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Richard D. Donnelly

MEMORIES OF 75 YEARS

FAMILY

Born August 1, 1911, in Bridgeport, Conn., fourth of five children, one of whom was a girl. My father was a butcher. He died from an infected cut when I was about 3 or 4. My mother died shortly after from TB.

All of us children spent some time in Catholic orphanages. I can remember only that our main food was beans and hot dogs, which we all liked, and that the Sisters in charge were very strict. In time we were all taken by friends or relatives. An aunt was a nun at another institution, and she was the broker who found us places to live.

I was taken, at the age of 7 or 8, with a younger brother, by relatives, also named Donnelly, who lived in New Britain, Ct. They owned a brickyard at which the men worked.

My stay with this branch of the Donnelly family was very pleasant. We lived on the bottom floor of a two story house with a veranda on one side overlooking a large flower garden. There also was an extensive backyard. A large flock of chickens was kept there, and when chicken was on the menu, one of the women would go out and wring a chicken's neck. My part in the process was removing the feathers with the help of large caldrons of boiling water to loosen the feathers. The family had no car at the time, but one of the men had a motorcycle which was stored in a small shed in the yard. It was in this shed that I and several friends were caught smoking one day. This precipitated a real crisis which luckily soon blew over.

One Summer I caught a chipmunk which I kept in a cage until Winter.

Very few people in the area had cars then, since a trolley car line ran from one end of the city to the other. These trolleys even went from town to town. I remember about 1931 a group of Brothers, on a dare, went from Lawrence, Mass. to Poughkeepsie, exclusively on trolleys. Everyone could not afford to use trolleys, although the fare was only five cents. My bedroom faced the street on which the trolleys ran, and was the main route to the center of town where the factories were. Every morning about 6AM I would be awakened by crowds of workers walking to work about two miles away.

Christmas morning was something I looked forward to for weeks. My presents were usually a new sled, or roller skates or books. But one Christmas I was given an Erector set. This must have aroused my building instincts because I built and rebuilt every item listed in the book. Each following Christmas I got the next bigger set.

I was a voracious reader and read everything that came into the house.

The grammar school I attended was St. Joseph's, run by the Sisters of St. Joseph. Every year at Confirmation ceremonies, each male applicant received the name Joseph as his confirmation name.

Naturally, I had a dog, and his name was Fido. As I skated around town for amusement or on errands, Fido ran along beside me.

One big event for the family and the neighborhood, was the purchase of the first radio in the area. People came from miles around to listen to the miraculous box. Tuning required the manipulation of three knobs, which produced wild whistles and wailing. The main endeavor was to try to find the most distant stations. It didn't matter what the content was. That first radio had many glass tubes in it which glowed red. The power was supplied by two car batteries which sat on the floor beneath the set. The volume was controlled by varying the temperature of the tubes.

An exciting occasion every year was moving from home to the beach. The family had acquired a Summer home close to the beach at Old Lyme Shore. On the day of departure, the men would carry all the luggage to the car, and the women would then appear in bonnets tied under the chin, bringing lunch, linens etc. Then, the driver would masterfully approach the front of the car with the crank in his hand. After several attempts, the engine would roar into life, and off we would go. It was about a two hour trip. Then the house would be set up for the Summer.

When the house was bought, it was purchased from a group called Old Lyme Beach Association. Among the terms, it was stipulated that if at some time later you wished to sell the property, you could sell it back to the Association, or sell it privately with certain constraints. One of these was that you could not sell to a Jew or an Italian. How quickly the Irish had forgotten that not long before, they had been on the forbidden list.

The Summers were very happy and passed quickly. My first chore in the morning was to get up early, prepare my breakfast and go for the mail. My breakfast was usually Shredded Wheat with a banana and milk. It now seems strange that Shredded Wheat is still a prominent breakfast cereal.

Getting the mail involved pulling our rowboat down the beach and into the water. Fido always came along with me. The Post Office was about a mile down the shore line, and if the weather was favorable, required about a half hour of rowing. After that, I checked the condition of our beach tent, where the women would later come to sit and chat, well out of the reach of the sun. We also had lobster pots some distance from the shore with identifying tags floating on the surface. Poaching was a problem, and I daily checked the condition of the pots.

Earlier, when my uncles had found that I could not swim, they quickly decided to do something about it. There was a pier extending about fifty feet into the water. One day two of them took me out about thirty feet and tossed me into the water. One dived in after me to offer advice. Within a week I was quite a fair swimmer.

Another occupation of the uncles was as members of the Old Lyme Beach Morals Committee. During those years, the length of girls' bathing suits was rapidly shrinking, and the Morals Committee decided to appoint a delegation to do something about it. A certain number of inches above the knee was decided to be the maximum allowed. My uncles managed to get on the delegation and spent many pleasurable days, equipped with a tape measure, checking the legality of the girls' swim suits. I should mention that the two uncles in question were medical students at Georgetown and so had the Summers free.

The Fourth of July was always an important day at the beach. The older men of the family sat on the front veranda of the house with their supply of firecrackers and spend a loud and happy day competing with the neighbors as to who could put on the best show. In the evening the sparkler and Roman Candles made an appearance. A large lobster cookout was held later in the evening, together with roasted corn on the cob and tankards of beer.

Those happy days suddenly ended when it was decided that I was becoming a subject for the morals committee.

It seems that I had become friendly with a girl my age, named Barbara Hood. We went swimming and boating together. The problem, I think, was that her family lived on another beach next to ours, of which the Morals Committee did not approve,

and hints must have been dropped to my family that the friendship must be broken up.

The family took drastic measures. It was decided that I should be placed in a strict boarding school. My aunt, Sister Evangelista, was informed. In due time, Br. Frederick Charles (Ma Tante) appeared at the beach house. He was recruiter for the Marist Brothers. He was served tea and cookies and agreed to take me for training to be a Marist Brother at St. Ann's Hermitage in Poughkeepsie, N.Y. Even then that name intrigued me.

Two of my older brothers, who lived elsewhere, were disposed of in the same way. Bill became a Marist Brother (Brother Maurice William) and lasted until he was 21. My brother Tom went to another Order of Brothers and lasted to about the same age. Seems as though the recruiters of Brothers found orphans to be a rich mine.

JUNIORATE

So, toward the end of the Summer, somebody drove me to Poughkeepsie. I arrived on a day when the Juniors were having a picnic at the river. There were about thirty boys about my age racing around on the shore and frisking in the river. I joined them and so had an auspicious introduction to my new life.

Late in the afternoon we stopped to say the rosary, and then began building several small campfires with driftwood. We were issued a frying pan for each fire. A large container of pancake mix and another of baked beans were brought down from the main kitchen.

Over the fire we made pancakes and then helped ourselves to beans. To me it was fun and exciting.

After evening prayer, facing the river, we filed in silence to the dormitory and were soon asleep.

Bro. Joseph Albert was our prefect. He was a strict disciplinarian, but also a polished gentleman. I still remember our weekly lessons on good manners: how to properly use table utensils, never to leave the dormitory without a clean handkerchief, how to keep order in our clothes closet, etc.

The routine was exactly the same every day: prayers, Mass, study, breakfast, employments, classes, and so thru the day. Saturday was different. We stripped our beds and put our laundry in large common bags. Each item had to have our name

in indelible ink, or a tag. The laundry was done in the bottom floor of what is now Greystone. I think there were machines for washing, but the laundry was hung out on a forest of lines to dry. To transport the laundry from the various buildings to the laundry, we used large two-wheeled carts. Two would pull in front and two push at the back. When the laundry came back later in the week, we sorted it by name.

Something perhaps unique to the time and place was the Saturday slaughter of bed bugs. When the beds had been stripped, several spray guns with hand pumps were used and the mattresses and springs were sprayed with something that smelled like kerosene. This was supposed to hold the bedbugs at bay until the next Saturday.

We had long recreation periods every day. Everyone had to play. No one was allowed to stand around and talk. The playground was where the Town Houses are now. There was room for basketball and baseball areas. We were divided according to our athletic ability. First Camp was for the best, Second Camp for the next best, Third Camp for the non-athletes, but they had to play anyway. Third camp was pushed down to a small field just North of the present Waterworks. I was usually in Third Camp or an umpire.

