

Featuring St. Frederick Mission School Class of 1947

St. Frederick's Mission School in Pontiac, Mich., opened its doors in 1897 and remained open until 1969. The school was part of St. Vincent's Parish. When it started, the parishioners and IHM Sisters were afraid that there would be no more than 75 students. They were delighted when 160 children enrolled!



It was not long before the students came to love the school and their teachers. Judging from the current strength of the alumni association, the school was one of great energy, both on the part of the faculty and the students. Friendships were easily made and people became life-long friends.

Featured Students

Jeanette (DeClerck) DeConick, from the class of 1947, has great memories of her days as a student at St. Fred's. She remembers several of her teachers for various reasons. Sister Melanie Moran was a beloved music teacher. Sister Ida Catherine Sanford taught biology and would have the students lower the shades at certain times for modesty. In her junior year Jeanette and a few of her friends decided to skip their math class and they went joy riding. With Sister Philippa Kerwin as the principal, it's no wonder they were caught!

Jeanette and three of her friends, Gloria Daley Stiel, Leah Currier and Marilyn Carry, were supposed to be studying in the library, but instead they were playing "baseball." They wadded up paper, threw it, and others would try to bat at it. Of course they never got away with that!

On a more serious side, Jeanette was aware that her education prepared her and her friends for the real world. She went into the business world and realized that her moral values stayed with her.

She married the senior class president, Phil DeConick, but she never dated him while in school. Unfortunately she has been a widow for quite a few years. She is a Realtor who "needs to find the digital camera that's just right for her business!"

She is sure that the class of 1947 was the best class ever, as they have many lasting friendships. In her words, "It just makes me feel great!"



(Left to Right) Ellen Deschaine Hoffman, Jane Doherty Stack, and Jeanette DeClerck DeConick

Ellen Deschaine Hoffman, also from the class of 1947, married a classmate, Frank Hoffman. She remembers attending football, basketball and baseball games. For many of the games, they had to go to the public school stadium as there was no room at St. Fred's for sporting venues. A special person, a lay woman whose name she cannot recall, was her second grade teacher. Ellen was sick for quite a while and her teacher was very kind and helpful to her, which made a big impression on Ellen.

(Left to Right) Frank Hoffman, Tony Stiel, Ellen Deschaine Hoffman and Jane Doherty Stack



Her classmates are still close friends and work with the alumni association to keep the spirit of this wonderful school going. Two of her special friends and classmates are Gloria Daley Stiel and Jane Doherty Stack. Ellen is proud of the fact that her class is very active in organizing and attending the annual St. Frederick's alumni Mass and luncheon which is held on a Sunday in mid-September.

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Oldest Alumni of the St. Frederick



**Class of
1929
75th
Anniversary**

**(Left to
Right) Mr.
Russell,
Patty Dean-
Phillips,
Benjamin
Klenkhamer
, and Kay
Russell**

At the luncheon, Mr. Benjamin Klenkhamer, was the one representative of his class. His daughter, Kay Russell and her husband were, no doubt, proud of Ben. Patty Dean-Phillips, the Alumni Chairperson, was gracious as always, as she introduced and congratulated Ben from the class of 1929 for being the wisdom figure in attendance.

From the class of 1952, Patty Dean Phillips is an example of someone who has a great devotion and dedication to the wonderful alums of the school. She has worked for many years to see that there is an annual Alumni Gathering that includes: a Sunday liturgy, followed by a luncheon and much delight for those who are able to attend.

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The Year: 1947

- Dead Sea Scrolls are discovered in Qumran

- Jackie Robinson joins the Brooklyn Dodgers



- *Meet the Press* debuts on NBC
- Anne Frank's *The Diary of a Young Girl* is published

- The microwave oven is invented



- *The Best Years of Our Lives* won the Oscar for Best Picture
- *All the King's Men*, by Robert Penn Warren, won the Pulitzer Prize

- Captain Chuck Yeager, USAF, breaks the sound barrier

Official USAF photo, courtesy of Edwards Air Force Base

