

LET US REMEMBER ...

WE ARE IN THE HOLY PRESENCE OF GOD



LET US REMEMBER

A HISTORY OF
CHRISTIAN BROTHERS HIGH SCHOOL
SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA

BILL ILIFF
CLASS OF 1976

BOOK REFERENCE

Introduction

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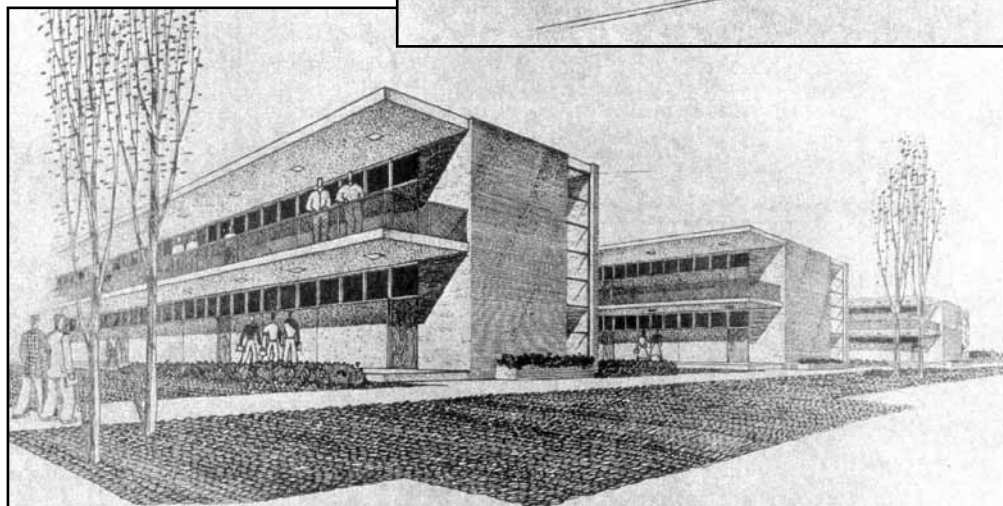
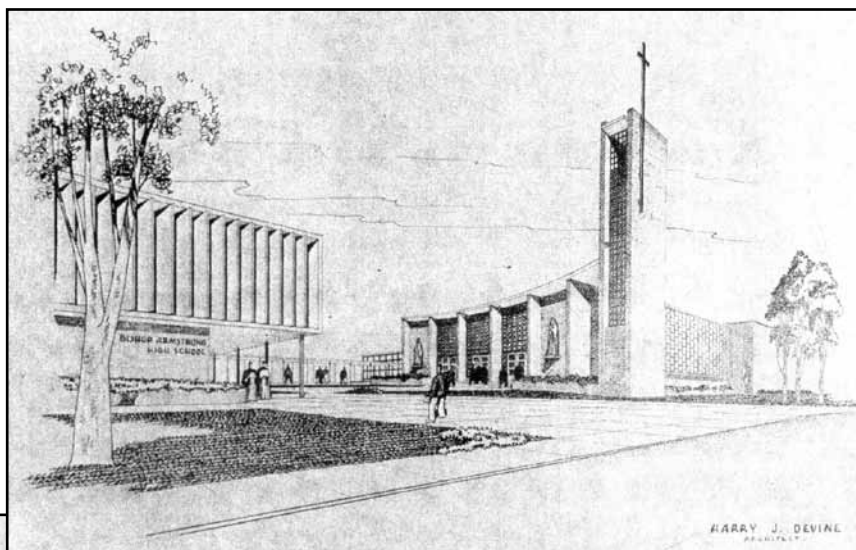
*This book was written to honor all of the
dedicated teachers and staff who have so warmly
welcomed the students into their lives
with wisdom and enthusiasm.*

THE TIMES ARE A'CHANGING

1955–1989

Addressing a goal that had been in place for years, the Brothers and the Sacramento Catholic Diocese laid out a plan for a new school at a different site in 1955. With an estimated cost of some two million dollars, the proposed school facility, to be named Bishop Armstrong High School, was designed by architect Harry Devine.

