



# PRO VIRILI PARTE P • A • P • E • R • S

Commemorating the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of  
Birmingham University School

Issue No. 3

## The Birmingham University School (1945-1975)

By Amanda Neel Davis<sup>1</sup>

Issue 1 of this centennial newsletter was filled with memories of the first B.U.S. building and its first headmaster, Basil Manly Parks. Issue 2 tells the poignant story of Captain Robert Louis Johnson, the second headmaster, who inspired students to do exceptional work in mathematics. For B.U.S. of the 1920s, 1930s, and early 1940s, national emergencies – the Great Depression and World War II – provided the main challenges. Parks, Johnson, along with a small teaching corps, persevered in leading their students in the direction of personal best by encouraging curiosity, effort, and discipline in every boy. However, in the post-war era, a time of national prosperity, challenges to the survival of this small school involved local geography and demographic changes. As all of you readers of the *Pro Virili Parte Papers* know, the B.U.S. story has a happy ending and new beginning with the Brooke Hill merger in 1975 to become Altamont. Even so, the path leading to future success was not a straight one but involved setbacks, failures, and changes of direction. The purpose of Issue 3 is to illuminate for readers some of the highs and lows of these last 30 years for the Birmingham University School.

### Frank Cantey

In 1946, chance and good fortune brought Frank Cantey, an educator who in the tradition of Parks and Johnson appreciated the importance of effort, discipline and personal best. Cantey assembled a small teaching corps from his alma-mater, Birmingham-Southern College. Like Marion Institute, Birmingham-Southern had a well-established tradition of excellence in education, but without the strong militaristic influence. Former associates describe Cantey as someone who could teach any subject. Drayton Nabers, a student at B.U.S. during this period, who later became a Rhodes Scholar, remembered Cantey and his colleagues as “the best group of teachers I ever had.”<sup>2</sup> Cantey served as Headmaster from 1946-1952. As headmaster, he discouraged corporal punishment but was determined that every student achieve, even if it meant extra hours of instruction.<sup>3</sup>



Frank Cantey

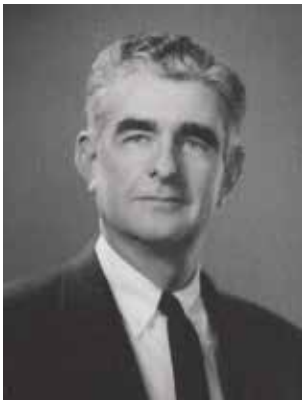
<sup>1</sup> Amanda Neel Davis (Brooke Hill Class of 1966) was a math teacher on the first Altamont faculty in 1975. From 1991-1996, she served as Altamont’s first Director of Development.

<sup>2</sup> Thomas, p 59

<sup>3</sup> Thomas, p 62

## Competition for Students: Shades Valley and Indian Springs

At this time of post-war prosperity in Birmingham, veterans were receiving grants for education through the GI Bill and low-rate home loans from FHA.<sup>4</sup> Families were moving south – up over Red Mountain, away from Jones Valley and downtown. New homes were built in Shades Valley and on the north crest of Shades Mountain. New competition for B.U.S. was Shades Valley High School which opened in 1949 to serve suburban neighborhoods of Mountain Brook, Homewood, and Vestavia Hills. Shades Valley had state-of-the-art athletic facilities and laboratories. By the mid-1950s, Shades Valley had over 1,000 students and was recognized academically as one of the top-ten high schools in the country. Graduates were receiving \$100,000 a year in National Merit Scholarships. Another competitor was Indian Springs School, a preparatory boarding school for boys located on Highway 119 in Shelby County, which was truly a rural rather than a suburban location when opened in 1952. A \$5 million grant from the Harvey G. Woodward Foundation, lured a visionary educator, Dr. Louis E. Armstrong, to Alabama and gave him the money he needed to recruit just the faculty he wanted by offering them housing, meals, high salaries, and paid sabbaticals. One of those he recruited was Frank Cantey, the B.U.S. headmaster, who would remain at Indian Springs over three decades and become one of the school's most beloved and fondly-remembered teachers.<sup>5</sup>



Beverly Head

Thus, at this point in time, it happened that the B.U.S. mantle of leadership fell, not upon an educator, but upon Beverly P. Head, Jr., a businessman and father of B.U.S. lower-school student, Beverly Head, III.<sup>6</sup> In 1953, Mr. Head was serving as president of the Patrons' Organization which had, since the early days of the school, supported the work of the headmaster and the teachers through additional funding and volunteer assistance. However, in the spring of 1954, Mr. Head organized this patrons' group into a corporate-like Board of Trustees. The new governing body elected its members on a rotating system and provided financial leadership, as well as a business perspective. The Board of Trustees also formalized procedures for hiring and firing the school's head, whose duties would include academic leadership and responsibility for hiring and firing members of the faculty.

### Beverly Head and the Board of Trustees

Cantey's departure in 1952 was a definite setback for B.U.S. The school now had fewer than 40 students and a small building nestled between large homes and apartment buildings in a city neighborhood. The school needed a new location and new building if it was to survive.



The entire B.U.S. graduating class of 1952 (right to left) Russell Luquire, Fred Johnson and Alfred Boone, Jr.

<sup>4</sup> Remember here that in 1950 these veteran benefits were mostly going to white males.

