance and inspiration by lovingly dedicating this *Cantoria* to Miss Steele."

Both of these women were strong and absolute. Their word was law and right or wrong, no one questioned them — they expected obedience and therefore received it. Each of them possessed an exquisite sense of timing in the matter of their retirements. Independent education was headed for some radical changes that neither of these Edwardian ladies would have understood or condoned. They were among the last and best of their kind and those who matured under their tutelage can be grateful to them.

In 1953, Anna Burton Neil replaced Miss Sinclair as Academic Head of the High School. A gentle, soft-spoken southerner from Missouri, she taught mathematics and possessed the traditional beliefs and qualities of her predecessor. The transition was a smooth one, and life for SNS students continued on its well-ordered and predictable pattern.

Miss Steele's replacement as headmistress was Miss Virginia E. Smith, a graduate of Indiana University who came to St. Nicholas from a teaching position at The Hockaday School in Dallas. Over the next five years SNS began to respond to the changes occurring in education and private school education in particular. The pressure of higher public school salaries and benefits were felt, and the Board also began to discuss the need to supplement tuition income with fundraising.

The matter of tuition itself became a subject for discussion, and the Board minutes of February 23, 1954 tell the story: "President Bekins met with Harry Henke, President of the Helen Bush-Parkside School and with Miss Marjorie C. Livengood, Principal of said school, to discuss matters of mutual interest. The fees charged by the two schools were discussed, and it was discovered that the fees charged by St. Nicholas were in all cases (except lunch fee) less than those charged by Helen Bush-Parkside School. Upon motion duly made and seconded, the Board of Trustees authorized a revision of the tuition fees charged by St. Nicholas School, commencing with the new contracts in the fall, soon to be issued, as follows, which schedule is in accordance with the tuition fees charged by Helen Bush-Parkside School."

Grades	1-2	\$300.00
	3-4	\$350.00
	5-6	\$400.00
	7-8	\$450.00
	9-12	\$500.00

In 1955 a one-story wing, which allowed for some expansion in curriculum, was added to the south end of the building, and the playground was hard topped. Students scored a major social coup by gaining permission for an exchange luncheon with Lakeside School. The sky did not fall in, and the Board decided to give the girls another privilege they had been lobbying for over the years: a mixer with Lakeside students to be held in the spring of 1956 at St. Nicholas. Bush and Lakeside had been hosting informal weekend dances for a long time, and SNS girls were often invited as guests. It seems a small thing, but being allowed to join the group at last was a tremendous breakthrough.

There were more changes at St. Nicholas during Miss Smith's five-year tenure than all of Miss Steele's 22 years at the helm. In 1956 an exchange student program began, and by 1957 transportation was being provided to 31 students. In February of that year, the Board established an Endowment Fund, and in 1958 even the Senior Stairs were replaced by another privilege — a Senior Room.

Miss Smith resigned in 1958 to rejoin the Hockaday School. There are those who feel she was afraid of her job as headmistress, to take a stand, to be herself — that she was not suited to "lead" in the tradition in which the school was accustomed perhaps. But she deserved credit for sensing the tenor of the times, recognizing the importance of updating the school, and

opening her mind to the expressed heed of teenagers to play some substantive role in the formulation of school policy.

The position of headmistress was given to Miss Edith Rowe, a warm, hearty Easterner who was raised by an artistic, aristocratic mother, but who preferred the outdoors and sailing with her brother to more intellectual pursuits. Mrs. Neil continued in her post as assistant head, and there were 237 students enrolled that year.

For ten years Miss Rowe struggled to keep herself and St. Nicholas afloat on the wicked seas of the sixties. It was an impossible task with students demanding more freedoms, parents demanding less; the Board worried about finances, enrollment and image; teachers discontented with curriculum/academic standards and low salaries. All of these factions had legitimate concerns but satisfying one seemed only to aggravate another.

In May of 1959 Miss Rowe asked the Board about the possibility of hosting the annual conference of independent schools on the St. Nicholas campus. "Upon motion duly made and seconded this request was not approved because the Board did not approve of having liquor on the premises."