The initial drawings by architect Harry Devine called for four wings of classrooms and a different school front.



"We don't know if the \$2,000,000 can be raised, but we are willing to try," Rev. James Poole, Diocesan Superintendent of Schools said. "We have never had such a large crusade in Sacramento before, but the sum is much smaller than you think."

With aging educational facilities at the girls' St. Francis High School (25th and K Streets) and St. Joseph's Academy (9th and G Streets) as well as the boys' Christian Brothers School (21st and Broadway), Brother Bertram Coleman of CBS proposed that the schools be brought together at one location in a co-instructional environment.

The original plan by architect Devine was to build four separate wings to hold 56 classrooms, 14 classrooms per wing with a capacity of 1,000 students. The enrollment at the time for the old CBS was 532 students.

The fundraising campaign was a three year pledge agreement, soliciting families through the parishes and direct contact in their homes.

"Only Catholics will be called upon and only those south of the American River, The Sacramento Bee stated. It is not an ordinary donation or a pass the hat activity. Father Poole says the \$2,000,000 is a solid investment in our Catholic youth and the community as a whole."

The campaign was introduced at the eleven southern "feeder" parishes on May 22, 1955.

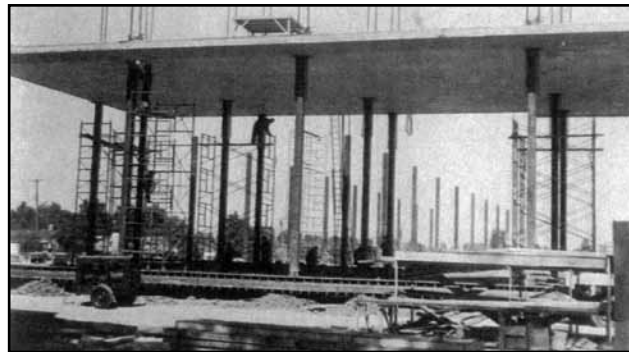
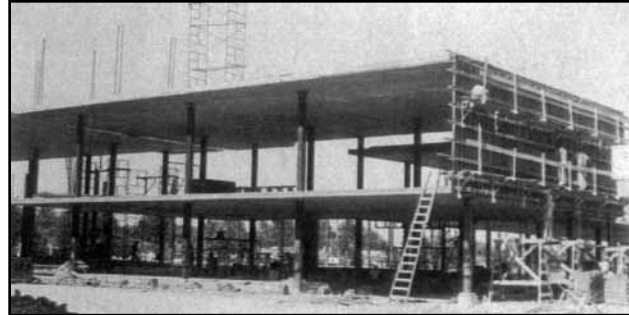
"We want families to see the need," Father Poole said at the time, "and how long it has taken to solve the problem of high school lack. In short, why have we waited until 1955 to do what should have been started as long ago as 1944 when our facilities began to dwindle for our growing student numbers?"

For many years, Christian Brothers School had to turn away as many as 200 students annually, especially in the post-war years, due to a shortage of available classroom space. In part due to enrollment demands of the high school students, the elementary grades were discontinued in 1954. The transition was made a little easier because many of the local church parishes had now added schools throughout the 1950's. In all, sixty-two students were relocated to parish schools from CBS.

The ceremonial golden shovel turned the earth at the new school site on (then) Sacramento Blvd. in November of 1955. The plans called for separate classroom wings for the boys coming over from Christian Brothers School and the girls from St. Francis High School and St. Joseph's Academy. There was to be a common cafeteria and separate boys' and girls' gymnasiums. Ultimately, \$1.2 million was raised via the campaign effort. The land had been acquired separately by the Sacramento Catholic Diocese.

Bishop Armstrong High School was officially dedicated in ceremonies led by Cardinal McIntyre of Los Angeles on March 24, 1957. An estimated 3,000 people attended, including Lt. Governor Harold Powers, Secretary of State Frank Jordan, State Senator Earl Desmond (class of 1911), Mayor Clarence Azevedo, City Manager Bartley Cavanaugh, and all the local school superintendents and Sacramento area college presidents. The initial enrollment, which was made up entirely of juniors and seniors, stood at 532 students. A new era had begun.