But I somehow did manage to be on the best team in a basketball tournament. One Summer day, a year after I had arrived, my folks drove over from the beach to bring me home, perhaps thinking that this strict school had done its work. But I refused to go because I was on the winning basketball team, and I wouldn't desert them. The strange ways 'vocations' are sometimes saved.

When I had completed my seventh and eighth grades, it was time for the momentous move to the Novitiate.

Just a note before I move. When I first arrived I had written several times to Barbara. I never received an answer, so, completely disenchanted by the fickleness of girls, I forgot her. Later I was to find out that the Master opened all incoming and outgoing mail, and discarded what he did not like. So perhaps Barbara came to the same conclusion I did.

NOVITIATE

The Novitiate was not a place overflowing with excitement. The cassock was 'de rigueur' all times except when in bed. An occasional novice striving for sanctity tried to wear it even then, but wiser minds prevailed. The Master of Novices often had to walk over to a dining room table and command an

overzealous Novice not to starve himself to death.

All in all, the two years went by very pleasantly. Every moment had its ordained occupation. Rising was at 5:30, followed by prayers. Then the walk, in silence, to the main chapel in the Juniorate, two by two, led by the Master. The roads were dirt, with some areas finished with home-made crushed stone. In Winter it sometimes could be tricky.

There was near the Juniorate a primitive stone crusher driven by a one-cylinder gasoline engine. Rocks were collected from all over the property by wheelbarrow, reduced in size by sledgehammer, and fed into the crusher. Then these crushed stones were spread over muddy areas. The first road to be paved was in 1952, from in front of the new chapel to the entrance from Rte. 9 near the Gate House.

One of the lovable characters on the staff was Bro. Paul Acyndinus, with great knowledge of literature and the sciences. But he was very absent-minded. There are numerous stories about him, many probably apocryphal. Examples: Paul often stated that he learned to type with his hands in his pockets, while walking to classes. He taught singing and always appeared with a trumpet to give the correct note. He had a very raspy voice himself.

Once I cut a gash in my face just above an eye, while cutting down trees. Paul realized that I should go to the hospital, so he asked me to with him to his room to change into clerical garb. He went into his room to change, and when after a half hour he had not appeared, I knocked on the door. He came out and said that when he had taken off his pants, he thought it was time to go to bed, and so he did.

When I was a Junior, I was assigned to him while he fixed the wiring in a sixteen-foot ceiling in the chapel. I was holding the ladder, with him on the top, when he suddenly crashed to the floor next to me unhurt. He said "Gosh" and went back up.

He was the only licensed driver of a car for a while. Early one morning he went into the garage by a side door to get the car, started the motor, and came crashing through the unopened door.

Many noteworthy things on campus were built by Bro. Paul. The only one remaining almost intact is the white stone grotto. This stone is a form of quartz and may be found in several places on the west side of the Hudson. Even now there is not a crack or leak in it. He also built the Stations of the Cross but only the bases of some of them

remain in the same area as the grotto. Most had to be removed when the road to Sheahan was built. The concrete stairs in the same area, that now lead nowhere, once had a Calvary group of statues on the top of the stairs.

Once there was a distinguished looking, six foot high concrete wall along Rte. 9 from the South entrance o the North entrance. Paul built this over several years with hand-cast concrete blocks. I know because as a Novice I was assigned to work for an hour a day making them in iron molds, four each day. It is ironic that it was I who demolished this wall in 1966. It had begun to disintegrate, and some people said that it made the campus look like a prison. The wall around the old cemetery was built the same way and embellished with colored glass mosaics. Novices were sometimes assigned to go to the city dump and pick up discarded colored bottles which they brought back and broke into usable sized pieces for the mosaics. of

When I was a Novice, we had no electricity in the building. The job of replacing the fragile gas mantles was assigned to a Novice with a delicate touch.

At that time only the Juniorate had electricity. It came from a generator located just north of the present City Waterworks. A sizeable brook flowed down a steep hill and Bros. Altin and Abelus built a concrete dam to provide waterpower. The brook still flows but inside a large pipe until it approaches the end of college property.

A very large overshot waterwheel was made to power a pump which supplied water for the whole property. The source of the water was a seventy five foot deep artesian well drilled near the waterwheel. Twice a day somebody had to walk down the steep hill to grease the pump. This waterwheel also ran a generator which supplied 1000 watts of electricity to the Juniorate.

Before that all the water came from wells, of which there were several on the property. The system mentioned above was built because the wells became contaminated by a slaughter house on Fulton St. The last well to be abandoned was located just outside the lower East door of Greystone.

The cemetery for the Brothers was at the spot where a monument to commemorate them stands in front of the McCann Sport Center.

The cemetery was established when the Brothers bought the Beck estate in 1908. The first burial was in 1909. It was at the west side of a large low lying field used at that time

for growing silage corn for the cows. The level of the cemetery was then about fifteen feet below the level of the present monument, which is directly above the original cemetery. The whole field was filled to its present level with excavation material when the Rte 9 arterial was built in 1966.

One of the greatest honors of my Novitiate days was being assigned to toll, once a minute, the large bronze bell on the Novitiate veranda as the cortege passed on the way to the cemetery to bury one of the Brothers who had died in the Juniorate. This bell is now in the tower in front of the chapel.

The fire escape system in the Novitiate was unique. A two inch steel pipe was supported top and bottom outside the building with a tall window close to it on each floor. We had to had practice on it twice a year. I remember Bro. Henry Charles, a stern, impeccably dressed, thin man demonstrating proper procedure to a large group of Novices. He tucked his cassock under his cord, leaned out and grasped the pipe, lunged his body at it, grasped his legs around the pipe and slid down to the ground. The trick was not to hold on so tightly that your hands got burned. The practice was a nightmare to timid souls.

After taking my temporary vows at the age of fifteen (dispensation was required because I was under the canonical age of sixteen) I was assigned to teach the 7th and 8th grades in our Juniorate in Tyngsboro, with orders to finish my two remaining years of High School on my own.

Tyngsboro

I remember taking all my Regents exams in one day. I was given the honor of doing this in the Director's office. This was almost my downfall, because he had a radio with headphones which I kept on all during the exams. It was the first time I had heard a radio at my leisure. The reason he had permission for a radio was so he could get the correct time for the clocks in the building. Luckily, it turned out that I passed my exams.

In Tyngsboro there was an old Model T pickup truck. One Sunday I decided to use it to learn to drive. I ran into a ditch off a dirt road. It would have been a scandal if the Director found out what I had done, so I walked back to the barn and harnessed our two massive farm horses (something I had never done before), and with their help pulled the truck

back on the road, and finally got them and the truck back where they belonged without being discovered.

There was a small lake on the property on which the Juniors skated in the Winter. But they had no place to put on their skates or warm up. I asked the Master of Juniors, Br. Edmund, if I could cut down some of the thousands of pine trees in the area to build a log cabin. He said yes, so with some Juniors, we started.

Soon I was on the carpet with the Director. He asked who had given permission to destroy Church property. And then proceeded to teach me the vast difference between a Master and a Director. He forbade me to cut any more trees (luckily I already had enough) or to spend any money on the job, not even for doors, windows or nails.

Somehow we managed to finish the cabin by stripping large branches for the roof, and caulking the cracks with moss. The local farmers were a big help with their advice. They even found us a wood-burning stove. Soon afterwards, New England had one of its worst storms and most of the remaining trees were felled. The place was used for many years before it burned down.

We also had a swimming pool on the grounds. It was large, deep, clean, and cool. It was a blessing during the hot Summers. This was formerly a quarry.

In those years, young Brothers who were not otherwise busy, would be shipped to Tyngsboro to help with the haying and other farm jobs. I did that for a couple of years. Transportation to and from Tyngsboro was provided by a home-made bus made by Bro. Aloysius, who was a gifted carpenter. The school had an ordinary stake truck. This became the motive power for the bus. The body was kept hanging in a garage until it was needed. Then the truck would back in under it and the bus body would be lowered onto it and bolted fast. It really was economical transportation and lasted for many years. Because it was so often overloaded, almost every long trip had several flats. Then too, the roads in those days were very rudimentary.

