

The History of Bradley-Bourbonnais Community High School

by

Cristina Denise Baines

English II A/AA

October 26, 1998

Outline

I. Introduction

H. History of Bradley-Bourbonnais Community High School

A. Founded (Origins)

B. Decades of History

1. 1939

a. 1940-School renamed

b. 1942-New land purchased for school

c. 1948-New building under construction

1. September 25-laying of cornerstone

2. 1949

3. 1959

4. 1969

5. 1979

6. 1988-Substitution for 1989

7. 1998-Present year

a. Current events from 1997

M. Changes and additions to the Bradley High School

A. Additions made

1. Architects

IV. History of the school mascot

V. Deaths and Retirements

A. Deceased Mr. Steve Hanks

B. Deceased student

Matthew Dolosky

1. The students voice

C. Retired

Mr. Donald K. Turner

VI. Closing and conclusion

Bradley-Bourbonnais Community High School is one of the most colorful, fascinating, and spirited high schools in all of Kankakee County. It holds many wonders and fascination for students, staff, and parents who have been here due to its educational system, its variety of cultures, and its background history. In order to fully understand the life of Bradley High School, it will help to explore these three areas: the first Bradley High School, the community and residents, but most importantly, the students who attend Bradley-Bourbonnais Community High School.

The first Bradley High School was established in 1898 and it offered a three-year course, but later in 1903, it was discontinued for unknown reasons. The school was held in the southwest room, second floor, of what is now Bradley Central Grade School. The high school was reestablished in 1909 by Professor Hortleb. In 1911 and 1913 additions were made to accommodate the increase in enrollment (Bradleyan 1943).

In the year 1939, the faculty consisted of seven members. Mr. Ruel E. Hall was the Principal and he taught Civics and American History. Laura Arends taught Commerce and she was the Senior Advisor. Jane A. Money taught Home Economics, Science, she headed the Home Economics Club, she was Junior Advisor, and a Library staff member also. Carol Brock taught English, Latin, Girls Physical Education, the Y-D Club, the Glee Club, and she was Senior Advisor. Mr. Donald Arthur was the Band Instructor, Freshmen Advisor, and he taught History and English. Earl Jones taught History and Industrial Arts. He was the Assistant Coach, Junior Advisor, and head of the Hi-Y Club. James Laffey was the Athletic Coach, Sophomore Advisor, head of the Hi-Y Club and he taught Boys Physical Education and Mathematics (Bradleyan 1939).

In 1939 there was a total of 177 students. There were 20 members of the senior class, 36 members of the junior class, 44 members of the sophomore class, and 77 members of the freshman class. As activities, the students could choose clubs to be in such as the Glee Club, the Girl's Athletic Association, the Y-D Club, the Hi-Y Club and there

was also a Concert and Beginner's Band. For sports, girls couldn't participate. There were only male sports which consisted of Basketball and Football (Bradleyan 1939).

At a school decision in December, 1940, it was voted that a new high school be constructed, to be called Bradley-Bourbonnais Community High School. Since January, 1941, Bradley High School has been operating under that name. In 1942, a tract of land, approximately ten acres, on North Street between Prairie and Center Avenues was purchased. An architect was hired and plans were almost complete when all the work was discontinued until after the war. When the war came to an end, new blueprints and new plans were made, and a different architect was hired. On August 10, 1948, the ground was broken and the building was finally under way. The laying of the cornerstone took place on September 25, 1948 (Bradleyan 1956).

The new school building contained six spacious classrooms, two commerce rooms, a study hall-library, two science rooms, and a large homemaking room. Besides these, there also were two separate offices for the principal and his secretary. The new building also contained a combined auditorium and gymnasium that would have a seating capacity of 2,400 (Bradleyan 1956).

During the year 1949, there were many improvements to Bradley-Bourbonnais Community High School. The teaching staff consisted of 12 members. The subjects taught by these teachers includes Typing, Chemistry, Science, Algebra, English, Economics, Social Problems, Mathematics, Geometry, Physical Education, French, Speech, Dramatics, Music, Industrial Arts, History, and Civics. The school Board consisted of five people: Bernard LaMontagne-President, Ernest McFarland-Secretary, Edmond Regner, S. W. Evans, and Walter Spirey. The student body consisted of 205 members (Bradleyan 1949).

The activities and clubs for the students included the Band, French Club, Thespian Club, Dramatic Club, Girls Chorus, Boys Chorus, Mixed Chorus, Pep Club, Varsity Club, Girls Athletic Association, Home Economics Club, and Senior Play Performance.