<sup>5</sup> Thomas, p.63-65

<sup>6</sup> Mr. Head had married Jane Hill Head and was the Birmingham Superintendent for the Hill Grocery chain. Jane and Beverly Head's daughter, Jane, was a 1966 graduate of Brooke Hill. His brother-in-law, Page Hill had been a B.U.S. student in the 1930s and was killed in World War II. Mr Head's son, Beverly Head, III, was father of Altamont graduates Barton Head, Hillery Head, and Maye Head Frei; and grandfather of Mimi Frei ('23) and Hillery Head's 2 children



The groundbreaking for the new school in early 1954. Front: Mr. Head with his two sons, Nelson (left) and Beverly (looking away on the right).

That same spring, Mr. Head and the Board of Trustees organized a group of patrons to purchase a narrow strip of land along Montclair Road for \$12,500. The property originally had frontage of just over 100 feet but stretched back over 600 feet down the hillside. The Board was also aware of adjacent undeveloped property that could likely be purchased later. The new school building was constructed in 1954 by the R. Hugh Daniel firm at a cost of \$65,000. Through the discounting of construction costs; gifts from patrons; and the sale of the 28<sup>th</sup> Street building and property, the mortgage on this new facility was only \$18,000. The new school's location, just over the Red Mountain crest, remained a convenient location for the families it planned to serve – residents of new suburban neighborhoods in Mountain Brook and Crestline, as well as Redmont, English Village, and Forest Park. Furthermore, the school's property adjoined Ramsay Park, which was put to use immediately as a playground and an athletic field. Mr. Head remained chair of the Board of Trustees from 1953 until 1963. Additional accomplishments attributable to his efforts included

leadership of various fundraising drives; expansion of the academic building; the construction of a gymnasium; and the acquisition of adjacent property.<sup>7</sup>



In 1954, B.U.S. moved from its original building at 1211 28th Street South to Montclair Road.

<sup>7</sup> It's also interesting that Mr. Head's cousin, Hugh Kaul, was involved in the Board of Trustees of the Brooke Hill School for girls. After the merger, Mr. Kaul was a trustee during the early years of Altamont.





## The Arrival of Frank Marshall

After the move to Montclair Road, B.U.S. experienced a 20-year period of growth and change – new students, new faculty, and additional construction. Unlike Indian Springs, no one had endowed the school with five million dollars. Even so, this school built on camaraderie, as well as rigor and depth in teaching and learning would find its own way – one year at a time. In the fall of 1957, Frank C. Marshall, Jr. arrived to teach English. Having received his bachelor's degree at Birmingham-Southern and had taught for a few years at Walker Junior College and Mortimer Jordan High School. Despite the low pay, Marshall was attracted to B.U.S. because he knew he would have more curricular freedom than in a public school and could emphasize authors and poets of his own selection. His students quickly began to appreciate

his intellectual ability, as well as his passion for literature and teaching.<sup>8</sup> Soon, legendary tales were being told of this young man with a slight build and “coke bottle glasses.” According to the stories, Marshall had not only read every Shakespearean play and sonnet but had memorized hours' worth of Shakespearean dialogue even before graduating from Woodlawn High School. Rigor was also present in Marshall's classroom, as he became known for being a hard grader of essays and for losing patience quickly with lazy students. On page 5 is a tribute to Mr. Marshall written by Craig Crockard from the Class of 1960.

## Plans for Expansion and the First “President” of B.U.S.

Inspired by the existing football field in Ramsay Park, the school's first attempt to jump start an athletic program was with football, but the faculty, trustees, and parents soon concluded that basketball would be a more promising possibility. Thus, Beverly Head and the trustees raised money to build a gymnasium, and in 1959, a large Quonset-hut structure was built behind the street-front building. Being both spacious and inexpensive to build, it would serve the school well during its remaining years on Montclair Road. Additionally, it would become a recognizable landmark for everyone driving east on Montclair Road, which was at that time also U.S. highway 78 to Atlanta.

To spearhead additional growth, the Board of Trustees also decided to purchase adjacent property, which gave B.U.S. almost six acres of land and 500 feet of Montclair Road frontage. The immediate plan was to add more classroom space and to increase the enrollment to 200-plus students. With the hope of further expansion and growth, the Board decided on



The new gymnasium, completed in 1959

a different type of leader, more of a CEO whose title would be “President” instead of “Headmaster.” Hardy Perritt was a former military communications officer with a doctorate in speech arts from the University of Florida. Thus, building plans; recruitment of new students; and fundraising would be Perritt's duties. Managing the day-to-day operations of the school would fall to others. The first fundraising project was a new

Continued on Page 6

<sup>8</sup> Thomas, page 80

## Formidable: A Tribute to Frank Marshall

By Craig Smith Crockard, B.U.S. Class of 1960

For B.U.S. students of the late 1950s throughout the 1960s, Mr. Marshall's love of literature, especially Shakespeare, and his zeal for great writing transmuted teenage apathy into a fiery quest for learning. I recall how the power of his intellect pervaded the room, and this student sat there over 50 years ago in awe. Formidable knowledge yoked together with formidable presentation was Frank Marshall's classroom style. He radiated an ardor that lasted a lifetime for his students. He even salted in a morsel of humor from time to time. One day we were studying the *Marshes of Glenn*, a sensuous Southern poem by Sydney Lanier. Marshall told us a story about one student who, when reciting the poem, misquoted a line which should have been "virginal sky lights, privacies of lone desire" as "privies of lone desire".

