

THE CLASS OF '55



Will Rogers High School, Tulsa, Oklahoma

Photographs by Steven Earl Wixson





ISBN: 978-0-615-98282-3

The front and back cover photographs are from the 1955 Lariat Yearbook

Copyright 2014 by Steve Wixson, Signal Mountain, Tennessee

THE CLASS OF '55



A Message from the President of Class of '55

To those of you reading this book who did not attend Will Rogers High School and enjoy the wonderful experiences the school offered, hopefully this book and comments will give you some idea just how special this time was for us and others in the fifties. An era of innocence and appreciation.

Most of us enjoyed a better life style than our parents, but we were so lacking by today's standards. It is what we didn't have that made it so special. We didn't have armed guards in the hall ways. We didn't have bars on the windows or metal detectors on the doors. No cell phones or computers and no drugs. What we had, which was so special, we shared with each other.

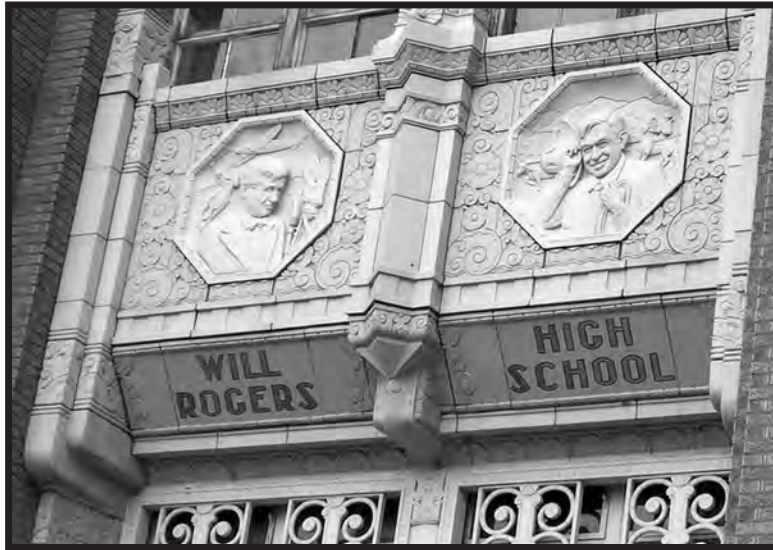
We took so many wonderful memories from Ole Will On the Hill and we left it as good if not better when we passed it to the next class. We hope you enjoy the pictures and comments-----We feel blessed just to have been part of it. *Ed Haug [1937-2014] (Page 89)*

WILL ROGERS HIGH SCHOOL



Will Rogers High School was designed by Joseph R. Koberling, Jr. and Leon B. Senter and built in 1939. It was named for the humorist Will Rogers, who died in 1935. It is on the National Registry as one of the best examples of an Art Deco designed school. The building looks the same as it did 60 years ago except the out buildings in the photograph are gone and there are two stand alone buildings, one on the other side and the other behind the school. The photographs on back of this page were not taken when the school was new, but within the last ten years.





Front door entrance decoration. Photographs by Doug Roberts



Library door showing walls and floors



Light fixture decoration



Air vent grill decoration



Will Rogers High School Auditorium. Photo from Yearbook.



PREFACE

Cradled between the Korean War and hippies and flower children was a great time in the history of Will Roger High School. 'Will on the Hill' is like most high schools, and in 1955 and for several years around that year, it was also a great high school coming in second for the Bellamy Award presented annually to honor a great high school in America, an honor later won by the Class of 1957.

Our part of Tulsa, Oklahoma was middle class which shows in several of the photographs in this book. My father was a meat cutter who owned a small one-man meat business. There were many young families and parents who had strong work ethics. Parents trusted and supported the teachers.

The '50s are sometimes called the Fabulous Fifties. It was a time of peace. Highlights include the rise of television, Rosa Parks not giving up her seat, integration in schools began, Eisenhower is president and the interstate highway system begins, Salk polio vaccine, Disneyland opens, and Elvis Presley's career begins. It was a great time to be a kid. You could play outside until bedtime with your parents not knowing exactly where you were. A child as young as a grade schooler could ride the bus downtown in safety. Drugs and sex were almost non-existent, though there was smoking out back in the 'smoke hole' and cigarette packs were stored in rolled up shirt sleeves.

With limited television and few air-conditioned homes, outdoor and school activities were the norm including athletics, school clubs, social clubs, ice cream socials, hayrides, formal and informal dances. and more. This book is a slice of that, and if you search the Internet for the 'Will Rogers High School Class of 1955 Lariat Yearbook', you will discover 42 boards, clubs and committees and 16 separate athletic teams including a rifle club and a shooting range in the basement of the school.

Soon after graduation, several classmates from this and other close graduating classes gained national prominence; Anita Bryant, singer and first runner-up for Miss America, Leon Russell (Bridges), song writer and musician, David Gates, song writer and singer with the group Bread, Paul Davis, illustrator, Archie Goodwin, Marvel Comics editor, Elvin Bishop, guitarist, Russell Myers, cartoonist and creator of the 'Broom Hilda' comic strip, and Gailand Sartain, actor, illustrator and regular on the Hee-Haw television show.





Steve Wixson, age 17, Self
Portrait

Now after almost 60 years, we look at our classmates as we gather every 5 years, and see the great things, large and small, that we have accomplished. And there are doctors, lawyers and a Director of Indian Cultural Affairs. The CLASS of '55 does indeed have CLASS.

I've shown the pictures in this book to people who did not go to Will Rogers High School and I ask them what they see. I ask you to do the same thing. You will see that many things are the same and many things are different. For example on Page 29, you can draw a line between the girls and the boys who did not pair up like today.

Special thanks to Janet Bascom Sutter (Page 95) for suggestions that improved the book. Thanks also to the classmates who contributed words to this book; they are acknowledged following their text. Thanks to Betty Ann Brown Trinkka for keeping track of our classmates and sharing that information with me. Thanks also to other classmates who researched photographs to identify people. Hopefully, the errors are minimal.

Most of the photographs in this book are of the class of 1955 with a few from the classes of '54 and '56.

It has been great fun looking at these photographs after many years, and I hope you enjoy them also. The negatives have been given to the Tulsa County Historical Society which has very few large format images from the '50s.

Steve Wixson, January 22, 2014

Footnote: The oil painting of Will Rogers shown on Page 2 hung on the wall in the school for decades. When someone realized it was worth over \$100,000, it was moved to the Gilcrease Museum in Tulsa.

CONTENTS

Girls	1
Boys	8
The Car.	14
Band	16
Football	20
Basketball	26
Other Athletics	30
Cheerleaders	36
Theatre	42
Round-Up	48
Social Clubs	63
Dances	82
School Dances	98
Driveway Dances	103
Square Dances	104
Ice Cream Social	106
Hayride	108
More Girls	110
Miscellaneous	118
Graduation	122
Weddings	124
More Memories	125
Acknowledgments	133
Technical Details	134
History Of Tulsa	135
History Of Will Rogers High School	136





Names of people in photograph captions are listed from left to right

GIRLS

Dressing appropriately for the activity was extremely important in our day. We girls started with the proper undergarments made of pretty stiff fabrics (Pre LYRA) – most of which have gone by the wayside since the 50's. Long-lined strapless bras, crinoline petticoats for the full skirts and regulation slips for the pencil thin long style we wore. All garments were designed to accent an 'hour glass figure' -- which most of us didn't not possess, only wished to have.

School clothes consisted of long pencil, dirndl or wide full skirts worn with sweaters (cardigans worn so that they buttoned up the back) or camp shirt blouses, a small scarf tied cowboy style or a lace or eyelet 'collar' at the, black & white saddle oxford shoes with only white socks. Coats were long and fully cut. It was against the rules for girls to wear slacks of any kind to school. I remember someone getting sent home on "Western Day" for wearing western fringe-trimmed denim culottes instead of a skirt....

The popular casual after school clothing was based on denim jeans – rolled up above the ankle with the same shoes, socks worn with a man's shirt – preferable white. Of course, we had some leeway with that one and many of us started wearing tight leFogged Capri's with ballet flats – ala Audrey Hepburn.

Going to church, out to dinner, a nice date, a theatre performance meant adding a hat, gloves with shoes and purse to match to a nice suit or pretty dress depending on the season.
Jo Anne Meade Lewis (Page 37)





Below the portrait of Will Rogers on Lasso Day, April 1954 are Marilyn Shields, Janet Eastham, Dawn Crisjohn and Ann Davis.