As far as sports goes, there was Football, Basketball, Baseball, Track, and Cheerleading (Bradleyan 1949).

Bradley-Bourbonnais Community High School made much progression in the 1950's. In 1959, the principal was S. A. Smith. The eight Board Members were S. J. Beaupre-President, John Matthews-Secretary, Omer Tetrault-Treasurer, Leonard Martin, James Topliff, William Larkins, Maurice LeClaire, and Robert O. Martin. Harry L. Skalsky was the Assistant Principal and the Dean of Boys. Doris Beach was the Secretary. Mabel C. Rucker was the Dean of Girls. The teaching staff consisted of 31 members. Some members were Shirley Boatz, Agnes Boulger, Margaret Beinor, Phillip Lackey, Jerry Lemon, Robert Martin, Phyllis Moore, Mable Dankers, Durwood Canham, and Richard Samlin. Some subjects taught by these teachers include Algebra, English, Family Living, Chemistry, Physics, Art, Trigonometry, Mechanical Drawing, and General Business (Bradleyan 1959).

The student body consisted of 655 students. With all of these students, there were many activities, clubs, and sports to keep them busy. There was Football, Basketball, Baseball, Track, Golf, and Cheerleading. The different activities include Senior Class Play, Junior Class Play, and Speech Contests. Some clubs include Spanish Club, French Club, Latin Club, Science Club, Varsity Club, Radio Club, Journalism Club, and Student Council (Bradleyan Club 1959).

In the year 1969, the staff grew enormously. Mr. Harry L. Skalsky was the Superintendent, Richard Skinner was the Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Supervision. The Assistant Superintendent of Student Services was Donald Turner. Mrs. Patricia Duncan was the R.N. Miss Doris Beach was the Bookkeeper and Secretary to the Superintendent. The teaching staff consisted of 66 teachers; 33 women and 33 men. The student body consisted of 1098; 290 seniors, 288 juniors, 340 sophomores, and 180 freshmen (Bradleyan 1969).

A school with this many students had a variety of activities. There was the Bowling Club, Dramatic Club, Varsity Club, French Club, S.F.S., Pep Club, Art Club, and the Elk's Club. By this year, there were sports for girls to participate in. There was Girl's Tennis, a Track Team, and for boys, there was Football, Cross Country, Golf, Basketball, Wrestling, Baseball, and Track (Bradleyan 1969).

In 1979, there were 40 different clubs, 15 different sports, over 1300 students, 16 different learning departments with about 100 teachers. Joan Meyers was the Chairman of the English Department, Janice May was the Chairman of the Social Studies Department, Judith Ponton was the Mathematics Department Chairman, Donald Meyers was the Foreign Language Chairman, Gerald O'Flaherty was the Science Chairman, Agnes Boulger was the Home Economics Chairman, Roger Bohnenstiehl was the Drivers Education Chairman and Mr. Edward Hayes was the Director of the Guidance Department. There were 19 cafeteria cooks also (Bradleyan 1979).

By 1988, the student and teacher population at Bradley-Bourbonnais High School was steadily increasing. There were 1435 students; 376 in the freshmen class, 341 sophomores, 320 juniors, and 398 seniors. The Valedictorian for that year was Michael Hart and the Salutatorian was Sam Bhayani. There was an estimate of about 96 teachers that year also. Some of those teachers would include Paula Gates, Kevin Goodwin, Michelle Blanchette, Paula Grimes, Cynthia Hakes, Kevin Boelk, Stuart Cann, Michael Lehning, Linda Linn, Nancy Schiffner, and FierSloan. Some subjects taught by these teachers would include Algebra, Science, Civics, Physics, Mathematics, English, Spanish, Vocational Education, History, Drivers Education, and Physical Education. The School Board at the time consisted of eight people and one of those being S. Bhayani, a student member (Bradleyan 1988).

Activities, clubs, and sports to keep the students busy were Drama Club, French Club, German Club, Spanish Club, Pep Club, SADD, Youth and Government, Students Helping Students, Students at Work, and National Honor Society. Sports include Soccer,

Football, Volleyball, Cross Country, Golf, Gymnastics, Badminton, Tennis, Basketball, Wrestling, Swimming, Baseball, Softball, and Track (Bradleyan 1988).

In our present year 1998, Bradley-Bourbonnais Community High School serves three adjacent communities; St. George, Bradley, and Bourbonnais. The district covers 42 square miles. There are approximately 1700 students in the school and 145 faculty and non-certified members on staff. The school has a community center, an Olympic size pool, a theater, three gymnasiums, and a senior citizens center. Also there are 30 different clubs and 17 different sports to participate in. The School Board Members are Jerry Sykes-President, Donald Meyers, Michael Downey, Kevin Baker, Steve Hlavach, Willard DeWitt, and Joan Pierce (BBCHS Web Page).