Sometimes in a young person's life there is a turning point, a sea change in attitude and aspiration. This is usually precipitated by the influence of a teacher. In my case, this teacher was Mr. Marshall, English instructor at the Birmingham University School. Even so, my initial burst of reading concentrated not in English literature but on the classic Russian novels of Dostoyevsky, first the famous ones such as *The Brothers Karamazov* and *Crime and Punishment*, and later morphing into more obscure ones such as *The Idiot*, *The Possessed*, and *Notes from the Underground*. All the while Frank Marshall was encouraging me to branch out into Dickens. While I did eventually read *Tale of Two Cities* and *Oliver Twist*, Dickens remains a gap in my reading repertoire.

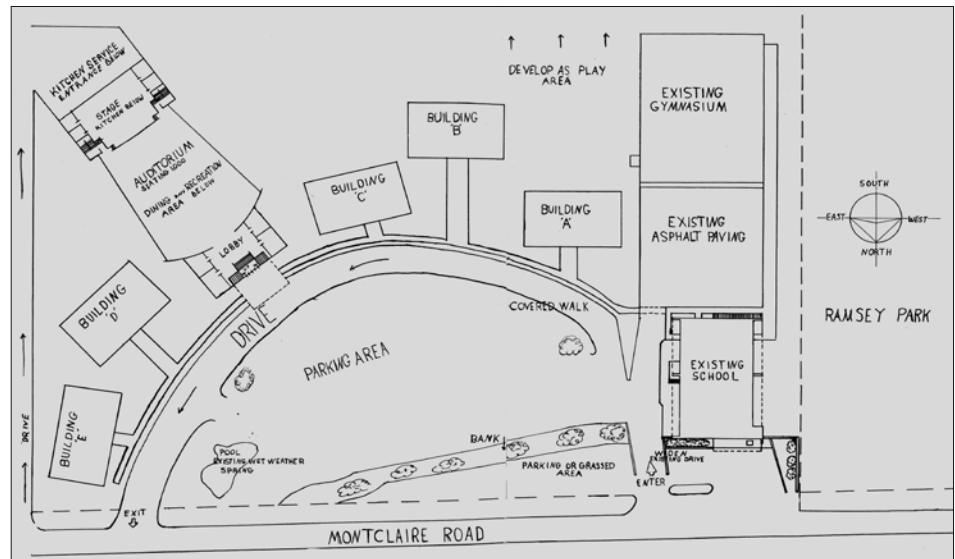
He also encouraged and insisted upon a deep exposure to poetry, with an emphasis upon Romantic poetry. As my friends and family will attest, it only takes a glass of wine or two to trigger the recitation of long quotations from Wordsworth or Keats. My family now forbids me to recite those powerful poems of World War 1 so many times – "In Flanders Field" and "I have a Rendezvous with Death." Of course, he also baptized us in a profound submersion into the Shakespeare tragedies, a course of study which prepares students well for the rigors of a collegiate liberal arts program. Due to my lessons from Frank Marshall and B.U.S., I pursued a philosophy major at Washington and Lee University. After W. and L., I went on to graduate study at Emory. I am certain I would not have been so academically brave without Mr. Marshall.

This kind intellectual awakening is empowering, in the sense that it invokes self-confidence. Without this self-assurance as a foundation of character, the challenges of higher education and its attendant social interactions would be far more daunting. Mr. Marshall's love of literature and great writing also inspired one of my classmates and close friends, Charles Gaines. Charles credits him to this day with giving him the encouragement and confidence to become a professional writer. Charles's initial enthusiasm was for writing poetry, and I recall that in addition to short poems, he created a long epic poem. In those formative years, Mr. Marshall was right there with him, helping Charles to establish the techniques of writing that he would later perfect at the University of Iowa graduate writing school. He went on to write novels including *Stay Hungry*, *Dangler*, and an autobiographical tale, *A Family Place*. One of my personal favorites is *Survival Games*. He has also written innumerable books on bodybuilding and fishing.

**Mr. Marshall, you were truly formidable! We shall always be in your debt.**



H. Hardy Perritt: B.U.S. President from 1959 until 1962



8-classroom academic building for the lower school, but Perritt quickly began envisioning an expansion program that included six new buildings.<sup>9</sup> However, as it turned out, only one of these (Building A) would ever be built.<sup>10</sup> By the end of 1961, barely enough money had been collected to begin work on Building A. And, as it turned out, there was only enough money to complete four classrooms within the building leaving the rest of it for a somewhat makeshift assembly room they named “The Town Hall.”<sup>11</sup>

### ***Lords of the Flies in Coats and Ties***

As a part of Perritt’s plan to attract students and increase enrollment, he tried the idea of re-enacting Captain Park’s original 1922 vision of B.U.S. as an elite prep school to emulate those scattered about the New England states. It was during Perritt’s tenure that the boys were first required, during the winter months, to wear blazers and ties to school. To enhance the image, the pocket of the blazers was to display an embroidered version of the school crest. But surprisingly, in 1960, neither a crest nor motto existed! President Perritt, then took on the task of designing a crest, but according to Frank Marshall, it was probably Hubert Harper, Upper School Director, who came up with the Latin phrase *pro virili parte* for the motto. Harper’s impressive academic background included a bachelor’s degree from Birmingham-Southern and a doctorate in classics from the University of North Carolina. However former students complained later that his classes lacked relevance as he frequently read Homer aloud in the original Greek.<sup>12</sup> Several alums of the President Perritt years reported that the boys tried in vain to rebel against wearing the blazers and declared the school’s unofficial motto to be “Lord of the Flies in Coats and Ties.”