Bro. Aloysius, the Director, was also the driver. He would appear in the fashion of the times, wearing a tan duster, goggles, and chauffeur's cap.

A funny incident happened one day. There were two older Brothers who had been working on the farm for several years: one was called Pipe Down, a hulking brute of a man who could back up a recalcitrant horse just by pushing on its head. The

other was Pete, a very stout man. To supply themselves with a little money, each of them started building his own pile of junk iron which could be sold. One Summer morning we heard a loud commotion in the barnyard. Pipe Down was accusing Pete of stealing from his pile. He was carrying a long-handled axe, and threatening Pete, who ran to the carpenter shop which was a short distance away, and locked the door. Pipe Down followed and smashed open the door with his axe. Pete escaped to a nearby barn by a back door. By this time, we, the Summer Brothers, realized murder was afoot, and ran over and surrounded Pipe Down. He gradually cooled off, and the next day Br. Director sold both piles of junk.

There was one more farmer, Br. Bassus, who raised the garden crops. A gentle, nature loving man who never raised his voice. What makes him remarkable to me was that each Spring he would catch a young crow and train it to follow him in the garden as he worked. It was advantageous to both of them: Bassus had company, and the crow, each year a different one, but always called Jimmy, found numerous worms in the freshly turned soil. Jimmy slept in a nearby tree, but was always waiting when Bassus came out in the morning. The Fall of every year. the present Jimmy would disappear to join the other crows, and a new Jimmy would be trained the following Spring.

Bassus had no greenhouse in which to start his plants in the Spring, which gave the other farmers in the area a jump on him. We talked this over and tried to figure out a way to get one built. We needed plans, a little money, and permission from the almighty Director. Bassus was very resourceful. He explained to the Director that a greenhouse would vastly increase the amount of food produced, that we could cut, in our own shop, the lumber we needed, from our own trees. A very hesitant O K was given. To our Director, progress was a sort of decadence.

We discovered that the local Farm Bureau would provide us with a detailed set of plans and plenty of advice. Also unexpectedly, a local farmer was dismantling his greenhouse and would give us all the glass, if we would remove it.

So, far into the Winter we labored. Bassus was in Heaven. The crop of vegetables that Spring far surpassed that of every previous year. But keeping Jimmy away from the young seedlings was a problem.

I was sorry when the year was over and I was told to report to Poughkeepsie to begin my Scholasticate.

SCHOLASTICATE

At that time the Scholasticate was an accredited Junior College which provided two years of education.

Greystone had just been renovated from a stable to three floors of usable space, just as it is today. The ground floor was the Chemistry Lab, the second floor was the Physics Lab, and the third floor the library. Classrooms and dormitory were in an adjacent wooden building. We had meals in a separate dining room in the Juniorate.

For me, this promised to be a very enjoyable time. We were still treated as High School kids, but the discipline was not as regimented.

At that time, Br. Legontianus (Leggy) was Provincial. As a hobby, he had built a six foot wooden boat and planned to sail it in the lake (now filled in and the site of the Lowell Thomas Building) by remote control.

Electronics, as such, was then just a word. As I was a college student, and so presumed to be intelligent, was invited to work on the remote control. At that time radio was still in its infancy. The only transmitter I could come up with was an open high voltage spark, and the receiver was a coherer. A coherer, as a receiver of radio signals, was very primitive. It consisted of a two-inch long glass tube, half filled with silver filings, and closed at the ends with metal plugs. It was known that when a strong electric spark occurred at not too far a distance from the coherer, it became conductive and could be used to close a circuit. If then vibrated, it would lose its conductivity. In our case a telephone dial sent out the impulses from the spark, and a step-per relay assigned power to the correct device to be activated.

Eventually, we had it do six things on command: 1-forward, 2- reverse, 3-turn right, 4-turn left. It would also play a record and shoot a cannon. We had a big formal christening with all the communities on hand. Everything went smoothly with much loud cheering, and then the boat was put on permanent display in the Physics lab.

While building the spark transmitter, I became interested in the Tesla coil, a very high voltage, high frequency device invented recently by Nikola Tesla, an eccentric genius who died in 1943. Somehow a group of three of us Scholastics managed to get plans and build one. To make the massive condenser, we had to 'borrow' glass plates from a surplus supply

kept in the greenhouse across the road from St. Peter's. We also had to climb into the carpenter shop thru windows at night to get several gallons of kerosene, which was used by Brs. Altin and Abelus, the carpenters, to fuel their one-lung engine which drove the shop machinery. Altin told me years later that he knew we were taking kerosene. But he never let on.

Finally we put on a show for the assembled communities in the Juniors recreation hall. It must have been spectacular. We shot six-foot sparks across the stage and between ourselves, created halos around our bodies, etc. When the superiors present saw what was going on, they quickly had collected all available fire extinguishers.

The three of us were considered very daring for a while.

This experimenting finally was my downfall, and led to my sudden expulsion from the Scholasticate. I had received permission to use a small room at the top of the tower of Greystone for experiments. Naturally, since we were forbidden to listen to a radio, I decided to build a crystal set.

One Sunday before Vespers, during our recreation time, Br. Emile Nestor, our Director, walked in on me listening to music through headphones. I was caught 'flagrante delicto'. A crisis meeting of the teaching staff was called, and I was ordered to take the next train to New York, assignment unknown. I went at first to St. Ann's Academy in Manhattan. They didn't want me, but finally the Mount took me in to help teach the eighth grade classes, and later in High School.

MOUNT 1931-1936

As mentioned above, I arrived at the Mount under a cloud. But I never noticed it, and I liked every day I was there. Only a few things stand out in my mind. One was that I had been assigned to teach in a High School; a dream realized.

Naturally I was given odds and ends to teach. Included were Geography, Algebra, English, and something called Social Science.

I started a Freshman bulletin with the name of Freshie, which printed what I thought were the best Freshman writings in my English Classes.

Br. Florentius (Flossy) was Director. He was also a super politician and managed to get the local government and building contractors to donate anything he needed. The Delafield side of the property sloped severely to the street. When Flossy had finished, there was a thick stone wall on three sides to contain the fill, and a paved road leading to Delafield St. This added a large area of usable level land to the campus.

These years saw the worst of the 1929 depression. Each year fewer families could afford to send their sons to a private school. I was not connected directly with this problem, but knew that things were tight. We had one dilapidated car. A general factotum tried to keep it going, but had as his principal job to maintain the heating system, the laundry, etc. Gradually I took over the upkeep of the car.

One day, after working on it all afternoon, I took it out for a trial run. To get permission for a driver's license required permission from the Provincial, and, among other things, that you be of a 'mature' age. When he heard of it, Flossy asked me if I knew of the legal penalties of driving without a license. When I told him I had a license, he just walked away and I heard no more of it.

At that time almost all of the young monks, about sixteen of them, went to Fordham University on Saturdays to take courses. This entailed a thirty minute walk to and from the 241st street station and another walk at Fordham.

Somehow we acquired a small used bus. My job was to put it in running condition and do the driving. The monks dubbed it the Peanut Bus, and I was the official driver. The bus lasted several years.

Some of us attended classes at the Woolworth Building extension of Fordham. We left the Mount after teaching all day, and had to be back for night prayer. Even on Christmas, one of the few days we were allowed to go home if we could get there for a nickel subway ride. Those who had to go downtown on Saturdays were given ten cents for subway fare down and back, and fifty cents for lunch. Many of us smoked and the lunch money was spent for cigarettes and an occasional visit to Radio City Music Hall which had only recently been opened and cost seventy-five cents. To economize, we also bought bulk tobacco and rolled our own cigarettes. There was no talk then about smoking being bad for your health.

At that time, every student had to take gym classes, in the gym in bad weather, outside in good weather. To enable the boys to practice to music, we built an amplifier and a set of

loud speakers. A record player was attached to this. It was quite an innovation then.

Most of us had rooms on the second floor of the Powerhouse. Since private radios were not allowed, we strung a pair of thin wires above a high molding along the walls in the corridors. I had a small radio fastened under the bed springs in my room. For ten cents a month each monk was supplied with a set of earphones to listen to this radio. We would agree each day on which radio station should be tuned in. Usually it was one of the weekly series of dramas which were popular then.

