

What was school like back in the day? Onondaga Historical Association's new exhibit shows us

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[Dick Case / Post-Standard columnist](#)



Courtesy Onondaga Historical Association Museum. *The 1953 majorettes from Onondaga Valley Academy. The Onondaga Historical Association Museum has a new exhibit about older Syracuse High Schools: Valley Academy, Eastwood, Vocational, North, Central, even the old Nottingham, now Levy Middle School.*

It's time to renew the old school ties.

One place to travel, first, is to the Onondaga Historical Association museum on Montgomery Street downtown to visit a new exhibit about older Syracuse High Schools: Valley Academy, Eastwood, Vocational, North, Central, even “old” Nottingham, now Levy Middle School.

Tom Hunter, OHA’s assistant director, said the exhibit “explores and celebrates the history of these earlier Syracuse schools,” starting with founding of Onondaga Academy in 1812, and ending in the 1960s, when the new generation of high schools began to open.

The show, on the museum’s second floor, includes three dozen large-format photographs of school scenes, yearbooks, school souvenirs, graduation programs, uniforms, and other documents, including an 1888 student list from Syracuse High School, a building that once stood on West Genesee Street, near Onondaga Creek.

Tom said the exhibit was generated by the recent gift to the association by Nick Nett,

who graduated from Central High School in 1952 and is unofficial historian of the school. The materials were intended for an alumni room at Central once it is renovated. Those plans are now on hold.

Tom said he hopes the exhibit, which continues until Oct. 17, will encourage other alumni to donate mementos of their alma maters in Onondaga County.

Meanwhile, at Old North



An early 20th century postcard depicting North High School, which was built on the site of the old county pen, Pond Street, Syracuse.

Graduates of North High School, which closed 46 years ago after a life of 102 years, will gather at Double Tree Hotel on Carrier Circle Sept. 11 for the first school Hall of Fame awards dinner. A board of directors evaluated some 70 entries for the first Hall of Fame. A permanent Hall will be installed at the McChesney Park Community Center.

Those to be placed in the 2010 North Hall of Fame:

Athletics: Dominick Stefanelli, 1929, senior class president 1928, played four sports; Herbert Schulze, 1934, 10 block letters, led North to baseball pennant pitcher; Joseph Masterleo, 1939., played football, baseball and basketball; wounded in Iowa Jima invasion; John Cantanzarita, 1943, All-City baseball, basketball and football; Conrad Mirizo, 1947, his 90-yard run won the football title for North; Thomas Cappelletti, 1949, excelled in football, basketball and track; Dominick DeRegis, 1950, basketball, baseball, football and track; and Jack Garvey, 1960, all-city baseball and basketball.

Education: Angelo Mancini, 1942, educator and coach; Dr. Alma Aquilino Ilacqua, 1943, writer and teacher; Patricia Spadafora, 1947, teacher and educator; Carmen D'Eredita, 1953, Solvay superintendent of schools; Robert Lewis, 1933, educator, coach and

acrobatic performer. Visual and Performing Arts: Joseph Lotito, 1945, founder of Salt City Center; Hallie Stiles, 1916, opera singer; and Lawrence Arlotta, 1961, jazz performer.

Business: Michael Rapuano, 1922, landscape architect and designer. Science: Dr. Joseph Grosso, 1928, physician and politician; Dr. J.G. Fred Hiss, 1911, physician and leader; Paul Shanahan, 1923, lawyer for 60 years. Government: Sen. John Hughes, 1922, influential public servant; Judge Leo Yehle, 1911, judge of Children's Court; Armond Magnarelli, politician and civic leader; Sam Grillo, probation officer.

Journalism: Arlene LaRue, 1930, women's editor and writer. Mario Rossi, editor and writer. Community service: Ralph Bova, Sr., 1933, community leader.

Nottingham, too

Graduates of Nottingham High School, Class of 1950, are planning a reunion weekend Oct. 8 and 9. Activities include a tour of old Nottingham building on Westmoreland Avenue, Oct. 8, and Wall of Fame celebration, 6 p.m., Oct. 9 at Drumlins.

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