Some current events from 1997 that are memorable include the death of Princess Diana on August 31, 1997. She was killed in a car crash. On September 5, Mother Teresa died of a heart attack. Chris Farley died of an apparent heart attack on December 18. Other events include the birth of the first set of SEPTUPLETS in history by Bobbi McCaughey, the Florida Marlins won the World Series, and Chelsea Clinton left for her first year of college at Stanford University (Bradleyan 1998).

Changes and additions were made to the school at several different points throughout the school's history. In 1954 an addition was made to the West Wing. The Architect was A. J. Kruegel. The General Contractor was O. L. Martin & Son. The area by the North Cafeteria and everything north of that was added in the year 1960. The General Contractor was Ma77,UCO Construction Company. The Architects and Engineers were Kreiegel, Wilkins, Healy & Moore. In 1973 the East Wing was added. Turner-Witt & Associates, Inc. were the Architects. Stewart Construction Company was the General Contractor. In 1979 the pool, community center, and theater was added (Wall Murals).

The mascot for Bradley-Bourbonnais Community High School is the ***Boilermaker***. The *Boilermaker* is the symbol of spirit at the high school. BBCHS got the nickname "*Boilermaker*" from Mr. O. W. Young in 1929. He came from Purdue Uni-

versity which also has the nickname "*Boilermakers*." When he became coach at Bradley, Mr. Young gave the name of his alma mater to the school. He felt that the teams he was coaching exemplified the spirit of the Boilermaker. "Boilermaking" requires a high level of co-operation, physical strength, condition and stamina, and a will to work. Boilermakers spring back after defeat. This spirit applies not only to the athletics, but also to scholastic ability (Bradleyan 1979).

Not only was there the death of worldly-known figures, but the school lost two people really close to them. There was the death of Mr. Steve Hanks, a former Drivers Education teacher at BBCHS. He died of a prolonged illness. Also there was the death of Matthew Dolosykci. His death saddened many students at the high school. Some students had this to say about Matt: "He was never upset, always happy enjoying life to its fullest. Matt was the funniest guy in the whole world. He had something special about him--something unique that no one else could possibly have. Matt always sported a T-shirt, a grin, and some charm. If he was ever angry, he would make cracks and jokes about the situation. Matt always seemed shy but once you got to know him, he was the most outgoing, loving, caring person. He is going to be missed forever and his friends will love ever (1998 Bradleyan/page 81)."

Another event that saddened BBCHS was the retirement of Mr. Donald K. Turner. He spent 35 years at the high school teaching, coaching, and bringing smiles to everyone's face. Mr. Turner was a basketball, baseball, and track coach for five years. He was also a teacher for five years. He taught Boys Physical Education, Social Studies, and Drivers Education. One of Mr. Turner's most memorable moments is when he was named Superintendent. Another event that Mr. Turner can remember is the school's main gymnasium being dedicated to him. It is now called Donald K. Turner Gymnasium. The 1997-1998 Bradleyan Yearbook is also dedicated to him. Mr. Donald K. Turner said he enjoyed seeing students at BBCHS working hard and becoming more successful (Bradleyan 1998).

Bradley-Bourbonnais Community High School has much history according to the Bradleyan Yearbooks. Even though the school started in 1898 and was discontinued for a while, the year 1998 marks the 100th birthday for the Bradley High School. Throughout researching this project, it was founded that BBCHS holds many wonders and fascination for students, staff, and parents who have been here due to its educational system, its variety of cultures, and its background history. Happy 100th Birthday Bradley-Bourbonnais Community High School.

Bibliography

Bradleyan. Bradley High School. 1939

Bradleyan. Bradley-Bourbonnais Community High School. 1943.

Bradleyan. Bradley-Bourbonnais Community High School. 1949

Bradleyan. Bradley-Bourbonnais Community High School. 1956

Bradleyan. Bradley-Bourbonnais Community High School. 1959

Bradleyan. Bradley-Bourbonnais Community High School. 1969

Bradleyan. Bradley-Bourbonnais Community High School. 1979

Bradleyan. Bradley-Bourbonnais Community High School. 1988

Bradleyan. Bradley-Bourbonnais Community High School. 1998

Bradley-Bourbonnais Community High School Web Page ***BBCHS@www.bbchs.com***

Bradley-Bourbonnais Community High School Wall Murals