As the above shows, not much out of the ordinary happened during my stay at the Mount. In 1936 I was transferred to St. Ann's.

St. Ann's 1936-1942

Because I was studying for an MS in Physics I was assigned classes in Physics and Chemistry. The labs faced on Lexington Ave. and the traffic noise was so great we could not open the windows.

While taking a course at New York University, I met Dr. Edgerton, who had just invented the electronic flash gun, the forerunner of the now ubiquitous flash gun. At my request, he told me how to build one and supplied the critical part he had invented.

Before long I was taking stop-action pictures at the basketball games. Compared to what now weighs a few ounces and is easily attached to any camera, my unit weighed over a hundred pounds and was dragged around on a wheeled dolly. But then it was a marvel.

Previous to this electronic flash gun, photographers used one-shot flash bulbs. They didn't work well because there was no way to synchronize them to the camera shutter. The school photographer asked me to help. He would supply the test bulbs. I came up with a clumsy device that did the job. He told me I should get a patent. I asked Br. Provincial about it. He told me it was not within my vocation. It really didn't matter because within the year there were several such devices on the market.

This experience got me interested in photography and I started a Photo Club with the students and we began working with the Stanner Year Book. There was room in the Chem lab to set up a darkroom, and a dozen or so students were using it.

Then Paul Ambrose interested me in putting on plays, which was customary at St. Ann's. The Business Office did not like plays because they always lost money. But as the future would confirm, P A had a knack for making money. As expenses began to mount we were given a very tight budget and told under no circumstances could we go over it.

Home sound recording on plastic records was moving fast then and I persuaded Br. Linus William, the Director, to let me use a large room over the gym to set up a recording studio. The theory was that it could be a big help in teaching languages and in the Public Speaking class.

So we had a room but no equipment. We persuaded the Treasurer Br. Victor (King Tut) to agree to let us use any money we made over expenses, with the play we were about to put on, to equip the recording studio. He laughed at our optimism, but agreed.

There was a lot of enthusiasm among the actors. The play was Brother Rat. For the last dress rehearsal I persuaded my brother Bill who lived in New York to attend disguised as a famous New York play critic. We had told the players that a Broadway critic was coming. The whole group was electrified and word spread in the local neighborhoods.

The actual presentations were sell-outs, and we made a \$500 profit. King Tut tried to renege on his promise, but I bought the equipment and sent him the bills.

The biggest story of the time was the King of England's abdicating his throne to marry Mrs. Simpson, and I recorded his speech of abdication, and sold quite a few copies.

About this time Brother Francis Borgia AG, came to St. Ann's on his visitation. He visited the studio and I demonstrated what the machines could do. He decided to record his farewell message and authorized me to sell copies to all the Marxist schools for \$10 each. I sent out a notice of this to all the schools. Only one bought a copy.

Just before recording his speech, the AG said it was too bad the machine could not talk Latin, as it would be more moving if he could give his farewell blessing in the language of Rome. He was amazed when I told him the machine could speak Latin too.

Around this time TV was just making its appearance. It was decided to raffle off a TV set as the first prize of the annual raffle. Dumont Electric made one of the first sets.

The screen filled an eight inch circle.

An elderly Irishman won the set. When it was set up in his home he became furious and told us he would not have people watching him in his own home. So I left the audio part of the TV, and set up the video part in my room.

The programming each day started about 7 PM and lasted one hour. It was mostly ads. The man who had won the TV died a year later and his daughter insisted we return the set. We did and that was the end of my private TV.

While all this was going on, I came down with a bad cold which kept me in bed for two weeks. Finally the doctor said I was overworked and ordered a month's vacation away from St. Ann's. I asked him to write a note to my Provincial to that effect. He did, and the Provincial told me to go home for a month.

When I called my family with the news, they said it was the middle of Winter and I should go South. They sent me a round-trip train ticket to Miami and \$60. This news I passed on to my Director who told me that my permit told me to go home and if I went to Miami I would be committing a mortal sin. Naturally, I went to Miami.

I got a nice room over a private garage on Collins Ave. for five dollars a week and managed to survive on what remained of my \$60.

Somehow the Director found out about this and notified me that I had been expelled from St. Ann's, that my trunk had been shipped to Tyngsboro and that I should report there.

TYNGSBORO 1942-1943

I suppose I was sent to Tyngsboro as a punishment, but I liked the place almost from the start. And besides, I had taught there the year after my Novitiate.

I was to replace Br. Jerome who had been farmer there for a long time. Recently he had become ill, and spent quite a while in the hospital. When he left the hospital he also left the Marist Brothers.

On the first day I was told to help with milking the cows. It seemed easy at first and I lasted the evening session. But the next day both of my arms seemed to be paralyzed and I could not even move my fingers.

After a conference with the other Brothers who worked on the farm, it was suggested that I take over the job of removing the Winter's crop of manure, and they would do the milking. As all of them were elderly, I soon found out why.

The walls of the bottom floor of the barn were made of massive blocks of granite of which there was an endless supply on the property. The cows and the horses were kept on the second floor. I think there were about twenty cows and two horses. At this level there were trap doors in the floor thru which the manure was pushed to fall on the floor below. Since Br. Jerome had left some months before I arrived, no one was available to remove the piled up manure. When I opened the wide doors to the lower level, I was faced with immense mounds of manure from one end to the other.

The next day I learned how to harness the horses and connect them to the manure wagon. This was a remarkable piece of machinery constructed entirely of steel. When the wagon was going forward and the gear was engaged, the floor moved toward the rear where rapidly revolving steel forks threw the manure in a wide swath on the ground behind it.

After backing the wagon into place, I used a pitchfork to load it, wearing knee-high boots. Load after load was hauled to the field about twenty minutes away. It was spread mostly on the garden fields as there was not enough for the hay fields.

Before I had finished this job, Spring was approaching. Basus and his new crow, Jimmy, were busy preparing for the Summer crop of vegetables.

When the hay fields began to green, I requested fertilizer to increase production. I was told that God in his wisdom provided what was needed. In an attempt to prove my point, I managed to get a few bags of fertilizer and spread it through the field as far as it would go. The hay in this area came up green, healthy, and twice as high as the rest. But still no more fertilizer.

It was about this time that we realized that we would soon have four horses. The present two horses had been bought recently. They both began gaining weight very rapidly. The vet on one of his visits, told us that each of the mares was about to foal. They did, and after a few months the colts were sold.

When our schools closed for the Summer, several young Brothers came to help with the chores. They lived in the Tyng mansion and worked in many areas, especially on bringing in

the hay.

We did not have a resident bull, so an arrangement was made with the neighboring farmer, Mr. Little, for his bull to service our cows. The more knowledgeable farmers told me when the cow was ready, and simply to put a rope around her neck and lead her to Mr. Little's farm. They also explained that if the cow wandered off the road, attracted by luscious grass I was simply to wrap my arms around her horns and wrestle her to the ground. It happened, and it worked. We continued along the road.

When we arrived at the farm we had to pass in front of the cattle barn. I yelled that I had arrived with a cow. Mr. Little shouted to tie her to a five foot fence some distance further on and he would release the bull. Suddenly a massive bull came roaring towards me when the cow and I were almost to the fence. Somehow I managed to tie up the cow and leap over the fence. Nature took its course. The bull completely ignored me. The cow and I quietly returned home.

The Summer went by pleasantly and at the retreat I was named to Lawrence.

CENTRAL CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL 1943-1951

The school was growing rapidly at this time. The monthly tuition was only five dollars a month. We soon realized that we would not be able to accommodate all the new students.

The cafeteria was located in the basement of the building. It was decided to build a new cafeteria in a separate building on the jail side of the school building, and the vacated space would become classrooms. I was named as leader. They must have thought that because I had been a farmer, I could put up a building. So during the Summer, with the help of about a dozen Brothers from other schools, we put up a wooden building. Br. Joseph Alexander and I put on the finishing touches at night during the beginning of the school year.

The school roster continued to grow that year and we planned to put up a four-classroom building adjacent to the new cafeteria.

The war was now draining almost all building materials, and a permit was necessary for any new building. The only material available was wood. Not knowing what its future uses might be, it was designed with no supporting partitions.

With the help of an engineer at Lawrence Lumber Co., massive

wood trusses were designed. We had recruited many more Brothers to help during the coming Summer vacation.