Co-instructional. Not co-educational, but co-instructional. What did this mean? In the years of 1957 through 1964, co-instructional meant bringing the boys and girls together on the same campus but not in the same classroom. Also, the students at Bishop Armstrong did not start at that school until their junior year. For the girls, they attended either the old St. Francis High School or St. Joseph's Academy for their freshman and sophomore years before then leaving to attend Bishop Armstrong for the final two years of their high school career. The boys spent their first two years at the old Christian Brothers School before going to the new Bishop Armstrong. The girls had their classes in one wing, the boys in the other wing (at the time, two wings were completed of the four originally planned). Under the arrangement, the two had a combined lunch, and participated together in liturgies, spirit rallies, and socialized after the school day. The student government was made up of both the boys and the girls.



The new school during construction in 1956



The raising of the flag at the beginning of the day during co-instructional era.



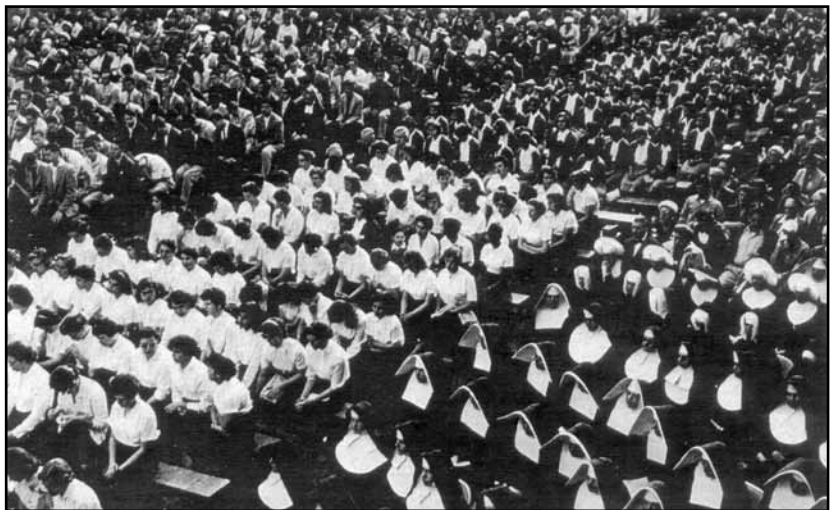
In the co-instructional era, socializing often happened at the end of the school day.



The last year of the girls attending Bishop Armstrong was 1964. The school would have an all-male student body until the fall of 1990.



Co-ed Student Council in the co-instructional era, 1962



Dedication of the newly constructed Bishop Armstrong High School, March 24, 1957. The celebration was led by Cardinal McIntyre, Archbishop of Los Angeles.

As to the acceptance of the co-instructional arrangement, it was often described in later years by the alumni as gradual. That is to say, some of the girls may have been a little resentful in their first days at Bishop Armstrong because they were not able to finish their school career at the school they came from, be it St. Francis or St. Joseph's. However, once the girls got there (it was reported), they adjusted well for the most part. And, while there probably was not as much daily mixing as both the boys and girls would have preferred, Bishop Armstrong maintained a very busy calendar of activities including ballgames, dances, and other social events.

For the boys of that 1957-1964 era, they attended Christian Brothers School (CBS) on 21st and Broadway for their first two years prior to coming over to Bishop Armstrong as a junior. While it was a challenge for the boys, who left behind their old school, the friendship bonds were a little easier to keep as they had already spent two years together, albeit on a different campus. The girls, however, not only had to adjust to a new campus in their junior year, they also had an influx of girls from the other school now as classmates. But, there were now new kids to meet and friends to be made. Trepidation in a new environment would give way to new opportunities. A sampling of student quotes in the 1964 *Crest* yearbook reflected that feeling.

Upon the completion of my Junior and Senior years at Armstrong, I feel that the education, experiences, and friends that I have gained in those two years are priceless.

As a newcomer entering into a strange, unfamiliar world, I was most impressed by the abounding friendliness and understanding of all- teachers and students.