Sampling of girl's school dress. Angela Sexton, Theda Cox, Sharon Couch, Ann Smith, Mary Ann Morris, Pam Smith, Pat Payton and Margret Cox (all class of '56)





Dudes cheering. In front, Peggy McBride, first row, Carol Conway, Marilyn Eldridge, Kay Mannon, Rita Payne, second row, Marsha Sherley, Jean Tibbets, Jeanette Hornsey, Janet Bascom, third row, Dorothy Smith, Patti Grimes, Louise Brown, Mary Jane Brown, Carlotta Calvert



Enjoying the game are Judy Robinson, Carol Ann Martin, Kay Miller and Jackie Phillips





Majorettes Rita Rosser and Barbara Rodd



Girls in a more formal meeting with a recruiter from Cottey College (seated)



BOYS

Ater school hours we headed to the Town-Talk to see the girls. During school hours we went to Breezy's Pool Hall and played snooker. *Ray Biery (Page 99)*



Don Ritschel, Don Von Aspe, Eddie Carol and Jerry Lanning

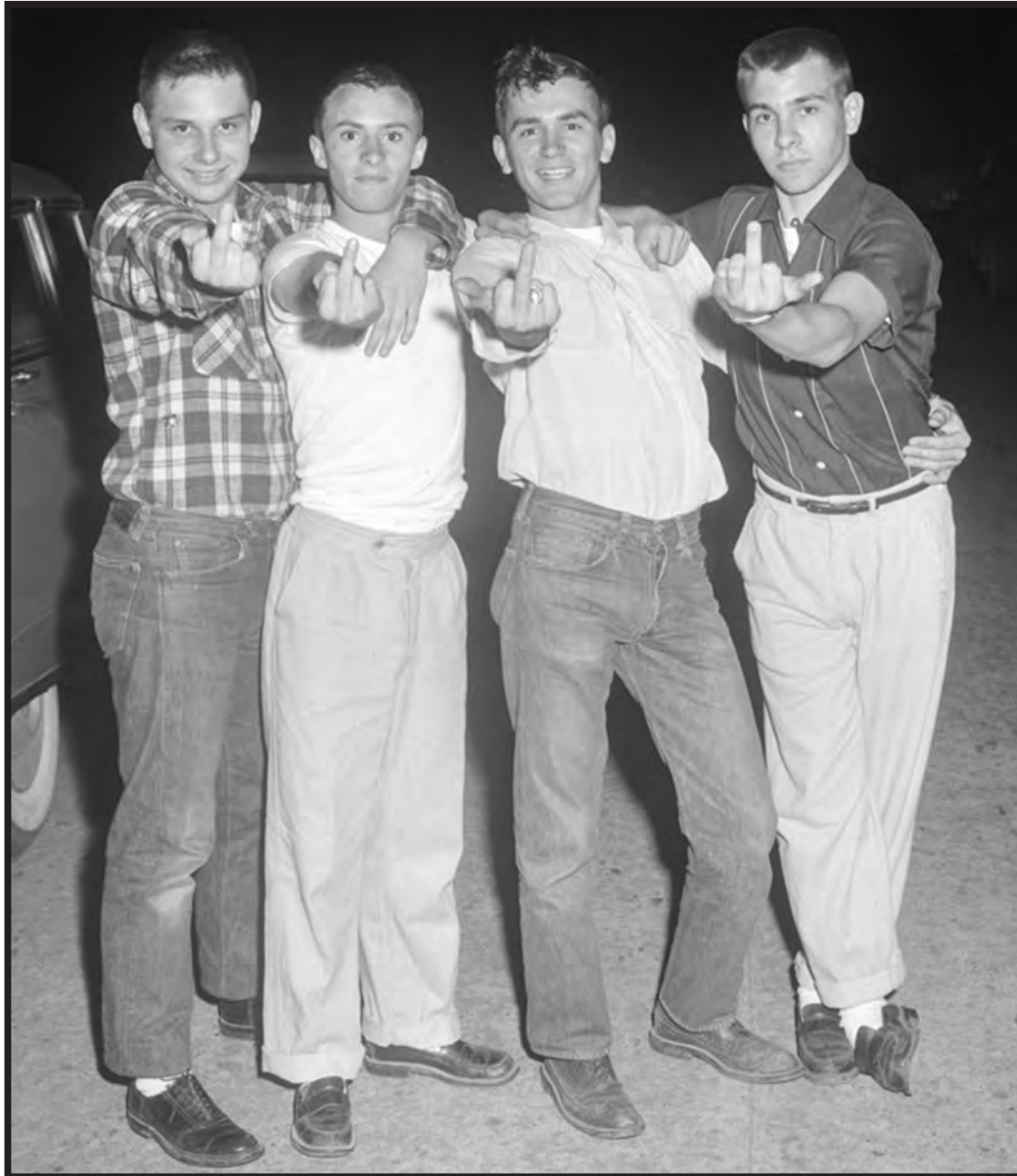


Don Von Aspe, Don Gallemore, Woody Stalnaker, Bobby Schultz and Sam Shepherd





Hamming it up at a football game



Back in 1955 this was pretty raw. Woody Stalnaker, Don Gallemore, Don Kinkaid? and Mike Edwards. At every reunion, Woody offered to buy the negative.





Playboy magazine had just been published, but not many of us had seen it. This drawing illuminated by an automobile headlight was as much as we got to see.



Lasso Day - April 1954. Shown with Mrs. Pauline Perry, Dean of Girls, are Ronald Looney, Jim Blue, Sheldon Detrick, and Rex Graves

THE CAR

Crime was not rampant and we thought nothing of walking alone at night. However, the car was our choice of transportation and especially we girls used it for chasing boys in their cars although very few of us owned our own car. Whoever was first to get their driver's license was immediately a best friend and we all squeezed into his/her car at lunch time to go to Hardens for hamburgers. *Kay Sue Kinkaid Smith (Page 64)*



Mike McNally in a 1940 Plymouth.



Carol Lingo, driver, and Nancy Knight, passenger, in brand new 1954 Plymouth Belvedere. They are in front of Nancy's home which was also the home of Dr. Raymond Knight, Principal of Will Rogers High School.



BAND

When I was elected band captain, our wonderfully gruff-jolly band director Carl Barnett told me that leadership was not all about basking in the public's admiration of our uniforms' blue and gold stripes but more about the unceremonious loading and unloading the band's instruments on and off the truck, every game, rain or shine.

Good lessons, well-learned, early on.

Even so, "the" ceremony loomed at next week's half-time. The band captain's very public job was to crown that year's band queen—lovely Marilyn Combs—with a kiss! One Sunday evening before the crowning, Bill Comfort and I went to MYF as usual at Boston Avenue Methodist Church. Bill had heard of my upcoming challenge and put on his mantle of authority by assuming---accurately or not—that I was not as experienced as he in these manly matters. He proceeded to instruct me. He lifted his bent arm chin-high and implanted a big, loud smacker ("ummm-ahhh!") on the inside of his forearm. "There!" he gleamed "that's how it's done!" I thanked Bill for his unsolicited expert instruction, and went home pondering those mysteries which he presumably had mastered early on.

Then came the reckoning half-time ceremony. Marilyn waited on the 50-yard line for her crown, girded by the best high school band in the country blaring away! Like a gladiator emboldened by military band music and "expert" training, I marched confidently to place the ceremonious kiss. It was indeed a basking moment. After the game, with a twinkle in his eye, Carl Barnett reminded me that the last part of the ceremony was to load the band instruments onto the truck.

Good lessons, well-learned, early on. *Clay Ballard*





The band on the sideline at a football game.





The kiss. Millie Imel, Gerald Hickman, Clay and Marilyn, Donazel Bowman, Jack Fish



Clay Ballard and Queen Marilyn Combs



Marilyn and Clay arrive at the Queen's box



The Band in sweetheart formation for the crowning of the Band Queen

FOOTBALL



Don Ritchel carrying the football with Eddie Haug, No 10, following



Will Rogers game in 1954



Don Ritschel, Betty Jane Tucker, Woody Stalnaker, Queen Karen Jones, Terry Brown and Trina Wright



The Coronation Kiss



The Football Queen procession




Trina Wright, Her Majesty, Miss Will Rogers XVI, Karen Jones and Betty Jane Tucker with Jim Case and Butch Kline driving.