Left to right: Gilbert Carpenter; Gene Moor; Skip Phillips; Harry Carpenter; Pitt Mullins.

<sup>9</sup> Thomas, p 86-87

<sup>10</sup> Thomas, p 90

<sup>11</sup> Thomas, p. 92

<sup>12</sup> Thomas, p. 96

Perritt also took on two tasks that weren't always in sync – increasing rigor, and at the same time, increasing enrollment. Beginning in 1960, the Upper School program required a course load of five subjects a day. This included four years of a foreign language and four years of science. To increase enrollment, Perritt accepted students who seemed to be less studious, less motivated, and less well-behaved. There were even some documented bullies. Jimmy Barton who arrived as a fifth grader in 1962 concluded that his parents didn't love him anymore if they were sending him to such a rough place.<sup>13</sup> In the spring of 1962, there were 11 who graduated. Others left at the end of that year (not of their own volition) and Perritt left that year as well.<sup>14</sup> In 1963, the trustees decided to return to the teaching-headmaster model and offered Frank Marshall the leadership position.

## The Arrivals of Phil Mulkey and Martin Hames

“Hames and Mulkey sought to instill in us the very best. They had very different personalities, yet I would have jumped into a burning building if either of them had asked me to.”

George Wheelock, III Class of 1971

After Perritt left in 1962, Marshall abolished his demerit system but retained some of Perritt's innovations “designed to give the school more of an air about it.”<sup>15</sup> Thus, the tradition of wearing blazers during the winter months remained. With the attrition of students for whom B.U.S. was probably not “the right school,” Marshall retained Perritt's rigorous curriculum which from the beginning had been a part of the school's culture. With the new motto and Marshall's leadership favorable winds were blowing toward



Phil Mulkey

a new identity. In April of 1962, Indian Springs headmaster, Louis Armstrong, spoke at a B.U.S. patrons meeting and advised the group, “Decide what you want to be and be that.”<sup>16</sup> And, as was the B.U.S. pattern, the “new identity” came in a less-than-intentional manner with the arrival of two unique, committed, and inspiring educators. The first to arrive was a coach who would lead B.U.S. into Alabama's top echelons of high school athletics. The second was a 26-year-old, unbelievably large man who would transform the boys he frequently referred to as “barbarians” into “Renaissance men.” The third dignitary of this triumvirate was headmaster Frank Marshall. It was these three – Marshall, Mulkey, and Hames – who would guide students to internalize the Ciceronian ideal of personal best throughout the 1960s and into their distant futures.

### Physical Phil

In 1961, the name of Philip R. Mulkey was brought to the attention of Hardy Perritt and Beverly Head by Jack McCleery. Mr. McCleery had recently been transferred by his employer from Memphis to Birmingham and had enrolled his son, John, in the Lower School at B.U.S. As a former trustee of St. Dominic's all-male high school in Mem-

<sup>13</sup> Thomas, p 92-93

<sup>14</sup> Thomas, p 94

<sup>15</sup> Thomas, p.95

<sup>16</sup> Thomas, p. 93





The “Fab Four” in 1968 (*left to right*) Bruce Denson, Tom Huey, Harry Moon, and Milton Bresler

phis, McCleery had heard much about this coach, who after only a few years there, was winning city championships in track and basketball. Probably with the help of Mr. Head and Mr. McCleery, Perritt somehow managed to convince Mulkey to take on a new challenge at this much-smaller school.

Mulkey grew up in Wheaton, Missouri, a small farming community. He was a multi-sport athlete in high school, was drafted into the military in 1950, and remained involved in athletics throughout his military service. Fortunately, three college coaches were present at one of his company basketball games, and from this exposure, Mulkey received many athletic-scholarship offers. He first accepted a scholarship from the University of Wyoming and later transferred to Memphis State. His athletic accomplishments also included a slot on the 1960 U.S. Olympic Team; a world record in Decathlon; and Southern Hemisphere records pole-vaulting.<sup>17</sup> After graduating summa cum laude from Memphis State with a degree in education, he was offered a job at St. Dominic’s.<sup>18</sup>

From the moment he stepped into the gym at B.U.S., the boys realized they weren’t dealing with a run-of-the-mill P.E. teacher.<sup>19</sup> Mulkey became known as “Physical Phil” and exacted a strict regimen of physical exercise for every student – push-ups, pull-ups, sit-ups, squats, and lots of running. He tamed the bullies with intramural competitions in wrestling and boxing pairing boys of near equal strength. A key to Mulkey’s success was identifying the potential strengths of every boy and then motivating him to develop those strengths to their fullest potential. According to Shuford White, one of Mulkey’s students who became a state champion shot putter, “He gave you goals and built you into something more than you ever thought you could be.”<sup>20</sup> Members of the Class of 1968 – Milton Bresler, Bruce Denson, Tom Huey, and Harry Moon became known as, the “Fabulous Four,” as they captured for B.U.S four straight state titles in track and field events.<sup>21</sup>