The heavy wood members were cut to size and bolted together at Lawrence Lumber under the supervision of Br. Edward Michael. When the walls of the building were up, the trusses were taken apart, labeled, and trucked to the site where they were bolted together again. As we could not afford to rent a crane, we located a master rigger who said he could place the trusses with the help of a single tall telephone pole. The pole was guyed in three directions and a winch attached to the base.

The trusses were assembled on the ground at their approximate locations, the cable was attached, and little by little, each one was raised to its correct location and braced to the adjacent building. We got them all up in one day.

Br. Joseph Abel was Director. He was sure there would be an accident, so he stationed himself at a window overlooking the job with the telephone number of an ambulance at hand.

The yearly retreat time was approaching. We finally got permission for the workers to make a separate retreat at a neighboring monastery some time later in the Summer. On the opening day of school the whole building was in operation. It was called the Annex.

During the War, ham radio operators were not allowed to broadcast except on a special frequency given the name WERS, (War Emergency Radio Service), and assigned a frequency in the six meter band, which was very new then. I knew a couple of local hams and we met once a week to build the sets and organize a procedure for the protection of Lawrence and vicinity, in case of an invasion by the Germans.

I soon got my first ham license, WINS, and sometime later my Advanced Class License. At the request of the War Dept., I taught classes in Morse code. The students were soon sending and receiving code faster than I could, so the group built a motor driven, variable speed transmitter, and the students wore headphones, seated around a large table.

When the War ended, I mounted a rotary beam antenna on the roof of the Annex, turned by an automobile steering wheel in my room just below. Br. Joannes shared the quarters. The ham bands were not yet crowded, and for a couple of years I was talking around the world every day.

We began to realize that Central was going to continue to grow. We talked it over and decided to build a permanent

building with a large basketball court, twelve classrooms, offices, and the necessary shower rooms, storage rooms, etc.

But where to get the money? John Lawrence, the Director, told me that if I thought it could be done, he would assign me full time to the job.

In my innocence, I thought it would be easy to raise \$200,000: get 200 people to each give \$1000. So for months, I spoke at hundreds of meetings to any group that would listen. Most of the promised donations were in pledges over a year's time. It was the most harrowing time of my life, but finally we had the \$200,000 promised. Some big donors gave just to get their names in the paper but never paid.

We finally got permission to start. We naturally could not afford to contract the job. We found two skilled carpenters, Fritz Woerker and his son.

War Surplus was a department of the Federal government formed to dispose of the huge volume of supplies gathered for the War, but no longer needed. They held sales on specific days all over the USA. Veterans and non-profit groups could get anything on sale for 1 percent of its evaluation, which was only a fraction of its actual cost. So I started covering every sale in the area. Mostly I needed construction material. In a short time I had a very large crane, 50 wheelbarrows, assorted tools by the dozen, a large concrete mixer, a 30 passenger bus, heavy loading machines, etc., etc.

The excavation for the building was almost completed and the concrete walls and columns started to go up. But the money was not coming in fast enough to pay the bills. The local War Surplus centers were rapidly depleting their stocks. I had to expand my sources for all this equipment.

On a large map of the USA, I marked the locations of all the War Surplus Depots. I got a list of all these depots and the dates they would open. Most opened for only one week, and at varying intervals as new equipment came in. To get the best choice, it was necessary to be at the depot when it opened the first day.

Br. John Lawrence reluctantly gave me permission to go by car on a country-wide buying tour. He worried about my vocation. His last words to me before I left were: "Better men than you have fallen." Before leaving I rented two large stone barns located on the Searles estate in Methuen to be temporary repositories of the purchases when they arrived.

I also arranged with a local Ham, Bill Loeffler, for a daily

radio schedule. It was set for noon each day. When possible I would set up my portable station and contact Bill. I would give him my location, the items I had bought, and approximate date of arrival in Lawrence. He would then call my secretary and give her the information. Most of the purchases came by rail freight. The Brothers at Central would transfer the material to the storage barns. I took the northern route across the country heading West. At the Pacific coast I went East and then returned along the highway from Miami to New York.

After about one month I was back. As soon as the basement of the new building was ready we moved everything into it. A final reckoning later showed a profit of \$50,000. I had bought every bit of copper and brass pipe and fittings I could find. These items were very scarce after the war and brought top price.

Our radio contact turned out to be very reliable. I had to send a telegram only once and that was because I had been arrested for speeding and had no money to pay the fine.

Normally I would find an elevated location along some country road, stretch the antenna between two trees and then call Bill.

One day, on the way back, at Pompano Beach, I spotted a man painting his motel buildings. His name was Tom. I stopped and arranged a price for the night. The next morning I set up the antenna on the beach in front of the motel and by chance made contact with someone who lived in Tom's home town in Arkansas. Tom was watching and listening but refused to believe it. I let him take the mike and talk himself. When convinced, he was so delighted that he said I could stay free in the motel as long as I wanted.

I stayed a week and got in some good deep-sea fishing. I sold the fish to a local restaurant and they threw in a free meal. Pompano was then a very small town, not at all the Florida resort it is today. I continued contact with Bill every day. One day he told me that Bunny, my secretary, had an urgent message that I should call Br. Thomas Austin, the Provincial, as soon as possible. I did by phone and he told me to come immediately to Mt. St. Michael. Seems they had the final plans for the proposed gym and he wanted me to check them. I managed to hold him off till the end of my week's vacation. I went to the Mount, but naturally found that they had very capable people handling the job, so I bowed out and went home.

The building was coming along. There were no serious acci-

dents. The foreman's son fell from a scaffold and a steel bar pierced his leg so he was not able to move. His father Fritz climbed up and got him loose.

One high concrete wall snapped a tie rod while being filled and began to bulge. The next ten seconds everybody holds his breath. If the failure of the first is followed by what sounds like a machine gun volley, of all the other ties snapping, you have lost the wall. If there is no further sound, you may have time to install special ties to hold the wall. We were lucky this time.

At one stage of the construction, we had a mountain of dirt from excavation in the middle of the future gym floor. We had no money and no trucks to move it. So we placed large ads in the local paper stating that on the next two Saturdays we would load the fill free into any truck that came in. We had a caravan of trucks the two Saturdays and were left with a level floor.

The concrete floor contract was given to a small contractor who had a good reputation for quality but had never done a large job. The owner's name was Mr. Ramey. He used no instruments, but figured everything by eye. So I set up a transit and gave him levels. He went broke when he was half finished, so the rest of the job was done on a cost plus basis.

The day after the high wall at the back of the stage was poured, we started to back fill it. The pressure of the loose material began to tilt it. We quickly began to remove to remove the fill with a crane. Fritz organized a crew to install heavy braces to hold the wall temporarily. Finally we were able to jack it back and hold it with permanent ties.

In this case and in many others, local companies and individuals rushed to our help with machinery, tools, and even hand labor. The people of Lawrence are very friendly.

The roof arches were fabricated in the West and shipped in pieces on freight cars. They were over 100 feet long, not like the 40 foot ones we had erected for the Annex. T-Mike and his crew assembled one a day, and our War Surplus crane easily put them in place.

Fritz's precision was clearly shown when the first arch was slowly lowered to the two steel pins more than 100 feet apart that were to hold them. They mated exactly. It was a custom then for the foreman, if he were a brave man, to walk across the top of the first truss. Fritz did, to the cheers of those below. Several Brothers followed him.

Soon afterwards the roof was sealed and we felt safe from the weather. In the Spring we began looking for rentals of the hall to make it productive. The first was a banquet for Fr. Carney, from St. Mary's, celebrating an anniversary. The hall was crowded and soon became stuffy. Among the surplus material we had bought, were tremendous turbine fans which were designed to ventilate battleships. They were accidentally turned on at full speed, and it sounded like a hurricane let loose. They were quickly slowed down and the guests went on with their dinner.

We organized Friday night dances for High School students, but St. Mary's also did and we had few patrons.

Among the War Surplus items were 500 pairs of women's nylon stockings, which were still very rare and expensive. So we advertised that at the next dance, the first 100 girls to come got a free pair. Of course the boys followed the girls and from then on we had a full house. We also soon hired a twelve piece band instead of records. During the Summer the Brothers installed a cafeteria next to the gym. The ovens, stoves, etc. were all War Surplus. A Coke at that time was ten cents.