Her Majesty, Miss Will Rogers XVII, Mary Jane Oxley - May 1955



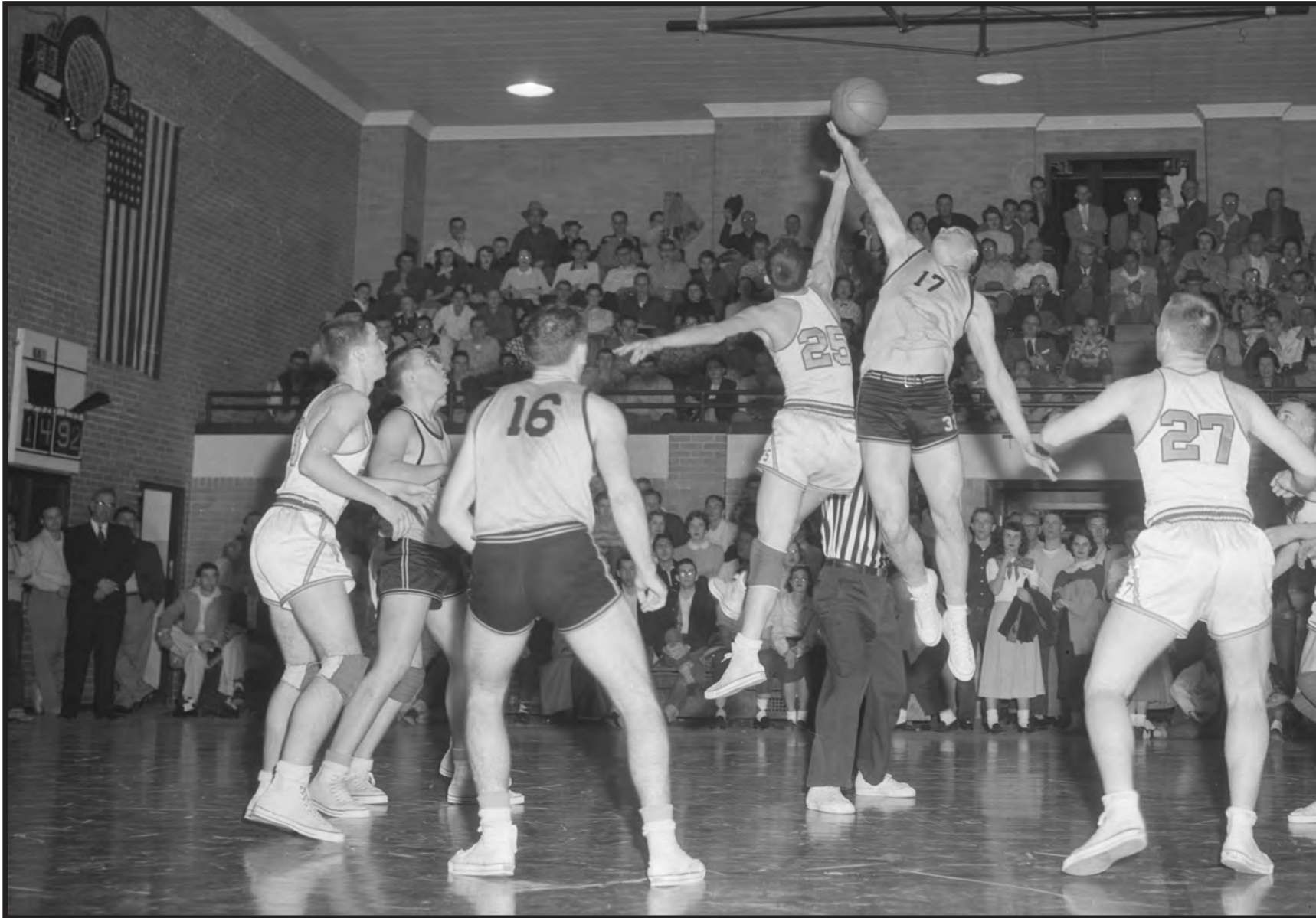
BASKETBALL



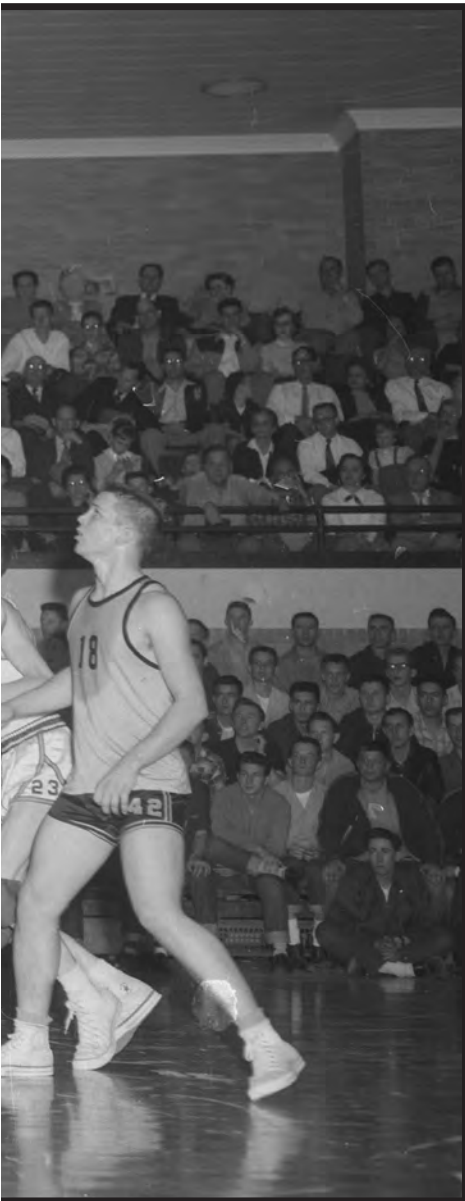
The players and coaching staff appreciated the students and fans for attending the basketball games, and their support was very important to our basketball success. We always played before a packed house, and some times it was standing room only. You don't see that kind of support at games today. *Jack Pontius (Page 27)*



Jack Pontius, No. 26 shooting with Jack Wright, No. 32 and Neal Nixon, No. 28. This side of the court was for students.



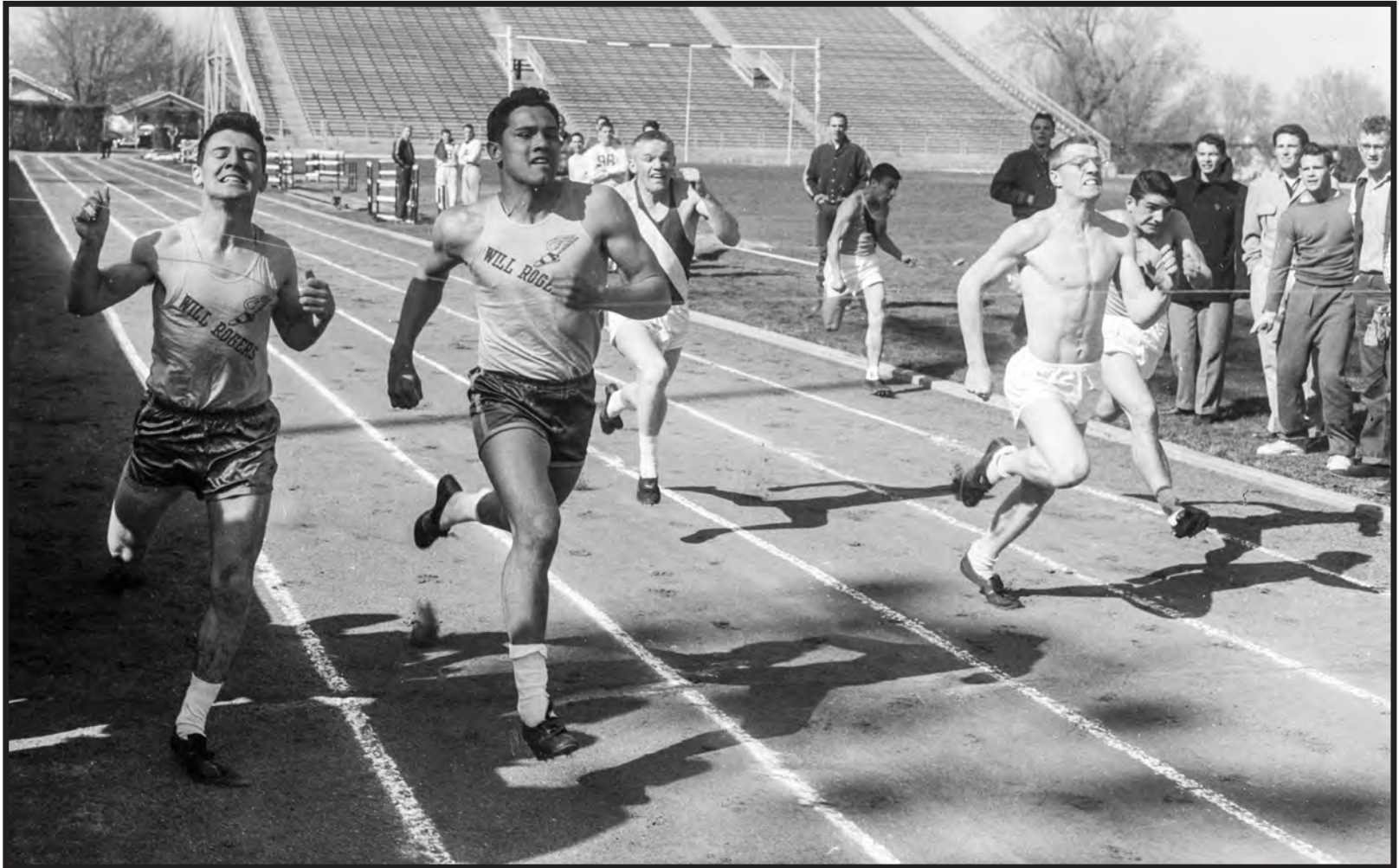
The tip-off. The people shown watching are on the parent and visitor side.



My favorite photograph. You can draw a line between where the boys and girls are sitting.