Students were still in uniforms but their adherence to rules and general behavior was changing radically. In mid-year 1959, the Board issued a formal statement that "smoking on school grounds would be considered cause for suspension". By 1960, Miss Rowe was forced to extend the smoking ban to the Cathedral grounds and to recommend that two suspensions would be cause for expulsion.

In 1961, enrollment had risen to 248, the Alumni Association raised \$500 for scholarships, and activities with Lakeside had increased, with the two schools collaborating on a Christmas play. But it was also in 1961 that the Board decided to offer two separate courses in the high school: "One for those students who could reasonably be considered candidates for the more demanding colleges and a less intensive course, known as the general course, offered to the remaining students."

1960 was the year of St. Nicholas' Golden Anniversary. Dr. A.H. Meadowcroft became chairman of a committee composed of past Board Presidents charged with the duty of planning a suitable 50th anniversary celebration for the school. To commemorate this occasion, the Board decided to add a second floor to the new wing. Final cost for the addition was \$89,000. A Capital Fund Drive set at \$150,000 ended with pledges of \$65,000. Maxwell Carlson was president of the trustees.

Tuition in 1962 ranged from \$550 in the lower grades to \$850 in the upper school. The Board minutes, while they do not reflect specific incidents, indicate some apprehension about the Lakeside/St. Nicholas connection. Attendance at mixers had increased, and Miss Rowe asked for more control, feeling it was necessary to "change the arrangements in order to minimize the likelihood of unfortunate incidents".

The Board decided to eliminate grades one through four in successive stages. A decision was also made against allowing early dismissals for Lakeside games — even if Bush did permit them.

By 1964 St. Nicholas had a dynamite volleyball team which defeated both Bush and Lakeside, but its academic performance was so poor that one Board member remarked (with unintentional prescience), "the standards of the independent schools must progress as colleges do or our days are numbered." A minimum grade average of 2.0 was required for classes 40 earning seconds after the first quarter. But by now the faculty was in a state of ferment which is understandable when one considers the low salaries, which averaged \$4300 a year. This was barely a living wage even in 1964 and many teachers were moonlighting or looking for higher paying positions.

When school opened in September 1965, enrollment had dropped to 229, and it was felt that the school needed a better image. A fulltime public relations consultant was authorized in September of 1966. St. Nicholas failed for a while. There was a scholarship budget of \$5000 and a sustaining fund of \$7,432.

In 1967 the Board approved a library extension and construction of biology and chemistry labs. Teacher salaries were finally increased 15% and enrollment rose 20%. These might be interpreted as hopeful signs, and they were moves in the right direction, but people who were intimately involved with St. Nicholas knew it was mortally ill. From 1967 on, the history of the school became a litany of disaster.

It should be pointed out at this time that St. Nicholas was not alone in its struggle for survival. The late sixties was a turbulent era: the United States polarized over involvement in the

Vietnam War, and authority figures under siege at all levels of society, from the White House on down. Conservatives saw salvation in traditional values and clung to them like grim death; young people rose up in revolt against those values which, to them, seemed irrelevant. Parents were frightened — totally confused about how to deal with these young strangers they had raised; grubby, long-haired, pot-smoking strangers who, at best, refused to conform to established standards of behavior and, at worst, were actually throwing bombs and fomenting civil strife. The very fact that they were institutions for youth made tinder boxes out of universities and secondary schools.

Prep schools were especially vulnerable to the “irrelevant” charge. Young people looked upon them as moss-covered monuments to The Establishment, bastions of the rich and privileged, hide-bound with traditions they considered puerile. Enrollments fell off everywhere, and not because of parental disenchantment or inability to afford constant tuition increases and requests for supplementary funds. Parents were more eager than ever to place their children in what they felt was a safe environment — a good, solid school, run by conservative, right-thinking people. But thousands of children simply refused to go, opting instead for public high schools which were neither exclusive nor preachy. The present and the future were important; the past didn't concern them except, perhaps, as an example of what not to do.