<sup>17</sup> Obituary, Jan 7, 2023

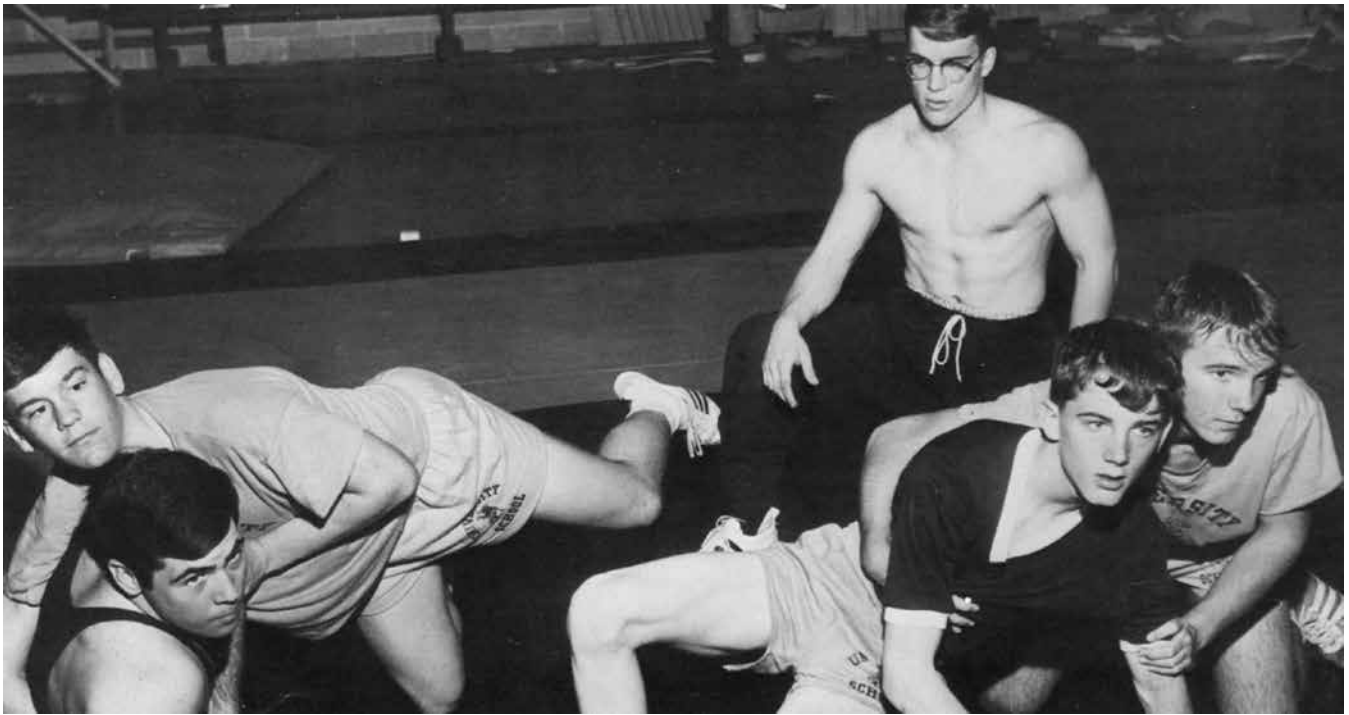
<sup>18</sup> Thomas, p.97

<sup>19</sup> Thomas, p. 98

<sup>20</sup> Thomas, page 99. Quotation is from correspondence with White, in June of 2007

<sup>21</sup> Thomas, p 100-101





The 1965 B.U.S. wrestling team (*left to right*) Rob Minor, Mike Reeves, Bruce Nelson, Bruce Denson, and Chris Kelly. The wrestling mat was Mulkey's "Leveling device" for bullies.



*First Row:* Bruce Wilmouth, Paul Elliott, Lee McGriff, Jeter Barron. *Second Row:* Tom Huey, Jim Kyle, Tim Calahan, Jack Tomlinson. *Third Row:* Harry Moon, Bill Crow, Bruce Denson, *Fourth Row:* Milton Bresler, Malcolm Carmichael.



The 1969-70 Knights basketball team made it all the way to the state "Final Four" where they suffered a heartbreaking 90-93 overtime loss to Northside.



1970 was Phil Mulkey's last year at B.U.S.

Under Mulkey's leadership, it was easy for these same well-conditioned track and field athletes to shift their emphasis during the winter basketball season. On Friday nights in the mid-1960s, the Quonset-hut gym at B.U.S. was filled with families and friends cheering the teams on. The fans followed them to away games and were particularly vocal cheerleaders when they went out to Shelby County to play Indian Springs. By 1970, Mulkey had moved B.U.S. from a winless season in 1961 to an overall 76% record of wins and the school's first and only Alabama Final Four appearance.<sup>22</sup>

<sup>22</sup> Thomas, p 102

## Martin Hames: A “Larger-than-Life” Whirlwind of Energy<sup>23</sup>

One of Mr. Hames’s best-known goals as a teacher was to instill in his students a sophisticated, discriminating view of the world. “Barbarian” was his term for the primitive state in which most of us came to him. Yet it was also a term of endearment. Something about our rawness amused him. He was a man whose infectious appreciation for the beauty of art, literature, and the human soul was unbounded. His disdain for the base and ignorant was equally evident. His students came to him in a state of nature for which he had no patience. But he loved the potential in us all to emerge as enlightened humanists, retaining just enough of our “barbarian side” to find our place in a difficult world.