OTHER ATHLETICS



Track and Field events were held at the University of Tulsa's Skelly Stadium. From Rogers on the left are Jerry Bergeron Curtis - almost hidden Larry Hovis



Runners practicing on the Will Rogers High School track, Bill Wolf, Reed Ferguson, Bill Foley and Vernon Haddox



High Jump, Neil Sparks



Pole Vault, James Graham who went on to win the state championship




Jim Barrett, out or safe - you be the umpire



Wrestler's Banquet, May 1955. On left side, Rodman Woods, (fathers are not named, but are sitting opposite of their son), Charles Johnson and Bob Hanner. At end table, Rex Trout, Bob Brumble and Terry Bucker. On right side, David Marshall, Howard Ault, Bob Schultz and Ben Walcott



CHEERLEADERS



In 1955 it was ok for a male to be a cheerleader. Not sure when or why that changed. There was no requirement for extraordinary athletic ability. You did need to be reliable, a team player and care desperately, that your school won—everything. There were ten of us chosen toward the end of our junior. year by election after tryouts. We began to know each other as a group by going to Norman (OU) for a week long cheerleading camp. As I recall we were selected as the best squad there and that feeling of being winners stayed with us throughout the year. Our first game was the “All City.” Remember the football games where we played Central and Webster each one half to start the year. The result counted only until we played the real games, but for that night, if you won them both, you were city champion. After that first game I really felt a part of a team, and that I was making a significant contribution to my school. Throughout the remainder of the year through every kind of game and even as a group act for “Roundup” we were there. Recently, a ruling was publicized that cheerleading is not a sport. Maybe it isn’t, but there is certainly a team, uniforms, and a common goal. Sounds like a sport to me. *Jim Case (Page 37)*



Butch Kline, Linda Tenney, Dick Williams, Jo Anne Meade, Ann Smith, Bill Paapanen, Karen Jones, Bobby Small, Carol Baker and Jim Case with Jeanie Kline



Butch Kline, Linda Tenney, Dick Williams, Jo Anne Meade, Ann Smith, Bill Paapanen, Karen Jones, Bobby Small, Carol Baker and Jim Case with Jeanie Kline



Carol Baker and Dick Williams



Cheerleaders huddle up





Cheerleaders formation



Peggy McBride registering attendees to a Cheerleaders Conference, September 1954

THEATRE

Will Rogers High School had an outstanding auditorium and stage that was used for school assemblies, plays, the Round-Up, events and more. It had a full fly space, dual remote controlled lighting board, two Strong carbon arc spotlights, 16mm carbon arc projector and separate stagecraft room. Flats were made from linen stretched on a wooden frame, sized and painted. *Steve Wixson (Page vi)*



Senior Class Play Set, October 1954



Stagecraft crew with Mr. Black. Seated, Jim Boatright, Steve Wixson, Standing, front row, Brent Goddard, Eddie Hough, Scott Looney, John Black, Don Trees, Gene Lloyd, Norman Christensen, Tim Cousings, Frank Galloway, Renen Price and John Brock. Back row, Joe Green, Jim Clark, Jim Lukert, Joe Johnson and Jon Knoll



unknown, unknown, Jerry Talley, Leslie Earl and Joyce Goetz



Senior Play Cast Party, seated, Bill Campbell, Mr. Martens, Barbara Rainey, Rowe Wynn. Second row, Mrs. Martens, Jerry Talley, Kaye Davis, Jerry Keller, Harold Oltman, Barbara Smart and Marilyn Eldridge. Back row, Archie Goodwin, Susie Kemp, Dick Williams, Max Ray and Brian Ausburn.



Class of '56 present 'Meet Me in St. Louis.' Front row,, Jo Daulton, Gail Welch, Mike Griswold, Annette Miliken, Mary Jane Oxley, Joyce Moore, Betty Griffin, Barbara Simon and Barbara Davis. Second row, Eugene Dunsmore, Stanley Wilson, Edward Hoag, Judy Edwards, Winston Davidson, Nick Gubser, John Weymouth and Hal Hurst.




Emily Eps, Norman Dolph, Anbela Sexton, Nick Gubser, Paula Helmcamp (sitting), unknown, Elaine Upton, Mark Frazier and Margeret Cox

ROUND-UP

My memories of the Round-Up were fantastic and as I have told the story of the production later in life, they came even more amazing. What a wonderful tradition was continued with fellow students and teachers dedicated to supporting the whole concept.

We were a "Fine Arts" High School and did not even fathom the concept. Doris Niles coordinated the meeting of talent and creativity into the most fulfilling concept of a talent show that could be imagined with the assistance of the whole faculty. When I tell the story of the Round-Up to others they were amazed. We wrote the concept of the show for our fellow students. They embraced our ideas in the development of their talents. Then displayed their talents in trying out for a part in the show. With student directors we framed each scene under the scrutiny of Ms. Niles.



Then with the support of the whole fine arts faculty and the responsible participation of every student we produced the most fantastic High School production for our time. When I tell the story that we had a full orchestra and swing band, several choirs and vocal quartets, dancers and dance chorus lines, a stage craft teacher and a loft to fly-in multiple sets changes with controls for stage lighting, they are awed. And in retrospect I am too.

"LIGHTS UP" was the first Round-Up production to run six nights, because of the demand for tickets created by our interview on TV. To my recollection, being on the Board of Control that monitored the cost of student funds, we spent over nineteen thousand dollars on the materials for the production and grossed several thousand dollars over that amount.

The teachers and whole student body played a part; from the most talented performer to the ushers that made sure everyone had a seat. This was one of the great experiences of our lives and times. How can we thank everyone enough for the part they played? We were humbly blessed with the environment of dedicated parents and teachers that supported the "Renaissance" of our education.

Doug Roberts, President of the Round-Up Board (Page 123)



Arensky Waltz played by Georgann Simpson and Kay Cole in Act I, Scene III "Reflected Lights "



Television promotion of the Round Up. Upper shows Don Black and Karen Jones. Lower Jerry Keller and Paula Helmcamp



Sunlight (in Darkest Africa) Act with unknown, Jerry Talley, Karen Jones, Don Black, Albert Sheofstall, unknown, unknown, Barbars Simons, unknown



Lovely to Look at Act; Cleo Phillips, Sally Smith, Janice McDaniel, Mary Jane Oxley, Carol Baker and Clara McMahan





Tricycle Built for Two Act; Select from John Brickman, Hal DeShong, Larry Elkin, Jack Fish, Chuck Gay, Archie Goodwin and Jerry Mizell





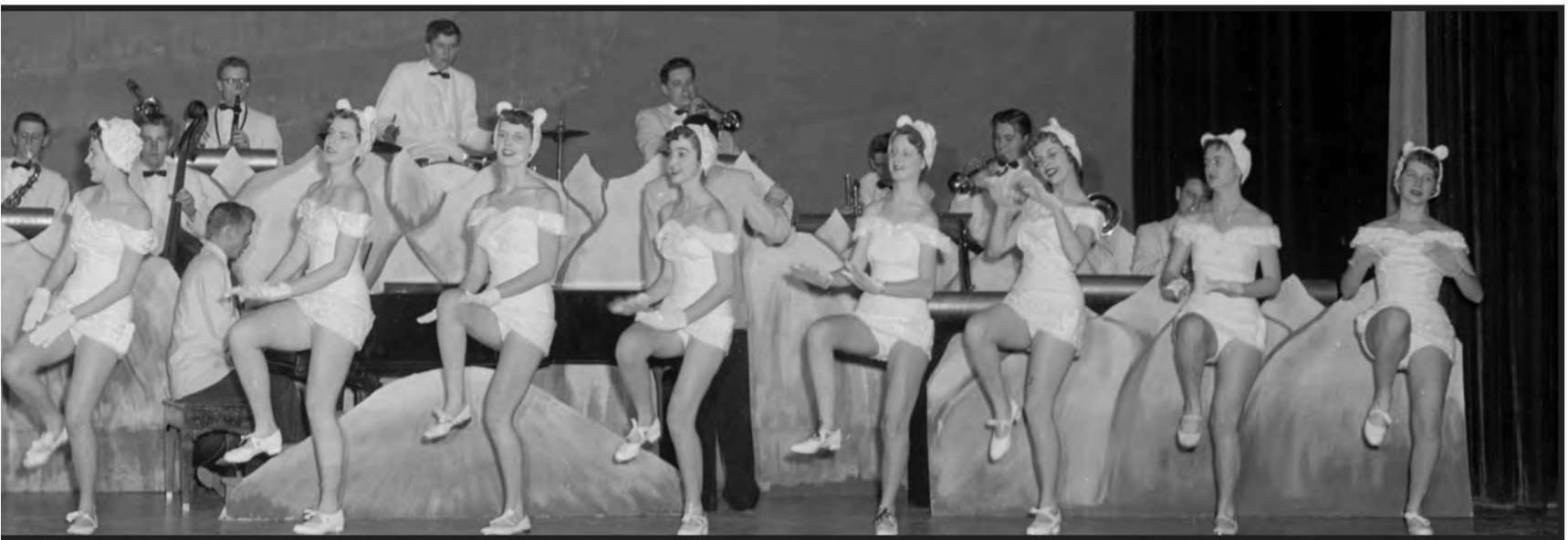
Light Drizzle Act; Linda Tenney, Butch Kline, Jo Anne Meade, Dick Williams, Ann Smith, Bill Paapanen, Karen Jones, Bobby Small, and Carol Baker





Polar Bears Act with Betty Jane Tucker, Karen Jones, Sally Smith, Pattie Morrison, Marilyn Coiner, Elaine Ellison, Carolyn Conway, Zoe Jane Rodgers, Marilyn Combs, Marilyn Hendrex and Jo Anne Meade





Incandescent Lights Act with Patty Morrison, Clara McMahon, Marilyn Eldridge, Raydelle Hughes, Zoe Jane Rodgers, Elaine Ellison, Phyllis Hoot, Elaine Ellison and Carol Couch.



