

History of the Monroe High School - Class of 1966

Five years ago, with mixed glee and apprehension, the Class of 1966 invaded the halls of Monroe High. The No. 35 School group, the last to have seventh grade at Monroe, took delight in watching their confused classmates try to find rooms. Conducting their yearly "Get-Eighth-Graders-Off-To-A-Good-Start" campaign, the worldly seniors dropped helpful directional hints.

The seventh grade officers -- Roger Berman, Stewart Edelstein and Rita Fragos -showed their political prowess by capturing none of the eighth grade posts. Bob Allison, Steve Geppert, Nancy Shatoff, Crystal Palmer and Tom Fraser ran the class activities. This was the first year with a seven period day. This was the last year until the present one with a booth-type carnival instead of a winter carnival. And this was the only one of our years when Monroe took the football interscholastic title (with a perfect record).

Scholastic ability was recognized in the ninth grade when the Junior Honor Guard was chosen. Steven Geppert and Pat Bennett became standard bearers, with Roger Berman, Peter Van Demark and Chris Thurber as assistants. Thespians in our class, led by Thom Johnston, showed their talent in the production of "Brigadoon." New leaders also emerged -- Phil Schuyler, Pat McMullen, Sue Daniel, Sharon Weinbach and Tracy Walker.

In tenth grade we were greeted with the news that sororities and fraternities were outlawed. The installation of the apple machine took the bite off this news. Then we had the fire, evoking the legend of Mr. VanDelinder's saying "stay calm, cool, and collected," after which he walked into the wall. The class actors again shone in "Teahouse of the August Moon," starring Vivian Seyfert and Norman Gauch. We were led through this varied year by Bob Taylor, John Seegler, Linda Schmidt and Roy Washington.

Our junior year had even more surprises. A new "fraternity" was formed -- "Sigma Epsilon Xi." A deranged man terrorized the cloistered halls of Monroe in the spring. The PSAT's showed us that college was not very far away; for some this was more of a shock than a surprise. Not surprisingly, our class had lead parts in the fall play, "My Three Angels;" Norman Gauch, Victor Pinzon, Vivian Seyfert and Jim Thompson starred.

Our eleventh grade officers were Alan Sweedler, Roy Washington, Linda Schmidt, Sharon Weinbach and Bob Janson. They led us through a year which included the Junior Prom, "Showboat," and Student Government elections. Bernie Ferrari, Stewart Edelstein and Laima Ozols were the victorious candidates. During the summer Josh Katzen, Terry Bloom, Roger Berman, and Stewart Edelstein went to Europe under Teenage Diplomat programs.

When we returned in September as seniors, Monroe had undergone many changes, the most startling being in the cafeteria. 26-B had its walls and reputation cleared and became the official student government and poster-party room. Many humorous and informative signs issued from there, especially the one for basketball games, such as "Short-circuit Edison" and "Franklin, Go Fly a Kite!" The hard working group of signers and policy makers headquartered in 26-B were branded a clique. This became "The Year of the Intelligencia."

The Teenage Diplomats, Pauline Allen and Harry Noormann saw many fads come and go forming M.U.S.H. (Monroe United Society of Heretics), playing keep-away on the asphalt, and trying to guess the next move of the striking teachers. Our European friends also saw many outstanding sportsmen in action, including All-Scholastics Al Green in football and Bob Campbell in swimming, and City Champion Charley Daniel in tennis. In previous years other All-Scholastics were Roy Washington in football, Tom Frazier in track, and Tim Verna, Seegler and Richard Austin in baseball.

Officiating in class posts this final year were Alan Sweedler, Jon Tomson, Mary Kay Schultz, Linda Schmidt, and Tracy Walker. They led a very generous class -- we contributed the most money to the Red Cross Drive, which was highlighted by a fierce battle for first place among homerooms 160, 378, and 329.

We also spent money for some worthwhile school functions. Our class again took starring roles in the plays, "The Thurber Carnival" and "Ten Little Indians." The Carnival, complete with fortune-telling and sponge-toss booths, was delayed by a school-stopping blizzard but triumphed over the elements the following weekend. The climax of the social year was the Senior Ball at Cutler Union; its theme was "Harbor Lights." Jon Tomson and Carol Neuman were crowned King and Queen.

Many honors were awarded and several high level posts were filled during this last year. Steve Geppert and Miriam Barken were Senior Standard Bearers, assisted by Alan Huffman, Roger Berman, and Chris Thurber. The latter two also were awarded the Harvard Book and Elmira Key, respectively. Monroe Life, Monrolog, and Kaleidoscope were edited by Betty Lew, Roger Berman, and Pat Bennett, in that order. Bernie Ferrari became vice president of the newly-formed countywide Teenage League for Responsible Citizenship. Rich Wyland held the unofficial position of Janitor of 26-B. More important Rich was also made Student of the Year.

Our class has shown a great deal of diversity and excellence in academics and extra curricular activities. But we would not have reached this plateau in our education in such fine form without the help and guidance of our teachers, advisors, and especially Mr. Berman and Mr. Steese. Let us hope that they can point to the Class of 1966 and say, "There was a fine class. It's too bad so few are staying on next year."

Respectfully Submitted

Peter Van Demark
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Class Historians