To me, as a new student, Armstrong meant a challenge, a new school with new faces and new friends.

Foremost in my memories of Bishop Armstrong will always be my friends; the new friendships gained and the old ones continued.

The end of the 1964 school year saw the completion of the co-instructional era. The old schools were now all closing for good. St. Francis was to relocate to 60th and M Streets, and the old campuses of CBS and St. Joseph's Academy had finished their duties. St. Francis (as well as Loretto High School across the river, which had opened in 1955) would serve as the girls' schools, while Bishop Armstrong High School returned to its historical roots as an all boys school. In 1968, the school's name was changed to the one we recognize today, Christian Brothers High School.



AMERICAN CULTURAL SHIFTS AND THEIR EFFECTS ON CHRISTIAN BROTHERS

Throughout the 1950's, American societal norms were fairly consistent and, for the most part, one of uniformity. Whether young or old, there was a general consensus of dress, music, entertainment- people generally did not seek to go against the cultural grain. There was the beginning of a "beat" movement amongst younger people, but it would clearly have to be considered more of a fringe part of society. This was true with the new Bishop Armstrong High School. The girls all generally wore their hair in the same style, cut well above the shoulders. Dress patterns were essentially consistent and conservatively stylish. The same was true of the boys- similar haircuts, the same type of outfits either for the school day or in social settings. Uniformity.

School discipline was consistently strict and largely unchallenged. Throughout the early 1960's, this pattern did not change. The faculty staffing throughout the Bishop Armstrong era was about two-thirds or more religious and one-third lay. This is clearly not to say that the higher proportions of religious to lay teachers signaled a more strict disciplinary tone. The two trends were unrelated.

*The fireworks at the old
State Fairgrounds offered a
perfect backdrop to the cam-
pus on summer nights.*





As the decade of the 1960's went on, America certainly was in a cultural transition. Campus protests and/or unrest, be it colleges or public high schools, became more prevalent. Bishop Armstrong/ Christian Brothers did liberalize its approach somewhat, but allowing any extra curricular disturbances was certainly not part of that. Instead, the faculty would try to reach out to the student body by working through topics in the

context of what was going on in their lives with subtle changes in the approach to the class curriculum. A simple example would be that during a class discussion, the lyrics of a Simon and Garfunkel or a Beatles song may be inserted into the repartee to draw the students out and engage them. Folk masses were instituted, with the goal of keeping the liturgy relevant to the students, inviting fuller participation in the celebration. School retreats were remembered as being more open and "free flowing." Another trend was the unfortunate decline of religious staff numbers. By the end of the 1960's, the faculty was down to no more than a fifty-fifty split between lay and religious teachers.

In 1971, the students felt emboldened enough at that juncture of change to approach Brother Martin Fallon in Administration about the need to communicate concerns they may have had about the school. In response, Brother Martin formed a school advisory board to give the students more access to the administration to air grievances about everyday life at CB. Brother Martin, in a sign of the times, vowed to listen to the students more.



In the fall of 1975, the Christian Brothers faculty implemented what they termed an "experimental" approach to education which emphasized the process of learning rather than pre-determined answers. The program was labeled "Humanities," which integrated English, History, Literature, and Religion in the curriculum. As it was conceived, the teachers and students worked together by sharing responsibility for learning through group discussions and developmental tasks rather than a "lecture/ authoritarian" (a school term at the time) style.



Societies, like individuals, grow old and die once the habits inherited from the past outweigh the will to renewal. It is not easy to balance fidelity to the institutions that sparked our origins and the requirements of life today. The school must ... change...in its objectives, by imparting to the students more than mere book knowledge and by emphasizing instead the development of the powers of observation, imagination, reasoning, and discrimination...in its methodology, by highlighting research and creativity rather than rote memorization ...In this same vein, the school today stresses training in sensitivity, the ability to form judgments, and the development of a critical mind.