Andy Fies (Class of 1975)<sup>24</sup>

As Headmaster, one of Frank Marshall’s most fortunate hires was a Birmingham-Southern graduate named Martin Hames. Marshall described Hames as “a whirlwind of creativity whose impact on the school’s *esprit de corps* was tremendous.” He was much more than a teacher – he was a force. He had an amazing ability to take even the most disengaged student and create within the student a passion for literature, history, and even the fine arts. He had a significant effect not only in the lives of his students but also on the lives of anyone with whom he associated. In fact, the whole Birmingham over-the-mountain social world knew “Ma-a-a-ar-tin” and loved him. Over the years, Hames took many students to



Martin Hames in New York City in late 1967, with underclassmen Jim Burke, Steve Campbell, and Donald Powell



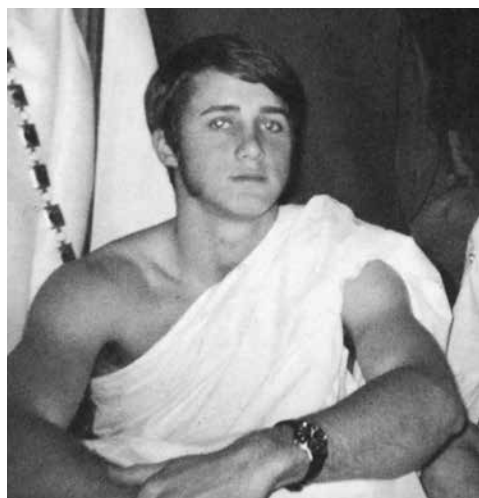
New York City to visit museums, see plays, and just to experience the city he loved so dearly.

To direct the attention of his students toward Medieval English literature, Mr. Hames began the tradition of a (moderately barbarian) *Beowulf* feast. Beginning as early as December of 1966, B.U.S. students gathered at the apartment in Homewood where he lived with his mother, Mary, for a celebration complete with a roast pig and all the trimmings. The *Beowulf* Feast would eventually morph into one of Altamont’s most cherished traditions,

<sup>23</sup> In 2012, Carolyn Sloss Ratliff (Brooke Hill Class of 1973) and Scott Fuller (B.U.S. Class of 1969) worked together to produce a collection of stories, *Larger than Life: Memories of Carl Martin Hames*.

<sup>24</sup> The “barbarian” quotation (p.62) of Andy Fies and the title of this section also come from *Larger than Life*.





Jim Barton, with toga and sideburns, at the 1970 Latin convention

the Roast Pig Feast, a senior-faculty dinner held a few evenings before graduation.<sup>25</sup>

Aside from introducing his students to new experiences, Mr. Hames expected great amounts of academic effort from them – effort equal to the physical effort expected by Coach Mulkey. Those in his English classes were required to read three books a month. On certain dreaded days, he went around the class and asked each student to provide him a brief, oral report about his month’s reading accomplishments. No one wanted to experience the looks or comments of a dissatisfied Mr. Hames. Mr. Hames would grade a student’s paper while he stood by and watched. He used a red pen quickly and unsparingly; and he was neither a generous nor forgiving grader. Furthermore, a two full generations of students will *never* forget the senior-year experience of a graded, stand-up recitation of the Prologue for Chaucer’s *Canterbury Tales*.

The next way Martin Hames changed the lives of students was as their college counselor. In the early 1960s the trend was to go to college in Alabama – Auburn, the University of Alabama, Birmingham-Southern, etc. However, he encouraged his students to apply to selective, private colleges outside Alabama. Headmaster Marshall and the rest of the faculty members collaborated on an emphasis of college preparation, making sure that no boy “fell through the cracks.” Faculty members also frequently stayed in their classrooms after school and were available to prepare the boys for college entrance exams.<sup>26</sup> The B.U.S. Class of 1970 became known as “The Wonder Boys.” They earned this title by placing in the top 20% of the nation’s high school seniors on the SAT and ACT. Even though there were just seventeen of them, they gained acceptances at selective, out-of-state colleges, including Amherst, Davidson, Colgate, and Virginia – more than any graduating class in the history of the school.<sup>27</sup>



The B.U.S. Class of 1970, “The Wonder Boys.”

*Pictured from left to right:* Clay McClung; Jim Barton (hidden); Sam Upchurch; Scotty Greene; Sammy Smith; Marty Oramous; Barry Roseman; John Civils.

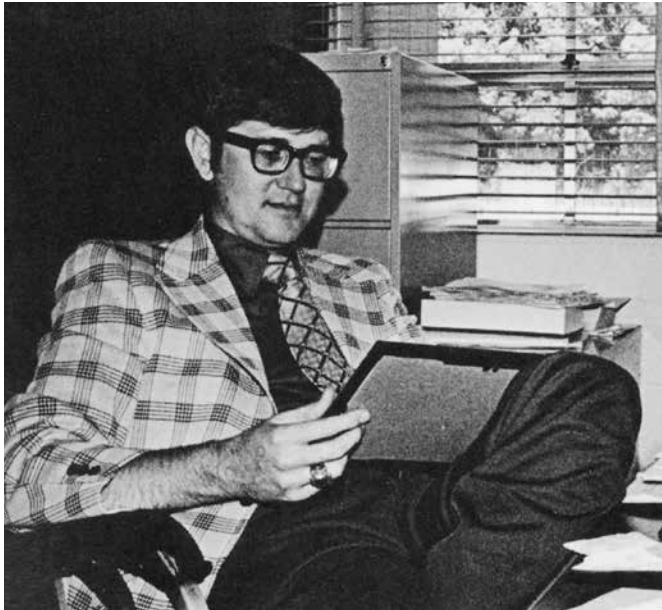
*Not pictured:* Art Black; Milton Datnoff; Lee Jackson; Claude Johnston; Jim Palmer; Johnny Ribe; Jimmy Screven; Edmund Seibels; Jimmy Wiygul.