The sale of construction equipment brought good prices.

The Province lent us \$50,000 to finish the building, and we did numerous things to try to pay back this debt. Suddenly I was told that I should go to France for six months of religious studies.

SECOND NOVITIATE

The Second Novitiate takes about six months. Br. Philip John Br. Richard Aloysius, and myself composed the group from the U.S. This was in 1951 when transatlantic planes were not common or too expensive, so we went over and back on the Queen Mary. It was an uneventful trip. We had a few days before reporting to St. Quentin where we would spend the next five months. Each went his own way as we had different objectives. I visited Paris, Nice, and after the Second Novitiate, Casablanca.

I found the Second Novitiate very interesting and also a chance to improve my basic French. The classes were conducted in French. Br. Henri Noe was the Master of Novices. His talks were well prepared and well delivered, although, due to the subject matter, sometimes boring.

There was an adequate library on the subjects we were studying. I got interested in the many volumes on higher spirituality.

The attainment of the state of ecstasy I found intriguing. It seemed to me that if I followed all the suggestions, it might happen to me. It involved self abnegation, self denial and inflicting pain on the body. I never lashed my back, but I went as far as putting pebbles in my shoes. Finally, while standing for the thirty minute meditation. I think I had a period of ecstasy. I don't think a proper description can be given, but I remember it as a complete separation of body from soul and an intense union with some spiritual entity. When the meditation period was up I was later told that I had to physically be brought back to reality. My comrades thought I had fallen asleep, and perhaps I had. It never happened again.

Knowing that I had had some experience building with concrete, the Master asked if I would build a Stations of the Cross on the extensive property.

There was no money for any building materials except sand and concrete, but the heavy crosses could not be built without steel reinforcing rods. We also needed some form lumber and some tools.

I wrote to friends and relatives at home, telling them what I was asked to do, and that for a donation towards the construction, I would bury a sealed wine bottle at the foot of each station, each bottle containing the name of a donor.

I didn't promise any miraculous cures, but I guess the thought of having one's name encased forever in a little bit of blessed land in France must have intrigued many, because I received enough American dollars to build the Stations with a little left over for expenses on the way home.

As the six foot long white crosses were ready, the Brothers, in their cassocks, hoisted each one on their shoulders and carried it to its prepared footing. Later they were all solemnly blessed by the local priest.

MARIST COLLEGE 1952-

When I was named to Marist College in September 1952, CCHS was in the midst of preparing a Home Show to help pay off its debt for the new building. We hoped to make it the biggest

event since the gym opened. I was involved in organizing and in selling space.

Paul Ambrose set my teaching schedule so that all classes were on one day. I acquired an old Ford car with a rumble seat, and commuted every week. The roads were not the highways of today. Many did not even have guidelines in the middle.

After things had settled down, PA told me the real reason for my being in Poughkeepsie. The Marian year was only two years away, and he was trying to get permission to build a Marian chapel for the occasion. When he was told to go ahead with the plan, another person was hired to take my classes, and I would be full time on the Chapel project.

I told him we could do it for \$75000 if the Brothers did all the work. This was agreeable to him, and we started. A site was chosen at the West side of a former corn field, on a small promontory.

Mr. Pratt, the architect of Central Catholic's new gym building agreed to make the plans, came down to see the site and get some idea of what we wanted.

The chapel for the local communities was in the old mansion. It was very long and very narrow. The Juniors had the front rows, followed to the back by Novices, Scholastics, staff Brothers, and at the rear, the old men who were in the infirmary on the second floor behind the chapel. Windows allowed a view of the altar. It was not an ideal chapel.

So M. Pratt, PA, and I decided on a round chapel so that all the groups were clustered around the altar.

As soon as weather permitted, the scholastics started digging by hand for foundations. They didn't have to dig deep as the site was on solid rock. Soon we acquired an old crane for \$3000, and some War Surplus equipment from CCHS.

We did have to do some blasting for the boiler room at the West side, on top of which would be the sacristy. A neighbor did the blasting at first, but as he was not usually available when I needed him, I finally did it myself.

As Spring approached I went to New York and visited all our schools, to try to get volunteers to work during the Summer. Some twenty Brothers agreed to come.

Two of them were to be key men for all our future projects. Br. Mark, and later Br. Brendan Regis (Panther), did the cook-

ing, and Br. Edward Michael would be construction boss. Without them the whole idea would have floundered. Of course PA was the kingpin of the whole enterprise, smoothing the way with work crews of Scholastics and money to pay the bills.

At the same time that we were digging footings, we were preparing to provide the usual services: water, sewer, and electricity.

Sewage then required only a septic tank, which we dug behind the chapel and then piped it to a swamp which existed at a lower level towards the river. St. Ann's sent sewage to the same area. From there it seeped into the river.

Electricity and water were was close at hand on Waterworks road. But obtaining a tap from the water line became a problem. It seems that an anti-Catholic feeling existed to some extent in the city. We applied for a water permit on April 13, 1953, to the office of Mr. Dean who was city engineer. but did not receive the permit until September 18, 1953. For a whole month, starting in July, we sent a Scholastic, wearing his Roman Collar, to Mr. Dean's waiting room, where he presented his reason for being there, and then sat down to wait. Finally Mr. Dean died or retired and a Mr. Hacket took his place. We soon had the permit for a six inch water line. It was so large because the fire department required that we have hydrants.

Up to this time, the water supply for the whole property was a small 1/2 inch pipe. That is one reason why in each building, St. Ann's, Central (Scholasticate), and Novitiate, had a large water tank near the top of each building. This tank took care of the early morning large use of water. Connecting all buildings was a two inch pipe installed earlier by Br. Abelus and Br. Altin.

Work proceeded rapidly on the building, and in July the roof trusses arrived. These were made of wood and fabricated in a Western State. There is a story attached to the roof. It was originally designed to be made of cast concrete, the same as you see in the ceiling of the perambulator near the outside of the building.

I began to realize early that this complicated concrete roof would be very time consuming to build, and perhaps beyond the skills of our untrained workers. Also at this time, Mr. Pratt did not keep up with the plans for the chapel and occasionally I would find errors. He also would not talk to me on the phone and my messages were relayed thru his wife. This was not like him, who was always very punctual and precise. I finally drove to Lawrence to consult with him. His

wife then told me he had a tumor in the brain which was affecting his speech. He later died of this.

At this meeting we agreed to change to the timber roof you see today. Mr. Pratt took a vacation and drove out West to talk to the engineers of Timber Structures. They worked very fast, and from July 7 to July 28 several carloads of roof beams arrived and were carried across Rte 9 on the shoulders of the Scholastics to the site of the building.

The erection of the roof, with the help of our crane, was simple and fast. Gus Schmidt from Timber Structures came to supervise. By the end of August the roof was complete. The steeple and the cross went up soon after. It was not the one designed by Mr. Pratt, as that one was of bronze and much too expensive. We designed a simple one of aluminum tubes which you see today. It did blow down in a storm soon after erection, but some added reinforcement solved the problem.

In October 1953, Br. George Francis Byrne, a teacher at Marist, died of a heart attack and was buried after services in our new chapel. Byrne Residence is named after him.

Before Winter set in we had started the first paved road on campus. It went from the WW road to the entrance near the Gate House, including the entrance to the chapel. The chapel was dedicated on May 2, 1954 with the usual ceremonies.

A few words on the original window scenes from the life of the Mother of Christ might be interesting. In January 1954 I went to Haiti on vacation during the Winter lull in construction. While there I met Arthur O'Neil, an American who had retired to Haiti. In New York he had been an outstanding leader in the development of high fashion color photography.

I told him I was looking for a young woman to pose for these pictures. He strongly suggested a Mrs. Rita Traulsen, who before her marriage had been one of the most successful models in New York. When I came back from Haiti I contacted her and she was delighted with the idea.

For several successive Sundays I went to her home in Bayside and took the pictures in black and white, had them enlarged onto heavy film, and then colored by an expert in the field. Each measured 24 ft. by 4 ft. In addition to the head of Mary, there was an adjoining text from the New Testament explaining the scene, They were considered unusual and an embellishment to the chapel.