St. Nicholas students were right in step with the times and their generation. In looking back over some of the changes they sought and those they received, it is difficult now to imagine what all the fuss was about. The student chapel committee asked to be allowed to drop chapel assemblies in favor of a study of comparative religions. The faculty favored continuing chapel with a less rigid format. Student Government officers were finally given permission to rule on and control the wearing of earrings and later requested power to make a decision on uniforms. Seniors were given smoking privileges in the dining room for the last lunch period, and students were allowed to leave the campus with permission from the administration and their parents. To the uninitiated, these hardly seem like earthshaking issues, but to the network of older graduates whose daughters and granddaughters were attending the school, these freedoms were threatening and seemed to signal the demise of yet another dependable bulwark against the tide of social change.

The Board of Trustees was faced with a situation which produced a number of vital meetings. Miss Rowe, who was seen as a representative of a by-gone era, was asked to resign. A study was made of a flexible curriculum and, in the fall of 1968, a pass-fail system was instituted in the junior class with seniors having independent study privileges. Frank MacKeith was brought in from St. John's in Houston to become the school's first male faculty member and its headmaster. As a former public affairs officer for NASA and former science teacher, he admitted in a *Seattle Times* interview to being "not perfectly at ease" with his new position as leader of a school for young ladies. But he said he found the prospect "challenging and exciting" and noted that while he didn't believe in ultra stern discipline, he did feel "solid guidelines" were important.

In February 1969, tuition was increased to a high of \$1100 with \$180 for lunch. Board President Tedrow Watkins asked a former headmaster from St. Johns to prepare a study of St. Nicholas. His report recommended the school become co-ed, that a faculty with broader experience and disciplines be hired, that enrollment be increased to 360, and the facilities enlarged. Faced with a declining enrollment and an anticipated deficit of \$46,000, the Board asked John Graham to make a preliminary study for expanding the school to 350 students. It was decided the deficit could not be reduced by increasing tuition so an annual fund goal was established at \$20,000. By February 1970, only \$10,200 had been received.

When school convened in the fall of 1970, there was more bad news. A deficit of \$64,000 was anticipated, and the architect's estimate for an addition to the school was \$750,000. As a measure to produce more income, tuitions were increased by \$250 per student and the 5th grade was reinstated. Trouble was brewing amongst the faculty as well and five of the 24 staff members decided not to return in the fall. With Mr. MacKeith's resignation in July, the Board faced the serious question of another or not the school could continue for more than a year without going under financially. Only 70% of the Annual Fund goal had been reacted, and discussions about co-education began in earnest, as did the possibility of merging with another school, if a suitable one could be found.

It was again necessary to find a new leader for St. Nicholas. David Davis was then Director of Admissions and Scholarship at Lakeside. He had taught English there for eleven years and was regarded as a gifted, innovative teacher — the sort who inspired students in class and

years later caused many to observe, "He was the best teacher I ever had". Davis was interested enough to write a long letter to two other trustees, J. Vernon Williams and Mrs. Holt Webster, stating his educational views and determination to implement them if he took the post. His concepts won the firm support of Board President Langdon S. Simons, Jr., who called a special board meeting in late summer to ratify the appointment. Davis was there and told the trustees that, "the school as it exists in its present state and ideals is doomed".

Shortly after his appointment was announced, Davis began to revolutionize the school; to act on his belief that its only salvation lay in radical change. The first thing to go was the traditional St. Nicholas uniform which had remained unaltered for the past half century! This was a great victory for the girls who had been struggling to get rid of, or at least update it, for years. Their parents were not so enthusiastic and saw nothing amusing in Davis' flip offer to "purchase the first four skirts delivered to the school to have them made into a pair of slacks", when he invited parents to the first of a series of "talk backs", during which he promised to outline his principles, policies and objectives for the school.