<sup>25</sup> Thomas, p. 116

<sup>26</sup> Thomas, p. 117

<sup>27</sup> Thomas, p. 141

## The Leadership of Bill Haver and the Path Up the Mountain



Bill Haver

As the 1960s ended, B.U.S. students (as well as the whole world) were well aware that times were changing. Frank Marshall resigned from the headmaster position in the Spring of 1968 and would spend the remainder of his career teaching at Marion Military Institute. Coach Mulkey left in June of 1970 to pursue a more lucrative career in insurance. In 1971, the trustees selected William F. Haver, Jr. as the new leader. Haver was a native of Childersburg with B.A. and M.Ed. degrees from the University of Alabama. He had been teaching and coaching at Tuscaloosa Academy since 1967. B.U.S. trustees who interviewed him were particularly impressed with his understanding of independent school finance.<sup>28</sup> His first school project as headmaster was refurbishing the building and grounds. To save money, he enlisted the help of teachers, parents, and students in this sprucing-up project.

In his second year, he increased tuition so that he could offer a substantial raise to the faculty. In addition to his adeptness with managing the lean budget, Mr. Haver also coached baseball and taught music.

## The Arrival of Girls at B.U.S.

When the possibility of B.U.S. becoming coeducational was first mentioned around 1960, this idea for change received little support. However, in the fall of 1972, the boys accepted the girls readily. Andy



Fies (Class of 1975) complimented the first female cohort, “These girls were very much in our own mold. Like us, they probably would not have fit in very well at Brooke Hill or Mountain Brook.”<sup>29</sup> The next fall the first two Black students arrived — two more girls — Janine Pearson and her cousin, Lynn Battles. Furthermore, the arrival of girls was a great boost to Martin Hames’s drama program.

Mr. Hames giving notes to his troupe of male and female actors during the production of *Hadrian VII* in 1974.

<sup>28</sup> Thomas, p.143

<sup>29</sup> Thomas, p.147

## Considerations of a Shelby-County Move

Not long after Haver became headmaster, board chair John Schuler proposed that the school relocate to Shelby County on a 40-acre piece of property offered to the school by the Daniel Corporation, near the intersection of Highways 280 and 119. The plan was to build a multi-million-dollar campus for grades 6 through 12 (Phase I) beginning in September of 1972. Phase II, a complete elementary program, was projected for 1978-79. By the



A preliminary sketch of B.U.S.'s new Shelby County campus (*Shades Valley Sun*, August 29, 1973)

end of 1972, Haver and his trustees had a set of architectural drawings for a Shelby County campus and estimated a future enrollment of about 350 students.<sup>30</sup>

Of course, readers of this issue of the *Pro Virili Parte Papers* know that relocation to Shelby County never came to pass. There was an initial holdup involving the water improvement commission, but a lack of money was the biggest stumbling block... *and* unbeknownst to students, new plans were being made for a merger with the Brooke Hill School for girls. The move of students, faculty, etc. to Brooke Hill's 1959 school building atop Red Mountain would spare B.U.S. the costs of relocation. Early in 1975, trustees of both schools approved moving ahead with merger plans. According to Mimi Tynes, a Brooke Hill graduate and trustee, "The boards felt like they were doing what was best for everyone concerned, and there was no real controversy at that level. It just made sense."<sup>31</sup>



The Brooke Hill campus as it looked in 1975.

<sup>30</sup> Thomas, 149-50 From *Shades Valley Sun* article, August 29, 1973

<sup>31</sup> Thomas, p 150. Mimi Wilson Tynes, member of the Brooke Hill Class of 1957, was a math teacher at Brooke Hill in the mid 1960s and later became a trustee of Altamont. Her children and grandchildren are graduates of Altamont.





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## good-bye b.u.s

THE END

On the school calendar, it says that the school year ends on May 30. I suggest however that the academic year as we know it ended long, long ago. I refer, of course, to the demise of order and the disintegration of discipline that, I believe, started when the merger was announced. Like a fog the consciousness that B.U.S. no longer existed permeated the student body. The completion of schoolwork no longer seemed necessary. All eyes turned to the future and the present was forgotten. The week before Knight's Day is a prime example. The faculty and students were busy shuttling back and forth to Brooke Hill, preparing for the play and for Knight's Day. Everyone was doing something. If the energy radiating from this school could have been harnessed then, it would have powered Los Angeles for a month. Also, the pressure created by increasing academic assignments, which lost out on the priorities lists of most students, hastened our approach to critical mass.

The breakdown of discipline is so remarkable that most teachers are used to it. Their attempts at muzzling the students and at controlling their actions have declined. I don't believe they have given up. I just think that this new consciousness of the students is contagious. Why even now as I write this article in the library, normally the bastion of discipline and order, the natives are seining from the rafters and babbling something socially unacceptable. Ms. Brasher is applauding the swingers. I'm telling you, it's a MADHOUSE!

Very few now fail to realize, however, that there is no other way. It is over.