Several years later a delegation of priests from the Chancery office came to Marist for the usual occasional inspection of

Catholic chapels. Soon after we received a severe censure of the pictures as being too worldly, and were ordered to remove them. We had no choice but to comply.

On Sept. 9, 1954, there was a very large Marian Year Rally in the chapel and on the lawns surrounding it. There must have been over a thousand people present. Naturally, this had been organized by Br. Paul Ambrose as a fulfillment of his long held dream.

Before the Chapel was finished I was told to start to start plans for the next building. The Provincial Council had decided that facilities for a completely new Scholasticate were to be built behind the chapel.

So in the Spring of 1954, work was started. This building was to provide a study hall, dining room, and kitchen as a minimum.

By now our work crews had some experience in building, and work proceeded faster and more smoothly. It was of concrete except the roof which again was to be by Timber Structures. The height of the apex of the roof was almost thirty feet. When the library moved in later, more floor space was needed so the center opening was closed.

On Christmas Eve 1955 the traditional Reveillion was held in the new building. On Christmas Day the kitchen equipment was ready, and from then on all our meals were taken there. Much finish work remained to be done and we worked on it until Spring.

In March 1956 we began the last of the Scholasticate buildings. Mr. Tidd was now the architect. This was to be a three floor dormitory, with connecting areas for showers and bathrooms It is now called Fontaine in honor of Br. Paul Ambrose Fontaine.

The three story section was built of steel to save time. There was very little welding to be done as the steel beams were bolted together.

There were still no private rooms for the Scholastics; curtains separated the cells. This method made for good ventilation, but very little privacy: all lights out together etc. But for the first time, the residents had ample modern bathrooms and shower facilities.

Shortly after the Brothers had moved in and before we had finished the stair rails, a young Canadian Brother fell from the stairs and ruptured his spleen. He died the next day at

St. Francis Hospital.

Much later another Scholastic asked me one day if he could practice welding. After discussing the dangers involved, mostly from the danger of fire, I told him to go out to the middle of a playground with his equipment. To protect his clothing from sparks he put on an Army issue raincoat, and for more safety, he buttoned it up the back instead of the front. It turned out to be highly inflammable. A spark hit it, and a moment later he was encased in flames. There was a ball game going on nearby and people rushed to help him.

It was too late. He died two days later in the hospital. These were the only serious accidents we had in over the ten years the building projects went on.

While the dormitory was being built, the college was opened to laymen from the local area. To provide a place for them to gather for lunch and study, Adrian Hall was built. It was named for Br. Adrian, the music teacher at the college who had recently died.

The site of the building has an interesting background. On the lower level to the West was a large wooden building. It was the workshop of the campus and contained several items of wood working machinery and a forge. The farm equipment was repaired here and general maintenance work done.

Close to this building was a small pond where ducks were raised. When automobiles began to be used, a windmill was constructed to charge the batteries. At the time that Adrian was under construction these buildings were eliminated and a paved basketball court laid out in what is now part of the mall.

Around 1925 two long, one story wood buildings had been erected near the site of the present Marian building. These were to provide dormitories for Brothers coming in the Summer for the annual retreats. They contained curtained enclosures for beds, toilet and bath facilities, and a long galvanized metal trough for washing.

The present Marian building was the first gym. It was built about 1950 under the supervision of Br. Francis Xavier Benoit. Benoit house was named for him. The brick walls and the roof were built by contract, but the Brothers did all the other work. Br. Francis also did extensive building at the Juniorate in Esopus.

The whole area now bordered by Champagnat, the Student Cen-

ter, Marian and Adrian, was originally a rocky hillside sloping towards the river. When I was a Scholastic, and for years before, the young Brothers spent their weekly work day leveling this area to make a ball field. The procedure was to remove as much of the hill as possible with picks and shovels. When rock was encountered, holes were drilled, dynamite loaded in them, and the rock blasted.

The drilling procedure was primitive. One person held the two inch diameter drill by hand. Two others, opposite each other, and each with a sledgehammer, alternately hit the top of the drill. When the drill went as far as it could, it was exchanged for a longer one.

The loosened material was loaded by hand into wheelbarrows and run to the end of the level fill. During my stay as a Scholastic, we persuaded the Director to allow us to purchase a Model T dump truck for \$60. We had found it in an automobile graveyard. The engine was a heap of disassembled parts. Somehow we managed to make it work again, and it made the leveling of the hill much faster and easier. I heard later that the next year it was dumped into the fill area because it cost too much to maintain.

Years later when we were excavating for the foundations of the Student Center, we ran into this rocky fill to a depth of fifteen feet. The nearest we could find a machine to drill holes in this fill to place caissons on solid rock was in Cleveland, Ohio. We contracted the job to its owners. A 30" auger drilled down to bed rock. As it went down, a 30" diameter auger followed it. A man with a flashlight went down to check the bottom. The cylinder was filled with concrete and withdrawn. Dozens of such holes were drilled. The book store and the River Room are built on this foundation.

Another note on the Brothers' dining room. To hold up the apex of the ceiling and the second floor, the architect had planned for a concrete structure at the base of which was to be a fireplace. On further consideration it was decided it would be too overwhelming for the room, and changed it to two steel beams with a five foot space between them. After the roof was on, Mrs. Fisher designed an abstract mosaic, twenty feet high to fill this space. We laid out the glass mosaic, section by section, on her kitchen table and then assembled the pieces between the steel beams. It stayed in place until the space was needed for an elevator when the building became the library.

At the beginning of 1958, the Council voted to put up a class room building. We had only about 200 students at the time, but for some reason it was decided to erect a building which

is still the second largest in area on the campus. Someone must have been gifted with clairvoyance. At the time we thought this building would provide sufficient space for years to come. Within a year we started a dormitory.

On May 6, 1958 Cardinal Spellman came to bless the buildings we had just finished and to preside at the ground breaking for the proposed building.

The first Summer we had 85 Brothers on the working crew. They all lived in two wooden buildings located close to the present entrance road to the McCann gym. They started work at 8 AM, stopped for lunch and then back to work till 5 PM.

On days when a large concrete pour could not be interrupted, lunch was brought over from the kitchen in a large black hearse that someone had given us. This was euphemistically called a picnic in the grove.

At the start the only mechanical equipment we had was an old backhoe and a small crane for hoisting concrete. The second year we had added a large dozer and a bigger crane. At the end of the Summer of 1958, the lower floor had been leveled. Scholastics in groups of ten, took over from the Summer Brothers, and each group worked for two weeks.

The next year saw the building enclosed, and the following year the service lines were placed and the parking lot paved.

In September '61, the building was opened for classes and living facilities for about 40 resident students.

In 1961 a contract was given for Sheahan Hall and opened for 130 residents in 1962.

A sewage disposal plant had been built to take care of Donnelly, but when it became necessary to build dormitories, this plant was too small. Something had to be done quickly.

Bro. Paul Stokes, a faculty member, was a friend of Tom Maher, a city official, and he asked Tom about the possibility of connecting to the city sewer system. He suggested that we tie into a sewer manhole which was on the other side of Rte 9 about 400 feet south of our south entrance.

That summer a crew of Brothers dug across what is now Leonidoff Field to the south entrance and along the edge of Rte 9 southerly. The pipe went over the railroad overpass and continued along the road. We still had to cross Rte 9, which is a state highway. One day while we were digging this section, a state trooper stopped and asked to see our permit. Of

course we had forgotten to get one, so the work was stopped and we hired an accredited construction company to finish the line to the manhole.

This took care of us until the McCann Center was built, and simultaneously a new City of Poughkeepsie sewer line was built thru McCann Field near Rte 9. We were allowed to tie into this line, and the line described above was abandoned.

This marked the end of my building career. From then on I was the Clerk of the Works for the future buildings.

Champagnat Parking

When the Champagnat Dormitory and the Student Center began to be discussed about 1973, it became evident that a large parking facility would be needed.

At the time, the present Mall was a parking lot, but President Linus Foy and many others wanted it to become a landscaped Mall much as it is now.