The Brothers of the Christian Schools, A Declaration, c. 1974

With the newly developed program, the students made frequent journal entries in an introspective manner. As stated by the faculty guidelines, the teaching staff met weekly to prepare the shared educational strategies, with one of the primary goals being to prevent “needless duplication of subject matter as when courses were taught in the traditional manner.” To some extent, it followed St. Mary’s College which utilized the Collegiate Seminar Series. The Humanities program was in use until 1985.

With the inevitable changes that world and national events bring, the teachers at Christian Brothers were remembered by alumni in oral history interviews as really letting the students into their lives, engaging them. Current events of the day were looked at as a school community. Like generations of students before them, what was going on in the outside world mattered; it was thought through, talked about, and processed, with opinions expressed and debated. This was part of the education of the “whole person.”



Folk Masses were instituted in the late 1960's to help engender fuller participation.



The kitchen crew is ready for a La Salle Club dinner.

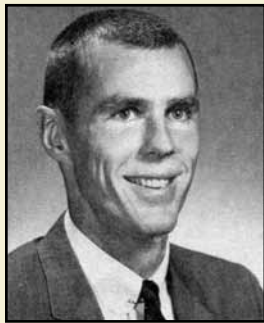
TO STAY OR TO MOVE

In 1989, challenging economic conditions facing the school led to the Board of Regents considering the feasibility of relocating Christian Brothers to a more suburban location. Basically, the question being asked was did Brothers need to move and build a new school to remain attractive to prospective future students and their families?

As most of the city's interior land was already developed into commercial and/or residential properties, Sacramento, at that juncture, was at a point where any population growth was occurring more on the outskirts of the area. Because of this, there was little or no growth in the number of families moving into the geographic vicinity of Christian Brothers. The economy was in full swing locally, but it was hard for the school to participate in that growth because of its location- families with school aged children were moving out to the suburbs, such as Elk Grove, Natomas, Folsom, and El Dorado Hills, be it new families to the Sacramento region or existing families looking for a new home.

With the suburban building boom of the 1980's, less expensive or donated land was offered by home builders to Christian Brothers High School in both Elk Grove and Natomas. For the developers, by enticing the school to move to their subdivision, it was a way to instantly legitimize and distinguish their development by having a brand new high school, especially with the name recognition and community stature that the school would bring. It would create a powerful inducement for potential home buyers in the competitive new home market.

While the school regents seriously considered a move for the better part of a year and a half, they ultimately decided to remain at the present campus site. One of the biggest reasons the move did not take place was that the City of Sacramento prevailed upon Christian Brothers, reminding them often that the school was a much valued and needed foundational part of the Oak Park neighborhood. By its presence and community ties, it was a vital source of stabilization to the area. As it turned out in many ways, Christian Brothers High School was and is in the perfect location, given the historical mission of the school. The decision was made to stay put.

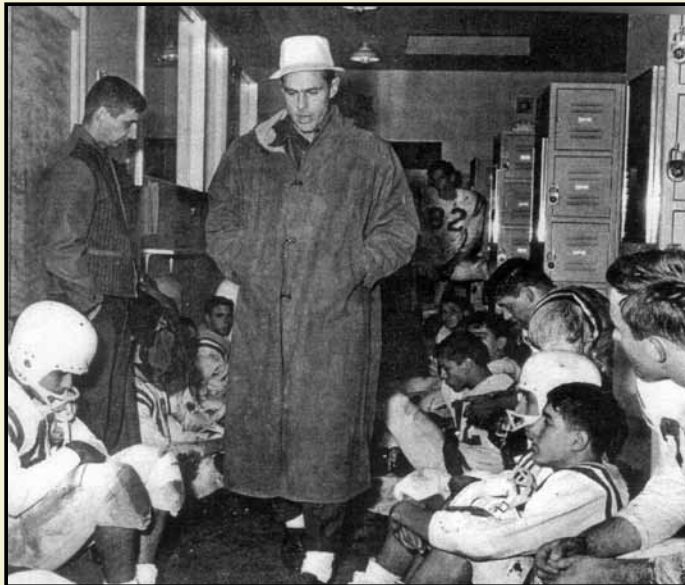


Dick Sperbeck

A CRADLE OF COACHES

For twenty years as a teacher, athletic director, and football coach (1962-1975) at Christian Brothers, Dick Sperbeck influenced countless students and athletes. Included in his CB legacy, also, is the number of former players and coaches who advanced from his tutelage to long and successful careers in their own right as head coaches.