There were two meetings, both marred by acrimonious exchanges between parents and between parents and Davis. Emotionalism scored a victory over logic which was extremely unfortunate for St. Nicholas because Davis' concept for the school was sound and might have saved it. He wanted to get rid of its 19th century finishing school "tea and good manners" program and replace it with a vital, meaningful educational environment which would answer the varied needs of large numbers of students. He felt a school should be important to the kids, a place they wanted to be ... not just a place they went to every day because of parental pressure.

In addition to making uniforms voluntary, Davis wanted to eliminate letter grades, transfuse new blood into faculty and staff, make the school co-ed in the fall of 1971, invite representative adults from the community to donate their wisdom as resource persons, and get the kids involved in the life of Seattle.

Ten years later, it is difficult to understand why even the most conventional parent could have been threatened by this benign program. Some were not, and Davis did have the support of those who realized he was not a radical but a visionary. These parents left their children at St. Nicholas and prayed Davis would be successful in turning the school around. He had only one year in which to do so.

David Davis didn't make it. Personal problems coupled with the strain of a difficult job had undermined his health, and in November he was given a leave of absence. In a long interview, Davis spoke with characteristic candor about himself and his efforts to save St. Nicholas. Parental fear was a big factor. Struggling to exert some control over children who had little respect for their elders and who were extremely conventional in their social attitudes, many St. Nicholas parents were simply not ready to let go of what they felt was a safe, predictable school environment. A place that was "responsive to the needs of kids" sounded like it might make their children less, rather than more tractable, and Davis did not have the political skill in assessing his own virtues and shortcomings, to change their minds. Davis said, "I was cocksure, brash, naive; full of good will, energy, honor, and fine ideas. I was an excellent teacher, but an administrative dummy".

But David Davis started something terrific for others to carry on. Lakeside had already been approached about the possibility of a merger. By December 1970 a plan had been approved by both boards, and Davis resigned as headmaster. Lakeside's capable headmaster, A.D. Ayrault, was appointed acting head of St. Nicholas until the effective date of the merger in September 1971.

The last class of St. Nicholas School graduated in 1971. Their feeling about themselves and their school is eloquently expressed on the front page of the Senior section of the *Cantoria*; "Something new, Nothing old, Something true, Something bold. No spirit of the past can hold you back from the BRAVE NEW WORLD."

What more can one say about a good school...

St. Nicholas and other schools like it became extinct because they failed to evolve and adapt to cultural changes. Those of us who loved SNS may look back on it with nostalgia, and some regret that it couldn't survive, but we have much to be proud of in Lakeside and the strong rule women play in making it a success. St. Nicholas may be gone but its spirit lives on in those who still believe that "Nihil est virtute amibilius" and "Personal honor and Consideration for Others" are good mottos for mankind and for all seasons.

[The following description of St. Nicholas School events and ceremonies was written by Anna B. Neil, who joined the St. Nicholas faculty in 1945, became Academic Head of the Upper School in 1953, and retired in 1970.]

THE CUM LAUDE SOCIETY

The Cum Laude Society, a national honor society, was founded at the Tome School by Dr. Abram W. Harris who felt that scholastic achievement should receive as much recognition as all other activities. Through the efforts of Miss Virginia E. Smith, headmistress, the St. Nicholas chapter was established in 1956. Since that time, Senior girls with honor grades were initiated into the society.

THE THREE CHRISTMAS PAGEANTS

One of three pageants was presented during the Christmas program at St. Nicholas School: *The Perfect Gift*, *The Handmaiden's Search*, and *The Christmas Story*. Each was repeated every three years and told the story of the birth of the Christ-child, with scenes portraying an episode of the story.