Sue Jones singing with the Swing Band directed by Ted Kramer with Bob Beck on piano, and John Cowan, Jack Parker, Paul Bailey, Wayne Calhoun, Bob McClure, David Downen, Pete Jones, Scott Senter, Tucker Harrison, Leonard Groupman, Stuart McMinimy, and Clay Ballard





SOCIAL CLUBS

The Will Rogers High School social clubs were formed in 1939/40 the same year that Rogers was christened. The students at Woodrow Wilson Jr. High who were headed to Will on the Hill - (that new school on the prairie) wanted to continue the tradition which had been in place for many years at Central High School of 'Social Clubs.' The first formed were Damsels (an extension of Schadrac) and Hylanders (extension of Tri B). NSK soon followed. Meanwhile the boys formed Vikings and Brigadiers, but were most driven to impress the girls. In addition, each sophomore class formed a club which was a much more inclusive group-- Jesters was the Class of '55 group. The clubs continued to have successful rush parties for 9th graders well into the 70's and were finally unable to pledge recruits. They finally fizzled out leaving quite a trail behind them.



The social club activities monopolized the social structure of students who were a part of that world in the 50's. We humans are wired to be a part of a group - and never is (and was) more apparent than in Junior High and High School when you have the exclusive line fairly well drawn in the "Hall-Way".

Activities included the following: meetings - weekly in homes, fund raiser -talent shows, formal dances - at least one every winter, slumber parties, rush parties - seems like they were in the summer-time, philanthropy - usually a needy family -

helping out a cause. All groups had a Car-Honk and they tapped on the horn as they passed their friends houses. Example: Hy-Lan der girls" and "Dam Dam Damsels." Each Club had designed/created a pin, and it was usually worn daily over ones' heart. Shown here is the Damsel pin and the Viking pin. *Jo Anne Meade Lewis (Page 64)*





Damsel Carnival, December 1954. Carol Ann Martin, Kay Sue Kinkaid, Millie Imel, Karen Jones, Sally Smith, Jo Anne Meade, Shirley Newberry and Betty Jane Tucker



Damsel Carnival, December 1954. Sharon White, Armel Baker, Shirley Newberry and who knows



Damsel Carnival, December 1954. From left, Mary Ann Morris, unknown, Sharon Couch, unknown, unknown and Ann Smith



Damsel Carnival, December 1954



Damsel Carnival - December 1954. Unknown adult, Betty Griffin and Sondra Forestell



Damsel Carnival Finale - December 1954



Damsel Carnival - December 1954



Damsel Carnival - December 1954. Warren Moore, unknown , Don Gallemore, Terry Brown and who knows?





Damsel Carnival, December 1954



Damsel Carnival, December 1954



Carol Lingo with Jerry Cornelius' camera at a Damsel Rush Party, April 1954. The group, Sharon White, Sandy Daugherty, Arnel Baker, Barbara Self, unknown, Margo Luton and unknown



Hylander Rush Party - October 1954



Hylander Rush, October 1954. Carolyn Conway, Marilyn Coiner, Merilyn Eldridge and Kay Mannon with Lucille Davidson at the piano



Hylander Rush, October 1954.



Hylander Rush, October 1954



Kaye Davis



Hylander Rush, October 1954





Mademoiselle Rush party. Sitting, Unknown, Carol Klaus, unknown, Barbara Rainey and unknown. Standing, Charlotte Pixley, Wanda Daniels, unknown, Jancie Richardson, unknown, unknown, Jean Rice, Lillian Smith and Shirley Williams



Planning are Julia Teague, Sondra Foristell, Jackie Phillips, unknown, Kay Payne and Sharon Couch

DANCES

Ballroom dancing was part of our social life and many of us learned to dance in junior high school at 'Skilly's School of Dancing.' Being young we thought Skilly was old, but here she is with more suggestions.

"Dance lessons were more about teaching boys and girls how to interact socially than of dancing though most of you learned how to dance well. What was fun for me was that you were so fresh, so honest, so impressionable. Keep dancing and have a long life." *Skilly Forsman*, July 2010 (Skilly passed away on April 26, 2011 at the age of 89.)

Formal attire was normally a strapless top, full-skirt, waltz-length design constructed of taffeta with tulle or netting over-lay worn with shoes dyed to match and accented with a corsage given by our date to the event. I made most of those dresses as they were pretty expensive to purchase. *Jo Anne Meade Lewis (Page 64)*



Unknown classmate at the microphone with the band at Damsel formal held in the Crystal Ballroom of the Mayo Hotel. Looking on to the left is Betty Benner, Gerald Smith with Bob Mullendore behind. Judy Robinson and Don Gassaway can be seen in the background



Sharon Sprague and unknown swing dancing at Damsel formal in the Crystal Ballroom of the Mayo Hotel



Joy Ann Howard, Bill Edwards and Eddie Cederbaum in a congo line at a Damsel formal.





Highstepper formal, April 1954. At bottom, Pat Hosford, Cleo Phillips, Gerald Smith and Mary Jane Oxley



Dance with band. Butch Kline, Carolyn Conway, Bill Comfort, Pattie Morrison, Al Shoefstall, Pat Woodson, Kay Mannon, Dick Williams, Vernon Haddox, Jean Tibbets, Marilyn Coiner, Chuck Gay, Rosemary Latting, Bill Edmondson, Carol Couch and Ronnie Baker



Damsel Sweetheart dance with Chet Bryd, Jo Anne Meade, Shirley Newberry and Don Ritschel



Damsel Sweetheart dance with unknown, Millie Imel, Linda Tenney and unknown



Damsel Sweetheart dance, Bert Looney, Jean Price, Joy Ann Howard and unknown



Damsel Sweetheart dancers Tommy Haug, Pam Smith, Patty Morrison and Eddie Haug



Highstepper Members, front row, Billie Jones, Sharon Couch, Pam Smith, Theda Cox, Jean Haley, unknown, and Judy Edwards. Second row, Sue Haddox, Emily Epps, Ann Lampkin, Georganne Simpson, Sue Ann Williams, Ann Smith and Barbara Simon. Top row, unknown, unknown, Clio Phillips, Pat Payton, Marilyn Polite, Rosalee Gillette, Sondra Foristell and unknown



Highstepper officers, Jean Haley, Suann Williams, Pam Smith, Billie Jones, Sharon Couch, Theda Cox, Sondra Brown, Judy Edwards and Sue Haddox



Hylander/Viking officers planning a dance, Deborah Durham, Howard Ault, Shirley Marler and unknown



Hylander-Vikings Dance - May 1955, Bill Paapanen, Marilyn Eldridge, Larry Lewis, Patty Morrison, Ronny Baker, Carol Couch, Don Black, Rita Rosser, Mike Haugh and Kaye Davis



Hylander members at their formal dance. Not standing, Carol Couch, Phyllis Hoot, Clara McMahon, Rita Rosser, Susan Evans, Marie Pettyjohn, Felicia Danuser, unknown, Patricia Ann Odom, Earlene Hughes, Kaye Davis, Sharon Sprague, Pauline Cooper, Sue Haddox, Theda Cox, Linda Chancellor and Margaret Hood. Standing in front, Nancy Ruley, Sue Eidschun, Beverly Wilde, unknown, Barbara Rodd, Pat Woodson, Jo Lynn Garrett, Peggy Morrison, Elaine Ellison, Rosemary Latting, Marilyn Coiner, Lucille Davidson, Carolyn Conway, Marilyn Eldridge, Kay Mannon. Standing in back, unknown, Elaine Bury, unknown, Jean Tibbets, unknown, Elaine Upton, Ann Lamkin, unknown and Marilyn Chance.



NSK Sweetheart dance - Feb 55, Don Forney, unknown, Gerald Hickman, Janet Bascom, Brian Ausburn, Carol Crowder, Central student, Mary Ann Foor, unknown, Linda Perry, Bob Beck, Kittie Chaffin, D. L. Caruthers, Beverly Roberts, Gail Lay and John Hopper



NSK Sweetheart dance, February 1955, unknown, unknown, unknown, and Jim Barrett



NSK Sweetheart dance, February 1955



Chaperones



SCHOOL DANCES



A school dance



Seniors celebrate after decorating for their Senior dance - September 1954, Winifred Newell, Bill Phillipe, Ben Walcott, Ray Biery, Kay Miller, Margo Luton, Jack Alexander, Judy Robinson and Rodman Woods



Decorating for the Senior Dance, September 1954, Mike Bell, Judy Robinson, Ray Grant, unknown, Chuck Gay and unknown boy



Hanging a decoration for Senior Dance, September 1954



Decorating for Senior Dance, September 1954, Jim Case on Mike Bell's shoulder with Chuck Gay



Jim Case and Barbara Rainey and others at a school dance

DRIVEWAY DANCES



Tony Turner and unknown dance partner.