Whenever a teaching position opened up, Sperbeck would contact college coaches and inquire if any graduating seniors had a major that would match up to the department needing faculty help. In this way, the young college grad could work toward their credential while learning the coaching profession. Sperbeck took the young coaches under his wing and via highly detailed coaching manuals along with a dynamic program, the novice gained invaluable experience. The manuals were updated each spring, with input from the entire staff, who were instructed to learn all they could about current trends through reading, experience, and clinics to create a coherent annual plan for the football program. The result was a team that ranked consistently in the area's top 10 and a real source of school pride for the student body and alumni.



Coach Sperbeck's "offspring" are listed below.

LARRY GHILARDI

Kennedy HS, ARC

SAM POPOVICH

Folsom HS

MEL FONTES

Valley HS, Elk Grove HS

DAVE HOSKINS

Valley HS, Elk Grove HS

JOHN FLETCHER

Del Oro HS

DAN CARMAZZI

Jesuit HS

JEFF TISDEL

CB, Sac City, Nevada-Reno and Sierra College

STEVE DAPRADO

Justin Sienna HS, Elk Grove HS,

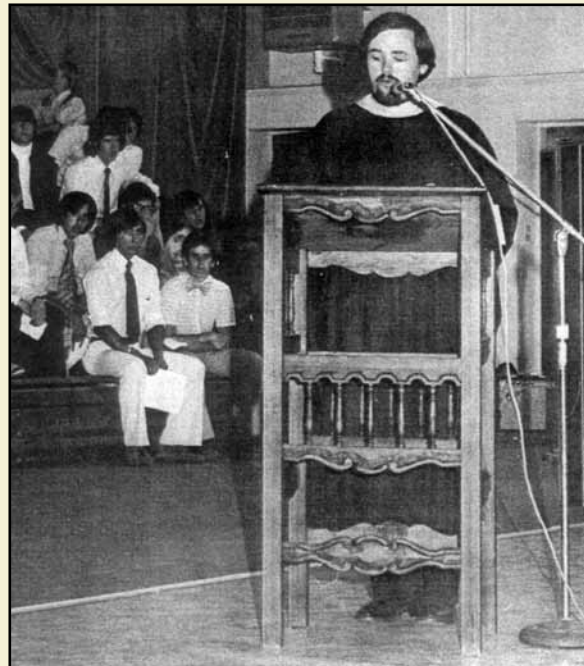
Modesto JC, Chabot JC

MARSHALL SPERBECK

Foothill JC, Sacramento State

ONE HUNDRED YEARS

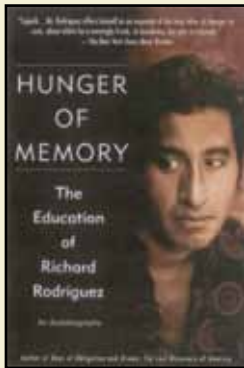
The centennial year of Christian Brothers High School in Sacramento, 1976, was celebrated throughout the 1975-1976 school year with events being held almost every month. In September, an official opening of our 100th anniversary was celebrated with a liturgy for the school community. Various dances and socials were staged culminating with the Centennial Ball at Del Paso Country Club. In April, a Civic Liturgy and Banquet to honor one hundred years of service by the Christian Brothers was one of the highlights of the Sacramento area, celebrated at the Community Center. Civic leaders throughout the region and state attended to fete the enduring legacy of the Brothers and the school. The next month, a cornerstone from the old school on 21st and Broadway was laid along with a centennial plaque at the "new" school. Finally, the 100th graduating class of St. Patrick's Institute/ Sacramento Institute/ Christian Brothers College/ Christian Brothers School/ Bishop Armstrong High School/ Christian Brothers High School received their diplomas on June 2nd, 1976. One hundred years! A long time, to be sure, but we were just getting started.