The six scenes of *The Perfect Gift* depicted a young man's search for a gift for the Christ-child, and he appeared in each one. The scenes were:

1. The Young Man's Vision
2. The King's Court
3. The Scholar's Cell
4. The Merchant's Mart
5. The Shepherd's Watch
6. The Vision Fulfilled

The scenes of *The Christmas Story* were:

1. The announcement by the angel of the birth of Christ
2. The Roman soldier reading the taxation proclamation which caused the people to journey to their own city to pay their taxes
3. Joseph and Mary turned away from the inn because there was no room and sought shelter in a stable
4. The shepherds watching their flocks by night and becoming aware of the heavenly prophecy when they saw a brilliant star in the heavens
5. Herod questioning the chief priests and scribes about the child born a King
6. Herod sending forth the Wise Men to find the Child
7. The Nativity Scene

There were seven scenes depicting *The Handmaiden's Search*:

1. The handmaiden is carrying water from the well when she hears prophets of her tribe reading the prophecy "Behold a King shall come who shall reign in righteousness."
2. THE SCHOLARS. The young men of the tribe were receiving instruction in wisdom, judgment, justice, and equity, but there was no place for a woman in their midst.
3. THE WARRIORS. At the sound of the trumpet the young men of valor gathered ready to go forth to battle and the handmaid of the house of Libnah was fired with zeal for service, but what place was there for a maiden?
4. PRIESTS IN THE TEMPLE. The priests were in the temple, the candlestick of gold burning during the rites, but there was no place for a woman among the holy sacrifices.
5. THE REAPERS. "It is not given unto me to serve this valiant KING. Lowly tasks that have no honor in His sight have fallen to my lot." The handmaiden was sent forth to the fields to glean with other maidens.
6. THE MAIDEN AND THE STAR. Shepherds wandered through the mountains and the handmaiden went forth to seek after the sheep that might fall in the rocks. She stopped to warm herself at the shepherds' fire when a great light was seen and voices heard praising God and saying, "Unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior which is Christ the Lord. Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in the manger." The handmaiden knew in her heart that the light had come to her as a messenger and that she

must seek Him out.

7. THE NATIVITY SCENE. The maid followed the star until it came and stood over where the young child was. She saw the child and Mary his mother and the wise men with gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. And she knew that the King had come, not as a mighty warrior, not as a learned scholar, nor yet as a powerful priest, but as a babe to whom the gifts of service of all people would be acceptable.

THOUGHTS OF THE CHRISTMAS PAGEANT:

When I think of the many Christmas pageants I have witnessed, I think of certain people and their parts in making the productions successful. I think of Miss Steele wishing each student a Merry Christmas at the close of the program as she called each girl by name. I remember the hours of practice Doreen Lidgate and the members of the Glee Club put in and the beautiful music that was produced. I see Frances Swift placing girls in their positions in the tableaux, arranging their costumes, a colorful scarf here, a touch of red there. I picture Mary Elizabeth Wright with her faculty committee removing (quietly!!) the props from one scene and placing those for the next. I am reminded of Laure Nichols, a beloved teacher of French, who was in charge of the stage lighting during her 41 years at St. Nicholas. Most of all, I remember my feeling of nervousness, experienced each year for 25 years, resulting from a fear that the globe in the back spotlight I was operating would burn out during the Nativity Scene!

(A.B.N.)

1945-1970

STEPPING-UP EXERCISES

The stepping-up exercises for the eighth grade were held in an assembly for all students in the early part of May. The members of this class wore white uniforms to the assembly. The headmistress called each in turn to the front of the auditorium and presented her with an SNS pin. This pin indicated that the wearer had graduated from the 8th grade at Saint Nicholas. On that day these girls had lunch with the upper school. Members of their sister class, the sophomores, decorated the tables for the guests. Place cards were made for each girl, there were flowers on the table, and a certificate of graduation was placed at each place. The president of Student Government, the president of the Senior Class, and the class sponsor of the group sat at the head table. The class was welcomed into the high school and Student Government Association by the president of that organization. The president of the Senior Class presented the senior colors to the incoming freshman class. All girls returned to classes after the luncheon.

NOTES: (a) Each class in the high school had assigned school colors, blue and white, purple and white, red and white, or green and white. An outgoing senior class always presented its colors to the incoming freshman class — thus keeping these 4 combinations in the school.

(b) Each class in the high school had a sister class. Freshmen and juniors were members of sister classes, as were the sophomores and seniors.

(c) Miss Mabel McBain and Mrs. Crystal Meek (before her) were eighth grade sponsors more often than any other teacher in the junior high school.