SQUARE DANCE



Square Dance - April 1954

HAYRIDE



Hayride, October 1954. Bob Tabor, Sondra Forstell, Pat Hughes, Terry Faulk, Kathleen Weber and Larry Lippard





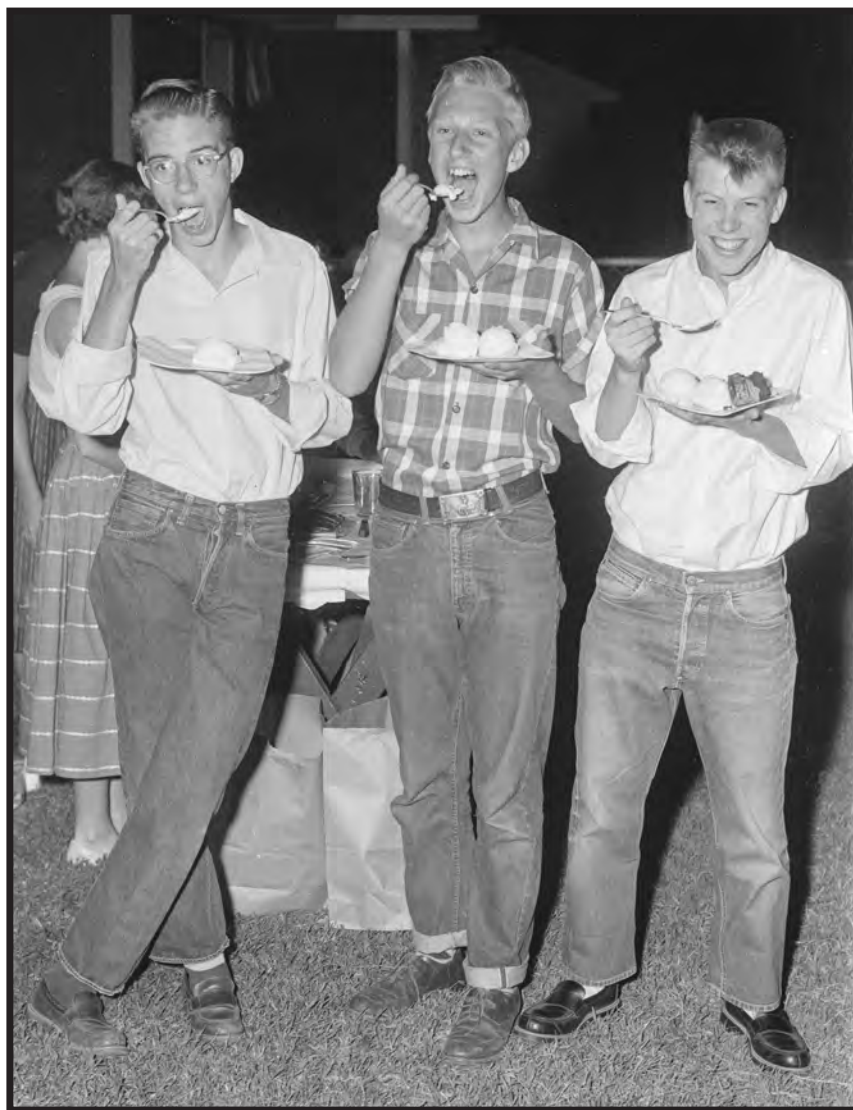
Hayride - October 1954. Terry Faulk, Pat Hughes, Sondra Foristell and Bob Tabor



Hayride - October 1954 . The event included a bonfire, hot dogs and marshmallows. unknown, Sondra Brown, unknown, Winston Davidson, Pat Hughes and Terry Faulk



ICE CREAM SOCIAL



Ice Cream Social, September 1954. John West, Jon Knoll and Stanley Johnson



Hylander Ice Cream Social, September 1954. Jerald Stanfield, Sherald Stanfield, Betty Griffin, Karen Jones, Eddie Haug, Jo Anne Meade, Woody Stalnaker, Ray Grant, Louise Brown, and unknown



MORE GIRLS

Girls occasionally asked to have their pictures taken.



Marilyn Polite at home



Joyce McGinnis at home



Judy Stout



Carol Hammon at home (only attended Junior year)





Kaye Duncan at home



Barbara Rodd



Cleo Phillips



Carolyn Conway at home



Joyce Goetz



Jo Lynn Garrett at home



Barbara Huggins at Woodward Park



Barbara Simon at home





Nancy Knight at home



Janet Jerome, Class of '58. She married the photographer, Steve Wixson



MISCELLANEOUS



Kenny Green, Shiela Hodges and DJ Buddy Hamilton



Rogers, Central and Webster cheerleaders at a radio station



This photograph of high school photographers Tom McPherson and Jim Boatright with TV's Cy Tuma appeared in the newspaper as did many other photographs



Hawks Hometown Dairy was a hangout (order the Pig's Dinner). Jon Knoll and Jim Boatright in front of advertisements for 15 cent hot dog and 25 cent Hot Fudge Sunday.



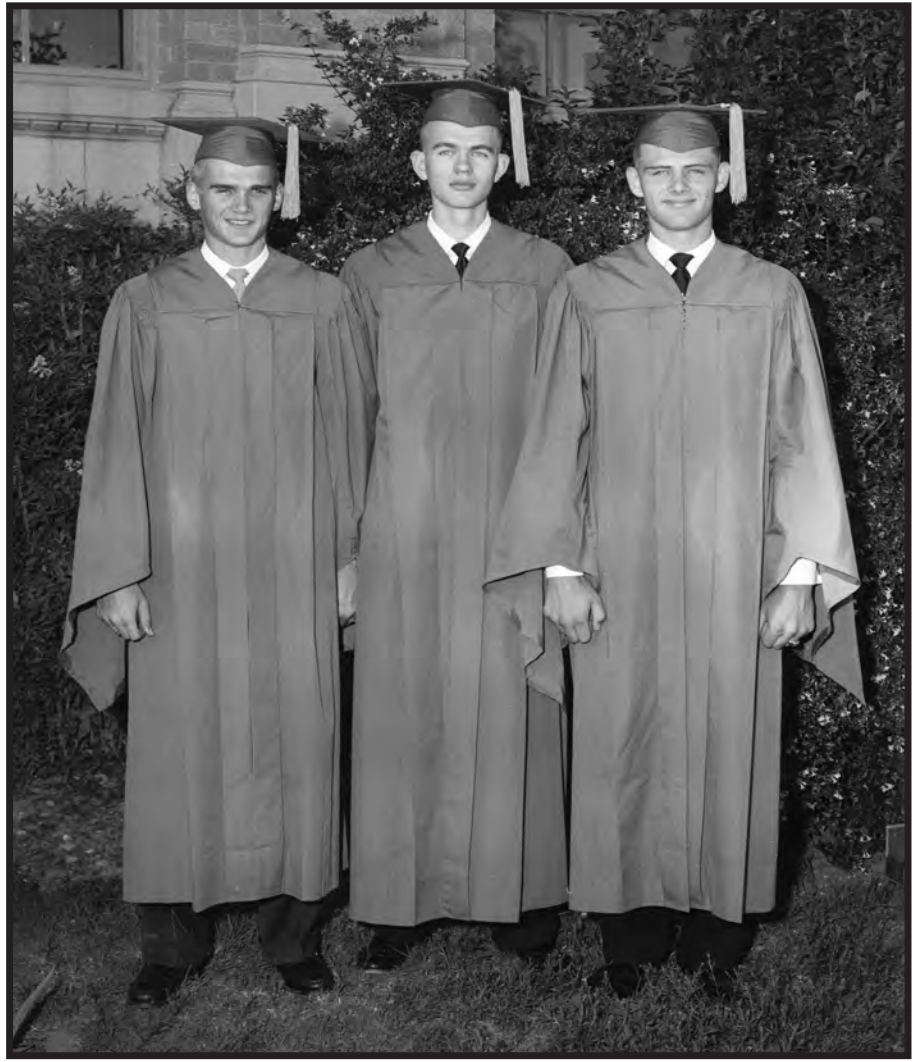
GRADUATION



Sandy Doroty, Jacqueline Skelly, Thelma Cage, Anmel Baker, Sharon White, Rose Powell, Margo Luton and Ruth Sandidge



Beverly Brown and Richard Morgan. They married



Vernon Haddox, Doug Roberts and Mike McNally

WEDDINGS



This is from classmates Sue Jones and Bob Passmore's wedding photographs, and one with Sue throwing her bouquet appeared in the newspaper on their 50th wedding anniversary. I took the wedding photographs of several classmates.

MORE MEMORIES

GIRLS

Ah yes, life in the 50's. Dressed in a straight skirt, saddle oxfords, scarf tied at the neck, and hair tightly curled. That would be me clutching the arm of someone in a letter jacket! The hallways were crowded, everyone greeting one another and acting silly as we reluctantly made our way to class.