RICHARD RODRIGUEZ, THOUGHT PROVOKING PROSE



Born of Mexican immigrant parents, Rodriguez started kindergarten scarcely able to speak English. But, somewhere, intellectual curiosity, persistence, love of language, and probably a little bit of a stubborn streak led Rodriguez from Bishop Armstrong (Class of 1962) as the school newspaper editor to Stanford and Columbia Universities. Following this, Richard received a Fulbright scholarship to study Renaissance Literature.



Nationally known for his thought provoking prose, Rodriguez compiled a number of his essays into the 1981 best-selling autobiography, *Hunger for Memory: The Education of Richard Rodriguez*, which tells the tale of his personal journey from his Mexican roots to assimilation as an American adult. Other books include *Mexico's Children* (1990), *Days of Obligation* (1992), and *Brown: The Last Discovery of America* (2002).

For many years, he also has served as a lead essayist for the Public Broadcasting Station series *McNeil-Lehrer NewsHour* and continues to write on many different subjects.

JOHN PAUL II STEM CELL RESEARCH INSTITUTE

Alan Moy, M.D., Class of 1977, is a Christian Brothers graduate of whom we can all be very proud. He is a physician-researcher who is trying to apply scientific knowledge in a responsible, moral way in the hope of finding useful clinical breakthroughs for everyday medical treatments.



The goal of Dr. Moy's John Paul II Stem Cell Research Institute in Iowa City, IA is to advance research and education in stem cell investigations in a manner consistent with pro-life bioethics. While focusing on strictly adult (rather than embryonic) stem cells, Dr. Moy is trying to find treatment solutions for patients

with disorders that could potentially benefit from those stem cells.

In so doing, Dr. Moy and his colleagues are attempting to bridge the gap between basic scientific research and the advancement in the medical care of patients with often serious conditions. Bravo!

A SECURE COMMUNITY

The Sacramento region has long benefitted from the selfless service of many Christian Brothers graduates who entered the profession of law enforcement. The current Sheriff of Sacramento County is John McGinness, a 1976 graduate, who will be retiring this year, concluding a career of great distinction.

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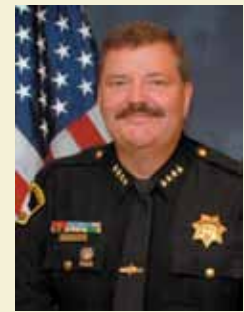
On the City beat have been more than fifty CB grads, including Chiefs of Police Joe Rooney '25 and Jack Kearns '51, who ran the Sacramento Police Department from 1965-1969 and 1977-1992, respectively. There have also been numerous Deputy Chiefs, Captains, and Sergeants amongst the ranks of Brothers' alumni. We owe them a debt of gratitude.



Rooney 1925



Kearns 1951



McGinness 1976

DAVID COOKE, POWER FORWARD



David Cooke '81 rode an overpowering inside game and sweet outside jump shot to a fine four year career at St. Mary's College followed by a free agent try-out with the Sacramento Kings of the NBA in 1985. David made the opening night roster, appearing in the team's very first game at the old Arco Arena in front of family and a bevy of Falcon friends.





COACH

A product of Immaculate Concepcion Parish, Ron Limeberger entered Christian Brothers School in the fall of 1949, a young man possessed of boundless energy and enthusiasm. Limeberger played basketball and baseball for the Gaels and was the Student Body President in his senior year, a graduate with the class of 1953.

After college, Ron returned to the 21st and Broadway campus, teaching PE and Driver's Education as well as coaching both basketball and baseball over a 42 year career. If you single out his most notable coaching achievements, it would have to be in baseball, where his teams won over 400 games, including the 1989 City Championship. But, of course, that does not even begin to tell the Ron Limeberger story.

With a tremendous work ethic, Ron always had a job as a kid, including a stint as the bat boy for the professional Sacramento Solons of the Triple-A Pacific Coast Baseball League, to help out the family. Later, throughout much of his teaching career, he had a second job, working at his father's restaurant (who was in business with Joe Marty, the namesake for the varsity baseball field at Christian Brothers). On campus, he was always the first to help set up equipment or tables and chairs for meetings, dinners and the like. But, he wasn't all work. Ron truly loved the students with a ready connection to each one, knowing what they were involved in and asking them about their activities.