CHAPEL

Originally, chapel was held weekly with each class in grades 7 through 12 responsible for the program at given times. For a while the service was conducted by a minister chosen by the class responsible for the service. In time, chapel was held less frequently, with a Chapel Committee, composed of students and a member of the faculty, choosing the format of the service. Chapel was discontinued altogether in the late sixties.

GOVERNING BOARD FOR THE HIGH SCHOOL

The Student Council was the governing board for the high school. The members of the Council were the officers of the Student Government Association, the presidents of Lambda and the Athletic Association, the presidents of the four high school classes, the head of the school, and the Academic Head of the high school (later the Assistant Head). Meetings were held on Monday mornings and were presided over by the Student Government president. At the meeting in the library, girls who had broken rules were brought before the Council, one at a time. Each girl stood

in front of the members of the Council and was asked to state her offense. At this time she was allowed to explain her actions if she wished. After the girls had appeared at the meeting, members of the Council discussed the infractions of the rules and took appropriate action. This action sometimes resulted in the "guilty party" staying after school for a specified time. Judgment by peers was usually effective. Thus, the Student Council was responsible for discipline in the high school.

UNIFORMS (For the years 1945-70)

REGULAR

Navy blue pleated wool skirt
with matching cardigan
(These were carried by local stores)
White middie (Also carried by stores)
Black tie
Blue (navy) knee socks, short socks
approved in hot weather
Brown oxfords

WHITE UNIFORM

White pleated cotton skirt
White middie
Black tie
White shoes (low heel)

GLEE CLUB

For the Christmas Pageant members
added a short red robe to their white uniforms.

AT GRADUATION: Seniors wore white caps and gowns and white pumps. Brown and white pumps (spectators) were worn some years. Beautiful bouquets of American Beauty roses with matching satin ribbon were carried.

THE MAY FESTIVAL

The May Festival was held in the auditorium for the student body, parents, and guests. It was usually held around the middle of May, and its success was due to the combined efforts of the faculty and students of the Lower School, the music department, the art department, and the gym teacher. An important part of the program was the Operetta which was directed by the head of the Music Department (more often than not, Doreen Lidgate), and the cast was chosen from among the Lower School students.

The last part of the program was the May Pole dance. Members of the sixth grade were chosen to participate in this. Not only did the girls wrap the maypole, but they also unwrapped the pole. When this was done successfully a sigh of relief ran through the crowd, accompanied with much applause. The success of this dance was due to hours of practice with the gym teacher (most often, M.E. Wright).

ST. NICHOLAS DAY

One of the most beautiful and cherished memories of St. Nicholas graduates and faculty is the memory of St. Nicholas Day when the birthday of the school was celebrated. A program was presented on the morning of the day that Christmas vacation began. At this time one of three pageants was presented in tableaux, each telling the story of the birth of the Christ-child. The three pageants were *The Perfect Gift*, *The Handmaiden's Search*, and *The Christmas Story*. Each was repeated every three years.

On the morning of the pageant parents, alumnae, and friends gathered and sat in the balcony of the auditorium. The program began promptly at ten o'clock. Students, in white uniforms, marched into the hall in pairs singing *Adeste Fidelis* in Latin. (Woe be to any girl who failed to memorize the words!) The Glee Club marched at the head of the processional and continued to the front of the auditorium. When all had entered, the girls were seated, and the Glee Club presented a program of Christmas music. At the conclusion, the Glee Club left and took its place in the balcony near the stage; the girls in the pageant left to dress for their parts in the pageant. Lights were turned down, and the Welcome Speech was given by one of the high school girls. In this the scenes of the pageant were listed. Following this a student from the 6th grade told the Christmas Story. Then the pageant began. Two narrators stood at the sides of the stage. Each was spotlighted in turn as she told the story of the scene which was to follow. The scenes were accompanied by the voices of the Glee Club. The Glee Club also sang while a following scene was being prepared. The nativity scene was always the last scene and was particularly beautiful. As the curtains opened on this scene, the spotlights and stage lights were on. During the scene the Glee Club sang *Silent Night*. As each verse was sung, some of the

lights were turned off, a few at a time; first the two small spotlights in the balcony, then the stage lights, gradually. Finally, at the end of the last verse, there was just one light on, the large spotlight at the back in the balcony. This formed a circle of light on the Virgin Mary and the Christ-child in his crib. The curtains remained open for a few seconds after the music stopped, then slowly closed. There was always a hush in the audience before the auditorium lights came on and the **Ceremony of the Cakes** began.