The nearest large area available was a hillside behind the present library building. Before the Chapel was built in 1953, there was a continuous sloping field from that location all the way to the present tennis courts. It was a large orchard covered with full grown fruit trees. The top-most section became the site of the chapel, and below it were built the present library and Fontaine Hall. The remaining section was to become the new parking area.

There was a six foot high steel mesh fence along both sides of Waterworks Road erected and owned by the City of Poughkeepsie. The city allowed us to remove it at this time.

The upper area was bulldozed towards the tennis courts. Much of it was rock and had to be blasted. It was finally leveled and paved. It made room for 282 cars. If we ever need room for more cars, a second level could be built above the present space. The entrance to this higher level could be entered from the road in front of the library to avoid ramps within the building. This will not be done for a long time because it would intrude into the view of the river.

SPRINKLERS

The Summers of 1981-82 were very hot and dry. People began using sprinklers on their lawns and gardens to such an extent that the city water pumps could not keep up with the demand.

A city ordinance was passed outlawing the use of sprinklers until the emergency was over. At Marist this meant that when the students returned in September the athletic fields would be almost unusable.

With the Hudson river, full of water, flowing next to the campus, we began looking for a means of tapping this supply.

Research through the City Water Dept. files revealed that the old water pumping building, which had by then been demolished, had had, under the ground floor, a 25 foot deep well, which was connected to the river by a large pipe. Even at low tide, there was ample water in the well.

The new Water Dept. installation no longer used this well. We obtained permission to remove the debris with which the well had been filled, and also to use an abandoned 24 inch pipe which ran under the railroad tracks up to the west end of our maintenance garage. We brought in a large backhoe, and after locating the well, which was about 12 feet by 12 feet in area, dug out the debris until we had a five foot depth of water at the bottom at low tide.

It was a simple job to push high pressure tubing through the 24 inch pipe under the railroad tracks and up to the back of our garage. We also pulled up the necessary wires to operate the proposed pump.

We now needed a hydraulic engineer to design the system. A Mr. Marty Dretel, president of D and S Pump Supply Co. of Brewster, N.Y. was contacted, and he came over to gather the needed data. He supplied a five horsepower pump and needed controls.

In the meantime the trench to and around McCann Field was dug, the 3 inch pipe placed, and sufficient standpipes installed. The controls are in the garage. It was put to work immediately and has been working when needed since then.

The Business Office also says that the system considerably reduced our water bills during the Summer.

SOME DATES NOT MENTIONED IN ABOVE TEXT

1905 McPherson property bought. 35 acres. Bad condition.

1908 Purchase of Brock estate. 65 acres.

1909 First burial in cemetery

Tents erected for Summer retreat dormitories.

There was a large swamp West of Greystone. It and other wet areas were drained because they bred mosquitoes.

The Scholasticate moved from St. Ann's Academy to Central.

1911 The North American Province was divided into the Province of Canada and the Province of the United States. An intercom system was installed to connect all buildings. It could not have lasted long. When I arrived in 1924, a courier was dispatched to notify the person needed.

This year there were seventy Brothers taking Summer courses in Poughkeepsie.

The lake (future pool) was drained by a twelve inch concrete pipe that ran under the Waterworks Road near the present Benoit House. The trench was dug by alternating groups on the property.

Several wells were dug on the property to provide drinking water.

The railroad bought a piece of land near the river.

1912 Railroad builds two bridges over the tracks.

1913 Electric power was supplied to the Juniorate from our water wheel East of the railroad. An artesian well 60 ft. deep was dug at the same location to supply water for all the buildings. A generator run by the water wheel supplied power for the pump.

1916 Electricity finally connected to the Juniorate.

IN THE EARLY DAYS

Present Gate House was first called The Chateau at this time.

Waterworks Road was first called Pumping Station Avenue.

Present Greystone and nearby wooden buildings called Central.

St. Peter's School teachers lived in St. Peter's and gave it its present name. A small wooden building was added to the West side for a kitchen and dining room.

Greystone was the carriage house with horses on the ground floor, carriages and hay on the second.

On Sundays two large wagons took the Juniors to and from St. Peter's Church where they formed the choir.

MARIST COLLEGE CHRONOLOGY

- * 1858 Greystone built as two story barn.
- * 1870 Gatehouse built. St. Peter's built as gardener's cottage.
- * 1905 McPherson property bought. / 35 acres
- * 1908 Beck property bought. / 65 acres
- 1909 Brothers teach at St. Peter's.
First burial new cemetery.
- 1910 Tents served as dorms and classrooms during Summer.
Swamps West of Greystone drained because of mosquitoes.
St. Peter's Brothers move to St. Peter's on campus.
Scholasticate moves from St. Ann's Academy to Central, which was name given to Greystone and a group of small buildings close by.
- 1911 Intercom telephone connects all buildings.
One public telephone on campus.
Seventy Brothers take Summer courses.
12" vitrified clay pipe for sewage and storm installed from near pool to South of WW. Dug by Novices.
- * 1912 Two bridges crossing tracks built by RR. The last of these was removed in 1980.
- 1913 Dam built north of Waterworks. The stored water ran a water wheel which turned a generator to supply electricity to St. Ann's, and to pump water to all the buildings from a newly dug 70 ft. deep artesian well.

- Juniorate first building to have electricity. Silo is built.
- 1914 Stop using city water and use own wells because of cost.
- *1915 Grotto begun. Underground concrete caveau for vegetables built near the barn.
- 1920 First garage built. Calvary built. Feb.20 so much snow had to use sleigh to get priest from St.Andrews.
- 1921 Three story addition added to St. Ann's.
- *1922 Outdoor Stations of Cross built near Calvary. These were removed in 1962 to make room for a road to Sheahan.
Concrete block wall along Rte 9 begun. Finished 1923.
Sewage from Knaus slaughter House contaminates wells.
- 1928 Two story addition to St.Peter's. Demolished 1969.
- 1930 Bought stone crusher to make material to pave roads.
- 1947 Old Gym built. Later reconstructed as Marian.
- *1953 Chapel built.
- *1957 Linus Foy named President.
- *1957 Fontaine and Adrian built. Water Tower near old barn dismantled.
- *1961 Donnelly opened. St. Ann's demolished.
- *1962 Sheahan built. Barn torn down.
- *1963 Byrne, Boathouse, and Leo built.
Sewer lines connected to city system on Rte 9.
- *1965 Champagnat built.
- *1966 Remove wall along Rte 9. St. Mary's demolished.
Arterial Highway construction fills South Field.
Cemetery covered. Gate House remodeled.
- 1967 Benoit and Gregory built. First Computer installed in Adrian.
- 1968 Leonidoff Field dedicated. Named after distinguished local physician, who contributed to its building.
- 1969 Wooden section St. Peter's demolished. Greystone remodeled.
McCann athletic field opened.
- 1970 Fill valley East of Benoit-Gregory. St. Mary's demolished. Start Mall. First street lights. South Mall. First street lights. South entrance road paved.
Bee House and small wood dormitory demolished on South campus.
Aerial survey map of campus made.
- 1971 South entrance road paved.
Modern sculpture in Mall.
- *1972 Sign at Main Entrance (near Gate House). Designed by Mrs.Fisher, as also the large black vertical sculpture near Gatehouse.
- 1973 Fill started for McCann parking lot. This was the site of a ski lift that started near Sheahan.
- 1974 Start separation of storm and sewer lines. Tennis

- courts built.
- ~~#~~1975 Library moved from Donnelly. Computer moves to Donnelly.
 - 1976 Acquire more land at river. Kirk House built.
 - ~~#~~1977 River renovations including gabion wall. McCann opens.
 - 1978 Chapel renovated after fire.
City sewer line installed at East edge of campus.
Stairs to McCann parking lot built.
 - ~~#~~1979 Campus sewage lines connected to new city plant.
Elevator installed in Student Center.
Dennis Murray becomes president of Marist.
 - ~~#~~1980 RR bridge over tracks removed.
North entrance opened.
 - 1982 Maintenance Center opened.
Town Houses built.
New gate to river on WW road.
Sprinkler system using river water built.
River area improved.
 - ~~#~~1983 Dedication of remodeled Old Gym as Marian Hall
 - ~~#~~1984 West athletic field opened.
Gartland Commons opened
 - ~~#~~1987 Lowell Thomas building dedicated.