Coach Limeberger reflected back on his career and offered this assessment of his days at Christian Brothers: "A good teacher is a good coach and a good coach is a good teacher. Once you learn to teach, it just sort of flows with you. Each kid is an individual...It's not only the ones you've touched but the ones who've touched you. When a student comes back later in life and says, 'Hey, thanks!' then I've done my job."

JACK WITRY



Jack Witry has been a mainstay at Christian Brothers for over 50 years, serving the students in a variety of ways: Dean of Students, Math teacher and basketball coach.



KEVIN AND DAVID SUTHERLAND

Continuing a tradition of very strong, competitive golf teams at Brothers, the Sutherland brothers were certainly the face of the Christian Brothers program throughout the early 1980's. Kevin (83) and David (85) followed up on their high school success, enrolling at Fresno State, where each garnered All-American honors in the midst of truly standout amateur careers. While David's professional career was somewhat derailed by various injuries, Kevin has been a consistently solid player on the PGA Tour, amassing almost \$15 million in career earnings to go along with the 2002 World Match Play Championship. David has since returned to Sacramento, running the Sac State golf program, where top recruits Grant and Cameron Rappleye (08), stalwart players from the current era of outstanding teams at CB, anchor his Hornet links squad.



David (first on left) and Kevin (fourth) anchored the CB Golf team in the early '80's, continuing a stream of success that has seen many great years.

Starting under Father Mike Carroll (left), the Christian Brothers boys were the dominant area soccer program, from its inception as a CIF sport in the early 1980's, well into the new millennium.



OAK PARK, 'THE EDEN OF CALIFORNIA'

With a title as daunting as the "Eden of California," Oak Park has seen much development and growth as a community in the past 100 years. What started as the small vision of developer Edwin K. Alsip and the Oak Park Association, grew into Sacramento's first full-fledged suburb. Beginning in 1887, with an initial division of 56 whole or partial lots, Oak Park gained a reputation as a community built by hard-working citizens. At what was billed as "The Greatest Auction Sale Ever Held in California," 200 lots were purchased with more than 500 people attending the event. This early sale of real estate started Oak Park's transition from farm to city.



Oak Park, 1906

Edwin Alsip and the Oak Park Association sold this rural area by advertising its quality land and exceptional growing conditions. The main selling points, however, were the promises of no city taxes, graded avenues, and a common belief that a real estate boom had finally reached Northern California. Buyers from all over the state purchased lots, as many thought the value of the lots would easily double upon purchase. Most remained vacant for at least four years after the auction, and major development of the area did not take

place until the early 1900's. Between 1900 and 1950, the area developed as a traditional working class suburb.

In the 1940's and 1950's, Oak Park experienced the early signs of urban blight. In response, the Sacramento city council and city planning commission decided to develop a community plan for Oak Park and make a few changes to its appearance. The concept of single-family residences growing to multiple-family residences, future developments within the Oak Park Business District, and the influence of South Sacramento and future freeways, led the city to adopt a plan of updating certain areas. Widening of streets to accommodate traffic, as well as construction of underpasses were some of the changes that affected the quality of life in Oak Park. The business district of Oak Park also was updated in an attempt to enhance the classic appearance and draw future patrons. Unfortunately, most of these "improvements" only enhanced the problems of the community, particularly problems associated with absentee landlords and substandard multi-family housing. Residents increasingly felt removed from the decision-making process and developed an antagonistic relationship with both police and city government.

Presently, Oak Park holds the reputation of a working class community, albeit with a recent stigma as a neighborhood in need of redevelopment. St. HOPE Corporation is leading the way in this new phase of Oak Park redevelopment. A weathered city with a vast history, Oak Park has the potential to emerge from neglect, to recapture the title of "Eden of California."

KEVIN LEONARD, in Sacramento's Oak Park.

*An individual has not started loving until he can rise above the narrow confines of
his individual concerns to the broader concerns of all humanity.*

Martin Luther King Jr.