We'd gather with our friends before and after school and visit about the night's event or that upcoming weekend dance or slumber party. Life in the future wasn't really much of a concern as we assumed it would always be fun, safe and secure. Special times, special values, special people and special memories...that's us, members of the class of '55. *Judy Robinson Ellis (Page 5)*

Janice McDaniel was one of my best friends, and I envied her. She was SO cute and nice to be around, and I still write to her today. And she's still cute, and she is one of my fondest memories. I recall the slumber parties out at Alice Roby's house, and they were so much fun! She has since passed away. I well recall my group of friends - Barbara Cummings, Tish Gearhart (she was a Jr.) and Janice and Alice and Rose Alice Powell, Thelma Cage and Annabelle Beatty! Thelma was going with Pat Noah, one of my favorite buddies. They got married and had 3 lovely daughters. I kept up my friendship with Pat and Thelma - she has since passed away. *Glenna Cain Weatherman*

I remember feeling so fortunate to go to such a huge and absolutely beautiful school. I had grown up in a small town and of course the schools weren't very big so Will Rogers High School was overwhelming to me. It didn't take very long, though, for me to feel very comfortable there and I loved it. Some of my favorite things were walking the halls in the mornings before school and of course, looking at all of the boys. I didn't date much in high school, but I did like to look! I loved going into the Auditorium for anything; it was so huge and so very impressive. I always looked forward to the Roundup even though I was never a participant, but was always in awe of the talent and the huge stage in this auditorium that was in my school.




I didn't miss very many football and basketball games and it was so much fun to go to the away games on a bus. Weren't we lucky to always have such good teams! I couldn't believe that this school had a swimming pool; I always loved to swim so this was really very special to me. I always loved Gym on swim days, even though my thick curly hair was a wild, huge mess the rest of the day.

There were lots of fun times with my friends and so many good memories of the years at this wonderful school. *Janelle Allen Guthrie*

BOYS

Linda Tenny (Page 88) was the first girl I ever kissed. *Ronnie Baker (Page 87)*



Then there was the time, the last week of our senior year, when a group of guys, including Ronnie Baker, decided to go out to Baker's Acres on Spunky creek for a swim. I had sixth hour gym which in the spring was outside, so I decided to play hooky and head out early. I told some of my classmates that I was leaving, jumped in my jeep and took off. When I arrived home to get my bathing suit, my mother was amazed that I had gotten home so quick, as she had just hung up from calling the school. She had injured her head and wanted me to take her to the doctor. Needless to say I tried to maintain a low profile for the rest of the week. I was sure my truant episode would prevent me from graduation. *Mike Haugh (Page 93)*

CARS

Judy Culp had a 1954 Corvette. I think that's the year--it was THE original Corvette, and perhaps the most beautifully designed car ever. And she used to pick me up and drive me to school, and go out in it.

I was smitten. It was a luscious cream color (can't remember the interior, but I think red). As a result, I've had a love affair with cars....Triumph TR3, Austin Healy, 1965 silver Corvette convertible with a red interior, had custom made a 1967 maroon Corvette with tan leather interior (nobody did it then), a 1981 corvette--which was ugly and ended the affair with Corvettes. The new affair has been with Jaguars, where I still am, with a supercharged XF. *Jo Lynn Garrett (Page 114)*

Most of my vivid remembrances involve a vehicle in one way or another. Like the times that we would push Bill Comfort's car from Will on the Hill to Comfort's station. How far was that? I think we pushed it ten or eleven blocks. We would all then pool our money to buy 25 cents worth of gas so Bill could take us home. Of course I only had one half block to go by that time.

Or how about the times before school when we would drive down the country roads to south Tulsa to jump ducks off the ponds. Only houses exist where those ponds once were.

Bob Eastham and I were planning a trip to Alaska in the summer between our junior and senior years. We were going to take my old blue and gold army jeep. Well, during Christmas break, Bob comes to me and wants to go right then. "We could drive to Oregon, wait for spring then head on up to Alaska," Bob said. I told Bob that I needed to stay in school and graduate. His response was, "OK just don't say where I am for three days." I didn't say anything, but I don't think Bob made it to Alaska at that time. I certainly didn't.

Mike Haugh (Page 93)

I remember one time I got the first parking spot in front of the school. *Bill Johnson*

TEACHERS


Once I arrived as a bona-fide student, I began three of the most enjoyable years of my life. I cannot recall a truly bad experience. Now, as a university administrator, I look back at those extraordinary teachers that underpinned my education and allowed me to have some degree of success. Stella Gartman was a superb algebra teacher and mentor, but Ulista Hawkins, Ethel Crate, and Madge Gibson were the key. Although I am not sure that I was all that aware at the time, they gave me the language (grammar) and writing skills that carried me through my college years and serve me today. I am forever grateful for their efforts. Serving as homeroom president as a senior in "Mighty Madge's" class was a singular experience. Being elected to the Tulsa Youth Court gave me confidence and helped hone my critical thinking skills. Being part of the CLASS of 1955 has been one of the special events in my life. *Chuck Gay (Page 109)*



SPANISH CLASS

I loved taking Spanish with Senorita Bell. I only took one year and now regret not taking the second year Spanish. I let too many people talk me out of it as they said it was too hard. Once a year Ms. Bell had a Spanish party at the school, and that year she asked me to perform a dance. I did. I got a really good grade from her class. *Joyce McGinnis Duncan (Page 110)*

FOOTBALL



My favorite football story occurred after the 1954 Muskogee game. Muskogee was ranked #1 in the state at that time and we played to a 0-0 tie in Muskogee. A bunch of their fans were outside our dressing room harassing, threatening, etc. Then our wrestling team showed up and the fight was on. Our boys cleaned up. Coach Goad was yelling for us to stay inside as he guarded the door. Those were the days. A fight between students, no guns, no knives and no one really hurt.

Another memory was in the Bartlesville game. We were trailing 27-21 with two minutes left in the game and we had the ball on the Bartlesville 30 yard line going in to try to win the game. A sweep to the right was called and the right halfback was to block the defensive end to the inside (he did), the fullback was to block the linebacker to the outside (he did) and the quarterback pitched the ball to the left halfback (he did) and he in-turn ran into the end zone untouched. Jack Mitchell, the Arkansas coach said at the football banquet that it was a perfectly executed play. The players, Roy Peterson the first blocker, Bob Brumble the 2nd blocker, Eddie Haug the quarterback and Don Ritschel carried it in for the winning touchdown. Those were the days.
Roy Peterson

My extended family was large in Tulsa, with many aunts, uncles and cousins. We were a competitive, sports minded group, and football season was a special time to enjoy. I remember so fondly those night games at Skelly Stadium and the excitement associated, especially when WRHS played Central High School (their alma mater). I remember one particularly cold night my Aunt Mable went to buy a Coca-Cola. As she tried to negotiate the narrow row to her seat, a touchdown occurred and some fans jumped to their feet, jostling Aunt Mable, who poured her iced drink down the overcoat neck of a gentleman sitting below her. I will never

forget the look he gave her and her attempts to make it right. *Chuck Gay (Page 109)*

I loved the football games and loved being in the pep squad. High School was a very fun time, though I was a little shy in those early days. I think I missed a lot and if I had it to do over, I would savor many more moments and the friends that I did not get to know. That is a good reason we have our high school reunions. *Joyce McGinnis Duncan (Page 110)*

BASKETBALL

When we were at Rogers, they use to play a defensive type of basketball where you could hold the ball as long as you wanted. Sorta "keep away" until you saw a good shot. I think we were playing Central and it came down to the last few seconds of the second quarter (half). I believe that Central took a shot and Don Ritchel got the rebound and headed down the court. The time was about to run out and he took a shot from half court and it went in for a 5 to 3 score for Rogers at half. After the game we were standing around and someone told Don, "that was a great shot right before the half," and he responded, "I couldn't even see the basket rim." He was near sighted. *Doug Roberts (Page 123)*



ROUND-UP

I had a wonderful time when I was in the Round-Up in my junior year, being the devil in one of the scenes. I think it was a New Orleans scene, but I can't remember since that was so long ago. It was fun practicing and getting to know more students in our class. *Joyce McGinnis Duncan (Page 110)*


Here is a tidbit of silly, dumb, embarrassing, glorious moments as we remember them? Like getting chewed out by the orchestra director for griping about the musician's skill at the very challenging and sophisticated "Slaughter on Tenth Avenue" we were dancing to for one of the Round-Ups - Junior year, I think. Sure took some of the ego and strut out of us!!! *Linda Palmer Bunch*

I remember the excitement - wondering who would be the models in the Round-Up, and who would be elected to be our Football Queens & Band Queens. The Round-Ups were marvelous. *Betty Ann Brown Trink*

SOCIAL CLUBS

I well recall being a member of Jesters, and Sally Smith was my pledge Mother. I was so scared of doing the wrong thing at the meeting and Sally reassured me. I remember our pledge ribbons were pale yellow and bright blue. I forgot my pledge ribbon one day when Sally picked me up for the meeting, and was so glad when she nicely stopped and purchased one at the store. They don't have Social Clubs anymore, do they? I am so glad (if they don't have them anymore). That's part of growing up, I guess, but one shouldn't be so scared of making a mistake! *Glenna Cain Weatherman*