Four girls assisted the headmistress in the Ceremony of the Cakes, the presidents of Lambda, the Athletic Association, Student Government, and the Senior Class. They presided at a table in the back of the room, on which were white birthday cakes with red candles, one for each class and one for the alums. The presidents took turns in taking cakes to the headmistress who was standing in the front of the auditorium. Beginning with Grade 1, each class was called in turn; the headmistress gave a cake to the cake bearer for that class and wished each member of the class a Merry Christmas as she walked out of the room. Lower School students curtsied to the head of the school, and the older girls shook hands. The cake bearers for grades 7 through 12 were class presidents. Cake bearers for the lower grades were selected by the teachers. No girl could be a cake bearer more than once. An alumna took a cake to the library where others gathered after the program. Ice cream and cake were enjoyed by the girls in their homerooms before leaving for Christmas vacation.

(Note: There was always a tall Christmas tree in the back of the auditorium, placed there for the Christmas Pageant. In early years there were Christmas lights on the tree and lighted candles on the birthday cakes. Later, because of fire regulations, there were no lights on the tree and candles on the cakes were not lit.)

CLASS TEAS

For a number of years each class in the school (7 through 12) was responsible for a class tea. When a date was chosen, plans were started for the event. At a class meeting, attended always by the class sponsor, committees were appointed by the president for writing invitations, table decorations, refreshments, etc. The entire class voted on the member of the faculty to be honored. All faculty and staff members were guests at the teas. Eventually mothers of the class members were included. Teas were held in the library or in the dining room if the class was large. Each tea was held after school in the afternoon. Guests were greeted by a receiving line which included the guest of honor and president of the class who introduced her, the other class officers, and the class sponsor.

Each tea was planned and executed by the girls, with the advice of the class sponsor. In grades 7 and 8, especially, the girls were instructed in the "proper behavior" for such occasions by their sponsor. The occasions were pleasant ones, where faculty and staff, students, and mothers could meet and talk in a non-school atmosphere. The tea tables were always beautiful — set with flowers, silver — and food! All of this contributed to the social learning of the girls.

RULES

1. No chewing of gum.
2. No make-up.
3. No jewelry except a watch and specified pins on tie — Lambda pin, Student Government pin, SNS pin (worn by those who had come into the high school from the 8th grade at St. Nicholas).
4. For a number of years no talking was allowed in the halls between classes. Eventually the girls were allowed to talk quietly when going to and from class.
5. In the morning before classes, all girls reported to study hall where they could talk until the first bell rang. When this bell rang each girl was required to be in her assigned seat, and no talking was allowed. Miss Sinclair, and eventually her successor, then took roll.
6. School and class officers were in charge of study halls. Just two girls were allowed out at one time. When a student wished to leave study hall, she signed out at the front desk, listing where she was going.
7. Each teacher was responsible for the discipline in her class. If she was in her room when a class arrived, the girls remained standing until asked to be

seated. (In my years at SNS, the girls never said "Good morning, Mrs. Neil". Perhaps this was done earlier.) If a teacher entered the room after her class had assembled, the girls would stand and remain standing until given permission to be seated. If an adult entered a room while the class was in session, the class immediately stood.

8. For many years, members of the faculty and staff and the seniors were the only ones who could use the Senior stairs. These were the steps to the left of the entrance into the building and were, by far, the closest and fastest way to get to the second floor. The use of these stairs was considered a senior privilege. Eventually it was decided that it would be sensible to give this privilege to all students.