St. Paul’s Story - Meeting

It has the look of a small, liberal arts college. Its campus spreads over 42 wooded acres, large enough so its 22 buildings aren’t crammed together. Enrollment? It has 500 students—200 are day students, the remainder boarders.

What’s the college? It’s not one: It’s St. Paul’s School in Covington, which has shed its age to become as confident, fast growing and modern as its students.

St. Paul’s history dates back to the turn of the century, when Dr. Brant V. B. Dixon, then dean of H. Sophie Newcomb College, decided to establish a preparatory boarding school for Tulane University. As a first step, he purchased 26 acres on the outskirts of Covington. Then Dixon Hall was built, and in 1900, Dixon Academy took shape. It had 33 boarding and 24 day students. Another building, an octagon-shaped gymnasium, followed.

The academy was an immediate but short-lived success. It closed in 1909, was sold in 1911 to the Benedictine Fathers, who operated nearby St. Joseph Abbey, and its name was changed to St. Paul’s.

Its final transfer took place seven years later, in 1918, to the Christian Brothers, who still operate the school. Although the Christian Brothers had a number of schools in Louisiana during the 1800s, the acquisition of St. Paul’s...
The Cover: The colorful creation of fashion designer Gerald Pierce—he was born in Plaquemine and raised in Houma—is featured on Dixie, the magazine of Louisiana Designer, on Pages 10-11. Pierce, who is causing quite a stir in the fashion world with his colorful designs, came into prominence as a young man when he and some friends formed a specialty company to design and market fashions.

For more about Pierce and his ideas on fashion, turn to Fashion Figure—A Louisiana Designer, on Pages 10-11.

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Revives Conditioners by Helene Curtis more beautiful young men begin.

Today's Challenge

Paul's have been demolished to make way for new student buildings on St. Paul's campus. The new residence hall was finished immediately. The new residence ball was filled immediately.

Foreign students provide one area of increasing enrollment. At present, all students from Latin America board at St. Paul's. Almost half, says Brother Francis, are Americans whose fathers work for oil companies in Latin America. As an example is a project of Brother Jar and Brother Francis in a computer program, which is an elective course in most colleges and a requirement in some curricula.

The new residence building, filled immediately, was significant because it reestablished St. Paul's as a college preparatory school. The Christian Brothers had closed the last of their schools in the state in 1906, because of recurring yellow fever epidemics and injuries suffered as a result of the Civil War.

Today, nearly 50 years after thistake-over, St. Paul's physical plant has grown to a point where, as one school spokesman says, "visitors need a map to find their way around."

Wedged in between dormitories and classroom buildings on St. Paul's campus are a stadium and track, swimming pool, tennis courts and three football practice fields. A small, sparkling lake separates the lay teachers' residence from the rest of the campus. Our Lady of Peace Chapel, built in the shape of a cross, is the newest building on campus. It's built on Queen Hall, one of the first dormitories, which was once used as a chapel, is the library. A number of buildings which went up after the Christian Brothers took over St. Paul's have been demolished to make way for new ones.

Remarkable, much of St. Paul's physical growth is quite recent. Nearly a third of its buildings are only 10 years old. Mark of the ingenuity for the growth has come from Brother Francis Beck, F.S.C., who became principal in 1961. At that time he initiated a 10-year growth plan for St. Paul's, then decided to change that language plan in a one-year crash program.

Buildings planned and constructed included a glass-enclosed cafeteria with a 300-student capacity, a residence hall for 350 boarders, a chapel with a 400-situated capacity, an administration building, a student union, and an athletic-size swimming pool.

"It's doubled our enrollment in the past five years," says Brother Francis. "The new residence hall was filled immediately."

Looking toward St. Paul's future, Brother Francis predicts additional growth, because "there is a great market for preparatory schools and the structure of the atmosphere they provide for young men." Over the long term, he looks St. Paul's might develop into a junior college.

In addition to its steady growth, St. Paul's strives to update the school's academic philosophy of college preparatory work. The layteachers and lay-teachers have a big task in instructing students toward college, because, as Brother Francis points out, "most boys when they enter high school interested in college when they first come here. Last year, however, 86 percent of the graduating class listed all or the rest of higher education. Brother Francis seeks to increase this percentage even more by encouraging help for the college bound. An example is a project of Brother Jar and Brother Francis, head of the mathematics department. As advisor of the Alpha Theta, the mathematics club, he is interested students in learning about the PPAR computer program, which is an elective course in most colleges and a requirement in some curricula.

Club sessions include instruction in the use of the computer and the boys practice. Every computer problem set in the Delta Region, a competition of the French-American, an annual competition, is the subject of computer solution. The mathematics club meets every week during the school year to discuss the mathematics club believes the project is "a good mental stimulus because all students work on the same project. Sophomores in the club can expand on the basics for three years."

St. Paul's is an country school. It lives in the year 1967 and looks to the future. The growth of the physical plant over a series of decades has been matched and countered by the growth in student enrollment. But it retains its original, ambitious educational philosophy of a college preparatory school.

From left, new dormitory, besides Hall. Our Lady of Peace Chapel, and partially hidden Dixie Hall are viewed from campus lake.
The Cover: The colorful creations of fashion designer Gerald Pierce—he was born in Plaquemine and raised in Baton Rouge—appeared in Dixie Rotof's cover.

Mrs. Walter, who is causing quite a stir in the fashions world with her colorful knitwear designs, came into prominence a year or two ago when she and some friends formed a specialty company to design and market fashions.

For more about Pierce and his ideas on fashions, turn to Fashion Figure—A Louisiana Designer, on Pages 10-11.

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Wedged in between dormitories and classroom buildings on St. Paul's campus are a stadium and track, swimming pool, tennis courts and three football practice fields. A small, sparkling lake separates the big teachers' residence from the rest of the campus.

Our Lady of Peace Chapel, built in the shape of a cross, is the newest building on campus. It's next to Dixon Hall, the administration building, and St. Jude Armont, head of the mathematics department.

"We've doubled our enrollment in the past five years," says Brother Francis. "The new residence hall was filled immediately.

Foreign students provide one area of increasing enrollment. At present, all students from Latin America board at St. Paul's. Almost half, says Brother Francis, are Americans whose fathers work for oil companies in Latin America. But Paul's director, Brother Francis feels St. Paul's might develop into a national prep school.

Paul's director, Brother Francis Beck, who became principal in 1963. At that time he initiated a 10-year growth plan for St. Paul's, then decided to change that long-range plan to a near-term crash program.

Buildings planned and constructed included a glass-walled cafeteria with a glass-enclosed classroom, a new dormitory, a women's dormitory, and a new gym.

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"Gone With the Wind," that classic of fiction and film, has seldom been considered for the stage. Not only would it be expensive to mount such a show, but few producers or actors would care to match budgets with David Selznick or talents with Clark Gable and Vivien Leigh. The Japanese, however, were not overawed. They chose GWTW as the first foreign show to be played in Tokyo's new Imperial Theater, a lavish 1,950-seat house with all the latest stage machinery.

Producer Kazuo Kikut wanted an attraction that was broad enough to fill the theater's big stage and also powerful enough to draw customers to repeat performances. GWTW seemed the per-

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