Andy Fies

### WATSON WINS

Early in the fall Mrs. Watson, who is the girls' P.E. coach and the school's Latin teacher, applied for a scholarship grant to study in Italy this summer. On Monday, May 12, she received the results. All her efforts were not in vain. Mrs. Watson is an official winner, along with several other people in the United States, of a Fulbright-Hayes Grant.

This will enable Mrs. Watson to attend an eight-week seminar for classical study. She will be spending six weeks at the American Academy in Rome and two weeks in Virgilian Society in Cumae. She will leave the United States on June 28 and return August 22.

Congratulations to Mrs. Watson, on this big achievement. In addition to furthering your education, we hope a great time.

Diana

### Election

Elections for year's Student officers were held Tuesday, May 13. Those people with the office of the student government in mind are congratulated by the Brook Hill. Those people from B.U.S. who were elected are: David McRae, President; Boname, first vice president; David second vice president; Charlton Crocker, secretary; and Gred, secretary. Congratulations to all people and good performing your duties in conjunction with the officers elected.

Brooke Hill, Ronny

### ROUND TABLE

This year one of the traditions of BUS comes to a triumphant close with the publication of the last Roundtable, the school's literary magazine. This achievement is the work of editor Ike Turner & co-editors Kevin Clayton and Dorah Lee Rosen. This year's Roundtable is perhaps one of the best and provides a fitting end for this noble literary tradition, for which the editors must be highly complimented.

This edition of the Roundtable contains poetry by the students Kevin Clayton, Dorah Lee Rosen, Ike Turner, Jeff McRae, Steve Brown, and Roy Green, as well as art by Tommy Reddoch, Richard Grooms, Ike Turner and Robert Slaughter, and photographs by Brunson White and Jim Cummings. But perhaps the most unique contributions came from the alumni Mike Hart and Rosie Ward both of whom are excellent poets. In addition, one must also note the highly interesting cover which was designed by Ike Turner. Even though the number of contributors this year was very small this edition of the Roundtable is a remarkable accomplishment. In conclusion, we must give special thanks to

### COLLEGE ACCEPTANCES

- Graham Beene- Dartmouth
- Dodie Bowron- Auburn, U.A.B.
- Carter Crocker- U. of Georgia
- Andy Fies- Harvard, Yale, Princeton, Dartmouth
- Art Gowan- Sanford, Emory
- Cooper Green- Auburn, Southwestern, UAT
- Ronnie Haralson- Transylvania
- Robert Harper- Florida State University, U. of N. Carolina, UAT
- Jamie Lawrence- Birmingham Southern, UAT
- Tommy Reddoch- Auburn, University of Georgia
- Bert Rountree- U.A.B., B'ham Southern UAT
- John Schuler- Mercer
- Peter Schuler- Tulane, UAT
- Jim Selfe- Boston University, Vassar, Bennington, Tulane
- Wilson Smith- Sewanee
- Ike Turner- Mercer, Sewanee
- Brunson White- UAT

### FROG LEGS

Graham Beene, the senior Montgomery Relays with high jumper proved to be an outstanding jump of



The last edition of the *Omni-BUS*, May 23, 1975

The Last Class: (left to right) Cooper Green, Carter Crocker, Art Gowan, Bert Rountree, Jamie Lawrence, Tommy Reddoch, Ronny Haralson, Robert Harper, Graham Beene, Jim Selfe, Peter Schuler, Dodie Bowron, Andy Fies, John Schuler, Ike Turner, Brunson White (Wilson Smith is not pictured)

A Board of Trustees was appointed for the new school. The new 12-member board of trustees would include six representatives from B.U.S. and six from Brooke Hill. Bill Haver as the first headmaster. Martin Hames from B.U.S. would assume a newly-created post as Dean of Students. Margaret Gage, chair of the Brooke Hill history department would become Dean of Faculty; and Edna Earle Mullins, Brooke Hill's last "Director" would retain that title. B.U.S. teachers who were on that first faculty included Lois Flowers (a.k.a. "Mother Dear"); John Boucher; Nelson Brown; Walter Ellis; Connie Frazier, Laura Clegg; Christine Watson; and Bob Durand. With the sale of the Shelby County property; the sale of the B.U.S. Montclair



Phil Mulkey, Martin Hames and Jim Palmer

Road property; and Brooke Hill's \$600,000 endowment, B.U.S. was probably in their best financial shape since the Stock-Market Crash of 1929. Bill Haver served as headmaster of Altamont for 15 years and is still the longest serving head of school at B.U.S., Brooke Hill, or Altamont. In 1991, Martin Hames would rise to the headmaster position and remain Headmaster until his death in 2002.



AS THE FIFTY-YEAR HISTORY OF BIRMINGHAM UNIVERSITY SCHOOL HISTORY CAME TO AN END, its students, alumni, and faculty remembered it as a truly great (and unique) prep school, the whole of which equaled more than its parts. Carl Adams ('67), who had transferred to B.U.S. from Shades Valley noted that he had never experienced close friendships between students and teachers. Furthermore, Adams remembered the highly-motivated atmosphere which became contagious. "Many of us reached well beyond our abilities because of that atmosphere." And as Jim Palmer succinctly put it in the afterword of Chris Thomas's book,

"It was an extraordinary place for a boy to become a man."



## The Altamont School

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The mission of the Altamont School is to improve the fabric of society by graduating well-educated individuals capable of independent thinking and innovative ideas. To this end, the school attracts, nurtures, and challenges students whose commitment to truth, knowledge, and honor will prepare them not only for the most rigorous college programs but also for productive lives.