The social clubs sponsored formal dances. In Jesters, we made monkey stuffed animals out of gray socks - for the needy. What a life! Thanks, *Betty Ann Brown Trinka*



As I recall the boy's social clubs were about to die off in our years at Rogers. I was treasurer our senior year. Dues, if collected, were used to buy refreshments. Membership slipped to not much more than a dozen guys, mostly jocks. Our club meetings, most often held at Terry Brown's house, were just another excuse to sip a few beers. I'm not sure we had any members other than our classmates. I know we had no money to leave. Woody Stalnaker always accused me of using the funds to finance my career in real estate. I maintain we spent it on beer. The Brigadiers in our time at Rogers served no useful purpose except having fun and hanging out together. *Ray Biery (Page 99)*

FRIENDSHIPS

At the tender age of 15, I met Jack Pontious. Within a few days we formed a friendship that lasts until this day. He quickly became my hero. The friendship continued as he married my sister, Mollie [class of '57]. His impeccable honesty, unyielding integrity and deep loyalty have seen us through the best of times and life's darkest moments. His faith has sustained him, even through the loss of his son Gary, a 12 year heart recipient, at age 39. Friendships can last forever and Jack is still my hero!" *John Peterson*

MISCELLANEOUS

1-Important projects: Learning Handel's Messiah in choir to perform with Central High School for the whole audience of Tulsa at Central. 2-Life Highlight. Standing up my first date with a classmate I now have been married to for 58 years. 3-Friends. Still know A LOT of classmates from grade school to now. 4-Will Rogers. I cry when thinking back on those wonderful days and that beautiful school and all of my friends. 5. Love the reunions. Everyone is magically 18 years old again the whole week end. *Sue Jones Passmore (Page 124)*

I have not kept in touch with many of the classmate except Lynette Bennet Danskin. I was lucky enough to see Lynette in several of her shows in New York City and then was able to set up some performances for Lynette when she was doing her one woman show about the life of Jeanette MacDonald in Houston Texas where I was living at the time. She did several great show there. *Ray Grant (Page 109)*

My memories of Will Rogers High School begin much earlier than my entry as a sophomore student. They begin as a "summer day-camp" attendee about the time I was in the sixth grade. Mike Richmond's father (Coach Richmond) conducted this camp for years, and I rode my bike over for the array of sports, movies, and camaraderie every summer. I used to walk those empty halls and think what it would be like when I would be a student there. From the first day, I thought it was such a special and beautiful place. *Chuck Gay (Page 109)*

I think we were so lucky to grow up in the 50's. We all had such wonderful times at Will Rogers and made life time friends. I moved away many years ago, but I'm always proud to tell everyone that I'm from Tulsa, Oklahoma. *Kay Miller Maddox (Page 5)*

I think that the most significant facts are - I was in awe most of the time. New friends, new opportunities, and such joy. I will never forget - sitting in the balcony on Fridays - at assembly - we recited the Pledge of Allegiance, sang the National Anthem, someone gave a prayer, and then the chorus sang the "Seven Fold Amen." And, the Seniors turned around and jeered at we Sophomores - which was actually thrilling. I don't remember an unpleasant issue at WRHS. However, Milo Dean did get excused from school for some days for getting a Mohawk haircut! And, he's truly of Indian heritage. Lady teachers wore dresses and men wore slacks, shirts, ties. Dr. Knight ALWAYS wore a suit. He instilled in us to behave - "remembering where we came from and the school that we represented." Girls NEVER wore slacks to school. I do remember someone warning us to NOT buy an elevator key! We were not suppose to leave the campus, but a lot of us



ran to Harden's for a delicious hamburger. We didn't become fat because of the hamburgers! The cafeteria had wonderful bean chowder and cinnamon buns! Most girls hated swim class, wearing those awful swim tanks, and having to RUN from the locker room down the hall to the pool. We had many formal dances in downtown hotels and the Blue Moon with live music where we danced our hearts out! *Betty Ann Brown Trink*



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

My photographic training came from the WRHS Photograph Club shown in the photograph below. Later through Jerry Cornelius, class of 1956, I was exposed to his father, Master Photographer, Meyers Cornelius, and I spent many hours in his darkroom watching him make 16"x 20" color photographs using the dye transfer technique. This labor-some technique involved separating a color negative into three separate negatives, printing them on 16x20 transfer film, dyeing each film and registering all three, one at a time, on photographic paper with chemicals and processing times exact. I saw what good technique could do, and as a kid tried to copy it. Now almost 60 years later, over 95 percent of my negatives are usable and most are in good shape. Jerry and I worked together for a while taking dance photographs. Jerry became a Master Photographer in his own right, and has served Tulsans and others for many years. Jerry is shown in the photograph on Page 74.



My father loaned me \$400 of his hard earned money to purchase a camera and darkroom equipment. I paid him back taking photographs at dances and selling to classmates for \$1 a black and white 8" x 10" print.



TECHNICAL DETAILS

The camera that recorded the images was a 4"x5" Speed Graphic, Anniversary model, with a Kodak Ektar f4.7 lens. The camera came with a flash attachment that used flashbulbs the size of 40 watt light bulbs. Later, I bought a Strobe Research electronic flash that greatly simplified taking photographs. The film holders held two negatives, one on each side, and required a large carrying case to hold lots of film. Later I bought a 120 roll film adapter that again improved shooting at the cost of some image quality. This is the camera you see in old period movies. The enlarger was an Omega D2.

The scanning of 1266 negatives was accomplished using an Epson V700 scanner. Negatives were scanned at 2400 ppi with 16 bits per pixel and stored in .tif format. For processing the digital images were down sampled to 600 ppi and for printing output at 300 dpi. Most of the images processing was done in Adobe's Camera Raw with full Photoshop CC as needed. Processing included exposure correction, highlight/shadow adjustment, healing brush for imperfections and surface damage caused by poor handling over the years and more.

The book was formatted using Adobe InDesign.



HISTORY OF TULSA

Tulsa is the second-largest city in the state of Oklahoma and 45th-largest in the United States. With an estimated population of 400,000, it is the principal municipality of the Tulsa Metropolitan Area, a region of around a million residents. The city serves as the county seat of Tulsa County, the most densely populated county in Oklahoma, and extends into Osage, Rogers, and Wagoner counties.

Tulsa was first settled in the 1830s by the Creek Native American tribe. In 1921, it was the site of the infamous Tulsa Race Riot, one of the largest and most destructive acts of racial violence in the history of the United States. For most of the 20th century, the city held the nickname "Oil Capital of the World" and played a major role as one of the most important hubs for the American oil industry. Tulsa has been credited as the birthplace of U.S. Route 66 and the home of Western Swing music.

The Tulsa Port of Catoosa, at the head of the McClellan-Kerr Arkansas River Navigation System, is the most inland riverport in the U.S. with access to international waterways. Two institutions of higher education within the city operate at the NCAA Division I level, Oral Roberts University and the University of Tulsa.

Tulsa is situated on the Arkansas River at the foothills of the Ozark Mountains in northeast Oklahoma, a region of the state known as "Green Country." Considered the cultural and arts center of Oklahoma, Tulsa houses two world-renowned art museums, full-time professional opera and ballet companies, and one of the nation's largest concentrations of art deco architecture. In 2005, the city was selected as one of "America's Most Livable Large Cities." People from Tulsa are described as "Tulsans." [Excerpted from Wikipedia]

For a photographic look at Tulsa, see *Historic Photographs of Tulsa* by Jerry Cornelius, another outstanding Will Rogers High School graduate.



HISTORY OF WILL ROGERS HIGH SCHOOL

Will Rogers High School, located on 3909 E. 5th Place in Tulsa, Oklahoma, was built by Tulsa Public Schools in 1939 using WPA workers and designed by Joseph R. Koberling, Jr. and Leon B. Senter. It was named for the humorist Will Rogers, who died in 1935. The school has more than 39,000 alumni. The school's colors are blue & gold, the mascot is a roper and the students are known as the Ropers. The school's symbol is the dogiron (branding iron) used by the Will Rogers family.

On September 21, 2007 the Will Rogers High School building was added to the National Register of Historic Places as one of the best examples of Art Deco Architecture. This was due to the dedication, perseverance and financial contribution by our classmate, Betty Ann Brown Trinkka, with some assistance from the Tulsa Architectural Preservation Council. A new Field House was added and window, air conditioning and other improvements were made.

In 2011, with declining student enrollment, the school was saved from closure, designated as a lottery magnet school and renamed Will Rogers College Jr High & High School. Students who meet certain requirements are offered the opportunity during 11th and 12th grades to take courses through Tulsa Community College. There is a waiting list to enroll. All this just in time for its 75th anniversary.

The school has a group of alumni who run the Tulsa Will Rogers High School Foundation Inc., which provides grants and scholarships to Rogers faculty and students. The Foundation was established in the 1990s. They are sponsoring the 75th Anniversary Celebration. Classmate Jo Anne Meade Lewis is their president for 2014.

On the 50th anniversary of the school, Architect Koberling said "I just hope that whenever anybody else spends money for buildings that they leave the purse strings loose just a little bit so they can leave something that is beautiful." A visit to the school today shows the lasting effect of spending that extra money.



